

W462D_Finish_Work_of_Christ_34.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording by In the Chapel of the Open Book. At the dinner hour meeting under the covering title, the finished work. And we are, for the time being, concentrating our attention upon the acts of the Apostles and its place in the development of that great work that is yet to be finished. We were looking at the day of Pentecost. We learned that there were Jews, only Jews out of every nation under heaven. There wasn't a single gentile there, except if they had been a proselyte. And. We ask the question, where do we see those of the Gentiles having no descent from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Being defined in the New Testament as aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise and having no hope. Without God in the world. Where do we come in? Surely that's a question you should say to me, and I should say to you, it's worth canvassing. So I ask your attention while we look at the acts of the apostles. Now, in these brief moments, the acts of the apostles as a whole, what do you say? 28 chapters. What are we going to do with it? Well, it so happens that God has threaded the 28 chapters upon us, as it were, a thread, and He's given us a little sort of key word. On this blackboard that you have in front of you and those of you who are listening in the tape recording, you can easily do this with a sheet of paper.

[00:01:34] At the beginning of one side of the sheet of paper or the blackboard. I've got chapters three and four. Chapters three and four and Salvation sent to the Jew. Is the review of the book. At the board we have Chapter 13 Salvation Set Jew and Gentile at the end. The last Chapter 28 Salvation Sent to the Gentiles. Now, is that a fiction or is it a fact? If it's a fact, I pass it on to you. And if it's in your Bible, your responsibility begins now to take heed to it. So shall we? Without further ado, make sure of these features. Chapter three of the Acts of the Apostles records a miracle. And miracles are called signs. It was not merely an act of compassion. This was a miracle. That was an acted parable. It was something that was going to be done to exhibit to the people of Israel what was moving. So for the moment, we'll have to just turn to chapter four to get the explanation. We'll come back to this again if we want details later. Chapter four. Verse nine. If we this day be examined of the good deed done unto the impotent man by what means he is made whole. You see, now that's a question we're asking. So we're going to get the answer. Be it known unto you all and to all the people of Israel that by the

name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him, do this man stand here before you whole.

[00:03:15] This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Now, the point that I want you to remember is this that the word hole in verse nine, the verse, the word hole is the Greek word for salvation. The verb ζο. And the word saved in verse 12 is the same word whereby we must be saved. And the word salvation in verse 12, the word salvation is the thought that this is the healing of this people. I don't mean physical healing. Not for the moment. Let us see what the apostle says again, because the way he's worded it. Verse 12. Neither is there the healing. You see, he's pointing to the impotent man who has just been healed. And he says, You're all of a dude are over that list of what happened to him and why he's been raised beneath it all. Forget him for a moment. Think of yourself as a people. Neither is there. The healing. That's the word salvation in any other. And the thee is there. Well, I cannot stop on that for a moment because I want to get the other word in chapter three to go back on our story.

[00:04:44] After the actual miracle has taken place, the apostle Peter draws his inferences and his exaltation, starting with verse 19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the Heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. You remember in chapter one, they came to him and said, Lord, wilt thou? At this time that is verse six. Wilt thou this time restore again the kingdom to Israel. He didn't rebuke them and say, Now don't talk about the kingdom. Talk about the church. He simply said, It's not for you to know the times. Now, it's given a note here that if this people would only repent. That was the key thought when he preached the gospel of the kingdom in Matthew. When John the Baptist preached the Gospel of the Kingdom in Matthew. Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And this people refuse their king and put him on a cross with a very title over his head. Now, they were sent to to Jerusalem and he reminds them you crucified him.

[00:06:02] But God has given you the second opportunity. Repent ye, therefore. Verse verse 19. And then he says at the end of the chapter, verse 25. Ye are the children of the prophets. I'm just asking you, is that a definition concerning anyone in this room now? Are you the children of the prophets or are you poor, outside, alienated gentiles having no covenant relationship with God at all? You try to answer that if you haven't got the answer already in your heart. But this people understood what he meant. He said, Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers or God made no covenant with my fathers. In fact, as I know my fathers were. I don't know whether you do. I don't know how far you go back in your pedigree. It doesn't matter. There's no indication that God ever entered into a covenant with your fathers or mine. This is a specific people. A saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Now, then, unto you first God, having raised up his son, Jesus sent him to bless you. In turning away every one of you from his iniquities unto you first. You remember the writing of the Epistle to the Romans. The Gospel was preached to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Unto you first. So the day of Pentecost wasn't the calling of the Gentile.

[00:07:28] It was giving the children of Israel an opportunity to enter into their covenant relationship and become a kingdom on the earth through which all the Gentiles would be blessed. Did it take place? You know it didn't. They had the opportunity and they resented it and they turned away. Well, now we'll go to the middle section, chapter 13. Chapter 13. If I have to hurry over these things, friends, you know that it's merely because we've got limited time and I'm hoping that you have is interest enough to follow without too much distress. Now, the Apostle Paul, not Peter speaking out. We must go back and consider his conversion and condition presently. The apostle Paul now takes over in the Acts of the Apostles. Peter goes out after this practically. He comes on the scene in chapter 15 and then is heard No more in the acts of the Apostles. The Apostle Paul takes the whole thing over or God takes it over. Now he stands up in this synagogue, goes through the history of the people of Israel. And now he says in verse 26, focusing the attention upon this particular expression. Men and brethren. Children are the stock of Abraham. So he's still speaking to Jews. Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and he says men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham. But he adds this, and whosoever among you fear it, God to you is the word of this salvation sent.

[00:09:00] You know the two words. Now, is this in scripture or is it my idea? It's in Scripture. It looks as though it's there on purpose. So now we have Jew and Gentile together being invited to repent and believe and that they were Gentiles. You can see by looking at the end of this chapter where we have. Verse 46. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said it was necessary that the Word of God should first picking it up again from the third chapter. First had been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life. Lo we turn to the Gentiles. So here in Acts 13, the movement is beginning. He's turning to the Gentiles, and the people of Israel are gradually going off the scene. He doesn't leave them. Oh, no. You've only got to turn the pages. And five in the succeeding chapters that he goes to the synagogue at Thessalonica, he goes to the synagogue here. But in the 19th chapter, the synagogue witness ends and Paul is on the verge of becoming a prisoner. And that's another important feature. So will you come to the last chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the 28th chapter, where we once more get these key words, Salvation said. The Apostle Paul was very, very concerned to meet the saints of the church at Rome.

[00:10:26] But will you read this 28th chapter? You discover verse 17. It came to pass that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together. Instead of going to the church at Rome and seeing all the brethren there, he still went to his old ancient people. This is the very last opportunity that Israel got until they look upon him whom they pierced, that they will do one day. In fact, the very near future. I don't know. But here is the last opportunity they have to hear this invitation. It came to pass that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together and when they were come together, he said unto them, men and brethren, though I have done nothing, committed nothing against the people or the customs of our fathers. Yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem unto the hands of the Romans. And because of time verse 20, for the hope of Israel, I am bound with this chain. So right to the last chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the hope of Israel was possible. But the hope of Israel ceases at the end of Acts 28 and is not picked up again until the second coming of Christ. This is critical. So they appoint him a day. If you look at verse 23 and when they had appointed him a day. There came many to him into his lodging, to whom he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets from morning till evening.

[00:12:02] Will you look at the last two verses? And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house. You see, they appointed him a day and they came to his lodging. Here we have two years now occupied in his own hired house and received all that came in unto him, preaching the Kingdom of God. But not a word about Jesus. Not a word about Moses. You see, this is Scripture. I'm not asking you to notice I didn't write the Acts of the Apostles friends. Neither did you. This is written for our guidance if we can only believe these are words indicated and dictated by the Spirit of God. So there's an omission. It's very, very rare that Paul calls our savior Jesus. Mostly he gives him his full title, The Lord Jesus Christ. But when he was speaking to the Jews, it was Jesus out of the law of Moses. Now this new ministry is the Lord Jesus Christ. Why doesn't he quote Moses? Why doesn't he quote the Old Testament? Well, he says, I'm the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. And God in that capacity has revealed to me the mystery which was hidden in God and never opened up until this people proved to be an unrepentant. And now the salvation of God.

[00:13:15] So we're going to get the words sent again in verse. We'll look at verse 26 now. Go unto these people saying, Hear ye shall, hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand. Seeing ye shall see and not perceive For the heart of this people is waxed gross and their ears are dull of hearing and their eyes are they closed? Lest I should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and should and should be converted. And I should. He is the word coming back again. Heal them. See, neither is there the healing in any other. He is this play upon the word healing, which is the word for salvation in the original. Be it known, therefore, unto you. That the salvation of God. That's what we're after, isn't it? Is sent unto the Gentiles. And the table here. Now. That's where we come in, friends. We do not come in the acts of the apostles at Pentecost. We do not come to the apostles at X13. We come in at the Acts of the Apostles when all hope seems to be shut down. And then God revealed the fact that he wasn't taken by surprise. So we sang a hymn at the beginning of this meeting, and that hymn is the charter of the Church of the present dispensation chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Before Abraham was mentioned, before Isaac was known, but kept a secret so that when the God of this world had put a spoke in the wheel of God's purpose and apparently felt if I could stop Israel repenting or stop the Lord's work, then God revealed he was the only wise God and takes these folk, any of them, from the evil one down to his emissaries in their own craftiness.

[00:15:05] You'll sympathize with me having to rush through these things, and I sympathize with you having to sit through them. But if you'll give me permission week by week, just to take step by step, I hope that this Word of God will be built up in front of your eyes so that it will not be listening to somebodies opinions about it. But you'll be have to sit down and face this fact. Either I believe what God says or I better not go to those meetings. But if something's going to happen to me, if I've any of all this because it's so contrary to so many things that we are taught, either by preachers or by books or by meetings or by sitting ins, we're criticizing nobody by name. We're only saying may God give us grace to see when our eyes are opened. And conscience is to say, if that's what God says, let me stand there. But after all, that is the position, which means triumph and blessing now and glory in the future, undimmed by unfaithfulness.