

- A Study in Acts -

Chapter Sixteen – Second Journey of Paul

ACTS 16:7-12:

We began this journey with Paul and Silas in **Antioch of Syria**; they then traveled through the rest of **Syria** and through the region of **Cilicia** strengthening **the Bodies of Christ** along the way. When they had come to the area of the two cities of **Lystra and Derbe**, they will pick up young Timothy to travel with them. They delivered the decrees to these cities which strengthened them to a productive unity. From here they will travel to two new areas of Asia Minor: **Phrygia and Galatia**. Luke does not record anything about these visits and Paul will not return to these regions until **Chapter 19**.



Text #1:

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Acts 16:7-10 “After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. ⁸ So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. ⁹ And a vision

appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”¹⁰ Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.”

Mysia: This is a province, much like Galatia or Phrygia, located in the northwest portion of Asia Minor. Here and in **verse 6**, the Spirit of God forbid Paul, Silas, and Timothy from going to either Asia (the far mid and southwestern portions of Asia Minor bordered by the Aegean Sea), or Bithynia (a region along the north edge of Asia Minor just under the Black Sea). Both of these locations will come back to us in the New Testament narrative (Paul will come to Ephesus, the capital of Asia, at the end of **Chapter 18**, and again in **Chapter 19** – where he will preach the Gospel to all of Asia; and Peter will record that Bithynia will be one of the locations that Christians from Judea will scatter to – **1 Peter 1:1**).

Troas: Paul and his band passed all the way through Mysia and came to Troas. This name is applied both to the Roman province fronting the Aegean Sea, and the city of Troas which was a Roman colony and one of the most important cities of northwest Asia; and a port on the trade routes between Macedonia and Asia.

With the exception of the vision of the man from Macedonia, Luke does not record any Gospel work here; however, we know that when Paul returns through here at the end of the third journey, there are disciples here. Whether this is from work performed at Ephesus in **Chapter 19**, or after he leaves Ephesus which he records for Christians in Corinth – **2 Corinthians 2:12** (a door was opened to him there by the Lord), or here, it is not revealed.

Vision: Paul is going to have a vision in the night; the primary differences between visions and dreams in the sense used here, is that one occurs while the individual is awake (vision), and one while sleeping (dream). In either case, it is evident at this point that it is part of the Spirit’s direction to Paul to accomplish God’s purposes for the Gospel of Christ verses his own.

Macedonia: Macedonia is a Roman province in north central Greece. It runs from the Aegean Sea to the Adriatic Sea, and is bordered by Illyricum to the northwest and Thrace to the northeast and finally by Achaia (Achaia) to the south. It was a large and populace province with many important cities.

Luke: After Paul was witness to the vision and concluded that God wanted him to preach in Macedonia, the writer, Luke, now joins the group (noted by the change of pronouns from ‘they’ and ‘them’, to ‘we’ and ‘us’).

Summary: Passing through the region of Mysia (having been forbidden by the Spirit of God to go into Asia and Bithynia at this time), Paul and his group have come to Troas. Here at Troas, Paul will have a vision encouraging him to go to Macedonia and bring the Gospel. As they determine to go to Macedonia, we learn that Luke joins them.

Text #2:

Acts 16:11-12 “Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next *day* came to Neapolis,¹² and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days.”

Journey: Paul and company crossed the Aegean Sea which separates Asia Minor from and the western world that is Europe. Paul and the group ran a straight course, which implies that the winds were behind them, and it only required two days to sail across. At a later date and a trip back across this same course, but in the opposite direction, the same distance will require five days to complete (20:6).

Samothrace: This is an island in the Aegean Sea where they stopped till the following day on their journey.

Neapolis: This is the seaport town for the major city of Philippi (which was about ten miles inland from the port). Luke does not record any activity here for the Gospel’s sake, and moves right on into Philippi.



Philippi: A Macedonian town in the plain east of Mount Pangaeus. It was a strategic city founded by Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great. The position dominated the road system of northern Greece.

After Rome conquered this area Octavian (the future Augustus), constituted the city a Roman colony, and he housed partisans of Antony whose presence was not desirable in Italy; however, there would be many of the Roman military who through time would be given land and title here, a kind of retirement for their loyal service.

There was a school of medicine in Philippi connected with one of those guilds of physicians which the followers of early Greek medicine scattered throughout the Hellenistic world; and may account for the touch of pride in Luke's description of the city.

Note: Before we begin to look into the work of Paul here in Philippi, I would like to share with you, from his own words, some things to consider as we look at the events in Philippi, note:

Philippians 4:8-9 “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”

As Paul writes back to the Christians established by the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ here in Philippi, he reminds them of all the properties necessary to learn, and states that they have witnessed all of them in his actions among them. We will in the next lessons begin to look at three examples of these events to be noticed and recalled by these brethren and you and me.

Summary: Passing through the region of Mysia (having been forbidden by the Spirit of God to go into Asia and Bithynia at this time), Paul and his group have come to Troas. Here at Troas, Paul will have a vision encouraging him to go to Macedonia and bring the Gospel. As they determine to go to Macedonia, we learn that Luke joins them.

They set out across the Aegean Sea and cross with relative ease, stopping at the island of Samothrace, and the next day arriving at Neapolis, the seaport town for Philippi. From Neapolis they head straight to Philippi, the chief city of this region.

Next: “Paul Brings the Gospel to Lydia and Her Household!”