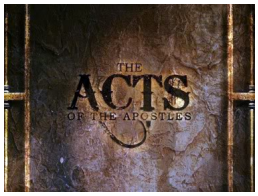

Every true messenger of The LORD Jesus Christ, is a faithful steward of the Mystery of God. 1 Corinthians 4:1-4. Many zealous, sincere, men and women, although they love the LORD, are unskillful in the Word of Righteousness, being babes, giving out the milk of the Word, but NOT the strong meat that belongeth to those who are perfect. Hebrews 5:12-6:2, and Ephesians 4:13-14. Therefore, with this in mind, we will explore and learn the meat of the Word of God contained in the Book of Acts.

"***And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.*** " (John 3:14).

"Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But He answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." (Matthew 12:38-41).

We have in these verses the plain statements of the Son of God; that He must be lifted up on the cross of Calvary; that He must remain in Joseph's tomb for three days and three nights. These were '**musts.**' The Gospel by which we are saved is stated in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5: ***"Chr ist died for our sins, ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES, He was buried, and He was raised the third day according to the Scriptures.***
" If our LORD was not raised from the dead, all our preaching and faith and good works are in vain, and we have NO hope. So it was in fulfillment of Old Testament Prophecy that Christ was lifted up, and was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the big fish. (Acts 13:29-30). Strange language do we read in John 12:37-41, "

though He (Christ) had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him...Therefore, they could not believe."

The great signs God Performed by Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of Israel before He was lifted up and before He went to Joseph's tomb (Acts 2:22, John 20:30-31) should have caused Israel to repent at the preaching of Christ as the men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, for Christ was greater than Jonah, and the Israelites were God's chosen people. Refusing to repent before Calvary was a serious matter. But Christ had to die as He died and when He died. (Hebrews 2:9; Acts 4:25-28; Acts 2:23; Acts 3:18; Acts 13:29-30; Matthew 26:24; Luke 24:25-26; Luke 24:46; and. Matthew 21:42). Therefore, Israel's sin against the Son of man, lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent, could be forgiven (Matthew 12:30-32; Luke 23:34, and Acts 3:18).

But for Israel it was far more serious when they rejected the witness of the 12 Apostles and that of the Holy Spirit AFTER Christ came from the heart of the earth as Jonah came from the belly of the fish. (Acts 5:29-32). Undoubtedly that great miracle of Jonah in the fish for three days and three nights caused the men of Nineveh to repent. The great miracle, or sign of Matthew 12:40, referred to by the Apostle Peter in Acts 3:15 and Acts 5:31-32, should have caused Israel to grasp the meaning of the '***THEREFORE***' in Acts 3:19, when Peter said, "***Repent 'THEREFORE***'." BUT, what happened? They put Peter in jail, stoned Stephen to death, and continued in their rejection and rebellion until God's wrath unto the uttermost came upon them. (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16).

FACTS TO UNDERSTAND THE BOOK OF ACTS

Every true messenger of Christ is a faithful steward of the Mystery of God. (1 Corinthians 4:1-4). Many zealous, sincere men and women, although they love the LORD, are unskillful in the Word of Righteousness, being babes, giving out the milk of the Word, but NOT the strong meat that belongeth to those who are perfect. (Hebrews 5:12-6:2, and Ephesians 4:13-14). Therefore, with this in mind, we begin this new multipart series of messages, through which we will explore and learn the meat of God's Word contained in the Book of Acts.

Every faithful steward of the Mystery of God knows that 'ISRAEL' and 'CIRCUMCISION' are two of the keys to the Scriptures.

Now, inasmuch as we find the word ‘ISRAEL’ in the Book of Acts about **20** times and the word ‘JEW’ or ‘JEWS’ about
80
times, and the word ‘CHRISTIAN’
1
time and ‘CHRISTIANS’
1
time, and inasmuch as Peter said, ‘TO THE JEWS FIRST’ in Acts 3:26, and Paul, about
12
years later said, ‘TO THE JEWS FIRST’ (Acts 13:46), perhaps we should approach the study of Acts with the words of Christ to the Greek in mind, “
let the children (Israel) FIRST be filled.
” (Mark 7:27). But of course, if we do not understand the
Dispensational
place of the Book of Acts, we surely wonder why, some twelve or thirteen years after Christ said to Israel, “
your house is left unto you desolate
” in Matthew 23:38, the Apostle Paul should warn Israel to ‘
BEWARE
’ in Acts 13:40, and then say ‘
TO THE JEWS FIRST
.’ in Acts 13:46. Why some eight years after Christ's unmerciful denunciation of Israel in Matthew 23:31-40, was it NOT lawful for Peter to go to Gentiles seen in Acts 10:28? Why did the Jewish messengers preach to no one but Jews only as seen in Acts 11:19? Why were the Apostles and elders in Judea displeased when Peter had preached to the household of Cornelius? (Acts 11:1-5). When the Apostle Paul, some years later, wrote ‘
TO THE JEW FIRST
,’ in Romans 1:16, he was not talking of the
‘then’ present
, but of the ‘
then’ past
; for in that same Epistle to the Romans he wrote that there was no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles, as we read in Romans 3:22 and Romans 10:12, and that God had set Israel aside, until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. (Romans 11:25). Now, just think of the blunder of those who preach today ‘
to the Jew first
’ after reading Romans 11:7-11 and Acts 28:25-28!

In Jeremiah 31:35-36 we read that, "***when there shall no more be a sun, and stars and the moon, there shall no more be a nation Israel.*** " So when you behold the planets, keep your eyes on Israel. Israel is now the TAIL of Deuteronomy 28:44; but Israel will yet be the HEAD of Deuteronomy 28:13. Spiritually speaking, the Christian Gentiles are rich because Israel, during this parenthetical period, (The Age of of Grace, the Dispensation of the Mystery), is poor. (Romans 11:12, and Romans 11:30).

In Acts 3:12-18, the Apostle Peter plainly told Israel of their '**PARDONABLE**' sin, their sin against the Son of man, the Prophet like unto Moses. (Acts 3:22). In Acts 7:51-60 Stephen plainly told Israel of their '
PARDONABLE
' sin, against the Son of man, their '
UNPARDONABLE
' sin against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:30-32; Acts 5:30-31), and concerning Christ the Prophet like unto Moses. (Acts 7:37). Then, Israel said, in a sense, to Stephen, concerning the certain Nobleman of Luke 19:14, "
we will not have THIS MAN to reign over us
."

In Isaiah 5:7 we read that '***the VINEYARD OF THE LORD IS THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.***' Read the other PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD in Matthew 21:33-46. Now, follow me here, then read with these two Parables in Isaiah and Matthew, Stephen's great message to Israel in Acts 7, Paul's great message to Israel in Acts 13:16-46. And with these four messages I want you to read Psalm 78, and Psalm 106. ONCE, you do this, you will have a real knowledge of the general history of Israel, and you will understand better the question Christ put to Israel, in Isaiah 5:4, "
what could have been done more to MY VINEYARD (ISRAEL), that I have not done in it?
" Then read Romans 9:29-33, and 11:1-11, and answer this most thought provoking, and most important question, "
how long was Israel's 'ALL-DAY-LONG,
' referred to in Romans 10:21?" God stretched forth His hands to Israel 'ALL-DAY-LONG.'

Again as we begin to study Acts we should remember the words of the disciples of Christ after His resurrection, "***we trusted it had been Christ Which should have redeemed Israel***" (Luke 24:21), and the question of his apostles, in Acts 1:6, "
wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?
" And with these quotations remember Matthew 10:23, that Christ's apostles may not go over the cities of Israel before the Son of man come: and Matthew 19:27-28, that Christ promised the twelve apostles that they would sit on twelve thrones and judge Israel. With these thoughts, keep in mind, that the Gospel of Matthew, we have from the best authorities, was written within six years after the death of the LORD Jesus Christ, before Cornelius, the first Gentile was saved, because at the time it was not lawful for Matthew or any of his fellow apostles to go to Gentiles. (Acts 10:28). Matthew wrote after Saul (Paul) was converted, after Saul went in and out among the apostles in Jerusalem. (Acts 9:27-28). At that time Saul knew no more about Ephesians 3:9 than did Matthew.
The Mystery had not yet been revealed! This is a Very Important point!

From these facts, even the babe in Christ should know that the Lord Jesus revealed NOTHING of the Dispensation of the Mystery (Ephesians 3:9), nothing of the Dispensation of the Grace of God (Ephesians 3:1-8), and nothing of the program of Romans 11:30-31 to His apostles, when right before His ascension He spoke of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3). Acts 11:18 should convince even the most skeptical of this fact.

"Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" Acts 16:31, while there is still time!

So There You Have it!

Spread this message to everyone you know, far and wide. **The time is short**

Grace be to you and peace, from God: our Father, and The LORD Jesus Christ.

In The LORD Jesus Christ,
The Lion and Lamb Ministry

Pastor David Picos, D.D.
Minister and Ambassador for Christ in the Ministry of Reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-20)

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