

Study of Acts 14
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Here it says that Paul and Barnabas went into the synagogue of the Jews and they spoke with such passion about Messiah that many Jews and Greeks believed. We can see that in this synagogue as in many others, that prior to Paul teaching the Gospel, there were many gentiles that attended the synagogue to hear the Word of Elohim preached every Sabbath by the Rabbis. That indicates to me that YHVH had already poured out His Spirit upon the community so that many hearts were prepared to receive the Living Word of Elohim. Scripture tells us that ***NO ONE*** can come to the Father unless the Father calls them.

Paul and Barnabas are doing the work ***BUT IT IS*** YHVH that has prepared the field. As we step deeper into the Word of Elohim, we learn that what He truly wants from us ***IS*** to obey, follow and ***DO*** His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions in the manner that He, our heavenly Father has prescribed, and as we try to do that, we will meet with opposition. The opposition that we meet with today ***IS*** nothing compared to what Paul and Barnabas experienced. It says that *the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and MADE their minds evil affected against the brethren, Paul and Barnabas.*

Now, as I said above, I believe that YHVH poured out His Spirit unto the people at that time to prepare the hearts of those who would believe. That means that those who did ***NOT*** believe the message that Paul was teaching, actually rejected the Spirit of Elohim in favour of man's traditions, man's teaching and instructions, man's doctrine.

What do you suppose Paul and Barnabas were teaching? They were of course teaching the people that the Living Word of our heavenly Father, His Torah had come to earth to teach ***US HOW to BELIEVE, KEEP, FOLLOW and DO*** the Word, the Torah of Elohim, His eternal ***TRUTH***, in the manner that Elohim had prescribed at the beginning of time and that it was only through obedience to YHVH's inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life that we would inherit eternal Life with Him.

By rejecting Paul's teaching, they rejected Elohim Himself, they rejected His Living Torah, they rejected Messiah, for Messiah ***IS*** the Living Torah; *John 1:1;14*

We see the very same thing happening today. There are people out there in the body of Messiah that are so adamantly opposed to what ***WE BELIEVE AND TEACH*** that they ***WILL*** stir up people to the point that ***IF IT WERE PERMITTED*** they would stone us to death, stone the teachers such as myself who teach that the Torah of YHVH ***IS STILL IN FULL*** effect today. That is how entrenched the word of ***MAN IS IN*** the houses of Elohim today. They ***DO NOT FOLLOW*** the Commandments, the Torah of YHVH to resist ***CHANGE***, for ***ALL*** of man made religions ***ARE*** about changing and adapting to the times so that they can reach more people and have them join their groups. *Proverbs 24:21-22 My son, fear you YHVH and the king; and MEDDLE NOT with them that are given TO CHANGE: 22 For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knows the ruin of them both?* What they are vehemently resisting ***IS*** returning to the ways of the Father, His ancient Paths of Righteousness that He ordained us to walk in from the very beginning of time, and that path my

friends **IS** YHVH's inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah, His directives for everlasting Life

In *verse 3* it says that Paul and Barnabas performed signs and wonders. Paul and Barnabas are believers in the Living Torah, and the Scripture emphatically states that signs and wonders **WILL FOLLOW THOSE WHO BELIEVE, LIVE AND TEACH** the Word of Elohim, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life.

So Paul and Barnabas were aware that some of the people of Iconia wanted to stone them and they fled to Lystra and Derbe, and they preached the Gospel, the Good News that Elohim's own words had taken on Physical Life and come to earth in the form of a man called Yeshua and that He died on the cross for the redemption and salvation of the world

While there, Paul came across a man that had been crippled from birth, and Paul perceived that this man had faith, he perceived that this man believed in Messiah and the Gospel message. How does a person perceive that another person has faith and believes? Can you tell just by looking at him? Is there a sign on his forehead? Of course **NOT**. The only way to have that kind of perception and discernment **IS** to have a surrendered obedient heart to the Father and then the Father through His Holy Spirit quickens your spirit to reveal that knowledge. Therefore Paul who was armed with the knowledge that He received from Elohim's Holy Spirit that this man had faith, said to this crippled man, stand on your feet, and the cripple man leaped up and walked. How many of you here believe that this story **IS TRUE**? If you answered yes to that Question, **THEN WHY** aren't we, the people of Elohim of today saying to people that are crippled get up and walk?

It is safe to say that all of us need to work on our level of faith, we need to learn to be faithful to the Word of Elohim and **THEN** the Word of Elohim will be faithful to us and fulfil **ALL** of what YHVH has commanded **IT TO DO**. Paul had spent years and years in the study of the Father's Torah of Life and in man's tradition, **BUT IT IS** only when he willingly and lovingly surrendered his heart to the Father that He truly **BEGAN TO LEARN TO HAVE FAITH**. Paul also found out that **IT IS** only through a surrendered life in loving obedience to the Father's inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His directives for everlasting Life, His Torah of Life, that we can be a vessel fit for **HIS USE**. That my friends **IS** when the miracles **WILL** begin to happen and signs and wonders will indeed follow us.

Because of this miraculous healing, the people of Lystra who saw it believed that Paul and Barnabas were gods. They called Barnabas Jupiter which is Latin, but the actual word used in the Greek is Zeus and they called Paul Mercurius, but the actual Greek word used is Hermes which was a mythical messenger of the Greek gods. These priests of Zeus wanted to pay homage to Paul and Barnabas because they believed that they were sent by the gods, albeit false gods, but gods none the less, and the people of Elohim, the Jews wanted to kill him because they believed that he was **NOT** sent by Elohim and furthermore they believe that he was blaspheming Elohim with his teaching.

It is quite ironic that the people that had been taught the oracles of Elohim, His Torah of Life for centuries did **NOT RECOGNIZE** that Paul and Barnabas **WERE** messengers or prophets sent from YHVH Elohim and yet the Gentiles and the pagans believed that they were indeed gods or messengers of gods. It is therefore quite evident that **IT IS NOT** enough to have the Word of Elohim,

one must also believe what it says, exactly how it is written and **NOT** how it has been translated through the prism of religious theologians.

The Jewish brethren had been given the Word of Elohim thousands of years before the advent of Messiah, **BUT** instead of believing what Elohim had written through the hand of Moses, they believed what their religious leaders had taught them which was a fabrication of man's doctrines and theology and **NOT** the **PURE** Word of Elohim, His Torah of Life.

When Paul and Barnabas realized what these people were doing they were quite distraught and they told these people to **NOT** sacrifice animals for their sake, because there **IS** only **ONE** that **IS** worthy to be worshipped and that **IS** the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Elohim that created **ALL** things.

Paul says that even though we the nations of the earth did **NOT** know YHVH nor walk in His ways, Elohim permitted all of us to live and He still blessed **ALL** peoples with rain and fruitful seasons, filling our bellies with food and our hearts with gladness. Paul is explaining to them that all things are under Elohim's control even the rain and the crops we grow, for the crops only grow because Elohim created them to do exactly that and YHVH allows them to grow. He doesn't allow these blessings of rain and crops to bless the peoples of the earth because of our righteousness, **BUT** because of His love for His creation. It truly **IS** His will that **NONE** would perish but that we **ALL** would turn from our wicked ways and follow His Word with repentant and contrite hearts and **LIVE**. Even after telling these people about the sovereignty and the love of Elohim, the love of the One and only true Elohim, Paul and Barnabas still had trouble convincing the people **NOT TO** sacrifice their animals onto them.

Next we are told that Paul continued to teach the Word of YHVH and that even though many believed there were also many that did **NOT** believe and who actually hated what Paul was doing and they therefore incited the crowd of people to the point that they stoned Paul and carried his limp body out of the city believing that he was dead.

Now I don't know what it would be like to be stoned to death, **BUT** obviously Paul experienced it. Did he suffer, was he injured? You be the judge, verses 19-20 *And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having **STONED** Paul, drew him out of the city, **supposing HE HAD BEEN DEAD**. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, **HE ROSE UP**, and came into the city: **AND THE NEXT DAY HE DEPARTED WITH BARNABAS TO DERBE**.*

As you can see Paul could **NOT** have been injured very seriously since he left the very next day for Derbe. Now we can speculate as to what happened such as Paul died and YHVH resurrected him or that YHVH protected him and that he felt no pain and the rocks that he was stoned with did **NOT** harm him or that somehow YHVH healed him completely from the wounds that he received from the stoning, but none of that **IS** important because we are told that the very next Day Paul was ready to continue to preach the Gospel to as many people as he could.

What we have to understand and realize **IS** that when we lovingly follow and obey the Word of Elohim to complete the tasks that YHVH gives us, many things will happen along on our journey to fulfil YHVH's Word because YHVH has given man free choice and they can use that free choice to hinder us or try to stop us, they can choose to believe what YHVH has sent us to teach them or they

can choose to react indifferently or even violently which **IS** the case here in *Acts 14*, however Elohim says that **IF** we willingly and lovingly choose to walk with Him and follow His Commandments, He will turn **ALL** the evil that is thrown at us into good and that **NO** weapon formed against us will prosper

Now I believe that that promise was fulfilled here in *verse 20* for it says that the disciples stood around about him. In other words they must have believed he was dead also, or else they would have bent down to tend to his wounds and help him in his time of agony. However Scripture says that while they were watching him believing that he was dead, Paul rose up and came into the city. It is stated in such a way that one can easily overlook that Paul was stoned and was either protected from the stones thrown at him by his accusers, or Elohim resurrected him; either way I believe that it was a miracle. The point is that YHVH doesn't want us to dwell on the miracles that He has and will perform, He wants us to dwell on the fact that He is with us wherever we go and **IF** we will do His Work as He as Commanded us to do, that regardless of what we encounter, He will be with us and do whatever needs to be done to fulfill His will even **IF** that means our death and resurrection.

Now to further show us that Paul was either unharmed or resurrected by YHVH, it says that the very next day they departed for Derbe. Again I have to say that I don't know the extent of Paul's injuries from the stoning and how long it takes for them to heal, **BUT** I am sure that it takes more than half a day to recover from a stoning or from the injuries that one gets by being stoned to heal; **BUT** here we are told that the very next Day Paul together with Barnabas departed for Derbe. That should definitely convince anyone reading this text that Paul was **NOT** injured or that Paul had miraculously recovered from whatever injuries that he suffered, which is more likely what happened since it said that Paul appeared to be dead.

Next we find that Paul returned to Lystra. As you know self preservation is natural for most people, therefore for Paul to return to the place where he had been stoned to death or near death, whatever the case may be, is something that is **NOT** natural. This tells me that Paul knew in his heart that even **IF** he had to suffer the same fate again that Elohim would protect him once more. That my friends **IS** the kind of belief that we **ALL** need to have and I for one do covet that kind of faith or belief, where YHVH **IS** everything and I am nothing.

This man Paul, was stoned to death or near death and yet appeared **NOT** to be injured and **NOW** we are told that he chose to return to the very city and people that stoned him. I believe that this is teaching his disciples and us that we too need to continue in our belief in the omnipotent and omniscient Elohim even though we will go through trials and tribulations until we enter the kingdom of Elohim. Therefore we can see that Elohim took the evil that happened to Paul and turned it to good in that through Paul's example and teachings many entered the kingdom of Elohim.

Next we see that Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every church, or assembly or qahal that they had started and set up. We have to pay attention to what they did, for it says that they prayed and fasted. How many of us do that as a group today? I venture to say that little to none of us do. If it was a tool of prayer that was used by the Apostles, maybe we should consider using that same method when we, as servants of the Most High Elohim are praying for something or someone.

Paul and Barnabas continued on throughout the whole region to preach the Gospel, the Good News of Elohim's redemption onto salvation plan. They returned to Antioch and encouraged those that

were there by telling them of the wonderful signs and wonders that Elohim had performed on their behalf and how Elohim had opened the door to the Gentiles

Although this teaching that Elohim had opened the door to the Gentiles should **NOT** have been a surprise to our Jewish brethren because they know and believe that Elohim created and loves **ALL** people, **BUT** they had been taught for years by their religious teachers that Elohim was exclusively for the children of Israel and against the world, **BUT** here in the Book of Acts they are finding out that Elohim loves **ALL** people with a perfect love and wants everyone to repent and return to Him from whence they came. Amein

Studying and keeping Torah together as a community.

Have a great Elohim blessed week and may Yahweh bless your every thought, and your every deed. Until we meet again, שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם, Shalom Aleykem. Amein