

THE MISSION TO THE GENTILES

The Second Mission Journey of Paul According to Acts 15, 36–18, 22

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Abstract

The study focuses on the second mission journey of Paul, as it is recorded by Luke in Acts 13, 1–18, 22. The schematic character of the account creates difficulties determining many details concerning the journey. The attempt of this study is to present more details concerning the mission journey. In order to achieve this aim examined the time span of Paul's journey, so allowing us to place Luke's narrative in its correct socio-historical background. The information concerning each of the cities that Paul was visited, helping us to understand the diversity of places, which created particular social environments that worked for or against the success or lack of success of the mission.

Introduction

From Chapter 13, the Acts of the Apostles turns into “the acts of Paul”, the narrative concerns itself almost exclusively with Paul and his works. The narrative of Acts 13–28 concerns two period of Paul's life. The first period focuses on the mission work (Acts 13, 1–20, 38) and the second period on Paul's imprisonment (Acts 21, 1–28, 31). Luke's account of Paul's mission work contains rather short narratives about Paul's three mission journeys (Acts 13–14; 15, 36–18, 22; 19, 1–20, 38) and the narrative on the Jerusalem council (Acts 15, 1–35). The accounts concerning the mission journeys of Paul are rather schematic and reduced to the most important events, from Luke's historical, narrative and theological perspective. While on the one hand it makes the accounts compact and easy understandable, on the other hand, it robs the account of many important details and gives them a very schematic or general character. This fact is evident in the account of the second mission journey of Paul (Acts 15, 36–18, 22), the subject of this study. For that reason, it is necessary to attempt a search for more details in order to make the account more holistic.

1. The Time Span of the Second Mission Journey

Neither Luke in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 15, 36–18, 22) nor Paul in his letters provide any precise chronological information, which would help us to determine the span of the second mission journey. Because of this all attempts to determine the span are more or less guesswork¹. Fortunately Luke provides information which allows scholars to establish the time of Paul's trial, which took place before Gallio², the governor of Achaia (Acts 18, 12–16)³. To establish the date of Paul's trial however it is necessary to establish the period of Gallio's time in office. For this task the inscription from Delphi discovered in 1905, which refers to Gallio's petition to the Emperor Claudius regarding problems he was facing in the city⁴. The inscription contain Claudius' answer, including the mention of the 26th Imperial Decree (calling for the expulsion of the Jews from Rome). Although the date of the Decree has not survived, the period of its possible creation can be determined as being between January 51 AD and September 52 AD⁵. The office of governor had a fixed term of only one year. In the time of Claudius a governor's term of office usually started in June⁶. Seneca and Plinius inform us that Gallio, due to the health reasons, did not finish his term in office⁷. Rakocy thinks that Gallio took office in Jun 51 AD and was in service till spring 52 AD⁸. The trial of Paul took place during this period. The fact that after the incident in Corinth, Paul stayed in the city for few weeks and then sailed to Jerusalem, suggests that Paul left Corinth during the autumn 51 AD

¹ Among many attempted chronologies of Paul's life and his second mission journey the most influential is the chronology presented in R. Jewett, *A Chronology of Paul's Life*, Philadelphia 1979, pp. 59–61.

² Annaeus Iunius was the eldest son of Lucius Seneca, who was adopted by the senator Lucius Iunius Gallio and named after him. He was brother of the famous writer Seneca. Caesar Claudius appointed him proconsul of Achaia. The inscription from Delphi, dated early 52 AD, mentions Gallio as the proconsul, which allows us to determine beginning of his term of office as spring 50 AD. He did not stay in office until the end of his term (two-year term), probably due to his dislike for the province. In time of the Caesars Nero, he was named consul. More details concerning his life are not known.

³ There is also secondary information, of a more general nature, concerning the fact that in Corinth Paul met Jewish married couple Aquila and Priscilla, who were expelled from Rome in response to the decree of Claudius; based on that decree all Jews were banished from Rome probably during the period 49–53 AD. The event is mentioned by Luke in Acts of the Apostles (18:2), as well as by the Romans historians Suetonius (69–122 AD) and Cassius Dio (150–235 AD). The dating of the event is a matter of discussion.

⁴ Concerning the inscription see: A. Deissmann, *Paul. A study in Social and Religious History*, London 1926, p. 264.

⁵ The period is determined from an analysis of Imperial Acclamation 27, made in 12th year of Claudius regime (25 January 52 AD -24 January 53 AD) not later than 1st September 52 AD and Proclamation 24, which was made in 11th year of Claudius regime (25 January 51 AD-24 January 52 AD). Logically, Proclamation 24 and 25 were made between January 51 and September 52 AD.

⁶ W. Rakocy, *Paul Apostle. Chronology of Life and Writings*, Czestochowa 2003, pp. 97–102.

⁷ Seneca, *Epistulae Morale* CIV, 1; Plinius, *Historia naturalis* XXXI, 62.

⁸ W. Rakocy, *Paul Apostle*, pp. 101–102.

or during the Spring 52 AD⁹. Luke informs us in Acts 18, 11 that Paul spent a year and a half in Corinth, allowing us to determine the time of his arrival in Corinth as the spring of 50 AD or the autumn of 50 AD. To determine the span of the second mission journey we still need to know how long took to arrive in Corinth from Antioch and how long it took to return to Jerusalem from Corinth. Based on Jewett's research, Paul had to travel 3,497 km (775 km by sea, and 2,722 km by land) from Jerusalem to Corinth, which would take 91 weeks (if he traveled 40 km per day without delays) and 201 weeks (if he traveled 30 km per day with delays)¹⁰. That means, Paul's journey to Corinth took at least one year and eight months or at maximum three years and nine month. If we take the average span, Paul's journey to Corinth probably took two years and eight months. Thus setting the beginning of the second mission journey during autumn 47 AD or during spring 48 AD. Luke's narrative of Paul's voyage back to Jerusalem (Acts 18, 18–22) shows no signs of disruption or delay, which suggests that Paul reached the port of Caesarea in the same year he left Corinth, which means either the autumn 51 AD or the spring of 52 AD¹¹.

2. A chronology of the second mission journey

In Acts Luke places the narrative concerning the second mission journey after the account concerning the so called "Council of Jerusalem" (Acts 15, 1–35)¹². The immediate context of the account concerning the second mission journey is the narrative concerning the conflict between Barnabas and Paul about Mark (Acts 15, 36–41). Based on the results of our research

⁹ Sailing during the winter was impossible due to weather conditions.

¹⁰ C.S. Keener, *Acts. An Exegetical Commentary*, Grand Rapids vol. 3, pp. 2297–2299.

¹¹ In 2 Cor 12, 25 Paul mentions that he was shipwrecked three times. The New Testament contains only one account concerning Paul being shipwrecked (Acts 27, 1–28, 16) and nothing about two more shipwrecks. Luke's narrative concerning Paul's journey back to Jerusalem indicates that he sailed directly from Ephesus to Caesarea, without stopping in any other port, which suggests that he sailed through open seas and not near the coasts. This was only possible from spring to autumn, which supports the supposition that Paul went back to Jerusalem during the spring 52 AD. As Acts 27, 1–44 shows sailing through the open seas during the autumn was usually extremely dangerous. On the one hand, there isn't any information that allows to suppose that one of other two shipwrecks mentioned by Paul took place during the voyage home after the second mission journey, however on the another hand based on Acts 27, this voyage would be the best possible for one of the other shipwrecks mentioned by Paul.

¹² The account of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15, 1–35) is a point of discussion between scholars due to the account of Gal 2, 1–10, which also mentions Paul's visit to Jerusalem. The opinions of scholars are divided into several groups. The first group identify Gal 2, 1–10 with Acts 15, 1–35 (ex: E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Oxford 1971, pp. 64–65; G. Ogg, *The Chronology of the Life of Paul*, London 1968, pp. 72–88). The second group identify Gal 2, 1–10 with Acts 11, 28–30 (ex: A. Suhl, *Paulus und seine Briefe; Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Chronologie*, StNT 11: 1975, pp. 46–64). The third group identify Gal 2, 1–10 with Acts 9, 26–30 (ex: D.R. de Lacey, *Paul in Jerusalem*, NTS 20: 1974, pp. 82–86). The forth group identify Gal 2, 1–10 with Acts 18, 22 (ex: G. Lüdemann, *Paul Apostle to the Gentiles. Studies in Chronology*, London 1984, pp. 141–157).

concerning the problem, the main reason for the placing of the event in the Acts are literary in character, and indicate a turning point in Luke's narration, where his narrative breaks with a general approach, the history of the first generation of Christian communities, and moves to a particular approach, the history of Paul's mission and his imprisonment¹³. According to Luke's account, Paul wants to undertake another mission journey accompanied by Barnabas. Most probably the journey, at least the beginning of the journey, would include visitation of the communities established during the first mission journey (Acts 15, 36). At this point there was full agreement between Paul and Barnabas. The problem started when Barnabas wants to take along Mark, his cousin, who during the first mission journey was working with Paul and Barnabas on Cyprus but left when the mission extended to the region of Pisidia and Pamphylia (Acts 13, 13)¹⁴. Paul and Mark disagreed leading to a split between them and the creation of two independent mission teams heading for different destinations (Acts 15, 39–40).

2.1. Pisidia (*Acts 16, 1–5*)

Paul and Silas went by land in the direction of those cities where Paul and Barnabas had worked during the second part of the first mission journey (Iconium, Lystra, Derbe), visiting on the road the communities where there were disputes in Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15, 41). Luke doesn't note the establishment of any new communities, rather he informs us that they strengthened already existing communities. This indicates that the main focus for Paul and Silas was not the communities in Syria and Cilicia. It also indicates that Paul's stops in some places not only in order to rest but to strengthen the communities. We can assume that the message, which he gave to the communities was the same as the one presented in Acts 16, 4 and it concerns the decree of the Jerusalem council. The span of time which Paul gave to strengthening the communities is difficult to determine, but Jewett thinks that it took one month or two months. In order to reach Derbe¹⁵, Paul and Silas had to walk about 470 kilometers, which would require from twelve days to three weeks. Derbe is mentioned only three times in Acts, twice in the context of Paul's visit to the city (Acts 14, 20–21) and once in reference to the Gaius, the co-worker of Paul (Acts 20, 4). There isn't any detailed information concerning Paul's mission activities in Derbe, (Acts 14, 6–7. 20–21; 16, 1). The probable reason for the marginalization of the activities in Derbe is the importance of the events (from the narrative approach of Luke), which took place in Lystra during Paul's visitation of these places

¹³ See our article: The Conflict between Paul and Barnabas. *Sitz im Leben* of Acts 15, 36–40, *Academia* 8: 2015, pp. 87–98.

¹⁴ The following verses in Acts: Acts 13, 13; Acts 15, 38; Acts 15, 15 may suggest that Mark's "reports" to the Jerusalem communities about the mission activities of Paul and Barnabas caused opposition from some members of the Jerusalem community, what was the direct reason for the Jerusalem council.

¹⁵ Nothing certain is known about origin and history of the city. The city was located around 24 km northeast from the city Laranda and southeast for Iconium, under the slope of a volcano, Karadag (2288m), but nothing is left of the city. The name of the city noted only in Acts 14, 6; 16, 1 and on some coins and inscriptions. In Strabo's "Geographica" he writes that in 1st century BC the city of Derbe was belonging to a local ruler Antipater Derbetes until Amyntas the king of Galatia overtook it. Since 25 BC the city was a part of the Roman province of Galatia. See "Gallio", in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, p. 481.

(Acts 14, 8–21; 16, 13). From Derbe Paul and Sylas went to Iconium passing through Lystra. The distance of 144 kilometers, can be walked in four days, and the time they spent in Lystra and Iconium possibly extended to about two months. First, on the road from Derbe to Iconium, Paul and Sylas stopped at Lystra (Acts 16, 1), the city where Paul was stoned during the first mission journey (Acts 14, 8–20). Luke's account concerning Paul's visit to Lystra during the second mission journey is reduced to only one event concerning the person of Timothy (Acts 16, 1)¹⁶. The most probable reason for this approach is to introduce the reader to the most important co-worker of Paul. Timothy was a Christian (2 Tim 3, 15), whose mother, Eunice (2 Tim 1, 5) was a Jewish-Christian and whose father was Greek (name unknown). The Christian life of Timothy impressed the believers in Lystra and Iconium, and was the basis for a positive evaluation of his attitude (Acts 16, 2). Timothy had to make a positive impression also on Paul and Silas, who see in him a valuable co-worker and decide to take him with them (Acts 16, 3). However, Timothy was not circumcised, which made him a 'gentile' a great disadvantage to becoming a co-worker of Paul and Silas. It was not because he was not Jewish and Paul and Sylas were, but because the mission activities of Paul and Silas were in the first place addressed to Jews¹⁷. A mission team, which included a gentile has less, almost no chance of being accepted by the Jews. To overcome these difficulties Paul, probably with the agreement of Timothy, decided to circumcise him (Acts 16, 3). The act does not mean that the Gentile-Christian Timothy became a Jew, but it means that Timothy became a Jewish-Christian. The action of Paul cannot be interpreted as violation of the Jerusalem council's decree, because Timothy was circumcised not in order to become a Christian, but in order to become a Christian capable of working among Jews. Luke affirms this point when he writes that the mission team (Paul, Silas and Timothy) in every one of the cities they entered, proclaimed the decree of the council (Acts 16, 4). The Lukan narrative concerning mission activities in this region ends with a typical Lukan summary (ex: Acts 9, 31) indicating the success of the mission (Acts 16, 5)¹⁸.

2.2. Asia Minor (*Acts 16, 6–10*)

Luke's short account of Paul's team mission in Asia Minor for many reasons must count as very peculiar. First, the mission activities, the time span of which may have been six and a half

¹⁶ The son of a Greek father and a Jewish-Christian mother, living in Lystra (Acts 16, 1–5). He was respected by believers in the communities in the region, and because of that Paul took him as his co-worker. In order to avoid problems proclaiming the kerygma in synagogues Paul circumcised Timothy. The fragment from Hb 13, 22 suggests that Timothy was imprisoned. He is addressee of two pastoral letters. See about: Timothy's family — Acts 16, 1–5; 2 Tim 3, 15. Timothy as Paul emissary — Acts 17, 14; 19, 2; 1 Cor 4, 17; 16, 10–11; Philip 2, 19–22; 1 Thess 3, 16. On Timothy and Paul's relationship — 1 Cor 4, 17; Philip 2, 22; 1 Thess 3, 2. J.S. Lancaster, in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, p. 313.

¹⁷ Luke, very strongly indicates that Paul mission approach follows the rule: first Jews and afterwards Gentiles (Acts 16, 13; 17, 2. 10; 18, 4).

¹⁸ There are no details concerning the mission activities of Paul, Silas and Timothy in Iconium and other cities mentioned in Acts 16, 4.

months or over one year, Luke records in just 5 verses. He just records the facts without any details (Acts 16, 4–6). The most probable reason for this approach was Luke's narrative concept, according to which he pays special attention to mission activities in Europe (Philippi, Athens, Corinth). The mission in Asia Minor is the main focus of the narrative concerning the third mission journey (Acts 18, 23–20, 38), however the mission in Phrygia and the Galatian region is hardly mentioned by Luke (Acts 16, 6; 18, 23). Second, Luke only gives a negative reason for the mission in Phrygia and Galatia¹⁹. He writes that “*having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia*” (Acts 16, 6), to then note that Paul and his associates plan was to go from Iconium through Pisidian Antioch (probably) directly to Asia (Ephesus), however this was prohibited to them by the Holy Spirit (κωλυθέντες ὑπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος). This enigmatic phrase makes more sense if it is read against the background of Luke's pneumatology in the Acts of the Apostles. According to Luke the time of church is the time of active involvement by the Holy Spirit, who is the main agent of every action of the church, including mission activities (Acts 13, 2). In this context the phrase means that it was not yet the proper time to engage in mission in this region (Acts 16, 6)²⁰. Although, Paul wished to work in the region neighbouring Pisidia and Pamphylia, the will of the Holy Spirit (the Divine will) for them was to head west (Acts 16, 9). When Paul's team reached Mysia and wanted to go north to the region of Bithynia, the Holy Spirit again did not allow this (Acts 16, 7), leaving them with no alternative but to go through the region of Mysia to the port at Troas (Acts 16, 8)²¹. Paul and his companions had to walk some 1200 km from Iconium in

¹⁹ There is a textual problem with verse 6 concerning the phrase τὴν Φρυγίαν καὶ Γαλατικὴν χώραν, which contains two definitive article, what suggests two regions rather than one region (it is attested by manuscripts E, H, L, P). However, others important manuscripts (p⁴⁷, Ξ, A, B, C, D) takes τὴν Φρυγίαν as the adjective and read “*Phrygian Galatia*”, thus indicating only one region. For more explanation on this problem, see: B.M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Stuttgart 1994, p. 390; B. Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 1998, pp. 477–478. This problem gives grounds for two hypotheses concerning this part of Paul mission journey, as well as the problem of the addressees of Paul's Letter to Galatians, one is known as South Galatia hypothesis and the other as the North Galatia hypothesis. In this study we will follow the north Galatian hypothesis. This option is based on Luke's narrative in Acts 16, 6–10, where he twice writes about the Holy Spirit (in Act 16, 6 it is the Holy Spirit, and in Acts 16, 7 it is the Spirit of Jesus), who prohibit Paul's teams work in Asia (Contemporary Turkey on the east side of Aegean Sea), and in Acts 16, 7 the Holy Spirit prohibits them from working in Bithynia (the north part of contemporary Turkey on the south side of the Black Sea). Thus Luke's narrative approach naturally creates the path, which leads Paul's team to Europe, the main focus of Luke's account of the second mission journey.

²⁰ The same refers to the prohibition of mission activities in the region of Bithynia (Acts 16, 7). In both cases Luke's narrative concept concerning the mission journey of Paul plays a critical rule in Luke's interpretation of the facts. According to Luke, God's will for Paul's team was to reach Macedonia (Acts 16, 8–10).

²¹ An important seaport on the Aegean Sea, located in north-west part of the Asia Minor. The city was founded in 4 century BC by Antigonos and named after him (Antigonia). In 133 BC, the city became possession of Rome, and during the time of Augustus became a Roman colony. R.S. Ascough, Troas, in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, p. 481.

order to reach Troas, which may have taken them from seven months to over a year. Thirdly, Luke gives divine intervention as the reason for the beginning of the mission in Macedonia (Acts 16, 9). Regarding “the night vision” of Paul (Acts 16, 9) Luke’s interpretation of Paul’s vision structures the narrative at this point, thus explaining the shortness of the account concerning the mission in Asia Minor and the two prohibitions given by the Holy Spirit. The narrative shows Paul as God’s servant faithfully following the orders of his Lord. The fourth interesting point is that in Acts 16, 10 for the first time appears a “we” section, where authors narrative is in the first person plural, indicating that author is present with Paul and his companions²².

2.3. Macedonia (Acts 16, 11–17, 15)

After leaving Troas, the Paul’s team sailed through Samothrace, where they stopped for the night, then on to Neapolis (Acts 16, 11)²³. From Neapolis, using the *Via Egnatia*, they headed to Philippi, a Roman colony and the principal city of the Macedonia district, more precisely one of the fourth provinces, into which the former kingdom of Macedonia was divided by the Romans (Acts 16, 12)²⁴. The sea voyage and land travel took probably three days, and judging by the narrative, they didn’t face any troubles. The length of time Paul’s team spent in Philippi is difficult to determine due to lack of information on dates and seasons, which would allow us to do this. Keener, following Jewett, gives the time span as from three months to one year.

2.3.1. Philippi (Acts 16, 6–40)

Paul mission in Philippi is narrated in some detail by Luke (Acts 16, 12–40), but it focuses mostly on Paul’s imprisonment (Acts 16, 16–40). Luke indicates that Paul started his mission activities according to his mission pattern (Paul’s *modus operandi*), which was to seek out the Jewish community, visit their worship meeting and proclaim the kerygma. Shortly after his arriving in the city Paul found that the small Jewish community did not possess a synagogue, and the place of the prayer meeting was outside the city walls, close to the river Gangites (Acts 16, 13). In this place Paul and his companions met some women (Acts 16, 13), probably Jews, but not exclusively, because among them was Lydia, from Thyatira, whom Luke describes as a

²² There are four “we” section in the Acts: Acts 16, 10–17; Acts 20, 5–15; Acts 21, 1–18; Acts 27, 1–28, 16. All passages concerns the sea voyages, but they are not limited to it (Acts 20, 5–12; 21, 7–18). Concerning the “we” section, see: B. Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 480–486. In this study we accept the opinion that the “we” sections indicate that the author of Acts met-up with and joined Paul and his companions.

²³ Samothrace is a mountainous island in the northeastern part of the Aegean Sea. Neapolis was the seaport for Philippi, and in Roman times was militarily and economically dependent on Philippi. The chief deity of Neapolis was the goddess Parthenos. S.L. Cox, Neapolis, in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, p. 481.

²⁴ The roots of this Macedonian city go back to the six century BC, when the city was inhabited by people from Thaaos and it was named by them Krenides. In 4 century BC (358 BC) the father of Alexander the Great, King Philip II of Macedonia renamed the city after himself. The city lies on the ancient road the Via Egnatia, the source of its wealthy were gold mines. The city was under Roman rule from 168 BC. R.A. Spencer, Philippi, in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, pp. 1048–1049.

woman worshipping God. She was one of the “God-fearing Gentiles”, fearing God of Israel. She seems to be a woman with a high social position, someone of importance in the local community, if we follow two hints given by Luke. First, Luke mentions her by name and not by cognomen which was normal in Greek-Roman times. Only well-known women (notable or notorious) were addressed by name in public²⁵. The second, Lydia was involved in the purple cloth trade (Acts 16, 14), in all probability the owner of the business, which in turn means she had family links with the imperial household, since the purple cloth trade was an imperial monopoly. It is hardly possible that she was a patrician, rather she should be recognized as a freedwoman in the service of the Emperor. Consequently she was a woman of status in Philippian community. According to Luke, she became not only the first convert (person believing in Jesus) in the city, but also her household was baptized (Acts 16, 14–15). Because of that, her house became the base for the activities of Paul’s team during their time in Philippi and the first house-church in the city (Acts 16, 15. 40).

From Acts 16, 16 onwards Luke turns exclusively to an account of Paul’s imprisonment (Acts 16–16–40), the only event in Philippi recorded by Luke²⁶. A woman servant, possessed by πνεῦμα πύθωνα - the Python Spirit, (Apollo, the Pythian deity) (Acts 16, 16) would interfere with the progress of Paul and his coworkers as they went to the worshiping place (probably the same place as in Acts 16, 13). As someone “possessed” by Apollo, she worked as a fortuneteller, providing her owner with a significant income. (Acts 16, 16–17). For several days she spoke constantly about Paul and his companions proclaiming that they were “*slaves of the Most High God, who proclaims to you a way of salvation*”. In a Jewish context these words contain a grain of truth and probably did not annoy Paul at all, but in a Gentiles context this message was highly misleading. The phrases τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου — *of god the highest*, does not refer here to the God of Israel, rather it is a quite common term, which can refer to each and every pagan deity considered as the supreme one²⁷. In the same way the phrase ὁδὸν σωτηρίας — *way of salvation* is misleading because the absence of the definite article before noun *way* along with the term *salvation* in the genitive, makes the interpretation of the phrase to not be necessarily self-evident²⁸. The behavior of the woman servant forced Paul to do an exorcism in the name of Jesus Christ, which resulted in losing her fortune-telling ability (Acts 16, 18)²⁹. Paul recognized the spirit acting in the servant as a demonic one. Acts 16, 17–18 narrates some kind of confrontation between the Christian prophet (Paul) and the Pythian

²⁵ B. Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 491–492.

²⁶ The Narrative concerning events switches to the first person plural from Acts 16, 17.

²⁷ P. Trebilco, Paul and Silas — “Servant of the Most High God”, *JSNT* 36: 1989, p. 60 (pp. 51–73).

²⁸ The New Jerusalem Bible translates the phrase as “they have come *to tell you how to be saved!*” which does not necessarily refer to the salvation as Jews and Christian understand it.

²⁹ The attitude of Paul is similar to that recorded by Luke in Acts 8, 28–35; 19, 11–41. Paul exorcizes the evil spirit from the servant, the source of her ability and her misleading message concerning Paul and his companions. The direct mention of the name of Jesus Messiah may serve as an indication of the name of the one whom Paul is serves. Paul is acting here in way similar to Jesus (Lk 4, 35; 8, 29).

prophetess³⁰. One consequence of Paul's exorcism was the servant's loss of her ability to tell fortunes, and so lose her capacity as a source of income for her owner(s). (Acts 16, 18). Mention of "owners" plural suggests a group of people involved in the "fortune-telling slaves business", making them in turn a group with considerable influence in the city³¹. The owner(s) of the slave, having lost a source of income, decided to put Paul and Silas on a trial before the authorities of the city. The authorities of the city are called in verse 20 στρατηγός the equivalent of the Latin *praetor* or more common *duumvirs*, and it is used in the plural because usually were two or more of them in a town or city. As the collegiate magistrates of Philippi, a Roman colony, to them were addressed all juridical cases. Paul and Silas were officially accused of causing a civil disturbance in the city (Acts 16, 20), as Jews they were accused of proclaiming customs not lawful for Romans (Acts 16, 21). Proselytization of Romans, although not prohibited by law was not socially accepted due to a general prejudice against the Jews³². The accusation doesn't touch on the real reason for the charge against Paul and Silas (Acts 16, 19), but rather is a rhetorical sleight of hand used to convince the crowd of their guilt without a proper investigation. The accusation was presented in a way that was enough to provoke the crowd to a prompt and harsh attack on Paul and Silas (Acts 16, 22). It may indicate that the antagonistic sentiment towards Jews was very strong, reflected in the small number of Jews living in Philippi and their lack of a synagogue in the city. The praetors had neglected an investigation of the case, probably because of the same reason as the crowd attacked Paul and Silas, and ordered the *lictores*, the magistrates' police attendants, to whip them with rods (Acts 16, 22-23)³³. However a more immediate reason for the action of the praetors was to prevent, to avoid a riot in the city as, Acts 16, 35 suggests. After the whipping they were taken into the inner part of the prison, where their legs were put into stocks (Acts 16, 23-24). This severe treatment was usual for foreigners without the rights and privileges of membership of the Roman colony, thus making the case of Paul and Silas not as extraordinary as Acts 16, 25 suggests³⁴.

In the prison were others prisoners, who listened to the prayers of Paul and Silas till midnight (Acts 16, 25). At that time a violent earthquake, quite common in that region of Greece and Macedonia, destroyed the jail, making an escape of possible (Acts 16, 26-27)³⁵. Luke does not give the reason for the prisoners not escaping, however he describes the jailer's conduct as honest; a Roman soldier, who failed in his duty and considered suicide (Acts 16,

³⁰ L.T. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Collegeville, 1992, p. 294.

³¹ The event has some similarity to the event in Ephesus (Acts 19, 21-40), where also a group with a private interest (craftsmen) are the reason for Paul's persecution.

³² F.F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, Grand Rapids 1988, p. 314.

³³ This is one of the three times when Paul was whipped (2 Cor 11, 25).

³⁴ B. Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 497.

³⁵ Luke writes in Acts 16, 24 that Paul and Silas' feet were put in stocks (πόδας ἡσφαλίσατο αὐτῶν εἰς τὸ ξύλον), then in Acts 16, 26 he writes that chains were unfasten (τὰ δεσμὰ ἀνέθη), which may suggest that the imprisonment of Paul and Silas was for a different reason and for a different purpose than the others prisoners, who were put in chains. This observation will help to understand the decision of the praetors presented in Acts 16, 35.

27)³⁶. Acts 17, 42 mentions that the soldiers in charge of prisoners, in order to prevent the possibility of the prisoners' escaping, were expected to kill them. The jailer having failed in his duty believed it was his duty to die, even though in fact he was not ready to die, as Acts 16, 29 suggests. Paul's words saved his life and the tension of the situation broke his soldierly calm. Acting impulsively, he rushed into the prison, and trembling with fear, fell down before Paul and Silas (Acts 16, 19), led them out of the prison, called them "Sirs", enquired after the way of salvation (Acts 16, 30), brought them to his house, washed their wounds, and became a believer together with his family (Acts 16, 32–34). In this passage, Luke's narrative focuses exclusively on the jailer, the fate of Paul and Silas, the damage caused by the earthquake and the fate of the other prisoners are all set aside. He sets aside a more "socio-historical" approach to focus on a specifically theological message. The meaning of the jailer's question is hard to determine since we have no way of understanding the import for him of his question, "*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*", particularly the phrase, "*to be saved*"

However, in spite of that, Luke by placing the question here indicates the beginning of those events which led the jailer and his family to salvation in the name of Jesus (Acts 16, 31. 33–34).

In Acts 16, 35, Paul returns to a "socio-historical" account of Paul's and Silas imprisonment. The decision of the praetors can only be logically understood as preventative detention of Paul and Silas (Acts 16, 35)³⁷ in order to avoid an anti-Jewish riot in the city, which could easily be provoked by the influential group of fortune-telling slave owners. The praetors give orders that Paul and Silas be whipped with rods, this also to partly satisfy the crowd. The imprisonment of Paul and Silas was probably not in order to put them on trial, but to create the impression that justice was done. The jailer was the one who brought the good news that they were to be released from prison to Paul and Silas, and any further charge against them would not be pursued (Acts 16, 16). Not surprisingly Paul was not satisfied with the simple act of being freed from prison without any kind of apology, and he makes a stand for his rights as a Roman citizen (Acts 16, 37)³⁸. Paul requests to be taken out of the prison by the praetors, an indirect form of

³⁶ C.S. Keener, *Acts. An Exegetical Commentary*, Grand Rapids vol. 3, pp. 2297–2298.

³⁷ The scholars give many probable reason for the praetors' decision. Witherinton III thinks the reason was not serious enough for a trial (B. Witherinton III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 499). Keener thinks that the damage to the prison by the earthquake forced the authorities to make such a decision (C.S. Keener, *Acts. An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 2515).

³⁸ Use of first person plural in Acts 16, 37–38 in regards to Paul and Silas suggests that Silas was also able to claim Roman citizenship. There is no detailed information concerning Silas' Roman citizenship (J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, New Haven & London 1998, p. 590. For extensive elaboration concerning problem of Paul Roman citizenship, see: C.S. Keener, *Acts. An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 3, pp. 2517–2527. Saul's parents' possession of Roman citizenship does not create any major problem and it is generally accepted by exegetes. In the first century AD, obtaining Roman citizenship by those who were not Romans by birth was common practice. Obtaining citizenship was not associated with numerous and burdensome obligations (except for citizenship of the city of Rome), but it did not give too many privileges either³⁸. However, possessing Roman citizenship had practical benefits because of the restrictions concerning treatment of Roman citizens by the Roman administration, which was imposed by imperial authority (*lex Julia de vi publica*). Paul used it on a number of occasions (Acts 16, 16–40; 22, 24–39). There were three ways, Jews

recognition of the mistake, and an unspoken apology. The news that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens became a source of anxiety among the praetors, who were aware that in Roman law, it was illegal to whip a Roman citizen without trial (Acts 16, 38)³⁹. The praetors visit to the prison serves to release them their imprisonment but is accompanied by a request to leave the city immediately (Acts 16, 39)⁴⁰. The sequence of the praetors' actions hardly shows signs of apology, on the contrary they still act in a very administrative fashion. Paul and Silas, concede to the request of the praetors and that same day they leave Philippi (Acts 16, 40).

2.3.2. *Thessalonica (Acts 17, 1–9)*

After being expelled from Philippi, Paul and Silas went to Thessalonica⁴¹. From Philippi to Thessalonica is a distance of 144km, which it is possible to walk in four or five days⁴². The length of time of their mission in Thessalonica based on the account in Acts 17, 1–9 seems to be one month (Acts 17, 2), however the account of 1 Thess 1, 2–3, 13 suggests a much longer time span. Keener proposes a mission of three or four months. During the mission in the city Paul and Silas stayed in the house of Jason (Acts 17, 6–7). Luke informs us that in Thessalonica the Jewish community was large enough to possess a synagogue (Acts 17, 1). Following his *modus operandi* for three weeks Paul was in agreement (διελέξατο αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν γραφῶν) with his fellow Jews in their reading of the Torah (Acts 17, 2)⁴³. Luke gives some hints which allow us to determine the area of agreement (Acts 17, 3). Paul talked of a suffering Messiah, probably after Second Isaiah, with an additional new element, the resurrection of the executed Messiah. Paul claims that the Messiah is Jesus, whom he is proclaiming⁴⁴. Probably the Jews view concerning the Messiah differed from Paul's view, leading to discussion and dissension on the part of some, so limiting the number of those who accepted his kerygma (Acts 17, 4).

living in 'diaspora' in the Roman Empire could get citizenship: 1. By service in the Roman army; 2. Through liberation from slavery; 3. In return for their service to Rome. Based on Luke account (Acts 16, 37–39; 22, 25–29; 23, 27; 25, 10–12), Paul says that he and his family possessed Roman citizenship, but it is impossible to determine with certainty how and when they obtained this. There is no mention of Paul citizenship in the Pauline letters.

³⁹ A similar problem appears in Acts 22, 22–29). Concerning the Julian law, see: Cicero, *Pro Rabiro* 12.

⁴⁰ It is important to notice that verb παρακαλέω is used in verse 39 to describe the action of the praetors toward Paul and Silas, then in verse 40 it is used to describe the action of Paul toward the believers in Philippi.

⁴¹ The name of Timothy does not appears in the narrative concerning the time in Thessalonica (Acts 17, 1–9), but it appears again in the narrative concerning Berea (Acts 17, 10–15). Luke is no longer with Paul.

⁴² The city lies between two rivers, the Axios River on the west and Strymon River on the east, and it is located on the Thermaic Gulf on the west of the Chalcidice Peninsula. It was founded in 4th century BC by Greeks and it fell under the Roman rule in 168 BC. During the Roman domination, the city became the capitol of the second of fourth districts into which Macedonia was divided. The city was a prominent center of trade. R. S. Ascough, Thessalonica, in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, pp. 1300–1301.

⁴³ Based on 1 Thess 2, 9, Paul and Silas during their stay in Thessalonica worked, probably as tent-makers or leatherworkers, what gave them an opportunity to associate with many Gentiles in the city.

⁴⁴ Witherington thinks that Paul used the rhetorical form of a syllogism (*enthymeme*): the Messiah must suffer - Jesus suffered = Jesus is Messiah. B. Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 504.

Surprisingly, without any mention of mission work among the Gentiles, Luke informs us that Gentiles and influential women accepted Paul's teaching⁴⁵. He also gives as the reason for Jewish opposition towards Paul, the mission's success among the Gentiles, and not the controversy concerning the Messiah (Acts 17, 5)⁴⁶. Using the crowd, they arrested some believers and Jason, who hosted Paul and Silas, instead of Paul and Silas⁴⁷. The official accusation was that Paul and Silas in many places as well as in Thessalonica proclaimed that there is another king (whose name is Jesus) other than Caesar (Acts 17, 6–7)⁴⁸. In this way a strictly internal Jewish religious matter, which usually was not taken into consideration by Roman authorities, was presented as a serious political offence with a strong suggestion of its possible wide scale consequences. The crowd and the administration acted impulsively (Acts 17, 8) but legal procedures were preserved, making it possible for Jason to convince the authorities of the falseness of the accusation (Acts 17, 9). The very laconic account does not include Jason's defense, however the fact that he and the others were soon released in spite of the generally unfriendly attitude of the crowd and the authorities suggests that he successfully put the matter of Paul and Silas' behavior on the level of a strictly Jewish religious controversy⁴⁹. The *satis accipitio* (λαβόντες τὸ ἱκανὸν) by Jason allowed Paul and Silas to freely leave Thessalonica but it also meant they were unable to return to the city while the present authorities were still in office⁵⁰.

2.3.3. Berea (Acts 17, 10–15)

The change in their circumstances in Thessalonica meant that Paul and Silas had to leave during the night, a hazardous endeavor given the risk of being attacked by robbers. They headed for Berea, which lay some 70 kilometers from Thessalonica, a distance they could walk in two or three days⁵¹. The narrative concerning their stay in the city (Acts 17, 10–14) is

⁴⁵ In his narrative concerning the mission in the Roman world, Luke highlights the role of women in the life of the early church (similar: Acts 17, 12). The Gentiles, who accepted the Paul's teaching could possibly be God's fearers associated with the synagogue or those Gentiles Paul associated with through exercising his trade (1 Thess 2, 9).

⁴⁶ This information allows us to understand the twisted character of the accusation.

⁴⁷ The crowd consisted of Jews and ἀγοραίων ἄνδρας — *people of marketplace*, who were people without permanent work, and recognized as malcontents and agitators who for a monetary reward would readily respond to the particular purpose of a benefactor.

⁴⁸ The accusation could be based on Paul's teaching concerning the parousia (1 Thess 4, 13–5, 11), where Jesus' second coming is described in fashion resembling the coming of the king into the city. However, the teaching is later, coming after events related here. For this reason, it is better to see the accusation as an attempt to present a Jewish religious controversy as a political controversy, than as an accusation based on the facts.

⁴⁹ The phrases καὶ λαβόντες τὸ ἱκανὸν παρὰ τοῦ Ἰάσονος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν — *they had taken security from Jason and the rest* suggests that Jason and others offered to stand guarantee for the good behavior of Paul and Silas.

⁵⁰ A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Law and Roman Society*, Grand Rapids 1992, pp. 95–96.

⁵¹ The city is located 80 km from Thessalonica, in the foothills of Mt. Bermion. Under Roman control, the city was the seat of the imperial cult and headquarters of the Macedonian confederation, what brought it prosperity. R.S. Ascoug, Berea, in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, pp. 167–168.

very schematic, again making it difficult to calculate how long they actually spent in Beroea⁵². In Beroea there was a Jewish community, which had its own synagogue, allowing Paul and Silas to follow their usual *modus operandi* and encounter fellow Jews living in the city when they gathered to pray on the Sabbath.⁵³ Luke describes them as more εὐγενέστεροι — *noble-minded* than those Jews in Thessalonica (Acts 17, 11). They listened to Paul's kerygma and as a community for whom reading and studying the Torah was an integral part of their daily life, they were open to his message. They are portrayed as zealous, orthodox Jews for whom the foundation of their lives was the Torah (Acts 17, 11). When they found echoes of Paul's teaching in the Torah, when they found that the Torah seemed to confirm Paul's teaching, they were open to making a positive response to Paul's message. Based on this, they accepted Paul's kerygma and became believers (Acts 17, 12). Luke also notes the possibly unexpected side effect of many influential Greek women and Greek men becoming believers⁵⁴. The news of the spectacular success of Paul's mission in Beroea, reached the ears of Thessalonian Jews, who came to the city, in order to agitate and to stir up among the people opposition to Paul (Acts 17, 17)⁵⁵. Their actions forced Paul to leave the city together with some believers from Beroea, but without Silas and Timothy, who stayed in the city (Acts 17, 14). The brothers from Beroea, escorted Paul to Athens, and after that they went back to Beroea with orders for Timothy and Silas to come to Athens (Acts 17, 15)⁵⁶. The phrase "*they came there likewise, agitating and stirring up the crowds*" suggests a situation similar to that in Thessalonica. However the narrative concerning the incident is very schematic, so not allowing us to interpret what happened without reference to events in Thessalonica. Also, the prompt reaction of the believers who escorted Paul to Athens indicate the danger of the situation.

Beroea was the last city in the region of Macedonia visited by Paul during his mission journey. The common pattern of narration concerning this part of the second mission journey is that Paul and his coworkers faced misunderstanding from the Gentiles inhabitants as well as conflict with some of the Jews. Moved and led by the Holy Spirit the mission proved a success and they were able to overcome the hardship and persecution (cf, letters to Thessalonians and Philipians).

⁵² Jewett determine the time span as two months. R. Jewett, *Chronology of Paul Life*, pp. 59–61.

⁵³ Timothy, whose presence is missing in narrative concerning the Thessalonica (Acts 17, 1–9), rejoined Paul and Silas in Beroea (Acts 17, 16).

⁵⁴ There isn't any information concerning Paul's activities among the Gentiles in Beroea, as there is no mention of Paul and Silas engaging in their respective trades while in the city, possibly excluding encounters with Gentiles through that path leaving us with the option that the Greek men and women were God's fearers, associated with the synagogue. At least the name of one Beroean believer (Sopater) is known to us thanks to Acts 20, 4.

⁵⁵ The actions of the Thessalonian Jews is similar to the actions taken by Jews from Pisidian Antioch during the first mission journey (Acts 14, 19–20).

⁵⁶ We lack definitive information to determine whether Paul went Athena by the sea (as verse 14 suggests) or by the road (as verse 15 suggests). By sea the journey would be 56 km whereas by road it was 450 km, a journey of some two weeks journey.

2.4. Achaia

Moving on from Macedonia, Paul went to Achaia, the region where the narrative of his second mission journey terminates. The account of the mission in this region focuses particularly on Athens (Acts 17, 16–33), the very heart of Greek culture and religion, where Luke places the only recorded speech of Paul, that given at the Areopagus (Acts 17, 1–34), and later Corinth, Paul main headquarters for over two years (Acts 18, 1–17)⁵⁷.

2.4.1. Athens (Acts 17, 16–34)

Opposition from the Jews first in Thessalonica, then in Beroea saw Paul and his companions move as far away as possible to Athens, which lay some 450 km from Beroea. If he went by land he probably reached Athens in two weeks. We cannot discount the possibility that even without the opposition he met in Thessalonica he probably intended to undertake a mission in Athens⁵⁸. This also explains why he ordered Silas and Timothy to come to Athens as soon as possible. During the time of waiting for his coworkers, as he visited various quarters of the city, he would have noticed how prevalent was idolatry among the Athenians (Acts 17, 16), who worshiped all gods known to them, and even those who were unknown to them (Acts 17, 22–23). Athens was famous for its tolerance of religious pluralism⁵⁹. However that religious pluralism doesn't seem to have been a topic of Paul discussions with those he encountered in the city, whether they be Jews, God-fearers or Gentiles (Acts 17, 17). Luke briefly notes that Paul visited a synagogue and engaged in dialog with Jews and God's fearers, but doesn't go into detail. While Paul proclaimed the "good news" the context would suggest that Athenian polytheism was also discussed. Some have considered the possibility Paul didn't focus on proclaiming the "Good News" of Jesus as the Messiah to the Jews in Athens, but that is only possible if we do not take into consideration the construction *μὲν οὖν* in verse 17 which indicates a new topic⁶⁰. Luke also informs us that Paul had exchanges with people in the market place, as well as academic discussion with philosophers (Epicurean and Stoic), which in

⁵⁷ The Areopagus was not only the place of meeting but it was "the main administrative body of the city" and "chief court of Athens". Gill D. W. J., Gempf C., *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting vol. 2*, Grand Rapids 1994, pp. 447–448.

⁵⁸ The city was named after the goddess of wisdom, Athena. It lies on the slopes of the Acropolis. It first gained prominence in the 8th century BC, and reached its political and economic zenith in 5th century BC, after defeating of Persia. From 4th century BC until it was conquered by the Roman (2nd century BC) Athens was under the domination of Macedonia. Under Roman control Athens lost its political power as Corinth prospered, but it remained a center of Greek culture and religious. S. Nash, Athens, in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, p. 127.

⁵⁹ Paul statement from Acts 17, 22 (*Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way*) should be understood as a sarcasm, but could also serves the function of a *captatio benevolentiae*. See: Witherington III B., *The Acts of the Apostles*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 1998, p. 520.

⁶⁰ Although the narrative gives grounds for this supposition, it is hardly possible that Paul would discourse with Jews on matters related to pagan religions rather than matters concerning the Jewish religion. The construction *μὲν οὖν* indicates the new topic (Paul's mission activities in Athens), which differs from the topic of verse 16 (irritation caused by the pantheism of the Athenians). In this way, Luke follows the pattern of Paul's *modus operandi*.

some cases may have seen Paul outwitted, humiliated (*What would this idle babbler wish to say?*) due to his inferior knowledge, or bluntly proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 17, 18.31). Luke statement in verse 18 that Paul proclaimed the resurrected Jesus applies to the whole section of Acts 17, 17–18. Paul's attitude, marked by provocative discussions, saw rumor spread in Athenian society, raising enough suspicion for him to be taken to the assembly (the administration or the court of Athens) on the Areopagus' in order to clarify points of his religious and moral teaching (Acts 17, 1–20).

Luke mentions some Epicurean and Stoic among those who argued with Paul, which indicates that he was confronted by what we can name as Greek materialism. Epicureans accepted gods as material in essence, with no relation with human world. As the main aim of human life they emphasized pleasure, freedom from pain, disturbing passions and superstitious fears⁶¹. Stoics accepted that god is an essential part of the world (like the soul in the human body) but it was a perfected matter, which dwelt in each being, giving the world reason and order (pantheism). As a main aim of human life, they accepted living according to nature, which for them was subordinate to reason (the principle, which creates from various elements the ordered world) and not to human emotions or human self-sufficiency.

Luke also mentions "others", who disagreed with Paul's religious beliefs⁶², indicating on other hand that Paul had to face a fundamental openness to religious pluralism. The "others" recognized Paul teaching as "new" and based on fragmentary knowledge, this seems to be the cause of Paul's humiliation (Acts 17, 18) and suspicions concerning his teaching (Acts 17, 19–20). It seems that the action of the "others" was not "a polite invitation" to give a speech, a demonstration of hospitality⁶³. However, the whole context gives Paul an opportunity to give a speech at the very heart of the Greek culture, philosophy and religious.

The speech (Acts 17, 22–31) is preceded by the necessary background information concerning circumstances and the reason for the speech (Acts 17, 16–21) and it is followed by the results of the speech (Acts 17, 22–34). These three parts create a logical and coherent narrative unit where the center is the speech (Acts 17, 22–31).

The speech itself has structure built according to the rhetorical standards of Greek speech⁶⁴. The speech starts (Acts 17, 22) with an *exordium* (ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι) and it includes a *captatio benevolentiae* (κατὰ πάντα ὥς δεισιδαιμονεστέρους ὑμᾶς θεωρῶ). It is followed by a short *narratio* (Acts 17, 23a), which refers to information already presented in Acts 17, 17–20, and it creates the ground for a *propositio* (Acts 17, 23b - ὁ οὖν ἀγνοοῦντες εὐσεβεῖτε, τοῦτο ἐγὼ καταγγέλλω ὑμῖν). It is followed by a *probatio*, the longest part of the speech (Acts 17, 24–29), and ends with a *peroration* (Acts 17, 30–31).

The *Exordium* indicates the addressees of Paul's speech, the Athenians, and not any

⁶¹ F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Leicester 1990, p. 376.

⁶² Zerwick translates *τί ἂν θέλοι ὁ σπερμολόγος οὗτος λέγειν* as "what on earth is he trying to say? What is he supposed to be driving at? See: M. Zerwick, M. Grosvenor, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, Rome 1996, p. 409.

⁶³ Bruce thinks that it was the case. F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 331–332.

⁶⁴ Concerning the structure of the speech we will follow the proposal of Witherington III apart from the lack of a *narratio* (Witherington III B., *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 518).

particular group (ex. philosophers). It also contains a *captatio benevolentiae* which can probably take on a double meaning. The addresses probably took it in positive sense, due to the proverbial religiousness of Athenians, however, Paul uses it rather in a negative and ironic sense. The *narratio* is reduced here to only one sentence, because it is extensively presented in the narrative concerning the background of the speech (Acts 17, 16–20). It explains on the one hand the reason for this kind of *captatio benevolentiae* and on the other hand prepares the ground for the *propositio*. Paul during his stay in Athens till then saw him concentrate on the religious life of the society, which he found unacceptable (Acts 17, 16), and based as he saw it on ignorance of the real truth (Acts 17, 23). In the Athenians well designed religious system however Paul found one point to comment on “*I noticed among other things an altar inscribed: To an Unknown God*”. This he used as a foundation and starting point for proclaiming his kerygma. The *Propositio* is a simple answer to the question proposed in verse 19, which at the same time indicates the topic of the *probatio*.

The *Probatio* given by Paul contains teaching concerning God nature, which is in opposition to the Athenians flexible, inclusive image concerning the gods. The God that Paul is proclaiming is a creator and the ruler of all existing things, who has no need of any material things (Acts 17, 24–25). Although, people can neither enclose Him in buildings nor fully understand Him, it is possible for those who seek Him to find Him. (Acts 17, 27). The main message contained here is that “the image of god is not God”, and the God proclaimed by Paul has no need of images. The *Peroratio* is a conclusion based on the argument given in the *probatio*, and here it presents Paul’s conviction that the Athenians should acknowledge the true God and true worship, no longer depend on idolatry, but turn to the True God (Acts 17, 28–30). One of the reasons to do so is the prospective of God’s judgment, judgement made by the one whom God has raised from the dead (Acts 17, 31).

According to the Luke’s account, Paul did not finish the speech, which was interrupted at the point when he spoke of resurrection of the human body. The critics and the mockers in the audience raised their voices in protest. Generally, the idea of resurrection from the dead as a universal act, which will occur at the end of time was strongly rejected by Greek philosophy. Resurrection of the human body was a subject of discussion only in two cases: the first, as an impossible thing, and the second as an individual, occasional or supernatural phenomenon⁶⁵. Although Paul spoke about the resurrected Jesus and not about general resurrection, his message was not accepted. Probably it was due to fact that Paul proclaimed not only that Jesus was resurrected by God (what would be possible to accept on certain conditions) but he proclaimed also that God will judge the world in the person of the one whom He resurrected from the death. What the Greeks most probably understood from Paul’s speech was that they will be judged not by God himself, but by the man who had died and had been resurrected by God. Combining the resurrection of the human body with God’s judgment was impossible for Greeks to accept because both occurrences were hardly mentioned in their philosophical knowledge, and neither of them was accepted. Luke precisely indicates the issues in Paul’s speech, which was unacceptable by materialistic Greek philosophy. Conzelmann writes that vv.

⁶⁵ A. Oepke, avni, sthmi, in: *TDNT*, vol. I, p. 369.

31–32 proves that Paul achieved his purpose, however was it really Paul's intention to end his speech at the key point, which was the prime reason for his speech at Areopagus (Acts 17, 18–20)⁶⁶. Most probably Paul would have liked to take his argument to the full proclamation of the Good News but the audience refused to listen to him anymore. Verse 32 shows two kinds of reaction to Paul's speech. One part of audience makes direct mockery of Paul, and another part shows some sign of interest in his speech⁶⁷. It was all that was possible for Paul to achieve at the Areopagus that day (Acts 17, 33). Instead, Luke points to some conversions of Athenians, but they were not necessarily directly connected with the speech at the Areopagus (Acts 17, 34). Among the converts Luke names a woman, Damaris, following the pattern used throughout the whole narrative concerning the second mission journey, and stresses that among the converts was a woman (Acts 17, 34).

2.4.2. *Corinth (Acts 18, 1–17)*

By the time Paul arrived in Corinth it was a Roman city established in 44 BC by Julius Caesar as *Colonia laus Iulia Corinthiensis*⁶⁸. He had to walk about 78 km southwest from Athens, what took him two or three days. The city was situated between the Corinthian Gulf with the harbour in Lechaëum and the Saronic Gulf with the harbour in Cenchrea. This strategic position (from the economic point of view) made the city one of the most important commercial centres between Europe and Asia⁶⁹. Corinth was a city of great wealth, well known as the melting pot of many religions and many cultures due to the mixed population of the city⁷⁰. Inhabitants of the city were Greeks and Romans, mostly freedmen, slaves and veteran soldiers⁷¹. There was also considerable Jewish diaspora, who had built their own synagogue (Acts 18, 8)⁷². Corinth was then a city where many different cults were active and many gods were worshiped in temples⁷³. The city was the administrative centre of the Province of Achaia,

⁶⁶ H. Conzelman, *Acts of the Apostles*, Philadelphia 1987, p. 146.

⁶⁷ Witherington III is aware of the possibility for an alternative (dismissive) understanding of Luke's statement concerning the second group of audiences: "enough for now, perhaps another time". Witherington III B., *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 532.

⁶⁸ Before the Roman period (since 44 BC), Corinth was a Greek city which flourished in the 5th century BC and was successfully building its importance and wealth until 146 BC when it was destroyed by the Romans (Consul Lucius Mummius). For almost 100 years, although still inhabited, but without importance, the city lay in ruins until it was rebuilt by the Romans as a colony.

⁶⁹ J.M. McRay, *Corinth*, in: A. Craig, A. Evans, S. E. Porter, (eds), *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, InterVarsity Press, Dohners Grove/Leicester 2000, pp. 227–231.

⁷⁰ J. Wiseman, *The Land of Ancient Corinth: Studies in Mediterranean Archeology*, Göteborg 1978, pp. 11–12.

⁷¹ Inscriptions containing names of inhabitants include Roman as well as Greek names. This is attested in 1 Cor 18, 7–8. See: Collins R. F., *First Corinthians*, pp. 21–23.

⁷² Jewish groups consisted of those who possessed Roman citizenship, those who were sent as slaves to Corinth by Vespasian after the Jewish War, freedmen, workers and merchants. B. Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 1995, pp. 24–28.

⁷³ Among many others there were a sanctuary of Asclepius, the temple of Athena, a temple of Apollo, a sanctuary of

and the governor of Achaia resided in the city (Acts 18, 12)⁷⁴. Paul came to this commercial city, when Gallio was the proconsul of Achaia (Acts 18, 12) and he stayed there for 18 months⁷⁵. Athens and Corinth were the most important cities in the region of Achaia, but the reasons for their importance differ. Athens was a *civitas liberta et foederata* which regained its former status in the Roman Empire. Athens was a centre of philosophy, culture and religion where the old Greek tradition still flourished. In contrast, Corinth was a Roman *colonia* established as a commercial centre. Most of the citizens were colonists and traders, with almost no original inhabitants, thus naturally creating a city with a wide range of cultures, religions, languages and consequent moral and ethical diversity⁷⁶. Corinth was a genuinely cosmopolitan city with great economical potential, making it a city attractive to those looking to settle here, seeking a better life.

According to Luke, Paul after his arrival in Corinth met the Jewish-Christian family of Aquila and Priscilla (a citizen of Pont), who had recently come to the city from Rome, following a decree issued by Caesar Claudius; all Jews had to leave Rome due to disturbances they were said to be responsible for (Acts 18, 2)⁷⁷. Paul and the Jewish family shared the same trade, tent making, and because of that living and working with them was an obvious option for Paul (Acts 18, 3). Luke also stresses that Paul had to work with his own hands for his living, until his co-workers, Silas and Timothy came to Corinth (Acts 18, 5)⁷⁸. For this reason, his mission activities at first were limited only to teaching and discussions on the Sabbath in the synagogue with Jews and Gentiles - the God's fearers (Acts 18, 4). Luke indicates that Paul's mission strategy remained unchanged. Paul made contact with the synagogue at Corinth and began to proclaim the gospel to the Jews and to those who were interested in the Jewish religion⁷⁹. After

Demeter and Persephone, and a temple for the imperial cult. See: McRay J. M., *Corinth*, pp. 228–229. Acts 18, 4 attests the existence also of a Jewish synagogue in the city.

⁷⁴ Corinth was the administrative center of Achaia most probably from 27 BC to 44 AD which seems to be verified Acts 18, 12 and archeological excavations in the forum of the city. Cf. D. W. G. Gill, *Achaia*, in D. W. J. Gill, C. Gempf, (eds): *The Books of Acts in Its First Century Setting. Greco-Roman Setting vol. 2*, The Paternoster Press, Carlisle 1994, pp. 448–450.

⁷⁵ Possible dates for Gallio as proconsul Achaia are: June 50 to April 51 AD or June 51 to April 52 AD. Collins R. F., *First Corinthians*, pp. 23–24. Taking into account the reference to Paul in Acts 18, 11–12 and the information in Acts 18, 24–9,1 concerning Apollo's activity in Corinth, it is possible to date Paul's missionary work in Corinth to 50–51 AD.

⁷⁶ Korynt [Corinth], in: *Leksykon Biblijny [Lexikon zur Bible]*, F. REINECKER, G. MAIER (eds), Vocatio, Warsaw 1994, p. 368.

⁷⁷ The decree of Caesar Claudius was valid from 49 AD to 53 AD.

⁷⁸ The primary source for this information is 1 Cor 4, 11–13 where Paul complains of the conditions of living a missionary life. The Greek preposition ἄχρι — *until now* - limits the time to his present situation, including also some time covered by the mission at Corinth.

⁷⁹ Luke mentions Jews and Greeks as targets of Paul mission (Acts 18, 4), however the groups of Greeks had to have some relation with the synagogue. Luke (Acts 18, 6) recounts Paul's break with the synagogue and his beginning a mission among the Gentiles at Corinth because of continued Jewish opposition to his teaching (ἀντιτασσόμενων δὲ αὐτῶν - they [the Jews] opposed). It is significant that it was after breaking with the synagogue in Corinth that Paul

the arrival of his co-workers, Paul put all his efforts into mission among the Jews, teaching and arguing that Jesus is the Messiah, but without any significant results (Acts 18, 5–6)⁸⁰. The fact that the Jews in Corinth rejected Paul's teaching and humiliated Paul was probably the reason for his decision to change the main target of his mission activities and concentrate on proclaiming the kerygma to the Gentiles (Acts 18, 6)⁸¹. He also changed the place of his activities, departing from the synagogue and going to the house of Titus Justus, whom Luke calls "a worshiper of God" (Acts 18, 7). However, it does not mean that Paul definitively abandoned his mission to the Jews, because Luke gives an account of Crispus, the leader of the synagogue in Corinth, who became a believer in Jesus (Acts 18, 8)⁸². This took place after Paul parted with the synagogue community, indicating that even after his formal departure from the synagogue in Corinth, Paul continued proclaiming the gospel to those Jews who wished to listen to him⁸³. After giving a very⁸⁴ general and quite schematic account of Paul's mission activities in the city, Luke turns his narrative to one particular event, which although it did not directly cause Paul's departure from Corinth, it focuses on the same problems faced by his mission in other towns, growing opposition to his activities (Acts 18, 12–17). The indisputable success of Paul's mission in Corinth saw surface opposition from some Jews (probably the same as in Acts 18, 6), who decided to put Paul on a trial before the governor Gallio (Acts 18, 12). The official accusation was "*This man is persuading men to worship God contrary to the law*" (Acts 18, 13). Although the accusation seems to be somewhat ambiguous, because it does not directly indicate if the background of the accusation is Jewish or Roman, several hints strongly suggest the first possibility. The phrase *this man is persuading men* refers to Paul teaching to the Jews in the synagogue (Acts 18, 5). The phrases *to worship God* refers to one God (singular), which strongly suggests the God of Israel. The phrase *contrary to the law* refers to the Jewish Law and not to the Roman law as Acts 18, 15 strongly indicates. The Jewish accusation brought forth an immediate and strong response from the governor Gallio, even without prior hearing of Paul's defense (Acts 18, 18)⁸⁵. Gallio's speech starts with a one-

went to "*the house of Titus Justus, a worshiper of God*".

⁸⁰ Luke indicates that Paul's message to the Jews at Corinth was that Jesus is the Messiah. This message met strong opposition from some Jews and it was the occasion for Paul's departure from the synagogue (Acts 18, 6) and for his trial before Gallio (Acts 18, 12–17).

⁸¹ Gestures - in this case Paul shook his cloak before his opponents before he left the synagogue - are a symbolic way (characteristic of Judaism) of breaking off a relationship and putting the responsibility on the opponent's side (Acts 18, 6).

⁸² The conversion of Crispus probably caused stronger opposition toward Paul, leading to his trial, and also stronger frustration was felt among the Jewish synagogue members after Gallio dismissed Paul's case (Acts 18, 13–17).

⁸³ B. Witherington III correctly argues that Acts 18, 5–8 should not be interpreted as an end of Paul's mission to the Jews or as a final departure from the Jewish synagogue. B. Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth*, pp. 549–550.

⁸⁴ Before the section concerning Paul's accusation before Gallio, Luke gives a short account concerning Jesus' revelation to Paul, the main reason for which was to strengthen Paul to continue his mission in spite of strong opposition (Acts 18, 9–10). The revelation was effective, and Paul stayed in Corinth all together for one and a half years.

⁸⁵ The speech ends the narration concerning the second mission journey of Paul. The speech of Gallio shows that the

word *exordium* indicating the Jews as the addressees of Gallio's words (v. 14a). It is followed by the *propositio*, which presents the legal grounds for Gallio's position (v. 14b)⁸⁶. In the *probatio*, Gallio refers to the strictly religious aspect of the Jewish accusation as the reason for rejecting the case (v. 15a). The last part of the speech is a *peroratio* containing the final decision of Gallio (v. 15b)⁸⁷. At the beginning of his speech, Gallio indicates the Jews as the addressees his words. The use of the general expression "Jews" instead of a more specific description of the accusers is similar to the use of the term in Acts 18, 12, which suggests that Luke in this part of the narrative consciously avoids any specification. Gallio's address serves as vehicle for a presentation of Roman policy respecting the judgement of cases that touch on specifically Jewish religious matters (Acts 18, 15). Gallio as the governor of Achaia is ready to judge any and every matter concerning acts recognized by the Roman law as criminal (Acts 18, 14), but he refuses to judge a matter concerning Jewish Law (Acts 18, 15). The term ἀνέχομαι— *to endure*, here takes on a forensic rather than moral sense and means here "to accept a case." Gallio argues that the case concerns words, names and the Jewish Law, which as the object of this particular case can better be judged by the Jewish authorities, since they possess the privileges of being a *politeuma* (Acts 18, 15). This argument lays out the grounds for Gallio's final overruling of the case (Acts 18, 15). As a result, Gallio dismisses the Jews from the court (Acts 18, 16)⁸⁸. Probably, not satisfied with the results of their accusation and humiliated by a Roman official, the Jews turns against Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, as the one to be blamed for their defeat⁸⁹.

Roman official refused to recognize internal Jewish religious conflicts as a legitimate legal issue, which could be subject to Roman law. This is the first and only account of a Jewish attempt to put Paul on trial before a Roman official. Because of that, although the speech takes a particular character rather than general, it refers to the general approach of the Roman juridical system in the Empire concerning religious problems within the Jewish communities. The attitude presented by Gallio, will be consequently repeated by Luke, in his narrative concerning Paul's trials in Judea (Acts 21, 27–26, 32). However the speech of Gallio has also a particular function, which is to present the reason why Paul was able to work in Corinth for a long time in spite of strong opposition from the side of the Jews.

⁸⁶ The *narratio* is here omitted, because the context of the event was presented in vv. 12–13.

⁸⁷ Padilla presents a different structure for the speech. See: Padilla, *The Speeches of Outsiders in Acts*, p. 154.

⁸⁸ The term ἀπελαύνω — *drive away* suggests physical expulsion.

⁸⁹ The matter presented in Acts 18, 16–17 is a subject of much speculation, due to the obscurity of the text. The first problem refers to question: who was beating Sosthenes? The first possibility is that it can be the same subject as in verse 16, which means the *lictors*. This possibilities must be rejected due to the fact that the object in verse 16 is in the plural but the object of the action in verse 17 is in the singular. The second possibility is that the Gentiles beat the leader of the synagogue. This possibility must also be rejected because in the narration of the event, the Gentiles are omitted (Acts 18, 12) and if they acted in verse 17 it would be recognized as an anti-Jews riot. Also, the Jews would be presumed to defend their own leader. The third possibilities is that the frustrated accusers beat the leader, blaming him for the failure of the legal action. It is the most probable possibility, which also explains the indifferent behavior of the Gallio, who probably interpreted the incident (Acts 18, 17) as a strictly Jewish affair. C.S. Keener, *Acts. An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 3, pp. 2775–2779.

2.5. On the road home

In spite of the opposition from some Jews in Corinth, Paul spent a year and a half proclaiming the kerygma, resulting in a significant response to his endeavours. When Paul decided to leave for Syria (Acts 18, 18), he had established in Corinth several house-churches. Based on these results, Paul mission in Corinth must be count as a real success. Luke does not present any reason for Paul's decision to end his mission in Corinth. The narrative suggests that the attempt to put Paul on trial was not the reason for his decision. Verse 18 suggests that Paul recognized that a basic solid foundation for the church in Corinth had been laid, and his mission in the city was no longer required. However, Paul left the city, together with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18, 18), the family he had lived with during the whole time he stayed in Corinth (Acts 18, 2-3), suggesting that the reason for leaving Corinth was financial, no longer being able gain an income to support his work. Aquila and Priscilla definitely left Corinth for commercial reasons, and they headed for Ephesus where they stayed for several years (Acts 18, 26)⁹⁰. When they decided to move from Corinth Paul possibly also decided to leave for Syria. The information, that Paul in Cenchreae shaved his head because of a Nazarite vow (Acts 18, 18), shows that his intention does not include going to stay in Ephesus with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18, 19), but to go directly to Jerusalem (Acts 18, 22), probably in order to be there for Pentecost as Acts 20, 22 seems to suggest⁹¹.

2.5.1. Ephesus (Acts 18, 19-21)

In order to go to Ephesus Paul had to walk to Corinth's seaport at Cenchreae and cross the Aegean Sea⁹². After they reached Ephesus Paul parted company with Aquila and Priscilla, who were probably preoccupied with settling down in their new place⁹³. Paul stay in the city was no longer that it was necessary to find a ship sailing to the eastern parts of the Mediterranean Sea. During this time Paul attempted to initiate mission activity. According to his *modus operandi*, Paul visited the synagogue and opened discussions with the Jews. Luke does not provide any information concerning the matters discussed, but without presuming too much we can assume that he witnessed to Jesus as the Messiah. Luke records the fact that some showed signs of interest in the Pauline kerygma, asking Paul to stay longer and explain more fully the Good News. However Luke doesn't give enough information to justify the opinion that Paul established the church in Ephesus, or that there were people who came to believe in Jesus during his short visit to Ephesus⁹⁴. On the contrary Luke indicates at this point in his narrative

⁹⁰ F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, Grand Rapids 1988, p. 355.

⁹¹ If it is so, then Paul left Corinth during the spring 52 AD.

⁹² As Rom 16, 1 indicates some members of the church in Corinth were living in Cenchreae.

⁹³ The city was founded in 9th century BC by Codrus, the king of Athens, in south western Ionia on the coast of Asia Minor. From 546 BC until 334 BC, the city was under Persian control. From 334 BC until 133 BC, the city was ruled by several Hellenistic rulers. From 133 BC, the city was under the rule of Rome. D.E. Aune, Ephesus, in: D.N. Freedman (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, Grand Rapids 2000, pp. 413-415.

⁹⁴ Most probably the Church in Ephesus started from a mission by Aquila and Priscilla, who stayed for a long in the city (Acts 18, 26-27).

that Paul initiated only exploratory encounters with the Jews in Ephesus. The manner in which he declined their request seems to indicate that he was thinking of returning to Ephesus on his next missionary journey. Luke records Paul's refusal of the invitation from the Jewish community in Ephesus as a link to his subsequent narrative of Paul's third missionary journey and Paul's mission in Ephesus to which he turns almost immediately. (Acts 18, 23–19, 40). The conditional form of expressing his decision to work in Ephesus (*if God wills*) resembles the central theological axiom of Luke's narrative, that the missions of Paul are undertaken on God's initiative (Acts 9, 15; 13, 2; 16, 6–7; 18, 21).

2.5.2. *Caesarea, Jerusalem, Antioch (Acts 18, 22)*

Concerning the rest of Paul voyage back to Antioch in Syria Luke's record is brief and to the point. From Ephesus Paul went by sea went to Caesarea, and from there he walked to Jerusalem, visiting the local churches, before he departs once more for Antioch (Acts 18, 22). Evidently Luke is in a hurry to narrate his account of Paul's mission in Ephesus (Acts 18, 23–19, 40), and because of that the voyage, which we can presume took many days is treated here schematically. This laconic approach of Luke creates some problems of interpretation. The information in Acts 18, 18 that Paul headed for Syria must be taken as a general statement in the light of Acts 18, 22. Before Paul returned to Antioch in Syria, he visited Jerusalem, which is situated quite far from the shorter road to Antioch. What was the purpose of his visit to Jerusalem?⁹⁵ Is it linked to the vow mention in Acts 18, 18? Does Paul visit Jerusalem to give the elders of the Jerusalem church a report concerning his mission work? Is Luke preparing the ground for the narrative given in Acts 21, 1–26? Based on the information we possess nothing can be said with certainty allowing students of Paul to engage in a wide range of speculation.

3. Paul's writings activity during the second mission journey

Concerning Paul's writing activities during the second mission journey, it is generally accepted that Paul wrote one letter, which is now known as the First Letter to Thessalonians. The letter was written in Corinth allowing us to place the time of its composition in 50 AD early 51 AD. There is a possibility that two more letters were written during this time. Scholars who accept Pauline authorship of the Second Letter to Thessalonians date this letter shortly after the First Letter to Thessalonians, sometime later in 51 AD⁹⁶. The second letter, which could possibly be written during the second mission journey is the Letter to Galatians. But this would only be possible if the south Galatian hypothesis is correct⁹⁷.

⁹⁵ Concerning the difficulties in interpretation of the passage, see: C.S. Keener, *Acts. An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 3, pp. 2794–2797.

⁹⁶ Concerning the problem, see: B. Witherington III, *1 and 2 Thessalonians. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, Grand Rapids 2006, pp. 9–21.

⁹⁷ Concerning the problem, see: B. Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia. A Commentary of Paul's Letter to the Galatians*,

4. Luke's approach to his presentation of the second mission journey

The Acts of the Apostles is recognized as the earliest history of the first generation of Christians. Obviously, while it is an historical work according to standards accepted by ancient science, it hardly correlates with the standards accepted by contemporary scholars. Very often Acts is recognized today rather as historiography, which is a study of the writings concerning particular past events, rather than a direct study of past events. In fact Luke in writing Acts used many different (written and oral) sources available to him, but he also included his own knowledge based on his experiences (the "we" sections). The discussion concerning genre of Acts is not the subject of this study, however it is necessary to recognize that the Acts of the Apostles in general and the account concerning the second mission journey of Paul in particular (Acts 15, 36–18, 22) is not a full and precise recording of the events which are the subject of the work. A practical consequence of this is that Acts 15, 36–18, 22 should be treated as an historical but schematic account, rather than a detailed one. Although Luke presents a rounded account the second mission journey of Paul, many events are hardly mentioned (Acts 16, 6–10), some accounts are reduced to brief summaries (Acts 17, 1–15) and even the account of Paul's mission in Corinth (a two year long mission) is given in very general manner (Acts 18,1–17). All these points indicate that Luke purpose was not to give a precise and full account of the events he records.

As important as the historicity of the events presented, as equally important is the way in which the author decided to present them to the reader. The method of presentation was chosen in order to give, based on historical facts, a coherent and understandable account, which will satisfy the addressee. The main literary concept behind the presentation of the history of the first generation Christians is presented in Acts 1, 4–6, and it is part of Jesus's mission mandate. According to that mandate, which can also serve as a kind of table of contents, first Luke presents the mission in Jerusalem (Acts 1, 12–8, 3), then the mission in Samaria and Judea (Acts 8, 4–12, 25) and last the mission to the end of the world (Acts 13, 1–28, 31). In this way he presents and explains the way in which Jesus's teaching was spread throughout the Roman Empire. The account concerning the mission journeys of Paul is a part of the narrative concerning the mission to the end of the world and it contains the three missions, where each of them is presented by Luke in a precisely determined way in order to indicate to the reader the progressive character of Paul activities. The first mission journey (Acts 13, 1–14, 28) is in fact the mission of the Church in Antioch, in which Paul himself took part. The mission was addressed to Jews living outside Judea and Samaria, and because of that the standard mission approach was created (go to the city-find Jews-attend the synagogue on Sabbath-proclaim kerygma)⁹⁸. The main focus of the account is a mission to the diaspora Jews, with some exceptional encounters with the Gentiles. Although the second mission journey of

Grand Rapids 1998, pp. 2–13.

⁹⁸ In a general manner this approach was used during all mission journey, however a particular situation could see a modification of the method, especially during the second and the third mission journey.

Paul (Paul's own journey) was primarily addressed to the diaspora Jews, it very soon turns into a mission to the Gentiles due to opposition from the Jews related in general terms, and in a few cases from some Gentiles. The accounts main concern is the mission to the Gentiles, even though the mission method stayed unchanged. The third mission journey of Paul is the only journey which from the very beginning was designed as mission to a particular place, Ephesus. Although the mission approach stayed unchanged, the account concentrates on the Gentiles, who in some cases believed in Paul's kerygma and in some cases opposed Paul's teaching. The account ends with Paul's speech to the elders of the Ephesus church and indicates the success of Paul's mission. Even when faced with many difficulties, Paul created churches consisting of Jews and Gentiles, which were capable of existing on their own. The speech indicates another important point in Luke's approach to the presentation of the mission journeys, which is their theological character.

The narrative of the Acts concerning the historical events is mixed with a considerable numbers of speeches which should be recognized as records of historical events, but which contain material from oral tradition and shaped by Luke's theological agenda. The account of each journey contains one main speech and one additional (structural) speech. The main function of the speeches is to indicate the main issue of the mission and the problems connected with the mission. The main speech during the first mission journey was given in Pisidian Antioch, and it was addressed to the diaspora Jews (Acts 13, 15-47). It contains argumentation that Jesus is the Messiah, which was the main topic of Paul's kerygma. Generally speaking, the message (the speech) was rejected by Jews, which indicates the main problem concerning the mission to Jews, they did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. The main speech during the second mission journey was given in Athens (Acts 17, 22-31), and it was addressed to Gentiles with deep roots in Greek culture, philosophy and religion. The main message concerns the One and Only God who created all existing things, and who raised His servant Jesus from the dead, giving him power to judge the human race. The speech indicates that the resurrection of the dead and the concept of God's judgement, were the main reason for the Gentiles rejecting Paul's kerygma⁹⁹. The main speech during the third mission journey was given in Miletus, and it is addressed to the elders of the Ephesus church. The speech is given to representatives of the Christian community who were both Jews and Gentiles, and who were to continue that same mission without any future help from Paul. The speech indicates that Paul successfully finished his mission work and established self-sufficient churches. Success was possible only thanks to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is the main acting agent in the time of Church. He was also the main acting agent during the second mission journey of Paul.

Luke's account of the second mission journey of Paul blends three different components. It is based on historical events (the first component), which are arranged in a particular narrative way (the second component) in order to expose its theological meanings (the third component).

⁹⁹ The problem concerning the resurrection from the dead appears in Paul's letter to the communities he established during the second mission journey (1 Cor 15, 1-58; 1 Thess 4, 13-18).

Conclusion

The account of Paul's second mission journey is another step in Luke's narrative concerning the life of Paul. There are no significant differences in the presentation of the second mission journey and of other two journeys. However, the function of the second mission journey narrative differs from the function of the two other narratives. The narration of the first mission journey focuses on Paul and Barnaba's mission to Jews and the narrative of the third mission journey focuses on Paul's mission to the Jews and the Gentiles in Asia Minor (Ephesus), the narrative of the second mission journey focus on Paul mission to the Gentiles in Macedonia and Achaia (Europa). For this reason the beginning and the end section, which concern mission in the territory of Asia Minor is schematically presented. Luke's narration rushes towards Paul's mission activities among the Gentiles in Europe, and it concerns rather the most important places in the region of Macedonia and Achaia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth).

Following a fixed pattern Luke places in each narrative one main speech, which contains theological and social information concerning Paul's way of presenting his kerygma. Concerning the second mission journey, the speech is given in Athens, the city recognized as the very heart of Greek culture and pluralistic religions. Paul's kerygma starts with proclaiming the God unknown to Greeks, who is creator of all that exists, and He is different from the Greeks gods. This part of the speech seems to be accepted by the audience, however the kerygma concerning Jesus' resurrection and the judgment was radically rejected. In this way, Luke presents the main obstacle in proclaiming the kerygma to the Gentiles, to Europeans strongly influenced by Greek philosophy.

The account concerning the second mission journey, which took about four years, concentrates particularly on the big cities with significant positions in the regions of Macedonia and Achaia. It starts with a rather long narrative concerning events which occurred in the city of Philippi, goes to the city of Athens, where the speech was given, and it ends with a relatively rather short narrative of the two year successful mission in Corinth. Almost nothing is said about details concerning this mission except with regards to the presentation of Paul's co-workers and the reason for Paul staying for a long time in the city. Paul started the mission in the city at the synagogue but because of opposition from some Jews he changed the base for his activities to the house of a Gentile. Until his co-workers, Silas and Timothy, joined him in Corinth, he supported himself financially by working as a tentmaker together with Aquila and Priscilla. An unfavorable attitude of the Roman administration toward the Jews helped Paul and his co-workers to continue the mission in the city for a while.

The account concerning Paul's way back home contains mention of the short stay in Ephesus, which can be taken as preparation for the narrative of the third mission journey that exclusively concerns the mission in Ephesus.