

to North-Central Anatolia, raiding and terrorizing cities and towns. Their land became known as Ga(u)latia; the Romans used the same name and expanded their territory in all directions when they made it into a province of the Empire in 25 BC. Cities which had been considered "Galatian" became part of the new Galatia (e.g. Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe). From this confusion rises the problem of who the letter addresses.

The coast of Pamphylia, where Paul landed (Acts 13:13), was well-known as a breeding ground for malaria. Was this perhaps the sickness from which Paul suffered when he first preached to these cities (Gal. 4:13)? The higher altitude (c. 3600 ft) of Antioch in Pisidia would have relieved some of the symptoms; haste to reach this haven may explain their apparent push through Pamphylia (Acts 13:14) on the way to Antioch.

Paul's itinerary may have seemed strange to his companions, for, after leaving Pisidian Antioch, he left the Roman military highway which went directly to the imperial city of Lystra and traveled to (Claud) Iconium, named for the Roman emperor Claudius.

The reference to "those who by nature are not gods" (4:8) may have been prompted by Paul's memory of Acts 14:8-10. Statues with inscriptions linking the names of Zeus and Hermes have been found near Lystra. In addition, a statue of Hermes dedicated to Zeus by men with Lycaonian names has come to light. Ovid (a Roman historian-poet) records a legend of the region of Lystra that said that a pious older couple had entertained Zeus and Hermes unawares and were generously rewarded.

Study Tips:

Read Galatians twice in a row. Use a different version and read it again, underlining key thoughts of each paragraph or section. Read the articles on Galatia, Gauls, and Galatians in a Bible dictionary or encyclopaedia. With this material in mind read Acts 13:13-16:10. Now read Galatians again, looking for important words and ideas. What is the logical progression of Paul's thought? Why is his argument so persuasive?

Find all the occurrences of "free" or "freedom" in Galatians. What kinds of freedom does Paul have in mind? How do you know? How many purposes or results of salvation does Paul give (e.g. 1:4, 3:14,)? Galatians is sometimes considered a "rough draft" or precursor to Romans, especially in its explanation of salvation by grace. What are the similarities and differences between these two epistles? How do their doctrine and style and