

***“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —  
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 7  
The Great Transition Gains Substance as Saul is Received by Peter  
and is then Sent Forth in Apostolic Ministry to the Gentiles”***

**Review:**

- ***Why a New Dispensation? In truth, Grace will not mix with Law or Law with Grace. See Rom 11:6: “And if by grace, then [is it] no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if [it be] of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”***
- ***Stephen’s Death Initiated the Great Transition Through Saul (Paul)***

**Our Outline Today: *“The Transition Gains Substance as Saul is Received by Peter and then Sent Forth in Apostolic Ministry to the Gentiles”***

- ***Saul’s Salvation Signals the End of Israel’s Pentecostal Opportunity***
- ***Peter’s Approval of Saul Follows Visitations of the Lord with Signs Given***
- ***Paul Is Sent Forth in Apostolic Ministry (With Barnabas and John Mark)***

**I. Saul’s Salvation Signals the End of Israel’s Pentecostal Opportunity:**

- ***To effect a transition from the Pentecostal Dispensation to the Fullness of Grace would require a great transition as we have seen. Much would be involved in this and many chapters of the book of the Acts is required to cover it in detail (which Luke does so perfectly, of course).***
  - ***To the Jews first, then the Gentiles, but not for their salvation but for their judgment. This preaching was not of the resurrected Christ coming in judgment of the Jews due to the rebellion of the chosen nation, but rather of a coming judgment on Gentiles and the whole world (even Jews)***
  - ***Grace not an earthly kingdom preached***
  - ***Spiritual were gifts given to some during this Transition, especially in Corinth, “for the sake of the Jews” primarily - and “to the Jews first ...” This continued until Acts 28:28***

- *The revelation of grace continued through Paul until the completion of the revelation given in his prison letters.*
- *And how did the Great Transition gain substance? When Stephen was stoned and a young man named Saul was seen to have played a major role.*

*So why was Saul there in the first place, one might ask? Zeal, no doubt, and mistakenly for the Lord! Surely he was not acting in obedience to Gamaliel but was obeying it would seem the high priest [see 9:1 to support this] and the elders of Israel.*

*Act 7:57-60 [Remember those words as Stephen died ...]*

*57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,*

*58 And cast **him** out of the city, and stoned **him**: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.*

*59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon **God**, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*

*60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

*...*

*Acts 9:1-3*

*1 **And Saul**, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,*

*2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.*

*3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:*

- *“... yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord”: Saul thought his condemnation of Stephen was a great success indeed and he now seeks to replicate that in Damascus, bringing the disciples he hoped to capture to Jerusalem in chains! Such incredible arrogance! He was literally playing with fire and didn’t know at all what was happening. He would soon learn.*
- *But Saul was intersected on his course to Damascus by the Lord himself as he visited him from heaven’s glory bringing Saul’s life into a true focus as “the light of heaven now shone round about him.” This was a great*

*miracle indeed but was largely personal and known only to him as to its details. The others only heard an indistinct voice speaking.*

- *But why Paul, one might rightfully ask? Only the signs and wonders convinced Peter and the other apostles as we shall see. But a greater miracle than those seen before was about to be unleashed. Perhaps the greatest of all in the book of the Acts is occurring here in the humbling of this man with blindness and the realization that his life has been intersected by God himself and his son, Jesus!*
- *The Lord Calls Saul to Salvation Through the Very Voice of Jesus*

*Acts 9:4-5, 8*

*4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

*5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

*...*

*8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.*

- *Paul's Commission Revealed — "How Great Things He Must Suffer for My Name's Sake"*
  - *Saul's humbling continues now in the hands of his loving savior Jesus. It will continue that he might be made an example for many in how through his weakness the Lord's strength might be made manifest and that his grace might be seen to be always sufficient. For that is the mark of God's abundant grace!*
  - *Saul was 3 days without sight and a disciple named Ananias was visited by the Lord and commanded to go to a home where he would find a blind man named Saul. He was empowered to bring healing to Saul's eyes and also to deliver a most important message regarding this man's future life and ministry.*
  - *A hallmark of Paul's ministry and message was that God's strength would be manifest through weakness. It would be God's grace that would be proven and demonstrated to be always sufficient. So it was appropriate that the Lord would reveal that to Saul early and he did, through a disciple named Ananias in Damascus:*
  - *But, here at the beginning of this Great Transition, Saul's period of humbling will also see the manifest power of God in miracles such as described here:*

**Acts 9:15-16**

**15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:**

**16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.**

- *My, what a message to deliver to this man so humbled already for several days: That he would be a “chosen vessel” to bear his name before many, even the Gentiles and kings in addition to the Jews! He also receives a miraculous healing from his blindness! His response, in obedience, is water baptism, a very Jewish ceremony indeed, as had been so prevalent since John’s preaching in the wilderness.*

**Acts 9:19-22**

**19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.**

**20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.**

**21 But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?**

**22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is *[the]* *[very]* Christ.**

- *Saul’s boldness and knowledge of the scriptures (he was the student of Gamaliel, of course — Acts 22:3) was evident to all. This man had been well prepared by God, it seemed, to take up the message he had so hated before. But what a transformation this was. The sheer miracle of it would be used of the Lord to convince many as the drama develop.*

**Acts 9:23-25**

**23 And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:**

**24 But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.**

**25 Then the disciples took him by night, and let *him* down by the wall in a basket. *[Compare with 2 Cor. 11:33]***

- *From pursuer to pursued, what a humbling indeed this was for this man so accustomed to worldly success.*

### **Acts 9:26-31**

**26** And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

**27** But Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

**28** And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.

**29** And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.

**30** *Which* when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

**31** Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

- *Instead of judging his enemies, the Lord has saved his greatest enemy. But is Israel still rising in the plan of Almighty God or is it falling. Though Stephen had been martyred, the Nation had still not been judged. Or had it? The ministry was proceeding well it seemed — but only to the Jews still, except for special exceptions like Cornelius and his family. And now there was this new disciple Saul who has been sent far away to Tarsus because of the Jews who sought to kill him.*
- *But now the challenge will be the other apostles and Peter. Will they accept Saul fully, even when he has begun his missionary journeys and outreach to the Gentiles? Would they? Would Peter? We shall see.*
- *Saul's Salvation Signals the End of Israel's Pentecostal Opportunity, but does not in itself accomplish that, for the Great Transition will continue until the end of the book of Acts as we shall see ...*

### **II. Peter's Approval of Saul Follows Visitations of the Lord with Signs Given:**

- *So Saul was now saved. But the ministry was soon about to change dramatically. That is crystal clear. But Christ's command to remain in Jerusalem until the power from on high was given signaled a change. And then his statement about the "times and seasons" would have given the Twelve pause as well.*

**[READ ] Acts 10:1-5**

1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called **Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,**

2 **A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house,** which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

3 **He saw in a vision** evidently about the ninth hour of the day **an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.**

4 **And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.**

5 **And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:**

...

**Acts 10:9-10**

9 **On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:**

10 **And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,**

**[READ ] Acts 10:11-22**

11 **And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:**

12 **Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.**

13 **And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.**

14 **But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. [as the Law demanded!]**

15 **And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common.**

16 **This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.**

17 **Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,**

18 **And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.**

19 **While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.**

20 **Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.**

21 **Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: *what is the cause wherefore ye are come?***

**22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.**

- ***But the ministry had been so far only to the Jews and the proof of that is here. Why? Were the Twelve wrong? Consider their commission in Matt. 19:28. Chapters 10 & 11 will give us some answers?***
- ***Now signs and wonders would be again used to convince the Jews and in this case Peter that God was now reaching out to the Gentiles in ways unexpected by these Jews so influenced by the Law. And a Roman centurion named Cornelius with his family would be used to convince Peter and then the others that God was undertaking a great work apart from the Kingdom ministry they had been so fervently anticipating.***
- ***Peter is taught by a vision that God is now going to turn to the Gentiles, which Peter is not willing to do — until the vision is given. Consequently, Peter gives his seal of approval to Saul — and this was his last formal work! He appears only one more time in the book of the Acts, in chapter 15 at that great council, where he proclaims that God is now working among the Gentiles and that grace is the theme - verse 12 — the signs and wonders convinced Peter and the Jews that God was working through Paul and his associates!!] ==> the signs are for the Jews! And see Matt. 16:19 regarding Peter's authority in this matter, for it was to him alone that "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" were given!***

#### **Acts 10:24-48**

24 And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped *him*.

26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29 Therefore came I *unto you* without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

**30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,**

**31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.**

**32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.**

**33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.**

**34 Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: *[Peter was convinced that God was reaching out to the Gentiles!]***

**35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.**

**36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)**

**37 That word, *I* say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;**

**38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.**

**39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:**

**40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;**

**41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.**

**42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead.**

**43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.**

**44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.**

**45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

**46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,**

**47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?**

**48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.**



- *So we have seen both here and in the earlier chapter that the gift of the Spirit with foreign languages was poured out on these Gentiles, Cornelius and others — convincing Peter that this was the work of Almighty God. Though he was convinced earlier with those signs and wonders, these here with Cornelius sealed his convictions.*
- *But the other disciples were not yet convinced as they themselves had not seen the signs, for only Peter had. They were still afraid of Saul, it seems, but perhaps much more importantly was what Saul was doing. Peter had accepted Saul, but would he accept fully what Saul was preaching and his full intentions regarding the outreach to the Gentiles? This had great implications regarding the Law which prohibited close fellowship between Jews and Gentiles.*

#### **Acts 11:1-4**

**1** And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

**2** And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,

**3** Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

**4** But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying ... [and he recounted to the group what had happened with Cornelius and himself as God gave Signs and Wonders to convince those that would not believe ...]

- *So signs and wonders were given by the Lord, for the outreach to the Gentiles through Saul and the others depended on the Jewish believers in Jerusalem (the Twelve) being fully supportive. “For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom” (1 Cor. 1:22).*
- *The testimony of Peter continues and concludes with many being now finally convinced that Saul had been chosen by the Lord and that he had been given a distinctive ministry. The issue will continue to be, however, just how distinctive that ministry and message would be:*

#### **Acts 11:13-20**

**13** And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

**14** Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

**15** And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as [he did] unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians [Jews], preaching the Lord Jesus.

- *Take note again here of the Signs and Wonders. And, the preaching was to the Jews only! Why is this highlighted by Luke here, we might ask, late here as it were in chapter 11?*
- *But was it not now time to evangelize the Gentiles? The dispersed had been ministering to the Jews in Gentile lands but were still preaching to the Jews only (verse 19)! What about the Gentiles? Wasn't Cornelius and his family tokens concerning things to come?*

**[READ ] Acts 11:21-26**

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch *[a Gentile city]*

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

...

*11:26 And when he had found him [Saul], he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. [... and NOT JERUSALEM!]*

- ***Saul's Salvation Signals the End of Israel's Pentecostal Opportunity***
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### **III. Paul Is Sent Forth in Apostolic Ministry (With Barnabas and John Mark):**

- *Verses 1-23: Judgment now falls on the elect of Israel as James is martyred by Herod and Peter is imprisoned for a time, but ...*

***[READ ] Acts 12:24-25***

**24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.**

**25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.**

- *Peter and others of the original disciples will now no longer occur in the Acts history except in one verse in chapter 15 (Peter) and once in chapter 21 (James) where we read about the confrontation between Paul and the Twelve at the Jerusalem council.*
- *Ministry outside Israel has now seriously begun. Consider this for next time as we are now well prepared to begin chapter 13!*

### **Overview and Conclusions:**

- ***Saul's Salvation Signals the End of Israel's Pentecostal Opportunity***
- ***Peter's Approval of Saul Follows Visitations of the Lord with Signs Given***
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