

“Overlooked Signs ~ The Coming Messiah” (3.28.10)

The 2004 U.S. Women’s Olympic softball team...

- Utilized an unusual training technique to improve their hitting.
  - Mike Candrea the legendary softball coach (University of Arizona) had each woman on the U.S. Olympic team spend hours standing in a batting cage watching tennis balls flying out of a pitching machine @ 150 mph.
  - A little perspective might be helpful:
    - Only a few pitchers in Major League Baseball history have BEEN ABLE to throw baseballs faster than 100 mph.
    - So, 150 mph is an outrageous - speed ☺
- To make it more challenging for his Olympic squad ~ Coach Candrea marked each tennis ball with either a red or black number.
  - The coaches instructed the women to keep watching until they could discern the number & color on each tennis ball as it crossed the plate.
  - At first this seemed to be an impossible task.
  - But after months of training, most women on the team had re-trained their eyes to be able to read those numbers.
- The GOLD MEDAL results were pretty astounding:
  - One of the outcomes was that at the Olympic tournament, the softballs appeared to be coming across the plate as slow lobs for the U.S. team.
  - The U.S. team outscored their opponents 51 – 1 in 9 games & didn’t allow a single run until the (6<sup>th</sup>) inning of its final game!

Simply re-training their eyes + adjusting their expectations on the speed of the pitch allowed our U.S. team to literally crush the ball in game time!

Sometimes we miss important matters because we fail to adjust our expectations on a given subject.

It just so happens that God’s chosen people, Israel, actually missed the Messiah the 1st time around b/c of predetermined expectations.

I. Messianic Profile (this is how it happened)

A. The Bible was very specific in what to expect in regards to the “coming Messiah.” The Messianic profile said He would be...

- KING that would preside over the entire world!

Psalm 2: 7 – 9, “I will tell the decree of the Lord: He said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. I will make the nations your heritage, & the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, & dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

- The “coming Messiah” would SUBDUE Israel’s enemies!

Psalm 110: 1, “...the Lord says to my Lord; sit @ my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”

- The “coming Messiah” would RESTORE wealth & prosperity!

Psalm 72: 10 – 11, “May the kings of Tarshish & of the isles render Him tribute, may the kings of Sheba & Seba bring gifts. May all kings fall down before Him, all nations give Him service.”

- & the “coming Messiah” would eventually CRUSH our enemy Satan!

Genesis 3: 15, “I will put enmity between you & the woman, & between your offspring & hers; he will strike your head & You will strike his heel.”

- B. So, how did they miss it so badly, interpreting the prophets?

INSTEAD of Jesus being a KING, He was a mere servant;  
INSTEAD of Him subduing His enemies, Jesus lived under Roman occupation;  
INSTEAD of Him CRUSHING the enemy, Jesus died a horrific death!

So, how do we account for these apparent contradictions of what was clearly prophesied & what actually occurred?

- II. Prophetically they completely missed the (2) Advents of Christ

- A. O.T. prophets = Isaiah + Jeremiah + Ezekiel + Daniel (Big 4)  
+ Hosea ~ Malachi (12 minor prophets) & even Solomon (2<sup>nd</sup> wisest man ever)  
had no clue that their would be (2) Advents of Christ

- B. Define ~ Advent (s) literally means coming or arrival

1. Christians of earlier generations spoke of “the advent of our Lord,” and of “His 2<sup>nd</sup> advent.”
2. The 1<sup>st</sup> advent of our Lord refers to God sending His Son Jesus, “to be born as a human being in Bethlehem.”
3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> advent refers to Jesus 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming

The O.T. prophets only could see ONE ADVENT 1 Arrival

- C. (R) Isaiah 61: 1 – 2 or p. 565 in pew Bible

Almost parallel to Jesus’ mission statement in (Luke 4: 18 – 19)

(1) tiny exception

1. Did you catch it?
  - a. Isaiah wraps the Messiah’s coming all into (1) event:
  - b. Isaiah adds at the end of Jesus’ mission statement the phrase, “...and with it, the day of God’s anger against their enemies.”
2. You see ~ the prophets of the O.T. only saw ONE ADVENT
  - a. They believed Messiah would arrive to planet earth & be a WARRIOR /KING:
  - b. Birth to Power to World Dominance all in 1 coming – 1 arrival

- D. Disciples had the same MISCONCEPTION

1. (R) Matthew 20: 20 – 21 or p. 750 in pew Bible  
+
2. (R) Matthew 20: 24 – 28 (completely over their head)

Very clear that the (12) disciples desired POWER & PROMINENCE;

E. B-4 we get to pious ~ wouldn't it be nice to have that kind of Messiah?

One that would bless our personal biases; bless our battles political or otherwise; a Messiah who would be 'just on our side' (tempting isn't it)?

(12) Disciples were just like us in many ways: They desired an Earthly kingdom = filled with POWER & PROMINENCE!

Just (1) snag ~ Jesus isn't that kind of Messiah!

So, what did the O.T. prophets really miss when they saw only 1 ADVENT or 1 ARRIVAL or 1 COMING of the Messiah?

III. They missed = NO IDEA that the coming Messiah would have to suffer!

A. It's the great mystery of the O.T. that Jesus the Messiah would be the suffering servant written about in Isaiah 49 – 53.

Honest questions arise from the text:

- Why did God omit any mention of Messiah in the suffering servant passages?
- +
- Why would God not include even one O.T. reference to (2) advents of Messiah?

Only (1) answer satisfies these questions:  
God must have created this situation deliberately.

- God intentionally had these prophetic predictions written in such a way that readers couldn't understand them until AFTER the life of Jesus.
- For some undisclosed reason, God was keeping Messiah's mission during His 1<sup>st</sup> coming somewhat of a mystery.

B. Up until this point = God had not revealed His plan of redemption!

- Not 1 person in the O.T. ever even speculated that the Messiah would have to suffer & die a horrific death; this was simply unfathomable!
  - Suffering was not a part of the Messianic profile!

C. (R) Matthew 16: 13 – 23 or p. 747 in pew Bible  
Jesus' begins teaching about what to really expect

- His teaching was clear & specific = NO SURPRISES
- (Disappointing News) He would suffer / be rejected / be killed / & rise again
  - No wonder Peter was upset & distraught @ this news.

- The disciples were no longer going to be world leaders & put the Romans under their dominion (payback was going to be fun)

## MY CHALLENGE

Don't allow yourself to miss the suffering of Christ this week!

This Sunday or TODAY is Palm Sunday;

Let's REFUSE to waive palm branches & shout HOSANNA; w/out 1<sup>st</sup> taking time to consider the suffering & humiliation Jesus endured for us!

## REMEMBER:

There is NO EASTER w/out 1<sup>st</sup> the sufferings & death of Christ on the Cross:  
No celebration without 1<sup>st</sup> hand reflection.

My team mates & I have come up with some tools that will personally assist you in spiritually preparing yourself for EASTER.

(3) concrete ways to access information: after this service:

- 1<sup>st</sup>, Sermon Series Discussion Guide @ the Connection Counter ~ a detailed set of activities that will help you reflect upon the spiritual price paid for us.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, go to our website = wrcc.org & click on Easter @ the River
- 3<sup>rd</sup>, mark on your Connection Card the box, "I want to prepare spiritually for Easter."

Don't allow anyone you love to miss the significance of Christ's suffering on the Cross:

- INVITE your family + your friends + your neighbors + your work associates to come next Thursday night to our Maundy Thursday Service that is dedicated to remembering the sufferings and humiliation that our Lord Jesus encounter!
- EASTER SERVICES = 9:00 am ~ 10:45 ~ 12:15 (need missionaries)