

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for April 27, 2014

The Ministry By The Church of Antioch To Judea
Acts 11:27-30

Acts 11 begins the active ministry to the Gentile world. First, Jewish disciples brought spiritual ministry to the Gentiles in Antioch (11:19-26) and now the Gentile disciples bring physical ministry to the Jews in Judea (11:27-30).

1. The prophets (11:27)

This is the first mention of prophets in Acts. A prophet is a person who, based upon direct revelation from God, proclaims a divine message.

It is impossible for a true prophet to proclaim a false prophecy (Deuteronomy 18:20-22).

New Testament prophets served to establish the church until the foundation had been laid with the completion of the New Testament (cf. Ephesians 2:20).

2. The prophecy (11:28)

Agabus is also mentioned in Acts 21:10-11, when he comes from Judea to Caesarea to warn Paul of the threat of seizure by the Jews in Jerusalem.

Luke had earlier used the word “world” to refer to the Roman Empire (Luke 2:1). Claudius was the Caesar of Rome from 41 AD to 54 AD, and his reign was noted by the series of famine years in the Roman Empire. This included a famine in the Middle East from 44-48 AD, with 46 AD being the worst in Judea.

The importance of the persecuted church in Judea knowing of this famine in advance cannot be overestimated.

3. The provision (11:29)

- a. The contribution was provided by the disciples.
- b. The contribution was participatory.
- c. The contribution was proportional.
- d. The contribution was planned.
- e. The contribution was pledged to the brethren.

- f. The contribution was prudent.
- g. The contribution was practical.
- h. The contribution was processed by local churches.
- i. The contribution was purely sacrificial.
- j. The contribution proved their faith.
- k. The contribution was possessed by responsible men.

4. The providers (11:30)

Barnabas and Saul personally delivered the gift to the elders, which is the first time we see this term used in Acts to designate church leaders.

The faith of these unnamed disciples of Antioch was pivotal to the uniting of Jews and Gentiles together in the church, thus establishing peace (cf. Ephesians 2:11-22). Years earlier, Barnabas had served to unite Saul with these very same people (Acts 9:27).

May we use our resources to serve our fellow believers in time of need in order to build the unity of the church.