

ACTS 14– MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

Barnabas And Paul began their first missionary journey from Antioch in Acts 13:4. When we come to the end of the chapter, Paul and Barnabas have arrived in Iconium. Acts 13:50,51.

I. Paul and Barnabas in Iconium (14:1-7)

A. “So spake” [spake with such power]

1. Shows that faith comes by hearing.
 - a. Romans 10:14,17
 - b. John 20:30,31
2. They were obedient believers (obedient) both Jew and Gentile.

B. The disobedient Jews stirred up the Gentiles (vss.2-4)

1. When the gospel is preached with conviction, it stirs men to action to either accept it or fight against it.
2. Many accepted it at Iconium, but the disobedient Jews occupied themselves to create all possible prejudice in the minds of the people against Paul and Barnabas.
3. They could not meet the arguments of Paul and Barnabas, but they did use falsehoods and insinuations to poison the minds of the people against them.
4. Nearly all of the persecutions recorded in Acts was instigated by unbelieving Jews.
 - a. Two exceptions
 - (1) Philippi (Acts 16:16-40)
 - (2) Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41)
5. Paul and Barnabas spent a “long time” teaching in Iconium.
 - a. Spoke boldly.
 - b. Word of his grace.
 - c. Signs and wonders were done.

C. The city was divided.

1. Part held with Jews. . . Part with the apostles.
2. The disobedient Jews did not succeed in poisoning the minds of all the people against the preaching of Paul and Barnabas, but they were able to divide the city.
3. They learned that the mob was going to use them spitefully and stone them.
 - a. To use spitefully means “ doing bodily harm, violence, to someone.”
 - b. Stoning was Jewish method of execution.
4. They fled the city and went to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia.
 - a. When should you flee and when should you stay and fight?
 - b. When opposition increased, they boldly proclaimed the gospel (v.2).
 - c. If the time ever comes when one is forced to either deny Jesus or die, the choice is clear.
 - d. Under circumstances such as at Iconium, when one sees that there is no more possibility of doing good, and there is evidence that life is at stake, then it is time to get out.
5. They preached the gospel. Location changed. . . message did not change.

II. In Lystra (14:8-18).

A. Certain man, impotent in his feet, from his mother’s womb, who never had walked.

1. His faith was produced by hearing the word of God.
 - a. He believed that Paul could make him whole.
 - b. He leaped up and walked.

B. Results which followed.

1. These heathen believed that the gods came down and manifested themselves in human form.
2. They called Barnabas Jupiter (Most powerful of all the ancient gods)
3. They called Paul Mercuris, because he was the chief speaker.
4. There was a temple at Lystra dedicated to his worship (v.13).

5. The heathen had gods and goddesses for almost everything.
6. The priest of Jupiter was prepared to make sacrifice.
7. Barnabas and Paul objected.
 - a. Barnabas called "apostle." Apostle means "one sent." (V.4).
 - b. They rent their garments (sign of grief and horror)
 - c. We are men of like passions with you (i.e. men of human weakness, fleshly desires, and mortal). Men should not be worshiped ever!
 - d. We preach unto you to turn from these vanities unto the living God (I Thess. 1:9).
 - e. In times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways (Romans 3:25; Acts 17:30).
 - f. He left not himself w/o witness.
 - g. They had difficulty restraining the crowds.

III. More Persecution.

A. Paul stoned at Lystra.

1. Short while before, they were ready to worship Paul. Now they attempt to kill him.
2. They drug him outside the city, like the carcass of a dead animal.
3. Their intent was to kill him and they thought they had done so.
4. First recorded bodily harm done to Paul (2 Cor. 11:25).

B. Paul recovered and continued His work (14:20-23)

1. Paul rose up, went back into the city.
2. Next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.
3. Preached the gospel in that city.
4. Returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch.
5. They confirmed the souls of the disciples (strengthen them in the faith).
6. Exhorted them to continue in the faith.
7. Through much tribulation enter the kingdom (eternal, heavenly kingdom).
8. Appointed elders (plural) in every church. (responsible leadership).

C. Return home (14:24-28).

1. Gathered the church together to give report (fulfilled their ministry).
 - a. First mission trip ever sent out to the heathen world.
 - b. Eager to tell their story as the disciples were to hear it.
2. All that God had done with them. [God was with them!]
3. Opened the door of faith.
 - a. Open doors is a characteristic expression of Paul. Abundant opportunities and great progress
 - b. I Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3
 - c. Faith is the key that opens Heaven's door!
4. Stayed there long time.

Con: The completion of the first missionary journey to the Gentiles. What a report they had to give. The primary thing was they preached the gospel. The message was the same for Jew and Gentile.