

Acts 17 – Paul goes to Athens

I. Paul and Silas @ Thessalonica, v.1-9

- A. Paul attempted to teach the Jews in the synagogue for three Sabbaths
- B. Jews are made jealous
- C. Jason's house is arrested – see **I Thess.2:18**

II. Paul and Silas @ Berea, v.10-13

- A. Berean Jews were “more fair-minded” than those in Thessalonica
 - 1. Received the word with readiness
 - 2. Studied the Scriptures daily to fact-check Paul's claims
 - 3. Jews in Thessalonica came to Berea to stir up the crowds against Paul
 - a) Silas and Timothy remain

III. Paul @ Athens, v.14-34

- A. Altar to the “unknown god”
- B. Epicureans – Happiness is gained through pleasure of all kinds although with temperance, with the absence of pain and fear. Epicurus believed that “pleasure” was the greatest good, but to obtain pleasure was to live modestly, gain knowledge of the workings of the world, and to limit one's desires.
 - 1. The “gods” do not interfere with humans or the universe in any way.
- C. Stoics (Stoicks) – Happiness is gained by accepting the moment as it presents itself, and not allowing ourselves to be controlled by our desire for pleasure or our fear of pain; thus logic and proper objectivity was required, along with an ethical system of fairness along with virtue being the greatest good. A strict control of emotions was emphasized.
 - 1. Believes “god” to be the universe, both passive and active. The universe is cyclic, with no beginning or end, but is constantly destroyed and recreated.
- D. “Babbler” – “applied to one who was outside any literary circle, an ignorant plagiarist”
- E. “Areopagus” – “Ares was supposed to have been tried here by the gods for the murder of Poseidon's son Halirrhothius”. (Areios Pagos – Ares' Rock)

Questions for Acts 17:

1. In what way had the saints “turned the world upside down”?
2. Why has God created man with “preappointed times” and “boundaries”?
3. Why does God command “all men everywhere to repent”?
4. How has God “given assurance” of the Judgment Day?