

Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 11

Sha'ul and Bar-Nabba's First Missionary Journey ~ Part 5

We pick up the ongoing story of **Sha'ul** in Acts 14:19.

Sha'ul's Sermon in Pisidian Antioch ~ Part 5

Note: To examine the graphics in this series, click on them for a pop-up version.

Sha'ul Is Stoned

¹⁹ Then, some unbelieving Jews came from Antioch and Iconium. They won over the crowds, stoned Sha'ul, and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. ²⁰ But as the talmidim gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day, he left with Bar-Nabba for Derbe.

It is not clear whether the **unbelieving Jews** (see Acts 9:22–23) stoned **Sha'ul** to death so that he actually arose from the dead or only thought he was dead - in which case, there is still an implied miracle of healing, for someone dead would not usually be in condition to walk back to town. Why did he go back? To prove that he could not be intimidated. The next day he did indeed leave but on his own terms.

This does not mean deliverance from all harm, for Paul was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19–20) and experienced much opposition during this time. It means rather that the Lord kept him from death and empowered him for continued ministry.

Douglas J. Moo ~ NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible Notes

Strengthening the Churches

²¹ After proclaiming the Good News in that city and making many people into talmidim, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²² strengthening the talmidim, encouraging them to remain true to the faith, and reminding them that it is through many hardships that we must enter the Kingdom of God. ²³ After appointing elders for them in every congregation, Sha'ul and Bar-Nabba, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord in whom they had put their trust.

Sha'ul's "follow-up work" included:

1. strengthening the new talmidim spiritually;
2. urging them to use that strength to hold fast to their faith;
3. giving fair warning of what to expect - troubles but also the Kingdom of God.
4. And finally, he appointed **elders** to guide the young congregations; to do this, he and **Bar-Nabba** retraced their steps.

Sha'ul and Bar-Nabba appointed elders in these early Pauline churches to establish the first stages of church leadership (see note at 11:30). These practiced official oversight and responsibility within the church.

Report to Kehillah in Antioch in Syria

²⁴ Passing through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. ²⁵ After speaking the message in Perga, they came down to Attalia; and from there, they sailed back to Antioch (Syria), ²⁶ the place where they had been handed over to the care of God for the work which they had now completed. ²⁷ When they arrived, they gathered the Messianic community together and reported what God had done through them, that he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸ And they stayed for some time there with the talmidim. ¹

They visited the churches where they had ministered, plus some additional towns (**Attalia, Perga**). They had performed their assigned tasks by the grace of **God**. Thus ends the first missionary journey.

In our next post, **Sha'ul** and **Bar-Nabba** return to **Yerushalayim**.

¹ Acts 14:19–28.