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INTRODUCTION

Acts 15:1-30 has been described as the narrative account of the Jerusalem council or the apostolic council. Coming as it does at almost the center of the Acts of the Apostles, it plays a pivotal role in the progression of that book. The apostolic council marks the last time that Peter is mentioned in Acts. From Acts 15 on the focus has shifted almost entirely upon the Apostle Paul. With that shift of focus came a diminished role of the Jerusalem church. The chapter also marks a watershed in the theological progression of the gospel. The gospel of grace is unequivocally advanced to the Gentile world as the gospel is taken to the shores of Europe and beyond.

The apostolic council represents an attempt to accommodate previously held tradition to the rapidly changing theological reality presented by the gospel of grace. The pressure to wrap the gospel in the guise of a proselytic Judaism threatened to diminish the theological heritage for every Gentile believer from that time on. The council represents a diligent effort of the community of faith to seek the divine will in the midst of controversy.

For the above reasons Acts 15 is worthy of exegetical attention. This paper will be divided into two chapters. The first will address critical concerns which have long been associ-

ated with Acts 15. These will include the issues of Luke's sources, the issues of historical and chronological harmonization with Galatians, and the textual issues of the passage. The second chapter will present an exegesis of Acts 15:1-30 as guided by the seminar working model in Exegeting the New Testament.¹

¹Lorin L. Cranford, Exegeting the New Testament: A Seminar Working Model with Expanded Research Bibliography, 2d ed. (Fort Worth: Scripta, 1991).

CHAPTER ONE
CRITICAL ISSUES

"Über das 15. Kap. haben die Forscher besonders heftig gestritten." So begins D. Ernst Haenchen's analysis of Acts 15.² Even if one limits the discussion to the late nineteenth century to the present, a wide diversity of approaches are apparent in the works of those who have written on Acts 15 and the apostolic council it portrays. A variety of issues come to bear in a critical appraisal of the chapter.

The Issue of Sources

One of the issues which continues to resurface in an analysis of the chapter is that of sources.³ Bernhard Weiss viewed the composition of Acts 15, as he did much of the book of Acts, as a conflation of two texts: one which he labeled the "source," and the other from the reviser, Luke.⁴ From these two sources

²D. Ernst Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 12th ed., Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1959)

³The following discussion on Acts 15 and sources is structured along the discussion which Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 396-98, presents. However, a fuller treatment of the critical exploration of the sources behind the book of Acts may be found in Dupont, The Sources of the Acts, trans. Kathleen Pond (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964).

⁴Weiss' view is presented in his Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Neue Testament, 2d ed. (Berlin: W. Hertz, 1897); English

one may reconstruct two conflicts in the chapter. The first conflict, in Acts 15:1, is a dispute which was initiated in Antioch. The second is that which is recorded in Acts 15:5, which arose in Jerusalem. This first conflict was argued and resolved in the presence of the apostles and elders, while the second took place before the entire congregation. The first conflict is largely the product of the reviser, Luke, while the second is derived from the source. The speeches of James and Peter are authentic, and belong to the source, largely on the premise that the same author could not have composed two speeches which differ so in style and form.⁵

Friedrich Spitta took a different approach to source analysis as it relates to the apostolic council.⁶ Spitta postulated that Acts was composed by two sources: A and B, with only slight contributions by the author in transitional passages.⁷ The two sources are largely parallel accounts, although the B source is a popular account, often composed of legendary material, and historically unreliable. In regards to Acts 15, Spitta believed

translation: A Manual of Introduction to the New Testament, 2 vols., trans. A. J. K. Davidson, Foreign Biblical Library (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1889). The presentation of Weiss in this paper is adapted from that in Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 397.

⁵See B. Weiss, A Manual Introduction to the New Testament, 1:575.

⁶See Friedrich Spitta, Sie Apostelgeschichte: ihre Quellen und deren Geschichtlicher Wert (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1891), 179ff.

⁷See DuPont, The Sources of the Acts, 34.

that 15:1-33 was inserted into the account of the first missionary journey. The original narrative flowed uninterrupted from 14:28 to 15:36. Acts 15 is actually a parallel account of the journey from Antioch to Jerusalem recounted in Acts 11:29-12:24. The account in Acts 15:1-33 should be inserted after 12:24. However, the parallel in Acts 15 is from the unreliable B source.

Hans Hinrich Wendt considered Acts 15:1-33 an interpolation into an otherwise mission report.⁸ Although the account was based upon tradition, rather than freely composed, certain elements were composed by the author: "den Reden des Petrus und Jakobus werden wesentlich seine komposition sein."⁹

Otto Bauernfeind's commentary marked a transition in the discussion of Acts 15 and its underlying sources.¹⁰ Bauernfeind emphasized Luke's role as a redactor, not with the task "eine Art synoptischer Ordnung zwischen den einzelnen Berichten herzustellen; die Christen, für die sein Buch bestimmt war, brauchten ein übersichtliches Bild, das die Wahrheit der Einigung

⁸See Hans Hinrich Wendt, Die Apostelgeschichte, 5th ed., Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament 3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1899), 224ff. Wendt differs from Adolf von Harnack, Die Apostelgeschichte, Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Neue Testament 3 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1908), 134-39, in that while Harnack includes Acts 15 in an Antiochene setting source (to which Harnack attributed considerable historical value), Wendt excludes it. See Dupont, The Sources of Acts, 36.

⁹Wendt, Die Apostel Geschichte, 225, n. 2.

¹⁰Otto Bauernfeind, Kommentar und Studien zur Apostelgeschichte, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 22 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1980), 187.

in fassbarer Form festhielt."¹¹ This set the stage for the work of Martin Dibelius,¹² who approached Acts 15 as a literary construct without the need to separate out material according to various sources.¹³ However, Dibelius' analysis was destructive to the historical credibility of Luke's account, concluding that Acts 15 is unhistorical and that only Galatians may be used to reconstruct the account of the conflict between Gentile and Jewish Christianity of which Acts 15 alludes.¹⁴ Dibelius believes that Luke produced the apostolic decree (15:23-29) from a written document; however, that document was rewritten into the context of the council.¹⁵

Rudolf Bultmann largely followed Dibelius' lead in asserting that Acts 15 is a composition of rewritten source material designed to construct a context for the apostolic decree (a written document with which Luke was familiar).¹⁶ That the apostolic decree is in fact out of context may be seen in its address, which includes not merely Antioch, but also Syria and

¹¹Bauernfeind, Kommentar und Studien zur Apostelgeschichte, 187.

¹²Martin Dibelius, Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte, 5th ed., ed. Heinrich Greeven (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1968).

¹³Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 398: "der Text lässt sich ohne Quellenscheidung verstehen."

¹⁴Dibelius, Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte, 100.

¹⁵Dibelius, Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte, 89.

¹⁶Rudolf Bultmann, "Zur Frage nach den Quellen der Apostelgeschichte," in New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of Thomas Walter Manson, 1893-1958, ed. Angus John Brockhurst Higgins (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), 68-80.

Cilicia. Paul and Barnabas specifically have been rewritten into Acts 15, which originally focused upon Peter. Haenchen wrote in response to Bultmann's views on the chapter, asserting three aspects about the composition of Acts 15 in relation to underlying source.¹⁷ First, he maintains that the speeches of Peter and James cannot be attributed to one source. The speech of Peter presupposes the story of Cornelius as Luke recounts it in Acts 10-11, while the speech of James consists largely of an argument that is taken from the Septuagint. Second, the discrepancies of 15:1-5 with two conflicts involving two antagonist parties are merely apparent, and can be explained in the rewriting of the narrative without difficulty. Finally, the address of the apostolic decree does not limit its scope but enlarges it through mention of Christian communities whose origin is not addressed by Luke.

Haenchen has noted that the general trend in studies on Acts 15 has moved from an exploration of disparate sources to a focus on the author:¹⁸

Sie betrachtete es zunächst als ein Konglomerat von Quellen. Es galt, dieses Gemenge zu fortieren und aus der verlässlichen Quelle zu ersehen, was eigentlich geschehen war. Der biblische Autor kam nur als Lieferant von mehr oder minder zuverlässigen Nachrichten in Frage. Je weiter die Forschung fortschreitet, desto mehr tritt die Quellenfrage zurück. Der biblische Autor kommt wieder in Sicht, und zwar nicht bloss als Tradent von Quellen.

¹⁷D. Ernst Haenchen, "Quellenanalyse und Kompositionsanalyse in Act 15," in Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias, ed. Walther Eltester (Berlin: A. Topelmann, 1960), 153-60.

¹⁸Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 398.

The Biblical author now is the focus as both a creative redactor and literary producer, with a focus to understand the theological thrust of the literary composition.

One would think that given Haenchen's remarks, inquiry into sources no longer occupies the interest of those who write on Acts 15. Marie Émile Boismard has written on the problem of sources in Acts 15 as recently as 1988.¹⁹ Boismard suggests that Acts 15:1-33 has gone through four stages of redaction. The first stage was the original narrative, in which the speech by Peter was made immediately after the conversion of Cornelius and his household in Acts 10-11. Paul and Barnabas play no role in the original narrative. The second stage of redaction changes little of the original narrative's content and order. However, the third stage of the redaction removes the speech of Peter from its original context and displaces it between the first and second missionary journeys and associates it with a source concerning the disturbance with converted Pharisees in Antioch. The fourth stage of redaction transposes the conflict and its resolution back to Jerusalem, and is essentially the form of the text as it exists today. Boismard's reconstruction posits two written sources: the original source of the first stage and one

¹⁹Marie Émile Boismard, "Le `concile' de Jérusalem (Act 15, 1-33), Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses 64 (1988) 433-40. This writer believes that the article published is intended as part of a forthcoming commentary on Acts by Boismard and Arnaud Lamouille. The facts of its publication are not known to this writer.

which incorporates the apostolic decree. All of the subsequent stages may be accounted for through the process of redaction.

The Issue of Acts 15 and Galatians 2

Another issue concerning the narrative of Acts 15 is its relation with the second visit of Paul to Jerusalem recounted in Galatians 2:1-10. In the Galatians passage, Paul relates how he journeyed to Jerusalem accompanied by Barnabas and Titus (Galatians 2:1). While in Jerusalem, Paul discussed the message he had been preaching with the pillar apostles: James, Peter, and John (2:9). Opposition arose against Paul and his party on account of Titus' lack of circumcision (2:3). Sometime after this journey Peter travels to Antioch and a dispute develops between Peter and Paul concerning table fellowship (2:11-14). Several suggestions have been made as to the relationship of Acts 15:1-35 and Galatians 2:1-10.

One proposal is that Acts 15 parallels Galatians 2:1-10. This view is widely held,²⁰ and has several features in its favor. There is agreement in both accounts concerning the subject matter, over the participants involved, and over the

²⁰Charles B. Cousar, s.v. "Jerusalem, Council of," in The Anchor Bible Dictionary, ed. David Noel Freedman, et al (New York: Doubleday, 1992), labels this view as "the most widely held proposal." Among its adherents are J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Commentary to the Galatians: A Revised Text with Introduction, Notes and Dissertations, J. B. Lightfoot's Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995; reprint), 123-28; Martin Hengel, Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 111-26.

fundamental outcome.²¹ The greatest problem with this identification is that Paul fails to mention the apostolic decree of Acts 15:22-29.²² However, other problems exist: the meeting in Galatians is described as a private meeting, while Acts 15 is not, nor does Paul mention a previous famine relief journey to Jerusalem in Galatians 2.²³

Acts 11:27-30; 12:25 parallels Galatians 2:1-10. The occasion for this visit by Paul and Barnabas is to deliver a collection for famine relief in the Jerusalem church.²⁴ This view postulates that the private meeting with the pillar apostles occurred during the visit. Thus the visit of Acts 11:30 is not excluded by Paul in Galatians 2:1-10. These two visits have several points of correlation: Both were initiated by revelation (Gal. 2:2; Acts 11:28. Both involved Paul and Barnabas together (Gal. 2:1; Acts 11:29). This view has the advantage of relieving

²¹See David Wenham, "Acts and the Pauline Corpus: II. The Evidence of Parallels," The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting, ed. Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clarke, The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting 1, ed. Bruce W. Winter (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1993), 228-29.

²²Cousar, s.v. "Jerusalem, Council of;" Wenham, "Acts and the Pauline Corpus II," 230-32.

²³See Wenham, "Acts and the Pauline Corpus II," 229-34.

²⁴This view finds favor with Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury, Additional Notes to the Commentary, The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I, the Acts of the Apostles, vol. 5, ed. F. J. Foakes and Kirsopp Lake (London: Macmillan, 1933), 445-74; F. F. Bruce, Commentary on the Galatians, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1982), 106-28; Ronald Y. K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1988), 86.

Paul's culpability of not embracing the stipulations of the apostolic decree is his dispute with Peter, because that dispute occurred before the decree was formulated.²⁵ However, if Acts 11:30 and Galatians 2:1-10 describe the same visit, then the Gentile controversy is lacking from Luke's account. Is this omission likely so soon after the events of Cornelius' conversion? Nor does Acts 11:30 specifically mention a meeting between Paul and the apostles.

Another proposal suggests that Galatians 2:1-10 parallels Acts 15:1-4 and 12, on the basis that Luke conflated two accounts concerning disputes between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. Those elements of the apostolic council that feature Paul and Barnabas are from an earlier conference which Paul recounts in Galatians 2:1-10, and which resolved the issue of circumcision. A second conference was held in Jerusalem (Acts 15:5-11; 13-33) to address the issue of table fellowship between Jewish and Gentile believers. Paul was absent from this conference, and was consequently not a party to the apostolic decree.²⁶

²⁵In fact, Wenham, "Acts and the Pauline Corpus II," notes that the Antioch dispute between Paul and Peter makes best sense between Acts 11:30 and Acts 15: There is no indication that Paul's discussion with the pillar apostles resulted in any resolution concerning Gentile converts and circumcision or any discussion concerning table fellowship. It may very well be that dispute with Peter that inspired the stipulations of the apostolic decree. It also seems unlikely that Peter would have acquiesced to the men from James in Antioch after his speech in Acts 15:6b-11.

²⁶See Johannes Weiss, Earliest Christianity: A History of the Period A.D. 30-150, trans. Frederick C. Grant (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), 1:259-73.

Another proposal is that the Acts 15 council takes place later (chronologically at the same time as Paul's visit in Acts 18:22).²⁷ In this case Galatians 2:1-10 parallels Acts 18:22. The narrative of Acts 15:1-30 was displaced by the redactor to its present location. However, this chronology is dependent on the pauline letters to the exclusion of Acts.²⁸

Paul J. Achtemeier has proposed that Paul was present at the discussion recorded in Acts 11:1-8, occasioned when Peter gives an account to the Jerusalem church concerning the conversion of Cornelius and his household.²⁹ Achtemeier contends that the writer of Acts is unaware of Paul's presence in Jerusalem and his private meeting with James, Peter, and John. However, Paul's account of the meeting is that which is provided by Galatians 2:1-10. The council of Acts 15 occurs after both Peter and Paul have left on their respective missions. Their presence recorded at the apostolic council is erroneous.

The Issue of the Text

The Western Text

The textual history of Acts 15 presents the exegete with significant challenges. Many of these challenges arise from the

²⁷See John Knox, Chapters in a Life of Paul (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950; Gerd Lüdemann, Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles: Studies in Chronology, trans. F. Stanley Jones (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 149-57.

²⁸Cousar, s.v. "Jerusalem, Council of."

²⁹Paul J. Achtemeier, The Quest for Unity in the New Testament Church: A Study in Paul and Acts (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 44-55.

conflicting witness to the text manifested in the contrast between the Alexandrian tradition of the text of Acts and that of the Western tradition of the text.³⁰ It is in these two distinct forms that the text of the Acts of the Apostles circulated in the early church.³¹ The Alexandrian text of the Acts of the Apostles

³⁰"Alexandrian" and "Western" are terms which were first applied to families, or recensions, of texts by J. Griesbach (1777) and J. S. Semler (1766); see F. G. Kenyon and A. W. Adams, The Text of the Greek Bible, rev. (Surrey: Duckworth, 1975), 214, 223; Eldon J. Epp, s.v. "Western Text," in Anchor Bible Dictionary, ed. David Noel Freedman, et al (New York: Doubleday, 1992); J. Harold Greenlee, Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1964), 74. In modern textual criticism of the New Testament four local recensions have been postulated, which in addition to the Alexandrian and Western families, include the Byzantine (closely associated with the *Textus Receptus* or the "majority text") and Caesarean text types (the latter has indeterminate representation for the Book of Acts), as well as an extensive category of manuscripts of indeterminate recension. In an effort to remove potentially erroneous geographical associations inherent to the nomenclature described above, Kenyon, The Text of the Greek Bible, 208, has suggested that the Byzantine text be designated ", the Alexandrian as \$, the Caesarean as (, and the Western text as *. The Western text is in particular somewhat of a misnomer, in that some of its principal witnesses, the uncial D, and some Syriac versions (notably the Peshitta and corrections to the Harclean Syriac) are believed to be of eastern origin; see D. C. Parker, s.v. "Codex (Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis)," in Anchor Bible Dictionary, ed. David Noel Freeman, et al (New York: Doubleday, 1992); Epp, s.v. "Western Text." For the purposes of this paper the designations of Alexandrian and Western will be retained.

³¹See Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (third edition), corrected edition (London: United Bible Societies, 1975), 259. Epp, s.v. "Western Text," describes the Alexandrian and Western recensions as "the earliest identifiable `text -types.'" However, this assumption has been called into question by Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticisms, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), 54-56, 64-69.

is represented by the papyri p^{45} and p^{74} , the uncials !, A, B, C, and Q, and the minuscules 33, 81, 104, 326, and 1175.³² The Western text in the book of Acts finds its principle representation in the uncial D^{ea}, also known as the Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis. This manuscript has been located in Lyons, France in the ninth century. However, the style of the original script, as well as that of an early corrector, appear to have an eastern affiliation.³³ The writing of this manuscript is early, and may date as early as the third century C.E.³⁴ The Western text of the book of Acts is also attested by the fragmentary papyri p^{29} , p^{38} , and p^{48} , by the uncial 0165, by the minuscules 383, and 614, by certain marginal readings of the Harclean Syriac version, the African Old Latin manuscript h, and by the citations of Acts by Cyprian and Augustine.³⁵

³²Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 259.

³³So postulates Parker, s.v. "Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis."

³⁴Dates for the Codex Bezae have ranged from the fourth century to the seventh; see Eldon Jay Epp, The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis, Society for New Testament Monograph Series 3, ed. Matthew Black (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966). Hermann Josef Frede, Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften, Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel 4 (Freiburg: Herder, 1964), 18, n. 4, suggests a fourth century date. Parker, s.v. "Codex Bezae Catabridgiensis," offers a date for the extant manuscript of shortly before 400 C.E., although he states the basic form of the text to date from the second century.

³⁵Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 259; Epp, s.v. "Western Text." Epp also lists the church fathers Marcion, Tatian (in his *Diatessaron*), Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Ephraem of Syria. B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, The New Testament in the Original Greek (New York Harper, 1882), 2:112-

The Western text differs from the Alexandrian text (and from the eclectic but generally pro-Alexandrian critical editions of Nestle-Aland and the United Bible Societies) in being both longer and more expansive in its language. The Western text of the Acts is significant for its numerous additions. Consequently, the resultant Western text of the Acts of the Apostles is about one-eighth longer than the Alexandrian text.³⁶

Accounting for two differing texts of such early attestation has posed a significant challenge. Westcott and Hort described the Western text as a corruption of the neutral text (largely synonymous with the Alexandrian text), the result of a freely creative revision of the latter.³⁷ A similar conclusion was suggested by James Hardy Ropes, who believed a single reviser writing before 150 C.E. rewrote the Alexandrian original, harmonizing parallel accounts and providing consistency in the narrative accounts.³⁸ In contrast, A. C. Clark argued that the Western text represents the original composition of the author of

13, adds to the above Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, and Origen.

³⁶See Epp, s.v. "Western Text." Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, xix, 260, reports a ten percent increase in length for the Western text.

³⁷See Westcott and Hort, The New Testament in the Original Greek, 2:122-25.

³⁸James H. Ropes, The Text of Acts, The Beginnings of Christianity Part I: The Acts of the Apostles, vol. 3, ed. F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (London: Macmillan and Company, 1926), ccxxxi-xxxii, ccxliv-xlv.

Acts, which was systematically abbreviated to form the Alexandrian text.³⁹

The phenomenon of the Western text has also been explained by postulating that Luke wrote two editions of the Acts of the Apostles. The first of these was made for Theophilus, while the second was composed for the church at large.⁴⁰ Many difficulties are encountered in this proposal. C. S. C. Williams notes that "the two texts are so conflicting at many points that the same author could not have produced both."⁴¹ It does not seem plausi-

³⁹A. C. Clark, The Acts of the Apostles: A Critical Edition, With Introduction and Notes on Selected Passages (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1933), xx-v-xxxii. Kenyon, The Text of the Greek Bible, 237-38, and Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 266-67, note that in contrast to Clark's earlier work, The Primitive Text of the Gospels and Acts (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1914), Clark replaced his previous theory of an inadvertent scribal omission with one of deliberate editorial alteration.

⁴⁰This theory was developed by Friedrich Blass in two works which he composed in Latin: the first is Acta Apostolorum sive Lucae ad Theophilum liber alter: secundum formam quae videtur Romanam (Leipzig: Teubner, 1896); followed by Euangelium secundum Lucam sive Lucae ad Theophilum liber prior: secundum formam quae videtur Romanam (Leipzig: Teubner, 1897). Blass' argument is presented by Kenyon, The Text of the Greek Bible, 238; Epp, s.v. "Western Text;" Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 260-61. Blass is followed by Theodor Zahn, Introduction to the New Testament, trans. John Moore Trout (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1987; reprint, 1909), 3:8-10; and J. M. Wilson, The Acts of the Apostles Translated from the Codex Bezae with an Introduction on its Lucan Origin and Importance (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1924). C. S. C. Williams, Alterations to the Text of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1951), 54, also includes William M. Ramsay in this list of Blass supporters, although Ramsay, St. Paul the Traveller and Roman Citizen (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979; reprint, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), 23-27, speaks disparagingly of the Bezae Codex.

⁴¹Williams, Alterations of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts, 54.

ble that Luke would have changed the number of stipulations of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:20, 29), nor that he would have contradicted himself as to the place of residence of Mnason (Acts 21:16).⁴²

Others have suggested that the Western text preserves in written form the oral presentation of the Acts by Luke in Rome,⁴³ or that it was produced in a time when the preservation of textual traditions was fluid.⁴⁴ F. G. Kenyon postulated that the individual responsible for the Western additions was a companion of Paul who transcribed factual information from personal knowledge.⁴⁵ Several have suggested that the differences of the

⁴²These examples are from Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 262. A similar difficulty in the Gospel of Luke is explaining the substitution in the Western text of the Lukan genealogy with that found in the Gospel of Matthew; see Kenyon, The Western Text in the Gospels and Acts (London: Humphrey Milford, n.d.), 16.

⁴³Such was the suggestion of George Salmon, Some Thoughts on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament (London: J. Murray, 1897), 140.

⁴⁴Epp, s.v. "Western Text," notes that "the dual features-- its early and widespread use and its lack of homogeneity-- suggested to others that the 'Western' text might represent very early 'unrevised' textual traditions of the NT. . . ." That the first two centuries of the transmission of the text was perceived as being very fluid has been suggested by Westcott and Hort, The New Testament in the Original Greek, 2:120-26; and Martin Dibelius, "The Text of Acts: An Urgent Critical Task," Journal of Religion 21 (1941) 421-31.

⁴⁵See F. G. Kenyon, The Text of the Greek Bible (London: Duckworth, 1937), 235-36. This speculation does not appear in the 1975 edition of the same title. However, Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 272, notes that the committee responsible for the book of Acts in the UBS third edition of the Greek New Testament "judged that some of the information incorporated in certain Western expansions may well be factually accurate, though not deriving from the original

Western text may be explained through Semitic influences. Matthew Black postulates that the Alexandrian and Western text types are two redactions from the same primitive "Aramized" Greek Text.⁴⁶ Charles Cutler Torrey maintained that the Western text represented the result of an Aramaic targum of the Alexandrian text which had been retranslated back into Greek.⁴⁷ Still others have sought an explanation for the differences of the Western text in the theological biases exhibited in the text.⁴⁸

author of Acts. F. F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek Text), notes that some of the Western additions are attractive and may be accepted, "if they did not keep such questionable company."

⁴⁶Matthew Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts, 3d ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1967), 279-80.

⁴⁷Charles Cutler Torrey, Documents of the Primitive Church (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941), 112-48.

⁴⁸Philippe H. Menoud, "The Western Text and the Theology of Acts," in Jesus Christ and the Faith: A Collection of Studies, trans. Eunice M. Paul, Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 18 (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1978), 61-83, sees a definite anti-Jewish bias in the Western text, along with an emphasis on universalism, the Spirit, and alterations to the name of Jesus. The anti-Jewish bias has been developed by G. E. Rice, "The Anti-Judaic Bias of the Western Text in the Gospel of Luke," Andrews University Seminary Studies 18 (1980) 51-57; *idem*, "Some Further Examples of Anti-Judaic Bias in the Western Text of the Gospel of Luke," Andrews University Seminary Studies 18 (1980) 149-56; Eldon Jay Epp, "The 'Ignorance Motif' in Acts and Anti-Judaic Tendencies in Codex Bezae," Harvard Theological Review 55 (1962) 51-62; and W. Thiele, "Ausgewählte Beispiele zur Charakterisierung des 'Westlichen' Textes der Apostelgeschichte," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 56 (1965) 51-63. However, this is disputed for the book of Acts by R. P. Hanson, "The Provenance of the Interpolator of the 'Western' Text of Acts and of Acts Itself," New Testament Studies 12 (1965-66) 211-30; *idem*, "The Ideology of Codex Bezae in Acts," New Testament Studies 14 (1967-68) 282-86; C. K. Barrett, "Is There a Theological Tendency in Codex Bezae?" in Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black, ed.

One may easily see the complexity of solutions proposed for the problems which the Western text raises. None of the above explanations of the origin of the Western text satisfactorily explain the diversity of variations encountered in the Western text of Acts itself. D. Ernst Haenchen notes that three types of variants characterize the Western text: (1) "Der `westliche' Text zeigt in der Apg wie in den Evangelien und Paulusbriefen eine Fülle kleiner Änderungen: sie wollen verdeutlichen und glätten."⁴⁹ These minor variations not only clarify and explain the text, but also on occasion introduce pious phrases or alterations to the name of Jesus. These changes do not actually constitute a recension of the text, since they do not comprise a unity. (2) "Änderungen anderer Art find dem `westlichen' Actert eigentümlich."⁵⁰ The revisions of this category reveal the hand of the reviser, and are characterized by both long and short additions that eliminate seams and gaps, adding historical, biographical, and geographical detail. (3) "Andere Änderungen gehören nicht dem `westlichen' Text als solchen an, auch nicht seinem Bearbeiter, von dem wir soeben gesprochen haben, sondern

Ernest Best and R. McL. Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 15-27; M. Wilson, "Luke and the Bezan Text of Acts," in Les Acts des Apôtres: traditions, rédactions, théologie, ed. J. Kremer, et al, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologiarum Lovaniensium 48 (Gembloux: Leuven University Press, 1979), 447-55.

⁴⁹Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 48.

⁵⁰Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 48.

einem bestimmten Koder, dem berühmten Koder Bezae."⁵¹ These variations associated with the Codex Bezae exhibit an assortment of scribal idiosyncrasies. While some of these resemble Aramaisms, Haenchen attributes them to scribal errors. Haenchen concludes that, "in keinem der drei Fälle liefert uns der `westliche' Actaret den `ursprünglichen' Text der Apg: das ist die Lehre, die wir allmählich zu lernen im Begriff find."⁵²

Although the Western text cannot be demonstrated as a whole to represent a more original text than that of the Alexandrian recension, the individual variants may in themselves represent a superior witness to the original text. Consequently, the validity of the variant readings encountered in the text of Acts 15 must be weighed individually.⁵³ The text of Acts 15 includes an abundance of textual variants.⁵⁴ Although the total number of variants makes a detailed treatment impossible to pursue within

⁵¹Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 50.

⁵²Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 53.

⁵³In light of the lack of an hypothesis that comprehensively explains the relationship of the Western and Alexandrian texts, the committee for the UBS third edition of the Greek New Testament took an eclectic approach to the text of Acts, "in each case [to] select the reading which commends itself in the light of transcriptional and intrinsic probabilities;" Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 271-72.

⁵⁴The UBS third edition records forty six variants in Acts 15:1-35. This, however, is only a partial representation of the textual concerns of the chapter. Further variants are listed in the apparatus of the Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graeca, 27th ed. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 426-39, comments on additions and variations at 15:1-5, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 16, 18, 22, 26, 28, 30, 32, 33, which are not found in the UBS third edition apparatus.

ethical and ceremonial elements.⁵⁷ Generally, the Alexandrian and Western traditions are juxtaposed as being ceremonial or ethical in character, respectively.⁵⁸ However, the supposed reading of the Caesarean text would contain three elements of prohibition that may be described as ceremonial in nature: a prohibition against idols (perhaps with an emphasis on food offered to idols), one against eating things which were strangled, and a prohibition against eating meat with its blood.⁵⁹ The Western text, with the omission of B<46J@0 and the inclusion of the negative expression of the Golden Rule, has been portrayed as applying ethical stipulations upon the Gentile believers.⁶⁰ The Alexandrian formulation with four elements of prohibition has either been seen as consisting of entirely ceremonial prohibitions or incorporating both ceremonial and ethical components.⁶¹

⁵⁷Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 430.

⁵⁸See the reconstruction of the textual history of the apostolic decree offered by Ropes, The Text of Acts, 269. See also Metzger, 431-33; Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 51.

⁵⁹The details of the prohibition will be discussed in the exegesis of this passage.

⁶⁰See Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek Text), 299; Ropes, The Text of Acts, 269; C. K. Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," Australian Biblical Review 25 (1987) 50, Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 431.

⁶¹Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15:29," 50-59, argues that the elements of the decree cannot be easily divided between those that are ceremonial in tenor and those which are ethical. Although Barrett does not state a preference for either the Alexandrian or Western text tradition, the implication is that the elements of both traditions of the apostolic decree

Evaluating the external evidence makes the supposed Caesarian reading, omitting ἡ ἀπόστολος, ἡ ἐκκλησία, ἡ συναγωγή, ἡ ἐκκλησία, ἡ συναγωγή, questionable. Metzger notes first of all that the actual existence of a Caesarian recension for the book of Acts, as well as the relationship of that recension to that of the Alexandrian and Western text types, is uncertain.⁶² Apart from the Chester Beatty papyrus p⁴⁵, the attestation for the omission is relegated to quotations or allusions by Origen, Gaudentius, and Vigilius, and ancient Latin (vg mss), Armenian (arm), an Ethiopic (eth ro) versions. Its omission from these manuscripts may be explained as an attempt to ensure that all of the elements of prohibition fall in the realm of ceremonial, rather than ethical, stipulations.⁶³

The reading ascribed to the Western text, with the omission of ἡ ἀπόστολος and the inclusion of a negative formulation of the Golden Rule, implies a threefold moral injunction to refrain from idolatry (ἡ ἀπόστολος, ἡ ἐκκλησία), unchastity (ἡ ἀπόστολος, ἡ ἐκκλησία), and the shedding of blood (ἡ ἀπόστολος, ἡ ἐκκλησία).⁶⁴ Key to this exposition of the

incorporate both ceremonial and ethical aspects.

⁶²Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 430; see also Kenyon, The Text of the Greek Bible, 220-23, who notes that the Caesarian text is definable largely only as it applies to the Gospel of Mark.

⁶³See Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 430-31. Metzger continues by suggesting that ἡ ἀπόστολος, ἡ ἐκκλησία is not in conflict with an essentially ceremonial construct of the decree if it is taken to refer to marriage outside Levitical limitations (Lev. 18:6-8) or mixed marriages with pagans (Num. 25:1).

⁶⁴See Metzger, A Textual Commentary of the Greek New Testament, 431.

apostolic decree is the understanding of "Ë" as a reference to the taking of life, or murder.⁶⁵ The dictum of textual criticism giving preference to the shorter reading,⁶⁶ while the less robust external attestation mitigates against the inclusion of the negative Golden Rule. Additionally, it is easier to explain this reading as an attempt to give ethical rectitude to the stipulations of the decree than to explain the fourfold prohibition with its mixed stipulations as an expansion of the Western text.⁶⁷

The fourfold prohibition presented in the Alexandrian reading of the apostolic decree enjoys the external support of the attestation by the letter uncials !, A, B, and C. The exclusion of the negative formulation of the Golden Rule argues for the Alexandrian reading as shorter than the Western reading,

⁶⁵See Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 431; Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52. This issue will be addressed in the later exegesis of the text.

⁶⁶See Greenlee, Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism, 114-15; Cranford, Exegeting the New Testament, 40-41.

⁶⁷Barrett, "The Apostolic Degree of Acts 15.29," 51, notes that "students of Acts, having made this distinction between a ceremonial and ethical decree, have often (though not always) gone on to argue that, though the production of a ceremonial decree at the time when Christianity was emerging from Judaism would be understandable enough, such a decree would lose its relevance in the course of the second century, so that one may reasonably conclude that the Old Uncial [largely Alexandrian] form is original, and that the Western form arose, probably in the second century, as an edited, revised version." Such a view works against the Western reading, satisfying the dictum that the reading from which the other readings in a variant could most easily have developed is preferable; see Greenlee, Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism, 115; Cranford, Exegeting the New Testament, 1:41.

favoring the former. As noted above, this fourfold formulation best explains the others, and also gains favor as representing the most theologically obtuse reading, thus satisfying the dictum that the reading which appears more difficult is preferable.⁶⁸

⁶⁸See Greenlee, Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism, 115; Cranford, Exegeting the New Testament, 1:41.

CHAPTER TWO

EXEGESIS OF ACTS 15:1-35

Exegetical Outline

- I. (1-6) A situation arises in Antioch between Judean Christians and Paul and Barnabas.
 - A. (1-2) Judaizers visit Antioch.
 - 1. (1) The Judaizers advocated circumcision as a condition of salvation.
 - 2. (2) In the face of controversy Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem.
 - B. (3-6) Paul and Barnabas go up to Jerusalem.
 - 1. (3) The entourage travels through Phoenicia and Samaria.
 - 2. (4-5) Paul and Barnabas were welcomed by the church and reported what God had done.
 - 3. (6) Some of the Pharisee converts insist on circumcision for the Gentiles.
- II. (7-29) A council is convened in Jerusalem.
 - A. (7) The council meets.
 - B. (8-P5) Peter speaks on behalf of Gentile converts.
 - 1. (8) Peter speaks.
 - a. (P1) Peter reminds the church of its previous mission to the Gentiles.
 - b. (P2-P3) The heart knowing God bore witness to the Gentiles and indiscriminately purified them.
 - c. (P4-P5) Peter questions the imposition of the Mosaic law in light of salvation by faith.
 - C. (9-10) Paul and Barnabas address the council.
 - D. (11-J5) James addresses the council.
 - 1. (11) James speaks.
 - a. (J1) James commands attention.
 - b. (J2-OT5) Peter's report is confirmed as fulfillment of God's desire.
 - (1) (J2) James affirms Peter's account.
 - (2) (J3) Peter's report correlates with the words of the prophets.
 - (3) (OT1-OT5) James cites Amos 9:11-12.
 - c. (J3-4) James presents his decision.
 - (1) (J3) James decides the stipulations of the decree.
 - (2) (J4) James supports his decision.

- E. (12-L5) A letter is addressed to Gentile Christians.
 - 1. (12) An delegation is sent with a letter.
 - a. (L1) The letter opens.
 - b. (L2-L4)
 - (1) (L2) The reason for the delegation is the dispute concerning Gentile believers by an unauthorized delegation.
 - (2) (L3) The delegation is identified.
 - (3) (L4) The stipulations of the decree are presented.
 - c. (L5) The letter closes.
- III. (13-18) The Church of Antioch receives the letter from the Jerusalem church.
 - A. (13-15) The letter is received in Antioch.
 - B. (16-17) Judas and Silas substantiate the message of the letter.
 - C. (18) Paul and Barnabas continue in Antioch.

Exegetical Overview

Acts 15:1-35 consists of an interchange between alternating narrative elements and speeches. The narrative elements define the pericope both geographically and temporally. Temporally, the passage moves in a linear fashion from the beginning of the conflict over Gentile converts in 15:1 to the communication of the resolution of the conflict in 15:30-35. Geographically, the passage moves between Antioch and Jerusalem. It begins in Antioch with the arrival of people from Judea (resulting in disputation), and ends with the departure of the envoys Judas and Silas returning from Antioch to Jerusalem (accompanied with resolution), coincided with Paul and Barnabas' remainder in Antioch. Jerusalem plays a central role in both the inception of the problem concerning the Judaizers and the Gentile converts as well as its solution. Earl Richard notes that:

The issue emanates from Judea, is inserted into the non-Palestinian setting of the Gentile Mission, and is referred back to its source for a solution. There, after being

reformulated by appropriate representatives, the issue is debated and resolved. Finally, from Jerusalem comes the remedy for the original disruption.⁶⁹

Consequently, both the problem of the Judaizing Christians demands upon the Gentile converts and its solution may be located in Jerusalem.

Richard has identified certain structural indicators of the pericope.⁷⁰ The problem which is presented in 15:2 (.OJZ:"), involving dissension (FJVF4H) and debate (.OJZF4H), will be resolved in the final episode in 15:31 (B"D" 68ZF4H). This debate (.OJZF4H), introduced in 15:2, is reintroduced in Jerusalem in 15:7.⁷¹ Its resolution is both signified by the approval

⁶⁹Earl Richard, "The Divine Purpose: The Jews and the Gentile Mission (Acts 15)," in Luke-Acts: New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature Seminar, ed. Charles H. Talbert (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 190. Richard suggests that Jerusalem plays both a spatial and a rhetorical role in Acts 15: "not only do all post-crucifixion events occur in or around the holy city, but also every impetus, embassy, or ideational thrust--regardless how reluctant or questionable--arises from or is related to Jerusalem. The importance of Jerusalem for Luke in both the gospel and Acts has been noted by Eduard Lohse, s.v. "E 4f <,z3 D@F" 8Z: ,{ 3 D@F` 8L: ", { 3 D@F@8L: \JOH," in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 10 vols., ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1964-76), and Hans Conzelmann, Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas, 3d ed. (Tübingen: J. B. C. Mohr, 1960), 66-86, 124-27.

⁷⁰Richard, "The Divine Purpose: The Jews and the Gentile Mission (Acts 15)," 189-90. In turn, Richard cites S. A. Panimolle, Il discorso i Pietro all' assemblea apostolica (Bologna: Dehoniane, 1976), 175-98.

⁷¹So Richard, "The Divine Purpose," 189. While .OJZF4H re-occurs in 157, the debate is not far from the surface. The contention of the converted Pharisees finds expression in 15:5, and the assembly is convened "to see about this matter" (Æ, Å< B, DÅJ@ 8' (@ J@J@).

(*@6XT plus the dative, 15:22) of James decision (6D\<T, 15:19) and communicated through a written letter.

The surface structure of Acts 15:1-35 may be divided into three sections: 15:1-5; 6-29; and 30-35.⁷² First, there is an introductory narrative primarily situated in Antioch which introduces the controversy concerning the Gentile converts and the Judaizers in 15:1-5. This is complemented by closing narrative section presented in 15:30-35 which is also situated in Antioch, and which presents the resolution derived as a result of the council. Between these two narrative sections is the council itself in 15:6-29. This middle section may be viewed as consisting of presentations supporting the outcome of the council. First is a short narrative element which introduces the council

⁷²The presence of :¥<@P< in both 15:3 and 15:30 opens the possibility that the passage divides at these locations (15:1-2; 3-29; 30-35) rather than that suggested in the text. Friedrich Blass and Albert Debrunner, Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch, 14th ed., ed. Friederich Rehkopf (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1976), 381 (section 451, n. 3), notes of the use of :¥<@P< in Acts: "es wird hier teils angegeben, was weiter geschah, teils die Summe aus dem Vorhergehenden gezogen, um den Übergang zu etwas Neuem zu bilden." C. F. D. Moule, An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 162-63, also lists the majority of occurrences of :¥<@P< in Acts as having this resumptive use. However, it is not clear if this resumptive quality expresses merely a summary or a new thought. This conjunction appears to be employed in opening paragraphs in Acts 1:6; 5:41; 8:4. Alternatively, in Acts :¥<@P< often denotes a narrative summary, generally located at the end of a unit of thought; see 1:18; 2:41; 8:25; 17:12; 23:18. In the latter case, the summary usually includes geographical or spatial movement on the part of the subject. Such as use of :¥<@P< is not inconsistent with its employment in 15:3 and 15:30, suggesting a second alternative division of the text as follows: 15:1-4; 5-30; 31-35.

in 15:6. Next comes the speech given by Peter which recounts the conversion of Cornelius (15:7-11). A second narrative element, portraying the presentation given by Paul and Barnabas of their first missionary journey (15:12), separates the speech of Peter from that of James (15:13-21). A third narrative element (15:22-23a) introduces a letter which proclaims the decision of the council to the churches (15:23b-29).⁷³

Richard also notes dynamics of deep structure at work in the passage. Keying on the repetition of .OJZF4H ("debate"), Richard notes the following parallels in the dynamics involved:

a	statement (1)	a'	statement (5)	
b	debate (2a)	b'	debate (7a)	
c	report: conversion of the Gentiles (2b-3)	c'	speech: conversion of the Gentiles (7b-11)	c'' speech and sequel (13f)
d	"what God has done" (4)	d'	"what God has done" (12)	d'' preaching: God's work (34) ⁷⁴

⁷³Richard, "The Divine Purpose," 190, divides the council of Acts 15:6-29 into two sections: debate (15:6-21) and resolution (15:22-29). In the view of this writer, such a format is not readily apparent. James speech is not given in the character of continued debate but of resolution (not the use of 6D\<T in 15:19). In any event, the "debate" as it is presented by Luke is one-sided throughout.

⁷⁴The citation of Acts 15:34 at this point must be a misprint or a typographical error on the part of Richard or the publisher. Acts 15:34 is a verse of highly dubious textual ancestry, and appears either bracketed or not at all in most modern translations; see Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 439. However, even if one accepts the verse, it is difficult to see how it stands in parallel with the other "d" elements in Richard's schema. It is this writer's judgement that Richard actually meant to cite 15:32, in which

Each "statement" (a) introduces a Judaizing group that makes demands upon the Gentile converts which provokes debate (b). Consequently, 15:6-12 may be seen as a replay of the debate and dissension of 15:2. The "c" parallels in Richard's schema advances the response to the Judaizers in terms of expressions of God's purpose in dealing with the Gentiles. Each presentation deepens the level of expression of purpose. The purpose of God calling a people for His name (15:17) as it is first expressed through Paul and Barnabas' 15:2b-3 report of the conversion of the Gentiles on their missionary journey is deepened by the antecedent expression of purpose in Peter's recollection of his experience with the conversion of Cornelius and his household in 15:7b-11, which is in turn shown by James' citation of Amos to have its antecedent in the purpose of God as expressed by the prophets.

Exegesis

(1-6) A Situation Arises in Antioch

(1-2) Judaizers visit Antioch

The narrative of Acts 15:1-5 consists of two subsections (15:1-2 and 15:3-5). Haenchen notes that the first of these provides the impetus which leads to the apostolic council:⁷⁵

Judas and Silas prophetically confirm what God is doing among the Gentiles (*4, 8` (@ B@88@0B" D, 6V8, F" <J@xH• *, 8N@xH6" Å |B, FJZD4" <), although this is not entirely parallel with the two other "d" elements (d and d'), in that these refer to particularly the ministry of Paul and Barnabas.

⁷⁵Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 399.

Die lukanische Erzählung beginnt mit einer Art Dorspiel: wir erfahren, wie es zur Derhandlung in Jerusalem gekommen ist. Die von jerusalemischen Judaisten beunruhigte Gemeinde Antiochias sendet Paulus und Barnabas zu den Aposteln und Ältesten, um diesen die Befchneidungsfrage zur Entscheidung vorzulegen.

The controversy was initiated by J4, H.. • BÎ z3@* " \ " H. The individuals from Judea are not further identified. It does not seem unreasonable to identify these individuals from Judea with the J4, HJä < • BÎ J-H" ÊDXF, THJä < M' D4F" \ T < B, B4FJ, L6` J, H of 15:5.⁷⁶

Such an identification is supported by the Western text (notably Q, 614, 1799, 2412, syr h mg), which adds Jä < B, B4FJ, L6` JT < • BÎ J-H" ÊDXF, THJä < M' D4F" \ T < after z3@* " \ " H.⁷⁷ These individuals have also been identified with the "false brethren" of Galatians 2:4.⁷⁸ They may have been numbered among the men "from James" of Galatians 2:12,⁷⁹ although 15:24 makes it clear that there ac-

⁷⁶So Simon J. Kistemaker, Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1990), 538; John B. Pohill, Acts, The New American Commentary 26, ed. David S. Dockery, et al (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 323; William J. Larkin, Acts, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series, ed. Grant R. Osborne (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1995), 218. Bauernfeind, Die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas, 188, dismisses this identification based upon his evaluation that 15:1 and 15:5 derive from different sources.

⁷⁷See Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the New Testament, 426; Luke Timothy Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, Sacra Pagina 5 (Collegeville: Michael Glazier, 1992), 259.

⁷⁸See Alfred Loisy, Les Actes des Apotres (Paris: Émile Nourry, 1920), 564-65.

⁷⁹See F. F. Bruce, The Book of the Acts, rev., The New International Commentary on the New Testament, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1988), 286.

tions were unauthorized by the church in Jerusalem: @H@J
*4 FJ, 48V: , 2" .⁸⁰

The imperfect verb |**"F6@ is ingressive, the trouble started when those from Judea began teaching.⁸¹ The crux of their teaching was that circumcision was necessary for salvation. The present indicative verb *b<"F2, is listed by Dana and Mantey as a permissive middle, indicating a voluntary yielding of the agent to the results of an action, or seeking to secure the results of an action in the agent's own interest.⁸² However, the verb may easily be a middle/passive deponent. Either way, the debate which follows must center on the requirement of circumcision for salvation. The act of circumcision alone is not portrayed by Luke in a negative light.⁸³ Both the circumcisions of John the Baptist and Jesus are recorded without reservation,⁸⁴ as is that of Timothy.⁸⁵ Luke records Stephen's inclusion of the

⁸⁰That Luke wished to distance these individuals from the church of Jerusalem may account for their description as from Judea, rather than from Jerusalem; see Hans Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, trans. James Limburg, et al, Hermeneia, ed. Helmut Koester, et al (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 115; Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 383; Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 258-59.

⁸¹See Larkin, Acts, 218.

⁸²H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 160.

⁸³See Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 259.

⁸⁴Luke 1:59 and 2:21, respectively.

⁸⁵Acts 16:3.

ritual in the speech of the martyr without negative comment.⁸⁶

By instructing that circumcision was a requirement for salvation, the people from Judea may have been attempting to place upon the Gentile converts the similar stipulations requisite upon Gentile proselytes to Judaism.⁸⁷

⁸⁶Acts 7:8.

⁸⁷Some ambiguity exists concerning the requirement of circumcision for Gentile proselytes to Judaism. The practice, instituted in Gen. 17:9-14, was recognized in antiquity as a distinguishing feature of Judaism; see Herodotus *Histories* 1.104.2-3; Diodorus Siculus 1.28.3; 1.55.5; Josephus *Wars of the Jews* 1.34-35; *idem Antiquities of the Jews* 1.192, 214; 12.26; *Against Apion* 1.168-71; Tacitus *Histories* 5.5; Petronius *Fragments* 37. Failure to practice circumcision was considered by pious Jews to be equivalent with apostasy; see 1 Maccabees 1:11-15; Philo, *On the Migration of Abraham* 89-92. Circumcision as a practice by proselytes has been recorded as early as c. 160 B.C.E. in Judith 14:10. However, it is not clear that the requirement was universally required of proselytes. Josephus *Life* 112-13 records that the nobles from Trachonitis who joined the Jewish forces in Galilee were pressured to be circumcised, although Josephus disallowed the requirement. It is not apparent, however, that these were proselytes. That there was debate among the Jews themselves over the requirements for proselytes can be seen in the differing instruction given by Ananias and Eleazar to Izates concerning his circumcision; see Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews* 20.38-48. Neil J. McEleney, "Conversion, Circumcision and the Law," *New Testament Studies* 20 (1974) 328-29, suggests that Philo *Questions and Answers on Exodus* 2.2 argues that circumcision is not required by the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher for proselytes who otherwise conform inwardly to Judaism. McEleney is countered by John Nolland, "Uncircumcised Proselytes?" *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 12 (1981) 173-79, who notes that Philo distinguishes between an inward and outward circumcision, and that the outward circumcision symbolizes the true inward circumcision; see Philo *On Dreams* 2.25; *idem On the Special Laws* 1.304-06. However, the physical ritual was still required; see Philo *On the Migration of Abraham* 92. That Epictetus *The Discourses* 2.9.20-24 speaks of Jewish proselytes who practice only baptism without circumcision is problematic in that he may have confused Judaism with a Jewish Christian sect; see Nolland, "Uncircumcised Proselytes?" 179-82. Scot McKnight, *A Light among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary*

In the midst of the resulting controversy (FJVF, TH6" Â .OJZF, TH@Û6Ï 8\ (OH), it is decided to send a delegation to Jerusalem for resolution to the debate (15:2). The subject for §J" >" < is not identified. The Western text indicates that it was the individuals who had come from Judea (the variant specifies Jerusalem) who had charged Paul and Barnabas to go to Jerusalem for judgement.⁸⁸ The reference in 15:3 to BD@B, : N2X<J, HÛBÎ J-H |6680F\ " H sets the context for §J" P" <: the implied subject signifies "the involvement of the entire congregation at Antioch and its leaders in the appointment."⁸⁹

(3-6) Paul and Barnabas go up to Jerusalem

Acts 15:3-5 recounts the journey to and arrival at Jerusalem. The : ¥< @Û< introduces a narrative summary, in this case a

Activity in the Second Temple Period (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 81-82, notes that the rabbinic opinions expressed on the subject are not unambiguous until the later traditions. McKnight, 82, after surveying noncanonical and rabbinic Jewish sources, concludes that "circumcision was seen as an act whereby the male convert demonstrated his zeal for the law and his willingness to join Judaism without reservation." However, he hesitates "to conclude that circumcision was a requirement throughout Second Temple Judaism, because the evidence is not completely unambiguous and there may have been some diversity on the matter." McKnight quickly adds, however, that "Circumcision was probably required for male converts most of the time and in most local expressions of Judaism."

⁸⁸@Ê*¥|808L2` <J, H•BÎ z3 D@LF" 8-: B" DZ((, 48" <" Û@ÃHJè A" b8â 6" Â#" D<" \$" 6" \J4F4-88@4H•<" \$" \<, 4. See Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the New Testament, 426-27; Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 259-60; Richard N. Longenecker, "The Acts of the Apostles," in The Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 9, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, et al (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 443.

⁸⁹Longenecker, "The Acts of the Apostles," 443; see also Kistemaker, Acts, 539.

travel summary, which is not uncommon in Luke-Acts.⁹⁰ Phoenicia and Samaria were areas of previous evangelism.⁹¹ Haenchen notes:⁹²

Dass Lukas in V. 3 die Reise dieser Delegation durch Phönizien und Samarien schildert, scheint überflüssig. Aber die Freude der dortigen Judenchristen über die Heidenmission zeigt dem Leser sofort: es ist nicht das ganze Judenchristentum, das die Beschneidung fordert, sondern nur eine kleine Minderheit eifert dafür.

One should recognize, however, that these churches were the result of the Hellenistic mission which followed Stephen's martyrdom.⁹³ The delegation was well received in Jerusalem by the church (•BÍ J-H|6680F\` H), apostles (Jä<•B@FJ` 8T<), and the elders (Jä<BD, F\$LJXDT<). Those who stand in opposition are •BÍ J-H" ÊDXF, THJä<M' B4F" \T<B, B4FJ, L6` J, H (15:5). Conzelmann understands the debate of 15:5 to be one which rises anew rather than a continuation of the debate of 15:1.⁹⁴ The presence of two debates cannot be used to imply that 15:1-2 and 1:3-33 are based on different sources. Haenchen suggests that the two conflicts play a dramatic literary role in pressing the Jerusalem church to

⁹⁰For example, Acts 8:25. See Blass and Debrunner, Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch, 381 (section 451, n. 3); Moule, An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek, 162-63.

⁹¹See Acts 8:40; 9:32-43; and Acts 8:4-25 for Phoenicia and Samaria, respectively.

⁹²Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 399.

⁹³See Bruce, The Book of the Acts (English text), 288.

⁹⁴Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 116.

come to a decision concerning the Gentiles converts.⁹⁵ However, Bruce suggests that the two groups insisting on circumcision may differ in degree: the first group from Judea insisted circumcision was necessary for salvation, while the second, the pharisaic believers in Jerusalem, may have insisted on circumcision as a vehicle for recognition by and fellowship with Jewish Christians.⁹⁶ Bruce's position is bolstered if one understands the resulting apostolic decree (15:29) as a means to guarantee table fellowship.

(7-29) A Council is Convened in Jerusalem

(7) The Council Meets

The council, which is convened in 15:6, consists of four episodes. The first consists of Peter's speech in support of the Gentile mission (15:7-11). This is followed by a short narrative concerning the report of Paul and Barnabas (15:12). A third protagonist, James, offers his decision in a speech (15:13-21). These three protagonist episodes are followed by a fourth episode which consists of the short narrative describing the decision to send the apostolic decree by letter and the content of the letter itself (15:22-29).

(8-P5) Peter speaks on behalf of Gentile converts

⁹⁵Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 399; see also Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 116.

⁹⁶Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek text), 291.

The speech which Peter delivers is categorized by F. F. Bruce as a deliberative speech.⁹⁷ The meeting is characterized as consisting of the apostles and the elders (Acts 15:6-7). Although this portrays a meeting of only the leadership of the church, its attendance may be described as B, < J1 B8-2@H in 15:12.⁹⁸

Peter's speech will support the outcome of the apostolic decree in two ways: The first way is through a recapitulation of the conversion of Cornelius and his household and the discussions which took place at that time. Peter notes that the Cornelius incident occurred sometime in the past: •N'°:, Dä <•DP" \T < (15:7). Conzelmann suggests that the phrase as a literary device "transforms the story of Cornelius into the 'classic' prototype."⁹⁹ However, others note that some length of time has passed since the earlier incident.¹⁰⁰ The question arises as to why the Jerusalem church is now faced with a problem which

⁹⁷See F. F. Bruce, The Speeches in the Acts of the Apostles (London: Tyndale Press, 1942), 5-8. Bruce categorizes the speeches in Acts as evangelistic, deliberative, apologetic, and hortatory.

⁹⁸See Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek text), 292; Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 261; Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 385; Loisy, Actes des Apotres, 581.

⁹⁹Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 116.

¹⁰⁰See Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek text), 292; Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 404; Pohill, Acts, 326; R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1961) 602. The time passed is suggested to be about ten years, which would be the "early days" of the church.

appeared resolved in Acts 11:1-18. Haenchen suggests that the Cornelius episode in the intervening years "es völlig dem Bewusstsein entschwand."¹⁰¹ He suggests that the Pharisees who had become believers only did so after the Cornelius incident, and that the congregation had largely forgotten it. Johannes Munck suggests that the church did indeed accept the divine appointment of Cornelius' salvation, but that they did not understand the offer of salvation to be decreed for uncircumcised Gentiles beyond Cornelius and his immediate household.¹⁰²

The purpose of Peter's speech is to show that both the Gentile and Jewish believer share the same fate of salvation. {? 6" D* 4@ (<f FJO2, `H refers to God's ability to see and determine the destiny of believers.¹⁰³ The determination is based on internal, rather than external, criteria.¹⁰⁴ The events of the Cornelius episode exhibits the positive aspects that both Gentile and Jewish believers share: the gift of the Spirit and salvation through faith. The language which is used in Peter's speech is

¹⁰¹Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 404.

¹⁰²See Johannes Munck, Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte, Acta Jutlandica, Teologisk Serie 6 (Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget, 1954), 224.

¹⁰³See Johannes B. Bauer, "5" D* 4@ (<f FJOH, ein unbeachter Aspekt (Apg 1,24; 15, 8)," Biblische Zeitschrift 32 (1988) 114, notes that in "das Herz auch Sitz der schicksalhaften Bestimmung des Menschen ist, des ihm persönlich zugeteilten Loses." The concept of the heart knowing God is illustrated by Tobit 6:17, in which God has prepared a wife fitting for Tobias' destiny from eternity. Bauer also illustrates this concept with *Psalms of Solomon* 14:8; Prov. 20:27; Jer. 1:5.

¹⁰⁴Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 262.

strongly reminiscent of that earlier event.¹⁰⁵ The use of 6" 2" D\F" H is suggestive that ὁ Ἰσχυρὸς 2VDF, <F x: - 6@<@L.¹⁰⁶

Haenchen notes that "mag der heide als solcher unrein sein, wie das der Jude behauptet, so hat doch Gott in ihm die innere Reinheit geschaffen.") 4X6D4, < is also suggestive of the Cornelius episode.¹⁰⁷

The second way in which Peter's speech will support the outcome of the apostolic council is through arguing that both Gentile and Jewish Christians share a similar experience with keeping the Law in regards to salvation (15:10-11). Acts 15:10 has appeared to several commentators to be inappropriate from the mouth of Peter. Haenchen notes that "es ist deutlich, dass hier nicht die Denkweise des historischen Petrus referiert wird. Denn dem strengen Juden galt das Gesetz keinswegs als untragbare Last."¹⁰⁸ Instead, Peter presents the attitude of the Gentiles concerning the Law: that it was a vast collection of commands and prohibitions that no person could satisfy. Josef Zmijewski presents the view that Luke has Peter function as the representa-

¹⁰⁵See Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 262.

¹⁰⁶Acts 10:15.

¹⁰⁷In Acts 10:20 Peter was told to accompany the messengers of Cornelius : O* ¥< *4' 6D4` : , <@H, which is recounted in 11:12; see Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 262.

¹⁰⁸Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 400; see also Munck, The Acts of the Apostles, 139.

tive of Paul,¹⁰⁹ presenting a salvation through faith and grace.¹¹⁰ However, others suggest that the words of Peter's speech concerning the Law represent neither the common Jewish view nor that of Paul.¹¹¹

John Nolland notes that the "yoke" of the Law is generally viewed in three ways:¹¹² (1) an oppressive burden of demands impossible to bear; (2) a recognition of the compromised position of those who make demands on Gentile believers; (3) a burden which proved too oppressive for

¹⁰⁹Josef Zmijewski, Die Apostelgeschichte: Übersetzt und erklärt, Regensburger Neues Testament, ed. Alfred Wikenhauser, et al (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1994), 566, cites F. Mussner, *Ap. G.*, 92, that Peter functioned "als Vertreter des Paulinismus;" this writer was unable to discern a fuller citation of Mussner's *Ap. G.* either in Zmijewski's bibliography or through other resources.

¹¹⁰Zmijewski, Die Apostelgeschichte: Übersetzt und erklärt, 566. Rudolf Pesch, Die Apostelgeschichte, Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 5 (Zürich: Benziger, 1986) 2:78, makes a similar point, although it is cast "in einer anderen (petrinischen) Terminologie."

¹¹¹Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 387, n. 1:

Diese Aussage entspricht weder der jüdischen noch der paulinischen Theologie. Nicht der jüdischen: sie sah im Gesetz eine Bevorzugung und eine Hilfe. Der Begriff "das Joch (des Gesetzes)" bezeichnet die religiösen Pflichten und enthält keine Klage über Schwierigkeit oder Unterträglichkeit des Gesetzes. . . . Nicht der paulinischen: sie sah Gesetz ein Mittel, mit dem der Mensch seinen Eigenruhm zu gewinnen sucht und das ihn damit von Gott entfernt.

See also Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 117; Munck, The Acts of the Apostles, 139.

¹¹²John Nolland, "A Fresh Look at Acts 15:10," New Testament Studies 27 (1980) 109.

even the Jews themselves to bear. Such views both seem out of keeping with Peter and unlikely to be persuasive to the Pharisaical Christians. Nolland believes that a much simpler issue was being presented in Peter's speech:¹¹³ "we suggest that the background question at v. 10 is 'What relevance had the law to your salvation?' and the concern is to show that their possession of the law was as irrelevant to their salvation as was Cornelius' lack of it." Peter argues first that the absence of the Law did not preclude Cornelius from salvation. Secondly, the presence of the Law did not bring the experience of salvation to the Jews. Finally, he asserts the common experience of salvation by both parties through believing.¹¹⁴

Both Haenchen and Conzelmann support the RSV translation of 15:11: "But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will."¹¹⁵ This translation understands *4, J-HPVD4J@H to modify FT2-<" 4, rather than

¹¹³Nolland, "A Fresh Look at Acts 15.10," 110.

¹¹⁴Nolland, "A Fresh Look at Acts 15.10," 111. Nolland's point of the irrelevance of the Law to salvation in Christ is well taken. However, even if Nolland is correct that "\$" FJV., 4 is free of the negative coloring often associated with the translation "to bear" (113-15), it is uncertain that all the difficulties of this verse are addressed. The verse still connotes the failure on the part of the Jews to "carry the yoke." The later use of B" D, <@P8, Å in James' speech (15:19) and \$VD@H in the apostolic letter (15:28) do little to alleviate the concept of the Law as a burden.

¹¹⁵See Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 387; Conzelmann, The Acts of the Apostles, 114; *idem*, s.v. "PVD4HP" D\ @ " 4P" B4FJ T, •PVB4FJ@H," in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1968-76), n. 160.

βα, <. ¹¹⁶ It also understands βα, βτ in the same sense as
 *αχ, which is not in line with Luke's normal use of the for-
 mer. ¹¹⁷ Generally, when βα, βτ and φ.τ come together in Luke's
 writing, it is with the intention of showing that faith leads to
 salvation. ¹¹⁸ Consequently, Nolland argues for an infinitive of
 result, rendering the translation: "But through the grace of the
 Lord Jesus, we believe (in order) to be saved, and so do they." ¹¹⁹

(9-10) Paul and Barnabas address the council

Peter's speech, which started amidst βα-Η. ΟΖ, ΤΗ (15:7),
 silences the crowd (|F\(\OF, <*¥B..<JÎ Β8-2@Η, 15:12). ¹²⁰ The short
 narrative of 15:12 is notable for its brevity. Loveday Alexander
 notes that in spite of the lack of a speech from the Apostle Paul
 in Acts 15 he still functions as the hero, while Peter is merely
 a secondary character. ¹²¹ Haenchen notes that the detail which

¹¹⁶See Conzelmann, s.v. "PVD4H P" Δ\ @ " 4 P" βαJ` T, • PVB4J@H. "

¹¹⁷See Rudolf Bultmann, *et al*, s.v. "βα, βτ, βαη, βαJ` H
 βαJ` T, -βαJ@H • βαJXT, • βαJ", ἰ 84(` βαJ@H ἰ 84(@βαJ", " in
Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel
 and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids:
 William B. Eerdmans, 1968-76); Nolland, "A Fresh Look at Acts
 15.10," 112-13.

¹¹⁸Nollan, "A Fresh Look at Acts 15.10," 113.

¹¹⁹Nolland, "A Fresh Look at Acts 15.10," 113; see also,
 Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek text), 294.

¹²⁰See Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 263; Haenchen, Die
 Apostelgeschichte, 400; Robert C. Tannehill, The Narrative Unity
 of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation, Volume Two: The Acts of
 the Apostles (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 186.

¹²¹Loveday Alexander, "Acts and the Ancient Intellectual
 Biography," in The Book of Acts in Its Literary Setting, ed.

Luke presented of the first missionary journey precludes the need for more than a summary statement in 15:12.¹²² From the standpoint of deep structure, it essentially is a refrain of the report given in 15:4.¹²³ In the surface structure of the chapter it serves as a narrative interlude in preparation for James' speech:¹²⁴

V. 12, den manche Kritiker aus dem Ganzen herauslösen wollten,¹²⁵ hat also eine wichtige Ausgabe im Rahmen der lukanischen Erzählung. Zugleich dient er als Übergang zu der zweiten grossen Rede, der des herrenbruders Jakobus (V. 13-21).

(11-J5) James address the council

After an initial call to attention, the speech which is given by James falls into four parts: First, there is a summary of what has happened already (15:14). Second, there is an appeal to scripture to show agreement with God's purpose for the Gentiles (15:15-18). Third, James gives his decision (15:19-21).

Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clark, *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting 1*, ed. Bruce Winter, et al (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1993), 34, n. 6.

¹²²Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 400.

¹²³This writer's observations on deep structure are largely indebted to Richard, "The Divine Purpose," 188-209.

¹²⁴Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 400.

¹²⁵Among these would be Wilhelm Boussett, "Der Gebrauch des Kyriostitels als Kriterium für die Quellungscheidung in der ersten Hälfte der Apostelgeschichte," Zeitschrift für die neuestestamentliche Wissenschaft 15 (1914) 141-62; Rudolf Bultmann, Exegetica: Aufsätze zur Erforschung des Neuen Testaments, ed. Erich Dinkler (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1967), 417, n. 6; Boismard, "Le 'Concile' de Jérusalem (Act 15, 1-33), 434-35.

concerning what is to be required of the Gentile converts (15:19-20). Finally, James gives a comment concerning the preaching of Moses (15:21).

J. W. Bowker makes the case that James' speech is a partial yelammedenu form.¹²⁶ The yelammedenu form is a Jewish homiletic construct which is structured around the answering of a question.¹²⁷ In Acts 15, a basic halakic question has been posed by the Pharisaic believers: Is it necessary for the Gentile converts to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses? James responds on two grounds: what is known to have happened in the past, and on scripture. What has happened in the past is what Peter has already reported: the conversion of Cornelius and his household.¹²⁸ However, James gives the purpose in 8" \$, Ā!>|2<ä < 8" Ī < Jè Ī < : " J4" Ū@Ø.¹²⁹ The term 8" `H is generally a term for the

¹²⁶J. W. Bowker, "Speeches in Acts: A Study in Proem and Yelammedenu Form," New Testament Studies 14 (1967-68) 96-111. For further on the yelammedenu form, see Earle E. Ellis, The Old Testament in Early Christianity: Canon and Interpretation in Light of Modern Research (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 96-100.

¹²⁷Bowker, "Speeches in Acts," 101.

¹²⁸EL: , f < is the Aramaic name for Peter transliterated into Greek; see Bruce, The Book of Acts (English), 293; Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 264; Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 388. The suggestion of D. W. Riddle, "The Cephas Problem and a Possible Solution," Journal of Biblical Literature 59 (1940) 169-80, that James is referring to another Symeon, distinct from Peter, is not generally followed.

¹²⁹This phrase has caused some consternation for exegetes. Jacques Dupont, "7! ? É Z += Z+1; S; (Acts XV.14)," New Testament Studies 3 (1956-57) 41-50, suggests that the phrase is one cast in a biblical style (a "colour biblique") reminiscent of the Septuagint (possibly an allusion to LXX Deut. 7:6 or 14:2). On

people of God, theologically juxtaposed with $\text{S}2<0$.¹³⁰ Johnson speculates that James' speech as portrayed by Luke may have been influenced by Zechariah 2:14-15 (LXX): "I will come and construct a tent in your midst, says the Lord, and in that day many nations will flee to the Lord and they will be to him as a people, and they will tent among you."¹³¹

this basis, Dupont concludes that the entire speech is one composed by Luke. N. A. Dahl, "A People for His Name" (Acts XV. 14)," New Testament Studies 4 (1957-58) 319-27, takes issue with DuPont, contends that the phrase in the speech by James reflects a Semitic background. Dahl notes that the phrase $\text{S}^{\text{H}}\text{J}^{\text{H}}\text{E}^{\text{I}}\text{<}$: " $\text{J}4$ " $\text{W}@\text{O}$ does not occur in the Septuagint. However, he notes several instances in the Targums where similar phrases exist in Aramaic: *Fragment Targum* Exod. 7:7; 29:5; Deut. 26:18, 19; *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* Lev. 26:12 (Dahl lists other examples which are not as clear in their parallel elements). Richard, "The Divine Purpose," 205, n. 34, supports DuPont's conclusion that the speech of James is Luke's creation. He asserts that supplemented with his own study of *Targum Neofiti I*, that the expression "for my/the Lord's name" is a mark of late Aramaic (after 200 C.E.). However, Richard displays his data in a somewhat meager fashion. In the Septuagint, the term D^{K} :" is virtually synonymous with God: LXX Ps. 5:11; 7:17; 21:22; 22:3; 44:17; 53:1; 78:9; 144:1; 148:1, 5, 13; see Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 264.

¹³⁰Bruce, The Book of the Acts (English), 293. See, for example the LXX Deut. 14:2. As used by Luke S^{H} almost exclusively refers to the people of God: Luke 1:17, 68, 77; 2:32; 7:16, 29; 20:1; 22:66; 24:19; Acts 2:47; 3:23; 4:10; 5:12; 7:17, 34; 13:17. Luke's use of the term suggests a continuity of the Gentile mission with biblical history; see Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 264; Jacques DuPont, "Un Peuple d'entre les nations (Actes 15.14)," New Testament Studies 31 (1985) 321-35, esp. 324-26.

¹³¹Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 264 (Johnson's translation); see also Pohill, Acts, 329; Dahl, "A People for His Name," 323-24.

the use of the Septuagint by Luke in the speech of James is further evidence that the speech is entirely Luke's creation:¹³⁶

"Dass hier LXX an einer Stelle, wo sie entscheidend vom hebräischen Text abweicht, zitiert wird, macht unwidersprechlich klar, dass auch die Jakobusrede kein historisches Referat, sondern eine Komposition des hellenischen heidenchristen Lukas ist." Haenchen's view should be moderated by two considerations: First, the yelammedenu elements of the speech suggest a Jewish heritage to Luke's source. Second, the possibility exists that the quotation as Luke records it reflects an Aramaic handling of the text which parallels the Septuagint rendition.¹³⁷

If James' speech is yelammedenu form, only the response remains intact. A complete yelammedenu homily would not rely only upon scriptural support from the prophets, but primarily

• <@46* @ ZFT twice, Luke does not use • <" FJZFT , uses
• <@46* @ ZFT twice and • <@D2f FT once; (4) Amos includes both J, B, BJT 6` J" and J, 6" J, F6" :: X<" ; Luke has only J, 6" J, F6" :: X<" (but see textual variants); (5) Amos includes 6" 2ã H" Ê°: XD" 4J@
" Æ <@H, deleted in Luke; (6) Luke makes two additions to Amos 9:12 (LXX): an -< after ÖBTH and the object JÍ <6bD4@<; (7) the words (<TFJ, • B" Æ <@H are an addition; see Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 264-65; Earl Richard, "The Creative Use of Amos by the Author of Acts," Novum Testamentum 24 (1982) 44-52.

¹³⁶Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 401.

¹³⁷This latter point is made more credible in light of the similarities between the Acts reading of Amos 9:11-12 and both the *Damascus Document* (CD 7.16) and 4QFlor (174) 1:12-13; see Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 117. Bowker, "Speeches in Acts," 108, n. 1; suggests that the original citation by James was from a text source other than the LXX, in which was recorded in an abbreviated fashion with only the starting words and the finishing words of the quotation recorded. The LXX was then later used to restore the text.

from Torah. The fact that James supports his decision only from the prophets suggests that what has survived in Acts is only part of a larger homily.¹³⁸ Acts 15:18 may be an allusion to Isaiah 45:21.¹³⁹ If so, it is not out of keeping with the Jewish homiletical principle of *haruzin*, in which several passages are associated together to establish a point.¹⁴⁰ The message which James relates through the quotation of Amos 9:11-12 is that prophets predicted that the gentiles would join the eschatological people of God as Gentiles.¹⁴¹

The decision by James in Acts 15:19-20 is the climatic moment of the passage. All the events thus far work to support James' decision. The use of the inferential conjunction *4 connotes a strong conclusion.¹⁴² The force of |(ã 6D\<T is debated. Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury argue that |(ã 6D\<T

¹³⁸Bowker, "Speeches in Acts," 108-09.

¹³⁹Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek), 298.

¹⁴⁰See Bowker, "Speeches in Acts," 100. Ellis, The Old Testament in Early Christianity, 89-91, notes that two of Hillel's principles of interpretation result in a string of quotations: the second rule, inference from similar words; and the sixth rule, inference from an analogous passage.

¹⁴¹Richard Bauckham, "James and the Jerusalem Church," in The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting, ed. Richard Bauckham, The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting, vol. 4, ed. Bruce Winter, *et al* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 452.

¹⁴²See Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 266.)4 is generally thought of as a subordinating conjunction, but is not always used as such in the New Testament; see Nigel Turner, Syntax, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, vol. 3, ed. James Hope Moulton (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1963), 333. In this instance it is co-ordinating.

has the force of "I decree," stating: It has the definite sentence of a judge, and the ἵψ implies that he [James] is acting by an authority which is personal."¹⁴³ R. J. Knowling acknowledges James as "the president of the meeting. . . , and his words with the emphatic ἵψ . . . may express more than the opinion of a private member."¹⁴⁴ Others view ἵψ as the expression of James' opinion, which he gives for consideration by the assembly.¹⁴⁵ However, it is James speech which is the decisive factor in Luke's account.¹⁴⁶

James' decision is not to subject Gentile believers to the entire Mosaic Law (15:19), but to limit them to four stipulations (15:20).¹⁴⁷ Each of these four stipulations constitutes something that must be abstained from (ἵψ 4). The first of these four stipulations is to abstain from "the pollutions of idols"

¹⁴³Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury, English Translation and Commentary, The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I, The Acts of the Apostles, vol. 4, ed. F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (London: Macmillan, 1933), 177.

¹⁴⁴R. J. Knowling, "The Acts of the Apostles," in The Expositor's Greek Testament, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976; reprint), 323.

¹⁴⁵See Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 389; Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 119.

¹⁴⁶J. Jervell, Acts and the People of God: A New Look at Luke-Acts (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press, 1972), 188-93, argues that James position in the Jerusalem church is one of considerable authority, and exercised greater influence than did Paul over Luke's readers. Bauckham, "James and the Jerusalem Church," 427-50, discusses the expanding leadership role of James in the Jerusalem church.

¹⁴⁷Following the "Alexandrian" rendering of the passage. The Textual problem involved has been discussed above.

($\dot{\alpha}$ < \bullet δ Φ (O: VJT < $\dot{\alpha}$ <, $\text{\textcircled{A}}\text{\textcircled{f}}$ 8T <). This phrase is the functional equivalent of $\text{\textcircled{A}}\text{\textcircled{T}}$ 8@2bJT < in 15:29.¹⁴⁸ James is not speaking of idolatry, because one could not be a Christian and at the same time practice idolatry.¹⁴⁹ James has in view the practice of eating food that had been offered to idols.¹⁵⁰ Eating or trafficking in meat offered to idols was forbidden to Jews.¹⁵¹ $\text{\textcircled{Z}}$! δ Φ (Z: " , while rare, is always in the sense of defilement associated with idolatry or paganism.¹⁵²

The second stipulation, $\text{J}^2\text{H}\text{B}\text{\textcircled{D}}$ <, $\text{\textbackslash}^{\text{H}}$, is generally thought of as an ethical term.¹⁵³ It belongs to a family of words which

¹⁴⁸Haenchen, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 390; W. Mundle, s.v. "Image," in *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971).

¹⁴⁹Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, 614.

¹⁵⁰This was first described in 4 Maccabees 5:2 as one of the practices forced upon the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes in the effort to undermine Judaism: δ DXT < β , $\text{\textbackslash}^{\text{T}}$ < δ " $\text{\textcircled{A}}$, $\text{\textcircled{A}}\text{\textcircled{T}}$ 8@2bJT < V < " (6V., $\text{\textcircled{K}}$ \bullet $\text{\textcircled{B}}$ $\text{\textcircled{A}}$, bF2" 4; see Friedrich Büschel, s.v. " $\text{\textcircled{C}}\text{\textcircled{T}}$ 8@ <, $\text{\textcircled{A}}\text{\textcircled{T}}$ 8' 22LJ@ <, $\text{\textcircled{A}}\text{\textcircled{T}}$ 8, $\text{\textcircled{A}}$ <, δ " J, $\text{\textbackslash}^{\text{*}}\text{\textcircled{T}}$ 8@H, $\text{\textcircled{A}}\text{\textcircled{T}}$ 8@8VJDOH, $\text{\textcircled{A}}\text{\textcircled{T}}$ 8@8" JDV", in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1968-76). According to Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 51, what is not in view is the question which Paul addresses in 1 Corinthians, whether eating meat offered to idols constituted worship of that idol.

¹⁵¹See the Mishnah, *Abodah Zarah* 2:3. A similar injunction against meat offered to idols is given for Christians in *Didache* 6.3.

¹⁵²Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," gives as examples the cognate verb \bullet δ Φ (, $\text{\textcircled{A}}$: Sirach 40:29; Dan. 1:8 (LXX); Mal. 1:7, 12 (LXX). See also Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews* 9.273.

¹⁵³See Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52.

denote various aspects of prostitution and extramarital sexual activity.¹⁵⁴ While in the LXX it denotes the simple dealing with a prostitute,¹⁵⁵ it can also be used as a metaphor for unfaithfulness to God, with the implication of idolatry.¹⁵⁶ Several commentators suggest a reference to marriages forbidden by Levitical code,¹⁵⁷ although the Septuagint version of the appropriate chapter (Leviticus 18) does not use Β@D<, \".¹⁵⁸

The third stipulation, stated simply as Β<4|@0, is somewhat unusual. Bruce cites F. C. Burkitt that "the word is technical and unfamiliar outside the poultry-shop and the kitchen."¹⁵⁹ It is an adjective derived from the verb Β< \(T, with a literal

¹⁵⁴See Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52; Friedrich Hauck and Siegfried Schulz, s. v. "Β' D<O, Β' D<@H Β@D<, \", Β@D<, bT, |6Β@D<, bT," in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1968-76).

¹⁵⁵Gen. 38:24 (LXX).

¹⁵⁶For example, Jer. 3:2, 9 (LXX); see Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52. Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 119, believes that this connotation is in effect in Acts 15 (see also 1 Thess. 4:3; Gal. 5:19).

¹⁵⁷Lev. 18:6-18; see Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 390, n. 3; Bruce, The Book of the Acts, 299; Larkin, Acts, 225; I. Howard Marshall, Acts, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries 5, ed. R. V. G. Tasker (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1980), 253. W. K. Lowther Clarke, New Testament Problems: Essays, Reviews Interpretations (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1929), 59-61, extends the same meaning to Matt. 5:32; 29:9.

¹⁵⁸See Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52.

¹⁵⁹F. C. Burkitt, Journal of Theological Studies 28 (1927) 199; cited in Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek), 300.

meaning of "what is strangled" or "things strangled."¹⁶⁰ Its place as a term of first century Judaism has been questioned, although it figures in the Jewish-Christian Pseudo-Clementines.¹⁶¹ Hans Joachim Schoeps specifies the meaning as "Tieren, die auf der Jagd mit Schlingen gefangen und getötet worden sind,"¹⁶² although the evidence for food rejected on this grounds in Jewish literature is sparse.¹⁶³ The compound verb •B@B<\(@J, H could be used with reference to preparing meat "unfit for the altar by strangling and throttling the animals."¹⁶⁴

The fourth stipulation which is suggested by Peter is an injunction to abstain from J@ " È " J@H. The Old Testament prohibition of the consumption of blood is first presented in Genesis 9:4, and is repeated in Leviticus 7:26-27; 17:10-14; and Deuter-

¹⁶⁰Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52.

¹⁶¹See Eberhard Nestle, "Zum Ersticken im Aposteldekret," Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 7 (1906) 254-56; A. F. J. Klijn, "The Pseudo-Clementines and the Apostolic Decree," Novum Testamentum 10 (1968) 305-12.

¹⁶²Hans Joachim Schoeps, Paulus: die Theologie des Apostels im Lichte der jüdischen Religionsgeschichte (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1959), 60.

¹⁶³Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52. Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 267, notes that it is never used in the LXX in a ritualistic sense.

¹⁶⁴Philo *On the Special Laws* 4.122; the edition cited is F. H. Colson, Philo: With an English Translation, Loeb Classical Library, ed. G. P. Goold, et al (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939). Philo also indicates that death by strangulation is unclean; see Philo *On the Change of Names* 62; *idem On the Eternity of the World* 20. See also *Joseph and Asenath* 8.5.

onomy 12:16, 23.¹⁶⁵ However, because the loss of blood entails the loss of life, it has been suggested that this could also be an injunction against bloodshed or murder.¹⁶⁶ However, it would seem unlikely that Gentiles who had become Christians would need some special warning to abstain from murder.¹⁶⁷ It is possible that both B⁴⁶ and J⁴⁰ are in some sense related as prohibitions against improperly prepared foods: that which is strangled also has its blood remaining inside, rather than drained.¹⁶⁸

It is difficult to determine why James decided upon the four stipulations of Acts 15:20. Barrett suggests that they correspond to the heathenistic pressures which idolatry had brought to the diaspora Jews: those of food and fornication. He finds it significant that rabbinic literature lists three areas in which

¹⁶⁵Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 267; Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52.

¹⁶⁶Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52; Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 267. So it was used in classical literature: see Demosthenes *Orations* 21.105; Sophocles *Oedipus Tyrannus* 101; Euripides *Orestes* 285. Such a prohibition against murder also exists in the LXX: Deut. 21:7-8; 2 Sam. 1:16; 2 Kings 9:7; Psalms 5:6; 9:12; 25:9. Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 52, 53, 59, n. 31, believes that this usage is significant in light of rabbinic injunctions against murder which are often accompanied with injunctions against idolatry and incest; p. Shebiith 35a, 49-50; p. Sanhedrin 21b, 10-11; b. Pesahim 25ab; b. Sanhedrin 74a.

¹⁶⁷See Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 431-32.

¹⁶⁸Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 119.

compromise was impossible:¹⁶⁹ idolatry, the shedding of blood, and incest.¹⁷⁰ There is, then a minimal standard which comprises the essence of Judaism. Barrett's point appears to be that of Loisy:¹⁷¹ "Les païens converttis sont dans la Loi, ils sont en règle avec le judaïsme vrai, attendu qu'ils observent les perscriptions de la Loi qui s'appliquent à eux."

Other discussion has focussed on the possibility that the stipulations of Acts 15:20 and 15:29 correspond to elements of the Noachic rules which are recorded in Leviticus 17-18.¹⁷²

Haenchen expresses this position as follows:¹⁷³

Was diefe 4 Verbote miteinander verbindet und von allen andern "rituellen" forderungen des "Moses" unterscheidet, ist jedoch der Umstand, dass sie, und nur sie, nicht bloss den Juden gegeben sind, sondern auch den heiden, die unter den Juden wohnen. Während sich das Gesetz sonst allein an die Juden wendet, legt es diefe 4 forderungen auch den heiden auf!

¹⁶⁹See p. Shebiith 35a, 49-50; p. Sanhedrin 21b, 10-11; b. Pesahim 25ab; b. Sanhedrin 74a.

¹⁷⁰Barrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 53.

¹⁷¹Loisy, Les Acts des Apotres, 595.

¹⁷²See, for example, H. Waitz, "Das Problem des sogenannten Aposteldekrets und die damit zusammenhängenden literarischen und geschichtlichen Probleme des apostolischen Zeitalsters," Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte 55 (1936) 227-63; M. Simon, "The Apostolic Decree and it Setting in the Ancient Church," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 52 (1969-70) 437-60; Terrence Callan, "The Background of the Apostolic Decree (Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25)," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 55 (1993) 284-97. Other lists of the Noachic rules include *Jubilees* 7:20 and b. Sanhedrin 56b.

¹⁷³Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 411.

However, S. G. Wilson finds fault with the above assertion, noting that several Laws outside of Leviticus 17-18 apply not only to Israel, but also to the "stranger in the land."¹⁷⁴ He also notes that in distinction to the apostolic decree, in the Noachic rules Exodus 22:18 is not found, the prohibition against blood refers to murder, and the ban on idolatry is broader than that specified by Acts 17:23.¹⁷⁵ Terrence Callan proposes that the apostolic decree derives not only from the Noachic rules of Leviticus 17-18, but also from a broader list of laws which apply both to Israel and to the stranger or sojourner (Leviticus 24:10) in the land.¹⁷⁶ Callan works off an expanded list of laws which apply to both Israel and the stranger in the land.¹⁷⁷ He further suggests that the stranger in the land would in first century Judaism conform to the Gentile adherent of the synagogue.¹⁷⁸ The apostolic decree of Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25 represents an abbreviated list of laws applicable to the stranger in the land (or the

¹⁷⁴S. G. Wilson, Luke and the Law, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 50, ed. R. Mcl. Wilson and Margaret E. Thrall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 86. Among these are Sabbath keeping (Exod. 20:10; 23:12; Deut. 5:14).

¹⁷⁵Wilson, Luke and the Law, 87.

¹⁷⁶Callan, "The Background of the Apostolic Decree," 285.

¹⁷⁷Callan, "The Background of the Apostolic Decree," 285-86.

¹⁷⁸Callan, "The Background of the Apostolic Decree," 291-95.

Gentile adherent of the Synagogue) which would potentially threaten fellowship within the congregation.¹⁷⁹

Acts 15:21 has been described as although "sprachlich und textlich ohne Anstoss, doch nach Zusammenhang und Bedeutung zu den schwierigsten des NTs gehört."¹⁸⁰ Most commentators explain the verse in one of two ways: Since Moses is preached everywhere,¹⁸¹ Gentile believers must out of consideration for Jewish believers accept the four stipulations James has laid down.¹⁸² Or, since Moses is preached everywhere, it is possible to know of these requirements of James.¹⁸³ Bruce believes that James makes the statement to stress the continued mentoring role of Moses and Judaism, while appeasing the Pharisaical believers in the congregation.¹⁸⁴ Richard believes James is providing a continued role

¹⁷⁹Callan, "The Background of the Apostolic Decree, 286-88; 295. Callan's argument is internally coherent, although he recognizes the lack of direct evidence for such a practice in first century Judaism.

¹⁸⁰Dibelius, Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte, 87. Wilson, Luke and the Law, 83, considers the verse "notoriously obscure."

¹⁸¹Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 267, notes that the witness is longstanding (ἰσχυρὸν, ἀπὸ παλαιῶν χρόνων), widespread (ἁπλοῦς, ὅπου ἔστιν ἐκκλησία), and regular (ἁπλοῦς, ὅπου ἔστιν ἐκκλησία).

¹⁸²Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 391, n.1, "In 21.20 dagegen wird deutlich: Jakobus verlangt rücksicht auf den Judenchristen, die--viele Zehntausende sind--alle Eiferer für das Gesetz sind!" Also Lenski, The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles, 617-18; Munck, The Acts of the Apostles, 141.

¹⁸³See Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 267; Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 391, n. 1; Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles, 120.

¹⁸⁴Bruce, The Book of the Acts (English), 296.

for the preaching of Moses and the Law in the church.¹⁸⁵ Daniel R. Schwartz,¹⁸⁶ following J. K. L. Giesler,¹⁸⁷ views the statement in James' speech as an admission of the futility of preaching Moses: No further burden is required of the Gentile believers because in light of the universal preaching of Moses already throughout the world it would not appear to produce the desired effect.

(12-L5) A letter is addressed to the Gentile Christians

The fourth and final episode of the apostolic council consists of a narrative describing the response assembly to James' speech (15:22-23a) and a record of the letter which the assembly sent (15:23b-29). The subject of the letter is the infinitive "send" 4.¹⁸⁸ The action taken is to send a letter which affirms James' decision. After James' speech the decision of the assembly and the letter it sends is somewhat anticlimactic. Judas and Silas are selected to deliver the encyclical letter which fol-

¹⁸⁵Richard, "The Divine Purpose," 196-97.

¹⁸⁶Daniel R. Schwartz, "The Futility of Preaching Moses," Biblica 67 (1986) 276-81.

¹⁸⁷J. K. L. Giesler, "Über die Nazaräer und Ebioniten," Archiv für alte und neue Kirchengeschichte 4 (1818-1820) 311-12; cited in Schwartz, "The Futility of Preaching Moses," 277.

¹⁸⁸A similar construction exists in Thucydides 3.36.2 describing the Athenians' deliberation to sentence the Mytilenians to death: "The Athenians deliberated to sentence the Mytilenians to death: 'We will send a letter to the Mytilenians, that they should be obedient to the laws of the Athenians';" see Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Greek), 301. Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 275, notes that the construction denotes a formal declaration, citing as examples Herodotus *Persian Wars* (?) 1:3; Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews* 6.321; 16.163.

lows. Their selection as $\text{<D}^{\circ} \text{H}^{\circ} (\text{@: X<@LH!<J@H}^{\circ} \text{*}, \text{8N@H}$ lends both personal credibility to the letter and extends the respect of the Jerusalem church for the Antiochene church.¹⁸⁹

The letter which is sent by the church in Jerusalem employs the common Hellenistic opening salutation, consisting of the notation of the sender, followed by J@H and the recipient, followed by greetings.¹⁹⁰ The body of the letter itself is reminiscent of Hellenistic decrees promulgating the decisions of councils and assemblies of provincial cities.¹⁹¹ The first sentence after the greeting constitutes the only periodic sentence found in Acts.¹⁹² This and other literary features mark this sentence as constituting a formal declaration of the deci-

¹⁸⁹See Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, 392, n. 2, 401; Zmijewski, Die Apostelgeschichte, 570; Alfred Wikenhauser, Die Apostelgeschichte, Regensburger Neues Testament 5, ed. Alfred Wikenhauser and Otto Kuss (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1961), 176.

¹⁹⁰See Stanley K. Stowers, Letter Writing in Greco Roman Antiquity, A Library of Early Christianity 5. ed. Wayne Meeks (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1989), 21. The infinitive $\text{P}^{\circ} \text{ND}, \text{4}$ is a standard greeting in Hellenistic letters; see Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 275. Examples of its use in letters include 1 Macc. 10:18, 25, 26; 11:30, 32; 13:36; 2 Macc. 1:1, 10; 11:36; 3 Macc. 1:8; Jas. 1:1; Acts 23:26.

¹⁹¹So David Aune, The New Testament in Its Literary Environment, A Library of Early Christianity 8, ed. Wayne Meeks (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 128.

¹⁹²Aune, The New Testament in Its Literary Environment, 128. Blass Debrunner, Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch, 463 (sect. 464), describes the periodic sentence as "die Zusammenfügung einer größeren Anzahl von Sätzen un Satzgliedern zu einer Einheit."

sion of the council.¹⁹³ The format of the body of the letter consists of three statements: The first statement (15:24-26) reflects upon the question presented to the council and the resolution of the same, enclosing the first of two decisions enacted by the council: to send chosen men. As the periodic sentence is developed, it has an apologetic tone, defending the ministry of Paul and Barnabas.¹⁹⁴ The second statement (15:27) identifies and credentials Judas and Silas as representatives of the council.¹⁹⁵ The third statement presents the second decision of the council: to place the four stipulations upon the Gentiles which James had previously recommended. The letter emphasizes that the decision derived was not merely of the council, but also that of the Holy Spirit (15:28). The limitation of the burden (#VD@H) excludes circumcision, which was the source of the original controversy.¹⁹⁶ The content of this second list of

¹⁹³Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 276, notes that the use of #B, 4*Z is appropriate to solemn declarations of assemblies; see Diogenes Laertius *Lives of the Philosophers* 2.142. The sentence repeats the declarative formula of §*@, plus the dative plus an infinitive subject witnessed in 15:22. See also Aune, The New Testament in Its Literary Environment, 128.

¹⁹⁴See Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 275.

¹⁹⁵As such the letter functions in part as a letter of introduction and recommendation; see "John White, Ancient Greek Letters," in Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament, ed. David Aune, Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study 21, ed. Bernard Brandon Scott (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 88-89.

¹⁹⁶#VD@H should be taken as an excessive weight; see a Macc. 9:10; Matt. 20:12, 2 Cor. 4:17; Gal. 6:2; Rev. 2:24 (Johnson, The Acts of the Apostles, 277).

stipulations is so similar that further comment is not warranted.¹⁹⁷

(13-18) The church of Antioch receives the letter

The closing narrative to Acts 15:1-35 consists of three elements: First there is a travel summary introduced by : ¥ < @ ϕ < which returns the entourage, accompanied by Judas and Silas, to Antioch and reports their reception 15:30-31. The reception was positive: | P V D O F " < | B A B " D " 6 8 Z F , 4. The Gigas text of Old Italian version translates B " D " 6 8 Z F , 4 with *exhortationem*, that of Claomontanus with *orationem*, while Jerome used *consolatione*.¹⁹⁸ Bruce suggests that the reception was marked with relief.¹⁹⁹ Second, there is a description of a description of Judas' and Silas' activity in Antioch (15:32-33). Finally, there is a narrative summary of Paul and Barnabas' interlude in Antioch (15:35).²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷The most significant difference is the reading of , Æ T 8 @ 2 b J T < for J ä < • 8 4 (O : V J T < J ä < , Æ f 8 T < . The addition of | > ô < * 4 ' J O B @ < J , H © L J @ x H , P B D V > , J , is almost a formal feature of the endings of letters (2 Macc. 9:19; 11:26; Ignatius of Antioch *Ephesians* 4.2; *idem Smyrnaeans* 11.3.

¹⁹⁸See Haenchen, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 395. Haenchen finds Jerome's rendering "passender."

¹⁹⁹Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 304.

²⁰⁰Haenchen, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 396, describes 15:25 as "ein lukanischer Abschlussvers," similar to Acts 5:42 and 13:1.

CONCLUSION

At the conclusion of this paper, this writer would like to make one proposal for a change in the exegetical model. This writer desires a way by which the main clause of the sentence could be displayed in such a fashion as to indicate the subject, verb, and object of the clause in a columnar fashion while preserving the order of the words as they occur in the Greek sentence. It may even be possible to make tab settings for the position of each on the page of the block diagram. In addition, the subject and object elements of the main clause could be so designated by being underlined. The verb of the main clause would take a double underline. This writer believes that such a change would make some emphatic constructions easier to see. It would also be helpful to visualize the syntax of a sentence when, for example, the object of a verb is separated from the verb by a number of prepositional phrases or other syntactical elements that would be subordinate to the verb.

Applying Acts 15:1-35 to the contemporary church provides a measure of challenge. The direct application of the four stipulations appears culturally remote. Although they were never abolished by any ecclesiastical authority, the stipulations appear to have fallen into disuse or disregard even before the close of the New Testament era. The Apostle Paul never exhibited

any overt consideration of the decree's application.²⁰¹ Francois Dreyfus understands the apostolic decree to be an example of *Synkatabasis*, or a divine condescendence in consideration of prevailing thought patterns within the culture of the time, and not intended to become universally prescriptive.²⁰²

Perhaps what is directly applicable about the apostolic decree is the principles of resolution and decision making exhibited in the passage. Differences which jeopardize the foundation for Christian salvation and the principle of grace cannot be compromised. The issue of circumcision for Gentile converts was never seriously entertained by the principals of the apostolic council. Nor was any action taken to thwart what the Spirit of God had already born witness to. Positively, there is value in the body coming together to resolve problems when they occur. It should be noted that no faction nor any one individual was said to have been excluded from the assembly of the council. In churches today the decision making process should allow all views in the congregation to be addressed.

As the resolution of the council was formulated into the apostolic decree, three elements came into play: what God appeared to be doing at that present time through Paul and

²⁰¹See F. F. Bruce, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15," in Studien zum Text und zur Ethik des Neuen Testaments: Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Heinrich Greeven, ed. Wolfgang Schrage (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), 117-22.

²⁰²Francois Dreyfus, "Divine Condescendence (*Synkatabasis*) as a Hermeneutic Principle of the Old Testament in Jewish and Christian Tradition, Immanuel 19 (1984-85) 86.

Barnabas, what God had done in the past memory of the life of the congregation through Peter's experience with Cornelius, and what God has purposed to do on earth through his people as it is expressed in His word. These three elements should also come to bear in conflict resolution in today's churches. In resolving conflict or controversy, it should be asked, how will a resolution comply with what God is doing now in the church? How will a given resolution correspond with that congregation's memory of God's activity through that church? How will a given resolution correspond with the purpose of God expressed in scripture? Focussing on these questions allows the passage to be preached with a large measure of prophetic particularity.

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APPENDIX ONE

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 D<J, H
 *4 8" (@ B@88@0
 B" D, 6V8, F" <J@xH•*, 8N@xH
 6" Å
 !B, FJZD4" <

15:33

*¥
 B@ZF" <J, HPD' <@<
 • B, 8b20F" <
 : J', ÅZ<OH
 • B| Jä <•*, 8Nä <
 BD| HJ@xH• B@FJ, \8" <J" H" Û@H

15:35

*¥
 A" Ø@H6" Å#" D<" \$.H*4KD4\$@<
 !<z! <J4P, \'
 *4 VF6@<J, H
 6" Å
 , Û" ((, 84 \ : , <@4
 : , J, 6" Å@, Df < B@88ä <
 J| <8" (@<
 J@06LD\@.

APPENDIX TWO
SEMANTIC ANALYSIS
ACTS 15:1-35

<u>Clause</u>	<u>Connective</u>	<u>Sentence Function</u>	<u>Verb Analysis</u>	<u>Verb Subject</u>
1	6" \	Declarative	Imperfect 3P	J4<, H
2	*X	Declarative	Aorist 3P	(" Ū@)
3	: ¥< @P<	Declarative	Imperfect 3P	@É
4	*X	Declarative	Aorist Passive 3P	(" Ū@)
5	J,	Declarative	Aorist 3P	(" Ū@)
6	*X	Declarative	Aorist 3P	J4<, H
7	J,	Declarative	Aorist Passive 3P	@É•B` FJ@B@4 6" Á@É BD, F\$bJ, D@4
8	*X	Declarative	Aorist 3S	A XJD@H
P1		Declarative	Present 2P	β: , ĀH
P2	6" \	Declarative	Aorist 3S	Ò 6" D* 4@ (<f FJO H2, Î H
P3	6" \	Declarative	Aorist 3S	Ò 6" D* 4@ (<f FJO H2, Î H
P4	<Ø< @P<	Interrogative	Present 2P	(β: , ĀH)
P5	•88V	Declarative	Present 1P	(β: , ĀH)
9	*X	Declarative	Aorist 3S	B..< JÎ B8-2@H
10		Declarative	Imperfect 3P	B..< JÎ B8-2@H
11	*X	Declarative	Aorist 3S	z 3/6T \$@H
J1		Imperative	Aorist Imperative 2P	(β: , ĀH)

J2		Declarative	Aorist 3P	EL: , f <
J3	6" \	Declarative	Present 3P	@Ê8` (@4
OT1		Declarative	Future 1S	((f)
OT2	6" \	Declarative	Future 1S	((f)
OT3	6" \	Declarative	Future 1S	((f)
OT4	6" \	Declarative	Future 1S	((f)
OT5		Declarative	Present 3S	6bD4@H
J4	*4	Declarative	Present 1P	(f
J5	(VD	Declarative	Present 3S	9 T dF -H
12		Declarative	Aorist 3S	BX: RF" 4
L1		Declarative	Present Infinitive	
L2		Declarative	Aorist 3S	BX: R" 4
L3	@P<	Declarative	Perfect 1P	(°: , ÆH)
L4	(VD	Declarative	Aorist 3S	B4J\2, F2" 4
L5		Declarative	Perect Imperative 2P	
13	: ¥< @P<	Declarative	Aorist 3P	@Ê
14	6" \	Declarative	Aorist 3P	@Ê
15	*X	Declarative	Aorist 3P	(" Ú@)
16	J,	Declarative	Aorist 3P	z 3@b*" H6" Â E 48..H
17	*X	Declarative	Aorist Passive 3P	z 3@b*" H6" Â E 48..H
18	*X	Declarative	Imperfect 3P	A " 08@H6" Â #" D<" \$.H

APPENDIX FOUR

WORKSHEET FOR TEXTUAL VARIANT ANALYSIS

PASSAGE: Acts 15:20a

APPARATUS USED UBS³

VARIANT READING A: 6" ÂJ-HB@D<, \" H

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
1739	614	0142	049
Minuscule Uncial X	Minuscule XIII	Numbered Uncial X	Numbered IX
2127	D 05	056	1877
Minuscule XII	Letter Uncial V/VI	Numbered Uncial X	Minuscule XIV
33	E 08	104	2412
Minuscule IX	Letter Uncial VI	Minuscule 1087	Minuscule XII
81	it ar 61	1241	2492
Minuscule 1044	Old Latin IX	Minuscule XII	Minuscule XIII
A 02	it d 5	1505	330
Letter Uncial	Old Latin	Minuscule	Minuscule

V	V	1084	XII
! 01	it e 50	181	451
Letter Uncial	Old Latin	Minuscule	Minuscule
IV	VI	XI	XI
B 03	it gig 51	2495	Byz Lect
Letter Uncial	Old Latin	Minuscule	Lectionary
IV	XIII	XIV/XV	
C 04	it l 67	326	P 025
Letter Uncial	Old Latin	Minuscule	Letter
Uncial			
V	VII	XII	IX
cop bo		436	
Coptic		Minuscule	
IV		XI	
cop sa		629	
Coptic		Minuscule	
III		XIV	
		630	
		Minuscule	
		XIV	
		88	
		Minuscule	
		XII	

945

Minuscule

XI

eth pp

Ethiopic

XIX

geo

Georgian

V

Q 044

Letter Uncial
VIII/IX

VARIANT READING: [omit]

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine

Origen		arm	
Church Father		Armenian	
254		V	
p45		eth ro	
Papyri		Ethiopic	
III		XVI	

EVALUATION OF EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Date. The largest number of early manuscripts (fifth century and earlier) support reading A, including the uncials !, B, C, D, and E (sixth century). Reading B is attested by the papyrus p⁴⁵ and Origen (both third century) and the Armenian version (fifth century).

2. Geographical Distribution. Reading A has the broadest geographical distribution.
3. Textual Relationships. Reading A is represented in all text families, with ample attestation in both Alexandrian and Western families. The omission, reading B, is represented in the Alexandrian sources of p⁴⁵ and Origen.

EVALUATION OF INTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Transcriptional Probabilities.
 - (1) Shorter/Longer Reading. Reading #, an omission, is shortest.
 - (2) Reading Different from Parallel. The prohibition from B@D<, \ " H is in parallel with the apostolic decree of Acts 15:29, also viewed retrospectively in Acts 21:25. In the latter two settings some form of B@D<, \ " is included in the prohibition.
 - (3) More Difficult Reading. Neither alternative is particularly difficult, although the omission presents some difficulty to continuity with 15:29 and 21:25. Theologically, a mixed prohibition of ethical and ceremonial elements is troublesome.²⁰³
 - (4) Reading Which Best Explains the Others. The exclusion of the parallel element is likely to initiate its addition later. However, 6" AJ-HB@D<, \ " H may have been omitted because it seemed out of place with what otherwise may be taken to be ceremonial elements.²⁰⁴
2. Intrinsic Probabilities. This author could not detect any intrinsic probabilities applicable to these variants.

²⁰³See BARrett, "The Apostolic Decree of Acts 15.29," 51; Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 429-33.

²⁰⁴See Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 430-31.

WORKSHEET FOR TEXTUAL VARIANT ANALYSIS

PASSAGE: Acts 15:20b

APPARATUS USED UBS³

VARIANT READING A: 6" AJ@OB<46J@0

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
1739	614	0142	049
Minuscule Uncial X	Minuscule XIII	Numbered Uncial X	Numbered IX
2127	E 08	056	1877
Minuscule XII	Letter Uncial VI	Numbered Uncial X	Minuscule XIV
! 01		104	2412
Letter Uncial IV		Minuscule 1087	Minuscule XII
C 04		1241	2492
Letter Uncial V		Minuscule XII	Minuscule XIII
p45		1505	330
Papyri III		Minuscule 1084	Minuscule XII
		181	451
		Minuscule XI	Minuscule XI

	2495	Byz Lect
	Minuscule	Lectionary
	XIV/XV	
	326	Chrysostom
Father	Minuscule	Church
	XII	407
	436	P 025
Uncial	Minuscule	Letter
	XI	IX
	629	
	Minuscule	
	XIV	
	630	
	Minuscule	
	XIV	
	88	
	Minuscule	
	XII	
	945	
	Minuscule	
	XI	

VARIANT READING B: 6" ÂB<46J@0

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
33		Apostolic Const	
Minuscule		Church Father	
IX		380	
81		Q 044	
Minuscule		Letter Uncial	
1044		VIII/IX	

A 02

Letter Uncial

V

B 03

Letter Uncial

IV

VARIANT READING C: 6" Â (or 6" ÂJ@) B<46J@

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
cop sa	it ar 61	arm	
Coptic	Old Latin	Armenian	
III	IX	V	
	it e 50	geo	
	Old Latin	Georgian	
	VI	V	
	it l 67		

Old Latin

VII

VARIANT READING D: [omit]

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
	D 05	Ambrose	
	Letter Uncial	Church Father	
	V/VI	397	
	Ephraem (Syrus)	Ambrosiaster	
	Church Father	Church Father	
	373	IV	
	Irenaeus (of Ly)	Aristides	
	Church Father	Church Father	
	202	II	
		Augustine	
		Church Father	
		430	

EVALUATION OF EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Date. All variants are attested early, although readings C and D largely by either church fathers or versions.
2. Geographical Distribution. Readings A and D have broad geographical distribution.
3. Textual Relationships. Reading A is represented in all text families, with ample attestation in both Alexandrian and Western families. The omission, reading B, is represented in the Alexandrian sources of p^{45} and Origen.

EVALUATION OF INTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Transcriptional Probabilities.
 - (1) Shorter/Longer Reading. Reading #, an omission, is shortest. Readings C and D are predominately Western. Reading B is predominately Alexandrian. Reading A has representation in all families, including early Alexandrian attestation (p^{45} , !, and C).
 - (2) Reading Different from Parallel. The prohibition from $B<46J@0$ is in parallel with the apostolic decree of Acts 15:29, also viewed retrospectively in Acts 21:25. In the latter two settings its attestation is also problematic.
 - (3) More Difficult Reading. Neither alternative is particularly difficult from a grammatical standpoint.
 - (4) Reading Which Best Explains the Others. The exclusion of the parallel element is likely to initiate its addition later.
2. Intrinsic Probabilities. This author could not detect any intrinsic probabilities applicable to these variants.

WORKSHEET FOR TEXTUAL VARIANT ANALYSIS

PASSAGE: Acts 15:20c

APPARATUS USED UBS³

VARIANT READING A: " È " J@H

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
2127	614	0142	049
Minuscule Uncial XII	Minuscule XIII	Numbered Uncial X	Numbered IX
33	E 08	056	1877
Minuscule IX	Letter Uncial VI	Numbered Uncial X	Minuscule XIV
81	it e 50	104	2412
Minuscule 1044	Old Latin VI	Minuscule 1087	Minuscule XII
A 02	it gig 51	1241	2492
Letter Uncial V	Old Latin XIII	Minuscule XII	Minuscule XIII
! 01	it l 67	1505	330
Letter Uncial IV	Old Latin VII	Minuscule 1084	Minuscule XII
B 03		181	451
Letter Uncial IV		Minuscule XI	Minuscule XI

C 04	2495	Byz Lect
Letter Uncial	Minuscule	Lectionary
V	XIV/XV	
cop bo	326	P 025
Coptic Uncial IV	Minuscule XII	Letter IX
p45	436	
Papyri	Minuscule	
III	XI	
	629	
	Minuscule	
	XIV	
	88	
	Minuscule	
	XII	
	arm	
	Armenian	
	V	
	geo	
	Georgian	
	V	
	Q 044	
Letter Uncial		

VIII/IX

VARIANT READING B: " È " J@H6" ÂÓF" ←: - 2X8TF4 © LJ@H(\<, F2" 4
 ©JXD@H: - B@4 Å<

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
1739	D 05	630	
Minuscule	Letter Uncial	Minuscule	
X	V/VI	XIV	
cop sa	Ephraem (Syrus)	945	
Coptic	Church Father	Minuscule	
III	373	XI	
	Irenaeus (of Ly	Aristides	
	Church Father	Church Father	
	202	II	
	it ar 61	eth	
	Old Latin	Ethiopic	
	IX	VI	
	it d 5	Eusebius, of Ca	
	Old Latin	Church Father	
	V	339	
		Porphyry	
		Church Father	
		II	

EVALUATION OF EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Date. Although both variants are attested early, reading B is largely by either church fathers or versions.
2. Geographical Distribution. Both readings A and B have broad geographical distribution.
3. Textual Relationships. Reading A is represented in all text families, with greatest attestation in the Alexandrian family. Reading B is predominately Western.

EVALUATION OF INTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Transcriptional Probabilities.
 - (1) Shorter/Longer Reading. Reading A is shortest.
 - (2) Reading Different from Parallel. The addition of the negatively expressed golden rule is paralleled in a number of manuscripts of 15:29, which is equally problematic.
 - (3) More Difficult Reading. Neither alternative is particularly difficult from a grammatical standpoint.
 - (4) Reading Which Best Explains the Others. The addition of the negative golden rule element provides an ethical explanation for what may have been otherwise obscure requirements.
2. Intrinsic Probabilities. This author could not detect any intrinsic probabilities applicable to these variants.

WORKSHEET FOR TEXTUAL VARIANT ANALYSIS

PASSAGE: Acts 15:29a

APPARATUS USED UBS³

VARIANT READING A: 6" ÅB<46Jä<

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
-----	-----	-----	-----
81	614	Gaudentius (of	2412
Minuscule	Minuscule	Church Father	Minuscule
1044	XIII	400	XII
A* 02		Jerome	
Letter Uncial		Church Father	
V		420	
! * 01			
Letter Uncial			
IV			
B 03			
Letter Uncial			
IV			
C 04			
Letter Uncial			
V			
Clement of Alex			
Church Father			
215			

cop bo

Coptic

IV

cop sa

Coptic

III

Origen

Church Father

254

VARIANT READING B: 6" ÂB<46J@0

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
1739	it ar 61	0142	049
Minuscule Uncial X	Old Latin IX	Numbered Uncial X	Numbered IX
2127	it e 50	056	1877
Minuscule XII	Old Latin VI	Numbered Uncial X	Minuscule XIV
33	it gig 51	104	2492
Minuscule IX	Old Latin XIII	Minuscule 1087	Minuscule XIII
A ² 02		1241	330
Letter Uncial		Minuscule	Minuscule

V	XII	XII
! c 01	1505	451
Letter Uncial	Minuscule	Minuscule
IV	1084	XI
Didymus, of Ale	181	Byz Lect
Church Father	Minuscule	Lectionary
398	XI	
	2495	Chrysostom
Father	Minuscule	Church
	XIV/XV	407
	326	E 07
Uncial	Minuscule	Letter
	XII	VIII
	436	P 025
Uncial	Minuscule	Letter
	XI	IX
	629	
	Minuscule	
	XIV	
	630	
	Minuscule	
	XIV	

99

88

Minuscule

XII

945

Minuscule

XI

Apostolic Const

Church Father

380

arm

Armenian

V

Epiphanius (of

Church Father

403

Q 044

Letter Uncial

VIII/IX

Theodoret

Church Father

466

VARIANT READING C: B<46J@0

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
Athanasius	it ph 63		
Church Father	Old Latin		
373	XII		

VARIANT READING D: [omit]

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
	Cyprian	Ambrosiaster	
	Church Father	Church Father	
	258	IV	
	D 05	Augustine	
	Letter Uncial	Church Father	
	V/VI	430	
	Ephraem (Syrus)	geo	
	Church Father	Georgian	
	373	V	
	Irenaeus (of Ly)	Jerome	
	Church Father	Church Father	
	202	420	
	it d 5	Pacian	
	Old Latin	Church Father	
	v	392	
	it l 67		

Old Latin

VII

Tertullian

Church Father

220

EVALUATION OF EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Date. All the variations of this passage have early attestation, although reading A is strongest with uncials ! , A, B, and C.
2. Geographical Distribution. The distribution of readings A, B, and D is broad. Reading C is weakly attested to Alexandria.
3. Textual Relationships. Readings A, B and C are largely Alexandrian witnesses. Reading D is Western.

EVALUATION OF INTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Transcriptional Probabilities.
 - (1) Shorter/Longer Reading. Reading D is an omission; the other readings are nearly equally short.
 - (2) Reading Different from Parallel. The prohibition from B<46J@ is in parallel with the apostolic decree of Acts 15:20, also viewed retrospectively in Acts 21:25. In the latter two settings its attestation is also problematic.
 - (3) More Difficult Reading. These variants present no grammatical difficulties.
 - (4) Reading Which Best Explains the Others. The plural number of reading A was assimilated into the singular.²⁰⁵
2. Intrinsic Probabilities. This author could not detect any intrinsic probabilities applicable to these variants.

²⁰⁵See Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 438.

WORKSHEET FOR TEXTUAL VARIANT ANALYSIS

PASSAGE: Acts 15:29b

APPARATUS USED UBS³

VARIANT READING A: 6" ÂB@D<, \ " H

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
2127	E 08	0142	049
Minuscule Uncial XII	Letter Uncial VI	Numbered Uncial X	Numbered IX
33	it e 2	056	1877
Minuscule IX	Old Latin V	Numbered Uncial X	Minuscule XIV
81	it gig 51	104	2492
Minuscule 1044	Old Latin XIII	Minuscule 1087	Minuscule XIII
A 02	Tertullian	1241	330
Letter Uncial V	Church Father 220	Minuscule XII	Minuscule XII
! 01		1505	451
Letter Uncial IV		Minuscule 1084	Minuscule XI
Athanasius Church Father 373		181 Minuscule XI	Byz Lect Lectionary

B 03	2495	P 025
Letter Uncial	Minuscule	Letter
Uncial		
IV	XIV/XV	IX
C 04	326	
Letter Uncial	Minuscule	
V	XII	
Clement of Alex	436	
Church Father	Minuscule	
215	XI	
cop bo	629	
Coptic	Minuscule	
IV	XIV	
Didymus, of Ale	88	
Church Father	Minuscule	
398	XII	
Origen	Apostolic Const	
Church Father	Church Father	
254	380	
	arm	
	Armenian	
	V	
	geo	

Georgian

V

p33

Papyri

VI

Q 044

Letter Uncial

VIII/IX

VARIANT READING B: 6" ÂB@D<, \" H 6" ÂCF" : - 2X8, J, © LJ@ÃH(\<, F2" 4
©, D@H: - B@4 Â<

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
1739	614	630	2412
Minuscule	Minuscule	Minuscule	Minuscule
X	XIII	XIV	XII
cop sa	Cyprian	945	
Coptic	Church Father	Minuscule	
III	258	XI	
	D 05	Ambrosiaster	
	Letter Uncial	Church Father	
	V/VI	IV	
	Irenaeus (of Ly	eth	
	Church Father	Ethiopic	

202	VI
it ar 61	Eusebius, of Ca
Old Latin	Church Father
IX	339
it d 5	Porphyry
Old Latin	Church Father
V	II
it l 67	
Old Latin	
VII	
it p 54	
Old Latin	
XIII	
it ph 63	
Old Latin	
XII	

VARIANT READING C: [omit]

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine

		Gaudentius (of	
		Church Father	
		400	
		Vigilius	

EVALUATION OF EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Date. The attestation for an early date for readings B and C are largely from church fathers (although reading B is support by uncial D). Reading A is strongest with uncials ! , A, B, C, and E.
2. Geographical Distribution. The distribution of reading B is broad. Reading A is largely attested to Alexandria.
3. Textual Relationships. Readings A is largely Alexandrian witnesses. Reading B is Western.

EVALUATION OF INTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Transcriptional Probabilities.
 - (1) Shorter/Longer Reading. Reading C is an omission; the variant of reading A is short.
 - (2) Reading Different from Parallel. The prohibition from B@D<, \ " H is in parallel with Acts 15:20, also viewed retrospectively in Acts 21:25. However, the parallels are also textually problematic.
 - (3) More Difficult Reading. These variants present no grammatical difficulties.
 - (4) Reading Which Best Explains the Others. Reading B is an amplification in parallel with variants of 15:20.
2. Intrinsic Probabilities. This author could not detect any intrinsic probabilities applicable to these variants.

WORKSHEET FOR TEXTUAL VARIANT ANALYSIS

PASSAGE: Acts 15:29c

APPARATUS USED UBS³

VARIANT READING A: BDV>, J,

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
1739	614	0142	049
Minuscule Uncial X	Minuscule XIII	Numbered Uncial X	Numbered IX
2127	E 08	056	1877
Minuscule XII	Letter Uncial VI	Numbered Uncial X	Minuscule XIV
33	it e 2	104	2412
Minuscule IX	Old Latin V	Minuscule 1087	Minuscule XII
81	it gig 51	1241	2492
Minuscule 1044	Old Latin XIII	Minuscule XII	Minuscule XIII
A 02		1505	330
Letter Uncial V		Minuscule 1084	Minuscule XII
! 01		181	451
Letter Uncial IV		Minuscule XI	Minuscule XI

B 03	2495	Byz Lect
Letter Uncial	Minuscule	Lectionary
IV	XIV/XV	
Clement of Alex	629	P 025
Church Father	Minuscule	Letter
Uncial	XIV	IX
215		
cop bo	630	
Coptic	Minuscule	
IV	XIV	
cop sa	88	
Coptic	Minuscule	
III	XII	
Didymus, of Ale	945	
Church Father	Minuscule	
398	XI	
Origen	Apostolic Const	
Church Father	Church Father	
254	380	
	geo	
	Georgian	
	V	
	p33	

Papyri

VI

Pacian

Church Father

392

Q 044

Letter Uncial
VIII/IX

VARIANT READING B: BDV>" J,

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
C 04	it ar 61	326	
Letter Uncial	Old Latin	Minuscule	
V	IX	XII	
		arm	
		Armenian	
		V	
		eth ro	
		Ethiopic	
		XVI	

VARIANT READING C: BDV>OJ,

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
	E 08	436	1877

Letter Uncial	Minuscule	Minuscule
VI	XI	XIV

VARIANT READING D: BDV>" J, N, D` : , <@4!<Jè -(\\å B<, b: " J4

CLASSIFICATION OF MANUSCRIPTS BY TEXT FAMILY

Alexandrian	Western	Unclassified	Byzantine
-------------	---------	--------------	-----------

1739

D 05

Minuscule

Letter Uncial

X

V/VI

Ephraem (Syrus)

Church Father

373

Irenaeus (of Ly

Church Father

202

it d 5

Old Latin

V

it l 67

Old Latin

VII

Tertullian

Church Father

220

EVALUATION OF EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Date. The attestation for an early date for readings B and C are largely from church fathers (although reading B is supported by uncial D). Reading A is strongest with uncials !, A, B, C, and E.
2. Geographical Distribution. The distribution of reading B is broad. Reading A is largely attested to Alexandria.
3. Textual Relationships. Reading A is largely Alexandrian witnesses. Reading B is Western.

EVALUATION OF INTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Transcriptional Probabilities.
 - (1) Shorter/Longer Reading. Readings A, B, and C are equally short.
 - (2) Reading Different from Parallel. Not applicable.
 - (3) More Difficult Reading. Of the three short readings, the aorist or imperfect of reading B and the aorist subjunctive of reading C are more difficult than the future tense of reading A.
 - (4) Reading Which Best Explains the Others. Reading C appears to be an amplification of the original common to the Western tradition.²⁰⁶
2. Intrinsic Probabilities. This author could not detect any intrinsic probabilities applicable to these variants.

²⁰⁶See Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 263, n. 12.

APPENDIX FIVE

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE

Sermon Title: Acts 15: Blueprint for Christian Conflict Resolution.

Outline:

- IV. In order to resolve conflict, we must first identify the nature of the problem.
 - A. Some problems involve biblically unassailable truths.
 - B. Other problems do not.
 - 1. Other problems stem from the complexity of the human condition.
 - 2. Other problems stem from varied expressions of piety.
- V. In order to resolve conflict, it is often profitable to council together.
 - A. Councillng together allows us to identify and understand the present working of God in our midst.
 - B. Councillng together enables us to remind and encourage ourselves with how God has worked among us in the past.
 - C. Councillng together grants us the opportunity to be reminded of God's divine purposes as He has revealed them through His word.
- VI. In order to resolve conflict, we must endeavor to come to a common resolution.