

Palisades Community Bible Church
Online Sunday School

Prophecies of Jesus' First, and Second Coming, Pt 3

August 22, 2020

As we continue in our third installment, let's look at some historical elements of the government under which the first century Jews in Jerusalem lived. Keep in mind, the Pharisees and Scribes knew of a promised Messiah, but they were not looking for the one who would take away the sin of the world...including their sin:

Isaiah 53:4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

Gosh! No wonder modern day Rabbis are forbidden from reading from Isaiah 53. They'd soon have a congregation of Christians! No, the Jewish rulers of the first century were looking for a powerful military leader, similar to those found in the Book of Judges. They anticipated, not what God had promised them, but what THEY wanted. They wanted deliverance from Roman rule – not forgiveness of their own sin.

Throughout history, human governments have been a long chain of one brutal monarch after another. Every exchange of rulership was bloody, violent, and resulted in the same thing: another brutal despot. Traditionally, only when the rulership is passed to heirs is the transfer of power peaceful.

When it comes human rulership, absolute power is paramount. Allowing any freedom or power to the citizenry invites unwelcomed influences upon the throne. The more power one has, the more power he can accumulate. The

monarch may spread his influence far and wide, but one swift dagger can turn the tables. All monarchs know this! Therefore, all monarchs worry about attempts to overpower their position and they surround themselves with their most loyal military specialists. They also ensure their legacies by raising up heirs to their thrones.

“When you come at the king, you best not miss.” Omar Little

In our last lesson, we looked at King Herod, the Great; an aging, very unhealthy, washed-up warrior who ruled with an iron fist. His greatest fear was a challenge to his throne. A successful overthrow would result in his own humiliation, torture and death. It would also prevent the “Herodian Tetrarchy,” the uninterrupted succession of rule by his heirs. When he learned of the promised “King of the Jews” from the Magi passing through his region, he obsessed over the threat even this baby might pose. He had no problem ordering the murder of every male child. Yet, even while he fretted over this promised King, there was a sinister plot being formed to murder Caesar, his superior.

One of William Shakespeare’s most notable works; “Julius Caesar,” is a tragedy based on the history of Rome. A group of senators realized that Caesar’s ambitions had driven him to the point of declaring himself Emperor of Rome. The assassins, led by Cassius and Brutus, decided that the only solution was assassination. The conspirators used flattery and appeals to Caesar’s ego to lure him into the capitol building. Once inside, they surrounded him, stabbed him to death, and washed their hands in his blood.

So it has gone for thousands of years; one despot just leads to another. No wonder monarchs are so insecure. Oh, you might fantasize about being king, but think of the number of ‘knives’ that would be pointing your way every second of the day. No wonder the Roman rulers made such public displays of punishing and torturing all who would defy their authority! If we were living in first century Jerusalem, we would frequently witness the public floggings, dismemberments, mutilations and executions of ‘criminals.’

Reserved for the worst offenders, the cross was not an execution device. It has long been acknowledged as the most horrendous form of torture. It did not kill its victim, but it inflicted the maximum degree of suffering without causing death. Death was the only mercy afforded victims of the cross. If you are a Christian, you

have learned what happens, physically, to those who experienced it. It is unimaginable suffering. Roman leaders used this device, publicly, because it demonstrated what would happen to anyone who might challenge their authority.

If you think this is only an ancient practice, you'd be very wrong. Just over the southern Texas/Mexico border is a highway overpass from which defectors of drug cartels are hung for all to see. Public floggings, dismemberments and executions are regular occurrences in many Muslim countries. American justice is the exception, not the rule!

(By the way, Herod the Great died in 4 BC. His kingdom was divided between three sons and a daughter. Herod Archelaus ruled the region surrounding Jerusalem, from Samaria to the north, to Judea in the south between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. It was this ruler to whom Pontius Pilate sent Jesus for additional examination. Herod A. returned Jesus to Pilate having found '...no fault in him.')

So, what do you think those in first century Jerusalem thought when Jesus said to his would-be followers: **Luke 9:23 Then Jesus said to all of them, "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me."**?

Little did they realize what today's Christians understand – that Jesus was illustrating the most magnificent aspect of God's character: unearned forgiveness and unmerited grace. This had never existed in human government. Even amongst the Jewish Priests and leaders, it was not shown. Yet, the cross became the place where grace and mercy meet.

Psalm 85: 9 Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, that His glory may dwell in our land. 10 Loving devotion and faithfulness have joined together; righteousness and peace have kissed. 11 Faithfulness sprouts from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven.

Where else is the guilty shown unjust forgiveness? Where else is the undeserving given the greatest gift imaginable? Where else?

It could only come through the unjust death of a truly innocent and pure son of God. Had there been any sin, any fault, any guile, in Jesus, his death would have

been just another human tragedy. And, Christianity would be just one more false religion.

So far, we have studied the prophecies of Jesus' birth, and His teachings. Now, let's examine the ancient prophecies that foretold His death and Resurrection, and their fulfillment in the New Testament. The death and resurrection of Christ are the most significant events in human history. It's no surprise that there would be plenty of Old Testament prophecies pointing to this remarkable event.

Prophecies of Jesus' Death and Resurrection:

29. Christ will be our Passover Lamb Prophecy:

"Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, 'Go at once and select the animals for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe.

'None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning. When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.

'Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. When you enter the land that the Lord will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. And when your children ask you, "What does this ceremony mean to you?" then tell them, "It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians." Then the people bowed down and worshiped" (Exodus 12:21–27).

Fulfillment:

"Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

30. Like the Passover Lamb, none of the Christ's bones will be broken Prophecy:

"It must be eaten inside the house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones" (Exodus 12:46).

Fulfillment:

"Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: 'Not one of his bones will be broken'" (John 19:31–36)

31. The Messiah's blood will be spilled for atonement Prophecy:

"For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life" (Leviticus 17:11).

Fulfillment:

"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28).

32. Jesus will be lifted up, and everyone who looks on Him will live Prophecy:

"So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived" (Numbers 21:9).

Fulfillment:

"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him." "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the

world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son" (John 3:14–18).

33. Christ's resurrection prophesied Prophecy:

"Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" (Job 19:23–27)

Fulfillment:

"Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned" (John 5:24–29).

34. The Messiah would be forsaken Prophecy:

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?" (Psalm 22:1)

Fulfillment:

"About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' (which means 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?')" (Matthew 27:46).

35. The Messiah would be scorned Prophecy:

"He trusts in the Lord,' they say, 'let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him'" (Psalm 22:8).

Fulfillment:

"He saved others,' they said, 'but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, "I am the Son of God"" (Matthew 27:42–43).

36. The Messiah's suffering would include thirst Prophecy:

"My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death" (Psalm 22:15).

Fulfillment:

"Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, 'I am thirsty'" (John 19:28).

37. They would pierce Christ's hands and feet Prophecy:

"Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet" (Psalm 22:16).

Fulfillment:

"These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: 'Not one of his bones will be broken,' and, as another scripture says, 'They will look on the one they have pierced'" (John 19:36–37).

38. They would cast lots for Jesus's clothing Prophecy:

"They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment" (Psalm 22:18).

Fulfillment:

"When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

'Let's not tear it,' they said to one another. 'Let's decide by lot who will get it.'
"This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, 'They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.' "So this is what the soldiers did" (John 19:23–24).

39. The Messiah will cry, "Into your hands I commit my Spirit" Prophecy
(Remember, Jesus did not die at the hand of man, He gave up His spirit willingly):

"Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me, Lord, my faithful God" (Psalm 31:5).

Fulfillment:

"Jesus called out with a loud voice, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.'
When he had said this, he breathed his last" (Luke 23:46).

40. Everyone will abandon the Messiah Prophecy:

"Because of all my enemies, I am the utter contempt of my neighbors and an object of dread to my closest friends—those who see me on the street flee from me" (Psalm 31:11).

Fulfillment:

"Then everyone deserted him and fled" (Mark 14:50).

41. They will plot to kill God's anointed Prophecy:

"For I hear many whispering; 'Terror on every side!' They conspire against me and plot to take my life" (Psalm 31:13).

Fulfillment:

"Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people made their plans how to have Jesus executed" (Matthew 27:1).

42. The Messiah will be quiet before his accusers Prophecy:

"Those who want to kill me set their traps, those who would harm me talk of my ruin; all day long they scheme and lie. I am like the deaf, who cannot hear, like the mute, who cannot speak" (Psalm 38:12–13)

Fulfillment:

"When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, 'Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?' But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor" (Matthew 27:12–14).

Remember the illustration that math class made of the probability of a single person fulfilling just 8 of the prophecies of Jesus? Yet, we are only up to number 42 of our PARTIAL list of 55! I pray that this study is strengthening your faith, as well as intensifying your resolve to share Christ with those around you. Even sharing these amazing prophecies with other believers can have a powerful effect on THEIR faith! Until next time, walk in the Lord today.

God, you made the cross the place where grace and mercy meet!

We struggle to comprehend.

We humble ourselves before your amazing love.

Amen