***An Intercalation  
  
Colossians 1:15-20  
  
COL-133***

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Our subject is "Hymn in Honor of Christ," number 23 in Colossians 1:15-20.

The apostle Paul reminds the Colossian Christians, who had some very bad false doctrine brought to them – He reminds them in Colossians 1:18 that they are a unique species of human beings: "And He, Christ, is also Head of the body, the church." This is a very dramatic statement, and a defining statement, as Paul is trying to identify Jesus Christ for the unique and preeminent Person that He is in the universe. Believers today, unlike in the past, are members of the body of Christ with the Lord as their Head. This special body of believers is called the church. The church body is closely related to the Lord Jesus Christ as the head is to the human body. It is the command center.

Paul points out the distinctive relationship of the Colossian Christians to the God-Man Jesus Christ in order to exalt the Lord as the Preeminent One in the universe. This very same person is Who our society, in every way, degrades, belittles, and blows off as a triviality that has no significance in our society and we are paying the price consequently. But the Word of God exalts Him for Who He is, the God-Man, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul points out the distinctive relationship of Christians to the Lord. They have this relationship in a very intimate way with the very Son of God. The Jews, under Judaism, never shared the glory and the grace of God. Never. Never. They had grace, but they did not live in the freedoms of grace. They were rule-keepers – 613 of them. They were ritualistic. They had a system that demonstrated that they could not make it into heaven, and that they were spiritual failures, and incompetent and unable to do anything. The whole system was extremely depressing, and they went through it because this is what God was teaching them in that particular era of human history.

The Jews, under Judaism, never enjoyed what we Christians enjoy. Judaism was a try-to-do-what-is-right system on your own efforts so that you'll be blessed, While Christianity is a system of enablement to do right through doctrine and the indwelling part of the Holy Spirit, because we already all blessings allotted to us in heavenly places, Paul says. Judaism and Christianity have no connection at all, even though most churches, denominations, and Christians keep imposing the Mosaic Law, the Jewish lifestyle, and various elements into Christianity.

**Israel vs. the Church**

The reformers were a great bunch of men. They achieved enormous things. But one thing that never got straightened out was the prophetic Scriptures. They never caught the relationship between Israel and the church, and they botched it. Understandably, they didn't live long enough. They were fighting the battle of salvation, and other things, and their followers did not grasp the key feature of the reformers, and that is Sola Scriptura. The Word of God alone is the guide. And their followers should have come through on the same basis and said, "Now we will study the Scriptures, and we'll put together, and we'll build on what our founders had. And instead they froze themselves back there in the reformation, and they blew it in relating Israel to the church. They have no connection whatsoever.

The church began on the basis of a special work of God. The literal interpretation of the Bible prevents the confusion of Israel and the church. The blessings; the honor; and, the power that belong only to Christians, as the royal family of God, cannot be contaminated as long as you stay with literal interpretation. And we've already shown you how Origen messed the thing up. And then Augustine finally finished it off with amillennialism, and later, post-millennialism. We showed you all that complete corruption of what, for 250 years, the early church writers talked about: Christ coming to this earth, ruling in a Millennial Jewish Kingdom with the church as the bride of Christ reigning. Nobody ever thought of anything else until they decided the words of the Bible don't really mean what they say. The truth is hidden underneath the words.

**The Church**

Well, the church began on Pentecost. It ends at the rapture when we're all caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Then God will return to finish His covenant promises to Israel. Yes, Israel has covenant promises. Gentiles don't. Christians don't. But yes, Jews, under Judaism, have covenant promises. In the Millennial Kingdom of Christ here on this earth, the Jews will realize the fulfillment of all those promises, based, first of all, on the Abrahamic Covenant, then expanded with the subsequent three covenants: relative to the land, the Palestinian Covenant; relative to the kingdom, the Davidic Covenant; and, relative to the new birth and the spiritual life, the New Covenant.

Since Israel and the church are separate divine program, clearly delineated everywhere in Scripture, the Christians have no part in these covenants with Israel. They belonged to Israel. Nobody in the Bible ever said they no longer belonged to Israel. Nobody in the Bible ever said that they weren't in effect. But it was very clear that they were set aside and they were in abeyance now. They belong to Israel. That's all. Nobody else. And it is only human theology that has imposed this upon Christianity. Israel and the church are totally separate.

Now, we gentiles are the beneficiaries indeed of the salvation that has come through Israel, through the line of Abraham. And that's why Paul says that we are spiritual children of Abraham. We are not physical children of Abraham. A Jew had great promises from God under those covenant blessings. The male could not enjoy those until he went through, on the eighth day, the rite of circumcision. Then he came into the covenant promises. Until then, he did not have those. Did that mean that he went to heaven? No. Paul made it very clear in the book of Romans that, at that point, the Jew made a terrible mistake. He thought that the ritual equated salvation.

Then Paul gets very heavy-handed in the Greek. And he says, "If cutting off a piece of the flesh is going to get you to heaven, why not take the whole organ off, and do a good job?" That is very rough language there. And Paul says, "I just want to show you what a fool you are to think that a ritual such as circumcision is going to take you to heaven. Well, it did give them covenant promise, but they had to believe personally. What did Abraham do? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for absolute righteousness. What did he believe? He believed that God told him, "I'm going to send you a Messiah Savior through the line of your people, and He will cover your sins." Abraham said, "I believe it." That's what every Jew had to do. Those who did not, were not saved, though they had the covenant promises. They had the privileges that pertained to the commonwealth of Israel.

So, you must keep those totally distinct, or you will really gum up what your place is in the royal family of God in the church age. We Gentiles are not physically related. We are spiritually related, but that's it. Once the rejection of Christ the Messiah became evident and official, then Jesus, I showed you, turned from Israel; He crossed over out of the land into gentile territory at Caesarea Philippi; and, He announced that he was going to do something brand new: "I'm going to build my 'ekklesia.' The disciples look puzzled at one another: "You're going to build your church? What does that mean?" They never read about that in the Old Testament because it's not there. They never heard about that because he wasn't dealing with that. He had come for the mission promised by the prophets. He came to set up the kingdom on this earth. And because they rejected it, Israel's program had to be set aside and put in abeyance. And then Christ said, "I'm going to do something brand new, and you are going to be the foundation of it – you the apostles." And the program of the church was announced.

Israel's program as a nation was put on hold. Early in Christianity, all this became perverted with Judaism. Then it became amalgamated with Nimrod's religion from the Tower of Babel under the Roman Catholic Church system. And that's why you have so many things that Nimrod did, like a perversion of the baptism ritual; the age and the person and the purpose eating your God; and, drinking your God's blood into the Roman Catholic Mass – all of these things which we have gone over in detail, that the historical records show us how, gradually, all this was twisted all out of shape. And suddenly, the whole glory of being part of "Christ as my Head; I His body; I am in Christ; and, all that that means – what glory had turned to delusion. That's why Paul said, if I'm going to talk to you about Jesus Christ, and I am, there has been a great deal of twisting and deception. I have to begin by talking to you about this issue of the body of Christ, the church – this great and wonderful thing, which God has put together as a distinction from the Old Testament era.

So, the problem that faced the prophets and the apostles was that the Old Testament never referred for one moment to the church. There was not the slightest reference to it at all. And as I've already shown you, the church was called a mystery. And the mystery was not something you don't understand. It was a secret. It was a secret that was not revealed in the Old Testament, but then it was revealed in the New Testament. And as we went through the passage in 1 Peter, it said the prophets were very confused, because it said that Christ was going to come as a suffering Lamb. And Christ was going to come as the conquering lion of the tribe of Judah. How can that be? Those are two contradictory statements. You can't come in both those lights.

So, they searched; they studied; and, they tried to find out how these things could be related to them. And the result was that they never could put it together. Something was seriously out of whack in all of this.

Well, what they had discovered in time, when the church age came, was that there were two comings: a first; and, a second. The first time, He did come as the suffering Lamb of God. The Jews rejected Him. The second time, He will come as the conquering line of the tribe of Judah. But when they stood and looked at this, their line of sight saw these together. That's why they were confused. They didn't realize that here was the church age in between. It had nothing to do with Israel here. It had nothing to do with Israel there. That was the answer two advents.

**An Intercalation**

Now, Old Testament prophecy deals only with Israel, so the church is unrevealed. The church is an intercalation. That's a word that means it is thrust in here. It is inserted. And an intercalation in the dictionary tells you that it's got nothing to do with what came before, and has nothing to do with what comes after. It is totally unrelated at either end. It is just inserted. And that's what God was planning to do once Christ was officially rejected. When he was out – and the final rejection, of course, was Palm Sunday. Then He turned to the full new operation of the program of the church.

Think for a moment. If the church is a full blossom of Israel, and not the bud, then every legalistic feature of Judaism may be imposed upon the local church believers today. Got it? If the church is simply the full blossom of Israel, and Israel is a foundation, and the church is connected and blossomed (it's the full flower), then everything that is true of Israel has to be true of the church. That's why you can sock it to the Christian to tithe instead of grace giving. That's why you can sock it to the Christian to go to church, and stand in front of an altar and do rituals, because that's what they did under the Old Testament system. This is why you can do all the things that you do under Judaism: holy days; and, priests. All of this would be imposed upon the church. And yet, that's not the case at all. They're totally separate.

Yet, what do most churches do today? They do exactly that. They look into the Old Testament, and they pick out as if it had something to do with the church, and they stick all this stuff into the church age. They've got it completely diluted so that the average Christian does not know his privileges; his right; and his honor as part of the body of Christ. And that is what the whole point of Paul's statement here is: we are the body of Christ.

Okay, let's go to Romans 16:25-26. Paul is coming to the end of this book. Paul shuts down this book (this great dissertation) on how to go to heaven. He says, "Now to Him (Christ), Who is able to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery (of the secret) which has been kept secret for long ages past, but is now manifested. And by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all nations, leading to the obedience of the faith." There it is. Paul says, "Now let me give a closing summary of what I've told you. I've been telling you how to become a member of the body of Christ: how to get into the church through salvation based upon a grace gift from God." And the mystery that he is referring to is not salvation. People of the Old Testament knew they were going to be saved. People of the Old Testament knew that that was in store for them. It is the specific relationship that these Christians have to Christ.

Now, the church itself in the New Testament is not called a mystery. That's important. The church itself is not, but all the details about the church that distinguish it from Israel – those things are called a mystery. Here is Ephesians 3:1 "For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus, for the sake of you gentiles, if indeed you have heard of the stewardship (or the King James Bible translated this word with the word 'dispensation' or 'lifestyle' – that's what this Greek word means: this is where we get the word "dispensation" – it's the lifestyle: it's the order of arrangements of God: "For indeed you've heard of the order of arrangements (the lifestyle) of God's grace, which was given to me for you." He was the prime instrument of revealing church-age doctrine: "That by revelation there was made known to me the mystery as I wrote before in brief." What's the mystery? All these details about a new body of believers called the church. Judaism was no mystery. All of that information about the Mosaic system – that was no mystery. That was no secret. This was a secret. Everybody knew about the Old Testament covenants. Everybody knew what they meant. Everybody knew where the nation was going. Then when Christ came to fulfill what they knew, they rejected Him.

Ephesians 3:4: "And by referring to this, when you read, you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ." What is the mystery of Christ? What He announced when he crossed over to Caesarea Philippi on gentile territory: "I will build My church." Five grammatical words – a future thing which Christ was going to do: "Which, in other generations, was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets and Spirit." Nobody knew about this idea of the church before: "To be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel." Did the gentiles know in the Old Testament that they were destined for salvation? You betcha they did. Israel didn't do very well at that, but the gentiles knew they were going to be the beneficiaries of salvation through the Jews.

What they did not know was that they were going to become part of a new body of believers, a new species of human beings called the church, where Jews and Gentiles are all going to be in the same body. That was unthinkable. And if you don't grasp that, then you've lost everything that is your honor and your place in the program of God, and the power of the Word of God, and the power of the Spirit of God, because you're still groveling around on human effort in the Old Testament system.

Ephesians 3:7: "Of which I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me, according to the working of His power. To me, the very least of all the saints, this grace was given: to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ." Three years in the Arabian Desert, Jesus Christ taught him. He taught him the details of the doctrine of the church. And He said, "Paul, all hell is going to break loose. The devil is going to try to bring Judaism into Christianity. He's going to get people all confused with religious rituals instead of the reality of a relationship with God. But here's the fact, and I want you to proclaim the grace principles of the church age.

Ephesians 3:9-12: "And to bring to light what is the administration (that's another translation of the Greek word for 'dispensation') of the mystery, which for ages has been hidden to God, Who created all things, in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and authorities in heavenly places." This was something very wonderful done by God.

Ephesians 3:11: "This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which he carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord." Did God the Father know that when Christ came to set up the kingdom for Israel, and to fulfill the covenant promises, that they were going to reject the Son? Yes, He knew. And I won't get into the relationship of the sovereignty of God making that happen, but He knew. And in the plan of God, created in eternity past, when they rejected, the Godhead said, "We will then create a new species of human being, directly related to Christ," and the details of which we will get to shortly in the future (in a few weeks) – that a relationship that no other believer on the face of the earth has ever had before. It is yours, and yours alone, and it gives you an access and a powerful way of life that is just beyond measure of anything you could imagine. The Jew knew nothing about it.

Some of you are beginning to get the hang of it, when I tell you of intuitive response to the leading of the Spirit of God. I've been bombarded with it this week, because I'm on a high roll of up-high intensity of getting ready for camp; resolving problems; finding things that need to be found; and, putting things together. And as long as I stay sensitive to the leading of the Spirit of God, the problems are being solved. Zip, zip, zip, zip, zip. There is no credit to me. The Jew never experienced that. That's what it means to stay in temporal fellowship, with known sins confessed, and feeding upon the doctrines of the church age. You become a powerful instrument in the Word of God.

What happens is that when you stand up for this, you'll be resisted, but some will believe you. I was very humbled recently about a week or so ago. A lady said, "Dr. Danish, this is what you said." And it was just a simple statement of doctrinal truth that belongs to the church age. As a Jew, I couldn't have said that to her, but in response to what I said, she said that it brought the sunshine in my soul. That's what we're talking about.

So, the details about the church are what are called the mystery. First of all, as we see here, the Jews and Gentiles are going to be drawing together into one new body as equals. This body is called the church. Ephesians 1:22-23: "And He put all things in subjection under His feet (that is, God the Father to God the Son) and gave Him as Head over all things to the church (the principle that Paul is enunciating in Colossians) which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." The church is being filled by one; namely, Christ.

Now, here's a second fact which is called a mystery: that every believer is going to be permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Now, you can go ahead and use the rest of your life searching the Old Testament Scripture under Judaism, and you will never find a single passage which suggests that the Holy Spirit comes into a believer at the point of salvation, and remains constantly with him until he goes to heaven. You'll never find it. So don't tell me that Israel and the church are the same thing, or that they have some relationship. Did the Spirit of God ever indwell a person in the Old Testament? That doesn't mean that He's not saved. Being regenerated is one thing. That's being made spiritually alive. But being indwelt for power and guidance, that's something else. Did that ever happen to a Jew? Yes.

For example, it happened to the men who built the temple. The Bible says in the Spirit of God came and dwelt upon them. He gave them the skills to build that magnificent temple. Then what does it say? It left them. This happened repeatedly. Some saint is raised up: "I'm going to do something with you;" the Spirit of God moves into that person; does the job; and, leaves the person. Now, here you have this magnificent declaration. It's a mystery, because nobody ever even dreamed about such a thing – that Christ would indwell every believer for fellowship?

Another thing that was a mystery was the fact that the church is related to Christ as His bride. Ephesians 5:22-23: "Wives, be subject to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the Head of the church: He Himself being the savior of the body." This is an unbelievable Scripture. How was Israel related to God? As His wife. Always Israel is the wife: the unfaithful wife. But you get to the New Testament, and here the church is related as the pure unsullied bride. That is how close we are to Jesus Christ. A bride to her bridegroom. That was a mystery that nobody ever dreamed of in the Old Testament. They wouldn't have presumed that.

Then there's another thing. There's this thing of Christians being caught up out of the world to meet the God-Man Jesus Christ in the air. We refer to it from the Latin word, "the catching way" – the "rapture." The rapture means the catching way. There is nothing like that in the Old Testament. That was a secret. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52. "Behold I tell you a secret, we shall not all sleep" (that's Christian terminology that every Christian will not die – some will not die) but we shall all be changed." But every Christian is going to be given a glorified body, some without having to die: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpets will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed." This is further expanded in 1 Thessalonians 4, as you know – that the Christians in the grave come out first, then we who are alive, our bodies are then transformed into the bodies of Christ, and altogether we go up to meet Christ in the air. You can go from one end of the Old Testament to the other, and you won't find a whisper of such an event in human history with any group of people, let alone the Jews. This wasn't in the cards for them. But all of a sudden, He has got a new species of human beings called the church, related to Christ as a bride to her husband, and who will be caught up to meet the Son of God in the air.

We began as a church on Pentecost. We will end on the day of the rapture when the last believer who belongs into the body of Christ has been brought in. Now none of these internal realities are ever revealed in the Old Testament. The Jews only were promised external realities. We're going to give you a King. We're going to give you a throne. We're going to give you prosperity. We're going to give you a land. We're going to give you a good life. There was never any internal great relationship to God for them. That's why they were helpless. That's why the apostle Paul writes Roman 7. He has his head in his hand there, in that Roman prison cell, as he's dictating this letter. And he says, "Oh God, what am I going to do? What am I going to do with this body of sin? What a helpless creature I am. God, I don't want to do this, but that's what I do. God, I want to do this that's right, but I don't do that." And he's going through his own experience.

That's what the Jew was doing all the time. And then he gets to chapter 8, and he says, "Thank God." What's the answer? The Spirit of God – church-age power through an indwelling Holy Spirit, and the presence of Christ Himself. And these are permanent relationships.

So, the Jews looked for the Messiah Savior, but these were all external manifestations. Then came the church age. Let's read it, this time in 1 Peter 1:10-11. This puts it all into perspective. Peter says, "As to this salvation (which he's been describing – grace salvation), the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry." What were the prophets confused about? What were they trying to find out? "Seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating, as He predicted the suffering of Christ and the glories to follow." Isn't that something? The sufferings of Christ, and the glories to follow. The prophets said: "That is contradictory. They're mutually exclusive. How can that be?" Here it is: "the sufferings of Christ and the glories of Christ." Here, He comes as a defeated Lamb, under the hands of paying for our sins. Here, He comes as the victorious Lion of the tribe of Judah. And in between is the church age. They didn't have a clue concerning that. That's why Peter says that they were confused. Then Peter goes on and says, "But we know. It's not contradictory. We know what has been done."

Now, let me just show you a couple places how, in the Old Testament, they ran into the church. The prophet is carrying on a period of historical time, and he runs smack dab against the church. But he doesn't know that the church is there. But he runs smack dab into this, and what does he do? The Spirit of God leaps immediately over to the Millennial Kingdom. It goes Zip! Into the tribulation. And Zip! Into the Millennial Kingdom, and he doesn't realize that these two are not related. But there are indications in the text itself that the Spirit of God was saying, "Whoop, we have to put a parenthesis here. We gave to leave an opening here, because later we're going to put the church in." The church age is not mentioned in the Old Testament or the gospels, except in the gospels, it's mentioned in Matthew 16:18, where He said, "I'm going to build My church." And then the whole gospel of John is written to the church. It's the church gospel book. In John 13–17, the upper room discourse is all pure church doctrine. Whereas Matthew – what is Matthew? Matthew is the last book of the Old Testament. It is fulfilling all that the prophets said. Matthew is to the Jews, and it shows how they simply blew the whole thing. And then God turned from them.

**490 Years**

So, until the time of Christ's ministry on earth, all of this was a complete mystery. When they came to an Old Testament passage about the church, which was built on the death; burial; resurrection; and, the ascension of Christ, it just stops, and leaps over the tribulation, and goes over to the millennium. But Israel was given a timetable. I'll show you one of those. Daniel said, in Daniel 9:24-27, that the 70 years of captivity were almost up: "Now God, how long are you going to deal with us before everything you promised in the Abrahamic Covenant to the Jews will be fulfilled, and then You expanded it in subsequent covenants." The angel that was brought sent, perhaps, Gabriel. He fought with a demon out in space for three weeks. He wouldn't let him through. They didn't want Daniel to give this timetable, because once we had this timetable, we can take revelation and make it all fit together. And finally, Michael, the archangel said, "God gave me the orders," because angels have very military ranks of power. He says, "Go down there and break the bottleneck. Let that angel get through."

Then He said, "Now finally I have come, and I'm able to bring you the message. Here's the message: 70 weeks have been decreed for your people (that is, 70 weeks of years – 490 years). And your holy city, to the finish of transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place." We can't go into details on this. But all this is saying is: "All the covenants will be fulfilled in 490 years." Daniel says, "Wonderful. That's all the history that's left with the Jewish people?" God says, "Right? 490 years. So, you are to know and discern that, from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah, the Prince will be 7 weeks and 62 weeks." Seven weeks is 49 years. They're rebuilding. They began rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, and so on. It's going to start when the order is decreed to rebuild Jerusalem. That day we know exactly in history. It was Artaxerxes, the Syrian king, in 445 B.C. that said, "Go back and rebuild the city." And the prophetic clock of 490 years started ticking. The chronologists have it to the very day.

Then he breaks down how there's going to be 7 weeks (that is, 49 years) for this to happen. And for 62 weeks, will be built the plaza, moat, and so on. Then after 62 weeks, something happened: The Messiah is cut off, and has nothing." That's only 483 years so far. After 483 years, the Messiah's going to be cut off – Palm Sunday, to the very day, concluded the 483rd year from the time that Artaxerxes issued the order to rebuild, and the Messiah was cut off; that is, He was rejected.

Now the clock stops. Nothing more is going to happen with Israel. Seven years are unfulfilled, and God does not lie, and He's very precise. So, all of a sudden, he's cut off. The last seven years are yet future. So, what happens between year 483 and 484? Bingo! The church age – now 2,000 years. But Israel still has seven years to go of its program. Where's that coming? It's going to come seven years before the coming of Christ the second time. This is a seven-year span, and here's the rapture of the church to meet the Lord in the air. This is the seven years that is going to fill out Daniel's timetable. This is the beauty of this timetable. We know exactly what is going on in the historical scene. God is going to give them the 490 years, with seven to go. And that's what Revelation describes. That's where revelation is. That's that seven years. Once we know the timetable, then we see how all the seals, and the trumpets, and the vials of curses of God, and the discipline of God fit into the picture.

Now, here's one that is extremely impressive. I hope you have your Bible's with you, because you're going to have to hold your finger in here. Turn to Isaiah 62:1-2. And at the same time, go over to the gospel of Luke 4:20. First, let's start at Luke 4:16. Jesus returns to His hometown of Nazareth. On the Sabbath day, He goes to the synagogue. They hand Him the scroll to read the Scripture and the comment. That's how they did it. Jesus turns to Isaiah 61:1-2. Here, we have it quoted in Luke 4:16-19. I want you to read in Luke 4:16-20 first: "And He came to Nazareth, where he'd been brought up, and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and He stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind: to set free those who are downtrodden; to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.' And He closed the book; gave it back to the attendant; and, sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him." Those eyes were not only fixed upon Him. People were looking at one another because the Jews knew the Scriptures, and they looked at one another and said, "Did you see what He did?" They knew what was written there in Isaiah, and they were startled when He stopped where He did. Luke 4:16: "And He began to say to them, "Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." That in itself was quite a bombshell.

Jesus said, "I have read to you a portion of Scripture from Isaiah, and this day, in Me, this Scripture has been fulfilled." Now, come back over to Isaiah 61:1-2. This is where Jesus is reading from, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon Me because the Lord has anointed Me to bring good news to the afflicted. And He sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; and, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord, *comma,* "and the day of vengeance of our God." What startled them was that He quit in the middle of a sentence. Well, why would He do that? Why would the Son of God handle the Word of God like that? He stopped in the middle of the sentence at that comma< because the last part of that sentence, "the day of the vengeance of our God." He could not say that: "This day has the Scripture been fulfilled in your eyes and your hearing." The first part, "The year of the Lord," He could say: "This has been fulfilled." The second part, "The day of vengeance," He could not say that that had happened. "The favorable year of the Lord" is what He was doing in proclaiming the gospel. The rest of verse 2: "the favorable year of the Lord is the day of the vengeance of our God" – that has to do with the Second Coming. So, here, again in Scripture, this was unbeknownst to them, because it was secret then. The church was a secret. Here, lo and behold, a gap was left. And Jesus indicated that. Now we understand it. Luke 4:19 refers to the favorable year of the Lord, which dealt with the First Advent. Jesus indicated a gap between the favorable year and the day of the vengeance into which the church age was inserted.

Now, anybody who read this in Isaiah 61:1-2, as the Jews did – they didn't see the gap, because this was a secret from them. That's why they were surprised that Jesus, Who knew the secret, could stop there and say, "This much of this Scripture has been fulfilled. The rest is going to have to wait until something you don't know about, 2,000 years of the church age, which has nothing to do with you Jews, nothing to do with Judaism. It's a whole brand new ballgame of a separate group of people that God is creating.

Not one part of what comes after the comma in Isaiah 61:2 has yet to be fulfilled to this day. It will be fulfilled after the church age, during the seven years of Daniel's tribulation timetable. That's amazing.

Daniel 9:26: "Then, after 62 weeks, the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come (from the revived Roman empire, which is enforced today) destroy the city and the sanctuary, and its end will come with a flood (that was done by Titus in 70 A.D.), even to the end there will be war, desolations are determined, and will make a firm covenant with the many for one week (that's the tribulation week – the antichrist's covenant with the Jews). In the middle of the week, he'll put a stop to the sacrifice in grain offerings, and on the wing of abominations will come one who will make desolate even until the complete destruction – one that his decree is poured out on the one who makes desolate." We can't go into the details, but what this Scripture is predicting is the rejection of Christ the Messiah. That's Daniel 9:26. He will be rejected. And the Jews will have their nation destroyed, which is what the Romans did. Daniel 9:27 tells the rule of the antichrist during the tribulation seven-year period. Now, when you read that, it looks like they come one after another – verse 27 goes right after verse 26. No. Between verses 26 and 27 is the whole 2,000-year church age.

Again and again in the Old Testament, looking at it from our point of view, knowing what the schedule is, knowing the difference between Israel and the church, we see exactly how room was made for this to be inserted.

Now, the real significance of all this is: "How am I different than the Jew? What do I really have that the Jew does not have?" And we shall look into that next time. And then you will see what a travesty it is, and what a horrendous, blasphemous travesty it is to be sucking in things from the loser system of Judaism into Christianity, and to be pretending that Christianity is simply the residual effects of Judaism. It's got nothing to do with it. It's a whole new ballgame, and you, as royal members of the family of God, are the winners in that. Don't ever let anybody deny you that which is your right, as being the special people of God. If people want to be ritualistic, let them be.

For you, there's something greater. And why are churches playing this old, emotional game today. Because they don't know this. They don't know doctrine. That's why they're playing on your emotions. That's why they're playing on your feelings. And that's why they have made fools of the people of God. You don't have to be a fool.

Dear God, we thank You for Your Word, and for Your incisive precision.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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