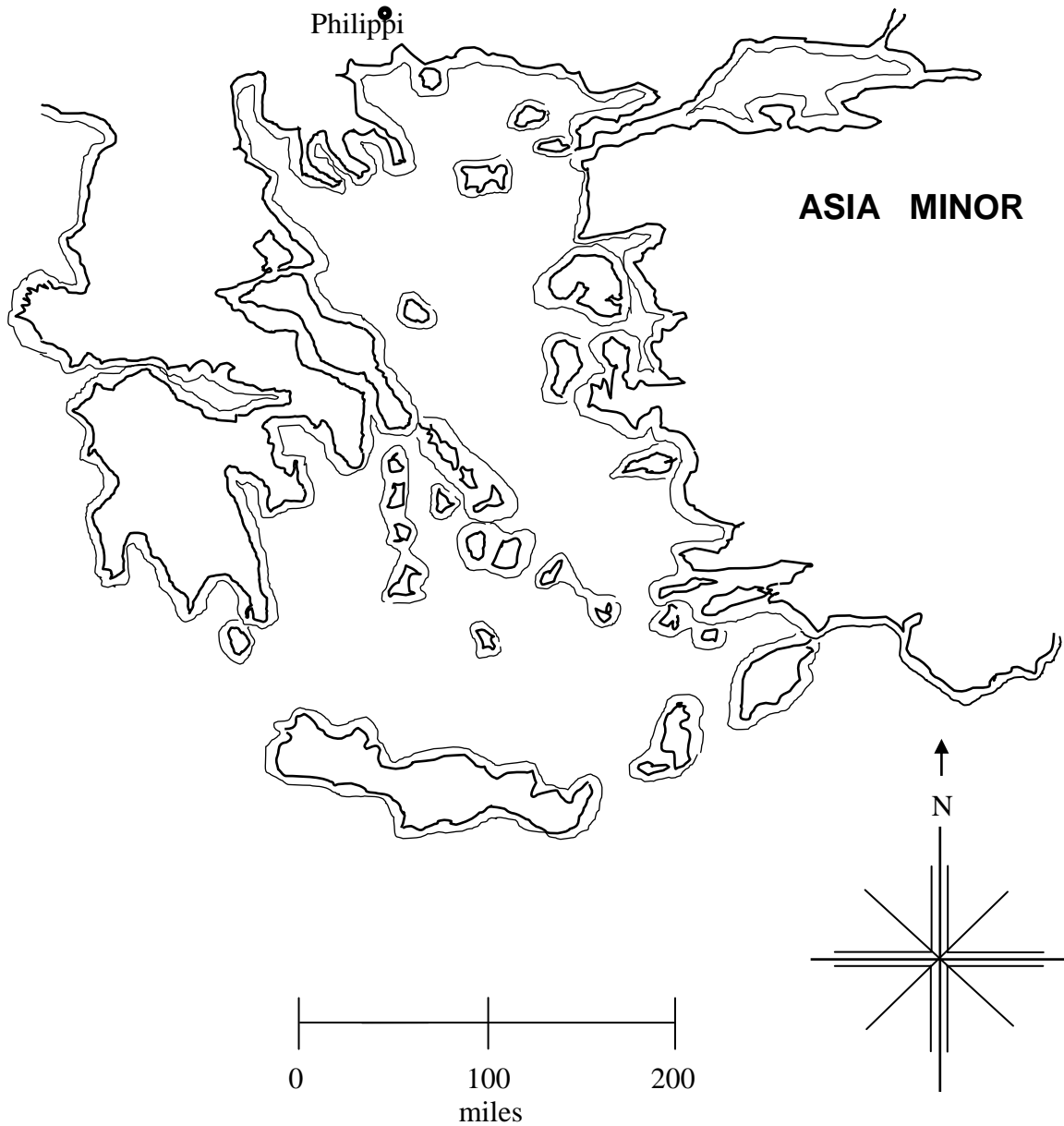


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#20, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD – Acts 17:1-34

After encouraging the brethren at Philippi, Paul and Silas traveled to the West and then swung South-West toward Amphipolis.



Acts 17:1 Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

[1.] v:1, Locate Amphipolis, Apollonia and Thessalonica and write them on your map.

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2 And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, " This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ." 4 And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women.

5 But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people.

6 When they did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have upset the world have come here also; 7 and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus." 8 They stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things. 9 And when they had received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them.

10 The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.

[2.] v:2, and for three Sabbaths, **Regarding Sabbaths, select the statements that are true.**

- a) The Jews would listen to him on Saturday.
- b) The Gentiles didn't care which day Paul preached.
- c) Paul normally went fishing on Sunday.

[3.] v:3, reasoned with them, **List the topics of the Scripture that Paul preached.**

[4.] v:4, Name the three groups that joined Paul and Silas.

[5.] v:5, But the Jews, **How was the prophecy of Moses (Rom 10:19) fulfilled at Thessalonica?**

[6.] v:6-9, before the city authorities, **It seems Jason and some brethren took the hit for Paul and Silas. However, from what we learned of the events at Philippi, why were the authorities fortunate that they roughed up Jason and not Paul and Silas?**

[7.] v:10, to Berea, **Locate Berea and identify it on your map (Pg 1).**

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11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. 12 Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men.

13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they came there as well, agitating and stirring up the crowds.

14 Then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea; and Silas and Timothy remained there. 15 Now those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.

16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols. 17 So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present.

18 And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, "What would this idle babbler wish to say?" Others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities," – because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

[8.] v:11-12, these were more noble-minded, **In the annals of Bible teaching few are spoken of more highly than the Jews at the Berean synagogue. How can we, as Christians today, be thought of as “noble-minded”?**

[9.] v:13, Jews of Thessalonica, **How could Paul, Silas and Timothy easily have avoided the wrath of these guys?**

[10.] v:14-15, out to go as far as the sea; **If you were fleeing to Athens by sea, on what body of water would you sail?**

[11.] v:16-17, his spirit was being provoked within him, **Why would these idols affect Paul this way, as opposed to say, a city full of brothels, or a city full of casinos?**

[12.] v:18, Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, **Go ahead and do your own research. Then, write down what you learned about these guys.**

[13.] v:18 again, **What reason did the Epicureans and Stoics have for calling Paul an “idle babbler”?**

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#20, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD – Acts 17:1-34

19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is which you are proclaiming? 20 "For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; so we want to know what these things mean." 21 (Now all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new.)

22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.

23 "For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

24 The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; 25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;

26 and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, 27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

28 ₁for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ₂For we also are His children.'

29 "Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

[14.] v:19-21, May we know what this new teaching is, Why or why wouldn't this be a good opportunity for any one who shares the gospel?

[15.] v:22, you are very religious in all respects. Why might this sentence be considered a great opener!

[16.] v:23, what you worship in ignorance, Paul's listeners knew exactly what he was going to talk about. What was it?

[17.] v:24-25, Back in v:16, we read: "observing a city full of idols". How did Paul now speak against the Athenians' futile attempts at true worship?

[18.] v:26-27, He made from one *man* every nation of mankind, This one *man* could be either be Adam or God. Write down who you think it is and why you came to that decision.

[19.] v:28-29, Being then the children of God, The point Paul made was, since God's children are flesh and blood, how can the intellectuals think their father is made up of gold, _____ or _____ , an image formed by _____ .

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#20, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD – Acts 17:1-34

30 "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this." 33 So Paul went out of their midst. 34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

[20.] v:30, having overlooked the times of ignorance, Now, having proved the absurdity of their so called wisdom, what did Paul tell them they needed to do?

[21.] v:31, having furnished, What was the proof that Paul mentioned regarding He who will judge the world?

[22.] v:32-34, the resurrection of the dead, What were the three reactions of those that heard this truth?

The following references are from the internet.

Minos addresses Zeus: ₁They fashioned a tomb for you, holy and high one,
Cretans, always liars, evil beasts, idle bellies.
But you are not dead: you live and abide forever,
For in you we live and move and have our being.

Epimendes

Speaking of God, Paul quotes Aratus's *Phaenomena*

₂Let us begin with Zeus, whom we mortals never leave unspoken.
For every street, every market-place is full of Zeus.
Even the sea and the harbour are full of this deity.
Everywhere everyone is indebted to Zeus.
For we are indeed his offspring ...

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NOTES