

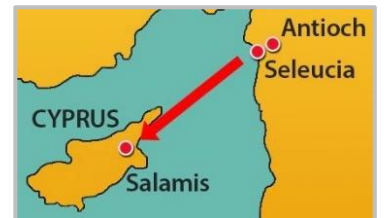
Paul's First Missionary Journey

Acts 13:4 – 14:28

Quoted from the *Easy-to-Read Version* of the Bible

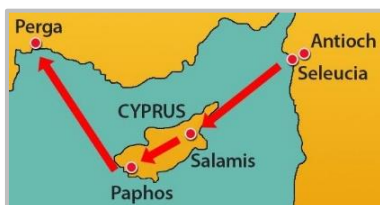
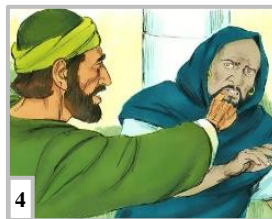
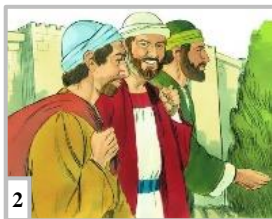
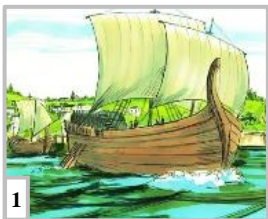


'Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit. They went to the city of Seleucia. Then they sailed from there to the island of Cyprus 1. When Barnabas and Saul came to the city of Salamis, they told the message of God in the Jewish synagogues. John Mark was with them to help 2.



Barnabas and Saul in Cyprus

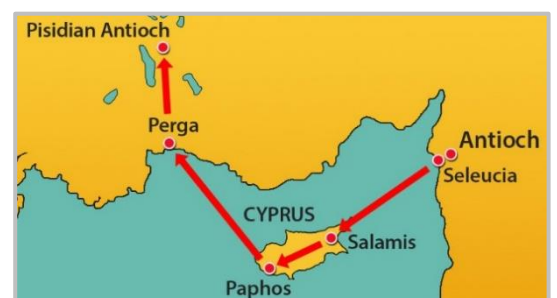
They went across the whole island to the city of Paphos. There they met a Jewish man named Barjesus who did magic. He was a false prophet. He always stayed close to Sergius Paulus, who was the governor and a very smart man. He invited Barnabas and Saul to come visit him, because he wanted to hear the message of God. But the magician Elymas (as Barjesus was called in Greek) spoke against them, trying to stop the governor from believing in Jesus 3. But Saul (also known as Paul), filled with the Holy Spirit, looked hard at Elymas and said, "You son of the devil, full of lies and all kinds of evil tricks! You are an enemy of everything that is right. Will you never stop trying to change the Lord's truths into lies? 4. Now the Lord will touch you and you will be blind. For a time you will not be able to see anything – not even the light from the sun." Then everything became dark for Elymas 5. He walked around lost. He was trying to find someone to lead him by the hand. When the governor saw this, he believed. He was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.



Paul and Barnabas Go to Antioch (in Pisidia)

Paul and the people with him sailed away from Paphos 6. They came to Perga, a city in Pamphylia. There John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem 7. They continued their trip from Perga and went to Antioch, a city near Pisidia. On the Sabbath day they went into the Jewish synagogue and sat down. The Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets were read. Then the leaders of the synagogue sent a message to Paul and Barnabas: "Brothers, if you have something to say that will help the people here, please speak."

Paul stood up, raised his hand to get their attention 8, and said, "People of Israel and all you others who worship the true God, please listen to me! The God of Israel chose our ancestors. And during the time our



people lived in Egypt as foreigners, he made them great. Then he brought them out of that country with great power. And he was patient with them for 40 years in the desert. God destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan and gave their land to his people. All this happened in about 450 years.

After this, God gave our people judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. Then the people asked for a king. God gave them Saul, the son of Kish. Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin. He was king for 40 years. After God took Saul away, God made David their king. This is what God said about David: 'David, the son of Jesse, is the kind of person who does what pleases me. He will do everything I want him to do.'

'As he promised, God has brought one of David's descendants to Israel to be their Saviour. That descendant is Jesus.'

Acts 13:23, ERV

As he promised, God has brought one of David's descendants to Israel to be their Saviour. That descendant is Jesus. Before he came, John told all the people of Israel what they should do. He told them to be baptized to show they wanted to change their lives. When John was finishing his work, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the Messiah. He is coming later, and I am not worthy to be the slave who unties his sandals.'

My brothers, sons in the family of Abraham, and you other people who also worship the true God, listen! The news about this salvation has been sent to us. The Jews living in Jerusalem and their leaders did not realize that Jesus was the Saviour. The words the prophets wrote about him were read every Sabbath day, but they did not understand. They condemned Jesus. When they did this, they made the words of the prophets come true. They could not find any real reason why Jesus should die, but they asked Pilate to kill him.

These Jews did all the bad things that the Scriptures said would happen to Jesus. Then they took Jesus down from the cross and put him in a tomb. But God raised him up from death! After this, for many days, those who had gone with Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem saw him. They are now his witnesses to our people.

We tell you the Good News about the promise God made to our ancestors. We are their descendants, and God has made this promise come true for us. God did this by raising Jesus from death. We also read about this in Psalm 2:

'You are my Son. Today I have become your Father.'

God raised Jesus from death. Jesus will never go back to the grave and become dust. So God said,

'I will give you the true and holy promises that I made to David.'

But in another Psalm it says,

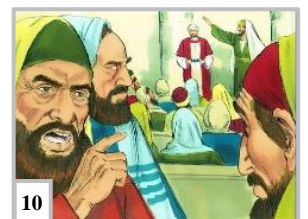
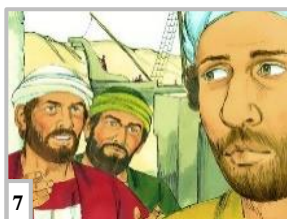
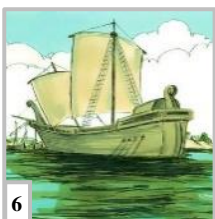
'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.'

David did God's will during the time he lived. Then he died and was buried like all his ancestors. And his body did rot in the grave! But the one God raised from death did not rot in the grave. Brothers, understand what we are telling you. You can have forgiveness of your sins through this Jesus. The Law of Moses could not free you from your sins. But you can be made right with God if you believe in Jesus. So be careful! Don't let what the prophets said happen to you:

'Listen, you people who doubt! You can wonder, but then go away and die; because during your time, I will do something that you will not believe. You will not believe it, even if someone explains it to you!' "

As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue **9**, the people asked them to come again on the next Sabbath day and tell them more about these things. After the meeting, many of the people followed Paul and Barnabas, including many Jews and people who had changed their religion to be like Jews and worship the true God. Paul and Barnabas encouraged them to continue trusting in God's grace.

On the next Sabbath day, almost all the people in the city came together to hear the word of the Lord. When the Jews there saw all these people, they became very jealous. Shouting insults, they argued against everything Paul said **10**. But Paul and Barnabas spoke very boldly. They said, "We had to tell God's message to you Jews first, but you refuse to listen. You have made it clear that you are not worthy of having eternal life. So we will now go to those who are not Jews. This is what the Lord told us to do:



‘I have made you a light for the other nations, to show people all over the world the way to be saved.’ ”

When the non-Jewish people heard Paul say this, they were happy. They gave honour to the message of the Lord, and many of them believed it. These were the ones chosen to have eternal life.

And so the message of the Lord was being told throughout the whole country. But the Jews there caused some of the important religious women and the leaders of the city to be angry and turn against Paul and Barnabas and throw them out of town **11**. So Paul and Barnabas shook the dust off their feet. Then they went to the city of Iconium. But the Lord’s followers in Antioch were happy and filled with the Holy Spirit.



Paul and Barnabas in Iconium

Paul and Barnabas went to the city of Iconium. As they did in Antioch, they entered the Jewish synagogue. They spoke to the people there. They spoke so well that many Jews and Greeks believed what they said. But some of the Jews did not believe. They said things that caused the non-Jewish people to be angry and turn against the believers **12**.

So Paul and Barnabas stayed in Iconium a long time, and they spoke bravely for the Lord. They told the people about God’s grace. The Lord proved that what they said was true by causing miraculous signs and wonders to be done through them. But some of the people in the city agreed with the Jews who did not believe Paul and Barnabas. Others followed the apostles. So the city was divided.

Some of the Jews there, as well as their leaders and some of the non-Jewish people, were determined to hurt Paul and Barnabas. They wanted to stone them to death. When Paul and Barnabas learned about this, they left the city. They went to Lystra and Derbe, cities in Lycaonia, and to the surrounding areas. They told the Good News there too.



Paul in Lystra and then Derbe

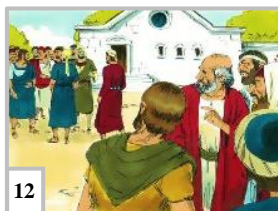
In Lystra there was a man who had something wrong with his feet. He had been born crippled and had never walked **13**. He was sitting and listening to Paul speak. Paul looked straight at him and saw that the man believed God could heal him. So Paul shouted, “Stand up on your feet!” **14**. The man jumped up and began walking around.

When the people saw what Paul did, they shouted in their own Lycaonian language. They said, “The gods have come down to

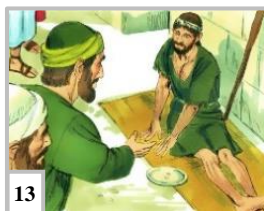
us in the form of humans!” The people began to call Barnabas “Zeus”, and they called Paul “Hermes”, because he was the main speaker. The temple of Zeus was near the city. The priest of this temple brought some bulls and flowers to the city gates. The priest and the people wanted to offer a sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas **15**.



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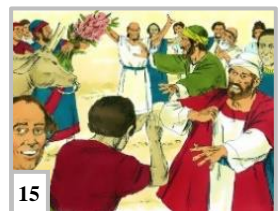
12



13



14



15

But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, understood what the people were doing, they tore their own clothes. Then they ran in among the people and shouted to them: “Men, why are you doing this? We are not gods. We are human just like you **16**. We came to tell you the Good News. We are telling you to turn away from these worthless things. Turn to the true living God, the one who made the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them.

Why Did Paul Adapt to the Culture of the Places he Visited?

When evangelizing non-believers in Lystra, Paul started with: ‘the One who made the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them’ Acts 14:15, *ERV*. To the non-believing philosophers in Athens Paul started with their altar to the ‘unknown god’ and then quoted their poets Acts 17:23, 28. When evangelizing the Berean Jews, Paul started from the ‘scriptures’ Acts 17:10-11. When evangelizing the Antioch Jews Paul first talked about subjects they were familiar with, such as the exodus from Egypt, Samuel and David Acts 13:14-22. Paul wrote: ‘I have adapted to the culture of every place I’ve gone so that I could more easily win people to Christ’ 1 Corinthians 9:22, *TPT*. Lesson: ‘When you share the Good News, begin where your audience is’.

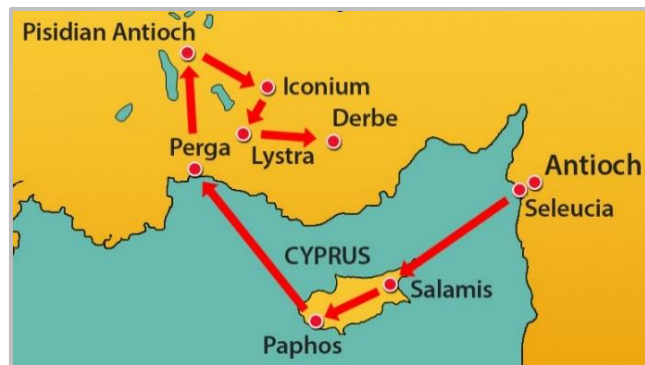
Based on a *Life Application Study Bible* footnote, Acts 13:23-31.

In the past God let all the nations do what they wanted. But God was always there doing the good things that prove he is real. He gives you rain from heaven and good harvests at the right times. He gives you plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.”

Even after saying all this, Paul and Barnabas still could hardly stop the people from offering sacrifices to them.

Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and persuaded the people to turn against Paul. So they threw stones at him 17 and dragged him out of the town. They thought they had killed him. But when the followers of Jesus gathered around him, he got up 18 and went back into the town. The

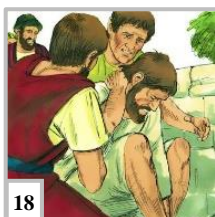
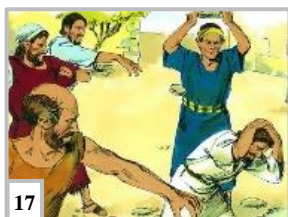
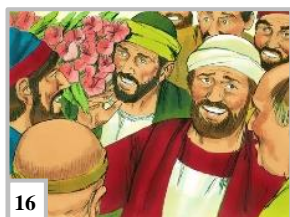
next day he and Barnabas left and went to the city of Derbe.



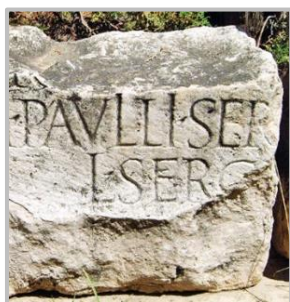
stopped eating for a period of time to pray for them. These elders were men who had put their trust in the Lord Jesus, so Paul and Barnabas put them in his care.

Paul and Barnabas went through the country of Pisidia. Then they came to the country of Pamphylia. They told people the message of God in the city of Perga, and then they went down to the city of Attalia. And from there they sailed away to Antioch in Syria 19. This is the city where the believers had put them into God’s care and sent them to do this work. Now they had finished it.

When Paul and Barnabas arrived, they gathered the church together. They told them everything God had used them to do 20. They said, “God opened a door for the non-Jewish people to believe!” And they stayed there a long time with the Lord’s followers.’



Sergius Paulus



The stone inscription (left) refers to Sergius Paulus. There have been several Sergius Paulus inscriptions discovered throughout the ancient Roman empire as his family seems to have been large and influential. In 1877, an inscription was discovered at Soli, not far from Paphos, that dates to about AD 54 and references: ‘the proconsul Paulus’. The illustrated stone inscription referring to Sergius Paulus was found near Pisidian Antioch, the site of his family estate.

The coin which was found in Cyprus, was minted during the reign of Roman Emperor Claudius, who was in power when Paul and Barnabas visited Cyprus. One side of the coin shows Claudius’ head and his title (in Latin), and the other side uses the Greek word for ‘proconsul’ to describe the governor of that island. Such archaeological discoveries help to verify the Bible, in this case the accuracy of Luke’s account in Acts 11:28 and Acts 13:7, 12.

Claudius Proconsul



Paphos

Paphos is one of the towns that Paul, Barnabas and John Mark visited on their first missionary journey. It is mentioned just twice in the Bible. It is where Paul met Bar-Jesus (also called Elymas), a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet who was with Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus Acts 13:6-7. The second reference is to Paphos harbour where Paul and his party sailed from on their way to Perga Acts 13:13. *Paphos Archaeological Park* (above) is on the *UNESCO World Heritage* list. Among the most significant remains so far discovered there are four large and elaborate Roman villas all with superb preserved mosaic floors.



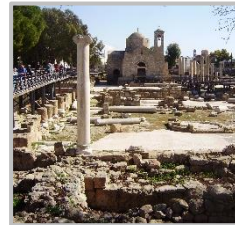
Wild Flower
growing in Paphos



Ancient Paphos Harbour,
but with modern boats



Jean Sole in Paphos
Roman Amphitheatre



Some of the remains
of ancient Paphos



A Paphos
Swallowtail Butterfly

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See if you can memorise some, or all, of the following:

‘Brothers, understand what we are telling you. You can have forgiveness of your sins through this Jesus.

The Law of Moses could not free you from your sins.

But you can be made right with God if you believe in Jesus.’

Acts 13:38-39, ERV

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Word Search

ANTIOCH	BARNABAS
SALAMIS	LYSTRA
SELEUCIA	DERBE
CYPRUS	ATTALIA
SAUL	DAVID
JOHN	SYRIA
MARK	FIRST
PAPHOS	MISSIONARY
SERGIUS	JOURNEY
PAULUS	TARSUS
PAUL	PAMPHYLIA
ELYMAS	PISIDIA
PERGA	HERMES
ICONIUM	ZEUS

M	I	S	S	I	O	A	R	Y	S	E	R	G	I	U
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Pictures are courtesy of and grateful thanks to: Paphos Archaeological Park: *Wikipedia*. Satellite picture of north-east Mediterranean: *NASA*. Sergius Paulus stone: *HolyLandPhotos.org*. Coin: *Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation Collection, jw.org*. All Bible paintings and maps: *Sweet Publishing* and especially Jim Pagett (the artist), *freebibleimages.org*. Pictures not credited are believed to be all in the Public Domain.

Bible abbreviations: *ERV*: Easy-to-Read Version. *NKJV*: New King James Version. *TPT*: The Passion Translation.

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