

THE ACTS AND THE APOSTLES

PLACING THE BOOK OF ACTS AND THE APOSTLES ON THE MIDDLE EAST MAP

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Version 1.1 (April 15, 2013)

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Printed in U.S.A

Published by



Biblical Backgrounds, Inc.
Rockford, IL U.S.A.

ME MARKING GUIDE 1: A CENTURY WITH THE APOSTLES AND THEIR DISCIPLES

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Introduction

Forty days of counting the Omer passed with the Master Yeshua, the Messiah appearing occasionally to individual followers or to groups of followers:

He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. (1 Corinthians 15:5–7)

On the fortieth day, the Master climbed the Mount of Olives with his disciples, and before ascending into a cloud he commissioned them as His apostles, “You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

On returning to Jerusalem Simon Peter defined the apostolic criterion of being a witness: It required someone “who has accompanied us all the time that the Master Yeshua went in and out among us—beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection” (Acts 1:21–22).

The apostles filled the twelfth spot with Matthias and continued to wait in Jerusalem, but while they were in the House (i.e., the Temple) on the fiftieth day of the counting of the Omer, the first day of the Festival of Weeks—Pentecost—they began to fulfill their apostolic mission. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Simon Peter stood up and proclaimed, “This Yeshua God has raised up again, to which we are all witnesses” (Acts 2:32), and from this proclamation the witnesses began the task of carrying the message of the risen Messiah to the remotest parts of the earth.

Chapter two of the book of Acts is the point of departure for this marking guide, *The Acts and the Apostles*, and it continues with events that can fit on Biblical Backgrounds’ *Regional Study Map 1: Middle East* into the middle of the second century. The guide represents extracts from a much larger document, *Torah Club Volume Six: Chronicles of the Apostles* (D. Thomas Lancaster; Marshfield, MO: First Fruits of Zion, 2012), “the epic story of the apostles and the early followers of the Messiah of Israel” (<http://ffoz.org/torahclub/volumes.html>). *Chronicles of the Apostles* draws on biblical text, early church literature, and Roman histories to write the story of the apostles. It includes map-marking exercises (by Steven P. Lancaster and James M. Monson) on several of Biblical Backgrounds’ maps, but this guide only includes the marking exercises for *Regional Study Map 1: Middle East*. Short discussions in the guide comment on the marking exercises, but sometimes assume a longer commentary in *Chronicles of the Apostles*. The guide, however, does serve as a good independent study for following the apostolic mission across the Middle East from Parthia to Rome.

To follow the marking instructions in the guide, the user should have a yellow highlighter, a set of other marking pens/highlighters (red/pink, blue, and green), a set of colored pencils (green, blue, brown, orange, red, and yellow), and a black ballpoint pen.

The guide includes thirty-four different marking events. A drawing of a scroll introduces the text, which prompted each event. Under each scroll is an approximate dateline to guide the user chronologically through the events.

With this brief introduction, prepare to follow the apostles across the Middle East:

The holy apostles and disciples of our Saviour were dispersed throughout the world. Parthia, according to tradition, was allotted to Thomas as his field of labor, Scythia to Andrew, and Asia to John, who, after he had lived some time there, died at Ephesus.

Peter appears to have preached in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia to the Jews of the dispersion. And at last, having come to Rome, he was crucified head-downwards; for he had requested that he might suffer in this way. What do we need to say concerning Paul, who preached the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and afterwards suffered martyrdom in Rome under Nero? (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.1.1–2)



In Our Own Tongues

Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God. (Acts 2:9–11)

Marking instructions: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Highlight** on continent names in yellow: Europe, Asia, Africa
- b. **Highlight** on country or regional names in yellow:
 - 1) Parthia—E of the Caspian Sea
 - 2) Media—SW of the Caspian Sea
 - 3) Elam—S of Media
 - 4) Mesopotamia—W of Media and Elam, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers
 - 5) Cappadocia—S of the Black Sea, between the Pontus and Taurus mountains
 - 6) Pontus—on the southern shore of the Black Sea
 - 7) Asia [Minor]—written N to S with wide letter spacing in eastern Anatolia between the cities of Adramyttium and Attalia (HL only the four letters of the name ASIA)
 - 8) Phrygia—between Asia and Pontus, written N to S
 - 9) Pamphylia—on the Mediterranean coast S of Phrygia
 - 10) Egypt—W of the Red Sea along the Nile
 - 11) Lybia and Cyrene—on the northern coast of Africa
 - 12) Rome—on the western coast of Italia
 - 13) Crete— island S of the Aegean Sea
 - 14) For Arabia, HL Nabatea—E of the Red Sea, written N to S

Discussion: In Our Own Tongues

Philo of Alexandria claims to record a long letter that King Agrippa [of Acts 12 fame] sent to Emperor Gaius. The letter names twenty-two regions, countries, islands, or cities as well as three continents with Jewish communities:

[Jews dwell in] Egypt, Phoenicia, generally throughout Syria, and particularly the part that is called Coele-Syria, and also in those more remote regions of Pamphylia, Cilicia, most of Asia Minor as far as Bithynia, and the far reaches of Pontus. Likewise, they extend into Europe, Thessaly, Boeotia, Macedonia, Aetolia, Attica, Argos, and Corinth and all the best, fertile and prosperous districts of Peloponnesus. The Jewish colonies fill the continents, and even the prominent islands; such as Euboea, Cyprus, and Crete. I have not even mentioned the lands beyond the Euphrates, for Jews have settled in nearly all of them, and Babylon too with all the satrapies around, wherever the soil and climate are advantageous [to settlement] ... [The Jewish community can be found in] every place in the inhabited world, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, on the continents, on the islands, on the coasts, and in the inland parts.

(Philo, *Letter to Gaius* 281–283)

Some seventeen of these names, plus the three continents, appear on your map in some form, but clearly the letter emphasizes the eastern Mediterranean (Egypt, Phoenicia [see Tyre, Sidon, and Byblos on map], Syria, Coele-Syria, Cilicia, and Pamphylia) and cities or regions on the European side of the Aegean (Thessaly [Thessalonica on map], Boeotia, Macedonia, Aetolia, Attica, Argos, Corinth, the Peloponnesus). It also lists three large islands: Euboea, Crete, and Cyprus.

As to Asia Minor, the letter treats it with one swift leap from Pamphylia and Cilicia in the south to Bithynia and Pontus in the north. Philo or Agrippa say little about the lands east of the Euphrates, because detailing the Jewish populations within Parthian territory—Rome's big threat in the first century CE—would not sway Emperor Gaius toward the Jewish appeal.

Luke, on the other hand, lists broad sweeping territories to cover the lands east of the Euphrates, perhaps to recall a large delegation from the Babylonian exile at Pentecost that year. He also covers Asia Minor from east to west and north to south, listing some regions that will become points of interest in the ongoing story of the book of Acts. As to Europe, Luke says very little, only mentioning Rome, where the book of Acts concludes, and the island of Crete. He also gives three place names in Africa. Luke begins out east in Asia, moves across Asia Minor, then shifts to Africa, briefly mentions Europe, and bounces back to the east with Arabia or the Nabateans.

For Arabia you highlighted Nabatea east of the Red Sea. By the first century CE the Nabateans had pushed farther north around their capital at Petra. They still ran the desert trade routes from southern Arabia to Petra and on west to Gaza or north to Damascus.



ca. 31

Of Cyprian Birth

Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. (Acts 4:36–37)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** in yellow: Cyprus (island in eastern Mediterranean), Citium (a city on Cyprus)
- Highlight** in yellow: Ptolemais (city on the coast of the Land Between)

Discussion: Of Cyprian Birth

Cyprus is the large island in the northeastern Mediterranean, which is part of the belt of mountains marking out the southern coast of Anatolia. Use your finger to trace the flow of mountains from the word Europe through the Aegean Sea with its many mountaintop islands, swinging back northeast through the Taurus Mountains to Urartu and southeast through the Zagros Mountains. Cyprus falls within this twisting belt of mountains. Seafaring peoples used it as a safe stop in the northeastern Mediterranean, so numerous peoples had contact with it. Some historians suggest its first inhabitants were Carians from the Ionian coast (western Anatolia, see period map 5 below the main map), then Phoenicians (see period map 5), and then Greeks. Today the island is divided between Greece and Turkey.

Josephus records the first-century opinion that a longstanding city name on Cyprus comes from a descendent of Noah: Chethimos (Greek for the Hebrew Kittim in Genesis 10:5) son of Javan son of Japheth son of Noah “held the island of Chethima—this is now called Cyprus—whence the name Chethim [Hebrew, Kittim] given by the Hebrews to all islands and to most maritime countries; here I call to witness one of the cities of Cyprus which has succeeded in preserving the old appellation, for even in its Hellenized form Citium [same as the Latin Citium on the map] is not far removed from the name of Chethimos” (Josephus, *Antiquities* 1:128/vi.1). The opinion takes into account the parenthetical information that Genesis provides after introducing the four sons of Javan: “Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittim and the Rodanim. From these the coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations” (Genesis 10:4–5); that is, the sons of Japheth were maritime peoples who spread across the Mediterranean Sea along the coastlands and islands to settle various homelands and in so doing also developed various languages (e.g., Greek, Latin, Spanish).

A strong Jewish population lived on Cyprus by 142 BCE as it was one of the recipients of a letter sent from the Roman consul notifying various kings and peoples of Rome’s treaty with and support for the Jewish people. The letter forbade harassing local Jewish populations (1 Maccabees 15:15–24). Josephus records that the Cyprian Jews were flourishing along with the Jews of Alexandria in Egypt and those in Jerusalem. Cleopatra of Egypt was at war with her son Ptolemy Lathyrus, king of Cyprus. She entrusted her army to two Jewish generals from Egypt. This account is followed by an odd

quotation from Strabo of Cappadocia that speaks of Jewish loyalties switching to Lathyrus, although the Egyptian Jews remained faithful to Cleopatra (Josephus, *Antiquities* 13:284–287/x.4). Agrippa's letter to Emperor Gaius also testifies to the significant Jewish community on Cyprus: "The Jewish colonies fill the continents, and even the prominent islands; such as Euboea [a big island north of Athens], Cyprus, and Crete" (Philo, *Letter to Gaius* 281–283).

As such, readers of the Book of Acts should expect to find Cyprian Jews in Jerusalem, and Yosef Bar Nabba [Joseph Barnabas], who was born in the land of Cyprus, plays a significant role in spreading the good news about the Master. In a later chapter he and Paul return to the island, and years later the apocryphal *Acts of Barnabas* (23) alleges Barnabas' martyrdom on Cyprus.



Hellenistic Jews and Native Hebrews

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. (Acts 6:1)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- **Highlight in yellow:** Carrhae (locate Carrhae by means of period map 6, Rome Supreme)

Discussion: Hellenistic Jews and Native Hebrews

Carrhae is the Roman name for Haran, the city which Abram and Sarai left to go to Canaan. It is located along the Balih River on an important trade route from Nineveh and points further east to Carchemish and the sea.

In Roman history the Battle of Carrhae (53 BCE) represents a crushing defeat by the Parthians. A much smaller mounted force of Parthians destroyed a Roman army led by Crassus as he set out to invade the untamed east.

For our purposes Carrhae serves as a point of reference between a western Hellenized Jewish Diaspora and an eastern Semitic Jewish Diaspora. Jewish communities in the west spoke Greek and understood Hellenistic culture. Jewish communities in the east spoke Aramaic and lived within Semitic cultures. The distinction between Hellenistic Jews and native Hebrews in Acts 6:1 speaks to the two contrasting Jewish cultures as present in the new believing community in Jerusalem.

The dividing line between the cultures, however, is more fluid than a simple division at Carrhae. Aramaic became the lingua franca of the ancient world under the Persian Achaemenid Empire, founded by Cyrus the Great. Look at period map 5, "Persia Pushes West" to see the great extent of the Persian Empire. Compare this with period map 6, "Alexander Pushes East" to see the vast territory conquered by Alexander the Great. His conquests established Hellenistic cities throughout the eastern world and initiated the use of Greek as a lingua franca. Hellenistic cities used Greek, while surrounding rural populations retained their native languages. Greek was found in the Aramaic-speaking world, and vice versa. The mixture of languages was greater in regions closer to the imaginary dividing line.

The eastern Mediterranean seaboard fell along this line with Aramaic persisting in rural areas, but Greek dominating in the Hellenistic cities on the coast and along important communication routes. In Egypt Alexander had founded the great city of Alexandria, and Hellenistic culture invaded the Delta, but local cultures endured upriver.

A linguistic note: Carrhae derives from Haran (also spelled Harran). If we transliterate the Semitic consonant *Chet* to produce Charran, it is easier to see the linguistic relationship of the two names.



ca. 32

Men from the Synagogue of the Freedmen

But some men from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen. (Acts 6:9)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** in yellow: Alexandria (city name), Cilicia (regional name)
- Place** three small, unobtrusive red dots under the following names: Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia; and **place** one small, unobtrusive red dot under each of the letters of the name Asia in western Anatolia

Discussion: Men from the Synagogue of the Freedmen

Luke provides four Diaspora locations for the men who rose up against Stephen in the Synagogue of the Freedmen. All came from the western Hellenized Jewish Diaspora. Saul stood among those from Cilicia. Many years later after being seized in the Temple, he declared in **Greek** to a Roman commander, “I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city” (Acts 21:39), and in **Aramaic** to the men of Jerusalem, “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). The shift of languages is an interesting and important feature in the text. The Roman commander had asked him, “Do you speak Greek?” (Acts 21:37). Then when the men of Jerusalem “heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew dialect [perhaps Aramaic (see NIV)], they became even more quiet” (Acts 22:2).



ca. 33

Saul's First Escape from Jerusalem

And [Saul] was with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews; but they were attempting to put him to death. But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus. (Acts 9:28–30)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** on city names:
Jerusalem, Caesarea, Tarsus (on the plain of Cilicia)

Discussion: Saul's First Escape from Jerusalem

The book of Acts records two escapes that Saul made from Jerusalem to Caesarea. The first escape occurred after he returned to Jerusalem following his escape from Damascus. The second escape appears Acts 23:23–33 after Saul had returned to Jerusalem from his travels in Asia Minor and Greece. In his first escape he reached Caesarea and returned to his hometown of Tarsus in the Diaspora, presumably boarding a ship in Caesarea and traveling by sea to Cilicia.



ca. 34

Monobazus, king of Adiabene; Abennerig, king of Characene; Izates, ruler of Carrae

Monobazus, the king of Adiabene ... sent Izates [from his capital of Arbela], with many presents, to Abennerig, the king of [Characene in his capital of] Charax-Spasinu, and that out of the great dread he was in about him, lest he should come to some misfortune by the hatred his brethren bore him.... But when Monobazus was grown old, and saw that he had but a little time to live, he had a mind to come to the sight of his son before he died. So he sent for him, and embraced him after the most affectionate manner, and bestowed on him the country called Carrae [in the region of Mt. Ararat] ... there are also in it the remains of that ark, wherein it is related that Noah escaped the deluge, and where they are still shown to such as are desirous to see them. (Josephus, *Antiquities* 20:17–25/ii.1–2)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Highlight** on names in yellow: Mt. Ararat (between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea); Arbela (move south from Mt. Ararat about two inches and find Arbela between the Great Zab and Little Zab rivers, tributaries of the Tigris River)
- b. **Write** with a black ballpoint pen in small caps: ADIABENE (from northwest to southeast just east of the Great Zab and Little Zab rivers); CARRAE (below Mt. Ararat); CHARACENE (between the north end of the Persian Gulf and Chogha Zanbil)

Discussion: Monobazus, king of Adiabene; Abennerig, king of Characene; Izates, ruler of Carrae

Following the campaigns of Alexander the Great (see period map 6, “Alexander Pushes East” at the bottom of the Middle East map), the Seleucid Empire received Alexander’s eastern territories (see period map 7, “Hellenistic Empires”). Eventually the Seleucids understood that they could not interact successfully with the Mediterranean world from their capital in Seleucia near Babylon, so they built a new capital, which they called Antioch on the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean. Later as the Seleucids weakened from internal struggles, Parthia began to assume rule over all of the Iranian Plateau, the Armenian highlands, and Mesopotamia. Parthia’s rule reached as far as the western extent of the Euphrates River, where they came into contact with the expanding Roman Empire. Rome and Parthia were the two large powers in the days of the Master and the apostles.

During the first century, however, smaller kingdoms in Parthia’s vast holdings began to gain independence. Adiabene was an independent kingdom in the first century with its capital at Arbela. King Monobazus I favored his son Izates to the point where he had to send him elsewhere for his protection. He chose a known ally, Abennerig of Characene, whose kingdom lay at the northern end of the Persian Gulf. Abennerig’s capital, Charax-Spasinu is not known. Later Monobazus recalled Izates to place him over the region of Carrae near Mt. Ararat, and after Monobazus’ death Izates assumed the throne in Arbela.

Josephus speaks of Izates’ accumulation of great wealth. A good portion of this wealth would have come from trade. The three kingdoms in the story of Izates—Adiabene, Characene, and Carrae—cover the major trade routes moving from China and India west to the Mediterranean and Asia Minor. A route from the Indus Valley passed through the region of Persia to enter Characene. This route has great antiquity, known first in historical texts from the third millennium BCE because of the lapis lazuli coming from eastern Iran into the region of Sumer (find Sumer on the map, stretched out northeast from Babylon to Ur). Characene also controlled a major port on the gulf. Adiabene intercepted the Great Khorasan Road, also known as the Silk Road, which came from China, through the territory of Parthia and by Tehran, Saveh, Achmetha, the Behistun Inscription, and Eshnunna to Babylon. A third route broke off the Great Khorasan road at Tehran and ran northwest through Tabriz, south of Mt. Ararat, and all the way west to the Aegean world. Izates had all three routes covered in some way: 1) the southern route as an ally to the kingdom of Characene by marriage; 2) the Great Khorasan Road ran through his kingdom; and 3) from his control of Carrae.



ca. 37

A gbar, king of Osroene in Edessa

Agbar, therefore, who reigned over the nations beyond the Euphrates with great glory, and who had been wasted away with a disease ... heard the name of Jesus mentioned frequently ... Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, by a divine impulse, sent Thaddeus, who was also one of the seventy disciples to Edessa, as a herald and evangelist of the doctrines of Christ. (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 1.13)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** on names in yellow: Euphrates River (by Mari); Edessa (move up river to the Balih River and follow that north past Haran—where Abram sojourned with Terah—to Edessa)
- Write** with a black ballpoint pen in small caps: OSROENE (find the regional name Al-Jazira between the two names you highlighted and write OSROENE above Al-Jazira)

Discussion: Agbar, king of Osroene in Edessa

Edessa, the capital of Agbar's kingdom of Osroene, lies on the same plain as the historical Haran/Carrhae through which the Silk Road passed on its way from Babylon to the Mediterranean. Haran is known in biblical history from Abram's stay (Genesis 11:31–32); it played a significant role as an Assyrian city on imperial marches to Carchemish and the Euphrates, and it appears in the conflict between Parthia and Rome, when at the Battle of Carrhae in 53 BCE the Parthians handed Rome one of the most crushing defeats in Roman history.

Edessa stands out for its prominence in church history. In the middle of the second century Edessa embraced Christianity and became formative as the center of Syriac literature. From Edessa came the Peshitta, the translation of the Scriptures into Syriac, as well as Tatian's Diatessaron ("Of the Four"), which placed the four gospels into one continuous narrative. The Diatessaron was compiled about 170 CE and evidences the priority of the four gospels over apocryphal gospels by that time.

Edessa was a place of pilgrimage by the fourth century. Egeria records her visit to the city, where she was shown "the large statue of the king [Abgar], a striking likeness, so they say.... From the features of this Abgar seen face to face it was clear that he was indeed a wise and honorable man. The saintly bishop then said to me, 'There is King Abgar, who, before seeing the Lord, believed in Him and believed that He was truly the Son of God.'" While in Edessa Egeria received copies of the fictitious letters exchanged between the king and the King Yeshua, and she records for her sister nuns in Spain, "I was clearly very pleased to accept them from [the bishop] ... If Jesus Christ our Lord wills it and I return home, you, ladies dear to me, will read them" (*Egeria: Diary of a Pilgrimage* [George E. Gingras, trans. and ed.; Ancient Christian Writers: the Works of the Fathers in Translation, No. 38; New York, NY: Newman Press, 1970], 78, 81).



through 41

Agrippa I on his Journey to the Throne of Judea

Shortly before the death of King Herod, Agrippa was living in Rome (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18:143/vi.1). [After recklessly spending his wealth,] Agrippa set sail for Judea (ibid. 18:147/vi.2). Agrippa withdrew into a certain tower at Malatha in Idumea [with intent to take his life] (ibid. 18:147/vi.2). Herodius [Agrippa's sister] and her husband [Herod Antipas] sent for Agrippa and assigned him Tiberias (ibid. 18:149/vi.2). [After a fight with his brother-in-law,] Agrippa resorted to [Lucius Pomponius] Flaccus ... who had previously been a very close friend of his in Rome and who was then governor of Syria. He was welcomed by Flaccus [in Antioch] and lived with him a short time (ibid. 18:150–151/vi.2–3). [Flaccus dismissed Agrippa after discovering that he had taken a bribe to influence him in a legal dispute.] Thus forced into the most dire straits, Agrippa went to Ptolemais, and ... he resolved to set sail for Italy (ibid. 18:155/vi.3). [Agrippa did not have the money to sail. He took a loan and attempted to sail from Anthedon, Gaza's port city, but was blocked by another creditor.] When night fell, Agrippa cut the mooring cables and proceeded on his voyage to Alexandria (ibid. 18:159/vi.3). [Agrippa's wife, Cypros, received a loan in Alexandria]. She dispatched her husband on his voyage to Italy (ibid. 18:160/vi.3). When Agrippa had reached Puteoli, he sent a letter to the emperor Tiberius who was then living at Capri.... When Agrippa arrived [in Capri], Tiberius ... made him a welcome guest (ibid. 18:161–162/vi.4). [Sometime later, Tiberius imprisoned Agrippa for his treasonous remark to Gaius about eliminating Tiberius' grandson as a

contender for the throne (ibid. 18:179–204/vi.6–7), but in the end Tiberius chose Gaius to succeed him as emperor (*Antiquities* 18:219–224/vi.9). Agrippa’s imprisonment was in a camp near Rome.] After Gaius had arrived in Rome ... not many days thereafter, he sent for Agrippa to come to his house ... he put a diadem on his head and appointed him king of the tetrarchy of Philip, presenting him also with the tetrarchy of Lysanius (ibid. 18:236–237/vi.10). In the second year of the reign of the emperor Gaius, Agrippa asked for permission to set sail [to Syria] and make his rule secure (ibid. 18:238/vi.11). Gaius advised him to avoid the voyage from Brundisium to Syria, which was a long and troublesome one, and rather to take the shorter one by Alexandria, and to wait for periodical winds ... and Agrippa took his advice (Philo, *On Flaccus* 25–26). [Agrippa’s arrival in Alexandria with the title king of the Jews intensified persecution against the Jews in the city. Josephus does not tell of this trip to Alexandria, and Philo does not narrate Agrippa’s departure from Alexandria, but Josephus sums up his arrival in his own land with the statement:] All were surprised to see him in his royal state (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18:239/vi.11). [As discussions in Galilee and Judea continued with Petronius over Gaius’ abomination] King Agrippa, who, as it happened was living in Rome, ... made a banquet for Gaius [and raised the issue of the abomination] (ibid. 18:289/viii.7). [Gaius died, and when Agrippa assisted Claudius in becoming emperor, Claudius] added to Agrippa’s dominions all the other lands that had been ruled by King Herod, his grandfather, namely, Judea and Samaria (ibid. 19:272/v.1). Claudius forthwith sent Agrippa to take over his kingdom ... Agrippa naturally ... turned quickly homeward. On entering Jerusalem, Agrippa offered sacrifices of thanksgiving, omitting none of the ritual enjoined by our law (ibid. 19:292–293/vi.1).

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Place** a black city dot on the point of land southwest of Cumae in Italy, and write Puteoli with a black ballpoint pen south of the island that is west of your city dot
- b. **Highlight** on names in yellow: Antioch (beside Seleucia in the northeastern Mediterranean); ‘Syria’ (southeast of Antioch); Gaza (the city governing the port of Anthedon); Puteoli; Capri (the island)
- c. **Write** with a black ballpoint pen abbreviations for Agrippa’s movements: A1 (in the sea along the border of the map opposite Rome); A2 (between Hebron and Jerusalem for Judea); A3 (below the ‘ee’ of Beer-sheba); A4 (above the ‘eg’ of Megiddo); A5 (east of Antioch); A6 (in sea beside Ptolemais); A7 (in sea beside Gaza); A8 (above Alexandria); A9 (in sea beside Puteoli); A10 (under Capri); A11 (under A1); A12 (beside A8); A13 (under Damascus); A14 (under A11); A15 (between Hebron and Jerusalem)
- d. **Write** the following key on the back of your Middle East map

Agrippa’s Journeys

- A1 Raised in Rome
- A2 Returned to Judea
- A3 Sulked in Malatha, a Negev fortress (on *Regional Study Map 2: Land Between*)
- A4 Received assignment in Tiberias (on *Regional Study Map 2: Land Between*)
- A5 Stayed with Flaccus in Antioch
- A6 Went to Ptolemais to seek passage to Rome
- A7 Found a ship in Anthedon
- A8 Sailed to Alexandria
- A9 Sailed to Puteoli
- A10 Visited Tiberius in Capri
- A11 Imprisoned, freed and crowned in Rome
- A12 Sailed to Alexandria
- A13 Arrived at his kingdom

A14 Approached Gaius in Rome about the abomination

A15 Presented himself in Jerusalem

Discussion: Agrippa I on his Journey to the Throne of Judea

Agrippa's journeys to the throne of Judea took him to three main centers of power in the Roman Empire and other smaller cities and even insignificant places before he finally entered Jerusalem, as king of the Jews. The list below only discusses places that you marked on your maps, an exhaustive list from Josephus would include other port cities and administrative and cultural centers.

Rome: Much of Herod Agrippa's life revolved around Rome. He was raised in Rome, fled Rome as a debtor, was imprisoned near Rome, received his kingdom in Rome, and while in Rome to woo Emperor Gaius yet again, he assisted Claudius to the position of emperor and received the throne of Judea. The city of Rome became the capital of the Roman Kingdom in the eighth century BCE. It remained the capital of the Roman Republic, which overthrew the Roman kings late in the sixth century BCE, and continued as the capital of the Roman Empire. Through a series of battles as a republic, Rome grew to dominate the Italian peninsula, and with the Punic Wars against Carthage, it advanced its rule overseas. Rome's control spread around the Mediterranean, so that the Mediterranean became essentially a Roman sea. For over a millennium, Rome was the most important city politically, as well as the richest and largest city, in the western world.

Malatha [Marked on *Regional Study Map 2: Land Between*]: Historical-geographers have placed Malatha at Tel Malhata in the eastern Negev on the southern bank of the Nahal Malhata near its confluence with the Nahal Beer-sheva. A main advantage to the site for life in the Negev is that the groundwater level near the confluence is high and supports wells (Moshe Kochavi, "Malhata, Tel" in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, vol. 3 [ed. by Ephraim Stern et. al.; New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1993], 934). The fortress at Malatha served as a security point along the routes from Edom or Nabatea to Gaza. For the cosmopolitan Agrippa, life could not have sunk much lower than to live in the Negev at Malatha.

Tiberias [Marked on *Regional Study Map 2: Land Between*]: Herod Antipas founded Tiberias on the shores of Lake Galilee sometime around 20 CE and named it in honor of Emperor Tiberius. South of the city are the hot springs of Hammat Tiberias, certainly a draw for the founding of a new Roman city, a model city in the heart of Jewish Galilee. Religious Jews avoided the city for some time because a cemetery rendered it unclean, but the city figures prominently in the politics of the first century, as evidenced by Petronius' visit there during the conflict over Gaius' proposal to place his statute in the Temple (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18:269–288/viii.3–6). In the second century CE Shimon bar Yochai declared the city ritually clean, and it became a center for Jewish study in the Galilee.

Antioch: Seleucus I Nicator founded Antioch near the beginning of the third century BCE and named it after his father, Antiochus, who was one of Alexander's four successors. Antiochus received the largest tract of land reaching from the Hellespont, on the western side of Asia Minor through Mesopotamia and across the Persian Plateau to India. The Seleucids first attempted to rule this unwieldy kingdom from Seleucia on the Tigris but found it advantageous to move closer to the Mediterranean world. Seleucus I founded Antioch on the Orontes River, and it became the new Seleucid capital. Rome also understood its beneficial position, and Antioch remained the capital of the Roman Province of Syria. Agrippa I stayed in Antioch with his old friend, Flaccus, for a short time. When Gaius ordered Petronius to march against Judea in order to install his image in the Temple, the governor of Syria set out from Antioch with three legions (Josephus, *Jewish War* 2:187/x.1), and after encountering the Jewish masses at Ptolemais, he returned to Antioch (*ibid.* 2:202/x.5). Antioch had a large Jewish population in the first century and became an important center for Gentile followers of the Master.

Ptolemais: The ancient Canaanite city of Acco—well known by the Egyptians in the second millennium BCE—fell within Asher's tribal territory. In the Hellenistic Period it received the name

Ptolemais after Ptolemy II Philadelphus enlarged the city. The city appears frequently in the book of 1 Maccabees: Jonathan met Alexander Epiphanes (10:1, 56–60) and Demetrius II (11:20–24) in Ptolemais. Trypho tricked Jonathan into the city and took him prisoner (12:39–50, 13:12), and the city appears in the Maccabean wars (5:15, 22, 55; 2 Maccabees 13:24–25). When Petronius arrived at Ptolemais, masses of Jews walked there to meet and plead with him not to set up the image of Gaius in the Temple (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18:262–268/viii.2; *Jewish War* 2:192–202/x.3–5).

Anthedon: When Agrippa could not depart from Ptolemais for Rome, he moved down the coast to Anthedon, which served Gaza as a seaport. Anthedon was the southernmost port on the eastern seaboard before one reached the ports of Egypt, so when Agrippa cut the moorings in Anthedon, the natural destination was Alexandria.

Alexandria: Alexander the Great founded the city of Alexandria in 331 BCE on the site of an earlier Egyptian city. The city became the western world’s access to the rich Nile Valley and served as the capital of both Ptolemaic Egypt and the Roman Province of Egypt. A large Jewish community lived in Alexandria, but the strong preservation of ethnic distinctions in the city—Egyptian, Greek, and Jewish—created great tension, such as witnessed during the reign of Gaius. The first translation of the Pentateuch into Greek took place in Alexandria, supposedly under the charge of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who reigned during the first half of the third century BCE. The so-called *Letter to Aristaeas* claims to tell the story of this event. Alexandria’s library became the largest in the ancient world, and the city served as a center of early Christianity.

Puteoli: Puteoli was an important port city on the western side of Italy near modern Naples and Mount Vesuvius. It served as an import center for grain ships from Alexandria as well as for the export of glass, mosaics, iron, and marble. Agrippa most probably took passage from Alexandria aboard a grain ship. The Apostle Paul also landed in Puteoli (Acts 28:13).

Capri: Capri is an island lying at the end of the Sorrento Peninsula, which separates the Gulf of Naples with its ancient port of Puteloi from the more open Gulf of Salerno. Emperor Tiberius built on Capri and lived there from 27 BCE until his death in 37 BCE, so when Agrippa returned to Italy and requested an audience with Tiberius, he was invited to Capri.

Jerusalem: Nothing more need be said about Jerusalem than is summed up in Psalm 122? But Agrippa did not sit on the “thrones of the house of David” (v. 5).



ca. 41-43

Journeys to Antioch

Those who were scattered ... made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch ... men of Cyprus and Cyrene ... came to Antioch. (Acts 11:19–20)

The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch ... [Barnabas] left for Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. (Acts 11:22, 25–26)

Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. (Acts 11:27)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Write** PHOENICIA from south to north with a black ballpoint pen in very small caps to the east of Acco, Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut
- Highlight** on names from south to north: Phoenicia, Homs Gap, Orontes River, Amuq, Amanus Mts., Syrian Gates
- Trace** the following journeys with your finger (it’s a good exercise!):
 - From Jerusalem via Aphek, Caesarea, and Ptolemais to Tyre in Phoenicia (you can trace this journey in greater detail on *Regional Study Map 2: Land Between*)
 - From Caesarea or Tyre via ship to Citium

3. From Tyre via Sidon, Beirut, Byblos, the Homs Gap to Qatna, Apamea, and follow the Orontes River into the Amuq Valley to Antioch
4. From Cyrene via ship to Citium (or any port you prefer) on Cyprus and on to Seleucia, Antioch's port city, and continue up the Amuq Valley to Antioch
5. From Antioch via the Syrian Gates across the Amanus Mountains to Issus and across the plains of Cilicia to Tarsus and back to Antioch

Discussion: Journeys to Antioch

At the end of Acts 11, Luke records several journeys to Antioch: 1) Believers who fled Jerusalem after Stephen's death; 2) Disciples who came from Cyprus and Cyrene; 3) Barnabas whom the apostles sent from Jerusalem; 4) Saul who accompanied Barnabas back from Tarsus; and 5) Prophets who came from Jerusalem. These eleven verses represent a lot of travel time over a lot of miles. Following are some distances, as the crow flies:

Jerusalem to Tyre: 105 miles

Tyre to Citium on Cyprus: 145 miles

Jerusalem to Antioch: 315 miles

Cyrene to Antioch via Citium: 860 miles, although the ship may have made port calls at Alexandria, Caesarea, Ptolemais, Tyre and Sidon first

Citium to Antioch: 170 miles

Antioch via Syrian Gates and Issus to Tarsus and back: 250 miles

A traveler from Jerusalem to Antioch could follow one of three routes for the first half of the journey (see *Regional Study Map 2: Land Between*): 1) along the coast as you traced with your finger; 2) through Galilee to the Beqaa Valley and north; or 3) through Bashan to Damascus and across the Abila Pass to the Beqaa Valley. After crossing the Homs Gap, however, many travelers would choose to follow the Orontes to Antioch.

Barnabas' journey from Antioch to Tarsus took him through an important battlefield between Alexander the Great and Darius III of Persia. As Alexander was subduing the city of Tyana and marching through the Cilician Gates, which cross the Taurus Mountains, to the plains of Cilicia, Darius III mobilized his forces for the crucial battle of Issus, a site that guarded the strategic Syrian Gates, the entrance to Persia's vast eastern empire. Alexander defeated Darius III at Issus, but instead of driving further east he turned south to take Egypt first (see period map 6, "Alexander Pushes East").



More Journeys to Antioch

Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem [to Antioch] when they had fulfilled their mission. (Acts 12:25)

Peter came [from Jerusalem] to Antioch ... (Galatians 2:11)

Certain men came [to Antioch] from James [who was in Jerusalem] ... (Galatians 2:12)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. Place a black city dot on the northern, dashed blue line that marks out The Land Between; place it on the eastern side of the third dash from the sea; write Baalbek in black ballpoint pen beside your dot
- b. Highlight on names: Byblos, Baalbek, Hamath, Apamea

Discussion: More Journeys to Antioch

As with the previous event, "Journeys to Antioch," this event also contains three journeys to Antioch. Antioch was emerging as a strong center for the Yeshua-movement, especially as it

pertained to God-fearing Gentiles. Those traveling from Jerusalem to Antioch, however, were Jews who were either coming to minister to the growing movement or to evaluate the movement. In “Journeys to Antioch,” we called attention to three possible land routes for the southern end of the journey between Jerusalem and Antioch: 1) along the coast to the Homs Gap; 2) through Galilee and the Beqaa Valley; or 3) through Damascus and across the Abila Pass or its shortcut south of Abila to Chalcis. One could also complete the journey by sea from Caesarea to Seleucia, but those making the journey to minister probably preferred the land route in order to visit believing Jewish communities along the way. The coastal route and coastal cities probably attracted Saul and any who were intent on reaching Antioch rapidly. Peter, however, might have chosen the route through the Beqaa in order to stop in Capernaum and visit family and believers there.

As the travelers journeyed, they interacted with numerous storied sites that appear in the Hebrew Bible or in the records left by Egyptian Pharaohs, Assyrian, Babylonian, or Persian kings, or Alexander and the Hellenistic kings. At the time of the journeys, Rome was actively making history along the eastern seaboard of the Mediterranean. The stories and events are too many to tell, but thoughts of a few sites helped pass the time on the journey.

Byblos: Saul, Barnabas, Titus, and John Mark encountered Byblos in their journey along the coast. The site has a long, storied past under the Canaanite name Gubla. The Egyptian pharaohs knew it well, and Egyptian scribes often wrote its name. Gubla and Egypt established trade relations as early as the sixth dynasty of Egypt (perhaps five hundred years before Abraham), as “the ships of Gubla” carried items of exchange between Canaan and Egypt. An archive of letters between Canaanite kings and Pharaoh Akhnaton, found at El-Amarna in Egypt, mentions Gubla in seventy-seven letters. This was in the days of Joshua. Perhaps Saul was unfamiliar with the Egyptian past, but he certainly knew that the Greek Byblos was Gebal of the Hebrew Bible (1 Kings 5:32[18 in English]; Ezekiel 27:9) and fell within the promised borders of the land (Joshua 13:5). As historical geographers look for the etymology of Byblos—the Greek name for the site—they tie it to the Greek *papyrus* “papyrus,” or more closely to the *bublos*, “the inner fiber” of the papyrus that is cut into strips to manufacture rope or paper. *Bublos* also lies behind the word Bible or any word built on *biblio* (e.g., bibliography, bibliomania). Phoenician Gubla was active in the papyrus trade between Egypt and the Aegean, hence, the Hellenistic Byblos. Under local Semitic influence a form of the old name, Jubail, Lebanon, now identifies the site.

Baalbek: Peter and his wife journeyed north from Lake Galilee through the Huleh Basin and the storied region of Dan with biblical sites like Abel-beth-maacah and Ijon. The route led them into the Beqaa Valley between the high Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges. They passed Chalcis on the way, ruled by Agrippa’s brother, Herod of Chalcis. They probably stopped to spend a night near the powerful spring that gives rise to the Litani River, which flows south through the Beqaa and into the Mediterranean between Tyre and Zarephath (cf. 1 Kings 17:7–24). From the spring they could see Baalbek but kept a wide berth between themselves and this pagan site, which Alexander the Great had called Heliopolis, city of the sun. The Romans turned the site into a cultic center for the triade of Jupiter, Venus, and Bacchus. When Peter passed the site, the greatest of the three temples was under construction, the temple to Jupiter Baal, which combined the name of a local Semitic deity with the Roman chief deity. The temple already towered above the surrounding plain but was completed around 60 CE.

Hamath: The two parties of travelers (Barnabas and Saul and later Peter) probably followed the same route after they crossed the Homs Gap, although Saul’s party could have continued along a coastal route. Both parties journeyed through the Orontes Valley as the river flowed north to reach the sea south of the Amanus Mountains. They passed storied Kadesh, the site of the significant final battle between Ramses II and the Hittites, and then ancient Qatna, but their attention was drawn to Hamath, a city of biblical significance. These were the legendary descendants of Canaan ben Ham ben Noah (Genesis 10:18; 1 Chronicles 1:16). Their king Tou had sent congratulatory greetings

and tribute to David (2 Samuel 8:9–10). Their king Irhuleni had invited Ahab of Israel to join a much larger coalition that opposed the march of Shalmaneser III of Assyria (*Annals of Shalmaneser*). Jeroboam II of Israel had captured Hamath, returning it as a vassal to Israel (2 Kings 14:28). Hamath caught both the attention of conquering Assyrians (Isaiah 10:9, 36:19; 2 Kings 19:13) and Israel's prophets (Amos 6:2; Zechariah 9:2; Jeremiah 49:23). Assyria deported Israelites to Hamath (Isaiah 11:11) and brought people from Hamath to Samaria (2 Kings 17:24). But in Ezekiel's mind the border of Hamath still represented the northern extent of land promised to Israel (Ezekiel 47:17). At Riblah in the land of Hamath, Nebuchadnezzar killed Zedekiah, the last Davidic king to sit on the throne (Jeremiah 39:5, 52:9, 27). How could they pass Hamath—now Greco-Roman Epiphania—without thoughts of the Davidic monarchy: David's greatness, Zedekiah's death, and Ezekiel's expectation of renewal under the son of David? The old name endures today: Hamath is Hama, Syria.

Apamea: At Apamea the travelers again encountered the full force of the western empires, as they came into contact with the first of the Syrian tetrapolis, four cities built by Seleucus I Nicator around 300 BCE to secure trade along the northeastern Mediterranean. The cities were Antioch with its port of Seleucia, and Apamea with its port of Laodicea (not on the map but located just below Ugarit on the coast). Rome took over the four cities, and they served the same function within the Roman Empire. At Apamea, the travelers found respite in a Jewish community. Josephus spoke about the Jews of Apamea as he described the massacres that various Greco-Roman cities conducted following the outbreak of the First Revolt:

Only Antioch, Sidon and Apamea spared the [Jewish] residents and refused either to kill or to imprison a single Jew; perhaps, with their own vast populations, these cities disdained the possibility of Jewish risings, but what mainly influenced them, in my opinion, was their pity for men who showed no revolutionary intentions. (Josephus, *Jewish War* 2:479/xviii.5)



ca. 46

Syrian Antioch to Pisidian Antioch

They went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they reached Salamis, they began to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John as their helper. When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos ... (Acts 13:4–6)

Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem. But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch. (Acts 13:13–14)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Highlight** on city names: Seleucia, Salamis, Paphos, Perga, Antioch of Pisidia
- b. **Highlight** on regional names: Galatia, Pisidia; and note Pamphylia and Phrygia, which you have already highlighted in the event, “In Our Own Tongues.”

Discussion: Syrian Antioch to Pisidian Antioch

The first movement from Syrian Antioch by Saul and Barnabas was a very natural step. They could have crossed the Amanus Mountains into Cilicia, but Saul had ministered there for some time already. To move northeast would take them out of the Roman world, and if they went south, they would find themselves in congregations that those coming from Jerusalem had already visited, perhaps ones which they too had visited in their journey from Antioch to Jerusalem and back. Cyprus called to them: Cyprian Jews had come to Antioch; Barnabas was from Cyprus; so they decided to visit Cyprus. They walked to Seleucia, Antioch's port city and boarded a boat for Salamis, the nearest Cyprian port. From Salamis they would have walked overland to Paphos. On the first leg of the trip from Salamis to Citium, they could have walked a fairly direct road without any mountainous difficulties. From Citium to Paphos they walked the coastal route to stay out the mountainous interior.

While narrating the events at Paphos, Luke informs his readers that the Jewish Saul also had a name he used in the Diaspora, Paul, and from Paphos, Paul and Barnabas went deeper into the Hellenistic world of the Anatolian interior. This move from Cyprus to Pisidian Antioch does not make much sense unless someone had encouraged them to enter the interior of Anatolia, especially wild Galatia. One might expect them to sail to the Ionian Coast along the eastern Aegean and visit metropolitan centers like Miletus, Priene, Ephesus, and Smyrna, all cities with large Jewish populations, the usual God-fearers, and possible introductions to further ministry elsewhere, which might eventually by chance lead them to the interior. Their course, however, took them straight to the interior, a move probably encouraged by the new Gentile believer, Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:6-12), whose family had land and power in Pisidia (R. L. Fox, *Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World from the Second Century AD to the Conversion of Constantine* [London: Penguin Books, 1988], 293–294).

They sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, traveled over the western stretch of the Taurus Mountains and arrived at Antioch in Galatia on the border between Phrygia and Pisidia. The regional names in Anatolia or Asia Minor are often confusing. Originally the names represented a specific tribe or group of tribes that shared similar culture and language. By the time Paul and Barnabas arrived, however, various empires had overrun these regions, each leaving an imprint of some kind on the local inhabitants. Era maps 5–8 show you the influences sweeping over Asia Minor from the sixth century BCE to the first century CE. One particularly troubling issue is the exact location of Galatia. The Galatians did not have their own specific tribal territory. The Galatians are part of a Gallic invasion of first the Balkan Peninsula and then from Thrace into Anatolia in the third century BCE. The name Galatian derives from Galli or Gaul. The Galatians became a ruling caste in central Anatolia, so by the time of the Paul's visit, Galatians had spread over or through some of the earlier indigenous tribes, even those like the Phrygians, who were not so indigenous but had made their own invasion of Anatolia over half a millennium before the Gauls.



ca. 46-47

Pisidian Antioch to Syrian Antioch

[From Pisidian Antioch Paul and Barnabas] shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. (Acts 13:51)

In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks. (Acts 14:1)

[After becoming aware of a threat in Iconium, Paul And Barnabas] fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the surrounding region. (Acts 14:5–6)

[Paul] went away with Barnabas to Derbe. After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch. (Acts 14:20–21)

They passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia. When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed to Antioch. (Acts 14:24–26)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** on city names: Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Attalia; and note already highlighted cities: Antioch of Pisidia, Perga, Syrian Antioch
- Highlight** on regional name: Lycaonia; and note already highlighted regions: Pisidia and Pamphylia
- Trace** Paul's first journey with a sharp, green-colored pencil: From Antioch in Syria to Seleucia on the coast; by ship to Salamis on Cyprus and overland to Paphos via Citium, Amathus, and Kourion; from Paphos by ship to Perga and overland north to Antioch in Pisidia; continue on to Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe; return without marking via Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia to Perga in Pamphylia; and trace his journey to Attalia and then by ship stay along the southern coast of Anatolia to Seleucia

- d. **Add** to your legend on the back of your map: “Paul’s Journeys”; under this title make a short line with your sharp, green-colored pencil, and write beside it “First Journey (Acts 14)”
- e. **Locate** without marking ‘Cilician Gates’ between Lycaonia and Cilicia

Discussion: Pisidian Antioch to Syrian Antioch

Paul and Barnabas could have easily returned to Syrian Antioch from Derbe by passing through the great Cilician Gates. Follow that option: leave Derbe, pass through the mountain pass of the Cilician Gates, rest at Tarsus with friends and perhaps family, cross the Cilician Plain to Issus, pass through the Syrian Gates—another mountain pass, and arrive at Antioch. This is actually shorter than the overland trip back through Lystra, Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia, and Perga to Attalia, and after the land journey they still had the sea voyage to Seleucia. Why did they choose the longer route and the route along which they had encountered so many hostilities? Luke offers a brief explanation in Acts 14:21–23 that also provides a look into the shepherding hearts of Paul and Barnabas. They placed the welfare of the believing communities above their own safety and comfort.



ca. 49

Still More Journeys to Antioch

Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” (Acts 15:1)

[Journey from Antioch to Jerusalem:] When Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem ... being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria ... when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders. (Acts 15:1–4)

Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren ... So when they were sent away, they went down to Antioch ... (Acts 15:22, 30)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Place** a black city dot northwest of the ‘D’ of Damascus beside the blue line of the Litani River; write Chalcis in black ballpoint pen starting beside the dot and staying north of Damascus
- b. **Highlight** on city name: Chalcis

Discussion: Still More Journeys to Antioch

The geographical markings for two previous events examined journeys from Jerusalem to Antioch.

“Journeys to Antioch” listed several journeys to Antioch from Acts 11:

Those who were scattered ... came to Antioch (Acts 11:19–20)

The church at Jerusalem ... sent Barnabas off to Antioch (Acts 11:22, 25–26)

Some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 11:27)

“More Journeys to Antioch” listed journeys to Antioch from Acts 12 and Galatians 2:

Barnabas and Paul returned from Jerusalem [to Antioch] (Acts 12:25)

Peter came to Antioch (Galatians 2:11)

Certain men came [to Antioch] from James (Galatians 2:12)

The believing community of Jerusalem continued to concern itself with affairs 315 miles north in Antioch, and Acts 15 records still more journeys to Antioch, as well as another journey from

Antioch to Jerusalem. Some men came down from Jerusalem to Antioch to teach the brethren (Acts 15:1). As Paul and Barnabas disputed with them, the congregation in Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem for a ruling from the apostles (Acts 15:2–4). The apostles in Jerusalem sent Paul and Barnabas back to Antioch along with two men of good standing from Jerusalem, Judas called Barsabbas and Silas.

The earlier discussion described distances and several places of interest along the journey from Jerusalem to Antioch. Two items from these additional journeys, however, deserve comment. The journey from Antioch to Jerusalem provides more exact routing stating that Paul and Barnabas passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria. With previous journeys we could only describe possible routes, but these geographical notations reveal actual routes. After crossing the Homs Gap, Paul and Barnabas followed the coastal route south through the Phoenician cities of Byblos, Sidon, and Tyre. In communities along the way, they described their work in Pisidia, Galatia, and Lycaonia, and their listeners rejoiced greatly in the advance of the kingdom.

They must also have explained their purpose in going up to Jerusalem. In Tyre, one wonders if the Syro-Phoenician woman and her daughter were part of the believing community (Mark 7:24–30). The Master’s verbal exchange with this woman left the distinct impression that she stood outside of Israel, even though her statement of faith impressed the Master. Now these two champions of Gentile inclusion in the kingdom were on their way to request a ruling from Jerusalem.

Likewise, why did they choose to pass through Samaria? If they were already on the coastal highway, the best routing would continue along the coastal highway until they could ascend on the Joppa-Jerusalem highway. Perhaps Paul and Barnabas turned inland after Acco to pass through Samaria because they wanted to share their experiences with the Samaritan believers and encourage them in the purpose of their ascent to Jerusalem. As they shared with these communities, they brought “great joy to all the brethren” (Acts 15:3).

Paul and Barnabas, along with Barsabbas and Silas, probably retraced their steps on the way back to Antioch and reported the council’s decision in the communities they had visited during their ascent to Jerusalem. One wonders, however, how the changes in the Beqaa Valley impacted their thinking or their route planning. Agrippa II, the son of King Agrippa, had received the throne of Chalcis. Would this son of the king who had persecuted the believers (Acts 12) receive more land from Caesar? If so, how might he treat the believers? Many years later after Rome had placed more territory under Agrippa II, Paul had the opportunity to stand before this latest king of the Jews in Caesarea.

Event 14
text

ca. 49-50

Into the World of the Aegean and Europe

Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas and left ... and he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. (Acts 15:39b–41)

Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. (Acts 16:1–2)

They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them; and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia ... So putting out to sea from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and on the day following to Neapolis; and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a Roman colony ... [In Philippi they met] a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics. (Acts 16:6–12, 14a)

They went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia, and when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed. Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. (Acts 16:40–17:1)

The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.... Then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea; and Silas and Timothy remained there. (Acts 17:10, 14)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Highlight** on regional names: Bithynia (below the Black Sea), Mysia (northwest Anatolia), Samothrace (an island), Macedonia
- b. **Highlight** on city names: Troas, Neapolis, Philippi, Thyatira (Lydia's hometown in Asia, south of Mysia), Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Berea
- c. **Trace** this first leg of Paul's second journey with a sharp, blue-colored pencil: From Antioch through the 'Syrian Gates' (between the 'A' and 'N' of Amanus), by Issus to Tarsus; from Tarsus through the 'Cilician Gates' to Derbe; follow the route of the first journey to Lys- tra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia; being forbidden to continue west into Asia, journey northeast through Phrygia and Galatia around the 'N' of Anatolia; turn west and follow the best route through the mountainous terrain to Mysia and to the city of Troas; depart Troas by ship and stop on the northern side of Samothrace; continue on to Neapolis and travel overland to Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, and Berea
- d. **Add** to your legend on the back of your map: Write "Second Journey (Acts 15:40–18:22)"; and make a short blue line under your green line

Discussion: Into the World of the Aegean and Europe

In this tracing of the second journey, Paul's movement through Phrygia and Galatia is indefinite and speculative. Luke does not provide any specific cities visited between Iconium and Troas, but Paul must have returned to Antioch of Pisidia to announce the decision of the Jerusalem council. Their movements through Phrygia and Galatia follow the word of prophecy ("forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia"), which most likely occurred while Paul was at Antioch and planning to continue west, deeper into Asia along the eastern coast of the Aegean Sea.

Luke's use of Asia refers to the Roman Province of Asia. On your map it included Mysia, the Troad (area around Troas), Lydia, Caria, and the land corridor through Pisidia to Pamphylia. Rome continued to alter the eastern territories included in the provincial government, but the province was roughly bounded by Lycia to the south, Bithynia to the north, and Galatia to the east.

When Paul drew near to Mysia, he must have thought of turning north into Bithynia, perhaps to cross the Bosphorus into Thrace, but "the spirit of Jesus did not permit them." They continued west without stopping in Mysia and arrived at Troas, where Paul received the vision calling him to Macedonia. Perhaps we hear of no ministry in Mysia and Troas because this was part of Asia, and in keeping with divine direction, Paul only used it to continue west until he again received some direction for his ministry.

In Paul's day, a water crossing was necessary to travel from Asia Minor to Europe. Two straits separate the land masses: the Bosphorus, which leads from the Black Sea into the Sea of Marmara; and the Dardanelles (or the Hellespont), which leads from the Sea of Marmara into the Aegean Sea. The decision to sail from Troas to Neapolis proved wise in terms of travel time. As Luke records the journey they covered the distance in two days. Traveling overland, they would have still had to make a water crossing and a long, arduous trip by foot into western Bithynia and through Thrace.



As far as Athens ... and went to Corinth

Then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea; and Silas and Timothy remained there. Now those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens. (Acts 17:14–15b)

After these things [Paul] left Athens and went to Corinth. (Acts 18:1)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** on city names: Athens, Corinth
- Trace** the next part of Paul's second journey with a sharp, blue-colored pencil

To Athens: From Berea to Pydna on the sea; at Pydna take a ship south to Athens. Your ship stays close to the coast, threads its way through the islands of the Northern Sporades, continues along the eastern side of the large island of Euboea, and approaches Athens from the south, passing between the 'ea' of Cenchreae to dock at Piraeus [not on map], which served as Athen's port city, and you walk to Athens.

To Corinth: The journey from Athens to Corinth is only some fifty miles along the southern coast of the isthmus that connects the Greek mainland to the Peloponnesus. Begin by moving north from Athens to get around the small bay by the 'A' of Athens, then turn west to follow the southern coast of the isthmus until you approach the small bay that serves Cenchreae. At this point cross the isthmus northwest to Corinth.

Discussion: As far as Athens ... and went to Corinth

Paul's journeys between Berea and Athens and between Athens and Corinth leave commentators with some doubt as to whether he traveled by sea or by land. The reading in the Western Text that "Paul passed by Thessaly, for he was prevented from proclaiming the word to people there" (Acts 17:14) may imply a land journey, but because of the difficulty of the land journey and the statement that "the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea" (Acts 17:14), the map-markings suggest that Paul made the journey by sea to Athens. Another interpretation of the Western Text could be that he passed by on a ship as the Spirit prevented him from traveling by land through Thessaly.

If Paul had traveled by land he would have followed the coast until he had passed the Mount Olympus range, then he would have turned inland through Thessaly (not named on map). On *Regional Study Map 1: Middle East*, you can see the point at which he would have turned inland. Follow the coast south from Pydna until you reach the plain above the final 'E' of Greece. Turn inland at that point in order to avoid two obstacles: 1) the peninsula of Magnesia (shown but not named on map); and 2) the Malian Gulf (shown but not named on map), which stretches from the island of Euboea in as far as Thermopylae. Paul would have passed through Larrisa (not named on map), a road center on the plain in Thessaly. Then he would have headed due south to Thermopylae, followed the coast a short distance to get around the rugged heights on Mount Parnassus on which Delphi sits and then continued southeast to Athens.

A good land route runs from Athens to Corinth, and Paul could have covered the distance in two or three days. Here, the map-markings chose the land route over the sea route.

Look closely at the map to see the remarkable position that Corinth holds on its narrow isthmus. Four miles of land separate two gulfs: the Saronic Gulf on the Aegean Sea from the Gulf of Corinth on the waterway through the Ionian Sea to the Adriatic Sea. The ancients understood that passage across the isthmus or via a canal through the isthmus could save several hundred miles of seafaring around the Peloponnesus—approximately 430 miles. From the seventh century BCE through to the first century CE, visionary leaders discussed the canal, and some commissioned studies of its feasibility. In 67 CE Nero attempted to construct the canal with a workforce of Jewish prisoners of war. He only succeeded in digging a little over four-tenths of a mile before the project was abandoned after his death. A canal was finally completed in 1893, but it is too shallow and too narrow for most mod-

ern freighters. In the seventh century BCE the ruler of Corinth built an overland, stone carriageway to tow ships across the isthmus from gulf to gulf. This enriched Corinth as it claimed a dominant role in the transfer of goods between the Adriatic and the Aegean seas, but it also made Corinth an infamous city, which supplied the basest desires of the seafaring world.



ca. 51

Proconsul of Achaia

While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat. (Acts 18:12)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Write** with a black ballpoint pen in small caps, ACHAIA: Place the 'A' in the space between Corinth and Olympia and write the name above Corinth, across the water of the Gulf of Corinth, and onto the Greek mainland under Delphi
- Highlight** in yellow: Achaia

Discussion: Proconsul of Achaia

Achaia in modern Greece refers to a region on the northern side of the Peloponnese. In Classical Greece it referred variously to a portion of the Peloponnese or the entire peninsula, depending on changing politics, conquests, and alliances. In the Roman Empire, Achaia was a Roman province that extended from the Peloponnese northeast into Thessaly, with the seat of government at Corinth.

The Apostolic Scriptures pair Achaia and Macedonia four times (Acts 19:21; Romans 15:26; and 1 Thessalonians 1:7 and 1:8) in reference to all Greece, and Achaia appears seven more times in scripture. Paul traveled through it on two of his missionary journeys, spent significant time there, and addressed at least two letters to the believers in its ruling city of Corinth. Apollos left Asia Minor to go to Achaia and ministered in Corinth.



ca. 51

A Long Return to Antioch

Paul ... took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchreae he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow. They came to Ephesus, and he left them there ... When they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent, but taking leave of them ... he set sail from Ephesus. When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up [to Jerusalem] and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch. (Acts 18:18–22)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** on city names: Cenchreae, Ephesus
- Trace** the last part of Paul's second journey with a sharp, blue-colored pencil
 - To Cenchreae:** From Corinth cross the isthmus southeast to Cenchreae.
 - To Ephesus:** Board a ship and pass through the northern islands of the Cyclades above the word Aegean, and pass below the name Samos to the coast by Ephesus. Walk east to Ephesus.
 - To Caesarea:** Return to the coast and take a ship through the name Priene between the island of Samos and the mainland; continue through the name Patmos and around the islands of the Dodecanes, staying east of the name; continue south of the island of Rhodes and head directly to Caesarea on the coast.
 - To Jerusalem:** Walk from Caesarea to Aphek and up to Jerusalem.
 - To Antioch:** Since you returned along the same route to Caesarea, begin at Caesarea and journey north through Ptolemais, Tyre, Sidon, Beirut, Byblos, Arvad, and Ugarit to Antioch.

Discussion: A Long Return to Antioch

Paul's end goal was to return to Antioch, the congregation where he had begun his work among the Gentiles and the assembly that had sent him out to continue the work. Surely he could have found a ship from Cenchreae to Seleucia or even Athens to Seleucia, Antioch's port city. It is obvious, however, that he placed a visit to Jerusalem to see the apostles and perhaps to celebrate the feast of Sukkot above his desire to reach Antioch. In so doing, he lived the words of a psalm written in the Diaspora, "If I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy" (Psalm 137:6). The sailing distance from Cenchreae to Ephesus and on to either Seleucia or Caesarea is approximately the same at around 750 miles, but by going to Caesarea and Jerusalem, Paul added some 65 miles up to Jerusalem and then the 315 miles he had traveled several times already from Jerusalem to Antioch.

On *Regional Study Map 1: Middle East*, Ephesus is set in from the present coastline. The city originally sat a short distance east of the harbor and was connected to it by a street that was six hundred meters in length (approximately four-tenths of a mile). The street that a visitor to ancient Ephesus views today was constructed in the Byzantine Era, but evidence of an earlier Hellenistic street testifies that a similar street was in use during the first century (Ekrem Akurgal, *Ancient Civilizations and Ruins in Turkey* [trans. John Whybrow and Mollie Emre; Istanbul, Turkey: Haset Kitabevi, 1985], 157–158). In the past 2,000 years the Cayster River has silted in the harbor and moved the shoreline westward, so that Efes—the site name today—sits approximately four miles from the coast, a mile and a half west of the modern city of Selçuk, Turkey.



ca. 49-65

Travels of Aquila and Priscilla and of Apollos Aquila and Priscilla/Prisca traveled—

From Pontus to Rome to Corinth: [Upon arriving in Corinth, Paul] found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. (Acts 18:2)

From Corinth to Ephesus: Paul, having remained many days longer [in Corinth], took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila.... They came to Ephesus, and he left them there.... [Apollos] began to speak out boldly in the synagogue [in Ephesus]. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. (Acts 18:18–19, 26)

[After returning to Ephesus, Paul wrote to the Corinthians,] the churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. (1 Corinthians 16:19)

From Ephesus to Rome: [When Paul wrote to the Romans, Aquila and Priscilla were back in Rome.] Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus.... also greet the church that is in their house. (Romans 16:3, 5; cf. 2 Timothy 4:19)

From Rome to Ephesus?—[In Paul's second epistle to Timothy in Ephesus, he instructs Timothy.] Greet Prisca and Aquila. (2 Timothy 4:19)

Apollos traveled—

From Alexandria to Ephesus: Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures. (Acts 18:24)

From Ephesus to Achaia and Corinth: And when [Apollos] wanted to go across [the Aegean] to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him.... It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus. (Acts 18:27, 19:1)

From Corinth to Ephesus: [Paul wrote to the Corinthians from Ephesus, after Apollos had evidently

returned to Ephesus.] Concerning Apollos our brother, I encouraged him greatly to come to you [in Corinth] with the brethren; and it was not at all his desire to come now, but he will come when he has opportunity. (1 Corinthians 16:12)

From Ephesus to Corinth to Crete?—[In Paul’s epistle to Titus in Crete, he instructs Titus.] Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way [after they have delivered this letter] so that nothing is lacking for them. (Titus 3:13)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Write** with a black ballpoint pen abbreviations for Aquila’s and Priscilla’s movements: AP1 (beside Sinope in Pontus); AP2 (above Rome in Italia); AP3 (near Corinth in Achaia); AP4 (above Ephesus in Asia); AP5 (beside AP2); AP6 (beside AP4)
- Place** a short green stroke under numbers AP1–AP6 on the map to help your eye gather together the travels of Aquila and Priscilla
- Write** the following key on the back of your Middle East map:

Recorded Travels of Aquila and Priscilla

- AP1 A Diaspora Jew from Pontus (Acts 18:2)
- AP2 Moved to Rome until forced out by Emperor Claudius (Acts 18:2)
- AP3 Fled to Corinth (Acts 18:2)
- AP4 Moved to Ephesus (Acts 18:19, 26)
- AP5 Returned to Rome after Claudius’ death (implied in Romans 16:3, 5)
- AP6 Returned to Ephesus (implied in 2 Timothy 4:19)

- Write** with a black ballpoint pen abbreviations for Apollos’ movements: AS1 (above Alexandria in Egypt); AS2 (beside AP4 above Ephesus in Asia); AS3 (beside AP3 near Corinth in Achaia); AS4 (beside AS2 above Ephesus); AS5 (beside AS3 near Corinth); AS6 (above Gortys on Crete)
- Place** a short blue stroke under numbers AS1–AS6 on the map to help your eye gather together the travels of Apollos
- Write** the following key on the back of your Middle East map:

Recorded Travels of Apollos

- AS1 A Diaspora Jew from Alexandria (Acts 18:24)
- AS2 Taught his way to Ephesus (Acts 18:24)
- AS3 Moved on to Achaia and Corinth (Acts 18:27, 19:1)
- AS4 Returned to Ephesus (implied in 1 Corinthians 16:12)
- AS5 Returned to Corinth (implied in 1 Corinthians 16:12)
- AS6 Carried a letter to Titus on Crete (implied in Titus 3:13)

Discussion: Travels of Aquila and Priscilla and of Apollos

Aquila and Priscilla, as well as Apollos, represent an extremely mobile element of Diaspora Judaism in the first century, and the locations where the Apostolic Scriptures place them were highly influential cities at the center of imperial commerce and government. Aquila, “a native of Pontus,” exchanged Pontus—the rather isolated and provincial land of his birth—for Rome, the heart of the empire. He probably traveled by boat from the port of Sinope through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and continued to catch merchant ships making their way through the Aegean Sea and on to some port in Italia that gave access to Rome.

When the couple fled Rome under the order of Claudius, they settled for a time in Corinth, a commercial port that controlled a short, overland transfer of freight from the Aegean Sea to the Ionian Sea (at the southern end of the Adriatic Sea). Corinth was also the Roman administrative center of Achaia. From Corinth they moved to Ephesus, another commercial hub and a Roman

administrative center in Asia. Eventually Aquila and Priscilla returned to Rome, where they continued to open their home as a gathering place for believers as they had done in Ephesus. The greeting in 2 Timothy 4:19 implies that, near the end of Paul's life, the couple had again left Rome and returned to Ephesus.

Apollos, too, moved among the commercial and administrative cities of the Roman world. He left Alexandria, the capital of Egypt, and ministered in Ephesus, Corinth, Ephesus, and probably Corinth again, before the cryptic text of Titus 3:13 seems to suggest that Paul sent him on a mission, which included a brief stop in Crete to deliver a letter to Titus.



ca. 52-57

A Third Journey West from Syrian Antioch

And having spent some time [in Syrian Antioch, Paul] left and passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. (Acts 18:23)

Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. (Acts 19:1)

After the uproar [at the theater in Ephesus] had ceased, Paul ... left to go to Macedonia. When he had gone through those districts ... he came to [Corinth in] Greece ... when a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. (Acts 20:1-3)

[Our traveling companions] had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas. We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days. (Acts 20:5-6)

But we, going ahead to the ship, set sail for Assos, intending from there to take Paul on board; for so he had arranged it, intending himself to go by land. And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. Sailing from there, we arrived the following day opposite Chios; and the next day we crossed over to Samos; and the day following we came to Miletus. (Acts 20:13-15)

When we had parted from [the Ephesian elders at Miletus] and had set sail, we ran a straight course to Cos and the next day to Rhodes and from there to Patara; and having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. When we came in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left, we kept sailing to Syria and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload its cargo. (Acts 21:1-3)

When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais ... on the next day we left and came to Caesarea. (Acts 21:7-8)

After these days [in Caesarea] we got ready and started on our way up to Jerusalem. (Acts 21:15)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Highlight** on regional names and island names: Greece, Illyricum, Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Cos, Rhodes
- b. **Highlight** on city names: Colossae, Laodicea, Smyrna, Pergamum, Assos, Mitylene, Miletus, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre
- c. **Trace** lightly with a sharp, brown/black-colored pencil the Via Egnatia (Egnatian Way): Begin at Byzantium on the Bosphorus, follow the contours of the land directly west to Neapolis, continue to Amphipolis, Thessalonica, Pella, Edessa, and Lychnidos to Dyrrhachium; write Via Egnatia above Lychnidos with a black, ballpoint pen and underline it with the same colored pencil
- d. **Trace** Paul's third journey west from Antioch with a sharp, orange-colored pencil: Parallel your blue line (the second journey) from Syrian Antioch to Antioch of Pisidia; follow the contours of the land west by staying north of the lakes to Colossae and Laodicea; cross the Maeander River and follow the terrain under Lydia to Ephesus; leave Ephesus and go north by Smyrna and Pergamum to Troas; make a sea crossing parallel to your blue line

to Neapolis and continue to parallel your blue line with stops at all the cities to Berea and Pydna; from Pydna continue by land along the coast to get south of the mountains, then turn inland and go around the 'C' of GREECE to Thermopylae, and follow the coast until you can go south to your blue line from Athens to Corinth, and parallel that line to Corinth; draw two arrowheads pointing toward each other in the middle of your line between Greece and Pydna and in the middle of your line between Neapolis and Troas to indicate that Paul returned the same way he went from Troas to Corinth; from Troas draw a line along the coast to Assos and a second line overland to Assos; from Assos continue by sea to Mitylene, and east of Chios, west of Samos to Miletus; leave Miletus and touch the northeast corner of Cos and go around the peninsula of Cnidus to reach the city of Rhodes and on to Patara; change ships and continue to the south of Cyprus to Tyre, Ptolemais, and Caesarea; parallel your blue line to Jerusalem

- e. **Add** to your legend on the back of your map: Write "Third Journey (Acts 18:23–21:15)"; and make a short orange line beside it

Discussion: A Third Journey West from Syrian Antioch

On Paul's third journey west from Syrian Antioch he revisited sites in Galatia that he had visited on both his first and second journeys, and he revisited sites in Macedonia and some in Greece from his second journey. At several points, however, he touched new ground. Luke's first summary statement "he passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia" (Acts 18:23) suggests revisiting disciples in the cities where he first proclaimed the message of Yeshua the Messiah. A second summary statement implies inland stops between Antioch of Pisidia and Ephesus: "Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus" (Acts 19:1). The Greek phrase, *ta anoterika mere*, "the upper country," can refer to regions higher in elevation or inland regions, which, of course, are higher than coastal regions. For example, one crosses mountains to pass from Colossae and Laodicea to Ephesus at sea level on the coast. Since Paul later writes letters to Colossae and Laodicea, it is highly likely that these fell within his travels through "the upper country."

The land journey from Ephesus to Troas also touches some new territory, and since the book of Revelation speaks about believing communities in Smyrna and Pergamum (Revelation 2:8–17), Paul would visit those communities on his way north to Troas, if they already existed. His urgency to meet Titus, however, may have precluded visits to the slightly eastern sites of Sardis and Thyatira (Revelation 2:18–3:6) and certainly Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7–13).

Luke's third summary statement, "Paul ... left to go to Macedonia. When he had gone through those districts ... he came to Greece" (Acts 20:1–2) implies visits to the assemblies he had founded on his second journey, but also allows for speculation that he may have followed the Via Egnatia west. Rome constructed the Via Egnatia in the second century BCE to provide a link for Roman colonies lying between the Adriatic Sea and the Bosphorus. Paul must certainly have pondered the possibility of following the Via Egnatia to Dyrrhachium, crossing the Adriatic Sea to Brundisium, and following the Via Appia (Appian Way) north to Rome, finally fulfilling his goal of reaching Rome. Two other goals precluded such action: his need to revisit Corinth and his desire to reach Jerusalem.

Luke's use of "Greece" in this third summary statement strengthens the supposition that Paul traveled overland from Berea to Corinth, finally allowing him to pass through Thessaly and more of Achaia. A fourth summary statement puts Paul back at Philippi: [Our traveling companions] "had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas. We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread" (Acts 20:5–6). Paul may have reached Philippi by ship from Cenchrea to Neapolis, but if he was attempting to avoid some plot on his life that involved sea travel, then perhaps he followed our map and returned overland to Macedonia. After leaving Philippi, Luke provided a detailed itinerary up to Jerusalem.



Twelve Tribes Dispersed Abroad

James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings. (James 1:1)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Identify the following geographical regions: Syria, Galatia, Lycaonia, Pisidia, Asia (in western Anatolia), Macedonia, Achaia (written in)
- Add to your legend on the back of your map: Epistle of James—possible recipients were Jewish communities in Syria, Galatia, Lycaonia, Pisidia, Asia, Macedonia, Achaia

Discussion: Twelve Tribes Dispersed Abroad

James addressed his epistle “to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad.” Did James have some specific Diaspora communities in mind? James was at the forefront of mediating between Paul and the Jewish communities and Jewish believers who misunderstood Paul’s gospel of Gentile inclusion. The book of Acts records two different visits that Paul made to Jerusalem and stood before James and the apostles or elders to tell of the Gentile response to his proclamation that Gentiles could enter the kingdom through faith in Yeshua the Messiah.

All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

After they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, “Brethren, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. With this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,

‘After these things I will return,
And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen,
And I will rebuild its ruins,
And I will restore it,
So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD,
And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,
Says the LORD, who made these things known from long ago.’
[citing from Amos 9:11–12]

“Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.” (Acts 15:12–21)

[Eight years later after he had again returned to Jerusalem] Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. After he had greeted them, he began to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

And when they heard it they began glorifying God; and they said to him, “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law; and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. What, then, is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come. Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow; take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law.” (Acts 21:12–24)

James may have sent his epistle to Jewish communities in regions where Paul had ministered to serve as both a defense of Paul and a correction to those who misunderstood Paul’s teaching by saying that

Paul encouraged Jewish believers to abandon Torah. If this premise is true, you identified possible recipients of the epistle where Pauline communities existed and conflict had arisen regarding Jews and their obligation to Torah.



ca. 59-60

Thus we came to Rome

When it was decided that we would sail for Italy ... [we embarked] in an Adramyttian ship, which was about to sail to the regions along the coast of Asia. The next day we put in at Sidon ... From there we put out to sea and sailed under the shelter of Cyprus because the winds were contrary. When we had sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia. There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy ... When we had sailed slowly for a good many days, and with difficulty had arrived off Cnidus, since the wind did not permit us to go farther, we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone; and with difficulty sailing past it we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.... Because the harbor was not suitable for wintering, the majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete ... they weighed anchor and began sailing along Crete, close inshore. But before very long ... we gave way [to a violent wind] and let ourselves be driven along. Running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were scarcely able to get the ship's boat under control ... and fearing that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis, they let down the sea anchor and in this way let themselves be driven along.... When the fourteenth night came, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors began to surmise that they were approaching some land.... When day came, they could not recognize the land; but they did observe a bay with a beach, and they resolved to drive the ship onto it if they could.... But striking a reef where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern began to be broken up by the force of the waves.... When they had been brought safely through, then we found out that the island was called Malta.... At the end of three months we set sail on an Alexandrian ship, which had wintered at the island ... After we put in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days. From there we sailed around and arrived at Rhegium, and a day later a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. There we found some brethren, and were invited to stay with them for seven days; and thus we came to Rome. (Acts 27:1–8, 12–17, 27, 39, 41, 28:1, 11–14)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Write** with a black ballpoint pen the following name in small caps: GULF OF SYRTIS (SIDRA) in the big gulf to the east of Lybia
- Highlight** in yellow on geographical names: Lycia, Salmone (a promontory on Crete), Cauda (also called Clauda), Melita/Malta, Sicilia, Italia; the following names are already highlighted: Asia, Cyprus, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Crete
- Highlight** in yellow on sea names: Gulf of Syrtis, Adriatic Sea
- Highlight** in yellow on city names: Sidon, Myra, Cnidus, Lasea, Fair Havens, Phoenix, Syracuse, Rhegium; the following names are already highlighted: Puteoli (written-in), Rome
- Trace** Paul's sea voyage to Rome with a sharp, red-colored pencil: From Caesarea sail up the coast to Sidon; from Sidon use the shelter of Cyprus and sail north toward Cilicia and then follow the coast to Myra in Lycia; from Myra sail west but stay along the coast to the east of Rhodes until you draw near to Cnidus; then turn southwest to sail east of Salmone and under the protection of Crete until you reach Fair Havens; leave Fair Havens and attempt to stay close to the shore of Crete to reach Phoenix, but after turning toward Phaistos, turn southwest and pass below Cauda as you are driven by a violent wind; the nor'easter is pushing you southwest toward the Gulf of Syrtis and its dangerous sands, so continue your journey southwest from Cauda for a quarter of the distance between Cauda and the first

'C' in Cyrenaica; at this point darkness engulfs you, and you have no idea of direction, but shifting winds drive you west-northwest (with a few gentle squiggles in your line) to crash on the southeastern shore of Malta; from Malta sail to Syracuse and then on to Rhegium; from Rhegium sail carefully through the narrow Strait of Messina and on to Puteoli just south of Cumae; from Puteoli journey by foot to Cumae and on to the base of the mountain range extending southeast from Rome; skirt between the range and the coast and follow the western edge of the range to Rome

- f. **Add** to your legend on the back of your map: Write "Journey to Rome (Acts 27:1–28:15)"; and make a short red line under your orange line

Discussion: Thus we came to Rome

The sea voyage to Rome is high drama. Luke foreshadows the coming disaster by recounting the various contrary winds they experienced. From Sidon the western winds opposed their progress, and they had to use the shelter of Cyprus to reach the southern coast of Asia Minor along which they tacked until they arrived at Myra. After Myra the journey slowed, and they made painful progress as winds coming across the Aegean Sea opposed them. After attaining an apparent safety within the islands of the Aegean, a northern wind drove them south until they were able to find shelter behind Crete. A deceptively gentle breeze lured them out of Fair Havens, but suddenly it gave way before the powerful nor'easter that drove them into open water and toward the sands in the Gulf of Syrtis. Old sailors terrified young initiates of the sea with the fearful prospects of wreckage on the shoals of Syrtis—once aground, a ship never left and the desert stretches of Libyan shoreline offered no life, only thirst, hunger, and death.

They could recount the story of Apollonius of Rhodes (third century BCE), who wrote of a ship stranded behind the sands of Syrtis: The ship had left western Greece and was making its way south through the islands guarding the mouth of Corinth Bay. They drew near to the Peloponnesus, when

a baleful blast of the north wind seized them in mid-course and swept them towards the Libyan sea nine nights and as many days, until they came far within Syrtis, wherefrom is no return for ships, when they are once forced into that gulf. For on every hand are shoals, on every hand masses of seaweed from the depths; and over them the light foam of the wave washes without noise; and there is a stretch of sand to the dim horizon; and there moves nothing that creeps or flies. Here accordingly the flood-tide—for this tide often retreats from the land and bursts back again over the beach coming on with a rush and roar—thrust them suddenly onto the innermost shore, and but little of the keel was left in the water. And they leapt forth from the ship, and sorrow seized them when they gazed on the mist and the levels of vast land stretching far like a mist and continuous into the distance; no spot for water, no path, no camp of herdsmen did they descry afar off, but all the scene was possessed by a dead calm. (Apollonius, *Argonautica* 4.1228–1250)

The helmsman of that ship spoke a fateful word:

There is no escape from ruin ... even though breezes should blow from the land; for ... I behold a sea of shoals, and masses of water ... run over the hoary sand. And miserably long ago would our sacred ship have been shattered far from the shore; but the tide itself bore her high onto the land from the deep sea. But now the tide rushes back to the sea, and only the foam, whereon no ship can sail, rolls round us ... all hope of our voyage and of our return is cut off. (Apollonius, *Argonautica* 4.1259–1276)

Strabo of Pontus, who lived around the time of Herod the Great, described a Lesser Syrtis, an area of dangerous sands along the eastern shoreline of Tunisia in what is today called the Gulf of Gabes (not on the map) and a Greater Syrtis, along the eastern shoreline of Lybia. He wrote:

The difficulty with both this [Greater] Syrtis and the Lesser Syrtis is that in many places their deep waters contain shallows, and the result is, at the ebb and the flow of the tides, that sailors sometimes fall into the shallows and stick there, and that the safe escape of a boat is rare. On this

account sailors keep at a distance when voyaging along the coast, taking precautions not to be caught off their guard and driven by winds into these gulfs. (Strabo, *Geography* 17.3.20)

Dio Chrysostom, a contemporary of Luke and Paul, also described the Syrtis:

Those who have once sailed into [the Syrtis] find egress impossible; for shoals, crosscurrents, and long sandbars extending a great distance out make the sea utterly impassable ... The surrounding country is very much the same—a lonely stretch of sandy dunes. (Dio Chrysostom, *Discourses*, 5:8–9)

The heavy Alexandrian grain ship that carried Paul and his entourage had no hope for survival in the sands of the Syrtis. The sailors knew this and feared “that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis” (Acts 27:17), and as the ship was driven for twelve nights and as many days with neither sun nor stars, “all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned” (Acts 27:20).

At any moment the fateful grounding in the *shallows* of the Syrtis would happen, but unbeknownst to those lost at sea in the darkness, God providentially shifted the wind so that it blew out of the east-southeast and drove the ship into the lower reaches of the Adriatic Sea. Instead of the shallows of the Syrtis and the deserted stretches of Libya, the hand of God directed the ship to the shallows of a bay on Malta and to a people who readily assisted the shipwrecked crew and passengers. Luke writes, “Thus we came to Rome” (Acts 28:14).



ca. 58

Andrew for Scythia

Meanwhile the holy apostles and disciples of our Savior were scattered over the whole world.... Andrew for Scythia ... (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.3.1)

Andrew with preaching softened Scythia. (Eucherius of Lyons [died c. 440] cited in Peter Megill Peterson, *Andrew, Brother of Simon Peter: His History and Legends* [Lieden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1958], 11)

Andrew ... accepted his lot-given preaching-fields Scythia and Achaia, in whose city of Patrae itself he died, suspended from a cross. (Isidor of Seville [died c. 635] cited in Peterson, *Andrew, Brother of Simon Peter: His History and Legends*, 11)

Andrew preached to the Iberians, Sauromatians, Taurians, and Scythians and to every region and city, on the Black Sea, both north and south. (Nicetas of Paphlagonia [died c. 840] cited in Peterson, *Andrew, Brother of Simon Peter: His History and Legends*, 20)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Write** with a black ballpoint pen in small caps: SCYTHIA (in the top margin of the map half an inch to the right of the middle fold); IBERIANS above the words Caucasus Mountains between the names Black Sea and Caspian; SAUROMATIANS in the map border that bears the map name and to the left of the word “Topic”; TAURIANS on the piece of land reaching into the Black Sea from the north
- Write** with a black ballpoint pen in small caps: ANDREW’S APOSTOLATE (along the northeastern shore of the Black Sea)

Discussion: Andrew for Scythia

Many writers from the Byzantine Period identify Scythia as the apostolate that fell by lot to Andrew, but Saint Nicetas of Paphlagonia listed several people groups—Iberians, Sauromatians, Taurians, and Scythians—to whom Andrew preached. Various traditions in the Eastern Orthodox Church also place Andrew around the Black Sea and north in Scythia. These traditions also credit him with founding the first believing communities in Georgia, stating that he stopped at a place in the Kievan hills to bless the future city of Kiev, and they claim him as the patron saint of churches in the Ukraine, Romania, and Russia.

The Borysthenes River, which flows into the Black Sea from the north (not on map), served as a route from the northern interior to the Black Sea, and Andrew perhaps used it to travel into the heart of Scythia, preaching and teaching in the villages along the river. Later Andrew left the Black Sea region to visit and instruct congregations in Thrace, Macedonia, and Achaia.



ca. 58

Scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia

Meanwhile the holy apostles and disciples of our Savior were scattered over the whole world.... Peter seems to have preached in Pontus, Galatia and Bithynia, Cappadocia and Asia, to the Jews of the Diaspora. (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.3.1)

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Yeshua the Messiah and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. (1 Peter 1:1–2)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. Use the dry end of a pen: Trace an imaginary line beginning near Ephesus and follow the coast of Asia into the Black Sea; continue across the Black Sea staying a little north of the southern coast until you can enclose Cappadocia; leave Lycaonia outside your line; include Galatia; exclude Phrygia by drawing your line between Phrygia and Bithynia; and then turn south to include Asia and return to the beginning of your line
- b. Write with a black ballpoint pen in small caps: PETER'S APOSTOLATE south of the Black Sea between the regional name Pontus and the words Pontus Mountains

Discussion: Scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia

Apart from Asia your imaginary line took in four regions positioned along or near the southern coast of the Black Sea. Peter's contact with Asia may have come from sea journeys through the Aegean Sea to reach the southern coast of the Black Sea. His transport from Caesarea or Joppa would have stopped in ports along the coast of Asia and probably required him to find another ship journeying on into the Black Sea. During these layovers, he had contact with Jews living "as aliens, scattered throughout ... Asia." Simon Peter probably left for his apostolate around the same time as Andrew.



ca. 61

You [in Colossae] ... Laodicea and Hierapolis

Epaphras, who is one of your number [at Colossae], a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers ... For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you [in Colossae] and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.... Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea ... When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the assembly of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea. (Colossians 4:12–13, 15–16)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. Highlight city dots in green: Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis
- c. Underline city names in green: Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis

Discussion: You [in Colossae] ... Laodicea and Hierapolis

The Lycus River flows beside Colossae and between Laodicea and Hierapolis to join the Maeander on its way to the Aegean Sea by Miletus. The fertile Lycus Valley, which surrounds the river, lies between mountain ranges and is somewhat horn-shaped with its tip near Colossae and its broad base engaging a stretch of the Maeander. The valley is a small, rich agricultural and herding environment that finds itself both aided and challenged by two other geographical features. The first is that

it serves together with other passes and valleys to carry an important east-west road from points east to the coast at Ephesus. Your map should bear the markings of Paul's third journey when he passed through the Cilician Gates, visited Derbe, Lysta, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch. We then brought him through the Lycus Valley via Colossae and Laodicea on his way west to Ephesus (Acts 18:23–19:1). The second geographical feature is the hot springs at Hierapolis. These springs drew visitors from all around the Roman world for health purposes. Visually stunning slopes descend from Hierapolis into the Lycus Valley as mineral-rich waters harden into white, rock formations that appear to flow down in terraces and broad outpourings to the valley below.

Paul's faithful co-worker, Epaphras came from this valley and was evidently instrumental in founding or ministering to the triad of believing communities in the valley. Paul testified to Epaphras' intense concern for the three communities: "he has a deep concern for you [in Colossae] and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis." The spiritual health of one community would easily influence the neighboring communities. Paul, too, encouraged an exchange of instruction: "When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the assembly of the Laodiceans; and you [at Colossae], for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea."



ca. 61

I have sent him to you

I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus ... because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.... Therefore I have sent him [to you] all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice ... Receive him then in the Lord with all joy ... (Philippians 2:25–26, 28–29)

But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts. (Ephesians 6:21–22)

Tychicus ... will bring you information. For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts; and with him Onesimus ... They will inform you about the whole situation here. (Colossians 4:7–9)

I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me. I have sent him back to you in person, that is, sending my very heart, whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel. (Philemon 10–13)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** in yellow on city names: Tarentum and Brundisium (two sites on the heel of Italy, Dyrrhachium (across the Adriatic Sea from Brundisium))
- Trace** lightly with a sharp, brown/black-colored pencil the Via Appia (Appian Way) from Rome to Brundisium: Trying to be sensitive to mountainous difficulties, trace south from Rome—staying west of the range of mountains—to pass east between the names Neapolis and Naples; an eighth of an inch beyond the name (Naples) turn south for an eighth of an inch and then southeast to pass an eighth of an inch under the 'C' of Cannae; continue southeast through the 's' of Taras and the 'm' of Tarentum to the city dot; finish with a gentle arc below the mountains to arrive at the city dot of Brundisium
- Write** Via Appia along an open stretch of the road with a black, ballpoint pen
- Note** your tracing of the Via Egnatia for Event 19, "A Third Journey West from Syrian Antioch."

Discussion: I have sent him to you

During his imprisonment in Rome, Paul wrote letters to the Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, Laodiceans (no longer extant), and Philemon. He dispatched his letters through co-workers, whom he commended to his addressees with glowing reports and an earnest hope that they would receive the messenger joyfully along with the letter.

The routes the messengers traveled are never mentioned. Certainly they could have taken a ship from Puteoli and perhaps made a connection someplace in the Aegean to reach a seaport near their destination. On the other hand, they could also have traveled the Via Appia south from Rome to Brundisium, taken a ferry across to Dyrrhachium, and continued overland on the Via Egnatia. This is the most logical route to Philippi, and Epaphroditus probably carried the Epistle to the Philippians along this route.

Tychicus and Onesimus may also have traveled the land routes. It would have permitted them to stay over with some of Paul's congregations along the way, but it also required another water crossing, perhaps from Neapolis to Troas or even all the way through to Ephesus.

The value of this speculative exercise is that it helps you ponder difficulties in communicating and traveling in the ancient world. Paul's letters were not posted and received a week later. They required experienced travelers and trip planning.



ca. 63

From the East to those who dwelt in the West

Peter often visited Pontus and Bithynia. (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 27.6)

And as they prayed and fasted, God was already teaching Peter at Jerusalem of that which should come to pass ... [The Master] showed him a vision after this manner, saying unto him ... "Delay not: set forth on the morrow, and there you shall find a ship ready, setting sail for Italy." ... And he went down to Caesarea and embarked quickly in the ship, the ladder of which was already drawn up, not taking any provision with him ... But Peter ... himself fasted while he was in the ship ... Now when there was a calm upon the ship in the Adriatic ... suddenly there came a wind, not vehement but moderate, at the ship's prow, and ceased not for six days and as many nights, until they came unto Puteoli ... As they entered in at the gate, Theon [the ship's captain, who had become a believer under Peter's instruction and marveled at Peter's fast] entreated Peter, "You did not refresh yourself on any day in so great a sea voyage, and now after so hard a journey will you set out immediately from the ship? Stay and refresh yourself, and then you shall set forth: for from here to Rome upon a pavement of flint [i.e., the Appian Way] I fear lest you be hurt by weakness." ... Theon himself delivered all that was in the ship to be sold for the price which he thought good, and followed Peter unto Rome. (*Acts of Peter* 5–6)

[Simon Magus] fled [from Simon Peter] and made a great journey across the sea from the East to the West ... And coming to the city of Rome ... he was in a short time successful in his undertaking. (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 2.14.4–5)

The all-good and gracious Providence ... led Peter ... to Rome against this great corrupter of life. He ... like a noble commander of God, clad in divine armor, carried the costly merchandise of the light of the understanding from the East to those who dwelt in the West, proclaiming the light itself, and the word which brings salvation to souls, and preaching the kingdom of heaven. (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 2.14.6)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Highlight** in yellow: Pontus, Bithynia, Jerusalem, Caesarea, Adriatic Sea, Puteoli, Rome (most already highlighted)
- c. **Trace** a sample journey of Simon Peter's with a yellow-colored pencil from Sinope, the port

of Pontus, to Caesarea, stopping if you wish at Ephesus or Corinth, as it seems Peter did in some of his multiple journeys: Begin at Sinope and follow the Black Sea coast west to pass through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; continue south along the Aegean's eastern coast (unless you are stopping at Corinth); pass between Rhodes and Lycia; and set a course south of Cyprus to Caesarea

- d. **Trace** Simon Peter's journey to Rome with a yellow-colored pencil: Embark at Caesarea and sail north to pass around Cyprus and continue west along the coast; pass south of Rhodes and between Crete and Kithira; sail north to touch the southern Adriatic in the area of Cephalonia; continue west to pass between Sicilia and Rhegium; disembark at Puteoli and follow the Appian Way to Rome
- e. **Add** to your legend on the back of your map: Write "Peter's Journeys" and make a short yellow line beside the title; stack in two lines underneath this head: "1) Multiple trips between Pontus and Caesarea"; and "2) Journey from Caesarea to Rome"

Discussion: From the East to those who dwelt in the West

Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis on Cyprus in the last part of the fourth century, wrote, "Peter often visited Pontus and Bithynia," two regions within his apostolate. By tracing a sample journey between Sinope in Pontus to Caesarea, you could see the possibility for port calls and changes of transport in the Aegean during Peter's multiple trips. During these layovers he would have visited various congregations around the Aegean or even spent a period of time teaching in an assembly. Paul speaks of Peter's influence among the believers at Corinth (see 1 Corinthians 1:9, 3:22). Dionysius, who was Bishop of Corinth in the last part of the second century, wrote that both Paul and Peter "planted and likewise taught us in our Corinth" (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 2.25.8).

You also traced out a trip from Caesarea to Rome, with a slight aberration in the southern Adriatic during a calm at sea. *Acts of Peter* records that Theon, the ship's captain requested baptism during the calm, and afterwards a favorable wind brought the ship to Puteoli within six days. Peter then followed the Appian Way to Rome (for the Appian Way, see the event, "I have sent him to you.")

Eusebius noted that Simon Magus "made a great journey across the sea from the East to the West," and then Simon Peter's trip to Rome prompted Eusebius to make the assertion, "[Peter] like a noble commander of God, clad in divine armor, carried the costly merchandise of the light of the understanding from the East to those who dwelt in the West." This—the statement of a man who grew up and lived in the east—echoes growing tensions between the eastern church and the western church. The tension was already obvious as early as the end of the second century in the debate over the correct day for celebrating the resurrection. Victor, Bishop of Rome (189–199), excommunicated easterners who would not yield to an observance on Sunday. He also introduced Latin over Greek as the language of the Mass in Rome. Other tensions existed over the claim of primacy by the Roman bishop, dominance in relationship between state and church, various doctrinal issues, the practice of clerical celibacy, etc. Eusebius' echo in the fourth century of these earlier tensions served as a harbinger of the great divide that would take place in the eleventh century between eastern and western Christianity. Old political and cultural differences had even found their way into the body of believers in Yeshua the Messiah. The east represented Anatolia, Mesopotamia, the eastern Mediterranean seaboard, Egypt, and everything east, while the west represented Italy, Spain, and the eventual expansion into Europe.



ca. 80-95

Instructed by Apostles In Smyrna

The people of Smyrna sent a message to John saying, "... Come unto Smyrna and unto the other cities, that we may come to know your God ..." (*Acts of John* 55)

Polycarp [of Smyrna] was not only instructed by apostles and conversed with many who had seen the Master, but was also appointed bishop by the apostles in Asia Minor in the assembly at Smyrna. (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.3.4)

In the Lycus Valley: Laodicea, Colossae, Hierapolis

After a long time had passed [in the Lycus Valley] ... he grieved them then because he said, “Brethren, it is now time for me to return to Ephesus ...” (*Acts of John* 58–59)

Papias [of Hierapolis], of whom we are now speaking, confesses that he received the words of the apostles from those that followed them, but says that he was himself a hearer of Aristion and the elder John. (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.39.7)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Locate:** Ephesus, Smyrna, Laodicea, Colossae, Hierapolis
- b. **Trace** with the back of your pen the two journeys of John discussed in *Chronicles of the Apostles* on John the Elder:
 1. From dot of Ephesus to the dot of Smyrna passing by the ‘S’ of Sardis
 2. From the dot of Ephesus to the dot of Laodicea by passing under Lydia and turning south through the final ‘R’ of the Maeander River
- c. **Write** with a black ballpoint pen:
 1. Polycarp (between the islands of Lesbos and Chios) and draw a short arrow to the city dot of Smyrna
 2. Papias (above Hierapolis) and draw a short arrow to the city dot of Hierapolis

Discussion: Instructed by Apostles

Reflection on John’s journeys and ministries in the cities of Asia Minor gives cause for rejoicing and sadness. Joy arises from the testimony of those men who saw John and heard his teaching about the Master’s miracles, words, practices, and resurrection. One can hear this joy in the third generation testimony of Irenaeus:

I remember the events of that time more clearly than those of recent years ... so that I am able to describe the very place in which the blessed Polycarp sat as he discoursed ... and the stories he told about his interactions with John and with the others who had seen the Master. And as he remembered their words, and what he heard from them concerning the Master, and concerning his miracles and his teaching, having received them from eyewitnesses of the “Word of Life.” (Irenaeus, *Letter to Florinus*; in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 5.20.6–7)

John witnessed the Word of Life and faithfully told Polycarp along with thousands of others, including perhaps Papias of Hierapolis. Polycarp faithfully told Irenaeus along thousands of others, but these few who left a record of the historical facts stand in that “great cloud of witnesses” that encourages us in the life of faith and hope.

Sadness arises, however, from the statement of John regarding someone like Diotrephes, “who loves to be first [and] does not accept what we say” (3 John 9). Where is the true testimony to the Master if one does not accept the words of those who saw Him and walked with Him? We must be thankful that John’s disciples encouraged him to record his memories of the Master and to speak out about the true nature and work of the Messiah, and we can still read and study those words today.



ca. 95

Banished to the Pontine Islands

And the same year Domitian slew, along with many others, Flavius Clemens the consul, although he was a cousin and had married Flavia Domitilla, who was also a relative of the emperor’s. The charge brought against them both was that of atheism, a charge on which many others who drifted into Jewish ways were put to death, and the rest were at least deprived of their property. Domitilla was merely banished to Pandataria. (Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 67.14.1–2)

In the fifteenth year of Domitian, Flavia Domitilla, daughter of a sister of Flavius Clement, who at that time was one of the consuls of Rome, was exiled with many others to the island of Pontia in consequence of testimony borne to Christ. (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.18.4)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Draw** in a small island: Make a very small circle (under the “C” of “Cumae” off the west coast of Italy) and write in black ballpoint pen to the left of the circle, “Pontia.”
- b. **Draw** in a second small island: Make a smaller dot under the “u” of “Cuma” off the west coast of Italy) and write in black ballpoint to the left of the dot, “Pandataria.”

Discussion: Banished to the Pontine Islands

The Caesars used the Pontine Islands off Italy’s west coast both as scenic retreats and as penal colonies. They sometimes banished members of the aristocracy, including family members who had fallen into disfavor, to live in exile on one of the islands. When Domitian discovered that his cousin, Flavius Clemens, and his niece, Flavia Domitilla, had drifted into Jewish ways by become believers, he had Clemens put to death and Domitilla banished to an island. The Roman historian Cassius Dio says he sent her to the island of Pandataria (modern Ventotene). Eusebius says he sent her to Pontia (modern Ponza). Both islands belong to an archipelago of six islands in the Tyrrhenian Sea: Pandataria, Pontia, Palmarola, Zannone, Gavi, and Santo Stefano. The scenic islands were formed by volcanic activity. Today, they are popular tourist destinations.



ca. 95

To Rome and Patmos

And when John declared again that he was the man they sought, the neighbors moreover bearing witness to it, they said that he was to go with them at once to the king in Rome. And, urging them to take provisions for the journey, he turned and took a few dates, and straightway went forth. And the soldiers, having taken the public conveyances, traveled fast, having seated him in the midst of them. (*Acts of John at Rome*)

And Domitian, astonished at all the wonders, sent him away to an island, appointing for him a set time. And straightway John sailed to Patmos, where also he was deemed worthy to see the revelation of the end. (*Acts of John at Rome*)

I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance, which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (Revelation 1:9)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Trace** with the back of a pen John’s route overland to Rome via public conveyances: Overland from Ephesus to Troas; a short and safe boat ride from Troas to Neapolis; follow the Via Egnatia from Neapolis via Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Pella, Edessa, Lychnidos to Aulon or Dyrrhachium; boat to Brundisium; follow the Via Appia from Brundisium via Taras to pass below the word Neapolis and turn north to Rome
- b. **Highlight** in yellow on the island of Patmos (name and island below the name)

Discussion: To Rome and Patmos

John’s overland journey to Rome by public conveyances must have taken him on two well-known Roman roads in the empire: 1) Via Egnatia (which you traced for Event 19, “A Third Journey West from Syrian Antioch”); 2) Via Appia (which you traced for Event 25, “I have sent him to you”). The trip from Ephesus to Rome, however, also required two water crossings, not much more than ferry rides, either across the northeastern Aegean or one of the straits that lead into the Black Sea and across the southern Adriatic. The soldiers most likely took the Troas-Neapolis ferry. Paul used this

ferry on least three occasions. The other crossing is a short but potentially choppy ride to Brundisium at the southern end of the Via Appia.

Acts of John at Rome states that John sailed to Patmos. You have sailed from the Aegean to Rome and back several times and can find your way through the Strait of Messina and either via Corinth or directly across the Aegean to Patmos, but as you have learned in other travels, most journeys required a change of vessel at one or two ports along the route. The trip to Patmos probably ended on a smaller vessel that serviced smaller islands along the Ionian Coast.



ca. 96

The Seven Churches that are in Asia

John to the seven churches that are in Asia ... I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea." (Revelation 1:4, 9–11)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Highlight** in yellow the Roman provincial name of Asia (making a solid highlight that links the previously highlighted letters)
- Highlight** in yellow the seven cities in which the assemblies were located (some are already highlighted): Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea

Discussion: The Seven Churches that are in Asia

John from the island of Patmos (Revelation 1:4) sent out a messenger to carry the Master's address to seven chosen churches in the Roman province of Asia. John lists the churches in a clockwise pattern—perhaps following a geographical pattern he had used while in Ephesus when he wished to make a cyclical journey to the various churches in Asia. Or perhaps it is the geographical route that he expected his messenger to follow in carrying the letter to the churches. The first three cities all lie on the coast or near to it. The last four cities are all inland. If you look closely at the map and trace the route from city to city as John listed them, you can find many of the passes and valleys that John had used in earlier visits to the cities.

As he sent the letter carrier on the same route, he probably thought of numerous adventures and hardships along the road: "He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (Revelation 3:21). James and John, the two sons of Zebedee ... said to Him, "Grant that we may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your glory" (Mark 10:35–36). It was a long road.



ca. 112

Bithynia and Nicomedia

To Emperor Trajan

As I had a very favorable voyage to Ephesus, so in traveling by post-chaise from thence I was extremely troubled by the heats, and also by some slight feverish attacks, which kept me some time at Pergamus. From there, Sir, I got on board a coasting vessel, but, being again detained by contrary winds, did not arrive at Bithynia so soon as I had hoped. However, I have no reason to complain of this delay, since (which indeed was the most auspicious circumstance that could attend me) I reached the province in time to celebrate your birthday. (Pliny the Younger, *Correspondence with Emperor Trajan from Bithynia* 16; or *Letters* 10.16)

To the Emperor Trajan

My lieutenant, Servilius Pudens, came to Nicomedia, Sir, on the 24th of November, and by his

arrival freed me, at length, from the anxiety of a very uneasy expectation. (Pliny the Younger, *Correspondence with Emperor Trajan from Bithynia* 20; or *Letters* 10.20)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. Place five city dots in the region of Bithynia and write the city names near the dots in black ballpoint pen:
 1. Dot on the end of the bay that stretches east above Nicaea = Nicomedia
 2. Dot on the coast above the 'Y' of Bithynia = Heraclea
 3. Dot on the coast above the 'A' of Bithynia = Tium
 4. Dot on the coast above the 'O' of Pontus = Amastris
 5. Dot in the valley an eighth of an inch below the 'T' of Bithynia = Claudiopolis
- b. Highlight in yellow: Nicomedia

Discussion: Bithynia and Nicomedia

Pliny's discussion of Christians in Bithynia captures the attention of Christian readers as it provides a written snapshot of a believing community at the beginning of the second century. Pliny, however, only spent about a year and a half in Bithynia, and he received the assignment from Trajan to order to bring financial accountability to Bithynia and its cities.

You added five cities in the area of Bithynia that appear along with others in Pliny's correspondence with Trajan. For example, he writes a proposal for sewer work in Amastris:

The elegant and beautiful city of Amastris, Sir, has, among other principal constructions, a very fine street and of considerable length, on one entire side of which runs what is called indeed a river, but in fact is no other than a vile common sewer, extremely offensive to the eye, and at the same time very pestilential on account of its noxious smell. It will be advantageous, therefore, in point of health, as well as decency, to have it covered; which shall be done with your permission: as I will take care, on my part, that money be not wanting for executing so noble and necessary a work. (Pliny, *Letters* 10.99)

In another letter, Pliny describes for Trajan a theater, which the citizens of Nicaea had begun to build but could not complete because they had exhausted the funds for the project. In the same letter he also speaks about a bathhouse in Claudiopolis that was falling short of funds for construction (Pliny, *Letters*, 10:48). Would the emperor please send out a dependable architect to determine the feasibility of continuing? Trajan responds: You are there; architects are available in all our provinces; I trust you to make the determination (Pliny, *Letters*, 10:49)

In yet another letter, Pliny reports that a wealthy man had appointed him as executor of his estate with the stipulation that Pliny honor Trajan either with building projects or five-year games in the cities of Heraclea and Tium (Pliny, *Letters*, 10:79). Does the emperor have a preference how the citizens of Heraclea and Tium remember him? Trajan responds: You know the cities and can make the choice accordingly (Pliny, *Letters*, 10:80).

Pliny's wise rule averted the crisis of Bithynian finances. After his short tenure there, he returned to Rome as a successful governor.



ca. 113

Sent from Syria to Rome

Ignatius, who was chosen bishop of Antioch ... is still celebrated by a great many. Report says that he was sent from Syria to Rome, and became food for wild beasts on account of his testimony to Christ. And as he made the journey through Asia under the strictest military surveillance, he fortified the parishes in the various cities where he stopped by oral homilies and exhortations ... So when he came to Smyrna, where Polycarp was, he wrote an epistle to the church of Ephesus, in which he mentions Onesimus, its pastor; and another to the church of Magnesia,

situated upon the Mæander, in which he makes mention again of a bishop Damas; and finally one to the church of Tralles, whose bishop, he states, was at that time Polybius. In addition to these he wrote also to the church of Rome, entreating them not to secure his release from martyrdom ... He writes as follows: From Syria even unto Rome I fight with wild beasts, by land and by sea, by night and by day, being bound amidst ten leopards, that is, a company of soldiers who only become worse when they are well treated. In the midst of their wrongdoings, however, I am more fully learning discipleship, but I am not thereby justified ... And when he had left Smyrna he wrote again from Troas to the Philadelphians and to the church of Smyrna; and particularly to Polycarp, who presided over the latter church. (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.36.2–7, 10)

Inasmuch as I have not been able to write to all the Churches, because I must suddenly sail from Troas to Neapolis, as the will [of the emperor] enjoins, [I beg that] you, as being acquainted with the purpose of God, will write to the adjacent Churches. (Ignatius, *Epistle to Polycarp* 8:1)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Place** two city dots along the Maeander River:
 1. Place one dot in the top of the “M” of Maeander; this is the location of Magnesia on the Maeander, modern Germencik, Turkey
 2. Place a second dot in the top of the second “A” of Maeander; this is the location of Tralles, modern Aydin, Turkey
- b. **Write** with a black ballpoint pen: “M” above the dot of Magnesia on the Maeander; “T” above the dot of Tralles
- c. **Highlight** in yellow (some names already have highlight on them): Antioch (in Syria), Syrian Gates, Cilician Gates, “M” for Magnesia, “T” for Tralles, Ephesus, Philadelphia, Smyrna, Troas, Neapolis
- d. **Locate** the following names while moving from Antioch to Troas: Antioch in Syria, Syrian Gates, Tarsus, Cilician Gates, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch in Pisidia, Colossae, Laodicea, Philadelphia, Sardis, Pergamum, Adramyttium, Troas

Discussion: Sent from Syria to Rome

Ignatius’ overland journey from Antioch in Syria to Rome placed him on much the same route that Paul followed in the first part of his second journey through Anatolia and Asia Minor (see Event 14: “Into the World of the Aegean and Europe”). The journey itself perhaps encouraged Ignatius to think of himself as a disciple of Paul. He left Antioch, crossed the Syrian Gates to reach the plain of Cilicia and probably stopped in Tarsus, Paul’s hometown. Then the soldiers probably took him through the Cilician Gates to cross central Anatolia. They would have passed Derbe, and Lystra or Iconium, if not both, and continued on to Antioch of Pisidia. From Pisidia they would have used the Lycus Valley and passed the sites of Colossae and Laodicea. Like Paul, they crossed the Maeander River, but unlike Paul, they continued north through Philadelphia and Sardis to Smyrna. Once they left Smyrna and crossed the Hermes River they would have rejoined Paul’s route through Pergamum and Adramyttium to Troas.

Like Paul they took a ferry from Troas to Neapolis and went on to Philippi, Amphipolis, and Thessalonica. They were now on the Via Egnatia and would have continued along it through Pella, Edessa, and Lychnidos to Dyrrhachium (see the route of the Via Egnatia in Event 19, “A Third Journey West from Syrian Antioch”). On this part of the journey they would follow the less well-documented, final journey of Paul (not included in this guide). For this leg and for the rest of the way to Rome they would also follow the same route along which Roman soldiers had escorted the Apostle John to Rome (see Event 29, “To Rome and Patmos”). A ferry would have carried them from Dyrrhachium to Brundisium, at which point they would follow the Via Appia to Rome (see Event 25: “I have sent him to you”).



ca. 113-117

Meanwhile the Jews

Next Trajan made a campaign against the Armenians and Parthians on the pretext that the Armenian king had obtained his diadem, not at his hands, but from the Parthian king ... When Trajan had invaded the enemy's territory, the satraps and princes of that region came to meet him with gifts ... [Trajan then removed the Parthian's puppet-king in Armenia.] When he had captured the whole country of the Armenians ... the senate voted to him all the usual honors in great plenty and furthermore bestowed upon him the title of Optimus, or Most Excellent ... [Trajan appears to have marched south out of Armenia, and] he captured Nisibis and Batnae ... [he then turned west, probably following a portion of the Old Silk Road from Arbela to Carrhae, and] leaving garrisons at opportune points, Trajan came to Edessa, and there saw Abgarus for the first time ... [since Abgarus] had failed to put in an appearance ... he met him on the road, made his apologies and obtained pardon. [Trajan passed the winter in Antioch.] At the beginning of spring Trajan hastened into the enemy's country. And since the region near the Tigris is bare of timber suitable for building ships, he brought his boats, which had been constructed in the forests around Nisibis, to the river on wagons; for they had been built in such a way that they could be taken apart and put together again ... And the Romans crossed over [the Tigris] and gained possession of the whole of Adiabene. This is a district of Assyria in the vicinity of Ninus [the eponymous founder of Nineveh]; and Arbela and Gaugamela, near which places Alexander conquered Darius, are also in this same country ... After this they advanced as far as Babylon itself, being quite free from molestation, since the Parthian power had been destroyed by civil conflicts ... Trajan had planned to conduct the Euphrates through a canal into the Tigris, in order that he might take his boats down by this route and use them to make a bridge. But learning that this river has a much higher elevation than the Tigris, he did not do so, fearing that the water might rush down in a flood and render the Euphrates unnavigable. So he used hauling-engines to drag the boats across the very narrow space that separates the two rivers ... then he crossed the Tigris and entered Ctesiphon ... After capturing Ctesiphon he conceived a desire to sail down to the Erythraean Sea [the Persian Gulf which flows into the Indian Ocean] ... Then he came to the ocean itself, and when he had learned its nature and had seen a ship sailing to India, he said: "I should certainly have crossed over to India, too, if I were still young." ... During the time that he was sailing down to the ocean and returning from there again all the conquered districts were thrown into turmoil and revolted, and the garrisons placed among the various peoples were either expelled or slain ... When he learned of the revolt, he sent Lusius [Quietus] and Maximus against the rebels. The latter was defeated in battle and perished; but Lusius, in addition to many other successes, recovered Nisibis, and besieged and captured Edessa, which he sacked and burned. Seleucia was also captured ... and was burned. Trajan, fearing that the Parthians, too might begin a revolt, desired to give them a king of their own. Accordingly, when he came to Ctesiphon, he called together in a great plain all the Romans and likewise all the Parthians that were there at the time; then he mounted a lofty platform, and ... he appointed Parthaspates king over the Parthians and set the diadem upon his head ... Meanwhile the Jews in the region of Cyrene had put a certain Andreas at their head, and were destroying both the Romans and the Greeks ... In all two hundred and twenty thousand persons perished. In Egypt, too, they perpetrated many similar outrages, and in Cyprus, under the leadership of a certain Artemion. There, also, two hundred and forty thousand perished, and for this reason no Jew may set foot on that island, but even if one of them is driven upon its shores by a storm he is put to death. Among others who subdued the Jews was Lusius, who was sent by Trajan. (Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 68.17–21, 26–30, 32)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- Place a city dot in the blue box of The Land Between halfway between Aphek and Gezer, and write an "L" beside it for Lydda
- Highlight** the following city names in yellow (some may already have highlight on them): Cyrene (in Cyrenaica), Alexandria (in Egypt), Salamis (on Crete), "L" of Lydda, Nisibis

and Edessa (in northwestern Mesopotamia), Antioch (in Syria), Nineveh, Arbela, and Gaugamela (in old Assyria, now Adiabene), Babylon, Ctesiphon and Seleucia (northeast of Babylon)

- c. **Highlight** in yellow: Euphrates River, Tigris River
- d. **Place** the following abbreviations along Trajan's invasion route of the Parthian Empire:
 - T1 in central Armenia
 - T2 by Nisibis
 - T3 by Edessa
 - T4 by Antioch
 - T5 by Nisibis
 - T6 between Nineveh, Arbela, and Gaugamela
 - T7 by Babylon
 - T8 by Ctesiphon
 - T9 in the Persian Gulf
 - T10 by Ctesiphon
- e. **Circle** the following names in red to represent sites of the Jewish uprising in the Kitos War: Cyrene, Alexandria, Salamis, "L", Nisibis, Edessa, Seleucia

Discussion: Meanwhile the Jews

The following geographical summary of Trajan's war against Parthia and the Kitos War draws on Cassius Dio's account. Other sources—such as, Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* and various rabbinic references—could add another dimension to the chronology and causes of the wars, but Cassius Dio marked the geography as follows.

Trajan celebrated a series of rapid victories and advances across the western part of the Parthian Empire. He entered Armenia and received the submission of the local kings. He turned south to march on Nisibis, then on to Edessa. He wintered in Antioch, but spring found him on the move again. Back at Nisibis he prepared boats for crossing the Tigris. He crossed into Adiabene to receive the submission of its cities. He went south to Babylon, turned east to cross the Tigris again and enter Ctesiphon. Then he took a cruise on the Persian Gulf.

Meanwhile the Jews in Cyrene of North Africa rose up in a rebellion against Rome. The rebellion soon spread to Alexandria in Egypt, Cyprus, and even into Judea, where at Lydda, the rebels could threaten Trajan's supply line coming from the granaries of Egypt. The Jews of Mesopotamia, who found the Roman yoke heavier than that of Parthia, responded by joining the rebellion. As the Jews of Nisibis, Edessa, Seleucia, and other places across Mesopotamia attacked Roman garrisons and seized cities, Trajan had to act quickly. He returned to Ctesiphon to set up a pro-Roman king on the throne of Parthia, lest Parthia take advantage of his weakened grip on Mesopotamia. Trajan also commissioned Lusius Quietus, a Moor who had gained Trajan's attention during the Dacian Wars and also in his service against the Parthians, to squelch the revolt. Lucius advanced westward across Mesopotamia and turned south to reach Judea. The revolt ended with great loss of life on both sides and the Jews again humbled under the heavy hand of Rome.



ca. 130-165

Justin "contended ... against the Greeks"
Marcion uttered "shameless blasphemies"
Polycarp "learned from the apostles"

To the Emperor Titus Aelius Adrian Antoninus Pius Caesar Augustus, and to Verissimus his son, the philosopher, and to Lucius the philosopher, own son of Caesar and adopted son of Pius, a lover of learning, and to the sacred senate and to the whole Roman people, I, Justin, son of Priscus and grandson of Bacchius, of Flavia Neapolis in Palestine, Syria, present this address and petition

in behalf of those men of every nation [Christians] who are unjustly hated and persecuted, I myself being one of them. (Justin Martyr quoted in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.12)

This same Justin contended most successfully against the Greeks ... (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.11.11)

A certain Cerdo ... taught that the God proclaimed by the law and prophets was not the father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... Marcion of Pontus succeeded Cerdo and developed his doctrine, uttering shameless blasphemies. (Irenaeus quoted in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.11.2)

And there is a certain Marcion of Pontus, who is even now still teaching his followers to think that there is some other God greater than the Creator. And by the aid of the demons he has persuaded many of every race of men to utter blasphemy, and to deny that the maker of this universe is the father of Christ, and to confess that some other, greater than he, was the creator. (Justin Martyr quoted in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.11.9)

Polycarp also was not only instructed by the apostles, and acquainted with many that had seen Christ, but was also appointed by apostles in Asia as bishop of the church of Smyrna. We too saw him in our early youth; for he lived a long time, and died, when a very old man, a glorious and most illustrious martyr's death, having always taught the things which he had learned from the apostles, which the Church also hands down, and which alone are true. To these things all the Asiatic churches testify, as do also those who, down to the present time, have succeeded Polycarp, who was a much more trustworthy and certain witness of the truth than Valentinus and Marcion and the rest of the heretics. He also was in Rome in the time of Anicetus and caused many to turn away from the above-mentioned heretics to the Church of God, proclaiming that he had received from the apostles this one and only system of truth, which has been transmitted by the Church. (Irenaeus quoted in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.14.3–5)

Map marking: Regional Study Map 1: Middle East

- a. **Write** with a black ballpoint pen:
 1. Justin contended with the Greeks (to the right of Shechem [Neapolis, now modern Nablus])
 2. Marcion uttered shameless blasphemies (under Sinope in Pontus)
 3. Polycarp learned from the apostles (you already wrote Polycarp between Lesbos and Chios in Event 27, "Instructed by Apostles"; now just add the predicate "learned from the apostles" to the subject "Polycarp")
- b. **Highlight** in yellow the names of the three men you just wrote

Discussion:

Justin "contended ... against the Greeks"

Marcion uttered "shameless blasphemies"

Polycarp "learned from the apostles"

These three personalities championed three different forms of Christianity in the second century. You have marked the home area of each of the three men.

All three also journeyed to Rome. Justin went to defend orthodox Gentile Christianity before the Roman government, and he suffered martyrdom for doing so. Marcion went to the heart of the empire to continue teaching his heresies. Polycarp visited Rome to meet with Anicetus, the bishop of Rome, and to defend apostolic practice as observed by some assemblies in Asia Minor.

May it be said of those who have pursued to the end of this marking guide through a century with the apostles and their disciples, they "learned from the apostles."