

THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

SESSION 35 | ACTS 10:44-11:24

ACTS 10:44-48 | THE HOLY GHOST COMES UPON GENTILES

- Verse 44 –
 - We have seen the Holy Ghost come upon several groups through the book of Acts:
 - Upon the 12 apostles (Acts 2:4).
 - Upon all the Jewish believers (Acts 4:31).
 - Upon the Samaritan believers (Acts 8:17).
 - Now upon this group of gentiles.
 - The indwelling of the Holy Ghost is not the mark of “the church.” Rather, it was the empowerment to Kingdom proclamation.
- Verse 45-46a –
 - The believing Jews (**as many as came with Peter**, which was 6 men, Acts 11:12), were **astonished** when the Gentiles began to **speak with tongues, and magnify God**, the same manifestations of the Spirit given upon the Jews.
 - Note that while this is the first time this had happened among gentiles, it is not the first time there was such manifestations.
- Verse 46b-48 –
 - Peter recognizes that this is unusual, so he asks his somewhat rhetorical question about objections to the baptism of the Gentiles. He then **commanded them to be baptized**. Note that he **commanded them**, not *instructed them*.
 - Baptism was very much still seen as a requirement, because the Kingdom Gospel was very much still being proclaimed.
 - Paul, on the other hand, would later say that **Christ sent me not to baptize**, and thus clearly did not command baptism (nor prohibit baptism). Under Peter, baptism was an *ordinance*, under Paul it is an *observance*.
 - This story concludes simply telling us that Peter was encouraged to **tarry certain days**. This was the first and is the last official work that any of the Apostles carry out with the Gentiles.

ACTS 11:1-18 | DISSENSION ARISES, PEACE RESTORED

- Verses 1-3 –
 - If the **apostles and brethren** were commanded to go to all the nations (Matthew 28:19), *and* (as so many say) were freed from the Law at Calvary or Pentecost, why are they complaining that Peter has gone to the nations and eaten with them? There are only two options:
 - The **apostles and brethren** of Jerusalem were either terribly xenophobic, prejudiced, and disobedient.
 - OR that those who say this are mistaken in their view of the “early church.”

- Verses 4-17 –
 - In these 14 verses, there is very little new information.
 - Why would Luke be so repetitive?
 - Possibly because this is such an important way of saying, “the Kingdom Gospel had a place in Gentile lives, but it was not the Grace Gospel which is yet to come.”
 - This message is so hard for some to accept that the Holy Spirit inspired Luke to write it twice.
 - In the end, Peter’s only defense is, **what was I, that I could withstand God?**
- Verse 18 –
 - This verse speaks against those who claim that the apostles and brethren of Jerusalem were simply prejudiced. As soon as Peter gives the account, they **held their peace** and also **glorified God**.
 - They rejoiced that **God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life**. Notice that they are still not talking about a *by grace through faith not of works* gift of salvation, but rather *by grace through repentance* salvation of the Kingdom Gospel.

ACTS 11:19-24 | MINISTRY TO THE PERSECUTED DIASPORA

- Verse 19 –
 - The **persecution that arose about Stephen** took place in 33 AD. Acts 11 takes place in 41AD. Thus, eight years later they were still preaching **to none but unto the Jews only**.
 - This is not because of disobedience, but because of the strategy God had given concerning the Kingdom Gospel (Acts 1:8).
- Verses 20-21 –
 - The believers **scattered abroad** (v. 19) encountered **Grecians** (hellenistic Jews) who were part of the Jewish diaspora. They preached the Kingdom Gospel to these Jews, with great success.
 - Note: The modern versions, based on the Critical Text, speak of *Greeks* (who were Gentiles) rather than *Grecians* (who were Jews). The text seems more natural that we have Jews in perspective. If however, these are Gentiles, then they are more of the pattern of Cornelius who was accepted into the Kingdom plan.
- Verse 22 –
 - It is notable that the **church which was in Jerusalem** appears to be the “in-charge” church. The Kingdom-era assembly was not made up of independent, autonomous churches, but was under the control of the Jerusalem assembly.
 - This is the basis of Catholic ecclesiology and comes when you fail to *rightly divide*.
- Verses 23-24 –
 - Barnabus arrived and saw **the grace of God**. It is a common misconception that God’s grace was not seen until the dispensation of grace. The same is true of **faith**, mentioned in verse 24.
 - Grace and faith are inherently part of God’s dealings with mankind, and vice-versa.