

# *Resurrection Life of Jesus Church*

## **BACK TO THE BOOK OF ACTS (BBA)**

RLJ-1143

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### **PART 32: PERSECUTION AND A GREAT MIRACLE**

The next stop for Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journey was the city of Iconium, located about 80 miles east of Antioch. Today this city is called "Konia" or "Konieh" and has a population of 40,000.

#### **STARTING AT THE SYNAGOGUE**

It started out very good as they went to the synagogue and were given the opportunity to share the Gospel. There were many Greek converts attending this synagogue in addition to the Jews and a large number of them were born again as they accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. **Acts 14:1**

The Jews who refused to accept Jesus like usual stirred up the Gentiles to be their attack dogs. **verse 2**

We are not told how long Paul and Barnabas stayed in Iconium, only that they stayed there for a long time and that a church had been planted. **verse 3**

The population in the city became divided, with some supporting the unbelieving Jews and others supporting Paul and Barnabas. **verse 4**

Satan's last recourse was to murder the people who were doing damage to his kingdom. Paul and Barnabas left town when they were told about the coming assassinations. **verses 5-6**

#### **ARRIVING AT LYSTRA AND DERBE**

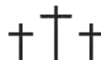
Luke doesn't say if Paul and Barnabas started at the synagogue in Lystra, about 18 miles from Iconium, only that they started to preach the Gospel. **verse 7**

Luke does not tell us if the crippled man was saved or not, only that he had faith when he heard Paul speak. **verses 8-9**

Moving in the power of the Holy Spirit, Paul looked upon the man, saw that he had faith and commanded him to stand up. The man not only stood up but he jumped up and started to walk. This was a creative miracle when the Holy Spirit immediately created muscles on the man's bones. **verse 10**

A great commotion broke out as the people in the city saw this creative miracle. They realized this was something supernatural and thought that their "gods" had come to visit them. **verses 11-13**

When the apostles found out what the pagan priest intended to do, they did something drastic by tearing their clothing to show their naked bodies and convince the priest and the people that they were just men and not gods. This is the only place in the New Testament where it is recorded that the Gospel was preached by half nude men. **verses 14-18**



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## **MIRACLES DO NOT SAVE PEOPLE**

Many people today believe that if unsaved people can see miracles, it will bring them to Christ and salvation. This is not necessarily true. Salvation comes from the preaching of the Word of God and conviction of sins on the part of the listeners. **1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 2:1-5**

The people in Lystra quickly forgot the miracle when Jews from Antioch and Iconium arrived and turned the people into a mob and stoned Paul. This is typical behavior of unsaved Jews by getting the mob to do their dirty work. **Acts 14:19**

The newly converted disciples didn't know what to do and we are not told if Barnabas was present. The Holy Spirit resurrected Paul with another creative miracle and he walked back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas traveled to Derbe. It had to be a creative miracle for Paul to walk 16 miles the next day after being left for dead. **verse 20**

We are not told how long Paul and Barnabas stayed in Derbe only that many people came to Christ in that city.

This was the end of this mission trip and they returned the same way they had arrived by traveling first to Lystra, then Iconium to the city of Antioch. On the journey home, they organized the churches and appointed elders through prayer and fasting. **verses 21-23**

Paul later tells us how these elders were chosen. **1 Timothy 3:1-7**

On their way back to the coast, they stopped in Perga and preached the Gospel in that city. **Acts 14:24-25**

From the seaport of Attalia, they purchased tickets on a ship that took them back to Antioch and their home church where they stayed a long time. **verses 26-28**

## **LESSON TO LEARN FROM THIS CHAPTER**

Expect resistance from the Devil; expect possible suffering and hardship when you are in the will of God and sharing the Gospel with unsaved people!  
**Matthew 10:23-33**

**DO YOU HAVE AN EAR TO HEAR WITH?**