

Acts of the Apostles – 11

- I. The Inspired History
 - A. Peter Defends the Conversion of Cornelius (1-18).
 - 1. The Jews at Jerusalem Attack Peter (1-3).
 - 2. Peter Testifies the Main Events (4-15).
 - 3. Peter Summarizes His Actions (16-17).
 - 4. The Jews Humbly Submit to God (18).
 - B. More Gentiles Are Converted at Antioch (19-26).
 - 1. Ordinary Ministers Begin the Work (19-21).
 - 2. Barnabas Furthers the Work (22-24).
 - 3. Barnabas and Saul Continue the Work (25-26).
 - C. Antioch Saints Send Charity to Jerusalem (27-30).
- II. The Sense and Meaning
 - A. The Jews at Jerusalem contend with Peter for eating with Cornelius and his house (1-3).
 - 1. The apostles and brethren in Judea heard about Peter baptizing a house of Italians.
 - 2. When Peter made it to Jerusalem, the circumcised Jewish believers confronted him.
 - a. Luke uses their anatomical identification mark rather than country of origin.
 - b. Even Jewish proselytes of Gentiles would have been circumcised (Ex 12:48).
 - 3. Their initial point of contention was social contact with uncircumcised Gentiles.
 - a. Peter knew it was unlawful for social interaction and told Cornelius (10:28).
 - b. The vision and angel convinced Peter, or he would not have done it (10:28-29).
 - B. Peter repeats main events from the previous chapter in detailing an accurate account (4-15).
 - 1. Read how godly men deal with controversy and contentions over religious doctrine.
 - a. They do not argue, call names, appeal to emotion, appeal to authority, appeal to pragmatism, appeal to tradition, appeal to opinion, appeal to love, etc., etc.
 - b. They do not describe “feelings,” “there was such a sweet spirit there,” “I don’t really know what happened,” or “I believed the Lord was leading me.”
 - c. Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning. Note accuracy with chapter 10.
 - d. Peter expounded it by order with very attentive care to the details of the case.
 - e. The certainty of the words of truth are to be our objective (Proverbs 22:17-21).
 - 2. He describes God’s preparation of himself and Cornelius and their receiving the Spirit.
 - 3. He shows that the manifestation of the Spirit was identical to that of Pentecost (15).
 - 4. The salvation Cornelius obtained from Peter for himself and his house is practical.
 - a. Cornelius was born again long before by the character defined (10:2-4,34-35).
 - b. If he was born again, then he was elect, predestinated, justified, adopted, etc.
 - c. The gospel saves us in a practical way by informing us of the truth about God, delivering us from ignorance and false doctrine, showing us what to do, delivering us from guilt in our consciences, giving us hope and glory, etc.
 - d. Consider these “salvation” verses: Romans 10:1-4; I Cor 15:1-2; Jas 5:19-20; I Tim 4:16; I Cor 1:18-20; Acts 2:40; James 1:21; I Peter 3:21.
 - e. This gospel can be fallen from (Gal 5:4), be failed (Heb 12:14-16), be frustrated (Gal 2:21), and waste ministerial labours (Galatians 4:11).
 - C. Peter summarizes his actions following the Spirit’s authentication of the conversions (16-17).
 - 1. He remembers and quotes the words of our Lord about the baptism of the Spirit (1:5).
 - 2. Since they received the identical gift as at Pentecost, I could not resist God (5:38-39).
 - 3. Since they believed on Jesus Christ as we did, I could not resist baptizing them (2:38).
 - D. The Jews humbly submit to God and accept this new revelation of salvation of Gentiles (18).

1. When the godly method of presenting truth is followed, godly men are silenced.
2. God granting repentance unto life to the Gentiles was a difficult thing for Jews.
 - a. Repentance is not the means of eternal life, since life exists before repentance.
 - b. Repentance no more buys eternal life than does giving by the rich (I Tim 6:19).
 - c. Repentance for sins and unbelief and ignorance is the way to peace with God.
 - d. Repentance is a gift from God that He may peradventure give (II Tim 2:24-26).
 - e. Repentance is the way we find the straight and narrow way of life (Matt 7:14).
 - f. Repentance as means for the life that now is (2:38; I Tim 4:8) is not eternity.
- E. Ordinary ministers begin preaching to Grecians in Antioch shortly after this event (19-21).
 1. The initial pattern among those scattered from Jerusalem was to preach to Jews only.
 2. Some men from Cyprus and Cyrene arrived in Antioch and preached to the Grecians.
 3. The Lord revealed His hand and blessed a great number to believe and turn to Him.
- F. Barnabas is sent from Jerusalem to check and confirm a work going ahead in Antioch (22-24).
 1. Again, the Jerusalem church, with apostles and elders, sent Barnabas to check things.
 2. He saw that the work was of the grace of God and exhorted them to perseverance.
 3. Barnabas was a good man with the Holy Ghost, whom we met earlier (4:36-37; 9:27).
 4. And the Lord continued to add to this Gentile church with the help of Barnabas.
- G. Barnabas gets Saul to help him in Antioch, and they work together to build a church (25-26).
 1. Barnabas knew Saul from presenting him to the apostles in Jerusalem (9:27).
 2. We last left Paul in Tarsus after escaping from Damascus and Jerusalem (9:23-30).
 3. They assembled with this congregation for a year and taught many people there.
 4. These disciples – dedicated followers – were called Christians here first. Amen!
- H. The saints in Antioch send assistance to the saints in Judea for a coming famine (27-30).
 1. A prophet from Jerusalem comes to Antioch and shows signs of a coming famine.
 2. Godly saints help financially when there is a need. Disciples = Christians = Givers.
 3. Godly giving is for the needs of the saints rather than for the gymnasiums of the rich.
 4. Barnabas and Saul carry this gift from Antioch to Jerusalem to the elders there.