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Disciplmaking 1 Abiding in His Word

THE NEW TESTAMENT

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8

At the Ascension (Acts 1) Jesus told His disciples that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them and that they would be witnesses, starting where they were in Jerusalem ... then into the surrounding areas of Judea and Samaria ... and then to the remotest part of the earth. They did receive power at Pentecost (Acts 2) and they became witnesses. The rest of the book of Acts recorded the expansion of their ministry into Jerusalem, into Judea and Samaria, and into the Gentile world and eventually Rome.

Peter and the apostles began in Jerusalem. The church grew by large numbers. Intense persecution, beginning at the stoning of Stephen, drove the early church into Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus and Peter's vision opened the door for expansion to the Gentiles ... into the remotest part of the earth. The apostle James was executed.

The *first missionary journey* took Paul and Barnabas from Antioch through Southeast Asia Minor. After this trip, they and Peter attended the Jerusalem Council that concluded that Gentile new believers did not have to be circumcised to be saved. The *second missionary journey* took Paul and Silas from Antioch into Macedonia and Greece accompanied by Luke and Timothy. Because of a disagreement with Paul, Barnabas and John Mark went on their own mission trip to Cyprus. The *third missionary journey* took Paul and his companions from Antioch through western Asia Minor. At the end of that trip, they returned to Jerusalem. Paul was arrested and held in Caesarea. That gave him a chance to give the Gospel to Governors Felix and Festus ... and to King Agrippa. Appealing his case to Caesar, Paul set sail as a prisoner to Rome on his *fourth missionary journey*. He was shipwrecked along the way ... giving him a chance to minister on the Island of Malta.

During his first Roman imprisonment, Paul ministered to many people while under house arrest for two years. He was released and revisited the churches. Paul was arrested a second time and held in a Roman prison. Then he was executed.

After Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, the apostle John moved to Ephesus and then was exiled to Patmos where he wrote Revelation.

THE 27 BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ... 5 – 9 – 4 – 9

The New Testament books are arranged in an easily understood order. There are five books of history (the Gospels and Acts) ... nine letters from Paul to groups four letters from Paul to individuals ... and finally nine books by other writers.

5 Books of history

The first four New Testament books deal with the life of Jesus Christ. Then Luke's account is continued in the book of Acts. This fifth book of history records what Jesus continued to do through his followers after the Ascension.

9 Letters from Paul to groups

Paul wrote nine letters to new churches to encourage, teach, and correct them. During his missionary trips, he wrote Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Romans, and 1 and 2 Corinthians. After these trips, during his first Roman imprisonment, he wrote Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians. These nine books are titled according to the recipients of the letters.

4 Letters from Paul to individuals

Paul also wrote four letters to individuals. During his first imprisonment in Rome, he wrote to Philemon, a brother in the Colossian church. After Paul's release he wrote to two church leaders . . . Timothy in Ephesus and then Titus in Crete. Then during his final Roman imprisonment, just before his death, Paul wrote his last letter . . . to Timothy. These four books are titled according to the recipients of the letters.

9 Books by other writers

James, the half-brother of Jesus, and the author of Hebrews each wrote a letter to Jewish believers. The seven remaining books include two by the apostle Peter, three by the apostle John, one by Jesus' half-brother Jude, and the apostle John's prophetic Revelation of Jesus Christ.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

5 history books	1	Matthew
	2	Mark
	3	Luke
	4	John
	5	Acts
9 Paul's letters to groups	1	Romans
	2	1 Corinthians
	3	2 Corinthians
	4	Galatians
	5	Ephesians
	6	Philippians
	7	Colossians
	8	1 Thessalonians
	9	2 Thessalonians
4 Paul's letters to individuals	1	1 Timothy
	2	2 Timothy
	3	Titus
	4	Philemon
9 books by others	1	Hebrews
	2	James
	3	1 Peter
	4	2 Peter
	5	1 John
	6	2 John
	7	3 John
	8	Jude
	9	Revelation

27 books total

ACTS - AN OUTLINE OF NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY

The author. Luke was a Gentile, a Greek, a doctor, an historian of the early church, and a missionary. He was Paul's companion from at least as early as the second missionary journey ... and as late as Paul's second Roman imprisonment. Luke wrote more of the New Testament than anyone else did (if we assume that Paul did not write Hebrews).

The book of Acts is a continuation of Luke's Gospel ... and a record of the apostles' obedience to the Great Commission. After Christ's Ascension in Acts 1 and the Holy Spirit's arrival at Pentecost in Acts 2, the apostles went into action. Acts 2-7 records their ministry in Jerusalem. Many believed in Jesus

Persecution beginning with the stoning of Stephen forced the early Christians out of Jerusalem into Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. Compare 1:8 to 8:1. The oppressor Saul was converted on the road to Damascus ... and the stage was set to take the Gospel to the remotest part of the earth. Peter had a vision that opened the apostles' hearts towards taking the Gospel to the Gentiles. Saul became the great apostle Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. In addition, the apostle James was killed.

Paul's *first missionary journey* took him and Barnabas through Southeast Asia Minor. A dispute about the Gentile converts arose. Paul and Barnabas attended a council with Peter in Jerusalem to resolve the problem. The decision was made that new Gentile believers did not have to be circumcised to be saved ... heresy was avoided. Paul and Silas left Antioch for the *second missionary journey* ... into Macedonia and Greece. Luke and Timothy were with them. Barnabas and John Mark split off from them at the beginning of that trip to take the Gospel to Cyprus. Paul's *third missionary journey* took him and his companions through western Asia Minor. Then they went back to Jerusalem.

Paul was arrested in Jerusalem ... and then confined at Caesarea. There he told the Gospel to governors Felix and Festus and to King Agrippa. Paul exercised his right as a Roman citizen to appeal his case to Caesar. That set his course for Rome ... his *fourth missionary journey*. On his way to Rome he was shipwrecked on the Island of Malta, giving him an opportunity to minister there. Finally in Rome, he was under house arrest in his own rented quarters for two years. Large numbers of people came to him, and he told them of the Kingdom of God and about Jesus. And some believed.

Beyond the book of Acts. Paul was released and ministered for a few years before he was put in a Roman prison. He apparently was executed in the mid- to late-60's AD. The Apostle John's ministry continued beyond the other apostles. When Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, John moved on to Ephesus where he wrote 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John. After he was exiled to the Island of Patmos, he wrote Revelation.

ACTS - THE HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all of Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8

Acts 1 The Ascension ... Jesus went up to Heaven.

Acts 2 Pentecost ... the Holy Spirit came down.
"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you"

Acts 3-6 The church went out into Jerusalem.
"... and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem"

Acts 7 Stephen gave his message and was martyred.

Acts 8 The church went out into Judea and Samaria.
"... and in all of Judea and Samaria"

Acts 9-12 Paul was converted, Peter had a vision, James was killed.

Acts 13-14 Paul's first missionary journey ... to SE Asia Minor.

Acts 15 The Jerusalem circumcision council kept the Gospel pure.

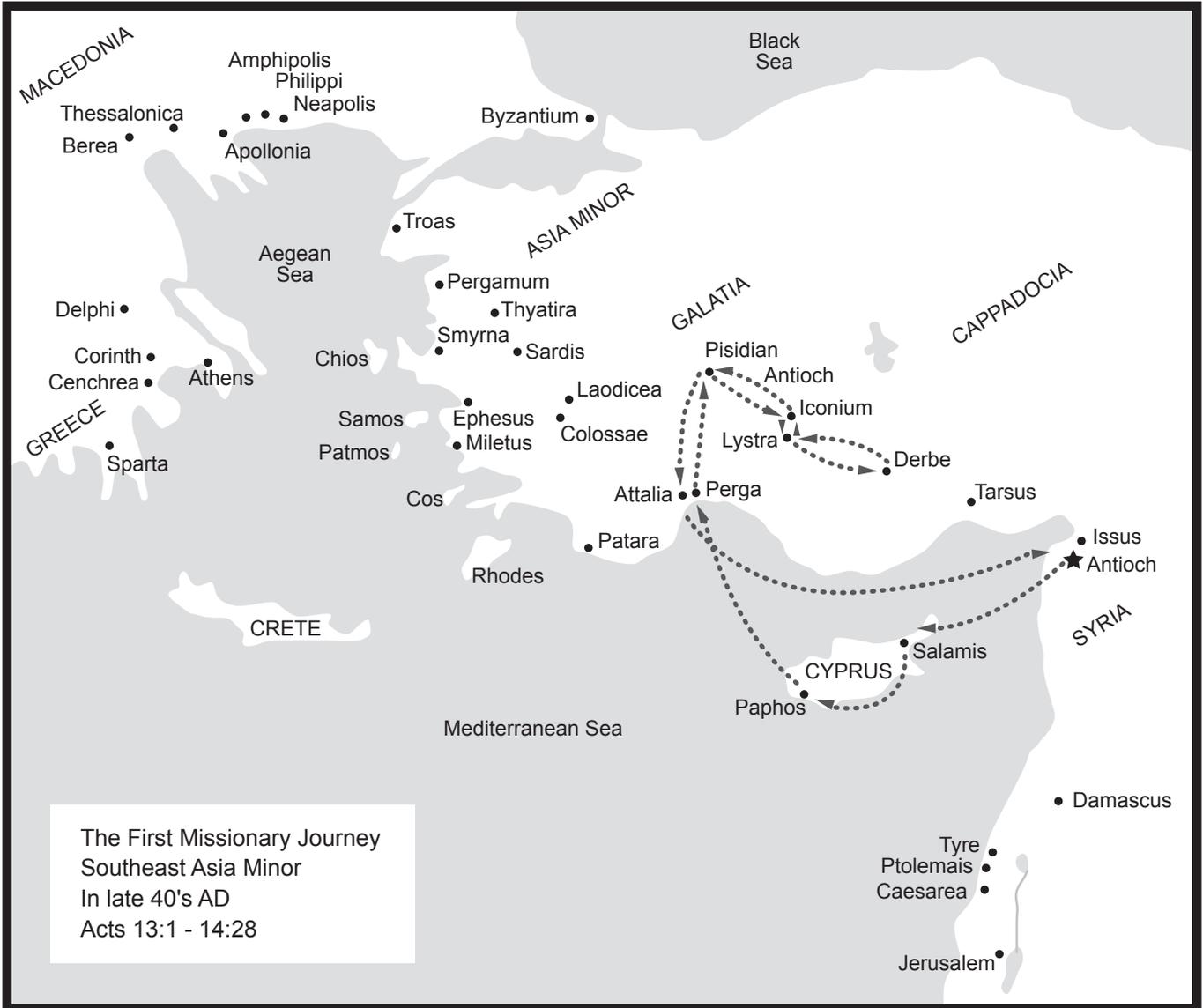
Acts 15:36 Paul's second missionary trip ... to Macedonia and Greece.

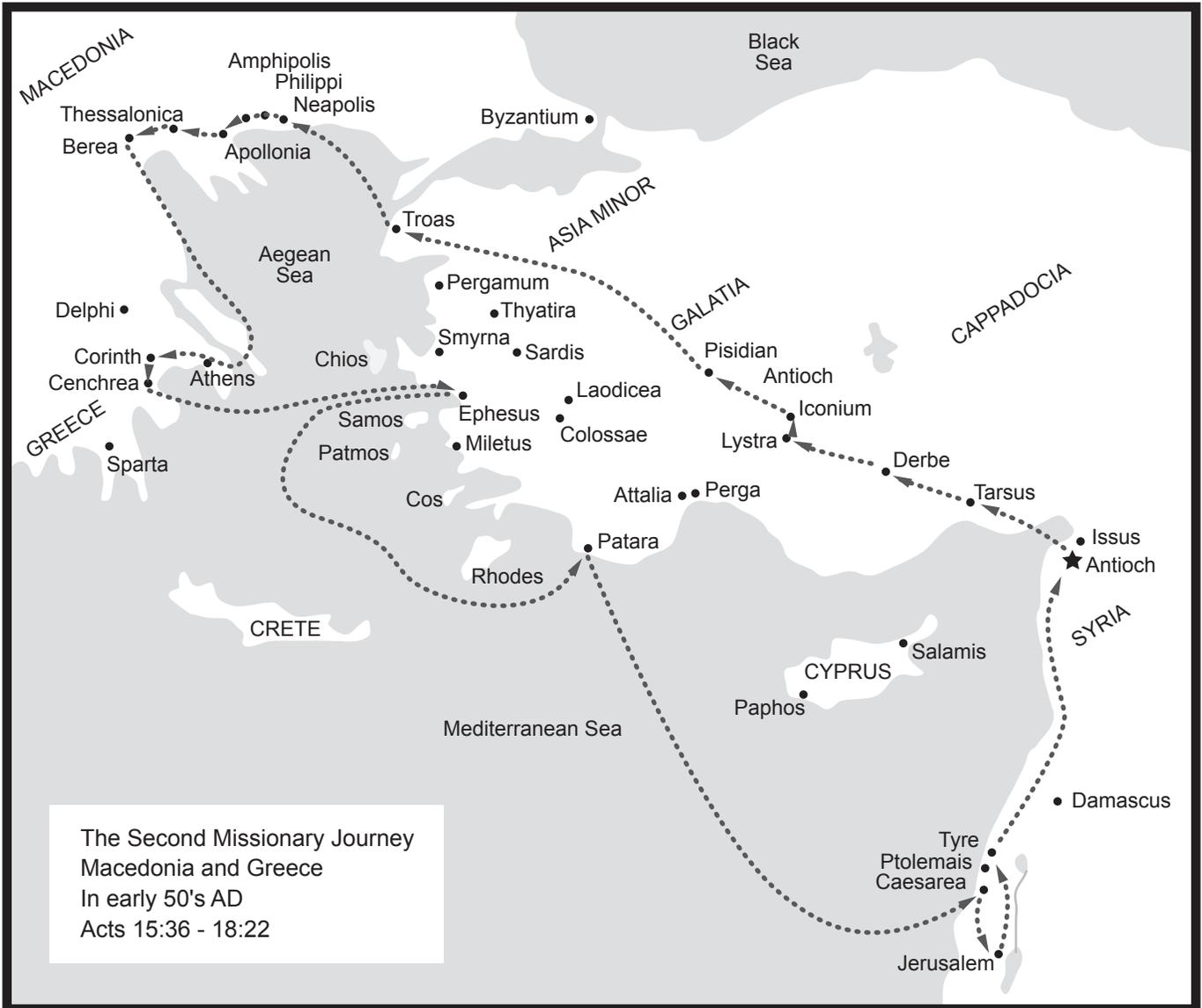
Acts 18:23 Paul's third missionary journey ... to western Asia Minor.

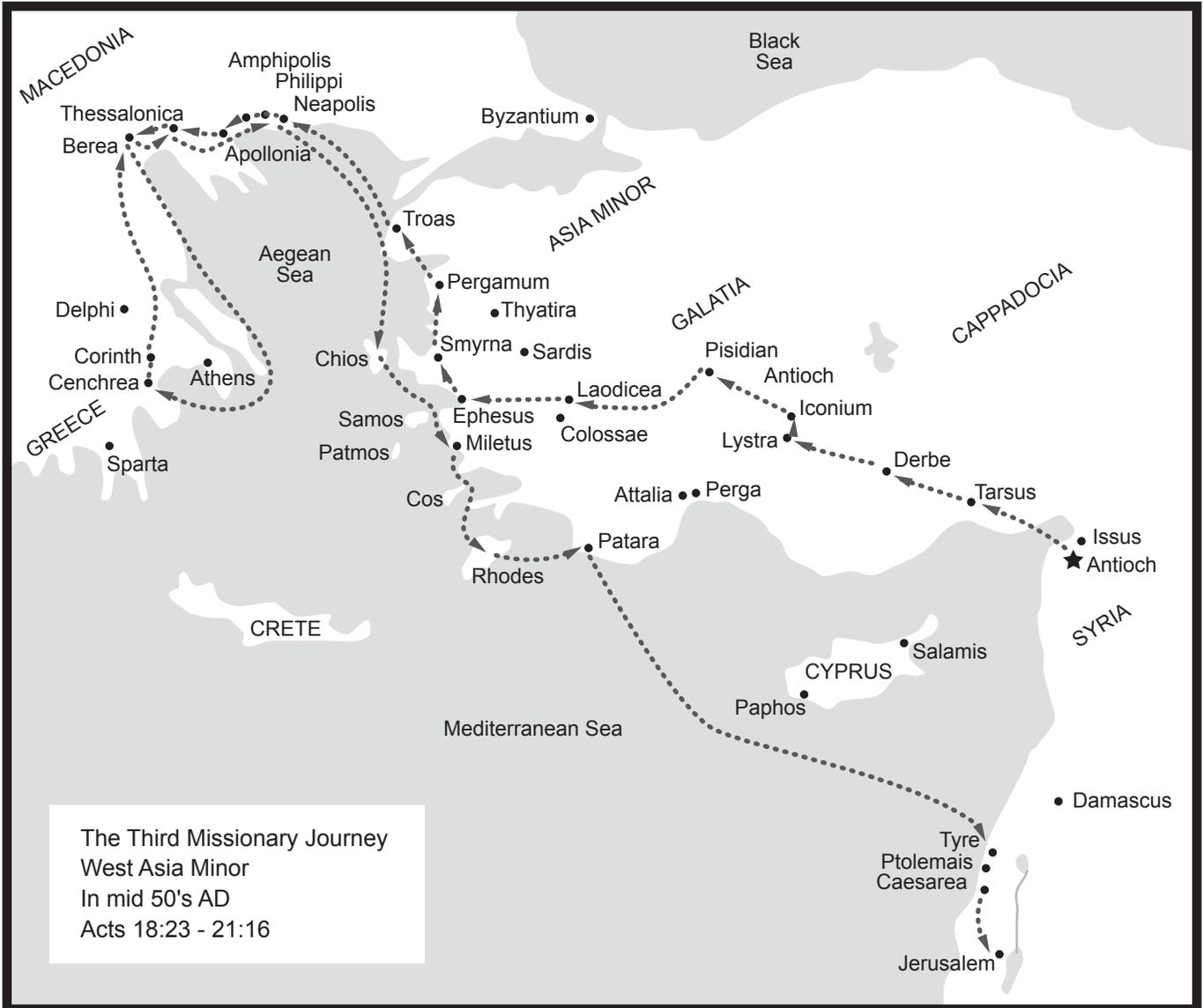
Acts 21:17 Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and confined in Caesarea.

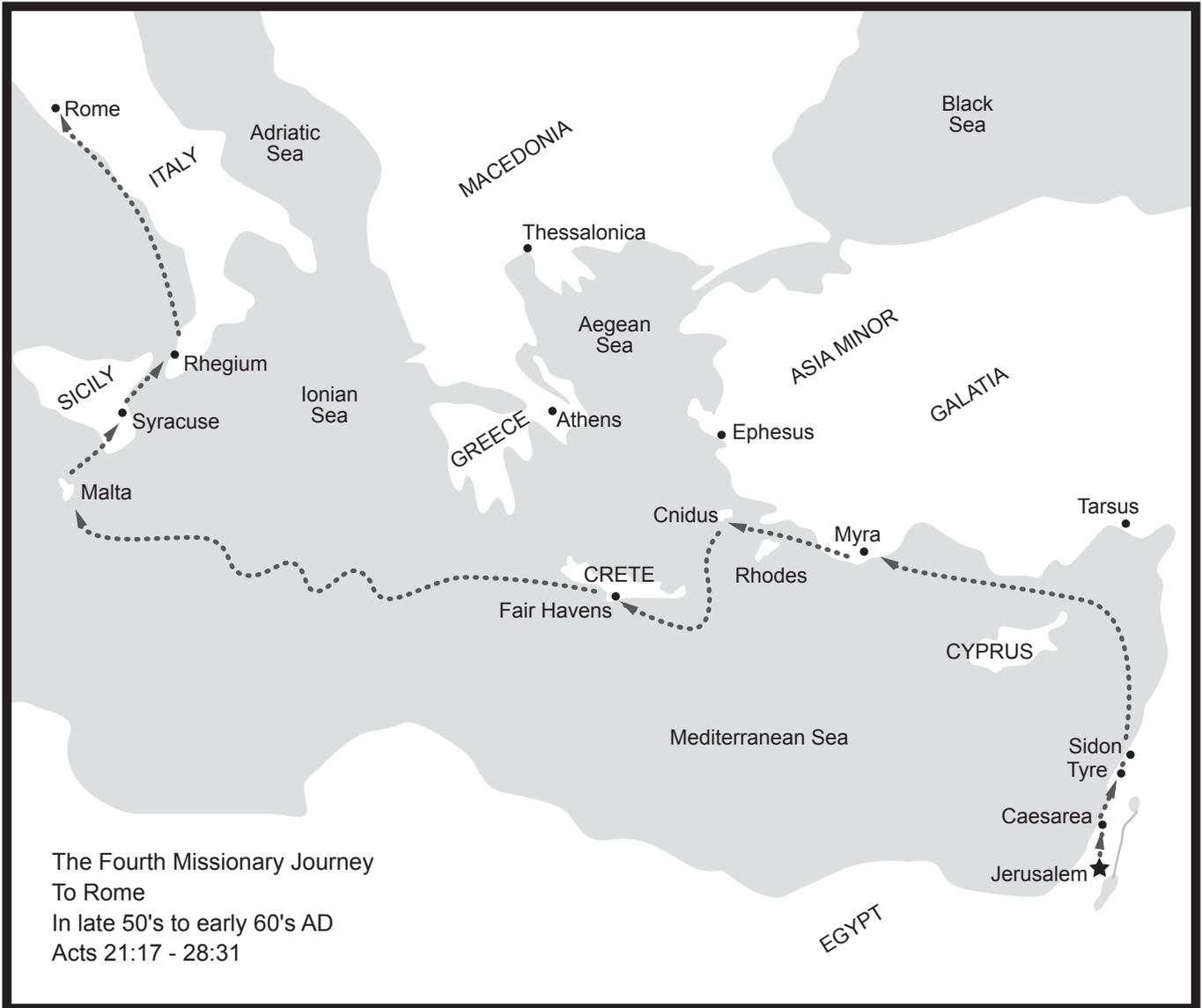
Acts 27-28 Paul's fourth missionary journey ... to Malta and Rome

"... and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8









PAUL'S LETTERS TO GROUPS

The author Saul of Tarsus was a highly educated Jew of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a Pharisee. He was a Roman citizen by birth. This persecutor of the early church was converted after his experience on the road to Damascus. Also known as Paul, from Acts 13:9 on, he became a missionary to the Gentiles and author of 13 books of the New Testament.

Romans - Paul wrote this letter *"to all who are beloved of God in Rome"*. He wrote to them before he had visited their great city. This letter was written from Corinth, near the end of the third missionary journey in the mid-50's AD. The book of Romans is the most doctrinal and formal of Paul's letters. He wrote detailed foundational truth covering the subjects of sin (chapters 1-3) ... salvation (chapters 3-5) ... sanctification (chapters 6-8) ... sovereignty (chapters 9-11) ... and service (chapters 12-16).

1 Corinthians - This letter is written to *"the church of God at Corinth"*. It was a church founded on Paul's second missionary journey. The church was struggling in the midst of that very immoral port city. Paul wrote this letter to them from Ephesus during the third missionary journey in the mid-50's AD. The worldliness of Corinth had infiltrated their church. Paul wrote about factions, sexual immorality, lawsuits, marriage, food, the Lord's Supper, and the use of spiritual gifts. Chapter 15 provides comprehensive teaching on the importance of the resurrection.

2 Corinthians - Apparently the believers in Corinth had not responded favorably to Paul's first letter. He made a trip to see them. He wrote another strong corrective letter to them. That letter is not included in the Bible. Following the repentance of the majority, Paul wrote another letter, 2 Corinthians, during his third missionary journey in the mid-50's AD from somewhere in Macedonia. Paul wrote of his joy that they had repented ... defended his character and his ministry ... taught on giving ... and defended his authority as an apostle.

Galatians - Paul wrote this letter to *"the churches of Galatia"*. He had visited them on either his first or second missionary journey. However, the date and location of the writing of this letter are unclear. The believers in Galatia had been misled to mix the law (works) into salvation. Paul strongly presented salvation by faith alone. He warned against the dangers of legalism. He also warned against license ... as he explained Christian liberty.

PAUL'S LETTERS TO GROUPS .(continued)

Ephesians - This letter was sent to the *"saints who are at Ephesus"*. Paul had been there on both his first and third missionary journeys. He wrote this letter to them from his first Roman imprisonment in the early 60's AD. Paul described the believers' spiritual wealth ... chosen, sealed, saved by grace, and united in one Body of believers. Then he exhorted them to walk worthy of the heavenly calling and position given to them in the Body. He described how to follow God in life, against sin, in the Spirit, at home, at work, and in the warfare.

Philippians - Paul wrote to *"all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi"*. He had been to Philippi during his second missionary journey. He wrote to them from his second Roman imprisonment in the mid-60's AD. Paul expressed his thankfulness for their consistent testimony ... and for their support of his ministry. He encouraged them to be at peace ... to be humble like Christ ... to be on guard ... and to rejoice.

Colossians - Paul wrote to *"the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae"*. Epaphras, a convert during Paul's ministry in Ephesus, brought Christianity to Colossae. Philemon was part of their church. This letter was written during Paul's first Roman imprisonment in the early 60's AD. He stressed the deity and supremacy of Christ to correct the hybridizing effect of false teaching ... which had brought the bad influences of legalism, philosophy, and mysticism into the church. Paul wrote that Christ is supreme (chapters 1-2), and therefore believers should seek the things above and live accordingly (chapters 3-4).

1 Thessalonians - Paul wrote to *"the church of the Thessalonians"*, founded during his second missionary journey. He had been forced to leave them, Acts 17:1-10. He wrote from Corinth in the early 50's AD. Paul's personal comments about their ministry (and about his own ministry) gave examples of a walk worthy of the God who calls each believer. He exhorted them to withstand sexual temptation ... to lead quiet lives ... to work ... to be at peace about the return of Christ ... and to fulfill their duties toward spiritual leaders, in conduct, and in worship.

2 Thessalonians - Paul wrote this second letter to *"the church of the Thessalonians"* shortly after his first letter ... from Corinth in the early 50's AD. He encouraged them in growth and in endurance under persecution. Some had misunderstood his teaching on the return of Christ and had ceased their work, thinking the Day of the Lord had come. Paul wrote about the coming events of the last days. He commanded them to work if they expected to eat ... working and waiting as they lived holy lives.

PAUL'S LETTERS TO INDIVIDUALS

Paul and people: Paul's letters followed a basic pattern. First, he presented his personal concerns and greetings. Then he taught spiritual truth. Then he taught application of that truth. He concluded with personal comments. Paul's commitment to God's truth was equaled by his concern for people. He would give the truth ... then teach them to live the truth. Even in Romans, his most formal and doctrinal letter, he devoted an entire chapter (16) to personal greetings and concern. Paul was committed to the three things in life that will last forever . . . God, God's Word, and people. The four letters described in this section are particularly committed to his concern for four men Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Philemon's runaway slave Onesimus.

1 Timothy - Paul wrote to Timothy as his "*true child in the faith*". Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother and was associated with Paul from the second missionary journey. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to oversee the ministry there. This letter was written in the early 60's AD after Paul's first Roman imprisonment. Paul instructed and encouraged Timothy to be a good leader. Many subjects are covered . . . prayer, women in the church, leaders, dangers and defenses, the older men and women, widows, elders, masters and slaves, false teachers, and money. Paul exhorted Timothy to "*fight the good fight of faith*".

2 Timothy - Paul wrote this final letter in the mid to late 60's AD from his second imprisonment in Rome. He wrote it shortly before his death. This is an extremely personal letter from Paul to his "*beloved son*" Timothy. Paul encouraged Timothy to be strong . . . to not to be ashamed . . . to minister faithfully . . . to stand true in the coming apostasy. . . to do the work of an evangelist . . . and to fulfill his ministry.

TITUS - Paul wrote to Titus, his "*true child in a common faith*", in the mid-60's AD after Paul's first Roman imprisonment. He left Titus in Crete to "*set in order what remains*" and to "*appoint elders in every city*". Paul encouraged Titus to carry out that task. Paul taught Titus about elders ... about rebellious, empty talking, deceiving men ... and about older men, older women, younger men, younger women, and slaves. He wrote about subjection to governments, consideration for all men, false teachers, and salvation producing a people zealous for good works.

PHILEMON - Paul wrote this letter in the early 60's AD during his first Roman imprisonment. It is Paul's personal plea to his friend Philemon in Colossae. The slave Onesimus had run away from his master Philemon. Onesimus came to faith in Christ through Paul's ministry while Paul was in prison in Rome. Paul sent the new believer back to his master with this personal plea for forgiveness of the slave who had become a beloved brother. Paul offered to repay anything that Onesimus owed.

KEY EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF PAUL

	Event	Age	Acts
1	At Stephen's stoning	Mid 30's	7-8
2	Persecuted the early church		8
3	Blinded on road to Damascus		9
4	Converted and healed		9
5	Brought to apostles in Jerusalem		9
6	Life threatened – sent to Tarsus		9
	A gap ... Galatians 1:17-2:1		
7	Retrieved by Barnabas	Early 40's	11
8	Carried money to Jerusalem	Mid 40's	11
9	Commissioned in Antioch		12-13
10	1st Missionary Journey – to Southeast Asia Minor	Late 40's	13-14
11	Jerusalem circumcision council		15
12	2nd Missionary Journey – to Macedonia and Greece	Early 50's	15-18
13	3rd Missionary Journey – to West Asia Minor	Mid 50's	18-21
14	Arrested in Jerusalem	Late 50's	21-23
15	Confined in Caesarea ... Gospel to Felix, Festus, and Agrippa		23-26
16	Sailed to Rome, Malta shipwreck	About 60	27-28
17	Under house arrest in Rome	Early 60's	28
18	Released to minister	Mid 60's	Beyond Acts
19	In Roman prison	Late 60's	Beyond Acts
20	Executed by Nero	~ 70	Beyond Acts

9 BOOKS BY OTHER WRITERS

The Authors: Five men authored the nine books that complete the 27 books of the New Testament. The author of Hebrews is unknown to us ... but was known to the original readers. It was probably not Paul because the content is more Jewish ... uses a definitively different vocabulary ... and is structurally different from Paul's writings. The author was an acquaintance of Timothy. Possibly, it was Luke, Barnabas, Silas, or someone else. James (not the apostle) and Jude were half-brothers of Jesus ... each wrote one book. Peter, a Galilean fisherman turned disciple, authored two books. John, a Galilean fisherman and "*the disciple whom Jesus loved*", wrote three letters and Revelation.

Hebrews - This book was written particularly to Jewish believers probably in the mid- to late-60's AD. The author, location of writing, and the location of the original readers are unknown to us today. The theme of the book is that the superior Christ gives us a superior life in Christ. Jesus is presented as better than ... better than the prophets ... better than the angels ... better than Moses ... better than Joshua ... and better than the Levitical priests. This eternal superior priest made a superior sacrifice. Moreover, He gave us an eternal, superior life with Him.

James - This book was addressed to Jewish readers ... to "*the twelve tribes who are scattered abroad.*" It is one of the earliest New Testament books, written in the late-40's AD. James wrote very practical instruction in everyday Christian living. He covered trials and temptations ... being a doer of the Word ... not showing personal favoritism ... and turning faith into works. He also gave instruction on the use of the tongue ... using wisdom from above ... and not being worldly. James concluded his letter, pointing out the power of prayer.

1 Peter and 2 Peter - These two letters, written in the mid-60's AD, deal with the difficulties and dangers facing Christians. Opposition from outside the Body is explained in 1 Peter. And 2 Peter covers opposition from inside the Body. In his first letter, Peter pointed out that salvation gives new hope in the face of outside persecution. He exhorted, "*Gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" He continued with instruction in holiness, fear of God, love for one another, growth, submission, suffering, and service. In his second letter, Peter attacked the problem of internal opposition. He stressed the need for continued growth rooted in Jesus Christ and in the Word of God. He presented a strong case against false teachers ... reminding the readers to expect them in the last days before the return of Jesus Christ. Peter exhorted them to look for His promised return and to be diligent to be found holy at His return.

9 BOOKS BY OTHER WRITERS (continued)

1 John - This book explains that believers can know that they have eternal life. John wrote that believers should live in light rather than darkness ... in forgiveness and obedience rather than sin ... in love rather than hate ... and in assurance rather than fear. This and John's other two letters were written around 90 AD ... probably from Ephesus.

2 John - This is a short note to the "*chosen lady and her children*," exhorting them to love one another ... obey His commandments ... and be on guard against false teachers, showing them no hospitality.

3 John - This is a note to John's dear friend Gaius. John commented on the good report that he had received stating that Gaius had been walking in the truth and that he had been kind to the visiting teachers. John also wrote a strong criticism of Diotrephes ... for his desire to be first.

Jude - This book was written sometime between the mid-60's and late-70's AD. This very short letter was a strong appeal to "*contend earnestly for the faith*" because of the dangers from false teachers. Jude wrote that they "*have crept in unnoticed*" ... and are "*hidden reefs*", grumblers, lustful, arrogant, and flatterers for the sake of gain. Such false teachers should be expected in the last days. Jude exhorted the believers to walk obediently.

Revelation - John's final book is the concluding book of the New Testament. He wrote it during his exile on the Island of Patmos in the 90's AD. The probable outline of the book is, "*the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall take place after these things.*" Revelation 1:19. Chapter 1 contains, "*The things which you have seen*". Then, "*The things which are*" are the letters to the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3. Then chapters 4-22 record "*The things which shall take place after these things.*" In these chapters are described. John wrote about the throne and the book in heaven ... and the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls of judgment. The latter chapters describe the return of Christ, the millennium, the white throne judgement, and the New Heaven and the New Earth. In the last verses of Revelation are the words of Jesus, "*Yes, I am coming quickly.*" John added his "*Amen*" and his prayer, "*Come, Lord Jesus.*"

THE NEW TESTAMENT

