

~PONTUS (84) **(Pon'tus) [Sea]**

- A district of northern Asia Minor along the Euxine Sea, or Black Sea. The name evidently was applied in pre-Christian times to that part of northern Asia Minor bordering **Pontus** Euxinus, as the sea was sometimes called.
- Pontus ran from the lower course of the Halys River on the West near Bithynia eastward along the coast toward the Southeast limit of the sea. Along the fertile coastline the climate is warm in the summer and mild in the winter.
- The interior forms the Northeast corner of the central plateau, broken by many river valleys, and in these grain was grown. The mountain slopes were forested and produced timber for shipbuilding.
- Along the coast the influence of Greek colonies was felt, but the people of the interior had close ties to Armenia to the East.
- After being under Persian influence for a time, the separate kingdom of **Pontus** was set up in the **Fourth Century B.C.E.** There was a succession of kings called Mithradates, and close ties with Rome developed.
- However, Mithradates VI Eupator challenged Roman power and expanded his kingdom greatly. After a series of wars, the Romans under Pompey defeated him about **66 B.C.E.** Much of Pontus was then united with Bithynia to the West into a combined province called Bithynia and Pontus.
- But the eastern section was added to the province of Galatia, Galatian **Pontus**. Later, some of this eastern part was given to Polemon, circa **36 B.C.E.**, to form part of the Kingdom of Polemon.
- Thus in the **First Century C.E.** the term, **Pontus**, referred either to the entire geographic area along the coast or to that part found in the combined province of Bithynia and Pontus or even to the eastern section that had become part of Galatia and the Kingdom of Polemon.

- The **First-Century** Jewish writer Philo said that Jews had spread to every part of **Pontus**. Jews from **Pontus** were present in Jerusalem on Pentecost **33 C.E.**
- Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, and Judea and Cappadocia, **Pontus** and the district of Asia. (**Acts of Apostles 2:9**)
- Possibly some of these Jews of **Pontus** who heard Peter's speech became Christians and returned to their home territory. Some 30 years later, Peter addressed his first canonical letter circa **62-64 C.E.** to temporary residents scattered about in **Pontus** and other parts of Asia Minor.
- Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the temporary residents scattered about in **Pontus**, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, to the ones chosen. (**1 Peter 1:1**)
- Since he mentioned, older men, who were to shepherd the flock, Christian congregations likely existed in **Pontus**.
- Therefore, to the older men among you I give this exhortation, for I too am an older man with them and a witness of the sufferings of the Christ, a sharer even of the glory that is to be revealed. (**1 Peter 5:1**)
- Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly, neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly. (**1 Peter 5:2**)
- The Jew named Aquila who was a native of **Pontus** traveled to Rome and then to Corinth, where he met the apostle Paul.
- After these things he departed from Athens and came to Corinth. (**Acts of Apostles 18:1**)
- And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of **Pontus** who had recently come from Italy, and Priscilla his wife, because of the fact that Claudius had ordered all the Jews to depart from Rome. So he went to them (**Acts of Apostles 18:2**)