Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

BACK TO THE BOOK OF ACTS (BBA)

RLJ-1141   JOHN S. TORELL   JULY 6, 2008

PART 30: PAUL'S APOSTOLIC MINISTRY IS BORN

PAUL & BARNABAS GO TO CYPRUS

The first destination of Paul and Barnabas after they left Antioch to spread the Gospel was the island of Cyprus, a Roman province and the birthplace of Barnabas. **Acts 4:36**

Biblical historians have placed this trip to 44 A.D., which would be 11 years after the resurrection of Jesus.

Since Antioch was 16.5 miles inland from the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, they traveled to the seaport of Seleucia, which was located where the river Orontes flows into the Mediterranean Sea. From there they paid a fare to ride with a commercial ship to the seaport of Salamis, which was located on the northeast coast of Cyprus. This city had such a large population of Jews that there were multiple synagogues in the city. Luke does not record the result of the preaching in this city nor does he give any details what happened during their land travel from the east coast to the capitol city Paphos on the west coast. Paphos was known for its worship of Venus and a great temple had been built for this demon goddess.
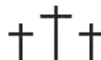
Luke doesn't say how the apostolic party traveled, but since the 148 mile long island has some mountain ranges, traveling must have been strenuous.

It is noteworthy to mention that Barnabas was a wealthy Jew with properties in Jerusalem and most likely this missionary trip was financed by him. **Acts 4:37; 13:4-5**

ENCOUNTERING WITCHCRAFT

My personal belief is that Barnabas was well known in Paphos, and when the deputy (governor) heard that Barnabas was in town, he called for him. Luke does not tell us what Sergius Paulus' nationality was but he must have been exposed to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Paulus had a Jewish sorcerer by the name of Bar-Jesus (Son of Jesus) as a political aid and he was not friendly toward Paul and Barnabas. **verses 6-8**

"Jesus" is the English word for the Hebrew name "Joshua," which in English means "Savior." "Bar" is the Hebrew word for "son." Many Jews were named Joshua over the centuries. In order for the apostolic church to make a distinction that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, they used the Hebrew title "Messiah," which in English is "Christ." To correctly identify the Son of God, He should be referred to as "Jesus Christ."

The Holy Spirit moved upon Paul and caused the sorcerer to receive a negative miracle through a spoken curse. **verses 9-11**

The result was that the governor accepted Christ and was saved. **verse 12**

ARE CHRISTIANS ALLOWED TO CURSE A PERSON?

We do know that Jesus got upset when a fig tree didn't have some sweet buds on it and cursed it. **Mark 11:12-14, 20-24**

The prophet Balaam told us that a man of God cannot curse a person or a nation unless God has first cursed that person or nation. **Numbers 23:5-8**

Balaam could not curse what God had blessed. **verses 16-20**

Nathan pronounced multiple curses upon David, his household and bloodline. **2 Samuel 12:9-14**

The prophet Elijah cursed the land with no rain. **1 Kings 17:1**

Elijah was told by God to curse King Ahab and his wife. **1 Kings 21:17-29**

The prophet Micaiah defied King Ahab and cursed him. **1 Kings 22:13-38**

Elijah's curse on Ahab and Jezebel was fulfilled. **2 Kings 9:30-37**

Elijah was allowed to curse the soldiers who threatened his life. **2 Kings 1:1-17**

You do not have the right to curse someone because they reject you. **Luke 9:51-56**

The prophet Jeremiah cursed Pashur. **Jeremiah 20:1-6**

MY PERSONAL BELIEF

I have come to the conclusion that if governments, individual rulers or persons of different stature in society are blocking the work of God, believers in Christ have the right to pray for the removal of such persons as God sees fit. The apostle Paul was initially an enemy of God and caused the deaths of many Christians. If someone would have cursed Paul and asked for his death, they would have been out of God's will. Therefore, if we encounter an evil person, we should pray and ask God if the person can be saved; but if they can't be saved, we can ask for their removal.

If people in the church of Jesus Christ are stumbling blocks or living openly in sin, such should be turned over to Satan for the destruction of the physical body, that their souls will be saved. **1 Corinthians 5:1-5**

A human being will either bless people or curse people every day. Words will bring blessings or curses. If you speak negatively to a person or about someone, you have cursed that person! **Matthew 12:36-37; James 3:1-10**

DO YOU HAVE AN EAR TO HEAR WITH?