

# \* ACTS

The Continuing Work of Jesus

## \* Acts 15: The Jerusalem Council

“But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they are also.”

– Peter (v11)

<sup>13</sup>After they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, “Brethren, listen to me. <sup>14</sup>Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. <sup>15</sup>With this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,

<sup>16</sup>‘AFTER THESE THINGS I will return,  
AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN,

AND I WILL RESTORE IT,

<sup>17</sup>SO THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK THE LORD,  
AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,’

<sup>18</sup>SAYS THE LORD, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM LONG AGO.

<sup>19</sup>Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, <sup>20</sup>but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. <sup>21</sup>For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

(Acts 15:13-21)

## Decision of the Council

### 1. Concerning Gentile Salvation

- “do not trouble the Gentiles” – circumcision and submission to the Law are not required
- God is now including Gentiles (as Gentiles) as ‘His people’

## Decision of the Council

- Amos 9:11-12
  - 1) Promise – restore the family/kingdom of David
    - fulfillment has come with the exaltation of Jesus
  - 2) Purpose – that Gentiles might seek the Lord
    - Gentile believers constitute a new people of God not simply an addition to Israel

## Decision of the Council

2. Concerning Gentile Behavior
  - these prohibitions do not concern the basis of Gentile salvation but their relationship to those who followed the Mosaic Law
  - Gentile Christians were asked to abstain from behaviors that were especially offensive to law-abiding Jews

## Implications

- In our freedom from the Law, let us...
  - 1) Avoid every form of immorality and idolatry
  - 2) Willingly restrict our freedom for the sake of our brother's conscience
  - 3) Do all things for the sake of the gospel that we may by all means save some

For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

(Galatians 5:13)