

JESUS-THE ONE AND ONLY SAVIOR

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I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior
(Isa. 43:11).

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other
name under heaven given among men. whereby we must be
saved (Acts 4:12).

The prophet Isaiah ministered during one of the most decadent and dangerous periods in Israel's history. The Jews had abandoned the laws of God and were a nation of idolaters. Prophets had been killed and the warnings of Jehovah, ignored. Believers who desired to be faithful to Jehovah, were persecuted, and lawlessness prevailed throughout the land. Idols were worshiped, and even along the highways were shrines where travelers could pause and pay homage. The Lord did everything possible to bring people to repentance but He failed, and finally the Babylonians were permitted to subjugate the country. Many defenders were either killed in battle or taken as prisoners to an alien land where they learned to detest images. Repeatedly Jehovah spoke saying, "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior," but the people refused to listen-preferring their silent idols to a God who continually complained about their conduct.

God Is Jealous... He can be hurt

America has often been compared with the ancient world. Although the Word of God has been faithfully proclaimed, multitudes refuse to listen. The One whom our fathers worshiped has been replaced by man-made idols. Within this favored country it is now possible to find every type of religion. Temples which once only existed in India, Burma, China, and Japan now occupy prominent places in the western world. Beneath the banner of free speech anybody can say anything. Nevertheless, the real gods of the western world are not made of wood nor carved from stone. They are deities enthroned within the souls of their devotees. Multitudes worship money,

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sex, and sport. An athlete who can throw or kick a ball may become an object of veneration and is bigger than politics. He can receive in one week more money than a president can earn in a year!

There are many places where it is unsafe to walk after dark, for men act like animals. Women are attacked, raped, and often murdered. Unfortunately, people have become accustomed to these sordid deeds. They read about them in the newspapers, shrug their shoulders, and forget the anguish suffered by victims. Vice has turned cities into places of terror; drugs and alcohol have mined society. Preachers denounce such practices, but most people remain indifferent.

When Jesus was upon the earth, He said, "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:37-39). The Savior was correct in His assessment, and if He were here today, He would empha-

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size the same message. Isaiah repeated that salvation came only from the Almighty. His words need to be heard in every nation. Israel rejected that message and perished. History has an unpleasant way of repeating itself. Sinners who ignore the warnings of God are in danger. When God finally rejects a nation or an individual, there is no court of appeal. Blessed are they who with David can say: "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God" (Ps. 20:7).

God Is Just ... He must be fair
Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else (Isa. 45:21-22).

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God is obligated to His laws. If He violated the commandments, He would become a sinner as did Adam and Eve. The Lord said that if a watchman failed to warn citizens of approaching danger, he would be responsible for the fate of the community (see Ezek. 33:6). The divine guardian of Israel was aware of approaching danger. If human watchmen were responsible for remaining silent, God would have been blamed for not warning sinners of their peril.

Earlier in his ministry Isaiah said: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18). God's invitation was not accepted, and He was compelled to use other methods. Patience was extremely commendable, but since Jehovah had said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3), it was incumbent upon the Lord to honor His word. Through Isaiah, He said: "I have sworn by myself, and the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness" (Isa. 45:23). God's predictions will be fulfilled. Souls who cooperate will be forgiven; others will perish.

Mankind had been taught from ancient times, therefore Israel had no excuse for ignorance. The people who rejected Noah's message died in the waters of the flood. Sinners who do likewise with the Gospel must suffer the consequences of their deeds. Since the dawn of time, God has insisted that He

is the Sovereign of the universe. Other gods, idols, or images would not be tolerated. Unfortunately, the children of Israel ignored that claim, and rejecting the warning, became slaves. These facts are irrefutable, but human folly continues. The Hebrews never valued Jehovah's help until it was denied. They learned more in Babylon than they did in the temple at Jerusalem.

God Is Jesus... He desires to help
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God (John 1:1-2).

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And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

Israel's God decided to put on garments of humanity so that John and others could say: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it" (1 John 1:1-2). The beloved disciple included other disciples in his claim. He spoke of us and said, "We have seen it." Peter repeated the same truth on the Day of Pentecost. He knew what was taught in the synagogues and was aware of what the prophets had said. They repeated that God was their only Savior. The apostle also said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The entire world needs to examine the words of Jesus, for unless He were what He claimed to be, He was a liar misleading listeners.

It was significant that throughout His ministry Jesus was unequalled in His announcements and achievements; no other person could be compared with Him. An official who was sent to arrest Him said, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). The Savior's ability to impart truth superseded that of any prophet. The others repeated what they were told; Jesus spoke for Himself. They needed inspiration; the Lord did not. He was always responsible for His own statements. Even children understood His message, and yet His words were so profound, even Israel's learned critics were silenced.

No other could be compared with the Prince of glory. That assertion could also be made concerning His achievements. Blind eyes were opened, lepers cleansed, the dead were raised. This fact brought the eminent Nicodemus to interview the Lord. The greatest teacher in Israel knew the time for the Messiah's appearance had passed. If the prophet had spoken accurately, the Anointed One would already have grown to

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manhood. Nicodemus was asking a question - "If Jesus were not the Messiah, who was?" There was no other person who possessed the necessary qualifications.

The apostle Peter was aware of all these details, and when he addressed the crowd in Jerusalem he emphasized the fact that "there was none other name . . . whereby men must be saved." It was evident to everybody that if Jesus were removed, a substitute could not be found. God had clothed Himself with humanity, had walked among men, and was "in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (see 2 Cor. 5:19).

It is to be regretted that liberal theologians have denied this important truth. They suggest that as there are twelve entrances to the New Jerusalem, so there are many ways by which people can approach God. All non-Christians believe they will be accepted by the Almighty, but that refutes the teaching of Jesus. If all nations will safely reach God's country, why should the Lord instruct His disciples to evangelize the world? If heathens were already safe, it was unnecessary to dispatch missionaries and spend vast sums of money to finance something which was needless.

The Lord said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Buddha,

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Mohammed, and the leaders of other religions cannot save, but JESUS THE SON OF GOD CAN. He is the Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Redeemer of the New Testament. He

is from everlasting to everlasting, the unchanging Savior of the world.

But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Heb. 7:24-25).

When this letter was sent to the Jews of his generation, the writer hoped to dispel fears of the future. The destruction of the temple had left people bewildered and apprehensive. If Christianity failed they had nothing left upon which to reply. Priests no longer ministered, and sacrifices had been

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discontinued. The people could be left sinking in quicksands of uncertainty. Many theologians believe this writer was Paul, that his letter represented the type of sermon preached in the synagogues. This identification, though interesting, is not of importance. Evangelical Christians believe the author was only a human pen in the hand of God.

The Aaronic priests could not complete what they commenced, but Christ continues indefinitely. He was already enthroned at the right hand of God. He who had commenced the work of redemption would conclude it triumphantly. The statement made in Hebrews 7:28 was an appeal to despondent believers to place their trust in the one and only Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God!

Yes, all the griefs He felt were ours,
Ours were the woes He bore;
Pangs not His own, His spotless soul,
With bitter anguish tore.

He died to bear the guilt of men,
That sin might be forgiven.
He lives to bless them, and defend,
And plead their cause in heaven.

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