

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE APOSTLE PAUL – LESSON 14

THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL PART 3

Much debate had taken place in this Jerusalem meeting with the church leadership. Paul and Barnabas defended the conversion of gentile believers by faith alone on Christ while the Judaizers insisted they must follow the entire Jewish law and custom.

James the Elder now announced the decision of the Apostles and Elders in Acts 15:13-21. The gentile believers would not be required to fulfill the Jewish law nor be circumcised. Guidance was given on certain things from which they must abstain. Other than that, they were liberated from the law (Old Testament).

They then wrote letters accordingly and sent them by messenger to the church in Antioch and the various churches throughout Syria and Cilicia (Galatia).

Paul and Barnabas returned to Syrian Antioch with the good news. The Jerusalem Church also sent from their own people Silas and Judas Barsabas as their representatives to verify the matter. After a season of time at Antioch, Judas Barsabas returned home to Jerusalem, but Silas remained at Antioch with Paul and Barnabas.

This decision by the Jerusalem leadership holds fast through all of Christianity today. We live free from the ritual obligations of the Old Testament because of this decision rendered by the way of the influence of Paul and Barnabas.

By the way, the “guidance” given was to avoid things associated with idols, from fornication, and consuming blood which included strangled animals (not bled out). There were very good reasons for that, and it could warrant articles on those subjects, but not for today.