

# THE 12 APOSTLES: **WERE SENT ONLY TO ISRAEL!**

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□□□□ Did you know that neither Peter, nor any of the other eleven apostles, □□ ever conducted □□ a so-called 'World-Wide Mission'?

Someone of you might cry out a protest: 'But how about the Great Commission in Mat. 28:19, 20: □□□□ (AMP web version)

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations [help the people to learn of Me, believe in Me, and obey My words], baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always [remaining with you perpetually—regardless of circumstance, and on every occasion], even to the end of the age."*

(At this point I will recommend to you my separate article on the Great Commission found here in my site. It is explaining in details these things).

But □□ put □□ shortly, I will remind the reader □□ of a *series of key passages* □□ in this topic:

Matthew 28 and the Great Commission have been very lacking in its translation in most Bibles. □□ It should better have been translated □□ -□□ *'Go therefore and make disciples of **Jews from all nations**, baptizing them...'*.

We are noticing that Jesus never said, *'Go make disciples all over the global world, in every nation on earth, globally...'* -□□ no, in error that is an □□ *impression* □□ coming from the expression □□ *'Of all the nations'*.

But that expression, □□ *'Of all the nations'* □□ - was at that time Jesus' words of the Jews, and we can see in Scripture that God had already pre-arranged it all: Every year there was going to be a Holy Feast called 'Pentecost' as ordained in the Law of Moses for Israel. □□ Fifty days after Passover, the nation should celebrate Pentecost. One of the eight Holy Feast days ordained by God for Israel □□ (including the weekly Sabbath). And for this feast Jerusalem was the place to come together for this celebration. Acts 2:5-11 says it all,

5 Now there were □□ **Jews living in Jerusalem, devout □□ and God-fearing men** □□ from every nation under heaven. □□

6 And when this sound was heard, a crowd gathered, and they were bewildered because each one was hearing those in the upper room speaking in his own language □□ or □□ dialect. □□

7 They were completely astonished, saying, "Look! Are not all of these who are speaking Galileans? □□

8 Then how is it that each of us hears in our own language □□ or □□ native dialect? □□

9 [Among us there are] Parthians, Medes and Elamites, and people of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia

[Minor],

[10](#) Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and the visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes (Gentile converts to Judaism),

[11](#) Cretans and Arabs—we all hear them speaking in our [native] tongues about the mighty works of God!”

JEWS FROM JUST ABOUT THE ENTIRE ROMAN EMPIRE was gathered in Jerusalem it says, due to this Holy Feast of Pentecost. Jesus, as He bade His disciples to preach the Gospel (of the Kingdom of God on earth, ref. Acts 1:3), had this narrative in mind. They were to go preaching it to these Jews who had come for the Pentecost celebration – in Jerusalem and Judea. Luke 24:46-49,

“..and said, “And so it is written, that the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed) would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,

[47](#) and that repentance [necessary] for forgiveness of sins would be **preached in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.**

[48](#) You are witnesses of these things.

[49](#) “Listen carefully: I am sending the Promise of My Father [the Holy Spirit] upon you; but you are to remain in the city [of Jerusalem] until you are clothed (fully equipped) with power from on high.”

Wrong conclusions are made by many, reading that Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem until they were empowered by The Holy Spirit for the ministry. Thus implying that they would leave off for the ‘World-Wide’ mission as soon as they had been given the power promised. But we shall learn that this is not so.

Mark 16:15, 16,

“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”

[16](#) He who has believed [in Me] and has been baptized will be saved [from the penalty of God’s wrath and judgment]; but he who has not believed will be condemned.”

The expression ‘All the World’ and ‘All Creation’ comes from Greek cosmos. That word can mean several things, such as land, nation, city, earth, universe, the creation. The context is what decides which word to use. In Greek, context is always extremely important. Thus, Jesus said ‘Go out into all of cosmos Israel’ – and not in the meaning of the whole world and so forth. To those in the days of the disciples/apostles, their world was not all nations in existence, but it was the nation of Israel. Only Israel was promised a millennial Kingdom on earth with Messiah on the throne, Jesus. This is emphasized much in what John tells,

John 21:15-17,

“So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these [others do—with total commitment and devotion]?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You [with a

deep, personal affection, as for a close friend].” Jesus said to him, “**Feed My lambs.**”

16 Again He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me [with total commitment and devotion]?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You [with a deep, personal affection, as for a close friend].” Jesus said to him, “**Shepherd My sheep.**”

17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me [with a deep, personal affection for Me, as for a close friend]?” Peter was grieved that He asked him the third time, “Do you [really] love Me [with a deep, personal affection, as for a close friend]?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You [with a deep, personal affection, as for a close friend].” Jesus said to him, “**Feed My sheep.**”

First thing we notice is that there is no Great Commission here! But – it is ‘Hidden in Plain Sight’ – Jesus bade Peter to care for His **lambs and sheep**. Who were they?

The answer is laid out for us in Mat. 15:24, “He answered, “I was commissioned by God and sent only to the **lost sheep of the house of Israel.**”

The twelve apostles were only sent to the house of Israel. The twelve continued what Jesus had started before He died. Peter was told by Jesus to go and shepherd and feed His sheep, the house of Israel. **The lost sheep of Israel. Feed My lambs. Shepherd My sheep. Feed My sheep.**

Peter and the eleven were never commissioned to go outside of Israel to preach. So to care like this for the sheep and lambs of Israel – *the entire nation was likened with those* – meant that they had to be present there, inside that nation, for that was where those sheep lived. Going outside of the ‘Sheep herd’ would be to fail the sheep, and the wolves would come for them!

This is also totally in line with Acts history.

Later on, (Acts 9), Jesus called Paul to go into the dispersion, outside of Israel, and preach what Peter and the eleven did inside Israel. Paul was to reach out to Jews who had not heard it, due to the fact that they had not been in Jerusalem that day of Pentecost in Acts 2. These were the ones living in the eastern parts of the empire.

Thus we learn that Peter’s ministry was not entirely the same as Paul’s,

Gal. 2:7, 8,

“But on the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised (Gentiles), just as Peter had been [entrusted to proclaim the gospel] to the circumcised (Jews);

8 (for He who worked effectively for Peter and empowered him in his ministry to the Jews also worked effectively for me and empowered me in my ministry to the Gentiles).”

Peter should just minister inside of Israel’s land, but Paul and his helpers should go to those in the dispersion. To

Jews, proselytes and kings, Acts 9:15. Peter was to preach to the circumcised (Jews)...and to a few proselytes, those in Cornelius' house seen in Acts 10.

Acts 10 was 8-9 years after Pentecost in Acts 2, and clearly proves to us that he NEVER had any spiritual/social relations with Gentiles whatsoever. He had fellowship with Jews only, its non-negotiable Bible truth!

The Lord had to persuade Peter to go to Cornelius at Caesarea, by giving him a vision when he was with Simon in Jaffa. The vision came as Peter was in prayer, Acts 10:9-16,

*"The next day, as they were on their way and were approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof of the house about the sixth hour (noon) to pray,"*

*10but he became hungry and wanted something to eat. While the meal was being prepared he fell into a trance;*

*11and he saw the sky opened up, and an object like a great sheet descending, lowered by its four corners to the earth,*

*12and it contained all kinds of four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air. 13A voice came to him, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat!"*

*14But Peter said, "Not at all, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common (unholy) and [ceremonially] unclean."*

*15And the voice came to him a second time, "What God has cleansed and pronounced clean, no longer consider common (unholy)."*

*16This happened three times, and then immediately the object was taken up into heaven."*

Peter understood that this was about Gentiles – in the image of animals which were considered forbidden in the Law of Moses, and thus unclean. He told the Lord that he had never eaten any unclean foods (Gentiles were held as unclean, and was forbidden access to the temple area).

And by this incident told, we have Peter's own words telling us that he never was sent to Gentiles, to preach/teach, and never to keep fellowship with them in any way. He was correctly 'classified' by Paul in Gal. 2:7, 8 as one who was only sent to the circumcised, which was Israel of course.

But he chose to obey the Lord and so he went to Cornelius to preach.

We notice that this was a 'One Off' – and did not alter Peter's ministry in any way.

Acts 11:19-21 witnesses about this, - they only went preaching to Jews...and a few men from Cyprus and Cyrene:

*"So then [since they were unaware of these developments] those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with [the stoning of] Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, without telling the message [of salvation through Christ] to anyone except Jews."*

**20** But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks as well, proclaiming [to them] the good news about the Lord Jesus.

**21** And the hand (the power and presence) of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord [for salvation, accepting and drawing near to Jesus as Messiah and Savior].”

Peter’s fellowship in company of Gentiles (historians calculate some 40 guests in Cornelius’ house) provoked the other apostles and brethren in Jerusalem – and they were so totally surprised and astonished that they demanded an explanation. So Peter told them all of it, in details, Acts 11:1-4,

“Now the apostles and the believers who were throughout Judea heard [with astonishment] that **the Gentiles also had received and accepted the word of God** [the message concerning salvation through Christ].”

**2** So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision [certain Jewish believers who followed the Law] took issue with him [for violating Jewish customs],

**3** saying, “You went to uncircumcised men and [even] ate with them!”

**4** But Peter began [at the beginning] and explained [the events] to them step by step, saying...”

There is no doubt about it, for Peter and the eleven stayed inside of Israel’s land where they ministered by preaching the Kingdom Gospel to them. What did they do, or rather – where had they been all these 8-9 years since Pentecost in Acts 2?

The answer to this is written straight forward and openly for all to understand, Acts 5:12-16,



**“At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders (attesting miracles) were continually taking place among the people. And by common consent they all met together [at the temple] in [the covered porch called] Solomon’s portico.**

See image.

**13** But none of the rest [of the people, the non-believers] dared to associate with them; however, the people were holding them in high esteem and were speaking highly of them.

**14** More and more believers in the Lord, crowds of men and women, were constantly being added to their number,

**15** to such an extent that they even carried their sick out into the streets and put them on cots and sleeping pads, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on one of them [with healing power].

**16** And the people from the towns in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing the sick and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all being

healed.”

The scenario described in Acts 5:12-16 were probably such things that took place *not necessarily every day all the year around,* but rather it occurred when there was a Holy Feast day, for instance Passover or Pentecost. Then it was always a multitude of visiting Jews in addition to the local residents, making a total of several thousands of people in Jerusalem. Like it was in Acts 2 and Pentecost, ‘Jews from all nations’ attended the feast. (Acts 2:5). Thus Peter and the eleven could keep on with what Jesus had commissioned them to do – preaching the Kingdom Gospel and healing the sick and afflicted. Peter telling them that Jesus would come from heaven the very same time He found that Israel had repented as a nation, Acts 3:19-21.

Notice my emphasize of Acts 5:12 in blue: The apostles usually were ALL present in the temple, at the portico of Solomon. They gathered there through most feasts in these 8-9 years that had passed since Pentecost in Acts 2.

The twelve could not appear at ‘two places at a time’ – could they?

If they had been meant to go out into the entire world, and all nations on earth, - how was it that the Bible says otherwise – they were always to be found in the temple, in Jerusalem. Thus we know for certain that the twelve never went world-wide in ministry.

But there was one man in particular whom God chose to send out into other nations with the Gospel, namely Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

Without Paul and his enormous efforts in ministry to us Gentiles, that which we now know as the *free Grace Gospel* – it is for sure anticipated by Bible historians and theologians that Peter and the twelve’s efforts would, by the centuries passing, go into the *fog of forgotten history*; just a minor Jewish sect who suffered under the fall of Israel and their destruction by the Romans.

It was Paul, not Peter and the eleven who brought the Gospel of salvation to the world.

This Gospel is found in Ephesians and Colossians only.

Eph. 2:8, 9 is a most elegant and true phrase we like to repeat to ourselves:

*“For it is by grace [God’s remarkable compassion and favor drawing you to Christ] that you have been saved [actually delivered from judgment and given eternal life] through faith. And this [salvation] is not of yourselves [not through your own effort], but it is the [undeserved, gracious] gift of God;*

*not as a result of [your] works [nor your attempts to keep the Law], so that no one will [be able to] boast or take credit in any way [for his salvation].”*

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