And the sixth place has been very well stated, perhaps this may be another reason why God said to the Jew first, then as Paul put it, the Gentiles might not become wise in your own conceits. So, perhaps, the Lord established this rule, also, as a disciplinary measure to Gentile believers. You see, God knew that as the church went on there would be more and more Gentiles in the church than there would be Jews. They would be completely outnumbered and out-distant by the tremendous number of Gentiles who would come in. Well, if there were no word of caution, be sure to let them have the gospel. Be sure to see that thy hear the word of life, that their messiah is coming, that salvation is in him. If there hadn't been that word of warning, there's the grave danger that they would be bypassed, and my dear beloved, that is exactly what has happened. That's exactly what has happened, they are the forgotten man and the forgotten man of missions. They should gladly now have that word. Gentile believers are indebted to the Jews for the reception of the gospel. They should gladly, gratefully give it to them also, Romans 15:27 reads, "It has pleased them..." this is the Gentile believers in [Macedonia and Dacia], parts of Greece, to make a certain contribution for the poor saints of Jerusalem, it has pleased him to do that, he said verily and that debtors they are, they're right, for if the Gentiles have been made partakers of the spiritual things. You remember, you're in a spiritual household that was originally in Israel, then their duty of Gentiles, [I believe] is to also minister unto them, the Jews, [in-carnal] things. There you have it. They should gladly now give the gospel back, return the compliment. And what about Romans 11:31? And verse 30 reads, "For as ye in times past have not believed God, you have not obtained mercy through their, Israel's unbelief, even so have these, Israel also now not
believe, that through your mercy they, Israel, also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all, Jew and Gentile and unbelief." Why? That he might have mercy upon all, you can't improve. You can't improve on God's program, don't try it. It's a lost cause. Yes, Gentile believers are indebted as Jews for their reception of the gospel, they should gladly give it to them also. Finally, Israel, is going to be the means of world blessing and conversion, that's why it's so important that they have it in that order, because when they have it, they are going to have it spread out just as [spokes] of oil, they are going to have it spread out all over the world. It must be from them through to others. Is that in the Bible? It's not only in the New Testament, my dear friends, but it is also in the Old Testament and possibly in a place where you would never suspected it. Notice in Psalm 67, read at the beginning, "God be merciful unto us and bless us and cause his face to shine upon us. Selah. Why? That thy way may be known upon Earth that thy saving help among all nation." Bless us, all the nations can, are we reading that intuitively. Look at the 7th verse of Psalm 67, "God shall bless us and all the ends of the Earth shall fear or worship him." You see, the principle of Psalm 67 still holds. God will bless Israel and all the ends of the Earth will come to know the Lord. Why it's set forth, not in exactly those same words, but it’s set forth most beautifully in Romans 11, where the apostle Paul is facing this thing in a frontal attack. He says, "Is this a case where Israel is gone for good?" Oh, he says, "I speak to you Gentiles," Romans 11:13, "And as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to jealousy them who are my flesh, you might save some of them. For if the casting away of them is temporary, putting aside Israel, be the reconciling of the world." That's true, how have all the Gentiles of the world come into this wonderful household of faith? It's been by the casting away of Israel from its place and someone says, let's just keep them that way, let's have the blessing to ourselves. But, my dear friend, what
poor logic that is. If all the nations of the world have received such marvelous blessing when
Israel was put aside, why, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? If you got
that much when Israel was aside, put aside for a while, think of how much blessing there is going
to be when Israel is brought into the very vortex in the center of God's will. Life from the dead,
just as with Jonah, for him was life from the dead, for him personally because if he'd remained
where he was he would certainly have died and for all intents and purposes, for anybody outside
on the land where he had been thrown into the Mediterranean, he was gone. But I tell you. When
he came forth, it was life from the dead for him and it was also life from the dead for the
Ninevites spiritual life from spiritual death. So, God will bless Israel, all the ends of the earth
will come to know the Lord. It's also set forth in this passage at great length. The receiving of,
them, Israel will mean life from the dead for the world. There were two great friends of missions
in England, one was Charles Simian, we still have his works, and Bishop Edward Bickersteth,
written some very wonderful portions on the scripture and wonderful words of poetry. These two
friends of missions, Charles Simian and Edward Bickersteth, were present once at a meeting, it
was held in support of the London society, for promoting Christianity among the Jews, an
honored society, well known. Now Simian was the speaker that day and when he closed his
speech, he said they had met together that day for the furtherance of the most important object or
purpose in the world that is the conversion of the Jews. Well, when Simian sat down, Edward
Bickersteth who'd been chafing right along with that, he was at that time a secretary of the
church missionary society that is the Anglican Church, the Church of England. They're a
missionary society, CMS, church missionary society. Well, when Simian sat down, Edward
Bickersteth couldn't get to that item fast enough. He wrote on a slip of paper, had it handed over
to Simian and it read, "Eight million Jews, there were that many at that time, eight million Jews
in the world. Eight-hundred million heathen. Which of these is the most important?" That paper was handed over to mister Simian. He looked at it, read it and at once turned the paper over and wrote on the other side. "Yes, eight-million Jews, eight-hundred million heathen but what if the eight million Jews are to be as life from the dead to the eight-hundred million heathen?" And he returned that slip of paper to Bishop Bickersteth, he was absolutely right because he was in conformity with the Bible. Now, friends, it must not be forgotten in considering this [wavy] theme in the [fourth] place that there is the blessing of it, the blessing of following God's order. First of all, we notice it in the book of Acts. Did you every stop to think that the greatest triumphs ever recording by the gospel? For instance the conversion of three thousand, about three thousand in Acts 2, the conversion of about five thousand in Acts 4, the greatest triumphs ever recorded by the gospel in historic times, in the history of the church, they came when this command was obeyed. The first offer, salvation, was made to the Jews in every one of those cases. Secondly, there is the record of the first century under the Jewish church historian, estimated that there were fully one million Jews who accepted Christ in the first century of the Christian era. And finally, we turn to the results, let's look at the results during the Christian era when four-hundred and seventy-three weak and hated little churches met together in Scotland to for that wonderful, free, Church of Scotland. That man of God [Auracious] Bonner got up before the delegates with great serenity, with great heart-warming, made an impassioned, glowing, plea that God could not bless, and in fact he would not bless, the new united, free, Church of Scotland unless they did one thing at once. Unless they made it a part of their doctrinal their missionary program to give the gospel, in God's order, to the Jew first. Well, the delegates unanimously accepted that challenge, they saw the biblical soundness of it and basis. So, they appointed, as I've already referred, Doctor Bonner himself with Robert Murray M'Cheyne's committed to go
once on a missionary tour throughout the European continent and into the Holy Land. Why? To establish Jewish mission stations wherever possible. During, it’s a matter of record now friends, that during the absence of these men of God, what happened? A mighty revival was sent from the Lord that began in, of all places, you might know it. God is no man's debtor. A mighty revival was sent from God that began in Robert Murray M'Cheyne's own church and spread throughout that wonderful, free, Church of Scotland. And furthermore, as a result of the founding of the mission stations, some of the greatest preachers and theologians among Jewish believers were the direct and immediate result of those missions. A roster of them would delight the heart of any believer and certainly must have made the angles rejoice. Friend, I ask of you seriously. Can we lose by obeying God? Have we ever lost by obeying God? It's a tremendous loss if we don't. All the blessing of it, we've already seen that this wonderful matter of order is the command of Christ. It's backed up by the example of the apostles, it's full of the logic of high heaven, there is blessing in it. It was Doctor Brown, the noted commentator of the well-known Jamenson Faucet and Brown Commentary, who once said, "I may remark, I want to say, that from the time I first began to study my Bible experimentally, shall I tell you how long since that is? It is seventy years ago. I felt that as salvation is of the Jews and my own savior was, himself, a Jew and he is God over all, blessed forevermore. I felt drawn to the Jews. My ties, which have become stronger from that hour to this, every word that has been uttered tonight," he was in a meeting for the salvation of Jews, he says, "Every word that has been uttered tonight about beginning with the Jews, beginning at Jerusalem to the Jew first, I not only echo but I practice it." Finally friends, in taking this significant command, we must remember always that there is another side of the calling, there is another side of the picture and that is the danger of disobedience. It's been shown again and again. It's been proved beyond the shout of a doubt, that
there are who refuse to give the gospel to the Jew, in God's order, rarely, if ever, give it to him at all.
I've heard preachers who can fulminate and become very very upset, their blood pressure rises so many degrees over this matter of the Jews first, beginning at Jerusalem because they think it's a matter of preeminence or preference. And then when they quiet down and you ask them where the evangelization of the Jew is in their church program, alright it's not first, is it at last fourth or fifth or sixth. All do often we find out that not even to the Jew last, it's to the Jews not at all.
Now, who are we fooling? Are we trying to fool God? Do we think that we could mock God?
Begin to see, God is not mocked. Paul, in Galatians, uses a very portent, very vivid Greek word, [Greek word], you can't thumb your nose up at God. Now, you're not fooling God, it's all too often, not even to the Jew last, it's to the Jews not at all. To such people, Jews evangelization is a nuisance. Even if it's mentioned once, they love to hear about missions all the time, they want to hear about missions every week at least, they want to have missionary letters on the bulletin board, they want to read the letters from missionaries, and God help them. I am glad they do. I'm in favor of that, I'm on the board of reference, I would say, of about a dozen missions around the world. But to people like this, that I'm speaking of, Jewish evangelization is a nuisance, it gets on their nerves. Stories told of a certain Christian said to a friend that was interested in missions, "This subject of missions is getting on my nerves. I might, just as well, tell you the truth and come at them point blank. This matter of missions is getting on my nerves." Well, the friend asked him, "You know I'm told that there are two sets of nerves, sensory and motor, on which set of your nerves does this subject bear the horror?" Yes, John Wilkinson was a great man of God, I suppose it was more than a half a century that he gave heart and life to carrying the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Jews in England. Actually, this personal node, he is my spiritual great grandfather. John Wilkinson, who led to the Lord David Barron who led John Solomon to the
Lord who led me to the Lord, well this dear man of God John Wilkinson, stated it very well, he said, "It is not at all," this is quite an [indictment] here, now it's his word, I'm quoting him, "It's not at all improvable that the secondary cause for closing this dispensation in corruption and judgement of the completion of the Church and the return of the Lord will be the culpable neglect, the blame worthy neglect of the Jews by the church of Christ." Now remember this, dear man of God, in studying the Bible was referenced to Israel for over half a century, he ministered among them, God had greatly blessed his work. That mission, that he was head of, the mission of the Jews in London is still going on. He is a Gentile believer, so you can't claim that he's partial, that he is motivated by some kind of national patriotic feelings that he said, "It is not, at all, improvable that the secondary cause for closing this dispensation in corruption and judgement of the completion of the church and the return of the Lord will be the culpable, the blame worthy, neglect to the Jew by the church of Christ." Now, anyone who knows anything about world missions, certainly knows about the China, England mission, certainly knows about the China, England mission and knows that it was founded by a great man of God, J. Hudson Taylor. Now, J. Hudson Taylor had a son, Doctor Howard Taylor. His dear wife, Mrs. Howard Taylor of China, [used] of God to write many wonderful books. My, how her written ministry has blessed the people of God. Looks after her, many rise up to call her blessed. Doctor and Mrs. Howard Taylor, of course, were in China. She wrote a book entitled, if you lay your hands on it by all means get it, it is entitled, it's from the New Testament words, Sirs be of Good Cheer. Now, Mrs. Howard Taylor of China, in this book Sirs be of Good Cheer, and I've looked it through and I've copied out this important statement of hers. She says, "Psalm 67, we read it you remember, The Lord shall bless us and all the ends of the Earth shall fear him' Psalm 67 is like a great search light turned upon the suffering world then and now. At once, locating the trouble and showing
the remedy. The blessing then of this world is to come through the seed of Abraham." "Oh", says she, "that the eleventh chapter of Romans, 'my take is right place in our thinking and therefore praying.'" I must read those two sentences again, they're so potent. The blessing then of this world is to come through the seat of Abraham. Oh that the eleventh chapter of Romans, 'my take is right place in my thinking and therefore praying.'" Humanity is like a body out of [joy], something is wrong with the world. What can be plainer? And scripture tell us that, only when Israel is restored to its true position by the mercy of God, can the body, of which it is so vital a part, function properly. Individuals can be, yes individuals, are saved. They can be, they are saved through faith in Christ, though the chosen nation is still estranged by unbelief but, says she, "A restore and readjusted Israel is to be God's channel of blessing to a redeemed world for the covenant still stands in thy seed, shall all the families of the Earth be blessed, Acts 3:25." Says she, "Why neglect the surest way to put right the grievous wrongs that cause our hearts to bleed? Israel must be uplifted, transformed, restored, for Israel too is redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Oh, these words are priceless. Are we earnestly praying for the turning of the Jewish people in faith of their messiah? Are we giving, working, in every way open to us for the deliverance and enlightenment? Do we see," this is still Mrs. Howard Taylor in Sirs be of Good Cheer, she is pleading for the evangelization of Israel. "Do we see the essential connection between their present sufferings and the rising tide of the world's misery, much worse than when she was living, the rising tide of the world's misery?" "Never," says she, "until the Jews are restored to their land and to the heart of God, can Earth's wrongs be finally put right and suffering humanity heal. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world," she quotes Romans 11:15, "'For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead'" Why do we speak with such great
earnestness and feeling in these areas? My dear friends, because if it had not been that godly people were so motivated and so walking according to the will of the Lord, some of us now who preaching the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ would not, humanly speaking, be in that glorious occupation. It's because there were those who saw the will of God, who saw that we must obey the word of God, who made it possible for unsaved Jews today to have the word and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Friend, it's simple. Let's believe, let's obey God, let's believe him every wit. Let's give the gospel, beginning at Jerusalem and that to the Jew first, and the reasons are compelling. You remember, just to briefly review them in your mind, first the command of Christ and secondly the example of the apostles and then the marvelous irresistible design, logical all of it, the blessing of it, God follows obedience. Doing God's work in God's way, in God's time, never fails to have God's blessing on it and then remember the very very great danger of disobedience, in fact, much of the darkness that has settled down upon the churches life, corporate life, much of it can be traced to the disobedience on the part of so many many to this already established, already declared, order that God has put before us to get the gospel out and to get it out to Jews all over the world. Beloved, we trust that this would not be just some verse tacked away and tucked away at the end of one of the great gospels of the New Testament, one of the greatest books ever written. It won't be just something that we read very rapidly, coming to the end of the gospel and let it go at that. No, let's take to heart. It is immediately in the same sentences as then open he there understanding that they might understand the scriptures. It wasn't in a fog bank, it wasn't in an atmosphere of low visibility or misunderstanding. He said unto them, "Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer," notice what it's paired with, his wonderful death and resurrection, "behooved Christ to suffer and rise from the dead, the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in
his name, Christ's name, among all nations," God has a worldwide program, never forget that and we are not reading that that should in any wise be shortened or circumscribed or limited or that the area should be shrunk, no. But beginning at Jerusalem, [our read] says God and our Father, of God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Jacob, how could we ever improve on thy plan of redemption? We dare not even conceive of it but if we can't improve on thy plan of redemption, if it has been wrought out, would one hundred percent perfection, divine perfection, eternal perfection, how dare we try to improve on the method of getting that plan of redemption out to the world. How could we foolishly think that thouest go through infinite pains to provide this and then allow the getting out of it, the propagation of it, the spreading of it, the broadcasting of it? How could we ever conceive that that would be a minor matter to thee, that thouest would not sit down? Certain wonderful inescapable guidelines that must not be deviated from, oh God, bless we pray thee this truth to the heart of every hearer and may we do something about it. May we say, as Paul said on the Damascus road, "Lord what wouldst thou have me to do?" We ask it with thanksgiving, in the alone worthy, prevailing, blessed, matchless name of our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory. Amen. Amen.