

## Acts of the Apostles 10-12

What we see here is the shift from the Jewish heritage to the Gentile, a shift which will change the Church forever. It is not a rejection or denunciation of Judaism, but a statement that the essential truths of Monotheism can now be embraced by non-Jews.

- \*the decline of pagan polytheism from the age of Plato

- \*we note the differences in the character of Zeus between the Iliad and the Odyssey: a tendency to monolatry

- \*but in antiquity monotheism was seen as a completely Jewish concept. We note the growing number of "God fearers", gentiles who respected the Jewish faith but could not quite convert to it

The Problems: The most obvious was dietary law

- Kashrut (Kosher) no pork, no carrion eaters, no reptiles

- Strict separation of milk and meat, both combined with Parve inc nuts

- Limit to five grains: wheat, barley, oats, rye and spelt. (rice?)

  - but not during Passover because of fermentation

- The forbidding of blood, which led to cooking and slaughtering laws

  - With all of these, there was a Calendar with holy days

- Second: The issue of circumcision of males

- Third: Judaism had been an active enemy of Rome, so loyalty was an

Acts 10-12 wants to say that a kind of Divine intervention occurred

Intervention# 1 Peter's Vision of nasty animals, three times

- \*This is confirmed by a large number of converts at Antioch

  - This follows a persecution: the blood of the martyrs is the seed

- # further confirmation by miracles and signs (Agabus)

- Note that miracles confirm authentic teachings

Intervention: the trials of Peter

- Note its resemblance to the passion of Christ; Peter is delivered (raised up) and seen by incredulous followers

- In this we see the cruelty of Herod - killing the guards who apparently did not do their job; he got Caligula to remove Pontius Pilate

- This Herod was a childhood friend of Claudius, upon whose accession reinforced his powers in Judea. He was a man of dual loyalties Roman and Jewish and he played whichever card he needed at the time; his sudden death in 44 AD seemed like Divine intervention. Was he plotting a revolt?

## II The ministry of Paul

- Raised in the Dispersion in Tarsus a city in the Province of Syria

Studied under Gamaliel, a leading moderate in Jewish theology  
\*wrote (or attributed to) 14 of the 27 books of the New T. His story  
undergirds Luke and Acts  
Has been called the First Christian theologian  
Main ideas: 1. Christianity is quite distinct from Judaism  
2. Justification by Grace apprehended by faith  
3. God has intervened decisively in human history in Christ  
4. Unity among all believers, male, female, slave free (imp today); to be a  
Christian is a whole new identity  
5. The four big ones: Romans & Galatians, calm vs furious  
1-11 Corinthians: Paul's problem parish (what is freedom)  
6. Ephesians: the distillation of Paul's thought  
7. Three missionary Journeys  
A Antioch and up the coast  
In Asia Minor and into Greece, visiting Philippi & Corinth  
Around Galatia and Phrygia into Macedonia, returns to Jerusalem  
He seems to have planned a trip to Spain (Tarshish) which never  
happened