

# Tour of the Holy Lands - Tarsus



We're driving to Tarsus this morning. It was the largest port in Cilicia (Si-li'sia). The river Cydnus (Sid'nus) flows into the Mediterranean at Tarsus. A famous love story began in Tarsus 41 years before Jesus was born. The Egyptian princess Cleopatra arrived on her gold and silver decorated barge with sails made of purple silk, and sailed up the river to meet the handsome Roman, Mark Antony.



**MARK ANTONY & CLEOPATRA**



Our hero, Paul, was proud to say that he was born in Tarsus. He was probably from a wealthy family, and so he went to fine schools to learn languages and philosophy. When he became an apostle, he wrote many letters, some of which are now in our Bible. In his letters, he mentioned several of his relatives who may have lived in Tarsus. Their names were Junia, Herodion, Lucius, and Jason.





Like many boys, Paul also learned a trade here. He learned tent-making. By working night and day, Paul was able to pay for his own food and housing during his travels.

Tents were often made from goat hair. As we walk around the fields near Tarsus, we see herds of black goats. Would you like to peek inside a goat hair tent?





Look over there – it's an old Roman road from Bible times. Look how solid it still is today. Those roads must have helped Paul and his friends as they traveled through this country. We might see more of them later. In town, let's get out of the bus and visit St. Paul's well. It doesn't mean Paul drank from the well. It just means the people of Tarsus were proud of this famous man who was born in their town.





The citizens also named a beautiful old church after Paul. We can go inside and see how different it is from the old cave we saw in Antioch. Many of the pictures on its walls and ceiling have been preserved. Pictures on church walls used to help teach Bible stories to people who didn't know how to read. We like Bible story pictures, too, don't we? Early Christians never owned their own Bibles. They had to memorize the stories told by others.





It's fun just to walk in the streets of Tarsus. Look at those interesting upper rooms that stick out over the street. What a good idea! It gives a small house more sitting space. And those extra windows help keep the whole house cool in the summer.



**TARSUS WOMEN**



**TARSUS MEN**



**SHOEMAKER**

The clothes the women wear are very colorful. Their skirts and sleeves are long, and their scarves cover the whole head. The men wear little caps, and their black pants are very baggy. Look at all the folds in the shoemaker's pants. Later, we will see the women wearing baggy pants, too. We hear they are very comfortable when picking fruit and vegetables, and riding donkeys.

There are so many more things to see in Tarsus. We could stay longer, but Turkey is a very big country and we're only here for the summer. Now, let's say "goodbye" to Tarsus here on the coast, and then, get ready for a big surprise.

