



# THE LIFE OF TIMOTHY

NEILL GIBSON

1B

# **SETTING THE STAGE OF HISTORY**

SESSION 1B

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- God's choice of the young and unborn to fulfill His purposes
- The long-range implications of God's Word and promises
- Prophetic fulfillment and expectation from Daniel to the First Century
- Fullness of time: language, roads, synagogues, and God-fearers
- Galatia and Lystra

# **GOD'S CHOICE OF THE YOUNG AND UNBORN TO FULFILL HIS PURPOSES**

- God uses people of all ages, but has a propensity toward setting people apart from the womb, calling them to greatness while still young and inexperienced, and fulfilling His promises to them over the long haul of their life and generations.
- Take a brief look at some of the examples:

## **GOD'S CHOICE OF THE YOUNG AND UNBORN TO FULFILL HIS PURPOSES**

- Jacob: different in the womb
- Joseph: young and favored
- Moses: delivered as an infant to become a deliverer
- Joshua: stayed in the Presence
- Samuel: a young, devoted hearer
- David: anointed in the midst of his [older] brothers
- Josiah: king at age 8
- Jeremiah: chosen from the womb, called as a youth
- Daniel: exiled as a young man
- Cyrus: (story...)

... When God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles ...

*-The Apostle Paul, in Galatians 1:15-16a*

Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium.

*-Acts 16:1-2*

"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you,  
And before you were born I consecrated you;  
I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."

...

"Do not say, 'I am a youth,'  
Because everywhere I send you, you shall go,  
And all that I command you, you shall speak."

...

"Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.  
See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the  
kingdoms,  
To pluck up and to break down,  
To destroy and to overthrow,  
To build and to plant."

*-The LORD, in Jeremiah 1:4-10*



# THE LONG-RANGE IMPLICATIONS OF GOD'S WORD AND PROMISES

"His message was almost universally rejected ...  
Yet, his prophetic messages unfolded the destinies of Israel and of  
nearly all the surrounding nations in the Middle East ...  
Thus Jeremiah was in very fact 'set over those nations and over the  
kingdoms,' and by the prophecies that he uttered, he became the  
actual arbiter of their destinies."

*-Derek Prince, in Shaping History through Prayer and Fasting*

# STRIKING EXAMPLES OF THE LONG-RANGE IMPLICATIONS OF GOD'S WORD THROUGH US

- Joshua – curses Jericho in 1405 BC (Joshua 6:26)
  - In 874 BC (531 years later) his prophetic word was fulfilled
- Josiah – prophesied about in 931 BC (1 Kgs. 13:1-6)
  - Fulfilled in 640-622 BC (see 2 Kgs. 23:15-20) – walks into destiny
- Jeremiah – Begins in 13th year of Josiah (627 BC)
  - Prophecies Babylonian exile, and the return (Daniel reads and prays it to pass)
- Isaiah – Prophecies "Cyrus" by name (ch. 45) – fulfilled about 150 years later (Ezra 1)

# PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT AND EXPECTATION FROM DANIEL TO THE FIRST CENTURY

- Daniel interprets dreams and sees things himself about the next few hundred/  
thousand years
  - Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:30-49)
    - Who is the most important person in the Empire?
  - Daniel's vision (Daniel 7)
  - The fulfillment of these prophecies, together with others with general  
time-range of expectations, puts an expectation for an eschatological  
event in the First Century that will change things forever.

# FULLNESS OF TIME: LANGUAGE, ROADS, SYNAGOGUES, AND GOD-FEARERS

- But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son ...  
(Gal. 4:4)
- Language and roads
  - (and crucifixion)
- Synagogues and God-fearers

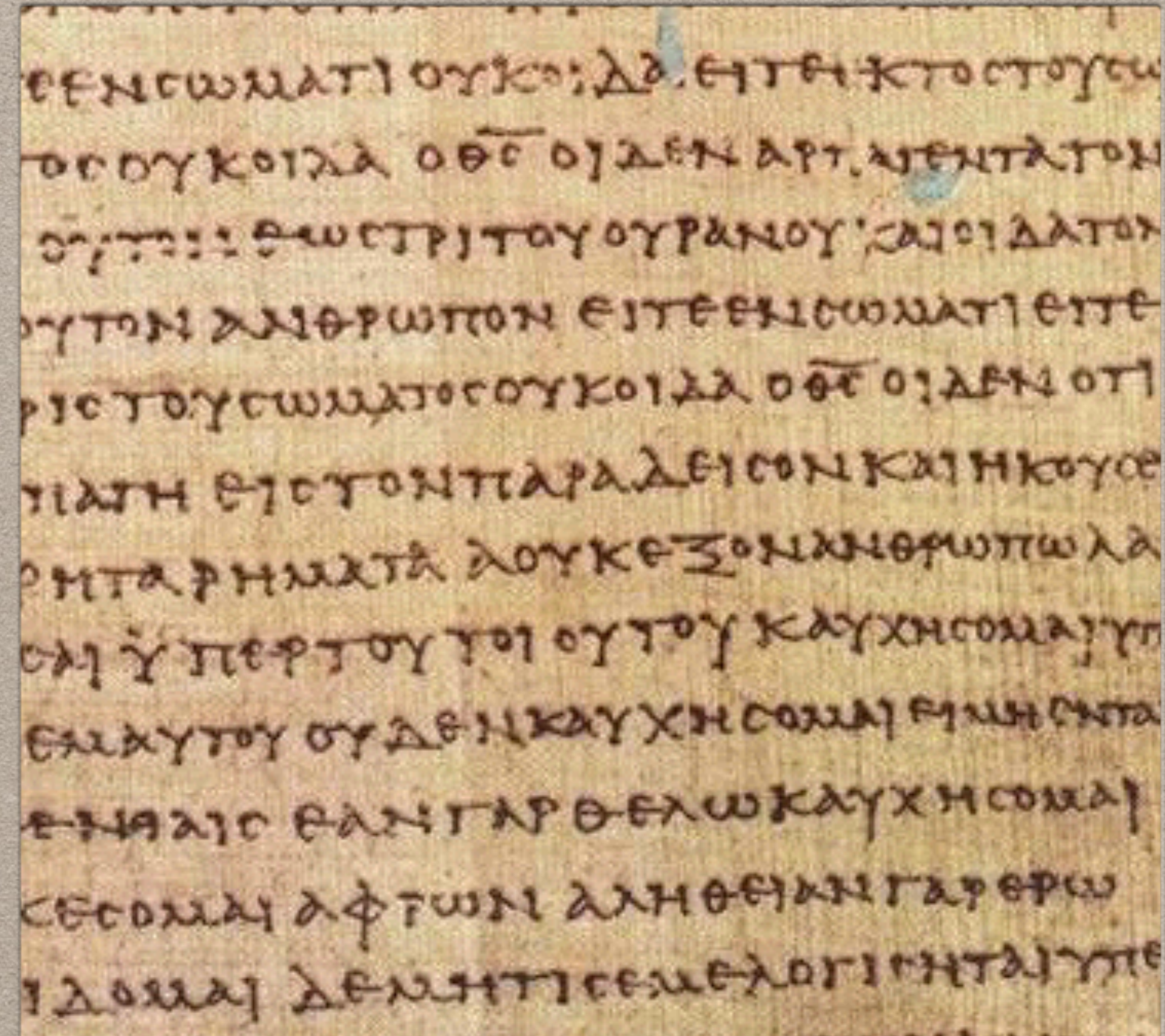
# BATTLE OF ARBELA / GUAGAMELA

- Daniel 8, especially v. 21
- “If you are looking for providences, there will be providences to note.”
- Decisive battle in the expansion of Alexander the Great’s Greek Empire turned the tide of the Persians and set the stage for the cultural context of the Early Church’s expansion.



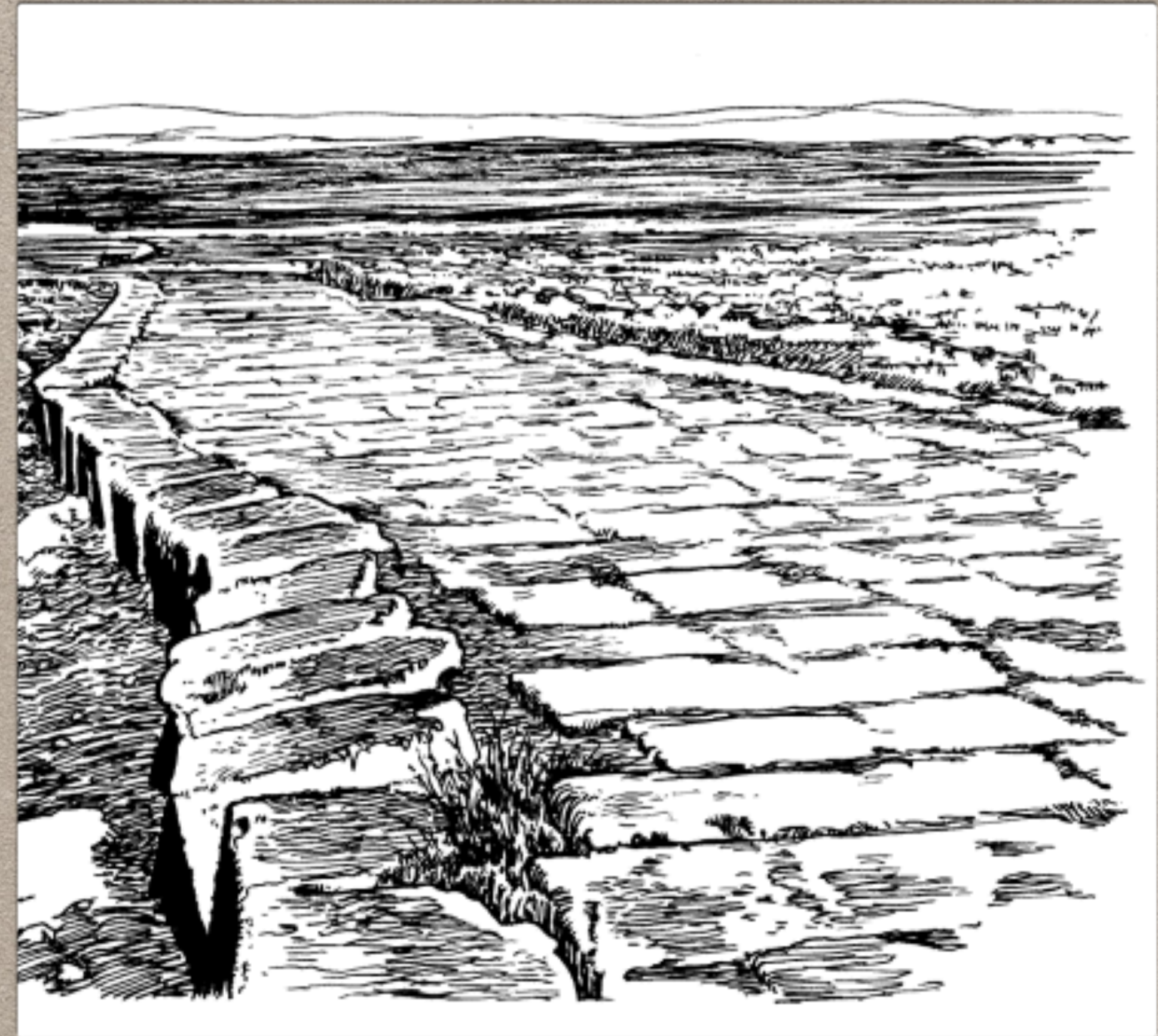
# GREEK LANGUAGE

- One of the decisive and beneficial results of this expansion was the widespread use of the Greek language.
- Its precision and universality contributed not only to the verbal spread of the Gospel, but also to the literary component.
  - Compare to current translation efforts and the inherent delay



# ROMAN ROADS

- Pax Romana + excellent roads
- Best time to travel the Mediterranean by 1,000 years either way. (Pollock)
- "St. Paul traveled in the best and safest period." (Ramsay)



# CRUCIFIXION

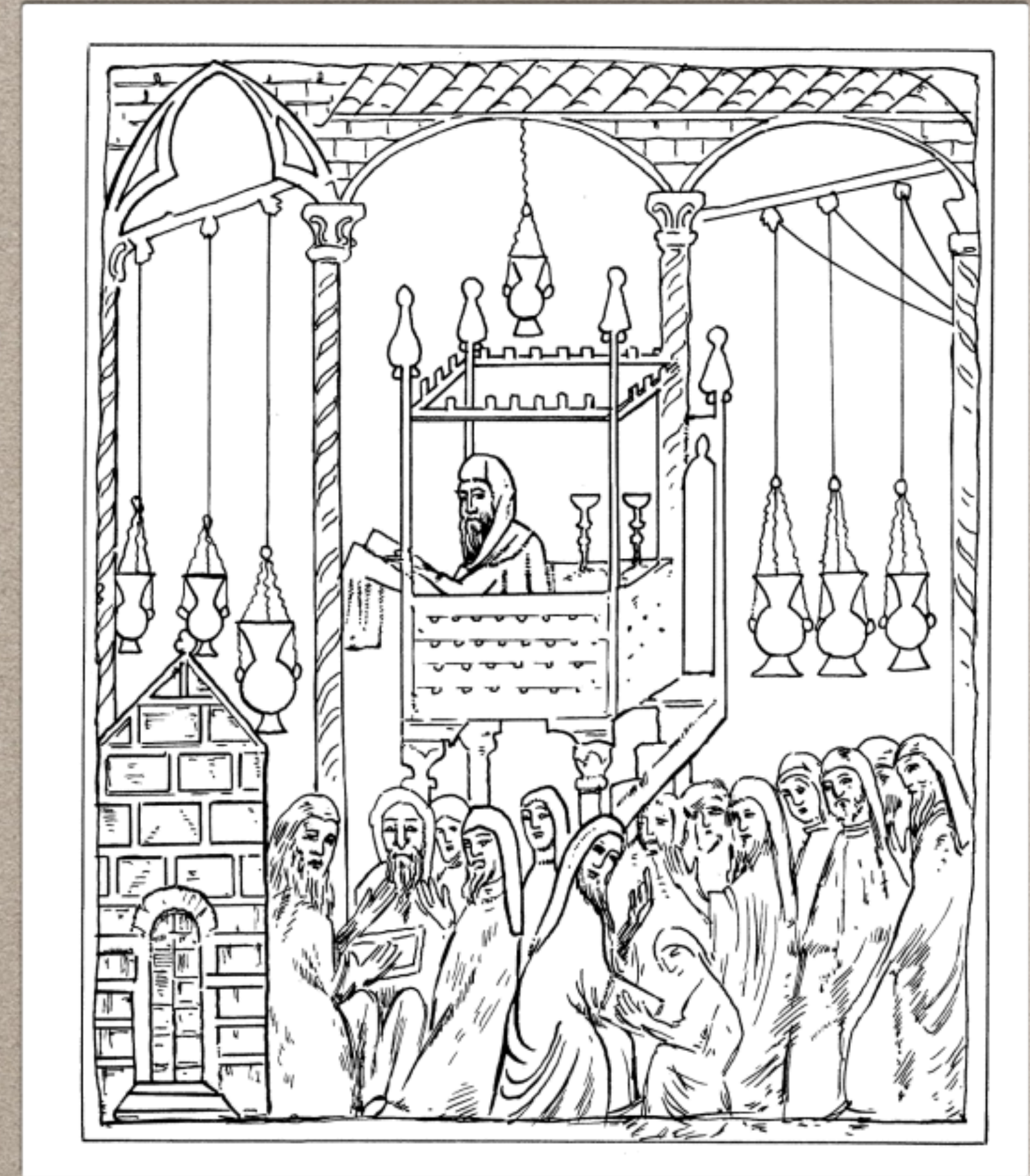
- Psalm 22 (esp. vv. 16-18)
- Isaiah 52:13-53:12 (esp. v. 5)
- Zechariah 12:10; 14





# SYNAGOGUE SYSTEM

- Began as an attempt to cope with the loss of the Land, the City, and the Temple during the Babylonian exile (which kind of ended and kind of didn't)
- The widespread dispersion of Jews throughout the Roman Empire created the perfect base of operations for the spread of the Gospel "to the Jew first and also to the Greek"



# GOD-FEARERS

- Not full proselytes to Judaism, but “sympathizers”
- Cornelius is Luke’s prime example (Acts 10:1-2)
- This is the category of people you would expect to have some recognition of monotheism, particularly with Israel’s God
- Like the Greeks in John 12 that wanted to see Jesus, these are the kind of people I picture would want to be occupying the “House of Prayer for all the Nations” that Jesus had to clear of obstructing merchandise
- Their presence in proximity to the synagogues throughout the Roman Empire was a ripe harvest field just waiting for a traveling apostle to swing his sickle.

“The one true God had done for Jesus of Nazareth, in the middle of time, what Saul had thought he was going to do for Israel at the end of time.

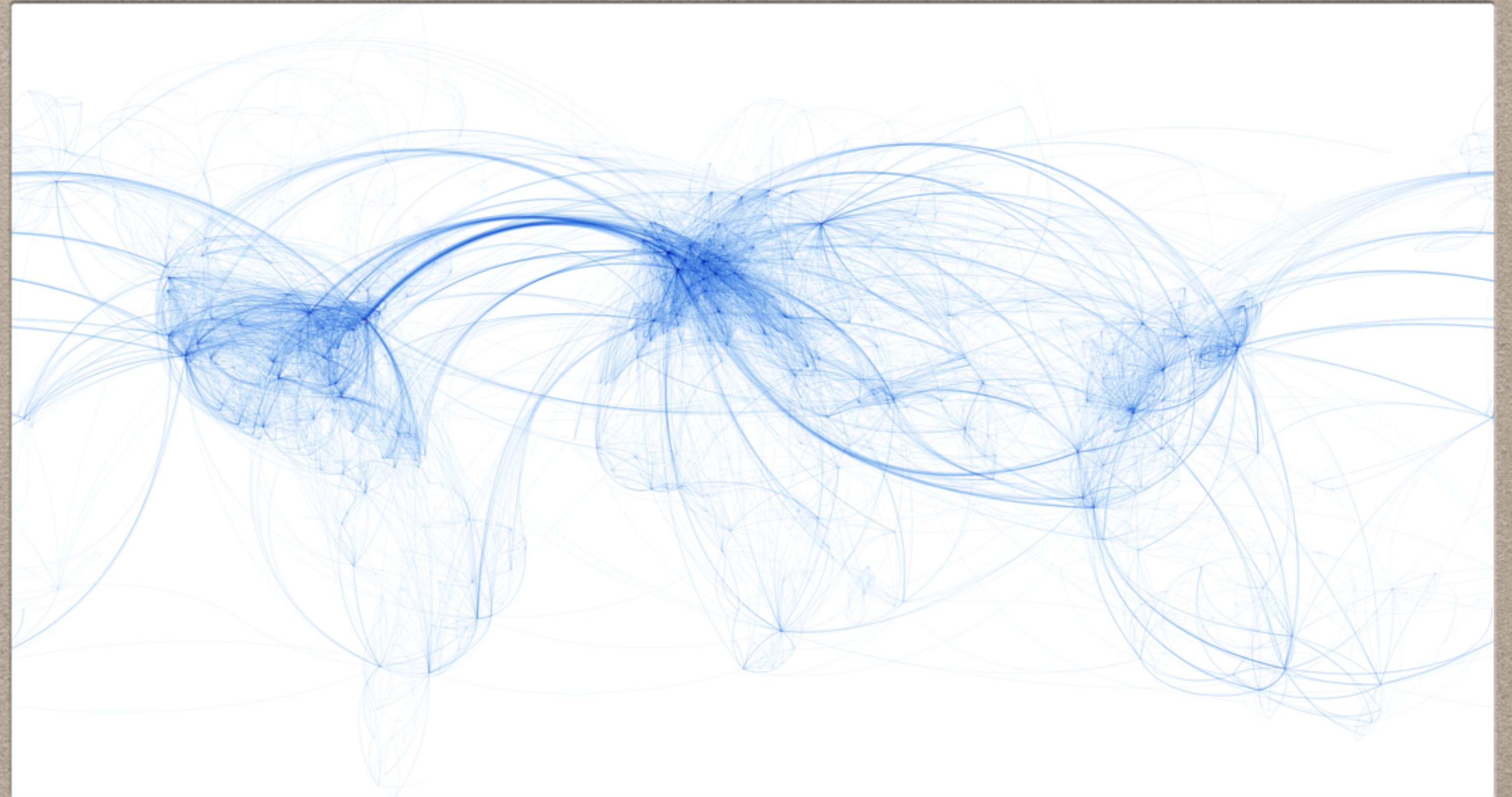
The death and resurrection of Jesus were themselves the great eschatological event ... The Present Age and the Age to Come overlapped ...

If the Age to Come had arrived, if the resurrection had already begun to take place, then this was the time when the Gentiles were to come in.”

*-N. T. Wright, in What Saint Paul Really Said*

# ALSO, THINK HOW THE STAGE IS SET TODAY

- International travel
- Common languages
- Internet



# GALATIA



# LYSTRA

- Roman Colony
- Connected to other garrison cities by Roman roads
- Local language remained, additional to official languages
- May not have had a synagogue



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