

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Jews and the Day of Pentecost, Part 2

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[0 : 00] Bible, please, to the Acts of the Apostles, we will point out some very important concepts that need to be considered as we enter this new section.

And it is indeed a new section because it is one of which our Lord Jesus spoke while he was here during his earthly ministry, when he made mention of the fact that the Spirit of God was not yet given, but when he comes, he will lead you into all truth.

He will not speak of himself, he will speak of me, and he will show you things to come. So the Acts of the Apostles could very well be considered the Acts of the Apostles and their deeds wrought through the Spirit of God.

Because while Jesus Christ, the Son, remains the focal point of the Apostles' message in the book of Acts, particularly in connection with his resurrection, the baton is nonetheless after a fashion passed from Jesus to the Holy Spirit.

And this is going to make a marked difference in the way things are accomplished. You see, there are three different major revelations that are provided for the nation of Israel throughout the Bible.

[1 : 24] And I think it's very important and very much a key to keep these in mind. In the Old Testament, it was principally the revelation of God the Father, that is, of Jehovah.

And he began to make himself known early on in the book of Genesis, and he is presented as the God of Israel. The nation of Israel was birthed, if you will, as they came out of the land of Egypt.

And it was God the Father who revealed himself to the nation of Israel through a multitude of miracles. It began with the ten plagues that were brought upon the Egyptians, and it culminated with the death of the firstborn, and established what the Jews still recognize today and celebrate as the Passover.

Then there was the miracle of the Red Sea, the crossing on dry land, the drowning of the Egyptian army. There was the miracle of the water out of the rock when the people were dying of thirst or would have died of thirst.

There was the miracle of the quail. There was the miracle of the manna from heaven. There was one miracle after another, performed by God the Father to vindicate himself, his presence, his power, his love, his concern for the nation of Israel.

[2 : 56] Yet, what was their principal response? Perhaps as hard as it is to understand, it's undeniable.

It was unbelief. Unbelief. And it seems to have been capped off when they came to Kadesh Barnea and had but a few miles to go, and they were going to cross in to the promised land.

The land which God had given to Abraham and his seed. They were at the threshold, almost ready to go in. And someone came up with a bright idea.

Now, wait just a moment. Let's not be too hasty. Let's reconnoiter the land. Let's send in 12 spies.

And let them look at the land, the lay of the land, the fortresses, the people, how they're armed, equipped, how they're prepared, how strong the defenses are.

[4 : 07] Then we will better know whether we should go in. Now, that was mistake number one. When God tells you to do something, you just do it.

Because he is going to make provision for it to be a reality. And that was clearly another illustration of the unbelief of the nation. Well, they sent the 12 spies in.

And 10 of the 12 came back, shaking their heads in a negative way, and said, Hey, we can't do it. We can't do it. You have no idea how strong their fortresses are, how many people they have.

And these guys are huge. I mean, they are big. They'll make mincemeat out of us. And only two spies came back by the name of Joshua and Caleb with a minority report.

And their finding was, well, you know what? We're not going to kid you. They are well fortified. And there are a lot of them. And yeah, they are good-sized guys.

[5 : 12] And obviously very well trained and used to combat. But our God is with us. He's not with them. So we can take them.

Let's go. And as is often the case, the majority prevailed. Now, very often there is wisdom in the majority position.

But if the majority is right, they are right because they are right. They are not right because they are the majority. Because sometimes it's the minority that's right.

And that was the case with Joshua and Caleb. This was a profound manifestation of their distrust in God.

And God said, okay, you're not coming into the promised land. What I'm going to have you do is wander here in a big circle in the desert for 38 years until every last one of you of this generation dies off.

[6 : 28] And I'm going to bring in two. Joshua and Caleb. And your carcasses are going to fall here in the desert.

And it was all because of unbelief. You see, as we have said so many times, so say I now again, more than anything else, God wants to be believed.

He wants to be trusted. He wants to be relied upon. And this, by the way, is the very essence of salvation. It is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

It is all belief. Is God a credible witness and testimony or is he not? So all throughout the Old Testament, we have one manifestation of God revealing himself to Israel through all kinds of miracles.

Which miracles, by the way, nobody ever denied. Nobody ever said, ah, there weren't any quail. There wasn't any manna from heaven. There wasn't any miraculous crossing of the Red Sea.

[7 : 42] There wasn't any water out of the rock. That's all fabrication. It's all fairy tale. Nobody ever said that. They all believed it. Well then, why didn't they extend their belief to more confidence and more trust?

It's almost like, yeah, well, what have you done for me today? You know. Never mind your track record. Never mind this plethora of miracles that you provided.

What now? And nothing infuriates God more than to call his integrity and his honesty into question.

He does not like that. He wants to be believed and he has given ample evidence to justify our believing. So this is the story of the Old Testament.

And what was Israel's response as a nation? Unbelief. Unbelief. In fact, the writer of Hebrews refers to this a number of times when he addresses his contemporaries by saying, Don't be like your ancestors in the desert who abided in their unbelief.

[9 : 06] Unbelief. Then when you come to the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, what we find there is more of the same.

Except it isn't being provided by God the Father. It's being provided by God the Son. And what was it that he provided?

Miracles. Miracles. Raised the dead. Healed the sick. Cast out demons. Sight to the blind. Hearing to the deaf.

Calmed the sea and the waves. One miracle after another. So much so that Jesus was able to say in one of the towns that should have lined up behind him in belief.

You know? Woe. Woe unto you. Chorazin. Bethsaida.

[10 : 08] Those were principal cities in the Galilee. Right on the shores of Galilee. Bethsaida was where Peter was from. And Jesus said, woe unto you.

And that woe is W-O-E. It is not nice. It is disastrous. Woe unto you, Chorazin.

Bethsaida. For if the mighty miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon.

And those aren't even Jews. Those are Gentiles. They would have repented. But what was your response? Unbelief.

More unbelief. And their unbelief was to such a degree that they said, we will not have this man to reign over us. You see, the Father and the Son are working together in tandem.

[11 : 06] The Father in the Old Testament. The Son in the Gospels. And I'm satisfied that this is what Jesus was referring to when he said, All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.

And him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. What was he talking about? He was talking about those Jewish believers who had already done business with God the Father.

And were in a right relationship with God the Father. They belonged to God the Father. And when Jesus came and began his ministry, God the Father recognized all of those who were believers in him and gave them to his son.

Transferred them to his son. Had to have them before he could give them to the son. And those whom the Father had were those who were believers before Jesus ever came on the scene.

They were people like Simeon. In the Gospel of Luke, chapter 1. The aged man that took the baby Jesus in his arms, remember?

[12 : 28] Was Simeon. And they were people like John the Baptizer. He was one who belonged to the Father.

And Peter. And James. And John. All of these had a relationship with the Father.

And that's what made the son readily acceptable to them. Because they were already in tune with God.

And it was not a stretch for them to sign on and begin following Jesus. In fact, they signed on and followed John the Baptizer before they followed Jesus.

And after John was executed, those who were his followers, John's followers, signed on with Jesus. The twelve who were apostles of Christ were disciples of John the Baptist before they were.

- [13 : 31] Maybe not all of them, but most of them. Before they were of Jesus. So here in the Gospels, we've got Jesus. Jesus. In effect, revealing himself instead of the Father.
- It was coming through the Son. And I think it is really significant when Jesus makes the statement.
- And I think it's in Matthew 12. Yes, Matthew 12. And he said, All manner of blasphemy and unbelief shall be forgiven.
- Blasphemy against the Son of Man shall be forgiven. But blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.
- And what is he talking about? I think he is talking about this third and final revelation that is going to be given to the nation of Israel, requiring a verdict from them.
- [14 : 41] In the Old Testament, through their unbelief, they rejected the Father. In the Gospels, through their unbelief, they rejected the Son. And in the Book of Acts, commonly referred to as the Acts of the Apostles, they are going to reject the Spirit of God.
- That's their last opportunity. There is a three-fold rejection on the part of the nation of Israel.
- They rejected the Father. The Gospels, they rejected the Son. In the Book of Acts, they are going to reject the Spirit of God. And Stephen, as he is stoned to death in chapter 7, refers to their being stiff-necked and hard-hearted and in rejection of what the Spirit of God has revealed.
- Now, what we've got here is all three members of the triune Godhead revealing themselves individually, miraculously, undeniably, to the nation of Israel.
- And each time, they are met with rejection and unbelief. And what's going to be the story of the Book of Acts? It's that same old familiar tune.
- [16 : 07] They are going to reject. And it begins as early as chapter 4. But I want you to come, if you will, to Acts chapter 2. And I want to point out a couple of things before we get a little further on.
- Because this is all really super critical material. And if someone asks, you know, what difference does it make? What do we care? Why is this important? It is important because, in our understanding of the Acts of the Apostles, it will help us to know what a church is to be and how a church is to operate.
- And it will also reveal to us the plan and program of God and give us a heads up as regards the future. Because it is clearly spelled out here, as we shall see, as to what is coming upon this earth.
- And make no mistake about it, it is spelled out rather specifically. And it isn't left a lot to one's interpretation as much as it is just a matter of reading the text and see what it says and what else could it possibly mean.
- So, what I would like you to do is to realize, first of all, and I've touched on this in our last session, and by the way, where we are right now is really critical.
- [17 : 27] And if you were not here last Sunday and did not get the content last Sunday, I would really urge you to pick up a CD back there.
- They're free, and they're available on that back table. And it will have last Sunday's date on it. It will help you to understand the overall picture and the thrust plan and program of God.
- It's a very comprehensive kind of study that we undertook. And I realize we covered a great deal of material, but it is all very, very critical. Now, what I want you to understand is that what we have transpiring here, in the Acts of the Apostles, in particular, chapter 2, is nothing more than the fulfillment of a promise that was given by Joel, which we will see momentarily, back in chapter 2 in the Old Testament, one of the minor prophets.

And what is taking place here by way of miraculous manifestation, the speaking in tongues, etc., is all the result of a promise that was given. And not only that, but it was a promise that was also reinforced by what Jesus said right before he ascended for the disciples' very eyes.

In chapter 1, we noted that it is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath placed in his own power, but you, you twelve apostles, you shall receive power not many days hence when the Spirit of God comes upon you.

[19 : 06] And the Spirit of God will come upon them for a special supernatural equipping and ability. The Spirit of God will give them powers and wisdom and abilities that they did not have of their own.

They will be miraculously enabled by the Spirit of God. And perhaps one of the foremost aspects of that will be their indisputable bravery and the courage to go up against the power, the shakers, and the movers, stand their ground, insist upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and not buckle under the threat of intimidation or whatever else the establishment could throw at them.

This is what is going to change Peter from a cowering, fearful, shrinking, violet in the presence of those people in Pilate's courtyard when one of those little servant girls points to Peter and says, hey, I recognize you.

You've been with Jesus. You're one of his followers. Yes, you are. I know you. I don't know what you're talking about. I never saw the guy before in my life. Denied him three times and the last time he denied him with a curse.

What was Peter doing? All Peter was doing was yielding to peer pressure. That's all he was doing. He was just caving in. The pressure was too great.

[20 : 43] And when the Spirit of God comes on the day of Pentecost, Peter is going to become a new man. He's going to become an energized man by the Spirit of God that will enable him to stand and address this crowd and all of these people are shakers and movers and Peter is not intimidated.

He's not cowering. He's standing forth for the truth, delivering the message and it really made an impact. So the first thing I want you to note is the day of Pentecost that is arriving here is 50 days.

That's where the word Pentecost gets its name. P-E-N-T refers to five or 50. This is 50 days after Passover. Passover. And Passover in the Jewish economy, which by the way will be coming up pretty soon, corresponds to our resurrection.

I know everybody calls it Easter and I do too because it communicates. People know what you mean but Easter is not a good word. It's not a good term. And yet, traditionally, that's what we're stuck with so we use it to communicate.

But what it really is is Resurrection Sunday. And that's a lot more important than Easter which is taken from a pagan name. But the point that I'm making is that when the Passover occurred, that's when the sacrificial lamb was killed and eaten by each Jewish family.

[22 : 16] and it hearkens all the way back to the children of Israel coming out of the land of Egypt. And that became a permanent feast that was embedded in the mind and heart and psyche of the nation of Israel which, by the way, they continue to celebrate to this day.

Jews, at least, at least observant Jews continue to celebrate the Passover. And the word is taken from the fact that God told the Israelites that you are to take the blood of the lamb that you slay.

You take the blood of the lamb and you smear the blood on the lintels of each doorway and on the side posts.

And I'm going to send the death angel throughout the land. And when the death angel comes upon any house, if there is no blood applied, the death of the firstborn will be realized in that household.

What this meant, of course, was that in all of the Egyptian households there would be the death of the firstborn. But in all of the Israeli households, the death angel would see the blood applied and pass over that house and would not visit that house with death.

[24 : 01] Hence, the name Passover was born. and it is still utilized today and still recognized for the very same reason it goes all the way back to that fateful night after the tenth plague when there was great mourning throughout the land of Egypt because Pharaoh's own son was taken in death.

That was the straw that broke the camel's back and that's what prompted them to say, go, go, leave us. and then when they went then you know the story that Pharaoh recanted and changed his mind and pursued them and ultimately ended up with his whole army destroyed.

So, Jesus is the Passover lamb and Jesus was slain on the day of Passover. Passover. Then, three days later he was resurrected and he was on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights.

You might as well say six weeks he was revealing himself and we are told here in Acts 1 that not only did he appear in 1 Corinthians 15 the apostle Paul says not only did Jesus appear to the twelve apostles a number of times and he appeared to Thomas personally and he appeared to 500 people who saw him all at one time and then he says and he also appeared to me as one born out of due time.

The resurrected ascended Christ revealed himself to Saul of Tarsus when he was on the road to Damascus. In fact, he revealed himself in such a way that he was blinded for three days and three nights.

[26 : 02] So, what we have here in the book of Acts is not the introduction of something completely new in one sense as much as it was the completion or fulfilling of something that had already been promised and was expected.

And when Jesus told them in chapter 1 you are to remain in Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.

He didn't tell them how long it would be. They didn't know how long they were going to have to be there. They were in this upper room. And this is apparently the same upper room where Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper.

I suspect that it was the same room. And he didn't say how many days it would be but in effect it was about 10 days and that would have been the 50th day 40 plus 10 days that Jesus was alive plus 10 more days.

And you have Pentecost arriving. And Pentecost always arrived 50 days after the Passover. It had for hundreds and hundreds of years and it still does. So it isn't and this is an important thing to understand it isn't the arrival of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost that made that the day of Pentecost although that's what a lot of people think.

[27 : 26] What made this the day of Pentecost was the Jewish calendar because it was entrenched in the Jewish calendar at the same time every year.

it just so happens that this was the time when God was going to send the Spirit of God in a new kind of manifestation to empower and enable these people in a way that they had not been before.

So it is a kind of kickoff of something really new but it is also a fulfillment of something old that was promised hundreds and hundreds of years earlier.

if you will look at chapter 2 of the Acts when Peter begins to give an explanation and somebody thinks that well these people speaking in these languages and by the way when the Bible talks about tongues speaking in tongues that's confusing and misleading in itself.

what it means is languages. These were languages. This was not some kind of mysterious gibberish or gobbledygook.

[28 : 40] It was actual languages. They were able to speak in a language that they had never learned. It would be equivalent and don't worry it isn't going to happen of my breaking halfway in the sentence that I'm giving you right now and I start speaking perfect French or German or Dutch and if you belong to one of those languages and spoke it you would hear me speak in your language.

In fact it meant that when they spoke everyone was able to hear them in their own language. So in a sense as someone has pointed out it's almost a miracle of hearing as much as it is a miracle of speaking because how is it that we are able to hear them in our own language wherein we were born and it gives a long list of all of these people here and where they're from in chapter 1 and they're from all over the Mediterranean world.

They just had one thing in common just one thing and that was a religion. That's why they were there. Because they were Jews. And they were Jews who kept the Jewish feast of Pentecost.

Just like there were Jews who kept the Jewish feast of Passover. Now how do we know that these were all Jews? And I insist on this. I will not give one iota on this. They were all Jews.

Why do we insist that they were all Jews and how do we know that they were all Jews? Well the answer is very simple. If you were not a Jew you weren't even allowed on the premises. You were not allowed.

[30 : 20] There was a barrier erected there around the temple courtyard and there were signs posted on that barrier. Because if you were a Gentile, if you were not a Jew, you were allowed on the temple mount only up to where that barrier was.

And there was a sign posted on the barrier and it said to the effect that if you are not a child of Abraham, if you are not a son of the covenant, you dare not go beyond this point at the risk of death.

And they were very serious about it. And by the way, archaeologists, fascinating, archaeologists about 15 years dug up one of those signs. So, if you were not a Jew, you were not allowed beyond a certain place.

And that place of safety and refuge for you was called the court of the Gentiles. So, you were allowed to go into the court of the Gentiles, but you don't go beyond.

Because if you do, any Jew who recognized you as a Gentile was under obligation to fall upon you and kill you, right on the spot. In fact, when you read later in the book of Acts, the apostle Paul was accused by someone in the mob of bringing a Gentile into the court of Israel.

[31 : 56] Of course, he did not do that, and he would not have done that, but that was the ruse that was used. And, of course, when they said that, that set everything aflame because those are fighting words.

You see, so they have the court of the Gentiles. This is like a big bullseye. Okay? Think of it in terms like a big bullseye, and right in the very center of the bullseye is the Holy of Holies.

And then out beyond that is called the court of the priests. You had to be a priest or you could not be admitted to that area.

And then outside that, as the circle gets bigger around the bullseye, outside the court of the priests, there is the court of Israel. You had to be a male Jew and you could be in that court.

Then, outside that, there was one called the court of the women. If you were a woman, you were allowed in those parameters. But you could not go into the court of the priests and you could not go into the court of Israel because you were a woman.

[33 : 02] And then outside the court of the woman was the court of the Gentiles. And there was that barrier. This barrier is what Paul was talking about when he wrote to the Ephesians and said, you know that you were in times past Gentiles without hope, without God in this world.

and then he goes on and talks about Christ. And he says that Christ has broken down the barrier that separated us, that kept Jew from Gentile.

And he has made of the two, Jew and Gentile, into one new man. And that new man is the body of Christ, the spiritual body of Christ.

It is an organism. It is not actually a man, but it is depicted as a man. Because of the singularity and the oneness of it, it's depicted as one man.

And it means that Jew and Gentile are no longer at odds with each other. Now they are both members of the same body.

[34 : 26] this is dynamite stuff. This was never imagined. And by the way, you will not find this phenomena mentioned in the Old Testament at all.

This is new stuff. And you won't find it in the Gospels. It just isn't there. In the Gospels, Jew and Gentile and their distinctions are very clearly maintained.

That's why Jesus said, when you go, don't go to the Gentiles. Don't go to the Samaritans. Confine yourself to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He was recognizing that that barrier was in place.

And it was supposed to be in place. It is only with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ that the way of access is going to be opened to Jew and Gentile alike.

So there is no pecking order as it were. There is no superiority because in Christ we are all equals.

[35 : 34] Whether Jew, Gentile, whether male, female, whether bond or free, whether you're a slave or a free person, there is an equality, a levelness there in Christ that does not exist any place else.

It is a beautiful, beautiful thing. but you won't find it in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament it is Jew, Jew, Jew, and Jew.

In the Gospels it's the same way. When you come to the ministry of the Apostle Paul he is raised up specifically to be the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Well, what is that all about? that's completely new. Gentiles never had any apostles. Jews had twelve apostles. Gentiles didn't have any.

What was their status before God? Paul talks about that in Ephesians 2. He says you were without God without hope in this present world. That was your state.

[36 : 43] You were just outside. That was it. There was no way for you to be acceptable to God. no message had been declared to them. And when Paul was raised up, he was raised up to proclaim a message that was just so stunning, so startling, that for many people, upon their first hearing, they would say something like, that can't be true.

What? Declared righteous before God, justified before God, accepted before God, just by putting your trust and faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and substitute?

Why, that's too easy. You've got to do this, you've got to do that, you've got to be baptized, you've got to speak in tongues, you have to perform miracles, you have to, all the rest of the rigmaroles and hoops that men come up with that you have to jump through, and Paul says, no, none of that.

Man is justified by faith, and faith alone, plus nothing. And you know something? People still don't believe that today.

they still reject it today. Because there is ingrained in the heart of man an insatiable desire, an appetite, an insistence on being able to do something of himself that will make him acceptable to God.

[38 : 32] I can try being a better person. I can give up this habit or give up that habit, or turn over a new leaf, church, or start going to church, or blah, blah, blah, and do all of these things, and maybe that will do it.

None of that stuff will do it. None of that will do it. Because if it would do it, think about this, if it would do it, like Paul said, I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness comes by the law, by your keeping the law, by your being good, then Christ is dead in vain.

Why did Jesus come? Why was it essential that he come? Why didn't he just stay parked in heaven where he deserved to be, at the right hand of the Father?

Why did he come down here to this earth? It was to do for us what we could never do for ourselves, and it was all prompted by incredible, amazing, compassion, and love.

Wow! And people look at the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and insist on adding something to it.

[39 : 54] What an insult! What an insult! Jesus died for my sins to save me 90% of the way, but I have to contribute something.

No, you don't! And there's nothing you can contribute, and whatever you would contribute, trust me, is thoroughly contaminated. Only the pure, spotless, sinless Son of God and His efficacy can be placed to your account.

And when it is, God accepts you and receives you just like He does His own Son. Because you are in Christ.

Christ. And that's exactly what Paul means when he uses that phrase over and over and over again through his epistles. In Christ, in Christ, in Christ, in Christ. How do you get to be in Christ? You receive Christ as your Savior, and Christ comes to be in you, and you are in Him.

And it is salvation by grace through faith plus nothing. There's nothing you can do, there's nothing God requires of you, other than to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

[41 : 05] That's it. That is justification by faith. Now, before I leave you, I want to just take you to Acts chapter 2 and show you another thing that I think must be made known.

And we won't go back to Joel for the actual prophecy, but if you want to, you can at your leisure. If you happen to have a New American Standard Bible, you will see that the quote from Joel is all in capital letters, and that of course indicates that it's a quote from the Old Testament.

And I want you to notice something that is very, very important. When Peter stands to give an explanation for their speaking in languages that they had not learned, Peter says in verse 15, these men are not drunk as you suppose, for it is only the third hour that is.

It's nine o'clock in the morning. Nine o'clock in the morning, nobody is swacked at nine o'clock in the morning. And then he says, but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel.

In other words, he says, what you are seeing and hearing in these languages and this manifestation of miracles, this is what Joel was talking about. This is what Joel prophesied was going to come.

[42 : 25] And here it is. We are living this. We are experiencing this. We are in the midst of prophecy that is being fulfilled. And let me tell you, this was electrifying. This was exciting stuff.

These people are wow, really, no kidding, wow, yeah, I remember reading that in Joel. This is that, this is that. But, something is going to happen here.

for lack of a better term, let me just put it this way. And I don't want to read in the white space as something that isn't here, but I'm convinced that this is what was meant.

This is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel. This is what Joel was talking about and it is beginning now.

But when you realize what the full prophecy of Joel was, that's not being fulfilled. Read the text. I will pour forth of my spirit upon all mankind.

[43 : 45] Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions. and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my bond slaves, both men and women, I will in those days, now remember Joel is talking about this time here, and Joel was hundreds of years earlier, he's dead and gone off the scene.

I will in those days pour forth of my spirit, that's what's happening, and they shall prophesy, that's what's happening, and I will grant wonders in the sky above, now wait a minute, where are those?

Where are those? If you had been there on the day of Pentecost, you would have heard the miraculous languages being spoken, but as you looked heavenward, what's this?

I don't see anything, everything looks normal, the sun is there, and the blue sky, and a couple of clouds, and what the text says, I will grant wonders in the sky above.

Where are they? Where are signs on the earth beneath? What are they?

[45 : 01] Blood and fire and vapor of smoke, the sun shall be turned into darkness. What? The sun doesn't look dark to me, there it is!

Looks like it's just shining on Israel like it always does. There's nothing dark about it. And the moon and the blood, well, they may have to wait a while to see that not come to pass, but that's not happening before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come, and it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Hmm. Does any of this sound familiar? Well, I would like to take you to Matthew 24 for our closing thought, because it really ties in, I think, undeniably with this passage.

And this is in the Olivet Discourse, when our Lord is giving some prophecies, and it is remarkable what he says, and how it relates to what we just saw in Joel's prophecy in Acts chapter 2.

Verse 29 of Matthew 24, Jesus is speaking. This is shortly before his rest, and he says, immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.

[47 : 17] Well, certainly none of this happened in connection with Pentecost. So what we have in the prophecy of Joel is not a complete fulfillment of the prophecy, but a beginning of the fulfillment.

And what was it that brought everything to an abrupt halt and kept these other things from being fulfilled? What was it that interrupted this flow of content so that Joel's prophecy was not realized in its entirety?

And that's very easily understood when you continue reading the book of Acts, because we'll look at chapter 3 next week, which is very, very key, and no sooner does Peter deliver his second Pentecostal-like address, and promises the return of Christ, but what the establishment descends on that little band of apostles, orders their arrest, and the persecution begins.

And all that was prophesied by Joel is abruptly put on hold, because the nation was still abiding in unbelief regarding their Messiah.

And none of those things are going to come to pass until later. This is prophecy, and this is what's going to transpire immediately prior to Christ's return.

[48 : 53] And the Old Testament makes as much of it, or more, than what the New does, but the book of Revelation is rather filled with it, and we will be examining it, maybe not verse by verse, but subject by subject, and we'll see how the rest of Joel's prophecy is going to be fulfilled.

But right now, it isn't. It only got underway, and then God withdrew it all because of the unbelief of the nation of Israel. So, what has been Israel's problem from the get-go?

Unbelief. Unbelief. Let me ask you this. What is the world's problem today? Same thing.

Nothing's changed. Same thing. Unbelief. We simply will not take God at his word, because man mistakenly thinks he's got a better idea.

And despite the fact that the millennia that have rolled by has proved that we don't have a better idea, that God's idea is the only one that matters, and we need to get with the program.

[50 : 02] That's the message of the scriptures. I've got a few minutes for Q&A.; Anybody have anything to share? In the back, do we have a microphone? one? Okay, Terry?

Were proselytes allowed into the inner circle? Oh, yeah. Yeah, because a proselyte, there were different stages of what we would call Judaism. First of all, there was a Jew who was born a Jew.

He's a descendant of Abraham, so he's a legitimate Jew by birth. And then there are proselytes, and a proselyte is a Gentile who comes to embrace the one true God of Israel, and he submits himself to circumcision, and he is accepted into the household of Israel.

He is considered a bona fide Jew with all of the rights and privileges accruing thereto. He is just as if he were born a Jew.

And then there is the God-fearer. The God-fearer is a Gentile who embraces the concept of the one true God of Israel.

[51 : 29] And this is what Cornelius was. Cornelius in Acts chapter 10 was a Roman army officer, and he repudiated the multi-God concept that Rome embraced, and he came to the conclusion that there is only one God, and that that is the God of Israel.

And we are told that he gave alms to the people, and he supported the temple. But he was not a proselyte, obviously because he had not been circumcised, but he was regarded with favor by the Jewish people, but of course he would not have been permitted in the areas that we're talking about as a God-fearer.

Sometimes, and I think Paul addresses those men of Israel, men of Israel and you who are God-fearers. So he's including them too.

And it's a technical term that most people don't understand, but Cornelius was a God-fearer, and there are some others too. Other comments or questions? I'm excited about what's coming up in Chapter 3 because it will be kind of climactic to what we're talking about this morning, and I'm still embarrassed to this day to have to admit that I had been a believer for over 15 years before I came to appreciate these truths that we're talking about now, and that is a shame because they are so key and so critical, and what you're going to see, I trust, at least this was my intention, as we move on through this theme of the Jewish solution to the world's problems, what you are going to see is going to enable you to connect more and more dots, to put more and more things together.

that's the effect that it has had for me. There have been so many things that were just a real wake-up call for me. Oh, man, that's why now this makes sense.

[53 : 40] Now I understand that. This was a complete puzzle before. It didn't make any sense. Now it fits the picture perfectly. And there are going to be a lot of aha moments ahead of us.

And they've excited me, and I think they'll excite you too. Would you stand, please? Father, despite what we know and what we have learned, we have to humbly admit that there is so much that escapes us that we don't understand and we don't see clearly.

But we want to. And we know you want us to. So we want to make ourselves available to you for your enlightenment, for your instruction. We do not want to lean on the arm of flesh because we know what that will get us.

We want to be a people of the book, Bereans, who search the scriptures to see whether these things are so. Thank you for the truth that you've been pleased to reveal.

If anything has been uttered of the flesh or it was untrue, we pray that it will pass away and come to naught. What has been true, may it be sanctified and sealed to our hearts to be a pathway for additional truth.

[54 : 54] We pray in Christ's name. Amen.