

Acts 10:35 – All men (meaning, not only Jews) are acceptable to God if they:

1. Fear God (an attitude or action towards God)
2. Do what is right (an attitude or action towards men)
  - BUT....All men still have sin (to fear God means to know his character and holiness; And, our sinfulness.)
3. Everyone who believes in Jesus (this is salvation)...Acts 10:43

Acts 10:38-43 – The Apostolic Message

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|------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 1. John's Baptism            | 4. Jesus Died and was Raised to Life      | 6. Scripture Testifies |
| 2. Jesus Anointed            | 5. Witnesses- testify Death, Resurrection | 7. Forgiveness of Sins |
| 3. Disciples Witnessed (saw) | and Return to Judge                       |                        |

Acts 10:44 – the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message the moment they believed the message.

-In 11:17 Peter will explain it this way, "God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ."

-This event then showed the apostles and the early believers these doctrinal points

1. Gentiles can be accepted by God just like the Jews
2. Gentiles responded by faith to the message of Jesus Christ for salvation
3. The Holy Spirit came to the Gentiles to bring salvation and sealed their salvation

- 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."

Acts 10:45-46 – The Jewish believers who came along with Peter (11:12 – six believing Jewish men) to serve as witnesses of this event were "astonished" (*ekestesan* – "to be beside oneself, to be out of one's senses, to be amazed.")

- There had to be some outward manifestation (tongues, prophecy) or else Peter and his friends never would have accepted a mere "spiritual" change in these Gentiles...even with this there is going to continual resistance and a felt need to convert the Gentiles to the Law of Moses first.

Acts 10:47-48 – Baptized in water. These Gentiles have already been accepted by God, saved, sealed with the Spirit so God has accepted them. Now, there remains the work of their confession before men and acceptance by the church.

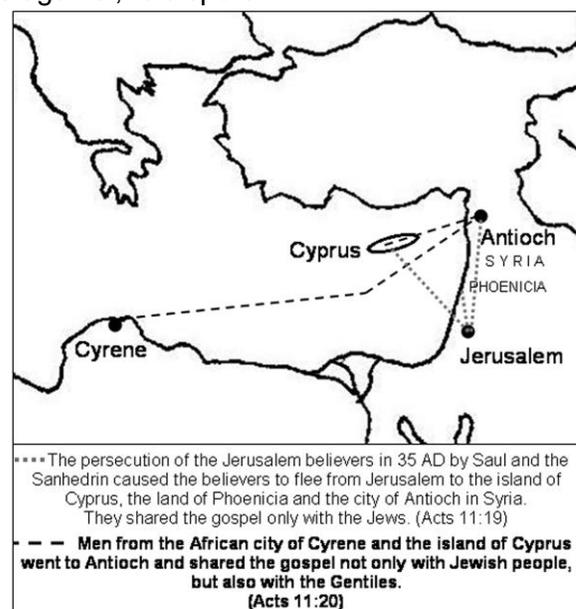
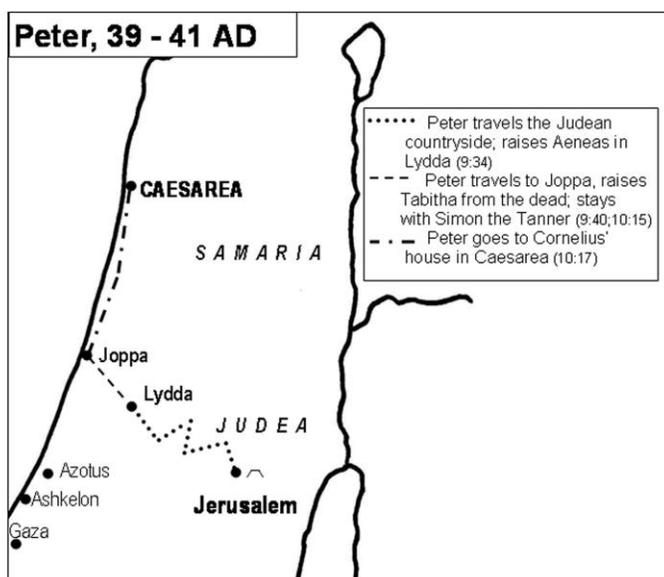
Acts 11 – Receiving Acceptance and Approval from Headquarters, the Jerusalem church

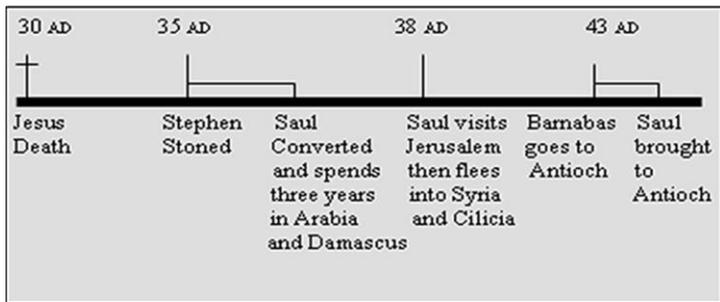
11:1 – Peter's behavior was revolutionary...so much so the story reached Jerusalem before Peter did!

This report is not going to set well with the Jewish believers, AND even less with Jewish non-believers.

This explains why it was so easy for Herod Agrippa I to execute James and later arrest Peter.(12:1-3)

11:2 – "criticized" is *diakrinomai* "to take issue, to take sides against, to dispute.





## Who is Saul of Tarsus?

Saul of Tarsus, the first great persecutor of the church, would later be known as the Apostle Paul.

Paul describes his earlier years in his own words:

### Paul's Ancestry

- "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no ordinary city." - Acts 21:39
- "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city (Jerusalem)." - Acts 22:3
- "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I."  
- 2 Corinthians 11:22
- "I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin." - Romans 11:1
- "If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews." - Philippians 3:4,5

### Paul's Education

- "Under Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today." - Acts 22:3
- "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee." - Acts 23:6
- "The Jews all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee." - Acts 26:4-5

### Paul's Character

- "As for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless." -Philippians 3:6
- "I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man." - 1 Timothy 1:12,13

### Paul the Persecutor

- "Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison." - Acts 8:3
- "I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison . . . I went to Damascus to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished."  
- Acts 22:4,5
- "I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. . . when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him." - Acts 22:19
- "I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth . . . On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Many times I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them."

