

Monthly Study - The Kingdom is the Big Picture

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[0 : 00] We are looking beyond the second coming, and if you will take the sheet that has been distributed and take a brief look at the campaign of Armageddon, we are not going to spend time on this other than to say that what we are dealing with this morning is material that follows all eight of these stages.

All eight of these stages, none of which are yet fulfilled, of course, but all of which will have been fulfilled prior to the time we are studying what we are studying this morning.

Because we are going to be looking at the structure of the Millennial Kingdom, and you can see that on the reverse side. It deals with the government of the Messianic Kingdom, and it is going to be realized.

Only after all of these eight stages are complete, especially in connection with the Victory Ascent upon the Mount of Olives, those of you who have been here on Sunday mornings know that we have been following and tracking this, and the return of Christ, and this item number eight in the eighth stage involves his Victory Ascent upon the Mount of Olives.

And then following that, there will be a judgment of the nations, as referred to in Matthew 25, where the sheep are divided from the goats, and the nations that were supportive of Israel will be accommodated one final sentence, and those who were friendly to Israel, etc., another.

[1 : 40] So all of these things are going to be mapped out in connection with the coming of that kingdom. But before we get underway with this and the government of the Messianic Kingdom, I want to once again, even at the expense of being repetitive, I want to insist and reinforce the concept of this coming kingdom.

Many people erroneously believe it is here. We are living in it. I think the scriptures really belie that. We are not. And almost everywhere you look, people talk about building the kingdom, and the kingdom, and the king. This is not the kingdom that is spoken of so often in scripture.

There is, however, some legitimacy to their claim in the sense that we are building a kind of kingdom in that Colossians tells us that we have been delivered from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear son.

But the distinction that needs to be made there is that this is a spiritual kingdom, not physical kingdom. When you become a believer in Jesus Christ, you are baptized by the Holy Spirit.

[3 : 05] It has nothing to do with water. You are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the spiritual body of Christ, of which he is the head. This is what Ephesians and Colossians are all about.

And that is a kind of spiritual kingdom. But I want to emphasize the fact that it is spiritual. It is not material. And everyone who is a believer in Christ is a member of that kingdom.

It makes no difference where they are geographically, what language they speak, or anything else. They are a member of the body of Christ. And that is a spiritual body of Christ. Now, what in the world is a spiritual body?

It sounds like a contradiction in terms. Because when you think of a body, you think of physicality. But this is a body that has no physicality. It is a body.

It is called a spiritual body because it is made up of the human spirits of believers in Christ. Every one of us, in fact, it is part of our humanity.

[4 : 12] It is one of the things that makes you a human being is that you have a physical body and you have a non-physical spirit that is the real you.

The physical body is just the manifestation of you outwardly that enables us to separate people one from another. But nobody has ever seen your spirit. That is your own private reserve.

And no one but God can get into it. And he gets into it. When you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, the spirit of God entered your body and regenerated your human spirit.

Made you alive on the inside. That's called regeneration or being born again or salvation or whatever you want to call it. And nobody to this day understands how God does that. All we know is that he does. He changes us on the inside. And he places us as in our human spirits. [5 : 24] Not our body. But in our human spirits. We are in Christ. Christ. And that is the spiritual body of which Christ is the head.

And when the time comes that we die physically that spirit of ours that was regenerated and quickened made alive leaves the body goes to be with the Lord.

And that is what occurs at our physical death. this is why James says in his epistle I think it's chapter 2 verse maybe 17 something like that that the body without the spirit is dead.

And our spirit vacates the body at death. Nobody ever sees this happen either. It just goes to be with the Lord. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. So that's how we are members of the spiritual body of Christ.

But what we are talking about today and this government of the kingdom is very very physical very material very earthly and there's no question about that.

[6 : 39] I realize that there are some other theological points of view that disagree with our conclusions and they believe they're commonly referred to as replacement theologians and they believe that the promises that God made to the nation of have been have been withdrawn from them because of their disobedience and their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah and that God has instead transferred all of the promises that he was going to give to Israel he has transferred them to the church the Christian church.

So we have become the new Israel and the old Israel is set aside permanently. These folks and they are for the most part they are genuine believers in Christ they just interpret the scriptures differently from what we do they are called reformed theologians or replacement theologians or covenant theology and the position that you take regarding this issue does not involve anybody's salvation these people are just as saved as you are we just see things play when it comes to interpreting the scriptures and one of my favorite answers to that that I will repeat now is that all of us I don't care who we are all of us have flaws in our theology and in our doctrine none of us has this thing called bible doctrine all together so when we get to heaven we will all get straightened out I say we all have wrinkles in our theology and when we get to heaven the wrinkles are going to get ironed out some of them are going to take more ironing than others but eventually we will all come to where we need to be so in the meanwhile we come to the scriptures with a certain hermeneutic which is the art and science of interpreting the bible and we try to apply principles that are consistent that will enable us to reach consistent kinds of interpretations and what we are looking at now I have referred to as the overarching theme of everything and I once maybe twice in I guess 47 years here at Grace I preached on this theme and I titled my message what everything is all about and that's what we are looking at what everything is all about where everything is going and where we will be when we get there and what is it going to be like so the day to day experiences that you and I have and that others have had down through the centuries and the millennia are just small little particles or ingredients of that grand scheme that is ultimately going to be realized in what we have labeled the kingdom of God come to earth that's what everything is really all about in essence it is that which addresses a broken and a fallen world that's the world we live in that's why Jesus Christ came I am come that man might have life and have it more abundantly and the price that Jesus paid on the cross for our sin completed the first of two requirements that are necessary for the kingdom of heaven to come to earth two things are required before the kingdom can be established one is the price has to be paid for the sin that has resulted in the necessity of the kingdom being restored in other words it was ruined in chapter three of Genesis the poet Milton called it paradise lost and it was we live in a fallen world that is filled with cruelty and hatred and lies and deception and war and violence and all of these things they are part and parcel of what has happened in the fall and what

Jesus Christ is all about is the reversing of that curse but before he could do so legitimately he had to pay for it and that's exactly what he did when he died on the cross that's the first leg of the two that must be accomplished and the second has to do with the nation of Israel embracing the one whom they earlier rejected whom their ancestors rejected Yeshua HaMashiach and those of you who have been here on Sunday morning know something about that and the CDs are available with that material so we are looking beyond the second coming we are assuming that the second coming is history alright and we are looking beyond the defeat of the Antichrist and his forces all

eight stages on the sheet that you have before you have been realized and now we want to go to what happens next so let's lay a little bit of foundation for that some of these passages are familiar to you but we need to get them on the table so let's go first of all to Luke's gospel chapter 19 [12:32] Luke chapter 19 this is such a tremendously important item I just feel so strongly about this because it is this issue that gives real purpose and meaning creation to redemption to everything in connection with what is really important by the way I better turn off my cell phone and if yours is activated you might want to turn it off too in Luke chapter 19 we're not going to concern ourselves with the conversion of Zacchaeus although that is the subject matter that Luke is coming off of and we read in verse 10 the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost and this is really really important every time

Jesus gives a parable the first clue that ought to be established as to the meaning of the parable is this why did Jesus give this parable at this time what was taking place he didn't just pull parables out of the air and tell stories to be telling stories they always had a purpose and meaning and value they were always related always pertinent to something that was happening and the parable that he gave was simply an elaboration or an explanation of that an illustration of that and in verse 11 this is so important and while they were listening to these things and I think that if you look at the context it identifies the they as the apostles who were accompanying him they were listening to these things he went on to tell a parable because that little word right there got underlined because he was nearing

Jerusalem and they and again in the context to whom does the they refer refers to the apostles who were accompanying him and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately and their anticipation was Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem this by the way is a Palm Sunday thing upcoming and the apostles are thinking Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem and we are going with him and boy when he gets there it's going to be something he's going to establish the kingdom of heaven after all this is why he came and the Romans who might oppose him will certainly not be successful he will just dispatch them however he needs to and he is going to rule and to reign and set up that kingdom there in

Jerusalem and that was their anticipation and it says they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately and my question is well wasn't it no it wasn't and that's why he gave this parable because this parable is about the land owner who apportioned certain things to those that they left behind and charged them with the responsibility of making good with them and that there would be a time of accounting and in the parable he talks about the owner being absent being gone for a long period of time what is that talking about it's talking about him he is the owner and he is going to be gone for a long period of time and when he comes back there will be an accounting that needs to be given that's why he told this parable because they were thinking they were under the assumption we're near

Jerusalem when he gets there when we get there he's going to establish his kingdom and you remember that he rode into town in all the pomp and circumstance and the people lined the highway and they cast down the palm branches in front and by the way that was kind of a nationalistic symbol kind of like our eagle is in the United States you know how often we use the bald eagle well for Israel the national symbol was the palm branch and that indicated a kind it was kind of like flying the Israeli flag to wave those palm branches which of course was designed to gouge the Romans a little bit I mean we may be a conquered people and you may be occupying us but we still got our patriotism and they're waving their palm branches and they're throwing their garments down and Jesus and this colt are walking over these and the people are shouting Hosanna Hosanna and Hosanna means save now deliver now rescue us now and those people who were shouting that and saying

[18:01] Hosanna to the son of David they recognized that Jesus of Nazareth was a direct descendant of David the king wow and David been dead and buried for a thousand years and that line is maintained in both Matthew chapter 1 and in Luke chapter 3 the genealogy that is given there is outstandingly beautiful and these people were anticipating Jesus going into the temple and routing the Romans and setting up the kingdom and just get on with it and all their hopes and dreams are going to be dashed because he is not going to Jerusalem to receive a crown he's going there to hang on the cross furthest thing from their mind and you know Jesus had already told them that that was exactly what was going to happen and they couldn't process it they just could not accept it it was just too out of the question and you'll recall that Peter was the one who took

Jesus aside and he's the only person in all of the Bible well maybe you would say maybe you would say Pilate or Annas or Caiaphas the high priest they did but at least of all of those whom Jesus would call friends Peter was the only one who had the nerve to rebuke him and he did Peter lovable and irascible as he was always had his foot in his mouth and he said he took the Lord aside and he said after Jesus said the son of man must go to Jerusalem and be entreated the Gentiles and the scribes and be crucified and the third day rise again none of that registered he said in plain language and Peter took him aside and said stop talking like that there's not going to be any such thing like that we would never allow something like that to happen and well you know the rest of the story of Peter so Dr. Luke continues this theme and let us come over to the same writer in Acts chapter 1

Acts chapter 1 this kingdom of which we are speaking is the all pervasive culmination spoken of by Peter and it is that which the apostles had in mind when they asked the question just before Jesus ascended and we are told that in verse 6 this is very very important I just cannot emphasize how important it is and so this is after the resurrection Jesus has been alive for about six weeks forty days on the earth after his resurrection and here he is meeting with the apostles again and in verse 4 we are told that he gathered them together and told them about not to leave Jerusalem and so on and then in verse 8 they ask a very logical question so when they had come together they were asking him saying

Lord is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel and all they were saying is we thought you were going to do that before before the cross but we were mistaken so now that that is behind you is it time now are you going to do it now because you got to remember this whole concept of the kingdom is God's redemptive fix-it plan for the whole nation of Israel and all the rest of the world this is paradise regain that we're talking about this is where everything is moving toward this is what I meant when I said this is what everything is all about this is going to be the culmination this final repair and restructuring and refining of the planet that is now terribly terribly broken and filled with pain and misery and all that goes along with it so it is a very logical question for them to be asking and

Jesus did not say yes or no he said that's something that you are not to know about and the time will come when you will but it is not for you to know the times nor the seasons which the father hath placed in his own power and I'm sure there are very good reasons that perhaps are unknown to us as to why this is not more specific and it is left kind of general but the second thing that second prong that must be accomplished is what Peter is speaking about and if you we'll come over to Acts chapter 3 this too is a very very critical passage and I say this to my great regret that Acts chapter 3 is one of the most sadly overlooked chapters in all of the Bible because people tend to become so enamored with

[23 : 39] Acts chapter 2 and the day of Pentecost and there is no question that that was truly a dramatic event never realized before or since in the same way and I suppose there's just a fixation that people have with Acts chapter 2 but it is unfortunate in that it often leads them to ignore chapter 3 and I want you to look if we may at verse 11 because we'll just skip the first part of it has to do with the man who was lame from his mother's womb laid at the gate beautiful this was his regular position he had he had he had dibs on this place and he had been there for years and years he was a beggar he was a beggar because he couldn't walk and people had to carry him into this place and then carry him away and he was over 40 years old and never walked a day in his life because he was born lame from his mother's womb and

Jesus gave Peter and John the power back in Matthew chapter 10 we are told that Jesus called the twelve and he gave them authority he imparted his authority to them to work miracles and to heal and everything and this guy sees Peter and John coming and he thinks here's a couple likely prospects and he holds up his cup for them to put some coins in and Peter almost always broke Peter says silver and gold have I none but such as I have give I unto thee in the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk and he reached down and grabbed that guy by the hand and yanked on him and he came up and for the first time in his life he stood on two legs that had never worked before now you know as well as

I do that anybody who hasn't walked anybody who has been bed fast for a long period of time Esther has to learn to walk all over again but this man didn't have to learn to walk all over again because part of the miracle was the dramatic healing in toto of this man so he stood up and walked this guy is jumping up and down excited just beside himself with joy and the next thing you know

people are watching and the crowd starts to build and people are murmuring and talking what is this what is going hey isn't that old so and so yeah that's him no that's not him he's crippled he can't walk this guy's standing walking well it sure does look like well I know that's him this is all this and this crowd is building and building and building and then we are told beginning in verse 11 and you've got to remember this is at the beautiful gate of the temple this is one of the particular gates it's called the beautiful gate because it was outstandingly beautiful the carvings on it the colors on it the workmanship on it was just absolutely exquisite name the beautiful gate and everybody knew which gate you were talking about that was the choice spot this guy had for sitting there begging every day and you know when people come into the temple they tend to be a little more religious and maybe a little more generous so he had dibs on that spot and had been there and we're told in verse 11 that while he was clinging to all the people ran together to them at the so called portico of Solomon full of amazement and when Peter saw this he replied to the people men of Israel and you need to note that because they're the only ones there this is a Jewish temple it's for Jewish people Gentiles are not even allowed off limits the Gentiles these are all Jews and he says men of Israel why do you marvel at this or why do you gaze at us as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob the God of our fathers has glorified his servant Jesus the one whom you delivered up and I cannot help believe that Peter was pointing his finger at that crowd the one whom you delivered up wow and disowned him in the presence of Pilate crucify him we will not have this man to reign over us Pilate had decided to release him but you disown the holy and righteous one and ask for a murderer to be granted to you but put to death the prince of life the one whom God raised from the dead a fact to which we are witnesses and I think Peter and John are standing there and there may have been other apostles with him and he's saying we were witnesses we know what we're talking about we were there we saw him we are witnesses wow and on the basis of faith in his name that's just confidence trust reliance in his name and what is his name his name is

[29 : 41] Yeshua and what does Yeshua mean it means savior Yeshua is nothing more than a new testament rendition of Joshua and Jesus is Joshua he's a beautiful type what the law could not do Moses Joshua did Joshua brought the children of Israel into the land and Jesus was able to do what the law was not able to do beautiful thing he has strengthened this man whom you see and know and the faith which comes through him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all and now brethren and when he calls them brethren he's not implying that they are fellow believers like I would call you brethren he is calling them brethren simply because they are fellow Israelites and didn't make any difference if they believed in Jesus or not if they were a Jew they were considered brethren so it's not a term of Christianity at all or anything close now

God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ should suffer he has thus fulfilled the prophets talked about Christ suffering he did that's over he did that in other words what he is saying is God did his part God delivered him for our offenses and he was raised for our justification God has fulfilled his part of the prophecy he has thus fulfilled repent which means you people held a previous position that saw Jesus of Nazareth as an imposter as not the true Messiah what you need to do is a 180 you need to completely reverse yourself that's what repent means has nothing to do with penance has nothing to do with paying some kind of penalty it has everything to do with an intellectual process activated by the will which means on the basis of this new evidence and information

I have I can no longer hold the position I once held I need to reverse myself that's what 3000 of them did in chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost and here Peter is making the same appeal to a different crowd repent therefore and return this is return to Jehovah return to the true God that your sins may be wiped away in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and what are these times of refreshing this is a time when the earth gets a bath gets a moral bath Mike question you mentioned Yeshua being savior when they say Yeshua Hamashiach what does the latter part translate mean well Yeshua there is no letter

J in the Hebrew alphabet so they use a Y in place of it and in Israel it is not Jerusalem with a J it is Jerusalem with a Y and when it comes to Yeshua it isn't J E S H U A it is Y E S H U A Yeshua Hamashiach Ha H A in Hebrew is the definite article V our equivalent to T H E and Mashiach in Hebrew is Messiah we say Messiah they say Mashiach so it is Yeshua Jesus Ha the Mashiach Messiah Jesus the Messiah that's what Yeshua Hamashiach means in Hebrew in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the

Lord and that he may send Jesus the Christ appointed for you now where is Jesus when Peter said that he's in heaven he's already returned he returned in chapter one so Peter is talking about him coming back but he hadn't been gone that long what is it that would bring him back it is Israel's repentance Israel's changing their mind and embracing this one whom they earlier rejected and Peter is giving the same opportunity to them yes what would have happened if the Jews had accepted Jesus suppose they had accepted him then what kind of would he have gone into revelation by well that's that's a very good question if the Jews had accepted him rather than crucified him is I guess we would say a doctrinal and a theological impossibility because the whole plan and program was set up on the basis of redemption and because of the corporate sin of humanity and by corporate

[35 : 31] I mean what was accomplished in our first parents Adam and Eve that since descended upon all of their descendants none of us escaped this curse it's called it's called a terminal illness and it's sin that results in our physical death but it need not result in our spiritual death and because of this corporate sin of humanity this deed of unrighteousness in the face of the holy righteous God there was a desperate need for what I refer to as the moral scales of the universe to be balanced and that necessity is because of the holiness and the righteousness of God

God is a God of love and mercy and grace at the same time he is a God of absolute justice and righteousness and in our humanity I'd be the first to admit we sometimes have difficulty marrying those concepts but I can assure you that God has no difficulty keeping them apart and exercising all of them Mike if at that time she asked the kingdom was established there would be precious few who believe in the kingdom well not only that but I see it theologically and doctrinally I see it as an impossibility that there was any way that the crucifixion could be avoided because this is the very vehicle that God has chosen to right a wrong world and this is the redemptive factor and it goes all the way back to

Genesis 3 when God addresses the serpent and informs Adam and Eve that that the seed of the woman that the serpent would strike the heel of the seed of the woman but that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent and Satan striking the heel of Christ inflicts a kind of mortal blow but was reactivated through the resurrection but the meaning of his crushing the head of the serpent speaks of the finality with which he will deal with him and how is he to do that he did that through the cross Satan active and alive on planet earth as 1 Peter 5 8 makes sure he's a roaring lion walking about seeking whom he may devour and we are not to be ignorant of his devices but

Satan is a defeated foe and the time is going to come when that will become very obvious and he's still active and operating but he is defeated and John Owen the 17th or I think 17th century Puritan delivered a wonderful sermon called the death of death in the death of Christ and that's what he accomplished and there was no possibility well while we're here in Acts come back to chapter 2 again just for a moment and I want to show you the parallel here because and granted it's difficult for us mortals to get our brain around this but I want you to see that both of these are fulfilled and in Acts chapter 2 this is Peter's Pentecostal sermon and in verse 22 of chapter 2 he says men of Israel and earth again that Jewish audience exclusively listen to these words Jesus the Nazarene a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst just as you yourselves know this man delivered up look at this delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God well who delivered him up I suppose many tend to think that well Pilate delivered him up Pilate well yeah in a way Pilate did he physically handed him over and said I find no fault in him and crucify him and I washed my hands of the whole affair but the one who really delivered him up is the father the father sent the son to be the savior of the world and if you look at chapter three and verse twenty five for you first

[40 : 56] I'm sorry verse twenty six for you first God raised up his servant I'm sorry I'm not I'm in the wrong place chapter four you know as I as I get older these verses move around well I thought sure it was three twenty five I'm sorry yes what I was looking for is is a reference that says he was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification where is at the end of the chapter

I thought sure it was chapter four well okay well we'll find it eventually somebody will find it before we dismiss and I'll show you where it was anyhow as I was saying he was delivered by the determinate counsel of God and the foreknowledge of God back to chapter two delivered up by the predetermined land verse twenty three and foreknowledge of God now that that says that God was a major player in this right the father I mean that makes it quite clear but then he goes on to say you

nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put him to death well not in reality these were all standing here they were Jews he's not talking to Romans Romans have no interest in this Jewish stuff Romans wouldn't have even been allowed there in the temple area anyway he's talking all the Jews and the Jews didn't nail him to the cross Roman soldiers nailed him to the cross but it was through the instigation of the

Jewish hierarchy Pilate not Pilate I'm sorry Caiaphas and Annas and Judas the traitor all of these were initially responsible for setting Jesus up delivering him to the Romans and they just all they were unauthorized to exercise capital punishment the Romans wouldn't allow them to do that so that's why they took him to Pilate for Pilate to find him guilty and Pilate didn't want anything to do with it Pilate said I don't find any guilt in this man he hasn't done anything worth his death and this bloodthirsty crowd most of whom were the anti Jesus with the big mouths and they were the one shouting out crucify him crucify him crucify and finally Pilate says okay I give up take him take him and crucify him he wanted to give Barabbas really thought the people would take Barabbas but they wanted Jesus yes it did move okay yeah 425 thank you thank you no that's still not what I'm looking for it better not be well that's the verse we were dealing with you nailed to the cross but what I was looking I tell you I am I am completely mystified by this because it was so clear that he was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification oh so oh oh wow it really moved done oh oh yes thank you thank you

Romans 4 uh let's read verse 23 24 But for our sake also to whom it will be reckoned as those who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

[45 : 49] He who was delivered up because of our transgressions. And the question there that needs to be asked and answered is who did the delivering? The father did the delivering.

Some might erroneously think that it was Pilate who delivered him because he handed him over and said, All right, then crucify him. But the father had already done that. And I can assure you that Pilate did not hand him over for our offenses.

It was God the father who handed him over for our offenses. And then God raised him from the dead for our justification. Thank you. So the morning has not been lost.

I do appreciate that very much. So let us hasten our time's almost gone. Yes. Her question. If Israel was a representative nation, wouldn't judgment have come when Stephen was installed at the right hand of God?

Was it judgment ready to fall? Well, we can theorize that. And that may very well be the case because Peter has made it very clear that upon the repentance of Israel, God will send Jesus, whom you rejected earlier.

[47 : 06] This is the burden of that message in chapter three. And we would remind you that Jesus hadn't been gone that long. Been gone just a short period of time. He ascended in chapter one. This is in chapter three.

And it's a short time after that. And he's saying God will send him back. Because the two things that would need to be accomplished before God can righteously, judicially bring the kingdom of heaven to earth is the price must be paid and the moral scales of the balance of the universe must be balanced.

Jesus did that when he died. As in Adam, all die and Christ shall all be made alive. And he did that. He paid the price. He paid the price for sin for every living human being. So God has done his part. Israel, the ball is in your court.

What do you say? And instead of Israel saying, count us in. They said, count us out.

[48 : 16] They continued in a rejection mode. And if you want to look at what happened in chapter three and verse 26.

For you first, God raised up his servant and sent him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways. But let me tell you something.

If you don't want to be turned from your wicked ways, you don't have to turn. And the reason is because God respects the volition that he gives to individuals. God will not force you, even as a Christian, he will not force you to be a spiritually minded Christian.

He respects the will that he has given you. And I would be the first to admit, I do not understand how there is a marriage of the human will and responsibility versus the sovereignty of God.

But there is a marriage of the two that God is able to see. All I know is God is sovereign and we are responsible. We are accountable.

[49 : 28] And it is our having a volition. It's because we have a will that provides God with the basis for accounting and for judgment.

It is because we are free moral agents and we are going to be held accountable for the decisions we make. And all of that comes into play here with the nation of Israel.

And their response was, look at chapter four and verse one. And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard.

And these are all Jews, by the way, and the Sadducees came upon them, being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. Hey, we've got to stop this thing. This is getting out of hand. And we need to get right at the source of the problem.

[50 : 35] And the source of the problem is these guys. So, we read in verse three, They laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening.

But many of those who had heard the message, The message that Peter delivered regarding this man who had been born lame. They believed. Here's 5,000.

Number came to be about 5,000. Now, I don't know exactly how to interpret that. It may mean a total of 5,000. It may mean 2,000 more were added to the 3,000 that were saved on Pentecost.

And that may well be what it means, but we cannot say for sure. And it came about on the next day that their rulers and elders and scribes, and who are these? All Jews, 100%.

They were gathered together in Jerusalem. And Annas, the high priest, was there. And Caiaphas, and Caiaphas and Annas are just a couple of real skunks, crooks, both of them.

[51 : 47] They are father-in-law and son-in-law. And they were high priests at the time. So corrupt it was incredible. These were the kind of people that Jesus was always doing verbal combat with, and back and forth.

And they were always trying to trap him, and always trying to make him look bad. This was the opposition. And this is where all of the power resided in Israel. These were the shakers and movers. We are told in Scripture that it was the common people who heard Jesus gladly. But it was the intelligentsia and the ruling class elite that saw Jesus as a threat.

And he had to be dealt with. Yeah. Yeah. Well, you know there are parallels. Interesting, isn't it? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And we are told that they were of high priestly descent.

Like I said, these are the well-positioned people. And when they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, By what power or in what authority or name have you done this?

[52 : 53] And Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit. And that's what made all the difference. This is the same guy who cowered before those little Jewish ladies and said, I don't know who you're talking about.

I've never met him before in my life. Denied him three times. Now, this is the same man, but a different man. This is a man infused with the Spirit of God.

And he has witnessed the resurrection. And he talks about him whom we have handled and seen. And Peter knows this Jesus is alive.

And I know what I know. And I can't do anything about it but proclaim it. And you cannot silence me. You're asking me to obey you rather than God.

It's not a hard choice for me to make. And they've got them all together. And they say, Peter says, rulers and elders of the people, If we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, well, let it be known unto you and to all the people in Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this name, this man stands here before you in good health.

[54 : 23] He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders. This is a prophecy from the Old Testament. Which became the very cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else.

For there is no other name given under heaven that's been given among men by which we must be saved. And this is another one of those tremendous verses that demands the exclusivity of Christ for the way of salvation.

And this is something that is stuck in the crawl of people. It is a major objection that many have. The Christianity is our insistence that Jesus is the only way to heaven.

And we need to inform the world that's not our idea. We didn't think that up. That's what God said. God had but one son.

And he provided that one son. And that's the way that he is made. And he is not to be faulted. What we ought to do is be profoundly thankful that God was pleased to provide even one way.

[55 : 31] Because we didn't deserve that. It was his grace and mercy that provided the one way. And it is the height of human arrogance to find fault with God.

Because some people would prefer a cafeteria religion where they could take a little bit of this and a little bit of that and a little bit of something else that appeals to them. Because you see, we humans, in our self-centeredness, love our options.

We want to be able to make choices. That's why General Motors makes cars in about 20 different colors. We like to make our choices.

And God says, this is the way. Not a way. This is the way. Walk ye in it.

Mike? This process of the crucifixion, as you were describing it. What, is there a role for the Gentile in this process?

[56 : 35] I mean, is this leading, is the crucifixion leading to an opportunity for Gentiles to know Christ?

Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Although, the point, the point needs to be made, and this is something that will have to come out later because I was wondering if we were almost out of time.

Well, we're already out of time. But your question is a very good one. Because what this gospel is going to do is it is going to be available to the planet, to everybody, is God so loved the world.

And that's not just Jews. That's the world. That's people in it. But the thing that is so often lost sight of is that the Jewish people, the Jewish nation, has been designated by God, going all the way back to Genesis 12, as the vehicle, or the spearhead nation, through which this is to be accomplished.

Because Jesus is coming of the seed of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. And then years later, through David the king. And it is through this one that redemption for the entire world is going to be provided.

[58 : 01] But it comes of necessity through those to whom God has made the promises. And it began with the Abrahamic promise. And it is repeated all throughout Scripture.

So that Jesus is going to provide salvation for the world. Does us continue to have■■■■?

And of course, gives us the obvious God is going to be but he is doing it. You know, That's what I am going to do. That's what I am going to you Israel. And I know that that is what I am not. means his Jewish countrymen. And his own received him not.

They rejected him. But as many as received him, and that of course includes the Jewish constituency who did receive him, and there were thousands and thousands of people who believed on Jesus during his earthly ministry.

It wasn't just the twelve. It was thousands of people. He had lots and lots of disciples. He only had twelve apostles, but he had thousands of disciples. And they were all Jews. Gentiles didn't figure into the picture hardly at all.

[59 : 09] And you may recall the incident of the woman at the well in John chapter 4. She was a Samaritan. That was completely out of order, really. That was unusual. Just because she was not a Jew.

And Jesus came to the Jewish nation. But he came for the whole world.

And therein is a very valuable distinction that needs to be made. But that is not going to become clear. That is not going to become clear until you get a little further into the book of Acts and a veritable bombshell is dropped.

And I mean it is a bombshell. And you know something? The world and the Christian community still hasn't picked up on it 2,000 years later.

And this bombshell is that this Jewish Messiah who came as a promise to the Jew, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is providing salvation for the whole world.

[60 : 19] And he provides a common base for Jew and Gentile.

Non-Jews. Which is another way of saying everybody. Everybody. And he raised up one man to make that clear.

And his name was Saul of Tarsus. He would have to be the last guy on the totem pole that anybody would ever pick for a job like that. Because this guy, Saul of Tarsus, I identify him as the original Jewish Gestapo.

That's what he was. He was a butcher. He was a murderer. He was violent. He was everything that you would want in somebody who really, really opposed Jesus.

And that's who Saul of Tarsus was. And this man was raised up to be the apostle to Gentiles. What?

[61 : 24] Are you kidding me? Gentiles don't have apostles. Yeah, they do. They have this one. His name is Paul the Apostle. And he, the bombshell that he is going to drop is that as a result of the death of Jesus of Nazareth, there is no distinction between Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female.

Everybody is on the same footing in Christ. That thing hit the first century like a bombshell. And Paul took a lot of heat and a lot of opposition because the Jews who believed still clung to the law of Moses and they saw Jesus as being a Jewish Messiah.

It's got nothing to do with Gentiles. The Gentiles are still pigs. They are still dogs. They are still the uncircumcised. And Saul of Tarsus had a tremendous job on his hands to bring that truth that was going to be so violently rejected by so many.

It's amazing. Amazing stuff. Hey, our time is gone and would you believe we did not get into our study this morning? So would you do this for me? Would you hang on to the sheet?

Because the government of the Messianic Kingdom still needs to be considered. And we will look at that next time. So thank you for your kind attention. And by the way, I don't even know what the date is, but if you can make it, we will be here the last Tuesday in the month of May.

[62 : 58] Okay? So thanks again for your presence and for all the delicious food.