

“All Israel Shall Be Saved’ - God Fulfills His Promises - Part 5

Review: “All Israel Shall Be Saved’ - God Fulfills His Promises - Part 4”

The Olive Tree Analogy: The Olive Tree and Its Consequences Dispensationally

- **Its Dispensational Significance by Divine Election Explained**
- **A Somber Exhortation Is Given for All Believers Under Grace**

The Olive Tree Analogy:

- ***Its Dispensational Significance by Divine Election Explained***
 - What we are learning here is that the sovereignty of God must be acknowledged when considering his workings, always. In God’s good timing (of course, always!) Israel’s “branches” were broken off. They are no longer connected to the life-giving trunk and root of the tree of faith. Rather, Gentile “branches” are connected.
 - Paul here is not speaking, it seems here, of individual and personal salvation (though that is a related subject we should address) but of the blessings of God’s direct working or lack of such within groups, even such a large group ultimately, even collectively of the Jews themselves, or later, of the Body of Christ).

Romans 11:19-24

19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, [take heed] lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in [his] goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural [branches], be grafted into their own olive tree?

- Verses 19-24 are key verses here in this chapter (but there are so many, aren’t there?): “God is able to graft them in again”, just like he did in Israel’s long history, is a sobering thought. And he shall indeed do just that. But isn’t it wonderful?

It seems here that Paul is laying a foundation of understanding since false teachers were probably already teaching that the church had replaced

Israel for all time and so Israel could never again have a future in the plan of Almighty God. But the apostle says absolutely not. This setting aside was only temporary, even though it would last as it turned out, nearly 2000 years.

- That false teaching, so common today, totally confuses Prophecy with the Mystery and Israel with the Church. The error comes, of course, from failing to Rightly Divide the Word of Truth!
- So this is all about the dispensational plan of God for his people Israel and how their setting aside has opened the way for the dispensation of the grace of God. This is not directly about gaining and losing personal salvation, of course, although these verses are considered "difficult" by many and used by others to support the view that one may lose one's salvation. I hope Paul's meaning here is beginning to be clear.
- So God was even using the Gentiles to provoke Israel to faith and apart from works through the gospel he preached, "for by grace ye are saved, through faith ... not of works":

[READ] Romans 11:14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation [them which are] my flesh, and might save some of them.

- This brings us to a most important section of scripture. This concept of jealousy and how God might use it is before us here. I believe Romans 15 has the key to understanding it, and though Bible teachers and commentators may have missed this teaching entirely, it is our privilege to take to heart what our apostle has written here. There Paul distinguishes physical blessings from spiritual blessings. That teaching deserves our special focus, and Lord willing it will be our subject in this study.

Our Outline In This Study and In the Next: God Can Even Use Jealousy To Accomplish His Mighty Purposes

- ***God Used Jealousy Through Gentile Gifts, Both Spiritual and Physical***
- ***God's Prophetic Revelations Have Often Come With Previews First***
- ***God Even Used Jealousy Through Gentile Spiritual Gifts — For Jews***

Next Time:

- ***God Used Jealousy Through Gentile Spiritual Gifts — For Gentiles Too***
- ***God Can Still Use Jealousy Through Gentile Testimony of Grace***

I. God Used Jealousy Through Gentile Gifts, Both Spiritual and Physical:

[READ] Romans 15:15-16, 25-27

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,
16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

...

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

- He has collected monetary gifts as he has traveled from city to city on his missionary journey. These gifts were “for the poor saints in Jerusalem”, in other words, the Jews saved during the early Pentecostal Period. The twelve apostles are ministering to them, and they were living communally, having sold everything and were depending entirely on the Lord to supply even their food, as Prophecy and the Kingdom Gospel had stated that he would. But Israel had rejected their Messiah and crucified him instead. Therefore, the Kingdom had not been established, and the Kingdom promises were increasingly not being fulfilled. They were therefore living in extreme poverty since, with the stoning of Stephen, even the preview of the Kingdom blessings during the Pentecostal Period had now largely ceased.
- Paul’s collections and offerings are meant in that context. The Gentiles have “carnal” or physical blessings to offer to those saints in exchange for the privilege of the Jewish believers in Jerusalem and Judea to receive “spiritual things” from Gentiles:
- In this study and in the next, this will be our focus. In overview, Paul’s point here is that the “spiritual things” belonging rightfully to Israel, as God had promised to deliver to them during Millennial Times, were now temporarily being given to Gentiles! This included much more than monetary blessings. It also included the temporary “spiritual gifts” of 1 Corinthians 12-15, the sign gifts and prophetic gifts as well. This was all temporary and applicable only during the transition period, as Paul writes in chapter 13. For there he writes that all of these special manifestations of the Spirit of God were “passing away” in the Lord’s due time:

Romans 15:28-33

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

- The difference between Law and Grace, dispensationally speaking, is inherent in all that Paul is writing here... the saints in Jerusalem were poor in two ways, one physical and the other spiritual, if we understand this correctly. Paul certainly saw it that way as he writes in many verses there in Galatians, chapter 2.

For the Lord had promised to bless Israel with both kinds of blessings, but as they have been set aside and the Gentiles have prospered, it is proper for those that have to share with those that have not. And here our apostle considers this to be his sacred duty, due to the poverty and lack of the essentials of life there in Jerusalem.

This is a further application, I believe, of the principle stated at the end of chapter 14 and the beginning of chapter 15 in these verses, in fact:

Romans 14:21-23, 15:1-3

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

...

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

- So the Gentile believers Paul ministered to were to sacrifice “good” things that were a great blessing to them, like meat and wine, so that they would have the resources to send to Jerusalem where the poor

saints were in need. Of course it is also true that those saints were Jews still bound by the Mosaic restrictions on eating and drinking as we saw before in Galatians and in the Acts. And so sending these gifts and offerings to Jerusalem was also a testimony of God's working under grace to those that had these material or carnal needs.

- But these gifts from the Lord God were not to continue permanently. Here, we see that these gifts were given for a specific reason, and that was the poor saints in Jerusalem. They had been saved during the Pentecostal Period under the apostleship of Peter and the Twelve. All of these supernatural or miraculous gifts were to pass away in their due time, as our apostle wrote in the Corinthian letter which we have carefully studied here before:

1 Corinthians 13:9-10

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

- So, in summary, as long as Paul is going "to the Jew first," (and he does generally go to the synagogues of the Jews in each city first) God is still ministering to them although Paul's ministry is in the spirit and power of Isaiah and is a "setting aside" ministry. For Paul knew in advance that they would not be welcoming him.

In effect, Paul himself was chosen to "break off" the branches of the tree starting in Jerusalem and going all the way across the known world to Rome and even beyond (Spain, northern Europe, etc.) When this ministry was finished (Acts 28:28), God stopped ministering to Jews as Jews in every way. Thus the Olive Tree analogy continued to reveal the workings of Almighty God until the Rapture or Catching Up of Christ's Body Church is a reality.

II. God's Prophetic Revelations Have Often Come With Previews First:

- Now, you will remember, from our previous studies, how Paul had written in the second letter to the Thessalonian believers that signs, wonders, and miracles might be a reality even under the grace dispensation, but that these were not to be understood as infallible evidences of the work of God, for they also could be just the opposite, the work of Satan. Great discernment would be needed to know the difference therefore. Miracles are not always the work of Almighty God, therefore.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- The sacred secret given to Paul for us Gentiles included this: That the prophesied miracles and signs described, for example in Joel chapter 2 and designed for the Tribulation period, would have a preview or foreshadowing even before the Rapture of the Church, which is His Body. Some commentators have called these partial fulfilments, even though they may be different in essential ways from what had been prophesied. This does not mean that scripture is not intended to be interpreted literally. But these are similar works designed to encourage believers or to draw unbelievers.

For example, in Joel 2:

Joel 2:28-32

28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

- The apostle Peter, in Acts chapter 2 used the words “this is that ...” drawing a comparison at the least with the Joel prophecy:

Acts 2:14-21

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

- So we must conclude that this preview or foreshadowing was not an actual fulfilment or even a partial fulfilment of prophecy, but rather simply a preview of how God would work in the future time of which the Joel prophecy was intended, namely, the Great Tribulation period, which has not occurred even now nearly 2000 years after the Acts 2 events. But it will, and the previews were intended to convince those Jews gathered there on the Day of Pentecost that, as the apostle was preaching, that was indeed a day of decision for those gathered, regarding faith in Christ Jesus, risen and ascended, as Israel's Messiah.

III. God Even Used Jealousy Through Gentile Spiritual Gifts — For Jews:

- Now, looking forward to the church under Paul's ministry, there was an additional outpouring of “gifts” during the Transition Period that was both for Jews and for Gentiles, to the Jews first to open their hearts to the gospel and save them.

Next time, Lord willing, we will consider the Gentile aspect of this, for it is that which applies directly to us. But for the Jews the signs and miracles were essential:

1 Corinthians 14:21-22

21 In the law it is written, With *men of other tongues and other lips* will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. [See Deut. 28:49, Is. 28:11-12, Jer. 5:15]

22 Wherefore tongues [*unknown foreign languages is the intent here*] are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

- Paul teaches here, referring to speaking in unknown languages, that God would give miraculous signs so that unbelieving Jews might believe. Sometimes that was the initial act of faith, but on other occasions it was for believers who were not aware of how the Lord was working and their faith needed these encouragements. True, demanding signs of the Lord were often refused by the Lord. But on some occasions as well, and we will read of them during the course of our lesson here in the letter to the Romans, the Lord gave miraculous signs for his own will and purpose.
- Let's consider quickly the sacred history found in the Acts of the Apostles to see how the Lord of glory ordained this and how ultimately Paul may be seen as the administrator of these signs and wonders even when others, including his twelve apostles, were the direct vehicles of these gifts.

Consider firstly, the opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles. This was administered initially by Peter, we read in several chapters of the book of the Acts, with the Lord God affirming this with miracles and signs as we shall see today:

Acts 10:1-8

1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian *band*, [*a Roman Gentile, therefore*]

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. [*the first miracle*]

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:

6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

7 And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; [*so he knew it was a miracle of God*]

8 And when he had declared all *these* things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

- As we read in the next verses, Peter then experienced this miracle of God for the purpose of changing his mind regarding the salvation of Gentiles under the new Administration of Grace:

[READ] Acts 10:9-16 [*There are several miracles listed here*]

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,

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.

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.

Acts 10:17-ff

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.

23 Then called he them in, and lodged *them*. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

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.

- Cornelius tells his remarkable story of how God spoke to him through an angel requesting this audience with the apostle Peter and then he preaches concerning Israel's Messiah come in the flesh, and his death and resurrection and the necessity of faith in him:

Acts 10:34-43

34 Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

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.

[READ] Acts 10:44-48

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 [*foreign unlearned languages miraculously spoken*], 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 how did the Lord use these miracles and signs? Peter now as recorded in the next chapter uses their provision by Almighty God to convince the unbelieving Jews back in Jerusalem of God's new work among the Gentiles apart from and distinct from the preaching and teaching of the Twelve Apostles. This was a most critical occasion indeed, for it changed everything.

Paul comments later that jealousy was at the heart of this witness, since the Jews saw that spiritual blessings prophesied for them were going instead to Gentiles, like this Roman centurian here, Cornelius. Peter was convinced by this and then in Jerusalem here other leaders were convinced too as noted in chapter 11 of the book of Acts.

Acts 11:1-19

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,

5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common.

10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me.

12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

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.

[see John 14:26]

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.

- So there was bound to be a continuing issue among the Jews living in Gentile lands who were believing on Jesus as their Messiah. For they were not accepting that God would work among Gentiles apart from a Jewish outreach and that furthermore, Gentiles could be blessed spiritually apart from the dominance of the Jewish Law.
- In due time, a council was initiated by Paul in Jerusalem to establish the new order, dispensationally speaking. Now salvation was going forth among the Gentiles independently of the Twelve Apostles and the Mosaic restrictions to which the Jewish believers were still in submission. And

Paul was the apostle leading this outreach to the Gentiles, not Peter and the Twelve.

- One might well ask at this point whether the so-called “Great Commission” had been suspended in its applicability now that the new Dispensation of the Grace of God had been initiated through Paul? If it was still in effect, then the apostles, including Peter and James themselves, were acting in direct defiance of the Lord’s command. Perhaps a better conclusion would be that this commission applied only when national Israel had believed (or that program was in a preview, as in Acts 2:38), and it was therefore now the time for the Gentiles to be evangelized.
- A preview of that dispensational plan occurred beginning on Pentecost and continued during the time after Peter’s offer of the Kingdom recorded in Acts chapter 3. Thousands were being saved as the Acts reports. But when that work of the Lord increasingly diminished due to the nation’s rebellion against their own Messiah, signified by Stephen’s martyrdom, that prophetic preview ended.

Verse 19 in this passage then confirms that and illustrates why the apostles were evangelizing only among the Jews. The apostles finally had recognized that dispensational change in Paul’s ministry. For now, with the rise of the Gentiles in contrast with Israel’s diminishing, the Isaiah 60:1-3 prophecy was no longer being fulfilled, even in its preview. And so they confirmed Paul’s apostleship and the new Dispensation of the Grace of God. It was Peter’s testimony therefore regarding the miraculous evidence of the Gentiles salvation that convinced those of the Twelve, just as many miracles had already convinced Peter.

[READ] Acts 15:1-2, 7-11

1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

...

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us;

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

- So, due to signs and miraculous events, Peter was used by the Lord to certify and affirm the opening up of the door of faith to the Gentiles — But Paul was chosen to administer, oversee, and interpret these miraculous gifts from this point forward, not Peter. This was established at another Jerusalem conference as we read of it in Galatians chapter 2:

Galatians 2:1-10

1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with *me* also.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed *to be somewhat* in conference added nothing to me:

7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter;

8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10 Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

- And so we see how the Lord used Paul (with others also as key instruments early on during this Transitional Period, but especially Peter) for the sake of the Jews. But the rest of the book of Acts records the details of this Transitional Period as Paul ministers grace and the gospel of grace to primarily Gentiles in his continuing missionary journeys. He does go to the Jews first, however, but then, when they do not receive his message, he turns to the Gentiles.

This ministry comes to its culmination, ending formally as recorded in the closing verses of the book of Acts as we shall see next time.

Conclusions / Application:

- ***God Used Jealousy Through Gentile Gifts, Both Spiritual and Physical***
- ***God's Prophetic Revelations Have Often Come With Previews First***
- ***God Even Used Jealousy Through Gentile Spiritual Gifts — For Jews***