

The Mission Journeys of St. Paul

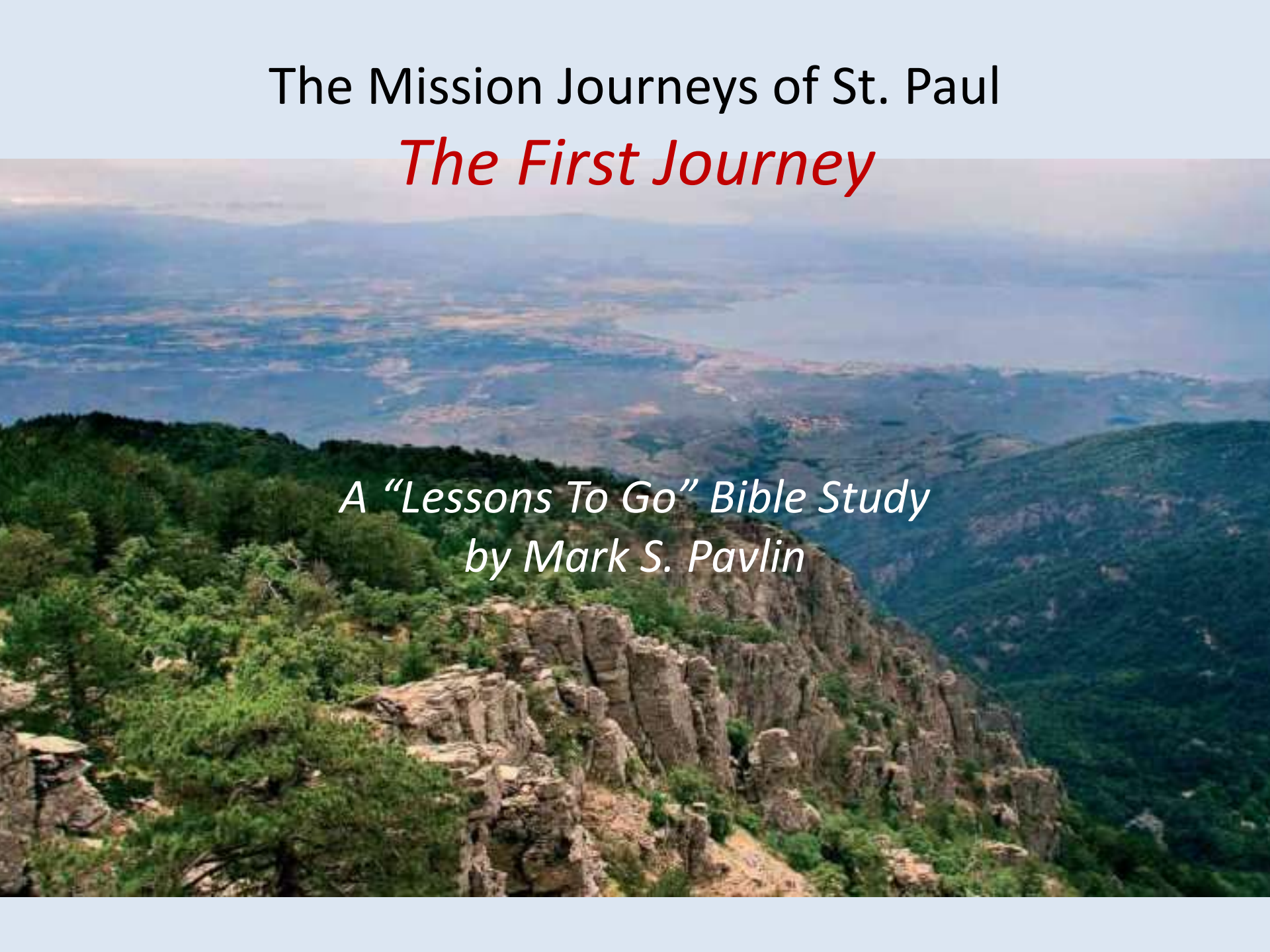
The First Journey



The Mission Journeys of St. Paul

The First Journey

*A “Lessons To Go” Bible Study
by Mark S. Pavlin*

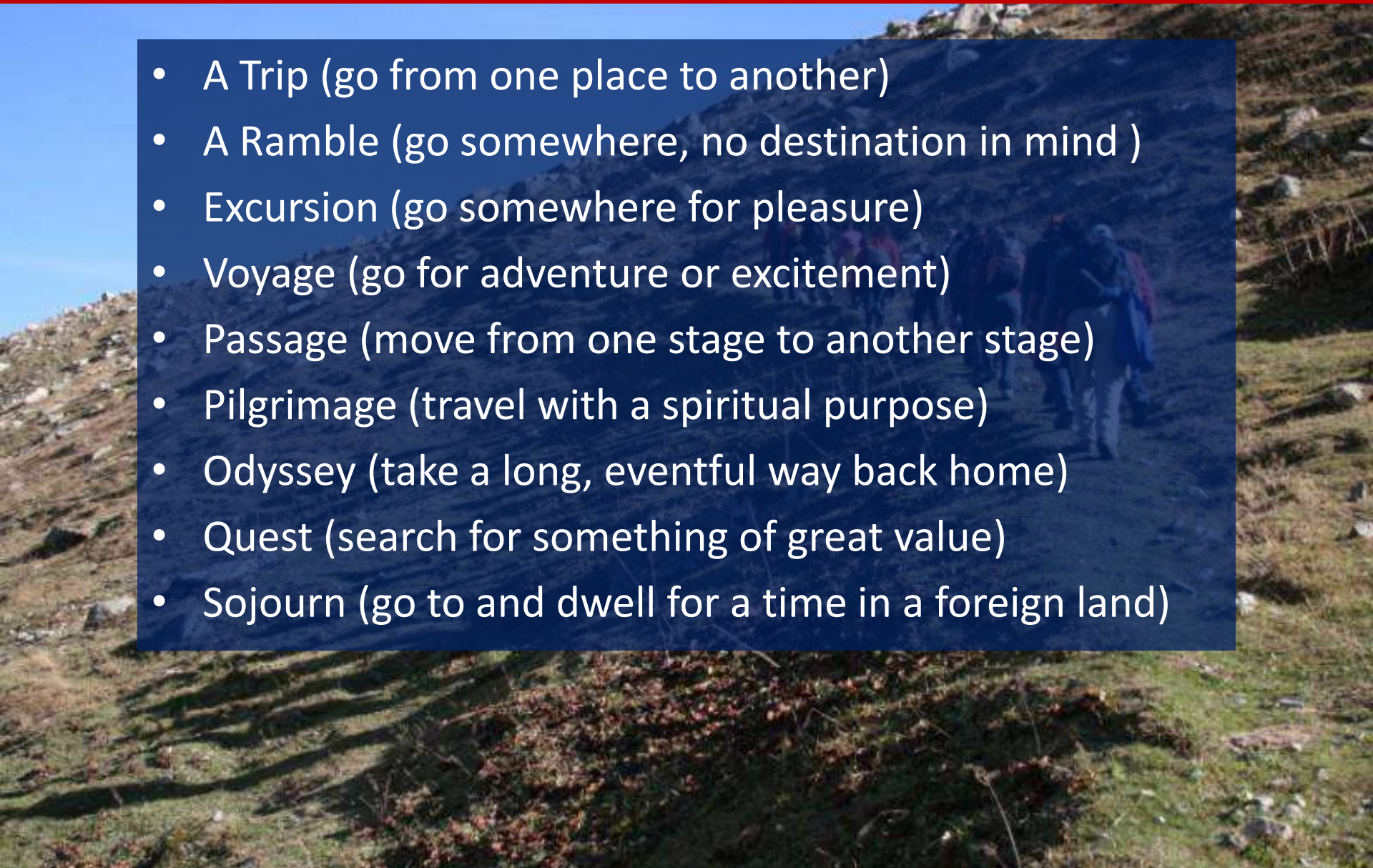


Part 1: What is a “Journey”?



What is a “Journey”?

- A Trip (go from one place to another)
- A Ramble (go somewhere, no destination in mind)
- Excursion (go somewhere for pleasure)
- Voyage (go for adventure or excitement)
- Passage (move from one stage to another stage)
- Pilgrimage (travel with a spiritual purpose)
- Odyssey (take a long, eventful way back home)
- Quest (search for something of great value)
- Sojourn (go to and dwell for a time in a foreign land)



Life is a jOURney

- ❖ Our passage from birth (life) to death (new life)
- ❖ Do we ramble or sojourn?
- ❖ Do we search (as a quest)?
- ❖ Is it a voyage of adventure?



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A JOURNEY FOR TRUTH

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A Thinking Person's Quest for Meaning

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Author and social critic **Os Guinness** discusses whether belief in God is good, bad, or irrelevant.



ALTRUISM IN EVOLUTION
A Christian and Non-Theist Discuss

The Journey Home

WHAT NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES AND MYSTICISM TEACH US ABOUT THE GIFT OF LIFE

Phillip L. Berman

YOUR MYTHIC JOURNEY

Finding Meaning in Your Life Through Writing and Storytelling

SAM KEEN and ANNE VALLEY-FOX


JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH

JULES VERNE

A classic illustration of a man with a beard and a hat, wearing a heavy coat and holding a rope, set against a dark, atmospheric background. This is a well-known illustration for Jules Verne's "Journey to the Centre of the Earth".

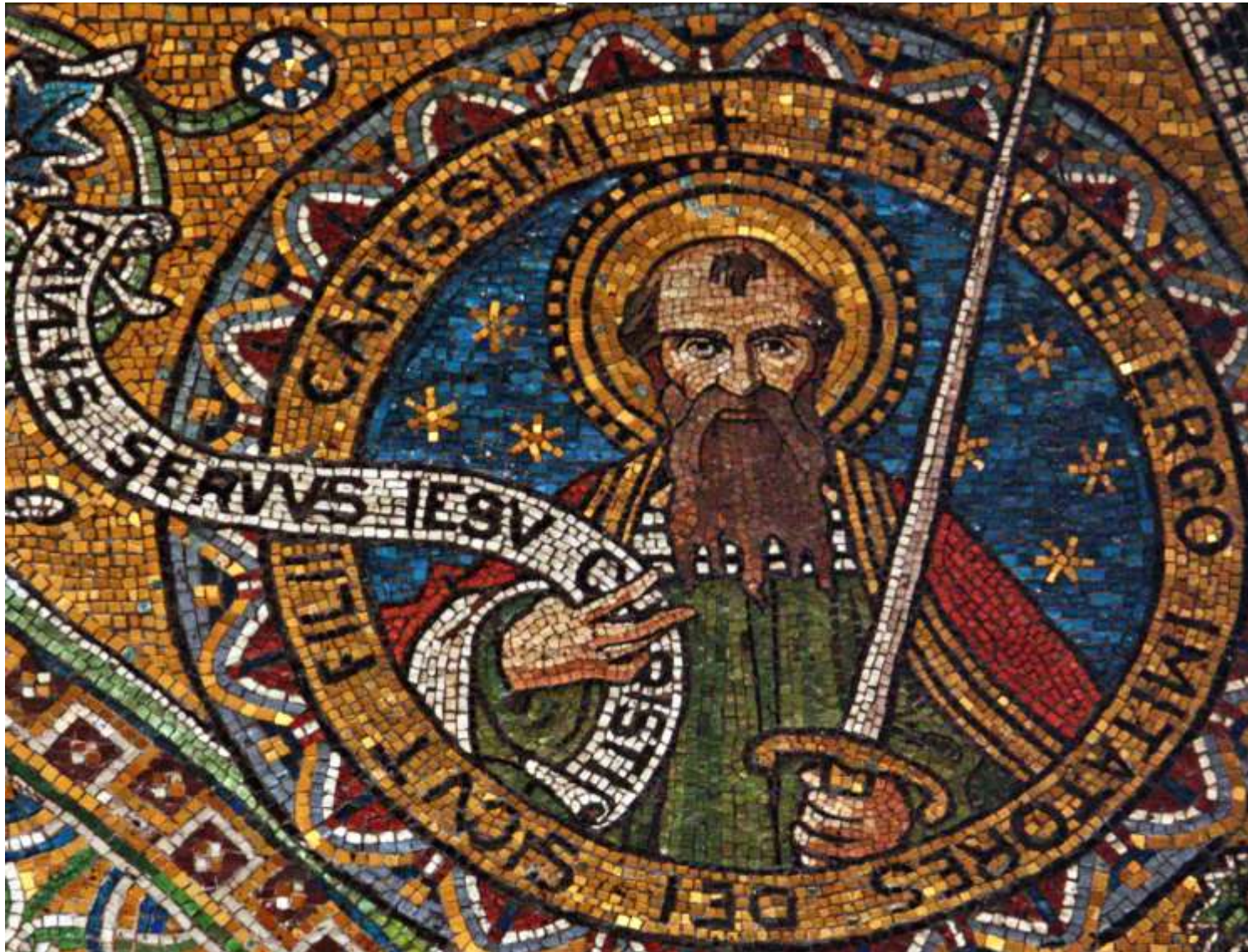
Or is life a long way back home?

The epic journey home of the Greek hero Odysseus that took twenty years was detailed in the 8th century BCE adventure told by the Greek poet Homer.

The painting depicts a dramatic scene from the Odyssey. In the foreground, a large, multi-masted wooden ship is shown from a low angle, its sails billowing. The ship is on a dark, choppy sea. In the background, a massive, dark, rocky island rises from the water, with a large, jagged opening or cave entrance. The sky is filled with soft, hazy light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall style is characteristic of the Romantic era, with a focus on dramatic lighting and atmospheric effects.

Ulysses deriding Polyphemus
(1829) J. M. W. Turner

As we examine and appreciate the mission journeys of Paul, the “Apostle to the Gentiles”, may we examine our own life’s journey, it’s aim, progress and destination.



“Journey” – samples from Scripture

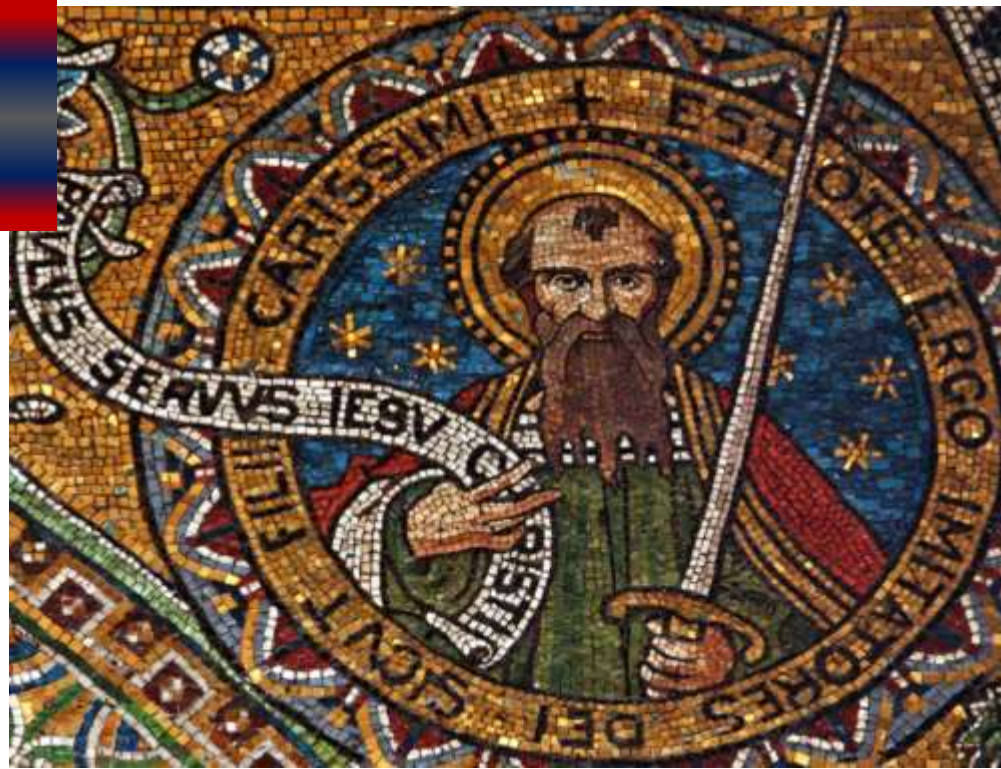
The people answered, “Far be it from us to forsake the LORD to serve other gods! It was the LORD our God himself who brought us and our parents out of Egypt, from that land of slavery.... He protected us on our entire **journey** among all the nations through which we **traveled**. - Josh. 24:17

And a **highway** will be there, it will be called the **Way** of Holiness; it will be for those who **walk** on that **Way**. The unclean will not **journey** on it, wicked fools will not **go about** on it... but only the redeemed will **walk** there - Is. 35:8-9

These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the **journey** except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. - Mk. 6:8

Who was St. Paul?

- ❖ What was he like?
- ❖ What was his background, education?
- ❖ What were his “credentials”?
- ❖ What did he do for a living?
- ❖ Why and how did he go on “mission” journeys?
- ❖ What is the significance of his life and his journeys to Christian history?
- ❖ What can his work and his travels teach us today?



Sources

- ❖ Undisputed Pauline letters (there are 7)
- ❖ Acts of the Apostles
- ❖ Writings of the Apostolic and Church “Fathers”
- ❖ Roman/Greek works (e.g. Josephus)
- ❖ Secular studies (archeology, geography)
- ❖ Disputed Pauline letters (Eph., Col., 1Thes.)
- ❖ Non-canonical works (e.g. Acts of Paul & Thecla, Apocalypse of Paul)



Paul of Tarsus

- Born ca. 1 AD in Tarsus, province of Cilicia (now southern Turkey)
- a **Diaspora** Jew, family of some modest status, wealth
- A Roman **citizen** by birth but...
- ...educated in Jewish Scripture, customs, and law in Jerusalem...
- ...by **Gamaliel**, a leading Pharisee, member of the Sanhedrin
- *“I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.”* - Gal. 1:14

Paul was “at home” in three worlds of the time: Roman, Greek, and Jewish



Tarsus is situated on the Tarsus River, in modern-day Turkey. It was a seaport but because of silting it is now located 9 miles inland.

Of Hittite origin, but, like all other Cilician cities, came, in turn under Assyrian, Persian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Armenian and, Turkish domination.

It was an important center of philosophy.

Where is Tarsus?



Gamaliel

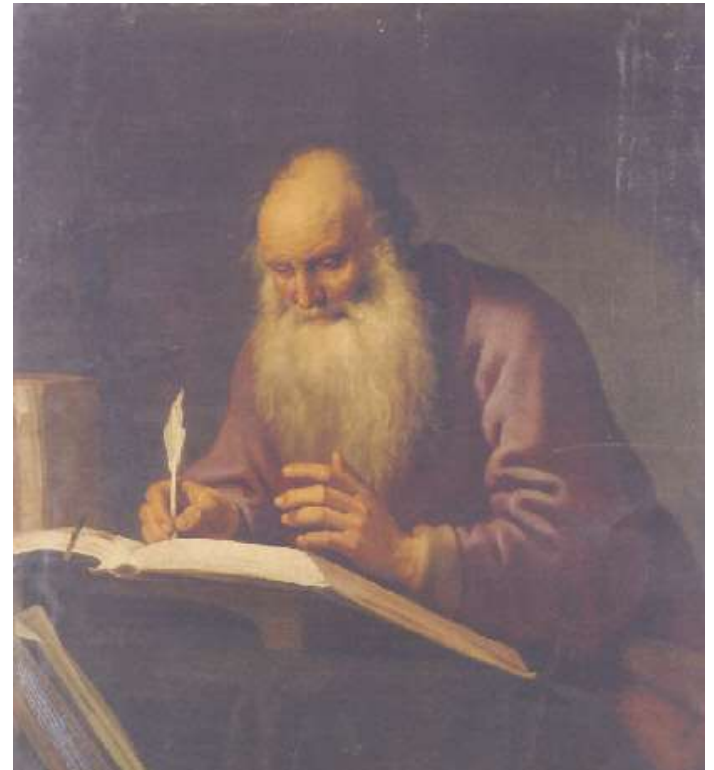
- **Rabbi** and leading authority in the Sanhedrin in mid 1st century Jerusalem.
- Grandson of the great Jewish teacher **Hillel the Elder**
- **Acts 5:34-39** says that he commanded great respect and spoke in favor of releasing arrested Christian apostles
- In the **Talmud**, Gamaliel is given the titles *Nasi* and *Rabban* (our master)
- Was possibly “president” of the Sanhedrin. It is not doubted that he held a senior position in this highest Jewish court
- Reputation in the **Mishnah** is that of a great teacher: *"Since Rabban Gamaliel the Elder died, there has been no more reverence for the law, and purity and piety died out at the same time"*



Saul or Paul?

- He did not switch names; he always had two;
- Should we think of him as a Greek (Paul) or a Hebrew (Saul)?
- Not known when he began education, possibly at age 12
- If so, then he spent ca. 20 years there, became a Rabbi and a zealous Pharisee
- **Act. 22:4-5, Phi. 3:4-6, Gal. 1:13**
- Best to think of him, then, as having a Jewish mindset...
- ...but living in, and able to relate to a Hellenic world.

We should not try to force Paul's Semitic views into a Greek mold and vice versa.



Paul had much more in education, status, knowledge of the world, and social experience than Jesus

What Paul was, was not

- ❑ Not the “Hellenizer of the Jesus Movement” as there was already vibrant interactions between Greek-speaking Jews and Greek-speaking non-Jews and Romans
- ❑ Not the “second founder” of Christianity, a term that implies the Jesus Movement was monolithic prior to Paul; scholars now agree that Christianity was diverse from the earliest time
- ❑ Not the only preacher: Paul’s work and writings were influential and helped enable the Movement to grow in the Roman world but many people in the course of daily life spread the teachings of Jesus
- ❑ Not the “first Christian” - he never used the term; he saw himself as a Hebrew, Jesus as Messiah to his people Israel, and the Movement a sect like the Pharisees
- ❑ He was “apocalyptic”, as were many Jews of the time, in that he believed that the coming of the Messiah was ushering in a new age of God’s rule through Jesus, that would be apparent soon to all.

Paul's most important journey



Paul's most important journey was an **epiphany**, a revelation, an experience of the Risen Christ as living Presence.

No so much a conversion, but certainly a “**metanoia**” or turning, an “about face”.

Not due to the preaching of the kerygma, but a sudden, blinding realization of a spiritual truth: God raise Jesus from death – he must therefore be Messiah!

The Conversion of Saint Paul
Carravagio (1600)

Paul's most important journey



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Did Paul fall off his horse? Did he have a horse? Most artists think he did.

Paul's journey to Damascus

- ❖ We first encounter Saul in **Acts 7:58 & 8:1** as “a young man” who guards cloaks of men who take them off to stone Stephen
- ❖ Saul “was there” (apparently a witness) and “approved” of the stoning (which is was illegal but dictated by Torah)
- ❖ There is no mention that Saul ever met Jesus but we can speculate that he had heard about Him (as had all of Judea)
- ❖ Soon thereafter, (Acts 9) we learn that Saul is “breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples”
- ❖ He obtains permission to ferret out any such in Damascus and take them as prisoners back to Jerusalem
- ❖ In all of this the author of Acts is using literary and dramatic license to heighten the contrast between the character of Saul *before and after* his conversion.



The dramatic Damascus Road account of the conversion occurs only in Acts, written about 50 years after the event.

And, no, there is no mention of a horse.

Damascus is ca. 150 miles northeast of Jerusalem

Paul, in his own letters, provides none of these details other than that he persecuted Christians.

What Paul says about his conversion

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is **not of human origin**.

I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it **by revelation from Jesus Christ**.

For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.

But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, **was pleased to reveal his Son in me** so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was **not to consult any human being**.

- *Gal. 1:11-15*

This amazing claim “rings” true in the sense that Paul likely developed his thinking, his theology, independently. He was (maybe even as a student?) an original thinker.

Paul – last but not least

He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and ***last of all he appeared to me also***, as to one abnormally born.



For **I am the least of the apostles** and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

-1Cor. 11:6-9

Was Paul really an apostle?

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? - *1Cor. 9:1*

What do you think?

Why is anyone an “apostle”? Note Paul’s “qualifications.”

Lots of people met Jesus during his earthly ministry – are they all apostles?

Lots of people since Paul’s day have done fruitful work for the Lord. Are they all apostles?

Jesus chose 12 men to be apostles, but did they all do fruitful work for the Lord after His resurrection?

Peter and Paul El Greco (1541-1614)



What was Paul like?

- Always was zealous for God, now zealous for Jesus as Messiah
- Dedicated; absolutely convinced of his mission (*so much so that he calls himself an apostle?*)
- Brilliant, articulate and self-reliant
- Not impetuous – spent a long time in prayer and study before beginning ministry (but “study” with whom?)
- Outspoken, opinionated, driven, passionate, single-minded
- Uncompromising to the point of being obnoxious or bellicose?
- Independent: a chip on his shoulder regarding his call?
Suspicious of the motives of others?



All people are on a mission:

- ❖ Each of us is unique, a person of many character traits, biases, skills, and experiences...
- ❖ But God does not loves us in proportion to our abilities or because of our (self-reported) goodness ...
- ❖ His love is His gift (grace) freely given.



All people are on a mission: we call it “life”

- ❖ Each of us is unique, a person of many character traits, biases, skills, and experiences...
- ❖ But God does not loves us in proportion to our abilities or because of our (self-reported) goodness ...
- ❖ His love is His gift (grace) freely given.
- ❖ Our trusting relationship with God in Christ, then, is not something **added** to our private selves;
- ❖ Our faith is the **grounding of our being**; Christ is, as it were, the road on which we journey;
- ❖ So we can say with Paul, “For me, to live is Christ” **Phil. 1:21**



A group of hikers with backpacks is walking up a steep, rocky hillside. The terrain is covered in sparse, dry grass and scattered rocks. The sky is clear and blue. The hikers are wearing various outdoor gear, including jackets and hats. The overall scene depicts a rugged mountain trail.

The Mission Journeys of St. Paul
The First Journey
End of Part 1

The Mission Journeys of St. Paul
The First Journey
Part 2



What did Paul do next?

I {Paul} did **not** go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia (*some say he went to Mt. Sinai, on a pilgrimage*).

Later I returned to Damascus. (*the Acts account differs*)

- Gal. 1:17-18

Apparently he caused a ruckus there because...

In Damascus, the governor... had the city... guarded in order to arrest me. But I was lowered in a basket from a window in the wall and slipped through his hands.

- 2Cor. 11:32-33



The basket case (according to Acts)

After many days had gone by, there was a conspiracy among the Jews to kill him, but Saul learned of their plan.

Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him.

But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the city wall.

- Acts 9:23-25



Since Paul himself attests to this episode in his Christian journey and it is repeated in Acts, it is likely that it happened as reported. Other events reported by Acts but not by Paul are less historically reliable.

Paul, meet Peter

- Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas {Peter} and stayed with him 15 days.
(Apparently he never met Peter until this time. Peter probably was surprised to see him! But why did he want to meet Peter?)
- I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea...
- They only heard the report: “The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.”
- I saw none of the other apostles *(why not?)*, only James, the Lord’s brother *{he was not one of the original 12}*...

- Gal. 1:17-24

It is not clear when he began preaching, but maybe it was after he made friends with Peter. Was this was his “graduate school” in missionary work?

The church at Antioch

Those (Christians) who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as **Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch...**
...spreading the word ***only among Jews***.

Why would they do that?

Some of them, however, from Cyprus and Cyrene (*on the north coast of Libya*), went to **Antioch** and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.

The Lord's hand was with them and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

- *Acts 11:19-21*

Did You Know?

The earliest Christian writer not included in the NT canon was Ignatius, bishop of Antioch. He wrote a series of letters, seven of which now form a part of the collection known as the Apostolic Fathers. His letters are a valuable source of Christian theology in its formative years, including his thoughts about ecclesiology, sacraments, and the role of bishops.

The church at Antioch



Did You Know?

Between the years 252 and 300, ten assemblies of the church were held at **Antioch** and it became the seat of one of the original patriarchates with Constantinople, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Rome.

Today Antioch remains the seat of a patriarchate of the Oriental Orthodox churches.

Notice that Antioch was a short sail from Tarsus, Paul's hometown. Antioch, then must have been familiar to him, a place where he knew many people.

What was Antioch like in Paul's day?

Imagine a city the size of Nashville



Antioch

A city of 500,000; 3rd most populous in the Roman Empire after Rome and Alexandria.

It was founded in 320 BCE after the death of Alexander the Great by one of his generals, Seleucus Nicator.

It was serviced by excellent paved roads and by the port of Seleucia.



Antioch today

The long and varied history has created many sites of interest. There is **much for visitors to see in Antakya**, although many buildings have been lost in the rapid growth and redevelopment in recent decades.



The *Church of St Peter* is honeycombed with places of refuge, tombs, and tunnels carved out of the rock.



Other places to see in Antakya

- ❖ *Gündüz cinema* in the city center, former Parliament of the Republic of Hatay.
- ❖ The *Habib-i Neccar Camii*, the oldest mosque in Antakya
- ❖ The old market area, a labyrinth of narrow streets and old houses
- ❖ St. Simon Monastery, Bakras Castle, and Titus & Vespasian Tunnel
- ❖ Hatay Archaeology Museum, 2nd largest collection of mosaics in the world
- ❖ Beşikli Cave and Graves (in the antique city of Seleukeia Pierria)
- ❖ The waterfalls (→) at Harbiye



Paul, meet Barnabas

News of {the spread of the gospel to Syria} reached the church in Jerusalem. They sent Barnabas (*Acts 4:36*) to Antioch. When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their heart.

Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul (*Why would Barnabas make such an effort to find Paul? What was Paul doing at home?*) and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. (*Why would Paul go with Barnabas to Antioch?*)

For a year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught **great numbers** of people. *Why would Paul be accepted as a teacher?*

- Acts 11:22-27

What Do You Think? Is the author here being too obviously “triumphalistic”? He means to impress, even awe his readers by an account in which the apostles overcome obstacles with Divine aid so that Christianity can spreading like wildfire.

“Perhaps I will stay with you for a while, even spend the winter so that you can help me on my **journey**, wherever I go.” - *1Cor. 16:6*

So,
let's
go
with
Paul!



St. Paul Preaching In Athens - Raphael (1515)

Did you reset your odometer?

From Greek: “*Odos, odoiporia*” meaning way, journey



Bon Voyage!

In the Antioch church there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon (or Niger), Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen and Saul. {we know nothing of these other church workers but it is important to note that there were Christian teachers and evangelists and writers other than Paul}

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit spoke to them, saying, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for work to which I have called them.”

So... they {the church leaders and elders?} placed their hands on these two men and sent them off.

- Acts 13:1-6

The two, thus sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed to **Cyprus**. When they arrived at **Salamis**, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.



The 1st missionary journey (preview)

- ❖ Sent by the Church of Antioch, the text makes sure the reader knows it was done by order of and blessed by the Holy Spirit
- ❖ Paul's travel companions were Barnabas (a Cypriot) and his cousin, John-Mark (*see Col. 4:10*)
- ❖ The journey, then was not exclusively "Paul's" - it was the work of the Spirit, authorized (and funded?) by the church of Antioch and shared by two other "apostles".
- ❖ Occurred ca. 46-48 AD (*Acts* does not provide enough information for us to pinpoint the year);
- ❖ Because what is now "Christianity" was still a Jewish sect, their first contact was naturally the local Jewish synagogues
- ❖ It was not a trip into unknown territory. Instead it was regional, to family connections, to Diaspora communities and where prior missionaries already had proclaimed the Good News.

First stop- Cyrus

They traveled {westward} through the entire island until they came to **Paphos**.



“Cyrus” means copper



Latin *Cuprum* = “metal of
Cyprus”, hence the chemical
symbol for copper is **Cu**

The republic of Cyprus today

- ❖ The Republic of Cyprus has sovereignty over the island of Cyprus (except for two British military bases)
- ❖ Under the Ottoman Empire 1571-1878; following the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878), administered by Britain until independence (1960)
- ❖ It is partitioned into two parts; the area under the effective control of the Republic of Cyprus, comprising about 59% of the island's area, and the Turkish-controlled area in the north
- ❖ The northern portion is called “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” recognized only by Turkey, covering 36% of the island's area (partitioning occurred in 1974)
- ❖ Cyprus is the third most populous island in the Mediterranean Sea and one of its most popular tourist destinations
- ❖ Capital is **Nicosia**; member of the European Union since 2004, population is ca. 1MM, 77% Greek ethnicity

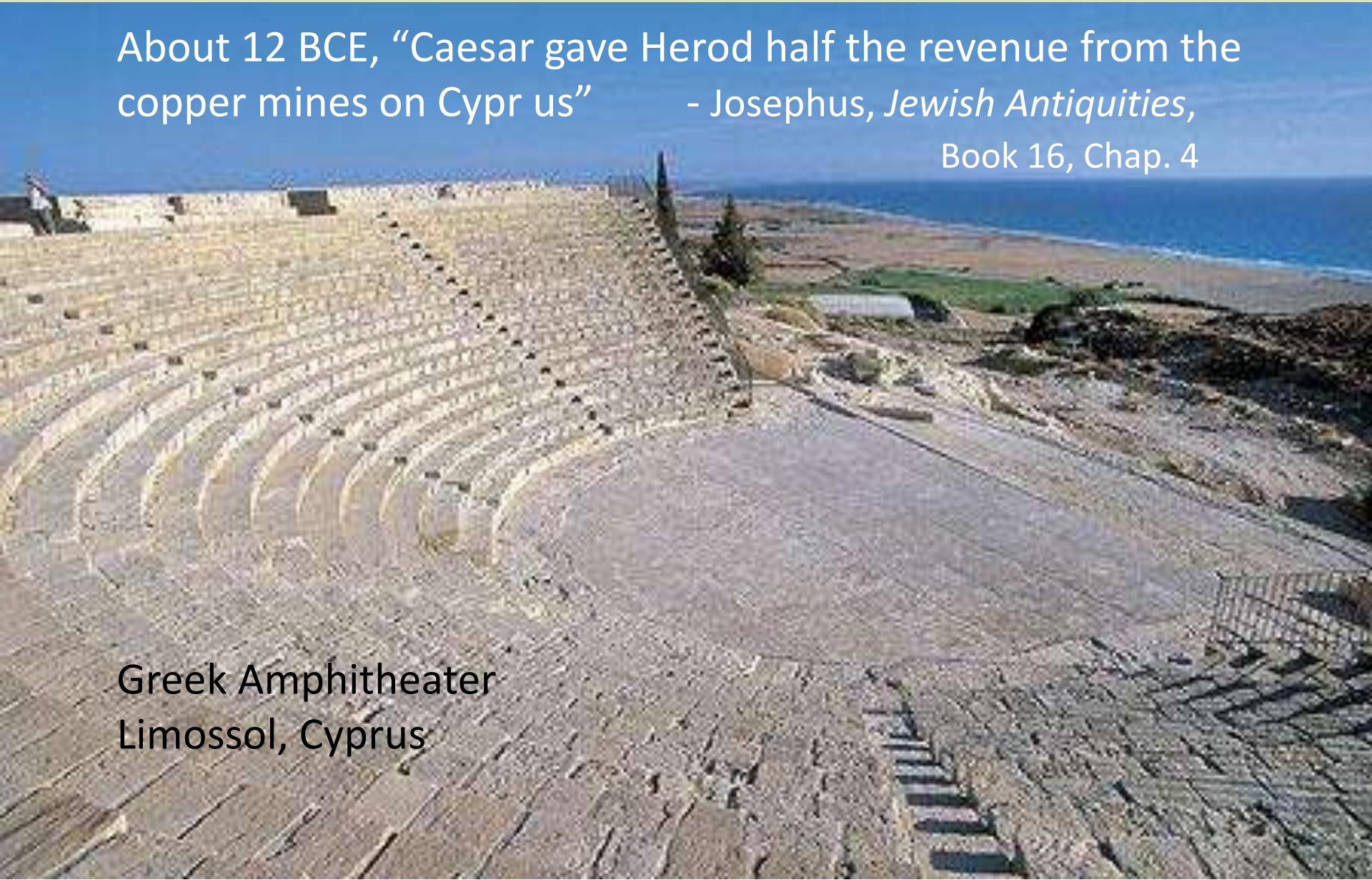
To King Herod of Judea, Cyprus meant wealth

About 12 BCE, “Caesar gave Herod half the revenue from the copper mines on Cyprus”

- Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*,

Book 16, Chap. 4

Greek Amphitheater
Limossol, Cyprus



“They traveled through the whole island...”

...until they came to **Paphos**. There they met a Jewish sorcerer (Gk. *magon*) and false prophet named Bar-Jesus (also **Elymas**) who was an attendant of the proconsul, **Sergius Paulus**. - Acts 13:6-7





In Greek myth, the goddess Aphrodite emerged from the sea at Paphos., which then became the center of worship dedicated to her for the entire Greek world.

Confrontation

The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word (*logos*) of God.

But **Elymas** (the Jewish sorcerer) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith.

Saul, also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at Elymas and said,

“You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is righteous! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?

- *Acts 13:7-10*

Powerful preaching of Paul

Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun.”

Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand.

When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

- Acts 13:11-12

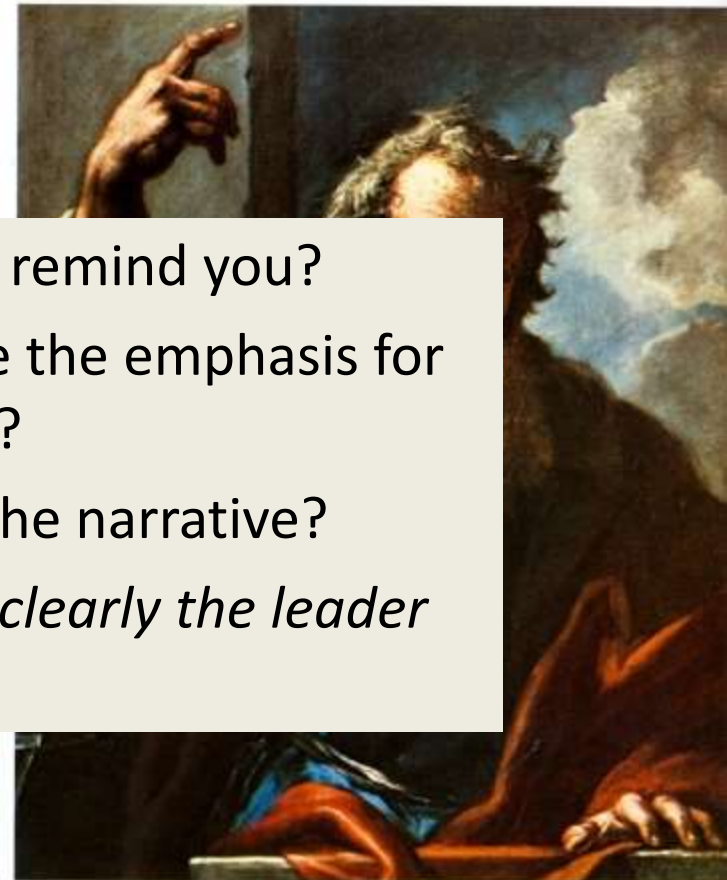


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Of what event in Paul's life does this remind you?

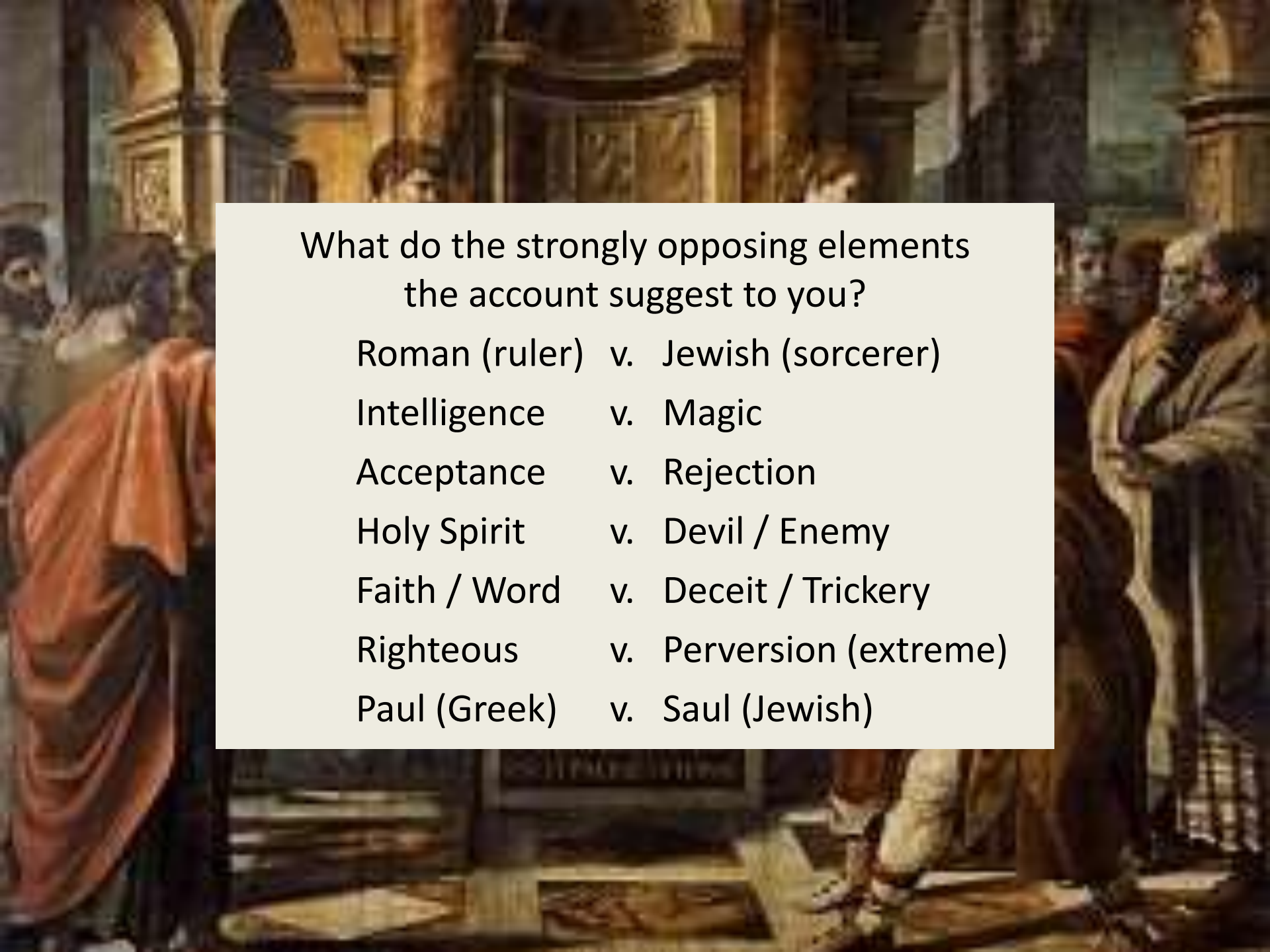
Where does the author of *Acts* place the emphasis for the coming to faith of the proconsul?

Why does *Acts* feature this story in the narrative?

Note that from this point on, Paul is clearly the leader of the mission

Elymas The Magician Struck Blind Before Sergius Paulus [Raphael]





What do the strongly opposing elements
the account suggest to you?

Roman (ruler) v. Jewish (sorcerer)

Intelligence v. Magic

Acceptance v. Rejection

Holy Spirit v. Devil / Enemy

Faith / Word v. Deceit / Trickery

Righteous v. Perversion (extreme)

Paul (Greek) v. Saul (Jewish)

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End of Part 2

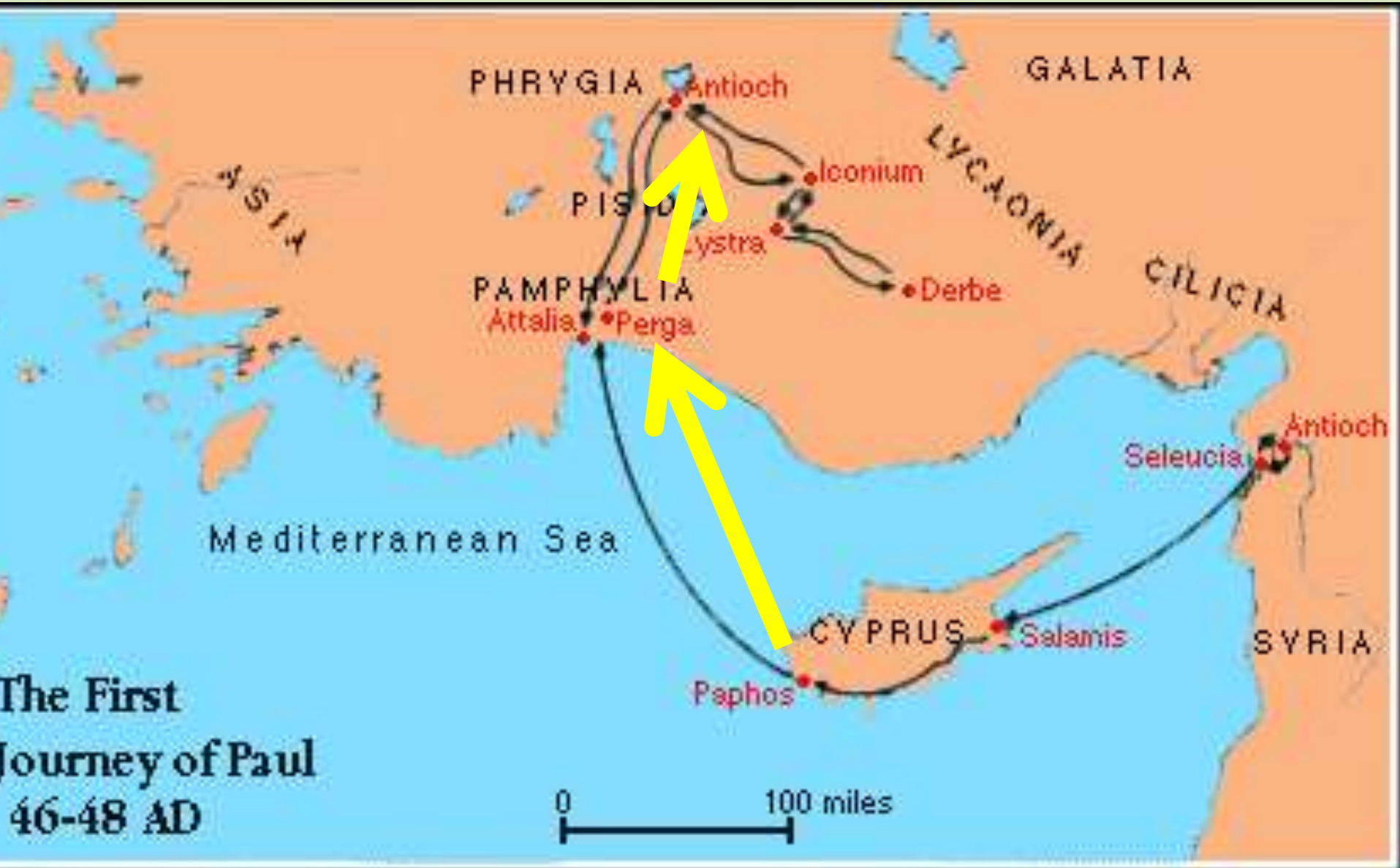


The Mission Journeys of St. Paul
The First Journey

Part 3



Back to the mainland, then inland



Capital: Ankara / Largest city: Istanbul

Population (2011 estimate) of 74.7 million (18th in world)

Official language: Turkish

Government: democratic, parliamentary republic

Succeeded the Ottoman Empire Oct. 29, 1923

Total Area 302,500 sq. miles = 37th largest nation

Modern day Turkey



Land of earthquakes



Lakes Beysehir, Egirdir, and Aksehir

Located in the Turkish “Lake District” west of Konya (Iconium), 115 miles north of Antalya (Attilia), the 3rd, 4th, & 12th largest lakes in Turkey, but the 1st, 2nd & 3rd largest freshwater lakes.

On home turf, Paul shares good news

From Paphos, Paul and companions sailed to **Perga** in **Pamphylia**, where John-*Mark* left them to return to Jerusalem.

From **Perga** they went on to **Pisidian Antioch**.

On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down. After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent word to them, saying,

“Brothers, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, please speak.”

Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: “Fellow Israelites and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me!

- *Acts 13: 13-16*

Paul then speaks at length....



What did Paul preach?

- ❖ “The word of God” What does this mean? (no NT yet, no OT canon) : could mean selected Scriptures and what he learned
- ❖ To the Jews exclusively - there was then no separate, distinct, “Christian church”, but it was there by the time Acts was written
- ❖ Rehearses the history of God’s working among the people of Israel, then proclaims, “We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children...”
- ❖ Resurrection is key - “...by raising up Jesus.”
- ❖ Faith in this Jesus - “Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.
- ❖ They don’t need to become Jewish – “Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.”

Then to Iconium

- ❖ Now the city of **Konya** in the Central Anatolia Region, whose metro area population is >1 million people
- ❖ Name is cognate with “icon” (image), referring to the Greek legend of the gorgon's (Medusa's) head, with which the hero Perseus conquered the region before founding the city
- ❖ History is known back to ca. 3,000 BCE; later it was in the Persian Empire, then Greek after Darius III was defeated by Alexander (333 BC)
- ❖ Ruled by Seleucus I Nicator after Alexander
- ❖ Surrendered to Roman authority under Emperor Claudius.



*Mevlana Museum
built in 1274*

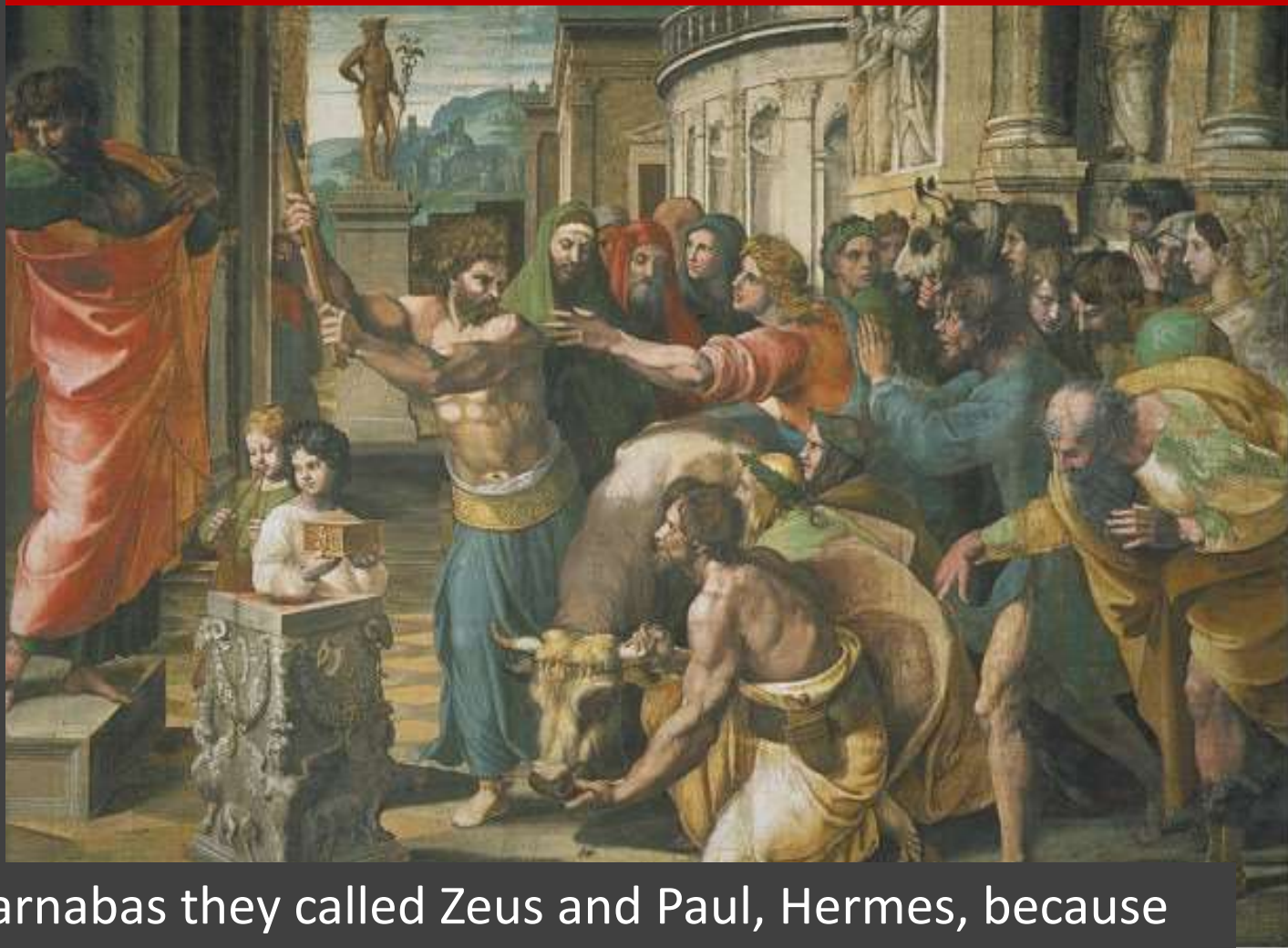
Trouble in Icon City

- ❖ ...went as usual into the Jewish synagogue
- ❖ ...spoke effectively; a number of Jews & Greeks believed
- ❖ ... But Jews who did not [believe], stirred up the other Gentiles and poisoned their minds (note the negative language)
- ❖ ... So [P. and B.] spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to perform signs and wonders
- ❖ ... people were divided... there was a plot... both Gentiles and Jews, with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them
- ❖ ... but they found out about it and fled (note drama)
- ❖ ... to **Lystra** and **Derbe** and to the surrounding country,
- ❖ ... where they continued to preach the gospel (note success despite all obstacles).

- Acts 14:1-7

In Lystra, a healing causes a sensation

...A man lame
...from birth...
listened to
Paul... he had
faith... “Stand
up on your
feet!” ...the man
jumped up,
began to walk...
the crowd saw
...shouted “The
gods have come
down to us in
human form!” Barnabas they called Zeus and Paul, Hermes, because
he was the speaker. The priest.. brought bulls and wreaths... to offer
sacrifices to them.



- Acts 14: 8-13

GREEK	God/Goddess Of	ROMAN
<u>Aphrodite</u>	Love , beauty	<u>Venus</u>
<u>Apollo</u>	Music, healing, prophecy, light, truth	<u>Apollo</u>
<u>Ares</u>	War, bloodlust, violence, manly courage	<u>Mars</u>
<u>Artemis</u>	Hunting, animals, young girls, childbirth, the moon	<u>Diana</u>
<u>Athena</u>	Wisdom, heroic endeavor, handicrafts.	<u>Minerva</u>
<u>Demeter</u>	Agriculture, horticulture, grain, harvest	<u>Ceres</u>
<u>Dionysus</u>	Wine, parties, festivals, chaos, drunkenness	<u>Bacchus</u>
<u>Hades</u>	King of the Underworld	<u>Pluto</u>
<u>Hephaestus</u>	Fire, metalworking, volcanism	<u>Vulcan</u>
<u>Hera</u>	Queen of marriage, women, childbirth	<u>Juno</u>
<u>Hermes</u>	Travel, messengers, trade, language, writing	<u>Mercury</u>
<u>Hestia</u>	Hearth, home and cooking	<u>Vesta</u>
<u>Poseidon</u>	Sea, rivers, floods, droughts, earthquakes	<u>Neptune</u>
<u>Zeus</u>	Thunder, lightning, law, fate; king of the gods.	<u>Jupiter</u>

Just human



When Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting:

“Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human.... We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything... rain... crops in season... He provides plenty of food, and fills your hearts with joy.”

Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

- *Acts 14: 14-18*

Paul's message to these non-Jews is not about a promised Messiah, which would be meaningless to worshippers of Greek gods.

Defeated in Lystra



The some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead.

But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city.

- Acts 14:19-20

Why would Jews from other towns bother to come to Lystra to contest Paul's message?

Hard to sort out what is going on. Perhaps

after a period of time Paul and Barnabas brought many in the town to believe in Christ as Messiah, Jews and non-Jews alike. By what argument could they incite people once favorable to Paul now try to kill Paul (but not Barnabas?)? They had, it seems, disciples to defend them, too.

Saint Barnabas

Barnabas Curing The Poor (Veronese)

Church tradition describes the martyrdom of many saints, including that of Paul's travel companion, Barnabas.

It relates that some Jews in Salamis where Barnabas was proclaiming the gospel were outraged at his preaching. They jumped him as he debated them in the synagogue, dragged him outside and stoned him. **Sound familiar?**

His kinsman, John Mark, a spectator of this barbaric action, interred the saint's body and spread the tale of his death.

Barnabas is venerated today as the patron saint of Cyprus. A widely popular post-apostolic writing credited to him, **The Epistle of Barnabas**, almost became a canonical book of the NT.



Last stop, Derbe... then go back

The next day Paul and Barnabas left for **Derbe**. They preached the gospel in that city and won a **large number** of disciples.

Here again the writer makes sure the reader knows that the missionary effort was extraordinarily fruitful.

Then they returned to **Lystra**, **Iconium** and **Pisidian Antioch**, strengthening the disciples, encouraging them to remain true to the faith. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord...

- *Acts 14: 21-23*

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- *Acts 14: 21-23*

They acted as bishops would (appointing elders) only a few years later in the same region.

It is puzzling that they did not complete a circuit by returning to Antioch (in Syria) via Paul's home town of Tarsus.

Are you “ecclesiastic”?

Lystra, Iconium and ...strengthening ... encouraging ... (they) appointed elders (presbuterous) ... in each church (ekklesian)...

After Paul left town, what was the situation of the newly-minted Christians he left behind?

- ❖ They were not of course part of an organized denomination nor did they have the concept of “church” as we think of it
- ❖ If they were mostly Jewish, they stayed with their synagogue and studied the OT. They had no NT to study, no catechisms, no commentaries, no church rule books.
- ❖ Were they also opposed by non-Christian Jews?
- ❖ Did other “prophets” arrive to urge non-Jews to become Jews to be fully Christian? (the major topic of *Galatians*).

Return; end of the 1st journey

After going through **Pisidia**, they came into **Pamphylia**. When they had preached the word in **Perga**, they went down to **Attalia**.

From Attalia they sailed back to (Syrian) **Antioch**...

On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them...

...and how He had opened a door of **faith to the Gentiles**. They stayed a long time with the disciples - *Acts 14: 24-28*.



“Gentiles” are acceptable to God in Christ

The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the **Gentiles** through them.

{Peter said,} “God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted {these Gentiles} by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.... No! We believe it is through **the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved**, just as they are.”

- Acts 15: 8-11

“Gentiles” are acceptable to God in Christ

The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God
Thank God they didn't as we Americans are mostly Gentiles.

And, as we will see in “The Second Journey” study, most of Paul's later converts were Gentiles also.

The “agenda” of the author is patently clear in this section; that God desires preaching to and the Holy Spirit will enable the conversion of non-Jewish peoples.

When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers... we should not make it difficult for **Gentiles** who are turning to God.”

- Acts 15: 19

The First Journey: a summary

Paul and Barnabas spend ~ 2 years in Cyprus (B's home) and the major towns of central "Galatia" (modern-day Turkey: Attalia / Pisidian Antioch / Iconium / Lystra / Derbe / Perga

- They spoke the Good News in the synagogues of the *Diaspora*, but their preaching attracted "God-fearers"
- *Acts* repeatedly stresses how successful they were in bringing non-Jews to belief in Christ. This suggests that by his time (ca. 80 AD) the split away from Judaism of this new teaching and way of life was clear, growing, even hostile, and irrevocable
- We are not told **why** P. and B. went where they went; like any great adventure, it was somewhat "ad hoc" and Spirit-led.
- They were, however, traveling in familiar territory, close to their homes. The adventure was more one of God than of geography.



The Mission Journeys of St. Paul
The First Journey
End of Part 3

The story of Paul's life and travels continues in
*"The Mission Journeys of St. Paul: The Second
Journey"*, also available in the "Lessons To Go"
Scripture studies series on SlideShare