

THIS One Debate SPLIT the Early Church

Core Message: This episode explores a pivotal debate in the early Church regarding whether Gentile believers in Jesus needed to convert to Judaism by following Mosaic Law to be saved. Rabbi Schneider highlights the central role of James, the half-brother of Jesus, in settling this issue at the Jerusalem Council. The core message is that salvation comes through grace and faith in Jesus, not through adherence to the law. Gentile believers were welcomed into the faith without being required to observe all Jewish customs but were given a few key guidelines to maintain fellowship. This resolution reflects God's inclusive plan to call people from every nation into His name.

Main Bible Verses (NASB):

- **Core Memory Verse: (Galatians 2:1)** "Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also."
- (Galatians 2:9) "...and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised."
- (Acts 15:1) "Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.'"
- (Acts 15:7-9) "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, testified to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith."
- (Acts 15:19-20) "Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, but that we write

- (Acts 15:21) "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

- "James was the _____ of the mother church in Jerusalem."
- "We believe that we are saved through the _____ of the Lord Jesus."
- "James brings the matter to a close. He said, 'This is my _____.'"
- "Let's not trouble them with a bunch of _____ and laws."
- "These four things would have prevented the Gentile believers from being able to have _____ with the Jewish believers."
- "The Torah and the Prophets were being preached in the synagogue every _____."
- "Our faith is built upon _____."

(Use lines below for personal notes)

[illegible]

Reflection Questions:

1. What was James's position in the early church-- how is it that he made the final judgment during the Jerusalem Council?

2. How does the resolution of Acts 15 influence the way we understand grace and salvation today? Are you grateful for this outcome?

3. What four requirements were listed for Gentile believers in Acts 15? For what reason did Rabbi say they decided on these things? Is unity in doctrine and practice important?

4. How does this snapshot of the early history of the church increase your understanding of how God's grace melded Jews and Gentiles?

5. What does this passage teach us about God's larger plan for the Church to become inclusive?

Application Challenge of the Week:

Visit a Messianic or Hebrew roots fellowship this week or listen to a Torah teaching and write down one way it enhances your understanding of Jesus.

(Or come up with your own as the Lord leads):

Prayer Prompts:

- Thank God for including all nations in His plan of salvation.
- Ask for wisdom to live in grace and truth without legalism.
- Pray for unity between Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus.

Resources	Where to find it
Books by Rabbi K. A. Schneider <u>Decoding the Torah</u>	https://discoveringthejewishjesus.com/the-book-of-revelation-decoded-revised-edition/

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord cause His face to shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His face to you and give you peace.” Numbers 6:22-27 (