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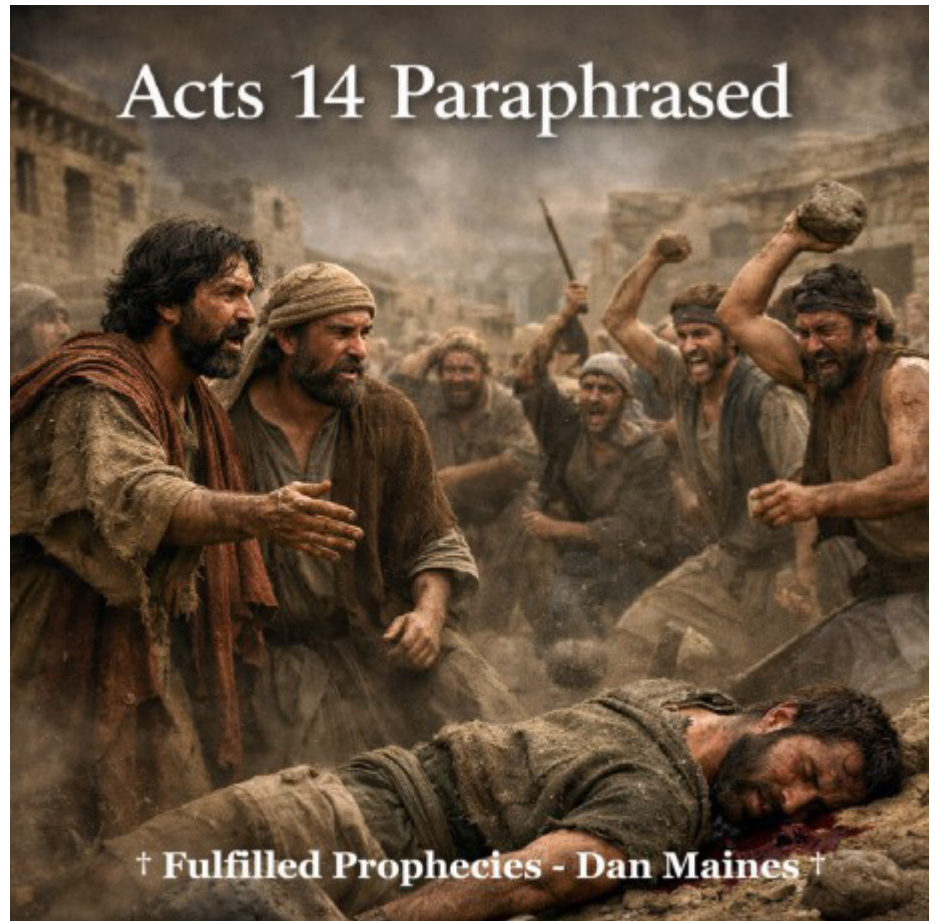
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Acts 14 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Acts 14 Paraphrased

Introduction

† Paul and Barnabas continue spreading the gospel among Jews and Gentiles, and we see both acceptance and strong opposition.

† This chapter shows how the message of Christ divided people, some believed, others hardened themselves.

† It also reveals that signs and wonders confirmed the word, and that persecution did not stop the work of God.

Acts 14:1

At Iconium they entered the synagogue together and spoke in such a way that a large number of both Jews and Greeks believed.

† The gospel was for both Jew and Gentile, showing the covenant was never limited to one nation (Isaiah 49:6).

† Their bold teaching brought results because the message carried authority and truth.

† Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (Romans 10:17).

Acts 14:2

But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and poisoned them against the brothers.

† Unbelief doesn't stay quiet, it actively works against truth.

† This shows spiritual opposition always tries to corrupt and divide.

† Jesus warned that division would come because of Him (Matthew 10:34-36).

Acts 14:3

So they remained there a long time, speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who testified to the word of His grace by granting signs and wonders through their hands.

† Signs confirmed the message during this transition period of the covenant.

† The focus is still the word of His grace, not the miracles themselves.

† God bore witness to the truth being preached (Hebrews 2:3-4).

Acts 14:4

But the people of the city were divided, some sided with the Jews, and others with the apostles.

† The gospel always divides truth from error.

† There's no neutral ground when it comes to Christ.

† This fulfills the pattern seen throughout Scripture, people

either receive or reject.

Acts 14:5

And when an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and the Jews with their rulers to mistreat and stone them,

† Opposition escalates when truth threatens established systems.

† Both religious and political forces often unite against God's messengers.

† This mirrors what happened to Christ Himself (John 15:20).

Acts 14:6

they became aware of it and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the surrounding region,

† Wisdom isn't cowardice, they moved to continue the mission.

† The gospel doesn't stop, it spreads further.

† Persecution often results in expansion of truth.

Acts 14:7

and there they continued to preach the gospel.

† Their mission remained unchanged regardless of opposition.

† The gospel is the central message, not location or circumstance.

† Faithfulness is seen in consistency.

Acts 14:8

At Lystra a man was sitting who had no strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked.

† This highlights a lifelong condition, making the miracle undeniable.

† It mirrors the power seen earlier in Acts (Acts 3:2).

† Physical healing points to spiritual restoration.

Acts 14:9

This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who, when he had fixed his gaze on him and saw that he had faith to be made well,

- † Faith was present before the miracle.
- † The gospel produces faith even before visible change.
- † God responds to genuine belief.

Acts 14:10

said with a loud voice, stand upright on your feet. And he jumped up and began to walk.

- † Immediate and complete healing shows divine power.
- † This confirms the authority of the message.
- † It reflects the same power Christ displayed.

Acts 14:11

When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the Lycaonian language, the gods have become like men and have come down to us.

- † The people misunderstood the miracle through their pagan lens.
- † Man naturally turns truth into idolatry without proper understanding.
- † This shows the danger of signs without sound doctrine.

Acts 14:12

And they began calling Barnabas Zeus, and Paul Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.

- † They assigned false identities based on their beliefs.
- † This reveals how culture shapes interpretation.
- † Truth must correct false worship.

Acts 14:13

The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to offer sacrifice with the crowds.

- † False religion responds with ritual instead of repentance.
- † The people were ready to worship men instead of God.
- † This shows how easily truth can be twisted.

Acts 14:14

But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out

- † They rejected worship immediately.
- † True servants of God refuse glory for themselves.
- † This is the opposite of false teachers who seek honor.

Acts 14:15

and saying, men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these worthless things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything that is in them.

- † They redirected attention to the Creator.
- † The call is always repentance from idols to the living God.
- † This aligns with the message of turning from dead works (Hebrews 6:1).

Acts 14:16

In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways,

- † God allowed the nations to walk in ignorance for a time.
- † This doesn't mean approval, but patience.
- † It sets the stage for the gospel going to all nations.

Acts 14:17

and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.

- † Creation itself testifies of God.
- † Even those without the law had evidence of His goodness.
- † This reflects Romans 1:19-20.

Acts 14:18

Even saying these things, with difficulty they restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them.

- † False worship is deeply rooted in human nature.

- † It takes effort to redirect people to truth.
- † Teaching must accompany signs.

Acts 14:19

But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

- † The same crowd that wanted to worship now turns against him.
- † Public opinion is unstable when not grounded in truth.
- † Persecution follows faithful preaching.

Acts 14:20

But while the disciples stood around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day he went away with Barnabas to Derbe.

- † God's purpose preserved Paul.
- † He didn't quit, he continued the mission.
- † This shows endurance in suffering.

Acts 14:21

After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,

- † They returned to strengthen believers, not just make converts.
- † Discipleship requires ongoing teaching.
- † The mission includes building up the church.

Acts 14:22

strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

- † The kingdom wasn't future, they were entering it then.
- † Tribulation was part of that transition period.
- † This aligns with Acts 1:3 and Colossians 1:13.

Acts 14:23

When they had appointed elders for them in every church,

having prayed with fasting, they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

† Structure and leadership were established early.

† Elders were appointed in every church.

† This shows order in the body of Christ.

Acts 14:24

They passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia.

† The mission continued across regions.

† The gospel spread geographically.

† This fulfills the expansion pattern of Acts.

Acts 14:25

When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

† The word remained central in every place.

† Preaching was always the priority.

† The message never changed.

Acts 14:26

From there they sailed to Antioch, from which they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had accomplished.

† Their mission had a defined purpose and completion.

† God's grace was the foundation of their work.

† This shows accountability and sending.

Acts 14:27

When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they began to report all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

† The focus is on what God had done.

† The door of faith was opened to the nations.

† This confirms the inclusion of the Gentiles.

Acts 14:28

And they spent a long time with the disciples.

- † Fellowship and teaching continued.
- † Growth happens over time, not instantly.
- † The work didn't stop after the journey.

Historical References

- † Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, describes the tensions between Jews and Gentiles during this period.
- † Irenaeus, Against Heresies, confirms the early spread of the gospel through apostolic preaching.
- † Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, records the endurance of early believers under persecution.
- † Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, speaks of turning from idols to the true God.

How it applies to us today

- † The gospel still divides truth from error, and we must stand firm in it.
- † We shouldn't seek glory for ourselves, but point everything back to God.
- † Faithfulness means continuing even when there's opposition.
- † Discipleship matters, not just belief but growth and strengthening.
- † God has already opened the door of faith, and we walk in what's been fulfilled.

Q & A Appendix

- Q:** Why did people react so differently to the same message?
- A:** Because belief and unbelief come from the heart, John 3:19.
- Q:** Were miracles the main focus?
- A:** No, they confirmed the word, Hebrews 2:3-4.
- Q:** Why did Paul refuse worship?
- A:** Because only God is worthy, Revelation 22:8-9.
- Q:** What does entering the kingdom through tribulation mean?
- A:** It referred to that generation transitioning into the kingdom, Acts 1:3.
- Q:** Did the gospel include Gentiles from the beginning?

A: Yes, God always intended it, Isaiah 49:6.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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† Acts 14

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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