

## **ACTS 15:36-16:11 SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY BEGINS: OVERLAND THROUGH SOUTH GALATIA TO TROAS**

The second missionary journey of the Apostle Paul is about to begin! From Antioch in Syria, he and his team will walk overland to Tarsus, then 130 miles on to Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium where he had previously founded churches. They move on through southern Galatia, and, avoiding the province of Asia, on to the seaport of Troas from whence they sail to Macedonia in Greece. Once there, he embarks on foot to the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea in northern Greece, then by boat to Athens and overland to Corinth in southern Greece. The last leg of this journey took them to Ephesus by sea, then across the Mediterranean to Caesarea (Palestine), on to Jerusalem and finally back to Antioch in Syria. The entire journey took approximately three years, ca. 50-52 AD. Luke covers it in Acts 15:36-18:22.

### **15:36-38 Trouble Getting Started: Paul and Barnabas Split**

v. 36 **Their Purpose:** to visit and strengthen churches established on the first journey (south Galatia). The Holy Spirit will enlarge this purpose when they get to Troas on the West Coast. See also 16:4, they deliver the decree of the Council.

v. 37, 38 **Their Initial Problem:** should we take \_\_\_\_\_?

Barnabas: "Yes; I have determined\* to take him."

\*boulomai, "to will" in the imperfect middle (deponent) indicative

Paul: "No; I insist (imperfect active indicative) we do not take this one."

Why? "Because he left us in Pamphylia and did not go with us to the work (*to ergon*, the task).

v. 39, 40 **Their Solution: They Separate**

NOTE: The contention was very sharp, very serious, between these two good Christian leaders, so that they separate. Now we have two missionary teams.

- Barnabas and Mark sail to Cyprus, Barnabas' homeland. Barnabas will be mentioned afterward several times in Paul's epistles. Tradition says he was martyred in Egypt. Mark also is mentioned by Paul and even summoned near Paul's death (II Timothy 4:11). Mark, of course, writes the gospel that bears his name.

- Paul and Silas\* depart north by northwest into Asia Minor.

\*"Silas" (Semitic)= "Silvanus" (Latin) as in II Cor. 1:19; I Thess. 1:2; II Thess. 1:1; and possibly I Pet. 5:12. First mentioned as a prominent prophet in Jerusalem (15:32); he was a Roman citizen (16:37-39). His name in the letter from the Council makes him a fitting companion for this mission.

### **15:41-16:5 Confirming Churches Already Established**

v. 41 **Syria and Cilicia (Provinces)**

*"...through Syria and Cilicia confirming\* the churches."*

WHAT CHURCHES? SOURCE? WHO? WHEN? Apparently, the Lord had motivated believers to intense evangelism in these areas. Assemblies were started; now Paul follows-up.

\*confirming = "strengthening," "firming-up." HOW?

(OVER)

**v. 1 (Ch. 16) Derbe and Lystra (Towns)**

No doubt Timothy, his Mother Lois, and his Grandmother Eunice got saved when Paul visited Derbe the first time (14:6-21; 2Tim 1:5). No mention is made of the salvation of his father, who was a Greek.

**v. 2** Timothy's reputation (spiritual giftedness?) had spread to the neighboring cities of Lystra and Iconium.

**v. 3** Desiring that Timothy join them on the journey, Paul has Timothy \_\_\_\_\_. Why? This is a good illustration of Paul "becoming all things to all men in order to save or win some" (I Cor. 9:19-23) AS LONG AS HE DID NOT VIOLATE DOCTRINE OR PRINCIPLE. Conversely: see Gal. 2:3-5 where he refused to circumcise Titus. Why?

**v. 4, 5 Cities = Lystra, Iconium, Antioch (Pisidia)**

*"...the churches kept being established\* in the faith;"*

*"...the churches kept increasing\* in number daily."*

\*Both verbs are imperfect tense, indicative mode; the first is passive voice, the second active voice. Paul's ministry of confirmation, reaffirmation of the faith (note the article), along with communication of the dogmas from the Council had its intended affect: the strengthening of the assemblies. That in turn produced personal evangelism so that the churches grew in number daily (compare 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30, 31 for similar transitional statements).

**16:6-11 God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) Leads Them to Southern Europe**

**v. 6 The Holy Spirit's Direction**

**"Do not go to the province of \_\_\_\_\_ at this time."**

Later Paul's disciples will evangelize all of Asia (19:9, 10), but not now. How did the Holy Spirit "forbid" ("prevent") them? Via a prophecy? Via circumstance? Via desire? We are not told.

**v. 7, 8 The Spirit of Jesus' (critical text) Direction**

**"Do not go to the province of \_\_\_\_\_;"** i.e., toward the Black Sea and southern Russia. They apparently had made several aborted attempts since the verb "assayed" (KJV) means "attempted" or "tried" and is an imperfect active indicative. So they continue north and west, skirting Asia and arrive at the Aegean seaport of \_\_\_\_\_.

**v. 9-11 God's Direction (v. 10, critical text)**

**"Go across the Aegean Sea into \_\_\_\_\_ in northern Greece."**

- **"the Lord" (v.10)** = "the God" in the critical text. Note the clear delineation of the tri-unity of God actively involved in leading Paul and his team on this special mission,
- God directs the geographic focus of the gospel to southern Europe through the famous \_\_\_\_\_ vision so AND SO ALTERS THE COURSE OF HISTORY FROM THAT MOMENT ON!
- **"vision"** = one of God's means of communication until the New Testament canon was complete. For visions in *Acts*, see 7:31; 9:10, 12; 10:3, 17, 19; 11:5; 12:9; 18:9; 26:19.
- **"we" (v.10)** = Luke joins Paul and his team here in Troas. He travels with them to Philippi where he stays when they move on (16:40); then he rejoins them about six years later (20:5) and remains with them throughout the rest of the narrative.
- **v. 11** Paul and his team (Silas, Timothy and Luke) arrive in Greece. Europe, and henceforth western civilization, will be altered forever!

AMAZING GRACE!