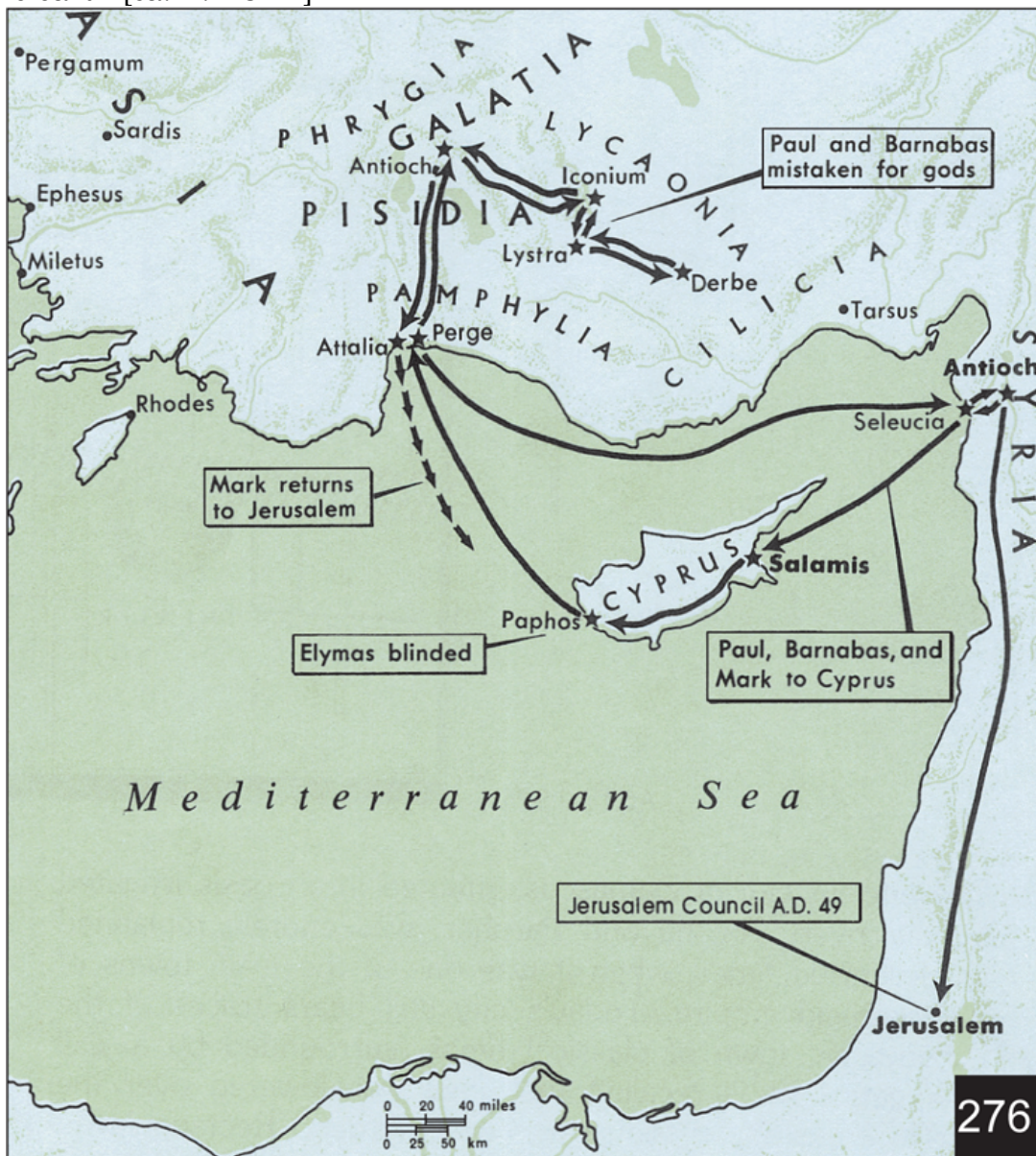


Outline of Acts 13-28

Introduction:

- Notice how the focus shifts:
 - From Jerusalem to Antioch of Syria
 - From Peter to Paul
 - From Jews to Gentiles
 - Note Luke’s accompanying Paul—“we” passages (16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16)
 - Note five “progress reports” (13:48-49; 15:35; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30-31)
- 1) Acts 13:1-14:28—Jesus sends out His messenger Paul the **FIRST** time to the ends of the earth [ca. 47-48 AD]



- a) Their separation by the Spirit—13:1-3
- i) Five men comprised the multi-ethnic leadership team of the congregation. (13:1)
 - (1) Group one (the first *te*)
 - (a) **Barnabas** (cf. 4:36; 9:27; 11:22, 30; 12:25) (a Levite from Cyprus)
 - (i) He is perceived as the leader, even by unbelievers (Cf. 14:12).
 - (b) **Simeon** with a dark complexion
 - (c) **Lucius** of Cyrene (north Africa, west of Egypt) (cf. 11:20)
 - (2) Group two (the second *te*)
 - (a) **Manaen** had connections with Herod Antipas, youngest son of Herod the Great, who ruled Galilee and had John the Baptist beheaded.
 - (i) If he was the same age as Herod Antipas, he would be 65-70 years old.
 - (b) **Saul**
 - (i) He has been a believer for about 13 years.
 - (3) Prophets & teachers are linked: 1 Cor. 12:28-29; Rom. 12:6-7, and Eph. 4:11.
 - ii) They were actively serving when they were called by the Spirit.
 - (1) God probably communicated through the prophets.
 - (2) Saul is set apart by God at least 3x: at birth (Gal. 1:15), at salvation (Rom. 1:1), and for specific service (Acts 13:2)
 - iii) They did three things before they were sent on the trip: fasted, prayed, and identified with them.
 - (1) Note the swift obedience of the leadership team.
 - (2) Note to whom they give their report on their return. (cf. 14:26-27)
 - (3) The Spirit works through the congregation, not apart from it.
 - iv) This paragraph emphasizes a twofold responsibility of a congregation: worship and church-planting.
 - (1) Opportunities for service rarely come to the idle.
 - (2) Opportunities for service are rarely made known to only the individual.
 - (3) Opportunities for service often include sending the church's "best."
 - (4) Opportunities for service often push us out of our comfort zone.
- b) Their itinerary—13:4-14:23
- This trip will cover @ 1,300-1,400 miles. It will last @ one year.
 - This trip begins at Antioch's port city of **Seleucia**, @ 15 miles west-southwest of Antioch.
- i) West to the island of **Cyprus** (the home of Barnabas; cf. 4:36; 15:39)—13:4-12 (has there been some preliminary Gospel work here? cf. 11:19-20)
- (1) **On the one hand, ministry with JEWS**—13:4-5
 - (a) Having been sent by the Spirit, they proclaim the word of God in the synagogues when they visit Salamis, the largest city on the **east** coast of the 140-miles-long x 60-miles-wide island.

- (i) Salamis was a 2-day sailing trip from Seleucia (@ 125 miles at @ 4.5-6 mph [4-5 knots]).
 1. The cost of the trip was probably paid for by the Antioch church (cf. 13:3).
- (ii) Salamis was a major harbor and **commercial** city, a large Jewish population.
- (b) “In the synagogues” is a noticeable ministry pattern in Acts (cf. 9:20; 13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:4, 19; 19:8) (cf. Rom. 1:16)
- (c) John Mark is traveling with them as their subordinate assistant [*huperetes*]. (cf. 12:12, 25)
- (2) **On the other hand, ministry with GENTILES—13:6-12**
 - Though not recorded by Luke, throughout their at least 1-week trip, they may have ministered in other smaller cities along the southern road to Paphos.
 - (a) They communicate God’s word when they visit (Old or New) Paphos (@ 100 miles west of Salamis), the largest city on the **southwest** coast of the island. (13:6)
 - (i) This was a major harbor and the **political** center (the capital).
 - (ii) It was home to a temple of Aphrodite (Greek)/Venus (Roman), the goddess of beauty, fertility, and sexual love.
 1. There were temples to Zeus, Leto (mother of Artemis by Zeus) and Artemis.
 - (b) Note how Luke describes Sergius Paulus. (13:7)
 - A man of wise discernment.
 - A man who authoritatively summoned the team.
 - A man who diligently sought to hear God’s word.
 - (c) Note the order of the team members’ names. (13:7; cf. 13:2)
 - (i) Cf. Luke’s later observations (cf. 14:9, 12)
 - (d) The Jewish man (Elymas/Bar-Jesus) responded negatively to the team while the Gentile man (Sergius Paulus) responded positively to the teaching. (13:8-11)
 - (i) Elymas not only rejected God’s word for himself, he also attempted to hinder others from embracing God’s word. Thus, Paul’s judgment upon him is just. (cf. Peter’s judgment of Simon in 8:9-24.)
 1. Was Sergius Paulus genuinely converted? (cf. 8:13; 14:1; 17:34; 19:18)
 - a. He believed initially because of the miracle of judgment.
 - b. He believed while being deeply impressed at the teaching about the Lord Jesus.
 2. This is the first recorded miracle through Paul. It was accomplished in conflict with a Jew over the evangelizing of a Gentile. (Stanley Toussaint)

- (ii) This is the second of four conflicts with demonic powers. (8:9-23; 13:6-12; 16:16-18; 19:13-17)
 - 1. The phrases “Bar-Jesus/son of salvation” and “son of the devil” are contrasting descriptions of the same individual.
- (e) Note the shift from Saul to Paul. (13:9)
 - (i) Luke’s note that Paul was filled with the Spirit indicates God’s approval of Paul’s ministry.
- ii) **North to Antioch in Pisidia—13:13-52**
 - (1) Introduction to the account. (13:13-15)
 - (a) Everyone on the team, except John Mark, travel north @ 150 miles. (13:13)
 - This is a 2–3-day trip at 4.5-6 mph [4-5 knots].
 - (i) Notice the change to “Paul and his companions.”
 - 1. Note the humility of Barnabas to accept this change.
 - (ii) For some unrecorded reason, John heads back to Jerusalem.
 - 1. Cf. Acts 15:38 to see how Paul interpreted this event.
 - a. This led to a separation between Paul and Barnabas.
 - b. According to 15:40, @ 6-7 months later, the early church authorized Paul and Silas, not Barnabas and John Mark.
 - 2. But see Col. 4:10; Philemon 1:24; 2 Tim. 4:11
 - (b) Pisidian Antioch is primarily Latin-speaking, emperor-worshiping, Roman colony (a little slice of Rome away from home originally for military veterans). (13:14a)
 - (i) Pisidian Antioch was @ 125 miles (7-9 days travel uphill) from Parga. Technically it was not in Pisidia but rather in Phrygia but very near Pisidia. It was the most important city in southern Galatia.
 - (ii) Pamphylia was next to Paul’s home territory of Cilicia.
 - 1. It was also near the ancestral home of Sergius Paulus. (cf. 13:7)
 - (c) Paul begins his ministry at the Jewish synagogue. (13:14b-15)
 - (i) They may have been invited to speak due to Barnabas being a Levite and Saul a well-known Pharisee leader in Jerusalem and a student of Rabbi Gamaliel.
 - (2) Paul’s message in the synagogue (13:16-41)
 - This is Paul’s first recorded sermon in Acts. The second is to Gentiles in Acts 17, while the third is to Christians in Acts 20.
 - Remember, he was regarded as a skilled communicator even by unbelievers. (cf. 14:12)
 - But see Paul’s own view of his abilities. (cf. 1 Cor. 2:1-4)
 - (a) His two-fold audience is identified—13:16 (cf. 13:26)
 - (i) Jews and Gentiles who worshiped the God of Israel.
 - (b) Recounted God’s faithful dealing with Israel—13:17-41
 - (i) God’s faithfulness demonstrated up to king David (13:17-22)

1. God chose (elected) their ancestors. (13:17a)
 - a. Cf. Deut. 7:7-8
 - b. Paul still identifies as a Jew (“our ancestors”).
 2. God lifted up their ancestors in the exodus. (13:17b)
 - a. “Lifted up” in both numbers and power.
 3. God put up with their ancestors in the wilderness. (13:18)
 4. God distributed the Land to their ancestors. (13:19)
 5. God gave their ancestors the judges. (13:20)
 - a. The 450 years probably includes: 400 (Egypt) + 40 (wilderness) + 10 (dividing the inheritance).
 6. God gave their ancestors kings. (13:21-22)
 - a. The sovereign removal of Saul and raising up of David.
 - b. Cf. Ps. 89:20; 1 Sam. 13:14; Is. 44:28.
- (ii) God faithfulness demonstrated in Jesus as the fulfillment of OT prophecies about King Messiah. (13:23-37)
1. God promised a seed of David to rule over Israel. (13:23)
 - a. Cf. 2 Sam. 7:12; Gen. 22:18-19
 2. God brought the promised Savior to Israel. (13:23-25)
 - a. Recognizes the historical reality and the God-given limitations of John the Immerser’s ministry.
 - i. Limited as to his **message** (immersion in light of repentance), **audience** (the people of Israel), **length of service** (fulfilling his course), and **focus** (focus on Jesus, not John).
 - ii. All Israel is in desperate need of salvation.
 - b. Luke refers to the other gospels writers. (cf. Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:7; John 1:20, 27)
 3. God raised up the promised One from the dead. (13:26-37)
 - a. There is a slight distinction between Jews and God-fearers. (13:26a)
 - b. God chose to reveal this salvation to Israel. (13:26b)
 - c. Deliberate rejection of the word of God resulted in rejection of the innocent Son of God. (13:27)
 - d. Though the Romans illegally executed Jesus (cf. Luke 23:4, 15, 22), God the Father raised Him from the dead and displayed Him before many valid witnesses. (13:28-31)
 - i. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:3-5 and the four-point Christian confession: crucified, buried, raised, witnessed.
 - e. These events have Biblical support, demonstrated from Ps. 2:7; Is. 55:3; and Ps. 16:10. (13:32-37)
 - i. On the one hand, David died and decayed. (13:36)
 - ii. On the other hand, Jesus died but did not decay. (13:37)

- (iii) God's faithfulness demonstrated in the offer of forgiveness of sins, with a warning of judgment if they refuse. (13:38-41)
 1. Forgiveness of sins and justification is available exclusively through this crucified and risen Christ. (13:38-39)
 - a. He points out the inability of the Law of Moses.
 2. A word of warning from the prophet about rejecting God's solution. (13:40-41)
 - a. Cf. Hab. 1:5
- (3) Reactions to the clear teaching of God's word. (13:42-52)
 - (a) **Positive** reactions (13:42-52)
 - (i) Aroused interest among some Jews and Gentiles who associated closely with Jews. (13:42-43)
 1. Request (from the synagogue leadership?) to hear more teaching.
 - a. Paul has not alienated his listeners.
 2. Identification with the church-planting team.
 - (ii) Among Gentiles (13:44)
 - (b) **Negative** reactions (13:44-52)
 - (i) The *initial* foolish, negative Jewish reaction. (13:45-47)
 1. Luke's use of hyperbole ("nearly the whole city").
 - a. The city's theater could seat @ 15,000 people.
 2. Jealousy and verbal abuse based on what they saw (13:45)
 - a. Cf. the similar reaction at Paphos on Crete. (cf. 13:8)
 - b. Oddly enough, while Gentiles were permitted to attend and even identify with, and at times finance (Luke 7:5), the synagogue, it was never thought that Gentiles could have access to God apart from Israel.
 3. Paul and Barnabas' confident reaction to the negative reaction to the positive reaction. (13:46-47) (Cf. Isa. 49:6)
 - a. Speaking confidently (cf. Acts 9:27-29; 13:46; 14:3; 18:25-26; 19:8; 26:26; Eph. 6:20; 1 Thess. 2:2)
 - b. They explain the personal responsibility of the team's shift to focus on Gentiles.
 - c. What comes next in their ministry? cf. 14:1-7
 - d. Cf. Isa. 9:1-2; Luke 2:28-32

Progress Report # 1—13:48-49

- Having heard the word of God, they were rejoicing and honoring the word of the Lord.
- As many as who had been appointed to/designated for eternal life believed. (There is no hint of double predestination to eternal death.)
- The word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region near Pisidian Antioch. Human opposition cannot stop the word of God.

(ii) **Additional** negative Jewish reactions to the positive reactions.
(13:50-52)

1. The unbelieving Jews did three things: stirred up influential Gentiles to hostility, instigated persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove the ministry team out of their region.
(13:50)
 - a. Not all “devout Gentile women” were genuine believers.
2. The believers’ reaction to the Jewish negative reaction.
(13:51-52)
 - a. Shaking dust off one’s feet was consistent with Jesus’ earlier command in Matt. 10:14; Mark 6:11; and Luke 9:5. It signified that the rejected one was responsible for his own decisions and consequences.

iii) Southeast to Iconium—14:1-7

- Iconium was @ 90 miles (4-5-day walk) east-southeast of Pisidian Antioch. This was part of the Roman province of Galatia. It was a Lycaonian (lit. “wolf land”) city with citizens who were primarily Phrygian.
- The dominant religions near Iconium were the worship of Cybele (goddess of nature) and Roman emperor worship.

(1) Incident one (14:1-4)

- (a) The **initial positive** reaction to God’s word. (14:1)
 - (i) “Such a manner” refers to the tactic of “to the Jew first.”
 - (ii) Many Jews and (probably God-fearing) Gentiles believed.
- (b) The **initial negative** reaction to God’s word. (14:2)
 - (i) The deliberately unbelieving [*apeitheo*] Jews manipulated a negative visceral response from the unbelieving Gentiles against the Christians.
- (c) The ministry team reacts by speaking confidently, testifying to the word of the Lord’s grace. (14:3)
 - (i) Despite the negative PR campaign, God confirms His approval of the ministry team by doing signs and wonders through them. But signs do not always lead to genuine faith.
 - (ii) Cf. Rom. 15:18-19; 2 Cor. 12:12; Gal. 3:5; Heb. 2:4
- (d) The Iconium’s were split [*schizo*] in their support. (14:4)
 - (i) On the one hand, some sided with the unbelieving Jews.
 - (ii) On the other hand, some sided with the apostles from the risen Christ (9:15), the church in Jerusalem (11:22), and from the church in Syrian Antioch (13:3-4; 14:26-27).

(2) Incident two (14:5-7)

- (a) The substantial, impulsive attempt at an insolent and violent persecution (stoning) motivates the ministry team to prudently relocate to the area near Lystra and Derbe. This move was not

merely to evade persecution, but also to evangelize. The persecution is eventually successful. (cf. 14:19)

(b) Luke records Paul's evasion of persecution in 9:24-25; 14:5-7; 17:10; and 20:3.

(c) Cf. 1 Thess. 2:14-16; 2 Tim. 3:11

iv) South to Lystra—14:8-20

- This was Roman colony (founded @ 75 years earlier) was located @ 20 miles south of Iconium (a full day's journey). The ruling class was mostly Roman veterans.
- This is the hometown of Lois, Eunice, and Timothy. (cf. 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5)
- No synagogue is mentioned in this account. Primarily Gentiles.

(1) The evangelists' response to idolatry (14:8-18)

(a) Paul's public evangelizing has already begun. (14:9a)

- Paul apparently did not know their native Lycaonian language (14:11). Perhaps he spoke Greek or Latin, since it was a colony.

(b) God heals the congenitally disabled man. (14:8-10)

- Fourfold description: *sitting, no strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked.*
- Previous healing of the disabled: 3:1-10; 9:33-35 (Cf. Luke 5:17-26)
- Paul, enabled by God, was able to perceive the man's faith. It is unlikely that this was faith for spiritual salvation.
- The man's three actions: listens to Paul, leaps up, and walks.

(c) The unbelievers' idolatrous misinterpretation of events (14:11-13)

- There was a local legend of an earlier visit by Zeus and Hermes to the region of Phrygia with disastrous consequences for those inhospitable to the gods. Don't repeat the mistake!
- Irony: rejected by fellow Jews, perceived as gods by Gentiles.
- **Barnabas the leader:** assumed to be Zeus (Greek) / Jupiter/Jove (Roman), the head god. Perhaps this was simply the process of elimination since Paul was the teacher. Zeus and Hermes were often worshiped as a pair.
- **Paul the teacher:** assumed to be Hermes (Greek) / Mercury (Roman), the spokesman of the gods.

(d) Paul's response to idolatry. (14:14-18) (cf. Acts 17:16-32)

- This is the first speech to purely pagan Gentiles in Acts.
- He demonstrated intense distress (14:14)
- He attempted to correct the misinterpretation through Biblical teaching, contrasted with known idols. (14:15-18)
 - The necessity of repentance and faith (Cf. 1 Thess. 1:9)
 - The living, sovereign, and patient God is also a good and generous creator.

(2) Stoning of Paul (14:19-20)

- (a) These Jews travelled from Pisidian Antioch (@ 90-100 miles) and Iconium (@ 20 miles) to inflict this harm.
 - Irony of the Jews joining with the idolaters to oppose the Gospel.
- (b) How extremely fickle emotions and passions are to change from the desire to worship to the desire to destroy.
 - Even though Paul had healed the disabled man, Paul also told them to abandon their favorite gods and goddesses.
- (c) It is difficult to say with certainty that Paul died. They wrongly interpreted the event, assuming him to be dead.
 - Perhaps the scars from this are referred to in Gal. 6:17.
- (d) Cf. 2 Cor. 11:25; 2 Tim. 3:11
- (e) Some people in Lystra apparently genuinely believe the message. (cf. 14:21-22)

COMPARISONS WITH 3:6-8 (CRAIG KEENER)

<u>Peter's First Healing (3:6-8)</u>	<u>Paul's First Healing (14:8-10)</u>
Lame from birth (3:2)	Lame from birth (14:8)
Peter "gazes intently" at the man needing healing (3:4)	Paul "gazes intently" at the man needing healing (14:9)
Once healed, the man leaps and walks (3:8)	Once healed, the man leaps and walks (14:10)
Near temple gates (3:2)	Near temple and gates (14:13)
Through faith (3:16)	Through faith (14:9)
Human "adulation" rejected (3:12)	Human "adulation" rejected (14:15)

- v) East to Derbe—14:21-23
 - Located @ 35-40 miles (some argue 60+ miles) [2-days of travel] southeast of Lystra. Most likely they would have passed through five towns between Lystra and Derbe.
 - Paul was now only @ 150 miles from his hometown of Tarsus.
 - This is the hometown of Gaius (cf. 20:4)
- (1) They courageously return to Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch. (14:21)
 - (a) After they evangelized in Derbe.
 - (b) After they discipled many people.
- (2) They faithfully strengthen the disciples in Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch. (14:22)
 - (a) They transparently encouraged them to persevere in the faith, reminding them that we will enter the kingdom of God through many pressures.
 - (i) The kingdom is still viewed as a future event.
- (3) They confidently commend the church leaders to the Lord. (14:23)
 - (a) After they appointed elders in every congregation.
 - (i) Some see this as a voting action by the congregation.

- (b) After they prayed and fasted.
- c) Their return to Syrian Antioch and report to the local church—14:24-28
- i) The reverse journey to the coast (14:24-25)
 - (1) They came into region of Pamphylia.
 - (2) They went down to seaport city of Attalia.
 - (a) They now speak the word in Perga, which they had not done earlier. (cf. 13:13-14)
 - ii) The return journey to Syrian Antioch (14:26)
 - (1) The congregation had committed the ministry team to the grace of God.
 - (2) The ministry team successfully fulfilled the work to which the congregation had committed them.
 - iii) The report to the congregation in Syrian Antioch (14:27-28)
 - (1) The ministry team's arrival
 - (a) They arrived in Antioch.
 - (i) The distance from Attalia to Antioch is @ 300 miles.
 - (ii) This church-planting trip has now covered @ 1,300-1,400 miles. (@ 7-800 miles by land and @ 5-600 miles by sea.) It has lasted @ one year.
 - (b) They promptly gathered the congregation (not the synagogue) together.
 - (i) This indicates submissive accountability to the congregation.
 - (2) The ministry team's Godward report
 - (a) They reported everything God had done with them.
 - God the Spirit had called them to this work. (cf. 13:1-3; 15:40)
 - The work includes: walking, sailing, contacting strangers, speaking with various ethnic groups, explaining God's word, discipling new believers, reacting to opposition and persecution, establishing congregations, appointing congregational leadership, etc.
 - God the Father's grace sustained them, and He did these things with them and opened the door for them. (cf. 11:18; 15:12; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3)
 - God the Son had foretold this ministry (cf. 1:8) and was the focal point of the message the Gentiles trusted.
 - (b) They reported how God had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.
 - (3) The ministry team spent a lengthy time (@ 1-2 years) with the disciples of Syrian Antioch.
 - iv) The sending congregation benefits by sending out the ministry team and by hearing all that God does through that team to the glory of His name.
- d) James writes JAMES just before or during this time [ca. 45-47 AD] while Paul writes GALATIANS following this trip [ca. 48 AD]

- 2) Acts 15:1-35—Jesus grants wisdom and unity to the Jerusalem conference [ca. 48/49 AD]
- The book of Galatians appears to have been written before the Jerusalem Counsel.
 - This chapter is close to the middle of Acts from different views. **Verse count:** there are @ 500 verses before and over 440 verses after. **Word count:** it is @ halfway through the 18,450 words in the Greek NT version of Acts. **Chronologically:** there are @ 15 years both before and after this chapter.
- a) **Conflict: why did they gather?**—15:1-3
- i) Unbiblical teaching by unauthorized (cf. 15:24) Jewish traditionalists—15:1
- (1) **Question:** why would these men travel @ 250-275 miles one way to promote their false teaching?
 - (2) Their argument is that a person enters God’s people by becoming part of Israel first. (FSB) (cf. 15:1, 5)
 - (a) This indicates ignorance that circumcision goes back to Abraham, @ 700 years before Moses. (Cf. Gen. 17:10-14)
 - (b) Historically, and ironically, Gentile congregations have often demanded that Jewish believers give up all ties to anything Jewish.
 - (3) Perhaps the inclusion of Gentiles was becoming overwhelming to them, and this was their way of protesting. (Stanley Toussaint)
- ii) Biblical leadership confronts the unbiblical teachers—15:2
- (1) This resulted in “not a little dissension and debate.”
- iii) Congregational decision-making and support—15:2b-3
- (1) Those extra men could serve as witnesses to what Paul and Barnabas had said and done.
 - (2) The congregation provides materially for this @ 250-mile journey.
 - (a) This will also put the unauthorized teachers back on their “home court” where they should be held accountable by the Jerusalem congregation.
 - (3) **Question:** Do you find the inclusion of Samaria strange, in light of John 4:9? What, or who, has changed?
 - (4) This is the only use in the NT of the Greek noun for “conversion” [*epistrophe*].
- b) **Conclusion: how did they gather?**—15:4-34
- i) Session 1: informal, public, congregational—15:4-5
- This gives us the two-fold “on the other hand” contrast to “on the one hand” of 15:3.
- (1) **Positive** response to the Godward explanation (15:4) (cf. 14:27; 15:12)
 - (2) **Negative** response to the Godward explanation (15:5)
 - (a) In contrast to the response in 15:3.
 - (b) “Sect/party” is the Greek word *hairesis* (Eng. heresy). It refers to the choice of an opinion. (cf. 5:17; 24:5, 14; 26:5; 28:22)

- (i) Before AD 70, the conservative followers of Rabbi Shammai dominated. After AD 70, the more liberal followers of Rabbi Hillel dominated.
- (c) These are genuine, but wrong-thinking, believers who demand that the church make being part of Israel mandatory and thus “God’s will” for all believers.
- (3) The issue is not whether Gentiles should be included in the community but the specific requirements for their inclusion. (Darrell Bock)
- ii) Session 2: formal, private, leadership—15:6-29
 - (1) Group investigation and discussion/debate—15:6-7a
 - (2) Three witnesses—15:7b-12
 - (a) Witness # 1: Peter—15:7b-11
 - Reminds them of God’s manifold work of grace regarding Cornelius @ 10 years earlier—15:7-9 (cf. Acts 10:1-11:18)
 - God’s sovereign choice of Peter, God’s knowledge of the heart, God’s witness, God’s gift of the Spirit, God’s judgment, God’s cleansing/purifying of unclean hearts
 - This indicates that God recognizes their genuine response and His acceptance of them.
 - Issues a stern warning to stop testing God—15:10 (cf. Ex. 17:2; Dt. 6:16; Ps. 95:9; Acts 5:9)
 - Reminds them of salvation by grace alone—15:11
 - Jews are saved without the Law the same way Gentiles are saved.
 - (b) Witnesses # 2 & 3: Barnabas and Paul—15:12
 - They explain God’s authenticating signs and wonders. (cf. Acts 13:11; 14:3, 8-10)
 - (3) James’ (oldest half-brother of Jesus; cf. Mt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3) decision—15:13-21 (cf. 12:17; 21:18; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 1:9 2:9)
 - (a) Recognizes God’s intervention [*episkeptomai*]—15:13
 - (b) Restates Simeon’s (Peter’s **Jewish** name) words—15:14 (cf. 2 Pet. 1:1)
 - (c) Restates the agreeable [*sumphoneo*] words of the prophet Amos 9:11-12 and Is. 45:21 from the **Greek** OT (LXX)—15:15-18
 - (i) Other prophets not quoted here: Is. 2:2; 11:10; 45:20-23; Zech. 2:11; 8:20-23
 - (d) Announces his conclusion—15:19-21
 - While clearly a decision of James, note also 16:4; 21:25.
 - Recognizes the genuine salvation of the Gentiles—15:19
 - Recognizes the legitimate sensitivity of the Jews—15:20
 - Avoid idolatry, sexual immorality, eating blood-related foods (cf. Gen. 9:4)
 - Recognizes the ongoing influence of Moses in the synagogues—15:21

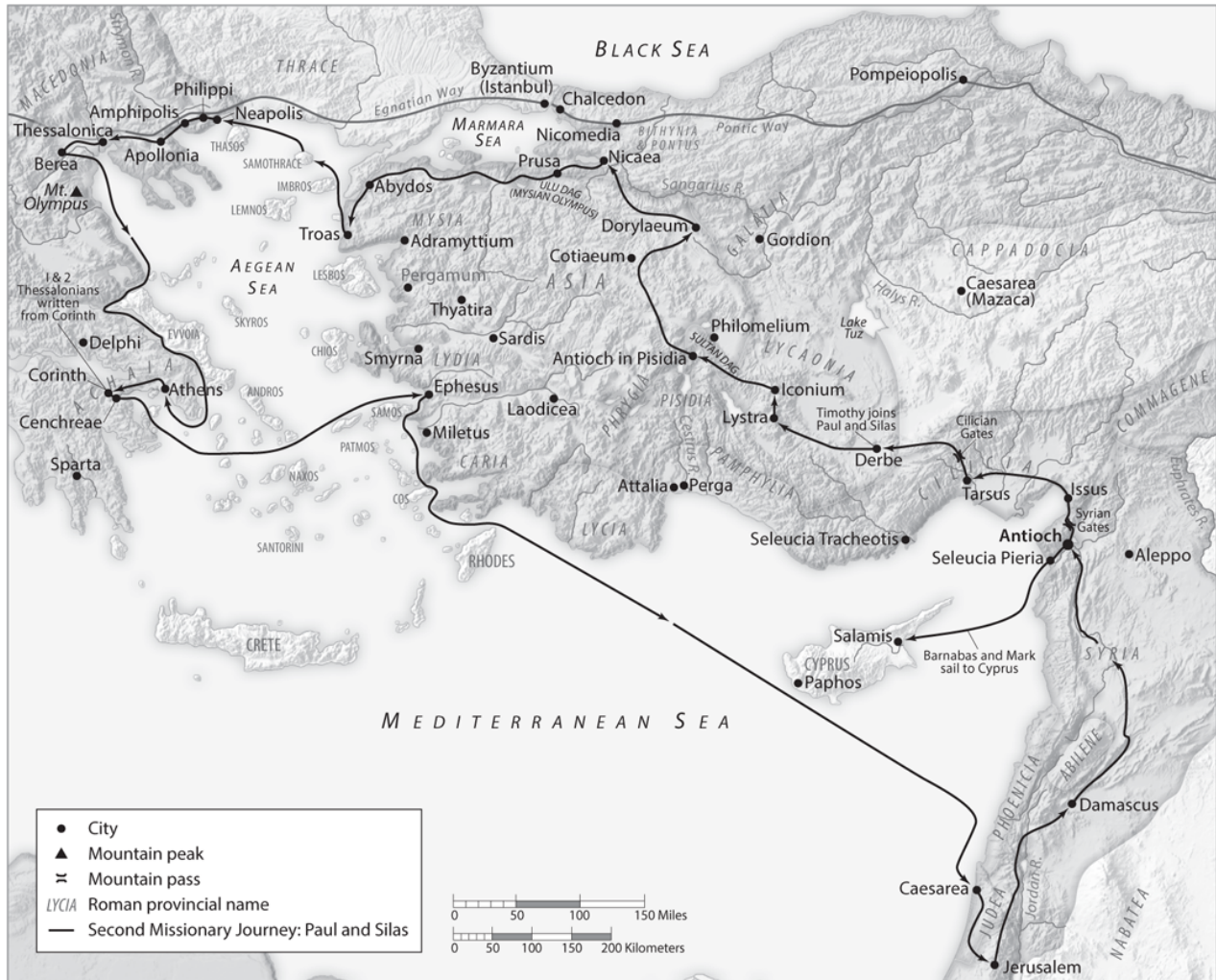
- (4) The congregation's response—15:22-29
- (a) Leaders and congregation combined decision-making—15:22-23
 - Note the encouraging word of acceptance in the greeting of the letter: “brothers.”
 - (i) Send influential men (prophets, 15:32) of the **Jerusalem** congregation, Judas and Silas, as witnesses.
 - 1. Silas (Silvanus) is mentioned for the first time.
 - a. Works with **Paul** (Acts 15:40; 16:19, 25, 29; 17:4, 10, 14, 15; 18:5; 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1)
 - b. Works with **Peter** (1 Pet. 5:12)
 - (ii) Send influential men of the **Antioch** congregation, Paul and Barnabas (note the change in sequence), as witnesses.
 - (b) Condemnation of the maverick, divisive troublemakers—15:24
 - (c) Clear explanation of the unanimous decision—15:25-29
 - (i) Note the respectful reference to Barnabas and Paul—15:25-26
 - (ii) Note the emphasis on the Spirit's activity—15:28
 - Throughout the NT, there is a complex interplay of divine guidance working together with human action that accomplished God's purpose. The complex interplay between divine guidance and human action is harmonious when humans (as here) humbly and trustingly respond to the Spirit's guidance. (Apologetics Study Bible)
 - iii) Implementing the decision of the congregation and leaders—15:30-34
 - (1) It is received joyfully and as encouragement—15:31
 - (a) They do not perceive the stipulations as burdensome.
 - (2) It is received, probably with two sermons from the word of God—15:32
 - (3) It is received in peace—15:33
 - (a) They do not perceive the Jerusalem counsel as being forced upon them by a higher church authority.
 - (4) Some Greek copies omit 15:34.
 - (a) Perhaps it was written to explain Silas' activity on the second church-planting journey? (cf. 15:40)

PROGRESS REPORT # 2—15:35

- Paul and Barnabas remain in Antioch (up to six months, winter of 49 – spring 50), teaching [*didasko*] believers the word of the Lord
- Paul and Barnabas remain in Antioch (up to six months, winter of 49 – spring 50), evangelizing [*euangelizo*] unbelievers with the word of the Lord.

- c) Note well: Peter is not heard of again in Acts after this.

3) Acts 15:36-18:22—Jesus sends out His messenger Paul a **SECOND** time to the ends of the earth [ca. 49-52 AD]



- a) Their lack of unity—15:36-40
 - i) The time frame—15:36a
 - (1) “Now after some days” must include enough time for Silas to travel @ 250-275 miles one way back to Jerusalem and them back to Antioch.
 - ii) The root circumstances—15:36b-38
 - (1) The proposition of what to do—15:36b
 - (a) Paul takes the initiative to propose re-visiting for evaluation purposes.
 - (2) The differing positions regarding who should go—15:37-38
 - (a) Barnabas determines [*boulomai*] to take his relative and former co-worker, John Mark.
 - (i) Barnabas is in a no-win situation. If he chooses Paul, he alienates his relative John Mark. If he chooses John Mark, he alienates his long-time friend Paul.

- (b) Paul considered John Mark as not worthy [*axioo*] to take along.
Luke notes John Mark had abandoned them on their first journey.
(cf. 13:13)
- iii) The strong disagreement—15:39-40a (cf. the harmony of 15:25)
 - The portrayal is not of a gentle and reasoned decision based on what would be most strategic for the kingdom (i.e., two teams instead of one); Luke reports an emotionally charged conflict. (Craig Keener)
 - (1) Barnabas returns by sea to his home island of Cyprus with John Mark.
 - (a) This location was part of Paul's original travel plan in 15:36.
 - (2) Paul selects Silas the prophet as his travel companion heading by land toward his homeland of Tarsus.
 - (a) Silas was a well-respected Christian leader in the Jerusalem congregation. (cf. 15:22)
 - (b) Silas was a Jewish-Christian prophet. (cf. 15:32)
 - (c) Silas was a Roman citizen. (cf. 16:37)
 - (d) Silas was quite capable of writing. (cf. 1 Pet. 5:12)
 - (e) Luke also travels with Paul and Silas on this journey. (Cf. the "we/us" in 16:10-13, 15-17)
 - (i) This would be awkward if Luke thought Paul was wrong.
- iv) The congregation unmistakably supports Paul and Silas—15:40b
 - (1) Paul fulfills the mandate of the Jerusalem congregation to share the unanimous decision with the Gentile congregations. (cf. 16:4)
- v) We do not see John Mark and Barnabas again in Acts.
 - (1) Paul later speaks positively of Barnabas. (cf. 1 Cor. 9:6 @ 5-6 years later; Col. 4:10 @ 10-11 years later)
 - (2) Paul later speaks positively of John Mark. (cf. Phlm. 1:24 @ 10-11 years later; 2 Tim. 4:11 @ 16-17 years later) (as does Peter, cf. 1 Pet. 5:13)
- b) Paul and Silas' itinerary—15:41-18:22
 - i) To **Syria and Cilicia**—15:41 (cf. 15:23)
 - (1) Overland to the north and then west to visit congregations probably established in Acts 9:30; 11:25; & Gal. 1:21 during his 5-1/2 years in the Tarsus region @ 10 years earlier.
 - (2) Cf. "strengthening" in 14:22; 15:32; 18:23
 - ii) To **Derbe and Lystra**—16:1-5 (cf. 14:6)
 - (1) Note the shift to a singular emphasis on Paul—16:1a
 - (a) Overland @ 150 miles) to the west to visit congregations established during the first church-planting journey. (cf. 14:8-20)
 - (2) Timothy is introduced—16:1b-2
 - (a) A disciple/learner
 - (b) His name—honoring a god, or honored by a god
 - (c) His parents—believing Jewish mother named Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15), unsaved Gentile father

- This interethnic marriage would normally have been viewed as sinful. (cf. Deut. 7:3-4; Ezra 9-10; but see Acts 7:29)
 - Some argue that Timothy's father is dead by this time.
 - Remember the godly influence of his maternal grandmother Lois (cf. 2 Tim. 1:5)
 - Remember that a wife/mother/grandmother can have spiritual influence, positively or negatively.
- (d) His reputation—well-spoken of [*martureo*] by believers in two towns @ 22 miles apart.
- (3) Paul's actions—16:3
- (a) Paul wanted Timothy to travel with them.
- Was Timothy converted during Paul's first visit to this area? (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15, 17; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2)
 - It is likely that the elders of the local church authorized Timothy before he left with Paul. (cf. 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6)
- (b) Paul circumcised Timothy because he was sensitive to the fact that the Jews knew Timothy's father was a Gentile.
- By the Jews, Timothy was (probably) regarded as a Jew because of his mother, but a nonconforming hybrid Jew (cf. Gen. 17:9-14), nonetheless.
 - Circumcising an adult male is significantly different than circumcising an 8-day-old baby.
 - By the Gentiles, Timothy was regarded as a Jew because he had been brought up in his mother's religion.
 - Titus, a Gentile, is not required to be circumcised in Ga. 2:3-5.
- (4) They (Paul, Silas, and Timothy) faithfully communicated the decrees [*dogma*] from the counsel in Jerusalem (cf. 15:23-29)—16:4

PROGRESS REPORT # 3—16:5

- **Internal:** doctrinal ("in the faith") strengthening (cf. 14:22; 15:32, 41; 18:23)
- **External:** numerical [*arithmos*] increase (cf. 6:7; 9:31)

iii) To **Phrygia, Galatia, and Troas**—16:6-10

- (1) Explanation of the regions and cities mentioned. See map on page 14.
- (a) Four Asia Minor regions
- Central Asia Minor: *Phrygia* and *Galatia* (cf. 18:23)
 - West and southwest Asia Minor: *Asia*, west of Phrygia and Galatia
 - Northwest Asia Minor: *Mysia*
 - North-northwestern Asia Minor, northeast of Mysia: *Bithynia*
- (b) One port city
- Troas
- (c) One European region