

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

BACK TO THE BOOK OF ACTS (BBA)

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PART 42: ON THE ROAD WITH PAUL

For many years, the twentieth chapter of the Book of Acts did not interest me. It seemed like a diary that Luke kept, telling how they went from one obscure town to the next, and since I did not take time to look at a map, this was a chapter I just skipped over. However, as I read this chapter again in its entirety, the Holy Spirit showed me that He had moved upon Luke to write down the details so could learn something from it some 1,950 years later. Please see the map at the end of the outline so that you can follow along as we proceed thru the chapter.

PAUL AND HIS TEAM

There are a number of things that we should begin to look at but let's start with the Gospel team that consisted of seven men in addition to Paul and Luke.
Acts 20:4

Sop-a-ter was from the church in Berea. Nothing more is known about this man

Aris-tar-chus was from the church in Thessalonica. He stayed with Paul and eventually arrived in Rome. He was referred to as "fellow prisoner" by Paul. Written tradition states that he was martyred during the reign of Nero.

Se-cun-dus was also from the church in Thessalonica. Nothing more is known about this man.

Gaius was a disciple from the city of Derbe. Nothing more is known about this man.

Ti-mo-the-us (Timothy) had a Greek father and a Jewish mother. He traveled extensively with Paul and was used as an evangelist. Written tradition tells us that he eventually ended up as the Bishop of the church in Ephesus and that he later suffered martyrdom on order of the emperor of Rome.

Tych-i-cus was a disciple from Asia. We do not know what city he came from or what happened to him after the death of Paul.

Troph-i-mus was a native from the city of Ephesus. The last thing we know of Trophimus is that Paul had left him in the city of Miletus because he was very sick. Which brings up an interesting question: why didn't Paul pray for the healing of this disciple?

When Paul and his team left Ephesus, located in Asia to travel over to Greece, it was a trip of some 600 miles (900 km). The team used commercial ships to cross over from Asia to Macedonia. We don't know how they traveled on land, whether it was by foot or horse/donkey. However, there was a financial cost when the logistics of where to sleep and eat are also added. Thus, we can conclude that either churches or individuals financed the trip for Paul and his team. **Acts 20:1-3**



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LESSON TO LEARN: When we are in God's will and doing His work, God has said that He will be responsible for food, lodging and finances. **Matthew 6:25-34**

NORMAL LIFE AS AN APOSTLE

The Book of Acts records certain events in the life of the apostles and their disciples but regular daily routine is not recorded. There must have been many days when life consisted of traveling, eating, sleeping, washing clothing, mending shoes, etc. There must have been thousands of meetings where the Gospel was shared and an equal number of prayer meetings. Luke records some of these days. **Acts 20:5-6**

LESSON TO LEARN: Be faithful in your every day living. **1 Peter 2:11-20**

THE MIRACLE IN THE UPPER CHAMBER

Luke shares an extraordinary miracle that took place when Paul was preaching. He tells us that the place was an upper chamber with many oil lamps burning in the room. Most people have read these verses and never given thought as to why Luke detailed the lamps. With the large group of people in this one room along with the burning lights, both the human bodies and the oil lamps were consuming oxygen. The air must have been stale with a high concentration of carbon dioxide. Eutychus was sitting three stories up on a window sill when he fell asleep and dropped to his death. Paul moved in the Holy Spirit and raised this young man up from his death. **Acts 20:7-12**

PAUL NEEDED TIME TO BE ALONE

Luke gives us another tidbit. For some reason Paul wanted to walk from Troas to Assos, a distance around 30 miles. While the team traveled in a ship along the coast, Paul walked by himself and came to Assos, where the ship and the disciples waited for him. My personal belief is that Paul needed time to pray and think; this was a time of "prayer walking." **Acts 20:13-14**

Luke then records how they traveled by sea from city to city until they came to Miletus where they stopped for a period of time. Paul and his team lodged in the city while Paul sent a messenger to the elders of the church in Ephesus requesting for them to come to him. The distance between these cities was around 36 miles, which meant that it would take at least two days to travel from one city to the other. Thus, Paul must have stayed in Miletus for at least a week. **Acts 20:15-17**

THE ELDERS ARRIVE

We can see that Paul was greatly respected by the elders in Ephesus who dropped whatever they were doing and journeyed two days to meet the apostle.

Paul knew that he would never again in this life come back to the church where he had labored hard for some three years and wanted to give them final instructions. **Acts 20:18-28**

WARNING FOR FALSE TEACHERS

The Holy Spirit spoke through Paul, warning the leaders in the church that they would be attacked by the Devil and his demons and use people in this destructive work. **Acts 20:29-31**

Both the apostle's Paul and Peter were given supernatural knowledge that the church would be attacked and that many weak Christians in the future would fall prey and be overtaken. **1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 2 Peter 2:1-3**

Living some 1,950 years later, we can look back and see that the entire apostolic church was pretty much destroyed by 325 A.D., when the Roman Catholic Church came into being and the dark ages began. Not one of the city churches founded by the apostles during the first century survived, and when the reformation came in the 16th century, it was birthed in Germany which at the time of Paul was the home of barbarians.

EMOTIONS THE SAME THEN AS NOW

The people living in the first century lived a very simple life. There was no electricity, no hot and cold water, and no water toilets like we have today. Food was cooked in wood stoves. But the verses left in this chapter show us that love, sorrow, integrity and loyalty were still the same. Despite our advanced civilization and education, the Bible is timeless and its message will always meet the need of any person regardless what century they live in. **Acts 20:32-38**

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

DO YOU HAVE AN EAR TO HEAR WITH?

