


# Acts 17:1-34

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February 26, 2006

# Paul at Thessalonica (1-9)



The map, titled "Paul's Second Missionary Journey," shows the route of Paul's travels across the Eastern Mediterranean region. The journey is marked with numbered stops: 1. Antioch (Syria), 2. Tarsus (Cilicia), 3. Troas (Mysia), 4. Philippi (Thrace), 5. Thessalonica (Macedonia), 6. Berea (Macedonia), 7. Athens (Achaia), 8. Corinth (Achaia), and 9. Ephesus (Asia). The map also labels major geographical features such as the Black Sea, Aegean Sea, and Mediterranean Sea, as well as various provinces and cities. A red box highlights the area around Thessalonica and Berea, with a red arrow pointing to the text below.

**Introduction**  
About the Map  
Overview  
Acts 15-16  
Acts 17  
Acts 18  
Acts 19

1 When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.  
2 As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,  
3 explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said.  
4 Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.

[http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map\\_pauls\\_second\\_missionary\\_journey.html](http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_pauls_second_missionary_journey.html) Bible History Online

# Paul at Thessalonica (1-9)



The map, titled "Paul's Second Missionary Journey," shows the route of Paul's travels across the Eastern Mediterranean region. The journey is marked with numbered stops from 1 to 10. Stop 5 is highlighted in green and is located at Thessalonica in Macedonia. The map includes labels for various regions such as Macedonia, Greece, Thracia, Mysia, Bithynia, Phrygia, Galatia, and Asia. Major bodies of water like the Aegean Sea, Black Sea, and Mediterranean Sea are also labeled. A legend in the bottom left corner provides a navigation menu for the map's content.

5 But the Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd. 6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, 7 and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus." 8 When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. 9 Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

[http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map\\_pauls\\_second\\_missionary\\_journey.html](http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_pauls_second_missionary_journey.html) Bible History Online

# Paul at Thessalonica (1-9)

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- *...Paul...reasoned with them from the Scriptures (2)*
  - See also Acts 17:17; 18:4,19
  - The Scriptures are reasonable
  - Christianity is reasonable
- *explaining...that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead (3)*
  - Where in the Scriptures does it say that Christ had to rise from the dead?
  - There is probably too little emphasis today on the resurrection of Christ, and on the life of Christ (Jn 14:19; Ro 4:25; Col 3:3-4)



# Paul at Berea (10-15)



# Paul at Berea (10-15)





# Paul at Athens (16-21)

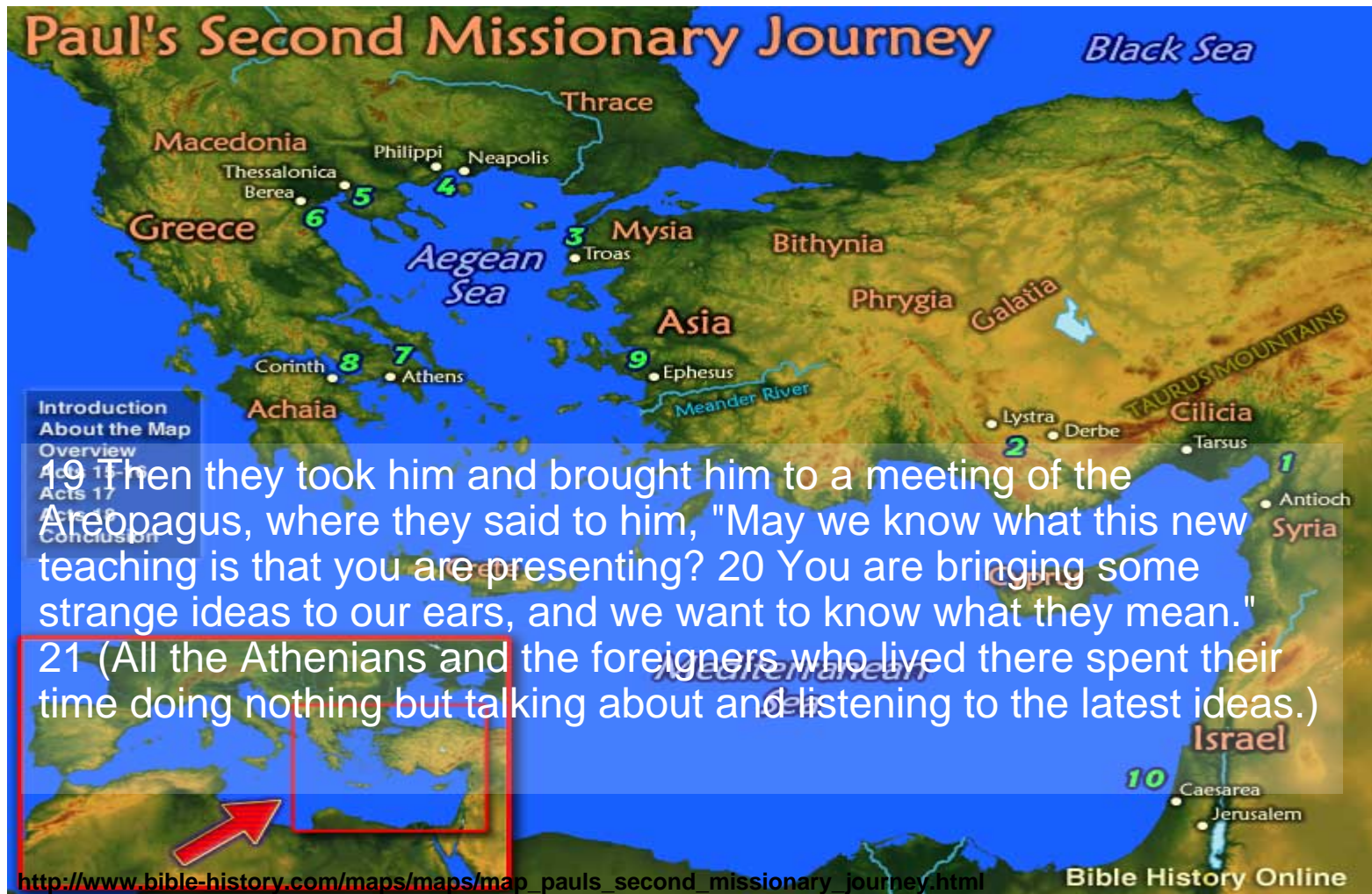


The map, titled "Paul's Second Missionary Journey," shows the route of Paul's travels across the Eastern Mediterranean region. The journey is marked with numbered stops from 1 to 10. Stop 1 is in Antioch, Syria. Stop 2 is in Lystra and Derbe, Galatia. Stop 3 is in Troas, Mysia. Stop 4 is in Neapolis, Thrace. Stop 5 is in Philippi, Macedonia. Stop 6 is in Berea, Macedonia. Stop 7 is in Athens, Achaia. Stop 8 is in Corinth, Achaia. Stop 9 is in Ephesus, Asia. Stop 10 is in Jerusalem, Israel. The map also labels various geographical features such as the Black Sea, Aegean Sea, and Meander River, and regions like Macedonia, Greece, Asia, and Cilicia. A legend in the bottom left corner provides navigation options: Introduction, About the Map, Overview, Acts 17, and Conclusion. A red box highlights the text of Acts 17:18-21, which describes Paul's encounter with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens.

16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. 18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

[http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map\\_pauls\\_second\\_missionary\\_journey.html](http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_pauls_second_missionary_journey.html) Bible History Online

# Paul at Athens (16-21)





# Sermon on Mars Hill (22-23)

<sup>22</sup> Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. <sup>23</sup> For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.



# Sermon on Mars Hill (22-23)

- *Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. (22)*
  - The Areopagus was a rocky hill about 370 feet high, not far from the Acropolis and the Agora (marketplace) in Athens, Greece.<sup>[7]</sup>
    - The word also was used to refer to the council that met on this hill. <sup>[7]</sup>
    - The name probably was derived from Ares, the Greek name for the god of war known to the Romans as Mars.<sup>[7]</sup>
- *For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. (23)*
  - Though Paul was distressed to see the city full of idols, he nevertheless finds an opening here
  - He was not afraid to use something from the local culture as an opening for a discussion about Christ

# Sermon on Mars Hill (24-27)

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<sup>24</sup> "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. <sup>25</sup> And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. <sup>26</sup> From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. <sup>27</sup> God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.



# Sermon on Mars Hill (24-27)

- *"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. (24)*
  - God is Creator (cf. Gen 1)
  - God is Lord of all (cf. Ac 2:36)
  - God does not inhabit our creation; we inhabit God's creation! (cf. 1Ki 8:27)
- *And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. (25)*
  - God doesn't need us! (cf. Ps 51:9-13)
  - We need God! (cf. Ps 51:14-15)
  - "God doesn't sell; God gives."
- *From one man he made every nation of men (26)*
  - God is not only the first cause of creation, He is the Maker of man as well
  - God not only started the human race, He is responsible for the emergence of nations as well (cf. Gen 10-11)

# Sermon on Mars Hill (24-27)

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- *that they should inhabit the whole earth; (26)*
  - God gave mankind a purpose (Gen 1:28; 9:1)
  - God caused mankind to scatter over all the earth (Gen 11:8)
- *and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. (26)*
  - God has sovereignly set a time for your life
    - It may have been interesting to live during the time of Christ, but that option isn't open to you!
  - God has sovereignly set a place for your life
    - You may wish to have been born and raised in Australia, but that option isn't open to you!
- *God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. (27)*
  - God's purpose is that men will come to know Him

# Sermon on Mars Hill (28-34)

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<sup>28</sup> 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

<sup>29</sup> "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill. <sup>30</sup> In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

<sup>31</sup> For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

<sup>32</sup> When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." <sup>33</sup> At that, Paul left the Council. <sup>34</sup> A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.



# Sermon on Mars Hill (28-34)

- *'For in him we live and move and have our being.'* (28)
  - Because Paul is addressing unbelievers, “In Him” here cannot refer to all the blessings believers have by virtue of being in Christ (Eph 1)
  - Rather, it must refer to more general blessings having to do with God’s sovereign and sustaining grace for all people (Col 1:16-17; cf. Mt 5:45)
- *As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'*  
*"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill. (28-29)*
  - Because Paul is addressing unbelievers, “we are his offspring” refers to our shared lineage in Adam (1Co 15:22)
  - It cannot refer to their spiritual brotherhood since unbelievers are children of the devil (Jn 8:42-47)

# Sermon on Mars Hill (28-34)

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- *In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. (30-31)*
  - Paul presents God both as a moral authority who commands people to repent and as judge who will call people to account
- *He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.” (31)*
  - Though some sneered at the notion of the dead being raised (v.32) Paul does not regard the resurrection as a weak proof about Christ but as a proof that is both powerful (Ro 1:4) and essential (1Co 15:12-14)

# Summary

## *The Big Ideas In Paul's Pattern For Preaching*

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- Paul reasoned from the scriptures (vv. 17:2,17; 18:4,19)
- Paul presented God as Creator and Lord (vv. 24-26a; cf. 14:15-17, Ro 1:18-23)
- Paul presented God as Sovereign (v. 26b)
- Paul presented his message in terms of their culture (v. 23, 28)
- Paul presented God as a Giver of blessings and purpose (vv. 24-28)
- Paul presented Christ as Judge of the world (v. 30-31)
- Paul presented the resurrection as proof of this (v. 31b, cf. Romans 1:4)



# Bibliography

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