

The Parish of Wellow

'Be Daring and Dynamic' 24 Studies in Acts Acts 11:1-30 – Making room for the gentiles Passage, Talk Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these talk notes home with you.

1. Talk Passage

Acts 11:1-30

- 1 The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.
- 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him
- 3 and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them."
- 4 Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it had happened:
- 5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was.
- 6 I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air.
- 7 Then I heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'
- 8 "I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'
- 9 "The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.'
- 10 This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.
- 11 "Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying.
- 12 The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house.
- 13 He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, 'Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter.
- 14 He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.'
- 15 "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning.
- 16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'
- 17 So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"
- 18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life."
- 19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews.
- 20 Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.
- 21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.
- 22 News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.
- 23 When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.
- 24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.
- 25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul,
- 26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.
- 27 During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.
- 28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)
- 29 The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea.
- 30 This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

2. Talk Notes

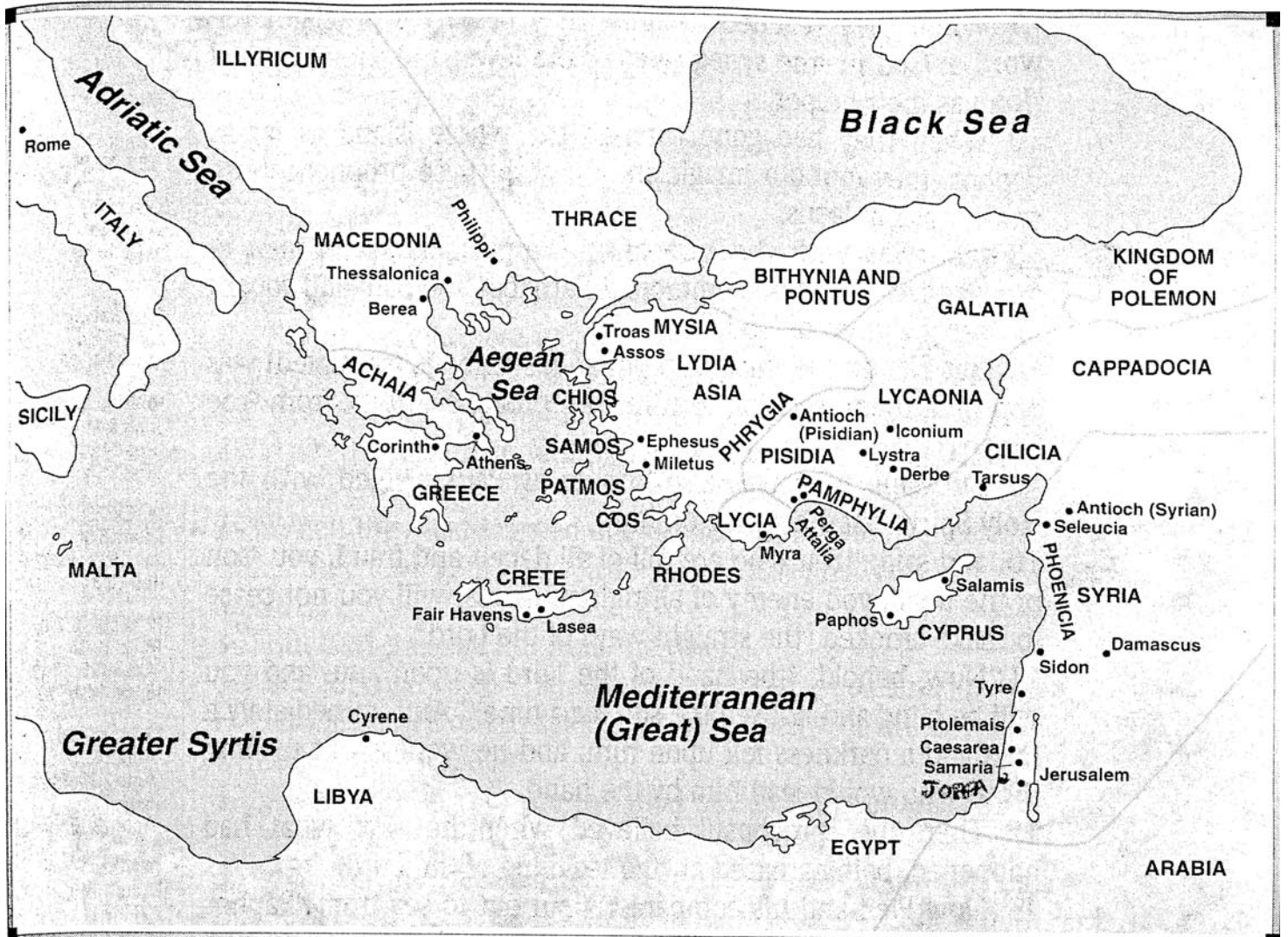
2.1 Background

A seemingly impenetrable wall had been broken down – that of Jew and Gentile as news that Cornelius, a Roman, a soldier and a foreigner, had accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour in Caesarea. Not only that, Peter in Joppa, had been told in a dream that nothing that God has made holy can he consider unclean. Peter had been taken to Cornelius' house and baptised him, his family and his relations. He now had to give an account to the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. What was their response?

2.2 They Accepted the Gentiles - Acts 11: 1 - 18

2.3 They Encouraged the Gentiles - Acts 11: 19 - 26

2.4 They Received Help from the Gentiles - Acts 11: 27 - 30



3. Questions to consider at home

3.1 What can we learn from the way Peter responded to his critics?

3.2 What seemed to be the final and most convincing proof to Peter of God's working in the Gentiles?

3.3 In the meantime, the gospel is spreading fast in Antioch. How might a Jew have felt going to such a city to tell others that their long awaited Messiah had come, not only to the Jewish people, but to all men?

3.4 How do you see in this passage the true meaning of "Christian" being lived out in a multicultural church?

3.5 Do we have an obligation to meet the needs of believers in need, as the disciples did in Antioch? What practical suggestions can you make?