Okay, it’s good to see everybody in again this afternoon for another session of four more programs. We trust that the Lord will use this for His honor and for His glory as we open up the Scriptures. We trust that people can come back and see what this Book says rather than just sit there and listen to denominational dogma.

Now, I’ve got nothing against the local church providing that they proclaim the truth. That I have to stand on. I can never agree to have people just constantly being fed some of this liberal stuff that is coming in so rapidly. We just beg people to get back into the Word.

In fact, I think I quoted several programs back from the fellow who was President, if I remember right, at Syracuse back in 1888 to 1892. And at that time he made the statement—now you want to remember, Syracuse is as liberal as they get today, but at that time the President of Syracuse said, “Unless Christendom comes back, back, back to the doctrines and the epistles of the Apostle Paul, then it is on and on and on to liberalism and atheism and despair!”

And it’s just as true today as it was then. We have to constantly fight the false teaching. And now there is a movement abroad called the Emergent Church. It is as false as a three dollar bill, but it sounds so good that the younger generations fall for this stuff. We just have to adamantly dig in our heels and come back and say—but what does the Book say?

All right, we finished Book 74 in the last taping. Today will start Book 75 and continue on with connecting the dots of Scripture. But before we do, I think I will share with my whole television audience that our beloved Sharon who does our closed-captioning, and who most of you see her right over here to my left with the red hair, is fighting brain cancer. We just covet the prayers of everybody from coast-to-coast on her behalf.

All right, so back to Acts chapter 1 verse 8. This is just after His forty days of being with the Twelve, or the Eleven. The next event, of course, will be His ascending back to Glory. But just before He leaves the eleven, these are His final words in verse 8. This is where we closed in our last program.
Acts 1:8

“But ye (Speaking to the Eleven—never forget that the Scripture has to be determined who is speaking and to whom. Well, here we have Jesus, of course, speaking to the Eleven.) shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you: (Which was, of course, a reference to Pentecost ten days ahead.) and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, (Which, of course, was the area of Jerusalem and Samaria.) and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Now, we pointed out in the last program that they got to Samaria, but they never did get to the uttermost parts of the earth. The Twelve have absolutely no Scriptural record of going to the uttermost parts of the earth, because of Israel’s unbelief. The nation continued to reject and reject and reject, as we will see some place along the line this afternoon. At that point in time, God turns to the Gentiles through the Apostle Paul.

But until that time, we’re still dealing with the Eleven (who will soon be twelve once again) and the Nation of Israel under the covenant promises. That’s what I’m going to show in the next few moments, that we still have not left the scenario of Christ’s earthly ministry.

You know, I like to put it this way—the four gospels are just an extension of the Old Testament. Nothing has changed except that the Messiah has made his appearance. Israel is still keeping temple worship, synagogue worship. They still have no intent of going to the Gentiles with anything (Matthew 10:5-6). It’s their religion. Nothing changes except that Christ has now made His appearance.

All right, now after we go through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; He ascends back to Glory in the next few verses. You continue on in the Book of Acts and still nothing changes, except now it’s in the hands of the Twelve to perform the signs and wonders and miracles to yet convince the nation that this Jesus who has just left their midst was indeed the promised Messiah. That’s the whole scope of Scripture until we get to the Apostle Paul. The coming Messiah, the coming earthly Kingdom, and then when He comes, believe who He is. This is the Promised One.

But they couldn’t, so He went through the death, burial, and resurrection. All right, now we’re going to see that after He ascends still nothing changes. It’s still the same format: the One you crucified is alive and is still able to be the King. All right, so they don’t go to the uttermost parts of the earth, because Israel has rejected the Messiah who would have made it possible.

Catch that—they never got any farther than Samaria. All right, verse 9, now we move into new ground. Now remember, we’re still connecting dots. Jerry just asked me. I
said, yup, we’re still connecting the dots. We started in Genesis. Now this is just a review for a lot of people. But for a lot of our new listeners it’s, hopefully, new and enlightening. We’re going to connect the dots as we come up through Scripture in an overview.

Acts 1:9-10a

“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, (While the Eleven were standing there watching Him visibly, physically, and bodily.) he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up,…” Now, don’t just read over that. Just stop and think of that for a minute. Put yourself in those guys’ shoes.

There they stood aghast, having just spent forty days with Him. They were having a hard time comprehending how He could slip through a wall and go from Jerusalem to Galilee in a split second, and yet sit down and eat fish with them. All these things, I’m sure, were just boggling their minds. Yet they were afraid to say too much, because the Lord would put them down with, oh, ye of little faith, what’s the matter with you?

And now to have this experience—He’s standing there visiting with them one minute and all of a sudden like a rocket He takes off. That’s enough to shake anybody’s shoes, isn’t it? But that’s what happened. There they stand watching Him go up and at the same moment, miraculously, angels appear beside them.

Acts 1:10b-11

“…as he went up, behold, two men stand by them in white apparel; (They’re angels, but they appear as men.) 11. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? (Now watch the next statement. This is what all of Christendom has been waiting on now for two thousand years.) this same Jesus, (What does that mean? In that same body with which He just now left, in that same physical form, He’s going to return once again.) which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

All right, now let’s go back for a moment to John’s gospel, chapter 14, where again most of Christendom has completely inverted the meaning. They have twisted it all out of shape. John 14, at the time of the Passover, just before his crucifixion, all got it? John 14, starting in verse 1, those very familiar verses.

John 14:1-3a
“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2. 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. 3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will (What?) come again,…” Now see, most of Christendom believes in a Rapture and tries to make this Rapture language.

This isn’t a referral to the Rapture. This is a referral to His Second Coming! That’s when He’s going to return to the Nation of Israel in fulfillment of the Old Testament promise. The Body of Christ and Paul’s Gospel of Grace (I Corinthians 15:1-4) haven’t been revealed yet.

I’m always stressing to people who can’t believe in a Rapture. It’s because you won’t read Paul. Paul alone teaches a Rapture of the Body of Christ, because Paul alone reveals the Body of Christ. Paul alone gives the Gospel we must believe in our heart in order to be placed into the Body of Christ. Paul alone gives the Christian walk for the Body of Christ. So Paul alone refers to things concerning the glorious Body of Christ and the Rapture!

What Jesus is sharing here in John 14 is His Second Coming—7 years after the Rapture takes place. Again, take my old rule of thumb. Who is speaking? Jesus. Who is He speaking to? To the Twelve and they represent Israel! So leave it in that setting. He’s still dealing with that after He’s ascended. He’s going to return to that same Jerusalem from which He left.

No, these mansions here aren’t ours. I remember years ago a lady said, “You took away my mansions.” No, I didn’t take away anything, because these mansions are probably tents compared to what we’re going to have in glory.

We don’t know what we’re going to have, did you know that? And you know why? I think if God would even just give us a little tip of the iceberg of our eternal destiny, we wouldn’t be able to comprehend it. It’s going to be so far above and beyond human comprehension that God has seen fit not to give us one word. All we know is that our eternal abode is going to be . . . what’s the word? Glorious! That’s all we know.

All the other references are to the Kingdom—the earthly Kingdom, as is this one. Now my own personal approach here is that the Father’s house, so far as Israel was concerned, was the what? Well, the temple, and the priests had rather sumptuous apartments in the temple complex. So, Jesus is really telling them that when He returns and the millennial temple appears, these twelve men are going to have sumptuous mansions in the temple complex. He’s not talking about us, the Body of Christ.
All right, now let’s go all the way back to tie this. That’s all Jewish, remember. These are all pertinent to the Nation of Israel and their prophecies and their promises. Come back to Zechariah. Most of you already know where I’m going, chapter 14. Let’s see how all of this fits when the angel told the Eleven, “this same Jesus as you have seen go into heaven will in like manner come again.”

Remember, that’s not the Rapture, but rather the Second Coming. Nobody but Paul speaks of the Rapture. Now, I’m repeating myself, but I have to. My, I get letter after letter, “Les, just keep repeating.” Luther was the best one that ever did it for me. He’s been coming here for years. Awhile back, what did you tell me, Luther? “Hey, Les, today I saw this for the first time.” Well, he’s not any less intelligent than anybody else. That’s just the way Scripture works—all of sudden it just comes to the top and you see it. So I have to keep repeating and repeating and repeating. All right, Zechariah chapter 14, we’ll start at verse 1, the tribulation.

**Zechariah 14:1-2**

“**Behold, the day of the LORD cometh**, (That’s the tribulation.) **and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.** (In other words, all the ramifications of the war and destruction. Verse 2, God says through the prophet…) 2. **For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle;** (Now that’s what we call Armageddon.) **and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished;** (or raped) **and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.**” In other words, Jerusalem is going to be under tremendous invasion. Now, when it looks like there’s no hope for Israel, then you got verse 3.

**Zechariah 14:3**

“**Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.**” Now, that’s the fulfillment of all the descriptions of His Second Coming back in the earlier prophets. Now look at verse 4. Most of you have seen this over and over through the years. Some of you never have. But here is the absolute Old Testament parallel with John 14 and Acts chapter 1.

**Zechariah 14:4a**

“**And his feet shall stand in that day** (Now, is that some kind of an invisible cloud? Well, clouds don’t have feet that I know of. No, it’s that resurrected body returning after it left in Acts chapter 1. So, in His Second coming when He returns, His feet shall stand in that day--) **upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east,…**”
It’s the same Mount of Olives from which He left in Acts chapter 1. All right, now let’s flip back to Acts. Hopefully I’ve made my point there.

Acts 1:11b

“…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, that’s as plain as language can make it. He left from the Mount of Olives. He went up head first toward Heaven. But the angels said He’s going to come back and stand on that same place on the Mount of Olives at His Second Coming.

We don’t know when it’ll be, but we feel we must be getting closer and closer every day. All right, so now the Lord has returned to Glory. He’s told these eleven men to go back to Jerusalem and wait for the day of Pentecost which is going to be ten days down the road. But in this ten day period, Peter is all shook up with one tremendous item on the agenda. That’s the best way I can put it. The number one item on their agenda was what? Fill that spot left open by Judas. All right, we’re going to pick it up right here in verse 15.

Acts 1:15

“And in those days (That is in those ten days between His ascension and the Day of Pentecost.) in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)”

Acts 1:16-18

“Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spoke before concerning Judas, who was guide to them that took Jesus. 17. For he (Judas) was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. 18. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; (The thirty pieces of silver that the priest gave him.) and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

Acts 1:19-20

“And it was known 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. (All right, now here is the verse I want you to see, verse 20.) 20. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his (Judas’) habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein and his bishoprick let another take.” In other words, his role as one of the Twelve let another take. Now, that’s what the Psalms prophesy.
Now, what have I said over and over and over through the years concerning prophecy? If the Book says it, it’s got to happen. Nothing can ever take away a prophetic statement. So, you see, Judas had to fall. Matthias had to be brought in to take his place. Why? Because the Book said so. Always remember that. Anything written in prophecy—I think I said it in the last taping, if I remember right. When Isaiah said that the Babylonians were coming, and he made it sound like it was going to be next month, how long was it? A hundred years! But it happened. Christ’s birth was foretold specifically at least five hundred years before it happened. But it happened. And how does Paul put it in Galatians?

**Galatians 4:4**

“But when the fullness of the time was come, (What happened?) God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” So, always remember that these theologians today like to throw away ninety percent of the Old Testament prophecies as if they can’t happen, because Israel is no longer a nation. That’s what they’re trying to tell people. And they’re succeeding. My, people are falling for it.

In fact, that’s one of my concerns of this very thing that’s taking place in Annapolis right now. Too many of those people in government are of that replacement theology, if they know anything. What does that mean? They don’t feel that there’s any concern for those Israelis in the homeland of the Jew, because they’re not Jews anyway. Oh, what a lie. Because this Book says that they will come back and have their homeland, as we’ve seen happen.

So again, let me emphasize. If it’s written in the Old Testament and God says I will, you mark it down, it’s going to happen. All right, so here again prophecy was fulfilled. Judas betrayed Him for the thirty pieces of silver. Now Peter picks up the agenda, as I call it. Let’s go through it quickly. Verse 21:

**Acts 1:21-22a**

“Wherefore of these men, (Now get the setting. We’re in that ten day window between Christ’s ascension back to Glory and the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit will come down. Ten days—all right, in this period of time, then, Peter says….) wheretofore of these men (out of that hundred and twenty over there in verse 15) who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22. Beginning from the baptism of John,…”

Now remember, these are the qualifications for filling Judas’ spot. Now, the reason I’m emphasizing this is there are good men who have in the past, and probably still do today, said that Peter was totally out of sync. He should have waited for Paul. But Paul would
never fill this requirement. Paul wasn’t saved until several years after all this took place. This says the candidate has to have become a believer during John the Baptist’s ministry. Now watch for these things. This is what makes Scripture so thrilling. So, this candidate must have been a believer beginning from the baptism of John.

Acts 1:22b

“…unto that same day that he was taken up from us, (Which was just a couple days ago. It had to be someone that had been a believer all through His earthly ministry as these other eleven had been.) must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.” So, out of that hundred and twenty there were at least two men who filled that.

Acts 1:23

“And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.” All right, now out of the two, then, they drew straws; and Matthias was the chosen one. All right, so they gave forth lots in verse 26.

Acts 1:26

“And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.” Now, that was a God ordained thing, because how did Moses come to conclusions back in the Old Testament economy? With the stones in his breast plate, didn’t he? The Urim and the Thummim—he’d pull out those stones and however they turned up, that was God’s decision, not Moses’. It was the same way here.

They used a system that we probably still use today. How they cast their lots. Whatever they used, whether it was the dice, or whether it was a short stick and a long one, it makes no difference. The right one was drawn according to God’s design, and it was Matthias. Then the last half of the verse says it all, “he was numbered (by God’s ordination) he was numbered with the eleven apostles (to bring them back to twelve).”

Now, I always like to do this just to help you realize how accurate Scripture is. Why in the world was Peter in such a hurry to fill this empty slot? Well, you remember. I think we’ve got time. Come back with me, this bears repeating. Because very few people know these verses are in their Bible. Believe me, I can tell from my mail. I show things that people have never seen before. Come back to Matthew 19. Now, these guys were just as human as we are. Don’t think for a minute that Peter had forgotten all about this in a matter of months. This is still fresh on his mind, because Jesus speaks this just shortly before His crucifixion. All right, Matthew 19, we’ve looked at it before. I know that I’m repeating.
Matthew 19:27-28

“Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we (the twelve) have therefore? 28. And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye who have followed me, (Just like He said in Acts, from the baptism of John until the resurrection day.) in the regeneration, (In other words, when the Kingdom comes in.) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, (as King of kings over that earthly kingdom) ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, (not eleven) judging (or ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Now, do you think Peter forgot all about that? Well, of course not, but they’ve only got eleven men, but how many thrones? Twelve. So what do we need? We need the twelfth man. That sounds like Texas A & M, doesn’t it? We need the twelfth man. So, the first thing on the agenda, before even Pentecost, is to get a replacement for Judas. And it’s Matthias.

Now the twelve are in place. Everything is ready now. They can look for the Lord to return at any minute like He said He would. They had no idea it was going to be two thousand years. They all thought it would be within their lifetime, and they would enjoy the Kingdom, and they would have their spot in the twelve thrones ruling the twelve tribes of Israel. Well, that’s one of the minor things of prophecy. But nevertheless it just shows that everything fits. Psalms prophesied that one would be a betrayer. On the other hand, everything was all set so that they could replace him with Matthias.
Okay, once again it’s good to have everybody back, and they’ve all had their coffee break. For those of you out in television, again we’re just an informal Bible study. I always have to remind myself to tell you how we appreciate your letters, your prayers, and your financial help; because we couldn’t do what we’re doing without you. We just know that the Lord is blessing it because of the response from our mail and our phone calls. I always remind people. If you don’t believe me, just ask them (Editor’s note: the secretaries), because they hear it all day long.

All right, now my little wife, again, bless her heart, wants me to remind our listening audience of this one and only book we’ve ever published. It is eighty-eight questions and answers. You know, in the last week I don’t know how many people have told me in their phone conversations that they use these books as a mission tool. They’ll keep eight or ten copies in the car, and whenever someone shows a smidgen of interest, they give them one. Cost is $11 which includes postage and handling. It’s a tremendous tool, because it’s in plain language. It’s not real hard stuff to understand, and it does get the message across.

All right, we’re going to move right on in to where we left off in our last program, and we’re just connecting the dots of Scripture. This is more or less an overview. This isn’t a verse-by-verse. We just want folks to get an understanding of how God has been dealing with the human race for the last six thousand years. We feel we’re close to the end. We don’t know how close. It could be today. It could be another hundred years. We don’t know, because I’ve learned that God is eternal. Time doesn’t mean anything to God, and His wheels grind slowly but surely. I’ve stressed lately that anything that the Scripture says is going to happen, is going to happen. You rest assured.

All right, so let’s jump in now at Acts chapter 2. The day of Pentecost has now come. Before we go any further, let’s go back to Leviticus, because I think too many of our theologians put the birthday of the church in Acts chapter 2. For the life of me, I cannot understand why, because if you come back to Leviticus chapter 23, we have the seven Feasts of Jehovah for the Nation of Israel. Seven of them beginning with Passover, and we’re going to drop down and read from verse 15 on to show you how clearly and specifically this day of Pentecost started at the very onset of Israel’s religious experience. There are seven feast days. Earlier in the chapter we’ve got the feast of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and now you come down to verse 15 in chapter 23.
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 (or seven weeks, forty-nine days) shall be complete:” But it doesn’t stop at the forty-ninth day. Go to verse 16.

Leviticus 23:16-17

“Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number (How many days?) fifty days; (What does Pentecost mean? Pente in Latin means fifty. So, Pentecost was the feast of the fiftieth day. All right, let’s read on.) and ye shall offer a new meal-offering unto the LORD. 17. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; and they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD.”

All right, now go back to Acts chapter 2. This is the feast of Pentecost, the fiftieth day after the feast of Passover. And that’s why when the Lord was with the Twelve, or the Eleven, for forty days, there was yet ten days till Pentecost. And in these ten days that we talked about in the last program, between the fortieth and the fiftieth, is when Peter had Mathias fill that twelfth slot.

And again, just to show you that I was not remiss in saying there were a lot of people that think Peter was remiss and should have waited for Paul. At break time, one of our listeners just came up and said somebody had just told him in a Sunday school class the other day that Peter was in a hurry and should have waited for Paul. But Paul would never fit the requirements, as we saw last program. It had to be a believer that was from John the Baptist until the resurrection. Paul doesn’t become a believer until years later.

All right, now then, as I come into this feast of Pentecost, this chapter 2; and, yes, it is the time when the Holy Spirit will come down. There is not one word of Gentile language in these early chapters of the Book of Acts. Not one word. It’s all Jewish. It’s just an extension of Christ’s earthly ministry. The only difference is that with the Holy Spirit coming down, these twelve men are going to be empowered with the Power from on high to carry on the very miracles and signs and wonders that Jesus did—but for what purpose? The same purpose—to prove that the One who had died and been raised from the dead and gone to Glory was coming back, and He would still fulfill all those Old Testament promises. Now isn’t that simple? Is that so hard to understand? The only thing that interrupted the whole thing was that which had to happen for the sake of the whole human race. Christ had to die. It had to happen. He had to be buried three days and three nights, and He had to be raised from the dead. Otherwise, everything would have fallen apart. But you see, with God things don’t fall apart. In the human understanding it may seem like it has, but it doesn’t.
All right, so here we are now, right according to God’s eternal purposes. The day of Pentecost has arrived, and the Holy Spirit is going to come down. All right, verse 1:

Acts 2:1a

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come,...” What did I say in the last program?

“That when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son,” As we see in Galatians chapter 4. Well, what does all this mean? God’s timetable is never a day late or a day early. It’s always on schedule because He’s God. All right, so we have the same language.

Acts 2:1

“When the day of Pentecost was fully come, (It wasn’t a day early. It wasn’t a day late, but on the exact day.) they were all with one accord in one place.” That is these hundred and twenty Jewish believers that you saw back in verse 1. You’ve got to remember who we’re dealing with. That’s all there were after three years of signs and wonders and miracles—a hundred and twenty believers in the area of Jerusalem.

Acts 2:2-3

“And suddenly (miraculously) there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house (or the building) where they were sitting. 3. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, (Now, there’s the key word. If it had been fire, it would have singed their hair; but it didn’t. It was just two little tongues that appeared as fire resting on their heads.) and it sat upon each of them.”

Acts 2:4-5

“And they were all (I’m assuming now the whole hundred and twenty.) filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other languages, (Languages is a better word than tongues.) as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Now the reason I’m using languages—I’m going to show you in just a couple of verses.) 5. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.”

See, no Gentile in that word, Jews. But ever since the Babylonian captivity six hundred years before, what had happened to the Jews of that day in time? They were scattered throughout the whole then-known world, just like they did again after A.D. 70. They had gone out into Babylon instead of coming back to Jerusalem, like a few of them
did. But most of them had already scattered and had set up businesses and trades and everything all over the Roman Empire. But they were still devout Jews.

Now, if they were devout Jews, what would they do? They would come back to Jerusalem for at least two of these seven feast days. They’d make more if they could, but a minimum was two. All right, so now you have thousands upon thousands of Jews flocking into Jerusalem from all over that then-known ancient world; which, of course, would be North Africa, the Middle East, and out into the Babylonian area—Iraq as we know now, and Iran and Syria, and then all along the Mediterranean on the north side through Turkey and Greece and Rome.

See, that was all the civilized world at that time. They could make arrangements to travel, and here they came for these feast days around the temple complex in Jerusalem, but they’re Jews. All right, they were devout men; otherwise, they wouldn’t take the time and spend the money to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. They came from every nation under heaven, but they were Jews.

Now remember, six hundred years is a long time. How many grand, grand, grand do we now deal with over generations? All right, now these great, great, great grandkids are no longer speaking the home tongue of Hebrew. They’re speaking the language of where they’re living; whether it was Rome or Athens or Babylon or Egypt. Naturally, they had picked up the language of the land in which they lived.

It’s no different today. My goodness, when people migrate into a foreign country, ordinarily what’s the first thing they do? Learn the language. That’s why I’m upset with our situation today. My grandparents, I can remember them talking about it. What was one of the toughest things of coming through Ellis Island over there in New York? Language! And how people would make fools of them because they didn’t know what they were talking about. I don’t even dare tell you about some of the things they went through. But language, well, what was the first thing they did? They learned English.

So, when I come along, my grandparents were still speaking German, of course, but their kids and their kids’ kids were now speaking English. Well, same way here. These Jews had been out of the Hebrew environment for so long that now they were at the fourth or fifth generation removed, and they were speaking the language of their homeland. So, what are they going to have to have? A common language. All right, that’s the miracle of Pentecost. Okay, read on in verse 6.

Acts 2:6
“Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, (They were amazed.) because every man heard them (these twelve men) speak in his own (What?) language.”

So, Jews from Egypt were hearing the Twelve in the Egyptian language. If they were from North Africa, they were hearing it in that language. If they were from Babylon, they were hearing it in Chaldean. So the whole crowd of Pentecost, every Jew from wherever they had come were miraculously hearing the Twelve speak in their own language. That’s what the Book says. That’s not my idea. It’s what the Book says, and why can’t people believe it?

You ought to read what some of these commentators say—that this is the beginning of the tongues movement. Are you kidding? No, this was language! All right, verse 7:

Acts 2:7

“And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these who speak (the Twelve now remember) are they not all Galileans?” Now, the average Bible reader doesn’t catch what’s going on. Jerusalem was the elite. They were the educated. That’s where all the priests and the rabbis originated.

What was Galilee? Well, that was the frontier. They were rough, and they were uneducated. And, my goodness, these uneducated men speaking eight, ten, twelve languages?

Now, I’ll never forget the first guy, Eli, when we first went to Israel. That fellow could speak fluently seven languages. That just blew my mind—to have that level of intelligence; to be able to have a busload of Americans today and tomorrow a bunch of Japanese come in. And he says, no, I don’t have any more trouble with the Japanese than I do with you, or when a bunch comes over from France. He could speak French as part of those seven languages.

Well, it was the same way here. These uneducated fishermen were speaking all these languages. Now that’s easy to understand, isn’t it? They were just as human as we are. That was the miracle of Pentecost, and theologians have twisted it all out of shape. All right, now verse 8.

Acts 2:8

“And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?” Or where we were raised? Then he lists them.
Acts 2:9a

“Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites,...” All these areas of the then-known world. In verse 11 it’s repeated again.

Acts 2:11-12

“Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them (the Twelve) speak in our languages the wonderful works of God. 12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?” Well, God had them exactly where He wanted them. They were thinking. And that’s all I ask people when I teach—to just stop and think: what is God trying to tell us? It’s not that hard, but you’ve got to put a little effort into it.

All right, so now they come up with all their crazy ideas. Peter has to stand up, and he says, no, no, no, no, no, you’re crazy. They’re not drunk. It’s only 9 o’clock in the morning. But what you’re seeing is what the prophet Joel spoke about several hundred years before Christ, prophetically. Now Peter goes right down the line and quotes from Joel chapter 2, word for word. It was prophecy, and it was all in their view coming right down the pipe.

Now, I think we’ve got the timeline back on the board, so let’s look at it. We’ve come out of the Old Testament with all these prophetic utterances concerning things to come. And in there, in veiled language that nobody really could comprehend, was, of course, the crucifixion, His burial, His resurrection, and the ascension back to Glory, as we’ve already seen. Zechariah said that He would return, and He couldn’t return if He hadn’t left, right?

That was all back here in the Old Testament in more or less veiled language. Then after His ascension, after a little period of time (they didn’t know how long), in would come those final seven years which would trigger the Second Coming of Christ, as we’ve already seen in the last half hour. He would return to Jerusalem. There He would set up His throne room, and in would come the 1,000 year earthly Kingdom.

Now, throughout all of this timeline, there was nothing revealed of this Age of Grace we’re living in until we get to the Apostle Paul. I mean absolutely nothing—nothing of the Age of Grace and this Body of Christ. It’s all based on Israel’s prophecies. But anyway, at the day of Pentecost all they can think about is that the Tribulation is coming. They knew that, and it would be followed by the Second Coming.

Come back with me to Peter—I have to look whether it’s first or second. I think its I Peter. I just made the statement that these Old Testament prophets had no idea of the
things that were coming, except that there was something in I Peter chapter 1. I think I’ve got time. I’m going to take a few more verses than I would otherwise. We might as well start with verse 1, because I always want people to understand my rule of thumb. Who’s writing? The Apostle Peter. Who is he writing to? Jews, not Gentiles. Not us.

I Peter 1:1

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, (Now, I’m going to put in the word writing just for sake of understanding.) writing to (Whom?) the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” Were Gentiles scattered? No. Who was? Jews!!! All right, have I made my point? So, the apostle for the Nation of Israel is writing to his fellow Jews. All right, now come down to verse 7.

I Peter 1:7

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” What’s Peter talking about? Here we are. We’re right in here (as Les points to the time line). Peter is writing to fellow Jews that with this horror of horrors (7 years of Tribulation) out in front of them, they would be able to come through the testing which would be like fire. They would then visibly witness the Second Coming of Christ.

Now, what does that tell you? They expected it within their lifetime. That’s not so hard to understand, is it? Read it again, “That the trial (or the testing) of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth.” Now, I made the point in one of my seminars the other day. What’s the one most important thing that God is looking for from a lost human being? Not man’s works, but rather his faith. That’s all God is looking for. Can you believe me? All right, here it is, “That their faith might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

Now another verse comes to mind in Zechariah. This is the next to the last book in our Old Testament. I think this is the exact parallel that Peter was referring to, Zechariah chapter 13 verse 8. Zechariah, next to the last book in your Old Testament, and compare this with what Peter is just saying. Verse 8.

Zechariah 13:8

“And it shall come to pass, (My goodness, what did I just say about a statement like that? It’s going to happen. We don’t know when, but I’ll guarantee you it’s going to happen. All right, what is?) that in all the land, (That is of Israel.) saith the
LORD, (Now watch this carefully.) two parts therein (two-thirds) shall be cut off and die; but the third part shall be left therein.” They’re going survive. They’re going to make it to the end. Now verse 9, God says:

Zechariah 13:9a

“And I will (There’s the promise.) bring the third part through the fire,…” The testing of the Tribulation. Listen, no human being on earth understands what that seven years is going to be like. We can no more comprehend that than we can the glory of heaven, but it’s going to be awful. All right, but one third of Israel is going to survive.

Zechariah 13:9

“And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, (See the connection?) and will try (or test) them as gold is tested: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, the LORD is my God.”

Now again, to get the time element, here we are (timeline again). Peter is talking to them, but the one third are going to come out of the Tribulation, and they’re going to be right here at the end, and they’re going to soon witness the Second Coming of their Messiah. All right, back to I Peter verse 8.

I Peter 1:8a

“Whom having not seen, ye love;…” In other words, a lot of these believing Jews that Peter was addressing had come in as believers, never having really witnessed anything of His earthly ministry.

I Peter 1:8b-10a

“...in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, (in other words with your faith) ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9. Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. (Now, here’s what I come back here for.) 10. Of which salvation…” This salvation for the Jews at that time was based, of course, on who Jesus of Nazareth really was.

I Peter 1:10-11

“Of which salvation the prophets (the Old Testament writers) have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: (At some future day. Now verse 11, back to the prophets again.) 11. Searching what, or what
manner of time the Spirit of Christ who is in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”

All right, now in the twenty seconds I’ve got left, what’s that telling us? The Old Testament prophets knew this was coming, but they couldn’t get the picture. They just couldn’t understand how God would fulfill all these things back there. But now you and I with our New Testament can understand.
Okay, it’s good to see you all back again. We’ll start program number three for this afternoon. Again, we’d like to invite our television audience to join with us and, like everybody here, open your Book and get a pen and a notepad and take notes. Because what you write, you’re more apt to remember, than if you just sit and say, “Yup, I’ll remember that.” No, you won’t. That’s why I keep reviewing. It takes a long time. You know, we were just rehearsing again at break time how many times we have to hear these things before they really settle in. That’s why I don’t apologize too much for repeating. Now, I realize that all this has been covered before, but a lot of it has been several years ago. So, it’s about time we do it again.

Again, for those of you in television, we just covet your prayers. My, how we need your prayers, because the devil doesn’t like what we’re doing. We witness that from time to time with several folk that are a part of this ministry.

All right, let’s go right back where we left off. We’re still in Acts chapter 2. Remember now, Christ had ascended ten days earlier, and now the day of Pentecost has arrived—the Jewish feast day according to Leviticus chapter 23. And it’s all Jewish. There’s nothing of Gentiles in here whatsoever.

Let’s come down to verse 22. Peter has just finished quoting Joel chapter 2—the horrors of the tribulation according to prophecy, and he gives it as though that’s what Israel is looking for just ahead. He has no idea that it’s going to be interrupted for two thousand years. All right, so after rehearsing the prophecy from Joel down in verse 22, and, again, I want to always emphasize it’s all Jewish,

Acts 2:22a

“Ye men of Israel, (There’s no Gentile in that.) hear these words;…” And then he speaks of how Christ had been delivered up to the Romans for His crucifixion and then verse 24.

Acts 2:24a

“Whom God hath raised up,…” Now, what is Peter already driving home to the nation of Israel? That the promised Messiah who lived and performed signs and wonders and miracles was rejected, was put to death and was buried, but was raised from the dead,
and has gone back to glory waiting for the day when He can come back and be their King. So, what does Peter have to prove? Your Messiah is still alive. He is still going to fulfill those promises.

Now, that reminds me of a verse that I used again just the other night. Let’s go back and look at it so that you’ll get the gist of this promised Messiah for Israel. Romans 15 verse 8 from the pen of the Apostle Paul, after the fact. Paul is writing to us Gentiles in the Body of Christ.

So, it’s for us to know how these things transpire. That’s why I’m connecting the dots. It all fits like putting the puzzle together. Everything in its rightful place and it’ll fit. All right, Romans 15 verse 8.

**Romans 15:8**

“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the (What?) circumcision (Not the whole world, He was the minister of Israel and Israel alone. So, He was the minister of the Circumcision.) for the truth of God, (And I always say it wasn’t something Paul dreamed up. It was all part of God’s sovereign plan for the ages. He came as the minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God. Now, what was the purpose?) to confirm (or bring to fulfillment) the promises made (To the world? No.) unto the fathers:” That’s Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the rest of the Old Testament patriarchs who were way back then already looking for this coming glorious kingdom on earth.

Now that reminds me. I haven’t used this in ages. I hope I can find it. Come all the way back to Job. It’s in front of Psalms. I think its chapter 19—Job 19 verse 25. Now, this is one of the oldest books in the Old Testament, beloved, and look what Job is already looking for. Now, this ought to give you goose bumps. I get them every once in a while. My, when they call and tell me what is happening by using our DVDs, I either bawl or I get goose bumps. That’s pretty typical, but here it is in verse 25.

**Job 19:25**

“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day (At the time of the end—where?) upon the earth:” Now, you can’t get it any plainer than it is. I want my audience to read it. Thanks, fellas, for showing it on the screen. Look at it again.

**Job 19:25-26**
“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, (Death, see, and he’ll go back to the dust.) yet in my flesh (What kind of flesh? Resurrected.) shall I see God:” Now, isn’t that plain? That was the hope of an Old Testament writer way, way back. He had an insight that after this life of flesh, there is an eternal resurrected life on the earth. That’s the part I want you to see, not up in the ethereal heavens someplace, but rather on the earth. And that’s the earthly kingdom that every Old Testament believer was constantly looking for and waiting for.

Now, we’ve had two thousand years of theology, and they still haven’t got it. Isn’t that unusual? They still can’t get it. Well, anyway, some of them do. Don’t worry, there are some. In fact, somebody sent me an interesting article off the internet the other day. I’m going to put it in my next newsletter. It was written in 1935. As the gal who sent it said, “Les, you could have written this. It just proves you’re not some weirdo coming out of the woodwork.” But, you see, most of Christendom just won’t see it. But it’s nothing new. I’m not the first nor the last.

All right, back to Acts chapter 2. Here we have Peter addressing the Nation of Israel with the primary message that this Jesus of Nazareth that they had presented to Israel for three years with signs and wonders was alive. He hasn’t lost His ability to be the King. He’s alive. He has been raised from the dead. Then he goes through some of the Psalms. Now, like I say, this isn’t a verse-by-verse study. This is just connecting the dots. All right, He goes back into the Psalms and he quotes David, verse 27. Peter quotes out of the Psalms.

Acts 2:27-28

“But thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, (or the place of the dead) neither wilt thou permit thine Holy One to see corruption. 28. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.” Now Peter says:

Acts 2:29-30a

“Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, (just like Job) and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.” (Why does Peter quote David? He was a prophet.) 30. Therefore being a prophet,...” We normally don’t think of David as a prophet, do we? We think him as the writer of the Songs and the Psalms and so forth. No, he was also a prophet foretelling future events.

Acts 2:30
“Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, (What would happen?) he would raise up Christ (Jesus of Nazareth) (To do what?) to sit on David’s throne;” See, all looking forward to this glorious Kingdom, not a word in here about us in the Body of Christ, not a word about the Church. But rather, it’s all tied to Israel’s prophetic promises. Okay, now then verse 31.

Acts 2:31

“He (David) seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, (Or, we know He went down into the paradise side of hell.) neither his flesh did see corruption.” Because He was divine! That’s why God the Father was the progenitor of the body of Jesus. His blood was divine, and it was holy and not fit for corruption. All right, now verse 32, Peter again hammers the fact home.

Acts 2:32-35

“This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, (Because of that finished work of the cross) and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has shed forth this, (This coming of the Holy Spirit on this day of Pentecost.) which ye now see and hear. 34. For David is not (the one who) ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35. Until I make thy foes thy footstool.”

That’s Psalms 110 verse 1. In other words, David is prophetically speaking of the ascension of Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father, and then some future day He would leave that seated position and return to Jerusalem. All right, now verse 36, and, oh, if only these people who demand water baptism for salvation according to verse 38 could just read 36, but they can’t. They can’t read it for some reason or other. Evidently it’s blanked out in their Bible or something, but here it is.

Acts 2:36a

“Therefore let all the house of Israel…” Any Gentiles in that? Not that I can see. Therefore, because of what Peter has just brought out of the prophets Joel and David, and in the Psalms. Now, because of all those prophetic promises given to the Nation of Israel for over a period of 2,000 years:

Acts 2:36
“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, (of Nazareth, of Bethlehem) whom ye have crucified, (Put to death, but He’s still…) both Lord and Christ.” Death didn’t stop anything. Now verse 37:

Acts 2:37

“Now when they (Don’t forget, who is Peter preaching to? Jews from all over the then-known world.) heard this, (what he had just been rehearsing) they were convicted in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, (All twelve, remember, are involved in all of this.) Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

Not what shall we take by faith, but rather “what shall we do.” Now remember, I could take you back. I haven’t got time I don’t think. I could take you back to Exodus. When God laid all this out in front of the Nation of Israel, how did Israel respond? Tell us what you want us to do and we will (What? Believe it? No, we’ll--) do it. What a difference between their Judaism and our Grace!!!

Today, for the Body of Christ, Paul doesn’t say do this or do that, he just says believe it. All right, here’s Israel though. This isn’t Gentile ground. This is God dealing with his covenant people. “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” And here was the answer, clear as language can make it, but it’s not for us in the Body of Christ. This is for Israel. Never does Paul use this kind of language.

Acts 2:38

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized (that’s water) every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, (for forgiveness) and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Remember, it’s all the promises made to the nation of Israel.

All right, now I’ve been stressing all the time that it’s according to the covenant promises. Let’s skip over quickly to chapter 3. Pentecost has come and gone. Time is going on. This isn’t all going to happen in a week. Time has gone by. Now verse 1, but nothing has changed. Look where Peter and John go for the time of prayer.

Acts 3:1a

“Now Peter and John went up together into the (What?) temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.” Does Paul ever tell us to go to a temple to pray? Does Paul ever tell us to find a prayer chapel and pray? No.
How does Paul instruct us? I think it’s in the Book of Timothy. How do we approach God in prayer? Anyplace, anytime, under any circumstance—the throne room is always open. You don’t need to go to a prayer room. You don’t need to go to a chapel. You don’t have to go to some sanctuary. Your prayer room is wherever you happen to be. What a difference. But see, back here that wasn’t the case. They were still, according to Judaism and under the Law of Moses, to go up to the temple, or the synagogue in other cases, “according to the hour of prayer” that was designated by their religion. All right, then they come across the lame man, and you know the story of that.

Acts 3:6

“Then Peter said, Silver and gold I have none; but such as I have I give unto thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.” Then the Jews got all shook up again. How in the world did you do this? They knew the guy had been lame for forty years. How did you do this? Now you come down to verse 12.

Acts 3:12a

“And when Peter saw it, (The consternation of the Jewish people over the healing of this lame man.) he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel,…” And all you nations of the world? That’s what people like to think. It’s not what it says. That’s not what it says. Peter addresses fellow Jews.

Acts 3:12b-13

“…Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? 13. The God of Abraham, (See, he takes them all the way back to the beginning of the Jewish race.) and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; (Now here he puts the dagger into the nation again.) whom ye delivered up, and whom ye denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.”

See, Peter isn’t going to let Israel forget their rejection of that Messiah. He wants them to be convicted of it and to repent of it, and then God would still embrace the nation. He wasn’t ready to cast them aside. That’s all Peter is trying to do—get them to the place of repentance where they would yet believe who Jesus of Nazareth really was. Isn’t it amazing that they never were convinced?

Now, I know that may upset some Jewish listeners, and I’ve got a lot of them. I know I do. But, you see, that’s the record. That was the nation’s unbelief. But that didn’t mean that God wasn’t ready and willing to forgive at the drop of a hat, if they would just
repent of what they had done nationally to their Messiah. All right, but Peter goes on to say then:

Acts 3:14-15

“But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15. And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.”

Acts 3:16

“And his name…” Now, that’s what I’ve been stressing for the last several programs, that Israel’s Kingdom Gospel was based on who Jesus was. That’s all God wanted them to recognize, that He was the promised Messiah.

All right, so here comes Peter now several weeks, maybe months, after Pentecost—that it was through faith in His name. Now I’ve said it more than once on the program. What does that really mean? That the name of Jesus of Nazareth was synonymous with God the Son and the Messiah of Israel. He was all the same person. Believe it! But, oh, they couldn’t. I think I said here a few programs back. What was their stock answer? “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Yes, the Messiah did, but they couldn’t buy it.

Acts 3:16a

“And his name (the name of Jesus of Nazareth) through faith in his name hath made this man strong,…” Not a word about the work of the cross. Peter doesn’t say, if you believe that Jesus died for you and shed His blood and rose from the dead, you’ll be healed. No, all this man believed was that Jesus was the Christ, and as a consequence he experienced miraculous healing. All right, now verse 17.

Acts 3:17

“And now, brethren, (Peter says) I know that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.” In other words, crucified the Christ. They didn’t do it knowing who He was. In fact, I think I’ve got time. Come ahead with me to a statement from the Apostle Paul in First Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 7. I like to wait until everybody’s found it, then I can be assured that the television audience can do the same. Here, Paul writes to us Gentiles.

I Corinthians 2:7
“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, (In other words, the things that have never been revealed before are now made understandable.) even the hidden wisdom, (Things that Peter said the prophets what? Diligently looked for and couldn’t figure out. But now since Paul, we can figure out.) which God ordained before the world (or the ages, or the generations, time gone by) unto our glory:” Now verse 8.

I Corinthians 2:8a

“Which none of the princes of this world knew:…” In other words, these hidden mysteries that Paul is now revealing—especially in his church letters—none of the patriarchs understood, none of the prophets understood, none of the leaders of Israel understood, none of the leaders of the Gentile pagan world had any idea of it, naturally. So, none of the princes of this world knew. They did not know who He was. Then what does the rest of the verse say?

I Corinthians 2:8b

“…for had they known it, (Had they known that He was the creator of the universe, had they known that He was the Son of God, would they have carried out that crucifixion? No way.) they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” But they didn’t know.

All right, for the minute that we have left, come back to Acts chapter 3. They were ignorant of who He was in spite of all of His signs and wonders and miracles. Now verse 18 and I’ve got to do this quickly.

Acts 3:18-21a

“But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, (See, like we showed in First Peter) that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. 19. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. 20. And he (God) shall send Jesus Christ,…(See, to be the King. It’s still out in their future. But Peter knows, in verse 21--)) 21. Whom the heaven must receive…”

And hold Him until the tribulation has run its course. Now, for the sake of time, I’m going to have to bring you all the way down to verses 24 and 25, to put the frosting on what I’ve been trying to say for the last fourteen or fifteen years—that Israel was the people of the prophets.

Acts 3:24-25
“Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold (or prophesied) of these days. 25. Ye (Israel) are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” So, Israel alone was under the covenant promises of God. Ephesians tells us that we’re outside the covenants of promise of Israel.
Okay, it’s good to see everybody back for our fourth program this afternoon. We’re going to jump right in where we left off in the Book of Acts. Again, for those of you joining us on television, if you’re a new listener, and they happen everyday, I guess; we’re just an informal Bible study. We’re not associated with anyone. I’m just an independent layman. I’m going to keep it that way, because I don’t want anybody trying to put strings around my neck. I’m going to just keep teaching it the way I see it. If it gets to the place the Lord wants and we’re out of here, why that’s His doing. But anyway, we’re not going to apologize. We’re not going to compromise, nor will I attack.

You know, a lot of people tell me all the time, “Well, Les, why don’t you tell people what these guys are saying?” No, I’m not going to do that. I trust that if people will just see what the Book says, and with normal intelligence you should be able to see the difference. That’s been my premise. Okay, now Iris, again, wants me to let our television audience know we have one published book. It is so well received, especially by the college age. My, we get more comments from grandparents, how their granddaughter or their grandson saw the book on the table and were intrigued by it. It’s eleven bucks, no postage or anything, just a flat eleven. Maybe you can afford to hand a few of them out here and there.

All right, I think that’s all the announcements, so we’ll go right back where we left off in the Book of Acts. We’re going to go on into chapter 4. Now, you remember in our closing statement, Peter is addressing Jews. He’s telling them up there—I had to hurry because time was running out—up there in verse 24 (I want to repeat that for just a moment) where he says to these Jews:

**Acts 3:24**

“Yea, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold (or prophesied) of these days.” What days? Christ’s first Advent - His death, burial, and resurrection. But it was in such vague language that they couldn’t understand what it was all about. All right, then he says:

**Acts 3:25**
“Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.”

All right, now I ran out of time on the last program. I wanted to go ahead to Ephesians. Let’s do that now, a minute, before going into chapter 4. Come on up to Ephesians chapter 2. Now this verse makes all the sense in the world that the Apostle Paul is writing to a group of Gentiles over there in Ephesus. Ephesians chapter 2 verses 11 and 12. We’ve used them quite often, but remember what Peter said? You, Israel, are the children of the prophets. You are the ones who are under the covenants.

Now, look what Paul says about Gentiles. This just throws the three hundred watt bulb on it. Verse 11:

**Ephesians 2:11**

“Therefore remember, (Don’t forget now, he’s writing to Gentiles.) that ye being in time past Gentiles (your genetics, go back to the Old Testament economy, your genetics as Gentiles in times past) in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by those who are the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;” In other words, Jews referred to Gentiles as Uncircumcised. Now verse 12:

**Ephesians 2:12a**

“That at that time (While God was still dealing, like He is in the Book of Acts, with Jew only.) ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise,…” See that? Gentiles had no part in those covenants.

That’s why Jesus had to begin His earthly ministry right up front in Matthew 10:5-6 telling the Twelve, “Go not to the Gentiles, (They’re not under these covenant promises.) but go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” If you’d just understand all that. It’s so plain that He couldn’t be anything to the Gentile world, because He had come to fulfill the covenants, and Gentiles had no part in them. Paul repeats it in Romans 15:8.

**Ephesians 2:12b-13**

“(you Gentiles were) strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (He was dealing only with Israel. Well, what’s the next verse?) 13. But now (See, but on this side of the cross He now becomes the Savior of
the whole world, not just Israel.) in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off (pagan Gentiles) are made nigh by the blood of Christ.’”

Today, salvation is open to the whole human race, not just Israel. But Christendom is just determined to muddy it all up. I get many calls that tell me, and I’ll use my own term, they’re blenderizing the Scriptures, and it does nothing but confuse. How can you understand something that’s all blenderized?

But rather than mixing it all up, just sort it out. Remember that all these promises made to Israel were to the nation of Israel and not to the Gentile world. It wasn’t until He went to the Gentile world with the Apostle Paul and his message of the work of cross—that is when the Gospel of Grace opened up for everyone.

Now, a verse is coming to mind. I sure didn’t plan to do this one. Come back with me to John’s gospel, chapter 12. We haven’t looked at this one for a long time, either, so maybe it’s appropriate. Here we have Jesus at the very end of his ministry. Again, the crowds are gathering for the third Passover at the end of His three years. The whole temple complex is just packed with Jews coming in from all the areas of the then-known world. But in this passage, we’re dealing with a small group of Gentiles. We don’t know how many. It’s just like the Wise Men. Everybody says three. The Bible doesn’t. We don’t know how many there were. Well, same way here, drop in at verse 20 of chapter 12 of John’s gospel.

**John 12:20**

“And there were certain Greeks among them (How many? Your guess is as good as mine. I don’t know—two, three, four, or five—couldn’t have been an awful lot of them. But there were certain Greeks, Gentiles, who were in the crowd.) that came up to worship at the feast:” Now, they were probably just curiosity seekers. What are these Jews all about and all this massive crowd? They had been around Israel long enough to have heard of the miracle worker, Jesus of Nazareth. We can pick that up from what they’re asking. All right, these Greeks in the midst of this crowd of Jews are waiting for Passover to begin.

**John 12:21**

“The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.” Now, this is one portion of Scripture I’d like to have people just sit back and use a little imagination.

Here you’ve got this crowd of Jews waiting for Passover to begin, and here are these, probably, pagan Gentiles who have been in the land long enough to have heard about
all the miracles that this Jesus of Nazareth had been performing. So, their curiosity was aroused. As they move through the crowd, use a little imagination. If you were looking for someone and you were in a total, strange environment, what would you do? You ask questions.

Now, I know I’m probably unusual in this regard, but the minute Iris and I are in a strange place and I feel lost, I pull in to the first place that’s open and I ask questions. Where am I? Where do I go from here? That doesn’t bother me one bit. Rather than just keep going, and going and be on the wrong road. All right, now these men did the same thing. They started asking, where is this Jesus of Nazareth? Somebody said, there’s one of His followers, go ask him. Well, it happened to be Philip. So they go to Philip and ask him saying, “Sir, we would see Jesus.”

Now again, put yourself in Philip’s shoes. Remember, Jesus had commanded them to have nothing to do with Gentiles. Well, what are we going to do with these guys? They knew they were Gentiles. Do we take them to see Jesus? Is He going to put us down for breaking His commandment to have nothing to do with Gentiles? Philip is in a quandary. Now, there’s safety in what? Numbers. So, what does Philip do? He goes and finds Andrew.

*John 12:22*

“*Philip cometh and telleth Andrew:* (What are we going to do? These Gentiles want to see Jesus, and we know only too well He has nothing to do with Gentiles.) *and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.*” All right, now the next verse. Well, goodness sakes, the Scripture gives you enough intelligence to determine, what are they going to tell Him? There are Gentiles out here that want to see you. So, when they find Jesus and tell Him that there are Gentiles, is this His answer? *Bring them to me.?* That’s not what your Bible says.

*John 12:23*

“*And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*” What’s He talking about? The cross. It’s just a matter of 72 hours at most and He knows. So He says, “*The hour is upon us when the Son of man shall be glorified.*” Which will happen at His resurrection.

*John 12:24a*

“*Verily, verily, I say unto you,* (Now watch this. Most of you know this, but there are probably some out there that are new listeners and have never heard this before.) *Except (unless) a kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die,…*” Now, if
you’ve had eighth grade biology, what do we know? A seed cannot germinate and bring forth new life until it what? Dies. Death has to happen before new life can come. It’s a fact of creation.

Now, why do you suppose God created it that way? Because of the cross. That’s the whole doctrine of the cross, that you can’t have life until there’s death first. All right, so He brings it into the biological world that a seed of corn, of wheat, must die first.

*John 12:24b*

“...unless a kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth (What?) much fruit.” A hundred-fold, what’s He referring to? His own death, burial, and resurrection, and that He cannot be an object of faith to those Gentiles until He finishes the work of the cross.

Up until that time, it’s a Jewish thing. That’s why you find no reference to Gentiles throughout those early chapters of Acts. It’s still based on the Old Testament covenant promises. But once the work of the cross is revealed to the Apostle Paul, it becomes the life-giving salvation, not just for Israel, but for the whole human race. All right, back with me to Acts chapter 3 and verse 25.

*Acts 3:25-26a*

“We are the children of the prophets, (Again, I’m repeating purposely. We’ve got to drive it home. To Israel this is what Peter says, you are the children of the prophets, the Old Testament. Let me repeat the subject.) ye are the children of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. 26. Unto you first…”

Now let’s go back, or go ahead, keep your hand in Acts. Go ahead to Romans chapter 1 verse 16. This is exactly why the Holy Spirit prompted Paul to write what he wrote. Romans 1:16, where Paul writes to us, not to the children of Israel. He’s writing to the whole human race, but Gentiles in particular.

*Romans 1:16a*

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ:…” And remember, what’s Paul’s gospel of salvation for us? That Christ died for your sins and was buried, and three days later arose from the dead. Believe it with all of your heart for salvation.

*Romans 1:16*
“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew (What?) first, and also to the Greek.” What does Acts say? God came to Israel first. All of scripture fits.

Acts 3:26

“Unto you first (Israel, according to God’s divine purposes) God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” Now, had every Jew responded, what would have happened? Well, the tribulation could have come in and Christ could have returned and set up His kingdom, and Israel could have evangelized the world. That was the Old Testament format, but they didn’t do it.

Now, this is where I like to make comparison with Scriptures. For Israel, for things to happen, every last Jew had to respond. That’s what it says. **Every one.** Now, when Paul goes to the Gentile world, what’s the word? **“That I might save some.”**

Peter and James, at the Jerusalem counsel James says, yes, we now agree. In fact, just go ahead. It’s in Acts chapter 15. I’ll let the Scripture speak for itself. Drop down to verse 13. Keep your hand in chapter 4, we’ll be right back. Now, drop down to chapter 15 verse 13. After the end of the Jerusalem counsel, they now agree that Paul and Barnabas can indeed go to the Gentiles, not to win every last one like with Israel, but here it is now.

Acts 15:13-14

“And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14. Simeon (or Peter) hath declared, how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.” Just a small percentage. Then Paul does indeed, I think in the Book of Romans, say that he wants “to save some.”

So, we don’t have to expect a great outpouring of Gentiles into salvation. It’s a relatively small percentage. But to Israel He expected every last Jew to respond, which, of course, they did not do. All right, back to Acts chapter 4. Here, we’re still dealing with Peter and the Twelve, and the nation of Israel, especially the religious leaders.

Acts 4:1-3

“And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, (See, this is all Jewish. There’s not a Gentile thing in here.) 2. Being grieved that they (the Twelve) taught the people, and preached
through Jesus the resurrection from the dead, 3. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold (or put them in prison) until the next day: for it was now eventide.”

Acts 4:4

“Howbeit many of them (That is of these Jews, now.) who heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.” So, the numbers are growing, but it’s still nothing compared to the whole. All right, now the in this next series of verses we have the religious leadership calling the Twelve on the carpet and trying to shut them down from speaking any more of this Jesus of Nazareth. All right, for sake of time, drop down to verse 7.

Acts 4:7

“And when they (the religious leadership) had set them (Peter and the others) in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?” Now, isn’t it amazing? Here Jesus has just spent three years, and Peter and the Eleven have been, I think we’re probably already three, four years after Pentecost, and still this religious leadership cannot get it through their head who this Jesus really was. Isn’t it amazing? All right, verse 8, then Peter, he’s always the spokesman when we deal with the Twelve.

Acts 4:8-10

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, (No Gentiles, all Jews) 9. If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, (The raising of the layman back there in chapter 3.) by what means he is made whole; 10. Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name (Not the cross, not the shed blood, not the resurrection, but it was by the name.) of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.”

Now, do you see where the emphasis is? On His name. On who He was. Not a word yet of salvation based on trusting in the death, burial, and resurrection. Now granted, according to the eternal purposes, Christ had to shed the atoning blood, coming out of the Old Testament Day of Atonement. But it is not yet revealed that this is where salvation lies. It’s still only on believing who He was.

Now, the reason I’m emphasizing that is because, turn ahead so that you’ll see where I’m coming. In a little while, another two or three tapings anyway—to Romans chapter 16 verse 25—because Paul is not going to discontinue with the message that Peter and the Eleven have been preaching, that it’s the name of Jesus of Nazareth; but it’s that name of who He was plus what He’s done. All right, and that was kept secret. That’s
what most of Christendom cannot understand, that these revelations given to the Apostle Paul were utterly secret.

Nobody understood that the death, burial, and resurrection was going to be a Gospel all its own. They had no idea of that. And I can prove that from Scripture over and over. They did not know that until this apostle.

*Romans 16:25*

“**Now to him that is of power** (See, that word power is always associated with the revelation of the Holy Spirit’s work in the human race.) **to establish you according to my gospel,** (not Peter’s, not John the Baptist’s, not Jesus’ gospel, but rather Paul’s gospel) **and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery,** (Something that had never been revealed before.) **which was kept** (What?) **secret since the world began.”**

God had never revealed it before. That’s why Peter couldn’t preach death, burial, and resurrection. It was still kept secret. Now, I’ve got time, come on back. I’ve used it over and over, because a lot of people think I make too much of Paul. Well, Peter does a lot more than me. II Peter chapter 3, this is at the end of Peter’s life, as soon as he finishes Second Peter. I think it’s just a matter of days and he’s martyred, but, oh, the Holy Spirit still got it out. He’s writing to Jewish believers who as yet have not embraced Paul’s Gospel, and I don’t see how they could have.

Now, in II Peter chapter 3 verse 15, and don’t forget the setting, just shortly before he dies. It’s also shortly before the temple will be destroyed. Peter didn’t know that, but the Spirit does. So, with all that in view, Jerusalem and the temple and the priesthood will soon disappear. So, where does that leave these Jews? Here it is in verse 15.

*II Peter 3:15*

“**And account** (understand) **that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;”** What wisdom is he talking about? The revelation of the mysteries! These are things that Peter had never understood. So, he says to his readers, **now you go to Paul because of the wisdom given unto him. He has already written unto you.** I think that’s evidence that Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews, but now verse 16.

*II Peter 3:16*

“**As also in all his epistles,** (See, not just Hebrews, but in all his epistles.) **speaking in them of these things;** (What things? Salvation!) **in which are some things hard to be
understood,...” Because this is all beyond Peter. He couldn’t comprehend this, and God didn’t expect him to.

Because God didn’t reveal these truths to Peter like He did to Paul. So, here’s where you have to draw the line of demarcation. When the Jewish program falls through the cracks, Paul’s Gospel comes to the fore, and all the world of Christendom hates it. What a pity. They fight it tooth and toenail. They would rather stay with Peter’s message. They just refuse to see it. I’ve read article after article, and they all say the same thing. There’s never been any difference between what Peter preached and what Paul preached. That’s not what the Book says, and I beg to differ.
LESSON TWO * PART ONE

BOOK 2 of CONNECTING THE DOTS

Genesis – Revelation

Okay, good to see everybody in on this beautiful day in Oklahoma. For those of you out in television, again, we just love to invite you to sit down and study with us. I, hopefully, don’t preach at you, but once in awhile it almost gets close, doesn’t it? Anyway, we attempt to just teach the Book and help folks to read it and understand it on their own. I think we’re making headway. My goodness, according to the mail we get, it’s really encouraging that folks are beginning to enjoy their own Bible.

We’re going to pick right up where we left off in our last taping. We finished in Acts chapter 3, so I’m going to start with the last couple of verses in Acts chapter 3 and then move on. “Connecting the Dots” is the title Jerry has given it. We started at Genesis and that’s just what we’re doing. We’re connecting the dots. I always like to let people be assured and be confident that this Book is true. It is the Word of God, and it’s the only Word of God. For that reason, we like to show how everything fits.

So in Acts chapter 3, let’s review a little bit of how Peter is ending up his second message after Pentecost. As I’ve been emphasizing, it’s still all Jewish. Everything is still concerned with the temple and all the covenant promises made to Israel. Hopefully, we’re going to point out a few things that I’ve even neglected to see before. Not that I didn’t see it, but I just didn’t think it was important enough to bring it to the top. But we’re going to look at that in a little bit. Now, Peter is ending up his second message after Pentecost. Already a few weeks have probably gone by, maybe even a few months. Look again at what he says in verses 24, 25, and 26. Then we’ll move on.

Acts 3:24

“She is the Book of Books, (Well, now if you’re a Bible student, what’s he referring to? The Old Testament.) from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold (Or prophesied—of what days?) of these days.” Now you remember, oh, my goodness, how long ago has it been? I had some statements on the screen? If you’re going to be a Bible student, the first thing you do is what? Determine who is writing. Then what? Luther, you know them. What is he writing? To whom is he writing? Where? What are the circumstances? What went before? What follows after? What’s Peter talking about here when he says, “Samuel and those that follow after have spoken of these days”? Ours? No, theirs. Where Israel was at that point in history, and it was shortly after the crucifixion. Fifty days later we had Pentecost. That’s where we were in our last taping. Now we’re some months beyond Pentecost, but it’s still all part of that prophetic end-time so far as the
Old Testament was concerned. Maybe I should have him flip the board and show the time line, but I won’t. We’ll do it in our next program.

We’ll just use an imaginary line on the board. Here we’re coming from the Old Testament, past the crucifixion, His ascension, Pentecost, and we find Israel. A lot of them are responding; as we’re going to see in a little bit, but percentage-wise for the whole nation, just a few. But nevertheless, the emphasis has been that God is winding up prophetic statements of the Old Testament. The end is in view. All they’re going to have to do is go past the Tribulation and Christ would return and in would come that Kingdom.

They had no idea of a two thousand year church age. Don’t ever think, well, what about this truth. No, they didn’t know that. They were thinking everything was just going to come right down the way the prophets had foretold in the Old Testament. That’s why he said “in these last days”. See what a difference one word can make?

Now verse 25, he is addressing the nation of Israel.

Acts 3:25a

“Ye are the children of the (What again?) prophets,…” They were the ones to whom all the Old Testament prophets wrote. Well, like you said, where do you start? Samuel. Who’s the next great prophet? David, and then Solomon got his words in with Ecclesiastes and so forth. Then you start the Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Then those twelve Minor Prophets: all of them writing pretty much on the same level—prophesying this glorious, earthly Kingdom that God’s going to give to Israel.

So, all of the word from Samuel until we get to where Peter is today is how Israel was being admonished to look for this glorious King and His Kingdom. But from our vantage point, they rejected it. So that whole program had to be laid aside. And God, as we’re going to see before the afternoon is over, brought up the other dispensation through the Apostle Paul, which we call the Age of Grace. It was totally unknown to all these prophets. They never once said one word concerning this Gentile Age of Grace. Their writings were all directed to Israel and her coming kingdom. All right, now verse 25 again.

Acts 3:25a

“Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant…” Now you remember, we did a whole series on covenants a year or two ago in book 63. All the Old Testament covenants were not between God and the world. They were between God and Israel. The covenants belonged to Israel.
I’m going to put a statement on the screen before the afternoon is over by a famous dispensationalist who actually founded the Dallas Theological Seminary. Somebody sent it to me, and I’m going to hopefully get it on the screen before the afternoon is over. I’ve never read it before, but he said word-for-word what I’ve said over and over, so that just confirms and gives me confidence. The gal that sent it to me went on to say, “See, you’re not some nut coming out of the woodwork.” No. No, I’m not alone. My, there are a lot of folks that see this the way I teach it. So don’t ever get second thoughts and think, well, maybe Les is just out on left field. No, I’m not in left field. Acts 3:25 again:

Acts 3:25

“Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, (back in Genesis 12) And in thy seed (That is the offspring of Abraham, which would be the nation of Israel.) shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” Well, who was included in that seed of Abraham? Jesus Christ. And it was through Jesus and His work of the cross that He reached to the whole human race and not just Israel. All right, now verse 26 and then we’re going to move on.

Acts 3:26a

“Unto you first God, (Now, remember our rule of Bible study. Who’s he talking to? Israel, the Jew. So, unto you Jews first, that’s where it all had to start.) having raised up his Son Jesus,...” After they rejected Him, and, as Peter says in chapter 2, they killed Him, but God raised Him from the dead. So, the King is still alive. He’s still going to fulfill the prophecies. That’s the whole thrust of these early chapters. That the One they killed was alive, and He could still fulfill all the promises.

Acts 3:26b

“...God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” And in my closing remarks, if I remember right, I made the statement. Here, God expects the whole nation to respond before He could actually fulfill the promises. But they didn’t. Only a small percentage responded. But on the other hand, when the next apostle comes, He never tells Paul, you’re going to go out and win them all. You’re going to win how many? “Some.” And that’s the way we are today. God is just calling out one here and one there. It’s the way Christendom has unfolded. It’s not the multitudes. It’s the one here, one there, the sum.

All right, now continuing on with Peter and his Jerusalem believers, all Jews, come over with me to chapter 4. I was going to skip it and go on a little further, but let’s stop at chapter 4 just for a verse or two. Starting at verse 32 because of what I’m
going to show you this afternoon. We’re not just dealing with a little flock like a few chickens or something like that. We’re dealing with thousands of people, which is only a small percentage of the whole, because Israel has always been between five and ten million. Nevertheless, there are thousands of people responding to Peter’s and the Eleven’s message here in the nation of Israel. All right, verse 32 of Acts chapter 4.

Acts 4:32a

“And the multitude (Now that indicates a fairly large number of people.) of them that believed…” Now, I’ve got to stop again. Believed what for salvation? That Christ died for their sins and rose from the dead? No, that’s the Age of Grace message for the Gentile Body of Christ today. That hadn’t been revealed yet, and won’t be till Paul is given that revelation.

So, what did Peter’s believers believe for salvation? That Jesus was the Christ! That’s all. They were still under the law. Nothing has changed. They still keep the food laws. They still keep the Saturday Sabbath. They still keep the feast days. But now they have recognized that Jesus of Nazareth was that promised Messiah and on that basis God saved them.

Now you want to remember, salvation has always been by what? Faith, it is always by faith. Well, go back to Adam. What was Adam’s faith? You remember? I showed it when we went back there sometime ago. What was Adam’s faith? When he named his wife what? Eve—the mother of all living! Well, God told them they’re going to die. So how does he know now that she’s going to live long enough to have children? God told him. And how did Adam respond? He believed Him! And what did God call it? Faith.

God told Noah a flood was coming and to build an ark. How much did Noah know about water and arks and so forth? Nothing, but what did he do? He built the ark. On what basis? Faith. All right, now here comes Jesus into this religious little nation of Israel, with all their temple worship and all their Old Testament prophets. He proclaims Himself as their Messiah and King. What did He expect them to do? Believe it, but only a few did. But now since Pentecost, it’s coming a little more. Now we have the reference of multitudes having now believed that Jesus was the Christ.

Acts 4:32

“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of things which he possessed was of his own; but they had all things common.” Now stop and think. Here you’ve got multitudes of people, as we saw in our last taping, that had come in from every corner of the then-known world—from out at the Far East, all the way to probably Spain, maybe a few from Great Britain, certainly all North Africa was now civilized and under the Roman Empire.
These Jews have been coming from all the corners of the Roman Empire. They literally filled the city of Jerusalem. But as I’m going to show you before the afternoon is over, most of them evidently stayed in Jerusalem and did not go back to their homeland out in the Gentile world. Why not? The King is coming. That’s what I want to impress on you this afternoon.

They stuck tight to Jerusalem, because they were convinced that now that Christ had finished the work of the cross, had been raised from the dead, and had ascended to glory, in short order He would be coming back and fulfilling the promises made to Israel. So, many of them did not go back home. And they had it so good, as this passage is going to show us, so why should they? My, when you got a free lunch, why go back home and struggle. All right, now just watch this attitude as we come through these verses. Now verse 32, I didn’t finish it.

**Acts 4:32b**

“... *neither said any of them that ought, of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.*” What is that? That’s pure communism. Now, we always think of communism on the evil side, but, you see, this was a righteous communism.

Nobody was claiming anything more than his neighbor. They all pooled their resources, and they were all living out of that common wealth that had now been accumulated. Now you have to remember, if you’ve got multitudes—thousands—because three thousand were saved on the day of Pentecost, and then everyday from then on multitudes were coming into salvation and were all glued to what I call the Jerusalem church. I’ll probably address that in the next program. Now then, all of these people are pooling their resources. That’s what it says. Now look at it.

**Acts 4:33a**

“*And with great power gave the apostles (the twelve) witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus:...*” In other words, that they knew their King was alive. There’s no salvation attached to it. That’s where people miss the boat. Peter never says believe that Christ died for your sins and rose again. They never said that. All Peter says is that the One you’ve killed is alive and He will yet come and bring in the Kingdom. Now, is that so hard to understand? And you can look for it and check me out. You won’t find it associated with their salvation. It was merely the emphatic fact that He was alive.

**Acts 4:33-34a**
“And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. (In other words, the blessings were just flowing on this congregation of Jews in Jerusalem.) 34. Neither were there any among them that lacked: (What does that mean? Hey, nobody was going hungry. Nobody was going without necessary food and shelter. They had it pretty good.) for as many as were possessors of lands or houses…”

What did they do with them? Turned them into cash. And what would they do with the cash? Turn it into the twelve apostles. And so the wealth is accumulating. I have often said, if they could have just invested that with fifty percent interest, they’d still be going. But they didn’t, and they couldn’t. And as we’re going to see, in time the funds ran out. Then we’re going to end up with a bunch of what? Poor Jews. It’s coming.

Okay, stay with me. But here they’ve got nothing lacking. They’ve got ample funds, and so far the Twelve have been able to handle the paperwork, as we call it today, the administration of it all. Now stop and think, was that simple? Was that simple to be able to take care of thousands of people with all of their physical needs? Now, that took some administration work. That took paperwork. They had to know how much was going out, how much was coming in. All right, read on. Keep that all in your computer up here.

Acts 4:34b-35

“…for as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, (See how plain that is? They brought it all to the Twelve.) 35. And laid them down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.” What does that entail? What I just was talking about. They had to administer this. They had to keep track of what was going out compared to what was coming in, and that somebody wasn’t being corrupt and taking more than they needed. It took administration. It took paperwork. Okay, read on.

Acts 4:35b

“…and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.” What would that mean? Maybe the head of a household of five or six naturally needed more than a husband and wife or a widow. All of this is just plain common sense if you’ll stop and think it through. All right, now verse 36.

Acts 4:36
“And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (The same Barnabas that will end up with the Apostle Paul.) (who is, being interpreted, the son of consolation,) a Levite (the tribe of the priests), and of the country (or the island) of Cyprus.”  Now, if you know your geography, Cyprus has always been a rather productive piece of real estate. They’ve got beautiful vineyards and orchards, and Cyprus is a good place to own some property. All right, so he owned land on the country of Cyprus, verse 37.

Acts 4:37

“Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.”  Now, this is what I did the last couple of days that I’d never done before. Do you think Barnabas was the only one that did that? Think. No, there must have been a number of Jews that probably had property. Who knows? North Africa, Italy, Greece, you name it; and they evidently did the same thing.

Now, if you don’t want to agree with me, that’s fine. I’m just projecting here what I feel human beings would do. If Barnabas did it, no doubt many other wealthy Jews did the same thing—sold their property, wherever it was, and brought the money. So here they’re piled up with wealth. I know they were. They had a bunch of it. All right, now the numbers are increasing, and I’ll jump across the page in my Bible to chapter 5 verse 12.

Acts 5:12a

“And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people;…”  Now you remember, I think it was in the last taping, or the one before. I don’t know, but I made the statement. I made it as clear as I knew how. Why were the Twelve given the same signs and wonders that Jesus practiced? It was for the same purpose.

Now, let’s back up to His earthly ministry. What was the reason for His signs and wonders and miracles? To convince Israel of whom He was. What are they still trying to do? Convince Israel that the One they crucified was the Christ. See, nothing has changed, except the work of the cross is now completed. Everything has been set for us as Gentiles. But so far as Israel is concerned, it was just an extension of these Old Testament promises. And now the Twelve are performing the same kind of wonders and miracles that Jesus did for the same purpose, convincing Israel of who Jesus of Nazareth really was. All right, now verse 13.

Acts 5:13-14a
“And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. 14. And believers…” Now, keep it straight, not Grace Age believers yet. What kind of believers? Jewish believers who had believed who Jesus was. They are still in the Kingdom program. They’re still looking for the King.

Acts 5:14

“And believers were the more added to the Lord, (What’s the next word, at least in the King James?) multitudes both of men and women.” Now, so that you catch what I’m driving at, go back to chapter 2 verse 41. We’re not just talking about a couple of dozen, or even a couple of hundred, we’re talking about thousands of Jews, all gathered here in Jerusalem around the temple area or wherever.

I thought of this during the night last night. The Scripture never tells us, but where do you suppose they fed all these people? Where do you suppose they kept all the things that were necessary for the daily needs? I don’t know, but it must have been a big facility some place there in Jerusalem. I remember when I was in the service. At one time we ate in a battalion mess hall. And that thing was huge. Thousands of guys could come in and eat within the same hour. But it took facilities. It took big kitchens. It took umpteen tables. That’s the term we’re going to see here. All right, we’re doing the same thing with these believing Jews in Jerusalem, thousands of them. I didn’t read it yet, did I? Chapter 2 verse 41.

Acts 2:41

“So they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day (the day of Pentecost) there were added unto them (That is the Jerusalem church, starting with the hundred and twenty. Remember how many?) about three thousand souls.” That’s a good bunch of people in anybody’s language.

All right, now on top of that then, we have here in chapter 5 that multitudes are still coming. Now, what are we ending up with? Here are a bunch of people that are not working. They are all eating and everything out of that common kitty is the way I used to call it; all the accumulation of the wealth of these people who were selling what they had and bringing it to the apostles’ feet. All I’m trying to impress on you this half hour is that we’re dealing with a lot of people, and they’re all dependent on the administration of these twelve apostles.

All right, now I’ve got three minutes left. Let’s jump over to chapter 6 verse 1. Now, we’re still on this same level playing field. We’re dealing with these Jews that are coming into the Jerusalem church, who are becoming believers in the Kingdom gospel, looking for the King and the Kingdom to come in short order. Now verse 1.
Acts 6:1a

“And in those days, (While this is all going on, and it could already be a couple, three years down the road.) when the number of the disciples (or believers, or these followers of Peter and the eleven) was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews,...” Now, do you know what I always call that? That’s the first crack in that beautiful veneer of this glorious congregation of believing Jews.

Remember it said back in chapter 4 that they were all of one accord. Everything was just hunky dory, no arguments, no disputes. All of a sudden there’s a crack in it, and what is it? “There arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews.” All right, now you have to know a little bit of Greek. Who were the Grecians? They were Jews who had been raised in and learned the language and customs of a foreign country.

All right, out of this multitude of Jews that had come in from every corner of the world, had become believers, and had become part of this great Jewish congregation, with all this accumulated wealth to meet their every need, there were Grecian widows. They were not homeland Jews. They were Jews from other areas of the world. You know, it’s no different in Israel today. I read an article in Jerusalem Post some time ago that when American teenagers move to Israel, do you think they’ve got an easy go? No, because the native Israelis just sort of make life miserable for them, until they really get acclimated. I mean that’s common right here in America. You move from one part of the United States to another part, and you all experience the same thing. I don’t care where it is. It’s always the same. What do they treat you as? You’re an outsider. You’re not part of us. Well, Israel was no different. So these Grecian widows who were not part of the original Israeli or Jewish citizenry were being slighted when it came time to hand out the goodies.

Acts 6:1b

“...there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.” Well, what does that tell you? Somebody’s in control. They had to be. So, it was an administration problem that they had to deal with immediately.
It’s good to have you all back. I see you’ve had your coffee. For those of you out in television, I trust you know by now that we take a break every half hour. We keep it informal, and that’s why you can see coffee cups on the table. We’re just here to study the Word. I trust and hope I’m not saying something out of place, but I trust that everybody has their own Bible. If I can brag on anything, that’s what I like to brag on, that I can get people to study their own Bible. So when you all come in with your separate Bible, you don’t know how I appreciate that. The same for those of you out in television, get your Bible and don’t just listen, study. That’s why we like to put the Word on the screen. In fact, I think I shared it with the whole national audience. One time I had a fellow call from Florida. He had caught my program for the first time and at the end of thirty minutes he was saved. But he said, “Don’t get the big head.” Well, no, I’m not prone in that direction, but why? He said, “You didn’t do it.” I said, “Well, I know that, but what did?” He said, “It was the Scripture that you showed on the screen.” That’s why I just told Mike a little while ago, I’d rather have Scripture on the screen as me. And the man said, “That was the first time in my life I had ever read a word from the Bible and what verse it was.” I don’t know what Scripture was up there, but it did it in thirty minutes. That’s why it’s more important to see for yourself what the Book says, as to hear me say it.

All right, we’re going to go right on back where we left off in the last thirty minutes, and that was in Acts chapter 6. We’re dealing with this multitude of Jews in the area of Jerusalem who are evidently part and parcel of all these who would come to celebrate the feast of Pentecost. And when they saw that they had the free lunch and the hope of this coming earthly Kingdom, why go back home and grub out a living. That’s the way I look at it. They just stay in Jerusalem. They are getting a free lunch.

Now we’re going to see all this, if you study the Scripture, it’s there. All right, let’s start at verse 1, even though we covered it in the last lesson.

Acts 6:1

“*And in those days* (That is while Peter and the eleven are holding forth in Jerusalem. They’re gathering all this wealth that people are turning in, and they’re administering it out as people have need. But it’s getting more than they can handle. It’s just going beyond them. All right, here we go.) *when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.*” We explained that in the last half hour. Jews who had grown up outside of the land of Israel were murmuring against the Hebrews,
the homeland people, because their widows were being neglected in the daily ministration, the handout.

Acts 6:2

“Then the twelve (Peter, James, John, and the rest of them) called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve (What?) tables.” Now you remember the last program, I made mention of my old battalion mess hall? That thing was humongous.

What was it filled with? Tables that would seat thousands at a time—that’s what they have here. They had tables for who knows how many people. I don’t know where they’re meeting, but, nevertheless, you’ve got to put two and two together. They’re coming together for their meals, and they’re being served. But the Twelve said we got more important things to do than to handle all of this. Now, what is the word at the end of verse 3? What is it? “business.” Well, it was big business. My, when you’re going to dispense food, clothing, and needs of thousands of people, that’s a big business in any man’s language. That’s what we’ve got here. That’s what I want you to see. All right, then verse 4.

Acts 6:4

“But (Peter says) we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” Because after all, what’s the end hope? Christ will return and bring in the Kingdom. That’s why these people are so willing to not go back home.

Now, I’m interjecting that. I can’t prove that. I’m telling you that that’s the way I look at it. That they just don’t see any need to go clear back to Babylon or over to Spain, or wherever, because the King is coming. The Kingdom will be coming in, and who needs houses and lands and wealth? That’s the idea. Okay, so verse 5.

Acts 6:5a

“And the saying pleased the whole (And again, what’s the word?) multitude: and they chose Stephen,…” Now, I’m stopping right there, because that’s the next person we’re going to study for a little bit. Stephen is not of the Twelve, but he is of the seven men who are set apart to take care of these material things such as keeping the groceries, keeping these people supplied, and maintaining a semblance of order and good business. All right, so they picked the seven, now verse 6.

Act 6:6-7
“Whom (these seven men) they set them before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. 7. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples (Now, that’s not associated with the Twelve disciples. This is just another word for the believers.) multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of (What people?) the priests (a great number of even the priests) were obedient to (not the law, but to) the faith.”

They placed their faith in who Jesus was. They are now recognizing that, yes indeed, He was that promised Messiah. If the rest of Israel will just recognize it, in will come that promised Kingdom. Now, I’m going to make reference to it. Like I said in the first program, I’m going to use a quote from a well-known scholar in years gone by, but I’m not ready for it yet in this half hour. We’ll use it in the next one, or the last one today. How these Jews are all coming in under what I call the Kingdom economy. That is that the law hasn’t changed. Chapel worship hasn’t changed. They still practice all the food laws. They practice the Saturday Sabbath, and they still go to the temple. Nothing has changed except now the Messiah has come and gone back to glory; and they’re expecting Him to come back any time, although they did know they’d have to go through some tribulation. But nevertheless, they’re all looking forward to the coming now of the King and the Kingdom. Okay, reading on in verse 8.

Acts 6:8

“The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples (Now, that’s not associated with the Twelve disciples. This is just another word for the believers.) multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of (What people?) the priests (a great number of even the priests) were obedient to (not the law, but to) the faith.”

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Acts 6:8

“And Stephen, (One of these seven picked out especially by the Holy Spirit, as He caused Luke to write. This Stephen was) full of faith and (What?) power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.” Where’d he get his power? The Holy Spirit, the power from on high.

All right, now we see all the way through the text that this man Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit. Everything that referred to him was that he was working and operating under the power of the Holy Spirit. For example, come down to verse 10, some of his opposition.

Acts 6:10-11

“And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit (A reference to the Holy Spirit) by which he spoke. (He’s a man full of the Holy Spirit.) 11. Then they (Stephen’s opposition. Those that were still frantically trying to stop this movement of accepting Jesus as their Messiah.) they suborned (Or they drafted, or they conscripted.) men, who said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.”
Well, it’s just like I’m accused in my teaching when I point out Paul’s epistles. Then you are telling us that Jesus didn’t mean anything? No, I didn’t say that. I’m just saying that everything Jesus said was to Israel under the law, and everything He says to us comes through His designated apostle, the Apostle Paul. That’s all Stephen had ever said about Moses. Listen, Moses’ day has come and gone. Now we’re ready to accept this Jesus of Nazareth as the primary individual. Then they thought that was downgrading Moses. Well, that’s just the way people think. So anyway, that’s their accusation. Verse 12.

Acts 6:12-14a

“And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, 13. And set up false witnesses, (Things haven’t changed, have they? They set up false witnesses.) which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, (The temple) and the law: 14. For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place,…”

Well, was that so bad? Once Christ would return and set up His Kingdom, He’s not going to use this same old temple that Herod built. He’s going to build His own millennial temple. Stephen was being falsely accused and his words twisted. Well, I have it happen every once in awhile even in my own ministry. In fact, one of these fellows here just came to me a little bit ago. This is typical right here. He said, “Les, this verse says in this translation just opposite of what you say.” And I said, “No, it doesn’t, read it again.” Well, before he left visiting with me, he saw it. He said, “Oh, I read that wrong.” Well, that’s human, and I have it happen every once in awhile. Somebody will call and say, Les, you said such and such. I said, no, I didn’t. I didn’t say anything like that. Yes, you did. Well, let’s see what the Book says. Well, then they admit, oh, I heard you wrong. But until they confront me with it, how many people have they told: don’t listen to Les Feldick. He hasn’t got it right. Well, that’s my fault. They aren’t reading it right. Anyway, it is the same way with poor old Stephen. He’s being falsely accused. Actually, he’s telling it like it is. That when this Messiah, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, returns and sets up His Kingdom, then all of this earthly stuff is going to disappear. The whole millennial environment will be totally different. Okay, so they bring Stephen on the carpet—chapter 7 verse 1. Now, we aren’t going to take this verse-by-verse. I would like to, but I already did it when we took the Book of Acts verse-by-verse. We’re going to hit the highlights of it before we move on. They take Stephen up before all the big wheels of Israel.

Acts 6:15
“And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.” So, God was with him as he spoke.

Acts 7:1

“So, God was with him as he spoke. Then said the high priest, Are these things so?”

Now, as I was rehearsing this again in the last week getting ready for today, you know what struck me? It never has before, but it did this time. How many times have you read articles and some of these newfangled, so-called books of so and so, and they come to the conclusion that our Old Testament really isn’t that believable.

Especially archaeologists—my, they’ll come up and they’ll just over and over say that much of what we have taken for granted in the Old Testament never happened. It’s not true. But you know what? Stephen here, after the fact of hundreds and hundreds of years for a lot of it, is rehearsing everything in a compact way beginning with Abraham all the way up to that present time. And he fills in a lot of details that the Old Testament doesn’t give us. You know, I thought of it in that light. I don’t care what these scholars say. Our Old Testament is believable. It’s just as true as anything can be. Stephen’s address here confirms it. Now, like I say, I haven’t got time to go verse-by-verse. So, when you get home this evening, if you’ve got time, you just sit down and read this chapter 7. You will see all of Old Testament history encapsulated. And it’s as true as anything can be. Let’s start up there at verse 2.

Acts 7:2

“Men, brethren, and fathers, (He’s addressing Jews, no Gentiles.) hearken; (or listen to me) The God of glory appeared (visibly) unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,” Now, the question comes in every so often: was Abraham a Jew? No, he couldn’t have been a Jew, because the Jewish race hadn’t even started yet. The Jewish race was by covenant promise beginning with Abraham, but what was he genetically? He was a Syrian. His whole family was Syrian. Now, let me show that. That’ll give me a good chance to answer a lot of questions out there in T.V. land as well. Come back with me to Genesis 28 and verse 1.

Genesis 28:1-3

“And Isaac (Abraham and Sarah’s son) called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. 2. Arise, and go to Padan-aram, (That’s up there in Syria where Abraham and Lot and all of them had stopped on their way down to Canaan.) to the house of Bethuel thy
mother’s father; (Now before we go any further, what was the relationship between Abraham and Sarah? Half brother and half sister, so they’re out of the same stock.) and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother’s brother. 3. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people.” Now, let’s come all the way down to verse 5.

 Genesis 28:5a

“And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padan-aram (up there in Syria) unto Laban, son of Bethuel the (What?) Syrian,…” Well, the whole family was Syrian until God separated Abraham and gave him the covenant promises. And then, yes, from Abraham on, all those offspring are Jews, Israelites of the twelve tribes.

Anyway, that answers that question: that we were dealing with Abraham, the Syrian, until God fulfilled His covenant promises. Okay, now we can come back to Acts chapter 7 verse 2.

Acts 7:2b-4

“...The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, and before he dwelt in Charran, (He was a Syrian.) 3. And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. 4. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: (Which was still up in Syria.) and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, (the land of Canaan) wherein ye now dwell.” We’re going to come on down until we get to verse 6. God is dealing with Abraham.

Acts 7:6

“And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; (In other words, he didn’t actually set roots down. He migrated up and down the length of what is present day Israel, amongst the Canaanites.) and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.” Now, of course, that’s a reference to the nation of Egypt.

Acts 7:7a

“And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage (Egypt) will I judge, said God:…” And we know He did. Now there again, the archaeologists in particular, if you ever read any of their articles, maintain that there is no visible evidence of the Israelites ever being in Egypt.
There is almost no archaeological proof according to their shards and so forth. But do you know what I always maintain? God has purposely hidden a lot of things in human history, like, for example, Noah’s Ark, for what purpose? To force us to take it by faith. As soon as the archaeologists come up and say that out of all the digging that we’ve done in Egypt and all of the Egyptian history, there’s not an inkling of the Jews ever being in Egypt. Well, if I’m going to believe that Israel was in Egypt, how am I going to have to take it? By faith! I don’t care whether they can’t find proof. It doesn’t make a bit of difference to me. My Bible says they were there hundreds of years. Someday maybe the archaeologists—like David. There was another one. Do you know the archaeologists were just on a binge. There was never a record of a guy by the name of David, so they threw all kinds of doubt on the Word of God. Well, here in the last couple or three years, they found a dagger-like stone. Whose name do you suppose they found on it? David’s—and it just blew their minds. That’s the one and only time that, so far at least, that they’ve found something that I’m aware of, that has an indication of David. But you see, I think God keeps it that way.

It is the same with the Ark. Why in the world does God keep that Ark from human view? Because if it was out there where people could examine it, what would people do? They’d go and worship it. They’d make a shrine of it. So the world still doesn’t believe in a flood or in the fact that Noah ever existed. So again, how do we know it? By faith. I think that’s why God does it—to force us to take these things by faith in His Word. All right, back to our text. I shouldn’t have digressed, but I can’t help it once in awhile. Acts chapter 7 verse 8.

Acts 7:8

“And he gave him (Abraham) the covenant of circumcision: (And after the covenant of circumcision, in comes the Jewish line now.) and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.” Not out of Ishmael or Esau, but out of Jacob. Now verse 9:

Acts 7:9

“And the patriarchs, moved with envy, (the eleven brothers) sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,” It was all part of His divine purposes that Joseph should be sold into slavery and taken down into Egypt. Let’s come a little further, verse 10.

Acts 7:10

“And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he made him governor over Egypt and all his
house.” In other words, Joseph is, again, a good illustration of how Jews many times come clear to the very top of Gentile governments.

Joseph is the first one. Moses did. Daniel did. All right, now Stephen continues. Now don’t forget the setting here. What is Stephen showing these religious leaders? He is showing that all these prophecies that had been building up through the Old Testament are about to be fulfilled. He’s showing them historically from Scripture that all of this was in God’s divine purposes for His covenant people. All right, come on down to verse 11.

Acts 7:11-13a

“Now there came a dearth (a famine) over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance (no food). 12. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. (That is, the remaining sons of Jacob.) 13. And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren;…”

All right, “And at the second time,” now you’ve heard me teach this. We’ll repeat it again. Why do you suppose the Holy Spirit inspired Stephen to make a point of the second time? Well, you’ve got the same thing up here in verses 23, 24, and 25 with Moses. Let’s jump up there a minute. Verse 22.

Acts 7:22-24

“And Moses was learned (or educated) in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. 23. And when he was a full forty years old, (You don’t get that in the Old Testament. This is a little tidbit that we get here. When he was forty years old,) it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. 24. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote (or killed) the Egyptian:” Now verse 25.

Acts 7:25

“For he (Moses) supposed (or he thought) his brethren (the Jews) would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.” What did he want to do? He wanted to lead the nation out with his own power and pomp and circumstance, because he was a great man in Egypt. So, he thought that God was laying it on his heart to lead the children out, but it wasn’t God’s time. So what happened? Read on.

Acts 7:25b-27
“…but they understood not. 26. And the next day he showed 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? 27. But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, (or threw him aside) saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?” Now, what’s all this a picture of? Christ’s first coming and Joseph down in Egypt.

When the brothers went down into Egypt to get grain, and Joseph was in control, Joseph knew them. Did they know Joseph? No, and they never did get it. All right, but when they came, like he says back there in verse 13, when they came the second time, now what happens? There is a great reunion between Joseph and his brethren. All right, what’s the picture?
The first time Jesus knew His covenant people. Did they know him? No, for the most part and they rejected Him, but He’s coming the second time. Now, when He comes the second time, they’re going to recognize Him. They’re going to see Him, I think, coming in the clouds of glory and every last Israelite, or Jew, whatever you want to call them, that will be in that one-third remnant will become believers.

All right, now it’s the same way with Moses. The first time he couldn’t get to first base, because they wouldn’t trust him. They wouldn’t believe who he was. Then come on down to verse 28 where we left off. These Jews who were rejecting Moses said:

Acts 7:28-30

“Wilt thou kill me, as ye did the Egyptian yesterday? 29. Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons. 30. And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.” You all know that back in Exodus chapter 3. That precipitated then verse 32.

Acts 7:32-34

“Saying, (out of the bush) I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. 33. Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground. 34. I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people who is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, (God is speaking.) I will send thee into Egypt.” Now for what purpose? To be the deliverer the second time.

What you have to learn from Acts chapter 7, if nothing else, is that it is brought home so clearly that at the first advent Israel could not buy into it. They could not believe who He was. But when He comes the second time, they will recognize Him, and, as
Zechariah says, they will say “what are these wounds in thy hands?” And how will He answer? “Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.” And Israel will suddenly realize who He is, and why He has come, and they will enter into the glory of that Kingdom as believers. So, always remember the first advent and the second.
Okay, program number three this afternoon, and, again, we want to invite our television audience to study with us. Get your Bible. Take your notes. If you get a question that just confounds you, you call me. I’m on the phone almost every forenoon. I guess that’s just part of the ministry. We just encourage you, don’t sweat it. Just give us a call, and we’ll try to clarify if we possibly can. Like I said in an earlier program, usually when people call with a question, it’s because they heard me wrong, and I can’t help that.

Anyway, here we go back to where we left off in our last program. And again, I guess I should thank my whole audience for your prayers and your letters and your financial help, because, after all, that’s what keeps us going.

All right, back to Acts chapter 7 for a little bit. We’re still in the message that Stephen preached. He was not one of the Twelve, but one of the seven that were appointed to take care of some of the material needs of all these multitudes of Jews who had been staying in Jerusalem. Remember, they’re living out of the common kitty, and, as we’re going to see in probably this program or the next one, their money runs out. Isn’t it amazing? It happened and when the money ran out, they didn’t have money to go back home. So, where’d they end up? Being those poor Jews in Jerusalem who are mentioned several times in the epistles. That, of course, is going to go right on into Paul’s ministry, as we will see.

But for now we’re still dealing with a multitude of Jews. We have Stephen making his appeal to the Jewish leadership that all the Old Testament was now being fulfilled right before their very eyes. And why can’t they see it is his message. You know, that’s what he’s asking them. Why can’t you see it? Well, he comes down to verse 35, still in chapter 7. He’s still rehearsing all the history of Israel. Now he’s up to Moses, who, after his second time, God used him to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. All right, verse 35:

Acts 7:35

“This Moses whom they refused, 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.” Now I trust you all remember that in Exodus chapter 3, where Moses saw that burning bush and stepped aside to see what in the world was
going on. It was the Lord Himself speaking. He was telling him that He would now send him back to Egypt to lead His people out of bondage. So reading on in verse 36.

*Acts 7:36a*

“He brought them out, (out of Egypt) after that he had showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt,” Now, I’ve got to stop a moment. Go ahead to First Corinthians chapter 1 verse 22. This is Paul writing years later, but he makes such an appropriate statement that I always like to have people lock onto.

*I Corinthians 1:22a*

“For the Jews require a sign,…” See that? That’s all you have to see in that verse. Now come back to Acts chapter 7. When did God begin dealing with Israel on the basis of signs and wonders? When Moses went back to Egypt.

You remember the very first argument that Moses had that he wasn’t qualified anymore? He’d been herding sheep for 40 years. He’d been away from all educated people and a fluent civilization back there on the backside of the desert. He had all kinds of excuses. And what did God ask him? “What’s in your hand?” Well, a shepherd’s rod. What did He tell him to do? “Throw it on the ground.” What happened? It became a writhing snake. Now what does He tell Moses? “Pick it up by the tail.” And suddenly it was back to a shepherd’s rod. Well, it was, of course, a supernatural miracle, but for what purpose? To prove to Moses that God was going to use him to bring Israel out of Egypt!

All right, now from that point on Israel is accustomed to the supernatural, miracle-working power of God all the way up, except for the four hundred years between Malachi and Matthew. Those four hundred years of silence. Nothing, other than Sampson. What did Sampson do? My, all those signs and people think they are just a figment of somebody’s imagination. No, God did it miraculously on up through the prophets and their supernatural ability to prophesy the future. That was all part of Israel’s history. They were accustomed then to, “show me a sign.”

All right, so here we have it beginning with Moses who was shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt. Then the greatest one of all, I still think, is the miracle that God performed with Israel—the opening of the Red Sea. I mean, that’s just beyond our comprehension that God opened up the ocean as we would look at it, for a distance of however many miles it took for several million people and all their livestock to go through on dry ground.
And again, it’s not a figment of somebody’s imagination. It happened because the Book says it happened. Now, of course, some are beginning to find some of the evidence of chariot wheels on the bottom of the Red Sea. But whatever, these were all signs and wonders and miracles to convince Israel that they were God’s chosen people. Moses is indeed His appointed man and they were to trust him explicitly. But Israel has always had the same problem as the rest of the human race, and that is a lack of faith. So, in spite of the miracles, they were still so prone to unbelief. Okay, reading now where we were in Acts chapter 7.

Acts 7:37

“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, (In other words, out of one of the tribes of Israel.) like unto me; (Even as Moses was a prophet and a leader and a deliverer, in the future there will come another one. Now the last four words--) him shall ye hear.” We know that was a reference to Jesus of Nazareth. Israel was to have responded to His three years of signs and wonders and miracles. All right verse 38:

Acts 7:38-39

“This is he, (speaking of Jesus of Nazareth) who was in the church in the wilderness (That called-out assembly of Jews coming out of Egypt and down to the wilderness of Sinai. This is He who was in the assembly in the wilderness.) with the angel which spoke to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the living oracles to give unto us: 39. To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and their hearts turned back again into Egypt,”

Well, many may think it’s referring to Moses, but I don’t think so. Because when the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, took them around Mount Sinai, gave them the law, built the tabernacle, and set up the priesthood, now where does He take them? Up to the southern border of the Promised Land, Kadesh Barnea. And what did the God of Abraham, Jacob, and the rest of them promise those Israelites? “Go in and take it. You will not lose one drop of blood. I’ll drive those Canaanites ahead of you, and they’re going to be chased out with hornets, and all you have to do is go in and take it, occupy it.”

And what did Israel do? Unbelievable, they said, “We can’t do it. Why the cities are walled, the people are giants, there’s no way. We’re like grasshoppers in their sight!” But God had said it. All right, now let me show you the verse that sets the whole thing on edge. Go back with me all the way to Hebrews chapter 3. This is so appropriate even for us today, because God is still dealing with America on the same basis. Believe Him, but they refuse. My, you wouldn’t dare bring any of these things up in the halls
of Congress. They’d have a conniption fit because God isn’t in that part of our culture anymore.

But see, this is the problem: they will not recognize that we are still under the Sovereign authority of the Creator God. Israel was the perfect illustration. Hebrews chapter 3, start with verse 7. This is just good rehearsal. We’ve been here before. Hebrews chapter 3 verse 7:

**Hebrews 3:7-10**

“Wherefore (as the Holy Spirit saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, 8. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation (or testing) in the wilderness: 9. When your fathers tested me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.”

**Hebrews 3:11-12**

“So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) (Which was the Promised Land.) 12. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, (Immorality? No! Was that their problem?) unbelief; (Unbelief! That’s been the problem all the way up through human history. People cannot believe what God says. Israel was no different. All right, so they had within them that evil heart of unbelief) in departing from the living God.”

Now the writer of the Hebrews, which I think was Paul, in verse 13 says:

**Hebrews 3:13-16**

“But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; 15. While it is said, (Now he’s bringing it all up from our situation rather than Israel’s at Kadesh.) To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as (they did back there) in the provocation (in Kadesh Barnea). 16. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.”

Because after all, Joshua and Caleb said, hey, we can take them. They were in the minority. Verse 17, now here’s where the lesson comes down to where you and I are today.

**Hebrews 3:17-18**
“But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them who had sinned, (The sin of unbelief, remember.) whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18. And to whom sware he (Now, we’re speaking about God and Israel.) that they should not enter into his rest, (the Promised Land) but to them who believed not?”

That was their problem. God had already forgiven them and dealt with them on the basis of that golden calf. They weren’t now practicing immorality; they weren’t having any other moral problems. What was their problem? They couldn’t believe that God said they could take it, and so they shrank back. Now verse 19 puts the cap on it.

Hebrews 3:19

“So we see that they could not enter in (That is to the Promised Land. Coming in from Kadesh Barnea, they could not enter in.) because of (What?) unbelief.” And so it is all through God’s dealing with the human race, it’s the lack of faith.

They just can’t take God at His Word. It’s the same problem today. They just cannot believe what this Book says. Like I said in the last taping, if this Book prophesied it, it’s going to happen and you can rest on it. It may not be in our lifetime, but its going to happen someday. All right, now let’s come back to where we were in Acts chapter 7. I want to be ready for Saul’s conversion in our next program, so let’s come on back to Acts chapter 7 for a little bit—verse 39.

Acts 7:39-41a

“To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt. 40. Saying unto Aaron, make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him. 41. And they made a calf…” And you know the story of that one. All right, come all the way up, for sake of time, to verse 45.

Acts 7:45

“Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus (Joshua) into the possession of the Gentiles, (That is when Joshua came into the land of Canaan and had to fight for it and had to have war in order to gain the occupation of the land.) whom God drove them out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David;”

We’re coming all the way up through Israel’s history now. Abraham is probably around 2000 B.C. Four hundred and thirty years later we have them coming out of Egypt, then the forty years in the wilderness. Now we’re up to the time of Joshua and through the
Book of Joshua, and then we come to King David at 1000 B.C. All right, now David, verse 46:

Acts 7:46-47

“Who found favor before God, and desired to find, (or build) a tabernacle (or a dwelling place) for the God of Jacob. (In other words, he wanted to build a permanent temple. But we know David didn’t get to do it.) 47. But Solomon built him an house. 48. Howbeit the most High (That is, the God of Israel.) dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet.”

Acts 7:49-50

“Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? 50. Hath not my hand made all these things?” In other words, He’s emphasizing even to David and Solomon that He’s more than just a God of a physical temple of wood and stone, but He is the Creator of everything.

All right, now verse 51, here Stephen begins to come down hard on the religious leadership of Israel. Remember, it’s the high priest who introduced the chapter. All right, now to the religious leadership Stephen says:

Acts 7:51a

“Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears,…” Oh, they’ve been circumcised in the flesh, but not the circumcision of the heart—the cutting off of the old Adam as we’re showing lately in the Book of Romans. That’s all Paul emphasizes. You’ve got to put old Adam to death. Old Adam has to be cut off. Well, that’s the circumcision of the heart, when the old Adam is cut off. It was just as appropriate for the Old Testament Jew as it is for us today. But they were still in their carnal state. They were still in the flesh. So, he calls them uncircumcised in heart and ears.

Acts 7:51b

“…Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers (and your forefathers) did, so do ye.” He’s bringing everything that happened in the past right up to their present day. He says you’re no different. Now, we know from history, what did Israel do to most of the prophets? Killed them. When they didn’t like the message, they’d kill the messenger. You’ve heard me say that more than once. All right, so Stephen is driving the point home. You’re no different. You’re just as rebellious as they were in the past.
Acts 7:52-53

“Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain (or killed) them who showed (or wrote, or prophesied) before of the coming of the Just One; of whom (That is, the Just One.) ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: 53. Who have received the law (the Mosaic Law) by the disposition of angel, and have not kept it.” You didn’t care what the law said. You lived your own life. Now verse 54.

Acts 7:54a

“When they heard these things, (These religious leaders, the Priests and the Pharisees, when they heard these things--) they were cut to the heart,…” They were convicted, but did they respond in the right way? No, they responded the wrong way. Instead of succumbing to Stephen’s message, they rebelled against it. What did they do?

Acts 7:54b-55

“...and they gnashed on him with their teeth. 55. But he, (Stephen) being full of the Holy Ghost (or the Holy Spirit), looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, (Here’s another miracle, again typical in Israel’s past. He saw the glory of God and in that open view into heaven, what he really saw was what?) and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,”

Now, that’s another question that comes in all the time. Why did Stephen speak of Jesus standing when all the other Scriptures such as Psalm 110:1 and Hebrews chapter 1 and a couple of others, say that He’s seated, but here He’s standing. Read it again.

Acts 7:56-57

“And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. (Now, as soon as he said that, what happened? An uproar.) 57. Then they cried with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord. What do you have? A mob.

Now, I’ve got one Scripture that I think is the answer. If you don’t want to agree, that’s fine. I’m not going to make a big deal. Come back with me to Psalms 68. I think this is the answer to what Stephen witnessed and to what these religious leaders of Israel responded. Psalms 68 is what I call the explanation of Acts chapter 7. Just drop right in at verse 1 and watch this really carefully.

Psalms 68:1a
“Let God (What?) arise…” Now wait a minute, maybe I should take the time. I think I’ve got it. Keep your hands in Psalms 68 and jump ahead to Psalms 110 verse 1. And this is what the Jews knew. They knew these Psalms forwards and backwards. This is what everybody understands.

Psalms 110:1

“The LORD said unto my Lord, (In other words, God the Father says to God the Son.) Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Now, that’s a loaded verse. So when did God instruct Him to come and sit at His right hand? After His resurrection and His ascension He sat positionally, symbolically, however you want to put it, but He sat at the Father’s right hand. But not forever, what’s the word? “Until.”

So, there would be a time coming, but like I said, everything in the Old Testament was looking forward to a straight unfolding of the prophecies including the Tribulation, the Second Coming, and the Kingdom. So, all of this was in a rather tight timeframe. The two thousand years of the church-age was unknown.

All right, so in Psalms 110 verse 1 we have the Lord seated at the Father’s right hand until He would go and destroy His enemies. Now, back to Psalms 68 and I think these Jews knew Psalm 68 just as well as they did 110 verse 1.

Psalms 68:1-2

“Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. 2. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: (And I think they saw the whole impact of this.) as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.” Were those religious people ready for that? Oh, heavens no. So, instead of succumbing to it by faith, they rebel at it under the instinct of old Adam as we’ve been seeing in Romans. All right, now if you’ll come back to Acts chapter 7, this is what I think you’ve got here. When Stephen saw Jesus standing, they reckoned according to Psalm 68 that He would be coming and destroying the wicked. Wow, they weren’t ready for that. So, again, instead of accepting the message, they killed the messenger. Isn’t it amazing?

Acts 7:57-58

“Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58. And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: (They put him to
death.) and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, (We’re going to be introduced to him in our next program.) whose name was Saul (of Tarsus).” The next major player from there on until the Book of Acts is completed.

Acts 7:59-60

“And they stoned Stephen, who was calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.” All right, for just a little bit of continuation, go on into chapter 8 verse 1.

Acts 8:1

“And Saul (Saul of Tarsus—this same man we’re going to deal with now in our next half hour, Saul of Tarsus.) was consenting unto his death. (Saul was more than consenting, he was actually promoting it.) And at that time there was a great persecution against the church (Assembly of these believing Jews that we’ve been talking about all afternoon. Now there are multitudes of them, thousands of them, and now there comes a great persecution against the assembly.) which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.”

They never left Jerusalem until a lot of time goes by, because they saw absolutely no need to go on out into the Gentile world. Because they were not apostles of Gentiles, they were apostles of Israel.
Okay, it’s good to see everybody back for program number four this afternoon. We’re in Book number 75. I don’t know where we’re going to stop with our tapes. People are writing and asking how long are we going to go? Well, I don’t know. I threatened to quit a couple of years ago, but we had our minds changed. Okay, we’re going to move right on now to Acts chapter 9. In our last program we had the stoning of Stephen, which I call the epitome, or the crescendo, of Israel’s rejection. It was just like they came to the end of an orchestra piece and just screamed, “We will not have this Jesus of Nazareth ruling over us!”

At the same moment, we’re introduced to the next major player on Scripture’s stage, and that is Saul of Tarsus. So we’re going to go right over to chapter 9 for this half hour and look at the conversion of this religious, fanatic, zealous Jew. He had to completely turn a full flip-flop, if ever there was one. From one who was so steeped in Judaism, to one who would now proclaim to us in this Age of Grace, you’re not under the law, you’re under grace.

Acts 9:1-2

“And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2. And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of those believing that Jesus was the Christ, or what we call the Kingdom Gospel, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.” I mean the guy was heartless.

Acts 9:3

“And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined around about him a light from heaven:” Now you know, it’s amazing what people are saying anymore today.

Somebody sent me an article (I don’t even remember what part of the country it was from) where this preacher was saying that the only people that ever went to heaven were Elijah and Enoch. Imagine? He said nobody knows what heaven is. They don’t know where it’s at.
Well, here’s just an example. In Acts chapter 1 at the ascension, where in the world does Scripture say Jesus went? He went into heaven. And where does it say He’s coming from? From heaven. All of Scripture is pointing to the fact that heaven is a real place. And they can’t see that?

But here again, this light came from heaven. Where’d it come from? The right? The left? From underneath? Where’d it come from? Above. So what do we take from that? When we go up to heaven, we don’t go horizontal, we go up. And that’s good enough for me. That’s enough. Heaven is up there someplace. It’s a literal, visible, physical place to which we are going and from which Christ has come. All right, now we’ve got Saul of Tarsus raging, I always say, like a bull. He can’t get to Damascus fast enough so he can arrest these Jews who had embraced Jesus of Nazareth and take them bound back to Jerusalem, so he can put them on trial and hopefully put them to death.

Now I made a comment on the program way, way back. I don’t remember when it was, or where it was. Maybe you’ve heard it lately, I don’t know. Nothing brings out the wickedness in people like religion. Just look at the world today. In the name of religion they can drive a suicide bomb into a marketplace and blow people to smithereens in the name of their religion.

Well, the Muslims aren’t the first. It’s always been that way. Religions will cause people to do barbaric things. Well, Paul, or Saul of Tarsus, was no different. Now before I even start, so that you’ll see where this man came from, let’s go ahead to chapter 26. Here he’s rehearsing this lifestyle that we’re looking at on his road to Damascus.

Acts 26:9-10

“I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints (That is those believing Jews.) did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; (He was working hand and glove with the religious leaders.) and when they (these believers) were put to death, I gave my vote against them.” That’s where I get the idea that he was a member of the Sanhedrin.

Acts 26:11-12a

“And I punished them often in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; (And I feel that was using torture.) and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. 12. Whereupon as I went to Damascus…” That was the life of Saul of Tarsus, the religious nut.
All right, come back with me now to Acts chapter 9. We want to move on quickly if we possibly can, because most of you have heard me teach this over and over and over. This light from heaven in verses 3 and 4 had such an impact on him that he fell to the earth. Whether he was afoot, or whether he was on horseback, it doesn’t make any difference. He’s prostrate on the ground.

Acts 9:4-5a

“And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5. And he said, (Saul said) Who art thou, Lord?...” Now, my marginal Bible says Jehovah. I agree with that a hundred percent. Because for a good religious Jew who did not like to even mouth the word Jehovah, Lord was the substitute. So in reality, whether he said it or not in his heart, he was saying—Who are you Jehovah? The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Acts 9:5b

“...And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the goads.” Now then, the immediate response when he heard he was dealing with Jehovah and Jesus, one and the same, was that the man melted like butter on a hot afternoon. He just literally melted there on the road out in front of Damascus.

Acts 9:6a

“And he trembling and astonished...” What astonished him? That the One he’d been persecuting was the same One he was worshipping. They were one and the same and all of a sudden it struck home. I don’t think any of us can get the impact of that. That here he had been actually putting people to death for embracing Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, but He was also the Jehovah of the Old Testament. And it hit him that the One he hated was the same One he thought he was serving.

Acts 9:6

“And he trembling and astonished (In an immediate conversion, an immediate recognizing of how wrong he had been.) said, Lord, what would you have me to do? And the Lord said, Arise, and go into the city, (Damascus) and it shall be told to thee what thou must do.” All right, now you know the rest. He comes into the city and this religious, this believing Jew Ananias who has become an embracer, as well, of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, is the go-between. He’s the one that God has designated—you go and you find Saul of Tarsus, and this is what you’re going to tell him. Now verse 15:
Act 9:15

“But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: (That is to Ananias who was scared to death of this adversary of these believing Jews, not knowing that he had been converted out at the city gate. The Lord says to Ananias, go thy way.) for he (Saul of Tarsus) is a chosen vessel unto me, to hear my name before the Gentiles,...” Now I pointed this out, I think, in one of the previous programs. All of a sudden you have a complete change in the modus operandi.

Back in the beginning of Christ’s earthly ministry, you remember, He told the Twelve, “Go not into the way of a Gentile, go only to the lost sheep of Israel.” To this man He is not saying, go not to Israel, but He is saying (the emphasis now) you go to the Gentiles. It is a complete change.

In fact, as I was mulling this over this last week, I thought of something. I’m going to just throw it out just for something to think about. When God called Abraham, or Abram, out of the Ur of the Chaldees, he, too, started something totally, totally different in dealing with the human race. So now I’m going to set two biblical pillars: Abraham, the pillar of the beginning of the nation of Israel—God’s earthly people. Here in chapter 9 we’ve got the second pillar, the Apostle Paul going to the Gentiles, calling out the Body of Christ. Which is not earthly, it’s what? Heavenly.

Now use that as an example. Abraham, the pillar at the beginning of Israel and Paul is the pillar that gives the sign for the beginning of the Body of Christ. All right, now as you come on down, I want to bring you all the way down to verse 20. Before we read it, I’m going to make the point. I’m going to have the fellows show on the screen what just came to me yesterday, just in time for this, from one of my listeners off the internet. It’s a statement from the founder of the Dallas Theological Seminary, Lewis Sperry Chafer. As we read it after a bit, and the guys put it on the screen, I want you to see how identical it is with the words that I’ve been teaching for the last fifteen years. All right, here it is. Verse 20 and then we’ll come back to Lewis Sperry Chafer’s statement.

Acts 9:20

“And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” Period. What does Paul not yet understand? That it’s the cross that is going to be the point of salvation. By preaching just that Christ is the Son of God, He’s still on Kingdom ground.

Now it stands to reason, how could he preach something that God had never yet revealed? And He hasn’t revealed it. He won’t until Paul begins his three years of hiatus
in the desert with Him. So Paul has to be saved unto the same economy that’s been all through the Book of Acts—the Kingdom Gospel that proclaimed that Jesus was the Christ. That’s his point, see. That’s his point. “Straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues.” Not that He died for the sins of the world and rose again, as we must believe in this Age of Grace, but that He is the Son of God. Period! That’s the Kingdom Gospel.

All right, now if the guys can put it on the screen for me, this statement that I have from Lewis Sperry Chafer. It was up on the Internet, and I hope that’s all the credit I have to give to it. I don’t want to do anything contrary to the law, but I’m going to read what this gentleman who was, remember, the president of Dallas Theological Seminary—Kingdom Gospel versus Grace Gospel. Strong objection is offered by coming-up theologians to a distinction between the Gospel of the Kingdom as preached by John the Baptist, Jesus, and the disciples and the Pauline Gospel of the Grace of God.

One covenant theologian states that to make such a distinction is unfortunate and dangerous. Well, that’s the kind of calls and letters I get. How can you possibly preach two Gospels? Well, they don’t understand. We’re not saying there are two Gospels today. But back here in the beginning of everything from Christ’s earthly ministry until we get to Paul, it was the Gospel of the Kingdom—that Jesus was the Christ! Not a word about death, burial, and resurrection. But as soon as you get into Paul’s Gospel, what is it?

How that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose from the dead.

All right, now Dr. Chafer says this: “He with others contends that the Kingdom Gospel is identical with the Gospel of Divine Grace. Here, nevertheless, will arise an absurdity which does not deter this type of theologian, namely that men could preach the Pauline Grace Gospel based, that is, on the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ when they did not believe Christ would die or be raised from the dead.”

Isn’t that what I’ve always said? Luke 18, you remember when Jesus told the twelve:

“We go up to Jerusalem and everything that’s been written by the prophets shall be accomplished, the Son of man shall be tortured and persecuted, and he will be put to death, and on the third day he shall rise again?” But what’s the next verse say? “And they (the Twelve) understood none of these things, because God hid it from them,”

They weren’t supposed to understand. I always have to come right back with common sense. If these men knew that Christ was going to die and be raised from the dead, which they’d have to know if they preach Paul’s Gospel, then why weren’t they outside the tomb on resurrection morning? Why did they have such a hard time believing that He
had actually been raised from the dead? John 20 makes it as plain as day. “For as yet they, Peter and John, knew not the scripture that he must rise from the dead.”

Well, then how in the world could they be preaching it, if they didn’t know it? Well, that’s exactly what Dr. Chafer said, and I just loved it. I said, man, if people think I’m some nut, and I do, I hear it. I’m some nut coming out of the woodwork with this. No, this is the truth of Scripture. When Jesus, John the Baptist, and the Twelve begin preaching, it’s only that Jesus was the promised Messiah and He had come to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies.

There’s nothing about death, burial, and resurrection in that. Nobody knew that that’s what was going to happen. Now when Paul comes on the scene, as he says in Corinthians, we preach Christ what? “Crucified and risen from the dead.” That’s his message. And you can’t see the difference between that? My, there’s something wrong. Oh, that’s a vast difference. Plus the Kingdom Gospel was preached to Israel in view of all the Old Testament covenants.

Paul’s Gospel is going to the whole human race, as we said in the last program or two, not to bring in the whole, but to call out “some.” When the Body of Christ has been called out and is filled and completed, we have to get out of here so that God can finish His dealing with Israel. That’s why I am so adamantly Pre-tribulation Rapture. We won’t fit in those seven years of tribulation. That’s God dealing with Israel again!

So anyway, now we can come back to our text. I hope that got on the screen where people can read it, and they can see that men far greater than I have said the same identical thing. Whoever sent it, if you’re listening, I thank you; because I’d have probably never ever found it.

All right, now back to Acts chapter 9 in the few minutes we have left, verse 20 again.

Acts 9:20

“And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” Paul preached Christ. That is the Messiah-ship, as that’s what Christ means.

Acts 9:21-22a

“But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he who destroyed them who called on this name in Jerusalem, (Isn’t this the same guy? Yeah, but he’s been saved. He’s had a conversion experience. And then they went on to say--) and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? 22. But
Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus,…”

Do you remember how that experience on the road to Damascus decimated him? I think he came out of that experience not only blind, but he was dehydrated. I think he was a physical wreck. I mean it was more than just a casual experience. All right, so “he increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews,” because that’s the only ones he was dealing with. He wasn’t trying to win Gentiles, yet. He hasn’t been told that he’s going go to the Gentiles. That’s just Ananias who knows that. So he is still dealing with the Jews in the Damascus synagogues.

Acts 9:22b

“…proving that this is the very Christ.” In other words, this Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the promised Messiah. That’s what they were to believe, and even Saul of Tarsus couldn’t convince many. All right, verse 23.

Acts 9:23-24

“And after that many days (A couple or three weeks, I don’t know, but after many days.) were fulfilled, the Jews (The orthodox Jews that he would have been a part of. Seeing that he had turn-coated on them, they--) took counsel to kill him: 24. But their laying await was known of Saul. (Saul found out somehow or other.) And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.” There’s only one escape. They’ll have to get him out of the city. So his fellow-believing Jews, like Ananias, helped him escape.

Acts 9:25

“Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.” That was his escape mechanism out of Damascus.

All right, now the Scripture just drops us there. The next thing we see in verse 26 is maybe three or four years later, when he’s come back from this Damascus experience to Jerusalem. So we don’t go on, but rather we’ve got to go over to where the Scripture picks that up. And that would be in Galatians chapter 1. And again, a portion that I know I’ve taught over and over, but I never get tired of it. I hope no one else does. And here Paul is now writing to Gentile churches many years later. Let’s see, that’s probably thirty seven—about fourteen years later Paul is writing this letter to the Galatians. Sometimes my math slips.
This is the very beginning of this change of operation between God and the human race. Instead of dealing with Israel on covenant ground under the Law of Moses, we are now dealing primarily with the Gentiles, but Jews included as well, under this whole new program that is never, ever hinted at anywhere else in Scripture. All right verse 11.

**Galatians 1:11-12**

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it (by other men), but by the revelation (or revealing from) of Jesus Christ.” And where’s Jesus Christ? In glory.

All right, now before we go any further, most of you know this, but there’s some out there that may not have ever heard it. Because I said it before and I’ll say it again, every tract that comes through our office never uses these four verses we find in I Corinthians 15:1-4, Paul’s Gospel of salvation. And it’s just amazing that so few, I won’t say nobody, but so few use it. I can’t understand it, because there is no other portion of Scripture that so simply explains what we in the Body of Christ must believe for salvation.

**I Corinthians 15:1**

“Moreover, brethren, (He’s writing to believing Gentiles over there in Corinth in Greece.) I declare unto you the gospel (not a gospel, but rather the gospel) which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand.” In other words, they had now been brought out of paganism and are standing in this glorious Gospel of salvation, and the power of the Holy Spirit is keeping them from falling back into paganism.

**I Corinthians 15:2a**

“By which also ye are saved,…” See how plain this is? This is the Gospel that saves us today—not taking Jesus into your heart, not believing that He’s the Messiah, not believing a lot of other things that are being thrown at us. It’s believing *this* Gospel that saves lost people.

**I Corinthians 15:2**

“By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.” In other words, you understand what I am preaching. Now the next two verses are the Gospel plain and simple.
I Corinthians 15:3a

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received,...” Now see, that’s why I called Acts chapter 9 the pillar for the Body of Christ, as Abraham was the pillar for Israel. That’s why this Apostle is the pillar now for the Body of Christ, the pillar on which it rests.

I Corinthians 15:3-4

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, (from the ascended Lord, remember) how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4. And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:” That’s Paul’s Gospel that we must believe for salvation.

Now that never elevates Paul. Like he told the Corinthians, he said, I didn’t die for you. But Paul is the designated Apostle of the Gentiles (Romans 11:13). All right, now let’s finish our few moments back in Galatians chapter 1 where he rehearses his salvation and his designation as the Apostle of the Gentile. All right, verse 13:

Galatians 1:13a

“For ye have heard of my conversation (or my manner of living) in time past in the Jews’ religion,...” Paul profited in the Jews’ religion. He was one of the big wheels in Judaism.

Galatians 1:14b

“...above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my father.” Like I said earlier, he was a religious nut. He was a zealot, all in the name of his religion. Verse 15.

Galatians 1:15-17a

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, 16. To reveal his Son in me, (as the designated apostle to the Gentiles) that I might preach him among the heathen; (The Gentiles, see that?) immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them who were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia,...”

All right, now in the fifty-two seconds we’ve got left, I always make this simple illustration. Here you’ve got this religious Jew who has been raised and lived most of his life in the land of Israel. He knew all about Christ’s earthly ministry. He knew who
those twelve apostles were, don’t think he didn’t. What would have been the logical thing to do? Well, go back to Jerusalem, look them up, and say “Look, fellas, tell me everything you know. God has called me but I don’t know.”

But God wouldn’t let him do that. God forbade Paul, or Saul, to have any contact with those twelve men. Now just think about that! Why? Because of God’s own purposes. He was not going to let those twelve men influence His other apostle, because He now has a new salvation message for mankind that Jew and Gentile must all believe.
Okay, it’s good to see everybody in on a chilly day in Oklahoma, but we’re glad that you braved it, and you’re here. We appreciate so much that you folks here in the Tulsa area come in and comfort us with your being here, because it’s the only way I can teach. Again, we always like to remind our television audience how we do appreciate your letters and your prayers on our behalf.

And speaking of prayer, you remember in one of my recent programs I mentioned that the young red-haired lady that always sits here in my front row is fighting brain cancer. She’s been gone about two months, but Sharon is back with us today. We want our whole national television audience to know how she appreciates your prayers. After I made that announcement of her illness, she actually had contact from people out there in the audience. So when I saw her today, I said, well, I just better let the audience know that Sharon is back. She’s not over the hill, but she also is not out of the woods. She still has to take some chemo, but we just praise the Lord because she has meant so much to the ministry. She’s the one that did the closed captioning and so forth.

All right, we’re going to pick right up where we left off in our last program, which for those of you here it was a couple three weeks ago. But for those of you on television, it was just a week ago. We’re still connecting the dots of Scripture, and we’re going to jump in at Matthew chapter 9. This will be a little review before we carry on from where we left off in the last taping.

I see it more and more all the time. You’ve got to repeat and repeat and repeat and repeat. So I’m not going to apologize for it. We just covered this, but I’m going to repeat it just to remind everybody where we’re coming from. All right, that would be Matthew chapter 9 and we’re going to start reading verse 35. Then we’re going to skip right over to chapter 10 verses 5 and 6. All right, Matthew chapter 9 verse 35.

Matthew 9:35

“And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” Not just one here and there, but every sickness and every disease among the people. All right, now as you come down into chapter 10, He chooses the twelve disciples. We don’t have to read those names, but you can just jump across to chapter 10 verse 5.
Matthew 10:5-6

“These twelve (Now, remember, this is at the onset of His earthly ministry.) Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, (That’s the key word. He commanded them.) saying, Go not, (And I have to emphasize that.) into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: (But instead of going to Gentiles--) 6. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” That’s what the Word of God says. Now that is as plain as language can make it. You don’t go that way; you go this way. There’s no making up your mind. You do what I tell you.

Now we know what happened after the three years of earthly ministry. The nation of Israel rejected it all, and that brought about the crucifixion, which, of course, had to happen. Peter and the eleven—after Judas is gone, they replace him with Matthias—too, continue on with that same message and the same signs and wonders and miracles. The only difference is that now Christ is ascended back into glory, but their operation, the modus operandi, stays the same. They are still ministering to Jews only, and they’re still preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom.

They’re still hoping to convince the nation of Israel that the One they crucified was indeed the Christ! So repent of it, believe that He’s alive. He’s been raised from the dead, and He’s gone back to glory; but He’s going to come very soon and still fulfill all the Old Testament covenants and promises.

But you see, God had something else on His mind which was totally, totally secret to every other writer of Scripture. You cannot find anything of this anywhere in the Old Testament, or in the four gospels, or Acts, or Revelation, or anybody else; because God is now going to take the opposite tact. That’s in Acts chapter 9 where we were just a few programs back at the conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

Acts chapter 9 and he’s just experienced the horrendous meeting of the Lord out there on the road. I think it left him physically devastated. He was blind. He was probably dehydrated. He was famished, and he actually needed physical help to get into the city of Damascus. But while his friends are helping him along the way, God leapfrogs into the city and approaches one of those believing Jews who no doubt ol’ Saul of Tarsus had on his list to arrest and take back to Jerusalem. All right, now we’re going to come in to Acts chapter 9 verse 10, just for sake of review, where the Lord says:

Acts 9:10b-11a

“…Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11. And the Lord…” Now remember, where is the Lord? In heaven. He’s ascended. So we’re dealing with the crucified, buried, risen, and ascended Lord from glory, and He says:
Acts 9:10b-11

“... I am here, Lord. 11. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth.” He still hasn’t gotten over that tremendous experience out there on the road.

Acts 9:12

“And he hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.” He says Saul knows you’re coming. All right, now look at Ananias’ response.

Acts 9:13

“Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints (or those believing Jews) at Jerusalem:” You know the account. How he arrested them, threw them into prison, and, if possible, put them to death. He persecuted them without end. All right, now Ananias is rehearsing all that to the Lord. Now, he says, here he is in Damascus.

Acts 9:14

“And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind (or arrest) all that call on thy name.” In other words, Jews who were embracing Jesus as the Messiah, which was contrary to Orthodox Judaism. All right, now here’s the verse we come for.

Acts 9:15a

“But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he (this Saul of Tarsus) is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles,...” Now what’s the point I’m making? Back three years ago the Lord told the twelve, go not to the Gentiles, go only to the house of Israel. Now, these seven or eight years later, God is going to let Israel go, and He sends this man to the Gentiles.

That’s the point I try to make over the phone with people. They never hear it in church. They never hear it taught in Sunday school. But here you have two direct opposite commandments, not a contradiction; it’s a change of program. He tells the twelve go not to the Gentiles. He tells this man you’re going to go to the Gentiles. Okay, now that can bring us up to where we left off in our last taping. I want you to jump over with me to Galatians chapter 1, because this is so hard for people to see, especially theologians,
Bible teachers, and preachers. They just can’t see that here we have two totally different programs.

I read it and hear it all the time, “Well, there’s nothing different between what Paul preached and what Peter preached. Paul’s is only in a little different atmosphere. Peter and Paul never had any difference of opinion. They all preached the same thing.” No, they did not!

You remember in my last program, I put on the statement from Lewis Sperry Chafer? My, I hope people will cut that out and pin it on the wall where he said exactly what I said.

“The Gospel of the Kingdom was God’s offer of salvation to the nation of Israel based on His Messiahship, under the law, nothing had changed. The temple was operating. But to this man Paul, this new apostle, this new direction, God is now not offering the Gospel of the Kingdom, but the Gospel of the Grace of God which is faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

And as Sperry Chafer said in that statement I put on the screen, “What an absurdity to try to say that the Pauline Gospel of faith in the death, burial, and resurrection is no different from the kingdom gospel which was before the cross ever happened. They didn’t know He was going to go to the cross. How could they preach it?”

Well, they couldn’t and they didn’t. All right, so that’s what we have to constantly point out. All right, now coming over to Galatians chapter 1, still a review from the last program, verse 11, where Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This is God’s word just as much as what the Lord himself said and read back in the four gospels.

Galatians 1:11-12

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, (That is by other men.) but by the revelation (or revealing) of Jesus Christ.” And never forget—where is He? In glory. So, from glory, God supernaturally through the work of the Holy Spirit, however you want to do it, revealed to this man this whole new modus operandi, is what I like to call it. All right, now verse 13:

Galatians 1:13-15

“For ye have heard of my conversation (or manner of living) in time past, in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, (Which was the Jewish church at Jerusalem and these Jewish believers.) and wasted it: (destroyed
it) 14. And profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. 15. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace,”

My, the man didn’t deserve it. He hadn’t worked for it. It was all of Grace, and what was the purpose?

Galatians 1:16-17a

“To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately (Now it wasn’t within the next five minutes, but within the next few days.) I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them who were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia,…” All right, now I’m going to stop right there.

If Paul is preaching the same thing that Jesus and the twelve preached, then why does the Holy Spirit inspire the apostle to say that I conferred not with flesh and blood? Why did Jesus make sure that this man would have nothing to do with those twelve men down there in Jerusalem? He wasn’t going to get it all mixed up, because He was going to come out with something totally different that these men knew nothing of. So everything, if you watch the Scripture, is done to keep Paul from them until he’s established enough that he can go back and compare notes with them.

All right, now keep your hand in Galatians. We’re going to come right back, but back up again to Acts chapter 9. And this is still a little review. We find that after Saul of Tarsus plays his hand, and they recognize that now he is indeed a believer that Jesus was the Messiah, again the orthodox Jews at Damascus were in a dither. They only had one objective, and that was to get rid of him.

All right, so come down to verses 20 and 21 of Acts chapter 9. After he’s come through that experience on the road, he’s been baptized according to the kingdom operation, because that’s what saved him. He didn’t yet believe in a death, burial, and resurrection for salvation. All he believed was that this Jesus that he thought he hated was indeed the Christ. Don’t lose that. That’s the basis of his salvation, so he has to still come through the water baptism bit. So after he’s baptized, he went straightway, verse 20, preaching Christ in the synagogues.

Well, that’s not what God intended. God intended him to go where? To the Gentiles. But, you see, he’s still adhering to that Jewish mindset that he had to prove to Israel that Jesus was the Christ—which is what he’d been hearing for three years while he was up there in Israel. So now he’s continuing on that same line—that Jesus was the Christ, and that Israel had to believe that. All right verse 21:
Acts 9:21

“But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither (That is up to Damascus.) for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?” But as a result of that conversion out there on the road--

Acts 9:22

“But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ.” Not a word about faith in the death, burial, and resurrection. Not a word about the cross. It is still on that same premise that Jesus of Nazareth was that promised Messiah.

Now, you see, in God’s providence and in God’s miraculous power He could have just simply done with Saul like He did with Philip, I think, back there with the Ethiopian eunuch. Here he (Philip) was on the road down to Ethiopia and the next minute he’s up there at Azotus back in Israel. I think God just picked him up and set him down. Well, why didn’t He do that with Saul of Tarsus?

Well, God operates on two different levels. Sometimes He will do the supernatural, but most generally He uses common circumstances to get people where He wants them. That’s true of every one of us, I’m sure. We’re all where we are spiritually because God has just simply maneuvered us by one event or another, closed doors, and opened doors; and here we are just exactly where God wants us—every one of you whether you know it or not.

All right, so now God isn’t going to do the supernatural. He’s not going to just lift Saul up and set him down in the desert. He’s going to use circumstances and what is it? They’re going to threaten his life. Okay now let’s read on in verse 23.

Acts 9:23-24

“And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: 24. But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.” They thought that if he would try to escape Damascus, they’d be able to nab him and put him to death and that would end it. But after they became aware of this conspiracy to kill him, his friends—these believing Jews as they’re called, the disciples in verse 25:

Acts 9:25
“Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.” All right, now as we said when we taped last time, there is a gap of time here between verses 25 and 26. Because we know he did not go from that basket experience in Damascus right back to Jerusalem, because that was the last thing God wanted. He did not want him to have contact with the twelve.

All right, that’s why we’ve got to flip right back to Galatians chapter 1. After they let him down in the wall in a basket, what happened? All right, here it is in verse 17. We see he didn’t do the logical.

_Galatians 1:17a_

“No _Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them who were apostles before me;…”_ Which, like I said in the last program, that would have been the logical. Go back and ask the twelve, tell me everything about this Jesus that you know. But no, that’s not God’s way. So God providentially gets him out of Damascus and evidently picks up with some kind of a supernatural way of taking him down into the desert of Arabia. Reading on in verse 17:

_Galatians 1:17b_

“…but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.” I think, because that’s where the primary trade routes were, from Damascus up over the Golan Heights, down around the north end of the Sea of Galilee, down into what is present day Megiddo, then over to the Mediterranean Sea, then down into Egypt.

That was the major trade route from the Far East. That’s why I think he goes from that desert experience in Arabia back to Damascus. All right, now the next verse is where we have to just use common sense. It does not specifically say that he spent the three years in the desert, it almost makes it sound like he spent the three years in Damascus. Let’s read it so you’ll know what I’m talking about—verse 17, the last half.

_Galatians 1:17b-18_

“…but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.” All right, now what am I trying to do? There was a three year period of time, from the time he was let down in a basket until he finally goes back to Jerusalem by way of Damascus.

Now, you’ve got to know your Middle Eastern geography. Mount Sinai where—again, I didn’t take the time to do that, but we’ll do that right now. Turn on over to chapter 4 in Galatians. Here’s where I get the scriptural concept that he went not just into the
desert someplace, but that he went down to Mount Sinai. Otherwise, I don’t see why the Holy Spirit led him to use the term right here just a couple chapters later. But in Galatians chapter 4, when he’s speaking of the Law and Grace allegory between Isaac and Ishmael, he uses verse 24 to bring out what I think is a scriptural point, and that is in verse 25.

Galatians 4:25a

“For this Hagar…” The mother of Ishmael, who, in the allegory, is the picture of law, which was of the flesh. It was fleshly. It was powerless. Isaac on the other hand is the picture of the spiritual, where we are. All right, but that’s not the point I want to make. I want to make the point of geography.

Galatians 4:25a

“For this Hagar is Mount Sinai (Where?) in Arabia,…” See? Mount Sinai in Arabia. Now why would that be put in here if it was not a little feedback on what Paul is talking about that he went into Arabia?

I’ve taught it for years that I think the Lord led him down to Mount Sinai which is in Arabia. And for three years he had a person-to-person relationship with Saul of Tarsus, unveiling all these things that had never been revealed before. And that’s the whole object of Paul’s doctrines: that they were never, ever revealed any other place in Scripture until God gave it to him.

Now I’m sure he didn’t get everything in those three years, but he got enough that it set him apart from Judaism—where he could make the statement in Romans 6 verse 14: “You’re not under law, you’re under grace!” All right, after these three years it says he went up to Jerusalem. Now the question comes every once in awhile from the TV audience, well, did he spend the three years in Damascus?

Well, I can’t just adamantly say, no way, because it doesn’t speak of it that way. But logically, had Paul spent three years in Damascus, what would he have left behind? Evidence. There would have been congregations in that city, more than one. But were there? Not a one. Nothing. You never ever read in Scripture that Paul, or Saul, left behind any kind of a group of believers in Damascus. So, on that basis I maintain, no, he didn’t spend those three years in Damascus. He spent the three years in the desert in the presence of the Lord.

Then I have another reason. You know, when Paul was in his ministry, especially amongst the Corinthians, they were always downgrading his authority and his apostleship. And what would they compare him to? “Well, we can believe Peter, we
can believe Jesus, but who are you?” Well you see, with his three year experience behind him, I think he could come back and say, well, sure you had three years with the Lord, but so did I. The Lord just leveled the playing field. So, those are my reasons of assumption. Like I say, it’s something that I can’t point to and say, this is what the Book says, like I normally do. But on the other hand, you’ve got to figure some of these things out with common sense.

That he did not spend those three years in Damascus for nothing, but he must have spent that whole three year time in the presence of the Lord where He revealed unto him these glorious, glorious Gospel of Grace truths. All right, now I think we might as well finish the chapter here in Galatians 1, and then we’re going to run back to Acts a minute. So verse 18 again:

**Galatians 1:18-23**

“Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem (Now, that’ll fill the gap back there in Acts 9 between verses 25 and 26.) to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19. But other of the apostles saw I none, except James the Lord’s brother. 20. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. 21. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; 22. And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ: (those Jewish congregations) 23. But they had heard only, That he who persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which he once destroyed.”

All right, now I’m going to go to the timeline up here for just a little bit and review this as well—from Abraham to Moses to David to the Babylonian captivities and the appearance of the prophets of Isaiah and Ezekiel and Jeremiah and Daniel and all the rest of them, leading us up to Christ’s earthly ministry. Then we begin that three years where He’s rejected, He’s crucified, He’s ascended back to glory.

Now, so far as all of these prophecies were concerned, they were to shortly expect the 7 years of Tribulation to come in, and that would trigger the Second Coming. Then in would come all the fulfilled prophecies from back here in the Old Testament in the form of the 1,000 year Kingdom.

But unknown to all of Scripture, and I can’t emphasize that enough. Nowhere in our Bible do we have any indication that God was not going to finish everything with that top line. But here in Acts we have the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and we have that specific instruction: don’t go this way, you go that way.

Now God opens up something that is entirely new and different. You can’t find one word, not one word, in the four gospels or in the Old Testament or Revelation or
anyplace else. It’s a closed body of truth that we’re going to be looking at the rest of the afternoon.

All right, so come back to Acts chapter 9, and instead of the tribulation coming in, as Israel was expecting, God now does something different. You will see that the whole Jewish Gospel of the Kingdom program is going to fall through the cracks and disappear as Paul’s ministry takes the ascending role.

So back to Acts chapter 9 at that point where they let him down in a basket in verse 25. Now in verse 26 we pick it up after those three years that we just read about in Galatians, and now, as Paul said, he meets with Peter for the first time.

Acts 9:26-27

“And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed (or attempted) to join himself to the disciples: (That is to those Jewish believers now gathered around Jerusalem ever since Pentecost that we talked about last time.) but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. 27. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way,…” And rehearsed his whole Damascus road experience. All right, now in verse 30, in the seconds we have left, we’ll see that now there was such hatred, again, rising about this new apostle that they had to get him out of Jerusalem.

Acts 9:30

“Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.” What was Tarsus? His home town. So he heads up into Gentile territory, north of present day Lebanon, up into Southwestern Turkey in our present day geography. There he will begin his ministry in his own hometown. Then from there on we’ll pick it up in our next program. But here is where you have that change of direction. Instead of going to Israel, God is now going to go to the Gentile world.
For those of you in television, in case this is your first time, and you’re just clicking through the channels, and you wonder what in the world—we’re just an informal Bible study. That blackboard is what gets people’s attention, not me thankfully. It’s the blackboard, and then they come back and have to see what it’s all about. We’re glad you’re with us. Again, we always like to thank you for your letters. My, how we enjoy our mail time!

All right, Iris wants me to keep plugging our one and only book, because we don’t want them to sit out there in the warehouse. The book is eighty-eight questions and the answers from past programs. Everybody seems to enjoy it, especially the younger people. We want to keep reminding you of that. They make wonderful gifts. And it will be the best $11 dollars you will spend. Many people have found salvation by reading this little book.

All right, we’re going to keep right on going where we left off with what we’ve been calling connecting the dots of Scripture. We didn’t mention it in the last program, but we just sort of decided to start at Genesis and just as they like to say lately, you just connect the dots and see how everything in Scripture fits from cover to cover. Sometimes there are changes in the program. We’re covering that now as we come to the Apostle Paul, but it all fits so beautifully.

After Paul’s conversion and after he spent the three years in the desert, as we saw in our last moments of the last half hour, he came back to Jerusalem, and he only spent a couple weeks with Peter and a few of the others. Then his life was threatened again, as usual, so he fled up to his home town of Tarsus, up there in what is presently southwestern Turkey.

But now we’re going to pick up back in Jerusalem once again, or at least Joppa, with Peter. The whole thing is so providential, but most people miss it. Because, you see, Peter is still the Jews’ Jew. He has no time for Gentiles, which was appropriate at that time. How shall I put it? Yet God had to let Peter know that something different was taking place. God was going to go to the Gentiles, Peter or no Peter. This is what we’re going to pick up now in chapter 10. God has to show Peter that He is now going to offer salvation to the Gentile world.
Now you’ve got to know your Old Testament to realize that Israel was never instructed to
proselytize or evangelize the Gentile world. They were to keep it to themselves. They alone were under the covenants. They would have their opportunity at some time in the future to bring Gentiles in but certainly not yet.

So this whole idea of Acts chapter 10 with Cornelius, now, is primarily not just to save those few Gentile Romans, which is appropriate, but more importantly to show Peter that now God was going to do something totally different. And I maintain had Peter not had this experience, when they came together in the Jerusalem counsel in A.D. 51, which would probably be about twelve years later, I’m afraid Peter would have never agreed to let Paul and Barnabas go back to their Gentile ministry. They would have squashed it right there in Jerusalem.

So, as we look at this event now with Peter and Cornelius, keep that uppermost in your mind—that this is God’s way of showing Peter that He was now going to do something totally different. All right, Acts chapter 10, we’ll start reading in verse 1.

Acts 10:1-2

“There was a certain man in Caesarea (just up the coast from Jerusalem) called Cornelius, a centurion (or an officer) of the band called the Italian band. 2. A devout man, (In other words, he was religious, contrary to most Romans who were pagan, but he was a devout man.) and one who feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, (He was certainly, what’s the word I’m looking for? A philanthropist, he gave to those that need it.) and prayed to God always.”

Now most people think that makes him a believer. No, that’s most of the human race. And still he’s as lost as a goose, is the way I usually put it. And, consequently, he was in need of salvation. This is where God is going to start now so far as the Gentile world is concerned. Now verse 3.

Acts 10:3-5a

“He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day (Which would be 3 o’clock in the afternoon.) an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. 4. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? (Not recognizing that it was an angel, but whatever.) And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. 5. And now send men to Joppa,...” Now you’ve got to know your Mideast geography. We’re down at that
southern end of the eastern shore, the Mediterranean, a little further south of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem today, to Joppa.

Acts 10:5b-6

“…send men to Joppa, and call for one called Simon, whose surname is Peter: 6. He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: (That is of the Mediterranean.) he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.”

Now, we’re not going to take all this verse-by-verse. We’ve done this before when we taught the Book of Acts, and, especially for those of you out in television watching the daily program, we’re back there. We just finished Acts and Romans, so this is all just a real recent review for you. But anyway, when Cornelius is ready to send someone down to find Peter, the Lord, again in His own way of doing things, also deals with Peter down there at Joppa in verse 9.

Acts 10:9-10

“On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, (That is the emissaries from Cornelius up at Caesarea.) Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: (which is noon) 10. And he became very hungry, (That’s lunch time as we call it today.) and would have eaten: but while they (probably the women folks) were making ready, he fell into a trance,” Up there on the housetop.

Acts 10:11-12

“And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: 12. Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.” Which means it was mostly unclean stuff to a Jew.

Acts 10:13

“And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.” Now I always stop right here. Why does Peter say what he says? Because he’s a law-keeping Jew. He’s not about to eat any of this stuff that was not part of the clean animals.

Acts 10:14

“But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.” Now all I want us to see here is that we are dealing with Peter, the law-keeping Jew. But you know what happens? Finally the Lord got through to him. And
Peter, of course, gives into the Lord’s leading. About the time he’s agreeable, here come the people from Cornelius, and they meet him at the front door. Now we’ll jump down to verse 23.

Acts 10:23

“Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.” Now we know from chapter 11 that he also took six fellow-believing Jews with him for a total of seven. Boy, I was just reading an interesting book last night on numbers. You know, it’s just amazing how this Bible is put together with numbers. It’s just unbelievable, and of course, that’s what makes it so supernatural. But anyway, Peter leaves with them—verse 24.

Acts 10:24

“And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.” So, we have a houseful of people. How many? The Bible doesn’t tell us. You can use your own good sense. Remember, it’s a Middle Eastern home, so it certainly wasn’t commodious enough for dozens and dozens. But there could have been twelve, fourteen, fifteen, maybe twenty people. All right, now we come down to verse 25.

Acts 10:25-27

“And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. (See, now there comes that pagan background.) 26. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. 27. And as he talked with him, he went in (through the front door), and found many that were come together.” And now Peter gets kind of shaky. Peter is getting a little bit worried. I can understand why. Because you know, when religion has a hold on you, it just controls your life. Judaism was a religion. All right, now look what happened when he sees all these Gentiles, probably a lot of them military people.

Acts 10:28a

“And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful (See how clearly this shows Peter’s legalism. Peter says, you know that it’s an unlawful--) thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation;…” Now you see how plain that is? That was the mentality of the nation of Israel. Rightly, because that’s what God had instructed from the very beginning—have nothing to do with these pagan, idolatrous Gentiles.
They were a separated people. All right, but now God has to show Peter that He’s going to make a break with that kind of mentality. He is going to go to the Gentile world. All right, so he says:

Acts 10:28b

“...it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” Because every human being is now going to be a candidate for this glorious gospel of salvation that will be coming from this other apostle (Paul).

Acts 10:29

“Therefore I came unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?” Then Cornelius rehearses his experience with the angel, and how the Lord had told him to send for him and so forth. And now verse 33, winding up Cornelius’ little speech, he says:

Acts 10:33

“Immediately therefore I sent to thee; (That is to Peter.) and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.” In other words, Cornelius’ group was hanging on every word that Peter was going to be telling them. All right, so Peter now begins to unfold who Jesus of Nazareth really was. All right, verse 36:

Acts 10:36a

“The word which God sent unto the children of Israel,...” Now never lose sight of that. Up until this time God’s word had never gone to anybody but the nation of Israel. Oh, there may have been an occasional proselyte, but I always remind people—what did Jesus say about proselytes? Why, the Jews were more the children of hell than the proselytes that they had won. But anyway, verse 36:

Acts 10:36-40

“The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) 37. That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38. How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. 39. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the
land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40. Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly;”

All right, now the point I’m going to make here, and this is what so many people cannot understand, Peter is not proclaiming faith in the death, burial, and resurrection as the means of salvation as we do in the Body of Christ. It just isn’t in here. He is establishing a fact that even though Israel had crucified their Messiah and shed His blood, He had risen from the dead and He had gone back to glory.

But as we show here on our timeline all the time, so far as Peter is still concerned, this was all simply a matter of something or other that he couldn’t comprehend, but I think they understood that the atoning blood had now been shed. So consequently, the ascended Lord in short order, after the seven years of tribulation (they understood that)—He would be coming back and still bringing in the 1,000 year Kingdom rule. They thought it would all happen in their lifetime.

They had no idea that this was going to be opened up into a two thousand year period of history. This was all supposed to happen in their lifetime. All right, now let’s read on. Don’t want you to lose the thought—verse 39.

Acts 10:39b-41

“…whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40. Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; 41. Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.”

Now, watch. As I’m saying, not a word of salvation attached to this. It’s just a statement of fact. Verse 43:

Acts 10:43

“To him (to this resurrected Christ) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.”

A word about the blood? A word about His death? A word about His resurrection? Nothing. Now do you see that? The world can’t see that.

Like I said in the last program, they tried to tell me that Paul preached the same thing Peter did, and Peter preached what Paul did. But Peter has no conception of what we call salvation through the work of the cross. All Peter still understands is who He was. He was that promised Messiah. Peter says, I don’t care what happened to Him, He’s alive. He’s in glory, and He’s ready to come back and fulfill the promises. That’s what I want folks to see. If they would believe who He was, even these Gentiles would
receive the remission of sins. All right, that’s the Gospel of the Kingdom, not the Gospel of Grace!

Now that’s the same message that Saul of Tarsus was saved by. Saul didn’t have an understanding of the work of the cross when he was saved on the road to Damascus. All he recognized was who this Jesus of Nazareth really was. That’s the Kingdom gospel. All right, now when these Gentiles, these Romans, when they heard that, they were so open to it. After all, this is God doing something beyond the normal. He’s got to open the door to the Gentile world. He’s got to show Peter that these Gentiles are going to be saved without going through all the ramifications of temple worship and law keeping and repentance and water baptism and the whole bit. They’re going to be saved by faith even though it’s not yet Paul’s Gospel.

Acts 10:44

“While Peter yet spake these words, (He hasn’t even finished and here comes the evidence of the believing of these Gentiles. Do you see that?) the Holy Spirit fell on all them who heard the word.” Why? Because they were believing it. With childlike faith they were believing what Peter was saying, and God responded by showing the proof of their faith—which was common for especially that day and time. He gave them the gift of speaking in other languages.

Acts 10:45a

“And they of the circumcision who believed (In other words, Peter and the six men that came with him.) were (What’s the word?) astonished,…” Now what does that mean? They couldn’t believe their ears. What in the world? What’s happening? These pagan Gentiles are receiving the same kind of a response that we got at Pentecost. But they had to believe it. God had saved them and that was the confirmation of their saving faith.

Acts 10:45b-46a

“…on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Why?) 46. For they heard them speak with tongues, (I think a better word is languages.) and magnify God.…” They were praising Him.

You know, this is what thrills us in the ministry. The other day I had a phone call. I can sometimes not remember whether it was a phone call or a letter. But a lady had been raised in a home absolutely destitute of anything spiritual or biblical. She said they didn’t have a Bible in the house. Her parents never believed in God. They never went to church, consequently the kids didn’t either.
She said she went on into her teen years with that same mentality. She never had an interest in the things of God, never questioned about Him. She said she married somebody pretty much of the same thinking, and she went into the work-a-day world. And for years, she said, that was her life—no concept of God, or eternity, or anything. And then she said one week she was home with an injury of some kind. She couldn’t go to work. She said she was just flipping through the channels and accidentally caught our program. She said it struck an interest, so she watched every day for about two weeks.

She had taped it after she went back to work so she could watch it when she got home. And she said that after two weeks I just happened to put the plan of salvation on the program, and she was saved instantly. She said from that time on her whole life changed. Her husband became a believer and their home life changed, all because of believing the Gospel. Now that’s the whole idea of Scripture.

As soon as these Romans believed what Peter preached, even though it wasn’t yet our Gospel of Grace, it was still the Word of God. God responded by giving them an open heart to believe and showed the evidence of it. Now of course I can never teach chapter 10 without going back to chapter 2. Those of you who are with me all the time, you probably get tired of me doing this. But I like to compare Scripture with Scripture so that we see what a drastic difference there is between what happened here in this Gentile house from what happened on the day of Pentecost back there in Jerusalem.

All right, that’s back at Acts chapter 2 verse 38. All I ask people to do is just use common sense and compare words with words, English with English. You’re not comparing oranges and apples. We’re comparing what took place over here at Pentecost with the Jew to what took place in the house of Cornelius the Gentile. And look at the complete inversion in the way God dealt with them. All right, in Acts chapter 2 verse 38, here is Peter and his appeal to the nation of Israel on the day of Pentecost.

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, and (next step) ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Now look what happens in the house of Cornelius. Just compare the process. Verse 44 again:

Acts 10:44a

“While Peter was yet speaking,...” He hadn’t even stopped to make any kind of an invitation or an explanation. He is still in his message of who Jesus Christ really was, and the Holy Spirit fell on these Romans as an indication of their believing.
Then these Jews couldn’t possibly comprehend what was taking place, but they understood that it was something real because these Gentiles, too, spoke in languages and tongues just like they did back on Pentecost. But what hadn’t they done yet? They hadn’t repented. They hadn’t gotten baptized, but they were believers. Do you see the difference? Plain as day.

Now of course, Peter in an afterthought said, well, now wait a minute. We missed it somehow or other. We should have baptized them first, but we didn’t have a chance. God is way ahead of him. These Gentiles became believers by just simply believing—no repentance, no water baptism, nothing. Isn’t that amazing?

All right, so this is the whole concept now of Peter going to the house of Cornelius. If you’ll go ahead to chapter 11, because I get so many questions on things in the Book of Acts, and my stock answer is “you cannot use Acts for doctrine.” Acts is an historical record of moving from Israel to the Gentile world. And there are so many things in here that get confusing when people try to use Acts for doctrine. They get all fouled up. They get all this other stuff that has no business being in our faith system today.

And so I repeat it over and over. Don’t use these things in Acts as doctrine and say, well, this is what you have to do, because this is what Peter said. This is what you have to do, because this is what happened here. It just doesn’t smooth out.

For example, Paul is going to take a Jewish vow. Paul is going to baptize. As I’m going to show you in these succeeding programs, as soon as we get out of all this transitional stuff in the Book of Acts and get into Paul’s Epistles, then everything starts leveling out.

But all right, back to our period of time with Peter yet in chapter 11. Remember, the basis of all of his operation is the Jewish church in Jerusalem, which is still all Kingdom ground. All they’ve understood was who Jesus Christ was.

Acts 11:1-2

*And the apostles (the other eleven) and brethren that were in Judaea (that is Jerusalem) heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. 2. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they who were of the circumcision, (That is this Jewish church including the other eleven apostles.) contended with him.”* My, they just called him on the carpet. Peter, what in the world were you doing in a house full of Romans? We have nothing to do with those people.
All right, verse 3, and they don’t quit with the fact that he went up there. He went in, and on top of everything else he sat down and ate unclean food with them! Peter, how could you?

Acts 11:3

“Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, (That was bad enough. But then you sat down and ate with them?) and didst eat with them.” Now, do you get the picture? They couldn’t comprehend something like this. Now when Peter comes back and rehearses all that happened, you see what God is doing? He is opening up the thinking of these Jews to the fact that God is going to go and save Gentiles. Not by bringing them into Judaism as proselytes, but He’s going to save them by faith and faith alone now.

Not in just who Jesus was, but what Jesus has done—and that is the work of the cross. And that’s where all the difference of the world comes in. That’s what sets Paul’s ministry apart from Peter. It’s as different as daylight is from dark, even though they’re dealing with the same Christ. Yet Peter is dealing with the Christ of the earthly ministry, proclaiming Him to be the Messiah of Israel. Paul knows nothing—as we’re going to see in the next program—nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, buried, and risen from the dead.

All right, now let’s just come down a little bit more in chapter 11 verse 4.

Acts 11:4-5a

“But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying, 5. I was in the city of Joppa praying:…” And then he rehearses the whole story, and that kind of settles them down.

But that doesn’t really change their overall thinking, because, as we’re going to see later, if not today, in another taping. We’re going to see that when these Jerusalem Jews hear about Gentiles coming into salvation by way of Israel’s God up there in Antioch, they’re going to get all bent out of shape just like they are here. They are going to, again, take steps to root out any of these false teachers who could possibly think about bringing Gentiles into a relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

So, as you see this in the Book of Acts, just constantly remember the Jewish mentality—that it was still all Jewish. That Israel alone was the recipient of God’s covenant promises. On the other hand, we’re getting ready to accept the fact that God is now going to go to the Gentile world without bringing them into Judaism.
Okay, it’s good to have everybody again after your break. We are going right back in where we left off, because these minutes go too fast. I only get a complaint once in awhile and it’s “don’t make announcements; you haven’t got time for that.”

So we’ll just go right back into Acts chapter 11. Peter has just finished rehearsing with the Jewish believers of Jerusalem his tremendous experience up there at that Roman’s house in Caesarea. They were military people, no doubt, and how God instantly saved them the moment they believed Peter’s message—which was faith in that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ and Messiah!

All right, now remember, Acts is transitional and so far, except for the little interlude of Paul’s conversion in chapter 9, it’s been all Jews and Peter and the Twelve. Now all of a sudden we’re going to see it changed from Israel and the Jews to Paul and the Gentile world. We’ll hear almost nothing more from Peter except maybe in chapter 15 when Paul goes up to the Jerusalem counsel. But Peter is going to fade off the scene and become a nonentity, and Paul comes to the fore.

This is the beginning of the transition now. They’ve had all this persecution up at Jerusalem because of Saul of Tarsus and the attending religious Jews. Now come down to verse 19 of Acts 11—to one of my favorite verses. This is the verse that began to open my eyes.

Acts 11:19

“All they who were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose around Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch (Up there north of Lebanon in Syria, now watch the remaining part of the verse.) preaching the word (Which would be the Old Testament, as no New Testament is written yet.) to none but unto the Jews only.” Now why is that so hard for people to comprehend?

Because that’s the way it was. It would have been totally a Jewish thing coming out of the Old Testament and Christ’s early ministry, as we showed in the first moments of the first half hour today. What did Jesus tell the Twelve? “Go not to the Gentiles; go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” All right, then we go through the whole death, burial, and resurrection, and Christ ascends back to glory. Peter and the eleven
hold forth on the day of Pentecost. It’s all Jewish, not a word about Gentiles. Everything is hanging onto faith in who Jesus was because of the Old Testament covenants.

All right, it’s no different here in verse 19. These scattered Jews are still only approaching fellow Jews about this Jesus of Nazareth. All right, verse 20.

Acts 11:20a

“And some of them (Some of these believing Jews coming out of Jerusalem.) were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spoke unto the Grecians,…” A lot of your translations should say Greeks. I think the reason is that there’s such a small difference between the Greek word for pure Greek and the Greek word for a Jew who was from outside the land of Israel. One is Hellenes and the other one is Hellenists. So I think what happened here is we have a change in the translators. One translator that I read quite exclusively says there wouldn’t have been anything unusual talking to fellow Jews who were merely from outside the land. But what made it so alarming was they were now approaching Greeks and that follows what just happened up here in chapter 10. So I’d like to read it.

Acts 11:20b

“…when they were come to Antioch spoke unto Greeks (Gentiles), preaching the Lord Jesus.” Now remember, they cannot preach faith in the death, burial, and resurrection until we get Paul coming on the scene with what he had learned in his three years in the desert with the Lord Jesus. So it’s still all based on the Kingdom gospel. It’s still just faith in who Jesus of Nazareth really was. All right, now verse 21.

Acts 11:21

“And the hand of the Lord was with them: (It’s all part of God’s design now to take this out to the Gentile world. And the hand of the Lord was with them--) and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.” Greeks. Now, like I told you in the last half hour, when the Jewish system up at Jerusalem heard some of these things, they got all shook up. Why? This isn’t supposed to happen. This is our God. This is the God of Israel. This isn’t the God for those Romans. And now here we got the Greeks becoming believers. So again, Jerusalem is all shook up.

Acts 11:22

“Then tidings of these things came (What things? Gentiles are responding.) unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: (the Jewish church) and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.” Well, for what purpose? Barnabas,
go up there and find out what’s going on. Straighten things out. This is going to ruin our religion. We can’t have these Gentiles coming in. So, that’s the alarm. But you know what? I always make the statement: God always has the right man at the right place at the right time! Had they sent anybody but Barnabas, it would have just exploded. But good ol’ Barnabas, see—verse 23.

**Acts 11:23**

“Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, (on these Gentiles) was glad, (Contrary to much of the mentality of the Jews, Barnabas was glad.) and exhorted (or encouraged) them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.” Now, why would he make a statement like that? Come back with me. Keep your hand in Acts, we’ll be right back. Go all the way up to First Thessalonians. I’ve made the point over and over. I’ve been on the air so long now I can’t help but repeat.

I Thessalonians chapter 1 and this, of course, is dealing with people up in Greece, north of Athens, at the city of Thessalonica. But nevertheless, Gentiles were Gentiles in these days. They had all come out of abject idolatry and paganism. All right, so this is why Barnabas told them to adhere or cleave to the Lord, because of what they’d come from.

**I Thessalonians 1:9**

“For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, (In other words, referring to people over in the rest of Greece who were just so commending of these Thessalonian believers.) and how ye turned to God from (What?) idols to serve the living and true God:” See that? That was true of all of Paul’s converts, unless they were Jews. All of the Gentile world was steeped in idolatry and paganism and the worship of the gods and goddesses of mythology. And they had been ever since the tower of Babel, because that’s where it all started.

All you have to do is go back into ancient history. You know, Nimrod started the whole ball rolling of all of this false worship of gods and goddesses, and that’s what these believers all had to come out of. All right, verse 10, I’m going to have to use this one. And what were these believers to do?

**I Thessalonians 1:10**

“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.” Now we’ve got to remember, we’re up now in Paul’s epistles—years later. And what is he reminding these Gentile ex-pagans—to not only realize that they’re saved, but to be ready for what? The Rapture and the coming wrath of the Tribulation.
The Rapture was Paul’s theme—that all these believers are going to be suddenly translated. Again, Paul thought it was going to happen in his life. So I’m not extreme in hoping that it’ll be in my life. We’re that much closer. But this was the Pauline mentality—that they were to wait for the soon appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ to take them out before the horrors of that 7 years of Tribulation would begin.

All right, back to Acts chapter 11. We’ve got to finish the transition. Now we’re coming away from Peter and the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom economy to the nation of Israel. But before the Gospel of Grace kicks in, God is still saving people on that Kingdom Gospel based on faith that Jesus was the Christ.

So, don’t lose sight that God is sovereign. He can do anything He wants to do. And if He wanted to save Saul of Tarsus by simply recognizing who He was, that was His prerogative. If He wanted to save centurions in the house of Cornelius by faith in believing that Jesus was the Christ, that’s His prerogative. The same way here—God is sovereign. He can do whatever He wants to do.

All right, so reading on in Acts chapter 11 verse 24, coming back to Barnabas again.

Acts 11:24

“For he (Barnabas) was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit (See, that’s why he could sense what was going on.) and of faith: and much people were added unto the Lord.” Up there at Antioch, in Syria. Now, I love this next verse.

Acts 11:25

“Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek (Who?) Saul:” Why? Why should Barnabas all of a sudden get the idea, “Well, I’ve got to find Saul of Tarsus?” The man is full of faith. He’s full of the Holy Spirit. So he’s the man God can use. Now, how did God cause the man to go? Your guess is as good as mine. But nevertheless, somehow or other God let Barnabas know that because of what’s taking place—the influx of Gentiles into all this—now we need that Apostle of the Gentiles—the sent one for their benefit.

Now, keep your hand in Acts and go ahead to another verse. Go to Romans chapter 11. I’ve got to back up what I just said—that Saul of Tarsus, whom we now know is Paul, was the designated apostle, singular, of the Gentiles. That’s what the Book says. It’s not my idea. It’s Scripture. Romans 11 verse 13, where he is inspired by the Holy Spirit to write:

Romans 11:13
“For I speak to you Gentiles, (See that? Watch every word when you read your Bible.) inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles,…” And that’s why we’ve got to adhere to that. Oh, my goodness, I read the best little book the other night. I wish everyone could read it, although it’s too hard to read.

The average person, I think, would just struggle through like I did. I had to go back sometimes and read things the second time. But anyway, it was just an unveiling of the history of Christianity. How many Pauline believers were there down through the last nineteen hundred years? Few or many? Precious few, precious few—because you see, most of Christendom, beginning with the so-called church fathers (Origen was the worst.)

all pushed Paul out the backdoor. They taught nothing but the Old Testament and the four gospels all the way down through history. Even the Reformation didn’t make that much difference, because as this author put it (the author’s name wasn’t even on it, so I can’t give him credit), but as this author put it—for example, in the Crusades. When they slaughtered people by the thousands in the name of their religion, where did they get the biblical authority? The Old Testament slaughter back there in the Book of Judges.

Have you ever read Judges? Oh, my goodness, it’s enough to turn your stomach. How they were just slaughtering them by the thousands. Well, they used that as their biblical authority to do it in the name of Christianity. Then you get the so-called Puritans and the Pilgrims of our New England early days. They weren’t much better. They were so legalistic. Like I shared with my class the other night—in their legalism, if young 17 year-old girls would show a bare ankle, what would they do to them? Beat them almost to death. They were heartless in the name of religion. And you bring it right on up until today. Now we’ve gone the other direction. Anything goes and still be Christian.

But you see, when you get into the Pauline part of it, it’s a whole different world. Most of religion was constantly trying to stamp them out. If they heard of a bunch of these conservative, biblical Christians in some valley, they’d seek them out and kill every one of them. And that was most of history for the last two thousand years. All right, so it’s the same way even here. That Paul has to be recognized as the one and only true apostle, or Christ’s representative, of the Gentile world, and people don’t like that—“but he is the apostle of the Gentiles.”

All right, back to Acts chapter 11 verse 25. He goes up to Tarsus and he finds Saul. You know, I always make the point. He didn’t just know exactly where to find him. He had to look. He had to ask a lot of questions. Where is this guy? He finally finds him. Now verse 26:
Acts 11:26a

“And when he had found him, (Barnabas finds Saul.) he brought him unto Antioch....” Because, after all, Antioch is where Gentiles are becoming interested in these things of Israel’s God. That’s the best way I can put it.

Now you’ve got to remember, there is still no New Testament. Nothing. Only thing they have is the Old Testament. This gives rise then to why they had to have gifted men in those early years—who, by a gift of the Holy Spirit, could teach these things that Paul had been revealed of first, so that error would not creep in through the spoken word. They had to be gifted. They had to be Holy Spirit led, because there was no written Word. Now once the written Word comes in, you see, then those gifts were no longer necessary. All right, back to verse 26. So when he’d found him, he brought him to Antioch.

Acts 11:26b

“...And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, (or this called-out assembly of primarily Gentiles) and taught much people. (God is opening the hearts of these pagans left and right.) And the disciples (or these followers) were called Christians first in Antioch.” As first I suppose a derogatory term. Those people who think they’re Christ-like. But the title stuck, and we still refer to believers as Christians to this day.

I don’t use it as much, because too often it’s not a true definition. But anyhow, that’s where they were first called Christians, in Antioch. Okay, now I think I’ve got ten minutes left yet in this half hour. Let’s go ahead now to verse 1 of chapter 13. Now Paul and Barnabas have been laboring amongst the Gentiles in Antioch, which was probably one of the most lively cities in the whole Roman Empire at this time. It was pretty much the center of the then-known world. It was a large city.

It had a tremendous amount of commerce, as well as it was a religious center for the worship of Diana. A certain period of years have gone by now, and we get up to Acts chapter 13. We’re now probably around A.D. 40 or 44. Now remember, the crucifixion and Pentecost were in A.D. 29. I always put Saul’s conversion at about A.D. 37, then the three years in the desert. That starts out when he goes up to Tarsus at about A.D. 40. So, about four years later now, after they had been laboring there in Antioch amongst the Gentiles--

Acts 13:1
“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.” Now, these were all men who were leaders of that Antioch congregation.

Acts 13:2

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” Now, here again, the Antioch leadership didn’t decide to send them out. This was a God thing. The Holy Spirit, one way or another, revealed to the men of this Antioch church that now it was time to get Paul and Barnabas out into the Gentile Roman Empire with this glorious message of the Grace of God.

All right, so now we can pick it up as they go up first to the island of Cyprus. I’m going to bring you down to just one verse here. I think you all know the account. How they ministered to the governor of the island, and there was a false teaching Jew who was a sorcerer. And he was attempting to keep this Roman, probably a Gentile anyway, from letting Paul and Barnabas minister to him with the plan of salvation. All right, so he’s doing everything he can. Verse 8:

Acts 13:8-10

“But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them (that is Paul and Barnabas), seeking to turn away the deputy (the governor) from the faith (or from believing). 9. Then Saul (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Spirit, set his eyes on him, 10. And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease (or will you not stop) to pervert the right ways of the Lord?” Now here comes Paul’s authority as an apostle.

Acts 13:11

“And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun (Now here’s the key.) for a season....” Not for the rest of his life, but for a period of time this false teaching Jew is going to be physically blind.

Now, I take that as a type or a sign that the nation of Israel as a whole is going to experience the same thing; as they were opposing, especially, Paul and Barnabas in these Gentile cities. It was always the Jews that opposed them the most, because they were, of course, defensive of their religion. That’s understandable. But nevertheless, because of their constant opposition to this, God has blinded the nation. To this day
they are under a blinding. All right, let me take you ahead to Romans chapter 11. This is from the pen of the Apostle Paul. I don’t know where to start. I guess, just for sake of time, otherwise we won’t make any headway at all, let’s jump in at verse 7. Romans chapter 11 verse 7, because I just want you to see that the Scripture makes it so plain that Israel is going to be spiritually blinded—not for the rest of their life, not until the nation of Israel dies or disappears, but for a period of time.

**Romans 11:7a**

“What then? Israel (the nation) hath not obtained that which he seeketh for;…” What were they looking for? The Messiah and the Kingdom, but it didn’t happen because of their unbelief. It’s still going to happen. They’re yet going to have it. Don’t think for a minute they won’t. But in this interim they are judicially blinded. All right read on.

**Romans 11:7**

“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election, (Or, those few who did believe.) hath obtained it, (In other words, they’ve entered into salvation, and they’re going to be in glory with the rest of us. But what happened to the major part of the nation?) and the rest were blinded.” They were blinded, judicially blinded.

Now, don’t ask me how God can remain fair and do that. But nevertheless, it’s a fact of Scripture that the nation of Israel has been nationally blinded. Now, individual Jews can still come in and be saved. Absolutely! And we get our share of them. But the nation as a whole and I’ve always made reference, you take the nation of Israel over there; they have a form of godliness, but is their government righteous and godly?

No, it’s as secular as any government in the world. They have just as much corruption as anybody else. They’re in a period of spiritual blindness. But now you’re in Romans 11, so you might as well go on to the next verse that speaks of it, verse 25. Here’s where I get the authority biblically to teach this period of time we are now in.

Let’s just drop down below Israel’s timeline, because that was going to take them all the way to the promise of the Kingdom, but God stopped it. The Tribulation hasn’t happened yet. I don’t care what some people say. We’re not in the Tribulation today. It hasn’t happened in the past. It’s still future. God broke the timeline right there, and now we drop down into here.

Now we’re in this parenthetical period of time. Israel has been set aside. Israel is spiritually blinded, and God is pouring out the Gospel and His mercy and Grace upon the whole world with His glorious Gospel based on faith in the death, burial, and
resurrection. That’s what we’re going to be looking at after we get out of the Book of Acts. How that Paul will then go to the Gentile world with that glorious Gospel of Grace!

But all right, here’s where I get my authority to open up the timeline. Why do I put in a parenthesis? Well, here it is in verse 25.

**Romans 11:25**

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (Or secret—now we’re going to be using that word a lot in the coming programs. And what was this secret?) lest ye should be wise in your own conceit; (In other words, don’t get puffed up that the Gentiles have all got it made and God’s through with Israel. See, that’s what a lot of people are trying to tell us—that God’s all through with Israel. But don’t you believe it. God is not through with His covenant people. Next statement--) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, (A spiritual blindness, in part, for a designated period of time.) until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.”

Well, what’s the fullness of the Gentiles? The Body of Christ which we’re going to be looking at, hopefully now, in the next half hour. The Body of Christ—this composite group of believers from every walk of life and from every part of the globe that have all been saved by trusting this finished work of the cross. And when it’s complete, it has to be taken out of the way so that God can finish with Israel.

When the Body of Christ has been fulfilled—it’s full, it’s at its time of fruition—however you want to put it, then God has to take it out of the way in the Rapture. Because the Body of Christ will not fit in any part of God’s dealing with Israel as they go into the Tribulation. We’re insulated from all of that.
Okay, program number 4, and I’m still on two feet. So we’ll just see where the Lord takes us in this half hour. Again, we like to always thank our television audience for your prayer support and your financial help. You’ll never know what it all means. Now again, my little wife is the one that’s the promoter of these things. I’m going to put it on her shoulders. But she wants me to keep reminding you that this Q & A book is still available. We send it out without any charge for postage or handling for a flat $11, and that’s it.

All right, we’re going to keep right on going where we’ve been. We’re still connecting the dots of Scripture. We’ve been coming all the way through the Scriptures. In this taping we’ve gotten to Saul’s conversion, his time out in the desert with the Lord, and how God’s in control of everything.

We’re making the transition from God dealing with Israel and all the Israeli covenants. And we saw that Gentiles were getting interested up there at Antioch. Then from the Antioch church four or five years later, Paul and Barnabas begin their first of what we call missionary journeys. As a real result of those missionary journeys, of course, Paul established Gentile churches throughout the area of Turkey and Greece predominantly, which was the major part of the Roman Empire.

So, I’m going to take you up to the result of his ministry among the Gentiles in one of his letters, I Corinthians. Let’s start reading in chapter 1. Now, of course, this isn’t the earliest letter, but it’s earlier than some. Verse 17.

**I Corinthians 1:17-18**

“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. 18. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.”

Have you heard anything like that in the Old Testament? Have you heard anything like that in the four gospels? Not even in John, but the world can’t see that. They just refuse to see it. My goodness, I get a call every once in awhile that says, “Les, you make too much of Paul. I’m following Jesus.” Well, that’s all well and good. But listen, Jesus doesn’t give you the gospel of salvation for the Body of Christ! It wasn’t time for it.
So we have to constantly be reminded that all of this is in God’s divine purposes that, yes, coming out of the Old Testament everything was Jewish. Romans 15:8 tells us He came to fulfill the promises, but through divine purposes Israel rejected Him. They crucified Him which brought about everything that needed to be done for this gospel that we must now believe.

But now here we have a whole change in direction. God did not let Paul have the Twelve influence him at all. Paul had to be taught something totally different, and he’s going to be referring to it over and over as the “revelation of the mysteries” that was given to him and him only. We’re going to be looking at this for the next several programs, so get ready. The mysteries—and in the Greek its *musterion*, which is also translated *secret*. All these things that have been kept secret in the mind of God are now going to come from the pen of this apostle.

Now, that’s why I’m always reminding you people—don’t go back to the Book of Acts to get your doctrine, because Luke wrote Acts, and Luke is not the apostle of the Gentiles. It’s that simple. Luke was simply the instrument that God used to record that transition. He wrote the gospel, but, you see, Luke is not the apostle of the Gentiles, Paul is; as we saw in Romans 11:13. So we have to constantly come back to Paul’s apostleship.

Now, I’m going to run right ahead of any criticism and comment by showing you—now if you’re going to condemn me for making too much of Paul, then I’m going to say, then you don’t know your Bible. Go back with me to II Peter. And I’m reminded as you look for it of a lady from one of our Western states. She sent me a clipping out of her newspaper, and it was a letter to the editor.

Evidently, some pastor had written a letter to the editor where he had emphasized some of these things from Paul’s epistles. And this letter, oh, wow! You talk about a mouth full of venom from start to finish—just venom of hatred for the Apostle Paul. Saying what an idiot he really was. How he got kicked out of Greece—he got kicked out of Turkey—he got kicked out of Jerusalem. The lady that sent me the article wrote across the top of the page. She said, “Now I see what you mean when you say that people hate Paul.” Yeah, they do. They just can’t stand the man, because they don’t like his doctrine.

All right, but now look what II Peter tells us concerning this apostle—the apostle that lots of people think shouldn’t even be in our Bibles. I haven’t even found it myself yet. Second Peter chapter 3 and those of you that have been with me over the years, you know where I’m going—chapter 3 verse 15. I’m putting this up front, so that if you are tempted to call me or write me and say, hey, wait a minute, I can’t follow this Paul bit. Well, then you can’t believe what Peter says. Look what Peter wrote by inspiration of
the Holy Spirit at the end of his life; a few weeks and he’ll be martyred. Look what he’s leaving with his Jewish listeners or readers.

**II Peter 3:15**

“And account (understand) that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him (from the Lord) hath written unto you;” Now isn’t that plain? Peter is telling his Jewish listeners: now if you want salvation, (The Kingdom gospel has dropped away. It’s disappeared.) if you want salvation as a Jew, you’d better go to Paul’s epistles and get this Gospel for the Age of Grace (as found in I Corinthians 15:1-4). A Jew can’t be saved today by just saying “I believe that Jesus was the Christ.” That’s not enough. He has to believe exactly as we do. All right, now look at verse 16. This is where so many of our Christian leaders are.

**II Peter 3:16a**

“As also in all his epistles,...” Now, I think in verse 15 he’s referring to the letter of Hebrews. I don’t get adamant if people don’t agree, but that’s what seems obvious to me—that he had written the Book of Hebrews. But now Peter says not just the Book of Hebrews, but all his epistles—Romans through Philemon.

**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, (See, there’s Peter’s legalism.) which they that are unlearned and unstable twist, as they do also the other scriptures,...” Now, what does that tell you? Paul’s epistles are Scripture. Don’t ever let anybody tell you Paul’s epistles don’t belong in our Bible. Peter says they’re Scripture, and that’s good enough for me. They are the Word of God, and they’re directed primarily to you and me as Gentiles.

And then, of course, Paul writes that all Scripture (Genesis through Revelation) is inspired of God. And is it profitable? Absolutely it is, but you will not find Body of Christ truth outside of Paul. It’s just not in there. It’s all good background. It’s all good foundation. But so far as understanding God’s program for us today, it has to come from this man’s epistles. All right, now then, back to the verses that I just read, because I want to go back to the timeline on the board.

Now remember, everything of these Old Testament prophecies have stopped cold. The Tribulation didn’t come in. The Second Coming hasn’t happened. Instead, we’ve been now 1,900 and some years in this Dispensation of the Grace of God (Ephesians 3:2), which is all part of the Pauline writings.
Next program I’m going to put a circle down here. If Sharon’s able to be with us, I’m going to have her put a circle. We’re going to call it the Body of the church-age truth—this Body of Christ and all of Paul’s doctrine. In fact, I like to put it this way when people call on the phone. If by virtue of what may happen, if we were to lose our Bibles, if they were to be confiscated, if we could somehow, before they took our Bibles, slip out Romans through Philemon, would we have enough to get by?

Yes, we’d still have enough to get by, because, you see, within the Pauline writings we have the plan of salvation. We have the Christian walk. We have our hope for the end. Now what more do you need? That’s where all of the real meat for us today rests.

Now, all the rest of Scripture, as Paul said in Romans 15:4 “Is for our learning.” It’s for us to get a better understanding of how all of this has been going on since the creation of Adam. But to really get down to the nitty-gritty of being ready for eternity, we can find it if we just can keep Romans through Philemon, because it’s all in there.

But now on the other hand, if they took away Paul’s epistles, and we were left with what was left, we’d be in tough straights. There would be no real presentation of the Gospel of Salvation. There would be no real way to walk the Christian life. There would be no real hope to suddenly be translated in the Rapture, because it’s not back there.

All right, now if you’ll come back with me to I Corinthians chapter 1 again, here is exactly how Paul puts it.

I Corinthians 1:17a

“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel:…” He wasn’t sent like John the Baptist with the instructions to baptize. All his commission was is preach the Gospel. All right, let’s move on. Verse 18.

I Corinthians 1:18

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it (the preaching of the cross) is the power of God.” It’s a supernatural thing. That’s why good people cannot be saved by their works. Good works cannot bring in the supernatural power. That takes a response to the Gospel. Then, yes, God moves in supernaturally. We become a new person, and we get new desires, new ambitions, and then everything is totally different.

Okay, now let’s take a little time here in these early verses in Corinthians, because it’s one of Paul’s earlier letters. It was written even before Romans. I think Galatians might
have been written before, and we’ll come back to that in our later programs. But now, reading on here in I Corinthians verse 19.

*I Corinthians 1:19-21a*

“For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. (or the intellectual) 20. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer (or the argumentative individual) of this world? Hath God not made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God,…”

Now, whenever you read something like that, I hope you know your Bible well enough that you can, in your mind at least, just flip back to what could Paul refer to. Come back with me again to the Book of Acts chapter 17. This is exactly what he’s referring to, and it’s not that much different today.

My, somebody just shared with me at break time again, how the religious leaders of our beloved America are turning their back by the hundreds against the truth of the Word, God’s Word. They’re coming up with all these foreign ideas. It’s coming in like a tsunami. It’s just unbelievable, except that we know that it’s the end time. We know that the apostasy, the falling away, is upon us. But all right, look what Paul encountered up at Athens. Chapter 17, let’s go down to verse 15.

*Acts 17:15-16a*

“And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timothy for to come to him with all speed, they departed. 16. Now while Paul waited for them at Athens,…” Now remember, they’ve been up to Philippi and they’ve been coming down the coast. They’ve stopped at Berea and Thessalonica and so forth. But now Paul has gone on ahead alone evidently, and he’s waiting at Athens.

*Acts 17:16b*

“…his spirit was stirred in him, (He just got shook up we’d say today.) when he saw the city of Athens wholly (or completely) given to (What?) idolatry.” Idolatry. Can you imagine what that must have felt like? That every place you went there were pagan temples. There were pagan idols, and the pagan immorality was everywhere. Things that are so evident that I don’t even want to mention on this program. We see it when we’re on our tours and stuff. It was everywhere and it just, I suppose, broke his heart. It just stirred him. All right, now verse 17.
Acts 17:17

“Therefore (because of all this) he disputed in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.” I imagine the chief conversation was this very thing. Well, how can you as synagogue religious Jews—how can you function in the midst of all this idolatry and all this immorality? I imagine he called them on the carpet. I think that’s what he’s doing.

Acts 17:18a

“They then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, (Those were groups of intellectuals in his day.) encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods:…” My goodness, they had thousands of them, and yet they couldn’t quite comprehend what Paul could be talking about with the one God of creation.

Acts 17:18b

“…he seemeth to be setter forth of strange god: because he preached unto them Jesus and the (What?) resurrection.” That threw them a curve. They had never heard of such a thing. To the Greek philosophy, to the pagans, you died like a dog and it was all over.

Now when they would talk about an eternal life or something like that, they weren’t talking about in the terms that we do. They felt that when you left offspring, they would just continue your lifeline; and so it would on into time immemorial. But they had no concept of actually dying in this body in death and then having a resurrection to come. It was beyond them. They’d never heard of such a thing. All right, verse 19.

Acts 17:19-20

“And they took him, (That is Paul.) and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof though speakest, is? 20. For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.” So, they’ve got an interest. They could have pursued it, but they didn’t. They didn’t want to. They’re no different than people today. They may take a temporary interest; but, no, I’m not interested in any of this stuff. All right, now verse 21.

Acts 17:21

“(For all the Athenians (the rank and file of the whole city) and strangers (The people that were there as tourists or as business.) which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)” They knew there was something
out there that they didn’t know, and so they’re willing to listen to anybody and everybody. But now verse 22.

Acts 17:22

“Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, (up there on the Areopagus) and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive (or I understand) that in all things ye are too superstitious.” What’s the core of religion? Superstition of one form or another.

Just stop and think about it. Why—was it Lenin who said that religion was the opiate of the masses? Yeah. Why? Because that’s what religion does. It puts them under the thumb of superstition, and religious leaders can control them. Lenin knew he had to get them out from under religion, then he could get them. One thing was as bad as the other. But that’s what religion does. This is exactly what Paul is confronting—all the superstition of their religion. Enough? Yeah. Okay, let’s go back to I Corinthians for the few moments we have left. Now verse 21.

I Corinthians 1:21-22

“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom (Through their intellectualism) knew not God, (But on the other hand) it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (Even though it’s so simple, instead of being complicated and intellectualized.) 22. For the Jews (Paul says, the religious Jews) require a sign, and the Greeks (The intellectuals like he had just confronted at Athens.) seek after wisdom:” How many degrees do you have? Where did you go to school? Have you been to Alexandria? See? All right, verse 23.

I Corinthians 1:23

“But we preach Christ crucified, (Not a ton of intellectualism there—the simple fact that Christ died on that Roman cross and rose again.) unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;” They couldn’t believe who He was.

They couldn’t recognize that He was the Creator of everything—and then nailed to that Roman cross? If He was the Creator, why didn’t He call down legions of angels? See, that was their thinking. If He was who He said He was, all He would have had to do was cry out and God would have saved Him. They couldn’t comprehend that this was something that had to be done in God’s economy. All right, reading on.

I Corinthians 1:23b-25
“...and unto the Greeks (With all of their education and all their intellectualism, it was a bunch of--) foolishness; 24. But unto them who are called, (That is the believer who has responded to God’s offer of saving grace. Unto those who are called--) both Jews and Greeks, it is Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25. Because the foolishness of God is wiser then men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

Now, I’ve just got to keep going. I was going to break there, but I’ve got to keep going—verse 26.

I Corinthians 1:26a

“For ye see your calling,...” Now stop a minute. Paul is not writing to a class of seminary students is he? Who’s he writing to? The rank and file Corinthians. Probably some longshoremen, probably some farmers, probably some merchant men—common people. He’s not addressing a seminary situation. So that’s why he brings it all right down to our level.

I Corinthians 1:26

“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:” Not from the upper crust, the elite as we call them today. No, not many of them have an inkling of what this is all about. They’re not called, but who does God call?

I Corinthians 1:27a

“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world...” You know, I’m always referring to the plowboy in England. I think I’ve got a trademark there. I hear it over and over because it just hits home. The Word of God was intended to be understood by the average plowboy of England in 1500. They didn’t even have a high school education in those days, but was the Word of God understandable? Absolutely, and that’s what this is telling us. The Word of God isn’t just for the elite. It isn’t just for the highly educated. It’s for the least of us.

I Corinthians 1:27-28

“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28. And base things of the world, (The things that the world in general looks down on.) and the things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which
are not, to bring to nothing things that are:” And why? So that nobody can ever brag in God’s presence.

I’m here because of who I am, won’t fly. It won’t fly. We have to enter in as nothing but Hell-bound, lost humanity. But God can save us and make us fit for His eternity. All right, now verse 30.

I Corinthians 1:30-31

“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, (as a result of your saving faith) who of God is made unto us (By virtue of our faith. It’s imparted to us now to understand His--) wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (That we’ve been bought with the price.) 31. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

All right, now in the two minutes I have left, I think I’m going to take us back to Romans chapter 16. This is what we’re going to be hammering on now for at least the next four programs in our next taping, maybe even all eight of them. I don’t know yet how long it’ll take. But we’re going to be hammering away at the fact that everything that was revealed to the Apostle Paul had been kept secret in the mind of God until revealed to him. And that’s what Christendom will not accept.

They want to feel that Paul is just sort of an addendum. He’s just been added to that which really counts. They can’t get the concept that in this Body of Truth, what we call Paul’s revelations of things kept secret, is where everything rests for us today. All right, have you got Romans 16? With this we’ll be able to close. Verse 25. I have used it for the last thirty years. I have asked seminars from one end of this country to the other, have you ever heard a Sunday morning sermon on this verse? Have you ever seen it taught in Sunday school? Never! And here’s why. They don’t like what it says.

Romans 16:25

“Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, (And remember, Paul’s Gospel of salvation was faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Lord.) according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since (Jesus’ ministry? No. Since Peter? No. Since when?) the world began. “

None of the Old Testament writers had any inkling that this was out there in the future. You know, I think the last time we were here in the taping I showed how Peter says the Old Testament prophets searched diligently. They knew there was something out there,
and they couldn’t get it. It didn’t appear until God revealed it to this apostle and instructed him to take it out to the Gentile world.