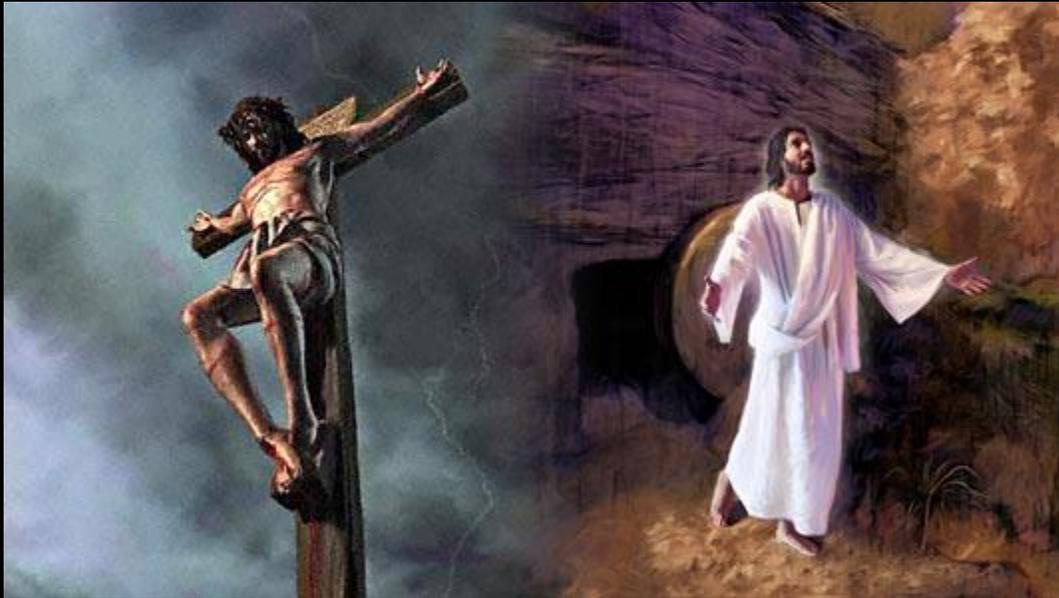


BEHOLD, THE MESSIAH

(part one)



Who has believed our message? asked Isaiah. The Messiah came to His people but they received Him not. He grew up before His Heavenly Father like a tender plant out of dry ground- loved and accepted only by few. His own betrayed Him for a sum of thirty shekels. Judas, the betrayer and one of His disciples, taking charge of a band of soldiers and some guards of the high priests and Pharisees, delivered Messiah with a kiss to the Jewish authorities. Judas was not an enemy who taunted Him; nor was not one who hated Him; but it was a man of His equal, His companion and one of His familiar friends; one who ate with Him. His own people delivered Him to the Roman government with insistence and urgency, with loud cries demanding Governor Pilate to crucify Him.

After His last supper on earth, having spent His last hours privately with His disciples sharing His last words and preparing them for what was to come, the Messiah went to a special garden, which was His custom to do. Gethsemane was His place of prayer. A quiet and isolated place away from all the noises of the crowd. That night, however, was His last visit to that garden. He had come to that garden this time to confront the reality of the plenitude of the time of His trials and ultimately death by crucifixion. There He prayed in agony more earnestly and

intently, for the stress of the moment caused His sweat to become like great clots of blood dropping down upon the ground. He prayed: Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done. An angel appeared to Him from heaven to strengthen Him at that time. Moments later a crowd led by His betrayer showed up. They came out with swords and clubs as if He were a robber. They were the chief priests and captains of the temple and the elders. They took Him first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was the high priest. Then He was bound and taken to the house of the high priest. So, it started the series of His unjust and illegal trials.

The Jewish authority constantly sought testimony against Him with a view of condemning and putting Him to death. Then they spat on Him, blindfolded and struck Him with their fists; the guards received Him with blows and slapped Him. And that was how the Messiah spent the night of His betrayal. Early the next morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes, and the whole council bounded Him and handed him over to Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, to face His third trial. Pilate, after examining Him, and being aware that it was by envy that the chief priests had delivered Him up, stated his verdict not guilty. He sent Him to Herod for the fourth trial when he found out that YAHSHUA was from Herod's jurisdiction. Herod asked Him many questions, but He made no reply. Then Herod with his soldiers, treated Him with contempt and scoffed at and ridiculed Him; then, dressing Him up in bright and gorgeous apparel, he sent Him back to Pilate, for he too had found Him not guilty. Pilate then gave YAHSHUA to his centurion to be chastised, with the plan to release Him. But the crowd raising their voices in a deep cry, said, Away with this Man! Pilate, not being able to prevail over the Jewish demand, gave them what they asked.

Then Pilate took YAHSHUA and scourged Him with many blows. A hundred and twenty blows were applied in front and in back of His body, including His face. "Preparations for the scourging were carried out when the Prisoner was stripped of His clothing and His hands tied to a post above Jesus and is whipped with a flagrum. This is a short whip consisting of several heavy, leather thongs with two small balls of lead attached near the ends of each. The heavy whip is brought down with full force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back, and legs. At first, the thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continue, they cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues, producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and veins of the skin, and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels

in the underlying muscles. The small balls of lead first produce large, deep bruises which are broken open by subsequent blows. Finally, the skin of the back is hanging in long ribbons and the entire area is an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue. The Roman soldiers throw a robe across His shoulders, place a stick in His hand, and a crown made of branches covered with long thorns is pressed into His scalp. Again there is copious bleeding, the scalp being one of the most vascular areas of the body.”



The soldiers, having twisted together a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and threw a purple cloak around Him. They kept coming to Him and saying, Hail, King of the Jews! They struck Him with the palms of their hands. His face and His whole appearance were marred more than any man's, and His form beyond that of the sons of men; He had no form of comeliness, that we should look at Him, and no beauty that we should desire Him. After chastising Him, Pilate brought Him out saying, Behold, the Man! He was despised and rejected and forsaken by men, a Man of sorrows and pains, and acquainted with grief and sickness; and like One from Whom men hide their faces He was despised and we did not appreciate His worth or have any esteem for Him; He was oppressed, He was afflicted, He was submissive and opened not His mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth; by oppression and judgment He was taken away. Then the soldiers took YAHSHUA and led Him away; so He went out, bearing the cross to the spot called the place of the skull. There they crucified Him between two criminals as Isaiah foretold: and they assigned Him a grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in His death, although He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. An

inscription saying, This is King of the Jews was put above His head in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. The whole world represented by these languages were benefitted through His death, for His wounds were for the purpose to bring healing to mankind, so Isaiah prophesied: through all His stripes we are healed and made whole.

After the Romans finished crucifying Him they made sport of Him. But He prayed for them saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Those who passed by kept reviling Him and reproaching Him abusively in harsh and insolent language, wagging their heads and saying, You Who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, rescue yourself. The chief priests, with the scribes, made sport of Him to one another, saying, He rescued others; Himself He is unable to rescue; let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and trust Him! About the ninth hour (three o'clock), after having been hanging on the cross for six hours, Messiah cried with a loud voice saying, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Crying again with a loud voice, He gave up His spirit. The curtain of the sanctuary of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth shook and the rocks were split; the tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints were raised.

Over a thousand years, in the frame of time from King David to Messiah YAHSHUA, King David wrote Psalm twenty-two- "the Psalm of the cross." It starts with the words YAHSHUA uttered while on the cross: My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? The psalmist continues throughout the psalm bringing forth the prophecy about the Messiah's sufferings by saying, Why are You so far from helping me and from the words of my groaning?...Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have hedged me in; against me they opened their mouths wide like a ravening and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax; it is softened and melted down within me; my strength is dried up like a fragment of clay pottery; my tongue cleaves to my jaws...for [like a pack of] dogs they have encompassed me; a company of evildoers has encircled me, they pierced my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones; they gaze at me; they part my clothing among them and cast lots for my raiment. Messiah fulfilled these prophecies to the letter. He suffered spiritually and emotionally when His spirit was bruised; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our guilt and iniquities; the chastisement

[needed to bring] peace and well-being for us was upon Him, and by the stripes that wounded Him we are healed and made whole.

Will you reject such great salvation, my friend? You may think that the Romans together with the Jews were mean. But if you continue rejecting the Messiah's sacrifice for you, you are holding Messiah up to contempt and shame and public disgrace. And that is acting the same way as they did. While there is time and opportunity for you, receive Him and be saved!

Taken from Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19