

¹ Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed.

² But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.

³ Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

⁴ But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

⁵ And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them,

Acts 14:5 (ESV) When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them,

Acts 14:5 (NIV) There was a plot afoot among the Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them.

⁶ they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region.

LYSTRA (*Līs' trā*) City in south central Asia Minor and an important Lycaonian center. According to [Acts 16:1](#), it probably was the home of young Timothy, one of Paul's companions in the ministry. Paul's healing of a crippled man at Lystra ([Acts 14:8-10](#)) caused the inhabitants to revere him as a god. Many believed his preaching but were turned against the missionary by Judaizers from Antioch and Iconium. Paul was dragged out of Lystra, stoned, and left for dead. He revived and later went back to the city to lend strength to the new Christians.

Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary.

DERBE (*Dêr' bə*) Important city in region of Lycaonia in province of Galatia in Asia Minor. It is apparently near modern Kerti Huyuk. The residents of Derbe and Lystra spoke a different language from the people to the north in Iconium. Paul visited Derbe on his first missionary journey ([Acts 14:6](#)), fleeing from Iconium. Persecution in Lystra led to a successful preaching mission in Derbe ([14:20-21](#)). On the second journey Paul returned to Derbe ([Acts 16:1](#)). He apparently visited again on the third journey ([18:23](#)). Paul's fellow minister Gaius was from Derbe ([20:4](#)). See [Asia Minor, Cities of](#).

Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary.

⁷ And they were preaching the gospel there.

⁸ And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked.

⁹ This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed,

¹⁰ said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked.

¹¹ Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!"

¹² And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.

Evidently, the crowd that witnessed this miracle was large. The response was immediate and emotional. Concluding that these men were gods in human bodies, they went so far as to decide that Paul was Hermes and Barnabas, Zeus. According to Greek and Roman mythology, Zeus and Hermes (the Roman names were Jupiter and Mercury) had once visited this city and, according to the legend, no one offered them hospitality except an old couple. So Zeus and Hermes killed the rest of the people and rewarded the old couple.

When the citizens of Lystra saw the miracles of Paul and Barnabas, they assumed that the gods were revisiting them. Remembering the story of what had happened to the previous citizens, they immediately honored Paul and Barnabas, showering them with gifts. The matter quickly got out of hand. The priest of the temple of Zeus was in the process of bringing oxen for a sacrifice. He would not want to be caught up short with such noble visitors in town!

Life Application New Testament Commentary

¹³ Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.

¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out

¹⁵ and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them,

¹⁶ who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways.

¹⁷ Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

¹⁸ And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

¹⁹ Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul *and* dragged *him* out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

See map pg. 56 Antioch to Lystra = **96 miles** & Iconium to Lystra = **20 miles**

²⁰ However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

²¹ And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,

²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

See: 2nd Corinthians 11:28 & Philippians 2:3-4

²³ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

See 1st Timothy 3, Titus 1, 1st Peter 5:1-4, 1st Thessalonians 5:12-13, Hebrews 13:7, 17 & James 5:14

²⁴ And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

²⁵ Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

²⁶ From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.

²⁷ Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

²⁸ So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.

Questions Acts 14

1. What was the initial response to the preaching of Paul and Barnabas at the synagogue in Iconium?
2. Who poisoned the minds of those at Iconium?
3. How might one's mind be poisoned today, and what precautions might be taken to avoid this serious problem?
4. Under what circumstances did Paul and Barnabas leave Iconium?
5. Who was healed at Lystra and what was the reaction of the people?

Questions Acts 14

6. Why did Paul and Barnabas tear their clothes?

7. How did Paul and Barnabas describe God to the people of Lystra?

8. Who persuaded the multitude to stone Paul?

9. What did Paul and Barnabas do after Paul recovered from being stoned?

10. List the lesson or lessons to be learned from Acts 14:22.

11. What do we learn about elders from Acts 14 and other related passages?

12. Explain the lesson or lessons you will remember from your study of Acts 14.