

# PAUL NOW IN ICONIUM

- We're at the halfway point of Acts
- Acts 14 completes the context for dealing with Acts 15
- Paul and Barnabas were forced out of Pisidian Antioch
- Arriving in Iconium they immediately sought out the local synagogue
- Several of the congregation became Believers
- Some of the Jews who rejected the message sought the support of local gentiles







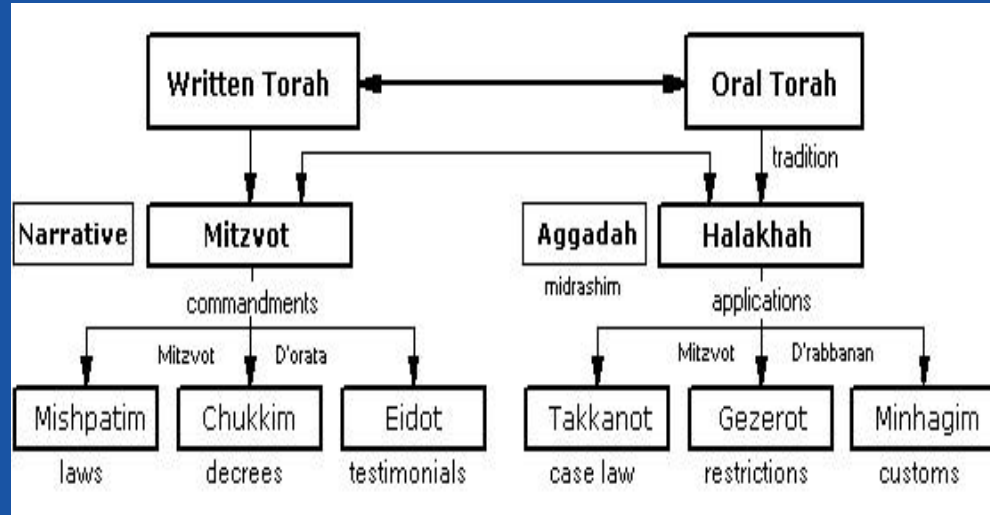
# WHY?

- What is behind the anger against Paul?
- It depended largely on whether the offended party was pagan, God-fearer, or Jew
- Pagans were religiously tolerant
- To the Romans, Jews held the opposite of their Roman values
- Jews showed no respect for other religions and gods
- Paul seemed radical and irritating
- Contempt for everything the pagans believed in and held dear
- This threatened civil stability and peace



# THE ISSUE WITH GOD-FEARERS

- Jewish teachers taught God-fearers to obey *Halakhah* (Jewish Law)
- Gentiles who switched from paganism to Judaism paid a dear price
- Paul says some of their theology is wrong!
- Circumcision faction says circumcision is a must, Paul says NO!
- A Catch-22





- Jews followed *Halakhah* to a higher level
- A regular stream of “Messiahs”
- Paul insisted that Yeshua was God
- To Jews, this was blasphemy & idolatry
- Religious Jews see evangelizing as trying to steal their souls
- Blasphemy punishable by death
- Overall issue was invitation to blasphemy, and incitement to civil unrest

# THE BATTLE FOR JEWISH SOULS

## The Missionary Threat to Jews





# ON TO LYSTRA AND DERBE

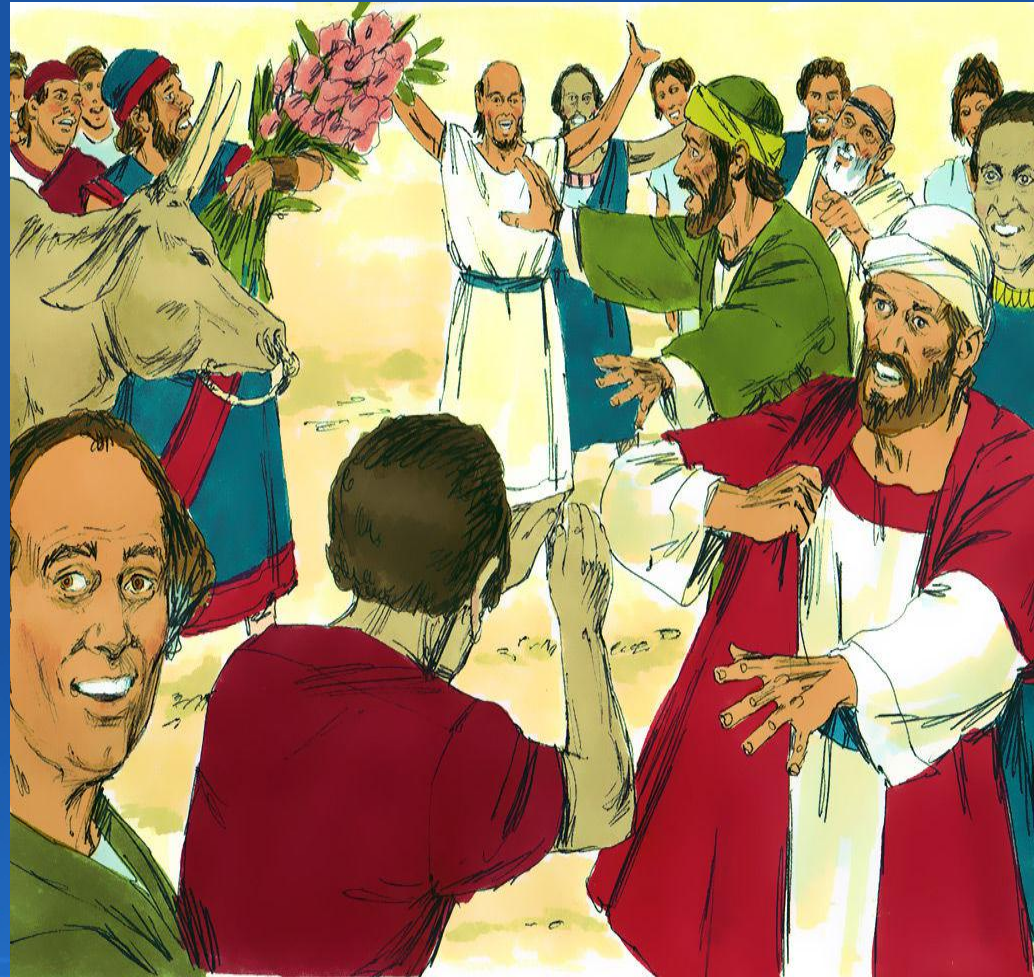


- Despite the threats Paul stayed a little longer in Iconium
- Miracles affirmed Paul's message
- Paul now speaking in the city streets to pagans
- Lystra and Derbe had no synagogues
- Paul heals cripple just as Peter did
- No doubt Luke was showing that Paul and Peter were equals



# PAUL IS SEEN AS A GOD!

- Crowd went wild with enthusiasm when the crippled man walked
- Lystrans believed Paul and Barnabas were Zeus and Hermes
- Zeus and Hermes are Greek, the same gods in the Roman pantheon are Jupiter and Mercury
- Paul protested that they are not gods, and not divine men





# GOD IS CREATOR

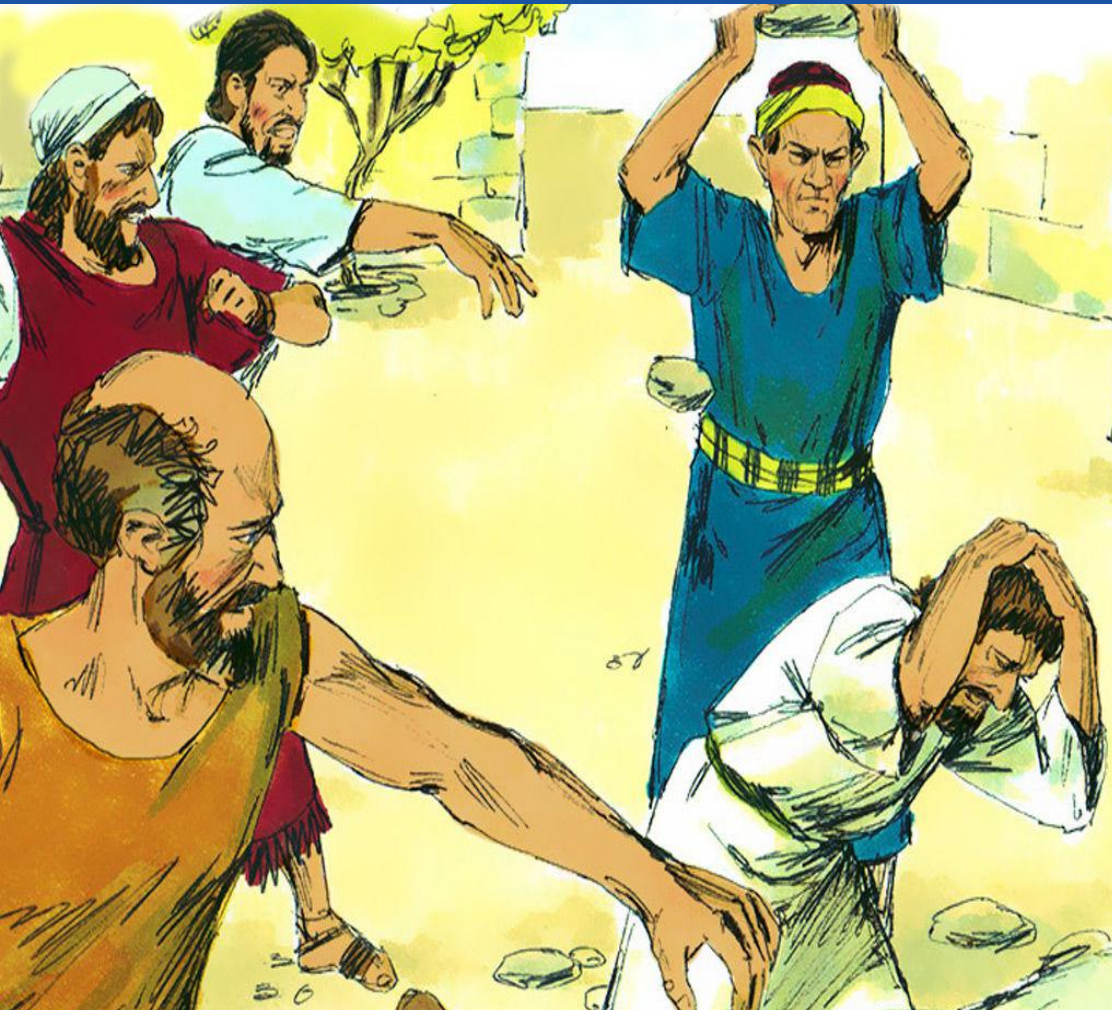
## The Seven Noahide Laws

1. **BELIEF IN G-D**  
Do Not Worship Idols
2. **RESPECT G-D AND PRAISE HIM**  
Do Not Blaspheme His Name
3. **RESPECT HUMAN LIFE**  
Do Not Murder
4. **RESPECT THE FAMILY**  
Do Not Commit Immoral Sexual Acts
5. **RESPECT FOR OTHERS' RIGHTS AND PROPERTY**  
Do Not Steal
6. **CREATION OF A JUDICIAL SYSTEM**  
Pursue Justice
7. **RESPECT ALL CREATURES**  
Do Not Eat the Flesh of an Animal that is Still Alive

- Since Paul's audience is pagan, they know nothing of the Prophets or Laws of Moses
- Natural revelation is there for any human to see
- Paul mainly interested in establishing that YHWH is Creator
- When Paul is speaking in simplistic terms to pagans, we should not use his statements to form Church doctrines!
- The pagan listeners are insulted by Paul calling their religion and idols "Worthless"



# PAUL LEFT FOR DEAD



- Some Jews from Antioch and Iconium come to incite the Lystrans
- Paul is stoned, but survives
- Goes back into Lystra!
- Next day, leaves for Derbe where he preaches in the streets and wins Believers to Christ
- Paul retraces his journey to strengthen the new congregations of Believers in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch



# PAUL RETURNS TO ORONTES ANTIOCH



- Paul instituted Elders at the new congregations
- Left for the city of Perga in Pamphylia
- Next to the seaport at Attalia to catch a ship back to Antioch on the Orontes
- Paul's center of activity is Antioch
- Peter's center of activity is Jerusalem
- 2 Headquarters of evangelism, but didn't always see eye-to-eye



# ACTS CHAPTER 15

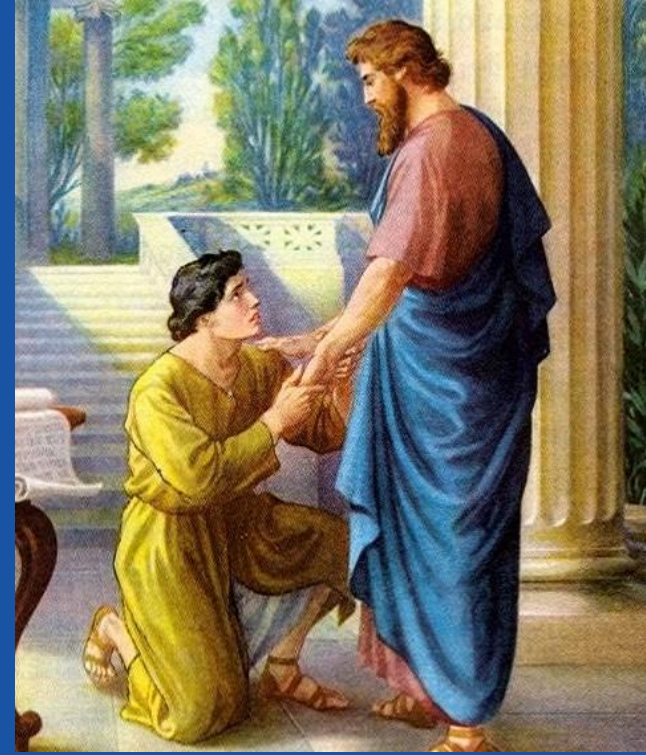
## CONTROVERSY

- Paul & Barnabas still in Antioch
- Circumcision faction shows up from Judah
- Conflicting viewpoints between Jewish Believers of the Holy Land, and Jewish Believers of the Diaspora
- Luke reported on the Jerusalem Council based on credible reports, but he was NOT an eyewitness
- In Galatians 2, Paul, who was a participant, gives his viewpoint of what transpired at the Jerusalem Council



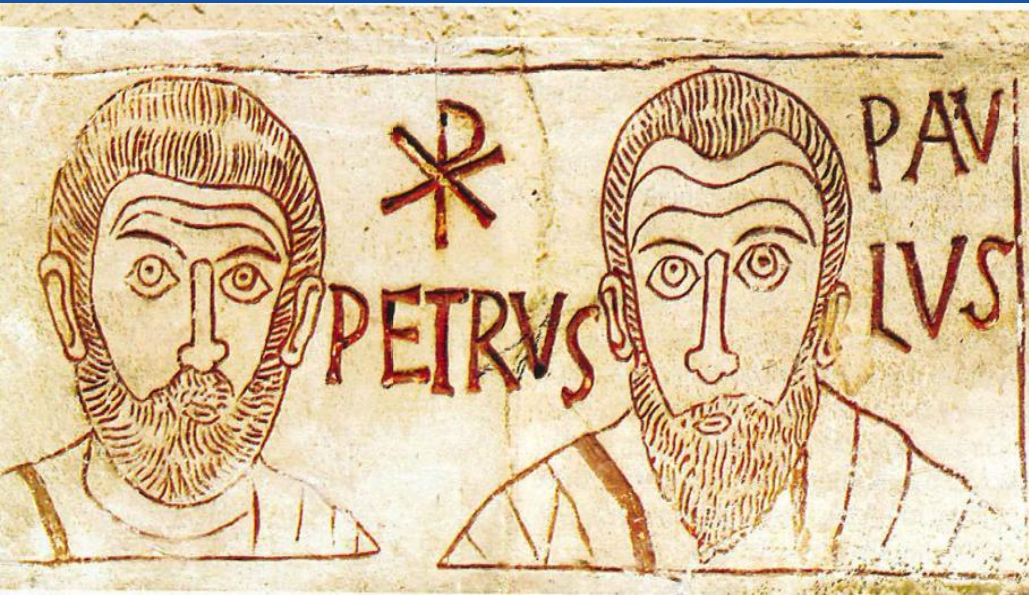
# THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL

- Galatians 2:1 – 10
- A private, leaders-only meeting
- What might Paul have done if they didn't accept his methods?
- Paul brought the gentile Titus with him
- Council did not order Titus to be circumcised, which told Paul that the council did not support the Circumcision faction





# PETER'S PRETENDERS



- Paul says the Circumcision Believers are “pretenders”
- Does this mean that these “pretenders” intentionally masqueraded as Believers, but were not ?
- Does it mean that they don't uphold Paul's doctrines sufficiently for him to accept them?
- Paul had mixed feelings about the Jerusalem leadership
- Luke sought to present Paul and Peter as equals
- But a definite division had developed between the two ministries