

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - The Book of Acts

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[0 : 00] 1 Corinthians chapter 1. And this morning, in 1 Corinthians chapter 1, we'll be looking at verses 18 through 25.

For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside. Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe?

Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

For indeed, Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified.

[1 : 25] To the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishness. But to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Thank you, Gary. Boy, wasn't that music, wake-up music this morning.

Wow. Keeps me singing. Sunshine in my soul. So, we've had our wake-up music. Now, I trust it isn't time for the sleepy time sermon.

Amen. We are engaged in a series of studies that have meant a great deal to me in the past as we unfold this subject matter.

[2 : 30] We are talking about the progression of doctrinal truth and the revelation of God as is found in the Bible. And we've already touched on it just briefly, although we weren't with this particular content last week because we had guests in with the ark.

But I would suggest that if you were not here two weeks ago, in order for this message this morning to make even, I trust, more sense to you, you might want to get that message that was delivered Sunday morning here two weeks ago because it provided the very basis for what we'll be talking about today.

And in that message to refresh your pure minds by way of remembrance, you will recall that we pointed out and made a significant issue of the fact that there is a great deal of physicality in the Old Testament that is not part and parcel of church age truth.

And the distinction that we made is simply found in the fact that in the Old Testament with the prophets, etc., with Moses, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and so on, God made very hands-on kind of contacts with these people.

And physical miracles that could be attested to were the order of the day. And this is one of the reasons why the Apostle Paul says the Jews require a sign.

[4 : 05] And that word for sign literally means a miracle, something that you could witness and see and something that you could experience with your own eyes.

God raised the nation of Israel on miracles, starting with their coming out of Egypt, the opening of the Red Sea, the manna from heaven, and just a whole host of things were all performed by God in a very face-to-face, hands-on kind of situation that was unmistakable.

And yet, despite all of that revelation, clearly, directly from God, the most significant thing that God charged the nation of Israel with was their unbelief.

So, it just goes to show you that belief is not always predicated upon seeing. Sometimes people can see things and still not believe.

And we see that a number of times in the Old and New Testament. And what we are suggesting is that when you come into the Age of Grace, which is where we live now, and was introduced to us about 2,000 years ago, it is very evident that the miracles that were so commonplace in the Old Testament and in the Gospels, and especially in the earlier chapters of the Book of Acts, they just began fading away.

[5 : 34] And miracles, as they were performed by Christ and others in the Bible, is not the order of the day today. We are not limiting God in saying that He cannot perform miracles any time He chooses, any way He chooses, for anyone He chooses, because He can.

He is God. But what we are saying is that is not His method of operation today. He is dealing specifically through the subject of faith.

And the faith was evident, and there in the Old Testament as well, but today it is faith without the miracles. And when Paul writes to the Corinthians in the second epistle, he talks about we walk by faith, not by sight.

What does that mean? That means that we conduct our lives, and we live our lives simply on the basis of believing what God has said.

That's it. That's walking by faith. You just believe what God has said in His Word because He said it, and that's it.

[6 : 44] You order your lives accordingly, and you don't have to see any miracles. You don't have to attest to any miraculous signs of any kind, even though God may, if He chooses to do so, He may bring miracles about.

But I cannot honestly say that I have ever really witnessed a bona fide miracle. And when we're talking about miracles, we're not using the word the way a lot of people use it. Some people see a miracle in everything.

I'm talking about a miracle in the sense that the laws of physics are reversed or violated. I'm talking about that kind of a miracle. And they were commonplace in the Old Testament.

Things like axe heads floating, and donkeys talking, and all kinds of physical, hands-on kind of miracles that people could look at.

And there was the wow factor. The Red Sea moving back so that the children of Israel could cross over on dry land. They're commonplace in the Old Testament.

[7 : 45] Where are they here? We just don't see them. Some would suggest that this is a change in God. That isn't true.

God doesn't change. But God's methodology changes. Because circumstances change. This today is not the age of Israel.

Did you realize that? This is not the age of Israel. What is this? This is the times of the Gentiles. Israel is out of the picture insofar as being a major player on the world scene today.

We know that things are hot and heavy in Israel in the Middle East now, and they have been, and they're coming back into focus. But by and large, the emphasis is not on Israel. The emphasis is on the rest of the world.

This is the Gentile world. So the day of Israel has passed, and it will be some time in the plan and program of God, whenever that is, that he brings them back online again, and they will once again be on the front burner, particularly during the tribulation period.

[8 : 53] But they're not there now. What this is now is the times of the Gentiles. And Paul reminds us in Romans that blindness, in part, has happened unto Israel.

This means Israel, the Jew, the nation of Israel, excuse me, the Jewish people, they do not see and perceive spiritually today.

Many Jews consider Christianity a foe, not a friend. There is a judicial blindness that is over Israel.

And Paul says that blindness in part, thank God it's just in part, it's not in toto. Blindness in part has happened unto Israel until.

Until what? Until the fullness of the Gentiles become in.

[9 : 56] What does that mean? Just what it says. God is principally working through Gentiles today. And the apostle to the Gentiles is not Peter, James, John, Matthew.

No, no. They were apostles to Israel. The apostle to the Gentiles is Paul. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

In fact, God raised him up specifically to be the apostle to the Gentiles. Now, if you have your Bible this morning, good for you because you're going to need it.

And if you don't have your Bible, then perhaps the person next to you, if they have one, would be kind enough to let you look on that. Because I want you to see how this transition is taking place right before our eyes.

But I must confess, and I do not do so proudly, but I do so humbly and somewhat embarrassed, that this transition that we are speaking of now completely escaped me for probably the first 15 years of my Christian life.

[11 : 08] I just never put it together, never connected the dots. I never had any difficulty believing the Bible, believing all of the Bible. And I did so.

And I revered it all. But there were portions of it that I couldn't get my brain around because they didn't seem to compute.

There were things that just didn't seem to fit. And I didn't know why. Now I know why. And now I see how they fit. And it has given the study of the Scriptures a whole new life.

It is just absolutely amazing when you see this transition in doctrine. And by the way, might I go so far as to suggest that much of the truth that we have in the Old Testament, which we look upon as being very, very profound and very deep, and I'm talking again about those physical miracles, in essence, they really weren't.

Do you know what all of those miracles, demonstrations of supernatural power in the Old Testament, what they really constituted? Some of you aren't going to believe this, and you'll probably reject it because we know how much power and energy it takes from the divine to perform these miracles.

[12 : 26] And here I am calling them basic elemental kindergarten stuff. That's right. That's what it was. It was designed to get the attention of these people who were not very far along at all in their spiritual life and demonstrated their lack of spirituality every time they got an opportunity.

And God was very patient and very deliberate with them, and he gave them all kinds of evidences and signs one after another. So we've got faith for humanity in a kindergarten primary mode in the Old Testament.

But most of us don't think of it that way. We think of it as, wow, stuff, because of the miracles. But they were designed to communicate to these people in ways that apparently nothing else would get through to them.

We in the New Testament, with an advanced revelation, ought to be beyond that. But do you know what? Many of us are not. Most Christians today would much rather have the physical miracles than the spiritual, intellectual embracing of God's truth.

We're all for pizzazz. We're all for demonstrations. We're all for wow stuff. We want something that will bowl us over. But what God is giving us is spiritual truth, information, to be taken in, accepted, received from Him, by which we grow and mature and develop and become conformed to the image of Christ.

[14 : 05] And that is through the Word. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. We, in this dispensation of grace, in this time of the Gentiles, in this church age dispensation, we are not supposed to be clamoring for God to perform this miracle, that miracle, and some other miracle.

We are to be clamoring for the Word of God to take it in and absorb it and let it do its work in us that we may grow and mature thereby.

And we don't need the miracles. Now, the time is coming when the miracles are coming back.

Well, when will that be? Huh. It's when Israel comes back and the miracles will be there. As you read the last book in the Bible, the book of the Revelation, guess what you are confronted with on virtually every page?

More miracles. signs in the heavens. All kinds of miracles taking place on the earth. The two witnesses and so on that are virtually indestructible.

[15 : 18] The 144,000 with the seal of God in their foreheads will be proclaiming the gospel and they will be virtually indestructible even though they will try to kill them. That's going to be a reinstitution of the same kind of miracles that were prevalent in the Old Testament and in the Gospels.

But they're not prevalent today. As we move into the book of Acts and let's go there if we may. Well, we'll just flip a few pages as we go through here and let me recount some of these things.

All right? In the Gospels we have a continuation of the Old Testament and let me make this point because it's very, very important. I want to get through this as quickly as I can because Marie, give me the sign.

I want a Q&A; this morning. Okay? About 15 minutes because I know there's going to be questions from this. Okay? When Christ came on the scene it was imperative that he maintain the mode that had been established in the Old Testament.

Especially when he presented himself as the Messiah of Israel. Any self-respecting Jew had every right to say regarding Jesus Christ.

[16 : 30] Okay? So you say that you are the Messiah. You say that you are the one sent from God and you are the answer that Moses and the prophets were speaking about.

Show us. Do your stuff. Why should we believe you? So Christ performed all kinds of miracles in just about every venue. Everything from stilling the storm to raising the dead, healing the blind, and giving sight to the blind, and lame people were walking, and multitudes came and were healed of all kinds of things.

And what all of these miracles were about was Jesus' calling card. This is the way he authenticated his claims to be the Messiah. And Israel had always been accustomed to God working with them through signs, manifestations.

And he did. Then when you come into the Acts of the Apostles, and here by the way, speaking of a transition, let me make this point because this is really, really critical.

When you come into the Gospels, you are still under the Old Testament economy.

[17 : 45] You heard me correctly. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all took place under the Old Testament economy.

The law of Moses was still very much in place. What makes so many Christians divorce the Gospels from the Old Testament is the fact that there are 400 years between them.

So there are 400 years when God isn't speaking to anyone through prophets. No scripture is being written for 400 years. And not only that, but when you open your Bible and you flip to the New Testament where Matthew begins, it tells you this is the New Testament.

Well, insofar as the canon of Scripture is concerned and the location in the Bible, yes, it's part of the New Testament. But it belongs under the operations of the Old Testament.

Why do you think Jesus kept the Sabbath? Why do you think he observed the feasts? Why do you think he was circumcised?

[19 : 02] Because all he had to do with was Judaism. Jesus was a Jew. He still is. And he never became a Christian.

Jesus, contrary to what a lot of people believe, Jesus Christ is not the best Christian who ever lived. He isn't a Christian at all. He's a Jew. But he made it possible for those who are Christians to be Christians.

There's nothing Christian about Jesus. He's Jewish. He's the son of David, son of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He's Jewish. Salvation. Jesus himself said, salvation is of the Jews.

He's talking to the woman, Samaritan woman at the well. So, we've got a Savior functioning and operating and observing the Old Testament law of Moses.

Now, there were times when he was accused of violating the law and teaching against Moses. He never did. He never did. In fact, Jesus Christ was the only one who ever really delivered the real meaning of the law of Moses.

[20 : 09] And when he said, think not that I am come to destroy the law. He didn't come to destroy the law. He came to fulfill it. And he fulfilled it in his life, death, and burial.

So, when you move from the Old Testament into the New, in the Gospels, we find more miracles. What sign show us thou?

And they had every right to ask that question. Because if you're who you claim to be, you're going to have to be able to do some things that only God could do. And he did.

So, when we come to the book of Acts, here is where many times people make another giant leap that should not be made.

You need to maintain the continuity between the Gospels and the Acts. And what I am saying is, in the economy, in the manner of living, in the operating orders that were in function at the time, the Gospels and the Old Testament go together.

[21 : 23] But when we come to the book of Acts, what do we have? Get ready for this. More of the same. What do we have between the Gospels and the book of Acts?

just a few weeks. That's all. Just a few weeks. Pentecost, the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2 came less than two months after the resurrection of Jesus.

Fifty days, in fact. It's related to the word Pentecost and the number five and fifty. So when we come into the book of Acts and Pentecost in chapter 2, who do we have there?

Nobody but Jews. Just Jews. No Gentiles at all. At that feast of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, we're given a long list of the geography that was involved from which all of those people came.

And it's all around the Mediterranean Basin, and the only thing they had in common was a common religion, but they all spoke different languages. And that's why God performed the miracle of their speaking in languages they had not learned.

[22 : 46] But they're all Jews. There's no Gentiles involved. So what does that mean? It means that Acts is really just a continuation of the four Gospels.

And the four Gospels is a continuation of the Old Testament. And those all belong together. However, and here's where the plot thickens, as you move on through the book of Acts, some dramatic changes are taking place.

And the most dramatic is, Israel is being confronted with the claims of a resurrected Christ, Christ.

But they are not coming on board. They continue to reject and persecute the Jewish believers who have embraced Jesus and are preaching and proclaiming him.

And as a result of their rejection, they begin fading away. And as you move through the book of Acts, you find the miracles rapidly receding.

[23 : 58] what's happening? Israel is passing off the scene, and the miracles they required is passing off with them. And what is coming into focus?

the church age, the times of the Gentiles, and Paul, the apostle, being raised up specifically to go to the Gentiles.

Do you realize the Gentiles never had an apostle? That means a special sent one just to the Gentiles. The Jews had 12. Jesus chose them.

But the Gentiles didn't have any. And the Gentiles made up 99% of the world's population, and still do. And they just had one apostle, and that was Paul.

Wow. And you know what? He was a Jew. Isn't that significant? He was a Jew who was also a Roman citizen. And we find something very dramatic that is taking place.

[24 : 59] And if you will look at Acts chapter 2, we've got the miracle of Pentecost, and the speaking in tongues, languages not known. in Acts chapter 3, there is the healing of the man who was lame from his mother womb at the gate beautiful.

And Peter and John looked down on this man who was there begging, and he looked up to them and held up his hand, his little cup like he's going to put a coin in my cup. And Peter and John said, silver and gold have we none, but such as we have give we unto you.

In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up. And he grabbed that man by the hand and yanked on him. And that guy came up out of that sitting position and is standing there on two good strong legs and he can't believe his eyes, can't believe his feet either.

And a crowd starts building and coming in from everywhere because they know this guy. They know he's begged there for years and he's never walked a day in his life. He was lame from his mother's womb and now he's over 40 years old.

And he's walking and jumping up and down and hugging Peter and hugging John and a crowd begins building. And Peter delivers a message similar to what he did on the day of Pentecost.

[26 : 13] And in chapter 4 of Acts, they have all things in common. There was a spirit of camaraderie that existed among these people. They brought all of their goods together, those that had surplus, and they sold them and they brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Why did they do that? They were anticipating the coming of the kingdom of heaven to earth. They were anticipating the return of Christ and the establishment of that kingdom.

Remember when Jesus told the rich young ruler, when he asked him, what must I do to obtain eternal life? And Jesus said, well, you keep the law.

He goes, oh, well, I've done that. And Jesus said, well, then sell everything you have and give it to the poor and come and follow me. And he turned and walked away, sadly.

Why was he telling him that? Because these are what the kingdom conditions were going to involve. And they are actually putting that in practice there in Acts chapter 4.

[27 : 14] They're selling houses and lands and bringing the money and giving it to the apostles and telling them to you distribute it wherever the need is.

That's phenomenal. That was the spirit of generosity and camaraderie that existed then. And the text makes it very clear that they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

And there was no stinginess or deceit among them except. Enter Ananias and Sapphira, who sold some land and then they brought money.

part of the money from the land and gave it to the apostles and they put on a show and made it look as though they had given everything.

And the truth of the matter is, they didn't have to give anything. And what was their undoing was their lying about it because they made it look like they were giving everything. And Peter said, why had Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?

[28 : 22] Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God. How did he know that? How did he know what he sold the land for and how much money he was giving? How did Peter know?

Well, I think that was simply a miracle. He had supernatural knowledge. And you know what Peter said to Ananias? Drop dead. That's what he did.

Fell over dead. I mean, that was punishment, judgment right on the spot. His wife came in, didn't have any idea what had gone on. They'd just taken her husband out and buried him. Now the pallbearers came back.

She came in. They asked her the question. She lied too. And she was slain. Just by the word. what's going on here?

Hey, this is Israel. These are miraculous manifestations. They are accustomed to that. When Peter is arrested and put into prison and they intend to bring him out the next day.

[29 : 27] And lo and behold, an angel visits Peter in prison and escorts him out past the guards. The cell door opens up and Peter goes out and they're standing at Rhoda's house.

She comes to the door and Peter's knocking and they've been praying for Peter and lo and behold here. That was an angelic deliverance. God sent an angel and delivered Peter from prison.

And when Paul is imprisoned along with Silas in Acts chapter 16, that earthquake that opened all of the cell doors so all the prisoners could go free.

There was nothing accidental about that. That was clearly a miracle of God. He sent that earthquake. He opened that up. He set the conversion of the Philippian jailer up and everything that went with it.

That too was involving the miraculous at a time when those things were commonplace. Now, a little later, Peter's going to be arrested again.

[30 : 40] Paul's going to be arrested again. There won't be any deliverance. There won't be any miracle. What happened? Why the change?

Something is taking place. God is moving from the manifestation of obvious sightseeing miracles, to that of just believing the word of God.

And we come to chapter 6 with Stephen. And is Stephen miraculously delivered? No. The Jews stone him to death. And he dies there in Acts chapter 7.

In chapter 8, we are told that there is great persecution that arises regarding the church. And this is really significant. I want you to pick up on this because it's very, very important.

Acts chapter 8 tells us about great persecution. And this is persecution from Jews upon Jews. And nobody else is involved.

[31 : 43] There aren't any Gentiles in this. It is Jews persecuting Jews. Jews upon Jews upon Jews upon Jews upon Jews upon the Jews. And all of the believers are scattered all throughout the area.

They head out. They pack up their belongings and they get out of town because no doubt there were Gestapo-like visits in the middle of the night and these people were being hauled off to prison. And Saul of Tarsus was one of the greatest perpetrators of it.

And when you read that in Acts chapter 8 about great persecution and the disciples were scattered everywhere, there's three little words that are often overlooked.

And it says, except the apostles. What? Why weren't they scattered?

Why are they still there in Jerusalem? Didn't Jesus tell them? You are to go into all the world, proclaim the gospel to Israel. What are they doing still in Jerusalem?

[32 : 47] Some say, well, they were just disobedient or they were cowards. That's nonsense. The text makes it clear they were filled with the Spirit. Don't try to make them disobedient or afraid to go to the far off lands.

They were fulfilling the commission. Jesus said, you will be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth.

In that order. Why were they still in Jerusalem? Because the business was still unfinished in Jerusalem. That was where it all had to begin.

And you know, Jerusalem never did get online. They never did get in place. And because of that, because of the unbelief of Israel, salvation has come to the Gentiles.

And when you read this about Stephen being stoned in chapter 7 and the persecution in chapter 8, lo and behold, who arrives on the scene in chapter 9 but a new kid on the block.

[33 : 54] And his name is Saul of Tarsus. He was one of the chief persecutors and now he's going to be a proclaimer of this gospel of the Messiah whom he once sought to destroy.

This is as radical a turnaround as you get. And when Ananias goes to him and lays his hands on him, the Lord told Ananias, I want you to go to the street called Straight and inquire at the house of Judas, not to be confused with the Judas Iscariot.

And there is where Saul of Tarsus is. You go in and lay hands on him and he may receive his sight and I will show him what great things he must suffer for me.

I will send him to witness, to Jews, to Gentiles, to kings, to emperors. That's what was in Israel. Everything is changing.

Israel is sliding back and the Gentiles are sliding in. And it's going to become the age. of the Gentiles. And it still is.

[35 : 07] Where our confusion exists today is the number of Christians who insist on trying to operate and function out of the Gospels or the Old Testament instead of getting in line with our latest marching orders which has to do with the Gentiles.

That's where we belong. We're not Jews. We're Gentiles. Jews. We will never be Jews. It is true we are of the seed of Abraham spiritually because Abraham was a man of faith and we are justified by faith just like Abraham was.

And that makes him the father of the faithful. So in that sense we have a spiritual affinity to Abraham but we are not Jews and we don't become Jews. This is so clear when you move through the book of Acts and see what's taking place.

And do you realize for instance let me be as hasty as I can here but we've got the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts chapter 8 and that's significant because he obviously was a convert to Judaism.

If he was a typical Ethiopian he was a black man and he was from Africa and yet he was there in Jerusalem for the purpose of worshiping.

[36 : 30] That makes him a Jew. That's why he was there. In fact you wouldn't be allowed if you weren't a Jew. You wouldn't even be admitted to the place and we know his conversion was miraculous and Philip led him to Christ.

And then in chapter 9 we find Saul of Tarsus being saved and in Acts chapter 10 and this is this is a real blockbuster because I cannot believe how I so grossly overlooked Acts chapter 10 and the significance of it for years.

Cornelius was a Gentile. He was an officer in the Roman army despite the fact that he and his superiors had been pagans.

He had come to the conviction that there was but one God and that was the God of Israel. and that was really unusual for a Gentile to come to that position.

Yet Cornelius is spoken of as a God fearer. He worshipped the true God and he prayed. And I know what he prayed for.

[37 : 41] He prayed for more light. And an angel appeared to Cornelius and told him and here again this is this is a bridge thing. An angel appeared to Cornelius and said you send to Joppa and inquire at the house of Simon the Tanner.

There is a man staying there and his name is Peter. You send men and have Peter come here and he will tell you what you need to know. That's exactly what happened.

Peter didn't want to go. You know the story. Sheet let down from heaven. All manner of four-footed beasts in there. Peter wasn't about to go because this man was a Gentile.

And when he went you see what's taking place here? Cornelius was a Gentile. Peter is a Jew. But he is going to who? He's going to Gentiles.

And Peter's saying no, no. It is unlawful for a man who is a Jew to have anything to do like that with a Gentile. To go into his home and have a meal with. That's unthinkable. I can't do that.

[38 : 44] I'm not going to do that. And God let this sheet down three times. And Peter's saying I don't understand what's going on here. What is this anyway?

We're not supposed to go to Gentiles. But he went. And when he did he walked in the house. This is in Acts chapter 10. Walked in the house and Cornelius is there and the place is filled with Gentiles.

And the first thing Peter says is you know you know how it is unlawful for a man who is a Jew to have anything to do with Gentiles.

And here I am up to my eyeballs in Gentiles. What is this all about anyway? And Cornelius tells Peter about the angel coming, about his being sent for.

And Peter says I don't understand. I don't understand. What is happening here? And he told them about Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

[39 : 48] And you know what? The Spirit of God fell on that little group of people, Gentiles. And those who had language barriers in that area were all broken down and they could hear everyone in their own language.

It was nothing but the day of Pentecost all over again for this small little community. And Peter is standing there and saying I don't believe this. I don't believe. How could God what's going on?

I don't understand. He was befuddled by it. And he said well then God is doing something with Gentiles?

How can that be? this whole thing is all about Jews and Judaism. And when Peter goes back home some of his Jewish brothers call him in and say you know what we heard about you Peter?

We heard that you went into a Gentile community and you went in and had a meal with them and sat down with them and you talked with them and Gentile Peter tell us it isn't so.

[41 : 02] And Peter recounted the whole thing about the sheet and about their speaking in unknown languages which was the authentication that this thing was real and it was from God and Peter said what was I that I could withstand God?

Do you want me to tell God he can't do that? How could I do that? I don't fellas hey I don't know what's happening either I don't know what's going on I don't know why God is having this interest in Gentiles that's never happened before this is all new it's confusing I don't know what to make of it and this is in chapter 11 of Acts and they look at each other in astonishment and here's the conclusion they came to well then this must mean that God is also granting repentance to Gentiles to Gentiles what?

how can that be? well it was because God so loved the world Gentiles included and they didn't get it now the whole scene begins moving away from Israel and the Jew to a non-Jewish factor called Gentiles and the Jews as a nation remain in their unbelief and the numbers of Gentiles coming to faith in a Jewish Messiah crucified buried and raised from the dead begins to explode and Israel sits there on the sideline still in a rejection mode of Jesus of Nazareth and Paul says in Acts chapter 13 when he preached to his own people the

Jews he says seeing you reject this message and you consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life flow we turn to the Gentiles and they will hear it that's where we are today do you see the progression here the movement it is dynamic and it is so important all right we've got 10 minutes left I meant to give you 15 but you're lucky you got 10 so let's have some Q&A; and I I'm sure that I've probably raised a lot of questions so we've got a roving microphone to you so it will be on the recording question or comment someone now you better have questions or I'm going to take off and finish preaching here okay Mike prior to Paul's conversion when he went to the Gentiles he was part of the persecution and there's a part of me that wonders why in the world the

Jewish leadership was so threatened by Jewish believers it seemed disproportionate you know unless it was satanic in its origin well I would certainly say this that the whole the whole dynamic of unbelief regardless of from whom it comes is satanic in its origin I think this is made very clear in 2nd corinthians 4 if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost whose minds thinking processes intellect whose minds are blinded by the god of this age lest the light of the glorious gospel of christ who is the image of god should shine unto them so there is a supernatural blinding there and you've got to understand that the jewish establishment so feared this growing body of jews who were becoming believers in jesus as the messiah that it threatened them in their position of authority and they operated and functioned only under the good favor of the romans who occupied israel at that time and one of the things that the jewish religious establishment was charged with by the romans was this listen you jews you religious jews you chief priest high priest etc you keep your people under control because if you don't we will and rome knew how to be very brutal sometimes when they put down insurrections and the jewish establishment saw all of the commotion and difficulty that was going on with jews embracing jesus as the messiah and proclaiming him and the arguments breaking out and the persecution and they wanted to keep the lid on everything and in fact they even make mention of the fact that if they displease the romans you see the jewish religious establishment in many respects was in bed with the romans they were cooperating and the romans let the jews run the religious thing and they accommodated them to the extent they could and the high priest made it very clear that if we don't keep this thing in check and keep the lid on it the romans will take away our place and our nation they will remove us from office and all of the perks and everything that go with it and that was a real threat to them that's one reason why they were so intense on putting this down not letting it get out of control other thoughts or comments anyone the reason

[47 : 34] I'll take it that there are no more questions because I don't see any hands out there but in case anybody is sitting here and thinking okay there's a question up here in case anybody is thinking well why are you making such a big deal of this I mean what's this got to do with anything my answer is everything everything this is critical to the whole plan and program of God and what we are going to be seeing unfolding in a prophetic way yes sir you said earlier that because Israel rejected Christ that was the way for salvation to come to the Gentiles do you believe Gentiles would have gotten salvation if Christ would not have been rejected I can't answer that because it's a hypothetical and I don't have the ability to answer what if questions I wish I did because I got a long list of myself what if questions and I've often said there are two things and I hope you remember this forever there are two things that absolutely have to take place before the kingdom of heaven can come to earth and the first thing is the Messiah has to die for the sins of the world to balance the moral scales of the universe and to provide

God with a legal basis for lifting the curse that's already happened that's history he did that and you'll find this very formula given in Acts chapter 3 when Peter preaches that second powerful message and he says the things which God promised by his servant that he should die for the sins he has done that and now therefore now your turn is up and what you need to do as a nation is embrace that truth and then God will send him back this is Acts 3 in the 20s and it's a powerful powerful passage so in order for the kingdom of heaven to come to earth Christ must die and pay the penalty for its restoration that he did the second thing that has to be fulfilled is for Israel to embrace Jesus as their Messiah as a nation they never have it's true thousands of Jews did but that was not the nation and the nation will immediately prior to the return of Christ

Israel will look on him whom they pierced and they will mourn for him they will become believers Jews by the multitudes by the millions are going to come to faith in Jesus as their Messiah that will bring in the kingdom and the reason that is so critical is because of the promise God made to Abraham Isaac and Jacob unconditional covenants and he will fulfill them very good question thank you okay back here was it the original intent for God weren't the Jews being prepared to become a kingdom of priests and then they were to take the message to the Gentiles absolutely excellent point and it really ties in and this goes back this is a point I've made before but it's so pertinent I'll just stick it in here again this goes back to Exodus chapter 19 and verse 6 when God called Israel out of Egypt and Moses is prepared to receive the tablets of the law and the law from God

God says to Israel I will make you a kingdom of priests now that's really significant because Israel had one tribe that was a priestly tribe that was Levi but what he is saying is I'm going to make all of the tribes a priestly nation I'll make you a nation of priests well that's never happened but it was getting underway with John the Baptist why do you think John a Jew of course was baptizing all of those who came to him when he was baptizing in the river Jordan early on in the ministry of Jesus why was and you know do you know the only ones who were baptized prior to this was the priests when they became 30 years of age that were ceremonially purified with water into the priesthood and when all of these thousands and thousands of people all of whom are

Jews come to John to be baptized by John there's no indication John is saying now are you from the tribe of Levi because you're not qualified to be a priest if you're not from the tribe of Levi no no he was baptizing everybody that came to him without any distinction because they were going to be and were preparing to be the priestly nation except those who were in control of the nation namely the shakers and movers and the religious establishment didn't accept John his authority or his baptism and what John was doing was preparing the nation to be a kingdom of priests and to whom were they to be priests all the Gentiles all the rest of eventually they will be but they're not now you see Israel had their own priestly tribe that was the tribe of Levi and the tribe of Levi served as a priest for the other 11 tribes but God is saying I'm going to make the whole nation priests that's never happened either but

[53 : 39] John was getting it underway and the whole thing was short circuited and the promise of the kingdom was all put on hold this is not the kingdom of heaven come to earth we're not living in that now we're living in the times of the Gentiles when the kingdom of heaven comes to earth what will happen simple what will happen when the kingdom of heaven comes to earth is the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven this is not it do you have a problem believing that this is not it this is not the kingdom we'll take one more question our time is gone but this is the age of grace so we'll have one if there is one more question or we will Betty has a question up here in the front where does the rapture fit into this then well the rapture fits into this in that it is the next thing the rapture is imminent that means there is nothing that has to take place before the rapture can occur and it could occur before

I finish my next sentence which would be just dandy with me we don't know when it's coming it might be today tomorrow five years from now 50 years from now frankly the way things are shaping up I expect it sooner rather than later and the safe answer that I always give without fear of contradiction is we are closer than anybody has ever been yes okay our last question it has to do with 2 Corinthians 4 that you mentioned 4 chapter verse 4 about the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not and that has always bothered me because he wishes all to be saved and yet he allows this would you address that I would be happy to but in 30 seconds this is a really good question for the 9 o'clock hour and

I would be glad to put that on what she is talking about is the problem of evil how do you equate the existence of an all powerful God an all powerful good God and the existence of evil and there are several factors that come into play there and one of them has to do with the fact that God has endowed humans and angels with a thing called volition and it's much more involved but it's an excellent question this question Joanne has probably plagued philosophers and theologians for millennia more than anything else and it's called the problem of evil how do you account for the fact that there is an all powerful God who is supposed to be a good God and yet we have the existence of all of this evil and injustice in the world and if he is all powerful why doesn't he put an end to it and if he could put an end to it but chooses not to then how could he possibly be good because

I'm not even close to being as powerful as God but if I could put an end to the evil I would so why doesn't he and it's a very legitimate question and it's one that deserves an answer and you need to be here at nine o'clock which we'll deal with that and for now our time is gone but you've been very kind and gracious and I appreciate your attentiveness would you stand please father we despite what we have talked about and answers that we've tried to provide all of us including myself still have more and more questions that are unresolved and we recognize that this is all part of the learning process and that none of us has all the answers that we need or want and this spurs us on to further study and investigation because we recognize how lacking we are in our understanding but we want more knowledge and more information because with it we can serve you and love you more intelligently and labor for you more effectively and that's why we want it thank you for all that you've been pleased to reveal thank you for the impetus that is ours to learn and understand more and thank you for being the utterly infinite loving

God that you are and for that magnificent son that you provided to die for our sins we'll never get over that thank you for it in Christ's name amen mad so you you you