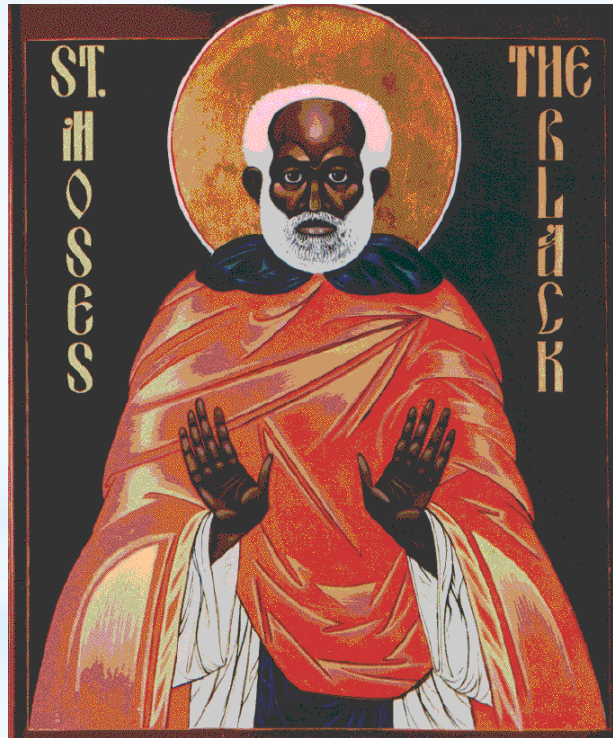


Black Presence in the Bible and African Christians in Early Christianity

An Important Two-Part Survey of Blacks in the Old Testament
and Early Christianity (A Study for Believers of All Ethnic Groups)

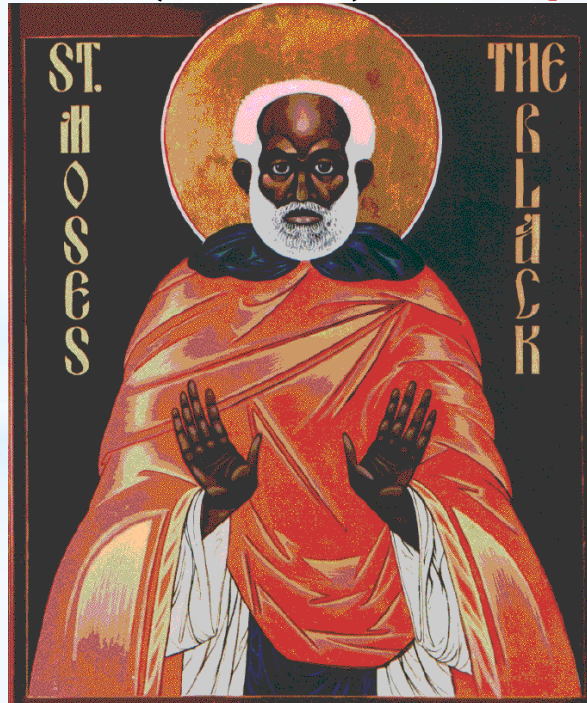
YOUR ASSIGNMENT



Dr. Kenneth Hammonds
Director of Christian Discipleship
West Angeles Church of God in Christ

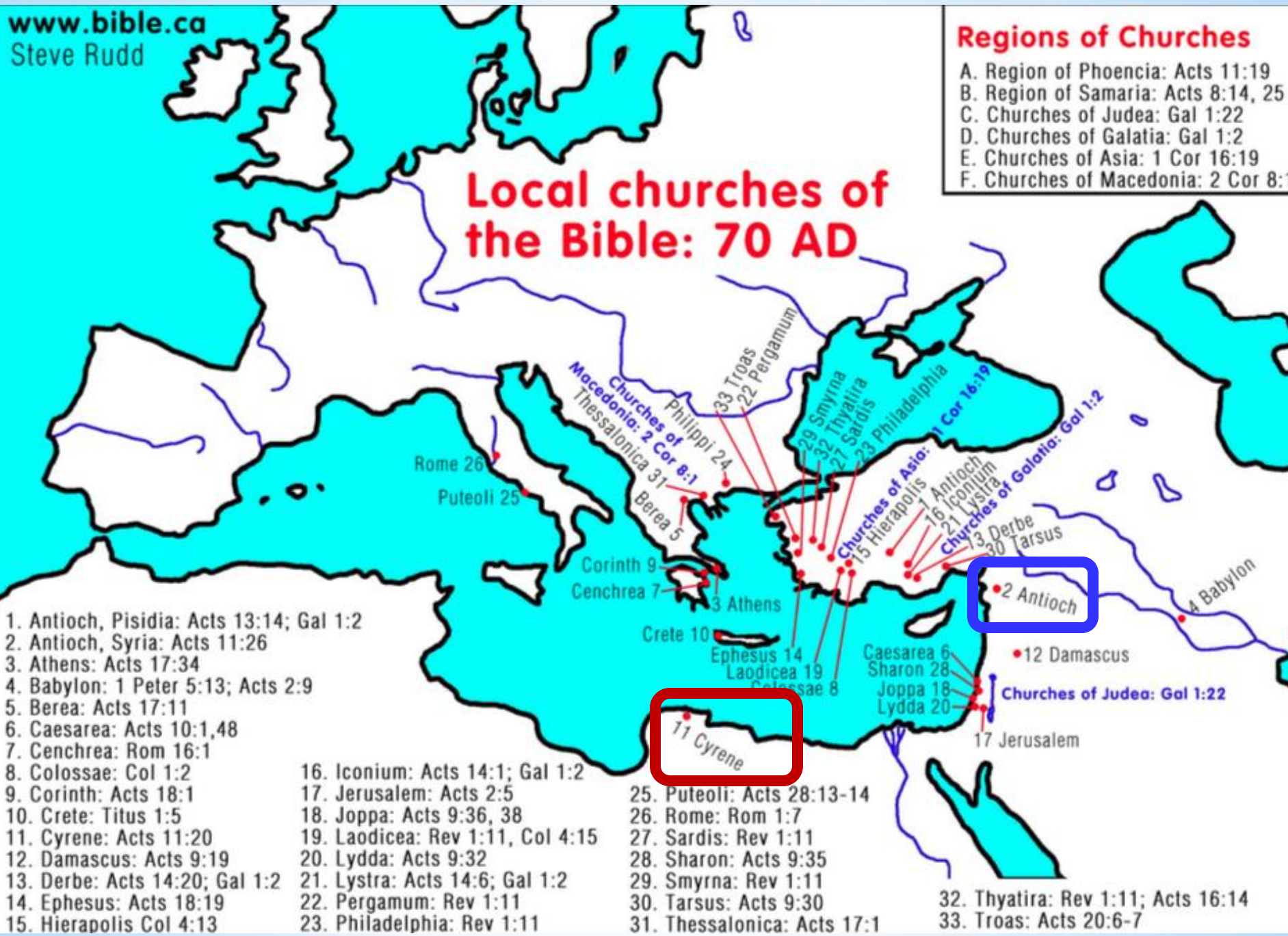
PART TWO: African Christians in Early Christianity

Introduction to Early Christianity's
Black Prophets, Teachers, and Evangelists
Early African (Black) Disciple-Makers

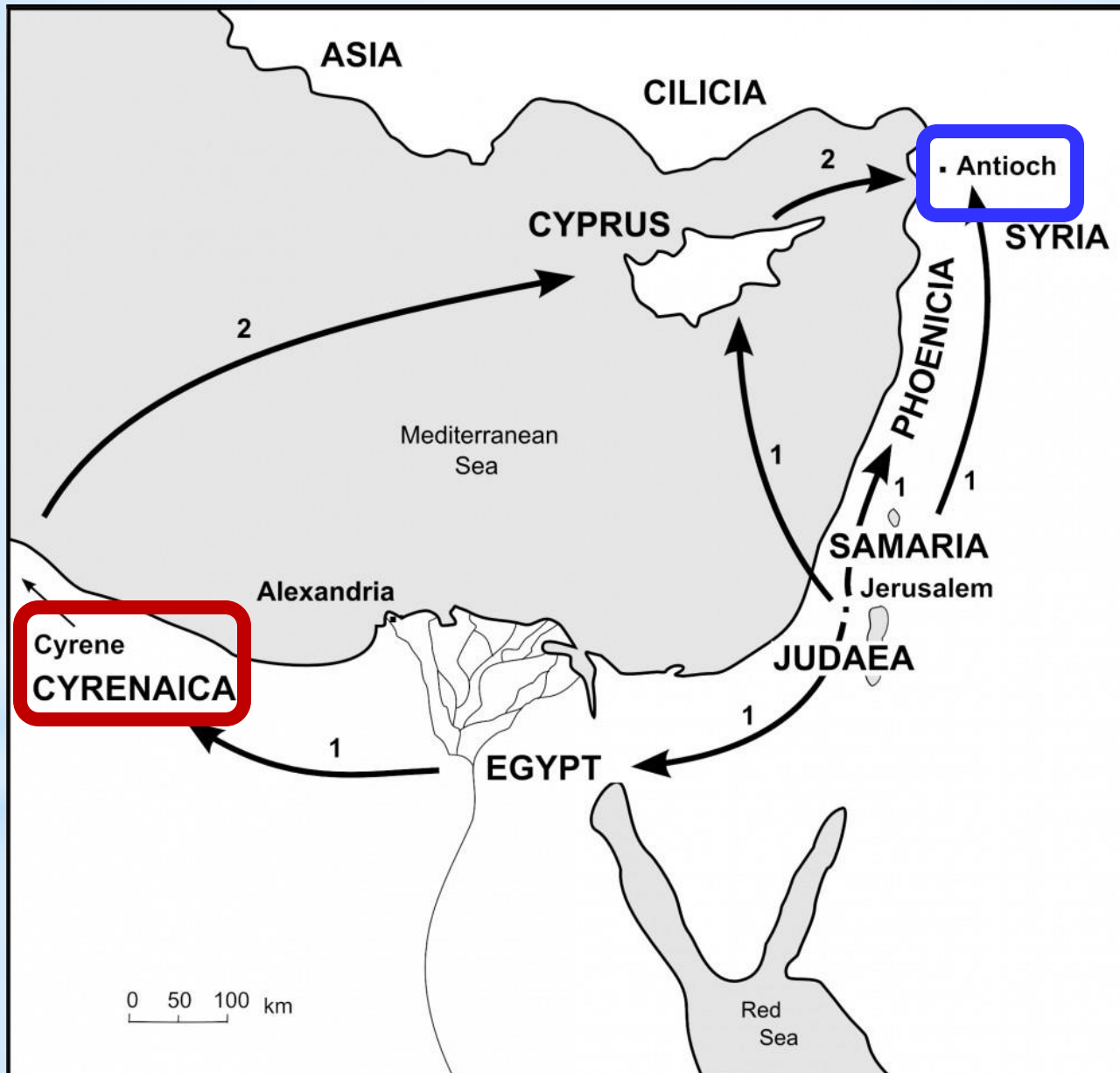


- Regions of Churches**
- A. Region of Phoenicia: Acts 11:19
 - B. Region of Samaria: Acts 8:14, 25
 - C. Churches of Judea: Gal 1:22
 - D. Churches of Galatia: Gal 1:2
 - E. Churches of Asia: 1 Cor 16:19
 - F. Churches of Macedonia: 2 Cor 8:1

Local churches of the Bible: 70 AD



Acts 2:10 NIV “Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene”
KJV “and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene”



Distance from Cyrene to Antioch: roughly about 1,000 miles

Acts 13:1-3

From An African-Christian Perspective

Introduction to Early Christianity's Black Prophets and Teachers
A **SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT** for Budding Biblical Scholars and Biblical Researchers

YOUR ASSIGNMENT - SHOULD YOU ACCEPT IT.

Research the meaning and significance of the Scriptures below as they relate to early Christianity and the Black (African) participation in the cause of Christ and the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Acts 13:1-3 Early Christianity Black Prophets and Teachers (AD 46)

Take special note of these facts and information

1. Simeon called Niger (What does Niger mean about him?)
2. Lucius of Cyrene (literally, Lucius the Cyrenian, *a native of Cyrene*)
Cyrene is on what continent and where?
Cyrene was famous for its Schools of _____ and _____?) (See the Free Dictionary online.)

Cyrene became one of the greatest intellectual and artistic centers of the Greek world, famous for its medical school, learned academies, and architecture. Wikipedia, History Section.

3. Another man of Cyrene, Simon the Cyrenian helped carry Jesus carry the cross. (AD 30) Mark 15:21 Written AD 60-65

❖ He is the father of two sons. What are their names?

These sons were known by the Apostle Paul and at least one of them lived in what city? Romans 16:13 (AD 56)

❖ Paul loved their mother so much he referred to her as who? _____
(See the *more literal* KJV translation, not the *thought for thought* NIV.)

4. There were powerful evangelists before Paul's journeys who spoke with, conversed (talked with, debated, reasoned with) and preached to (evangelized) the Greeks at Antioch who were also Cyrenians. Acts 11:20
[Notice verse 19 - the JEWISH Christians spread the Gospel to the JEWS ONLY.]
So, it is significant that the Acts 11:20 evangelists preached/reasoned/debated with OTHER racial groups. (Cyprians to the Near eastern and Caucasian (Greeks), and Cyrenians to the Black (African) individuals racially?) Thus, we see the Gentiles (Caucasian and Blacks) preaching the Gospel together in the 1st Century. (AD 46)

❖ What does that tell us about the African evangelists in the early Christian church?

❖ What can we reasonably deduce about these prophets/evangelists/teachers?

4. Lucius of Cyrene (Acts 13:1)

❖ Could this Lucius of Cyrene (Acts 13:1) possibly be the same individual as “Luke,” the physician who traveled with the Apostle Paul?

(Romans 16:21; Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon v. 24.)

See Biblos.com [also called, biblehub.com] for two opposing opinions on this.

See the First View

<http://biblehub.com/commentaries/acts/13-1.htm>

Or place “**Ellicott's Commentary Acts 13:1**” in the Google Search. You’ll get the results below. Click that one.

Acts 13:1 Parallel Commentaries - Bible Hub

biblehub.com/commentaries/acts/13-1.htm ▾ Bible Hub ▾

EXPOSITORY (ENGLISH BIBLE). **Ellicott's Commentary** for English Readers. XIII. (1)

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch.—The fulness of detail in ...

5. These Black (African) individuals in Antioch, (Missionary Headquarters) are the great men of God who laid hands on the Apostle Paul and commissioned him to go forth on his 1st Missionary Journey.

6. On the second journey Paul comes back to Antioch (Acts 15:35) Loukios (still at the church in Antioch, a year later) joins Paul on this journey. See the famous “we” passages of Acts, the first being Acts 16:10. “We” meaning Loukios, Luke was there with Paul. Most likely Paul asked him to come especially now that he was going to embark upon a new territory on his evangelist road trips.

He could very much use a man of Loukios’ intellectual skills and spiritual power. (a Cyrenian) And being a physician, artist (says tradition), and writer (Luke-Acts) was an added plus. Luke published his Gospel perhaps around AD 60 when Paul was in his first Roman imprisonment. Loukios accompanies Paul to Rome.

And he is with Paul at the end of his life and ministry. 1 Timothy 4:11 He probably publishes the Book of Acts before Paul’s death? (AD 62-66) or after Paul’s ? (AD 67-69). Paul’s death was perhaps in AD 67.

See the Second View

<http://biblehub.com/greek/3066.htm>

Or place “biblehub 3066” in the Google Search.

Thayer’s Greek Lexicon and Strong’s

Thayer’s Greek Lexicon Λούκιος, Λουκιου, ὁ (a Latin name), **Lucius**, of Cyrene, a prophet and teacher of the church at Antioch: [Acts 13:1](#); perhaps the same Lucius that is mentioned in [Romans 16:21](#).

KH Correction Note: In Biblehub the word “and” and misspelled as “mad” teacher. I have corrected it in the Thayer statement above.

Strong's Concordance	
Loukios:	Lucius, the name of two Christians
Original Word:	Λούκιος, ου, ὁ
Part of Speech:	Noun, Masculine
Transliteration:	Loukios
Phonetic Spelling:	(loo'-kee-os)
Short Definition:	Lucius

Definition: Lucius, (a) of Cyrene, an early Christian, in the church of Antioch, **by some identified with the evangelist Luke**, (b) a Christian with Paul at Corinth, by some identified with (a).

See also with Google Search “**Lucius of Cyrene**” - Wikipedia.
See what Origen, an early Church Father (184-253), thought.

Elliott's Commentary (See Biblehub.)

Lucius of Cyrene.—Probably one of the company of “men of Cyprus and Cyrene” (Acts 11:20) who had been among the first evangelists of Antioch. On the ground that Cyrene was famous for its School of Medicine, some writers have identified him with the author of the Acts.

This author however - thinks they are different. And goes on to say:

“but the two names Lucius and Lucas are radically distinct, the latter being contracted for Lucanus.”

I, however, and other early commentators (**Origen) think it refers to Luke. This fits well with the idea of Cyrene being a famous School of Medicine center.

** Origen (AD 184-254) and many church commentators, however most modern commentators same they are not the same.

All the Scriptures mentioning Lucius and Luke

Acts 13:1 Greek, Λούκιος; transliteration, Loukios; translation, Lucius
(Transliteration = a letter for letter rendering of Greek letters to English letters.)

Romans 16:21 Greek, Λούκιος; transliteration, Loukios; translation, Lucius

Colossians 4:14 Greek, Λουκᾶς; transliteration, Loukas; translation, Luke

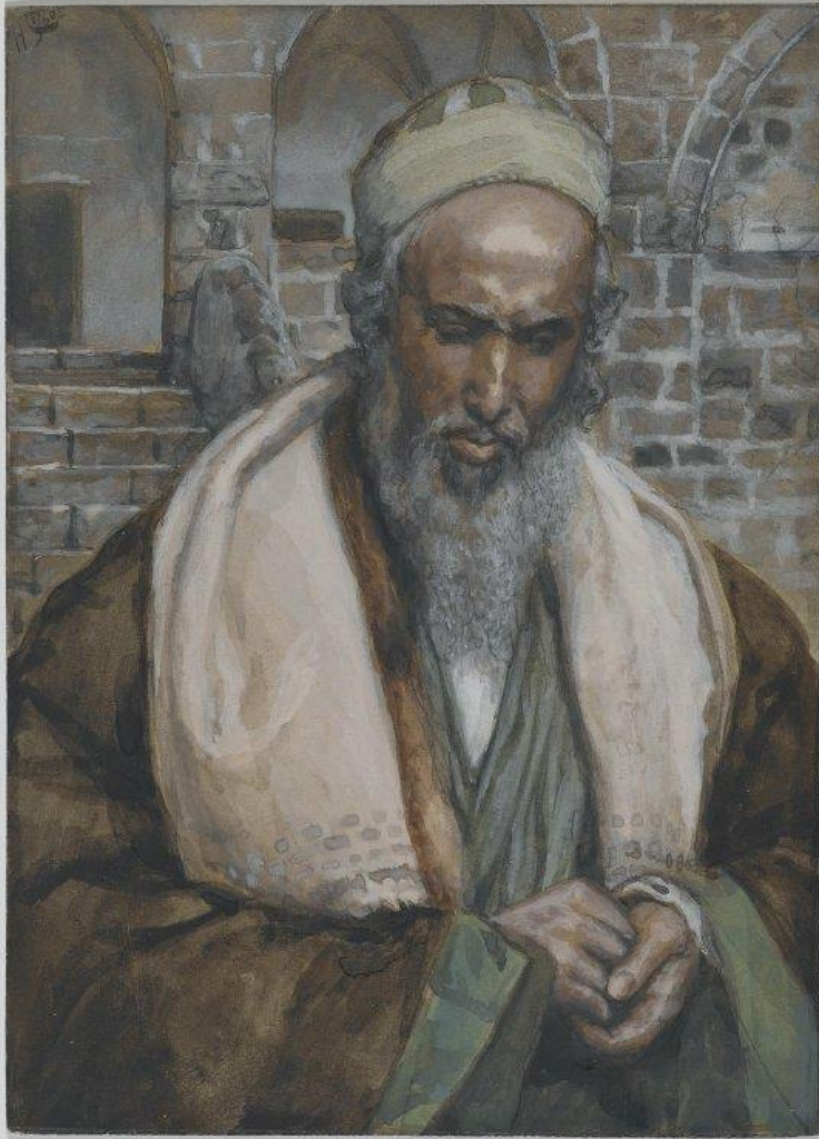
2 Timothy 4:11 Greek, Λουκᾶς; transliteration, , Loukas; translation, Luke

Philemon v. 24 Greek, Λουκᾶς; transliteration, , Loukas; translation, Luke

Some believe these references are to the same individual - Luke the Evangelist writer of Luke-Acts.

And I have posited for historical and biblical thought the idea that this was this Loukas/Loukios was possibly the Gentile, Black man from Cyrene in Africa and a member of the Church at Antioch in Syria.

**Oh! Luke Black? Too SCARY a thought for
“regular” Christian history?
SEE THE NEXT SLIDES.**

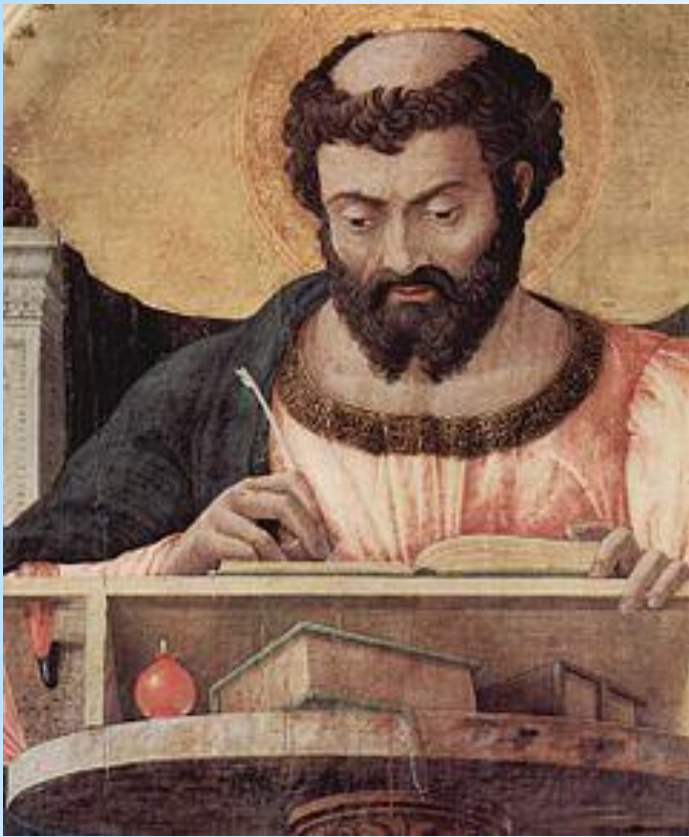


James Tissot, Saint Luke (Saint Luc),
Brooklyn Museum c. 1886



16th-century Russian version showing copy
of the [Theotokos of Vladimir](#).

Images of Luke, with some “color”



The St. Luke altarpiece
by Andrea Mantegna
(c. 1454)



<http://thecatholiccatalogue.com/feast-of-st-luke/>
St. Isaac of Syria Skete (A store in Wisconsin
featuring Byzantine Christian icons.)

The Ethiopian Eunuch, Acts Chapter 8

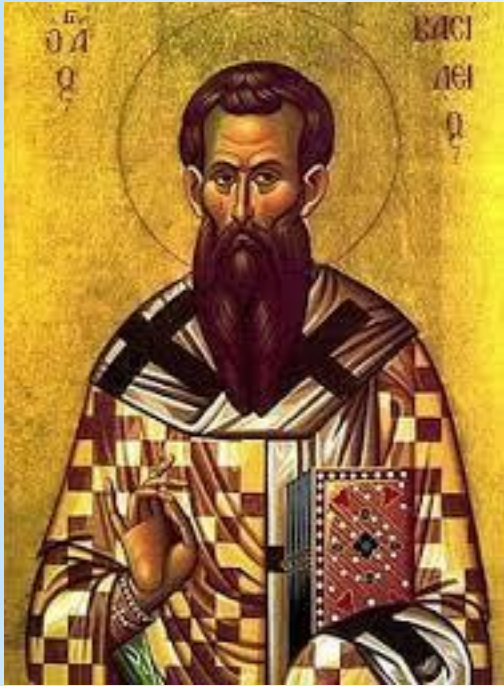
The Ethiopian eunuch is the **FIRST** Gentile won to Christianity mentioned after Acts 2. (AD 32-35)

Early in the history of the Church, Africa was a vital part of the spread of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. The Ethiopian, African Church is also known as the Coptic Church. St. Mark (writer of the Gospel) is known as its founder. However, some also date their origin directly back to the eunuch of Acts 8.

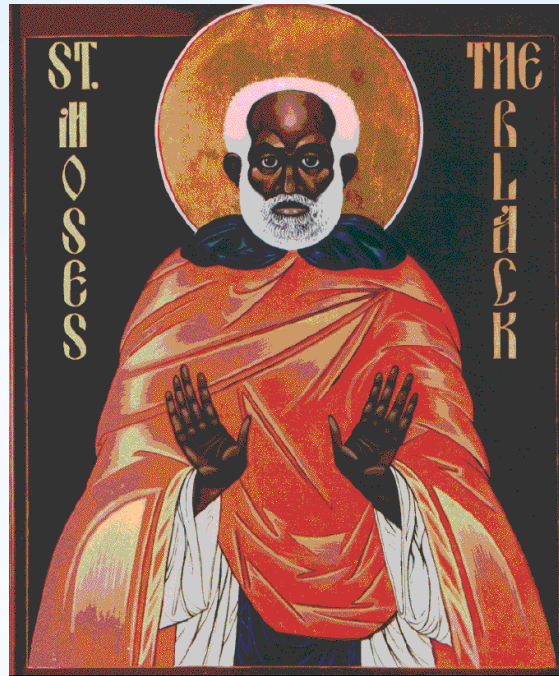


NOTE: The eunuch was **NOT** gay/homosexual as the revisionist chatter of gay groups today are now averring.

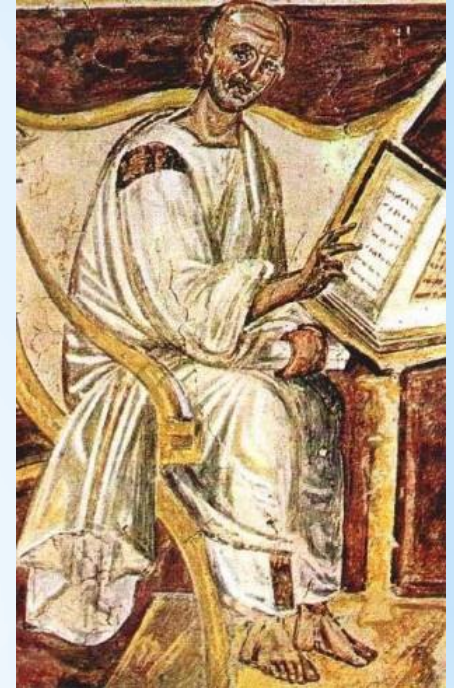
Some Interesting Early Christian Artistic Images



Tertullian, was a prolific early Christian author from Carthage in the Roman province of Africa. He is the first Christian author to produce an extensive corpus of Latin Christian literature.



St Moses the Black (Ethiopian) (330-405) was a former gang leader, murderer, and thief in ancient Africa. However, he became a model of transformation. His is one of the most inspiring stories among the African saints.



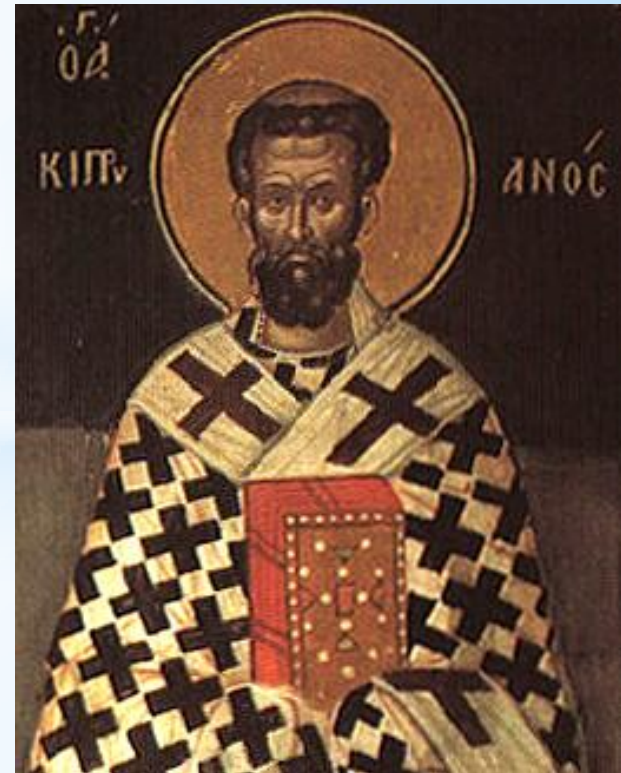
The oldest known icon of St. Augustine of Africa, a powerful intellect and early Church Father(AD 354-430) This is a 6th-century fresco in the Church of St. John Lateran in Rome.

Cyprian was born around 200 AD in North Africa, of pagan parents. He was a prominent trial lawyer and teacher of rhetoric. Around 246 he became a Christian, and in 248 was chosen Bishop of Carthage.

During the reign of the Emperor Valerian, Carthage suffered a severe plague epidemic. Cyprian organized a program of medical relief and nursing of the sick, available to all residents, but this did not prevent the masses from being convinced that the epidemic resulted from the wrath of the gods at the spread of Christianity. Another persecution arose, and this time Cyprian did not flee. He was arrested, tried, and declared an enemy of the gods and finally beheaded on 14 September 258. After only twelve years after being baptized.



Additional Note:
After a "dissipated youth," Cyprian was baptized when he was thirty-five years old, c. 245 AD. After his baptism, he gave away a portion of his wealth to the poor of Carthage.



Some Interesting Early and Later Christian Artistic Images

Icons of the Black Madonna

Mentioned in Bible - Song of Songs



A **Madonna** is a representation of Mary, either alone or with her child Jesus. These images are central icons for both the Catholic and Orthodox churches. The word is from Old Italian **ma donna (my lady)**. No image permeates Christian art as the image of the Madonna and child.

While Mary may be referred to as "the Madonna" in other contexts, in art the term is applied specifically to an artwork in which Mary, with or without the infant Jesus, is the focus, and central figure of the picture.

Other Artistic Christian Images



Saint Monica, an African laywoman. Born in Thagaste in northern Africa about AD 331. Her son, St. Augustine of Hippo (Africa) was a towering Church Father and figure in the history of the Church.



A modern icon of African Saints painted by Fr. Jerome Sanderson, a priest of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

And if you are really that interested google “List of African Saints.” A PDF document by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Baltimore, MD