

Act 17:1 When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. (2) As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

Philippi to
Amphilipolis
(33 miles) to
Apollonia (30
miles) to
Thessalonica
(37 miles)



Act 17:3 explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah," he said. (4) Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women. (5) But other Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.

Among those persuaded is Jason.

(6) But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, (7) and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus." (8) When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. (9) Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

Act 17:10 As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. (11)

Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. (12) As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

By this we know that Paul was using the OT prophecies of the Messiah to show that Jesus was the Christ.

This line of study still works today!

Act 17:13 But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up. (14)

The believers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea. (15) Those who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible. (16) While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

Thessalonica to Berea about 60 miles. From Berea to Athens by way of the coast. By land it would have been 250 miles and was accomplished quicker by ship.



Athens was said to have more idols than people by Petronius, a Roman writer who lived from AD 27-66.

Act 17:17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. (18) A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

Epicureans –denied that the world was created by God, that the gods exercised any care or providence over human affairs, and also the immortality of the soul. Pleasure was the chief good, and virtue was to be practiced only as it contributed to pleasure.

Stoic -- the universe was created by God; all things were fixed by Fate; even God was under the dominion of fatal necessity; the Fates were to be submitted to; the passions and affections were to be suppressed and restrained; happiness consisted in the insensibility of the soul to pain; and a man should gain an absolute mastery over all the passions and affections of his nature.

(19) Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? (20) You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean." (21) (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

The
Areopagus
viewed
from the
Acropolis





The text of Paul's sermon appears
on a plaque on the side of the
Areopagus.

Act 17:22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said:
"People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious [superstitious – KJV].
(23) For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship--and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

Act 17:24 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. (25) And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

Isa 44:13 The carpenter measures with a line and makes an outline with a marker; he roughs it out with chisels and marks it with compasses. He shapes it in human form, human form in all its glory, that it may dwell in a shrine. (14) He cut down cedars, or perhaps took a cypress or oak. He let it grow among the trees of the forest, or planted a pine, and the rain made it grow. (15) It is used as fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it.

(16) Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm; I see the fire." (17) From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, "Save me! You are my god!" (18) They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand.

19 No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, "Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?" (20) Such a person feeds on ashes; a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, "Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?"

Act 17:26 From one man [blood – KJV] he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

At the time this was written men thought there were many different bloods – a proof of scientific foreknowledge by the Bible.

Act 17:27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; (28) for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

Man differs from the animals in that in every society, there are those who worship God.

Act 17:29 "Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

Basically Paul says idol worship is stupid and those who worship idols (lucky pieces) are deluding themselves!

Act 17:30 "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, (31) because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

Luk 13:1 Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. (2) And Jesus said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? (3) "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. (4) "Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? (5) "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

Heb 9:27 And inasmuch as it is
appointed for men to die once and
after this comes judgment,

2Co 5:10 For we must all appear
before the judgment seat of Christ,
so that each one may be
recompensed for his deeds in the
body, according to what he has
done, whether good or bad.

Act 17:32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this." (33) So Paul went out of their midst. (34) But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

Only some believed then and only
some will believe now.