

NOON BIBLE STUDY: ACTS 11

ACTS 11:1-3 - PETER RETURNS TO JERUSALEM, JEWISH DISCIPLES "TOOK ISSUE WITH HIM."

ACCUSATION (V.3) - "YOU WENT TO UNCIRCUMCISED MEN AND ATE WITH THEM"

ACTS 11:4-18 - PETER RETELLS THE STORY OF THE GENTILE'S CONVERSION

V. 14 - MORE DETAILS TO THE STORY FROM ACTS 10: "HE WILL SPEAK WORDS TO YOU BY WHICH YOU WILL BE SAVED, YOU AND ALL YOUR HOUSEHOLD."

V. 16 - PETER "REMEMBERED THE WORD OF THE LORD" WHILE HE WAS STILL WITH THE GENTILES. THIS WAS NOT A LATER REALIZATION! HE REMEMBERED WHAT JESUS HAD TOLD THEM YEARS BEFORE AND RECOGNIZED THAT IT WAS BEING FULFILLED IN THE GENTILES AT THAT MOMENT.

V. 17 - STAND IN GOD'S WAY" - GREEK WORD *KOLUO*, SAME WORD USED IN ACTS 10:47 ("REFUSE")

ACTS 11:19-21 - THE GOSPEL OUTREACH CONTINUES

V. 19 - THOSE WHO HAD BEEN SCATTERED BECAUSE OF PERSECUTION BECAUSE OF STEPHEN'S DEATH (ACTS 8:1-2) NOW GO TO PHOENICIA, CYPRUS, & ANTIOCH (BUT ONLY SPOKE TO JEWS)

Major Movements and Exchanges of Acts 11 vs 19-30

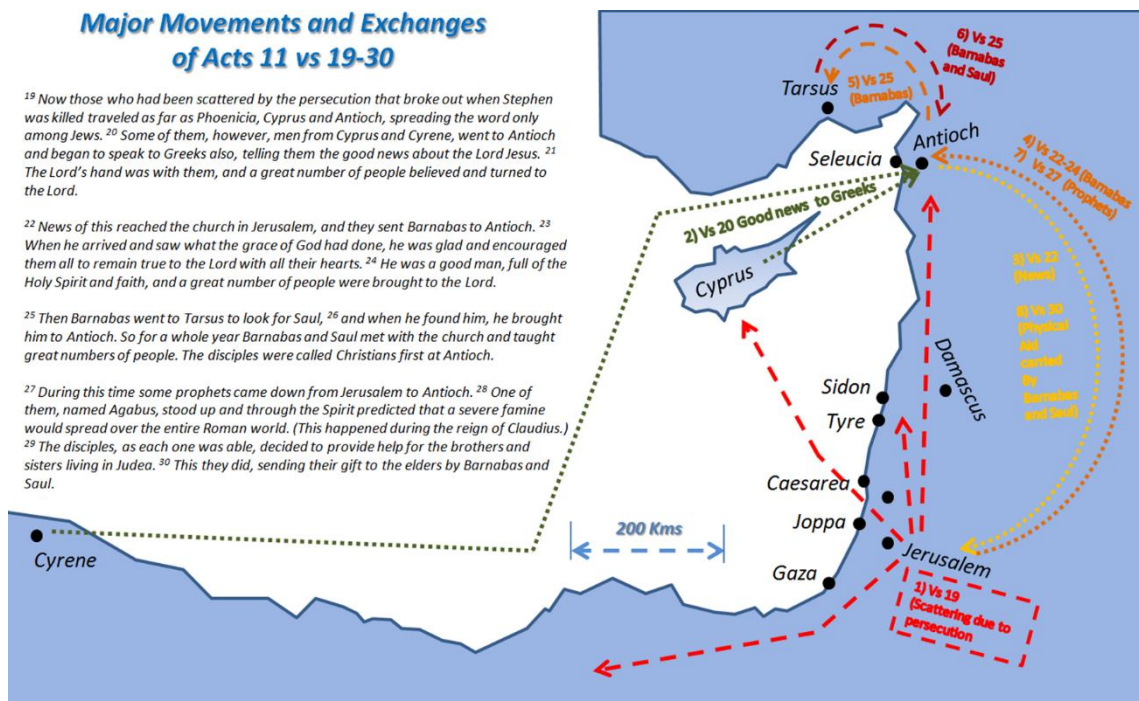
¹⁹ Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. ²⁰ Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

²² News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³ When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. ²⁴ He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

²⁵ Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶ and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

²⁷ During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)

²⁹ The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea. ³⁰ This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.



PHOENICIA WAS IN THE AREA OF PRESENT-DAY LEBANON, ITS PRIMARY CITIES BEING TYRE, SIDON, AND PTOLEMAIS. (FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES THERE, SEE 21:3-7.) CYPRUS WAS 100 MILES (161 KM) OFF THE COAST. THE PRIMARY LANGUAGE OF THESE AREAS WAS GREEK, AS IT WAS FOR ANTIOCH (MODERN ANTAKYA), THE LARGEST CITY OF THE AREA AND CAPITAL OF THE ROMAN PROVINCE OF SYRIA, WITH A POPULATION OF A HALF MILLION OR MORE. ONLY ROME AND ALEXANDRIA WERE LARGER IN

ANCIENT TIMES. AT ANTIOCH, AN ISLAND BEARING A PALACE AND A HIPPODROME STOOD IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ORONTES RIVER. BRIDGES CONNECTED THE ISLAND TO THE MAIN CITY. IN THE FIRST CENTURY THE MAIN CITY CONTAINED AN AQUEDUCT, BATHS, TWO THEATERS, TEMPLES (E.G., TO ARTEMIS AND TO HERAKLES), THE PANTHEON, AND THE KAISAREION (A BASILICA DEDICATED TO THE IMPERIAL CULT). PRIOR TO PAUL'S ARRIVAL, AN EARTHQUAKE IN 37 B.C. HAD DEVASTATED ANTIOCH, BUT THE EMPEROR GAIVUS (CALIGULA) HELPED REBUILD IT. ANTIOCH PERIODICALLY HOSTED OLYMPIC-STYLE GAMES. ITS GREAT COLONNADED AND MARBLE-PAVED ROAD HAD BEEN SPONSORED IN PART BY HEROD THE GREAT. (ESV STUDY BIBLE NOTE, ACTS 11:19)

V. 20 - SOME MEN (FROM CYPRUS & CYRENE) CAME TO ANTIOCH AND BEGAN SPEAKING TO "GREEKS" (GREEK SPEAKING GENTILES) ALSO, PREACHING THE LORD JESUS

V. 21 - "TURNED TO THE LORD" - "THE EXPRESSION "TURNED" IS A SUMMARY TERM FOR RESPONDING TO THE GOSPEL." (NET BIBLE NOTE ACTS 11:21)

- HERE THERE IS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN "BELIEF" & "TURNING TO THE LORD" (CP JOHN 8:30-31)

- PHRASE "TURN" WITH THIS USAGE IS FOUND IN ACTS 8X

ACTS 11:22-26 - BARNABAS SENT TO ANTIOCH

V. 24 - BARNABAS: A GOOD MAN, FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FAITH.

V. 21 - LARGE NUMBERS, V. 25 & 26 - CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS

V. 25-26 - BARNABAS GOES FROM ANTIOCH TO TARSUS TO LOOK FOR SAUL (ACTS 9:30). WHEN HE FIND HIM, BARNABAS BRINGS SAUL TO ANTIOCH. THEY REMAIN FOR AN ENTIRE YEAR. THEY MET WITH THE CHURCH AND TAUGHT CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS.

"THE DISCIPLES WERE FIRST CALLED "CHRISTIANS" IN ANTIOCH. ONLY 3X IN BIBLE DOES THIS WORD APPEAR (ACTS 26:28, 1 PETER 4:16). THE LABEL OF "CHRISTIAN" WAS PROBABLY NOT SOMETHING THE DISCIPLES CALLED THEMSELVES, BUT RATHER AN IDENTIFIER GIVEN BY THE UNBELIEVING PUBLIC AT ANTIOCH. IT IS AN INDICATION OF THE DISCIPLES AND THE MOVEMENT IN GENERAL GAINING A UNIQUE AND NOW SEPARATE IDENTITY FROM JUST A JEWISH SECT.

ACTS 11:27-30 - LARGE FAMINE PROPHESED.

V. 29 (NLT) - SO THE BELIEVERS IN ANTIOCH DECIDED TO SEND RELIEF TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN JUDEA, EVERYONE GIVING AS MUCH AS THEY COULD.

V. 29 - RELIEF: CP. MODERN EXAMPLE OF GIVING AFTER A NATURAL DISASTER, ETC.

- THE EARLY CHURCH WILL ADOPT THIS PATTERN THROUGHOUT THE TIME PERIOD OF ACTS (A GREAT EXAMPLE FOR US TODAY!).

- AFTER A RETELLING OF THE FACT THAT GOD ACCEPTS THE GENTILES (AND BY IMPLICATION ALL PEOPLE!), WE SEE THE GOSPEL CONTINUE TO SPEAK THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WITH GREAT RESPONSE. AND WE ALSO SEE THE PRACTICAL IMPLICATION OF THE CHURCH CARING FOR EACH OTHER IN THE SENDING OF PAUL AND BARNABAS AND THE RELIEF COLLECTION FOR HARD PRESSED AREAS.