

THE STORY OF PETER

And

THE STORY OF RUTH

Aunt Hattie's Bible Stories

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by

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

PETER CONVINCES THE JERUSALEM ELDERS

WHEN the apostles and Christians in Jerusalem heard that the Gentiles had received the Word of God, they were greatly troubled and criticized Peter very severely when he went up to Jerusalem.

They said, "Why, Peter, you went into the house of a man of another nation and ate with him. You surely must know that you have broken the Law of Moses by doing so."

Then Peter told about the sheet with the clean and unclean animals in it, and the men coming from Caesarea with the invitation from Cornelius, and that the Holy Spirit had told him to go with them, nothing doubting.

He related to them the meeting with Cornelius and that God had told this Gentile to send men to Joppa for him that he might tell him and all of his house how they might be saved; and last of all, about God sending His Holy Spirit down upon them even while he was speaking.

"And now," continued Peter, if God sent His Holy Spirit down upon them the same as He had upon us who believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, then who was I that I should say that God had made a mistake?"

This convinced the Jerusalem Christians. They said it was all right and glorified God saying, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles given eternal life even to those who believe upon His name."

This was a time to be remembered in the history of the Christian Church, and God used Peter in a marvelous way to help the Jewish Christians to understand that His plan of salvation was not only for the Jews but for the whole world.

A few years later this question came up again. A great council was held in Jerusalem and all of the leaders of the new Christian Church were called together.

Some of the Jewish Christians thought that in order to be saved the Gentiles must first become Jews according to the Law of Moses and then after that they could become Christians. They held that all Christians were under the Law of Moses and had to do the works of the law.

After they had discussed the matter for some time, Peter arose and said, “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God sent me to the Gentiles with the message of salvation and that, when they believed, God sent His Holy Spirit upon them the same as He did upon us. He made no difference between us. They were saved through faith, and not by first keeping the Law of Moses. Now, what is the use of asking them to be burdened with the law? You know it was hard enough for us to keep it. And not only that; but we Jews are saved not by keeping the law but by believing upon Jesus Christ the same as they.”

Then James, the president of the council, made a notable speech. He said, “Simon Peter has told you about the first time that God visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name,” that is to say, “This is now the plan of God. Any Gentile or any Jew who believes upon Jesus Christ as his Saviour can be saved and become a member of the Church; of Jesus Christ. His salvation is apart from the law of Moses.”

Many Christians today think that they will be saved by good works. Peter said that no man could be saved except through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

~ end of chapter 14 ~

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