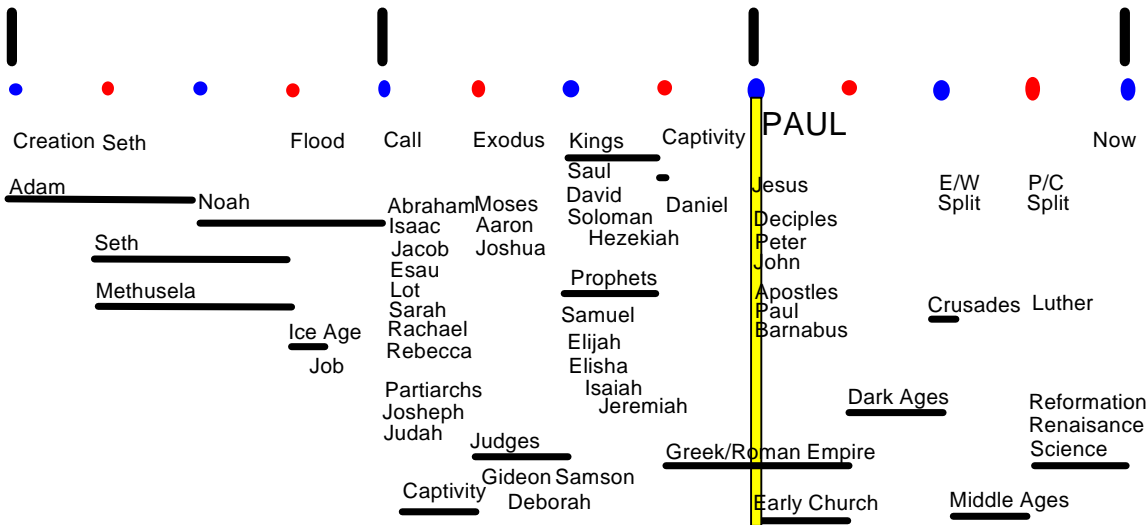


Paul

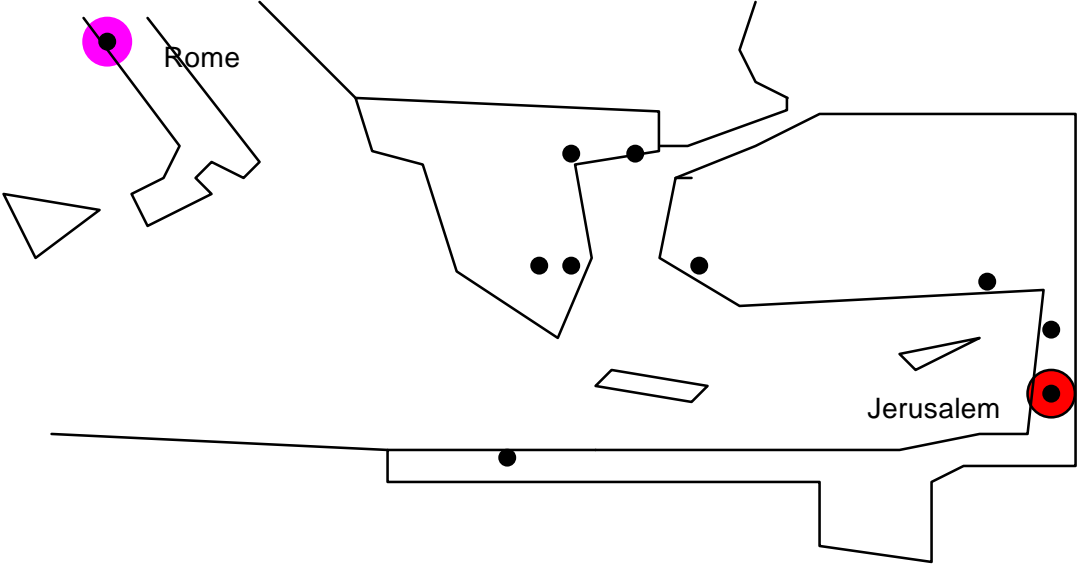
ACTS -- Paul's Ministry

The 13 Dots of History,
The Movement of God In History, The Lord of History



Paul

Paul's Road Map

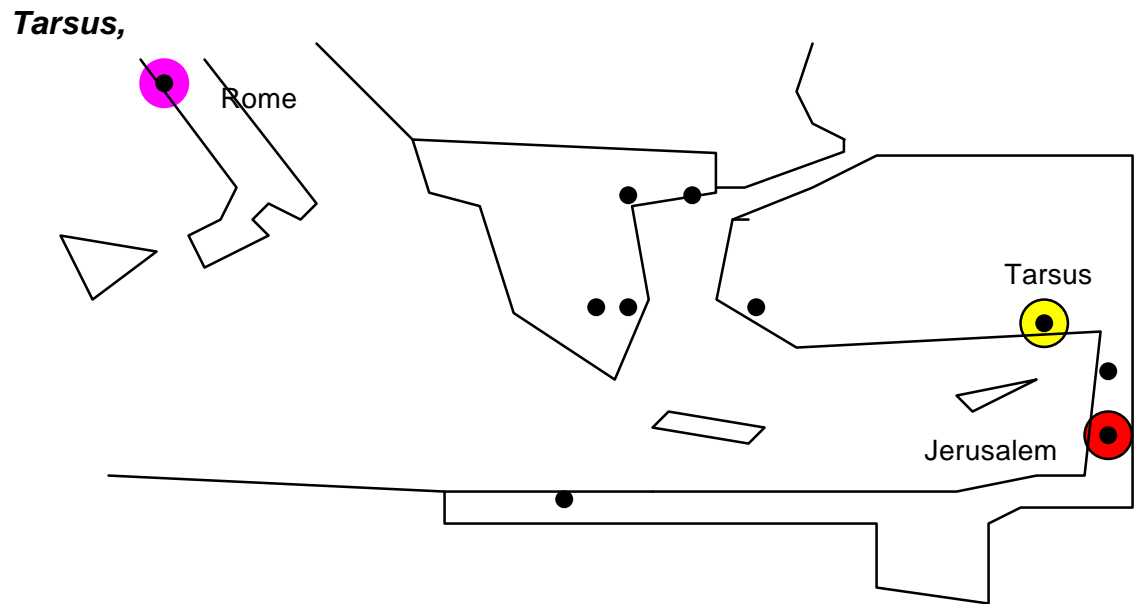


Paul

Paul's Early Life and Training

(A.D. 1-35) Paul's Jewish name was Saul, given at birth after his father or some near kin, or even after the famous Old Testament King Saul, who like Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin. Being born in a Roman city and claiming Roman citizenship, Paul (Paulos) was his official Roman name. Normally, a citizen would have three names similar to our first, middle, and last names. The New Testament records only the name Paul which would have been the middle or last name, since the first name was usually indicated only by the initial. See Rome; Roman Empire; Roman Law.

Paul

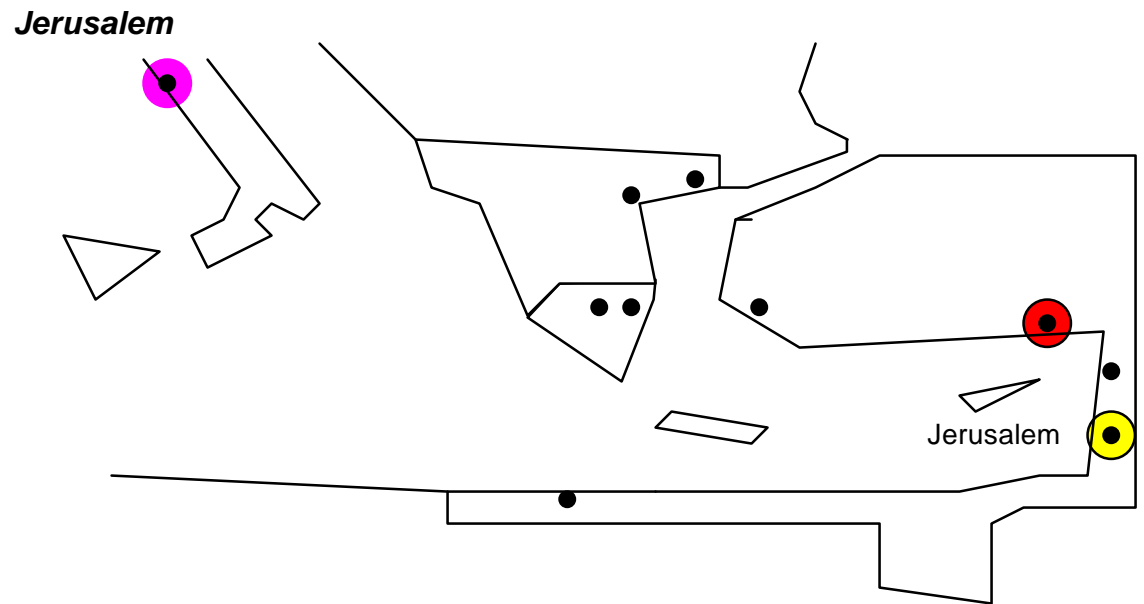


the place of Paul's birth (Acts 22:3), is still a bustling city a few miles inland from the Mediterranean on Turkey's southern shore. By Paul's day it was a self-governing city, loyal to the Roman Empire. We do not know how Paul's parents or forebearers came to live in Tarsus. Many Jewish families emigrated from their homeland willingly or as a result of foreign intervention in the centuries before Christ. A nonbiblical story says that Paul's parents migrated from a village in Galilee, but this cannot be verified. See Tarsus.

Well trained at home

Growing up in a Jewish family meant that Paul was well trained in the Jewish Scriptures and tradition (Acts 26:4-8; Phil. 3:5-6) beginning in the home with the celebration of the Jewish holy days: Passover, Yom kippur, Hanukkah, and others. At an early age he entered the synagogue day school. Here he learned to read and write by copying select passages of Scripture. He learned the ancient Hebrew language from Old Testament texts. At home his parents probably spoke the current dialect--Aramaic. As Paul related to the larger community, he learned the Greek language. Every Jewish boy also learned a trade. Paul learned the art of tentmaking which he later used as a means of sustenance (Acts 18:3).

Paul



Well trained by Gamaliel in Jerusalem

Paul eventually went to Jerusalem to study under the famous rabbi, Gamaliel. He was probably 13 to 18 years old. See Gamaliel. Paul had been well trained by the best Jewish teacher of that day (Acts 22:3). Paul became very zealous for the traditions, that is teachings, of his people (Gal. 1:14). He was a Pharisee (Phil. 3:5).

Paul

Paul's persecution of Jewish Christians, including Stephen

Paul's Commitment to Laws and Traditions

This zealous commitment to the study of the Old Testament laws and traditions is the background of Paul's persecution of his Jewish brothers who believed Jesus was the Messiah.

Stephen placed Jesus above law and tradition

Luke introduced Paul in the Book of Acts at the execution of Stephen. Now Stephen was executed because he placed Jesus (1) superior to the law and (2) superior to the Temple.

Stephen claimed Jews had always been rebellious

Furthermore he claimed (3) that the fathers of the Jewish nation had always been rebellious. Paul, from his training, vigorously disagreed with Stephen's point of view. Stephen opposed the very foundations of Judaism since the days of Moses.

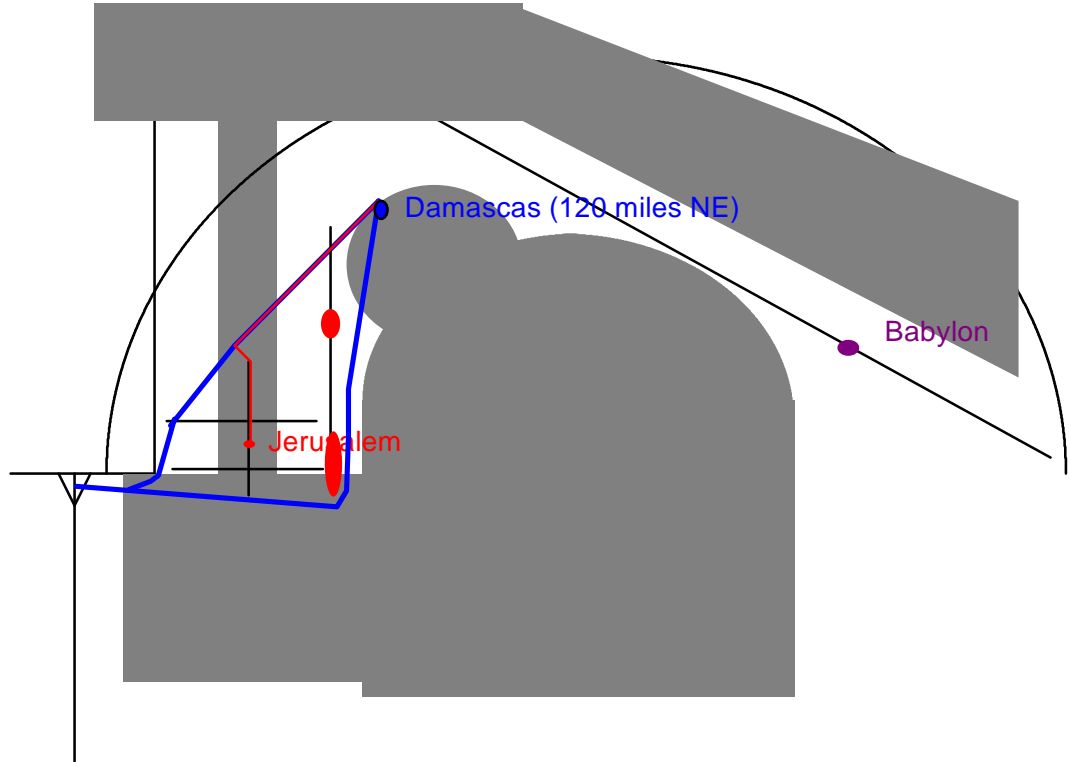
Preparing for debate, Paul learned about Jesus and the Church

Stephen's sermon apparently stimulated Paul's persecution of the church (Acts 8:1-3, 9:1-2; 26:9-11; Phil. 3:6; Gal. 1:13). To be an effective persecutor, Paul would need to know as much as possible about Jesus and the church. He knew the message of Christianity: Jesus' resurrection, His messiahship, and His availability to all humankind. He simply rejected the gospel. See Acts of the Apostles; Stephen.

Paul

Paul's Conversion

Location -- On the road to Damascus



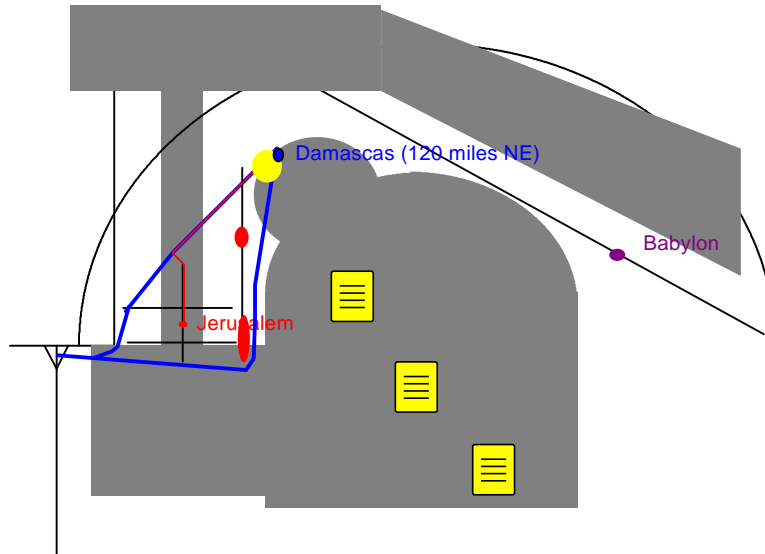
(A.D. 35)

Three accounts

Three accounts tell of Paul's Damascus Road experience: Acts 9:3-19; 22:6-21; 26:13-23. The variations in details are accounted for by recognizing that each story is told to a different audience on a different occasion. Paul was traveling to Damascus to arrest Jewish people who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. This was legally possible since city governments were known to permit the Jewish sector of the city a reasonable degree of self-government. The journey would take at least a week using donkeys or mules to ride and carry provisions. See Damascus; Messiah.

As Paul neared Damascus,

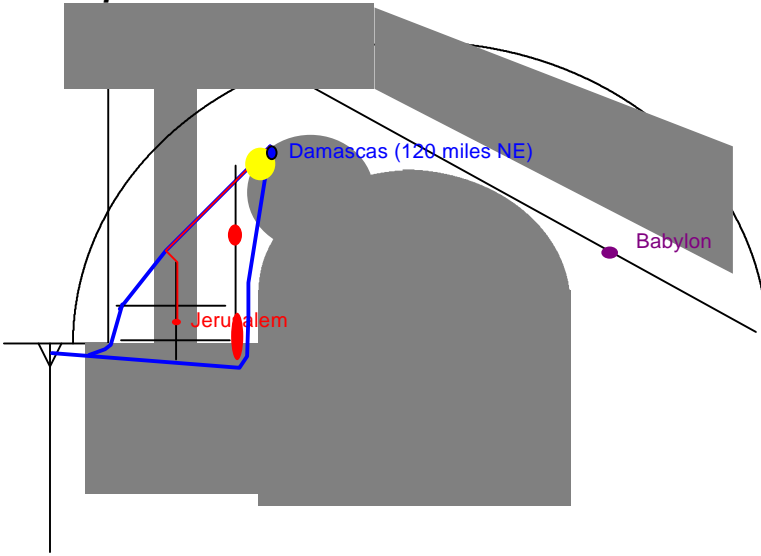
Paul



a startling light forced him to the ground. The voice asked: "Why persecutest thou me," and identified the speaker as Jesus--the very one whom Stephen had seen at the right hand of God when Paul witnessed Stephen's stoning. Paul was struck blind and was led into the city. Ananias met Paul and told him that he had been chosen by God as a messenger for the Gentiles (9:17). After Paul received his sight, like other believers before him, he was baptized.

Paul

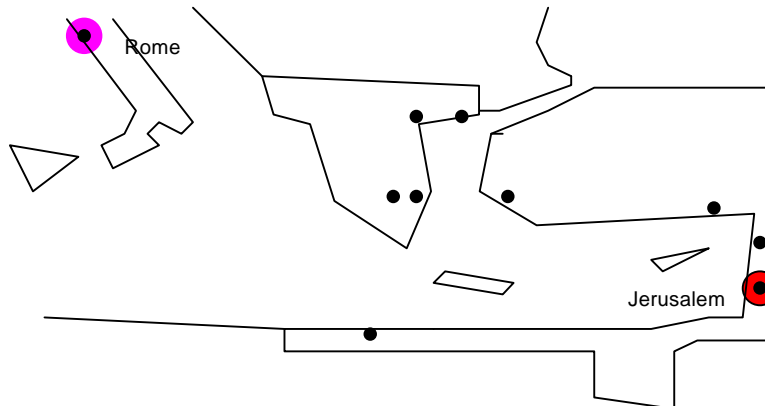
Paul accepts Jesus as Messiah



In this conversion experience, Paul accepted the claims of Jesus and the church, the very thing he was seeking to destroy. Jesus was truly the Messiah and took priority over the Temple and the law. The experience was also Paul's call to carry the gospel to the Gentile world (9:15; 22:21).

Paul

Paul's Call to the Gentiles



Paul's letters

Both his conversion and call are reflected in Paul's letters.

Jesus appeared to him

He wrote that Jesus had appeared to him (1 Cor. 15:8-10; 9:1);

By Revelation

the gospel Paul preached had come by revelation (Gal. 1:12);

Called by God

he had been called by God (Gal. 1:1; Eph. 3:2-12).

Radical change

His conversion brought a complete change in the inner controlling power of his life.

Like dying and being created anew

It was like dying and receiving a new life (Gal. 2:20) or being created anew (2 Cor. 5:17-20).

Call provided motivation to travel throughout Roman Empire

This experience of radical change and call to the Gentiles provided the motivation to travel throughout the Roman world. See Conversion.

Paul

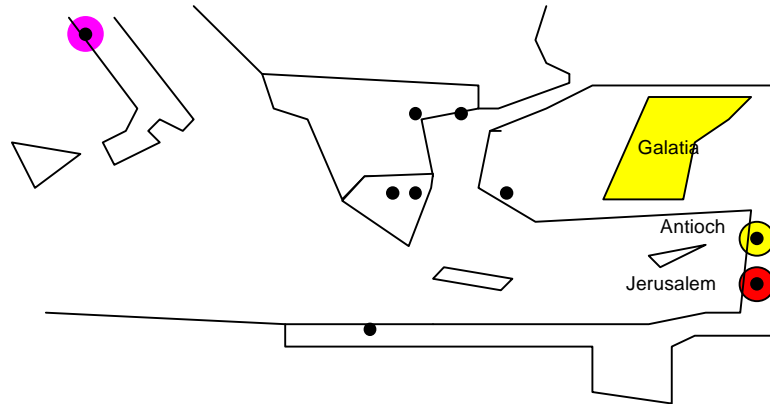
Paul's Missionary Journeys

(A.D. 46-61)

(1) *The first missionary journey*

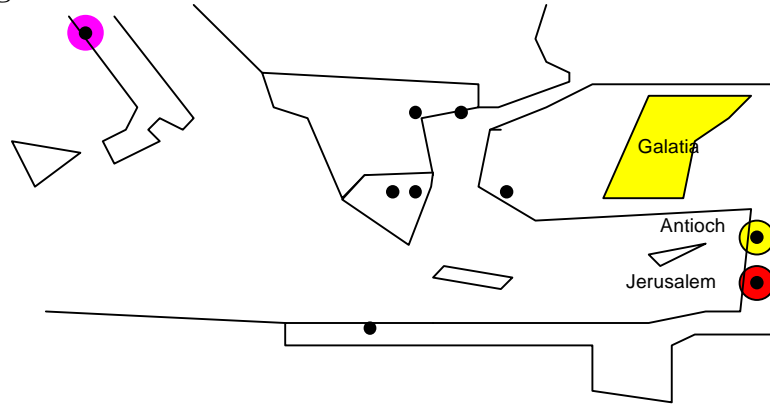
(A.D. 46-48)

Location -- Antioch and Galatia



Paul

began at Antioch

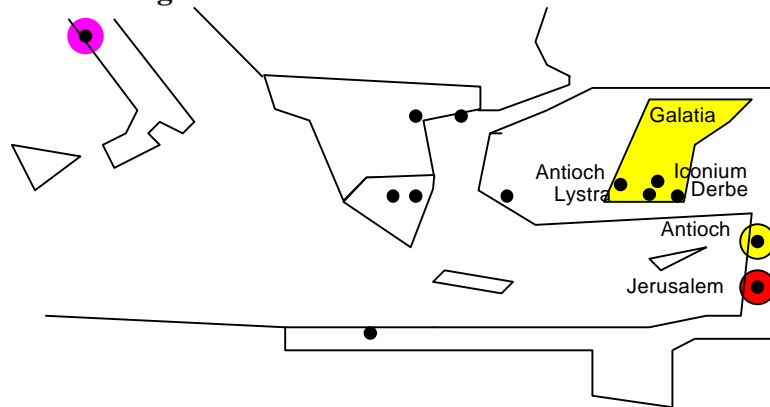


(Acts 13-14).

The church at Antioch had been founded by Hellenistic Christian believers like Stephen (Acts 11:19-26). Barnabas became its prominent leader, and Paul was his associate. Acts makes it clear that the entire church was involved in the world mission project, and the church chose Paul and Barnabas to be their representatives. John Mark went along as an important assistant. Their itinerary took them from Antioch (Antakya of modern Turkey) to the seaport of Seleucia. By ship they traveled to Cyprus. They landed at Salamis and traveled the length of the island to Paphos, from whence they set sail to Perga on Turkey's southern shore.

Paul

to Galatian highlands



Entering the highlands, they came into the province of Galatia where they concentrated their efforts in the southern cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.

Their typical procedure

was to enter a new town, seek out the synagogue, and share the gospel on the sabbath day.

Message caused division in synagogue

Usually Paul's message caused a division in the synagogue, and Paul and Barnabas would seek a Gentile audience. From Paul's earliest activities, it became evident that the gospel he preached caused tension between believers and the synagogue.

Many turn to the new way

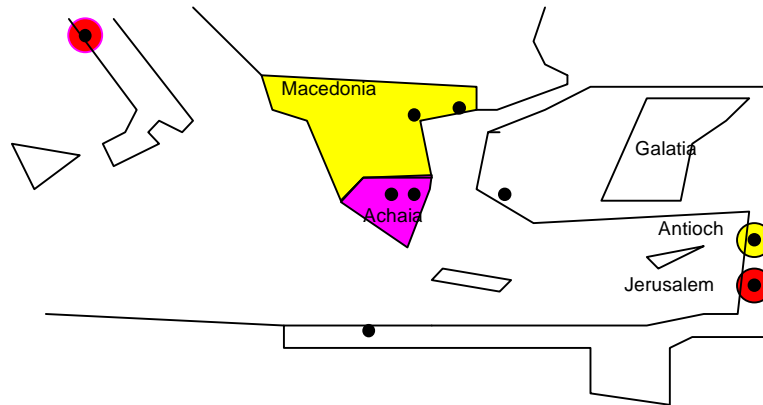
This first journey produced results. In each city many turned to the new way (Acts 13:44,52; 14:1-4,20-28); and a minimal organization was established in each locality (Acts 14:23). He later addressed an epistle to this district-Galatians. See Asia Minor.

Paul

(2) Paul's second journey

(A.D. 49-52)

Location -- Macedonia and Achaia

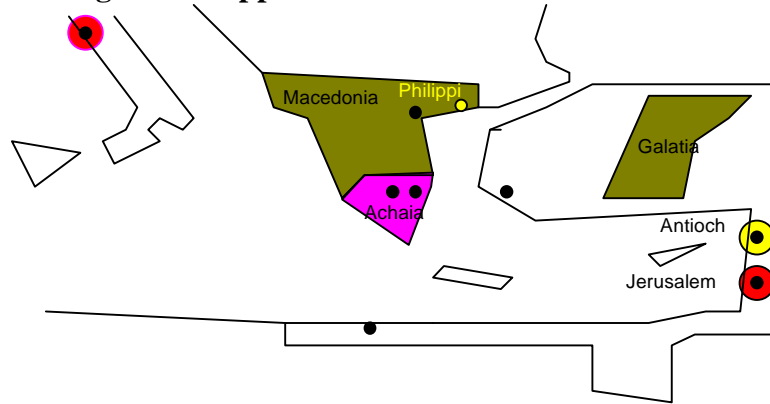


departed from Antioch

with Silas as his associate (Acts 15:36-18:18). They traveled overland through what is now modern Turkey to the Aegean part of Troas.

Paul

Vision to go to Philippi

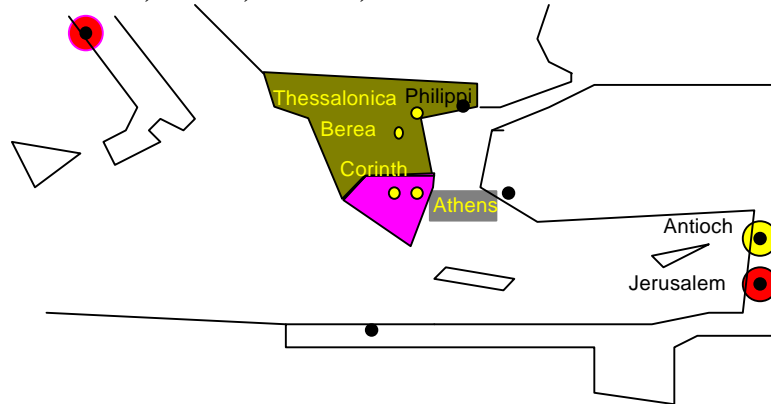


A vision directed Paul to go to Philippi in the province of Macedonia.

Philippi was a Roman city with no synagogue and a minimal Jewish population. Paul established a church there as further attested by his letter to the Philippians.

Paul

Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth



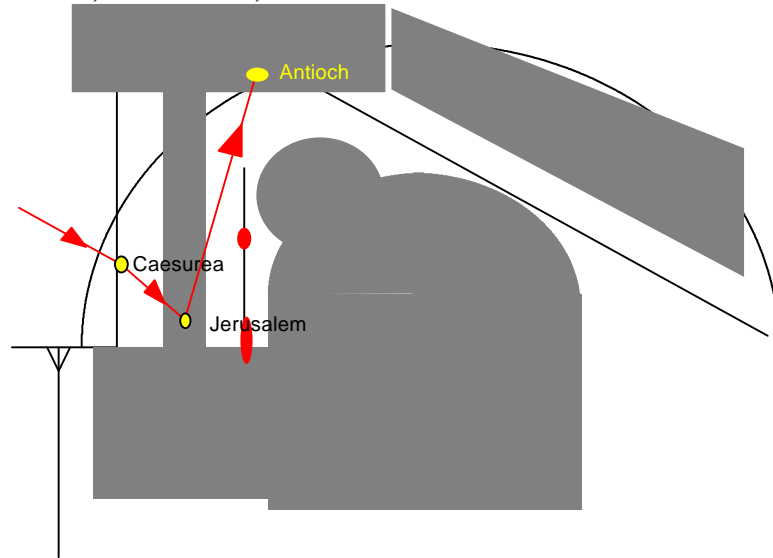
From there he traveled to Thessalonica and Berea.

His preaching in Athens met with meager results.

His work in Corinth (the province of Achaia) was well received and even approved, in an oblique fashion, by the Roman governor, Gallio.

Paul

Caesarea, Jerusalem, then Antioch



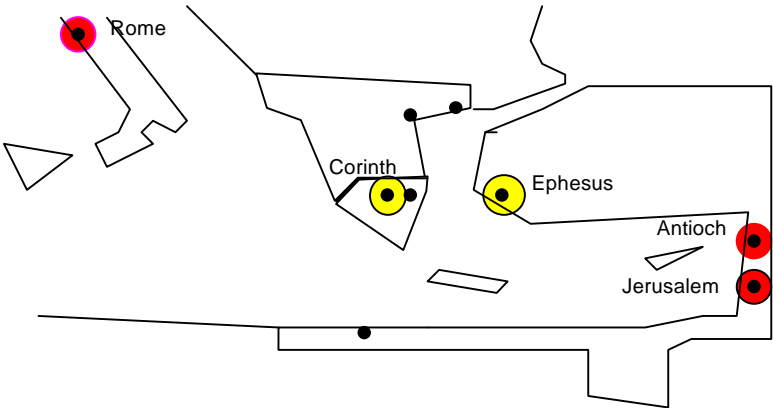
From Corinth, Paul returned to Caesarea, visited Jerusalem, and then Antioch (Acts 18:22).

Paul

(3) Paul's third missionary venture

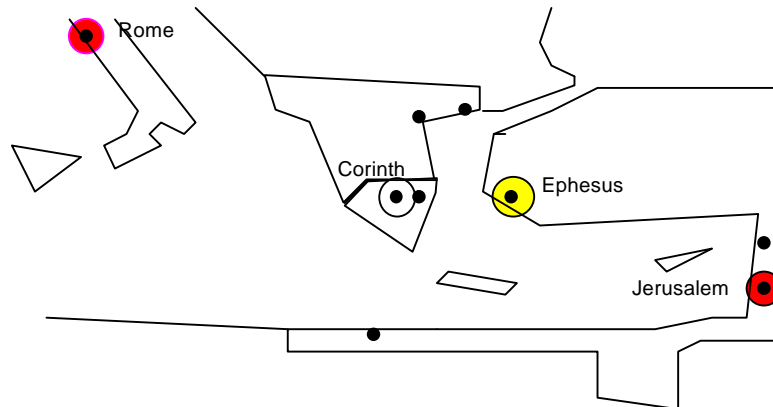
(A.D. 52-57)

Location -- Ephesus and Corinth



Paul

Ephesus



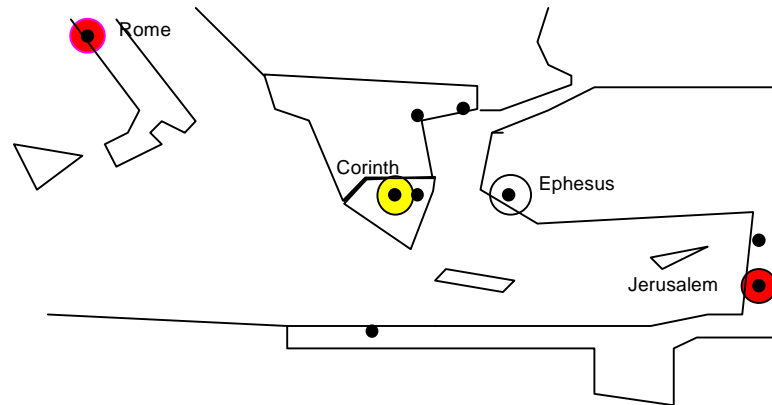
centered in the city of Ephesus from which the gospel probably spread into the surrounding cities such as the seven churches in Revelation (Acts 18:23-20:6; Rev. 2-3).

wrote to Corinthian church

From Ephesus he carried on a correspondence with the Corinthian church and possibly other churches.

Paul

Corinth



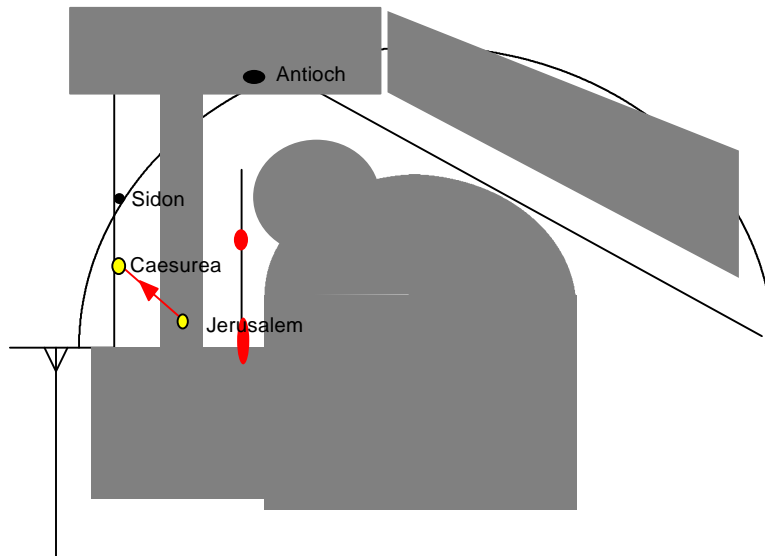
wrote to the Romans

While in Corinth at the end of this journey, he wrote the Epistle to the Romans. See Romans; Corinthians.

Paul

Paul's Arrest and imprisonment

Location -- Jerusalem and Caesarea



Transferred to Caesarea from Jerusalem

When Paul returned to Jerusalem for his last visit (21:17-26:32), he was soon arrested and imprisoned--first in Jerusalem and then later transferred to Caesarea (A.D. 57-59).

Charges

At first the charges against him were that he had brought a Gentile into the restricted areas of the Temple. Later, he was accused of being a pestilent fellow.

Real Reasons

His call to the Gentiles and His belief in the resurrection

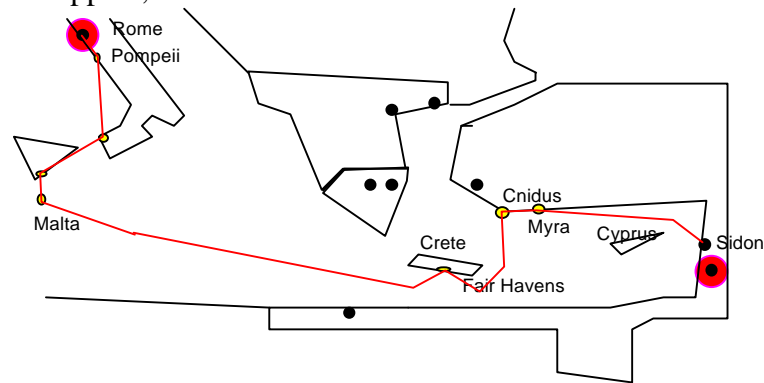
The real reasons for his arrest are noted: the crowd was enraged at his mentioning his call to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21-22), and he stated to the Sanhedrin that he was arrested because of his belief in the resurrection. These two reasons, or beliefs, were the controlling motivation of Paul's life from conversion to arrest.

Paul

Paul's Transfer to Rome

Locations -- To Rome,

by way of Sidon, Cyprus, Myra, Cnidus, Fair Havens, Crete, Malta, Syracuse, Rhegium, Pompeii, Puteoli, Tarracina, Forum of Appius, and Three Taverns.



Paul was eventually transferred to Rome (A.D. 60-61) as a prisoner of the emperor. His story in the New Testament ends there.

The tradition outside the New Testament that tells of Paul's execution in Rome is reasonable. The tradition that he traveled to Spain is problematic.

Paul

Paul's Theology

Paul and the churches

His calling as an apostle and to carry the gospel to the Gentiles

He told them he was an apostle from the Lord

(1) Paul did not hesitate to remind the churches that he possessed apostolic authority from the Lord. Galatians 1-2 is his most intensive statement of this. He blatantly stated that his appointment was from God (1:1), and that he preached the authentic gospel (1:8) because he received it by revelation (1:12).

To carry gospel to Gentiles

He had been called by God to carry the gospel to the Gentiles (1:16). This call was recognized by the leaders of the Jerusalem church (2:7-10), the very church in which the most distinguished of the apostles resided-- Peter, James, and John. In most of his letters, Paul identified himself from the beginning as an apostle of Christ Jesus. His certainty of the gospel and his relationship to Christ was the grounds of his relation to the churches. The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians further expresses Paul's commitment to the Gentile mission. Again he insisted that by revelation (3:3) he knew the mystery of Christ which is simply that the gospel is for the Gentiles without any restrictions (3:6-9). He had been given the specific charge to carry the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). See Galatians, Epistle to; Gentiles.

His dependency on others - returned to Jerusalem often - brought gifts

(2) While Paul was intensely aware of his calling, he also recognized his dependency upon others. When he was criticized for his own willingness to accept Gentiles without their being circumcised, he was willing to enter into dialogue with the Christians in Jerusalem (Acts 15) to resolve the question. Paul must have realized that he, as well as the young Gentile Christians, needed the approval and support of the Christian leaders in Jerusalem, the very place where the crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus took place. During his travels, he often returned to Jerusalem to visit the church, and he brought gifts to it on more than one occasion (Acts 11:29-30; 1 Cor. 16:1-4).

He persuaded churches through the gospel

Paul

(3) We must not think of Paul as an established administrator over the churches he founded. His letters give evidence that he did not command or dictate to his churches; rather he persuaded them. The lengthy correspondence with the church at Corinth was Paul's effort to persuade them to adopt the correct attitude towards specific problems as well as toward himself. He could only admonish the churches through the gospel.

Paul

Paul -- Humans choose themselves as the ultimate authority

(1) Human beings are alienated from God. They had the opportunity of recognizing God as Creator and themselves as dependent creatures, but instead they have rejected God and chosen themselves as the ultimate authority.

God permitted humankind to make the choice.

Choice of Abilities or Law to replace God

While Gentiles have made their own abilities absolute, the Jews have made the law absolute.

The results of such a choice

is humankind's immorality, idolatry, and the suffering that human beings impose upon one another. In short, our declaring our independence from God has given sin an opportunity. Each group has alienated themselves from God. This is the bondage of sin.

Bondage of Sin

Unfortunately, humans do not have the ability to solve this problem. We are hopelessly estranged from God. These ideas are especially described in Romans 1:18-3:8. See Sin; Anthropology.

Romans 1:18-3:8

Paul

Paul -- God sent his Son

(2) Paul's answer to humankind's alienation was that "when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his son" (Gal. 4:4). He further described the Son in Colossians 1:15-20.

Col 1:15-20

First, Christ is our model

Paul told his readers that Christ is the model for all humankind. He is the image of God (1:15). Christ represents what God would like all human beings to be.

Second, Christ is Almighty God

Christ is bound up with the One who created the universe. Its design and purpose centers in Christ. Whatever our question about our place in the world might be, the ultimate answer is in Christ.

Third, Christ is able to reconcile us to God

based on Christ's relation to God and His place in the universe, He is the appropriate one to reconcile us to God (1:20). Christ is able to reestablish the broken relationship between God and humankind. He shows us how we can realign our proper dependent relationship to God. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). See Conversion; Reconciliation.

Paul

Paul -- Graphic Portrayal of Christ's guift

Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus -- Paul's focus

(3) The presentation of Christ as God's reconciling gift to humankind is graphically portrayed in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. This event is the focal point of all that Paul preached and wrote. "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). The Death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus must be thought of as a unit. "If Christ be not risen, then ... your faith is also vain" (1 Cor. 15:14).

A passover sacrifice

Paul could think of Christ's death as a Passover sacrifice (1 Cor. 5:7),

A ransom

as a representative sacrifice (2 Cor. 5:14), or as a ransom (1 Tim. 2:5-6).

A future

When Paul stressed the resurrection event, he thought in terms of the doctrine of the future which he had inherited from his Jewish background:

End of human history will begin new world

(a) Human history has an end which will begin a new world.

Coming Messiah is the beginning to the end

(b) This will begin with the coming of the Messiah.

Encounter between good and evil

(c) An intense encounter between good and evil will take place.

Resurrection of the dead

(d) The dead will be resurrected. Jesus' resurrection is evidence that God has already begun the messianic era. It guarantees the hope that the complete resurrection and the new world is sure to come (1 Cor. 15:20-24). Jesus' death and resurrection was God's way of verifying that Jesus is the One who brings about reconciliation between humankind and God. See Jesus, Life and Ministry of; Christology; Future Hope.