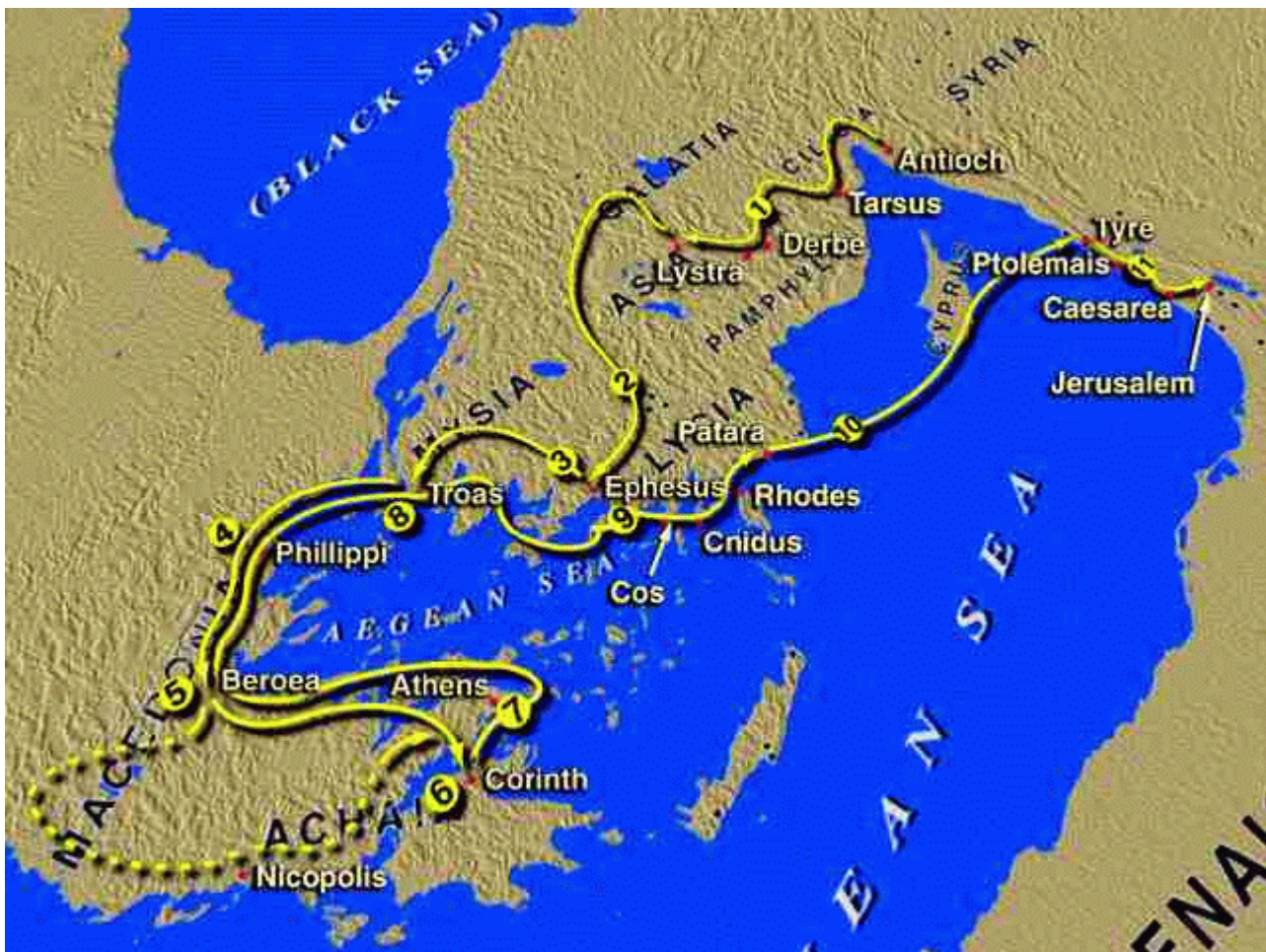


Paul and his Journeys – Part 9 Third Missionary Journey of Paul

Having completed his second missionary journey, Paul returns to Antioch. After ‘some time’, he begins his next missionary journey. This next missionary journey had a main purpose of strengthening the already-converted disciples.



Part 1 & 2 – Paul travels all over the regions of Galatia and Phrygia to in order to strengthen the disciples.

Part 3 – Paul arrives at Ephesus and find a group of disciples that had only heard the of the baptism of John, even though they had been instructed in the ways of the Lord. It appears that Appollos had been through this area, ‘diligently’ teaching the things of the Lord, but knowing only of the baptism of John (Acts 18:25). Paul asks them ‘Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?’. Of course they did not even know the Holy Ghost was a part of the new covenant. Paul clears the matter up by baptizing the dozen men in the name of Jesus Christ, and they all receive the Holy Ghost speaking in tongues and prophesying.

Paul preached in the synagogue for three months, ‘disputing and persuading’ the things of God. As usual, many of them hardened their hearts, and did not believe the words of Paul. He stays at Ephesus for around 2 years preaching, so that everyone in the region heard the gospel, ‘both Jews and Greeks (Acts 19:10). Through Paul working many mighty miracles, there were a large number of converts here. Since they now knew the true God, and His true power, they no longer needed their ‘curious arts’. The people proceeded to burn their books on curious arts (totalling fifty thousand pieces of silver in value).

Paul sent Timotheus and Erastus ahead into Macedonia, where he would later meet up with them, but stayed in this region for another ‘season’. During this time, Demetrius the silversmith who made silver shrines for the false idol ‘Diana’, gathered men of the same occupation together. He was concerned that there would no longer employment for them, now that Paul had turned away many people from gods that are ‘made with hands’. A riot starts with the men yelling out ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians’, and the city is thrown into chaos. Paul avoids the riot, and the mob is eventually calmed by officials.

The first letter to the Corinthians was probably written from here, near the end of his stay, as was the book of Galatians.

Part 4 & 5 – Paul travels the regions of Macedonia and gives much exhortation to the disciples. The second letter to the Corinthians was probably written during this time.

Part 6 & 7 – Paul goes preaching and exhorting the regions of Greece, visiting the Corinthian church again. He remains in the region for three months, and sends a few of the disciples to wait back in Troas. The book of Romans was probably written during this time.

Part 8 – Paul himself returns back through Macedonia, and sails from Phillipi to meet up with the disciples at Troas. Paul preached to them on the first day of the week ‘when the disciples came together to break bread’ (Acts 20:7 – it is from this that most modern-day Churches hold their communion service on a Sunday, being the first day of the week). Paul’s speech continued until midnight where Eutychus who was listening from the ‘upper chamber’ fell asleep and fell off from the third loft. He was presumed dead, but Paul embraced him, and his life came back to him again. After this minor interruption, they decided to break bread, and then Paul continued his speech until the break of day.

Part 9 – Paul meets up with other disciples at Assos, where they travel to Mitylene to sail to Chios. They then travel to Samos, Trogyllium, and finally arrive on the island of Miletus. From here, Paul sends word to all the Ephesian elders to join him. In an emotional speech to them, Paul declares his love toward them, his innocence from holding the gospel back from any man, and that they would see his face no more (Acts 20:25). He also warns them that after his departure, ‘grievous wolves’ would enter in the church and destroy the flock, and men from within would also speak perverse things to draw away the disciples. They were to ‘take heed’ to ensure that their church was not destroyed by predators.

Part 10 – Paul and his co-travelers arrive at Coos, and the following day went to Rhodes. From here they travel to Patara, through the island of Cyprus, and finally arriving at Tyre, where they stay for a week.

Part 11 – The travelers go to Ptolemais, and then to Caesarea where they stayed many days at the house of Philip the evangelist. During this time Agabus, a prophet from Judaea, came and prophesied that the Jews at Jerusalem would bind Paul up and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. Paul is not too concerned with the prophecy having suffered imprisonment before, and was at the stage where he was ready to die ‘for the name of the Lord Jesus’ if it was the Lord’s will.

Always trusting on the Lord for deliverance, and not fearing what any mortal could do to his body, Paul and his travelers head back to Jerusalem to face whatever challenges were to come upon them.

This ends the third journey which probably lasted about four years.

More next month...