

# Acts

## Lesson 8

# Paul's Message to the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch

# Who is his intended audience?

- **Men of Israel**
- **People who fear God**

*Act 13:16 So Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said: "**Men of Israel and you who fear God,** listen.*

# What Old Testament scriptures does Peter use?

1Sa 13:14, Psa 2:7-8, Isa 55:3, Psa 16:10

*1Sa 13:14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."*

# What Old Testament scriptures does Peter use?

1Sa 13:14, Psa 2:7-8, Isa 55:3, Psa 16:10

*Psa 2:7-8 I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.*

## What Old Testament scriptures does Peter use?

1Sa 13:14, Psa 2:7-8, Isa 55:3, Psa 16:10

*Isa 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.*

*Psa 16:10 For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.*

# What Old Testament scriptures does Paul use?

1Sa 13:14, Psa 2:7-8, Isa 55:3, Psa 16:10

*Psa 16:10 For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.*

# What does the scripture explain?

That the Messiah would be put to death  
and than raised up.



## *What information does Paul provide in his discourse?*

- God brought to Israel a savior in Jesus
- John the Baptist felt unworthy to tie his sandal
- The people in Jerusalem did not recognize him although they read about him every Sabbath
- They fulfilled prophecies by condemning him
- They executed him who they could not find any fault and buried him
- But God raised him up.

*How does Paul connect this to the gospel?*

Through Jesus forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.

*Act 13:38-9 Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.*

# What action does he require of his listeners?

Beware unless you too fulfill a prophecy.

*Act 13:40-41 Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about: "Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you."*

*What surprises you about Paul's message?*

His call to action.

*Act 13:40-41 Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about: "Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you."*

# What were the results of Paul's message?

Many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas,

*Act 13:43 And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.*

# Acts Lesson 8

## Acts 15: The Jerusalem Council deals with the question of Gentiles

Time Line: AD 48 to 49

Herod died AD 44

Jews expelled from Rome AD 49

# Some Key Elements

- After they complete their missionary journey Paul and Barnabas return to their sending church “where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled”
- They report to their sending church “all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles”
- They remained in Antioch “no little time with the disciples”

# 1.) (Acts 15:1-2) Paul and Barnabas debate Judaizers in Antioch

**What was the controversy Paul and Barnabas face when they return to Antioch?**

Some men from Judea say that Gentiles must be circumcised to be saved

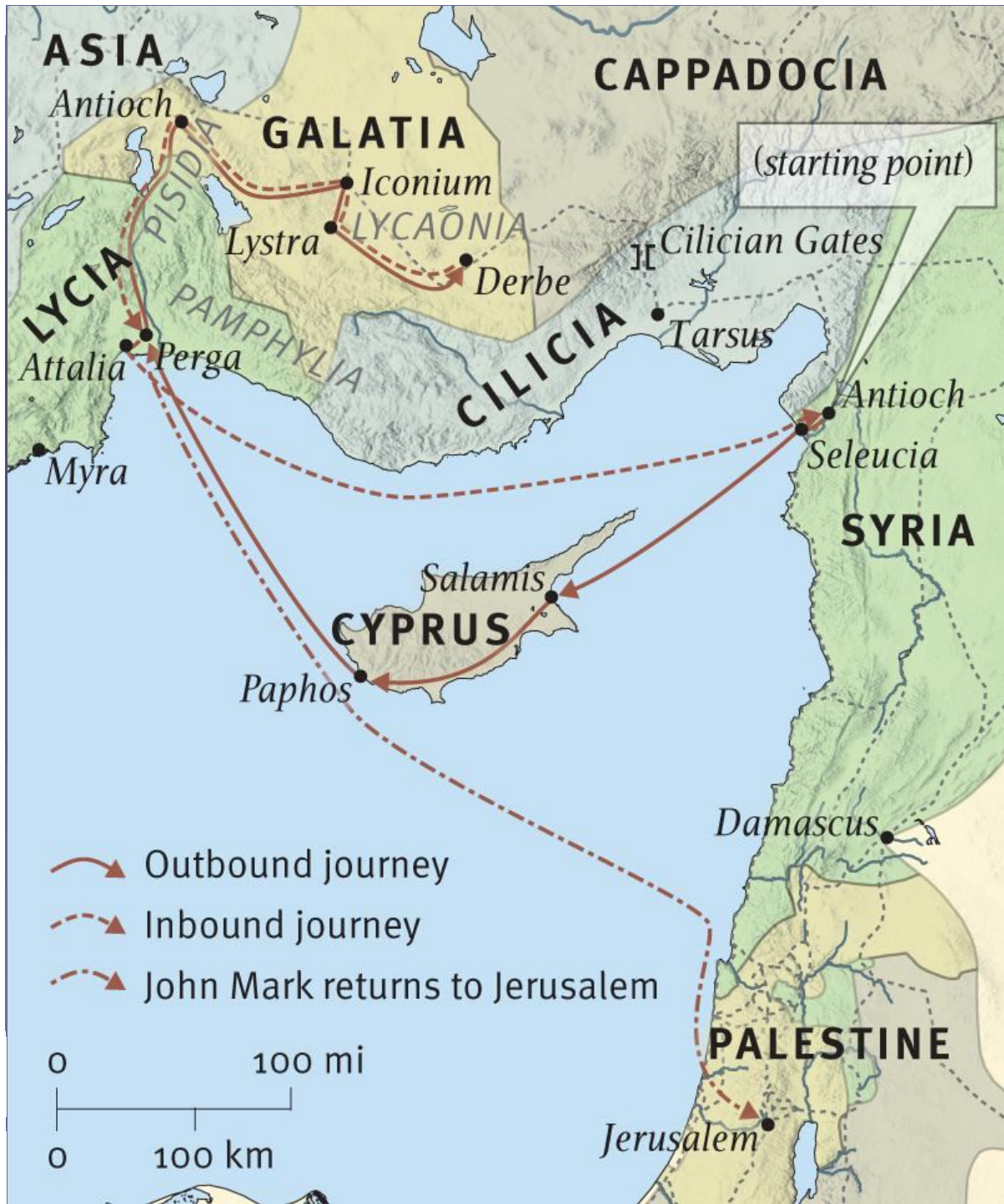
*Act 15:1-2 But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question.*



# What does the book of Galatians indicate about how widespread this may have been?

The Galatian church is a region, at least three churches Paul preached in.

*Gal 1:6-7 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.*



## Jerusalem and Antioch

# What Churches

## Lyster, Iconium and Derby.

*Gal 3:1-3 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*

*Gal 5:1-2 For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.*

# What is at stake here?

Whether salvation be by grace or  
works of the flesh

*Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him.*

## 2.) (Acts 15:3-4) Paul and Barnabas go to The Jerusalem Council

**What is the response of the believers to Paul and Barnabas' reports of Gentiles believing?**

**Great Joy**

*Act 15:3 So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers.*

**The second chapter of the book of Galatians seems to report on this council. What are some elements that are brought up**

**Circumcision for Gentiles, the law vs freedom in Christ.**

*Gal 2:1-3 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain. But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek.*

# What are some of the strong words Paul uses to repudiate the Judaizer

Christ died for no purpose if righteousness is through the Law

*Gal 2:21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.*



**What does the situation with Peter and even Barnabas indicate about how ingrained this problem may have been?**

The Jews lived under this for so long it was hard to change.

*Gal 2:12-13 For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy.*



### **3.) (Acts 15:5-6) Paul and Barnabas debate Judaizers in Jerusalem What was the controversy over?**

Whether it was necessary to  
circumcise Gentiles

*Act 15:5 But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses."*

# Who was creating the dissent?

Believers who belonged to the party of  
the Pharisees

*Act 15:5 But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses."*

## What was there response?

To gather together the apostles and elders

*Act 15:6 The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter..*

# Who were in this council?

The apostles and elders

*Act 15:6 The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.*

## 4.) (Acts 15:7-11) Peter's advice (AD 49 and Peter is still in Jerusalem)

What situation does Peter relate in his discourse?

Cornelius and his household

*Act 15:7 And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.*

**What proof does Peter give that the gentiles were saved without circumcision or obedience to the laws of Moses?**

**God giving uncircumcised gentiles the Holy Spirit.**

*Act 15:8-9 And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.*

# What does Peter warn the council against?

Putting an unnecessary yoke upon the gentile believers.

*Act 15:10 Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?*

# Instead what does Peter attribute salvation to?

The grace of the Lord Jesus

*Act 15:11 But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will."*



## *Some observations about Peter:*

- Peter is still on the scene  
(some thought he left after his imprisonment).
- Peter does not make the final decision in the matter (he does not act like a pope)
- Peter is not in Rome

## 6.) (Acts 15:12) Barnabas and Paul's testimony

What do Paul and Barnabas add to Peters discourse?

They relate the signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles

*Act 15:12 And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.*

# Why is this important?

It shows that God was interested in ministering to the gentiles.

## 7.) (Acts 15:13-21) James' counsel

### What points does James make in forming his opinion?

- As Peter pointed out, it was Gods prompting to save Gentiles

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*Act 15:13-14 After they finished speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name.*

## 7.) (Acts 15:13-21) James' counsel What points does James make in forming his opinion?

- It was predicted in scriptures •

*Act 15:15-18 And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, "After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old."*

# What requirements does James give for Gentile believers?

- • abstain from the things polluted by idols
- • abstain from sexual immorality
- • abstain from what has been strangled
- • abstain from blood

*Act 15:19-20 Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.*

**What is the significance of these things?**

It shows a changed heart

## 8.) (Acts 15:22-34) Letter sent out Who was sent to distribute the letter?

Paul, Barnabas, Judas (called Barsabbas),  
and Silas.

*Act 15:22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers,*



## What requirements are given in the letter?

- abstain from the things polluted by idols
- abstain from what has been strangled
- abstain from blood
- abstain from sexual immorality

*Act 15:28-29 For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."*

# Who agreed on these requirements?

The Holy Spirit and to us

*Act 15:28-29 For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."*

## *Some final thoughts:*

- Salvation by faith and not law is preserved
- Importance of being sent is shown
- Church in Jerusalem now has elders in addition to apostles
- The Holy Spirit is included in decision making

# Homework:

**Read: Acts 15-18**

**Analyze James's message to the council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:22-29)**