

Acts of the Apostles 15:1-12 _ Lesson 35

The Gospel of the Uncircumcision

1. Acts 15:1-6 – A Salvation Disputation

- a. A key chapter for: 1) Recognizing Paul's unique apostleship and message
- b. A key chapter for: 2) The diminishing of Israel/little flock/Peter – Rom 11:12
- c. *"no small disputation"* – over salvation with covenants, law, Israel (15:1)
 - i. Paul preached to Gentiles salvation w/o Israel/covenants/law ← mystery
 - ii. That there was a dispute shows the difference in the gospels – Gal 1:6-9
- d. *"to Jerusalem"* – This was 17+ years after Paul's conversion – Gal 1:15-19,2:1-7
- e. *"great joy....received..."* – The dispute is not over Gentile conversion, but the terms
- f. *"declared all things..."* – Paul explains what he's been doing as an apostle of Christ
- g. *"needful to circumcise...keep the law..."* – This much different than Gal 5:1-6, 6:15
- h. *"much disputing"* shows: 1) Paul taught new; 2) Pentecost was over – 2:46, 4:32
- i. Paul was preaching the gospel of the uncircumcision → no need for it to be blessed

2. Acts 15:7-9 – Peter's Testimony

- a. *"a good while ago"* – probably 10+ years ago
- b. *"God made choice"* – Not a natural expansion/progression → God initiated it
- c. *"among us"* – little flock, Jerusalem; distinct from those in Antioch, Paul's ministry
- d. *"Gentiles by my mouth should hear..."* – Peter only in Acts 10 to Cornelius' house
 - i. *"opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles"* – Only used re: Paul not Peter
 - ii. Only Paul could open this door, see Acts 10:35,42,11:18 vs. Rom 3:30, 11:13
- e. Peter testifies what happened in Acts 10:
 - i. *"as he did unto us"* – Respecting believing Gentiles over unbelieving Jews
 1. See also Acts 11:15 – the beginning for Peter was Pentecost
 - ii. *"no difference"* – a move up for those Gentiles, not a move down for Peter
 - iii. A good reference for Acts 10 would be to Rom 11:17-20, not Rom 11:32
- f. Peter's ministry was not to acknowledge Israel's fall, that was for Paul – Rom 11:25
- g. Peter was sent to Gentiles in Acts 10 to acknowledged Paul in Acts 15

3. Acts 15:10-12 – Israel, Saved by Grace

- a. *"a yoke"* – circumcision, law of Moses, etc. → Paul was already preaching this
- b. The dispensation of grace is different than moments of grace and prophesied grace
- c. Salvation the same but the gospel / message / ministry was different
- d. *"we shall be saved"* – This grace salvation delivered in the future – 1 Pet 1:5, 9-13
- e. Prophesied grace → Deu 9:5-6, Ps 84:11, Jer 31:2, Eze 20:44,36:22-24; Hos 14:2, John 1:17, Heb 10:29, 11:40; 1 Pet 4:10 (Luke 11:13), 1 Pet 5:5
- f. Peter acknowledges/endorse Paul's apostleship as in Gal 2:9 and 2 Pet 3:18
- g. *"declaring what miracles and wonders"* – why? 1 Cor 1:22 – Jews require a sign
- h. Paul's ministry/Gentiles didn't need informed/adjusted it was the Jerusalem group
- i. The question over which apostle was settled long ago, yet the church still debates