

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Peter's Post Pentecost Message 2

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[0 : 00] While you are turning in your Bible to Acts chapter 3, I want to make some introductory remarks. We are dealing with the issue that has been entitled, The Jewish Solution to the World's Problem.

And indeed, it is a Jewish solution because, contrary to what a lot of people think or understand, God has made an ironclad, bona fide commitment to Abraham and to his seed that he is going to affect all things good for this world through Abraham and his offspring.

That in you and in your seed all nations of the earth are to be blessed. Well, they certainly don't appear to be all that blessed right now. Nor do they appear to have been all that blessed for several past centuries.

They have been the object of persecution, vilification, the Holocaust. And even now, there are entire governments who have the dream of eliminating the nation of Israel from the face of the earth.

That is their intent. That is their desire. So, what is it about this nation? It is very key and very strategic. They are the apple of God's eye.

[1 : 23] And they are God's chosen people. We make it very emphatic when we say it isn't a case that they were God's chosen people. They still are. And the reason they are is because God selected them for reasons known to himself.

He chose Abraham and his seed. So, what we have done for the past few months is just taken a hop, skip, and a jump across the Old Testament. Looking at various historical aspects of the nation of Israel.

And we included a little bit in the intertestamental period. Now we are doing much the same with the New Testament. It is not anything that is exhaustive. We are just trying to hit the highlights.

And as soon as we finish this in the book of Acts, we will engage the call of God upon Paul the Apostle to be the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Something that caused a huge uproar in the whole Mediterranean world at that time. Particularly among the Jewish people.

[2 : 23] And we will see the implications of that. So, we have our work cut out for us. Because where we are going is the wrap-up. And we will probably be there within just a few months.

But the wrap-up won't make a whole lot of sense without having this historical material that we are now covering. So, eventually we will conclude with the Olivet Discourse.

Which is the most prophetic passage that Jesus ever gave. Found in Matthew 24 and 25. And then we will conclude with the book of the Revelation and the Tribulation period and the Second Coming of Christ.

But for right now, we are in a pivotal passage that is dealing with issues right in the middle of all of that history and all of the future. And it has to do with early Acts.

So, while you turn to that, if you haven't found it already, let me just preface our study by saying, The early chapters of the book of Acts provide the basis for much confusion among Christians.

[3 : 33] And that is not overstating the issue. To begin with, these early chapters of the book of Acts do not concern themselves with Christians at all.

In the classic term and designation of the word Christian. But it deals exclusively with Jewish people who have come to faith in Jesus as their Messiah.

And Jewish people who had not. They are the focus of these early chapters of Acts. And if you lose sight of that, then confusion will be heaped upon confusion.

Genesis, or I'm sorry, Acts chapter 2 and the day of Pentecost is commonly referred to throughout Christendom as the birthday of the church.

We have taken the position that it is no such thing. It is what Peter said it is. It is the fulfillment, or at least partial fulfillment, of the prophecy that Joel gave hundreds of years earlier.

[4 : 49] And it is just coming to pass here in Acts chapter 2. That is what Peter meant when he stood up and said, hey, these men are not drunk, as you suspect, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel. How could it possibly be any clearer? But it is amazing how Christians are eager to read into that, that this is the birthday of the church.

The Bible doesn't say that, doesn't allude to it at all. But let me tell you something. When people get an idea fixed in their mind, and it is someone of influence or persuasive ability, you would be amazed how it has legs and takes off and people pick up on it.

So much so today that we can look at Acts 2 and the account of Pentecost. And we'll hear this refrain over and over again. Everybody knows that's the birthday of the church.

Yeah, except it isn't. This is a Jewish holiday that is going to experience some really unusual things.

[6 : 08] Chiefest of which are these people gathered together from all over the Mediterranean world. They have one thing in common. Their religion. They're all Jews.

That's why they're there. Because it is a Jewish feast day. Pentecost. It's on the Jewish calendar. Every year they celebrate Pentecost. Along with tabernacles.

And along with Passover. So these are all Jews. And what God promised to the nation of Israel through the prophet Joel is beginning to be fulfilled.

Right here. And it is evidenced with all of these people speaking different languages and can't communicate. The only thing they have in common is their religion. But they can't talk to each other because they're different languages.

And the spirit of God simply broke down the language barrier. And all of these people were able to hear the message of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead in their own language wherein they were born.

[7 : 12] It was a reversal of the Tower of Babel. And it was a miracle. And other significant signs were done in the midst of these people including physical healing like we have in Acts chapter 3 with the man laid at the gate beautiful who'd never walked a day in his life.

He was over 40 years old. He was crippled from his mother's womb. He was miraculously healed by Peter. And we have other incidents of physical healing and other dramatic manifestations early in the book of Acts.

Why? Because these are Jews. What's that got to do with it? The Jews require a sign. The Jews, the nation of Israel, was born, birthed out of one miraculous incident after another.

And it started way back in Egypt with the ten plagues and the Passover and the miraculous escape from Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea and the manna from heaven.

And water out of the rock. And all of those things were physical manifestations for Israel. God was caring for his people.

[8 : 24] And it continues here in the book of Acts. So we find these miraculous manifestations.

These Jewish people who had come to faith in Christ were principally people who had not previously believed in Jesus as the Messiah.

And when Peter preaches this message and he tells them, you, you have by wicked hands crucified and slain your Messiah.

It was an incredibly bold message. It was an indictment that Peter was delivering. And these people, the text tells us in Acts 2, it's a very significant statement.

These people were pricked in their heart. That means Peter's message came through to them like a ton of bricks.

They got it. It penetrated their heart. And they acknowledged and recognized the foolishness of what they had done in rejecting the Messiah.

[9 : 36] And then Peter said, but God raised him from the dead. And you know what? Even now, after you crucified him, and when he was on that cross, he prayed for your forgiveness.

You didn't realize what you were doing. And now, if you will reverse yourself, acknowledge your wrong, admit you blew it, and believe on Jesus as the Messiah, even now, you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and God will send Christ back again.

And 3,000 complied with that message. We don't know how many did not. But I suggest the 3,000 constitute a minority.

It wasn't everybody. It was just a minority. Most of the nation of Israel remained in unbelief regarding Jesus being their Messiah.

Much of the confusion centers about whether this Acts 2 was the birthday of the church. And you know, there are some people, I'm sure they mean well, but they just haven't thought it through.

[10:56] And they say things like, well, really, bottom line, Marv, is who cares? I mean, does it really make any difference? Who cares whether you believe it started there or whether you don't?

And this is the reason it cares. It's because a doctrinal position that you take determines your policy. It determines your practice. Because you put into practice those things in accordance with what you believe to be true. And if this is the birthday of the church, and if this is the normal operating aspect of the church, if this is our modus operandi, if this is the way a church is supposed to function, then why aren't we speaking in tongues, in languages that we haven't learned?

And why aren't we raising the dead? And why aren't we healing the lame and giving sight to the blind? Why aren't we doing those things? Because if this is supposed to be the norm, then that's what we ought to be doing.

And, you know, to show you the impact of this and the far-reaching consequences of it, let me just relate an historical incident.

[12:17] In 1908, the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, California, was the site where a group of believers had gathered together for a prayer meeting.

Now, prayer meetings were not all that unusual in the United States of America in 1908. Today, you'd probably have to get a permit, and, well, we won't go there.

But anyway, and in that prayer meeting, someone began speaking in what others thought was a miraculous language that they had not learned.

Now, if you and I were to listen to it, it would not perhaps sound like a language. It might sound gibberish. But nonetheless, in the excitement and the fervency of that, it caught on.

And others began doing it. And, of course, the whole question was, was these noises they were making, were they actually legitimate languages, or were they just gibberish that people were making up?

[13:38] That, of course, is the question. Now, eventually, and to get ahead of myself, eventually, many of these languages were subjected to a test analysis by linguistic experts where they gathered several samples of people who reportedly had been speaking in tongues, and they had recordings of this, and they put all of them together, and they got this group of linguists in a laboratory to examine these languages, go over them, and reach some kind of a conclusion.

And the conclusion was unanimous among all of them that these were, in fact, just gibberish, and that they did not belong to any human language group anywhere in the world that could be identified.

So they labeled them as fraudulent. They just had no validity to them at all. And when the report was given to those who had submitted them in the hopes that, of course, they would be proved to be legitimate, their response was, well, it must be because they don't belong to any human language group.

Of course, they are the tongues of angels. That's why they couldn't understand them, and that's why they didn't correspond to any human language group. They're not human at all.

These people are speaking with the language of angels. It's an angelic thing. Because didn't the Apostle Paul said, though I speak with the tongues of men or of angels and have not love, I've become a clangison.

[15:15] And that was their conclusion. It was the language of angels. Well, and along with that came the miraculous healing demands.

And by the way, this becomes, this portion we are looking at in the book of Acts becomes the rationale for much of the healing promotion that's going on today, especially what you see on television with Benny Hinn and the Trinity Network and the people they have on there and those that they slap in the forehead and they slay in the spirit and they swoon and fall back.

That all comes from this that began in 1908 at the Azusa Street Mission and out of that eventually came into being what is today known as one of the largest and most influential denominations in the entire world including not only the U.S.

and North America but South America as well and it is called the Pentecostal Church. It is a very, very large influential church and these people love the Lord.

they are committed to Jesus Christ they are going to be in heaven and just like us when they get there we are all going to get straightened out. But this whole denomination has grown out of that and it takes its name Pentecostal or Pentecostalism from Acts chapter 2 and the day of Pentecost. [16:47] And that is why they call themselves Pentecostals. And they are characterized by two things in particular. One is the ability to speak in a language that you have not learned.

It is a supernatural language and they feel that only if you do that and of course there are all shades of agreement and disagreement among themselves in the Pentecostals because they are not completely agreed on this.

But the standard party line is in order to demonstrate that you have been baptized by the Spirit of God you have to speak in tongues.

And when you do then that proves that you have been. So these people number in the millions and they are very influential throughout the world and I don't discredit them from the standpoint or suggest that they are insincere or unfaithful or they don't love the Lord or anything of the kind. These are thoroughgoing believers and I'm convinced that their main objective is to be pleasing to the Lord. But I think that they have simply taken a passage of Scripture and misinterpreted it and then tried to apply it to today's situations.

[17:59] And I can't tell you how many fraudulent so-called healings have been exposed for what they really are. And by the way while we're talking about this let me make one thing really, really clear.

I am not saying that God does not and cannot heal anybody of anything He wants to today. He can do that. He is the God of the miraculous.

And nobody can put God in a box and say well, healing isn't for this day you can't do that now God. God can do whatever He wants. But more often than not miraculous healings do not come.

More often than not they do not come. And when they do we really sit up and take notice because it is unusual. That's why it's called a miracle.

So this church this Pentecostal church began growing leaps and bounds establishing churches in different places. None of you are old enough.

[18:59] Matter of fact I don't even think I'm old enough to remember Amy Simple McPherson but she was on the front page of the newspapers for years and years.

She was a Pentecostal evangelist who held meetings much like Catherine Kuhlman did. People came by the droves and claimed to have been healed. and so on. And she was involved in some kind of a scandal.

And anyway it was front page newspaper all over the United States. Amy A-I-M-E-E you can you can Google it. Amy Simple McPherson and quite controversial.

So this Pentecostal thing began growing and growing and became a legitimate denomination recognized 19 and by the way you realize a few hundred years ago just five hundred years ago which is a few in connection with the world's history just five hundred years ago not only were there no Pentecostals there were no Presbyterians there were no Methodists there were no Baptists there were no Church of God as such denominations didn't even exist they are all of rather recent origin and out of this 1908 denomination that began growing as the Pentecostals they had differences of opinion like all brethren do and they have splits and splinters and I'm going to take my marbles and go home and that happens the Church denominations and that was how the assemblies of God came into being it was originally part of the Pentecostal

Church they came out from that now it's a separate denomination called the Assemblies of God we have a couple of them here in Springfield and these are pastored by honorable men and they're Christ loving people who attend those churches but they really insist on the legitimacy of the speaking in tongues the miraculous healing so this went on for decades and then we come to the 1960s some of you remember how volatile the 1960s were this was the Vietnam thing and all that was going on and a new phenomenon took place in Seattle Washington at an Episcopal Church stayed Episcopal Church lots of liturgy lots of formalism and it made big news all across the country because Dennis Bennett was the vicar of this Episcopal Church in Seattle Washington and he claimed to have received the gift of speaking in tongues and he went to other places and talked about it and illustrated it and people got caught up in it and what came to be known as the charismatic movement came out of that event in the 1960s in Seattle

[22 : 00] Washington and the charismatic movement is very much with us today and going strong and the main prongs of the charismatic movement are speaking in tongues which demonstrates you are filled with the spirit and miraculous healings which can be realized only if you have enough faith and we see this on television a lot so for people who say this acts two things that's ancient history who cares what difference does that make anyway it makes all the difference in the world it makes the difference in the lives of millions of people and their polity and how they pursue this thing called the Christian life and the fulfillment of it so most other denominations including the Baptist from which I personally have my roots believe that this in acts two was the beginning or the birthday of the church and that it is a pattern for operation in our churches today in other words the position is taken that acts two is the early church and that this in acts two is what all churches are supposed to be today and the only reason we aren't is because we don't have enough faith if we had the faith that these people had back here we would be speaking in tongues too and we would be conducting massive healings physical healings etc.

as well and that's the position that many take now the Baptist from which I came believe that it was the birthday of the church but it doesn't include the speaking in tongues of the miraculous healing well the question is well why doesn't it and the Pentecostals really are a lot more consistent here than what our Baptist brethren are because the Pentecostals say we've got chapter and verse and we're just doing what they're doing here in the Bible how come you Baptists aren't doing that and the Baptists say well the healing and the speaking in tongues those are sign gifts and they have departed and they're no longer for this age but sometimes they have a great deal of difficulty in making that case and the position that we take here at Grace Bible Church is they're both wrong this isn't the beginning of the church this isn't the modus operandi this isn't what we're supposed to be doing this is the fulfillment of a promise that God gave to the Jewish people through Joel and it's being fulfilled and it has nothing to do with the church which is the body of Christ that doesn't come about until later because here all you have involved are Jews Jews Jews and more Jews that's not the body of Christ the body of Christ is Jew and non-Jew together in one new body this is what Ephesians and Colossians is all about the twain Jew and Gentile being made into one new man that's the body of Christ of which he is the head and our marching orders what we are to be and do as a church is not found in early acts it is found in the information that is given to the body church and who was the apostle to the body church his name was Paul he wasn't one of the twelve he had a special apostleship called by the risen Christ after his ascension and given a whole new set of orders and given a whole bunch of new things for instance Paul was given the dynamic and explanation about the rapture well you don't find that in early acts you don't find that in the gospels you don't find that in the old testament that's because it was a mystery it was not to be revealed until this particular time folks trust me we're going to see some really eye popping things as we move on through this and it is going to enable you to connect dots like you have never connected them before so many things are going to begin making so much more sense and you're going to see a lot clearer picture as we keep these things in line with progressive revelation which is doctrine unfolding and developing and moving until it gets to the place where well where we are today so we are in for what I think is absolutely thrilling content that has just made my Bible come alive and just given me so much more appreciation for the scriptures so in addition let me just add this the water baptism undergone by the 3000 Jewish converts was clearly a continuation of John's baptism no indication that this was something new when Peter said repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit nobody said repent and be baptized baptized what's that what's that they all knew what that was they were all familiar with John's baptism many of them had had not submitted had not submitted to John's baptism but John was right and when he introduced Jesus as the Messiah he was right there too but they rejected John and they rejected Jesus and now after they've crucified him

[28 : 11] Peter is delivering this message and saying to them you know what it isn't too late you can still embrace Yeshua Hamashiach as your Messiah you can still receive baptism of the Spirit of God it's not too late and here is another gross misunderstanding let me explain it this is the common party line that when Israel was complicit I'm talking about the leadership the shakers and movers chief priests Pharisees etc when they were successful in handing Jesus over to Pontius Pilate and his eventual crucifixion the standard party line is that's it for

Israel that was Israel's final answer to Jesus now they're out of it they're gone Israel had their chance God sent them the Messiah they blew it now God is finished with Israel forever he set them aside completely and permanently that's the standard line and that's the line that is embraced by most churches today and by most denominations that there is no more future for Israel except in the same way that there is a future for Ireland and Sweden and Czechoslovakia but nothing different nothing different and we are firmly convinced that Israel as a nation is on track to be reinstated front and center and will be the very spearhead of that which is coming and it is not insignificant what is happening in and about

Israel today this is all warming up it is moving toward an incredible climax persecution of the Jew is going to intensify not only in Europe but here in the United States and there isn't a week that goes by but what there are not more and more incidents of Jewish persecution and vilification and that's all part and parcel of the plan that's what's coming and we want to be as much as we can on top of it so the water baptism that was undergone by those individuals those 3,000 simply was in keeping with what they had earlier rejected they rejected John they rejected Jesus and now Peter is saying you need to turn around you need to see the error of your way and come clean and to demonstrate that you have you will submit to

John's baptism and you will receive the gift and 3,000 did so today there is a lot of emphasis placed on water baptism we're familiar with that my dear late wife Barbara to whom I was married for almost 50 years was born and reared in a Roman Catholic family baptized as a baby and then when she and her mother came to faith years later they joined a local Presbyterian church there in the little town of Cleolum Washington and she was sprinkled then she married me and we moved to Springfield Ohio and joined a Baptist church and she was immersed so my sweetie used to say well I was sprinkled as a Catholic and then sprinkled again as Presbyterian and then immersed as a Baptist and I come to Grace Bible Church and get dry cleaned so she has been through the whole gamut and you know something let me say this and

I know I know when I say it I'm going to ruffle some feathers because anytime you say something that somebody has believed for their whole life they're going to send up red flags and say hey Marv I was with you up till now but now I'm bailing out because I can't buy this and that is water baptism is Jewish Jewish Jewish Jewish baptism was part of their ceremonial ritualistic cleansing earlier it was applied only to the priests the Jewish priest when they came into the priesthood at 30 years of age they were baptized the word that is used in Hebrew 6 calls it washings plural because there were many baptisms they had to wash themselves time and time again it was a ceremonial purification it wasn't just a one time thing but when

[33 : 40] John was baptizing he didn't baptize just priests priests had to be from the tribe of Levi John was baptizing Jews from all different tribes that came to him because Christ had already said well the spirit of God had already said in the Old Testament in Exodus 19 that he was going to make Israel a nation a nation of priests all 12 tribes are going to be priests because they are going to be priests for the Gentiles as a light to the Gentiles and water baptism became the required mode for believing Jews and it was their ceremonial cleansing purification what do we have in the New Testament what do we have in the Pauline epistles Paul talks about I thank God that I didn't baptize anybody except Crispus and Gaius and I don't know whether

I baptized anybody else or not lest anyone should say I baptized in my name and I have always found it somewhat intriguing that Paul couldn't remember who he baptized I mean doesn't that sound strange to you and then he says things like Christ didn't send me to baptize but to preach the gospel well what does that mean could let me ask you could John the Baptist have said Christ didn't send me to baptize but to preach the God could John the Baptist have said that no no because he was sent to baptize and who did he baptize he baptized Jews so our baptism is spirit no H2O Mr. Stamm who was influential in the very early beginnings of Grace Bible Church he's with the Lord now he came down and preached for us one Sunday when we were still meeting at Roosevelt Junior High School and I'll never forget Mr.

Stamm saying it doesn't matter what position you take regarding water baptism you are in a minority and he's right he's right so what is the baptism for this day and age why don't we baptize in water simply because Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles which is what we are says for by one spirit are we all baptized into one body whether we be Jew or Gentile bond or free and have all been made to drink of one spirit when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ you were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the spiritual body of Christ and you became in union with

Christ as bone of his bone flesh of his flesh and there's no water involved this is spirit baptism spirit baptism takes the place of water baptism which was Jewish in the same way that spiritual circumcision takes the place of physical circumcision in the Old Testament physical circumcision is Jewish it is required of Jews on the eighth day if you have a baby boy you circumcise him but when you come to the New Testament and read what Paul says in Colossians he talks about a circumcision made without hands what kind of a circumcision is that when the

[37 : 47] Jewish person who was designated as the local circumciser I forget what they called him the motel or something like that it was his job to go around the community and circumcise all the baby boys and he would come in with this special circumcising knife and he would cut off the foreskin of that baby boy when he was eight days old and that's when the baby would be named and that's when John the Baptist was named at that circumcision and remember Zacharias was struck with dumbness and couldn't talk and the angel says you're not going to be able to talk until your baby is born and then he had been mute for all this time nine months of silence Zacharias wasn't saying anything and here they are ready to circumcise little John the Baptist and he turned to the mother because they don't Christ's tongue was loosened and he says John his name is

John John the Baptist got his name there at that physical circumcision but when Paul talks about circumcision in Galatians 2 I believe it is he talks about spiritual circumcision and it applies males and females and the spiritual circumcision is without hands it isn't a physical thing because the circumcision isn't physical it is a spiritual thing so what we've got we move from an Old Testament emphasis upon the physical the material the obvious very very physical and into the New Testament and the body of Christ and we find much of the physical being replaced by the spiritual and that is difficult for people to make that bridge they just want to continue that same thing but what I'm saying is there is a whole new order a whole new order is introduced with the coming of the church as the body of

Christ and this was that to which Paul the apostle was appointed to be the apostle to the Gentiles and let me tell you something that did not sit well with the Jews the Jewish establishment fought him all the way because they charged him with do you know what he's doing he's doing away with the law of Moses he's telling people they don't have to be circumcised he's telling people they don't have to keep the Sabbath he's telling people they don't have to have killed that guy and that's exactly what they set about to do because they saw Paul the apostle the same way Saul of Tarsus saw other Jews who had come to believe he saw them as a cancer growing on Judaism and they have to be stamped out and that's what he devoted his life to and the risen

Christ confronted him on the road to Damascus dramatically converted and now he's preaching the faith that he once sought to destroy and you know what he's going to pay a tremendous price because when he is called and he sends Ananias you go to the street called straight and you find Saul of Tarsus and you lay your hands on him so that he can receive his sight and the Lord said to Ananias and this is really something Lord said to Ananias I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name and do you know from whom he was going to suffer the most from his own countrymen who rejected him and rejected his message and you know something there are lots of Christians today who also reject Paul and his message sad that is so sad because the Christ who is behind the Pentecostal experience in Acts chapter 2 is the same Christ who was behind the calling of Paul and giving him this utterly new commission that is going to hit the scene like a bombshell and many have not recovered from it yet and that was 2000 years ago all we've done is just scratched around a little bit on the surface but there is much more to come and as this thing opens up and develops if you're like I was you are going to be amazed I tell you what this book has got so much more to offer than most of us know and I can't wait to share it with you it's going to be great and as usual I've taken all the time but

[43 : 05] I'll tell you this I suspect that what I have said today has got a lot of turning of the minds you're probably doing a whole lot of thinking and maybe a lot of buying and a lot of rejecting and I understand that you know what the first time I heard this first time I heard this my response well that's the dumbest thing I ever heard of that can't be that can't be and you know why I knew it couldn't be because I always believed that that's why it can't be because that means I've been wrong about so many things it doesn't bother me anymore I'm just so grateful for everything I find out that I was wrong about because that gives me a chance to correct it so what I want to do next week to make sure you don't get cheated out of your Q&A; we'll open with

Q&A; so you get your questions I don't care and if you don't want to give out a question or make a comment publicly I understand that some souls are not comfortable doing that feel free to write out any question you may have or any objection you may have and you don't have to sign it and just drop it in the offering box and I will do my best to treat it so until next week okay think on these things brethren would you stand with me please father we're aware that we've covered a huge amount of material much of which is controversial and much of which is going to cause a lot of questions just like it did in my mind and heart when I first heard these things so many years ago and yet we do believe that here in this assembly there is a deep desire on the part of these people to know the truth and to want the truth so that we can embrace the truth and walk in it so we pray for open minds and hearts and we pray for enlightenment from yourself because we know that these are difficult concepts for some some perhaps never heard this before and they don't quite know what to make of it we fully understand that so we just pray that spirit of God will be patient with each and every one of us and lead us gently into that way of truth so that we can rejoice in it and walk in it and we thank you for it all in the worthy name of our Lord Jesus Christ Amen