

STRENGTH IN EVERY STRUGGLE
ACTS 13:49-14:7

**Woodland Park
Church of Christ**



26 May 2019

BACKDROP

- Book of Acts pivots at end of chapter 12, which up to that point had focused on the works of original apostles;
- Chapter 13 welcomes the missionary works of Paul and his associates (Barnabas, John Mark, Silas).
- Saul (Paul), Barnabas and John Mark go to Antioch after leaving Jerusalem. **Acts 12:25-13:1**
- Saul (Paul) and Barnabas separated for the work – Paul's first missionary journey. **Acts 13:2-3**



- Seleucia (**Acts 13:4**)
- Salamis (Cyprus) – preaching in the Jewish synagogues (**Acts 13:4-5**)
- Paphos (Cyprus) – proconsul Sergius Paulus converted, but opposition from Elymus, the sorcerer (**Acts 13:6-12**)
- Perga (Pamphylia) – John Mark leaves (**Acts 13:13**)
- Pisidia (Antioch) – Paul provides brief history of Israel preaches the gospel. Envious Jews cause trouble. **Acts 13:14-41**





PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 13 & 14

- City
- One of the "Seven Churches" - Rev. 2-3
- ← Paul's Route →

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Paul & Barnabas receive great Jewish opposition to the Gospel

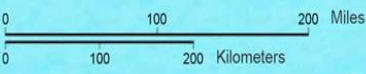
Paul & Barnabas flee to avoid being killed

Paul & Barnabas mistaken for gods Paul stoned

The Church at Antioch sends Paul & Barnabas on a missionary journey

Proconsul Sergius Paulus converted

Jerusalem Conference c. 49-50 AD



- Opposition, struggle and grind continued for Paul on his first journey:
 - Iconium – unbelieving Jews poisoned the minds of the Gentiles; city divided; attempts to abuse and stone Paul and company, but they flee. **Acts 14:2-6**
 - Lystra (Lycaonia): People wanted to make Paul and Barnabas gods; Jews from Antioch and Iconium tracked down Paul, stoned him and left him for dead. **But Paul “rose up” and went into the next city. Acts 14:8-20**
 - Derbe (Lycaonia) – made many disciples. **Acts 14:20-21**
 - Paul retraced much of his steps back to Antioch, **“strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith.” Acts 14:21-22**



PAUL'S LATER RECOLLECTION OF HIS STRUGGLES

From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. **II Corinthians 11:24-28**



LIKE PAUL & ASSOCIATES, WE HAVE STRUGGLES & CHALLENGES

- Physical illness and pain;
- Bereavement, sorrow and grief;
- Employment-related difficulties;
- Difficult meetings (and their dispositive outcomes with far reaching impact);
- Loved ones gone astray (wrecking lives);
- Temptations and tendencies.



**But GOD arms us
with strength in
every struggle!**

***For You have armed me with strength for the
battle;** You have subdued under me those who rose
up against me. **Psalm 18:39***



PSALM 18:16-19

He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, **but the LORD was my support.** He also brought me out into a broad place; He delivered me because He delighted in me.



PAUL'S AWAKENING

*And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, **there was given to me a thorn in the flesh**, the messenger of Satan to buffet me . . . For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness**. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

II Corinthians 12:7-10



ACCESSING GOD'S STRENGTH . . .

We must be close enough to Him & remain
in His presence.

That was Peter's and the apostles' undoing . . .

... Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.
Matthew 26:56

*And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away
to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and
elders were assembled. **But Peter followed Him
at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. . .***
Matthew 26:57-58



Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.
Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.
James 4:8

Studying God's word & prayer!

- **Importance of family devotionals and praying for and with our families brothers–married classes!**



**Encouraging all to remain
connected to God (in His good graces)!**

*For by You I can run against a troop, by my God
I can leap over a wall ... He is a shield to all who trust
in Him. **II Samuel 22:30,31; Psalm 18:29,30***



EXHORTATION TO GAIN GOD'S STRENGTH

See Psalm 18:20-24

Hezekiah's prayer (appeal): *“Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and done what was good in your sight.”*
And Hezekiah wept bitterly. II Kings 20:3



*He gives power to the weak, and
to those who have no might He
increases strength. **Isaiah 40:29***



LORD'S INVITATION EXTENDED TO ALL

- **Be added to the Lord's body**

Hear the gospel (**Acts 15:7**)

Believe (**Acts 15:7; Hebrews 11:6**)

Repent (**Acts 2:38**)

Confess (**Acts 8:37**)

Be baptized for the remission of
sin (**Acts 2:38, 8:38**) **or**



- Be reconciled to the Lord (**I John 1:9**);
- Desire prayer (**James 5:16**).

