

## I. Recap: God's Three Questions

Last week we were in John chapter 18, and out of that verse and that passage, I put together for you the three questions that God will ask every man and every woman. There is no way that any man or woman, whether saved or lost, is going to get out from under these questions. I told you a while back that the questions in the Bible are one of the greatest studies that you will ever undertake. You want to go back sometime and find the first question in the Bible, then you want to find the last question in the Bible. The questions are just incredible things to study. These three questions will form the basis of our entire Christian life if you are a saved person, but also if you are an unsaved person.

In Job chapter 38, verse 3, God is addressing all the educated world, the things they have, all the answers to everything. He says in Job chapter 38, verse 3, he asks them a question, and then he demands of them an answer. When it comes to these three questions, God is going to demand an answer. If you are unsaved, you will either answer these three questions here, or you will answer them at the Great White Throne Judgment in Revelation chapter 20. If you are saved, then you will either answer them here in this life, or at the Judgment Seat of Christ. But no one escapes these three questions.

I talked last week about all of us getting honest with God. I showed you that we will never get honest with God until we first of all get honest with ourselves. Last week's message impacted a lot of people. I had to talk to a lot of people last week, and that is where we do it, because we all need a reality check from time to time, and it will be so often. I had several families come in and talk to me, and they want to change some things. I think that is great. As I said last week, we need to help people who want to change make that change. Obviously, the change has to start with them, but many times a person has things in their life, or situations in their life, that they cannot find their way out of. Many times they want to find their way out, but they do not know what they need to do. Many times, because of that, they just get into deeper problems. We need to help people like that make that change.

I told you last week, my goal for all of you is to help anybody who wants to get up to that next spiritual level, no matter where you are at. You may be on the bottom one, or you may be midline, or you may be that everybody keeps blowing up in their spiritual levels, and we help each other to do that. I remember last week, I told one guy, "I could put a thousand people with you to help you, but it will not do any good if you are not going to fight for the change in your own life and make some changes in your own decision-making process." Because at the end of the day, it all starts with us. It all goes back to us. It starts with us getting honest with God, getting honest with ourselves, and then wanting to move forward.

What a church should do, what a pastor should do, what a pastor should train his people to do, is that when somebody comes in and they want to make those changes, be able to put a program together for them, some direction in their life. I have had people come in that their lives were just

completely upside down. They had spent 15, 20, maybe 30 years just making bad choices and all of the compounding of all of that. They come to Bible study on Thursday night, or they come and hear a message, and then God speaks to them, and then they want to make a difference in their life. Many times over the years, they have come in and sat in my office at home, and we have talked through, and they laid out all of the problems that they had gotten into, and all the different ramifications of it all. Honestly, you cannot fix somebody's megaton problems in just one session or one week. But I always want them to leave with a plan. I always want them to leave knowing that if they really want to change some things, there is a way to do it.

I remember many, many times I told them, "You have this going right now, and you have this going right now, and you have this right now, and you have this right now." I would tell them, "There is no quick fix for those things. You do not spend 20, 30 years getting into some kind of problem in your life, and then bail out and leave." In fact, I will tell you this, it always takes more to get out of something than it did to get into it. But I always tell them this, "We cannot fix all those major problems right now, but there is one thing we can do right now that will begin to reverse the process, that in time we can overcome all of these obstacles, if we just start with doing one thing, and that will be quit making bad choices. Let me help you, let us help you start making the right choices." If you can do that in your life, I do not care what problems you have, I do not care what issues you are dealing with, in time you will get the victory over them. Because what puts you in the mess were bad choices, and what gets you out of that mess in time will be good choices. That is what I try to train you to do, help people to make the right choices. I told this guy, it all starts with us.

As we move through 2023, I guarantee you, God will continue to send us people who really are tired of their life and really want to be different. It is like I said last week, you look at Jacob's life, and I talked about how God got him alone in Genesis chapter 32, and God touched the hollow of his side, and Jacob went the rest of his life with a limp. I talked to you and for me that one of the key things of staying on track with God is to learn from your limp. Never forget the day God chastised you, touched you, woke you to the reality of where you were and then showed you clearly where He wanted you to go. When you study Jacob's life, and we did not get into it to that degree last week, he learned his lesson and then God changed his name, did he not? He took his name from Jacob, which means supplanter, which is deceiver, and He changed his name to Israel. From that point on, you see a drastic change in Jacob's life and his relationship with God. From Jacob comes the twelve tribes, and then what happens? Comes the nation of Israel. Jacob to Israel.

One of the great studies in the Bible will be the seven people that God changes their name; they are not all men. When you look at that, it is a great study for each one of us because there will be a day in your life that I cannot tell you when yours is, I can tell you clearly what mine was, but there will be a day in your life, once you get saved, that God changes your name. That represents the fact that you are not ever going back to what you once were. There is a change in these men's lives when God changes their name, and there will be a change in your life when spiritually speaking God changes who you are. The three questions I gave you last week are very key to that. Each one and each example will be a picture of us to us.

I took it back to Genesis 3, and this was all based on getting honest with God. I took it back to Adam where the Lord shows up after they have eaten the forbidden fruit, and He says to Adam, "Where art thou?" Obviously we talked about that God knew exactly where Adam was, but here is the case. I told you this last week, He knew where Adam was, He was seeing if Adam would get honest with Him, and be honest where he really was. Then we went to Jacob. Here in Genesis chapter 32, God asked him, "What is your name?" He had to face God and say, "My name is Jacob," which means supplanter, which means deceiver. Then God changed his name. The third question was the men in John chapter 18 last week, the men who came for Jesus. Jesus asked them, "Whom seek ye?" He already knew by Himself that He knew all things, He knew what was going on, but He wanted to see if they were going to be honest. I tied that back to each one of us, "What are you seeking for today? What do you want from God? What do you want from the Word of God? What do I want from God and the Word of God?" Then I showed you that these men, like so many people today, they were seeking Jesus, but they were seeking Him for the wrong reason. So many people do that today too. He wanted to see in all these cases if they would just get honest with who they really are, and then He could do something with them.

## II. Approaching Scripture: An Investigative Study

Today, we are going to be back in John chapter 18. We are going to look at another section of Scripture. When I study my own Bible, or when I teach the Bible, I kind of like to use the same theorem of breaking chapters down. I think that for me, anyhow, it is better for me to break a chapter down of the Bible in sections. Sometimes I follow the paragraph mark, sometimes I follow something else, but I do not want to miss anything in the Bible. So I found for me, and this is the way I am teaching it to you, it is the way to do it. Take a chapter and then break it down in sections. A lot of guys just pick it up, take the whole chapter, and try to figure it out. If you can do that, that is fine. I am not smart enough to do that. I have to break it down in small pieces. I am like a three-year-old. You take them out to eat someplace, when you go out to eat at a steakhouse, and you have a two-year-old or a three-year-old, and you are getting a 12-ounce sirloin steak, and the wife is getting a 9-ounce steak, and you get that big old smoking thing there, you have to get hot dogs for your kids. But then you get the hot dogs, and you have to start breaking them up in just little pieces, because they cannot eat the whole hot dog. You can golf down that steak in record time, but a baby has to break the food down into small increments. For me, when it comes to the Bible, being the baby that I am, I have to break it down into small increments. I do not want to miss anything. So when I teach it, I follow that same format, because I do not want you to miss anything. It is a process that was taught to me many, many years ago, and it has helped me and served me well through the years.

Our study is going to change just a little bit today, and we go back and forth with this. I will teach you practical for a while, then we will get into some doctrinal stuff, maybe some historical stuff. Last week was very inspirational, it was very practical, it was very easy to preach because of the practical nature of it. Today we are going to go back to a little bit more of a doctrinal mode. This morning is going to be kind of like a little Bible study. I want you to see one of the great doctrines of the Bible revealed in this next section that we are going to look at. This will be a good example of how you take something that seemingly looks like nothing, and then you can

develop it through what you know with the Bible into what God is really trying to show you. I am going to walk you through a passage that all my life I have been told is pretty meaningless. Yet, I just bought into that until about 15, 20 some years ago, and then I started to put the Bible together and see, and I realized that that really was not true.

### III. The Significance of Peter's Sword Stroke

Our text today is going to be John chapter 18, verses 7 through 14. I want you to learn from this. You guys and gals who are trying to learn how to put your Bible together, you are trying to work out, learning how to get the pieces together. This is a good example of how you do that in this particular case. So, follow along here and I will try to show you to the best of my ability how this thing works, or how it works for me anyhow.

John 18:7-14

*7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.*

*8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:*

*9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.*

*10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.*

*11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*

*12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,*

*13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.*

*14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.*

Father, help us today to bring from this all that You have for us. We thank You and praise You for those that are here today, for those that have tuned in this morning. We just pray, Father, that You help us learn and bring from us everything that we need. I love these people. They are my people. You have given them to me. I am responsible for them in every aspect of giving them Your truth. So, help me today, Father. Help them. Help me to be there for them no matter if it is just on a day-to-day working through things, helping them with the Bible, providing them the charts or the books in the library to help them build their own. Lord, there are so many good young men and young ladies here that have so much to offer. I pray, Father, we have blessings upon all that we never did do to You. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.

Here, obviously, we have the famous story of Peter cutting off the guy's ear when they come to get Jesus. Peter is one of the greatest characters to study in the Bible. We are going to get into his

life here in a week or two. We will look at every aspect of that. But at a glance, we wonder why this may be important in the Bible. It does not really go anywhere from here. There is no Old Testament prophecy that talks about the ear being cut off. Nobody talks about it later on anywhere in the Bible. Honestly, all my life, all I have ever heard when preachers would make a reference to it, and they were some really good guys, was the fact that Peter could not handle a sword. I have heard many of the guys say that, "Peter, he is such a foul up, he threw that sword, he wants to cut this guy's head off, but he is such a lousy swordsman he missed and just cut off an ear." I have heard that all my life.

Over the years, one of the things that I have learned about Scripture is that everything is in the Bible for a reason and for a purpose. God just did not put stuff in there for filler material because He needed to fill up the book. Everything in that Bible, I have told you this before, everything in that Bible will either be directly to you or it will be indirectly to you, like today. But it is all there for a purpose to teach me something. There may not be something that directly applies to me, maybe to the nation of Israel, but I need to learn those things.

## IV. The Fourfold Witness

The first thing I see about this apparently meaningless story of Peter's inability to handle the sword, the first thing that struck me years ago about this seemingly non-event, is that it is recorded in all four Gospels. To a trained eye, that would be the first thing you would look for. It seems weird that if it is just a story about bad swordsmanship, and he missed his head and just cut off his ear, why would God put that into all four Gospels? You have it in John chapter 18 that I just read in verses 7 through 14.

Matthew 26:48-51

*48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.*

*49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.*

*50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.*

*51 And, behold, one of them which was with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.*

You do not have the name of the servant here either. The next place you find it is in Mark chapter 14, and you find it again in verses 45, 46, and 47.

Mark 14:45-47

*45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.*

*46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him.*

*47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.*

There is a third time. Then again we find it in the Gospel of Luke chapter 22, verses 48, 49, 50, and 51.

Luke 22:48-51

*48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?*

*49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?*

*50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.*

*51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.*

So what we have here is we have all four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, all four Gospels record what is happening here.

## V. Uncovering Deeper Meaning

Having said that, I think there is something more important here than just Peter missing this guy's head and cutting off his ear instead. I love things like this in the Bible. I love things that are not apparently anything to them. You have to really work to try to find what is going on. I know a lot of you kids, you like your video games. A lot of you parents you do too. You occupy your time playing those things and doing those things. To me, this is my brand of video games. Getting some place in the Bible that is obscure, that seems, because I have learned that the things in the Bible that most people look at, they do not mean anything and they say that they even mean something. I have learned that over the years.

I am a history guy and I am a mystery guy. I spend most of my life watching great unsolved mysteries down through history. I cannot get enough of them. I am a history guy and I saw a couple, six or seven months ago, a cable that they had an app called the History Vault. Within that, it had all these things that nobody could explain. They had a section in there called Unsolved Mysteries. I got hooked on it. I learned more about watching how these guys, they do not always solve the mysteries. I do not expect them to. In fact, very few of them do. But what it shows me is the process that these guys use to come to a real good hard-line, bottom line answer. To me, that is invaluable because I can take that over and use it in the Bible.

I watched one a while back on Roswell, New Mexico, back in 1947, when supposedly a UFO crashed back in Roswell with Jesse Marcel and all that. Most people, they look at that, they do not think, but they do not see that Roswell, New Mexico, is right down there to that road that runs all the way down through there, is Highway 666. The guy out there, he plotted on a map and he said it, "It is right next to the ground here, not too far from Highway 666." He never made the connection. I made the connection. I do not think like that. It went through this whole thing of how it started and how it changed and laid out all of these people. This guy is methodically putting a chain of evidence together to get to a bottom line conclusion. I watched that guy do that

and I thought to myself, "That is the same thing we want to do with the Bible." Because there are mysteries in the Bible, in fact there are seven mysteries to the church and there are mysteries to the nation of Israel, but then there are a lot of other things that we will have today. All my life the guy said, "Oh, Peter is a lousy swordsman, he wanted to cut this guy's head off and he was so lousy he just cut his ear off." Really?

Who knows who D.B. Cooper was? You know? Anybody raise your hand, I want to see how intelligent you are. You know who he was? He is the guy that hijacked an airplane and parachuted out the back of the old plane. He hijacked an airplane, landed it, let the crew off, demanded he said he had a bomb, demanded \$200,000, took off again and parachuted, and then somewhere over Washington State he bailed out. We had one of those old jets that had a ramp that came down the back, and it was the stairs and he bailed out. He was not found. They were found only tracing him. What a great mystery. This guy was tracing it down. It was incredible, but I did not care. They never found out who he was. They did find some of the money. It was quite incredible. They never found out who he was. Nobody knows his real name. Nobody ever saw him again. This guy, it was a great example for me of how when you had someone who just stayed with what you know to build a case of where they should have used. That is great stuff. I do not care about D.B. or whoever his name was. I could care less. I hope he enjoyed the money. But the bottom line is, if I had been there and you wanted a parachute, I would have given you one and when he pulled the ripcord, complications would have come out. He would have been sounding that way, stuck in a pine tree someplace.

The Malaysia flight 370. What a mystery that is. Takes off from Malaysia, going someplace about eight hours, six hours away, and in Vietnam someplace and just disappears. Makes a turn. Somebody turned off the transponder. It was the most expensive search for a missing airline with 250 people in it that they never found. See, just like that goes crazy for me. When this guy starts laying this stuff out, I watch how these guys do that. They know nothing about the Bible. They are all going to wind up in the lake of fire. But investigative work works. Whether it is solving a crime or discovering a mystery in your Bible, you have the same principles. I just went to the Lindbergh baby, another one who was kidnapped in 1930 or someplace like that. Wow, what a great one that was. How about Ted Kennedy, Chappaquiddick? Wow, that is a good one.

I come to the point where when I come to my Bible and things like this, I will be a little investigative worker. I will not just accept the status quo because I have learned some basic things about the Bible. The first thing, it just hit me. It is in all four Gospels. If it is just a random thing that does not mean anything, why did God think it was important to put it in one, two, three, all four of them? I know stories in the Gospels that you only have one account. Then you have some that you have just two accounts and some you have three, and then all four. The next step that I did was the importance of getting all four passages together and then looking at each one collectively and seeing what was the same, what was different, and what was added and what was left out.

In Luke chapter 22 in the Gospel of Luke, Luke was a medical doctor. See? That caught my eye. The guy that was a medical doctor who knew everything about human anatomy, who in his Bible in the Gospel of Luke, he was the one that was there at the attendance of what about the birth of

Christ. It was Matthew. It was Luke. Luke defines, we talked about this several weeks ago, he defines where life starts. Luke is a doctor who was chosen to write about this because in this account, in the first three he gets his ear cut off, but in this one he gets his ear cut off. Now, what did it do? Why did he say that in the other three? What is the significance of now we are starting to build something? It was not just a story that he blocked off his ear because he missed his head. Now we find out that Jesus healed that ear that was cut off. Maybe we will investigate what study did on all of this. If you do not get all four accounts together of the Gospel, then you miss things that are key to whatever you are trying to study.

I have talked many, many times about studying God, being able to look for different things. So what do we see there? A couple of things. I already told you that this was found in all four Gospels, so we got that covered. But the next thing that caught me when I saw Luke and it healed him, then it healed him. You realize this was the last act of healing that Christ does in His earthly ministry before He goes back to heaven? He healed the sick, raised the dead, and jumped off buildings with a single bound before this time. But this is the last act of healing that Christ does before He goes back. I have also learned in your Bible that you have what we call the last-place mention. The last-place mention is many times, not every time, but many times, the first time you find something in the Bible, it will show you something or define something. But along with that, there is also the last mention of something in the Bible. That is equally important. The last thing that Moses said is very important. The last thing that Paul said was very important. The last thing that Jesus said was very important. So there is not only a law of first mention, but there is a law of last mention. This is the last time He does that.

The next thing that popped out to me was this guy's name, Malchus. So I did a little investigative work on that, and I found out that the name Malchus means "king" or "kingdom." Then it bothered me, and we will get to this a little bit later on, but it bothered me why it took the time to tell us that it cut off his right ear. What difference does it make? An ear is an ear. Ladies and gentlemen, one ear is an ear. I do not care which one. What was significant about it being a right ear? I am telling you right now, Christ does not put the Bible together and the angel who said, "What do you want it to be, Lord? Which ear? I will make it the right." That is not what happened. There is a reason for everything in that Bible, and there is a reason why this guy's name means what it means. There is a reason why it was the right ear.

The next thing we should see is in Luke chapter 22, verses 35 through 38, that Peter was told to go buy a sword. Mostly we missed that.

Luke 22:35-38

*35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.*

*36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.*

*37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.*

*38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.*

This is the great Second Amendment verse in the Bible. Let me explain this to you. The first verse is saying, when He told them you do not need a weapon at all, is because Christ was coming to establish the kingdom, and He was going to take care of every issue that came up. So you did not need any weapon to protect yourself, you did not need anything because Christ was doing everything. Now, He is leaving. Now, the world is going to live without Him. When He was here to establish the kingdom, being the King, He said, "You did not need a sword." Now He is saying, "Because I am not going to be here, you are going to have to protect yourself." He says, "Go buy a sword." It always made perfect sense to me that the liberals who hate God, hate the Bible, and hate Christianity, are the ones who want to disarm you. But Jesus clearly told you to go buy a sword. He says, "Sell whatever you got and make sure you got a .45 ACP or 9 millimeter someplace where you can protect yourself." They did not have it back then. In the new translations, they will take away "sword" and put in "AR-15" or something like that. So Peter was told to go get a sword.

Look at this. "For I say unto you that this that is written must be accomplished in me, and he was reckoned among the transgressors so that things concerning me have an end." He is coming to the end of His life, the end of His ministry, He is going back to heaven. Now, everybody, the kingdom is not coming now. Everybody is going to have to fend for themselves. "And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords." Why do I need to know that? "And he says unto them, It is enough." You see, the sword being said here that the average person would just look at it, not think anything about it. But when you use a trained eye and you do a little investigative work, this would be a sword for a moment. Hebrews chapter 4, verse 12, because that is what the Word of God is, a sharp two-edged sword. So when he cuts off his right ear, there has to be some picture in that of what the Word of God is doing to a man who has rejected the King and the Kingdom. I would say the sword here definitely would picture the Word of God. They said, "We have two swords." They thought that was interesting. Verse 38. And they finally means that at some point in the future you are going to have an Old Testament and a New Testament. You are going to have two swords in one. You are going to have one for the nation of Israel, one for the body of Christ.

So now we are building this study, not based on what I think or what I think it means or what I want it to mean. When I come to the Bible, and I try to get you to see this, a lot of people come to the Bible with what they want to believe something about the Bible. When a guy is messed up on tongues, it is because he desperately wants to believe that it is okay to speak in tongues. When a guy or a gal has some bad doctrine like you can lose your salvation, it is because they come to the Bible wanting that to be true. I have never had that problem. I have always come to the Bible with the idea that I do not have anything in mind. I am so stupid I do not even suspect anything. I have just come to the Bible wanting what God tells me. I do not care. If the Bible is clear that we should speak in tongues, I would be speaking in more tongues than all of you. If the Bible says healing was the way to do it in the church age, I would not be here preaching to you today. I may go down and kill you to the hospital with a cancer ward with a little kid. I would not be wasting my time here. But those things are not true. When I come to the Bible, I have said this many,

many times, it is in a couple of my books over there. I do not care what it is. I will change whatever I believe, whatever I have been taught, whatever I have held to be true. I will change it in a New York second when the Bible, somebody shows me that in the Bible this is the way it really is and you have got it wrong. Because you know what? I do not care. I do not have any predilections. I do not have anything I just really have to believe to make my day. All I want is the truth of God's Word found in the Word of God and I do not care what it says as long as I know it is what it says.

So, we said we have got two swords. Based on what you have here, it is not about what I think it means or what I even want it to mean, but just following what God has already laid out through the Bible to put this story together. It is an investigative study. It is building like these guys did when you do with the Bible when you want to come to a conclusion. You have to follow a chain of evidence. You cannot just make it up wherever you want to because this is what you want to believe. You have to systematically walk through the Scriptures and you start with the things that I have showed you so far. Looking at the Bible, looking at the Gospel, looking at the stories.

The next thing or the third thing or whatever number it is that I see in here is that Peter is our swordsman. To me that is very interesting because it was Peter that in Matthew chapter 17 was given the keys to the kingdom and the King of the nation of Israel. In the book of Acts, we just studied this in Institute. In the book of Acts and on into the church age, it is Peter who is the apostle to the Jews. Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles. But Peter stays down in Jerusalem and he deals with the nation of Israel. In Acts chapter 15, you have the great meeting between Paul and Peter. Paul goes down to Jerusalem and he explains what God has done for him. Peter explains what he is doing in Jerusalem and the Bible says that they partnered together recognizing that Peter's ministry was to the Jews and Paul's ministry was to the Gentiles. So the idea that he is the swordsman here and not John or somebody else, to me, is quite significant.

## VI. Israel's Spiritual Condition Illustrated

The next thing that I see here and I remember my own Bible study here is that every person in the Gospel, every event in the Gospel, every story in the Gospel will illustrate in some way, some shape, some form the spiritual condition of the nation of Israel. I have told you that many, many times. Over the Gospels, you have the story of a woman who has an issue of blood. She touches the hem of Jesus and gets healed. You are told she has had the issue of blood for 12 years. She is a picture of the 12 tribes of the nation of Israel. There is a little girl, she gets healed, brought back to life and the Bible will tell you that she was 12 years old, a picture of the nation of Israel. We go in John chapter 5 to find a man laying by the pool there at Bethesda and all the infirmities he had and he is a picture of the nation of Israel. Every story in the Gospels, every event, every circumstance, every story that lays something out will be in some way, some shape, some form, a picture of Israel's spiritual condition at the first coming of Christ. We want to remember that.

So, now we come to the man who is a servant and gets his right ear hacked off and then he gets healed by Jesus and his name means King or Kingdom. Now I want to take it back to Matthew chapter 13. We have got to go back here and lay a little groundwork for where we are going to go here. So turn back to Matthew chapter 13 and I want to show you Israel's issue at the first

coming of Christ that this man is beginning to illustrate for us. Israel rejecting the King and the Kingdom and getting cut off from God to be able to hear what God says to them. Stay with me.

Matthew 13:13-15

*13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*

*14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:*

*15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*

This is what He says about Israel's spiritual condition and the quote here is from Isaiah chapter 6, verse 9 if you want to go back and mark it in your Bible. This man in John chapter 18 will be a picture of where Israel is at at this point in time. Based on Isaiah's prophecy and what He says in the official rejection of Him in Matthew chapter 13, Israel has three issues.

- 1.) Their heart, and the Bible says that it is waxed gross or cold to God.
- 2.) Their ears, and you notice He makes a reference three times in those verses to their ears that are dull of hearing.
- 3.) Their eyes, their eyes have closed.

We are told that hearing in anything that we do for God will be the key to you. If you are saved here this morning you got saved by the Word of God, praise the Lord. I agree with that. Somebody else said, "Well, I got saved because of faith in God and the Word of God." I agree, praise the Lord, I am glad we got saved. But let us go back to the Bible.

Romans 10:17

*17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Israel has rejected hearing anything that they say.

## VII. The Healing of Israel's Ear

Let me talk to you about the right ear for a moment. Let us go back to the Old Testament. Do not turn to it but Leviticus chapter 14, verse 17. When you deal with the priest back there, which is an Old Testament ordination, they took oil. The oil is a picture of the Holy Spirit of God. We know that. What they did back there in Leviticus chapter 14, verse 17. They took the oil, a picture of the Holy Spirit of God and put it on the tip of the right ear. Then they took that same oil and put it on the tip of his thumb on the right hand. Then they took that same oil and put it on the great toe of his right foot. Representing for us, you and me being completely under the ordination to be there, being completely under the direction of the Holy Spirit of God. But the first thing He says back there, the first place they put the oil is on the ear. Because if you do not hear what God says, you are not going anywhere. This is Israel's spiritual condition. They have rejected hearing anything.

When you come back down through this thing, you will find that the ear, back in Leviticus, this is the great toe of the Holy Spirit of God. Then He puts the oil on the thumb, right hand. And then He puts it on the right great toe. What it shows you is once you hear what God is telling you through the Holy Spirit of God, then with your hand or your thumb, you do what God wants you to do with it. Your great toe will be, you go where God wants you to go. That is the picture that you have with the nation of Israel in the Old Testament. They have rejected hearing what God has said.

Matthew 11:15 says, "Who has ears to hear, let him hear." It does not just stop with Israel. When you get into the church age of Revelation chapter 2, verse 17, He says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." It works for us too. In other words, you will never do anything for God, you will never go anywhere for God, or you will never learn anything from God until you first open up your ear and hear. Your ear has to be under the touching of the Holy Spirit of God, the oil, which Israel is not. That is what this man illustrates. In the church, Israel has rejected what they have heard, their right ear has no oil on it, and when it gets cut off, it is a representation of a picture of Israel being cut off from the Holy Spirit of God and anything that God is going to say to them. This man is a picture of Israel in their present spiritual condition.

Notice, he gets his ear cut off, Isaiah 6:9 and Matthew chapter 13, verse 15, but then when Christ in Luke chapter 22, under the writing of the physician, he gets healed. He says in Matthew chapter 13, verse 15, that they would see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart that He would heal them. Now we have got the healing aspect of this. We did not get that in the first three, but it is in Luke. As a matter of fact, we just cut off his ear, then we found out that it was his right ear, then we ran it back into Leviticus and saw the importance of the right ear with anointing oil, now we see the fact that the Lord healed that ear. This healing of the ear of the servant represents for us what will happen when the Lord comes back at the Second Coming of Christ. He will heal the nation of Israel and they will begin to hear what God says to them again. It is all through the Old Testament.

Malachi 4:1-2

*1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.*

*2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.*

You see when He comes back at the Second Coming of Christ, the thing that He heals in Israel is their ear. Because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. In the first coming of Christ they rejected the Word of God, Christ, they rejected everything that He said, and now they are cut off. But with the Second Coming, which is stored in pictures, He is going to heal that ear.

Jeremiah 14:19

*19 Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble!*

There is a picture of them in the middle of the Tribulation period, they are going through a daytime, but they are looking to be healed. You know how they are going to be healed? By starting to listen to what He said to them. You have problems in your life, I have problems in my life, maybe you want to get to the next level, but talk about earlier in our sermon, you want to grow, you know how you are going to do that? By starting to listen to what He said with your ear, because that is going to determine where your faith goes. You are going to have to start to hear what God is saying. You have been listening to the wrong things, you have been listening to the wrong crowds, to the wrong people, you have been listening to things that have put you in the mess that you are in. You have to come to the place now in your life where you start hearing what God wants you to hear. That is Israel's problem, that is your condition.

He told them in Jeremiah chapter 30, verses 16-17:

Jeremiah 30:16-17

*16 Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.*

*17 For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.*

Do what the wound did, the sword did, get your ear cut off. The light of your ear, this should have oil on it. Here comes Jeremiah chapter 3, verses 21-22:

Hosea 6:1-3

*1 Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.*

*2 After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.*

*3 Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.*

This one says He will pull us up in the Tribulation, now He is going to heal us. Paul said in Acts chapter 28, verses 27-28, concerning Israel, hearing being cut off, he says:

Acts 28:27-28

*27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*

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

Solomon wrote in the Book of Ecclesiastes chapter 3, verse 3, that he talks about the cycle of life. He says, dealing with a Second Coming, and then dealing with the Millennium to Israel, he says:

Ecclesiastes 3:3

*3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;*

So now we know healing was one of the sign gifts given to the nation of Israel. It was given to the nation of Israel for two reasons. 1 Corinthians chapter 14, verse 22, and 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 22 tells us that the Jews require a sign, and that tongues were a sign. The sign gifts were given to Israel, and among those sign gifts was healing. They had those sign gifts and the gift of healing for two reasons. Back in Exodus chapter 4, when Moses was asking God, "How is anybody going to believe what I am saying or any of this stuff?" He tells Moses to put his hand in his bosom, and He says, "Now pull it out," and when he pulls it out, it is leprous, white. Then He says, "Put it back in," he puts it back in, puts it out again, which is clean as it was the day he was born. Then He says to him, "By this sign, My people will never know that I am their God." Healing, healing.

At the first coming of Christ, Israel is broken, they are busted, and every story in the Gospels is going to picture some way, some shape, some form, Israel's spiritual condition. This guy is a servant, his name means king or kingdom, and like Israel, they have cut off hearing anything that God says. So Peter cut off his right ear, the Lord comes up and says, "That is enough Peter," and He heals that man's ear. A picture of what God is going to do with the nation of Israel at the Second Coming of Christ. Right now they are torn, right now they are beat up, right now they are broken, right now they are busted, but God is going to heal them. We know healing, as I said, is one of those sign gifts. It shows His Old Testament credential based on Exodus chapter 4, but then it also shows the healing that is going to come to the nation of Israel. When Christ comes back, Israel could have had it the first coming, but they did not because they would not hear what He was saying.

What you have here in John chapter 18, with the cutting off of this servant's ear, dealing with a man whose name means king or kingdom, based on Leviticus that tells us that they needed to have the first thing was the tip of their ear covered in oil. This will be the last illustration of Israel's spiritual condition. From this point on, He is going to the cross. He never makes another prediction against Israel. The only thing that resembles anything for Israel is when He is on the cross, and He says, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Most people think that that is a reference to all the people that are crucifying Him. I am sure that that probably is included into it, but what it really is dealing with is, He is saying, "Father, the nation of Israel does not understand what they are doing. Give them one more time for their healing. Give them one more time that they can hear with their ears." That time comes, Acts chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. At the end, Acts chapter 7, He moved to the Gentiles.

Now Israel goes through the most terrible time in the next 2,000 years. They go through the banishment of Europe. They go through the persecution of Europe. They are persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church. They are persecuted and kicked out of every country in Europe. They are looked down upon, they are despised. They make the two worst statements that anybody could make in history. When Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your king?" they say, "We have no king but Caesar." They chose the will of the cross because they did not hear what He had said. The ear has been cut off now. When He stands there and He says to them, they say, "Let His blood be upon us and our people." They made the two greatest worst statements that anybody could make in the next 2,000 years. They have lived out those two statements. In the Dark Ages, they were severely persecuted. When Rome came to power, she persecuted them. When all the European nations got into the 1600s and 1700s, they were banished from England, they were banished from Prague, they were banished from everywhere. We are getting to the 1900s when the Ottoman Turks come over and take over after the Byzantine Empire. They kick them out, they persecute them. It is a terrible thing. When they did end of 1920 to 1930, they got Auschwitz, Treblinka, and all those concentration camps where over 8 million of them were burned in the ovens. Why? Because they did not hear what He said. They got their ear cut off.

I think this story represents what is coming to pass where God is going to heal that ear. In the Millennium, He is going to heal. It is the last act of healing by Christ to illustrate the great salvation and healing that will come to Israel after His death on the cross. After now, the church of the Gentiles has come in, Acts 28:28. In your Bible study, we always want to remember, every person, every event, every story in the four Gospels will be some illustration of the nation of Israel in their spiritual condition. What you do, and hopefully you got a little picture of it today, is you have to establish a context. You have to look at any passage, especially in the Gospels. When you get past the Gospels, it is a lot easier. But there is so much happening and so little is written directly to you and me.

## VIII. Four Principles for Gospel Study

Let me give you the four principles that I follow in the four Gospels. This is what I have done today. This is what I do every time that I do it. It is what I simply use today. Four things that you want to remember and never forget whenever you are looking, whether it is Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. I do not care where.

1.) The first thing you want to remember and never forget is that everything in one of these Gospels is there for a reason. They will show you something. It may not show you something directly to you. Today it was not directly to us, but it was indirectly showing me what God is going to do with the nation of Israel in healing them. But everything in there is going to be for a reason. There are no mistakes. There is nothing that is left out. You find the scholars today, they call it the Synoptic Gospels, and they talk about how they do not really match and how they are disjointed and they do not really fit. That is because you do not even know what you are looking at. There are those complete, concise records of the first coming of Christ that you have. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each writer writes from a different standpoint.

- Matthew portrays Christ as the King of the Jews.

- Mark portrays Christ as the Master's Servant.
- Luke portrays Christ as the Son of Man.
- John portrays Christ as the Son of God.

You have to come at it from that aspect. You realize that everything in there is something for you, directly or indirectly.

2.) Every person, every event will be an illustration of Israel's spiritual condition at the first coming of Christ. I do not care what it is. He shows us over and over and over again what is wrong with Israel. He tells us over there in Matthew chapter 12 and 13 when He reads the great story about what a spirit, an evil spirit has gone out of a man. The man walks through dry places, seeking rest and finding none. He goes back and He says that He entered into that man, but He brings seven other spirits with him. At the end, the man is worse than he was at the beginning. That is the nation of Israel. We find these seven spirits back in the book of Proverbs. That is a picture of Israel's spiritual condition. When it talks about a man or a woman or any event at all, stop, look at it, and before you try to do anything to investigate it, know the context, some kind of form of Israel's spiritual condition.

3.) You have to get all three accounts together. There are times when you will find, where it tells you the story that one person is at the event. When you read the other accounts, you find out one of them will tell you there were two people there and the other will tell you there were three people there. He does that so you study to show yourself approved. He wants you to not just take it to Bible and verse and say, "Okay, I got it, I am done." No, He wants you to invest yourself into the Word of God. So you have to get all the accounts together.

4.) You want to remember that all the material in the four Gospels will be and will connect to all the Old Testament passages. There are hundreds of them. I gave you a few today on the healing. I have just picked a random. There are probably a hundred of them. You want to remember that you get into Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, even though they are in your New Testament, they are still under the Old Testament setup. The Bible tells you in Hebrews that the New Testament does not come into effect until the death of a testator. That is Christ. He was in the tomb. Matthew 28, John chapter 20, 21, everything up to that point, God is still dealing with the nation of Israel in the Old Testament. So all the Old Testament applies. That is why Paul, I am assuming that is why in Matthew, Matthew went back to the Old Testament passage in Isaiah, "not hearing." It is the same with it. You have to be able to, when you look at something, have all this stuff working for you at your fingertips. This is why I say it again, a good concordance is what you need. Good solid Bible books is what you need. Books that will give you, I wish I would buy every one I can find. All those books put out by Liberty Baptist College on the Old Testament, commentary on the Old Testament, folk teaching you, document, they are absolutely worthless. But they give you a sense of the context of what you are looking at. Once you get the context historically done, you can figure the rest out. You guys can figure the rest out because of what you already know. I would love to get every guy, every gal that really should, but the Bible, one of them. There are thousands of them out there just laying in somebody's garage because you buy them on eBay for a dollar apiece, maybe 75 cents. Nobody wants them. But they are invaluable. These are the things you learn to use. These are the things that you bring in and when you look in

a passage, you do not just systematically decide what it is. You have got to take a systematic approach of going where the Bible goes to illustrate what you have. At the end, you get it. You follow these four rules. Everything is going to be dealing with the Kingdom of Heaven to Israel, and it is going to flow back through the Old Testament, not only in the prophets, which where most of it will be, but then you will find it in the types of the people in the Old Testament that illustrate the nation of Israel, or Christ. That is what you do. We will hold up there, and I hope you can bring to mind today. I know that in time, we will be able to put those things together and get those things working for you. I will keep you updated on everything here.