

Chapter Fourteen

Chapter 14

- In verse 1, when the Apostles visited the city of Iconium, how effective was their ministry there?
- In verse 2, where did resistance come from and what was the result?
- In verse 3, how did their "persistence against resistance" work out for them?
 - Is your boldness "in the Lord" or in the strength of your own flesh? What's the difference?
- In verses 4-7, was everyone receptive to the gospel message?
 - How does this reflect what Yeshua stated when he said in Matthew 10:34, "Don't think that I came to send peace on the earth. I didn't come to send peace, but a sword."?

- Does the current proclamation of the gospel still produce similar results?
- In verses 6-18, we see Paul and Barnabas ministering to the gentile crowd in the city of Lystra.
 - Previously, they had preached in local synagogues, but here perhaps there wasn't one.
- In verse 8, how is the crippled man described?
 - Compare this to the crippled man who was healed in Acts 3.
- In verse 9, how did Paul "see" that this crippled man "had faith to be made whole"?
- What happened in verse 10?
- In verses 11-13, what was the reaction of the multitude who witnessed this event?
 - Do you think their pagan background was the context of their misunderstanding regarding the source of the healing and the identity of Paul and Barnabas?
 - Do you think the Apostles had a greater challenge when preaching to gentiles who were ignorant of the

Torah?

- Is ignorance of the Torah still a problem today when teaching people about the faith?
- How important is it for people today to fully understand the foundational teachings of a Torah-based faith?
- Have gentile believers today ever mixed Biblical faith with pagan practices and/or teachings?
- In verses 14-17, Paul and Barnabas tried to appeal to these pagans by appealing to the natural revelation of the created order.
 - His later attempts to do this in Athens were largely unsuccessful due to the lack of Torah foundation in his hearers.
- In verse 18, it demonstrates that even their attempts to communicate "hardly stopped the multitudes from making a sacrifice to them."
 - There are many stories of modern and past missionaries who have related similar stories regarding the difficulty of communicating the gospel message.

- Are there sub-groups within our society that seem to have similar language and cultural barriers to a proper understanding of the gospel?
- In verse 19, we see the militant, unbelieving Jews from Antioch and Iconium pursuing Paul and Barnabas to harass and intimidate them.
 - To what do you attribute such intense hatred and desire to persecute?
 - These same multitudes who were ready to worship Paul and Barnabas as gods, were now persuaded to stone them. How do you account for such a fickle response?
 - What was the end result of their persecution for Paul?
- In verse 20, we see that Paul rose up and entered the city.
 - It is not recorded, but do you think some of the inhabitants there might have been shocked to see him, since they assumed he was dead?
 - Paul and Barnabas moved on to Derbe, a town in the other direction.

- In verses 21-23, we see Paul and Barnabas have success in Derbe. They then decide to return to previous missions in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch.
 - What reason is given for their desire to return to these congregations?
 - Is there wisdom in following the Apostolic example of appointing a "plurality of leadership" in local congregations?
 - What is the downside of having a single, authoritative figure in charge of a congregation? Is it even Biblical?
 - Some modern missionary efforts have been criticized by focusing only on "getting people saved" and lacking a significant follow-through to ensure growing to maturity. How can the example of Paul and Barnabas serve to inform us of their wisdom?
- In verse 24-28, Paul and Barnabas completed their missionary campaign and returned home to Antioch, where they began.
 - Why do you think it was important for the ones who sent them out to hear of their exploits?

- Luke makes a point to state that not only did they report "all the things that God had done with them", but also "that he had opened a door of faith to the nations".
 - How significant was it that this gospel message was also available to the gentiles?
 - Throughout their travels, the main issue that many Jews had with their message was apparently not the claim of Yeshua being the Messiah of Israel or that forgiveness of sins was possible through His name. The intense, and sometimes violent, response had much more to do with their teaching against the man-made Rabbinic requirement of ritual conversion of gentiles to become a proper member of the covenant. How does this set the stage for the main issue in the next chapter of Acts?