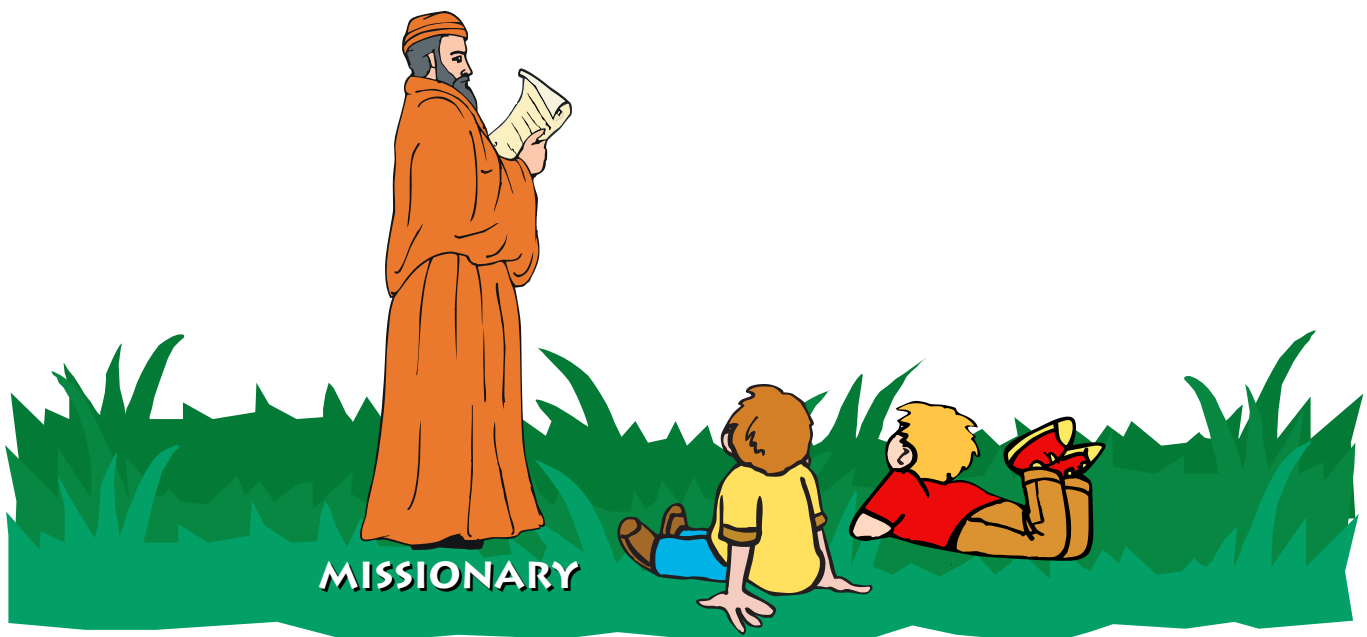


Tour of the Holy Lands - Seleucia



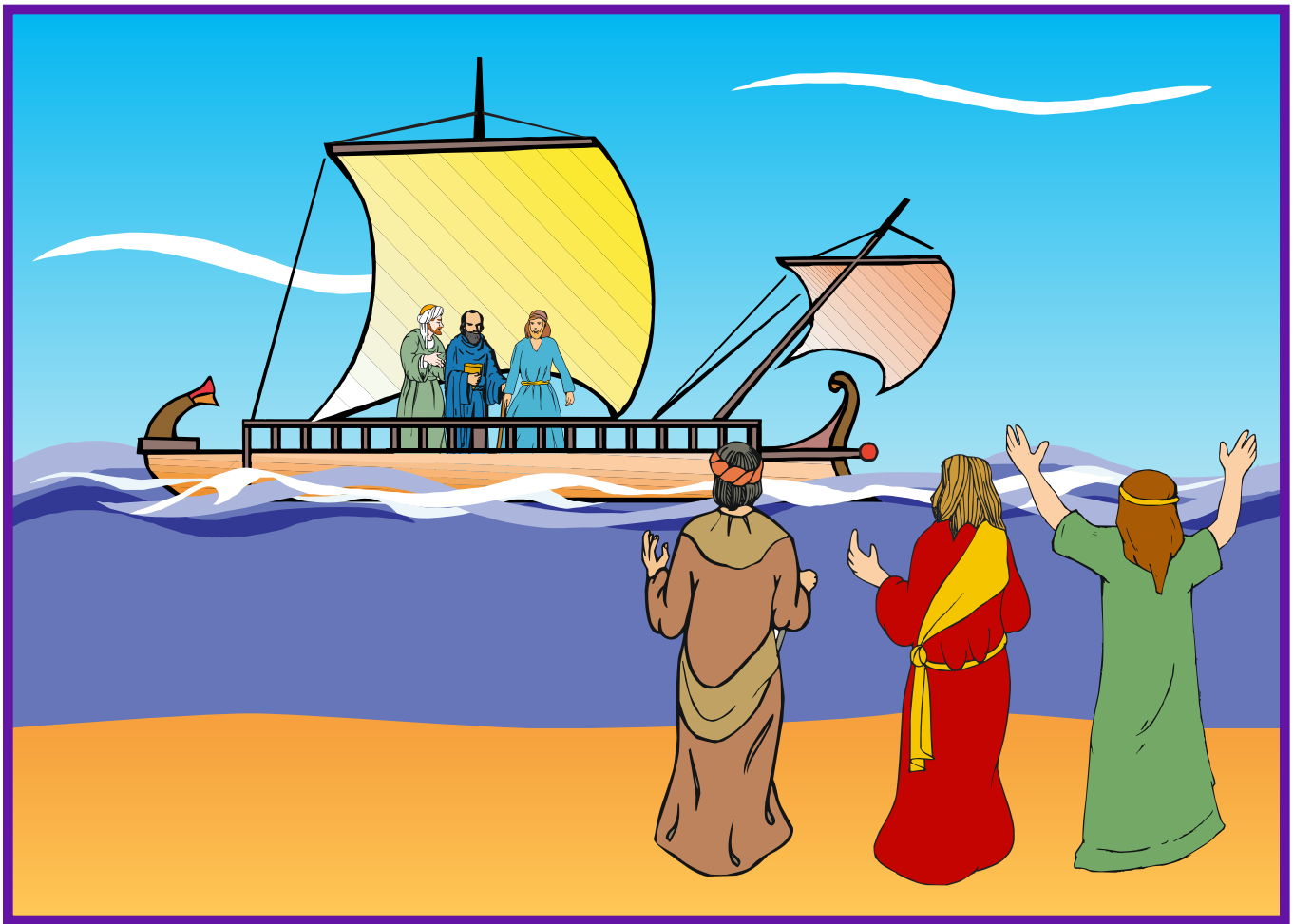
Let's get back on our tour bus and head down to the Mediterranean Sea to a town called Seleucia (Sel-oo'-shia). There, a ship will pick up our missionaries. A missionary is someone who is sent to spread the word of God.



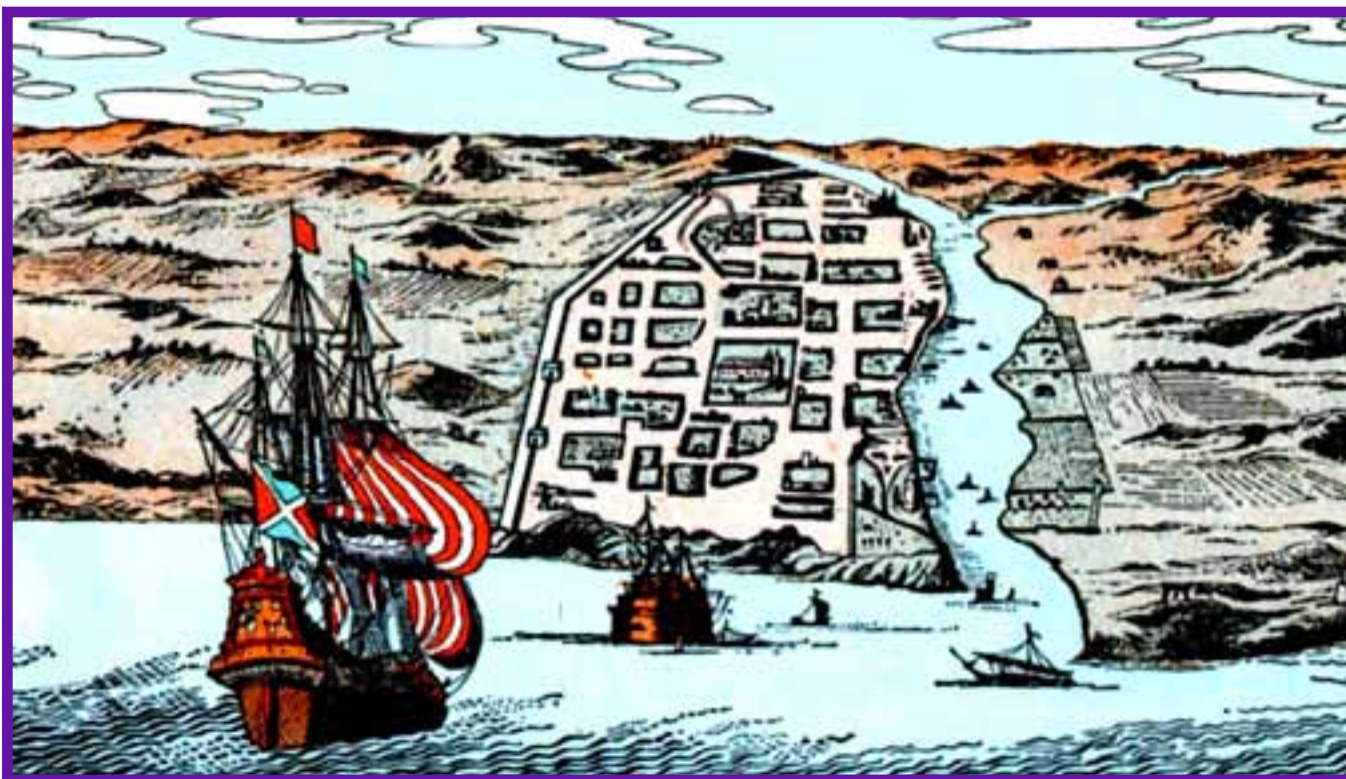


But, before we find the ship, let's explore this old seaside town. It has a wonderful old tunnel built by the Romans that's seven yards deep. Floodwaters would run through the tunnel so fast that the residents called it a "donkey-drowner." See those arches? There are tombs in there. That's where they buried people over 2,000 years ago. Go ahead, climb up those old steps. Stand on that old bridge like Roman kids once did!





Now, let's go down to the shore. There are our missionaries on the ship - Barnabas, Saul, and a third one, John Mark, a young relative of Barnabas. They're ready to travel. They found a ship going to Cyprus, an island just 60 miles away. It was a merchant ship. Perhaps it carried grain. We can picture the church members gathered on the beach, wishing them well and waving goodbye. The three men were heading out into the world to "preach the Gospel to every creature," just as Jesus had asked. And the church in Antioch would pray for them every day. Imagine the excitement!



Now, as we sit here on the beach, let's pretend that it's four years later, and we're meeting the ship on its return to Seleucia. Yes, the disciples' first trip lasted four years!





But, before arriving back in Seleucia, the missionaries headed to Cyprus, which was sometimes called "The Happy Isle" because the weather was so nice. After arriving at Cyprus, the ship dropped the missionaries in Salamis (Sal' a-meas), where they visited synagogues and preached the message of Jesus. You probably remember that synagogues are where Jews worship. Each time the missionaries entered a new town, they preached to Jews first and then to others in the community. Jews were friendly listeners since they worshiped one God and were expecting the Messiah. Barnabas and Saul would tell them their Messiah had already come, and that his name is Jesus Christ; then they would share his teachings and his works.





The three missionaries left Salamis and slowly zig-zagged all the way over to the other side of the island to the city of Paphos (Pay' fōs). The governor of Paphos had asked them to come and tell him about Jesus. But a teacher of black magic, named Bar-Jesus, tried to stop them. He didn't want them in his territory. He pretended to be a Jewish prophet and to tell fortunes, but he was not telling the truth.

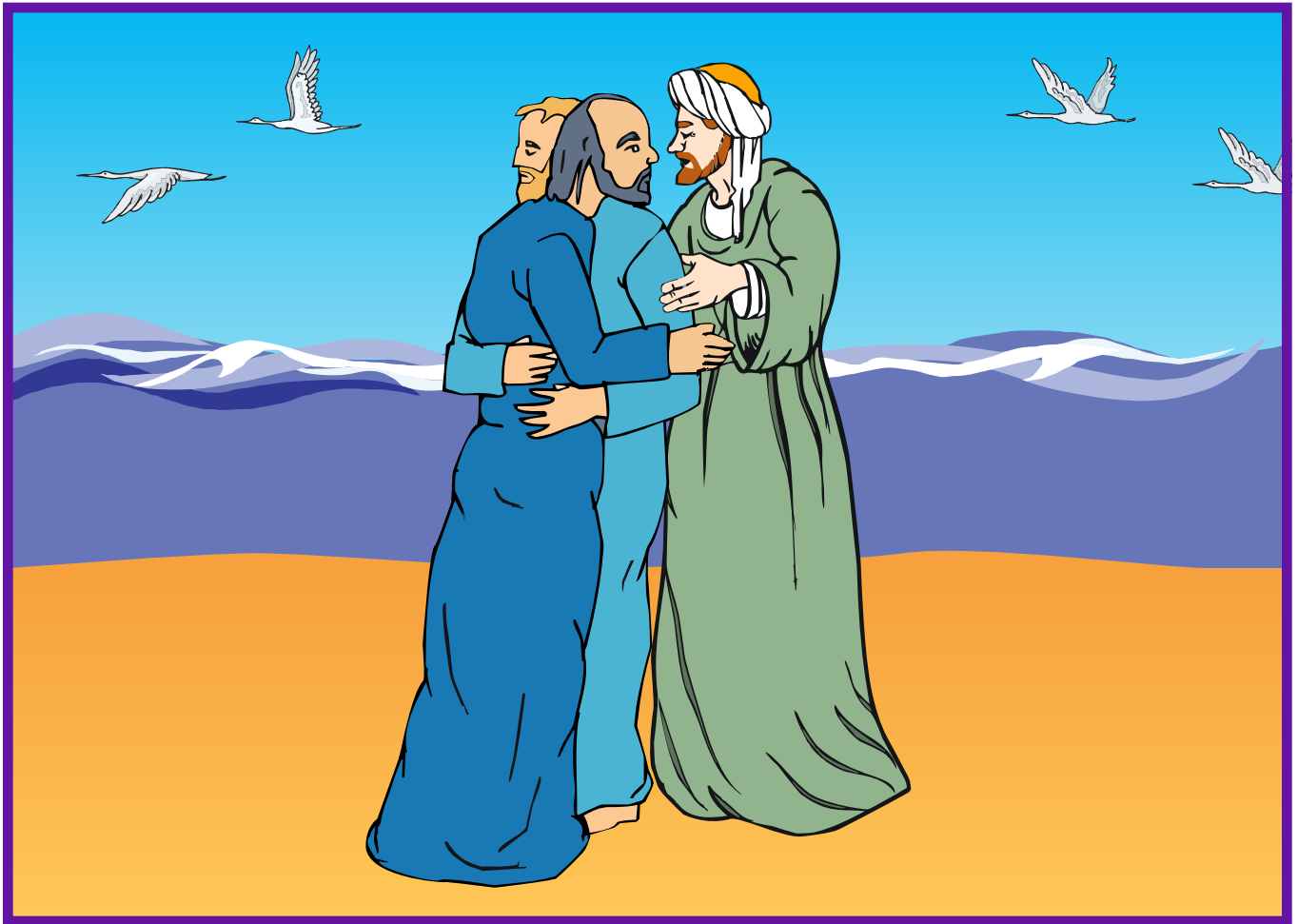




Just then, the Holy Spirit spoke through Saul. Remember, he and Barnabas were filled with the Holy Spirit. Saul uncovered the truth. He called this pretender the "son of the devil"—just the opposite of "Bar-Jesus." And then Saul said, "You shall become blind!"

Sure enough, Bar-Jesus became blind because he shut his eyes against the light of the Gospel. When the governor saw this, he believed their teachings and became a Christian.

This important event moved Saul from being second to Barnabas to being the leader of the two. From then on in the Bible, Saul is named first. However, it doesn't read, "Saul and Barnabas," it reads "Paul and Barnabas." In those days, a man had two names. "Saul" was his Hebrew name and "Paul" his Roman name, meaning "little." And so, in Cyprus, Paul became the leader of the missions, and its chief speaker. Yet, with a name like Paul, he remained humble.



At this point in the disciples' travels, young John Mark said that he had had enough. He decided to leave the mission and return to Jerusalem. Much later, it is believed he wrote one of the four Gospels - Mark.

It's time for us to leave the mission, too. It's been a good, but long day!



SARCOPHAGUS

MOSAIC

But first, let's make a short stop at the local museum to see a couple of pieces of early artwork. The picture on the left shows a corner of a sarcophagus (sar-kof' a-gus) which is a carved stone box in which to bury a very wealthy Roman man. Imagine finding such a large stone. Imagine how long it would take to carve it. Now, look at the picture on the right and notice the design created by so many tiny stones. This mosaic (mō-zay' ik) of small stone squares is just one example of the colorful way the Romans decorated their floors. Imagine searching for and finding colored stones like these.

Now, let's go to our hotel in Antioch.

