

Acts of the Apostles 11:1-18_ Lesson 28

Peter's Defense to the Circumcision

1. Acts 10 - Review

- a. Peter was told to go “doubting nothing” → Why would he change his message?
- b. John preached baptism ... this not a mystery – Mark 1:4, Acts 10:37, 1 Cor 1:17
- c. Peter’s message was from John the Baptist to Pentecost... but was interrupted.
- d. They heard and believed, but then God acted, NOT Peter – Acts 8:14-17
- e. Tongues are sign to the unbeliever - Mk 16:16, 1 Cor 14:22
- f. Those not knowing something here (and later) are the circumcision – Acts 11:45,15
- g. Cornelius’ conversion is out of order – like what God was doing with Israel
- h. God interrupted Peter’s message! → Acts 11:15, and he has to tell the brethren.

2. Acts 11:1-4 – Contention with Apostles of the Circumcision

- a. The apostles and brethren in Judaea for some years waiting for a kingdom.
- b. The contention: Peter went in to men uncircumcised and ate with them.
 - i. How many uncircumcised were there in Acts 2:46? None.
 - ii. Why did they contend if Gentiles were part of their commission?
- c. It is said (wrongly) “*Peter opened the door of the church to Gentiles with his keys*”
 - i. The Gentiles were not offered the Body of Christ, but the Christ, King, Judge
 - ii. Peter did not know what was going on in Acts 10. God did it all.
- d. What was their issue with circumcision? They were mighty in it → Gal 2:7
 - i. Covenant of circumcision → Gen 22:17-18, Isa 49:6, Zech 8:22, Mark 7:27
 - ii. Gospel of the circumcision → Acts 3:25-26, 10:35+, Rom 15:8
 - iii. This was not the next step of the kingdom, Israel was not yet saved.
 - iv. Gentiles to be blessed thru Israel. Israel is fallen, so Pete was sent to one.
 - v. Cornelius sought God diligently, unlike Israel – Heb 11:6

3. Acts 11:5-18 – Peter’s Explanation

- a. “*call not thou common*” = profane. God says they are sanctified – Acts 15:7-9
- b. God gave Cornelius an uncommon position above unbelieving fallen Israel
- c. Peter did not learn the mystery of 1 Cor 12:13, Eph 2:15, Eph 3, or Romans 3-8
- d. Peter learns what is the result of Israel’s failure → Rom 2:11-26
- e. Peter’s defense: “*what was I, that I could withstand God?*”
 - i. This was not their great commission, nor their normal operation.
 - ii. There’s no scriptural record of Pete going to Gentiles again. Acts 11:19, 15:7
- f. “*on us at the beginning*” – of their ministry at Pentecost
- g. “*then, I remembered... John*” – Matt 3:11 → This is not mystery information
- h. “*they glorified God*” – God’s blessing to Gentiles was acc. to prophecy – Rom 15:8+
 - i. The circumcision acknowledges God also grants Gentiles repentance ← foreshadow
 - j. Paul: pattern of God’s grace. Peter: pattern of submitting to God’s changing work