

THE BOOK OF
ACTS
LIFE IN THE SPIRIT



Acts 17: 16-34

Message + Mission + Multiply

Acts 17: 15 NIV

*Those who escorted Paul brought him to Athens **and then left** with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.*



MACEDONIA

Egnatian Way

THRACIA

Thessalonica

Philippi

Amphipolis

Apollonia

Berea

Larisa

Aegean Sea

Troas

Assos

Mitylene

Nicopolis

Delphi

Corinth

Cenchreae

Athens

ACHAIA

EPIRUS

141 Miles

Question

What was Greece
known for?

The Greeks made
important contributions
to philosophy,
mathematics, astronomy,
and medicine. They were
known for their
literature, sophisticated
sculpture and
architecture.

Some of the Greek
philosophers are still
discussed today and
include Socrates,
Plato, Aristotle,
Sophocles, and
Euripides









Athenia





[Home](#) / [Exhibits And Experiences](#) / [Treasures Of Ancient Greece](#)

Treasures of Ancient Greece



The city of Athens
was unparalleled in
architecture and
beauty, but what
was Paul's
comment?

Acts 17: 16 NIV

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

Quote of French
atheistic
philosopher Ernest
Renan

*“That ugly little Jew abused
Greek art by describing those
statues as idols.”*



Gaius Petronius Arbiter was a Roman author that lived during the reign of Nero. He is generally believed to be the author of the *Satyricon*, a satirical novel.

Born: 27 AD, Marseille, France

Died: 66 AD, Sito Archeologico di Cuma, Italy

“It’s easier to find a god in Athens than it is a man.”

What lens was
Paul looking
through?







What was Paul
supposed to be
doing?

Acts 17: 16 NIV

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

Acts 17: 17 NIV

So he reasoned in the
synagogue with both
Jews and God-fearing
Greeks, as well as in the
marketplace day by day
with those who happened
to be there.

Question

What is motivating
Paul to share Jesus
with everyone?

Acts 17: 18 NIV

A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods."

Epicureans

Enjoy the pleasures
of the flesh because
there are no eternal
consequences.
Death was the end.

Epicureans

Epicurus quote:

“Death does not concern us, because as long as we exist, death is not here. And once it does come, we no longer exist.”

Stoics

The ancient Stoics rejected a permanent afterlife so the afterlife did not play any role at all in their value system or their morality.

Stoics

All Stoics believed that we cease to exist when the fiery matter that makes up our soul (pneuma) dissipates upon our death.

Question

Does knowing the Epicureans and the Stoics were not concerned about the afterlife help explain their reaction?

Acts 17: 18 NIV

They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

Acts 17: 19 NIV

Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?”

Meeting of the Areopagus

This is the supreme court of Athens, the same court that had tried and condemned Socrates 400 years earlier.

Meeting of the Areopagus

One of the roles of this court was to review philosophies.

So when someone new arrived in town with some new philosophy, he had to go before this court for review so this was a review of Paul's new doctrine.

Meeting of the Areopagus

The location where the council or court of justice historically met was in the open air on a hill west of the Acropolis at Athens, on the south-east summit.

Meeting of the Areopagus

Traces of old steps cut in the rock are still seen today. On the flat surface of the summit are signs still visible of a smoothing of the stone for seats.







Acts 17: 20 NIV

You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean.”

Acts 17: 21 NIV

(All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

Acts 17: 22 NIV

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious.

Question

Could we say the
same thing about
our nation today?



Acts 17: 23a NIV

*For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: **to an unknown god.***

Unknown God

600 years before Paul arrived history tells us that there was a terrible plague that was killing many in Athens and they didn't know how to stop it.

So a poet from Crete, by the name of Epimenides, came up with a plan. He got on the Areopagus and released a flock of sheep and the god they would lie down in front of was the god that was upset with them and they would then sacrifice the sheep to that god.

Unknown God

What do you think
happened?

Unknown God

What is Paul saying
here?

Acts 17: 23b NIV

*you are ignorant of the
very thing you worship—
and this is what I am
going to proclaim to you.*

Unknown God

Paul is going to
introduce them to
the true God which
is the one they do
not know!

Acts 17: 24 NIV

“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands.

Acts 17: 25 NIV

And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

Acts 17: 26 NIV

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

Question

What is Paul
saying?

Question

Why is Paul not
quoting from
scripture?

Acts 17: 27 NIV

*God did this so that they
would seek him and
perhaps reach out for him
and find him, though he
is not far from any one
of us.*

Question

What did God do?

Acts 17: 27 NIV

God did this so that they
would seek him and
perhaps reach out for him
and find him, though he is
not far from any one of us.

Please turn to
Romans 1: 20

Romans 1: 20 NIV

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.”

Acts 17: 28 NIV

‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’

As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

Question

Paul is quoting the
Stoic philosopher
Aratus! What does
this tell us about
Paul?

Acts 17: 29 NIV

“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill.

Question

What is Paul using
to teach about
God?

Question

What point is Paul making?

Acts 17: 29 NIV

*“Therefore since we are
God’s offspring, we
should not think that
the divine being is like
gold or silver or stone—
an image made by human
design and skill.*

Acts 17: 30 NIV

In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

Acts 17: 31 NIV

For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

Question

Paul had introduced them to God the Father, now who is he introducing them to?

Acts 17: 32-33 NIV

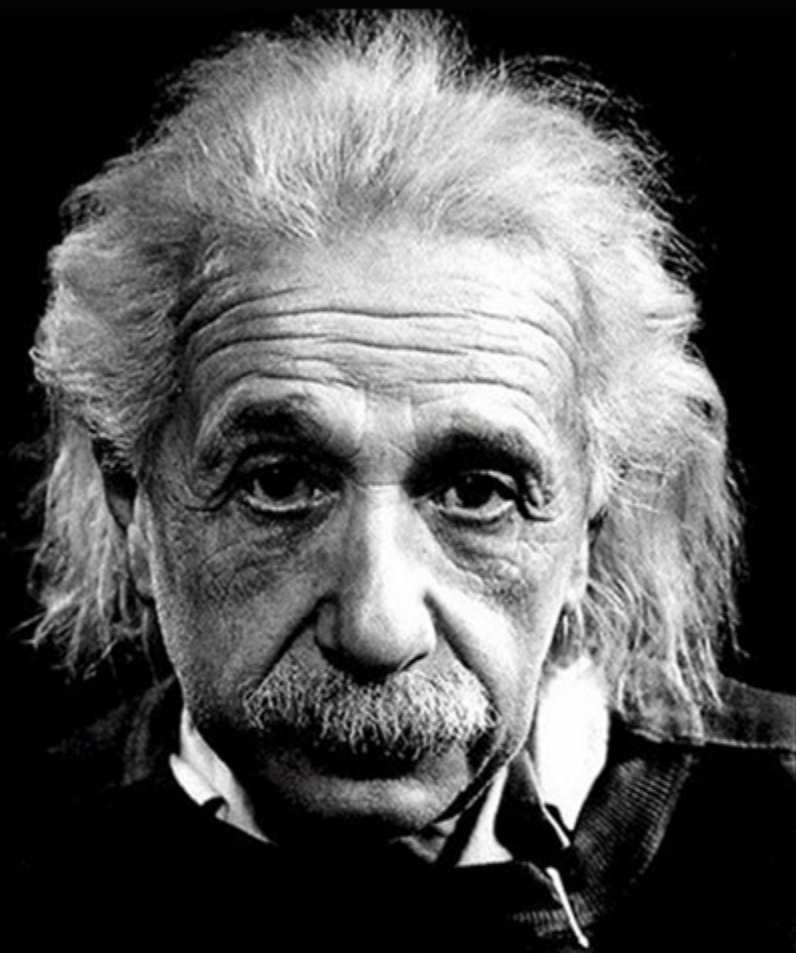
When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." At that, Paul left the Council.

Acts 17: 34 NIV

Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

Question

What can we learn from the fact that Paul taught about Christ using only nature and a quote from one of their Stoic philosophers?

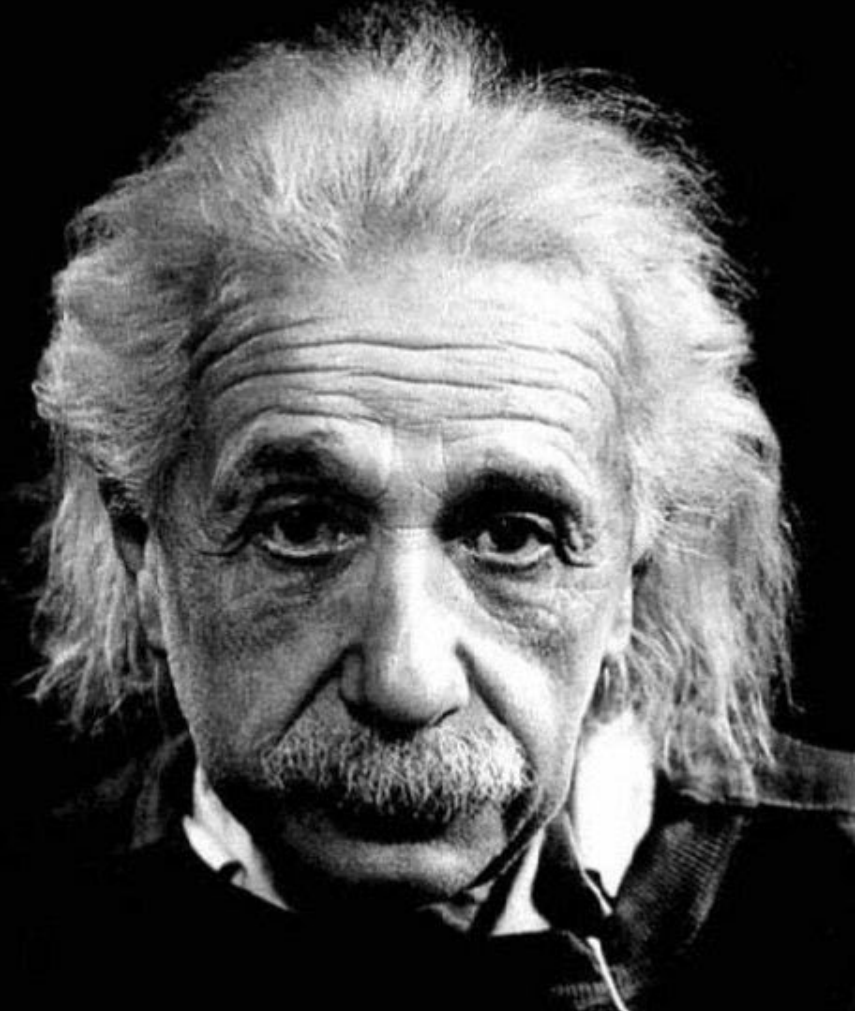


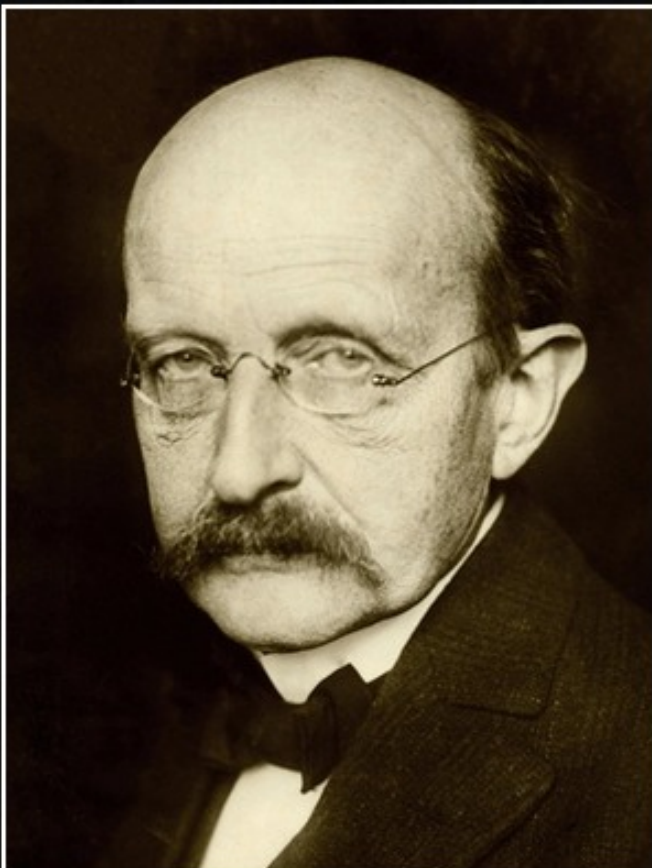
"The more I study science,
the more I believe in God."

Albert Einstein

“I believe in God -
who reveals himself in the orderly
harmony of the universe.”

Albert Einstein



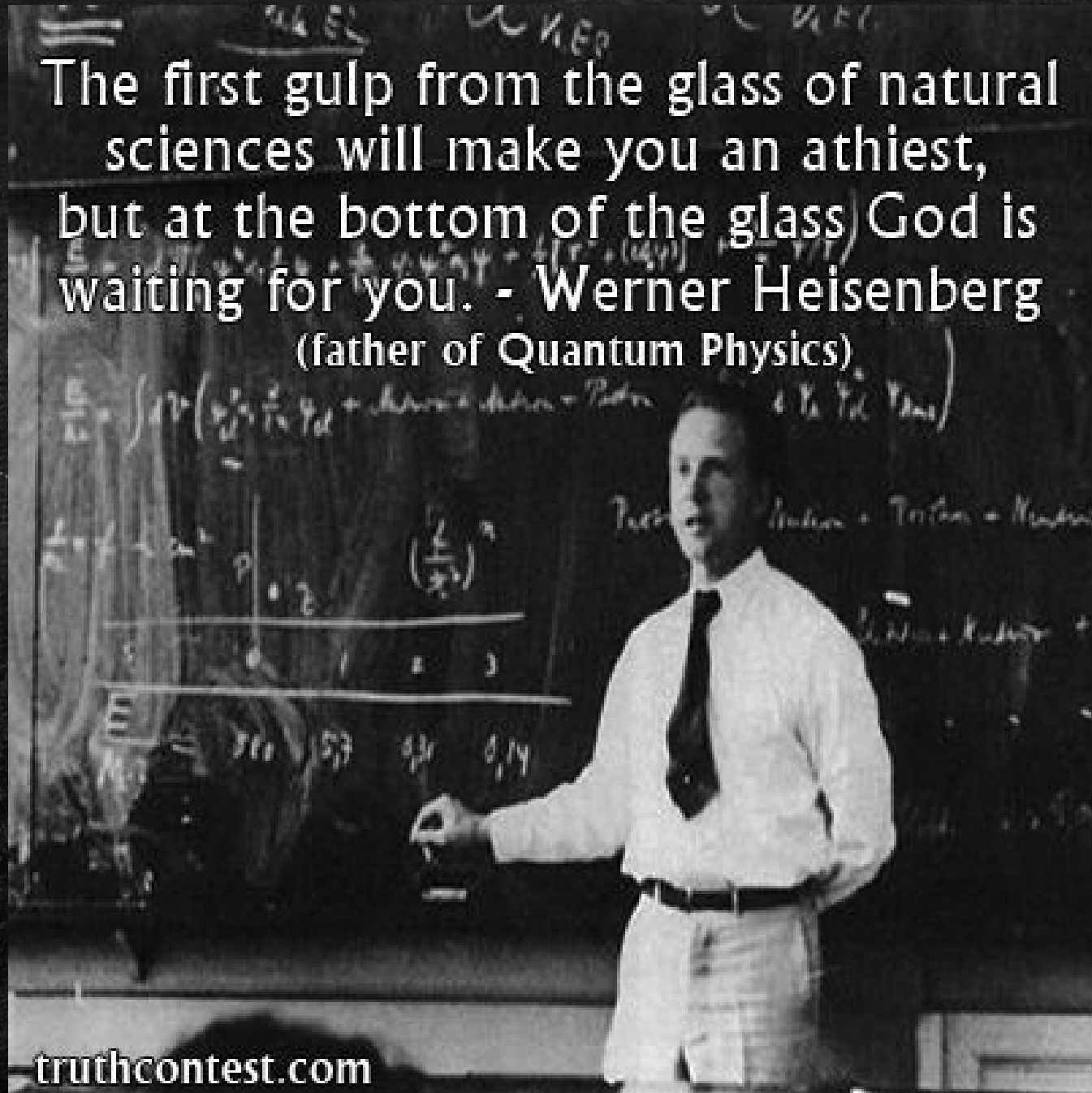


Anybody who has been seriously engaged in scientific work of any kind realizes that over the entrance to the gates of the temple of science are written the words: 'Ye must have faith.'

— *Max Planck* —

AZ QUOTES

The first gulp from the glass of natural sciences will make you an atheist, but at the bottom of the glass God is waiting for you. - Werner Heisenberg (father of Quantum Physics)



“This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being...

Newton





Mathematics is the language in which God has
written the universe.

(Galileo Galilei)

izquotes.com



"God is a mathematician of a very high order and He used advanced mathematics in constructing the universe."

-Nobel Prize winning physicist Paul A. M. Dirac, who made crucial early contributions to both quantum mechanics and quantum electrodynamics.

Next Week

Please Read
Acts 18: 1-22