

Welcome to

calvary
chapel
portsmouth



www.calvaryportsmouth.co.uk

Simply teaching the Word simply

Through The Bible

Session 37

The Acts of the Apostles

The Birth of the Church

From the miracle of our origin to the mystery of our destiny

Prelude to Acts

49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Luke 24:49

- The fulfilling of two promises of Jesus:
- ‘I will send another comforter’ John 14:6
- ‘Without me you can do nothing’ John 15:5
 - Without Jesus it will not bear fruit
 - Without Jesus it will not be sustainable

'Another Comforter'

- Jesus promised He would send...
- 'another comforter' (John 14:16)
 - Gr. 'allos' : another of the same kind
- Spirit of Truth
 - The world will not know Him
 - But He will indwell the believer
- He will testify of Jesus
- How?
- By the fruit produced in the lives of believers

Greater Works

¹² Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

John 14:12

- Greater miracles?
- Greater in quantity?

'Greater Works'

- Jesus does not say we will do greater miracles (Gr. Semeion = supernatural signs)
- But greater works
- Greater = Gr. meizon, in greater degree
- Works = Gr. ergon, toil (as an effort or occupation)
- What was Jesus' 'occupation' / 'work'?

'Greater Works'

*"For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater **works** than these, that ye may marvel"*

John 5:20

- This is the first time works (Gr. Ergon) are mentioned in John's gospel, and they are from the Father as a witness to the people.

'Greater Works'

"But I have greater **witness** than that of John: for the **works** which the Father hath given me to finish, the same **works** that I do, bear **witness** of me, that the Father hath sent me"

John 5:36

- The works were not of Jesus but the Father, and were to be a witness.

'Greater Works'

"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me"

John 10:25

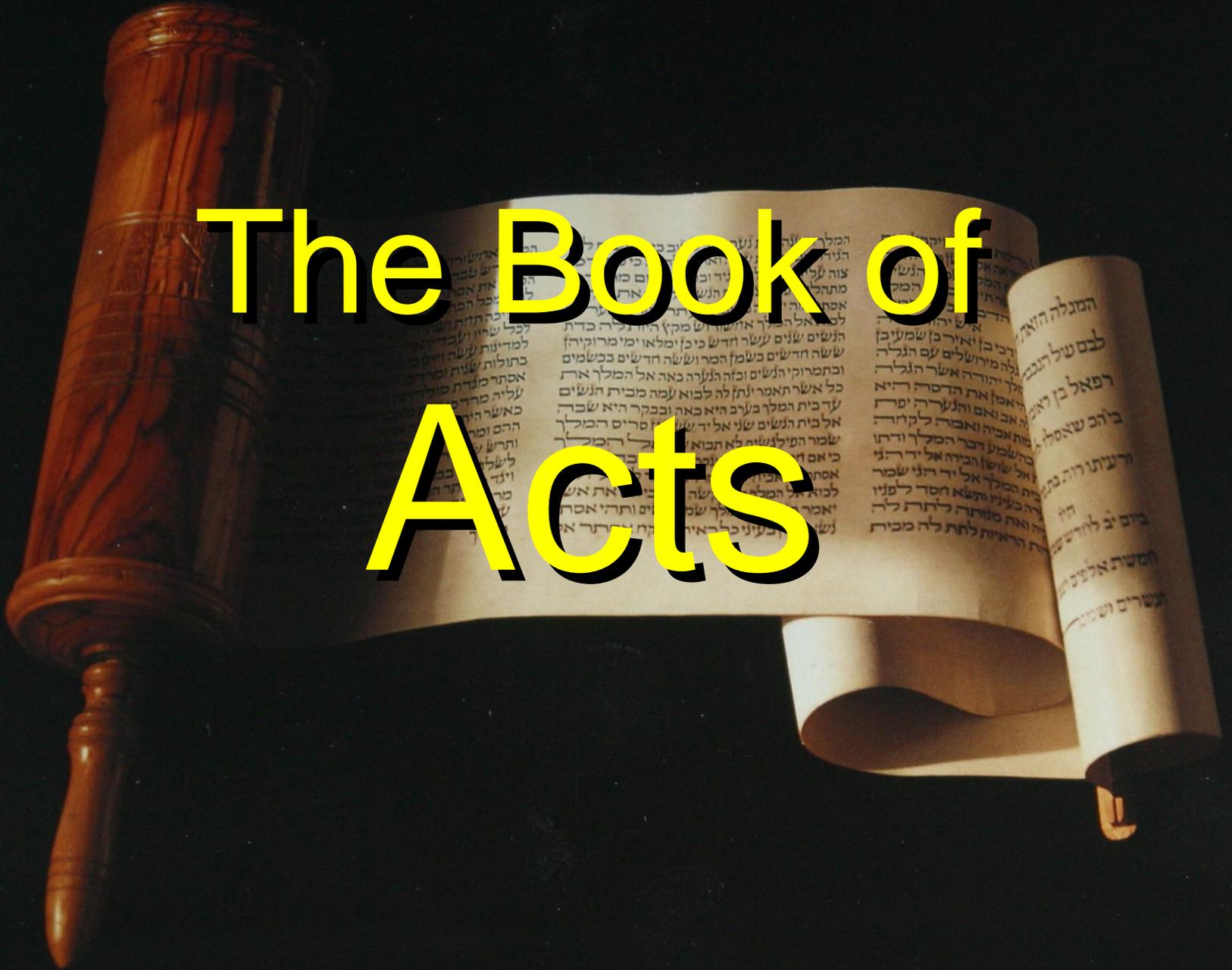
- The works Jesus did were to convince the people that He was the Son of God – God manifest in the flesh.
- Works = Witness.

'Greater Works'

*"If I do not the **works** of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the **works**: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him".* **John 10:37-38**

- Regardless of people's initial reaction to Him, Jesus points people to the works as the evidence He was God.
- Again, Works = Witness.
- What was the purpose of the works?
- To witness to the fact that Jesus was God

The Book of Acts



Author of The Book

- Dr Luke
 - Jewish Physician who accompanies Paul
- Intended as a continuation of Luke's gospel
- Written to (most excellent) 'Theophilus'
 - 'Lover of God'
 - It is addressed to all 'lovers of God'
- His name may have been a title
- Why did he require Luke to give him such a detailed account...
- ...in writing!???

Purpose of The Book

- Suspected to be the official trial document that accompanied Paul on his trip to Rome
 - Any appeal to Cesar had to be accompanied with appropriate documentation
- The book explains that the *Jews*, not the *Christians*, were responsible for the uprisings
- Roman officials are always seen in a positive light

Title of The Book

- Traditional title: 'Acts of The Apostles'
- Only two Apostles who really feature:
- Ministry of Peter
 - Ch 1 - 12 (56x +1x)
- Ministry of Paul
 - Ch 13 – 28 (126x)
- Stephen 7x / Philip 17x / John 11x / James 4x/3x / Barnabas 24x / Ananias 6x / John Mark 4x
- 'The Acts of The Holy Spirit'

Outline

- Ascension & promised return – ch1
- Birth of the Church – ch2
- Witnessing to Jerusalem begins – ch3-4
- The growth of the Church – ch5
- Persecution begins – ch6-7
- Philip & the Ethiopian treasurer – ch8
- Conversion of Saul (Paul) – ch9
- Peter & Cornelius – ch10
- Witnessing to Judea & Samaria – ch11-14
 - Chapter 12/13 is our crossover point
 - Focus shifts from Peter to Paul (1st Journey)

Outline

- Council at Jerusalem – ch 15
- 2nd & 3rd Journey's of Paul – ch 15-21
- Outcry against Paul – ch 21-22
 - Before Sanhedrin – ch 23
 - Before Govenour Felix – ch 24
 - Before Govenour Festus – ch 25
 - Before king Agrippa – ch 26
- Paul goes to Rome – ch 27-28

Acts 1:8 Summary of The Book

J Vernon McGee

- The Lord Jesus Christ at Work by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles **in Jerusalem**,
– Chapters 1–7
- The Lord Jesus Christ at Work by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles **in Judea and Samaria**,
– Chapters 8–12
- The Lord Jesus Christ at Work by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles **to the Uttermost Part of the Earth**,
– Chapters 13–28

Importance of The Book

- Completes the 'Pentateuch' of the NT
- Gives details found nowhere else
- It records the birth of the Church
 - Something hidden from ages past
- It is our only reference for church life
 - 'Early church fathers' often quoted
 - By end of 1st C. The 'church' was corrupt
 - Understanding Matthew 13:24-30 vital
- Verifiable document attesting to the integrity of scripture

Parallels

1 - 12

- Jerusalem the Center
- Peter the Chief figure
- Out to Samaria
- Word rejected by Jews
of homeland
- Peter imprisoned
- Judgment on Herod

Parallels

1 - 12

- Jerusalem the Center
- Peter the Chief figure
- Out to Samaria
- Word rejected by Jews of homeland
- Peter imprisoned
- Judgment on Herod

13 - 28

- Antioch the Center
- Paul the chief figure
- Out to Rome
- Word rejected by Jews of Dispersion
- Paul imprisoned
- Judgment on Jews

Parallels

Peter

First Sermon	2
Lame Man healed	3
Simon the Sorcerer	8
Influence of shadow	5
Laying on of hands	8
Peter worshipped	10
Tabitha raised	9
Peter imprisoned	12

Parallels

Peter

First Sermon	2
Lame Man healed	3
Simon the Sorcerer	8
Influence of shadow	5
Laying on of hands	8
Peter worshipped	10
Tabitha raised	9
Peter imprisoned	12

Paul

First Sermon	13
Lame man healed	14
Elymas the sorcerer	13
Influence of handkerchief	19
Laying on of hands	19
Paul worshipped	14
Eutychus raised	20
Paul imprisoned	28

Ministry of Peter

On Pentecost, Peter preaches,
many become believers Acts 2:1-42

Peter heals a lame man;
Arrested with John and warned
not to preach Acts 3:1-4:22



Ministry of Peter

On Pentecost, Peter preaches,
many become believers Acts 2:1-42

Peter heals a lame man;
Arrested with John and warned
not to preach Acts 3:1-4:22

Peter and John follow Philip into
Samaria; many believe Acts 8:4-25



Ministry of Peter

On Pentecost, Peter preaches,
many become believers Acts 2:1-42

Peter heals a lame man;
Arrested with John and warned
not to preach Acts 3:1-4:22

Peter and John follow Philip into
Samaria; many believe Acts 8:4-25

Peter goes to Lydda and Joppa
to raise Dorcas from death Acts 9:32-43



Ministry of Peter

On Pentecost, Peter preaches,
many become believers Acts 2:1-42

Peter heals a lame man;
Arrested with John and warned
not to preach Acts 3:1-4:22

Peter and John follow Philip into
Samaria; many believe Acts 8:4-25

Peter goes to Lydda and Joppa
to raise Dorcas from death Acts 9:32-43

Cornelius (a Centurion!) has a vision
in Caesarea, and sends for Peter



Ministry of Peter

On Pentecost, Peter preaches,
many become believers *Acts 2:1-42*

Peter heals a lame man;
Arrested with John and warned
not to preach *Acts 3:1-4:22*

Peter and John follow Philip into
Samaria; many believe *Acts 8:4-25*

Peter goes to Lydda and Joppa
to raise Dorcas from death *Acts 9:32-43*

Cornelius (a Centurion!) has a vision
in Caesarea, and sends for Peter

Peter has a vision in Joppa; goes to
Caesarea; many become believers
Acts 10:1-48



Ministry of Peter

On Pentecost, Peter preaches,
many become believers Acts 2:1-42

Peter heals a lame man;
Arrested with John and warned
not to preach Acts 3:1-4:22

Peter and John follow Philip into
Samaria; many believe Acts 8:4-25

Peter goes to Lydda and Joppa
to raise Dorcas from death Acts 9:32-43

Cornelius (a Centurion!) has a vision
in Caesarea, and sends for Peter

Peter has a vision in Joppa; goes to
Caesarea; many become believers
Acts 10:1-48

Peter reports to the Jerusalem church
who accept that Gospel is for Gentiles, too
Acts 11:1-18

Peter arrested; miraculously released.
Acts 12:1-19

Peter testifies at Jerusalem Council
Acts 15:1-21



Ministry of Paul

Saul, a Jew born a Roman citizen
and raised in Tarsus, *Acts 22:25*



Ministry of Paul

Saul, a Jew born a Roman citizen
and raised in Tarsus, *Acts 22:25*

Educated in Jerusalem as a Pharisee
under Gamaliel *Acts 22:3*

Holds coats while Stephen is stoned.
Becomes violent persecutor of the
Church *Acts 26:9f*



Ministry of Paul

Saul, a Jew born a Roman citizen
and raised in Tarsus, *Acts 22:25*

Educated in Jerusalem as a Pharisee
under Gamaliel *Acts 22:3*

Holds coats while Stephen is stoned.
Becomes violent persecutor of the
Church *Acts 26:9f*

On the road to Damascus, is
confronted by Jesus *Acts 9:*



Ministry of Paul

Saul, a Jew born a Roman citizen
and raised in Tarsus, *Acts 22:25*

Educated in Jerusalem as a Pharisee
under Gamaliel *Acts 22:3*

Holds coats while Stephen is stoned.
Becomes violent persecutor of the
Church *Acts 26:9f*

On the road to Damascus, is
confronted by Jesus *Acts 9:*

Visit with Ananias; blindness healed
and is baptized *Acts 9:1-19*



Ministry of Paul

Saul, a Jew born a Roman citizen and raised in Tarsus, *Acts 22:25*

Educated in Jerusalem as a Pharisee under Gamaliel *Acts 22:3*

Holds coats while Stephen is stoned. Becomes violent persecutor of the Church *Acts 26:9f*

On the road to Damascus, is confronted by Jesus *Acts 9:*

Visit with Ananias; blindness healed and is baptized *Acts 9:1-19*

Stays in Damascus; during which he spends 3 years in the desert in Arabia and then returns. *Acts 9:19-22; Gal 1:15-17*



Arabia

Ministry of Paul

3 years after his conversion, Paul is forced to flee in a basket.

Acts 9:25



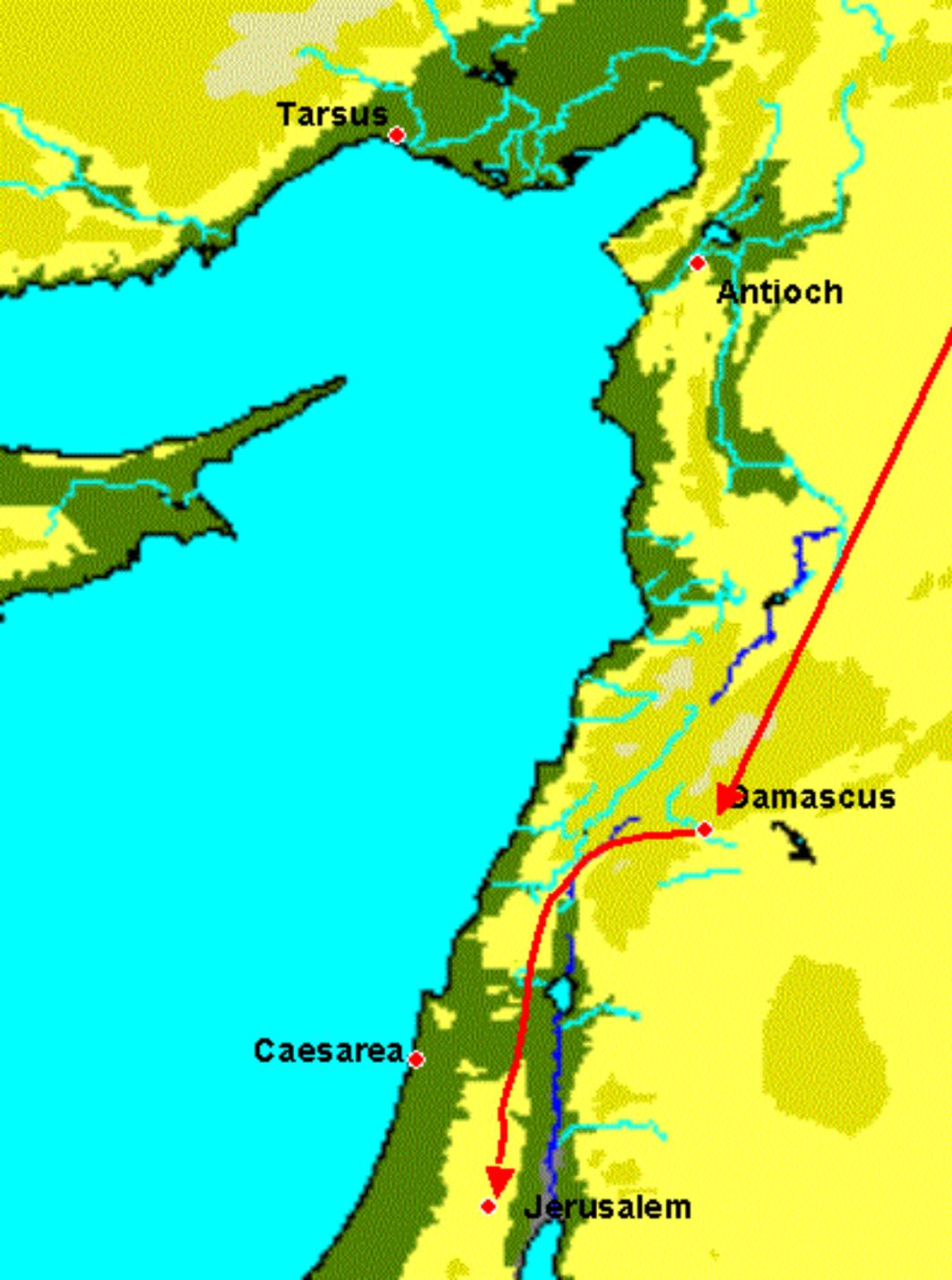
Ministry of Paul

3 years after his conversion, Paul is forced to flee in a basket.

Acts 9:25

Goes to see Peter; Barnabas introduces to suspicious believers; Talks with Peter and James. After 2 weeks smuggled out

Acts 9:26-30; Gal 1:18-20



Ministry of Paul

3 years after his conversion, Paul is forced to flee in a basket.

Acts 9:25

Goes to see Peter; Barnabas introduces to suspicious believers; Talks with Peter and James. After 2 weeks smuggled out

Acts 9:26-30; Gal 1:18-20

Taken to Caesarea, then to Tarsus

Acts 9:30

Spends 10 years in Tarsus; during which he visits Cilicia and Syria.

Still unknown to believers in Judea.

Gal 1:21-24



Ministry of Paul

3 years after his conversion, Paul is forced to flee in a basket.

Acts 9:25

Goes to see Peter; Barnabas introduces to suspicious believers; Talks with Peter and James. After 2 weeks smuggled out

Acts 9:26-30; Gal 1:18-20

Taken to Caesarea, then to Tarsus

Acts 9:30

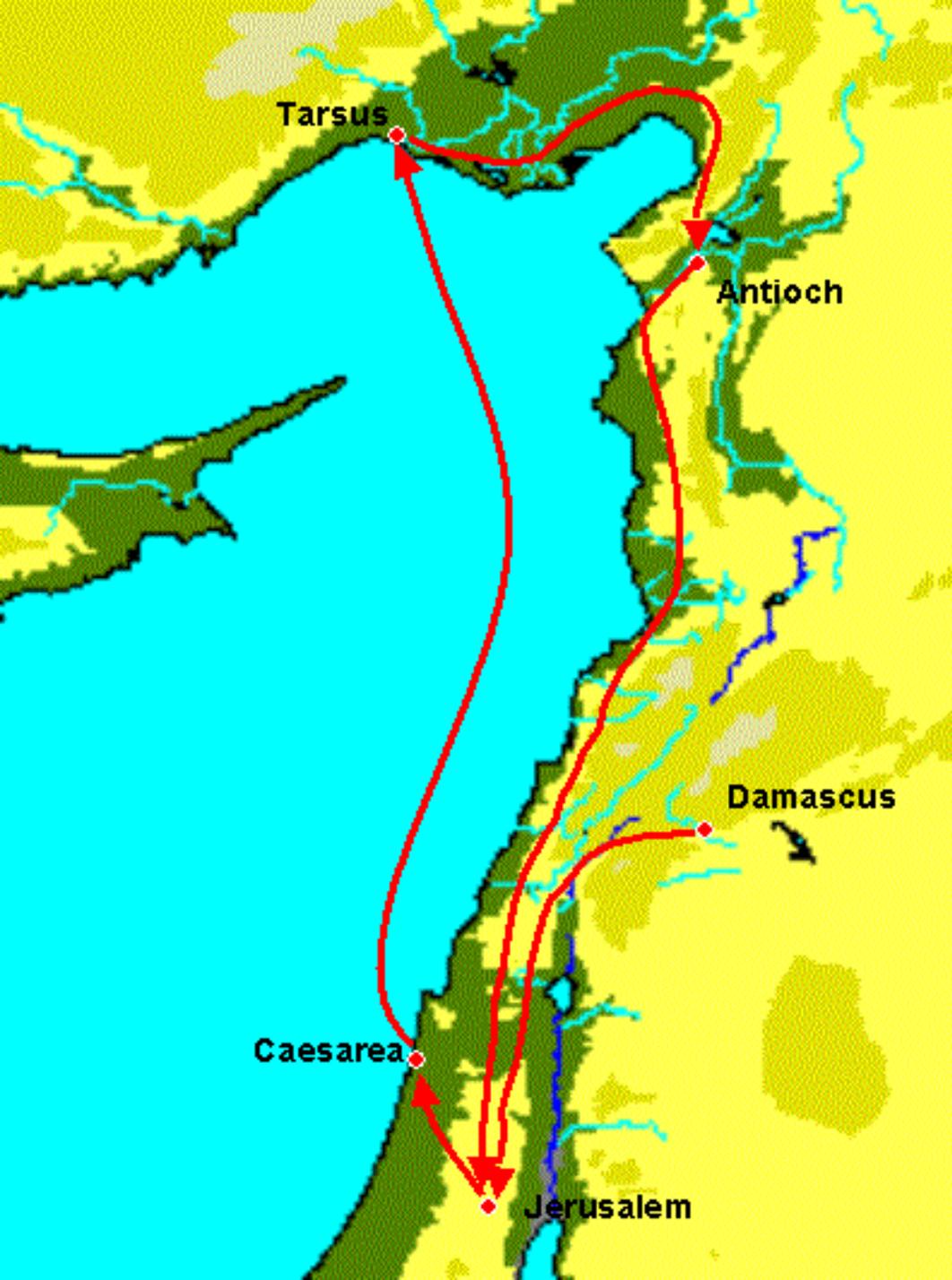
Spends 10 years in Tarsus; during which he visits Cilicia and Syria.

Still unknown to believers in Judea.

Gal 1:21-24

Barnabas brings Saul to Antioch; they teach together 1 year *Acts 11:26*





Ministry of Paul

3 years after his conversion, Paul is forced to flee in a basket.

Acts 9:25

Goes to see Peter; Barnabas introduces to suspicious believers; Talks with Peter and James. After 2 weeks smuggled out

Acts 9:26-30; Gal 1:18-20

Taken to Caesarea, then to Tarsus

Acts 9:30

Spends 10 years in Tarsus; during which he visits Cilicia and Syria. Still unknown to believers in Judea.

Gal 1:21-24

Barnabas brings Saul to Antioch; they teach together 1 year

Acts 11:26

Saul, Barnabas, and Titus bring famine relief money for Judea. They meet privately with church leaders, who acknowledge Saul's ministry to the Gentiles

Acts 11:27-30; Gal 2:1-10



Strategic (Gentile) Antioch

Stephen martyred;
Believers scattered

Acts 8:1-4



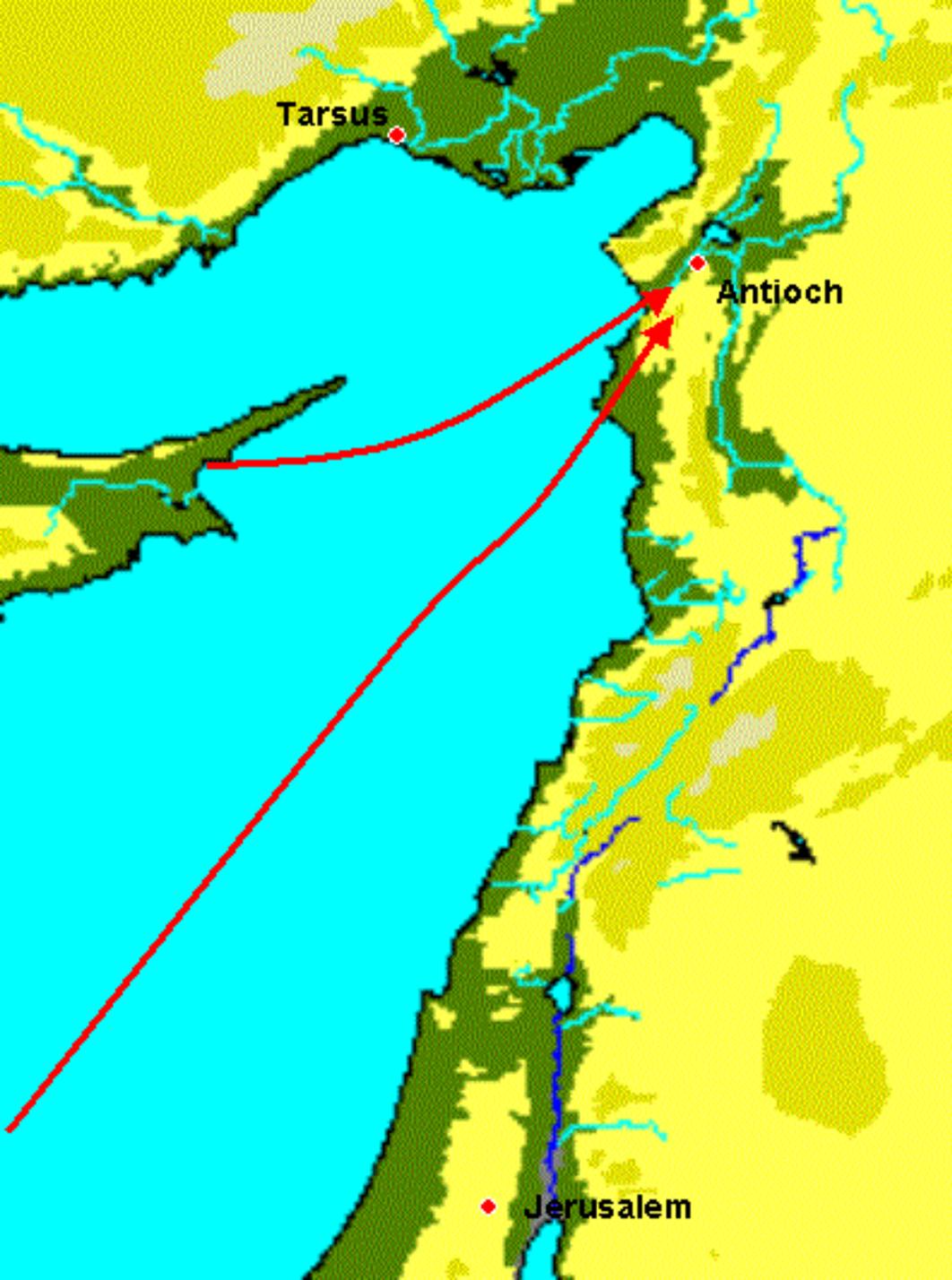
Strategic (Gentile) Antioch

Stephen martyred;
Believers scattered

Acts 8:1-4

Some travel to Antioch
(Preach to Jews only.)

Acts 11:19



Strategic (Gentile) Antioch

Stephen martyred;
Believers scattered Acts 8:1-4

Some travel to Antioch
(Preach to Jews only.) Acts 11:19

Some come from Cyprus;
some from N. Africa
(They preach to Gentiles) Acts 11:21



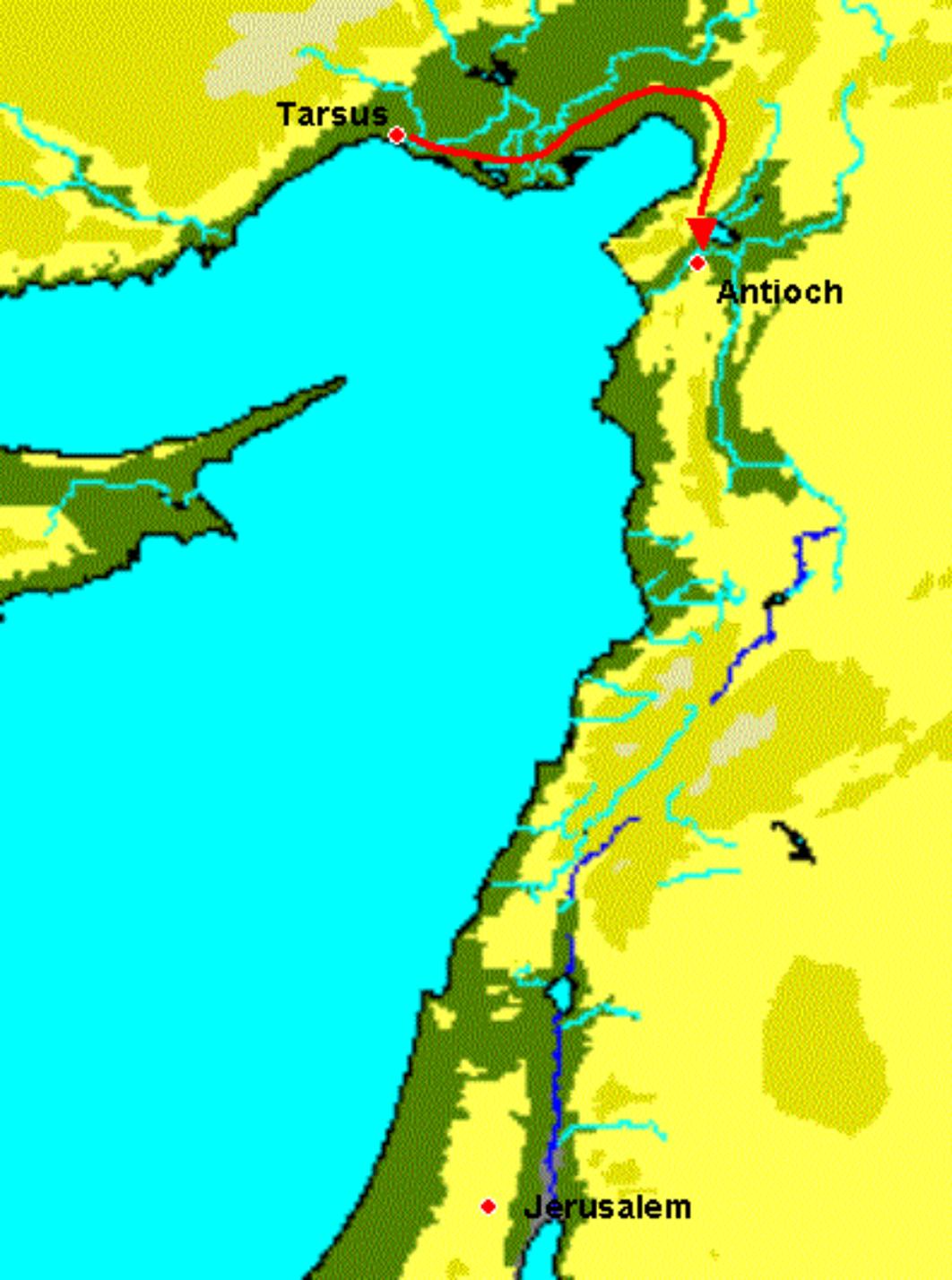
Strategic (Gentile) Antioch

Stephen martyred;
Believers scattered Acts 8:1-4

Some travel to Antioch
(Preach to Jews only.) Acts 11:19

Some come from Cyprus;
some from N. Africa Acts 11:21
(They preach to Gentiles)

Jerusalem Church sends Barnabas,
a trusted leader, to investigate.



Strategic (Gentile) Antioch

Stephen martyred;
Believers scattered Acts 8:1-4

Some travel to Antioch
(Preach to Jews only.) Acts 11:19

Some come from Cyprus;
some from N. Africa Acts 11:21
(They preach to Gentiles)

Jerusalem Church sends Barnabas,
a trusted leader, to investigate.

He collects Saul from Tarsus
and they stay to teach Acts 11:26



Strategic (Gentile) Antioch

Stephen martyred;
Believers scattered Acts 8:1-4

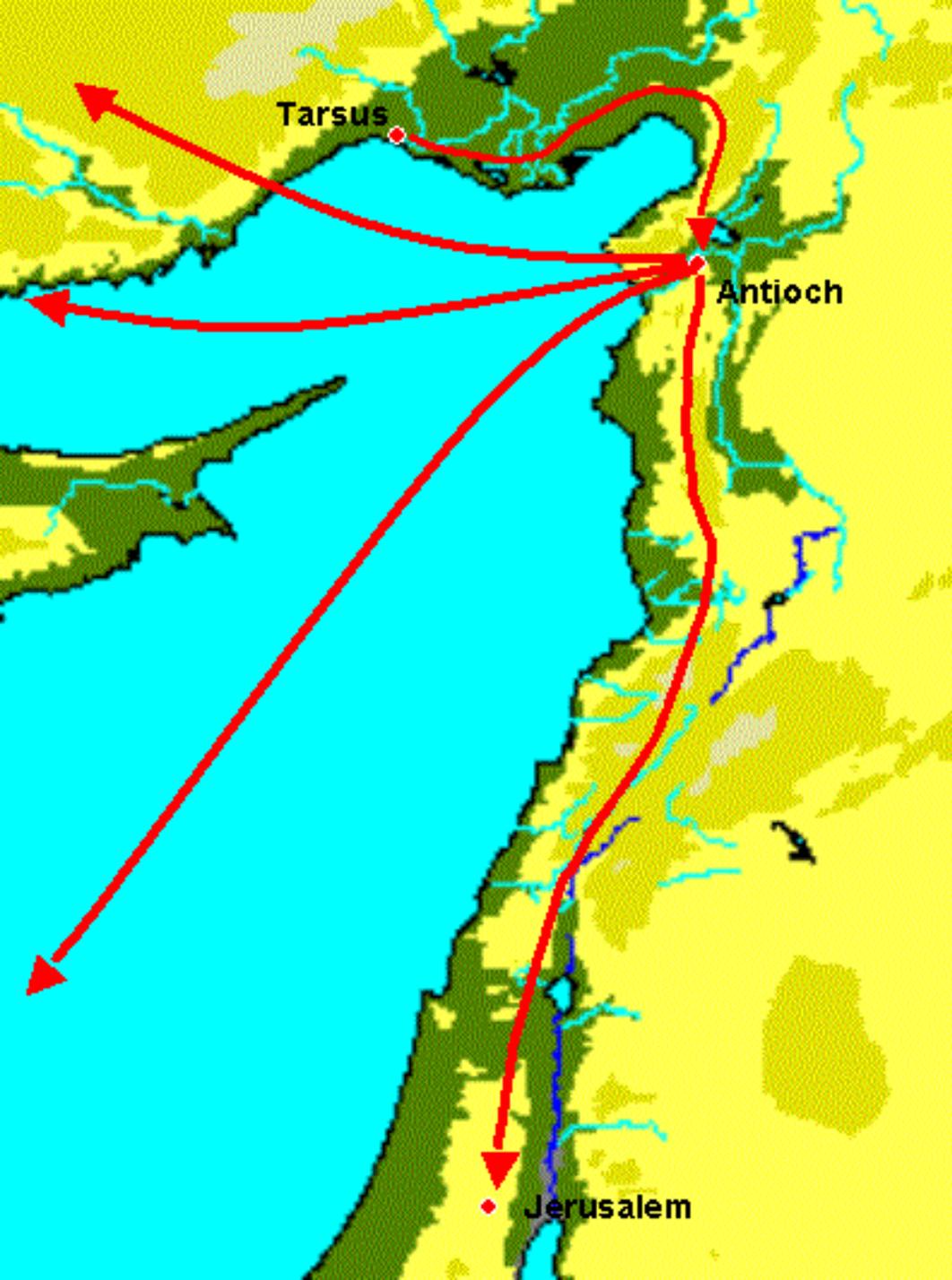
Some travel to Antioch
(Preach to Jews only.) Acts 11:19

Some come from Cyprus;
some from N. Africa Acts 11:21
(They preach to Gentiles)

Jerusalem Church sends Barnabas,
a trusted leader, to investigate.

He collects Saul from Tarsus
and they stay to teach Acts 11:26

A strong Antioch church sends
relief money to Jerusalem Acts 11:30



Strategic (Gentile) Antioch

Stephen martyred;
Believers scattered Acts 8:1-4

Some travel to Antioch
(Preach to Jews only.) Acts 11:19

Some come from Cyprus;
some from N. Africa
(They preach to Gentiles) Acts 11:21

Jerusalem Church sends Barnabas,
a trusted leader, to investigate.

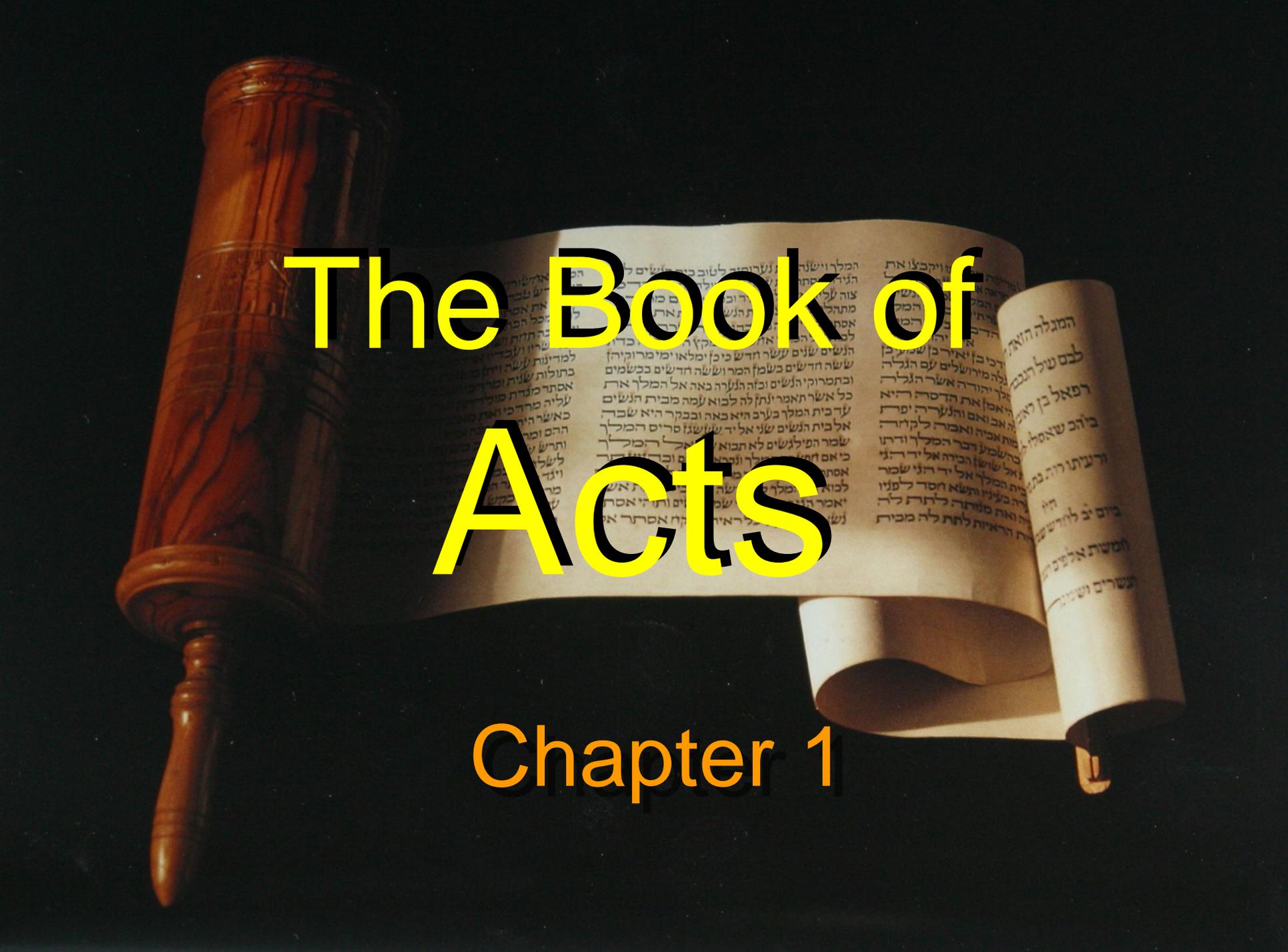
He collects Saul from Tarsus
and they stay to teach Acts 11:26

A strong Antioch church sends
relief money to Jerusalem Acts 11:30

and first messengers to foreign
countries Acts 13:1

The Cosmopolitan Antioch

- **Barnabas**
 - a Jew from Cyprus.
- **Simeon** (called the Black)
 - probably from Africa.
- **Lucius**
 - from Cyrene, a North African city.
- **Manaen**
 - foster-brother to Herod Antipas.
- **Saul**
 - a Jew from Roman Tarsus,
 - later to become Paul the apostle.



The Book of Acts

Chapter 1

- 1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,
- 2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:
- 3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

Acts 1:1-3

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for **the promise of the Father**, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

Acts 1:4

The Promise of the Father

49 I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I **straitened** till it be accomplished!

Luke 12:49-50

- Constrained (?)

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Acts 1:5

- Jesus implies a more superior baptism

Baptism in the Spirit

- Baptism in the Spirit?
- Led to much controversy in the church
- At the point of conversion?
- Some time after conversion?
- The key question is 'what' not 'when'

Threefold Function of the Spirit

- He is to be in the world
 - Bring conviction of sin (John 16:8)
 - He is to indwell the believer
 - Comforter / Teacher (John 14:16-17 / 16:13)
 - He is to bear witness to Jesus
 - (John 16:14 / Luke 24:49)
-
- Is 'Baptism' the same as the 'Indwelling'?
 - John 14:17

Baptism in the Spirit

- Analogous to John's baptism
- What was the purpose of John's baptism?
- With John the Baptist: People were
 - 1) Convicted,
 - 2) Repented,
 - 3) Baptised as a testimony to what had taken place
- Baptism was an outward sign
 - a witness to others and 'position marker' for the individual

Baptism in the Spirit

- What is the purpose of baptism in the Spirit?

49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be **endued with power** from on high.

Luke 24:49

- This 'empowering' was to come after they had received the Holy Spirit

Different 'Fillings'?

- Upper room – *John 20:22*
- Pentecost – *Acts 2:4*
- Subsequent fillings – *Acts 4:31*

- Indwelling at conversion
 - *once only*
- Baptism for ministry (power) as OT
 - *Re-fillings*
- *'It's not how much of the Spirit you have; but how much of you He has!'*

Threefold Function of the Spirit

- Para – Jn 14:16 draws along side
(bringing conviction)
 - παράκλητος [*parakletos* /par-ak-lay-tos/]
- En – indwelling
 - ἐν, ἐμμέσῳ, ἐννόμῳ [*en* /en/]
- Epi – coming upon
 - ἐπί [*epi* /ep-ee/]

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 1:6

- **Picture the scene:** ‘they head out to the Mount of Olives, disciples not knowing that Jesus was about to depart. One of the last times they were here together He rode into Jerusalem and was hailed as King. The last time Peter was ready to take the kingdom by force’
- **That is the mindset as they ask this question**

Kingdom Now?

- The Jews expectation
- The disciples expectation
 - Peter in the Garden – John 18:10
 - Sons of Zebedee (James & John) – Mk 10:37
- The driving force behind many biblically illiterate ventures throughout history
 - Crusades?
 - The plan of the Catholic Church (Church & State)
 - A wave of modern charlatans
- Fuelled the fire of amillennialism
 - Which in turn led to anti-Semitism

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt **thou** at this time restore again the **kingdom** to Israel?

Acts 1:6

- They are referring to the kingdom where Messiah will rule over the house of Israel – on David's throne
- Yet for 40 days they had been taught about the 'kingdom of God' (v3)
- Their interest here is regarding the 'kingdom *from Heaven*'

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

Acts 1:7

- The issue is the timing, not the event!

The Return of Christ to Rule

- 1,845 references in the Old Testament
 - 17 books give prominence to the event
- 318 references in the New Testament
 - 216 chapters
 - 23 of 27 books give prominence to the event
- *For every prophecy of Christ's 1st Coming, there are 8 of His 2nd Coming!*

The Return of Christ to Rule

⁶ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

Acts 1:7

- *“The kingdom will be restored, but you are not to focus on that”*
- That issue is in the Lord’s power

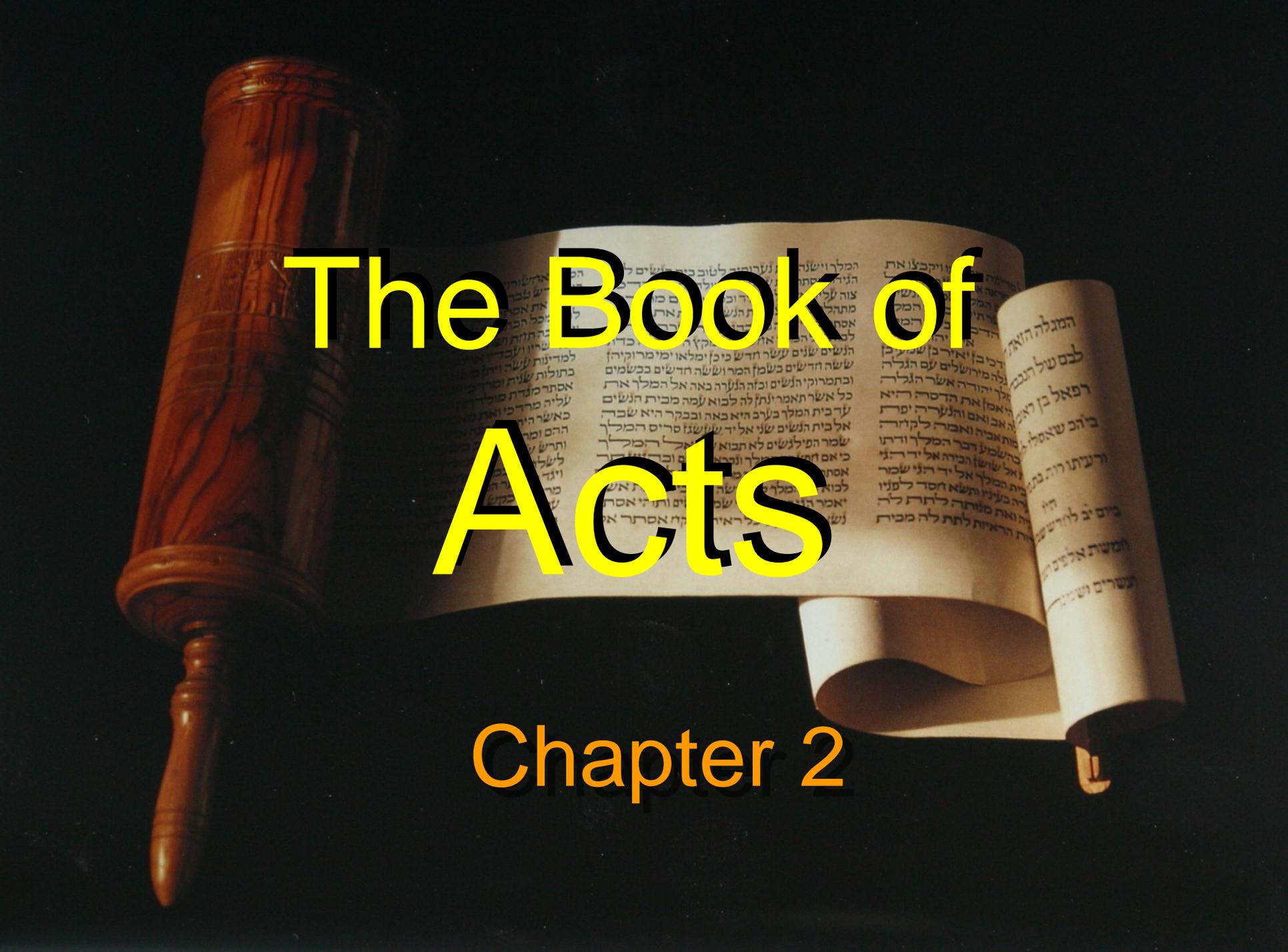
8 **But ye** shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and **ye shall be witnesses unto me** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:8

- Jesus focuses them on the task in hand:
- Our mandate is not to rule the world for Christ...
- The purpose of the power and our mission is to be witnesses

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:8

An open scroll with Hebrew text is shown against a dark background. The scroll is unrolled, revealing text in both directions. A wooden handle is visible on the left side. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The title 'The Book of Acts' is overlaid in large, bold, yellow letters with a black outline. The word 'Acts' is significantly larger than 'The Book of'.

The Book of Acts

Chapter 2

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:42

- It was an ongoing steadfast determination.
- The Greek word used here ('en') indicates a state of being.

Christianity 101

- This was the foundation of the early Church,
- These are the majors of the Christian faith.
- We may choose other electives as part of our own discipleship program, but these are mandatory.

Our Manifesto

- Apostles doctrine
- Fellowship
- Breaking of Bread
- Prayer
 - Note: much of what we major on in the church today is omitted from this list!

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:42

- Lit: the apostle's teaching
- *“One evidence of conversion is a desire to be instructed in the doctrines and duties of religion” - Barns*

Apostle's Doctrine

- What is doctrine?
- *“a creed or body of teachings of a religious, political, or philosophical group presented for acceptance or belief; dogma”*
- The foundations and non-negotiable fundamentals of what we believe.
- It is what defines us as Christians.
- Who decides?

Apostle's Doctrine

- *“If it is taught in the book of Acts, and expounded on in the epistles, it becomes church doctrine”* – Joe Focht
- Example: washing each others feet
- Not taught in the book of Acts...
- Nor expounded on in the epistles...
- *“For I have given you an example”* (John 13:15).

Apostle's Doctrine

- It is not a consensus of popular opinion,
- Nor that which seemed best at that particular time and in that culture,
- It was that which was taught by the apostles,
- who in turn had received it directly from Jesus.
- Thus, this was not man's opinion about how things should be done, and what should be adhered to, it was the fundamentals of the faith as given by Jesus for His Church.
 - These include...

Apostle's Doctrine

- *The way of Salvation being in Christ alone, through faith alone, by grace alone.*
- *The infallibility of the Word of God*
- *The incarnation of the 2nd Person of the Trinity in the Person of Jesus Christ*
- *That Jesus willingly surrendered Himself to the will of the Father, and was offered as a 'spotless Lamb' to make atonement for the sins of the world*

Apostle's Doctrine

- *The imminent return of Jesus to establish His kingdom and subdue His enemies*
- *That this kingdom will be a literal, political kingdom on Earth, and a continuation of the throne of David*

Apostle's Doctrine

- *That God is preeminent in all things, and by His foreknowledge He has chosen and appointed those who are the heirs of Salvation...*
- *...Yet at the same time every individual has free-will to accept or reject salvation through Jesus Christ.*
- *That God is the Creator of all things.*
- *That we should love and serve one another, not placing ourselves above another.*

Apostle's Doctrine

- In the 21st Century church 'doctrine' (i.e. teaching regarding the fundamentals) has become almost a taboo, and is seen as something that is divisive.
- Many churches and ministers are content to lay aside areas of doctrine for the sake of (so called) unity.

Apostle's Doctrine

- Those who undermine the doctrine of the apostle's are seen as being 'open minded', 'tolerant', and even 'forward thinking',
- Those who stand for the truth, are seen as being dogmatic, trouble makers, intolerant, divisive and living in the past.
- This should not really come as a surprise...
- ... Paul forewarned us this would happen:

Fellowship

- Our fellowship should be
 - Edifying
 - Faith-building
- David's view of fellowship:
- *"I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee"* (Psalm 22:22).
- *"Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders"* (Psalm 107:32).

Fellowship

- Fellowship combats the world's influence
- Keeps us spiritually alert:
 - as iron sharpening iron (Proverbs 27:17)
- Provides support:
 - bearing each other's burdens (Galatians 6:2)
- Keeps us in check:
 - confessing our faults one to another
 - praying “one for another, that ye may be healed”. (James 5:16).
- If doctrine is the backbone, fellowship is the life-blood of our faith.

Communion

- What is it? For What Purpose?
- An act of remembrance
- A celebration of Christ's victory
- Rooted in the Feast of Passover
- Instigated by Jesus in the upper room
- A regular spiritual health check!
- If doctrine is the backbone, and fellowship is the life-blood, Communion is our immune system!

Prayer

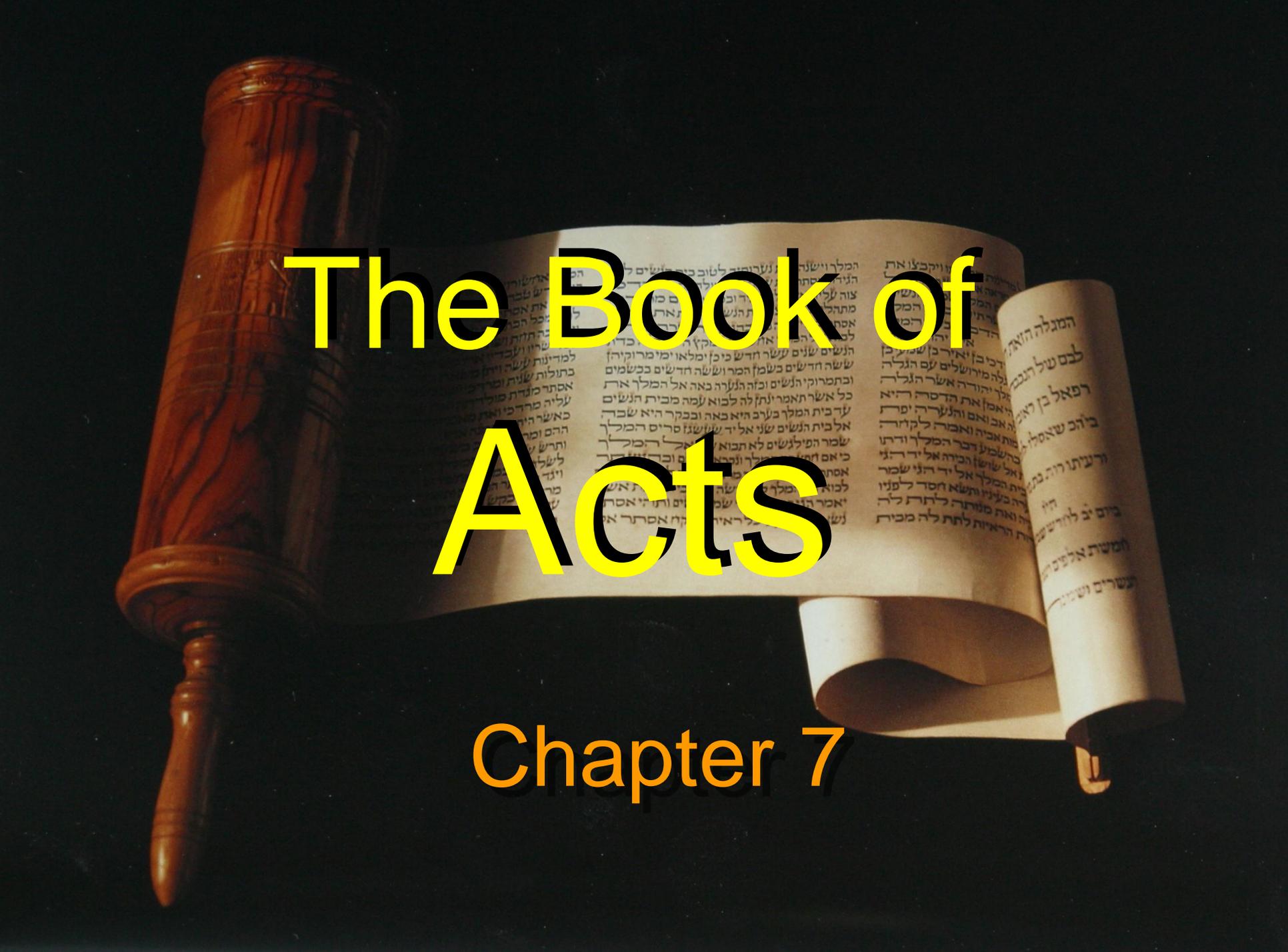
- If Christians are asked, ‘what are the two *most important* things for a believer to do?’
 - Read the Bible
 - Pray
- ‘What do Christians find the *hardest* to do?’
 - Read the Bible
 - Pray
- ‘*The little estimate we put on prayer is evident from the little time we give to it*’ - **Bounds**

Prayer

- *‘They continued in prayers; knowing that they could be no longer faithful than while they were upheld by their God; and knowing also that they could not expect his grace to support them, unless they humbly and earnestly prayed for its continuance’*

Adam Clarke

- If doctrine is the backbone, fellowship the life-blood, and Communion our immune system...
- Prayer is the heart-beat of our faith



The Book of Acts

Chapter 7

Stephens Address (Ch 7)

- His message was not a new heresy...
- It was the fulfilment of their scriptures
- He shows how Israel has always rejected their deliver the 1st time:
 - Joseph – rejected 1st time
 - Moses – rejected 1st time
 - Jesus – Stephen is stoned before reaching the obvious conclusion
- This leads to the dispersion of the Church

Winds of Change

Up to this point, the apostles had given no evidence of a purpose to carry the Gospel into the world but had stayed in Jerusalem witnessing to the Jews. Luke now relates the beginning of expansion of the church throughout Judea and Samaria, which was occasioned by the persecution that arose around Stephen. This expansion was accomplished not by the vision and purpose of the church but by the providential act of God in scattering the believers. To explain this persecution. Luke first relates how Stephen came into a position of prominence as one of the seven.

-The Wycliffe Bible Commentary

Acts Part II

- The Lord Jesus Christ at Work by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles in Judea and Samaria, Chapters 8–12
- Conversion of Ethiopian Eunuch
 - (Son of Ham), Chapter 8
- Conversion of Saul of Tarsus
 - (Son of Shem), Chapter 9
- Conversion of Cornelius, Roman Centurion
 - (Son of Japheth), Chapter 10

Acts Chapter 10

- Pivotal chapter in scripture
- The unveiling of a mystery hidden in the Old Testament

Hidden Mystery

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

Matthew 13:3-17

- Jesus introduces them to something that had previously been veiled...

Hidden Mystery

- 9 Having made known unto us the **mystery** of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:
- 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

Ephesians 1:9-10

Hidden Mystery

- 1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,
- 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward:
- 3 How that **by revelation** he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,
- 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

Ephesians 3:1-11

Hidden Mystery

- 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:
- 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known **by the church** the manifold wisdom of God,
- 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

Ephesians 3:1-11

By the Church...

- It is not the Church's job to 'explain' God's wisdom to the principalities & powers
- Rather, God's wisdom is manifest by the existence of the Church
- The fact the Church exists is a demonstration of God's unfathomable wisdom
- Acts chapter 10 is pivotal in the unveiling of this mystery!

The Mystery of the Church

- This mystery was revealed to Paul...
- Paul was commissioned to take the Gospel to the Gentiles
- But there was something that had to be settled first...

Can It Be True?

- 1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.*
- 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.*

Galatians 2:1-2

Official Sanction

- 7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;*
- 8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)*

Galatians 2:7-16

Official Sanction

- 9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.
- 10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

Galatians 2:7-16

Unlearning the Tradition

- The depth of the problem:
- The Jewish mindset was that Gentiles were 'dogs'...
- 'Fuel for the fires of hell'
- 'The only way to God was through Israel'
 - 'Become a Proselyte or burn

Unlearning the Tradition

- Israel were preoccupied with their own righteousness and importance
- It was so ingrained on the mindset of even the Apostles that it took a Supernatural work and the conviction of the Holy Spirit to undo the tradition..
- They had forgotten that it was to be through them that blessing would come to the world!

Gen 12:1-3

Unlearning the Tradition

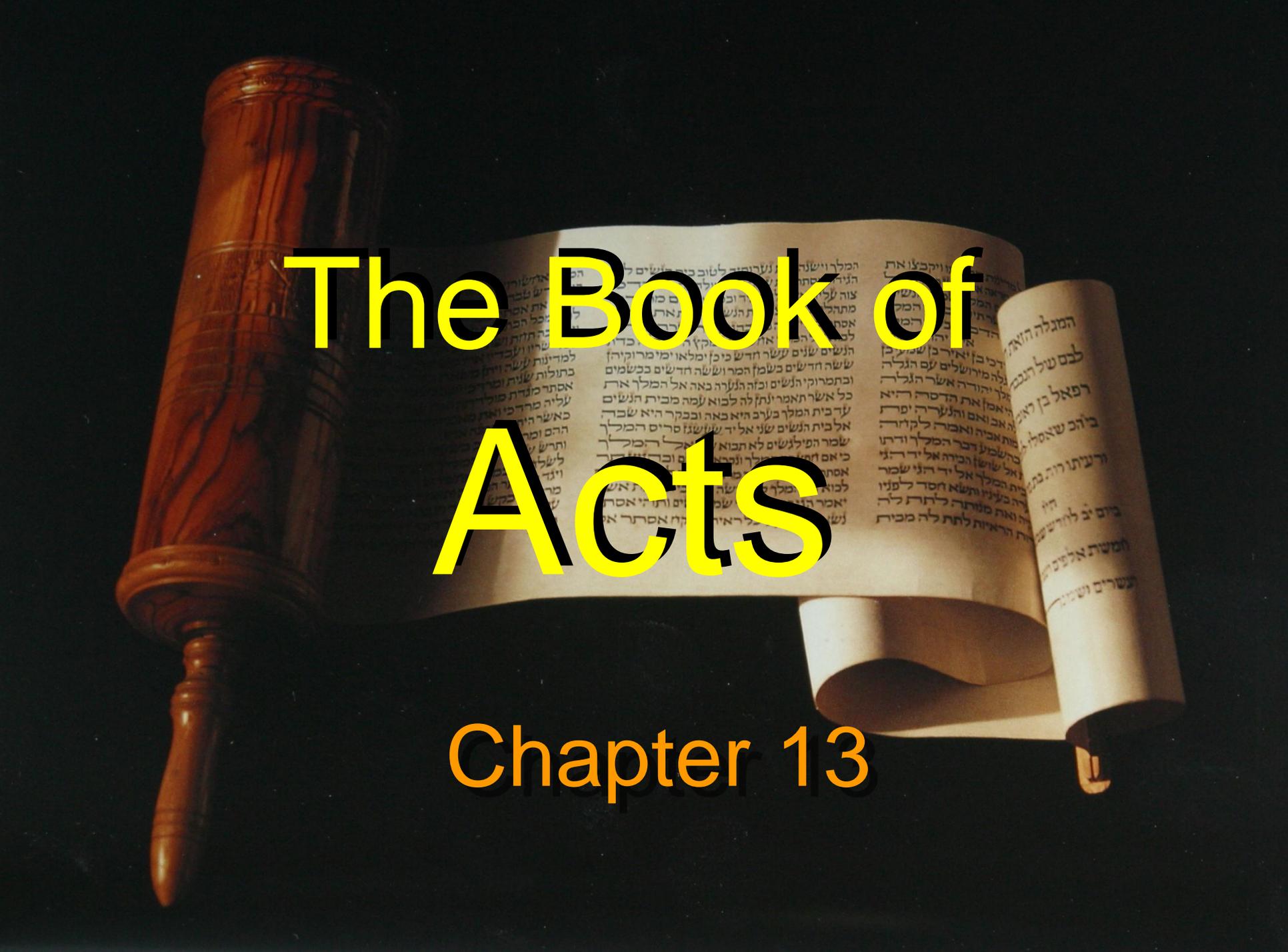
“This prejudice would have operated so as finally to prevent them from preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, had not God, by a particular interposition of his mercy and goodness, convinced Peter, and through him all the other apostles, that he had accepted the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and would put no difference between the one and the other, purifying their hearts by faith, and giving the Gentiles the Holy Spirit, as he had before given it to the Jews. The means which he used to produce this conviction in the minds of the apostles are detailed at length in the following chapter”

Adam Clarke

34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Acts 10:34-35

An open scroll with Hebrew text is shown against a dark background. The scroll is unrolled, revealing several columns of text. To the left, a wooden handle with a fluted design is visible. The text on the scroll is in Hebrew, with some words highlighted in yellow. The overall scene is lit from the side, creating a dramatic effect.

The Book of Acts

Chapter 13



Paul's 1st Missionary Journey

Acts 13 - 14



1st Missionary Journey: Galatians

Saul and Barnabas sent out by Antioch Church, with John Mark

Acts 13:1-3

They encounter Bar-Jesus, a false prophet and friend of governor.

Bar-Jesus is struck blind; governor becomes a believer.

Acts 13:4-12

John Mark leaves to return to Jerusalem. (A dispute will ensue later)

Acts 13:13

Paul preaches; jealous Jews stir up opposition

Acts 13:14-15

They stay a long time; but a Gentile plot on their lives forces them on.

Acts 14:1-7



1st Missionary Journey: Galatians

At Lystra Paul heals a cripple. They are hailed as gods.

Enemies arrive from Antioch and Iconium; they are almost killed.

They flee to Derbe; many more disciples won.

Acts 14:8-20



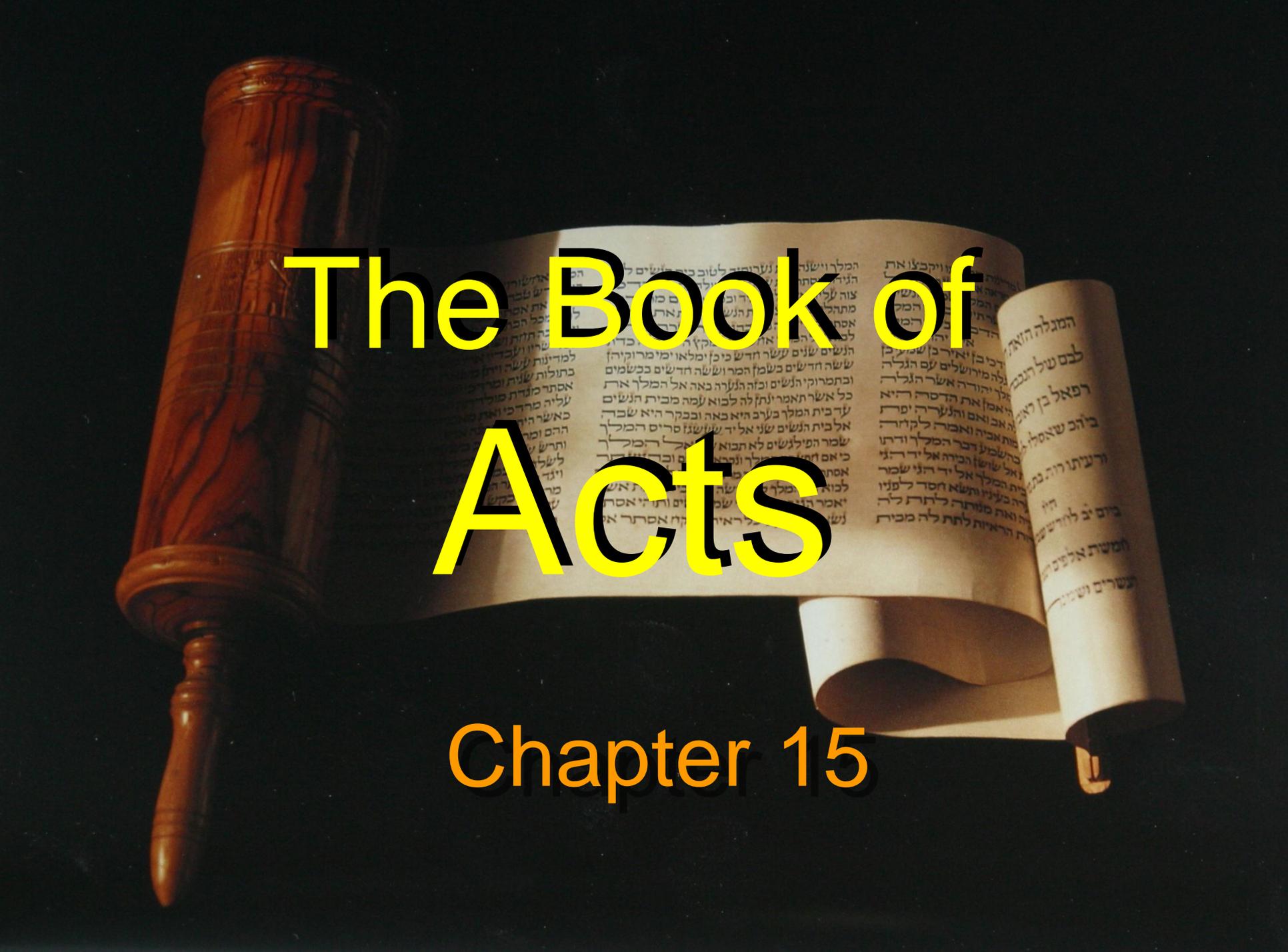
1st Missionary Journey: Galatians

They return the way they came, encouraging the young churches.

Acts 14:21-26

They report everything to the church in Antioch.

Acts 14:27-28

An open scroll with Hebrew text is shown against a dark background. The scroll is unrolled, revealing text in both directions. A wooden handle is visible on the left side. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The title 'The Book of Acts' is overlaid in large yellow letters with a black outline, and 'Chapter 15' is overlaid in orange letters with a black outline at the bottom.

The Book of Acts

Chapter 15

IO Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

II But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ **we shall be saved, even as they.**

Acts 15:10-11

- Peter turns the argument upside down!
 - NOT: how will the gentiles be saved...
 - But: How will (us) Jews be saved?(!)

13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

Acts 15:13-15

- 16 **After this** I will return, and will **build again** the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:
- 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

Acts 15:16-17

- 19** Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:
- 20** But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

Acts 15:19-20

The Gentiles' Do Not's:

- POLLUTIONS of IDOLS,
 - or, as it is in Acts 15:29, meats offered to idols, not only all idolatry was forbidden, but eating things offered in sacrifice to idols, knowing that they were thus offered, and joining with idolaters in their sacred feasts, which were always an incentive either to idolatry itself, or to the impure acts generally attendant on such festivals.

The Gentiles' Do Not's:

- FORNICATION,
 - all uncleanness of every kind was prohibited; for porneia (NT:4202) not only means fornication, but adultery, incestuous mixtures, and especially the prostitution which was so common at the idol temples, namely, in Cyprus, at the worship of Venus; and the shocking disorders exhibited in the Bacchanalia, Lupercalia, and several others.

The Gentiles' Do Not's:

- THINGS STRANGLED,
 - We are to understand the flesh of those animals which were strangled for the purpose of keeping the blood in the body, as such animals were esteemed a greater delicacy.

The Gentiles' Do Not's:

- FROM BLOOD,
 - we are to understand, not only the thing itself, but also all cruelty, manslaughter, murder, etc., as some of the ancient fathers have understood it.
 - Adam Clarke's Commentary



Paul's
2nd Missionary Journey

15:36 – 18:22



2nd Missionary Journey: Greece

Paul and Barnabas argue over taking Mark with them to revisit Galatia

Acts 15:36-38

Barnabas takes Mark with him to Cyprus

Acts 15:39

Paul takes Silas to Galatia.

At Lystra Paul asks Timothy to join them.

Acts 16:1-3

They publish the decisions of the Jerusalem Council

Acts 16:4-5



2nd Missionary Journey: Greece

Paul tries to go to Bithynia, but is blocked by the Holy Spirit

Acts 16:6-7

At night, Paul has a vision: a Macedonian urges him to come to help

At this point Luke joins them: They sail for Macedonia.

Acts 16:8-10

Paul delivers a girl medium from an evil spirit. Owners protest; crowd attacks;

Flogged, imprisoned; freed by earthquake. Jailer converted.

Acts 16:11-40

They travel to Thessalonica.

Acts 17:1



2nd Missionary Journey

Paul departs for Corinth.

Acts 18:1

Silas and Timothy bring news from Thessalonica. Paul writes Thessalonian Letters. They spend almost 2 years here, despite Jewish opposition.

Acts 18:1-17

They sail to Ephesus; resisted those that wanted him to stay longer

Acts 18:18-21

They travel back to Antioch, via Caesarea and Jerusalem

Acts 18:22

Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey

18:23 – 21:6



3rd Missionary Journey

After spending some time in Antioch, Paul revisited the churches in Galatia and Phrygia in order.

Acts 18:23

Paul makes Ephesus his base for the next 3 years.

Acts 19:1-7

Disciples of Apollos receive the Holy Spirit; a church is founded.

Acts 19:8-20



The Corinthian Problems

Paul plans to go to Macedonia; he sends Timothy and Erastus ahead
They may visit Corinth; Paul is worried about immorality in the church there.

Acts 19:21-22

Three members of the Corinthian church bring a letter to Paul
It is full of questions; the problems are greater than Paul had thought
Paul writes and sends 1 Corinthians, tackling the problems.

1 Cor 16:17-18



The Corinthian Problems

Paul hurries to Corinth.

2 Cor 12:14

The visit is extremely painful for everyone; Paul has to be severe.

Paul returns to Ephesus and writes a "severe letter" to them.

2 Cor 2:4

Titus takes the letter to Corinth. Paul arranges to meet Titus again at Troas urgently to get news of the situation.



The Corinthian Problems

Paul is the center of a riot in Ephesus. His message threatened the sale of silver statues of the Ephesians goddess Diana.

Act 19:23-41

Paul goes to Troas. Paul is worried about his "Painful letter." Was it too harsh?

Titus does not appear as arranged.

2 Cor 2:12-13

Paul goes to Macedonia in search of Titus.



The Corinthian Problems

He encourages the churches and collects money for Jerusalem
Paul and Titus finally meet.

Acts 20:1-2

Good news: the "Severe Letter" has been taken as Paul Intended.

2 Cor 7:5-16

Paul writes 2 Corinthians: full of joy!

Titus takes the letter to prepare the church for Paul's 3rd visit

2 Cor 8:16-24



To Jerusalem

Paul stays in Achaia 3 months, probably in Corinth.

Here he writes the letter to the Romans.

He plans to travel to Jerusalem by sea via Syria.

However, a plot by his enemies forces him to return through Macedonia.

Acts 20:2-6



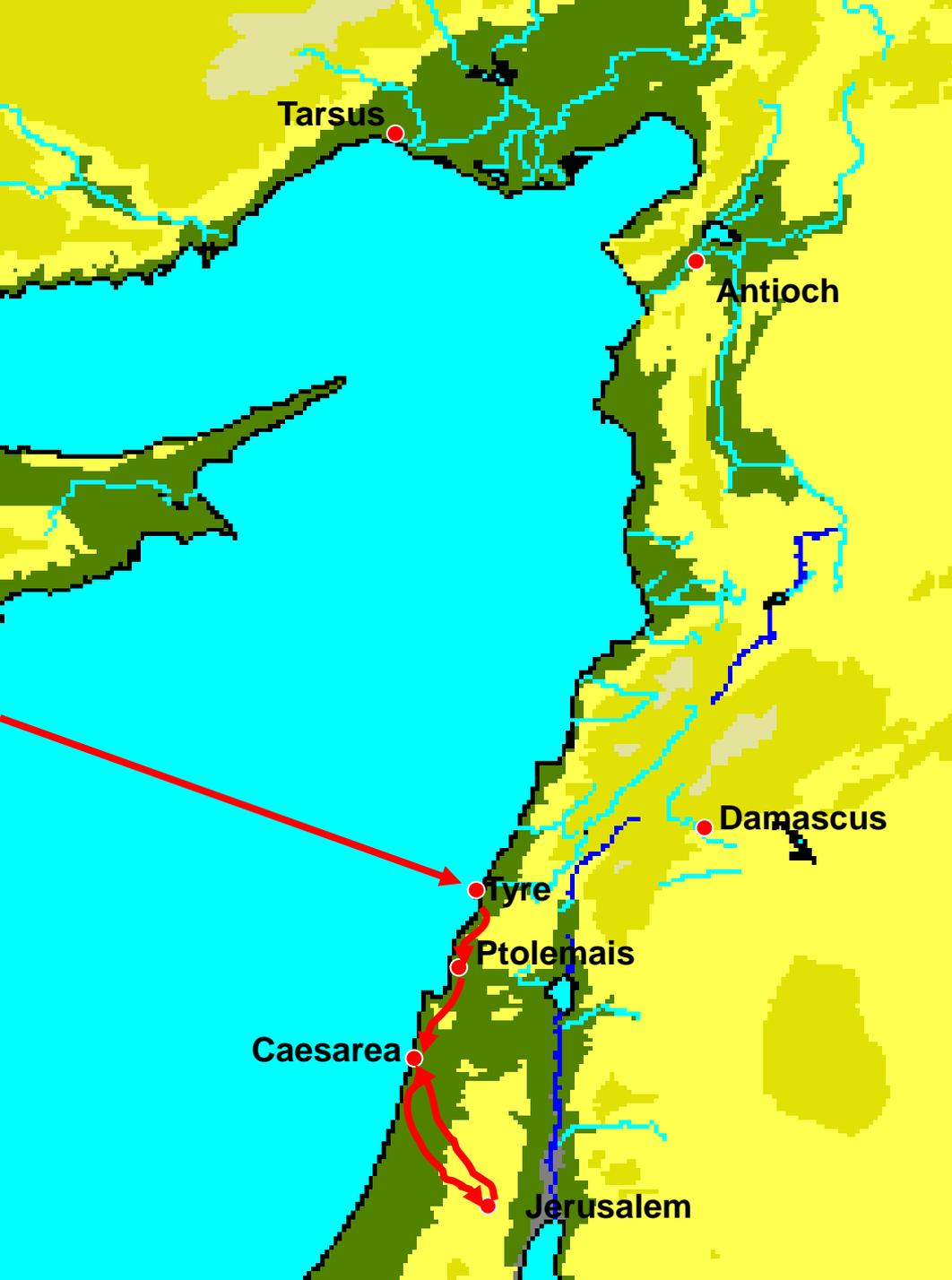
To Jerusalem

Arriving from Philippi, at Troas he preaches until midnight;

Eutychus falls asleep, falls out of a 3-story window; is raised from the dead. [Acts 20:6-12](#)

At Miletus Paul bids farewell to the Ephesian elders; [Acts 20:17f](#)

At Patara they change ships and sail for Tyre. [Acts 21:2](#)



To Jerusalem

After landing at Tyre, they spend a day at Ptolemais *Acts 21:7*

At Caesarea, they stay at Philip's house. *Acts 21:8*

Agabus the prophet tells Paul he will be bound by Jews in Jerusalem and handed over to Gentiles. Paul is determined to go on despite warnings and pleas. *Acts 21:10*

At Jerusalem, Paul is welcomed by the church. *Acts 21:17*

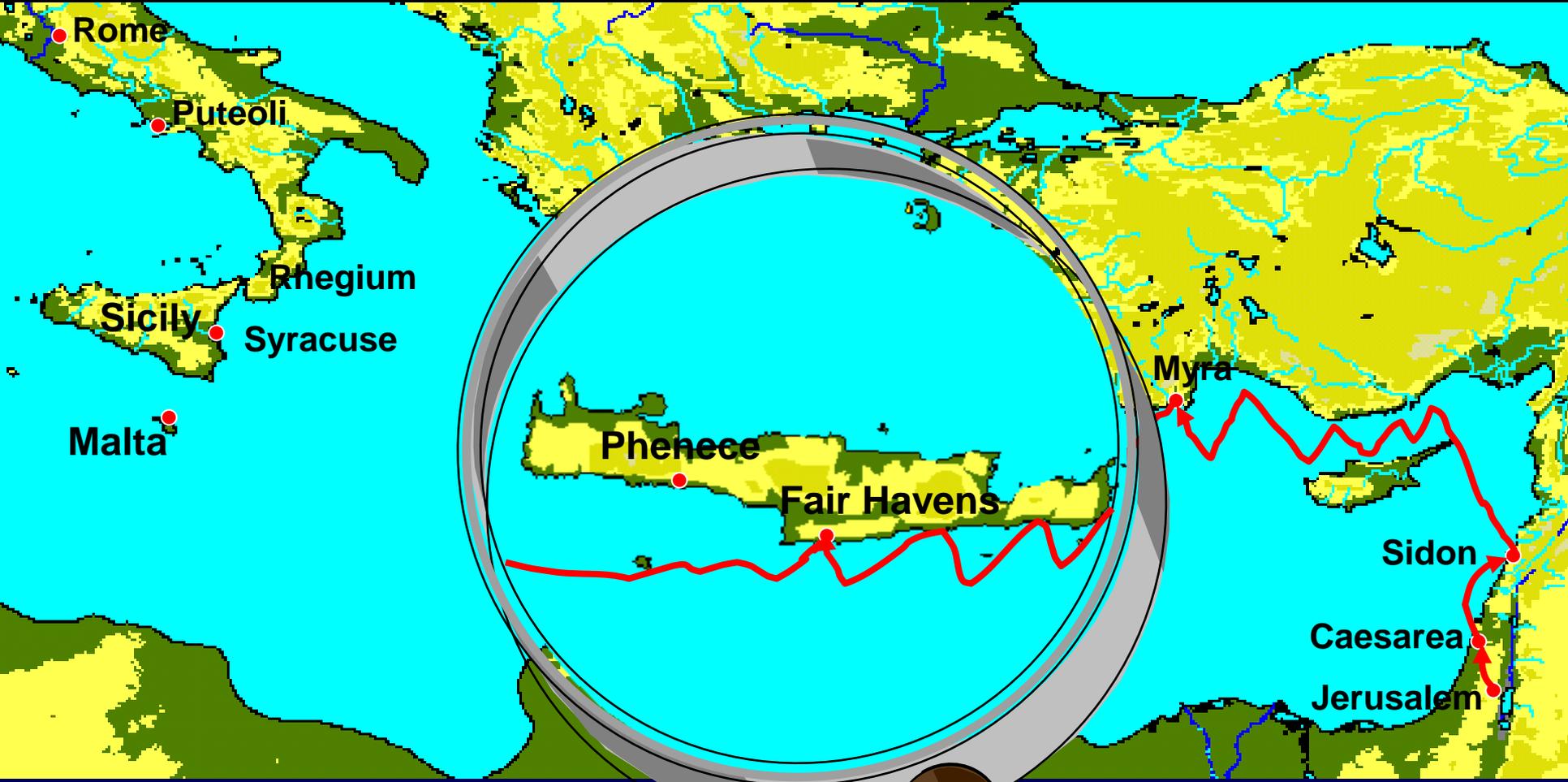
Paul is recognized by Jews from Asia; a mob tries to kill him. *Acts 21:27*

Roman troops arrest/rescue him; his speech incites more violence; Paul announces his citizenship; a defense before the Jewish Council turns violent. *Acts 22:1*

Learning of a plot on Paul's life, He is sent under armed guard to Governor Felix at Caesarea *Acts 23*

Paul's Hearings

- Before Sanhedrin 23
 - Arguments turn to violence
- Before Governor Felix 24
 - Defers. After 2 years, Festus replaces Felix
- Before Governor Festus 25
 - “I appeal to Caesar”
- Before King Agrippa 26
 - While awaiting his appeal



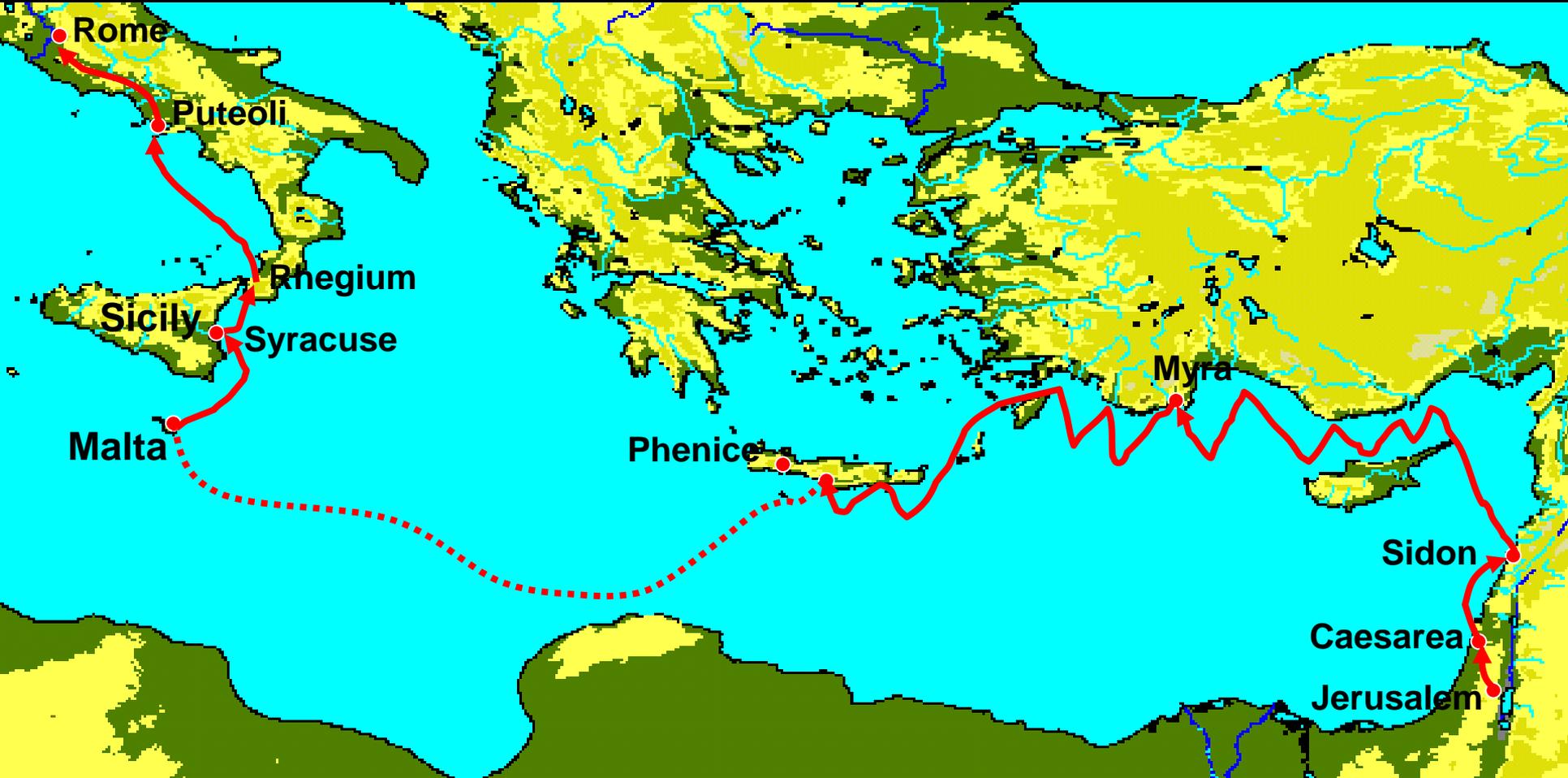
Storm and Shipwreck

Paul and other prisoners pick up a ship out of Sidon late in the season. They pick up an Alexandrian granary ship heading for Rome at Myra. They seek shelter from bad weather at Fair Havens; they hope to winter at Phoenice. However, a storm blows them out to sea and they are in desperate straits.



Storm and Shipwreck

Paul and other prisoners pick up a ship out of Sidon late in the season. They pick up an Alexandrian granary ship heading for Rome at Myra. They seek shelter from bad weather at Fair Havens; they hope to winter at Phenice. However, a storm blows them out to sea and they are in desperate straits. After jettisoning cargo and gear, and staving off a mutiny, on the 14th night of the storm the ship breaks up on a sand bar on Malta. No lives were lost.



Storm and Shipwreck

After surviving a venomous snake, and healing the chief of the island of a fever, after 3 months they sail to Syracuse; and after 3 days to Rhegium, and then to Puteoli. After a week with local believers, they set out on the 100 mile journey to Rome. Paul is encouraged by a welcome from local believers. He is kept under house arrest awaiting his trial. For 2 years he enjoys considerable freedom to preach.

The Book of Acts

- Lessons:
- God can take a weak fisherman...
- ... a Christ-hater,
- ... a single church...
- And change a generation
- How?

⁶ Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

Zech 4:6

The Book of Acts

- A.W. Tozer said:

“If the Holy Spirit were to withdraw Himself from the church today, 95% of what we do would go right on and no one would know the difference”.

“If the Holy Spirit would have withdrawn Himself from the church in the book of Acts, 95% of what they were doing would have come to a screeching halt and everybody would have known the difference!”

The Book of Acts

- The acts of the Holy Spirit did not stop at the end of chapter 28...
- ...or at the end of the first century
- For us, the book of Acts is a 'call to arms'



calvary
chapel
portsmouth

www.calvaryportsmouth.co.uk