Turn to Acts Chapter 1 and we will start where we left off last lesson. It always thrills us when folks write or call and tell us they are learning. They never try to make me more than I am. I have never had any formal Bible training at a Seminary or Bible School. I'm not a theologian or anything like that. I suppose I'm more like the average Sunday School teacher. We don't have any deep theological background but I do feel The Lord has given me the gift of teaching the Word in a way that common folks can understand it, and that's what makes the whole thing work. As I teach I just trust The Lord to lead me to the correct passages so the Word is open to people. We have been doing this about twenty-four years now and it just thrills my heart to see people studying the Word of God. We left off on the last lesson on the baptisms and I trust I showed it so plainly, that from the baptism that Jesus instituted when He said He would baptize with the Holy Spirit, He was referring to the Nation of Israel, and looking forward to the day of Pentecost. This would be the day they would be inundated by the Holy Spirit. Because when someone is baptized (in the Greek) they are engulfed. I Corinthians Chapter 10 says about the children of Israel.

*I Corinthians 10:2*

"And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."

They weren't baptized in water - they came across on dry land. So what kind of a baptism was it? They were engulfed, and inundated in the leadership of Moses and in the power and protection of that cloud. So baptism in Scripture doesn't always refer to water baptism. Then we pointed out in the last lesson there was a change of operations when you get to Paul and the Age of Grace. Now in the Age of Grace, it's not Jesus who does the baptizing but the Holy Spirit Who is the One doing the baptizing. And He baptizes believers into Christ. It's just a complete reversal to what had been taking place. Remember back in the Four Gospels and Acts it was Jesus that baptized the Jews into the Holy Spirit. Now verse 6, and remember we are on the Mount of Olives, with just Jesus and the eleven. They haven't chosen a replacement for Judas as of yet.

*Acts 1:6*

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"
I emphasize good reading. I guess I learned to read well from a junior high reading teacher, and a good high school English teacher, and now I'm glad I did. We run into so much confusion in the Scriptures because people don't read. They just will not see what the Scriptures say. We gloss over it, and interpret it by what we may have heard over the years, but we really don't take time to read what it says. And here is a good example. There are two words in here that make all the difference in the world in this one verse. It's the two words "restore again." Now what does that tell you? We are talking about something that has been in the past aren't we? So when the disciples asked Jesus, "Are you now going to restore, bring back on the scene again for the second time the Kingdom to Israel?" Now when did Israel have a Kingdom that they were proud of and they gloried in? King David's and Solomon's. The Queen of Sheba came and saw the glories of Solomon's Kingdom and what did she say? As much as she had heard wasn't the half of what she had now seen. So it was this glorious Kingdom that Israel was remembering. I can't help but think of a verse that Jesus spoke in the Book of Luke 11:31 "...for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here." And He was speaking of Himself.

Many people just can't accept this Kingdom aspect, and ridicule it through ignorance. They won't accept this idea of an earthly Kingdom, yet The Book is full of this terminology. It's the very fact of Scripture that this Kingdom concept, that had its beginning with the Nation of Israel under the Abrahamic Covenant with David and Solomon, reached its pinnacle of glory such as the world had never seen up to that time, then faded off the scene. Now the disciples use those two words so appropriately, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom." Was the Kingdom of David and Solomon an ethereal spiritualized Kingdom or was it real? It was a real, political Kingdom. It was Kingdom here on earth under the authority of a King. And they are still talking about the same kind of set up, only this time they know that Christ will be The King. They knew they were going to have it, but they didn't know when.

Let's recall this whole idea of a coming Kingdom, as it is just part and parcel of the Old Testament. And as you read your Old Testament, I'm sure you will see this constantly coming to the top. I'll hit the most evident and most descriptive of this Kingdom concept that God is constantly holding before the Nation of Israel. So let's turn to II Samuel Chapter 7. God is dealing here with David. This goes further back to the Abrahamic Covenant, when God had promised that out of him would come a nation of people, and one day He would put them in the geographical area of Palestine or the Land of Israel. And then at the appropriate time He would bring forth the Ruler or government to be over this Kingdom. In this passage God is speaking to David through the prophet Nathan.
II Samuel 7:13-16

"He (Solomon) shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. " It was just going to be 40 years as was normal, but this Kingdom was going to be forever. This is going to be a perpetual Kingdom.

"I will be his father, and he shall be my son (here God isn't just talking about Solomon but also the Nation of Israel). If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men (I'll use other nations), and with the stripes of the children of men:" And that is what God has done through history.

"But (in spite of all that) my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee." Verse 16, and this is looking down through the corridors of time:

"And thine house (the house of David) and thy kingdom (the Kingdom that began with David) shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever."

We know David and Solomon didn't live forever. But the forever end of it refers to when The Messiah, The eternal Son of God would come and be The King over this Kingdom. Look at the Book of Isaiah. Isaiah speaks so much of the coming glory of Israel. Yes he has to scold them. He preaches at them for their iniquities, but he always comes back with the prospect of their glorious future.

Isaiah 2:1,2a

"THE word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days,...."

Always remember that the last days for Israel are not the last days for the Church. The last days for Israel is when The King comes and sets up the Kingdom. They will have finally come to the fulfillment of all these previous times. The last days for the Church is that Age of Grace from the time of Christ's death, burial, and Resurrection until the Church is caught up to meet The Lord in the air as we see in I Thessalonians 4:13-18. They are not even close to being identical. So the last days here refers to Israel's Kingdom.

Isaiah 2:2

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain (or Kingdom) of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains (remember the term
mountain or mountains when used symbolically refers to a Kingdom. And this will be the top Kingdom of all kingdoms), and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."

**Isaiah 2:3,4**

"And many people (from around the planet) shall go and say, `Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain (Kingdom) of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (notice it doesn't say heaven). And he shall judge (rule) among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.'"

During this Kingdom Age there won't be war anymore. We are trying to show Old Testament prophecies are looking forward to this coming Kingdom, so the disciples are asking Jesus on the Mount of Olives, "Are you now ready to restore the Kingdom; will we see again the glory we had under King Solomon?" Isaiah Chapter 9:

**Isaiah 9:6,7**

"For unto us (Israel) a child is born (Christ), unto us a son is given: and the (what?) government shall be upon his shoulder (during this earthly Kingdom. He will have a righteous and benevolent rule. Today they are trying to shove world government down our throats, and it's coming whether we want it or not. But if it's any comfort, the world must have that before we can have this glorious Kingdom): and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Those are all titles of Christ, The Messiah.

"Of the increase of his government (rule) and peace there shall be no end (and where is He going to rule from?), upon the throne of David (and where is David's throne? In Jerusalem, upon the earth), and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment (rule) and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

This Kingdom in the Old Testament is forever and ever, but when we get to the Book of Revelation it's restricted to a thousand years. Why the difference? Well, when this Kingdom is set up after the Tribulation the first thousand years will be a time of testing for the off-spring of the believing survivors of the Tribulation. Satan will have been locked up for this thousand years but he is released for a little season to test this new population. They have not had to make a choice like you and I had to make,
because Christ will be The King, and everything has been wonderful. Just like it was in the Garden of Eden. So Satan goes forth and deceives this new generation, and Satan and the ones that follow him are judged by Christ. This first thousand years will only be an introduction to eternity. Let's move to Ezekiel 37. This is about the "dry bones." And it's about the Nation of Israel who has been out in dispersion among the Gentile nations, with no hope. They can only dream of some day going back to Jerusalem and one day having their homeland. Ezekiel prophesies that one day these dry bones will be brought back to life as we have seen in our own time. So let's look verse 15:

**Ezekiel 37:15,16**

"The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, "Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions:"" He is referring to the Nation of Israel when it was divided. The Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom. Verse 19. When they say, "What does all this mean?"

**Ezekiel 37:19**

"Say unto them, thus saith The Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand." They will no longer be a divided Kingdom. Verse 21:

**Ezekiel 37:21,22**

"And say unto them, "Thus saith The Lord GOD; "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen (Gentiles), whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and (how many?) one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all."" Now verse 24:

**Ezekiel 37:24**

"And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd."

**Ezekiel 37:26**
"Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore." What do these verses point toward? The King and the Kingdom.

Look at Daniel for a moment. In Chapter 2 King Nebuchadnezzar has the dream that Daniel interprets for him (about four great Gentile empires that were going to rule the earth). Then Daniel tells us in verse 35 about Christ Who will come and destroy these empires, and His Kingdom will fill the whole earth. Verse 44:

**Daniel 2:44,45**

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone (Christ in His Second Coming) was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass." Now to Hosea, where Christ is speaking through the prophet:

**Hosea 5:15**

*I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence (having crucified Him), and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.*" The nation is beginning to long for their Messiah even as we speak. They don't realize He's been here and has left. Chapter 6 shows that's what has happened.

**Hosea 6:1,2**

"COME, and let us return unto the LORD (This is Israel speaking): for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten (He has been punishing them), and he will bind us up."

"After two days (two thousand years, as in Scripture a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as a day) will he revive us (it's been two thousand years and that's just what He's doing): in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."

We're getting so close for all this to come to pass. We've seen Israel being revived for about 50 years now and it won't be long before she will be raised up. Go to Zechariah Chapter 14. At the beginning of the chapter we have the description of the Tribulation.
Zechariah 14:9

"And the LORD shall be king over all the (what?) earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one." And a King can't be a King unless He has a Kingdom.
LES S S N O N E * P A R T II

A C T S C H A P T E R 1: 6-11 - PSALMS 2

Now in our last lesson we studied about the Kingdom that was referred to in Acts 1:6. We will spend some more time on this very important subject and how it relates to the disciples before they began their ministry in the Book of Acts.

Acts 1:6

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?'" This was a valid question as the resurrected Lord had been talking to them about this future Kingdom for the past forty days.

Acts 1:3

"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs (of His Resurrection), being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:"

Many times I've said that the Kingdom is the Kingdom is the Kingdom. It's one and the same. So these eleven men are hung up on the Kingdom and there is a good reason. Go back to Matthew Chapter 19, and I trust you will be able to see as I did many years ago that this is something that cannot take place in Heaven. It is something that has never taken place before, so it's still future. But Jesus speaks of it in His earthly ministry.

Matthew 19:27

"Then answered Peter and said unto him, 'Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?"

Now Peter wasn't talking about his salvation, he knew he already had that. But rather what are we going to get as a reward? And that was a valid question. Paul deals with rewards in I Corinthians Chapter 3. Jesus was straight forward with His answer:

Matthew 19:28

"And Jesus said unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me (His twelve disciples, excluding Judas), in the regeneration (when things are put back like they were originally) when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his
glory (He has set up His Kingdom), ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging (ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel."

Isn't that plain language? Now when I look at something like this, I have to remind myself that these twelve men were just as human as you and I. And when He told them that this was in their future, they didn't just let it go in one ear and out the other. It stuck! And they haven't forgotten it. What do you suppose is on their mind over here on the Mount of Olive in Acts. That very same thing. So they want to know if He is ready to put them in their respective places of authority over the twelve tribes. Are we ready to take up our thrones? I can see that so vividly. And in verse 7 does He say, "Look fellows, whoever gave you the idea of an earthly Kingdom? Is that what Jesus said? No. He doesn't refute their idea of a coming Kingdom. The only thing He said was:

Acts 1:7

"And he said unto them, 'It is not for you know the times or the season, which the Father hath put in his own power.'"

The fact that it's coming. Yes. But when? It's not for you to know. You remember they asked him during His earthly ministry and He told them only the Father knows the time, not even the angels know. God the Son didn't know. But only the Father. I have an explanation for that, but I won't explain it now. But there was a reason Jesus could say that without lying. But nevertheless, God knows the exact hour, day, and year that these prophetic things are going to happen. And, yes, The King is coming one day. He's going to set up that Kingdom in Jerusalem, and God knows the hour. But He tells the eleven that it's not for them to know. Why? Let's go back in Scripture and see the reason that Jesus could, in fairness, even though I'm sure He knew from His God-side, tell the disciples it's not for them to know. Turn to Genesis Chapter 21. God is still dealing with Abraham in this passage. Come down to verse 33:

Genesis 21:33

"And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God."

The Hebrew is "El Olam." This is another one of the names of Deity. And "Olam" in regular usage could either mean from "everlasting to everlasting" or 'hide' or 'hideth.' And we have looked at some of these before. For example in Psalms, "Why hideth thou thyself from us." So what does the name really imply? God is eternal, He's timeless, but He is also the God of time. And since He is the God of time He can hide in time things He wants to keep hidden and reveal them when He gets ready to reveal
them. That's why I maintain the only way you can understand Scripture is to get a concept of the progressive revelation. He doesn't tell us everything here in the Book of Genesis, but reveals things as we come up through time. Turn to Deuteronomy Chapter 29. I think Moses, the writer here, puts it so clearly by inspiration. And there are several more verses in Scripture telling us the same thing. When you get to Paul's letters, the word he uses to tell us it had been kept secret is 'mystery,' which comes from the Greek word 'musterion.'

**Deuteronomy 29:29**

"The secret things (God's secret things) belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed (no longer a secret, but must be believed) belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

As you come through Scripture you find that, even as the prophets wrote, they had no way of understanding what they wrote, because God hadn't revealed it in such a way that they could. Now to Psalms Chapter 2 since we are talking about things that God kept secret. We'll review this chapter again, where the question's asked:

**Psalms 2:1,2**

*Why do the heathen (or non-Jew) rage and the people (Israel) imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth (the Gentile) set themselves, and the rulers (Israel) take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,"

That's exactly what happened at His Crucifixion. The Jewish leaders demanded it but they didn't want to carry it out, so they went and had Rome do the dirty work. Well, it had to be that way. We know Israel stoned their own people for religious infractions. They could have stoned Jesus. But that wasn't the death He had to die. I teach that when Jesus came in His earthly ministry He made Israel a valid offer to be their King and to set up the Kingdom.

And the question always comes up, "What if Israel would have embraced Him as their King and He would have set up the Kingdom before He was crucified?" Well, I don't have any trouble answering that at all, because the Scripture tells me, "With God all things are possible." So had Israel accepted The King and Kingdom, God would have brought about the Crucifixion one way or another because it had to happen. He had to die that sacrificial death. There was no escaping that. But of course He knew when He made that valid offer that Israel wouldn't accept it, but you see Israel didn't know that. Israel still acted on their own free will. And that's the way mankind does today, and like nations do today. Israel responded to the offer by rejecting it, and by rejecting it brought about that which had to happen for our Salvation, and that was the
Crucifixion. Here we have it so plainly that Jew and Gentile together had to be part and parcel together of His Crucifixion. Now let's move on to verse 3:

**Psalms 2:3,4**

"Let us break their (The Godhead) bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh (at man's foolishness); the LORD shall have them in derision."

Now in Luke's Gospel, Jesus uses the word `perplexity,' and that's the same meaning as derision. In other words, there's such confusion over their political, social and economy problems that they don't know which way to turn. Now that is why, between the Crucifixion and Peter's offer of the Kingdom in the Book of Acts, there was again that time period in-between when that derision could have taken place. And the nations of the then-known world could have come to the same perplexity where we are today, and the end-thing could have been brought about. Since Israel was rejecting their Messiah, everything was pushed out into the future including the derision. We are seeing this today in our own time. I don't think that there is a person living that watches the news that has any intelligence (even though they know nothing of the Scriptures), that hasn't come to the conclusion that the world is in a horrible dilemma.

We have missionary friends who have been working in Rwanda and all of that is beyond our comprehension. Pray for them because they are believers in the midst of that. They told us of one congregation that had been massacred. So we know the world is in derision. Now verse 5. And here comes the order in outline form, if you please, of the Old Testament prophetic program. Here it is:

**Psalms 2:5-7**

"Then shall he (God) speak unto them (the nations of the world) in his (not love, mercy and grace, but rather in) wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." God is going to pour out all of the wrath and vexation that He can possibly place during what we know is the Tribulation. And that is described graphically in the Book of Revelation. Then immediately following the Tribulation in verse 5, what is the next event?

"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." And then look at what The King will accomplish.

"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, thou art my Son (this is God the Father speaking to God the Son), this day have I begotten thee." And remember the begotten is the Resurrection. Now verses 8-12:
Psalms 2:8-12

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Now that's speaking of His reign and rule here on the earth. And now verse 9 backs up a little bit to the Tribulation.

"Thou shalt break them (the nations of the world) with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." This will culminate at Armageddon.

"Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling."

"Kiss the Son (some people will say that the Son isn't mentioned in the Old Testament. But you can see He is) lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled by a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

I would like to refer to the timeline again, all the way from Adam at 4004 B.C. Then about 2500 B.C. we had Noah's flood. And then at about 2000 B.C. we have the call of Abraham. So that means the first 2000 years of human history take place in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. And from Abraham all the way to the Cross is another 2000 years. And in those 2000 years God was only dealing with the Nation of Israel (Jew only with few exceptions). There were the exceptions of Nineveh, Rahab, Ruth, the Syrian General Naaman, the Canaanite women and the Roman centurion; and that was about all the Gentiles He dealt with in that 2000 year period of time.

And Psalms 2 says that after they have rejected Him, Jew and Gentile in consort, they put Him to death. And then Psalms 110 tells us, "THE LORD said unto my Lord, 'Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.'" And this is His ascension. But so far as Psalms 2 is concerned, immediately after the Crucifixion and rejection there would come that undetermined period of time where there would be a derision of the nation, and then would come the 7 years of Tribulation which is in the Book of Daniel. And then The King would return and set up His Kingdom. Now that is Psalms 2 in outline. And that is all the Old Testament knows. Now, what's missing? The Age of Grace - the Church. It isn't in here. Why? Because it's a secret, held in the mind of God, and it will be a secret until God reveals it to the Apostle Paul. And that is why I'm constantly telling people don't look for the Rapture or the Church in the Four Gospels, or the Old Testament. Remember He's only dealing here with the Nation of Israel. As Christ ascended, Israel kept on rejecting the offer of The King and the Kingdom that Peter presents to them. So God moved all this out into the future. And He put in an undetermined period of time that no one know when it's going to end. And then the seven years will come in, Christ will return, and then The King will set up His Kingdom and all of these promises will be fulfilled. I can't put it any simpler than that.
Understand, as we go through the early part of Acts, Peter and the other eleven are going to operate only on what God has revealed. And that is the Old Testament program. Peter doesn't know anything about the Gospel of Grace that Christ is going to reveal to Paul at a later date. Peter has no concept of God turning to the Gentiles for the next 1900 + years. None of them do. And it wasn't their fault. God didn't expect them to, because He's been holding it a secret, and is giving Israel every opportunity to yet repent of what they had done to their Messiah. As we move on through the early chapters of Acts, you will see it if you look at it with open eyes.

Peter was only talking to the Jew, not the Gentiles as so many believe. In fact, I'll be showing you that 7 or 8 years after the Cross when Peter goes up to the house of Cornelius and he takes six Jews with him and they see the evidence of Gentiles being saved in Acts Chapter 10 verse 45, the Scripture says they were `astonished.' Why? Because this had never happened before. And people can't get that through their head, they think that somehow Gentiles have been saved if not at the time of John the Baptist, at least from Pentecost. But they weren't, it's all Jewish. And for a Gentile to be saved, it was an astonishment. Let me show you one more passage. In Chapter 10 Peter goes to the house of Cornelius, but in Chapter 11 verse 2 look what happens. We will be coming to this and study it in more detail in the weeks ahead. Now get the setting. Peter and these six Jews had come back to Jerusalem from Cornelius' house.

Acts 11:2,3

"And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision (Jewish believers) contended with him (they put him on the spot). Saying, `Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.'" Would they have said that if Gentiles had been saved all along? Why of course not.
We're living in a day of course where Satan is pulling every stop. I think he already knows that his time is short. Now we know when he's cast out of heaven at the mid-point of the Tribulation, the Book of Revelation tells us he is also going to pour out his wrath and anger on the human race because he knows his time is short. He'll know he will only have 3 1/2 years left. And I think he already knows that he doesn't have a lot of time left even as I speak. One of the stops that he is pulling out, is a confusion of the Scripture. What confusion there is when it comes to teaching the Word of God, and it shouldn't be that way. God never intended it to be that way. I read the other day where there were over a thousand denominations in America alone. And very few of them agree with each other. So we are confronted with a lot of confusion. One group believes this way, another group believes another way. Well, who are you going to believe? Believe The Book!

I never tell people to go by what I say, and I don't intend to build a following whatsoever. But we just want to help people see what The Word really says. Now in that light, let's look at Acts Chapter 1. We will be looking at verse 8 - I trust we covered the time element of verse 6 and 7 where the disciples asked Jesus the question:

Acts 1:6b,7a

"...wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" And The Lord's answer was, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons,..." We are trying to show that throughout Scripture God has the prerogative of keeping things secret until He's ready to reveal them. Now verse 8. He tells them that although it's not for them to know the times, they will receive something else.

Acts 1:8

"But ye shall receive power (power is a crucial word in this verse), after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you (and we know this is going to happen in ten days): and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Now I do not like to allegorize Scripture, unless Scripture does it itself. Most of you have heard this verse allegorized to mean that for you and I, Jerusalem would be Tulsa or some other city in the state you live in. Judaea is the state, and Samaria may be the United States. And then to the uttermost part of the earth sounds good for missionary
work in foreign lands. And I have nothing against that. That is our prerogative to take the Gospel wherever we can. But that is not what this verse says. This verse says Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and after those three have been completely covered and converted then those Jews were to go to the uttermost part of the earth.

But from what you have been taught throughout the Old Testament, even in the last two lessons, everything that Jesus has been speaking and teaching, and the writings from the Old Testament prophets have been to the Jews and no one else. And they understood that they had no role to play as far as evangelizing Gentiles until they had The King and the Kingdom. And then the Gentiles would flow to Jerusalem as we saw in the Book of Isaiah 2:2. And again in Zechariah Chapter 8:

**Zechariah 8:23**

"Thus saith the LORD of host; 'In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you (but not until): for we have heard that God is with you.'"

I will show you in Acts 1 verse 8 is that Jesus could have (we know He didn't), done as He did in Luke Chapter 4, where he stopped speaking right in the middle of the verse. He could have stopped speaking after the word Samaria, because that is as far as this verse is going to be fulfilled where the Jew is concerned, so read it in that light.

**Acts 1:8**

"...and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria,..."

Did the disciples get that far? Why sure they did. By the time you get to Acts Chapter 8 where does Philip go? To Samaria. And Samaria heard the Word. But did the twelve disciples ever go to the nations of the world. Never! I've challenged people for over twenty years to show me one time in Scripture that those twelve disciples had a ministry to the Gentiles. They didn't. Why? Because Israel never fulfilled those requirements of accepting The King, which was required before they could bring Gentiles in. The Old Testament is full of those requirements. But even here in Acts, Peter was still offering them this opportunity. So they had the opportunity even after the Crucifixion, for them to all have repented and be baptized for the remission of their sins in crucifying their King, as we saw that some of them did in Act 2:38. And then The King and Kingdom could still have been set up even at that time. So Peter's offer was valid, but we know the nation as a whole rejected his offer just like they did Jesus' offer. We will look at it again in Acts Chapter 3. I alluded to Luke Chapter 4 a
few moments ago and I would like for us to look at it. We have looked at this many lessons ago but it won't hurt to refresh our memory.

**Luke 4:16-19**

"And he (Jesus) came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias, And when he had opened the book, he found (in other words He look for a particular verse that He wanted to read) the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of The Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of The Lord.'"

Let's go back to where Jesus read from, and we find that in Isaiah Chapter 61, so let's compare these two passages. It's word for word.

**Isaiah 61:1,2**

"THE Spirit of The Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD (this is where He stopped in Luke and the punctuatio was a period), and the day of vengeance of our God (what's the vengeance? Tribulation); to comfort all that mourn;" And when will comfort all that mourn happen? In the Kingdom. Do you see the progression?

Now when Jesus was reading in Luke why didn't He finish the verse? Because He knew the rest wasn't going to happen at that time. He knew the Nation of Israel was going to reject Him again, and He knew there would be 1900 + years where God would be going to the Gentiles with the Apostle Paul's message based on I Corinthians 15:1-4. But Peter had no idea of any of this as Peter's message was to the Jew only. Now let's flip back to Luke Chapter 4 verse 20:

**Luke 4:20,21b**

"And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." Why? I think they knew what He did with that Scripture. He stopped practically in the middle of the verse. And then look what He said after He sat down.
"...This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Now could He have said this if He had read the whole verse? Of course not, because the last part of that verse in Isaiah hasn't been fulfilled yet. He knew exactly where to stop. I hope I've made my point, so come back to Acts. In Acts 1:8 Jesus could have stopped at the end of the word Samaria, because that's where it did stop. The Jews and the disciples never did go to the ends of the earth with the Gospel of the Kingdom. Because the nation was rejecting it.

In verse 8, I said the secret word was "Power." Remember, John the Baptist has said that *"Jesus would baptize the Nation of Israel with or into the Holy Spirit,"* well here is the purpose: to give them power. I always try to make people think, what kind of power does God have in mind for the Twelve in particular and for these believing Jews who will be coming on the scene in the next few chapters? To carry on where He left off. Now in His earthly ministry, what highlighted almost every day of His experience in those three years? Miracles, signs, and wonders. And what was the purpose?

**John 20:30,31**

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

So this was to prove Who Jesus really was. Now as Jesus is ready to go back to heaven and He is now commissioning these eleven men (and there will be one more in short order), what are they to continue? What Jesus had begun. Even though The Messiah has been crucified and has ascended back to heaven, the prospect for the Nation of Israel is still The King and the Kingdom. And the only way to convince them was more signs and miracles. And this is the reason that the Holy Spirit is going to be poured out on these Jewish believers. So they will continue to see the Nation of Israel be converted to a faith in their rejected Messiah. Now come to Chapter 3, so that you can just get a little glimpse of what I'm talking about. They weren't concerned yet about evangelizing the world. Their chief concern was the Nation of Israel. Because Israel had to be converted to the last man. Here Peter has again presented a sermon in verses 12-18 and he says in verse 19:

**Acts 3:19,20a**

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted (believe Who Jesus was), that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of The Lord;" Now that's a semicolon colon and not a period. And so the thought goes on
into verse 20. Israel converted, the times of refreshing comes in and then what would God do?

"And he shall send Jesus Christ..."

For what purpose? To be their King! And Peter is saying it as clear as day if Israel would just repent and be converted, then God would send Jesus Christ to fulfill all the Covenant promises that He had made to the Nation of Israel. If you doubt that, then come on down to verse 24.

Acts 3:24

"Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."

What days? The days that have just taken place. The appearance of their Messiah, His miracles, His rejection, His Crucifixion, His Resurrection, His ascension. Now He's ready to return and Peter says all the prophets laid this out. We saw it in the last lesson in Psalms Chapter 2, all laid out in prophecy. But there's nothing about the Age of Grace, the Church, as of yet. Nothing about Gentiles being saved by Grace, this is still a secret being kept in the mind of God until Paul.

Acts 3:25

"Ye (Peter is addressing the Jew only) are the children of the prophets (the Old Testament writers), and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham (see why I keep stressing the Abrahamic Covenant? Everything is resting on that Covenant), And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."

Acts 3:26

"Unto you (the Nation of Israel) first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him, to bless you, in turning away (how many?) every one of you from his iniquities."

And if every Jew would have responded to this message then The King and the Kingdom could have come on the scene. We know the Tribulation would have had to have taken place but, nevertheless, the Kingdom would have been set up in short order. And then Israel could have evangelized the world by bringing Gentiles to The King. What an opportunity, and they missed it. So what did God do? He converted another Jew, completely out of any prospect for being a man of God. The least likely prospect that you or I would have picked - old Saul of Tarsus. He saved him by grace,
outside the land of Palestine, on Gentile ground, took him down into the desert for three years and seminary-trained him with the resurrected Lord Himself as the Instructor. And then sent him to Gentiles with a whole new program. But we'll come to that later.

Let's go back to the Book of Mark. This section always raises a lot of questions and controversy, but it shouldn't if people will just leave it with the Nation of Israel. This is not Church ground at all! I never look for controversy, nor do I like to argue with people. All I do is point out what The Book says, and let the chips fall where they may. Some people will cop out on these verses and say, "Well, it wasn't in some of the best newer manuscripts." But you know what? In the oldest and the best ones it is. And we are finding out now that a lot of these so called "best manuscripts" are anything but the best. But these verses are in the oldest and most reliable manuscripts, they belong here, and are not to be omitted. This is Jesus speaking:

**Mark 16:15-18**

"And he said unto them, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized (that's what it says) shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs (now watch this) shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and thy shall recover.'"

It's so interesting what various groups do with these verses. I heard a preacher one morning, and his text was going to be verse 16. He evidently hadn't studied very much and read about five words in verse 17 and saw what he was getting into and backed out of that verse like he had run into a buzz saw. And he said, "We'll stop at the end of verse 16." Now why did he want to stop there? He wasn't in agreement with the next verse. Now listen, that is not a valid way to treat Scripture. **If you can't use all of the verse or chapter, leave it alone.** Because you are going to get into trouble if you try to split it or leave some of it out. Now there are other groups that like verse 16. And some groups like 16 and 17 but won't have any part of verse 18. So these groups just stop where it's convenient. But I'm telling you to leave the drinking of poison or the picking up of poisonous snakes alone.

Now maybe the Kentucky hill people do it, but many don't get away with it either. It's not valid, it won't work, so what are you going to do, force it? No. Just analyze the whole thing and say, "Wait a minute! - this is all part and parcel to Christ's earthly ministry." This was appropriate in the Jewish economy, because this is exactly what He had been doing. But it's not appropriate today, because the Jewish program has slipped off the scene, and something new has come in. And don't try to force these
verses. And it's that way with so much of the Four Gospels, but that doesn't mean that you can tear it out and throw it away. Not at all. There are so many applications in the Four Gospels that are just as true for us as they were for the Jew. Same way with the Old Testament. But on the other hand, you're going to come up against things in the Old Testament that cause nothing but problems.

I remember years ago reading where someone was decrying women wearing slacks. And he went back and used a verse in the Old Testament where it says that a woman shall not wear that which pertaineth to a man. Good heavens, what did men wear in Old Testament days? Tunics and robes. They didn't wear pants. Now what's the poor woman to do? She can't wear pants or robes, see how foolish things can get? So we must be discerning and understand when we read in the Old Testament about things God hates: drunkenness, misuse of the widows, corruption among the clergy and priest; does God still hate that? Why sure He does. And that's appropriate. But when you come to certain things written directly to the Jew under the Law, don't try to force it. It isn't for us, you can't practice that, because we are not under those circumstances. But we can certainly learn from all of this. The mind of God, His righteousness, His Holiness, and all the rest. We have to be so careful how we use the Scriptures.

But for now come back to Acts 1 verse 8 once again. So after the Holy Spirit would come upon them they were to receive power to continue on with what Christ had been doing in His earthly ministry. Remember 1 Corinthians 1:22 "For the Jews require a sign," Where did the signs and miracles for Israel really begin? When Moses and Aaron went back to Pharaoh. But (and here's a lesson that some people don't want to hear), when Aaron threw his rod on the ground it became a serpent, which was an act of God. What did the magicians of Egypt do? The same thing. The only consolation we have is that Aaron's serpent swallowed up the magicians' serpents. But listen, they changed the shepherd's rod into a serpent the same way that Aaron did. And they didn't do it with God's power, they did it with Satan's power. Don't you sell old Satan short. He hasn't given up any of his power.

I can remember some of our missionaries coming home from the spiritually dark parts of this old world with their little 8 MM movies. They would show some scenes of some of those witch doctors and it was scary how much power some of them had. Where did they get this power? Not from God. But rather from Satan, and Satan's power is not diminished one bit. In 1st John Chapter 4, and as we study the Book of Acts, we will be dealing with a lot of this, and I do not ascribe to emotionalism. I think it is detrimental to a Spirit-filled life. Just simply take God at His Word. Look what it says in verse 1:

1 John 4:1
"BELOVED, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Now how are you and I going to try the spirit and see if it's of God? Line it up with The Book. If it doesn't line up with The Book forget it, I don't care how good it looks on the surface. I don't care how it warms your emotions. If John thought there were a lot of false prophets in his day and time, which was toward the end of the first century, how many more have we got today!
Acts 1:9. Remember, Jesus and the eleven are still on the Mount of Olives. They have been talking about things pertaining to the Kingdom. It's a valid Kingdom they have been talking about; the same Kingdom we have seen all the way up through the Old Testament and the same Kingdom that is yet going to come back to the earth as soon as the Tribulation is over and Christ returns. Christ knows that Israel will reject all of this and that He would be turning to the Gentiles under a whole different program. But He kept that secret until the Apostle Paul came on the scene and revealed that only to him. Now verse 9:

Acts 1:9,10

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld (they watched Him), he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Now personally I think this cloud was a heavenly host, I don't think it was cumulus cloud, but a heavenly host that ushered Him into glory. Now verse 10:

"And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;"

I like to point out that throughout Israel's history, when the supernatural such as angelic appearances took place, were they all shook up? No. As these eleven men are standing on the Mount of Olives, suddenly Jesus is going up into the atmosphere without benefit of rocket power, and then two angels appear, but this doesn't shake them up. If that happened today there'd be pandemonium. But it's been common place for the disciples for the past three years.

Acts 1:11

"Which also said, 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.'"

Now what does that mean? Just exactly what it says. You don't spiritualize it, or allegorize it, you just simply say this is easy to comprehend. Here He was standing in His resurrected body. He had been fellowshipping and eating and talking with the eleven for forty days, and then all of a sudden He went up! He went up head first which means He's going to come back feet first, bodily. Not in some ethereal form, or in a spiritualized realm of influence, but He is going to physically return to this planet.
I know there are a lot of people that scoff at the thought of His Second Coming. But all of Scripture is full of it. In type as well as a literal sense. Now here it's literal. He's standing there, and talking with them - they have been touching Him. His body is for real, and now He's taken up. Now we need to go back to the Old Testament and compare. So turn to the Book of Zechariah Chapter 14. This is prophecy and is directed to the Nation of Israel. Let's begin with verse 1:

Zechariah 14:1,2

"BEHOLD, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee."

"For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle (and we can see the stage being set even today. All the Middle Eastern nations are building up their hardware by the billions. And the rest of the world is not far behind them. And what's the purpose. They're getting ready for when God will call them all to come to that end-time doom. The battle of Armageddon); and the city shall be taken (now listen, the Nation of Israel is going to go through some terrible, terrible days, especially in those last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation); and the houses rifled (no mercy), and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth in captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." Just when it looks like Satan is finally going to succeed in destroying the Nation of Israel, by virtue of these Gentile hordes:

Zechariah 14:3

"Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations (the word LORD in the Old Testament capitalized is Jehovah. We have shown over and over that Jesus claimed to be the I AM of the Old Testament. So the LORD here is the LORD Christ. He's in heaven today, but He will return), as when he fought in the day of battle." God fought Israel's battle all through history.

Zechariah 14:4

"And his feet (that left the Mount of Olives in Acts 1:9 where the angels said He will come back the same way. You can't spiritualize that) shall stand in that day (second coming) upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." Now verse 8:

Zechariah 14:8
"And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem (in other words pure water): half of them toward the former sea (Mediterranean), and half of them toward the hinder sea (Dead Sea); in summer and in winter shall it be."

It's interesting that plans are being drawn up to build a canal from the Mediterranean to the Dead sea. It's going to cost billions of dollars. But you see God is going to do it in a moment of time. At His Second Coming there will be a fresh water river running from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean, and from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea. All of this is going to happen just as He says it will.

Zechariah 14:9a

"And the LORD shall be king over all the earth:..." And that will be in His Kingdom rule. We also need to look at Ezekiel Chapter 47. The prophet Ezekiel is getting a vision of this water way that will run out from the throne room in Jerusalem all the way again to the Dead Sea. Verse 8:

Ezekiel 47:8-10

"Then said he unto me, 'These waters issue out (from Jerusalem) toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the (Dead) sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed (nothing can live in the Dead sea). And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish (in the Dead sea), because these waters shall come thither (From Jerusalem): for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.'" Now verse 10:

"And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it (the Dead Sea) from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea (Mediterranean), exceeding many." Could this happen to the Dead Sea through man's technology? No! But it will happen when the Kingdom is set up at His Second Coming.

Now, the Second Coming. The Old Testament alludes to it by symbol, especially in the life of Moses and the life of Joseph. And we see that clearly in Acts Chapter 7, where Stephen is rehearsing the history of Israel and talking about the famine and Joseph in Egypt.

Acts 7:11-13
"Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first (the brethren). And at the second time Joseph was made know to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made know unto Pharaoh."

Why does Scripture bring in the "second time?" Well, the first time the brothers went down to see Joseph, he knew who they were, but they didn't recognize him. And that is exactly what happened to Christ at His First Advent. He came unto His own, He knew who they were. But did they know who He was? No. But when He comes the second time, just like when the brothers went the second time down unto Egypt, Joseph revealed himself to them. And there was weeping for joy. Joseph had become their saviour. He had the grain that saved them from starvation. And so Israel will also recognize Christ at His Second Coming.

I said Moses was the other one. When Moses went out the first time and he saw the Egyptian misusing a Jew. Moses killed him and hid his body. And Moses had to flee. Stephen is going to rehearse this as well. Because Stephen is driving home the very point that Christ came to them the first time in His earthly ministry and they rejected Him. But now He is ready to come the second time if they will just believe that He is Who He says He is. Stephen doesn't see 1900 + years into the future either. Christ had died which He had to do. He'd been raised from the dead, and ascended. Everything was set for Him to come back if Israel will just believe. So here's the type with regard to Moses.

Acts 7:23-25

"And when he was full forty years old (Moses had been in Pharaoh's house since a baby), it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian. For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not."

Moses' position in Egypt was that of the second greatest man, so he thought he had the power and clout to lead the children of Israel out of bondage into freedom, and back to a relationship with their God. Moses at this time becomes a man of faith, but what didn't he take into consideration? That Israel wouldn't buy it.

Acts 7:26,27

"And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, 'Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?"
But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, 'Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?''

Now are you getting the parallel? Jesus came unto His own, they could have accepted Him, they should have accepted Him, but what was their answer. "Who made you a ruler and judge over us?"

Acts 7:29a

"Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian,..."

Acts 7:35

"This Moses whom they refused saying, 'Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same (Moses) did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.'"

Now what's the lesson? In both instances, it was the second time that things came to the full. And so also Israel will recognize their Messiah the second time and acclaim Him. Let's come back to the Book of Matthew and look at this same concept of His Second Coming. This is Jesus speaking in His earthly ministry. This chapter is all Tribulation ground. This is the final seven years of prophecy:

Matthew 24:27

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east (Tribulation storm already over), and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Matthew 24:29,30

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

That will be the Second Coming when He will stand on the Mount of Olives in Zechariah 14:4. In John 14, most people think that this is the Rapture of the Church, but it's the Second Coming. John knows nothing of the Church Age or the Rapture of the Church, those were secrets that were only revealed to the Apostle Paul.

John 14:1-3a
"LET not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again,..." Here The Lord is talking to the Nation of Israel and preparing them for His Second Coming.
LESSON TWO * PART I

ACTS CHAPTERS 1 & 2 - EXPLANATION OF ACTS 2:38

It thrills our heart to know that folks are learning, and so many are writing and calling and telling us that for the first they are beginning to see the difference between God dealing with Israel and the Church. Now Acts Chapter 1, where the disciples had seen The Lord ascend out of their midst from the Mount of Olives. The disciples return to Jerusalem and are meeting in an upper room. It must have been a rather large facility, because we have at least 120 people meeting here. They were instructed by The Lord to wait, before the Holy Spirit would come down on these believers. Now verse 15:

Acts 1:15

"And in those days (in that ten day period) Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty),"

Is this all the believers that remained after three years of Jesus' preaching and teaching? I personally think so. We know there were women also, but of the men there were 120. I hope I'm wrong, but it appears in the Jerusalem area these were the sum total of His fruit. Now Peter realizes that since Jesus had left them with the idea that the Kingdom was at hand (He hasn't told them that it's going to postponed for some 1900 + years) and since the Kingdom is going to be ruled by Christ with the Twelve ruling the Twelve tribes of Israel, then they need twelve men rather than eleven. So Peter sees the need to fill that other slot, so they will be ready for the return of Christ when He sets up His Kingdom.

Acts 1:16,17

"Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he (Judas) was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry."

Remember he had been with them the full three years. He was also their treasurer. He held the money bag. He indeed had a part in the ministry, but we also know that he never had a spiritual part of it, because Jesus said Himself that Judas was a devil from the beginning. So he had completely fooled the other eleven men, but he never fooled Jesus. Jesus knew everything about him and what he would eventually do. That is why David, by inspiration, prophesied it. A lot of people will say Judas never had a chance. God had already created him to be the betrayer. No Judas wasn't put in that situation. Judas had a choice just like you and I have a choice. But God in His
foreknowledge knew what Judas would do when he was given the opportunity. So prophecy foretold it. And when prophecy foretells something it has to happen, otherwise the Book becomes a lie. But never take away Judas' free will.

**Acts 1:18**

"Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity (remember he took his thirty pieces of silver back to the priests at the Temple and threw them at their feet because of his own guilt. And the priests, knowing that it was blood money, couldn't put it into the treasury, so they took the money and bought the potters field. And that is why this verse gives Judas the credit for purchasing the field); and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out."

Before Judas betrayed Jesus in the Garden, who actually entered into him? Satan did. So I would like to think that what happened here, as Judas comes back and tries to get out of the whole situation, that as Satan leaves him, he literally just catapults the body of Judas. Now there is a lot more here than meets the eye. Because one point of Scripture says Judas was hung. Scripture doesn't lie so how are you going to reconcile the two? You've got to put all these things together. I think as a result of this catapulting action of Satan himself as he leaves Judas' body, it caused Judas to be flung onto a low tree branch or fence post. So he ends up in both descriptive categories. Now verse 19:

**Acts 1:19-22**

"And it was know unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, 'The field of blood.'" Because it had been purchased with blood money. Then Luke as he writes goes back to Psalms.

"For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick (his office as one of the twelve) let another take.' Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that The Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."

I'm sure most of you have heard teaching that Peter was being presumptuous here, and that he should have waited for the Apostle Paul seven years later to fill this twelfth slot. How can good solid Bible teachers make a statement like that? Look at the qualifications. It had to be someone who had been a follower of Christ from John the Baptist through His ascension. Paul wouldn't have fit. Paul was an opposer of Christ at that time. And so evidently there were only two men that fit those qualifications out
of the 120 men gathered there - Barsabas and Matthias. I don't know how they drew lots (probably with a long and short stick). In the Old Testament God would use two stones called the Urim and Thummim for the priest arrive at certain decisions. They were evidently two little gem stones that went into a pouch behind the ephod, and when a decision of yes or no was needed the priest would use these two stones. Scripture doesn't tell us how they were used, but we know they were used in some decision making. In choosing Matthias, I don't think they took a vote of the 120 men, but they get God's decision by choosing between these two men.

**Acts 1:26**

"And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias (some people say this doesn't really tell us that Matthias was God's choice. Well what are you going to do with the last part of the verse? It says clearly); and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." God made that choice and no one else.

In Chapter 2, it's the day of Pentecost. We find this in Leviticus Chapter 23. Pentecost is not a Church day, but a Jewish feast day. It's one of the seven feasts of Jehovah listed in Leviticus Chapter 23. And it was to be 50 days after the Passover. It started way back here in Sinai. In verse 5 we have the Passover and in verse 6 the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In verses 9-14 we have the Feast of First Fruits and in verse 15 we have the next feast.

**Leviticus 23:15**

"And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete;"

That's 49 days but then they were to go to the next day to make 50. The word Pentecost arrives from that. Pente means 50. This was the 50th day after Passover and it became one of the feast days that was practiced throughout Israel's history. Now back to Acts Chapter 2. Christ has just been crucified at the time of Passover. They were waiting that 50 days till Pentecost. Remember, Jews would come to Jerusalem from the whole then-known world (predominantly Roman Empire) for these seven Jewish feast days. The Temple in Jerusalem is still operating. No one has told these Jewish believers to cast aside Temple worship, these feast days or the Law. See how clearly the Scripture points it out.

**Acts 2:1-3**

"AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all (these 120 men plus the women) with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from
heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled all the house where they were sitting." On a windy day you can't see the wind but you hear it and see the results. And in order for them to see something, verse 3 states:

"And there appeared unto them cloven (separated) tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." Now it doesn't say it was fire, but it was like as of fire. It didn't burn them.

Acts 2:4,5

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues (the Greek word for tongues doesn't mean jibberish, but language), as the Spirit gave them utterance." Ever since the Tower of Babel there have been all kinds of dialects and languages. These Jews didn't all speak Hebrew. They had been living in Gentile nations and had picked up that language.

"And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews (notice we are not dealing with Gentiles), devout men, out of every nation under heaven."

All these nations had Jewish communities in them. The other important word in this verse is `devout.' What kind of Jews would spend the money and take the time to come back to Jerusalem for a feast day? Only the devout ones. And that's why they were here. There were thousands of them. Now verse 6:

Acts 2:6,7

"Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded (amazed), because every man (regardless where he was from) heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, `Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?''"

The disciples were from that part of Israel. Northern Israel was more rural than the southern part, and not as highly educated. They were mostly farmers, shepherds, fishermen and carpenters. Evidently these 12 men showed they were not from that cultured area of Jerusalem. And the crowd could tell it. They knew these men couldn't be smart enough to speak all the languages.
LESSON TWO * PART II

ACTS CHAPTERS 1 & 2 - EXPLANATION OF ACTS 2:38

Now as we start another lesson, we will be starting with Acts 2:8. We left off with the day of Pentecost, and Jews had come to Jerusalem from all over the the known world to celebrate this Jewish feast day. Remember there were seven of these feast days that the Jews celebrated. We were discussing in our last lesson how these thousands of Jews could understand the disciples in their own languages and dialect. So not only did these disciples speak in different languages, they brought it down to dialect of individual areas. And this is only to point out that God is so miraculous in everything that He does. This isn't something to be taken lightly. But these twelve men were given that ability of languages where all could understand them regardless where they were from or what languages they spoke. And as we discussed, these twelve men are not highly educated and yet they are speaking all the languages and dialects so these people could understand every word that they were saying.

Acts 2:8-11

"And how hear we every man in our own tongue (language), wherein we were born?" The names of the nations from which they came are listed in verse 9. Although these are Gentile nations, these are Jews that have come from these nations.

"Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." These are Jews who had been living in these various nations. This is the power that Jesus had promised to come upon them back there in Acts 1:8.

Acts 2:12,13

"And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, "What meaneth this?" What's going on? Can't you imagine? And how the crowd became alive at something so supernatural. But You've always got your scoffers, it's no different today. They will just grab at straws, and foolish notions to try to make a point. "Others mocking said, "These men are full of new wine." How ridiculous! Alcohol can make a man make a fool of himself. But I've never seen it elevate man to a higher level of intelligence.

Acts 2:14-16
"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:" Remember he is talking to Jews with maybe an occasional proselyte.

"For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day." That was another thing that made it ridiculous, it was too early in the day for anyone to be that far along. Verse 16, Here's where we are going to get real picky.

"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;"

Stop and analyze what is `this' and what is `that'? Well, the `this' he is talking about is this manifestation now of the coming down of the Holy Spirit in a role that is completely different than that He had ever played before. Now the Spirit has always been. You go back to the creation, what moved upon the face of the deep? The Spirit did. David prayed, "Take not your Spirit from me." So the Spirit has been evident. Although the Orthodox Jews don't like to recognize the Holy Spirit as a Person of the Godhead. But yet the Scripture does. Let's go back to the Book of Joel, Chapter 2, because I want you to see that this is all back in the Old Testament. And remember this is prophecy, and also remember that all prophecy is directed primarily to the Nation of Israel. There is no prophecy directed to the Church. Even today, as we see the increase of earthquakes, and the world getting ready for a one-world government, world economy, and world religion, it is still not the wheels of prophecy turning yet; it's simply getting it ready for when they do. So Joel is writing to the Nation of Israel, and Peter has just told them that this is what Joel is talking about. Now let's read on:

**Joel 2:28,29**

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."

(-) This was fulfilled at Christ's First Advent. But when we start to read verse 30, 31, and 32, keep in mind that didn't happen at Pentecost, and it still hasn't happened. But it will:

**Joel 2:30-32**

"And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that
whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Now had Peter had the foreknowledge that Jesus had, do you know what he would have done? He would have done like Jesus did in Luke Chapter 4, when He read from Isaiah Chapter 61, when He stopped in the middle of the verse. He sat down and said, "Today this has been fulfilled before your eyes" because Jesus knew that the rest of that verse in Isaiah wouldn't take place until another 2000 years. But Peter doesn't know this. Peter is still on Covenant ground as I have shown so often, and he claims the Covenant promises that God made to Abraham. So Peter can't put a break here between verses 29 and 30, because he doesn't know. So Peter quotes the whole passage as if it's all going to take place one thing after the other because that's what the Old Testament showed. None of the prophets knew about this 1900 + years span called the Church Age, and neither did Peter. All they knew about was that Christ would come, He would be rejected, He would ascend back to glory, and then would come the time of vexation, and wrath of God, the Tribulation. And then yet would set their King on the Holy Hill of Zion, the Kingdom. So you can see there was no hint of the Church Age in that program. The Scriptures in the Old Testament are full of prophecies of His first coming, and the last half of the prophecies are still waiting. Now back to Acts again. Peter continues right on with prophecy, because he thinks it will happen next.

Acts 2:19

"And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:" See that's the Tribulation. Now in verse 21:

Acts 2:21

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of The Lord shall be saved."

Now let's jump to Romans 10. We have the same language here but the casual reader will never see the difference. But I want you to. What is the difference? Peter says it one way and Paul says it another. Peter had just got through quoting Joel who said whosoever shall call upon the name of The Lord shall be delivered (saved) and that is under the Old Testament economy. That would be when The King and Kingdom would come on the scene. We have looked at those verses so many times. For example Zechariah 8:23. But before Gentiles could be saved under that economy, all the Jews had to become believers and priests in the Kingdom. And Peter knows this
and is trying to convince the Jews here at Jerusalem of their need. Look what Paul says in Romans:

**Romans 10:13**

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of The Lord shall be saved." This isn't going to be done through Israel. This is where we are today. Back to verse 8. I'm putting this in reverse purposely.

**Romans 10:8,9**

"But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth The Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." See that is the heart of our Salvation message, but in order to trigger it, what are we to do? Call upon Him!

I have always used the analogy (and I like to use simple ones that anybody can understand) that if you have a swimming pool full of kids on a hot summer afternoon and they are screaming and yelling and having a good time, the ordinary person would never hear a weak swimmer call for help. But that lifeguard has a trained ear. And when that lifeguard hears that feeble call he springs into action, because he can hear a cry for help. It's the same way with God. When God hears that sinner crying out for help, for Salvation, what does He do? He springs into action and immediately He's there to save. But I feel that the person still has to come to the place of realizing they are in need. And when they cry out, God responds. And that is the whole concept here in Romans 10, that we are to believe that Christ died and rose from the dead, but God expects us to cry out on that basis for His saving Grace.

So Paul is writing under the Age of Grace, and that is where we are tonight. The vilest of sinners can call out for Salvation and it's his if he believes. But back here in Joel that isn't the case. Christ hadn't died yet, the offer of Salvation hadn't been turned over to the whole world, It's still confined to Israel under the Law. The wording is the same but they are under two completely difference circumstances. One is under Grace, and the other is under the Kingdom economy. So be careful and don't gloss that over. Now back to Acts Chapter 2 once again. We have Peter with this great crowd of Jews from every end of the then-known world congregated for this feast of Pentecost.

**Acts 2:22a**

*Ye men of Israel,...*
And all you pagan Gentiles? No! Who's He talking to? Jews, and Jews only. Now Jew only is not original with me. We've looked at it before, but we need to look at it again. Go to Chapter 11, verse 19. The setting here is much later, but Luke the writer refers back to Acts 7 when Stephen was stoned and that event was seven years after Pentecost.

**Acts 11:19**

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word (The Old Testament)to none but unto the Jews only."

See how plain that is? The Book says it, not me. So it was Jew only, because God had not given them instructions to go to the Gentiles. He is still dealing with His Covenant people as late as Acts Chapter 7. So certainly in Acts 2 the same thing applies. He is still dealing only with the Nation of Israel and that is why Peter addresses it as such.

**Acts 2:22,23**

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs (and that is why we covered them as we came through the Four Gospels. And John tells us the purpose of those signs and miracles in John 20:30-31 was to show that He was The Christ the promised Messiah, and Peter is rehearsing that here with these Jews) which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:"

"Him (speaking of Jesus), being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:"

What's another word for slain? Murdered. Killed. How would you like to have your pastor stand up behind the pulpit Sunday after Sunday pointing his finger at the congregation and saying, "You killed the Son of God." We don't hear that, and we are not supposed to, but Israel deserved it because they had killed their Messiah. And Peter makes it so plain: You killed Him. But back up a few words in this verse and there are two tremendous words that I'm afraid the average Bible students don't see. There is so much in this Book to learn. In fact, the average Christian is so ignorant of this Book. But when I use the word 'ignorant' that doesn't mean they are short on brain power.

Hey, I'm average in brain power, but are a lot of things that I'm completely ignorant of. And most Church members know just a little bit of the stuff that they have scratched off the surface. And so consequently, with so little Biblical knowledge they
can come into the work-a-day world and they can embrace secular humanism and they don't know what they are doing. And so people ask me why I do what I do. I don't take any compensation, and I don't want any. If I can just get people to wake up and realize that there is so much in this Book to learn that will help us as a nation in day-to-day living and in experience. In good citizenship. We can see what's taking place in our young people tonight. They have no sense of right and wrong. Why? They don't know what this Book says! All you have to do is look at our beloved nation tonight and see murder and crime running rampant, and that's not the way it was meant. If people would only realize the Godliness of our founding fathers. And how they all quoted this Book.
LESSON TWO * PART III

ACTS CHAPTERS 1 & 2 - EXPLANATION OF ACTS 2:38

We were in Acts 2:23. But I want you to look at the two words in the middle of that verse:

Acts 2:23a

"Him (Jesus), being delivered by the determinate counsel (that word counsel is spelled with an "se" so it denotes a meeting of minds? When you have that kind of counsel that's what you are doing.) determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,..."

What does that mean? Well Peter has just accused Israel of killing their Messiah. But was God taken by surprise? Long before anything was ever created, the Godhead (and it didn't take a 30 minute committee meeting) determined in a split second decision, if I may call it that, that They would create the human race knowing the human race would sin and need a Redeemer. It was all preplanned. Those of you who have heard me teach these past four years on television, may have raised your eyebrows when I made reference to the fact that when Christ came the first time, Israel was given the opportunity to have The King and the Kingdom. But in the foreknowledge of God, what did He know? That they would reject Him (but nevertheless that offer was still valid, because of free will). And it had to be that way in order to bring about the Crucifixion. That also was in the predetermine counsel of God. So the whole Godhead is involved in this tremendous work of redemption. The other word I like to point out is His foreknowledge. Back in eternity past, they put the whole plan together, and the reason they could put it together was their foreknowledge. Let me show you what I'm talking about. Come to I Peter Chapter 1:

I Peter 1:1,2a

"PETER an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers (always realize to whom a particular Scripture is written. Peter here is basically writing to Jews out in the dispersion) scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect (believing Jews) according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,..."

And you see that makes all the difference in the world. God in His foreknowledge knew what everyone who has ever lived or will live, would do with His offer of Salvation. So He knew what Israel would do. He knew as He brought the little nation on the scene with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob exactly what they would do. And then in His foreknowledge, everything would come together according to His plan. But it wasn't that He took away their choice. God never does that, but He knew what they
would do with their choice. Yes, God knew in His foreknowledge which of these Jews would be believers that Peter is writing to. In His foreknowledge, He knew you and I would be believers. And knowing that we would be believers, He could reserve a place of service in the Body for us. And all of this is based on His foreknowledge. Back to Acts Chapter 2. So Peter tells them that they didn't take God by surprise when they crucified Him, He knew they would. And it was all decided before anything ever happened.

Acts 2:23,24

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:" And I'm glad we don't have to sit under that accusation Sunday after Sunday, hearing someone tell us that we killed The Messiah. But here Peter is accusing these Jews that they killed Him. Verse 24:

"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

He couldn't be held by it, because He was God. But Peter is making the point that even though they had killed their Messiah, their King, they didn't stop God, because God raised Him from the dead. And they knew from Psalms 110:1 that God had called Him back to heaven. Ready yet to return and still able to give them the Kingdom. We understand this as we study these early chapters of Acts. Peter is absolutely going to confirm His death, burial, and Resurrection. He merely states it as fact. But I maintain Peter never uses this as the Gospel for these Jews to believe for their Salvation. If you can prove this from Scripture let me know. Peter is still using the Gospel of the Kingdom and the Baptism of John, but also remember this is all that has been revealed to him. Now verse 25:

Acts 2:25,26

"For David speaketh concerning him (Christ), 'I foresaw The Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:'"

David here is quoting Christ you might say. So Peter quotes the Psalms in verse 27:

Acts 2:27,28

"Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (the three days and nights He was in Paradise), neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made
known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance." Now Peter comes back to his own first person speaking and he says:

Acts 2:29-31

"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David (whom Peter had just been quoting out of the Psalms) that he (David) is both dead and buried (David wasn't saying that death couldn't hold him), and his sepulchre is with us unto this day."

"Therefore being a prophet (most people don't think of prophecy coming out of the Psalms, but there is much prophecy in the Psalms), and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;" Now who sits on a throne? A King. And Peter is driving home the point that their King that they crucified and killed can still be their King, since God has raised Him from the dead.

"He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ (David wasn't speaking concerning himself, he was speaking concerning Christ. That death and hell couldn't hold Him), that his (Christ) soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."

This throws a curve at some people. Why didn't Mary recognize Jesus on that early Resurrection morning? Because it was in the predawn darkness, for one thing, and secondly all Mary could remember about Jesus was how horrible His body looked while hanging on the Cross. Not only had He been whipped with blood running down His body, but in addition the load of sins for the whole world had been placed on Him, causing His body to be marred and disfigured more than any human being ever or since. And that was the last picture that Mary had of Jesus. But when she sees Him on that Resurrection morning He had been healed of all that abuse. He looked normal, but He still had the nail prints of course. And Mary couldn't put all of that together. But it was the same Christ, only now with that glorious resurrected body.

Acts 2:32

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

Remember if there is one proof of Resurrection that stands out above all others, it is Peter himself. Peter, you see at the night of the arrest and conviction, was fearful for his life. He denied Jesus three times; the eleven scatter in fear for their lives, and I can't blame them. But after the Resurrection, they have a boldness that no one can shake. And why? The proof of Resurrection! We are living in a time where I'm afraid
that even here in our beloved America, we as Bible believing believers could find ourselves under a lot of pressures. We could find ourselves under a lot of persecution and it can come very fast. Are we ready? Are you so bound in the hope and power of Resurrection that you're not afraid of what they might do to this body of flesh? That's where we should be. We should have no fear of death, because death is going to be so temporary, because of Resurrection power. And this is where these twelve men are now. Nothing scares them. Rome or the Jews don't scare them. And because of the power of the Resurrection. Now verse 33, and Peter is referring to Christ.

**Acts 2:33**

*Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost* (that goes back to John 14, where they were promised a Comforter), *he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

What are they seeing and hearing? The power and manifestation of the descended Holy Spirit. That these uneducated Galileans can speak every language and dialect of the then-known world. And that was only part of it! They will continue on with all the other signs and wonders that Jesus performed. Again to prove that God was in all of this.

**Acts 2:34,35**

*For David is not ascended into the heavens* (the Psalms were referring to Christ rather than David); *but he saith himself, 'The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,*""

'*Until* (now what kind of word is that? A time word. He is not going to sit at the Father's right hand forever. There is coming a day when He is going to arise from that seated position. Why? He's going to leave heaven, and come back to earth. And is yet going to be The King of that promised Kingdom on the earth) *I make thy foes thy footstool.*"

We are getting close to a portion of Scripture that I think has been totally confused by almost all groups, and we're just going to take it for what it says. We're not going to spiritualize it, or allegorize, it we are going leave it right where it is. Verse 36:

**Acts 2:36a**

'*Therefore* (because of all that has just taken place. Israel has had The Messiah for three years, performing signs and miracles, they crucified Him, God raised Him from
the dead, and sent the Holy Spirit, and everything is falling into place) *let all the house of Israel...*

Now you can't put us Gentiles in this verse, unless you force it. Peter is speaking to Jews on Covenant grounds. It's the fulfilling of the Covenant which God made with Abraham. Let's pause for a moment and go to Chapter 3, so you'll know what I'm talking about. And again Peter is preaching to a Jew-only crowd.

*Acts 3:24,25*

"Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." What days? Everything that has just taken place. According to Peter, the Crucifixion, Resurrection, ascension and coming of the Holy Spirit was prophesied. Look at verse 25:

"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant (only the Nation of Israel. All prophecy is directed to the Nation of Israel, they are the ones that will be at the core of these prophetic events. Even the horrible events in Revelation will be directed primarily at the Jew. But the whole world will also reap the fallout from these events. Jeremiah 30 tells us it's the time of Jacob's trouble) which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, 'And in thy seed (through the Nation of Israel) shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.'"

So Peter is on Covenant ground. He's still on the basis that everything that has been since Abraham, that is: the Nation of Israel was to receive the Redeemer, The Messiah, The King and the Kingdom, and it would be through Israel that God would gather the Gentiles. I never like to leave people with the idea that God had cast off the Gentiles. Oh, not at all. But He was going to use the Nation of Israel on Covenant grounds to bring them to Salvation. Even right here God has never said a word to anybody that He's setting the Covenant promises aside for awhile. He hasn't told anybody yet that they don't have to keep Temple worship, or keep the Law. He hasn't told people they must believe in His death, burial and Resurrection for their Salvation. Not a word about that as of yet. You can't find it here. And that is what I try to tell people to understand. Don't take my word for it. **Search the Scriptures, but be sure you understand that the Scripture is putting Salvation on His death, burial, and Resurrection. Remember, there is never any reason to force anything into Scripture. Just leave them where they are. You can't put a square peg in a round hole without doing a lot of damage.** So here Peter is still on Covenant ground. Back to Acts 2:36:

*Acts 2:36*
"Therefore let all the house of Israel (He's talking to Jew only) know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Now we have to compare Scripture with Scripture. Come to the Book of Galatians, and just look at the difference in the language. We just saw Peter accusing the Nation of Israel of killing their Messiah, and now look what Paul tells us here in the Church Age.

**Galatians 1:3,4a**

"Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins,..."

And that's Paul's theme all through his writings. It's as different as day from night with Peter's message. Peter's sermon just doesn't fit Paul's doctrine at all. And it wasn't supposed to. God hadn't revealed Paul's message yet. It's still a secret kept in the mind of God. Now back to Acts verse 37:

**Acts 2:37**

"Now when they heard this (heard what? That they were guilty of crucifying their Messiah. And remember, Peter isn't just talking to 40 or 50 people. He's got thousands out in front of him listening out there in that Temple complex. This is the feast of Pentecost and they have come from everywhere as we seen in verses 9-11) they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren what shall (what's the pronoun?) we do?'"

Remember Peter is addressing this great crowd of Jews on Covenant ground. He has accused them of killing their Messiah, and now they are so convicted that I suppose in one way or another word gets up to Peter as he is speaking. And they say, "Well, Peter, what in the world are we (and remember that pronoun) supposed to do?" Now that is the question coming from the Nation of Israel.
LESSON TWO * PART IV

ACTS CHAPTERS 1 & 2 - EXPLANATION OF ACTS 2:38

Let's pick up again in the Book of Acts and for a short review we will start at Chapter 2 verse 36. Remember this is a Jewish feast day that is being celebrated. Jews from the then-known world have come to celebrate the feast of Pentecost. This is one of the seven feasts listed in Leviticus 23. Now it's on this day of Pentecost that this huge crowd of Jews are out there in the Temple area and Peter, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is addressing this great gathering. And regardless what nations these Jews have come from, they are hearing it in their own language. And this is the miracle of it all. Peter is speaking to Jew only (with an occasional proselyte). There is no Gentile ground here. God doesn't put Gentiles in this group and neither should we. It's a Jewish feast day, a Jewish crowd, a Jewish speaker, and a Jewish message. And now verse 36:

Acts 2:36,37

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly (this is all twelve tribes that are represented here, and God knows who they are), that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Peter is accusing these Jews of killing Christ their Messiah. "Now when they heard this they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren what shall we do?" And before we look at Peter's answer, I want to take you back to Acts Chapter 16.

In Chapter 16, Paul has begun his missionary journey throughout western Turkey. Earlier in this chapter the Holy Spirit directed him over into Greece. One of the first cities he approached there was Philippi. And that is where he met Lydia, who was the first European convert. After the conversion of Lydia, he is arrested and beaten along with Silas, and cast into the lower dungeon of the jail, as in verse 25. The setting is completely different than in Acts 2. This is all Gentile ground, a Gentile prison, a Gentile jailer, This Gentile jailer may have witnessed Paul and Silas preaching, and saw their arrest and beating. Now he was given charge over these two men along with the rest of the prisoners.

Acts 16:25-29

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them."
"And suddenly there was a great earthquake (we still haven't left the economy of signs and miracles, and wonders. These will pass off the scene in Paul's ministry at a little later time. But at this time we have a miraculous earthquake with a distinct purpose), so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed."

"And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled." The Roman authority would have killed him if prisoners had escaped.

"But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, `Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.'" Although they could have fled they didn't, because this is a Sovereign God at work.

"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,"

Why did this pagan Gentile jailer pick Paul and Silas out of all his prisoners? Somehow, God let him know that here was the answer to his dilemma. He's got all these prisoners loose, ready to flee, but they are staying there. God lets that jailer know the answer to his problem, but it's going to be a lot more than a bunch of prisoners, it's going to be the man's own soul.

Acts 16:30

"And brought them (Paul and Silas) out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Now look at the comparison.

Peter, preaching in Acts Chapter 2, is dealing with the Covenant Nation of Israel. And they say in verse 37, "What must we do?" But God doesn't deal with Gentiles on Covenant ground. He deals with us as individuals. Every individual has to ask that same question. "What must I do...?" Let's compare the answers each were given. In Acts Chapter 2, it is very clear, anyone can understand it. I'm leaving every word the way it's in your Bible and mine. I'm not changing a thing. Israel says, "What must we do?" Look at Peter's answer.

Acts 2:38

"Then Peter said unto them, `Repent, and be baptized (the next two words are crucial) every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,'"
Everyone of them would have to be converted and accept Christ as their Messiah for God to pick up where He had left off. He would have sent back The King and set up the Kingdom. Peter also tells them this in Acts 3:26. Look at the message. Peter says, "Repent and be baptized." Who began that message? John the Baptist. John was the herald of The King, and his message was, "Repent and be baptized." That was for the Nation of Israel. Now compare this with Paul's answer to the Gentile in Acts Chapter 16. Paul is not talking to the Nation of Israel, he's talking to a Gentile. And when this Gentile asks what he must do to be saved, what does Paul tell him?

Acts 16:31

"And they (Paul and Silas) said, 'Believe on The Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.'"

Does it say Repent and be baptized? No, and if that was the criteria it would have been in here. That was the Jewish program, and by this time it has fallen through the cracks because Israel is rejecting it again. God has now turned to the Gentiles through the Apostle Paul, without Israel. So the jailer said, "What must I do?" The answer is simple: "Only Believe on The Lord Jesus Christ." Now when you know the rest of Paul's message, he only had one Gospel to believe: "That Christ died for your sins, was buried and rose from the dead." You can find that message in many places in Paul's letters, for example I Corinthians 15:1-4. Believe the Gospel. And it's no different for Gentiles today, and the Jew as well. That is the criteria tonight. We have to believe the Gospel and nothing else. You search Paul's letters from Romans through Hebrews (and Hebrews is more Jewish than the rest and there is a reason for that), and show me one place where Paul teaches repentance and baptism for Salvation. You won't find it. Paul doesn't teach it. Paul's message is a different economy and you can't mix them. A lot of people try to. Our Lord didn't mix them and neither should we. The verses in Galatians 2:7-9 exist because they were two different messages. That's why Peter says Paul's message of Salvation is hard for him to understand in II Peter 3:15-16. To the Jew it was repent and be baptized. To the Gentile it is believe the Gospel. See how simple that is. Now let's come back to Acts 2 and make another tremendous comparison. Read verse 38 again:

Acts 2:38

"Then Peter said unto them, `Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,...'" The whole Nation of Israel had to repent and be baptized.

Winning the whole world has never been implied with Paul. In Acts 15, when even James had to agree that God is using Paul to go to the Gentiles, what was the
expression that James used? Calling out a people for His name. That doesn't imply 99 or 100%. Christianity has always been just a small percentage. But we should always be ready to share the Gospel that Paul presents to everyone we come in contact with when the opportunity presents itself. I get a kick out of the Gallop polls, the last one I saw was 60% of Americans were professing Christians. That's a joke because 60% of the Bible belt aren't Bible believing Christians, let alone other vast areas of our country. But it's always been that very small percentage, and it hasn't changed that much. Another comparison here in verse 38:

Acts 2:38

"...and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,"

I've had questions asked of me about this for many years, and let me ask you a question. What was the prerequisite in this verse for receiving the Holy Spirit? Repentance and baptism. That is the first part of the verse. Look at it again:

Acts 2:38

"...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Is there any mention of the death, burial, and Resurrection? Any mention of the shed blood for atonement? Not a word. But only the name. When you talk about the name of someone, what does that imply? Who he is. If I say the name of one of our Presidents, what do you associate that with? The White House. You speak the name and immediately it's the position that you're tied to. So, Peter doesn't mention death, burial, and Resurrection. But what were they to put their faith in? Who Jesus was. He was The Christ their Messiah, and they had killed Him. But God had raised Him from the dead. They were to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and then they would receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. In Acts Chapter 10, we have Peter at the house of Cornelius, a Gentile. This is seven years after the Cross. Not a Gentile has been saved. Back in Acts 2, the Jews had to repent and be baptized, then they could receive the Holy Spirit. Now look at what it says here:

Acts 10:44

"While Peter yet spake (he hadn't come to the end of his message) these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word."

And we know they all believed. Have they been baptized yet? No, these are Gentiles who haven't heard anything of the Law. But the moment they believed Peter's
message the Holy Spirit came down, and the amazing thing is God had to prove to
Peter and these six other Jews that God was doing something totally new, and that was
saving Gentiles! Not on the basis of repentance and baptism, but the moment they
heard the word and believed. Peter is still tied to that Jewish economy, so when he
sees what is happening he commands these Gentile believers to be baptized after the
fact instead of before as we saw in Acts 2:38:

Acts 10:47

"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have (past
tense) received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"

This isn't a contradiction, this is not Chapter 10 contradicting Chapter 2, but rather a
change of events. Ten is Gentile and Two is still Jew. Acts is a transitional book, so
always be aware that what was good for the Jew under that Jewish economy seems
like a contradiction, but it's not, it's only God changing the program. The moment we
believe for our Salvation the Gospel of Grace, that Jesus died for our sins, was buried,
and rose from the dead, the Holy Spirit baptizes us and we are saved. Don't put the
message that Peter preached and the message that Paul preached in a blender and mix
it all up and expect to understand it. That will give you heartburn, and you will never
be able to see what you should clearly believe for your Salvation. But if you will
realize that God is changing the program when He goes to the Gentiles, and leave the
Scriptures right where they are, I believe the Scriptures will be opened to you. So
many people come into my classes and almost immediately have their eyes opened. I
don't do that, the Holy Spirit does that when you search the Scriptures.

When I first started teaching in Oklahoma, I had a class in a home in Stigler. I hadn't
taught for long when a professional man, who has since died, shook his head and
said, "Why haven't we been taught this before?" Later that year he told me, "I feel
like I have been cheated all my life, because so much of the Scripture I couldn't
understand, but this teaching just lays it all out so beautifully." And countless
numbers have said the same thing. It is so plain if you will just separate the Jewish
program from the Gentile. It's the same God. God hasn't changed but His program has.
Now we are resting on the finished work of the Cross. Peter hasn't been told about this
yet, Peter is still on Covenant ground. So he is still proclaiming a repentance and
baptism, and then the Holy Spirit. Let's look in Ephesians Chapter 1. Ephesians is one
of Paul's later epistles. You will see things in these prison epistles that he doesn't even
allude to in his earlier writings. Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians are higher
ground and deeper water so far as doctrine is concerned. This is where the meat of the
Word is.

Ephesians 1:12,13
"That we (believers) should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." It doesn't say repented and baptized, but rather first trusted in Christ. "In whom ye also trusted, after (notice the progression) that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation (I Corinthians 15:1-4): in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."

Do you see the order? Every child of God has to come from a place of being a sinner, a son of Adam, condemned already. As soon as we realize that we are a sinner, we heard the Gospel and the Holy Spirit opened our understanding and we believed it. The moment we believe the Gospel the Holy Spirit comes in, and becomes God's brand upon us, He becomes the very power of God within us, and we are not under Law but rather Grace. That doesn't mean we become lawless. Grace is never license. But we have been given such freedom under Grace. We are now led and guided by the Holy Spirit of God. And that is part and parcel of the whole Salvation experience, and that is what makes true born again believers so different from false professors. A lot of people who are church members have never experienced true Salvation. They can't tell you what they believe for their Salvation. I always compare them to the Old Testament when Israel came out of Egypt. There was a great group of hangers-on. The mixed multitude. They were the unbelievers who were just hanging on to see what would happen. And a lot of so-called Christians are hanging on to the social environment of the Church, they want to be part of all the good things. They enjoy the music and all of that. But you get them down to the nitty gritty of studying this Book, the nitty gritty of actually living a testimony for Christ, and you can forget it. But God is not looking for that. He is looking for men and women who have experienced a genuine Salvation. They have experienced the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and we don't need law to tell us what we can and can't do. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 1:14**

"Which is the earnest (our down payment) of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." And remember the purchased possession is the whole person: the body, soul, and spirit.
LESSON THREE * PART I

ACTS CHAPTER 3, 4, & 5

It's so nice to hear from so many of you who tell us not to change a thing in our teaching. Just keep it simple so we can understand it, and that is what we intend to do. We trust we are reaching hearts that probably would never otherwise be reached. We also know that a lot of folk are having their eyes opened to a lot of things that they never knew were in this Book. Now today we are going to jump right in where we left off in our last lesson, and that would be Acts Chapter 2. We finished verse 38 in our last lesson, but for a short review let's back up to verse 36 so we can get the backdrop of this tremendous chapter.

Pentecost has now come, 50 days after the Crucifixion, and I maintain that it is one of the seven Jewish feast days that we find in the Book of Leviticus Chapter 23. It's a Jewish crowd with a Jewish speaker, and I know that 90% of Christendom has been taught it is the birth of the Church, the Body of Christ. And I taught it that way for ever so long, and I was never comfortable teaching it that way, because there were so many things that just didn't fit. The language in this chapter does not correlate with what we understand as church doctrine. So I make no apology for the fact that I'm going to be pointing out some things that are probably contrary to tradition. But don't think for a moment that I don't know what traditional teaching is. Traditional teaching tells us that here at Pentecost we have the beginning of the Gentile Body of Christ, but how can it be, because of the language, and setting. But now as we look at Chapter 2, look at some of the language that Peter uses. It's plain English for us.

Acts 2:5

"And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." There are no Gentiles here.

Acts 2:14

"...Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:"

Acts 2:22a

"Ye men of Israel,..." Now that doesn't include Gentiles as I read English. These were all Jews, at a Jewish feast day in the Temple area.
Now come down to verse 36. We have Peter speaking, and he told these Jews how they had crucified their Messiah.

Acts 2:36

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly (Peter doesn't say, "And you Gentiles," - he leaves it at that), that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

I never want to be accused of being anti-Semitic by pointing out that Peter puts the blame upon the Nation of Israel. I am by no stretch of the imagination anti-Semitic. And I know that here in Acts Peter will over and over, lay the blame for the Crucifixion on the Jewish Nation. And of course they did precipitate it. But also never lose sight of the fact of what Psalms Chapter 2 said in verse 1:

Psalms 2:1

"The Kings of the earth (Gentiles) set themselves, and the rulers (Jews) take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,"

So the whole human race is guilty of having crucified The Messiah. But here Peter is dealing with the Nation of Israel on Covenant grounds, and he is pointing out that they who should have known better, rejected the One that God sent to fulfill that Abrahamic Covenant as well as the other Covenants that are associated with it. So I don't want to be misunderstood when I point out that Peter said they killed The Christ. Now verse 37:

Acts 2:37

"Now when they heard this (the Spirit is convicting them), they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

The pronoun here is `we.' God is dealing with the whole Nation of Israel. So the question was so appropriate. "What shall we do...?" And remember we compared Peter's answer with that of Paul with the Philippian jailer.

Acts 2:38

"Then Peter said unto them, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you.."*
We'll see that "every one of you" again in Chapter 3. The idea was that if every Jew would have repented of their national sin; recognized that the One they killed was indeed their promised Messiah and King; then Chapter 3 tells us God would have sent Christ at that time to be their King and would yet set up the Kingdom.

As I teach these early chapters of Acts, I want you to remember our Gospel of Salvation, and that is to believe that Jesus died for you, was buried, and rose from the dead. I want you to see if you find that Gospel as a means of Salvation in any of these chapters. Look for it. But I promise you that you have to look real hard, because The Lord hasn't revealed that yet, and won't reveal it until we get to Paul. And if it's not there, we have no right putting it there, because The Lord certainly didn't. We often think, "Well, The Lord surely meant for it to be in there, so I'll put it in there to make it complete." But when we put our Gospel of Salvation in these early chapters we do great harm to the Scriptures. Just leave all Scripture exactly where it is, see who the Scripture is addressed to and you will be on solid ground. The emphasis in all of these early chapters was that the Nation of Israel was to believe in the name of Jesus Christ, and what did the name imply? Who He was. This goes all the way back to Matthew 16:13:

**Matthew 16:13**

"...Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" And then Jesus, I think, pointed right at Peter and asked him:

**Matthew 16:15,16**

"...But whom say ye that I am?" And what was Peters answer?

"And Simon Peter answered and said, `Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Peter doesn't say the One Who died for me, was buried and rose from the dead. Why? It hadn't been revealed that this was going to be the Church Age Salvation message. So the whole premise of the earthly ministry to the Nation of Israel was they were to keep the Law, because He never told them they weren't under the Law, He lived under the Law, Israel was under the Law, but along with that they were to believe Who He was. He was The Christ, their Messiah. Peter hasn't changed one bit. The only difference now is that Christ has died, had been buried, and was raised from the dead and ascended back to glory, but not a word yet that Salvation has been made available because of it. So in verse 38 all Peter says is to repent and be baptized for the remission of sin, because the Nation was guilty of killing their Messiah. Now verse 39:
Acts 2:39,40

"For the promise is unto you (remember He came to His own but His own received Him not), and to your children, and to all that are afar off (some think that is a reference to Gentiles. I don't see that, because the Jews were from one end of the empire to the other. Many were still dispersed even as far back as the Babylonian captivity. Remember, only a few thousand came back during that time. And even earlier, part of the ten tribes were taken up into Syria and never came back, so Jews were all over the then-know world), even as many as The Lord our God shall call." Now verse 40:

"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, 'Save yourselves from this untoward generation.'"

What was this generation of Jews guilty of? Rejecting and crucifying. And he says, "Don't identify yourself with those people, come out from that thinking that He was an impostor and blasphemer and separate yourself, and come to realize that He was Who He said He was. The Christ!" Now verse 41. Here is another verse that I used to twist as far out of shape as anybody could do it. I used this verse for years to get people people to do something.

Acts 2:41

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

Now what did John the Baptist do? As soon as they repented, he baptized them. And those believers became a separated group of Jews. And we have the same thing here. It's a furtherance of that same message. Only now the finished work of the Cross has been consummated, so that God could now save these people based on the shed blood. There is nothing here to indicate that these people are believing for their Salvation in what we call the Gospel. You know I'm talking about the Gospel that was revealed to Paul. Reference I Corinthians 15:1-4. Paul tells us that's the Gospel by which we are saved during this Church Age we are now living in. This Gentile Body of Christ. But here we don't see a word that they were to believe for their Salvation that Christ died for them. But rather the message was they killed Him. What a total difference. We are going to define the Church, and what it is all about in the New Testament, in a lesson in the near future.

Acts 2:42a

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine..."
What apostles are we talking about? The Twelve. And what did these Twelve men know? Not much more than that Christ had come, and fulfilled all the Old Testament promises. He had presented Himself as The King, The Messiah, but Israel had rejected Him. And that is all they knew. Rather than being misunderstood, I would like for us to turn to II Peter, the last chapter. We have a lot of people out there, with good intentions, well-churched, but they don't know these verses are in their Bible. And remember, Peter is writing these epistles shortly before he is martyred, so this takes us up to about 66 A.D. And in 70 A.D. the Temple is destroyed, and these same Jews and their children that Peter is pleading with go out into dispersion. Paul's letters have already been written for the most part, they may not have been circulated that much as of yet, but they have been written. Now look what Peter writes:

**II Peter 3:15,16**

"And account (understand, take it to heart) that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation (The Lord's not willing that any should perish); even (Peter says) as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;"

"As also in all his epistles (Romans, I & II Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, Galatians, and so forth are his epistles. Peter says in all those epistles), speaking in them of these things (what things? Those that pertain to Salvation as referred to in verse 15); in which are some things hard to be understood,..."

Now this is Peter writing by inspiration. And bless his heart, at the end of his life, he still can't quite put everything together that Paul has brought on the scene. So when people tell me they haven't heard this before, I tell them not to feel bad, because Peter spent three years with The Lord Himself; Peter preached from Pentecost on, filled with the Holy Spirit; and yet when Paul came on the scene, and had written his letters, Peter by inspiration had to admit right here at the end of his life that there was so much of that he couldn't comprehend. That's what The Book says, I'm not saying it. That is also implied in Galatians 2:7-9, where Peter and the eleven would go to the Jews with their message and Paul would go to the Gentiles with his message. Now read on:

**II Peter 3:16**

"As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest (or twist. That is what people have been doing with the Scriptures ever since Peter wrote it.
They twist the Scripture so that it fits what they think it should say), as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction,"

If people would only leave Scriptures where they are. God put them in the particular order they are in for a purpose. They try to fit Paul's doctrines and teaching with Peter and the eleven and they just won't fit. Our Lord and Saviour didn't do it as He inspired the writers, and we shouldn't try. Satan uses every avenue to confuse the Truth of God's Word. And he is doing a mighty good job of twisting the Scriptures.

I remember hearing an evangelist relate a story of what is happening even today. He was a young man of about 13 or so and in a group that did not believe in the literal, physical Second Coming of Christ. So, this young man went to the pastor and showed him the verse in the Book of Zechariah 14:4 that says, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives," He asked the pastor what he thought of that. The pastor looked at the verse and said, "Young man that verse doesn't mean what it says." So the young man turned around and left, and figured the pastor should know. He said when he reached the age of twenty, again he was bothered why this verse was totally ignored by his people. And by then, he had a different pastor, so he went into that pastor and showed him the verse, and said. "Now pastor, what do you do with a verse like this?" The pastor answered, "Ah, don't let that bother you, that's Apocalypse." This young man said that was a great big word that went right over his head, but he thought the preacher must know what he's talking about, so he dropped it for a while. He went on to tell us by the time he was twenty five The Lord had opened his eyes, and he saw that he had been misled. And he could see what he saw at the age of thirteen was more right than the people that he was questioning. And this is what we are plagued with today.

We are plagued with traditional views. People hear them from the pulpit and say they must be right because the preacher said so. Well, you don't go by what the preacher says. You don't go by what I say, but rather you must learn to search the Scriptures to see what they say. And I don't claim to have all the answers. Often I will put things out over television, and I don't expect people to say, "Well, that's the way it is, this guy know The Book." No. But I do expect people to search the Scriptures, and see if I'm right or wrong. I have so many tell us that for the first time in their life they are studying their Bible.

Peter then, at the end of his life, recognizes that Paul now has the answers to questions that he himself still can't quite comprehend. Now come back to Acts Chapter 2:42. So they are continuing in the apostles doctrines which of course included none of the revelations given to the Apostle Paul later. And this is where I always maintain that Scriptures are a progressive revelation. The Scriptures tell us that God has the ability to hide things until it was time to reveal them. God doesn't unload everything back in
Genesis as some think. He didn't put everything back there in the Old Testament, and He didn't tell everything in His earthly ministry. But as He sees fit, He reveals these certain truths and it's up to us to discern what and when they are. So here we have simply the "apostles doctrines and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayer." Now that is all very normal and common. They were now separated from the mainstream of Judaism and so the only place they could really talk together was in their own group of fellowship. And they would have their meals together.

You can know someone for a long time with a casual relationship, but you don't really get to know them or their family until you are invited into their home for a meal. We have experienced this so often, that when you are invited in for a meal everything is most generally just laid out. We get an idea where their kids are and who they are married to, and everything about the family. And I think that is the same situation here. They were coming together in a fellowship that they had never enjoyed in Judaism. Now verse 43:

Acts 2:43

"And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles."

Remember this is still very appropriate. They are an extension of Christ's earthly ministry. That's what He told them in Acts 1:8, that they would receive power. A kind of power that would continue to do what He had done while in their midst. Now verse 44. If you think this is a Church chapter, does your Church practice the next verse? I have never seen a Church that sells all their individual goods, cash in all their C.D.'s, sell their real estate, and cars and all they own and put it into a common kitty. But this is what they did.

Acts 2:44,45

"And all that believed were together, and had all things common. And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men ("men" is italicized so it has been added), as every man had need."

Every one is now living out of that common kitty which was probably very large starting out. Why were these people so ready to get rid of all their possessions. We are going to see in Chapter 3, that even good old Barnabas was a land owner and sold his land on the Island of Cyprus. Turned it into cash and brought the money to the kitty in Jerusalem. Now why were they so ready to do that? Because The King and Kingdom are just over the horizon. They can see the Nation of Israel responding to it like they did. And Peter tells them that if the whole Nation responds, that Christ would return
and they would have The King and Kingdom and who would need houses and land once the Kingdom is set up? The Old Testament promised that the Kingdom would be a utopia, there would be no poor, or no need for food. It would be the perfect environment that man is looking for. And that was just over the horizon. So they sold them gladly, thinking that this was in the immediate future. Now verse 46:

*Acts 2:46*

"And they, continuing daily with one accord (where) in the Temple (The Temple hasn't locked its doors. God hasn't said a word about staying away from it. There had not been one word uttered by anyone that they were not under Law. But we have all been instructed through the years to assume that these people are now under Grace and not Law. Don't ever assume anything, just search the Scriptures. And if you can find in the Scriptures that Peter and the eleven are saying that these Jews are not under Law, and can forget about Temple worship, that they are free from that, if you can show me that, then I'll change my way of teaching. But I'm not worried because you can't), and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,"

Now I have never been in a Church congregation that is that good. Have you ever been in a Church where everyone is agreed on everything? When you find a Church like that let me know because I'll drive a hundred miles to join it. There is no such thing now, but here in Acts it was! Why? Because this is not the Church as we understand it. This is a called out group of Jewish believers. The Spirit had been poured on them; they were all of one mind. They were all living out of one common kitty. And I know that kitty had to be kept going by new believers coming in and adding to it or else it was going to run out. What did happen? It ran out. And God in His Grace and goodness covered that situation with the Apostle Paul. Wherever Paul went he took up a collection for the poor and needy Jewish believers at Jerusalem. Why were they poor? Well, the kitty had been emptied.
I am never afraid to tell people my doctrinal position, and never claim to have all the answers, but I trust the Holy Spirit has kept me from error in any way. I never claim to be right and everyone else is wrong, but we have found that so many people have been freed of traditional teaching, and have gotten a brand new lease on Scripture, when they began to realize how all of these things are chronologically unfolding. Now let's pick up again in Acts Chapter 2, the last verse. Peter has been preaching to the Nation of Israel, and has been trying to convince them that the One they crucified was indeed their Christ, King, and Messiah. Many of them had been convicted, and as we saw in verse 41, three thousand on the day of Pentecost had repented of that sin, and were baptized. Then we saw in verses 42-46 that they sold all that they owned to put it into a common kitty so that all of them might live on that fund.

Acts 2:47

"Praising God, and having favour with all the people (true Christianity is that way. We stand for what we feel is the truth, but not in a contentious way. Too many times we put ourselves in a position where we are known for not getting along with people, and that is not a Christian testimony at all. These Jewish believers also had a lot of opposition from fellow Jews who were unbelievers and totally against this movement). And The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Here the word Church must be defined. The word translated Church in our Bible comes from the Greek word "ecclesia" It's where we get the word ecclesiastes or ecclesiastical which pertain to religious hierarchy. But the Greek word 'ecclesia' translated 'Church,' is also translated 'assembly.' Be careful. Not every time you see the word 'Church' in Scripture is it the New Testament Body of Christ. You have to learn to separate and put things in their rightful place. And every time you see the word 'Church' don't try to lump it all into one category. For example turn over to Acts Chapter 7. Seven years after Pentecost we find Stephen preaching also to the Nation of Israel. He is addressing Jews. And Stephen goes all the way through Israel's history, starting with Abraham and brings them on down through time. Let's start with verse 35. I want you to get the true setting. I had one gentleman write from the television audience that I was all mixed up, that the Church began clear back with Moses. Bless his heart, he just didn't know his Greek.

Acts 7:35,36
"This Moses whom they refused (that is the Israelites in Egypt), saying, 'Who made thee a ruler and a judge?' the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years."

Stephen is making the allusion that Moses was just a forerunner of The Christ. He was a type of Christ. And this is what Stephen is trying to emphasize. That the second Deliverer, Christ, they had crucified. I want to show you the setting he is referring to, when Israel had come out of Egypt, crossed the Red Sea and were encamped around Mount Sinai under Moses' leadership.

Acts 7:37,38

"This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, 'A prophet shall The Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.'" That was Moses speaking to the Israelites. Then Stephens says: "This is he (Jesus), that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai,..."

Was that a New Testament Church? Why of course not. But this gentlemen had the idea that the Church began back there in Sinai. That wasn't a Church as we understand the Church, but rather at Sinai it was a called out assembly. That is also the word 'ecclesia.' Israel was a called-out assembly. God called them and led them out of Egypt, encamped them in Sinai, and they became a called-out assembly. Not a Church. They didn't have deacons, or Bishops, or Pastors, they were under the Law of Moses. But it's the same word, only used in a different way. And while we are still in Acts let's turn to Chapter 19, where this same word "ecclesia" is not translated 'Church,' it's translated `assembly,' but it's not a Godly assembly. It's an ungodly assembly. Paul and Barnabas are in Ephesus and there has been such a turning from idolatry to Paul's Gospel that the makers of idols saw their businesses going down the drain. So there is a big uproar. And they trying to get the emotions of the idolatrous Ephesians to turn on Paul and these new converts.

Acts 19:28,29

"And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.' And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre." What do you have? A mob. A riot.
Acts 19:30-32

"And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre." Paul they will kill you. "Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly..." (Ecclesia)

Is that a Church? Hardly. But it was a called out assembly, because who had called them out? The Silversmiths. When you see the word `church,' you don't automatically think it's the Church as we know it, or as Paul refers to it as the Body of Christ. In Acts Chapter 2 the word `ecclesia' was a called-out assembly and that is indeed what the Jewish believers were. They separated themselves from the mainstream of Judaism. They believed that Jesus was The Christ. They were assembling themselves in fellowship and breaking of bread. And they are a called-out assembly. They are also a Church. But not necessarily the Body of Christ.

Turn to I Corinthians Chapter 12. Here we have a new connotation. This called-out assembly is not usually called the Church in Paul's writings, but it's the Church which is His Body, or the Body is the Church. And that is what qualifies it, although it is the same Greek word `ecclesia.' The Church today is a called-out assembly Who's Head is in heaven, as the Head of the Body. And we are the Body. That's a big difference. Peter doesn't teach or know that in Acts. Peter makes no mention that Christ is the Head of this called-out assembly, and that these Jewish believers are part of Him. It's as important to see what the Scriptures do not say as what they do say.

I Corinthians 12:12

"For as the body (human body) is one, and hath many members and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." What are we talking about? The Church which is His body. It doesn't matter what country that believer is in tonight, they are members of that Body. That wasn't true before.

I Corinthians 12:13

"For by one Spirit (it's capitalized, so Who is it? Holy Spirit) are we all (from the least to the greatest. As we become believers we are placed into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Some believers are far more spiritual than others. But regardless, if you are a believer you are in the Body of Christ. I've got a couple of fingers that were partially clipped off at one time. But they are still part of my body, they are not perfect but it's still me. And the same way with the Body of Christ. And that is what Paul is using here as a picture. That not every believer is all that he should or could be, but nevertheless he's still in the Body of Christ) baptized into one body, whether
we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free (it makes no difference, our station in life); and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

I Corinthians 12:14

"For the body is not one member, but many." Go to Ephesians 1. Paul constantly makes reference to the Church which is His Body (the word `ecclesia'). Still a called out assembly, but with one difference, this Church has the Head in heaven, and the Body is on earth. But the two can't be separated.

Ephesians 1:17

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:"

Ephesians 1:20

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,"

Ephesians 1:22,23

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church." What Church? "Which is his body (do you see the difference?), the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

That word `fulness' in the Greek also means `complement.' We are the complement of the Head. It's the same word, only in the Hebrew, in Genesis when Eve was given to Adam. She was given to be his complement, a part of him. That is why Paul brings in the physical marriage relationship between husband and wife as the beautiful picture of Christ and the Church which is His Body. I'm pointing this out to show that Peter doesn't address anything like this at all. None of this was ever revealed to Peter. Peter doesn't even mention the Body of Christ, and Peter doesn't mention being baptized into the Body of Christ. He hasn't had that revelation yet, and is unaware of it. So he is merely talking about a called out assembly of Jews who have separated themselves from the mainstream of Judaism by virtue of believing that Jesus was The Christ. Now Ephesians 5. Remember, Paul only writes to believers. And it's usually a Gentile congregation. There were some Jews in them I'm sure, but it's predominately to the believers who are members of a Gentile congregation.

Ephesians 5:21-23a
"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto The Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church:"

The Bible never gives authority for the husband to downtrod his wife. She is never to be his slave and servant, but she is a part of him. They are one. This is the Biblical teaching. Paul by inspiration is making it so plain. The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church. To the Church, Christ's the Head of the Body, and is never referred to as The King of the Church. But rather our Saviour. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, but to be scripturally correct He is not The King of the Church, but rather the Head. And what a difference that makes. If He was our King, we would be His subjects. Paul never intimates that we are subjects that have to bend to His every command, but rather we are part of Him. Just like the wife is part of the husband. Verse 24:

_Ephesians 5:24_

"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

Now husbands we are to have the same attitude toward our wives as Christ has to the Church. A husband with that kind of attitude will never have a divorce problem. You see, there is a whole different attitude when we treat our wives as Christ treats the Church. And what is that? Total love, even to the place that He died for her. I often wonder how many American husbands today would die for their wives? Would we really be able to say that I love her so much that if I have to give my life for her I will gladly. Now that is the real test. But that is how much we are to love our wife. Now read on:

_Ephesians 5:25_

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"

Do you realize that Scripture never tells wives to love their husbands. Never. I know Peter tells the mothers to teach their daughters how to love a husband. But it's never commanded the woman to love your husband. But husbands are commanded to love their wives. Why? It all goes back to Adam. God created Adam with the ability to love his helpmeet. But He also created in Eve the ability to respond to that love. And that's what God does with us. When He saves us and places us into the Body, we are going to have the ability to love Him in return. And so many people miss this. How
can you get this excited about The Bible, and Christian life? Well, unless you have experienced it, you can't explain it.

**Ephesians 5:26,27**

"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." Not baptism water but rather with Scripture.

"That he might present it (the Church, an ecclesia, called-out assembly) to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

**Ephesians 5:28-31**

"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as The Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones (because we have been united just like husband and wife), For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."

**Ephesians 5:32,33**

"This is a great mystery (that's why Peter couldn't comprehend so many of the things that were revealed to Paul. Remember, Peter wrote in II Peter that Paul wrote things that are hard to understand. Peter doesn't realize the full impact of this yet. That we as Gentiles believers are made one with Christ), but I speak concerning Christ and the church." The Body of Christ.

"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Now isn't it amazing that Paul in these series of verses constantly flips back and forth with the parallel of Christ and the Church, with the husband and wife. Why? Because it is a perfect synonymous relationship. Christ is the same to us as the husband is to the wife and the husband and wife relationship is the same as Christ and the Church. But remember Peter doesn't bring any of this up in Chapter 2 of Acts. He can't, nor was he expected to, because this hadn't been revealed yet. Back to Acts 2:47. We will go into Chapter 3 next lesson. Lets read verse 47 once again:

**Acts 2:47**
"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And The Lord added to the church (called-out assembly of believing Jews) daily such as should be saved."
LESSON THREE * PART III

ACTS CHAPTER 3, 4, & 5

Let's go to Acts Chapter 3 for our study. This is just a few days after Chapter 2. Where do Peter and John go? To the Temple. No one has told them to stop Temple worship. Even though they have come apart from the main stream of Judaism, yet they are still involved in the Temple worship.

Acts 3:1

"NOW Peter and John went up together into the Temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."

Does the Church have any instruction that at a certain hour we all bow down and pray? Most religions did and still do. And Judaism did. The ninth hour was the hour of prayer. And who goes? Peter and John. The average reader misses this. I used to miss those same things, but I started asking questions and my students started asking questions that I couldn't answer. And here is one of those questions. If this is the beginning of the Church, what are Peter and John doing going to the Temple at a prescribed hour of prayer? The Body of Christ doesn't have anything like that. So that's one of the things that made me start thinking. And I started looking, and I didn't come to the conclusion that I have over night, it took a long time for me to have searched the Scriptures to see what they really say. And as you study don't be afraid to say, well now what's going on here? Why is this like this? And that is the way you learn.

Acts 3:2

"And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the Temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the Temple;" He was a beggar. Now turn for a moment to Chapter 4 verse 22:

Acts 4:22

"For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed."

Why am I bringing this up? Who must have walked by this man time and time again in those 3 years of His earthly ministry? Christ. Why didn't He heal Him? Jesus was leaving all that for this time. That's the beauty of a Sovereign God, and so Jesus never healed him, knowing that the time would come when Peter and John would pass him
by, and this would precipitate a whole group of events. So this forty-year-old man was carried and laid at the gate which is called Beautiful and begged.

Acts 3:3-6

"Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the Temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee (now watch this): In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

What should Peter have put in there? If I would have had that power, I would have said, "Now look, in the name and in the power of the Resurrection of Christ rise up and walk." That is where power is generated so far as you and I are concerned. Peter doesn't even mention it, he only refers again to Who Jesus was, The Messiah, Israel's promised King, and Saviour.

Acts 3:7

"And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength." What have you got? A miracle, pure and divine.

Acts 3:8-11

"And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the Temple (he was a Jew), walking, and leaping, and praising God: And all the people saw him walking and praising God; And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the Temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."

Because this isn't far removed from Christ's earthly ministry, they should have been able to put two and two together and say, "These are the fellows that were with Him when He performed all those miracles." But memories are short aren't they. Now verse 12:

Acts 3:12

"And when Peter saw it (the amazement of the people), he answered unto the people, 'Ye men of Israel (He was talking only to Jews), why marvel ye at this? or why look ye
Most Jews today won't admit that Jews back then ever became followers of Christ, but archaeologists are finding evidence every day to the contrary. They are finding especially around the Sea of Galilee that indeed early believers of Christ were Jews. They are finding symbols carved in wood and stone that have the menorah, the candlestick of Israel's history together with the Cross. Those were Jews who became followers of Christ. Remember most Jews don't accept the New Testament. Look carefully at verse 13:

Acts 3:13

"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob (those three names are for the Jews and the beginning of their Nation. And it was to them that Israel's Covenant promises were repeated almost word for word. And at the end of the Covenant it was told that Salvation would go to the ends of the earth. And here comes Peter claiming these same Covenant promises out of Genesis), the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go." Peter says you caused Him to be crucified. Now verse 14:

Acts 3:14-16

"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;" Verse 15 is almost identical to the verse back in Chapter 2. "And killed the Prince of life (did that stop God? No), whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses." What does Peter now set up for these people to believe His name.

"And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong (compare that with what we are to believe for Salvation in I Corinthians 15:1-4. Peter doesn't make reference to it because that Gospel was revealed to Paul for us. Peter only knows to believe in His name), whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."

The name implied that Jesus was The Christ, He was The Messiah, He was the promised One according to the Covenant. Which Jesus had tried to tell the Nation of Israel exclusively for three years. They were the ones who had to believe first, and then the Gentiles. But Israel would not believe. Peter is hoping that Israel would wake up and realize that the One they killed was the promised Messiah.

Acts 3:17
"And now, brethren (Peter could never address Gentiles as brethren. Maybe he did about 30-35 years later when he wrote II Peter, but not at this point in time. They have no idea they are to have anything to do with Gentiles), I wot (know) that through ignorance ye did it (killed The Messiah), as did also your rulers."

Many years ago I had a retired pastor at one of my classes ask me, "Why did Peter give Israel this option, that they had killed their Messiah in ignorance? And why did Christ from the Cross say "Father forgive them," and why did Stephen in Chapter 7 say basically the same thing?" Well it took me a while to figure all that out. But I think I've come up with the right answer by going back into Israel's history. According to their law of cities of refuge, if an Israeli farmer was clearing rock off his field, throwing them over a hedge, and one of these rocks hit someone on the other side by accident and killed him, that Israeli could run to a city of refuge and plead with those city fathers about the accident. If they believed him they would send him back home totally set free because what he had done was in ignorance. Now bring that right up to the Cross.

Israel, had she rejected Him, knowing Who He was, God would have had to put them to death by completely destroying them. But since they did it in ignorance, God could continue to deal with them in mercy and Grace. Turn to I Corinthians. Paul is writing to the Gentile Church at Corinth. Paul only writes to believers. He never writes to the unbelieving world. But as he writes to the believers his message is going to go to the unbeliever also.

I Corinthians 2:7,8

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery (a secret), even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:" God knew that this apostle to the Gentile world would become a writer of Scripture. Now verse 8:

"Which none of the princes of this world knew (The Jewish leaders didn't know Who He was, Rome certainly didn't know): for had they known it they would not have crucified The Lord of glory." They just didn't know. Come back to Acts Chapter 3, and Peter is using this as an escape route for the Nation of Israel.

They were guilty of putting their Messiah to death, they rejected Him, and I think Israel is suffering for it to this very day. God's not through with the Nation, His mercy will come back them. He's still going to come back and keep His Covenant promises with them as a Nation. But for the past 1900 + years they have suffered so much and still have the Tribulation to go through.

Acts 3:17,18
"And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Israel should have known, Israel could have known, but they didn't know. And so consequently they rejected Him.

"But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets (the Old Testament was full of how He would come, suffer, die, be resurrected and ascend, but Israel couldn't comprehend all of that), that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." You can't stop God. Oh, He may move slowly, but all of these things had to happen and they did.

Acts 3:19-21

"Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing (the Kingdom) shall come from the presence of The Lord;" That's a semi colon, not a period. Verse 20 is a continuation of that same thought.

"And he (God) shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you:"

"Whom the heaven must receive (Ascension - Psalms 110:1) until (this is a time word. There is going to come a time when He is going to leave heaven again, but He would stay there until) the times of restitution of all things (now when is this old planet going to experience the restitution of all things? During the Tribulation. When the mortgage or the scroll in Revelation Chapter 5 is paid off. That is the road map of paying off the mortgage on the earth when the curse will be lifted. Remember Satan has been holding that mortgage for almost 6000 years, ever since Adam fell. But it's going to be restored to its original condition in the Garden of Eden before sin entered. Now that is the restitution of all things referred to in this verse), which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Even though Peter is expecting The Lord's immediate return to the Nation of Israel if they would repent, he also recognizes that they are going to go through seven years of restitution. Daniel's seventieth week. He knew that was all part of the prophetic program. That after the Tribulation, Christ would return. But it was hinging on Israel's repentance. The Kingdom couldn't come until the restitution of all things would come to pass. Remember how many times we have looked at Psalms Chapter 2? It tells all about this. They would reject The Messiah, they would put Him to death, God would call him back to heaven, set him at His right hand until His enemies were made His footstool. And the next verse in Psalms Chapter 2 says, then will come His wrath and vexation. And then the next verse says, yet have I set my King upon the holy hill of Zion. All was to flow straight through one right after the other.
But God in His wisdom has interrupted all of this. In this First Advent Israel rejected Him, and God called Him back to glory, Israel continued to reject, although several thousands are saved it was just a drop in the bucket. Peter tells us that ALL must repent and believe on His name. So they kept rejecting and finally we are going to see here in Acts that God is going to send them into dispersion. This happened in 70 A.D. when Titus of Rome destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem. At the present time we are seeing God bring the Jews back to the land. We know that God, after the final rejection, turns to the Gentiles through the Apostle Paul with Salvation by Grace with no connection to Israel's Law. We call it the Church Age. Calling out a people for His name, the Body of Christ.

We can see it so clearly, but Peter doesn't understand that nor was it ever intended for him to understand it. All Peter knows is that Israel is still under the Abrahamic Covenant, and if Israel would believe they could have The King and Kingdom as promised in Psalms Chapter 2. But all of Israel had to accept the fact that Jesus was their Messiah. And that is what you have to understand for this to make sense to you.

Always remember that the first part of Acts is nothing but Peter and the Nation of Israel. And then all of a sudden there is a departure, and what is it? The conversion of Saul. Then in Chapter 10, Peter goes to the house of Cornelius a Gentile, and that is all new. Israel is going off the scene, and Gentiles are coming into God's favor under Grace. Once you see that, The Book of Acts is so exciting to study. Now verse 22. Peter is still sticking to the Old Testament prophets and Covenant programs.

Acts 3:22-24

"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, `A prophet shall the Lord of your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me (Christ was a Jew); him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.'" What days? The days that have just taken place. And verse 25 is what opened my eyes.

Acts 3:25

"Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham,..."
LESSON THREE * PART IV

ACTS CHAPTER 3, 4, & 5

Let's go back to the last verse of Acts Chapter 3 and begin. This is shortly after Pentecost and if you watch the language you will see that Peter is still addressing Jew only, the Nation of Israel. And as we saw in the closing part of the last lesson Peter is still very much on Covenant ground. Now when I say on Covenant ground, remember I stressed that Abrahamic Covenant when we were back there in Genesis. Because I've found out in my own study that the Abrahamic covenant was really the bedrock of everything that God has been doing in order to redeem mankind.

After 2000 years of a hopeless race of humanity coming out of Adam, destroyed in the flood, and right back into paganism at the Tower of Babel, God in so many words at 2000 B.C. says, "I'm going to do something totally different. I'm going to call out one man. And out of that one man I'm going to bring to me a little nation, and I'm going work through that little nation and prepare them and through them I will take Salvation back to the whole main stream of humanity." And that of course was basically the Abrahamic Covenant. He promised Abraham a nation of people. He would put them in a geographic area of land and then at the appropriate time He would bring them their King, their Government and their Kingdom, and Israel could be the evangelization of the nations. But Israel rejected all that when they crucified and killed their King.

But even as we study in these early chapters of Acts we find God hasn't given up on them. I think that is what you must see in these early chapters of Acts. We like to normally think that as soon as Israel crucified their Messiah, The Christ, then God was through with them, and turned to the Gentiles, but that's not the case. And that is why I'm constantly showing you from Scriptures that Peter is still pleading with the Nation of Israel. He says, "The one you killed was the one you should have accepted as your King. But God raised Him from the dead, God has called Him back to glory, and God is ready to send Him back and still be your King, if you will just believe that that's Who He is." Pick that up in our closing remarks in our last lesson, verse 25, where Peter says to the Nation:

Acts 3:25

"Ye are the children of the prophets, and (the children) of the covenant which God made with our fathers (remember Peter is just as Jewish as the rest of them), saying unto Abraham, `And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.'"
Now in the seed of Abraham, we can also go all the way back to Genesis 3:15. The seed of the woman. And Who was the Seed of the woman? Who was the Seed of Abraham? The Christ! So this was all tied all the way back as part of God's plan of redemption for the whole human race. But it was going to be through the Nation of Israel. And Peter is pleading with them. You're the Covenant people, believe it, accept Him as your King, and as your Messiah, and God would yet send Him again. Then verse 26:

*Acts 3:26*

"Unto you first (do you see how plain that is?) God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away (how many?) every one of you from his iniquities."

Now that was the secret to the whole thing. Every Jew had to believe and be converted and understand that Jesus was The Messiah, their Christ. They could have had the Tribulation and The King and Kingdom just that quick, and then they could have evangelized the whole Gentile world as the Old Testament prophesied. We have looked at that Scripture so often in Zechariah 8:

*Zechariah 8:22,23*

"yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; 'In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.'"

But Israel rejected all of that, and it all fell through the cracks temporarily. Israel is still going to have her day in the sun, but in the meantime God has now been dealing with us Gentiles. But remember the secret to these passages. Everyone of the Jews had to believe who Jesus was and turn from their iniquities.

*Acts 4:1,2*

"AND as they spake unto the people (the Jewish nation), the priests, and the captain of the Temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them," No Gentiles involved here. "Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead."

We must be careful here. Especially the Sadducees, because the Sadducees did not believe in the Resurrection. You lived like an animal and died like one. That was their
doctrine. Here is the one group most concerned about Peter's preaching that Christ is alive and is yet able to come and be their King. The Sadducees are saying to Peter, "How dare you teach something that flies in the face of our doctrine? There's no such thing as someone coming back from the dead." So what did these Sadducees do?

Acts 4:3,4

"And they laid hands on them and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of men was about five thousand."

So you see there is a fair number of Jewish believers at this time. Three thousands in Chapter 2, others in the interim, and now we have the figure of 5000. But out of several million people, how many is that? Just precious few. It's just a sprinkling. Now verse 5 through 12 we will just skim, because here we have Peter and the others arrested.

Acts 4:5-7

And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them (disciples) in the midst, they asked, 'By what power, or by what name (do you see that), have ye done this?'" How they healed the lame man was still the point of controversy.

Acts 4:8,9

"Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them (now watch this, who is Peter talking to here? I'm just asking that you read what it says), Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel," Who were Israel's rulers? Their religious leaders.

"If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent (or crippled) man, by what means he is made whole;" Peter says if this is what we are on trial for:

Acts 4:10

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified (remember Peters tells Jews they killed Him. Paul tells us Gentiles that He died for us. Do you see the difference, it's like day and night), whom God raised from the dead (Peter says this for the Sadducees), even by him doth this man stand here before you whole."
Remember, there are no Gentiles in anything we have studied in Acts so far. You and I are not in there. Just read it in that light. Our risen Lord didn't put the Gentiles in there and we shouldn't put ourselves there. Now reading on:

Acts 4:11

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

All through Scripture, who is the Stone or the Rock? Christ is. Daniel Chapter 2, when he sees the Stone cut out without hands smiting King Nebuchadnezzar's vision. Who's the Stone? Christ. When Moses struck the Rock out there in the desert, and out came water, Who was the Rock? Christ again. And all through Scripture, the analogy is that He is the Stone or Rock. And when He said to Peter, in Matthew 16 the following:

Matthew 16:18

"And I say also unto thee, 'That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;...""

Who was the Rock? Christ was. He's the Rock of our Salvation. Here Peter is using an Old Testament analogy how that He was to be the Chief Corner Stone, He was to be the Head of the Corner, and He was the Stone they needed to hold everything together.

Legend has it that as Israel was building Solomon's temple that the cornerstone was brought in first, but the builders didn't know what to do with it so they dumped it out in a vacant lot. Grass grew over it and people would stumble over it as they cut across the lot. The cornerstone was used to hold everything together. But they threw Him out into a vacant lot and He has become a stumbling stone even to this day. Now in that same light the Scripture says that "Jerusalem will also be a stone of stumbling." And isn't that exactly what it is? All the nations of the world are stubbing their toe on Israel and Jerusalem. And it's going to be the stone of stumbling right up until the last day. But here Peter is saying, "You builders should have recognized that Chief Corner Stone. You should have known that He was the One that would hold the whole thing together. Instead you pitched Him off to the side and didn't know what to do with Him." This is exactly what he is saying. Let's read it again.

Acts 4:11,12
"This is the stone which was set at nought (or count for nothing) of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

This subject always comes up in our classes. What about Muslims? They are devout. They're sincere, some are probably better people than most of us, morally and every other way. But what's their downfall? They do not recognize the name of Christ. And so there is no other name. Salvation has to be centered on the finished work of the Cross of Christ. Now verse 13:

**Acts 4:13**

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John,..."

Remember I told you that after the Resurrection that the disciples were very bold, because they saw what power there was in the Resurrection. Before, they scattered at Jesus' arrest. But after the Resurrection they become very bold, and were afraid of nothing. Let's turn for a moment to Acts Chapter 8, and let me show you. This is seven years after Pentecost. Saul's persecution has been running rampant, especially in the area of Jerusalem against Jewish believers. And here they have just put Stephen to death by stoning.

**Acts 8:1**

"AND Saul was consenting unto his death, And at that time there was a great persecution against the church (the assembly) which was at Jerusalem (Jewish believers); and they (these Jewish believers) were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."

Two things should just shock us. One, in spite of the terrible persecution that was coming in upon these believers, that Jesus was The Christ, these twelve men did not run. Everyone else is fleeing for their life, but these twelve men sit tight. Two: if the great commission was kicked in gear like we think it should have been, then why are these twelve men still in Jerusalem, seven years after Pentecost (have you ever thought of that? Most people don't). They should have, according to most of our understanding, been out among the Gentiles a long time ago. But the apostles are still looking for The King and the Kingdom. And they weren't about to go any where except to Jerusalem. Because that is where Christ is going to return to, and it didn't matter how tough it got they weren't going to leave Jerusalem. Also in Chapter 11 we find:
Acts 11:19

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only."

Do you see that? At least seven years after the Cross and it's still "Jew only." And for these Jewish believers that is all they knew and that is all that was expected of them, because of the Abrahamic Covenant. They all had to be converted and become a nation of priests before they could do that. So don't be too hard on them. But the main thing I want to impress upon you is we all have the idea that these Jews were going out into the ends of the earth with the Gospel. They weren't as you can see. We'll cover that in more detail later. But come back with me now to Acts 4:13 again:

Acts 4:13

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men (hey, that's me. And I'm not apologizing for it one bit. I don't stand here with a long list of degrees behind my name, but neither did these guys. And yet God used them. Some people will say to me, who are you to be doing what you're doing? You haven't had an education in all of this. And they are right. But did Amos? Or David? What were they? Basically what I am - they came off the ranch. And God used them. And if God used them, He can use me. If He can use me, He can use you. When Christianity started going down the tube and lost its power, I maintain it was when congregations wouldn't even consider a man for the pulpit unless he had a Doctoral degree. And don't think I'm against education, because I admire people that have got it. But when that becomes the sole criteria for being qualified to preach and teach The Word, I feel they are out in left field. These disciples were uneducated and ignorant men. And until we recognize that is what we are, God can't use us.), they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

That three years with Jesus was better than fifteen years in a seminary, or the University of Jerusalem, and they recognized that.

Acts 4:14-17

"And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, Saying, 'What shall we do to these men? (they were up against it) for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.'"
Under normal thinking today, this council should have been commanding that they speak no more that Christ died for the sins of the world. That He was buried, and rose from the dead. (Our Gospel today) It doesn't say that. All they said was, "We can't let them preach in this name." That's what the Book says in these early chapters.

Acts 4:18-20

"And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, `Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye, For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.'"

Acts 4:21,22

"So when they had further threatened them (probably with prison and a beating) they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people (and here the man on the street came to their defense, because they haven't done any thing worthy of prison): for all men glorified God for that which was done."

"For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed."

Now I'm going to have to stop here. Why do you suppose the Scripture sees fit to give the man's age as forty something? Remember Israel's time of testing over and over was 40 years. It doesn't have to be an exact forty years. And the same today, Israel has now been back in the land since 1948. We are in "forty something." And I don't set dates, but there is something very important in the time scale of forty years, when you are dealing with Israel.