

Background to Romans

Previously on...

PREVIOUSLY IN DESCENDER...

Ten years ago, massive robots, dubbed THE HARVESTERS, suddenly appeared in the of the Nine Core Worlds, a collective of planets known as THE UNITED GALACTIC CO They activated and wreaked havoc on mankind before disappearing again.

Fearing a link between these HARVESTERS and the millions of robots that the UGC companions and workers, anti-robot culls swept the galaxy.

PART THREE OF THREE

AFTER A STRANGE TORRION JUST DROPPED

Book I, Part V

SKYWALKER STRI

It is a period of renewed hope for
The evil Galactic Empire's great

er amazing abilities to fight crime and be as awesome as Peteron
Let's catch up with what she's been up to


Squirrel Gi

PREVIOUSLY ON AVATAR...

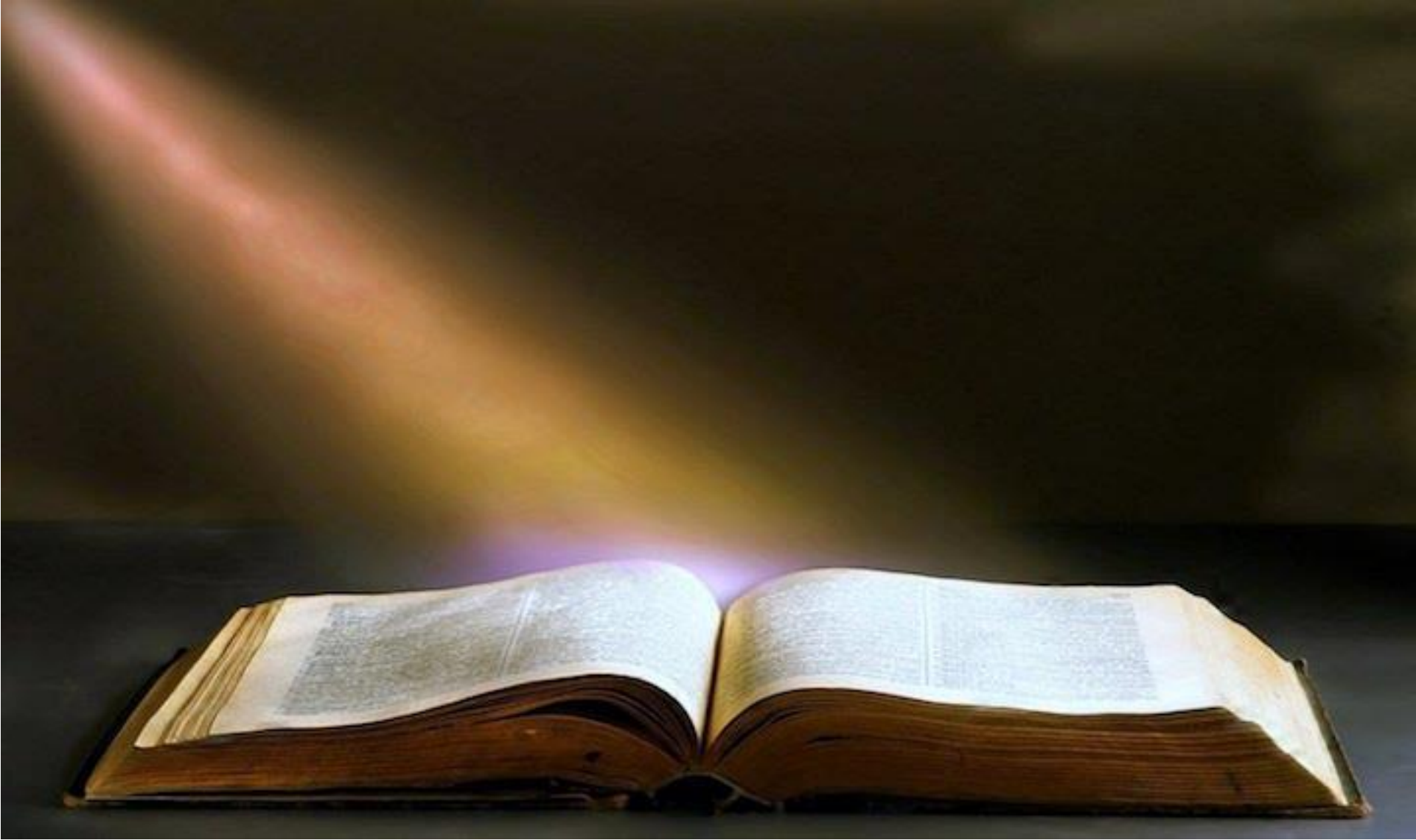
PREVIOUSLY ON 24

P

reviously on My Little Pony



DEXTER



Theological Algebra

Why might teaching Romans 5:12-21 have been so difficult for me?

- Inexperienced, immature, alone, and cocky.
- Theology isn't always easy.
- "The Complete Treatise of Paul's Gospel"
- **Not treating Romans like a document with 16 chapters!**

THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM IS RATED



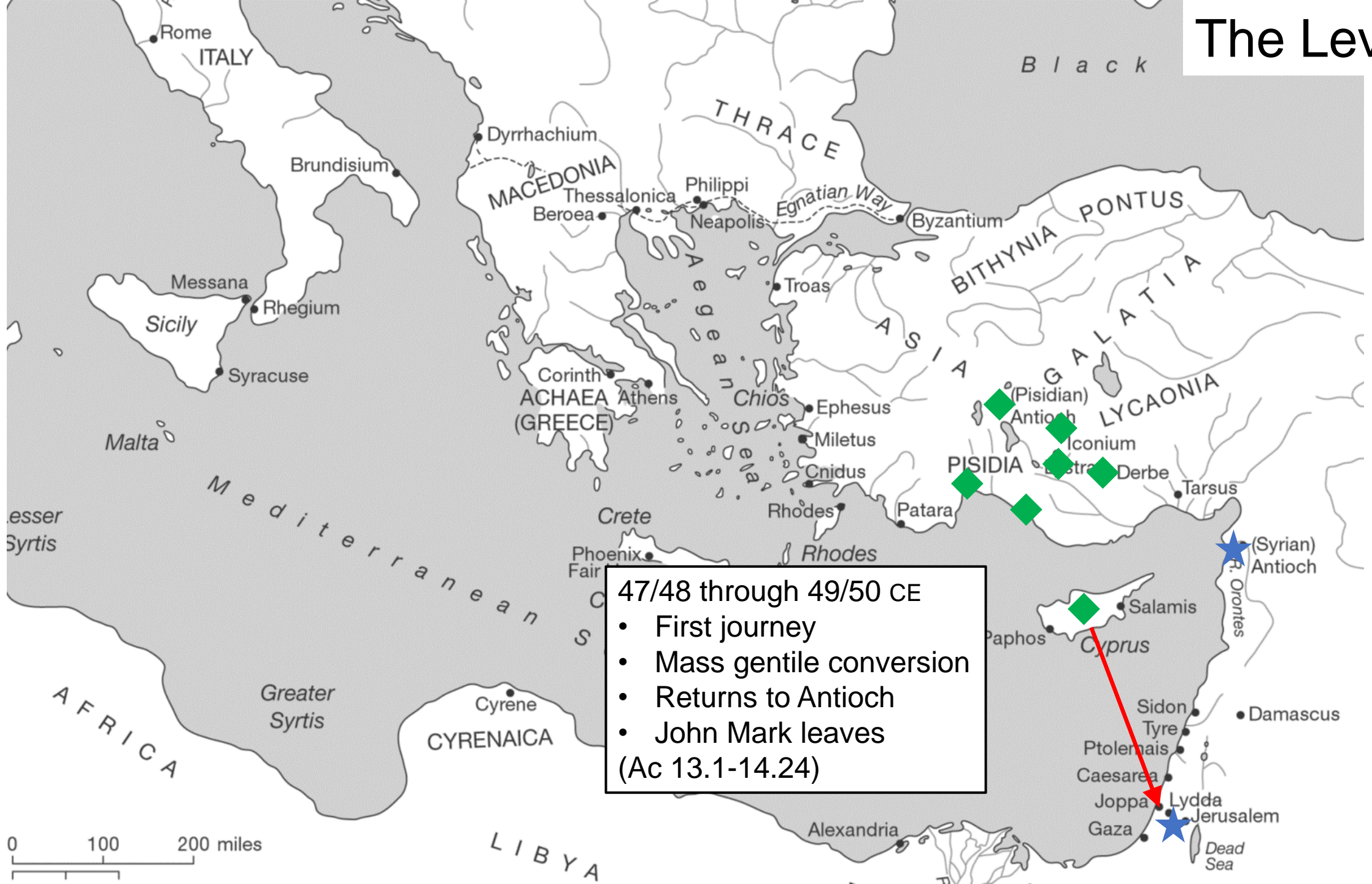
SUPRISING CONTENT

Previously, on *Paul...*

The Levant



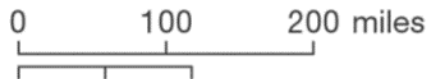
The Levant



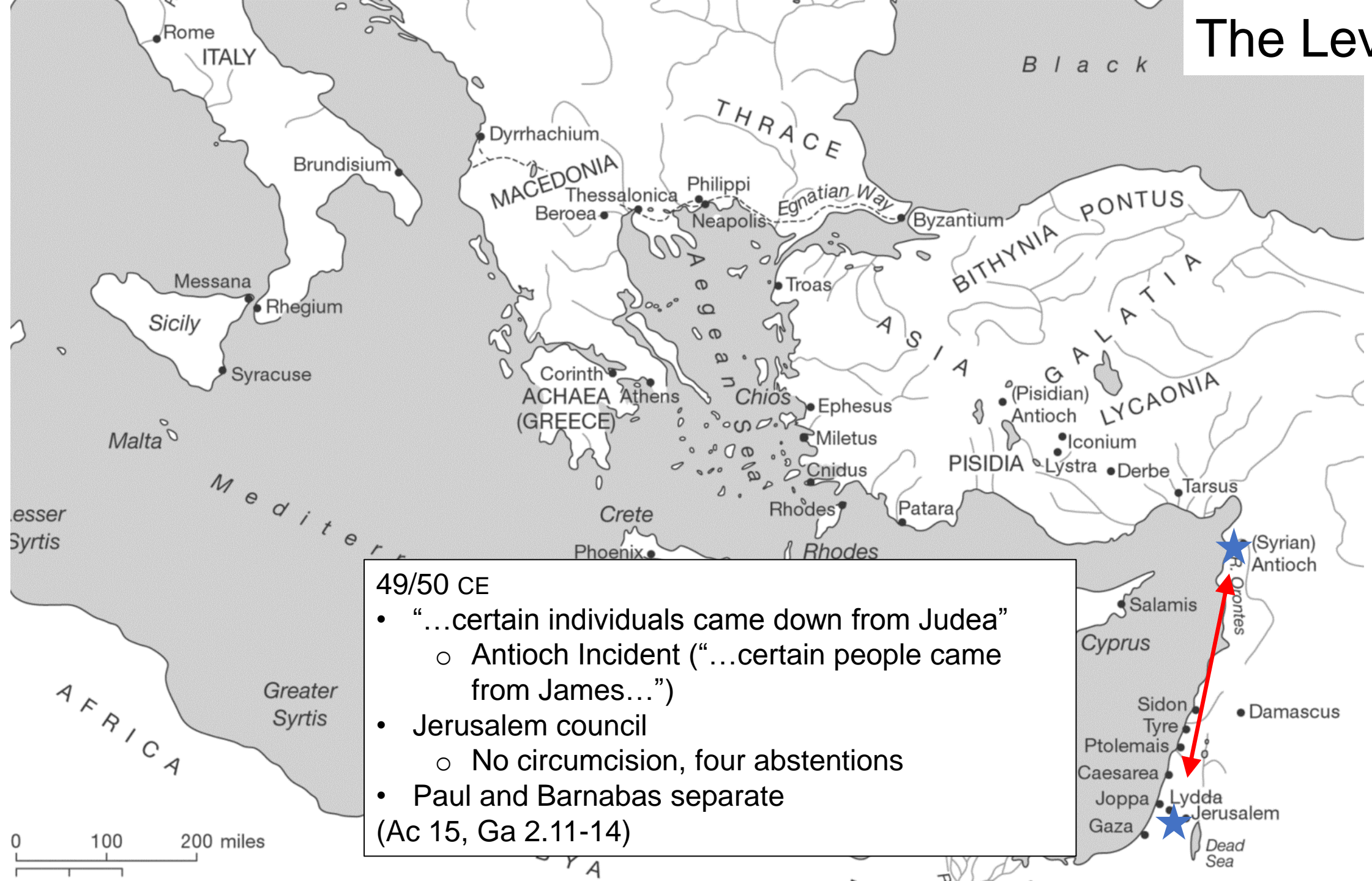
47/48 through 49/50 CE

- First journey
- Mass gentile conversion
- Returns to Antioch
- John Mark leaves

(Ac 13.1-14.24)



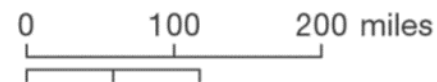
The Levant



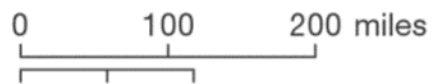
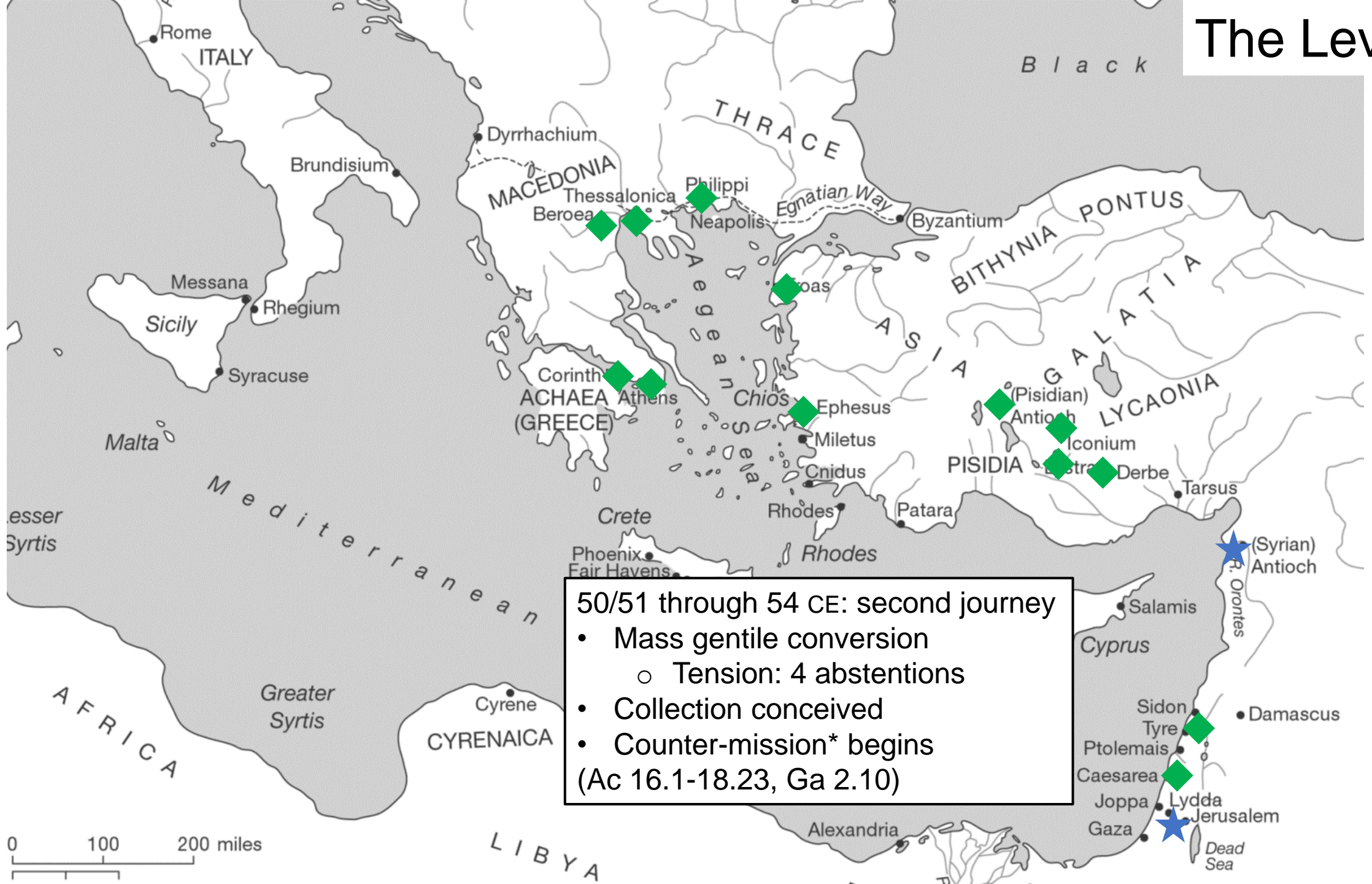
49/50 CE

- “...certain individuals came down from Judea”
 - Antioch Incident (“...certain people came from James...”)
- Jerusalem council
 - No circumcision, four abstentions
- Paul and Barnabas separate

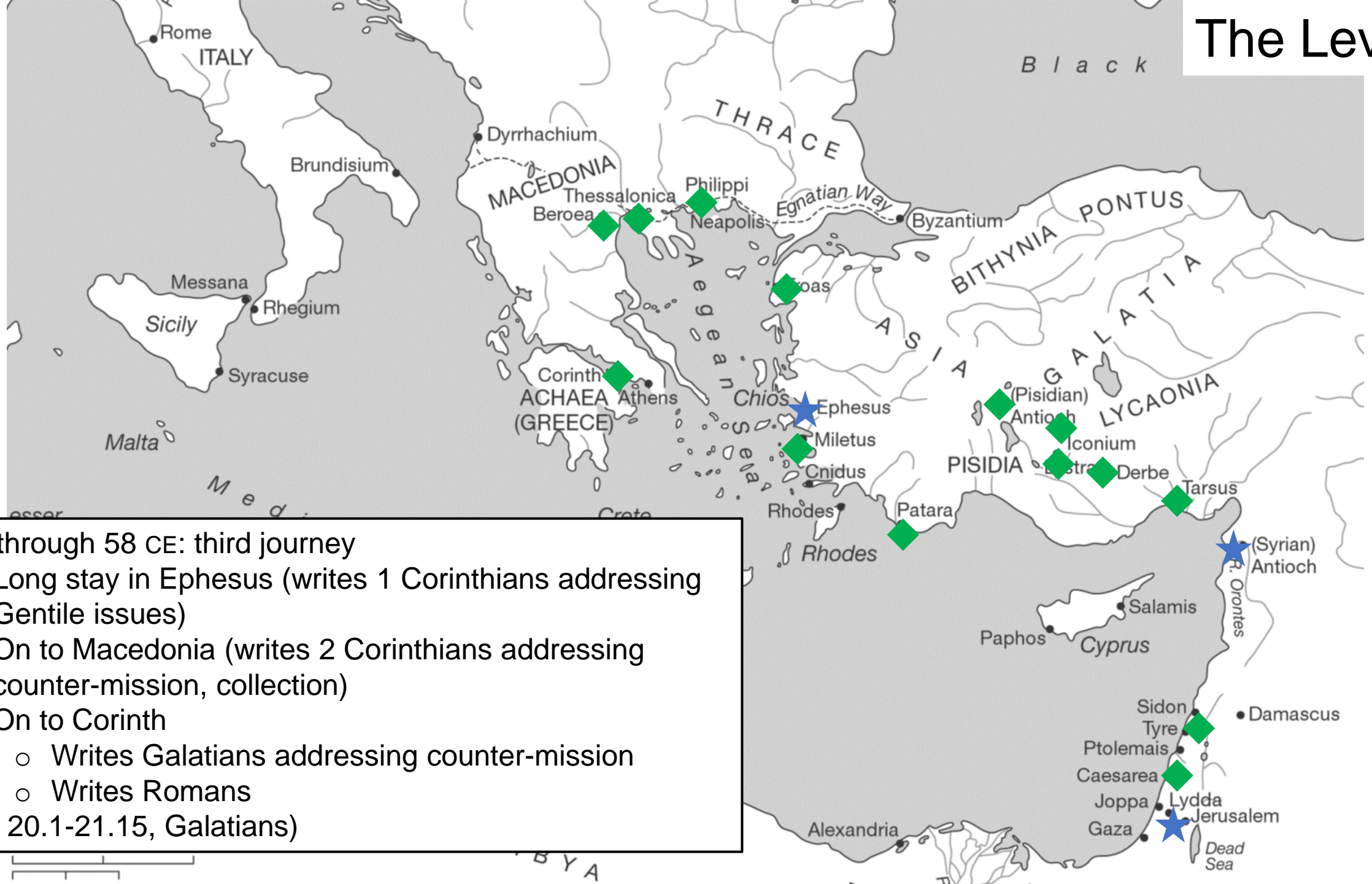
(Ac 15, Ga 2.11-14)



The Levant



The Levant

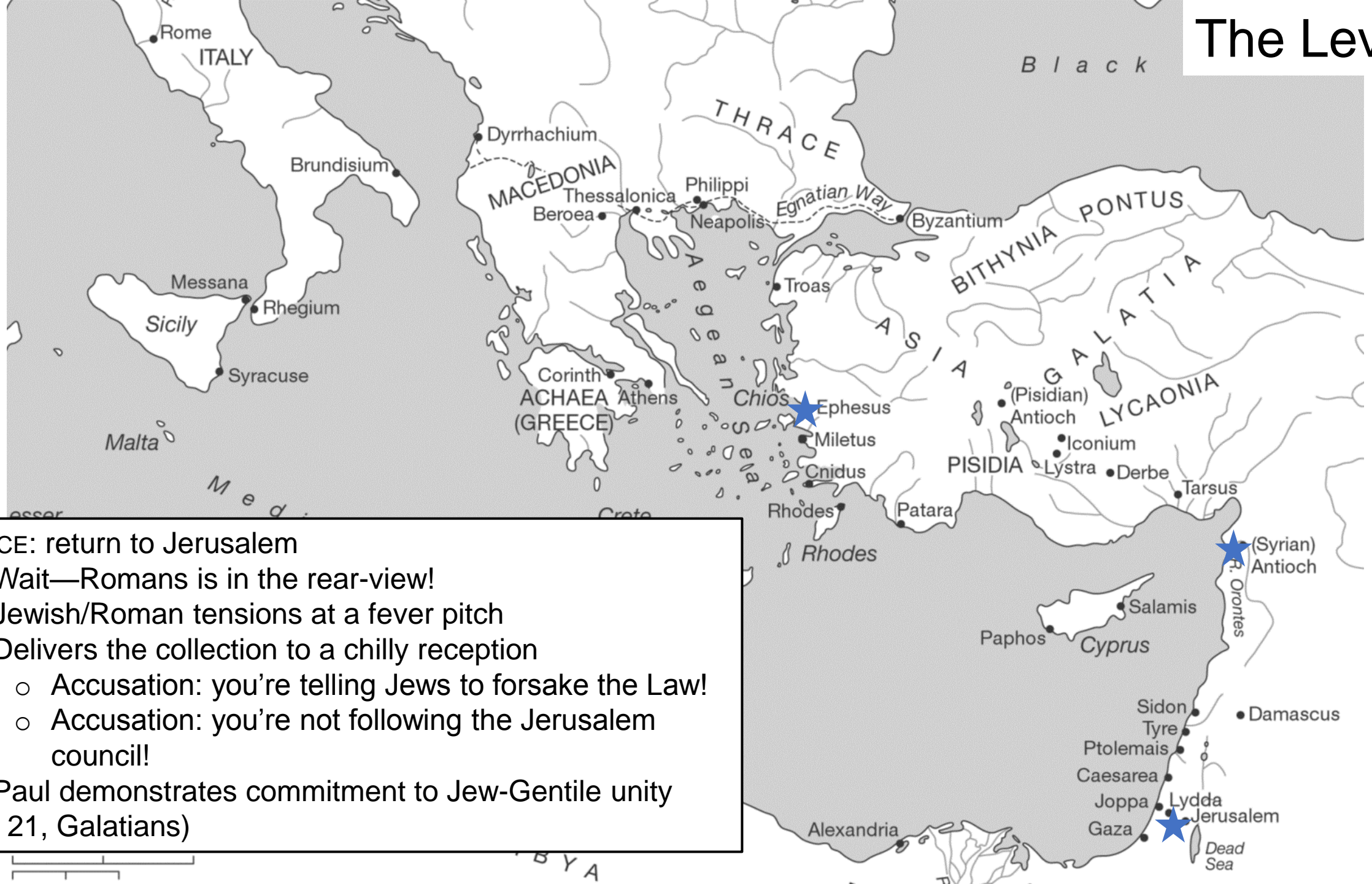


54 through 58 CE: third journey

- Long stay in Ephesus (writes 1 Corinthians addressing Gentile issues)
- On to Macedonia (writes 2 Corinthians addressing counter-mission, collection)
- On to Corinth
 - Writes Galatians addressing counter-mission
 - Writes Romans

(Ac 20.1-21.15, Galatians)

The Levant



58 CE: return to Jerusalem

- Wait—Romans is in the rear-view!
- Jewish/Roman tensions at a fever pitch
- Delivers the collection to a chilly reception
 - Accusation: you're telling Jews to forsake the Law!
 - Accusation: you're not following the Jerusalem council!
- Paul demonstrates commitment to Jew-Gentile unity (Ac 21, Galatians)

Surprising Content

- Deeply troubled relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians
 - Antioch Incident prior to Jerusalem Council
 - Four abstentions—but 1 Co 8 (background to Ro 14?) (...)
- Continuing tension beyond the council
 - Ac 21.2—22: “You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, **and they are all zealous for the law**. They have been told about you **that you teach all the Jews living among the Gentiles to forsake Moses**, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs. What then is to be done?”

Surprising Content

- Never saw this before; thought it was all *kumbaya*
 - Knew there were “Judaizers,” but...
- Jewish counter-mission
 - Thesis has explanatory power
 - Pharisaic believers from Jerusalem (Ac 15.5: “Some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, ‘It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.’”)
 - Would have been swept up by Jewish nationalism
 - Would have been outraged by Roman behavior (and worried about pagan Christians)

Seeing the counter-mission

- In Galatians:
 - 2.11-14: “When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; for **until certain people came** from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But **after they came**, he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision faction. And the other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that **they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel**, I said to Cephas before them all, ‘If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?’” (...)
 - 5.10-12: “I am confident about you in the Lord that you will not think otherwise. But whoever it is that is confusing you will pay the penalty. But my friends, I why am I still being persecuted if I am still preaching circumcision? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettle you would castrate themselves!”

Seeing the counter-mission

- In 2 Corinthians:
 - 2 Co 11.12-15: “And what I do I will also continue to do, in order to deny an opportunity to **those who want an opportunity to be recognized as our equals** in what they boast about. For **such boasters are false apostles, deceitful workers**, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder! Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness.” (...)
 - 2 Co 11.21-23: “Whatever **anyone** dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. **Are they** Hebrews? So am I. **Are they** Israelites? So am I. **Are they** descendants of Abraham? So am I. **Are they** ministers of Christ? I am talking like a madman—I am a better one: with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless floggings, and often near death.”

Seeing the counter-mission

- In Romans:
 - Ro 3.8: “why not say (as **some people slander us by saying** that we say), “Let us do evil so that good may come”? Their condemnation is deserved!”
 - Ro 9.1: “I am speaking the truth in Christ—I **am not lying**; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit.”
 - Ro 16.17-18: “ I urge you, brothers and sisters, to keep an eye on **those who cause dissensions and offenses**, in opposition to the teaching that you have learned; avoid them. For **such people do not serve our Lord Christ**, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the simple-minded.”

Surprising Content

- The threat of the counter-mission
 - Problem 1: can't eat together → can't partake in Lord's Supper together → unity of Christ destroyed (...)
 - Problem 2: Gentiles knuckle under → Jesus not sufficient for “setting men in a right relationship with God” (Barnett, Behind the Scenes..., 177) → Gospel itself at stake (...)
- That's the background for the writing of Romans

The Levant



Paul is ready to move on:

Ro 15.19, 23-24: "From Jerusalem and as far around as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the good news of Christ. ... Now, with no further place for me in these regions, I desire, as I have for many years, to come to you when I go to Spain. For I do hope to see you on my journey and to be sent on by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a little while."

Discussion Together

- How does this “previously on” inform the context in which Romans was written? How serious was the counter mission? What were their main arguments? How appealing would these arguments be to people in their day?
- How important was the base for the work? How serious were the accusations against Paul and his team?
- What things are counter mission to the work we have been assigned? What kind of things are countering Christ mission today?
- So what? How important is Ames Des Moines as a base for our work today? How can we be certain of the things we have been taught, how can we be confident in Christ’s teachings?