

Acts 14.21b-28: Returning Through Galatia Sunday PM 07/24/22

I) Recap of Acts 14.1-21a

A) Iconium, v. 1-6

1. A great multitude of Jews and Gentiles believed, **v.1**

Acts 14:1 *Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed.*

2. Preaching of the Gospel confirmed by miracles (signs and wonders)

Acts 14:3 *Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.*

3. Conflict with unbelieving Jews.

Acts 14:2 *But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.*

4. A violent attempt

Acts 14:5 *And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them,*

B) Lystra, v. 7-20

1. Healing of a man who could not walk,

Acts 14:8 *And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. **9** This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed,*

2. People thought of Paul and Barnabas as “gods”

Acts 14:11 Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!"

3. Paul restrains them, explains who he and Barnabas are, and who God is.
4. **Acts 14:15** and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them,
5. Jews come in and provoke the Gentiles to stone Paul.

Acts 14:19 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

C) Derbe – many believed.

Acts 14:21a And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples,

II) Returning to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia.

Acts 14:21b They returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,

A) To encourage them in the faith.

1. Connected with the "through many tribulations we must enter the Kingdom of God.

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

2. These people had witnessed first hand the stoning of Paul, the violent threats and attempts on his life.
3. Perhaps they were already suffering from these same threats.

B) A lesson for us today.

1. We face different types of “tribulation” in Revelation the idea is the pressing of grapes.
2. Remember are called to bear the cross and not lay it aside.

Luke 14:26 *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.*

III) They Appointed Elders in Every church.

Acts 14:23 *So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.*

A) Understanding the term

1. Sometimes elder refers to age, simple older people.
2. Sometimes refers to refer those with the task of overseeing a congregation.

Acts 20:17 *From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.*

Acts 20:28 *"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

3. Terms used in the Bible to describe their duty, work. Shepherds, Bishop, Pastor, Elder, Overseers.

B) Important points from **Acts. 14.23**

1. Local congregations exist.
 - a. Church of God at Corinth, **1 Corinthians 1.2**
 - b. The church at Ephesus, Philippi, the churches in Galatia.

- c. Contradicts the teaching that local congregations do not have the right to exist.
- 2. Local congregations existed for a time without elders. What some call “scripturally unorganized”.
- 3. They were **appointed** as opposed to assumed the position.
- 4. Not mentioned in this passage but stated elsewhere the qualifications of these men.

1 Timothy 3:1 *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

Titus 1:5 *For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you-- 6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, 8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*

- a. How could they already be qualified?
- b. Some were Jews and had knowledge of the Law of Moses.
- c. Apostles could have given the gift of prophecy which

would give them knowledge.

5. Congregations without elders were “lacking” missing something God intends for them to have.
6. Each congregation had its own eldership.
 - a. The elder’s oversight is limited to the local congregation.

1 Peter 5:1 *The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:*

1 Peter 5:2 *Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;*

- b. No universal elders, elders of one congregation were not overseeing a separate congregation.
7. There were a plurality of elders in every church.
 - a. No one-man oversight.
 - b. The authority is in the eldership, Presbytery – eldership.

1 Timothy 4:14 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.*

1 Timothy 4:14 KJV 14 *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

IV) Returning to Antioch of Syria.

Acts 14:24 *And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. 25 Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. 26 From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. 27 Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. 28 So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.*

A) Antioch goes back to *Acts 13.2-3*.

1. They had fulfilled their ministry – the grace of God to the Gentiles.
2. An open door of opportunity a phrase used by Paul on numerous occasions.

B) The journey

1. Took from 1 ½ to 3 years to complete.
2. Covered about 1300 miles, of which 500 over sea, 800 over land.