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By Dan Maines

## Acts 14

### Acts 14:1

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

† The gospel was first proclaimed in synagogues, fulfilling the pattern of "to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). Many believed, showing the Spirit's power in diverse groups.

### **Acts 14:2-3**

But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and embittered them against the brothers. Therefore they spent a long time there, speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who was testifying to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be performed by their hands.

† Opposition did not drive Paul and Barnabas away but strengthened their witness. God confirmed their word with signs and wonders.

† Josephus (Antiquities 13.10.6) records Jewish-Gentile tensions in various cities, which explains the hostile response.

### **Acts 14:4-7**

But the people of the city were divided; and some sided with the Jews, while others with the apostles. And when an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and the Jews, together with their rulers, to treat them abusively and to stone them, they became aware of it and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe, and the surrounding region; and there they continued to preach the gospel.

† The gospel always divides, those who believe and those who resist. Despite threats, Paul and Barnabas continued preaching elsewhere.

### **Acts 14:8-10**

In Lystra a man was sitting whose feet were disabled. He had been unable to walk since birth, and had never walked. This man was listening to Paul as he spoke. Paul looked at him intently and saw that he had faith to be made well, and he said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet!" And he leaped up and began to walk.

† This miracle paralleled Peter healing the lame man in Acts 3, showing continuity of Christ's power through both apostles.

### **Acts 14:11-13**

When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us!" And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, since he was the chief speaker. Moreover, the priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.

† The pagan reaction shows how Gentiles interpreted miracles through their religious worldview. Paul and Barnabas were mistaken for gods.

† Philo (On the Embassy to Gaius 116) notes how Greeks often deified men of power, which explains the crowd's reaction.

### **Acts 14:14-15**

But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard about it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men, of the same nature as you, preaching the gospel to you, to turn from these useless things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything that is in them."

† Paul redirected worship to the Creator, not to men. Their humility contrasted sharply with Herod in Acts 12, who accepted divine honors and was struck down.

### **Acts 14:16-18**

"In past generations He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; 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." And even by saying these things, only with difficulty did they restrain the crowds from offering sacrifices to them.

† Paul appealed to general revelation, God's witness in creation and providence. The Gentiles were accountable for recognizing the Creator.

† The Dead Sea Scrolls (1QS 10.10-11) affirm God's providence in sustaining creation, resonating with Paul's words.

### **Acts 14:19-20**

But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking that he was dead. But while the disciples stood around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe.

† Paul endured stoning but rose again, a living testimony of God's preservation. This suffering fulfilled what Christ told him he must endure (Acts 9:16).

† 2 Corinthians 11:25 recalls Paul being stoned, likely referring to this very incident.

### **Acts 14:21-22**

And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had made a good number of disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "It is through many tribulations that we must enter the kingdom of God."

† Paul encouraged perseverance through tribulation. The path to the kingdom was not ease, but endurance.

### **Acts 14:23-25**

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. They passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia. When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

† Elders were appointed in every church, showing the early pattern of local leadership under the Lord's authority.

### **Acts 14:26-28**

From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been entrusted to the grace of God for the work that they had accomplished. When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they began to report all the things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. And they spent a long time with the disciples.

† Paul and Barnabas gave account of God's work, showing missions as a work of God's grace. The door of faith to the Gentiles had been opened widely.

### **How it applies to us today**

† The gospel divides people, but God sustains His servants through opposition.

† Miracles confirm the message, but the focus must always remain on Christ, not men.

† God's providence in creation testifies to His reality even today.

† Tribulation is part of the path to the kingdom, and perseverance brings maturity.

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

### **Source Index**

† Josephus, Antiquities 13.10.6 – Jewish-Gentile tensions

† Philo, On the Embassy to Gaius 116 – Greeks deifying men

† Dead Sea Scrolls, 1QS 10.10-11 – God's providence in creation

† 2 Corinthians 11:25 – Paul stoned and preserved

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