

CHAPTER 8

The First Missionary Journey (Acts 13-15)

The Missionary Team is Sent Forth From Antioch

In Acts chapter 10 we learned that in the city of Caesarea, Cornelius and other Gentiles heard the Word of God preached by Peter, believed it and were saved (see **Chapter 6** of these notes). In Acts chapter 11 we learned that a great number of Gentiles in Antioch believed the gospel and were saved (Acts 11:20-21).

God wanted the good news of salvation to go to other cities as well. Other Gentiles (and Jews too) needed to hear the gospel message. The believers in the city of Antioch wanted the same thing God wanted. They wanted to send forth God's message of salvation to others. As these believers prayed and looked for God's will, the Holy Spirit set apart two men. Who were these two men (Acts 13:2)? 1) _____ 2) _____ God had a great work for these two men to do!

Who sent forth these men on their missionary journey (Acts 13:4)?

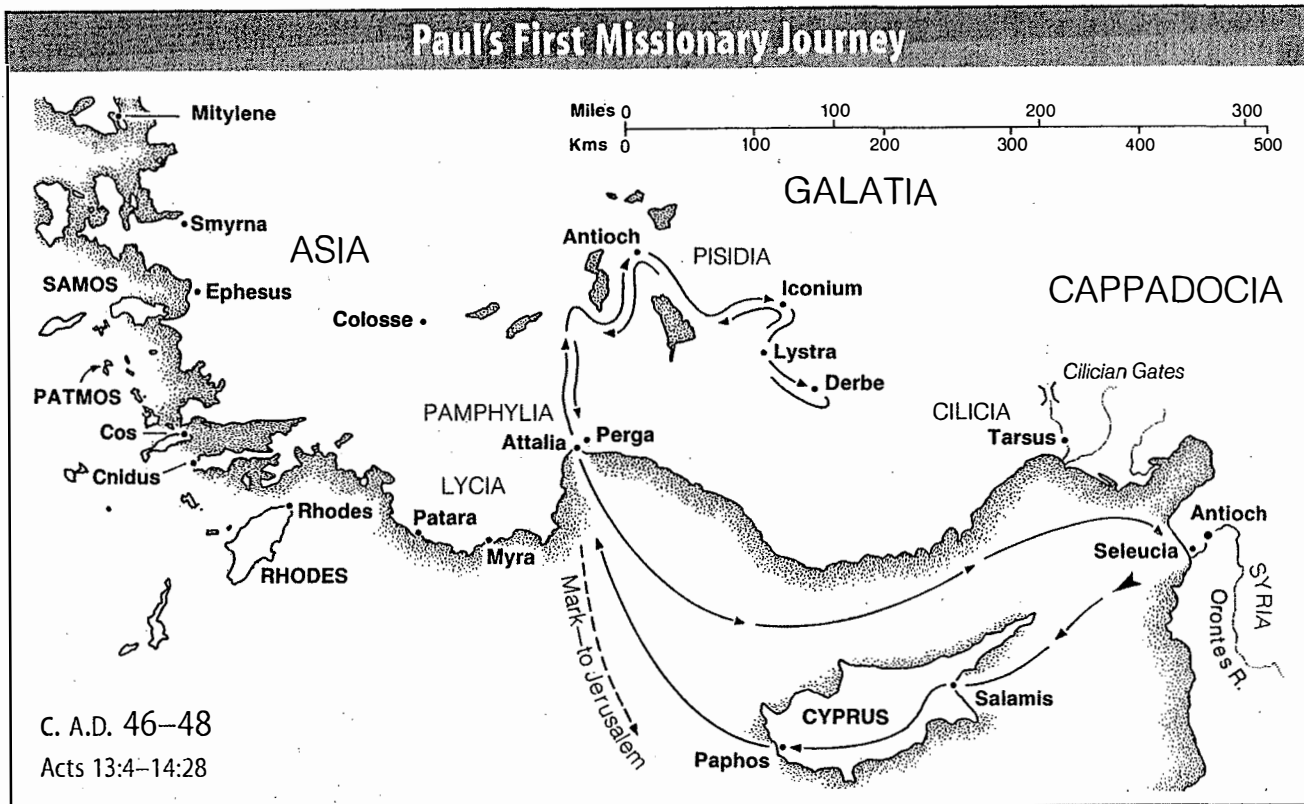
_____ The Lord Jesus once told his disciples to pray and ask the _____ of the harvest to send forth laborers (workers) into His harvest (Matthew 9:38). God sends forth the workers into His harvest field!

The believers in Antioch also had a part in this great work. Before Barnabas and Saul were sent forth, the believers prayed and laid their _____ upon them (Acts 13:3). This laying on of hands communicated the following: "Barnabas and Saul, we know that God has called you and set you apart for this work. We are putting our hands on you because we are identifying with you in this work and we want you to know that we will be praying for you and asking God to bless your ministry."

God's laborers or workers for this important mission were Barnabas and Saul, but there was another man who came along to be a helper. His name was _____ (Acts 13:5), who was also called M _____ (Acts 12:25). This was the same man who later wrote the gospel of Mark. Mark was the cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10).

The Missionary Journey

This first missionary journey lasted about a year and a half, and the missionary team traveled hundreds of miles by sea and by land. The following map shows all the places where they went. As you read Acts chapters 13 and 14, you can refer to the following map to see where Barnabas and Saul went.



The above map is taken from the *Zondervant KJV Study Bible*, page 2251 (see under Acts 13).

The Island of Cyprus

The missionaries began their journey by boarding a boat and sailing to the large island of Cyprus. Barnabas knew this island well because Cyprus had been his home (Acts 4:36).

Their first stop was the city of Salamis where they preached the word of God in the _____ of the Jews (Acts 13:5). A synagogue was a place where the Jews would assemble together to pray and to read the Scriptures. Usually when Saul and Barnabas entered a city, they would stop first at the synagogue and preach Christ to the Jews.

Next they traveled to the other end of the island to the city of Paphos. Here they met a magician named Barjesus or Elymas (Acts 13:6-8). This man was a Jew who claimed to be a true prophet of God. Was he really a true prophet or was he a false prophet. (Acts 13:6)?

Was he a friend or an enemy (Acts 13:10)? _____
 Was he a child of God or a child of the devil (Acts 13:10)?

_____ Whenever God does a great work, Satan tries to hinder it and stop it. Did this magician want Sergius Paulus to hear God's Word (Acts 13:7-8)?

God's hand came down upon this evil man in judgment. What happened to the magician (Acts 13:11)?

- a. **He was struck down dead.**
- b. **He was blinded.**
- c. **He was afflicted with leprosy.**
- d. **He became deaf.**

This man was already spiritually blind (John 3:19-20; 1 John 2:11) and suddenly because of God's judgment he became physically blind also! As a result of this miracle, what did Sergius Paulus the deputy do (Acts 13:12)? _____

In Acts 13:9 we learn that Saul was also called _____. Before Acts 13:9 he is always called "Saul" and after Acts 13:9 he is always called "Paul." From now on in these notes we will refer to him as PAUL.

Antioch in Pisidia

The team left Cyprus and arrived in Perga (this trip was about 180 miles over water). It was at Perga that John Mark decided to turn back (see Acts 13:13 and 15:38). From this point on, Paul and Barnabas would travel without Mark.

The next city which they came to was A_____ in Pisidia (Acts 13:14). On the map (shown earlier in this chapter) you can see that there were two cities called Antioch.

Paul and Barnabas entered the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath day (Saturday) and sat down (Acts 13:14). After the Scripture was read, the rulers of the synagogue asked Paul and Barnabas if they had anything they wanted to say to the people (Acts 13:15). Who stood up and began speaking (Acts 13:16)? _____

Paul's message is found in Acts 13:16-41. In his message he talked about certain things from the Old Testament which were very familiar to the Jews (such as the time when God delivered the Israelites from Egypt, the wilderness journey, the period of the judges, King Saul and King David). He then preached Christ to them. At the end of this message he told them how they could have their sins forgiven and how they could be justified (Acts 13:38-39). According to Paul, who will God forgive and justify (see verse 39)?

- a. **All who believe**
- b. **All who believe and are circumcised**
- c. **All who believe and keep the law of Moses**
- d. **All who believe and try to live a good life**

Some Gentiles also attended the synagogue services. After Paul had finished preaching the gospel, who wanted him to return to preach again on the next Sabbath--the Jews or the Gentiles (Acts 13:42)? _____ Who returned to hear Paul one week later--a few people or a great crowd (Acts 13:44)? _____

Who caused trouble for Paul and Barnabas and forced them to leave the city of Antioch (Acts 13:45,50)? _____ Why did Paul and Barnabas shake off the dust from their feet (see Acts 13:51 and compare Matthew 10:14)?

The unbelieving Jews were filled with _____ (Acts 13:45) or jealousy, but the saved Jews and Gentiles were filled with _____ (Acts 13:52). The Holy Spirit was doing a mighty work in the hearts of men and women.

Iconium

The next city was Iconium (Acts 14:1) and again Paul and Barnabas entered the synagogue and preached the good news of salvation. According to Acts 14:1, did some Jews believe? _____ Did some Greeks (Gentiles) believe? _____ Who caused trouble for Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:2)? The unbelieving _____

Did they stay a short time or a long time in this city (Acts 14:3)? _____ Did God perform miracles through Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:3)? _____

The city was divided--some were for Paul and Barnabas and others were against them (Acts 14:4). They had friends and they had enemies. Some loved them and others hated them.

Was the same thing true when the Lord Jesus preached? Were the people divided (see John 10:19-21)? _____

Finally Paul and Barnabas were forced to flee from the city of Iconium because their enemies were about to S _____ them (Acts 14: 5-6)!

Lystra and Derbe

The next city they came to was Lystra. Here they found a crippled man who never had W _____ (Acts 14:8). What happened to this man (Acts 14:9-10)?

The people at Lystra were very superstitious. When they saw this great miracle, they thought that Barnabas and Paul were gods that had come down to earth in the likeness of men! According to Acts 14:12, they called Barnabas J _____ (or Zeus, the King of the gods) and they called Paul "Mercury" (or Hermes, the messenger of the gods). In Greek and Roman mythology, Mercury was the god who carried messages from the gods to men. He had winged feet. They probably thought Paul was the messenger god because he did most of the talking.

When the people of the city were about to sacrifice animals to these two "gods," who stopped them (Acts 14:13-18)? _____ Paul was able to use this opportunity to preach to them about the true and living God. Read Acts 14:15 and MATCH the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. _____ Paul and Barnabas | A. The One who made heaven and earth and the sea and all things that are in them. |
| 2. _____ "these vanities" | B. "We are just men like you." |
| 3. _____ the living God | C. The false gods and idols that the people of Lystra worshipped |

Paul's enemies from Antioch and Iconium were not satisfied that Paul had left their cities. These Jews chased after Paul and Barnabas and came all the way to Lystra. They wanted to stop Paul from preaching once and for all. What did they do to Paul (Acts 14:19)?

_____ Did Paul mention this in 2 Corinthians 11:25?

After they did this wicked deed, they dragged Paul out of the city, thinking that he was _____ (Acts 14:19). Was he really dead? _____ Not many people are stoned and then live to tell about it! The Lord took care of Paul in a remarkable way. Paul rose up and the very next day he traveled to Derbe. God strengthened Paul in a wonderful way! If this were to happen to someone today, he would probably need at least a month in a hospital to recover! But God worked in Paul's body and strengthened him so that he could travel and preach immediately.

Derbe was one city where Paul was not greatly persecuted. In all of the other cities, the unbelieving Jews had persecuted God's missionaries and even tried to kill them. Read what Paul says about other Jews who tried to persecute believers (1 Thessalonians 2:15-16). The Jewish people were very hostile to the preaching of the gospel.

The Return Trip

After preaching and teaching in Derbe, Paul returned again to Lystra (where he was stoned), to Iconium (where he was almost stoned) and to Antioch (where he was expelled from the city)—see Acts 14:21. Why would the missionary team want to return to these places? Either they were very crazy or they were very courageous!

Paul and Barnabas were concerned about the believers who were in these cities (Acts 14:22). They wanted to encourage these disciples (Acts 14:22) and make sure that each church had men who could lead and teach the believers (Acts 14:23). The disciples were told to C _____ (Acts 14:22) in the faith (to stay true to the Lord even though persecution might come and things might get very difficult). Paul and Barnabas told them that through much T _____ (trouble, pressure, difficulty) they would enter into the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). Did Jesus tell his disciples to expect tribulation (John 16:33)? _____

Sometimes people receive God's Word with joy, but when tribulation or persecution comes because of God's Word, then they fall away (Matthew 13:20-21). Paul and Barnabas did not want this to happen to the believers in these cities. They wanted them to continue in the faith and to trust God to help them overcome every difficulty and danger. The same God who helped Paul and Barnabas and protected them in a wonderful way was the same God who could take care of these new believers.

Finally the missionary team returned to Antioch, the church from which they had been sent forth (Acts 14:26). Paul and Barnabas gave a wonderful report of the great things God had done, and especially how God had opened the _____ of faith unto the G _____ (Acts 14:27).

What Must The Gentiles Do In Order To Be Saved?

Certain Jews from Judaea came to Antioch and told the Gentile believers something that was false. They said, "You cannot be saved unless you are CIRCUMCISED after the manner of Moses" (Acts 15:1). Circumcision was something that was done to every Jewish man (usually eight days after birth). See Genesis 17:10-14. Other Jews began teaching that the Gentiles must be circumcised and they must also keep the law of Moses in order to be saved. Was this teaching true or false? What does the Bible say?

1. When Peter preached to Cornelius the Gentile, did he tell him to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, or did he tell him to believe in Christ (Acts 10:43)?

2. When Paul preached in the synagogue in Antioch (where Gentiles were present also--see Acts 13:42), did he tell the people to be saved by circumcision or did he tell them to be saved by faith (Acts 13:38-39)? _____
3. According to Peter, are people saved through circumcision and keeping the law, or are people saved by grace (Acts 15:11)? _____
4. What does Acts 16:31 really say? (circle the correct answer)

1. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be circumcised and thou shalt be saved."

2. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and keep the law and thou shalt be saved."

3. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

Have you done this? Are you saved? How do you know you are? Are you thankful that the gospel message has gone to the Gentiles? Are you thankful for the simplicity of the gospel message?