



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 26
Issue 629

When Was Israel as a Nation Set Aside?

or

Where Is the Dispensational Boundary?

by — John H. Kessler (1914-1963)
with extensive citations from others

The last record in the Bible of the judgment of Isaiah 6 being pronounced is at the close of the Acts period, Acts 28:25-27. During the first part of the Acts, we find that the Word was preached to the Jews only (Acts 11:19). When the Lord Jesus Christ called the Apostle Paul, the Word was preached to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles (Acts 9:20; 13:14, 42, 46; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:4, 19, 26; 19:8). After Paul pronounced Isaiah's judgment, the Salvation of God was sent to the Gentiles (Acts 28:28).

The message preached to Cornelius was "that Word which God sent unto the children of Israel" (Acts 10:36). Gentiles who believed the Word which God sent unto the children of Israel were grafted into a good olive tree (Romans 11:24). These Gentiles became partakers of Israel's "spiritual things" (Romans 15:27).¹ They became the "Israel of God" (Galatians

6:16), and "Abraham's seed" (Galatians 3:29). Abraham was their father (Romans 4:16), and Jerusalem, which is above, became their mother (Galatians 4:26). Their future sphere of blessing was Abrahamic and they would sit down with him in the Kingdom of Heaven (Galatians 3:9, 14; Matthew 8:11).

However, this all changed after the close of the Acts period. The Apostle Paul no longer was the prisoner for "the Hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20) but he was the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:1). Paul has a message which brings us into a relationship which was not made known during the Acts period. We are blessed with "all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). We as members of the Church² which is Christ's ►

– A New Administration at the Close of Acts – Part 1, Adlai Loudy (Part 1: [Bible Student's Notebook #562](#); Part 2: [Bible Student's Notebook #563](#)).

- [Editor:] For a look at the subject of Paul's priestly ministry, see:
 - Paul's Priestly Ministry, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #532](#);
 - The Priestly Ministry of Paul, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #532](#);
 - Onward and Upward: Paul's Priestly Ministry Transitioning Toward His Celestial, Vladimir Gelesnoff, [Bible Student's Notebook #509](#);
 - The Administrations, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #497](#);
 - The Readjustment Administration, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #492](#);
 - The Divine Calendar, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #434](#);

- [Editor:] The Greek word often translated as "church" in most English versions is ἐκκλησία (*ekklēsia*, or *ecclesia*). The word is a compound word meaning "called-out" (*ek* = "out"; *kaleō* = "called"). The *ecclesia* is God's "called-out" ones. The *ecclesia* is not a building or denomination; not a meeting, or doctrinal creed; it is not somewhere we go, or something we do, it is who we as believers are. For more information see:
 - The Outsiders, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (on order form under author);
 - The "Ecclesias" (Churches) of the Scriptures, Adlai Loudy (on order form under Facsimiles).

When Was Israel as a Nation Set Aside?5449
Our Mailbox.....5456



Body, are now seated together in the heavenlies in Christ (Ephesians 2:6). This was not made known until the testimony to Israel as a nation ceased after the close of the Acts period. The Lord makes known this precious truth through the Apostle Paul, who was made a minister of Christ's Body (Colossians 1:24-25).³

Charles H. Welch, an eminent English Bible teacher, in his book, *Things Most Surely Believed*, says,

Pentecost, with its accompanying miracles, and the church of the Acts period, are to be differentiated from the church of the Dispensation of the Mystery. The "signs following" (Mark 16:20) belonged to that period when the people of Israel still remained before God as a "people." In Acts 28 they were set aside for the time being; with them went all that pertained to Pentecost. Tongues, healings, and such gifts (Acts 2:16, 33; 4:30; Hebrews 2:3-4; I Corinthians 12:28; 14:21-22) have no place in the sphere of the church of the One Body (II Timothy 4:20; I Timothy 5:23).

In Acts 2 we find Jews, gathered out of every nation, at Jerusalem for this feast. No Gentile would or could attend it unless he was already a proselyte. Peter declared that the day of Pentecost ful-

fills the prophecy of Joel 2:28-29 and links up the sevenfold outpouring of spiritual gifts with the now postponed sevenfold wonders in heaven and earth that belong to the day of the Lord and the Book of the Revelation.

Addressing "men of Judea," "Dwellers at Jerusalem," "men of Israel" and "all the house of Israel," he declares that in the capacity of the Seed of David and the Occupant of his throne, the risen Christ has shed forth "this" which they see and hear. One has only to consider Peter's attitude upon being told to go to Cornelius (Acts 10), or the amazement of the church in Acts 11, to be sure that no church began at Pentecost⁴ in which Jew and Gentile were included on equal terms.

Without following the theme of the Acts step by step, we take it up again in the last chapter. There the conditions of Mark 16:15-20 are in full force; "the hope of Israel" still holds good (Acts 28:20), the Jew is still first (:17), and not until Israel in Rome reject the Messiah, as Israel in the land had done, do we read the words,

The Salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles and they will hear it (Acts 28:28).

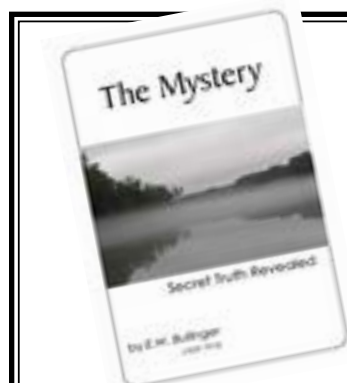
The prison ministry of Paul follows, and in this ministry miraculous healings cease. Paul, who previously cured disease by a handkerchief (Acts 19:12), now sends a prescription (I Timothy 5:23).

3. [Editor:] For more information about "the Mystery" and its "Secret Administration," see:

- *What Is the Mystery?*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #516](#);
- *The Present Secret Administration*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #575](#);
- *A New Administration at the Close of Acts*, Adlai Loudy, Part 1 – [Bible Student's Notebook #562](#); Part 2 – [Bible Student's Notebook #563](#);
- *The Pentecost, Readjustment & Secret Administrations*, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #497](#).

4. [Editor:] For more information, see:

- *Did the Body of Christ Begin at Pentecost?*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #1](#);
- *[14 Reasons Why] Pentecost Was Not the Beginning of the Body of Christ*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., *Daily Goodies* [book], August 28 (see order form).



Mystery, The: Secret Truth Revealed

by — E.W. Bullinger

There is no subject of greater importance to the Church of God than that which, in the New Testament, is called "The Mystery." Five Mysteries of the New Testament are carefully considered, with significance being placed on the "Great" secret concerning "the Body of Christ."

68 pp, PB

See order form.

www.EWBullinger.com

Yet he retains his faith to the end (II Timothy 4:7).

Miracles⁵ had a message for Israel and all who looked for the Messiah (Matthew 11:2-6). They were given to the Gentile churches during the Acts to provoke Israel to jealousy, if possible (Romans 10:19; 11:11). When the olive tree was cut down in Acts 28, the Gentile branches could no longer stand. A new movement from God was absolutely necessary to meet the new circumstances, and that new movement was the revelation of the present Dispensation of the Mystery, in which “the hope of Israel” and Pentecostal conditions have no place.

The company of believers called during this dispensation is called the church which is His Body, of which Christ is the Head. Its sphere of blessing, its constitution, and its hope are unique, and neither the promise to Abraham, nor the characteristics of the Pentecostal church belong in any way to this new calling.

Israel’s hope (Acts 28:20) and Israel’s signs (28:1-9) did not cease with Matthew 28 or Acts 2 but remained to the end of the Acts. Until then, the Gentile believer had been but a wild olive [branch] grafted into the stock of Israel. In Acts 28 the Israelite stock is cut down; the axe, so long laid to the root of tree, does its work. A new dispensation with new terms is ushered in – the Dispensation of the Grace of God for the Gentiles committed to Paul the prisoner of the Lord (Ephesians 3:1).

Dr. W. Graham Scroggie, in his book *The Acts of the Apostles*, comments on Acts 28, saying that :25-29,

5. [Editor:] For more information on sign gifts, see:
- *Tongues, Signs and Visions: Not God’s Order for Today*, A.E. Bishop, [Bible Student’s Notebook #416](#);
 - *Sign Gifts: For Another People and Another Time*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. & André Sneidar, [Bible Student’s Notebook #417](#);
 - *The Signs of Paul’s Early Ministry*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student’s Notebook #511](#);
 - *Miraculous Demonstrations: Watch Out!*, Richard Jordan, [Bible Student’s Notebook #430](#);
 - *Paul and His Early Healing Ministry*, A. E. Knoch [Bible Student’s Notebook #527](#);
 - *Israel’s Signs*, John LaVier, [Bible Student’s Notebook #106](#);
 - *To What Do the Signs Point?*, Richard Jordan, [Bible Student’s Notebook #156](#).

Mark a momentous crisis. Judaism has now fallen! A long dispensation here ends.

J. Eustace Mills, Bible teacher of Eastbourne, England, in his booklet, *Before Acts 28:28 and After*, says,

Before Acts 28:28, Israel was urged to “turn again” in order that God might “send the Christ” unto them “even Jesus” (3:12, 21, RV).

But at Acts 28:28 Israel’s hope of the Lord’s return was deferred, for Paul declared, in the words of Isaiah, that they were too blind to fulfill the required condition “turn again” (28:25, 27, R.V.).

Before Acts 28:28, Paul was bound for the Hope of Israel (28:20).

But after Acts 28:28 he became a prisoner for the Gentiles, in connection with the revelation of “the Mystery” given to him for them (Ephesians 3:1-3).

Before Acts 28:28, a calling was in view ►



Pagan Christianity: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices

by — Frank Viola & George Barna
293 pp, PB (*See order form.*)

Have you ever wondered why Christians do what they do for “church” every Sunday morning? Have you ever asked yourself any of the following questions: Why do folks “dress up” for “church”? Why does the “pastor” preach a sermon every Sunday? Why are there pulpits and pews? Why “church” buildings, steeples, choirs and seminaries? Where did all of these things come from?

This book proposes that what Christians do in “churches” has no root in the Scriptures! It rather has its origin in pagan culture. As shocking as that sounds, the authors prove their points by documenting every claim they make.

Fully footnoted, *Pagan Christianity* documents the story of modern church practices. If you are content with status quo “churchianity,” then you will not want to read this book. It is reserved for those who are ready to embark on an eye-opening venture that challenges every aspect of their church experience.

whose blessings are associated with a time “**from** the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34).

But after Acts 28:28, a calling came in view whose blessings are associated with a time “**before** the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:3-4).

Dr. A.C. Gaebelein, in his book on *Matthew*, says,

In the last chapter of Acts, when Israel's apostasy and unbelief is fully established, Paul speaks then to the assembled Jews and adds,

Be it known therefore unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles and they will hear.

The testimony which was begun by the Apostles up to the time when Israel rejected once more the offers of mercy from the risen Lord, when He was still waiting for their repentance as a nation, is an unfinished testimony. After that offer was again rejected the great parenthesis, the church age, began, and during this age (which is not reckoned in the Old Testament) there is no more Jewish testimony of the Kingdom of the Heavens. Israel nationally is set aside.

Sir Robert Anderson, in his book, *The Silence of God*, says,

The Pentecostal Church, which was based upon the testimony, was intensely and altogether Jewish.

The Pentecostal dispensation is brought to a close by the promulgation of the solemn decree,

The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles (Acts 28:28).

When these, the Jews of Rome, refused the proffered *mercy*, his mission to his nation was at an end,⁶ and for the first time separating himself from them, he exclaimed,

Well spake the Holy Ghost through Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers.

He went on to repeat the words which our Lord Himself had used at that kindred crisis of His ministry when the nation had openly rejected Him (Acts 28:25 RV; Matthew 13:13).

Acts, as a whole, is the record of a temporary and transitional dispensation in which blessing was again offered to the Jew and again rejected.

Not until the testimony had been rejected by the favored people did the Word go forth,

The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it (Acts 28:17, 23, 28).

6. [Editor:] Paul had an early ministry (*diakonia*; G1248) to the members of the nations (Romans 11:13, cf. Galatians 2:7, II Corinthians 4:1) which purpose was to provoke Israel to emulation (Romans 11:14). It was a ministry of grace (Acts 20:24), spirit (over against death; II Corinthians 3:8), righteousness (over against condemnation: 9), and conciliation (5:18).



Dabhar Translation: The Writ of the New Testament

The *Dabhar* (pronounced “Davar”), reprinted by permission exclusively for our students, was a work over 40 years in the making. First released in 2005, this is a hyper-literal concordant translation of the Greek Scriptures into English.

478 pp., PB/HC/spiral

See order form.

Dr. W.H. Griffith Thomas, in connection with Charles H. Welch's booklet, *United, Yet Divided*, wrote the following in the February, 1920, number of *The Evangelical Christian* of Toronto, Canada:

This booklet deals with the important subject of Dispensational Teaching and shows the vital necessity and spiritual importance of "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." This fundamental principle is clearly and convincingly set forth and deserves the thorough and constant attention of all Bible students. The author's application of the principle is that the dispensational boundary is not Pentecost, but Acts 28:17-28. While he believes "a" church began at Pentecost, "the" church which is Christ's Body did not begin until the Jewish rejection of the Gospel recorded in Acts 28 took place; therefore, that chapter is the boundary line.

The author has a good deal to say for his position and, while it may not be possible for all Bible students to accept it, the arguments by which it is supported are more weighty than many have been accustomed to think. Thus Mr. Welch calls special attention to the miraculous element promised in Mark 16:15-16 and pertinently asks whether these signs followed our faith and, if they have not, whether some change of dispensation has not come in.

Later Thomas, in *The Sunday School Times*, August, 1922, also wrote the following in his review of Mr.

Welch's booklet, *Far Above All*:

A very suggestive booklet calling especial attention to the distinctive ministry of Paul after Israel as a nation had been set aside. The writer compels thought when he does not command agreement, and all serious Bible students will do well to give this small and valuable booklet their most earnest and thorough attention. They will probably be surprised to find a number of things which they have never seen before and will then be compelled to ask whether or not they are true.

Dr. George Douglas, Bible teacher of Cardiff, Wales, in an article published in *Moody Bible Institute Monthly* July, 1936, says,

Only as we recognize and understand the place which Israel holds in the divine scheme of revelation can we read and understand aright the book of Acts.

Though Israel has been set aside, it is not done so forever, and the present dispensation in its earthly aspect is to continue only until the time comes when the covenant people shall again be restored to divine favor (Romans 9:10-11).

It is a common error to assume that the rejection and crucifixion of Christ was the historical crisis at which Israel was set aside. Under the influence of this erroneous conception, people are apt to ►



88 pp., PB,

See order form.

Nothing Will Be Lost! The Truth About God's Good News

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Is the Creator wasteful? Has He brought His creation into existence just to abandon it to a "Christless eternity"? No! God is the true Savior of His Own creation, and nothing will be lost. The realization of this truth about the true nature of our Father will completely change the way we look at Him and everyone around us.

This is an abridgement of the larger work *The Salvation of All*. It is designed as a give-away edition, with quantity pricing available.

"*Nothing Will be Lost* was one of the most edifying studies I have read in a very long time. It brings real joy to my heart when I see someone stand for the truth of Christ's total victory over sin. We do not have a weak Savior Who hopes to save only a few; rather, we have a Savior Who saves all!" — NY

read the rest of the New Testament as though it had no more to say concerning the earthly people. However, when we come into the Acts we at once discover that a place of repentance was granted to Israel, and a “*blotting out of sins*” was preached to them through the Messiah whom they had rejected and crucified (Acts 2:14, 22, 36).

Doubtless repentance would have brought them “*the times of refreshing*” and “*the times of restitution of all things*” spoken of by all the “*prophets since the world began*” (Acts 3:19-21). That was the Pentecostal proclamation of the divine amnesty for the guilty people of Jerusalem, and their answer to it was the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7).

However, that crowning sin of Jerusalem was not laid upon the Jews of the dispersion, and so the disciples who were scattered abroad, by the persecution which followed, carried the Pentecostal gospel to them, for in the first period of the Pentecostal dispensation the preaching was “*to the Jews only.*”

Though the Jews did not have a monopoly on the gospel in the second part of the Pentecostal period or dispensation, they still enjoy a distinctive priority, for now it was “*to the Jew first.*”

In the Pentecostal dispensation even Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, preached “*to the Jew first*” in every place, and this through the whole course of his great ministry as recorded in the Acts.

Why the Book of Acts Ends Abruptly

We learn from Acts 15 that the position of the Gentiles in the [Pentecostal] Church was only authoritatively settled some twenty years after Pentecost, and it is interesting to observe that even that settlement was on the lines and in harmony with Old Testament prophecy (Acts 15:13-17).

We notice, too, that years after the date of that Church council at Jerusalem, the followers of Jesus Christ were still regarded as an he-

retical Jewish sect (Acts 24:5, 14). When the Apostle Paul arrived in Rome, although as we learn from the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, the church there occupied such a prominent place in his affections, his first care was to summon together “*the chief [among] the Jews,*” and it was as a Jew that he addressed them, for his words are “*our fathers,*” “*my nation*” and “*the hope of Israel*” (Acts 28:17-20). However, when they rejected his testimony, he said “*your fathers*” (:25, RV). He now severed himself from Israel, and pronounced the solemn words which sealed their doom (:25-31).

It has often been asked why the evangelist Luke, who was with the apostle Paul in both of his Roman imprisonments, closes the Book of Acts with such apparent abruptness without giving any information regarding the ministry of those periods and the time of liberty between them, which would have been of great interest and value to us.

The simple answer is that in this book we have the divine record of the Pentecostal Dispensation, and that transition period was now ended. Here we notice a very significant fact, which surely cannot be said to be accidental, that in the New Testament books written after the date of Acts 28, there is not a word to be found about Spirit manifestations except as a warning, such as I Timothy 4:1-2. Therefore, we heartily agree with the late Sir Robert Anderson when he says,

As there were no miracles in Jerusalem after the stoning of Stephen, there were none in Rome after that solemn *Ichabod* had been pronounced BY THE APOSTLE. FOR THE AGE OF MIRACLES was past, with the dispensation to which they belonged, and the apostle himself entered upon the life of faith beneath a silent heaven. Such is the character of this [current] dispensation; for ours is the blessedness of those who have not seen but yet have believed.

Miracles and Tongues of Short Duration

It is necessary to emphasize the importance of grasping clearly and firmly the dispensational teaching of the Bible, and especially the dispensational character of the Acts, and to bear in mind the truth that manifestations of the Spirit were for a definite purpose, and for a limited period.

The evidential value of miracles depended largely upon a preceding revelation. They were a sign for those who possessed the countersign, namely the Jews, for "unto them were committed the oracles of God," and when they were definitely set aside by the apostolic pronouncements of Acts 28:25-27 the signs definitely ceased.

Why Paul Did Not Heal His Sick Friends

That explains why the apostle Paul performed no miracle in Rome and did not even speak in tongues. During his first imprisonment in Rome his "brother, and companion in labor," Epaphroditus, lay ill, but he exercised no special gift of healing upon him, simply depending upon the mercy of God to restore him to health again (Philippians 2:25-30).

When on the journey to his second imprisonment, another of his beloved friends became very ill, and his brief statement concerning him is,

Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick (II Timothy 4:20).

When Timothy, his "own son in the faith," was feeling far from well all the great apostle could do was send him a simple medical prescription, very likely suggested by Luke who was with him at the time (I Timothy 5:23).

There was a time when a handkerchief carried from his person brought healing and health to the sick (Acts 19:12), but that dispensation was now ended.

It is only as we understand the dispensational character of the inspired book which marks the transition period between the Gospels and the setting aside of Israel that we can understand the mystery of the silence of God in this dispensation of grace.

(edited)

— *Forgotten Truths Reaffirmed*,⁷ Chapter 8

Topics:

Major: Israel; Gentile; Right Division; Administrations; Mystery; Pentecost; Hope; Signs; Gifts; Sickness; Healing; Tongues.

Minor: Church; Acts, Book of; Body of Christ; Kingdom of Heaven.

7. [Editor:] A Bible Student's Press facsimile reprint is available from www.StudyShelf.com (see order form).



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Published since 1989, the later issues contain our most recent understanding of biblical issues. Therefore when ordering volumes of the BSN we would encourage you to order the latest volumes and work your way backwards.



I would like to let you know how happy and grateful I am with all your Bible studies! Whether it is written, audio or video, it cannot be enough for me. What a special grace Word did we receive and how clearly you tell the evangel of Paul with joy. I have the idea that I know you as a personal friend while you have never seen me or spoken.

Thank you Clyde, and thanks to our good and happy GOD that He gave you the effect of grace in your life, that you can speak so well and clear (even for non-English speaking listeners!) – *The Netherlands*

I'm writing this note by way of encouragement to you. Our God and Father has chosen to use you in the lives of me and my family. I have been consuming every book I get from you and these have enriched me abundantly "beyond all that I could ask or think." I have tried to be careful to compare Scripture with

Scripture, and after 43 years of study and ministry I have to conclude; "the half has not been told!"

I have especially been blessed through the ministries of Bullinger, Anderson, Knoch, Gelesnoff, yourself, Adams, *et al.* I just finished a careful perusal of A.P. Adams' book *Truth vs. Orthodoxy and The Purposes of God and the True Basis of Redemption*. What a wonderful, Sovereign God we have! I am particularly moved by the revelation of the mysteries as revealed through the ministry of Paul.

I almost finished a book I'd been writing, but I've had to put it on hold because of the light I've received lately. The sovereignty and love of God has been made very precious to me. I need not say more except to thank you for your faithful service to the Body of Christ. I magnify your ministry because your labors have magnified our God and Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. – *TX*

Thanks for all of the work you do for us. I really enjoy reading your BSNs and watching your teaching videos. – *OH*



Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume 26, No. 629 – July 14, 2017

Scripture education in a semi-weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 1:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:

- total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
- union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
- adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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