



Title/Date: 1/17/24 **“Biblical Church Growth”**

(Peter & Tabitha’s Example of a Multiplying Church Ministry:

– Humility, Holiness, and Helping – the Biblical Church Growth Model/Method)

I. Text: **Acts 10:31-43** 31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria was having peace, being built up. And going on in the fear of the Lord and in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it continued to multiply. 32 Now it happened that as Peter was traveling through all those regions, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda. 33 And there he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years, for he was paralyzed. 34 And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Rise up and make your bed.” Immediately he rose up. 35 And all who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord. 36 Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated is called Dorcas). This woman was full of good works and charity which she continually did. 37 And it happened at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room. 38 Now since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, pleading with him, “Do not delay in coming to us.” 39 So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, crying and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them. 40 But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. 41 And he gave her his hand and raised her up. And calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42 And it became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. 43 And it happened that he stayed many days in Joppa with a tanner named Simon.

What qualities in the early church, Peter, Aeneas, and Tabitha should we do well to emulate in our ministry at TBC so that it is a MULTIPLYING MINISTRY.

II. Introduction: Helping the Helpless, Weak, and Spiritually Blind

Introduction – recent protest at Planned Parenthood with Ashley Mogan (God brought opportunities as we were willing to go and spoke to people God put in our path (God used Peter as he was willing, available, and on the move as a traveling evangelist). 64 million abortions in the US since 1973 (over 1 million abortions in the US/year, 56 million abortions in the world/yr. PP kills 340,000 babies annually and receives 500 million in US tax dollars annually...did you know Margaret Sanger the founder of PP was a white supremacist/promoter of eugenics to specifically kill minority children before they were born and that PP is not really about family planning but about money/the almighty dollar... abortion is a billion dollar business and now with abortion being restricted in some states PP is remaking/retooling their killing business by being one of the biggest promoters and making money through gender reassignment surgeries/manipulation and mutilation of kids...**but Christ is greater** than this murder, genocide, and modern day holocaust – He alone heals and forgives (**Romans 5:9-11**). 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. **Mk. 10:45** 45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." **Jer. 1:5** 5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations." **Ps. 139:13-16** 13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. 15 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, 16 your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.



What can you do or we do as a church to HELP unborn babies, pregnant mothers considering abortion, or children or young people who are confused or depressed about their biological gender? Can you think of other Scriptures that prove abortion is wrong/murder, that transgenderism is sin/evil, and/or positively that adoption and salvation are the real solutions?

III. Review of Biblical Growth in the early church and Multiplication in the book of Acts

Acts 1:15 – 120

Acts 2:41 – 3000

Acts 4:4 – 5000

Acts 5:14 – multitudes

Acts 6:1,7 – increasing in number, the disciples **increased greatly**

Acts 11:21 – **large number** believed turned to the Lord

Acts 16:5 – So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number **daily**.

What do you think TBC can learn or apply from the example of the early church’s growth and multiplication?

Biblical Church Growth - When numbers are important to God they should also be important to us/the church:

- ▶ **Evangelism/reaching unbelievers with the gospel:** Numbers/numeric growth are important to God – He cares (and so should we) about every single person to be saved and spend eternity with Him in His coming Kingdom) vs separated from Him forever in Hell/Lake of Fire.
- ▶ **Discipleship/spiritual growth and progress:** Numbers/numeric growth should be important to the church because we care about being a Biblical, healthy, and thriving/vibrant church where every member in our church is growing more mature/Christlike in their faith by being progressively obedient to all of the Lord’s commands in Scripture; therefore we should care and track confessions, baptisms, memberships, discipleships, leadership, giving, and service (consistency/involvement/faithfulness).
- ▶ **Practical Matters:** Low/dwindling attendance can be discouraging to members, non-attractive/turn off to visitors, restricting to the ministries of the church in the sense of too few people to serve/volunteer in order to start, run, or maintain ministries, low giving can mean no money to support full time Pastors to best care, shepherd, and lead the church, no money to support new or existing missionaries, or no money to buy, maintain, or improve facilities that be a positive tool God provides a church in order to facilitate, improve, and maximize church ministry.

Why is it important for us to pray for, pursue, and prioritize Biblical church growth and NEVER being satisfied with mediocrity, merely maintaining, or accepting of decline, defeat, or dead churches?

The Danger with Church Numbers and some “Church Growth” methods/models...

1. If #'s tempts churches to compromise on truth/doctrine.
2. If #'s leads to pride/boasting/or giving glory to man instead of solely glorifying God
3. If #'s keeps churches from majoring on the majors (evangelism and discipleship)
4. If #'s distracts from the Biblical mission, purpose, & goals of the church found in the N.T. (equip to maturity – Eph. 4:13)
5. If #'s limits or hinder fellowship (one anothers), oversight (pastoral shepherding), or outreach (evangelism)
6. If #'s becomes an idol, distraction, or a burden to the church.
7. If #'s overall contributes to the church being culture and money driven (seeking success in man's eyes) vs Bible driven (successful in God's eyes)

Have you personally observed or seen where churches focus, prioritize, or make decisions unbiblically based on numbers and being successful in man's eyes (attendance, money, buildings, , popularity)? How can TBC guard against this real temptation?

Geography Quiz: (Bibleplaces.com, biblestudy.org, biblemapper.com, and ibiblemaps.com are great websites for Biblical geography)

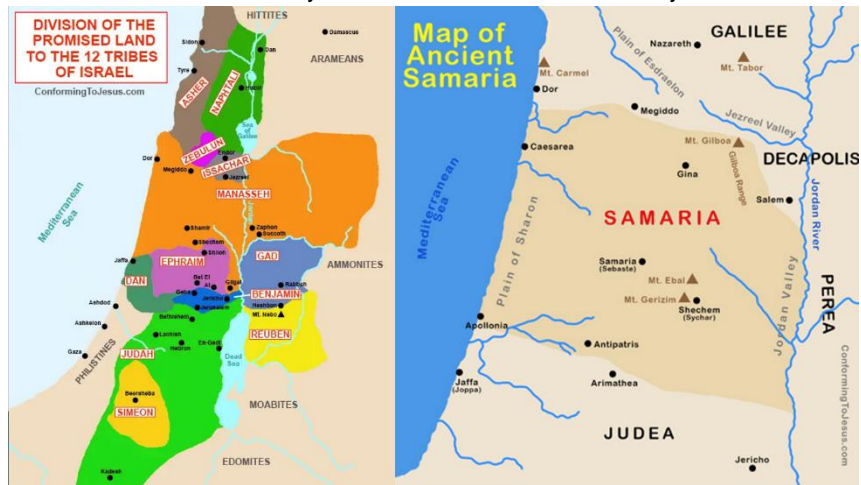
1. Saul was a Jew from the tribe of B_____ and he was from the city of T_____
2. Saul was part a sect called P_____ and studied under a famous scholar named G_____ in J_____
3. Saul Was Converted and became the Apostle Paul on road to D_____
4. Paul was taught and discipled by Christ himself in the desert of A_____ (likely east of Damascus) for ___ years
5. Paul's went to J_____ after ___ years to meet with Peter and James (Gal. 1) before sailing from C_____ to his hometown of T_____
6. Paul eventually makes his home church at A_____ (Syria) before departing on ___ missionary journey's recorded in Acts
7. Paul likely went on a 4th journey to S_____ (Rom. 15:24-28) before being martyred by Nero in R_____ between 64-68 A.D.



IV: Main Points (Church growth/multiplication: 1. Peter's Ministry, 2. Tabitha's Ministry, 3. Our Ministry)

1. **(9:31) The Early Church's Multiplying Ministry** –the universal church is clearly in view because there were many believers/ local churches in the 3 REGIONS mentioned:

- a. **Judea** – southern Israel (Ioudaias – Jewish territory, from the tribe of Judah (Ioudah/eoodah means “he shall be praised Gen. 49:8,” 4th son of Jacob) and Benjamin. Gen. 49:10 lion of Judah, scepter will not depart, major cities/hill country of Hebron, Jerusalem) Matt. 2:5-6 /Micah 5:2
- b. **Galilee** – northern Israel, around Sea of Galilee/Gennesaret – name means circle or district, cities of Capernaum, Bethsaida, Cana, Nazareth, tribes of Ashur, Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali settled there. Isaiah 9:1-3 “have seen a great light”)
- c. **Samaria** – central Israel, tribe of Joseph (Manasseh and Ephraim) both a city (aka Sebaste) and a region, capital of 10 breakaway tribes Jeroboam/Omri, known for idolatry Ahab/Jezebel, captured by Assyria in 722 and its residents dislocated and intermingled with foreigners (why despised by the Jews – seen as ½ breeds) 1 Ki. 13:32-34 (idolatry) Jer. 31:3-14 (restoration)



The Early Church was:

1. **Having Peace** (Greek: εἰρήνη *Eirene*, Hebrew: שָׁלוֹם *Shalom*: welfare, state of being undisturbed)
2. **Being Built Up** (Greek: οἰκοδομέω *oikodomeo*: lit. “to build a house” in this context of building up/edifying/strengthening a church (group of believers, not a physical building))
3. **Going On** (πορεύομαι *poruomai* – to ford a way, pursue a course, follow a specific path (Christians called THE WAY – following the way of Jesus)
 - a. Fear of the Lord (Greek: φόβος *phobos* – flight, fear, dread, terror of something/someone. More than mere reverence, respect, or awe of God as some say, but a needing/wanting distance from overwhelming power and greatness and glory!
 - b. Encouragement/comfort of the Holy Spirit – παράκλησις *paraklesis* from parakaleo – lit. to call alongside, to call people to get parallel/alongside Jesus and His right way of living (righteousness). This word has many aspects to include exhort/entreat/invite/beseech, encourage/comfort/conciliate, and urge/plead/appeal/implore/beg. So prayer is the best way to understand how we call out to God to come alongside/help us and He calls us through His Spirit to come alongside/parallel to Jesus by loving and obeying His truth
4. **Continuing to MULTIPLY** πληθύνω *plethuno*: to increase, to be increased

What are your thoughts or prayers how TBC can pursue, prioritize, and enjoy having peace, being built up, and going on in the fear of the Lord and the encouragement/comfort of the Holy Spirit in order to continually grow and multiply?

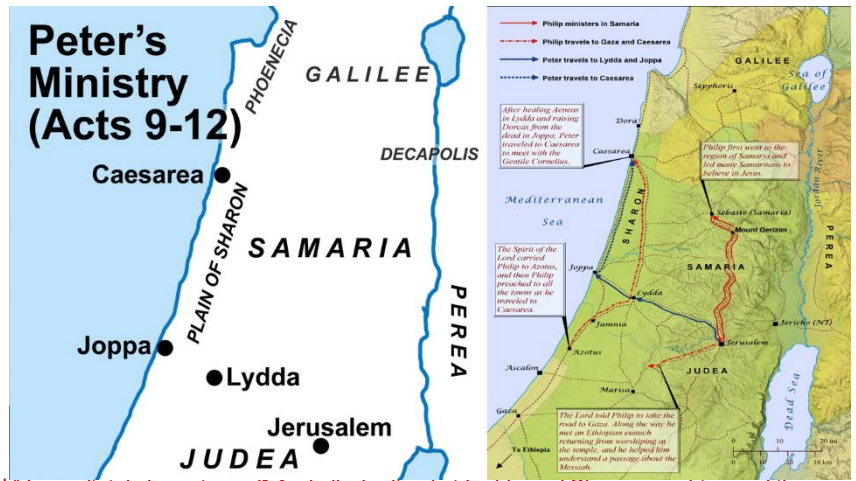
2. (9:32-35) Peter's Multiplying Ministry

- Traveling through all those regions (Galilee, Samaria, Judea)
- Peter came to a specific city in order to meet saints (SAINTS – *ἅγιος hagios: sacred, holy* - believers set apart to be holy and belong to God... NOT Catholic view of SAINTS: special class by confirmation of miracles)
- Where is Lydda? Lydda—a town in the tribe of Ephraim, mentioned only in the New Testament (Acts 9:32, 35, 38) as the scene of Peter's miracle in healing the paralytic Aeneas. It lay about 9 miles east of Joppa, on the road from the sea-port to Jerusalem. In the Old Testament (1 Chr. 8:12) it is called Lod. It was burned by the Romans, but was afterwards rebuilt, and was known by the name of Diospolis. Its modern name is Ludd. (Easton's Bible Dictionary, 1897)

Peter's Example of a Multiplying Ministry

- Traveling (sacrificing)
 - Finding (visiting)
 - Helping (healing)
- = Multiplying (new souls turning to the Lord)

Acts 9:33-35 ³³ There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years, for he was paralyzed. ³⁴ Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; get up and make your bed." Immediately he got up. ³⁵ And all who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.



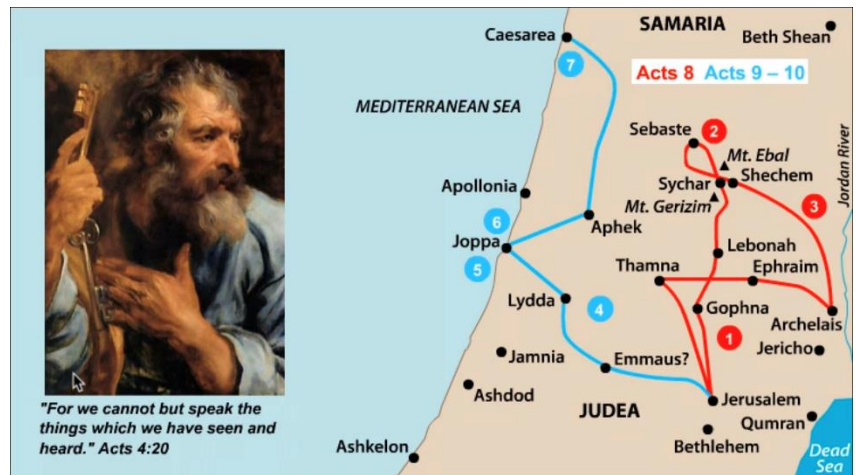
What are your takeaways/personal application from Peter's example of evangelism and multiplying ministry?

3. (9:36-42) Tabitha's Multiplying Ministry – was likely a widow in Joppa who was full of good works and giving)

Tabitha's/Dorcas' Example of a Multiplying Ministry

- Serving others (full of good works and continuous giving/charity)
 - Faithful till Death (fell sick and died)
 - Helping Widows (making clothing for them/labor of love - or making clothing with them/fellowship in serving together)
- = Multiplying (new souls turning to the Lord)

Acts 9:36-42 ³⁶ Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did. ³⁷ And it happened at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, imploring him, "Do not delay in coming to us." ³⁹ So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them. ⁴⁰ But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ And he gave her his hand and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. ⁴² It became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.



Where is Joppa? The name means beauty, a town in the portion of Dan ([Joshua 19:46](#) ; A.V., "Japho"), on a sandy promontory between Caesarea and Gaza, and at a distance of 30 miles north-west from Jerusalem. It is one of the oldest towns in Asia. It was and still is the chief sea-port of Judea. It was never wrested from the Phoenicians. It became a Jewish town only in the second century B.C. It was from this port that Jonah "took ship to flee from the presence of the Lord" ([Jonah 1:3](#)). To this place also the wood cut in Lebanon by Hiram's men for Solomon was brought in floats ([2 Chronicles 2:16](#)); and here the material for the building of the second temple was also landed ([Ezra 3:7](#)). At Joppa, in the house of Simon the tanner, "by the sea-side," Peter resided "many days," and here, "on the house-top," he had his "vision of tolerance" ([Acts 9:36-43](#)). It bears the modern name of Jaffa, and exhibits all the decrepitude and squalor of cities ruled over by the Turks. "Scarcely any other town has been so often overthrown, sacked, pillaged, burned, and rebuilt." Its present population is said to be about 16,000. It was taken by the French under Napoleon in 1799, who gave orders for the massacre here of 4,000 prisoners. It is connected with Jerusalem by the only carriage road that exists in the country, and also by a railway completed in 1892. It is noticed on monuments B.C. 1600-1300, and was attacked by Sannacharib B.C. 702. (Easton's Bible Dictionary, 1897)

What can the women of TBC learn and apply from the service of Tabitha and her multiplying ministry?

IV: Application: TBC's quest/prayer to be a Multiplying Ministry (3 H's) (Biblical Growth Plan/Method)

- Humility** (a Persistent Prayer that seeks God regularly, earnestly, and sincerely)
- Holiness** (a Personal Purity that confesses and purges sin so that we are a clean conduit so the power and blessing of God flows in our lives/church unhindered)
- Helping** (a Pursuing Passion that Pursues and Prefers Others over and above one's self)

- Praying (trusting and depending on the Lord) Acts 9:40 ⁴⁰ Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed... Col. 4:2 ² Devote yourselves to prayer,
- Raising (being used of God to practically help others – esp. with physical health difficulties) James 1:27 ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.
- Staying (truly caring about fellow Christians to stay with them, spend quantity and quality TIME with them in order to equip, encourage, and edify them) Acts 9:43 ⁴³ And Peter stayed many days in Joppa with a tanner named Simon.
= Multiplying (new souls turning to the Lord)

1 Peter 1:22 ²² Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, **1 Peter 4:8-11** ⁸ Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Be hospitable to one another without complaint. ¹⁰ As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

How can we practically grow, change, and progress in the areas of humility, holiness, and helping so that our church also is a multiplying ministry?



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Hollywood, MD 20636

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Next

TRUTH BIBLE CHURCH



FOLLOWERS OF JESUS SEEKING TO...

LOVE GOD SUPREMELY

Matthew 22:37-38 ³⁷ And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." ³⁸ "This is the great and foremost commandment.

SERVE PEOPLE SINCERELY

Matthew 22:39 ³⁹ "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

John 13:34-35 ³⁴ "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

REACH THE LOST URGENTLY

Matthew 28:19-20 ¹⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Acts 9:31–43 (LSB)

31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria was having peace, being built up. And going on in the fear of the Lord and in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it continued to multiply. 32 Now it happened that as Peter was traveling through all those regions, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda. 33 And there he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years, for he was paralyzed. 34 And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Rise up and make your bed.” Immediately he rose up. 35 And all who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.



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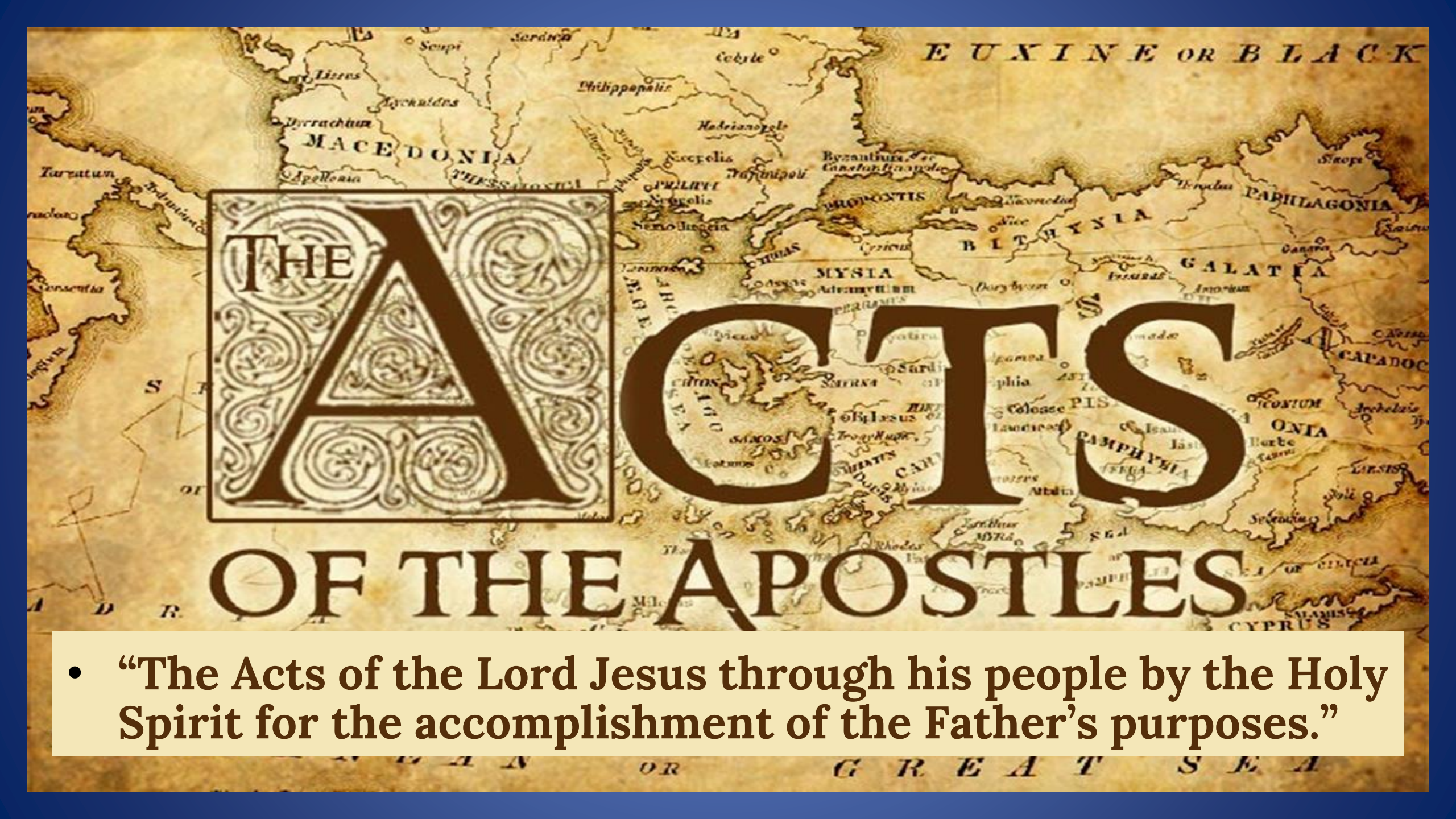
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THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

- “The Acts of the Lord Jesus through his people by the Holy Spirit for the accomplishment of the Father’s purposes.”

Today's Sermon Title:



“Biblical Church Growth”

(Fear of God, Encouragement by the Holy Spirit,
believers helping other believers)

Acts 9:31–43

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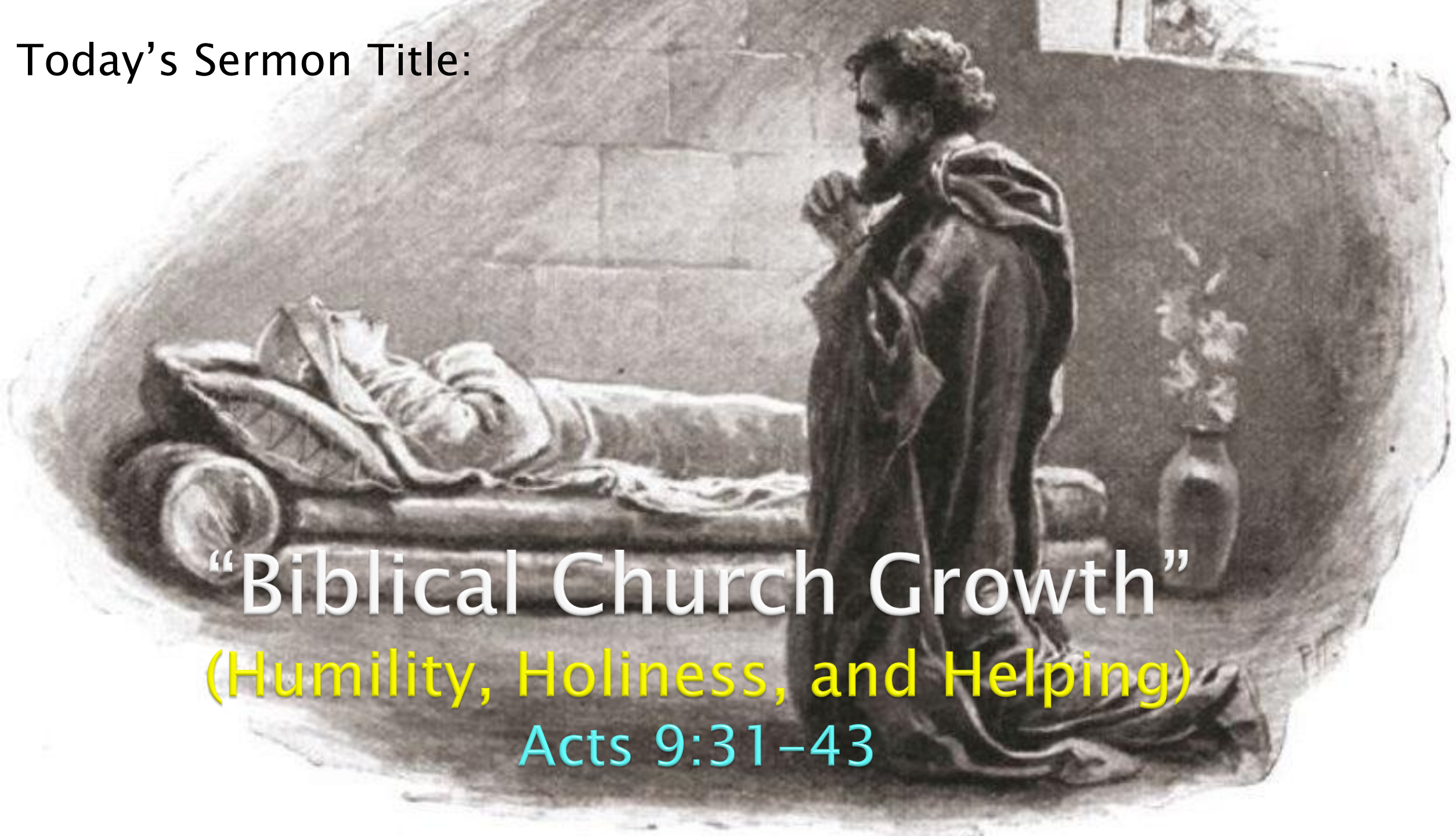


“Biblical Church Growth”

(Peter and Tabitha's Example of
a Multiplying Church Ministry)

Acts 9:31–43

Today's Sermon Title:



“Biblical Church Growth”

(Humility, Holiness, and Helping)

Acts 9:31–43

Introduction:



**CHRIST HEALS
AND FORGIVES
ROMANS 5:9-11**

FACE IT

Abortion Kills!
AMERICAN LIFE LEAGUE www.ALL.ORG

**-Kills 34
babies annually**
**-Receives \$500 million
in U.S. tax dollars
annually**

**Healing and
Forgiveness are found
in Christ**
**"For even the Son of Man
did not come to be
served, but to serve, and
to give his life as a
ransom for many." - Jesus**

**Before I formed you
in the womb
I knew you...**
Jeremiah 1:5

SO WHAT?

Application



Acts 1:15 – 120

Acts 2:41 – 3000

Acts 4:4 – 5000

Acts 5:14 – multitudes

Acts 6:1,7 – increasing in number, disciples increased greatly

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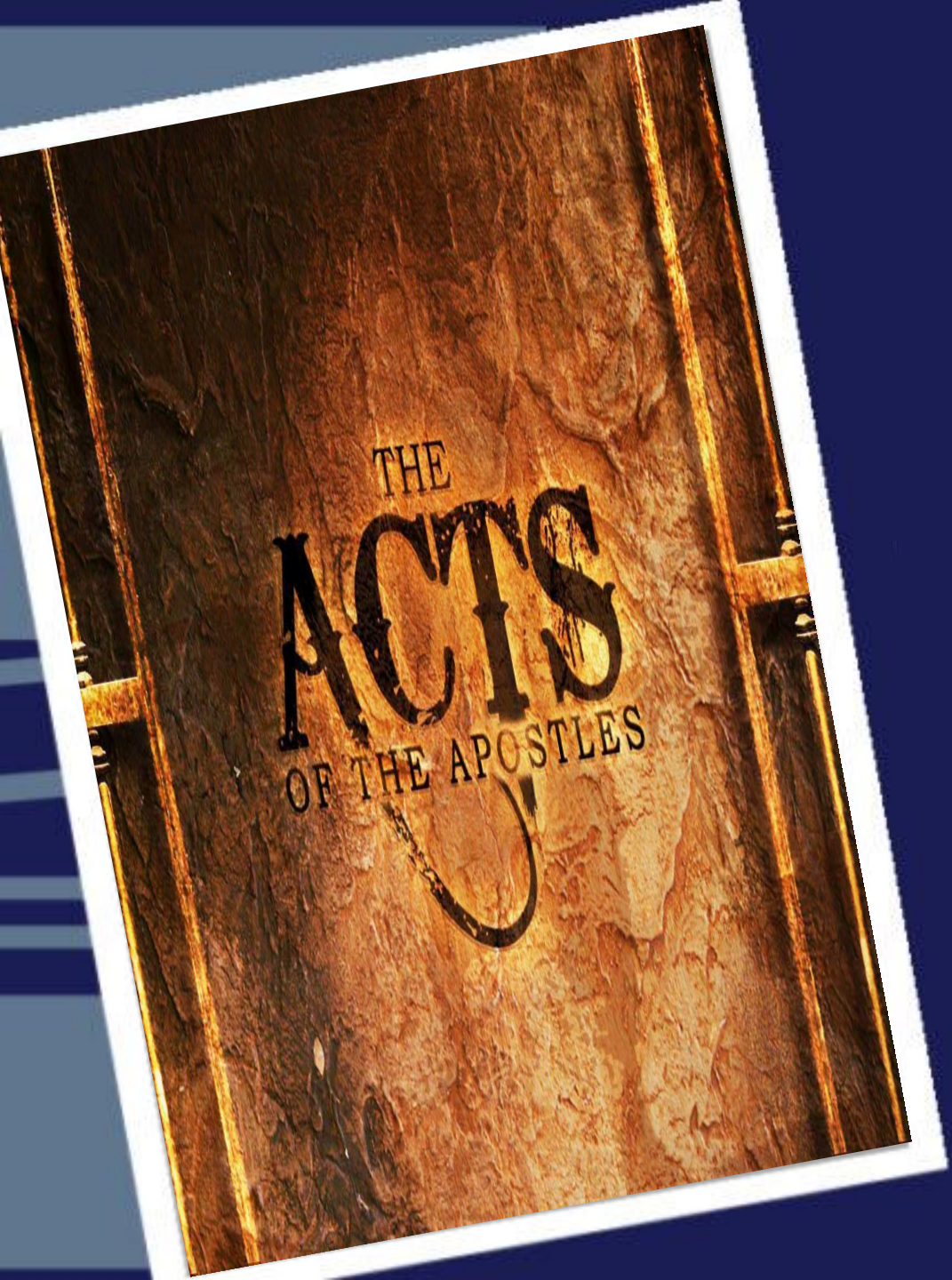
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Review



BOOK *of* ACTS

Outline of Acts

I. Jerusalem (1:1–8:4)

- A. The beginning of the church (1:1–2:47)
- B. The expansion of the church (3:1–8:4)

II. Judea and Samaria (8:5–12:25)

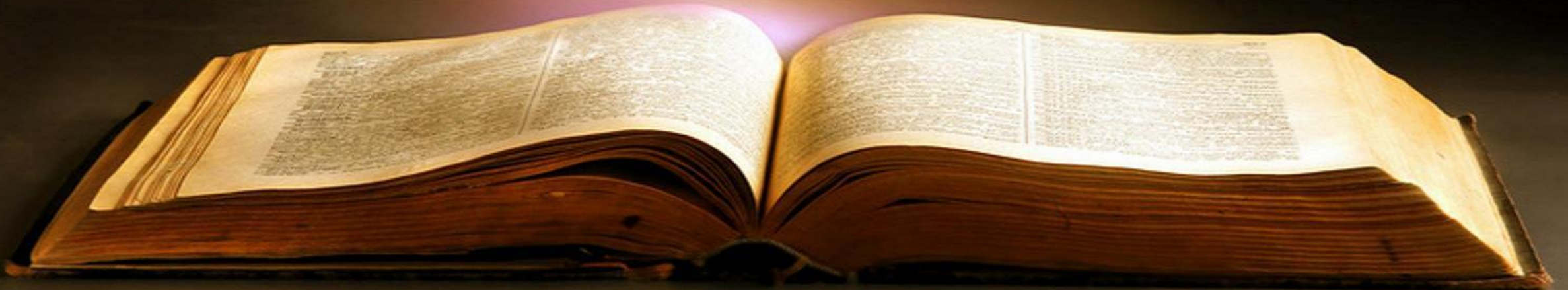
- A. The witness to the Samaritans (8:5–25)
- B. The conversion of a Gentile (8:26–40)
- C. The conversion of the apostle to the Gentiles (9:1–31)
- D. The witness to the Gentiles (9:32–12:25)

III. The remotest part of the earth (13:1–28:31)

- A. The first missionary journey (13:1–14:28)
- B. The Jerusalem council (15:1–35)
- C. The second missionary journey (15:36–18:22)
- D. The third missionary journey (18:23–21:16)
- E. The journey to Rome (21:17–28:31)

Acts 9 – Saul's Conversion and Immediate Change

1. God's **INITIATION** (Saul wasn't seeking God, he was seeking to persecute God's people)
2. God's **INTERVENTION** (light and voice from heaven)
3. God's **INTEROGATION** (why are you persecuting me, why are you kicking against the goads)
4. Biblical **IDENTIFICATION** (who are you Lord?)
5. Biblical **INTERCHANGE** (rise up, enter the city, you will be told what you must do...Repentance & Faith)
6. Biblical **IDEOLOGY** (why do you delay, get up be baptized, wash away your sins, calling on HIS NAME - Jesus is Lord/Jesus is God)
7. Biblical **INTRODUCTION** – just the beginning of a lifetime commitment that continues towards Biblical change and progress



10 Changes in Saul (Steps of Christian Growth) that should be True after Genuine Conversion. (Key word "IMMEDIATELY")

1. Water **Baptism** (Public Identification with Christ and His Church)
2. Improving **Physical health/strength** to match your new and growing spiritual strength/health
3. Church **Fellowship** (gathering together with other believers)
4. Personal **Evangelism** (sharing Christ and His gospel with unbelievers)
5. Spiritual **growth and maturity** (growth and progress in greater Christlikeness)
6. **Willingness** to go and do what God wants and wills (even if it brings hardship and persecution)
7. A **Trust** in the sovereignty of God no matter the circumstances
8. A reliance and **interdependence** on and with fellow believers
9. **1 to 1 Discipleship** – and close Christian friendship(s)
10. A bold/**Unashamed** mindset/attitude that always stands up, speaks, and defends (apologetics) the truth against anything/anyone who stands against our Lord Jesus, His Word the Bible, or His People the Church.



2 Timothy 3:12-17 ¹² Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ But evil men and impostors will proceed *from bad to worse*, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

A world map is visible in the background, rendered in a dark teal color. The map shows the continents and oceans, with a slightly faded and textured appearance. The overall background of the slide is a solid teal color.

▶ Sermon Introduction

Biblical Background,
Context,
Culture,
and Geography

Saul to Paul

1. Saul was a Jew (tribe of Benjamin) who was from **Tarsus**
2. Saul was a Pharisee who studied under Gamaliel in **Jerusalem**
3. Saul Was Converted (became the Apostle Paul) on road to **Damascus**
4. Paul was taught/discipled by Christ himself in the dessert of **Arabia**
5. Paul's home church was **Antioch** (Syria) (3 missionary journey's recorded in Acts he always starts or returns there)
6. Paul went on a likely 4th journey to **Spain**
7. Paul suffered historical martyrdom in **Rome**





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[Herod's Building Projects](#) show refs thumbnail

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[Jesus Is Born in Bethlehem](#) show refs thumbnail

[Jesus' Birth and Escape to Egypt](#) show refs thumbnail

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[Jesus' Ministry along the Sea of Galilee](#) show refs thumbnail

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[Jesus' Ministry in Galilee](#) show refs thumbnail

[Jesus Speaks with a Woman in Samaria](#) show refs thumbnail

[Bethany and Bethphage](#) show refs thumbnail

[Jesus' Arrest, Trial, Crucifixion, and Burial](#) show refs thumbnail

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[Paul's Conversion and Early Travels](#) show refs thumbnail

[Paul's Travels in Southern Galatia](#) show refs thumbnail

[Paul's First Missionary Journey](#) show refs thumbnail

[The City of Philippi](#) show refs thumbnail

[Paul's Travels in Western Anatolia](#) show refs thumbnail

[Paul's Second Missionary Journey](#) show refs thumbnail

[Paul's Third Missionary Journey](#) show refs thumbnail

[Paul Is Transferred to Caesarea](#) show refs thumbnail

[Believers Meet Paul on the Appian Way](#) show refs thumbnail

[Paul Travels from Malta to Rome](#) show refs thumbnail

[Paul's Voyage to Rome](#) show refs thumbnail

[The First Jewish War against Rome](#) show refs thumbnail

[Churches of Revelation](#) show refs thumbnail



Map of Israel and Judah circa 848 B.C. biblemapper.com

Map Index

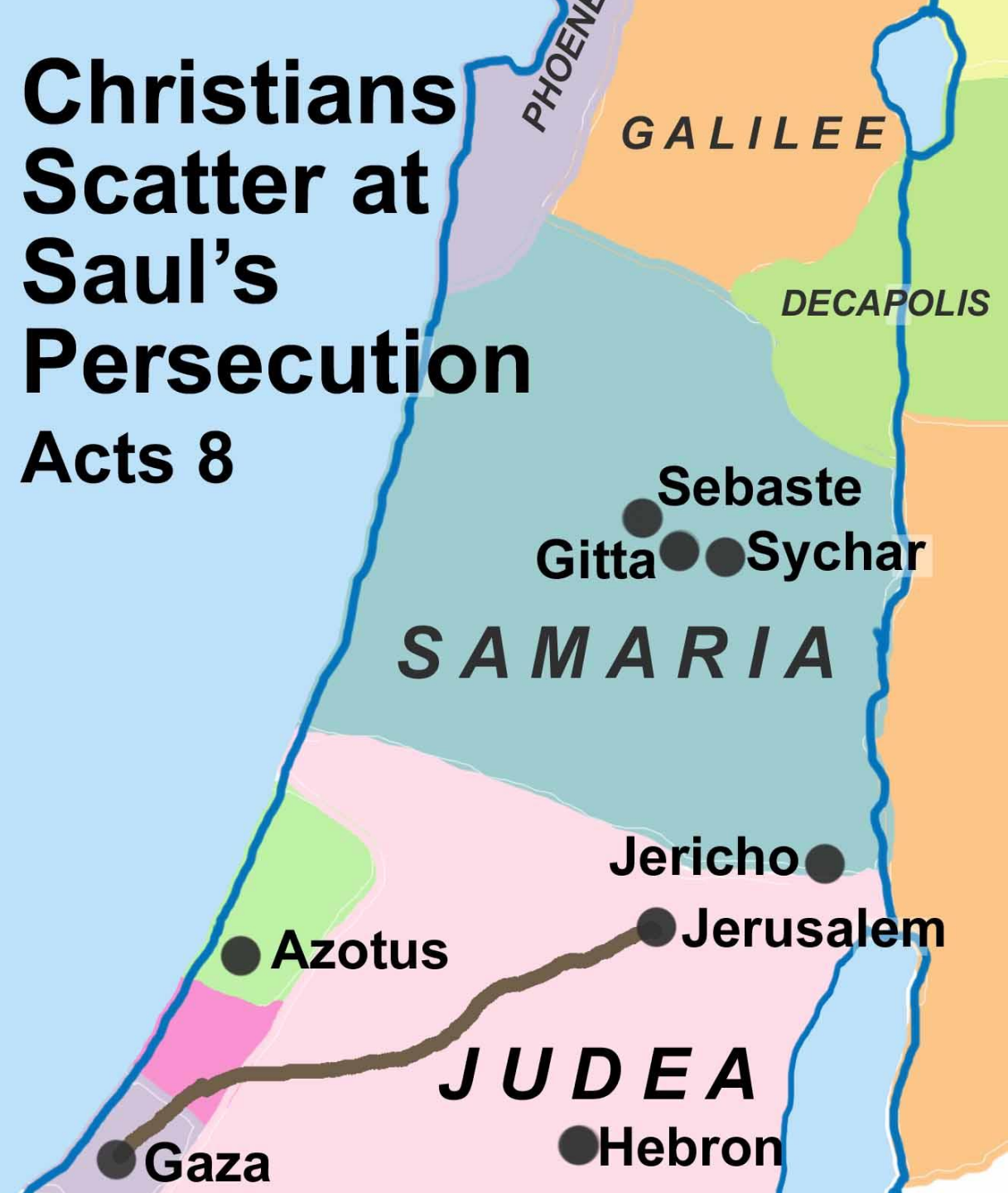
Old Testament Maps

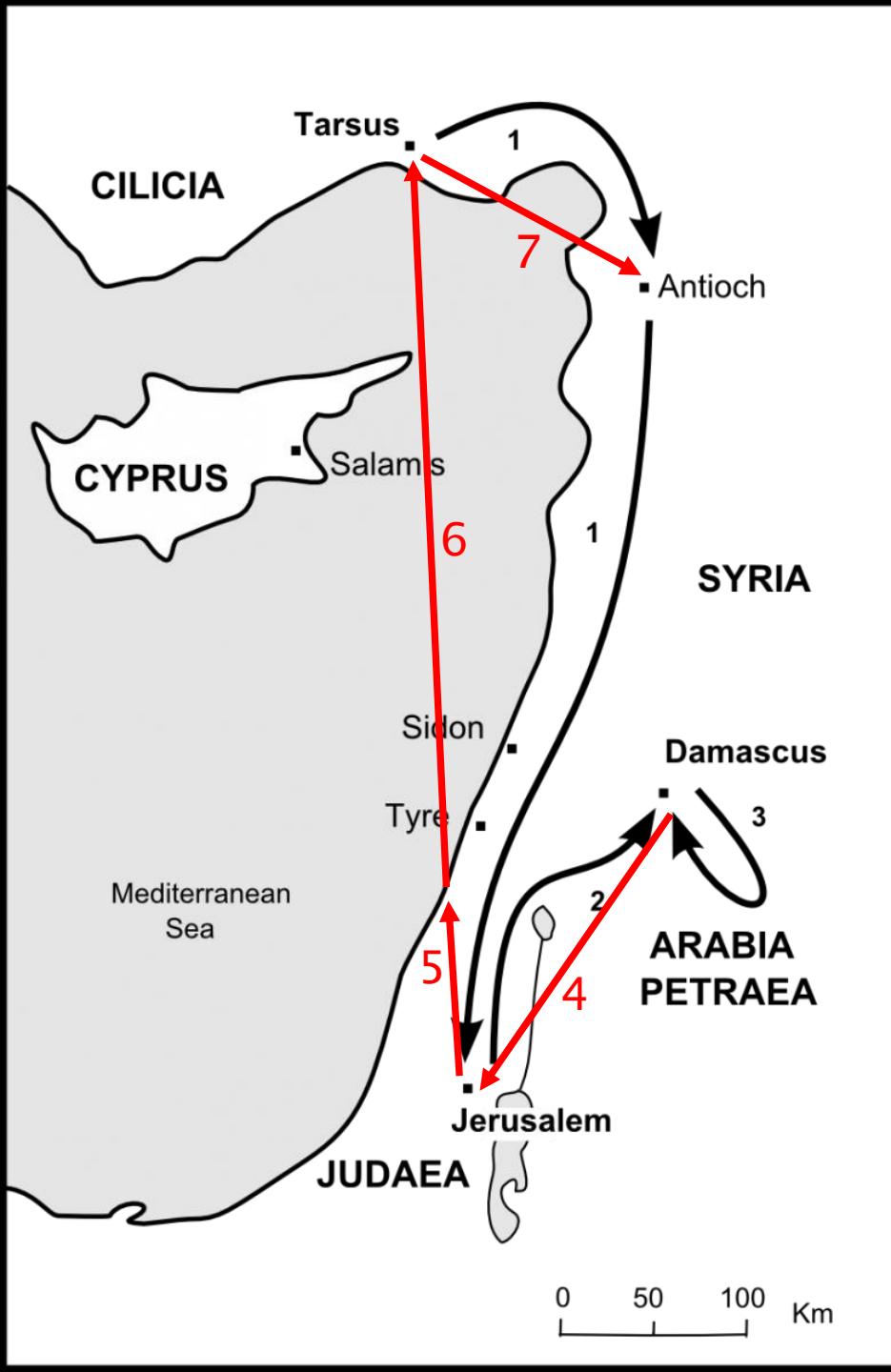
New Testament Maps

- THE WORLD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
- THE PATRIARCHS
- THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN
- THE JUDGES
- ISRAEL BECOMES A KINGDOM
- KINGS SAUL, DAVID, & SOLOMON
- THE DIVIDED KINGDOM
- INVASION AND EXILE

- JESUS
- APOSTLES
- SAUL/PAUL
- END TIMES







▶ **Galatians 1:11-2:1** ¹¹ For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹² For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but *I received it* through a revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹³ For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure, and tried to destroy it; ¹⁴ and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. ¹⁵ But when He who had set me apart, *even* from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus. ¹⁸ Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰ (Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.) ²¹ Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² And I was *still* unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ; ²³ but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy." ²⁴ And they were glorifying God because of me. **2:1** Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.

Tarsus

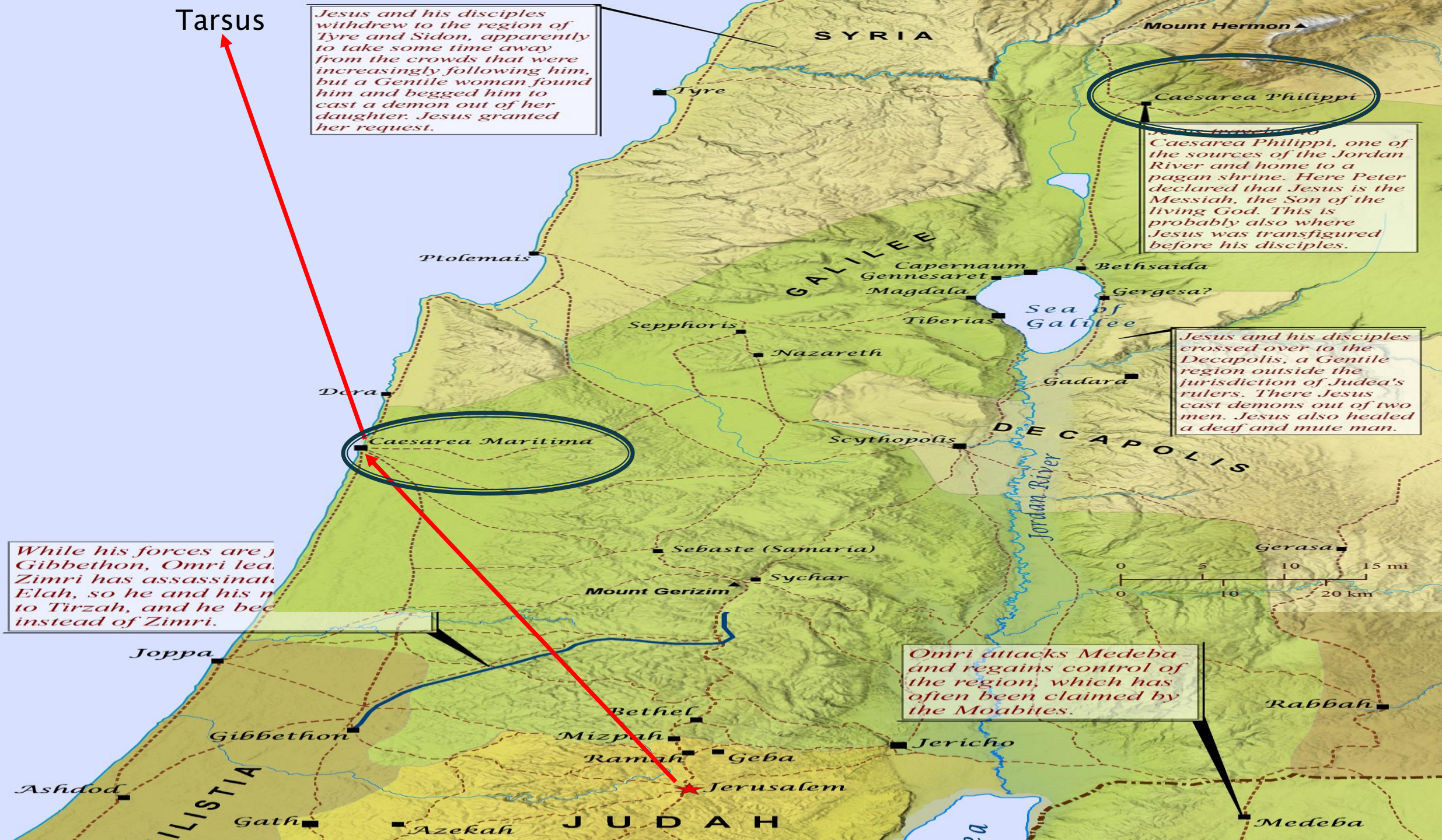
Jesus and his disciples withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon, apparently to take some time away from the crowds that were increasingly following him, but a Gentile woman found him and begged him to cast a demon out of her daughter. Jesus granted her request.

Jesus travels to Caesarea Philippi, one of the sources of the Jordan River and home to a pagan shrine. Here Peter declared that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. This is probably where Jesus was transfigured before his disciples.

Jesus and his disciples crossed over to the Decapolis, a Gentile region outside the jurisdiction of Judea's rulers. There Jesus cast demons out of two men. Jesus also healed a deaf and mute man.

While his forces are at Gibbethon, Omri leads Zimri to assassinate Elah, so he and his men flee to Tirzah, and he becomes king instead of Zimri.

Omri attacks Medeba and regains control of the region, which has often been claimed by the Moabites.



Paul's Hometown

*Inquire at the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of **Tarsus** (Acts 9:11).*

Paul's hometown was Tarsus in Cilicia. Little of Tarsus during the time of Paul has been excavated due to the location of the modern city atop the ruins. However, one particular structure has been traditionally identified as Paul's house. A glass covering has been built over it to protect the remains.





EUROPE

BULGARIA

BLACK SEA

GEORGIA

ARMENIA

ASIA

IRAN

TURKEY

GREECE

AEGEAN SEA

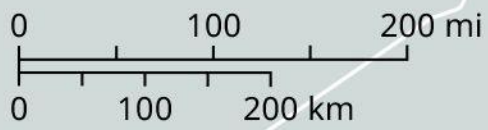
Tarsus.

CYPRUS

SYRIA

IRAQ

MEDITERRANEAN SEA





SAINT PAUL OF TARSUS

PAUL WHOSE ORIGINAL NAME WAS SAUL, WAS BORN IN TARSUS A FEW YEARS AFTER THE BIRTH OF JESUS. AS A YOUTH HE WENT TO JERUSALEM AND STUDIED UNDER THE FAMOUS RABBI GAMALIEL AT THIS TIME HE BELIEVED DEEPLY IN JUDAISM. IN JERUSALEM SAUL MET JEWS WHO HAD BECOME CHRISTIANS. THEY BELIEVED THAT THE RECENTLY CRUCIFIED JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH, THE PROMISED SAVIOUR OF THE JEWS. SAUL BEGAN TO PERSECUTE THE JEWS, BUT ONE DAY, WHILE ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS HE HAD A VISION OF THE RISEN CHRIST, AND WAS SO MOVED THAT HE SOON BECAME A CHRISTIAN AND CHANGED HIS NAME TO PAUL. HE SPENT THE REST OF HIS LIFE BRINGING CHRISTIANITY TO GENTILES (NON-JEWS). AFTER HIS CONVERSION HE WENT TO JORDAN, TO SYRIA AND CILICIA. THE MOST PRODUCTIVE PERIOD OF HIS LIFE WAS AROUND 50 A/D) WHEN HE MADE THREE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS: THE FIRST WAS WITH BARNABAS AND MARK TO CYPRUS, AND THEN TO THE SOUTHERN COAST OF ANATOLIA. HE GAVE BOLD, CONTROVERSIAL SPEECHES THAT ANGERED MANY PEOPLE, AND AS A RESULT HE WAS FREQUENTLY MISTREATED AND OFTEN IMPRISONED. THE SECOND JOURNEY WAS WITH SILAS AND TIMOTHY TO NORTH WEST ANATOLIA, AND THEY THEN CROSSED TO MACEDONIA, BRINGING CHRISTIANITY TO EUROPE. A THIRD TRIP COVERED MUCH OF THE SAME AREA AS THE FIRST. PAUL GIVING ADVICE, ENCOURAGEMENT AND HELP TO THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN GROUPS. HIS LETTERS TO THE CHURCHES OF ANATOLIA FORM A LARGE PART OF THE NEW TESTAMENT OF THE BIBLE. AFTER HE RETURNED TO JERUSALEM HE WAS ARRESTED BECAUSE OF OPPOSITION FROM HOSTILE JEWS. HE SPENT TWO YEARS IN PRISON AND THEN DEMANDED HIS RIGHT AS A ROMAN CITIZEN TO HAVE TRIAL AT THE EMPEROR'S COURT. PAUL WAS SENT TO ROME AND IMPRISONED FOR TWO MORE YEARS. HE APPARENTLY DIED IN ROME SOMETIME AFTER 60 A/D)

TARSUS BELEDIYESI - MUNICIPALITY OF TARSUS - 1988







Main Points of the Sermon

1. Our Ministry
(Church Growth/Multiplication)
2. Peter's Ministry
3. Tabitha's Ministry

Acts 9:31 ³¹ So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.

The Church – here the universal church is clearly in view because there were many believers/local churches in the 3 REGIONS mentioned:

- a. **Judea** – southern Israel (Ioudaias – Jewish territory, from the tribe of Judah Ioudah/eeoodah, 4th son of Jacob, name “he shall be praised” Gen. 49:8 (Gen. 49:10 lion, scepter will not depart, and Benjamin, major cities/hill country of Hebron, Jerusalem) Matt. 2:5-6 /Micah 5:2 ⁵ They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet: ⁶ ‘AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH; FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A RULER WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.’”
- b. **Galilee** – northern Israel, around Sea of Galilee/Genesaret – name means circle or district, cities of Capernaum, Bethsaida, Cana, Nazareth, tribes of Ashur, Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali settled there. Isa. 9:1-3 But there will be no *more* gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make *it* glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. ² The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them. ³ You shall multiply the nation, You shall increase their gladness; They will be glad in Your presence As with the gladness of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.
- c. **Samaria** – central Israel, tribe of Joseph (Manasseh and Ephraim) both a city (aka Sebaste) and a region, capital of 10 breakaway tribes Jeroboam/Omri, known for idolatry Ahab/Jezzebel, captured by Assyria in 722 and its residents dislocated and intermingled with foreigners (why despised by the Jews – seen as ½ breeds) 1 Ki. 13:32-34 (idolatry) Jer. 31:3-14 (restoration) Jer. 31:5-6 ⁵ “Again you will plant vineyards On the hills of Samaria; The planters will plant And will enjoy *them*. ⁶ “For there will be a day when watchmen On the hills of Ephraim call out, ‘Arise, and let us go up *to* Zion, To the LORD our God.”

DIVISION OF THE PROMISED LAND TO THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL

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Map of Ancient Samaria



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Acts 9:31 ³¹ So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.

The Church was enjoying a time period of ...

1. Having **Peace** (Greek: εἰρήνη *Eirene*, Hebrew: שָׁלוֹם *Shalom*: welfare, state of being undisturbed)
2. Being **Built Up** (Greek: οἰκοδομέω *oikodomeo*: lit. “to build a house” in this context of building up/edifying/strengthening a church (group of believers, not a physical building))
3. **Going On** (πορεύομαι *poreuomai* – to ford a way, pursue a course, follow a specific path (Christians called THE WAY – following the way of Jesus)
 - a. **Fear of the Lord** (Greek: φόβος *phobos* – flight, fear, dread, terror of something/someone. More than mere reverence, respect, or awe of God as some say, but a needing/wanting distance from overwhelming power and greatness and glory!
 - b. **Encouragement/comfort of the Holy Spirit** – παράκλησις *paraklesis* from parakaleo – lit. to call alongside, to call people to get parallel/alongside Jesus and His right way of living (righteousness). This word has many aspects to include exhort/entreat/invite/beseech, encourage/comfort/conciliate, and urge/plead/appeal/implore/beg. So prayer is the best way to understand how we call out to God to come alongside/help us and He calls us through His Spirit to come alongside/parallel to Jesus by loving and obeying His truth
4. **Continuing to MULTIPLY** πληθύνω *plethuno*: to increase, to be increased

Acts 9:32 32 Now it happened that as Peter was traveling through all those regions, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda.

Peter was an Apostle who served as a traveling evangelist

1. Traveling through all those regions (Galilee, Samaria, Judea)
2. Peter came to a specific city in order to meet saints (SAINTS - believers/those set apart to belong to God) (difference between Catholic and Protestant view of SAINTS)
3. Where is Lydda?

Lydda—a town in the tribe of Ephraim, mentioned only in the New Testament (**Acts 9:32, 35, 38**) as the scene of Peter's miracle in healing the paralytic Aeneas. It lay about 9 miles east of Joppa, on the road from the sea-port to Jerusalem. In the Old Testament (1 Chr. 8:12) it is called Lod. It was burned by the Romans, but was afterwards rebuilt, and was known by the name of Diospolis. Its modern name is Ludd. The so-called patron saint of England, St. George, is said to have been born here.

- Easton Bible Dictionary (1893). In (p. 431). Harper & Brothers.

1. Peter's Example of a Multiplying Ministry

1. Traveling (sacrificing)

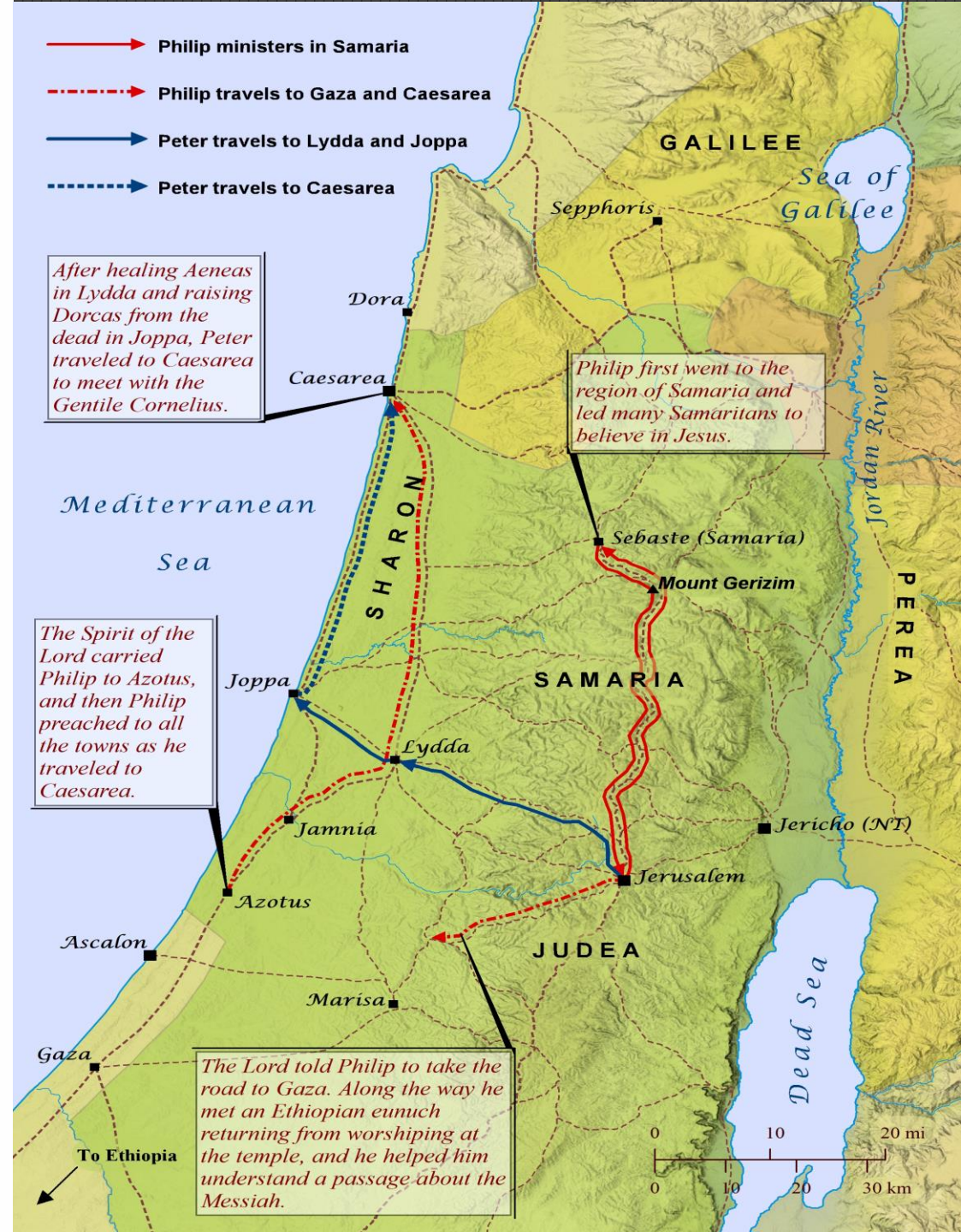
2. Finding (visiting)

3. Helping (healing)

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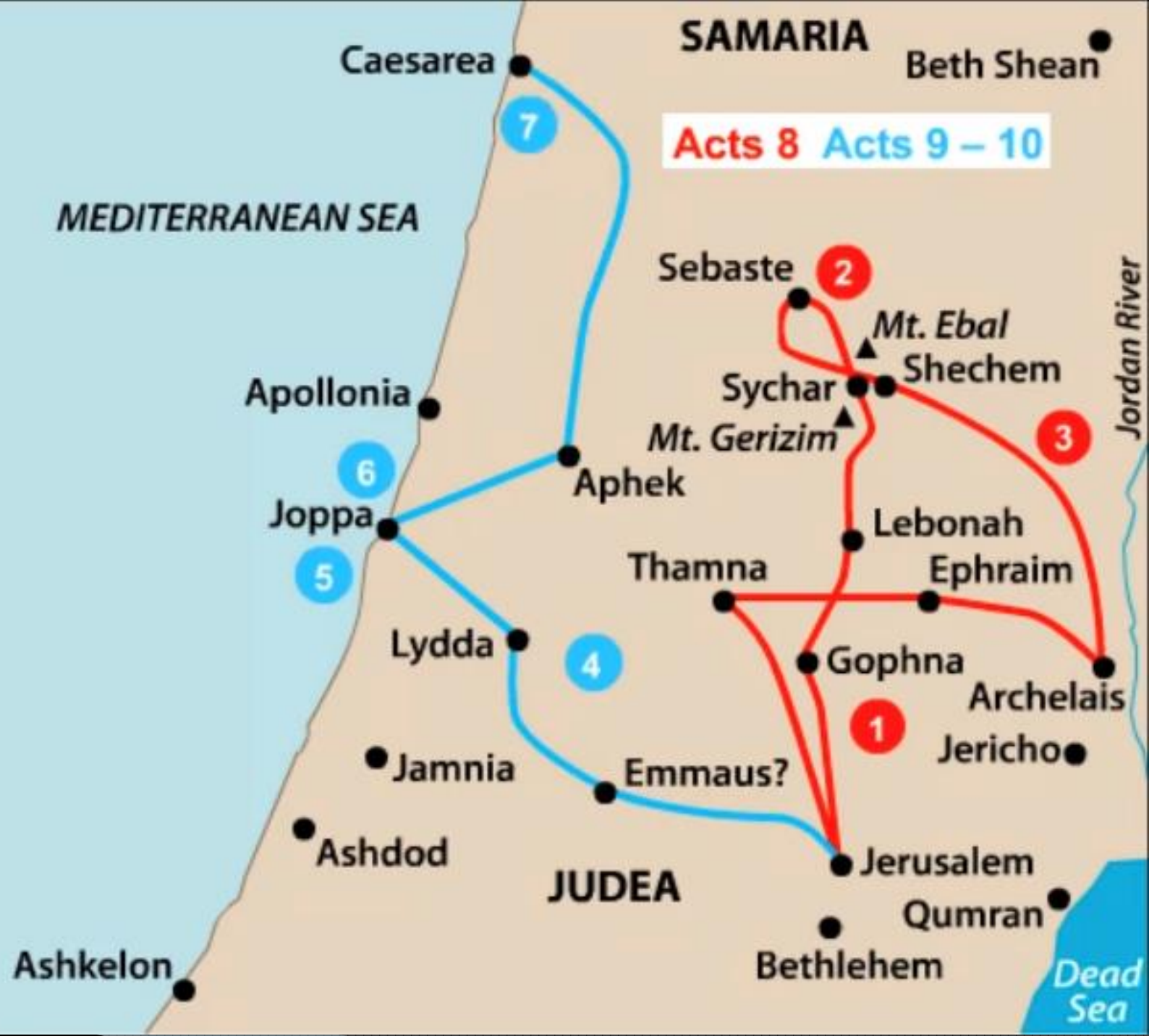
4. Multiplying (new souls turning to the Lord)

Peter's Ministry (Acts 9-12)





"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Acts 4:20



2. Tabitha's/Dorcas' Example of a Multiplying Ministry

1. Serving others (full of good works and continuous giving/charity)
2. Faithful till Death (fell sick and died)
3. Helping Widows (making clothing for them/labor of love – or making clothing with them/fellowship in serving together)
=
4. Multiplying (new souls turning to the Lord)

3. TBC's Example of a Multiplying Ministry (3 H's)

1. Praying (trusting and depending on the Lord)
2. Raising (being used of God to practically help others – esp. with physical health difficulties)
3. Staying (truly caring about fellow Christians to stay with them, spend quantity and quality TIME with them in order to equip, encourage, and edify them)
=
4. Multiplying (new souls turning to the Lord)

3. TBC's Example of a Multiplying Ministry (3 H's)

1. **Humility** (a Persistent Prayer that seeks God regularly, earnestly, and sincerely)
2. **Holiness** (a Personal Purity that confesses and purges sin so that we are a clean conduit so the power and blessing of God flows in our lives/church unhindered)
3. **Helping** (a Pursuing Passion that Pursues and Prefers Others over and above one's self)

SO WHAT?

Application



1 Peter 1:22 ²² Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,

1 Peter 4:8-11 ⁸ Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Be hospitable to one another without complaint. ¹⁰ As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.