

The Acts of the Holy Spirit

Acts 15

When some of the brethren “come down from Judea” in 15:1, where are they headed? What is the content of their message, and what sorts of echoes do you see with other parts of the New Testament? What do Paul and Barnabas do on their way to Jerusalem, and when they arrive who among the people of Jerusalem end up being the initial disputants?

How does Acts 15:6 explain the purpose of this meeting in your translation? What is Peter’s main line of argument when he stands to speak, and what does Peter say about the history of Israel when he does speak? In Acts 15:11, what theological assertion does Peter make, and how does that assertion fit in with this discussion?

When James rules on the deliberations, how does he use the word *ethnai* or Gentiles in his initial statement? What prophet does he cite, and what characteristic way of reading does he use? Once he has laid out his rationale, what decision does he announce? What regulations (drawn from Leviticus 17-19) still remain in effect for believers from other nations?

Acts 15:22-35 serve as an epilogue to the debate in Jerusalem. What does the letter emphasize, and how does the letter account for the arrival of Judas and Silas? How do the faithful in Antioch respond to the letter? How does Acts 15:35 wrap up this part of the story? Does your Bible have an Acts 15:34?

What disagreement ends up with Paul and a new companion going to assemblies in Syria?