

Christianity Clarified Volume 58

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[0 : 0 0] Christianity Clarified, Volume 58, Track 1, First Century Critical Events, Part 1. It is not at all an exaggeration to call the first century A.D. the critical century.

It began in what we would call the year 1 A.D. There is no year labeled zero. The traditional Western calendar then goes from 1 B.C. to 1 A.D., and the 99 years that follow constitute that first century A.D.

The Jewish reckoning does not acknowledge Jesus Christ as being one to divide B.C. from A.D. So the usual Jewish reckoning is to call what Christians designate as B.C. or A.D.

to be instead B.C.E., which stands for Before the Common Era. So regardless of what name or letters are used to designate the century in question, what was it about that first century that the Christian world in particular regards as so critical?

What were those events? They were many, and each contributed mightily to the theological upheaval of that first century. Obviously, we cannot list them all.

[1 : 1 7] We don't even know them all. But we do know those most critical, and they were all controversial to say the least. We are speaking again of those 100 years, or more accurately, 70 years of that first century.

And first and foremost, and that which would lead the way for all other incidents to follow as consequences of this first one was the birth of Jesus, Messiah of Israel and Son of God in Bethlehem, in precise fulfillment of the prophet Isaiah in chapters 7 and 9, and Micah chapter 5, both key Jewish prophets of the Old Testament.

All of the other components that contributed so much to the controversy and confusion in that first century will arise from this most seminal event, the birth of Jesus.

Second, 30 years after his birth, the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist will formally introduce him to Israel as their long-awaited Messiah.

Three, the wilderness temptation of Jesus by Satan and his triumph over it vindicated his claim of Messiah and demonstrated his moral fitness as Israel's Messiah and God's Lamb that would take away the sin of the world.

[2 : 3 8] Four, the public ministry and indisputable miracles performed by Jesus further validated his claims to be the one promised by Moses and the prophets.

And five, following his national rejection, his subsequent crucifixion, resurrection that followed three days later, and the rending from top to bottom of the veil in the temple, separating the most holy place from the holy place at the time of Jesus' death.

And that incident was far more significant than most recognize. It is key. Remember this. It will surface again quite soon, and it is very much key to Judaism and its demise before the God of Israel.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 58, Track 2, First Century Critical Events, Part 2. The five historical events listed in the previous segment were only a few of the items that stirred that first century in a way never before experienced, especially religiously.

So much was not only new, but on the surface at least, appeared to be flatly contradictory. It appeared especially so to the deeply entrenched Jews in their practice of Judaism.

[4 : 04] Predictably, great confusion surfaced and seemed to intensify with each new decade. Yet, in actuality, these dynamic events were only new in their fulfillment, but they were very old in that they had been prophesied by the Jewish prophets many years earlier.

We briefly recall those first five that were and are so strategic in contributing to what everything is all about. And recall them, if you will. They were first, the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, Son of God, in response to Jewish prophecy.

Two, His baptism by John 30 years later, when He was introduced by John as Israel's Messiah. Three, His ministry and miracles designed to authenticate His messianic claims.

Four, His rejection by Israel, followed by His crucifixion, and the rending in two of the veil in the Jewish temple. And then, His resurrection from the dead three days later.

And five, His post-resurrection ministry, for nearly six weeks later, when He appeared before many prior to His bodily ascension back to heaven, witnessed by His apostles.

[5 : 19] Added to those were the events that also contributed to the theological and religious upheaval of that critical first century, and they are as follows.

Six, the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, as promised by Jesus, and predicted by the Jewish prophet Joel, in chapter 2, accompanied by 3,000 Israelites coming to faith in Jesus as their Messiah, and their being baptized in His name.

And seven, the ministry and miracles of the twelve apostles, and their persecution from their fellow Jews, who continued in their mode of rejection of Jesus as their Messiah.

And number eight, the special ministry of the Apostle Peter to the Roman army centurion named Cornelius, that introduced the first Gentile to the company of believers in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Number nine, God's selection of Saul of Tarsus, formerly the chief persecutor of Jews, to now become the chief proclaimer of Jesus to His countrymen, and as the new apostle who will be sent to the Gentiles.

[6 : 34] And number ten, the subsequent setting aside of Saul and Barnabas to comprise the first missionary team to preach far and abroad the person of Jesus to Jews and Gentiles, extending the gospel of Christ as far as major cities in Europe, where they will establish several churches they leave behind, to whom Paul will later write letters.

This second five events, added to the first five, considered previously, impacted the religious community of Israel and the Mediterranean basin like nothing had since the time of Moses and the Exodus.

There yet remain two additional items that add to all the upheaval even yet more, and they are considered next. Christianity Clarified, Volume 58, Track 3, First Century Critical Events, Part 3.

It should be clearly understood that identifying the previous ten events that occurred during the first century were far more strategic in making our present world as it is than most imagine.

And there are yet two remaining that we need to consider now, and their influence has been incalculable. The first has to do with, of all things, the unlikely issue of circumcision.

[7 : 56] And the second is closely related to it because it has to do with the abandonment of circumcision. We Gentiles, and that means all of us who are not Jews, have very little understanding or appreciation of what this religious right meant to those who were Jewish.

It meant so much, in fact, that for a male Jew to not have been circumcised was a contradiction in terms. In fact, according to the law of Moses, not only is the male baby to be circumcised eight days after his birth, but the failure of his parents to have done so disqualified that boy from any connection circumcision with the God of Israel.

Circumcision was the divinely instituted physical seal between the individual and God. Listen to the language directly from the law of Moses expressed in Leviticus 12.

Here's what it says. When a woman gives birth to a male child, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised on the eighth day. Well now, suppose the Jewish mother would say, I can't allow that terribly bloody thing to be done to my baby boy.

Well, that would hurt him terribly, and I love him. I forbid it. So what would that entail? An uncircumcised male who is a Jew? Impossible!

[9 : 20] That is a contradiction in terms. If ever there was an example of an oxymoron, an uncircumcised Jewish male is it. But still, what if the Jewish mother persisted and refused?

Would it really matter? Listen to the original command God gave Abraham where this all started in Genesis 17. Here's what it says. This is my covenant which you shall keep between me and you and your descendants after you.

Every male among you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between me and you. But a male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people.

He has broken my covenant. Well, that meant such a person was cut off, excommunicated, disowned by God and Israel, not accepted as a child of the covenant between God and his people?

In view of that, do you think any Jewish mother could refuse her baby boy's circumcision? That would be child cruelty in the worst sense, but not to worry.

[10 : 29] Besides the mother being Jewish and her awareness of how serious circumcision was, she wouldn't dream of not having her eight-day-old baby boy circumcised, despite his screaming at the pain and it being a bloody affair.

Apart from all that, it was still an occasion of great joy and celebration for the whole community because another bona fide Jew has been added to the number of Israelites, Israelites.

And most Gentiles have no idea how important this was and why. And we will try to show you. More to come and the plot will thicken. Christianity Clarified, Volume 58, Track 4, First Century Critical Events, Part 4.

Few things are as indisputable as the circumcision of the male Jew, without which one could not be considered Jewish at all. The word circumcision comes from a compound word, circum, which is related to the word circumference, which simply means distance around.

And the cusion part relates to the English word incision, which means to cut. Hence, together, it literally means to cut around. And in this case, it is to cut around the male sex organ and remove the excessive skin at its end.

[11 : 48] Its absence for the rest of the male's life is a reminder of but one thing, the God of Israel and your connection to Him. Every time a Jewish man relieved himself, he would be reminded of one thing, assuming he had been properly taught.

He would be reminded of his God connection as the son of the covenant God established with his ancient forebearer, Abraham, thousands of years earlier. Likewise, intimate activity with his wife would remind both that even their marital relations were a connection to the God thing.

And practically speaking, an article published years ago, unable to be recalled as to particulars, revealed an interesting discovery about cervical cancer in women.

A team of gynecologists were trying to find items of commonality among women diagnosed with cervical cancer. Finding telltale commonalities could help in the prevention of cervical cancer.

And thousands of medical cases on file of women with cervical cancer were processed by computers looking for that common factor. A startling statistic eventually surfaced that revealed cervical cancer to be almost non-existent among one certain class of women.

[13 : 12] Jewish women. Why Jewish women? It dawned on them. Jewish women do tend to marry Jewish men. And Jewish men are, voila, circumcised.

Absence of the male foreskin provided a more thorough cleansing and elimination of harmful microbes that could easily be transmitted to the wife, providing potential infection. And, by the way, what's the big deal about the eighth day for the baby boy's circumcision?

What's wrong with the seventh day or the ninth day? Why the eighth day? God doesn't say why. He just says, do it on the eighth day because I said so. Not until the 20th century did medical research discover something rather remarkable about newborn babies.

Their blood naturally contains a chemical, prothrombin, by name, that is the blood clotting factor. And the research revealed that the greatest amount of prothrombin in a newborn baby boy reaches its peak of blood-clotting ability on the, you guessed it, the eighth day.

Not the seventh day when it was increasing. Not the ninth day when it begins to decline. But on the eighth day. And to this, there are those who say, isn't that an interesting coincidence?

[14 : 31] Ha! Coincidence, my foot. It's a God thing. Just one more of many God things that reminds us we are fearfully and wonderfully made. And the case for circumcision really does loom great.

Christianity Clarified, Volume 58, Track 5, First Century Critical Events, Part 5. The reason circumcision is included as one of the critical events of the first century is precisely because it was.

And here is why. From the time circumcision was prescribed by God, beginning with Abraham, it was the physical reminder of the connection that existed between the circumcised Jew and the God of Israel.

For the Jew, circumcision on the eighth day of the birth of the male baby was never an option. It was as mandatory as breathing. But now, in this first century under question, when so many new things were happening, physical circumcision was being put in a new light.

Since circumcision was the physical evidence and reminder of one's connection to the God of Israel, wasn't it only logical that Gentiles or non-Jews who also came to faith in the God of Israel by their trust in Jesus, they too needed to be circumcised, didn't they?

[15 : 57] Some Jews said, well, of course. Others said, but circumcision was demanded by God for Jews. And believing in Jesus, the God of the Jews, doesn't make Gentiles Jews, does it?

One can scarcely imagine the confusion that erupted over this super-controversial issue. It soon got so heated and confusing it was deemed necessary to get the apostles together and resolve the issue.

And this became the occasion for that historic council that would take place recorded in Acts chapter 15. Few Christians are aware how critical this council and their decision would be, and still is.

Here is the rub. If Gentiles can be brought into a right connection with God apart from the symbol of circumcision, that is, the physical expression of that, then why could not the Jew?

Horror of horrors perish the thought. A Jew without circumcision? Unthinkable! But it was not only thinkable, it was now a reality, a blockbuster item for that first century.

[17 : 11] And the predictable path this would take is soon to descend upon both the believing Jews and Gentiles. The emphasis so long placed upon the physical, including the multiple washings or baptisms, as well as the emphasis upon physical circumcision and other things physical that were so important to Judaism, were undergoing a seismic change in this critical first century.

Whoever could possibly imagine physical circumcision giving way to spiritual circumcision? Water baptisms and multiple physical washings or baptisms giving way to spiritual baptism?

Impossible! Next thing you'll tell me is there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles. Wow! That is precisely what's coming.

and it is all spelled out just ahead. It is something and it has lingering consequences that impact people to this very day.

Hold on to your seat. Christianity Clarified Volume 58, Track 6, First Century Critical Events Part 6.

[18 : 29] Please hear it and hear it well because here it comes and it is huge. Among the first century critical events, this and the reason for it looms among the largest.

Listen up everybody. Brace yourselves for the two key words that changed absolutely everything. Beginning with that critical list, first century events and those two words are found in Romans 3, verse 21 and they are but now, but now, but now what?

But now as opposed to before. This word but is a conjunction of contrast. It means something is different from before.

It requires something to have occurred that justified the use of this contrasting word but. What could it have been? What it was is that with which the Apostle Paul opens his letter to the Romans declaring, Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ called to be an apostle separated into the gospel of God which he had promised before concerning his son Jesus Christ our Lord who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh and declared to be the son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.

It is here the description of the person and work of Jesus Christ that Paul sets forth his premise by which everything from that time forward that is from the time of the death and resurrection of Christ to all time afterward everything is to be evaluated.

[20 : 13] Christ was and is the game changer for the world and Paul's use of but now in 321 marks the crisis point of the transition but now tells us something has happened to change everything from what it was before to what it is at the present but now after Romans opens with that monumental world changing event of Jesus death and resurrection he goes on to tell how it involves and affects the Jew and also the Gentile and so the stunning result of the death and resurrection of Christ here is the new issue on this side of the but now as opposed to the former side before the but now but now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested being witnessed by the law and the prophets even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe for there is no difference for all of sin can come short of the glory of God being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ

Jesus then in 328 of Romans therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law folks this is so monumental and different on this side of the but now yet there are still many today who just don't get it more about this but now lies just ahead and it is something Christianity Clarified Volume 58 Track 7 First Century Critical Events Part 7 Previous segments of Christianity Clarified noted several important and significant events of worldwide impact on the critical first century list particularly those having to do with Jesus Christ there is no doubt about it the first century was very strategic having briefly mentioned the first 10 of 12 we reserve the last two because they were and are far less understood than the 10 we listed already the first of the remaining two is the issue of circumcision there was absolutely nothing that so confirmed the Jewishness of a male than that of circumcision and we saw how this religious ritual was required by the God of Israel beginning as early as Abraham then it was reaffirmed 500 years later through Moses at Mount Sinai and the giving of the law from the original mandate to Abraham circumcision was never questioned by Jews as to its value or necessity but now here in this critical first century 2000 years after Abraham it is an item of intense debate not that the Jews were debating it for Jews no chance of that but Jews were debating it for Gentiles but why were Jews concerned about

Gentiles being circumcised that was strictly a Jewish thing a very Jewish thing now let's understand something very important Jews in the first century who did believe Jesus to be the Messiah accepted and served him as such were as Jews already circumcised that happened when they were just eight days old and you may be sure they had no memory of it but they still had the physical evidence that an original part of their male anatomy was missing but such was not true of men who were not Jewish their entire anatomy remained intact however controversy arose due to the Gentile men who came into a relationship with the God of Israel through their also believing in Jesus as Gentiles would that not also necessitate their being circumcised Jews who thought so made their demands quite clear as recorded in Acts 15 that reads and certain Jewish men who came down from Judea said regarding the Gentiles who believe except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses you cannot be saved when Paul and Barnabas had no small disputation with them they determined that they and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question and when they arrived in Jerusalem for the council certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said of the Gentiles who believed that it was necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to keep the laws of Moses then the apostles and elders came together to look into this matter and it is easy for us especially as Gentiles many years removed to just overlook the whole issue but we must understand it was and is monumental why it was so will become even more apparent just ahead

Christianity Clarified Volume 58 Track 8 First Century Critical Events Part 8 The position of the Jew who had also embraced Jesus as Israel's Messiah set forth their position regarding Gentiles who had also believed in Christ as Messiah and Savior and it was clear stating it is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the law of Moses in essence they were saying these believing Gentiles must become Jews well everyone knew if you were born as a descendant of Abraham Isaac and Jacob you were a Jew assuming of course you were circumcised and those who were Gentiles which comprise 99% of humanity but even for them there was the possibility of becoming as a Jew and accepted by Jews as a Jew if you were circumcised you could become a proselyte to Judaism entitling you to the full rights and privileges as a Jew just as if you had been born one and that remains open today in Judaism becoming a Jew as a convert to Judaism in essence that was what these Jews who were also

Pharisees were demanding of Gentile converts from their paganism to faith in Jesus they need to become Jews and it was the Apostle Peter who no doubt carried clout and credibility as one of the original 12 Apostles and he stood up and stated the case saying brethren you know that in the early days God made a choice among you that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe and God who knows the heart bore witness to them giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did also to us and he made no distinction between us and them cleansing their hearts by faith now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples meaning the Gentiles in question that which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear but we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way as they also are and the next verse 12 says and all the multitudes kept silent can we insert a modern day translation of that phrase all the multitude kept silent and here it is you could have heard a pin drop after their silence

[28 : 22] Paul and Barnabas were given the floor and the text says they were relating what signs and wonders that is miracles God had done through them among the Gentiles wow anyone with even a superficial reading must concur there is a new wind blowing indeed there was and is it is the wind of the Holy Spirit who is pouring out the grace of God upon all who believe whether Jew or Gentile recall the words of Paul two chapters earlier at Pisidian Antioch through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is preached to you and through him everyone who believes is freed from all things from which you could not be freed through the law of Moses oh my talk about a new wind blowing it was indeed Christianity clarifying volume 58 track 9 first century critical events part 9 a few sessions ago on Christianity clarified a list of the initial 10 of the 12 major events of that first century were briefly mentioned all of them centered upon the person of

Jesus Christ and what he accomplished especially as it relates to his sacrificial work on the cross we told you we were reserving the last two of the 12 chiefly because they were then and still are today terribly misunderstood and what both of these are comprised two of the many major consequences of what Jesus actually accomplished on the cross to say they were cataclysmic upheavals is still putting it mildly the first of the two have already been considered at least somewhat even if somewhat superficially still in enough detail we trust that you were able to grasp the consequences and that item number 11 of the 12 was circumcision and it was huge in all its implications having seen how why and when circumcision was established between God and his covenant people there is no difficulty understanding why it was and for most

Jews today still is so highly regarded it was an extremely critical event in that first century when the council at Jerusalem in Acts 15 ruled against the Gentiles needing to be physically circumcised as believers in Jesus now can you see the implications of this yet if the Gentile that is the non Jew could be brought into a right relationship with God and be fully accepted of him without physical circumcision then why was it necessary for the Jew to be circumcised and can you not readily see why Paul the apostle to the Gentiles was consistently accused of teaching against the law of Moses Paul was a champion for the Gentiles and insisted they need not submit to the religious ritual of physical circumcision as did the Jews and you may be sure the Gentiles were greatly relieved to hear that no circumcision required but does not the really big item consist of one's acceptance by God is not that the real bottom line acceptance approval forgiveness from God yes it is well if the Gentile receives that without circumcision why was it necessary for

Jews to be circumcised if Gentiles are brought into a right relationship with God solely on the basis of their faith and the finished work of Christ why can't the Jew come the same way you see where this is going do you not and yes it gets even more radical than this item number 12 of the contributing factors making that first century so critical and controversial was you guessed it there is now because of Calvary no difference between Jew and Gentile that was the first century thunderbolt that remains such even today we will develop this more and it is something Christianity Clarified volume 58 track 10 first century critical events part 10 the very essence of Judaism was unraveling right before the very eyes of the

Jewish people during this volatile and confusing first century but very few Jews had any grasp of that at all and that is still true today and it was all because of who Jesus of Nazareth really was and what he accomplished by dying on that cross and coming back from the dead three days later it changed absolutely everything it made access to God available through the door of Christ's substitutionary death and it was because God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself not imputing their trespasses to them and the reason the world's trespasses were no longer counted against them was because they were all imputed to Christ and he paid the penalty for them in his own body if that makes God's forgiveness and salvation to all through Christ available what then becomes of Judaism and the practice thereof as mentioned earlier the cross changed everything absolutely everything after all when

[34 : 20] God became incarnate in human flesh and was made to be sin for his sinful creatures by balancing the moral scales of the universe well I guess that would change absolutely everything wouldn't it what appears to be the most dramatic of that seismic change occurred when the Son of God cried out from the cross my God my God why have you forsaken me and Jesus breathed his last hung his head and died and the veil in the temple was torn into from the top to the bottom the veil what veil what did it have to do with anything what what what what what are we saying and the veil was torn what veil what is that all about well

Exodus chapter 26 reveals the veil to be a beautiful thickly woven curtain ornately decorated and it served as the partition separating the most holy place from the holy place in the temple in the most holy place the sacred ark of the covenant was put it was there God's presence dwelt among his people the ark of the covenant was a large box like chest made of acacia wood approximately two by four feet in size and in it were placed the two tablets of the law God gave to Moses at Sinai Aaron's rod that budded and the golden pot of manna the box or the ark was covered with a lid called the mercy seat and here at the seat of mercy God said he would dwell among his people Israel no one dare approach the ark or even look upon it under penalty of instant death but there was one exception and it meant everything to Israel and we'll consider that next

Christianity Clarified volume 58 track 11 first century critical events part 11 the instructions for building the ark of the covenant and other items of furniture for the tabernacle were given in Exodus chapter 25 and in Leviticus chapter 16 instructions are given regarding its use only the high priest of Israel was even permitted to look upon the ark and he only one day in the year in the Jewish language called Yom Kippur and it means day of atonement on this one day of the year the high priest alone would go beyond the veil separating the holy place from the most holy place where the ark of the covenant was kept there he would sprinkle animal blood from the sacrifice for his own sins and then sprinkle blood upon the mercy seat for the sins of the nation of Israel such such such such an atonement or covering was to give

Israel a reprieve for their sins for one year the ritual would be repeated every year on the day of atonement the annual ritual testified to the need for ongoing animal sacrifice because they could provide no finality only a temporal covering this was dramatically contrasted by John the Baptist when he introduced Jesus at his baptism and John declared Jesus to be the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world the contrast between animals blood temporarily covering to be repeated annually and the blood of Christ taking away sin with finality and completeness is stunning to say the least the book of Hebrews chapters 8 through 10 provide a detailed contrast between the animals with temporary atonement and Christ with a permanent taking away of sin when that intersecting veil separating the most holy place with the ark of the covenant from the remainder of the temple the access that was previously available only once a year and only by the high priest and only with the blood of an animal sacrifice was now open made visible by the tearing of the veil the ark where

God dwelt among his people that was so exclusive to Israel and Judaism alone is exposed signifying an accessibility to God at the ark in a way never before known or even imagined this is found in Matthew 27 in Mark chapter 15 and in Luke 23 at the time of Christ's death there was darkness over the entire land for the space of three hours which some try to make coincidental and the result of an eclipse but an eclipse never lasts more than 25 minutes at most and as well some say the earthquake that occurred at the same time was responsible for the heavy veil being torn in two but scientific seismologists they are the people who study earthquakes tell us that an earthquake would tear the curtain from the bottom up but the Bible says not only that the veil was torn in two but Matthew and Mark specifically say it was torn from the top to the bottom it is hard not to see this as a

[40 : 08] God thing and it strongly suggests that God was saying this is over I'm done with all this now confirmation of it lies just ahead Judaism is officially defunct God says so Christianity Clarified volume 58 track 12 first century critical events part 12 the book of Hebrews was written by someone who had to have been very familiar with Judaism the law of Moses and all it involved it offers by far the best explanation of what happened in the death of Jesus all of chapters 8 through 10 are extremely revealing and recommended reading chapter 10 verse 19 offers by way of conclusion as to the significance of the death of Christ by saying since therefore brethren we have confidence to enter the holy place by or via the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which Christ inaugurated for us through the veil that is his flesh did you get that the writer is saying the new and living way is actually the flesh or body of Christ

Jesus is the veil that means in contrast to the high priest alone being able once a year not without blood to come to God through the veil in the temple now the torn veil has changed that Jesus has become the new veil as it were and now we come to God through this new veil the body of Jesus the Son of God this Christ referred to by disclosing himself to be the door saying in John 10 I am the door if anyone enters through me he shall be saved he is the way the truth and the life as expressed in John 14 there is nothing and we do mean nothing as monumental as the Son of God having taken flesh upon him and dying as man's substitute on that cross 2,000 years ago it constitutes the singular greatest transaction ever in the history of the universe when God tells us through the apostle John in the third chapter about his loving the world in the way he did and the apostle Paul echoing that truth in his monumental statement of 2nd Corinthians 5 that

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself that is as monumental as can be to Abraham God promised all the world should be blessed through his seed namely through the Messiah who would come directly from the loins of Abraham Isaac and Jacob Israel would be the channel that would produce the humanity for the Messiah and God the Father would provide the deity Jesus was and is the only theanthropic person ever a unique blending of God and man one of his several names in Isaiah 7 is Emmanuel which literally means God with us listen to how the spirit of God inspired the writer of the letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament speaking from chapter 9 saying it was not through the blood of goats and calves but through his own blood he entered the holy place once for all having obtained eternal redemption and again from chapter 10 in

Hebrews it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins but Christ offered one sacrifice for sins for all time and sat down at the right hand of God and by one offering Christ has perfected for all time those who are sanctified this all was incalculable in its significance for all of humanity for all time Christianity Clarified Volume 58 Track 13 First Century Critical Events Part 13 These were phenomenal dramatic things that occurred in connection with the death of Christ on that cross of Calvary yes there was the powerful earthquake and yes there was the darkness over the land with the sun blotted out for those fateful hours from 12 noon to 3 pm and added to that was an event often overlooked or not assigned the tremendous significance it deserved it was the rending in two from top to bottom of that thick heavy veil or curtain that separated the most holy place from the holy place in the

Jewish temple it was not only significant that it happened but precisely when it happened that was also of great significance each writer of the synoptic gospels records the event Matthew in chapter 27 Mark in 15 and Luke in 23 all note the rending of the veil from top to bottom occurred with the precise event of Jesus' death that was not coincidental and that veil in place since the building of the tabernacle then transferred to the temple Solomon built years later played a very important role it separated the very presence of God from all the people it was beyond the veil that the ark of the covenant was situated and the lid on the ark was called the mercy seat two overarching angels were cast in gold and their wings overshadowed the mercy seat between them is where

[45 : 53] God said his presence among his people would be all behind that veil in the most holy place was strictly off limits to everyone under divine penalty of immediate death one exception was allowed and only one and for only one person only on one day the high priest of Israel was permitted actually required to go behind that veil on the annual day of atonement called Yom Kippur he approached the mercy seat sprinkling it with the blood of an animal that had been sacrificed for this very purpose he did that to atone for his own sins as high priest and then he sprinkled more animal blood to atone for the sins of the people of Israel that would suffice and stave off divine judgment for the sins of the nation for one year then it all needed to be repeated and we are reminded in Hebrews chapter 10 that it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin they only provided a reprieve a temporary satisfaction to be repeated annually but at the precise time on the cross when Jesus shed his blood and died then that separating veil was torn into from top to bottom this exposed the ark of the covenant and the entirety of the most holy place

God tore that veil he ripped it into from top to bottom and in essence said I'm finished with this so Judaism actually did cease and become defunct but there is nothing defunct about the Jew that's a far different matter explained just ahead Christianity Clarified Volume 58 Track 14 First Century Critical Events Part 14 Few things in the history of the Jewish people and the establishment of what Judaism was all about was as significant as what happened when Christ died on that cross outside Jerusalem nearly 2,000 years ago besides his death itself and what it accomplished the tearing in two of the massive veil separating the holy place from the most holy place where God actually dwelt among his people had occurred Matthew Mark and Luke all make mention of it surely noting that it was something not to be overlooked and certainly not merely an item of curiosity as noted previously such indicated the very demise or abrogation of Judaism and all its components and if we list them first the end of animal sacrifice had come right then and there and this was due to that final sacrifice of Christ himself having occurred at the death of Jesus his death forever dispensed with the need or even the appropriateness of animal sacrifice this was huge because in the eyes of God animal sacrifice supposedly to him out of necessity would minimize the ultimate sacrifice just made in the person of

Christ and if all the animals sacrificed earlier in Judaism symbolized and anticipated the one final sacrifice to come which was made by the Messiah then animals sacrificed afterwards were to say the least not only anticlimactic but how could they not even constitute a kind of divine insult to the almighty in his sacrifice of his son and Judaism without animal sacrifice was as much a contradiction in terms as was an uncircumcised Jew unthinkable and revisiting the issue of circumcision that too along with the animal sacrifice in Judaistic worship was no longer the integral part it had always been that too although continued to be observed as before among the Jews it no longer carried the weight of divine necessity as it had before the sacrifice of Messiah with such a critical aspect of sacrifice now passé where did that put the priests of Israel all those descendants of Levi and Aaron they too in their earlier sacred officers are you guessed it gone why no longer needed no longer any official functions for priests to perform which largely had focused upon the animals and their prescribed ritual for inspection and sacrifice even now

Jews have their rabbis or teachers today but there is no office or need for priests there is nothing else to call this but a dismantling of Judaism or it's actually having become defunct but not to worry and by that is meant nothing about being a Jew is defunct in fact in fact the Jewish people and their perpetuity is as secure in their endurance and future as is the promise of God and a Jew as a Jew could not be any more secure than that but Judaism itself as a system of worship is gone whether the Jews know that whether they accept it or not whether they believe it or not it is more evidence lies ahead Christianity Clarified Volume 58 Track 15 First Century Critical Events Part 15 Spending nearly six weeks in Israel in 1990 my wife and I enjoyed an utterly intriguing time of introduction first hand to things

Jewish to say Israel and the Jew are in every way remarkable is an understatement there is no place like Israel and no people like the Jewish people in the entire world quite indescribable so I'll quit trying many memorable scenes and experiences were forever captured in the memory however and one such occurred on an occasion that our group was invited to attend and it was a question and answer session conducted by a prominent local rabbi there in Jerusalem he was asked the question with the temple and the altar of sacrifice that had been the very heartbeat of Judaism how is it that the Jewish people can now worship were not these key components of the Jew connecting with the God of Israel yes he replied they once were but now we pray hmm but can anyone

[52 : 50] Jew or Gentile imagine the high priest prior to the death of Christ entering the most holy place on the day of atonement and instead of offering the blood sacrifice of an animal for himself and other blood for the atonement of the sins of Israel instead the high priest simply announces toward the ark of the covenant well this year we have decided not to sacrifice any animals so I really don't have any blood at all to sprinkle on the mercy seat we decided that we will just pray instead well who in their right mind would want to be in the place of that high priest yet really now in view of the altar and the temple being completely destroyed what else can the Jewish people do but pray the altar there at the temple where the holy of holies was located was the only prescribed place on earth where God said he would meet with Israel and now and as of 70 AD it is no more no sacrifice no altar no temple no ark of the covenant no mercy seat all gone and what was gone with those

Judaism was gone it no longer possessed credentials that allowed Israel to worship God in the way he prescribed and in the way Israel had done since Moses built the tabernacle in the wilderness all gone listen to the prophet Hosea in chapter 3 who prophesied as the God of Israel gave him utterance these are super solemn words Hosea prophesied over 700 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem and here is what he said for the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince without sacrifice or sacred pillar and without ephod or household idols afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king and they will come trembling to the Lord and to his goodness in the last days well the first part has already happened the second part is yet to come and so is the explanation thereof lies just ahead truly remarkable content indeed join us if you will

Christianity Clarified volume 58 track 16 first century critical events part 16 the previous segment of Christianity Clarified quoted a key passage from the Jewish prophet Hosea who wrote in the Jewish Tanakh that is also known as the Old Testament a most remarkable in fact downright stunning prophecy in chapter 3 this is what Hosea said for the sons of Israel will remain many days without king or prince without sacrifice or sacred pillar and without ephod or household idols afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king and they will come trembling to the Lord and his goodness in the last days Hosea wrote this prophecy 700 years prior to the birth of Christ and when did it begin its fulfillment Israel is said to be without a king or prince who would be next in line to the throne

Israel Israel Israel Israel Israel has not had a king since Zedekiah was led captive to the land of Babylon in 586 BC and they have been without a sacrifice since the temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD today modern Israel has no monarchy no king they have a prime minister but no king and they have no sacrifice that too ended in 70 AD when the Romans literally destroyed everything Jewish and led thousands of Jews who survived the carnage into slavery and out of the land of Israel and to this very day Israel remains devoid of a king a prince and a sacrifice modern Israel with many Jews from all over the world are back in the land yet still missing all these items and where is modern Israel religiously have they even any interest in having a king or prince or sacrifice well of course not in fact most

Jews in Israel today would probably laugh at the very idea why what's going on in modern Israel well to begin with Israel is for all purposes a secular state which most Israelis would endorse in fact only a small percentage of Jews in Israel would call themselves religious they are the Orthodox Jews and the Hasidim the ultra Orthodox and then there are the reformed Jews greater in number but far more liberal in their beliefs and there are also considerable numbers of Jews in and out of the land of Israel who have proudly maintained their Jewishness but have walked away from the God that made Jews Jews they have never been able to process the Holocaust when six million of their kinsmen died at the hands of the Nazis thus these have concluded there could be no God no

[58 : 15] God for Israel who could stand aside and allow such an atrocity to befall six million of his supposedly chosen people and if such a God should exist I want nothing to do with him such is the wild diversity among Jews in and out of the land of Israel and we have more upcoming it will be soul stirring and very enlightening just ahead Christianity Clarified volume 58 track 17 first century critical events part 17 no people on the face of this earth has experienced an on again off again relationship to the God who founded them as the Jew even a cursory reading of their own scriptures written by their own Jewish pen men recount both the loyalty and the disloyalty of the Jewish people toward their God yes the same one that birthed them as a nation when he rescued them from

Egypt spiritually up and down in and out backward and forward has been the association of Israel to their God men again to be their grossest sin now many Jews are on a different kick rather than worshiping false idols as did many of their neighboring nations many today worship no God at all theirs or no one else's such is the diversity of today's Jew the sentiments of one Jew were overheard in a conversation with another Jew who lamented their inability to agree on anything and in frustration he moaned to his Jewish brother it just seems like whenever you get three Jews together you'll have at least four opinions on anything well it's funny but it's sad at the same time and to be sure there is no nation like

Israel and no people like the Jew and probably the Jews could agree about that well maybe seriously though it will not always be thus for Israel because something incredibly glorious is coming their way and the same prophet Hosea from the same passage in chapter three tells about it if understood aright it should make every Jew jump for joy because it is indeed worth jumping and shouting about listen if you will to this from the prophet Hosea in chapter three of the Jewish Tanakh afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king and they will come trembling to the Lord and to his goodness in the last days well that does not speak of idolatry or rebellion that speaks of repentance of fidelity this will be a different Israel it will be

Israel seeking the God of their fathers when in the last days we do not know for certain how far away these last days are but we do know for certain that we are now closer to them than anyone has ever been the Hosea text says this future generation of the Jews will in the last days seek the Lord and David their king surely that doesn't mean David the king and former shepherd boy oh indeed but how can that be it's all due to a really big big thing called resurrection David the king the same one is coming back and Israel will seek him and by the way if you know the Lord whether you are a Jew or a Gentile you're coming back too you can count on that whether you are Jew or Gentile see you there

Christianity Clarified volume 58 track 18 first century critical events part 18 as the first century moves on the difference between the diverse messages preached by the twelve apostles regarding the kingdom of heaven and that preached by Paul the more recently called of God apostle to the Gentiles adds to the confusion of this first century and while the twelve continue with the message Christ gave them before his ascension back to heaven the apostle Paul is given a different message from Christ after his ascension back to heaven Galatians chapter two certainly confirms this in essence two different messages both called good news because both were good news one about the gospel of the kingdom by the twelve preached to the Jews and one about the gospel of the grace of God preached by Paul to the Gentiles both were legitimate for their intended audiences listen to how it is expressed in

[63 : 22] Galatians chapter two as Paul claims to have received blessing and endorsement from the original twelve apostles who obviously understood that he Paul had been given a different message from Christ than what they had earlier received from Christ and he states as much beginning with verse seven saying of the twelve quote they seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the Gentiles just as Peter with the gospel to the Jews for he who effectively worked for Peter in his apostleship to the Jews effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles and recognizing the grace that had been given to me James and Peter and John who were recognized as leaders gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the Jews bear in mind that while there are clearly two distinct audiences or recipients of these two different emphases the people of the people of the people are to both yet the gospel or good news the twelve were commanded to preach exclusively to

Israel was precisely what John the baptizer preached and Jesus and the twelve apostles after him as recorded in Matthew 10 and then again when he called the twelve and confirmed right before his ascension in Acts chapter 1 that it was a kingdom oriented message they preached to the Jews only before and after the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ and it also included what Peter preached on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and continued in Acts 3 and while the twelve are having some success among Jews who were believing the official position of Israel remained with their rejection of Jesus as Messiah just as they did before his crucifixion as the nation of Israel continues to harden toward the twelve apostles persecution of the Jews by the Jews begins to intensify rather than embracing the resurrected Messiah

Jesus of Nazareth and the message of the kingdom of heaven Israel as a nation moved yet further away from the offer extended to them by the twelve apostles and then another critical event occurs that really shakes up everything and it is next the confusion abounds Christianity Clarified Volume 58 Track 19 First Century Critical Events A prominent Jew by the name of Saul of Tarsus had distinguished himself in Jerusalem for the hard line he was taking against his fellow Jews who believed Jesus to be the long awaited Messiah to Israel He was convinced those Jews for Jesus had been duped into believing that Jesus was the Messiah and they were influencing other Jews to join them How could he regard them but a dangerous cancer growing on Israel that must be cut out and

Saul was just the man to do it and while en route to round up Jews who had fled from Israel to avoid the persecution that monumental event that occurred on the road to Damascus became one of the very critical events of the first century that absolutely changed the world Saul of Tarsus was confronted by the risen Jesus Christ whose followers he was intent on stamping out and not only did Saul of Tarsus become a committed believer in Christ but he also received from him a brand new assignment previously unheard of and the word radical is too mild to explain what was now to occur in this critical event of this first century Saul of Tarsus commissioned by the risen Christ to be the apostle to the Gentiles apostle to who Gentiles you mean Gentiles as opposed to Jews the same well what on earth why does

God want to do anything with or about Gentiles yes yes yes and don't many Jews also regard Gentiles as fodder for the fires of hell yes and don't many Jews in his morning daily prayer thank God that he did not make him a woman a slave or a Gentile yes well given all that and more why in the world would God call anyone and make him an apostle to the Gentiles well Ephesians 3 will tell you all about it and it was all due to something that had always been resident in the heart and mind of God but was not disclosed until God revealed it to

[68 : 49] Saul and called him to dispense this previously hidden secret to everyone including Gentiles this has to be why God would inspire Paul to write about the previously kept secret now to be declared everywhere to everyone Gentiles as well as Jews this brand new manifestation and declaration is given to Paul as the dispenser the revealer the proclaimer to everyone everywhere he went and it called the gospel or the good news of the grace of God not to be confused with the gospel of the kingdom these are both good news because Christ is at the center of both of them yet they are radically different and what will be the fallout of this it just lies ahead Christianity Clarified volume 58 track 20 first century critical events part 20 the fallout from the conversion of

Saul of Tarsus to become the apostle Paul was absolutely monumental and the commission he was given was to proclaim the gospel of good news to everyone it was a gospel or good news not available earlier but now had become such because the basis for the good news had become a reality and what was that basis it was the substitutionary death of Christ until God raised up Saul of Tarsus to preach the good news of the grace of God extended to all the singular good news that existed was the kingdom gospel that was directed exclusively to Israel it was this that was preached by Peter in the twelve not only in Acts 2 but Israel was charged as complicit in the death of Christ despite that God raised him from the dead now with the death of

Christ having paid the redemptive cost for the fallen earth the kingdom long promised is available to Israel and for the world but it is contingent upon Israel embracing their Redeemer Jesus of Nazareth Acts chapter 3 makes it clear when Peter told that to his Jewish audience their answer remained negative but instead their persecution of Jews who did believe Jesus to be the Messiah continued the persecution was so severe it even personally involved the stoning to death of Stephen whose arguments about the Messiah the ruling elite could not answer their only recourse so they thought was to silence Stephen they arranged for false charges to be brought against him by men whom they paid to perjure themselves by swearing they had heard Stephen blaspheme

God the executioners would be none other than the chief priests the Sadducees and the ruling elite of Israel these austere respected leaders of Israel personally rained down the stones on the body of Stephen silencing him permanently was this Israel's final answer to the issues of Jesus of Nazareth it led to things really heating up in Jerusalem against other followers of Jesus and this was when many of them fled Jerusalem leaving the country of Israel for Damascus in Syria a neighboring country a hundred miles to the north and this was also when Saul headed for Damascus to hunt them down and bring them back to Israel to face charges so he who traveled to Damascus to arrest followers Jesus became one of Jesus via that experience en route with the resurrected Jesus his conversion and commission to the Gentiles as a brand new apostle will increase the already confusion of that critical first century even more and when any society in any time period is beset by confusion faulty assumptions are guaranteed to occur

It is true of the USA when confusion is present, and it was true in first century Israel, clearly seen. Coming up.

[73 : 20] Christianity Clarified, Volume 58, Track 21. A preview of upcoming Volume 59. A dramatic crossroads will occur in first century Israel that will have severe repercussions unto our present day.

Here, beginning with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 A.D. by the Romans, nothing will henceforth be the same.

We will see the earliest beginning stages of the Church, and how it will eventually become the Roman Catholic Church. It, too, will be formulated on a list of faulty assumptions that certainly did not appear to be faulty at the time.

What these were, and their impact and influence that continues to this day, will be explored. So, unless you are already a student of those days, and you know what's coming, you may prepare yourself to connect a lot of dots that may not have made much sense to you before, but they will now as we get into it.

And one can only envision a lot of mental light bulbs clicking on in the minds of many people as these issues unfold, both among Jews, Roman Catholics, and Protestants.

[74 : 47] Because it is both extremely enlightening and can be revolutionizing personally for those who grasp the content and the significance thereof.

So, thanks so much for being with us and joining us for What Lies Ahead. This is Pastor Marv Wiseman and the gracious folks at Grace Bible Church praying the Lord's richest blessing upon you.

Volume 59 is next. Thank you for joining us.