

ACTS: LESSON 13

XIII. DISCUSSION IN JERUSALEM CONCERNING NECESSITY OF CIRCUMCISION (15:1-35)

- A. Men from Judea teach the necessity of Gentile believers being circumcised and keeping the Law of Moses in order to be saved (15:1-5).
 - 1. Paul and Barnabas earnestly confront the teaching.
 - 2. It is determined that Paul, Barnabas, and company to go to apostles and elders in Jerusalem (cf. Gal.2:2).
 - 3. Paul and Barnabas tell of conversion of Gentiles as they journey to Jerusalem.
 - 4. Paul and company received by apostles, elders and church.
 - 5. Believers from sect of Pharisees are the authors of the troubling teaching.

- B. Apostles, elders and church gather for discussion (15:6-21).
 - 1. Peter reminds brethren of God's work among the Gentiles through him - Jew and Gentile saved by the grace of the Lord (v.6-11).
 - 2. Barnabas and Paul rehearse miracles God did among the Gentiles through them (v.12).
 - 3. James applies conversion of Gentiles to fulfillment of Amos 9:11 (v.13-18).
 - a. Judges that letter be sent to believing Gentiles because of the many that hold to the Law of Moses.

- C. Apostles, elders and church unite to choose men to travel with Paul and Barnabas with constructed letter (15:22-29).
 - 1. Judas and Silas chosen.
 - 2. contents of letter:
 - a. No commandment had been given to the false teachers.
 - b. Judas and Silas chosen with one accord to accompany and speak.
 - c. Holy Spirit demands:
 - (1) Abstain from things sacrificed to idols.
 - (2) Abstain from blood
 - (3) Abstain from things strangled.
 - (4) Abstain from fornication.

- D. Letter delivered to Gentiles in Antioch - Gentiles rejoice over exhortation (15:30-35).
 - 1. Paul, Barnabas, Silas and others tarry to teach and preach.

QUESTIONS:

1. The troubling teaching in Antioch was that:
 - (a) Gentile believers must be circumcised in order to be saved.
 - (b) Gentile believers must be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses in order to be saved.
 - (c) Only the Jews had the right to be baptized and be saved.
2. Why did the brethren in Antioch determine to send to Jerusalem for answers to this questionable teaching when the inspired apostle Paul was among them?
3. According to Peter, how was this teaching "making trial of God"?
4. What part of their work did Paul and Barnabas rehearse before the brethren?
5. According to James, when was the tabernacle of David rebuilt?
6. How did Peter, Paul and Barnabas and James show that God was behind the acceptance of the Gentiles by faith just like he accepts the Jews?
7. Why was a letter needed outlining certain things from which the Gentiles were to abstain?

