

Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas
Fredericksburg Bible Church
107 East Austin
Fredericksburg, Texas 78624
830-997-8834 jthomas@fbgbible.org

**A0912 – March 22, 2009 – Acts 15:36-16:10 – The Invasion Of
Europe**

Open your Bible to Acts 15 this morning. Having worked through the Council of Jerusalem, a very important decision was made related to justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, apart from the Law, apart from circumcision, salvation is a free gift received through faith, it cannot be earned by any human works. Jesus Christ did all the work, and therefore it is by grace. Today we come to Paul's 2nd Missionary Expedition which, just like the 1st, comes out of Antioch, but the difference is he's not planning another missionary expedition, but Somebody is. So let's read how things get underway starting in Acts 15:36. And pay attention to how the Somebody behind the scenes.

³⁶After some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are.” ³⁷Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. ³⁸But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. ⁴⁰But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Now here we have the first in a chain series of events, episodes that will eventually result, under the work of the Holy Spirit, in the gospel going to Europe. Let's observe how it starts. Now, **After some days Paul said to**

Barnabas, probably only a very short time referred to there, not long after the Council of Jerusalem, Paul came up with this very simple idea. This is not some great vision Paul had of evangelizing the world. At this point all he has in mind is **Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are.**” So all he wants to do is re-cover the ground he covered on the 1st missionary journey. In that journey they started in Antioch. Paul, Barnabas and John Mark sail across to the island of Cyprus, they work their way across the island, and then set sail for Asia, and they land in Perga. John Mark flakes out, and they head up into the mountains to Pisidian Antioch, then down to Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, preaching the word, and then they go in reverse, establish churches, come down to the coast, go over to Attalia and then sail home at the end of chapter 14. Now it’s been about two years, Paul wants to go back. And with that we learn another principle of missions in addition to those we learned on the first journey. And that is the principle of follow-up. So, let’s review some of the basic principles of missions methodology that set up this principle. Why is it that the principle of follow-up is needed in the Book of Acts? By the way, it would not be needed in most modern missions organizations because when they go in the missionary establishes a church and controls the thing for the rest of his life. But Paul didn’t do that, that’s a modern method and that we have seen has some very negative repercussions. The first repercussion is that of spiritual reliance by the new converts upon the missionary or the missionary organization. The converts come to depend upon that missionary organization; they are never cut loose so they can be led by the Spirit of God rather than by the spirit of the missionary. And this results in a false dependence, a false spirituality, the spirit of “I am of Bill or Mary or whoever and I don’t move until the missionary moves.” Eventually this results in a static body of believers who just sit and soak. So to avoid this Paul went in, preached the word, won converts and then quickly followed up with teaching, and after a few months he appointed elders and left town. Now the modern missionary will criticize Paul at this point: “Don’t you know, Paul, how irresponsible it is to leave these new converts out there with only the Spirit of God and the word of God?” But Paul knew exactly what he was doing. What He was doing was two things. First, Paul was teaching. He taught according to the historical framework methodology of Creation, Fall, Flood, Covenant, Call of Abraham and so forth through the OT on up to the NT Birth of the King, Life of the King, Death of the King, up to where they were in the plan of God. He did not get bogged down in all the details, he

taught the broad historical and doctrinal outline of the plan of God for history. The second thing Paul did was teach massive amounts of content; he literally spent hours per day, six days a week, teaching new converts the word of God, such that in 5 or 6 months they could easily have 500-600 hours of Bible teaching. It's a principle which shows you just how quickly a new convert can advance in the spiritual life. These converts were literally transformed from idolatrous pagans into men and women of high Christian character. Then Paul appointed out of that group elders and left them in the hands of the Holy Spirit. The last thing Paul wanted was for others to rely upon him spiritually rather than the Spirit. So he taught them and he left them. But, what we see in 15:36 is that he did follow-up. Paul didn't answer every question in the book and so these churches needed guidance, they needed answers to theological questions and practical application so Paul follows-up. And therefore, a very important principle, if the modern missionary is to follow Paul, is that he has got to stay on the move but he has also got to return for follow-up.

And follow-up is all Paul has in mind in verse 36. The Holy Spirit, as we're going to see, has a little more in mind, but it all starts in v 36. Verse 37-38 you have the apostles get in a fight. You mean the apostles fought? Oh yes they fought. But I thought the apostles were infallible? When they wrote Scripture, correct. All the time in their personal lives, no. Let's look at this fight: Barnabas on one side with John Mark, verse 37. Who is John Mark? John Mark is Barnabas' nephew; there may be some family interest there. At the time he was a teenager in his 20's, college age probably by this time. His mother was a wealthy woman who had a big house where the early church met in Jerusalem, the Upper Room you read of in the Gospels, that was her home. But John Mark had gone on the first missionary journey with Barnabas and Paul as their attendant, he was the guy who was supposed to take care of all the details so Paul and Barnabas could minister efficiently. And they made it across Cyprus and then what happened? They sailed up to Pamphylia, at which point John Mark got cold feet and flaked out. He went home crying to mommy in Jerusalem. We're not told exactly why but evidently Paul interpreted John Mark as a flake. He set out with us but he did not finish and so at the time John Mark was a Christian who never finished anything. He may have been upset about Paul taking the lead over Uncle Barnabas. He may have been upset about the conflict between Paul

and Bar-Jesus at the home of Sergius Paulus. We don't know for sure, but for some reason he flaked out.

Paul was the type that didn't put up with this kind of childishness. He was on a mission and he needed a stable team. So with John Mark's past Paul says, "John Mark's not going," he's unstable. Paul was not a man of second chances. But Barnabas says, "Yes, he is going." Barnabas was a different type of man. Barnabas, whose name means son of consolation or encouragement, had a strong affinity for the new converts. He would take them under his wing and help grow them up. He was excellent at helping fledgling believers along. In fact, he'd helped Paul himself get his start in Jerusalem. Barnabas was a man of second chances. Paul was not and so there's a conflict. The fantastic thing about this conflict is that neither man did anything wrong. Both were basing their decision on Scriptural principles. Paul's principle was that of order and stability. Since John Mark is unreliable he doesn't go. Barnabas' principle was that of growth and second chances. Therefore John Mark should go. And this went back and forth to the point (verse 39) a **sharp disagreement** occurred which means they had an all-out. One day they just unleashed on one another till they were at each other's throats over this. That shows you how intense can be the differences between godly people. Godliness does not mean you never have an argument. Paul is going to eliminate Mark from his team. Mark will go with Barnabas to Cyprus. Barnabas is his right teacher, not Paul. As a result of this Barnabas is going to help Mark grow up into a fine Christian man, a man who becomes the author of the second Gospel; the Gospel of Mark. He would never have written that Gospel had he been with Paul. Paul was not his right teacher. Paul, though he was a patient man, did not have as long a fuse as Barnabas and so we conclude this is a good split.

Paul, who's he going to get? He's going to get Silas. Silas was one of the leading men of the Jerusalem church. He had the gift of prophecy, and so he comes from the mother church of Jerusalem, and he is going to be a tremendous help to Paul. So what do we gather from verses 37-39? We gather that God the Holy Spirit is up to something here. What has the Holy Spirit done through this conflict? What is the Book of Acts all about? Why is this heated dispute recorded? To show you how the church grew in the first century. To show you how the Holy Spirit brilliantly turned one missionary journey into two. Now we have two groups going out to two different places.

They didn't know that at the time, all they could see was this heated dispute and "That Barnabas, if he would just leave that flake we could get on the road," but as it worked out now we have two roads being traveled not one. So a tremendous leap in church growth. God the Holy Spirit is spreading the resources out. This separation literally has to occur because Paul is going to go into Europe, he doesn't know that now, but that's where God is taking Him and therefore God has to build up Paul's staff suited for Europe. Barnabas and John Mark were not on that staff, Silas was.

So what personal application can we make of that little episode? That God uses both kinds of people. Neither one is condemned for doing anything wrong. They both used biblical wisdom; they both came to different conclusions. There's nothing wrong with it at all. In the end they recognize this and Paul recognizes Barnabas, he recognizes John Mark as a leader in the church, no hard feelings.

And so once more we begin to see that the Book of Acts is really the Acts of the Holy Spirit. He is running the show. Human responsibility, yes, divine sovereignty, yes. Not a conflict at all. So in verse 39 **Barnabas** takes **Mark**, they sail **to Cyprus**. That's Barnabas' home, so very logically they go there to follow-up with the ministry at Salamis and Paphos. In verse 40, **Paul chose Silas** who was down in Jerusalem. He summoned him up to Antioch and they left, **being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord**. Not a problem in the world. The church had seen the dispute, they sided neither with Paul or Barnabas, and they sent them out in the grace of God. **And he** went into **Syria and Cilicia**. Probably what you have in **Syria** was churches established by the central church of Antioch. Remember, Paul followed the metropolitan approach; he went to the population centers and figured that the gospel would spread out into the rural areas over time. By this time there were other churches out in the countryside, so he visits those. Then he goes on up to **Cilicia**. **Cilicia** is where his hometown of Tarsus is, very logical, very strategic, he'd spent the first ten years of his ministry up here and had converts and established churches back in Acts 9. So he goes forth into these regions **strengthening the churches** and this brings us to chapter 16. So let's read.

¹Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but

his father was a Greek, ²and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. ³Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe. ⁵So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily.

As they come to **Derbe** and **Lystra**, it's all just the simple plan of follow-up. Who does he meet but number two on his staff. Number one on his staff was Silas, perfect man because Silas has got connections to the mother church in Jerusalem, so a member of the Jerusalem church is going to be eyewitness of the gospel invasion of Europe. Then you have this guy Timothy show up. Timothy's unique in that on one side he's Jewish and on the other side he's Greek. Now what advantage does that serve? Timothy is bi-cultural. If you're going to go into Europe that might be the kind of guy you want on your staff. Only one problem, Timothy isn't circumcised. Apparently **his father was a pagan Greek, was** in the imperfect. We think he was dead by this time, but his mother was **Jewish**, and we meet her over in 2 Timothy 1:5, her name was Eunice. She raised Timothy in the OT Scriptures from the womb, so year in year out she trained him, and trained him and trained him, but his father was apparently a very pagan man, and as an expression of that forbade Timothy to be circumcised. But it shows the principle I refer to from time to time of family training. You can't rely on the church to train your children for you. That is your job parents; it falls under Divine Institution #3, the family. The Church didn't come along for 4,000 years in history. Well, how did the children ever get saved? They got saved because their parents sat down with them and took them through the word of God over and over and over. Which is precisely what happened with Timothy. You can read all about it in 2 Tim 3:14-17. His father was out to lunch so his mother and grandmother picked up the ball and that training in the OT prepared young Timothy so that when Paul and Barnabas came into this territory on the 1st missionary journey and they preached the gospel, Timothy believed the gospel. And by the 2nd missionary journey Timothy had become a well-known **disciple...well spoken of by the brethren in Lystra and Iconium**. So you have this bi-cultural man being added to Paul's staff.

But the problem we said is that this bi-cultural man is uncircumcised. And with that we want to introduce another principle to our Doctrine of Missions. The principle of “contextualization.” By that we mean to address the question, “What kind of concessions can the missionary make for the sake of the gospel?” We’re going to see Paul make a number of concessions in the Book of Acts to reach people with the gospel. And these concessions are precisely the reason a number of theologians all clobber Paul for this. Oh Paul, you screwed up, should’ve never violated grace, Paul was wrong to do this. Now, was Paul wrong to do this? Apparently Paul didn’t have a problem with certain concessions. We read Paul in 1 Corinthians 9, verse 20, “To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; ²¹to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. ²²To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some. ²³*I do all things* for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.” The problem there is, “What do you mean Paul by “all things?” Do you mean to say you will violate doctrinal principles to win people to Christ? No. Paul never violated doctrine to reach anyone for Christ. If he violated doctrine they would have reached him for paganism. So the line is doctrine. But isn’t this a violation of doctrine? No, this is a cultural concession. See, here we have Timothy. Timothy is a block to Jewish evangelism in that region because his father was known to be a Greek. So what did Paul do? He had Timothy circumcised. Now he’s not longer a block, he can move freely among Jews and Greeks. In fact, in 1st century Judaism if a man had a Jewish mother and a Gentile father, as Timothy did, the son had a decision to make. Do you want to be identified with Jews or Gentiles? And circumcision was the identifier. If he was circumcised then he was accepted as a Jew among the Jews. So this opens up all kinds of opportunities for Paul and his staff. I like to think of myself as having a similar advantage. People always ask me if I’m from Texas and I always answer, well, I was born in South Carolina but I got here is quick as a could. We moved when I was 11 months old. But I do have some advantages being from South Carolina in that I can claim my birth state as the first state to secede from the union before the Civil War. And I think that’s something to be proud of. We led the charge for state's rights under the

10th Amendment. In other cases it's better to be from Texas, and so I have dual statehood in a sense and whichever is to my advantage in a given situation, that's what I use. There's nothing wrong with that. And there's nothing wrong with Timothy being circumcised. It is advantageous for the spread of the gospel and it did not violate doctrine. Neither Timothy nor Paul nor Silas thought he was being circumcised for eternal salvation. Paul was the great champion of salvation by grace through faith alone in Christ alone apart from circumcision, apart from the Law. But that did not mean that a believer does not have the freedom to be circumcised or follow the Law, understanding that it has no role whatsoever in salvation or sanctification. It was purely for cultural reasons to spread the gospel. And so Paul was not wrong, Paul was right. You have to realize under this principle of contextualization, that in the missionary world there are certain cultural concessions that should be made. There is no reason to go in there and make food or dress or language an obstacle to the gospel. But doctrine, you cannot concede that. And Paul wouldn't do that.

So, verse 4 they continue on the mission, **they were delivering the decrees**. The word **decrees** in verse 4 refers to the decision of Acts 15 that came out of the Council. Remember, Gentiles, there are certain Jewish sensitivities. Don't be eating meat not drained of blood, don't eat meat sacrificed to idols, don't marry your sister, things like that, otherwise you're going to cause division. Now verse 5, the result of this, terminates the idea of verse 36 in the previous chapter. The result of all this is that **the churches were being strengthened in the faith**, particular faith, so that refers to the content of truth, doctrine. See, that word **strengthened** means they were getting stronger in doctrine, these people were being trained. **and were increasing in number daily**, that's the logical result, evangelism happens, people are won to the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice how those two things go together. The believers get stronger in doctrine, they go out and people are won to Christ. That's the way it's supposed to work. You come here and get stronger in doctrine, you go out on the streets of Fredericksburg, Kerrville, Llano, San Antonio, etc...and lead people to Jesus Christ. Then you bring them here, they get stronger in doctrine, they go out and do the same thing, win more people to Christ, come back get stronger and go out. Now we come to the shift.

Watch, here's Paul in this region and this was Paul's goal: I'm going to follow-up with these churches, and now he's done that, he has a new staff member. I don't know what we're going to do next but we're moving. If you don't move nothing will happen. The principle in the Christian life is do something and God will lead you. But He doesn't lead a parked car, you have to start moving. They're moving. Verse 6, **They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;** ⁷**and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them;** ⁸**and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.** ⁹**A vision appeared to Paul in the night:** now what's happening here? Something new has occurred. In verse 6 Paul has come down the road to the crossroads of Antioch. There were major highways created by the Roman army engineers. The Romans knew that they could not hold an empire together without lines of communication and they built cities along the major highways and stationed garrisons in the cities, this protected the Roman Empire. So during this period the empire enjoyed peace and prosperity. And so the lines of communication formed a perfect situation for Paul to travel with the gospel. Just think today how difficult it would be to travel all the places Paul went, all the hoops you'd have to jump through to cover this kind of territory in the Mediterranean world. They had an ideal situation. So they're staying on the lines of communication and they come to Antioch, they want to penetrate Asia, to the west, this is where the seven churches of Revelation are going to be located. But what happens by verse 6? They are **forbidden by the Holy Spirit** to go in. We don't know how this was communicated, it might have been through Silas who was a prophet, but in some way the **Holy Spirit** forbade entry. So they wanted to go straight in along the lines of communication. The Holy Spirit forces them to turn right, so they come up to Mysia, the district to the north of Asia and now they want to **go into Bithynia**. Bithynia has people who need to hear the word of God, let's go there, uh, uh, **the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them**, again, we don't know exactly how they were blocked, we just know that they were blocked in a clear way. "So now Lord, what do you want us to do? We go west, you don't like that, we go north you stop us there, so maybe we'll try west again," and this time they got through over to **Troas**. You get the feel here it's like God is herding sheep around. We're called sheep in the word of God and sheep are stupid and need a Shepherd. But you have to feel the frustration of these men as they travel. You walk one way you get blocked,

you try another, and it's a dead end. Sometimes you get to the point in your life, Lord, would You just show me the whole map here, if you would just show me exactly where I'm headed then I'd walk that way. Why doesn't the Lord do that? Because it's a walk by faith and not by sight. He gives the directions along the way, bit by bit, and you have to trust Him. He's not going to give you all the details of life, you just have to go with what you do know, the known will of God revealed and God will take care of the unknown things, He'll make it clear along the way which way to go. Of course, they had special revelation in this time. Silas was a Prophet, apparently Paul was too, we don't know about Timothy, but these men did receive direct revelation from God, we don't know on this occasion, maybe they did, maybe they didn't, but one thing is clear, it was a step by step approach as God was taking them where He wanted them.

Another thing about this route they took is the obvious fact that the people in Asia and Bithynia need the word of God. Why is it that God refuses to let them enter with the word of God? Because those areas, had the gospel went in at that time, would have gone negative volition to the word of God. See, God has a plan going on outside of your direct experience. He's at work all over the world in people's lives and He has a time for them to go into Asia, it's not now but the time is coming Paul, the ground has to be prepared in advance so to speak, so that when Paul goes in with the word, there's positive response to the word. Because God does have people in Asia who will come to the Lord, but not yet, the time isn't right yet. And it just shows you once again who is in control of the universe, who is in control of time and who works all things after the counsel of His will. That's the lesson of these blocks. So after all the blocks, the only place left to go is **Troas**. Because right now the sovereign counsel of God is that you, Paul, are going to invade Europe. Can't you just see Paul; I'm going to invade Europe? Yes, you're going to invade Europe. I've built you a staff made of three men: Silas, a native of the land of Israel, you, Paul, a Hellenist Jew and the new guy on the block, Timothy, a bi-cultural man. Because when you invade Europe you're going to run into all three kinds of people and therefore I have built a staff perfect for Europe. Do you see how all this comes out of the fight between Paul and Barnabas over John Mark. John Mark and Barnabas were not the staff God wanted to invade Europe. And so God does work all things out for the good, even an apostolic fight. And it shows, I don't care how many degrees

you have after your name, you can't outsmart the Holy Spirit. He's got a strategy in the Book of Acts and He's carrying it out in brilliant fashion.

Now we come to Paul's vision at **Troas** in verse 9, often called the Macedonian Vision. And we want to take a minute to reflect on this vision on a deeper level than the typical missionary treatment of this. What is the significance of a man of Macedonia calling Paul over to Europe? And he heard a voice, verse 9, **saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."** ¹⁰**When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia,"** Now look at that **we sought**, you see that first person plural pronoun **we**, it's the first one used in the Book of Acts. You know what that means? It means that the author of this volume we call Acts, just joined Paul in Troas. That's right, Dr. Luke hooked up with Paul at Troas and from here on out on occasion you'll read these editorial **we's** and when you see that, Luke has joined the party, then he'll drop off the scene again and suddenly he'll re-appear. And it just shows you believers were running all over the place. Paul wasn't the only thing going, he was the big thing going, but at times they cross paths. And so while Luke was with Paul, Paul has a vision, **Come over to Macedonia and help us."** Now what is this all about? What's the significance of Macedonia? You may have heard a sermon called the "Call of the Macedonia Man" where the emphasis is always on the missionary call, how I was called to be a missionary. Now this is a missionary call, but it's not just a missionary call. There's more significance to this than just a missionary call.

So what is Macedonia known for in history? Back in the days when Greece was the world empire, Philip II of Macedon was one of the great leaders who conquered the area around the Aegean Sea and it was his son, the famous Alexander the Great, who conquered the world in his early 20's. And he was tutored; by the way, his personal tutor all during his teenage years was Aristotle. His father looked around Greece for the best teacher he could find for his son and found Aristotle and said Aristotle, you're going to teach my son everything you know. And this is why everywhere Alexander went he began to impose Hellenistic culture. He's a direct disciple of the philosopher Aristotle.

So Macedon, then, is the core of the Greek leadership of the Greek Empire. Therefore, this should alert us to the four kingdoms of Daniel. The Book of

Daniel outlines these four kingdoms as each having their particular contribution to western culture; the spirit of Babylon; the spirit of Persia; the spirit of Greece; and the spirit of Rome. The west is a combination of these four spirits. The spirit of Babylon is the spirit of international trade and banking. It is the economic core of the west. And right now they are doing everything they can to develop a global currency; the sinfulness we inherited is the inflation of currency through fractional reserve banking; it goes back to the days of Babylon. The Federal Reserve is a violation of Scriptural wisdom. It violates Isaiah 1, it violates the command, "You shall not steal,"; Isaiah has a big long discussion about fractionalized banking; it's wrong, inflating currency is wrong, but it's present because of this pollution we've inherited from Babylon. All of the major world bankers are men who think with the spirit of Babylon.

The second great spirit to mold our west is the spirit of Persia; the Persians were the ones who sought to unite the west and the east; it's the spirit behind globalism, the idea that all men should be subject to one culture, one system.

And then the spirit of Greece, the spirit of Greece is very easy to see, it's the spirit of intellectual rationalism, rationalistic philosophy, Plato and Aristotle.

And the spirit of Rome, that's easy, that's the spirit of law and bureaucracy. Rome was organization at its best; these are the four spirits.

Now looking at the four spirits of the west, which one is an intellectual leader? Greece. And who was the man in history who took Greek thought and forced it upon the world? The man from Macedonia, Alexander the Great.

Now let's go back to Gen 9 and see that history has a form and a shape. And here in Acts 16 we see the form and the shape played out before our eyes as Europe receives the gospel. Gen 9:25, 26, 27, the three branches of the human race. Humanity is divided according to the sons of Noah: Ham, Shem, Japheth. Every human being today descends ancestrally from one of those three men, being in the west, most of us stem from Japheth. A book has been published from the statements about these three sons in these verses. Dr Arthur C Custance, a Canadian Anthropologist with degrees in Hebrew and Greek wrote a book that basically says that Ham provided the physical needs of man, this is his contribution, and this is one reason, by the way, we think

the man who helped Jesus Christ carry the cross when He fell was a Hamite. Shem provides for the spiritual needs of man; and Japheth, the intellectual needs of man. Notice, verse 27, let's take it apart, "May God enlarge Japheth," what that means is that Japheth will be a world conqueror; the tendency of Japheth is to go out, take people over, expand and build kingdoms. And history has shown that to be true. The very history in the making of the New World Order is a Japhetic idea. It's actually called the Anglo-American World order which shows you exactly who is interested in taking over the world. It isn't the Hamites, it's the Japhethites. Second, "And let him dwell in the tents of Shem;" What does this mean? What this is, think of a tent and what does a tent provide? Shade, protection from the elements, relief. And what is it that Shem provides that gives man relief? Spiritual truth so your soul can relax, so for Japheth to go sit in the tents of Shem means that he will come into the spiritual life of Shem. He will get access to Shem's truths. And when Japheth puts his intellectual contribution together with Shem's spiritual contribution you get the rise of tremendous theology.

So now turn back to Acts 16 and watch how it all comes together: the man from Macedonia addresses Paul in the vision in the night, and he says, **Come over and help us**. That is a fulfillment of Genesis 9:27; it is the cry of Japheth to Shem, crying come and help us, we need your spiritual insight. And that's the significance of the Macedonian vision. The rise of the west is embedded in Gen 9:27, it is un-embedded in Acts 16. Finally everyone will have to admit that the East is not like the West; that there are tremendous differences. And from this point forward Europe was never the same. Europe began to be shaped by the gospel and the fruits thereof. The rise of science began in Europe because they believed in a rational God who created the universe. Science never really got going in the east until they saw the advantages it was giving the west. They had no spiritual basis for it. You have economic reform and the rise of modern capitalism; you never had that until you had a developed Protestant theology. You had the division of powers in government arise in Europe because there was a recognition of the biblical teaching of man's depravity and the need for checks and balances. Everywhere else, tyranny or anarchy.

So with the call of Macedon we have not just a missionary call, this is a call for the West to rise, and the West is never going to be the same after Paul steps his first foot on Greek soil. Acts 16:10, **When he had seen the vision,**

immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. They're going to take their Shemitic truths to Japheth, that's our heritage. We depend spiritually on Shem, we got the gospel from Shem. So this is not just a simply missionary story of somebody going from town to town, hopping along, this is our history, the invasion of the gospel into Europe. Why? Because of God's sovereign plan in Genesis for Japheth. And verse 10 also shows by the way, instant obedience: sovereign call, instant obedience. Verse 11 they set sail.

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