

## SEVEN YEAR WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

**Year Five**  
**Lessons 1-13**

**First Quarter**  
**Acts 10-22**

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## **F O R E W O R D**

“And He answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, he stones would immediately cry out” (Luke 19:40).

### **Crying Stones**

When Count Luigi Palma di Cesnola, the Italian-American archaeologist, was laboring on the site of Paphos on the Isle of Cyprus, he uncovered a massive marble block carved with this inscription:

“Appollonius to his father and to his mother consecrated the enclosure and this monument having filled the offices of clerk at this market, prefect, town clerk and high priest, and having been in charge of the record office. Erected on the 25th of the month Demarchusius, in the year 13. He also revised the Senate by means of assessors in the time of the proconsul PAULUS.”

NOW read Acts 13:7f. History records only one Paulus who was governor of Cyprus, he being the Sergius Paulus who was led to Christ by the ministry of Paul and Barnabas!

### **Mistake of Luke?**

Luke twice refers to the city magistrates of Thessalonica as “politarchs” (Acts 17:6, 8). Since the term was unknown elsewhere, it was once set down as a mistake of Luke.

Sixteen (16) epigraphical examples now exist in modern Salonica, and one is located in the British Museum on a stone that once formed part of the archway. It was evidently a Macedonian term.

It was Luke’s general practice to use the term in commonest educated use, Hence he called the officials of Philippi “proctors,” and an inscription has similarly established the fact that this was a courtesy title given to the magistrates of a Roman Colony.

“Crying Stones!”

Thus do the stones cry out as they confirm the Word of God!

Will you help us HONOR THE WORD OF GOD by using it in your Bible school?

Recommend that other churches use the WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE!

God will HONOR THOSE WHO HONOR HIS WORD! “PROVE GOD” and SEE!

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 1 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 1

Page 1

Acts 10

Memory Verses: Acts 10:34, 35

Memory Verses:

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteous-ness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34, 35).

**THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS**

The Apostles must have understood from Jesus’ Great Commission that the Gospel was for “all nations” (Matt. 28:18-20), and “every creature” (Mark 16:15, 16).

Jesus told them “And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Definite steps were taken in fulfilling the Great Com-mission (Acts 6:7; 8:4, 5, 26; 9:15; 10:45).

The Conversion of Cornelius, the Gentile, was between 35-40 A.D. (See Year IV, Quarter 4, page 8).

Cornelius was the first Gentile whose conversion is recorded (Acts 11:19, 20).

**“Rest... edified... multiplied”**

Following Saul’s conversion “then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied” (Acts 9:31-35). Peter raises Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9:36-43) at Joppa. This is the prelude to the most interesting and profitable study of the Conversion of Cornelius.

**I. A Wonderful Answer to the Prayer of a Remarkable Man (Acts 10:1-8)**

A. Attributes (Acts 10:1-4),

“There was a certain man... Cornelius” (Acts 10:1): Cornelius was stationed at Caesarea, It was the chief seaport of Palestine at this time, and the Roman capital, containing the Roman military headquarters. It was the home of Philip, the evangelist (Acts 8:40; 21:8).

“Cornelius”: He was a remarkable man. He was a Gentile, a Roman. He may have been a freedman or descendant of the great Cornelean family of Rome. He was a “centurion of the band called the Italian band.”

“Devout man...” (Acts 10:2). Roman centurions always appear in a favorable light in the New Testament. The centurion at the cross (Matt. 27:54, the centurion who built the synagogue at Capernaum (Luke 7:2), and Julius “a centurion of Augustus’ band” in charge of Paul on the voyage to Rome (Acts 27:1f).

This “devout” soldier had abandoned heathenism and was “one that feared God with all his house.” “Gave much alms to the people”: He was a benevolent man. He was doing many alms, the very phrase of Matt. 6:2.

“Prayed to God alway”: Though Cornelius prayed, begging of God at nine and twelve and three o’clock, he was not saved (Acts 11:14). Many Protestant churches would be happy to receive Cornelius just

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as he was BEFORE HE WAS IMMersed. Character alone is NOT THE CONDITION ALONE for membership in a New Testament Church. If so, pious Buddhists, Mormons, Christian Scientists, and many consecrated denominationalists must be admitted without obedience to the Gospel commandment of baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:27)!

“He saw in a vision...” (Acts 10:3): He was not in a dream or trance, but wide awake, and engaged in prayer at 3:00 P.M. (verse 30). An angel from God appeared to him, God heard his prayer because he was yearning for light, and using all the light he had.

“What is it, Lord?” (Acts 10:4): Filled with awe, Cornelius inquired the meaning of the appearance. “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.” His prayers and his alms proved his sincerity and won the ear of God. The only other instance where “memorial” is used in the New Testament is by Jesus about the act of Mary of Bethany (Matt. 26:13; Mark 14:9).

### B. Action (Acts 10:5-8).

“And now send men to Joppa...” (Acts 10:5): Cornelius is not told to go to Joppa. As a soldier he could not leave his post without orders. He is commanded to “send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon... Peter.” Cornelius had an angel speak to him, and God heard his prayers, yet this fine, moral man had to hear words from a man’s lips BEFORE HE WILL BE SAVED! Watch carefully the narrative to see what words were spoken, and what they contained that was so necessary (verse 6).

“Peter... lodgeth with one Simon a tanner... tell thee what thou ought to do” (Acts 10:6): Angels do not convert sinners. This one brought the sinner and the preacher, Peter, together (see Acts 8:26, 29, 30). He bade Cornelius to send to Joppa and get Peter to tell him “what to do to be saved” (Acts 11:13, 14).

“Joppa”: Joppa is about thirty miles south of Caesarea. Joppa, now called Jaffa, is built on a rocky ledge 116 feet high, at the edge of the sea.

“Simon the tanner”: His house was along by the sea. He lived out-side the city walls because he was a tanner, and to secure water for his trade. Some tanneries are by the seashore at Jaffa today.

“Cornelius... called two... servants, and a devout soldier... sent them to Joppa” (Acts 10:7, 8): Cornelius was a man of action. The first were his personal servants, the soldier of his military household. The three were, no doubt, “devout.” The soldier would protect the two household servants. It would be after 3:00 P.M. that Cornelius sent them to Joppa for Peter.

## II. Peter Directed to Go to Cornelius (Acts 10:9-23)

### A. A Jew puzzled by a vision (Acts 10:9-16).

“Peter... housetop to pray... sixth hour” (Acts 10:9): Peter had regular habits of prayer. So should we (Dan. 6:10; Luke 6:12; I Thess. 5:17).

The scene again changes in this section. We pass from Caesarea back to Joppa where Peter was last seen in the house of Simon the tanner (Acts 9:43). Note that Joppa was the place where God, 800 years earlier, had to use a little extra persuasion on Jonah to get him to go to a Gentile nation, Ninevah.

“They... drew nigh...”: The two household servants and the soldier started from Caesarea after 3:00 P.M. They could be near Joppa, thirty miles to the south, the next day “at the sixth hour” or about twelve o’clock.

“Housetop”: The flat top of the house would be surrounded by the usual balustrade about four feet high. It was a place of retirement and often the sleeping place of the family in the warm season. Moses required a balustrade to the roofs (Deut. 22:8; I Sam. 9:25),

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“He fell into a trance” (Acts 10:10): Peter was still completely him-self – in thought and feeling (see verse 14). The vision came when Peter was in prayer. He would be in a favorable mood to an unwelcome truth! The balustrade would give him privacy in praying. “The natural and the supernatural border closely on one another with no definable limits” (Furneaux).

“And saw heaven opened... certain vessel descending... great sheet” (Acts 10:11): The meaning of the vision is clear. Peter was “very hungry” (verse 10), and increasingly so as dinner is delayed. The picture is the sheet held up by four cords to which the sheet is fastened. Peter saw this sheet let down from heaven, filled with “all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air” (verse 12). Fish are not mentioned perhaps because the sheet had no water, though they were clean and unclean also (Lev. 11:9; Deut. 14:9). “All manner” means clearly all varieties, not all individuals. Both clean and unclean animals are in the sheet.

“Voice... Rise, Peter; kill, and eat” (Acts 10:13): Three times the vessel appears. Each time Peter is bidden by a heavenly voice to kill and eat. Each time Peter refuses (verse 14). Each time he is rebuked by the words, “What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common” (verse 15). This could only mean that the ceremonial distinctions of the Law were abrogated. Peter was perplexed that the sheet of UNCLEAN ANIMALS and clean animals was received “again into heaven” (verse 16). What was the meaning of the vision? He would soon see!

#### B. The puzzle solved by the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:17-23).

“The men... stood before the gate” (Acts 10:17): Peter “doubted,” not what the Lord had said, BUT WHAT WAS THE SPECIAL MEANING OF THE VISION. While he was thinking over the matter, the two household servants and the soldier from Cornelius arrived. Did it take diligent search to find the obscure house of Simon the tanner? The men stopped right at the folding gates of the passage that led from the street to the inner court or house. They “called” in a loud voice that those inside might hear whether “Simon... Peter, were lodged there” (verse 18).

“The Spirit... three men seek thee... go with them” (Acts 10:19, 20): The Holy Spirit told Peter the purpose of the three men and what he must do.

“Peter... I am he... What is the cause wherefore ye are come?” (Acts 10:21): Peter called in the men, took care of them till the next day, and then returned with them (verses 22, 23). Six Jewish brethren from Joppa went with him (Acts 11:12),

The vision, the movements of the messengers of Cornelius were well timed by the angels who had them in charge (see Acts 8:26, 27). This vision – and the part he is to play in it (verse 22) humble the apostle.

### III. The Meeting of Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10:23-33)

“And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea...” (Acts 10:24): It was too late in the day to start for Caesarea. It took time to get six brethren ready (Acts 11:12); Parts of two days were employed on the journey.

“And Cornelius waited for them...” Cornelius and “his kinsmen and near friends” were gathered together. They were predisposed to hear Peter favorably.

“Cornelius... fell down... worshipped him” (Acts 10:25): Meeting Peter as he entered, Cornelius cast himself at his feet as God’s messenger. Note Peter’s conduct: “Instead of receiving worship, as the popes who claim to be his successors, he forbade him, as he was ‘only a man.’ Not even an angel ought to be

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worshipped (Rev. 22:9), only God. “Worship” here probably means “reverence” and not actual worship, though Peter took it that way (verse 26). Jesus accepted such worship (Matt. 8:2; Luke 5:8 by Peter).

“Unlawful... Jew to keep company...” (Acts 10:28, 29): Peter explained why he departed from the Jewish custom of having no social intercourse with Gentiles. He desired to know why Cornelius had sent for him (verse 29).

“And Cornelius said, Four days ago...” (Acts 10:30): The Jewish method of counting time makes a part of a day a whole day (verses 3, 8, 9, 23). Cornelius and his family and friends are ready to hear the gospel (verses 24, 30-33). What a receptive audience! “Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God” (verse 33). This assembly of “devout” men recognized that Peter had a message of the Lord for them. This is the first Gentile audience that ever listened to a gospel sermon.

### IV. Peter’s Sermon to the Uncircumcised (Acts 10:34-43)

A. God respects character, not persons (Acts 10:34-38).

“Peter... I perceive that God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34): It had been difficult for Peter to grasp, but now “of a truth” the light has cleared away the fog. Not until Peter had crossed the threshold of the house of Cornelius in the new environment and standpoint that he sees this new and great truth.

On the day of Pentecost Peter had declared the conditions of salvation to the Jews. Now he declares the same conditions for the first time to the Gentiles. To him Christ gave the keys (Matt. 16:9) of the kingdom, and then he opened its doors .to both Jew and Gentile.

“God is no respecter of persons”: It just dawned on Peter that Jew and Gentile are on the same footing in God’s sight. Those “in every nation” who fear God and “worketh righteousness, are accounted with him” (verse 35). A Gentile would not have to become a Jew in order to become a Christian! Peter had not seen this fact before. On Pentecost he spoke of the promise “to all those afar off” (Acts 2:39). Peter understood that they must first become Jews (be circumcised) and then Christians. The new idea, which causes a revolution in Peter’s outlook, is that Christ can and will save Gentiles like this Cornelius group without their becoming Jews at all!

“Preaching peace by Jesus Christ...” (Acts 10:36): The only lasting peace begins with a reconciliation with God (II Cor. 5:17-21). The United Nations can not bring peace to this world. The fruit of Christianity can not grow on the vine of national ambition – on atheistic, unchristian vines as Russia or China.

“Jesus of Nazareth... went about doing good” (Acts 10:38): Peter briefly describes the personal career of Jesus, as he makes plain the way of salvation. He told the story of the life and works of Jesus whose ministry began from his baptism by John (verse 37). “God anointed Jesus” at his baptism, and made him THE ANOINTED. Jesus “went about doing good.” Charles Reynolds Brown called this “The world’s shortest biography.” It is a beautiful description of Jesus.

B. Witnesses to the resurrection (Acts 10:39-43)

“And we are witnesses...” (Acts 10:39): The apostles witnessed not only the life and power of Jesus, but his resurrection as well (verse 40). They were reliable and honest witnesses who knew Jesus before His death. They would know Him after the resurrection (Luke 24:30, 41-42). Peter makes it clear that it was no hallucination or ghost, but Jesus Him-self whom they saw after he rose from the dead.

“And he commanded us to preach...” (Acts 10:42): In the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16).

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“To him give all the prophets witness...” (Acts 10:43); By their testimony of the Christ (See Isa. 53:11; 55:1-3; Joel 2:32).

“That through his name... remission of sins”: Peter states three facts: (1) Remission of sins is in the name of Christ; (2) Remission of sins is only granted on condition of belief in Christ, trust in His name. (3) “WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in Christ, Jew or Gentile, “shall receive re-mission of sins!”

### **V. An Amazed Group of Jewish Christians (Acts 10:44-48)**

“While Peter yet spake... thee Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word” (Acts 10:44): Peter’s sermon was interrupted and broken off by an incident that alone occurs in Acts. The Spirit was “poured out” from God directly on Gentiles! The Jews “were astonished” at this (verse 45). They were able to speak in tongues and “magnify God” (verse 46). This is the only recorded instance where the Spirit fell on unbaptized persons. This exception is made to convince Jewish Christians that **UNCIRCUMCISED GENTILES** were fit subjects of baptism. Peter had to re-call this fact to convince the church at Jerusalem that he had done right (Acts 11:2, 3, 15). Gentile Christians are now baptized with the Spirit as they receive the Gospel, as on Pentecost the Spirit fell on Jews (Acts 11:15, 16).

“Peter, Can any man forbid water... commanded them to be baptized” (Acts 10:47, 48): Peter’s scruples were overcome. He was convinced that a Gentile Pentecost had come. God made no difference in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Gospel was for Jew and Gentile! Uncircumcised Gentiles might be baptized. Cornelius and company are immersed (verse 48). They become “Christians only!”

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 1 - PAGE 6

### Questions

1. Can you name five definite steps in the fulfillment of Acts 1:8 as recorded in the first nine chapters of Acts (Acts 6:7; 8:1, 4, 5, 26; 9:15)?
2. What additional step in the worldwide proclamation of the gospel is recorded in our lesson today (Acts 10:45)?
3. What are some of the attributes of Cornelius (Acts 10:1-2)? Was he a saved man (Acts 10:6; 11:14)?
4. Do you think some of our “open membership” churches would receive Cornelius without insisting that he be immersed? If character alone is a condition for church membership, must not all “pious unimmersed” people be admitted? What does God’s word teach about the necessity of baptism for a penitent believer (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:27)?
5. What the “Italian band” (Acts 10:1)?
6. At what hour was Cornelius praying (Acts 10:3), and what was the answer to his prayer (Acts 10:4, 5, 6)? Should such prayers receive an audible answer now, what would it be? How had the soldier become devout (Acts 10:7, 2)? How far was it and in what direction to Joppa?
7. What commendable nothings are mentioned of Cornelius (Acts 10:1-8, 22, 24, 25, 30-33)?
8. How did Cornelius show both faith and obedience (Acts 10:7, 9; John 13:17; James 4:17)?
9. How did the Lord prepare Peter to receive the messengers of Cornelius (Acts 10:9-16)?
10. How did the messengers find the house (Acts 10:17, 5)? In what sense had the Spirit sent them (Acts 10:20)? What was Peter doing when they arrived (Acts 10:17-19)?
11. What lesson did Peter’s vision teach him (Acts 10:12-15, 28; Gal. 2:15; Eph. 2:11, 12)? Who only is properly cleansed (Eph. 1:7; Acts 2:38; 10:48; Heb. 5:9; 9:22)?
12. Why not start till the morrow (Acts 10:23)? Why did Peter take six Jewish brethren with him (Acts 11:12)?
13. Why did Cornelius “worship” Peter (Acts 10:25, 26)? Did Peter act like a modern-day pope? Who made it unlawful to enter a Gentile’s house (Acts 10:28)? How was it “four days ago” (Acts 10:20, 3, 7, 9, 23, 24)?
14. Why the audience, and why assembled (Acts 10:24, 27, 33)? Why had Cornelius called them in? Have you ever invited your family and friends into your house, and asked the minister or elders to come and give them a Gospel teaching? Why not do it today?
15. What was Peter’s introduction, and why (Acts 10:34, 35)? Of what is God a respecter (Acts 10:35)? What facts does Peter state in the career of Jesus (Acts 10:37-41)? How did Peter’s message to these Gentiles (Acts 10:34-43) differ from his message to the Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36)?
16. How does the believer receive remission “through his name” (Acts 10:43, 48)?
17. What interrupted Peter’s message (Acts 10:44)? What astonished Peter’s co-workers (Acts 10:45; 11:18)?
18. What gift of the Holy Spirit was it (Acts 10:46)? What use did Peter make of the fact (Acts 10:47)? What then was the purpose of it? Was this gift ever connected with forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:1-4; 8:15, 16; 19:5, 6)? WHEN were these Gentiles forgiven (Acts 10:47, 48)?
19. What has Cornelius lacked of being a Christian? How was it supplied?
20. Was Cornelius required to quit his army work in order to become a Christian?

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 2 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 2

Page 1

Acts 11

Memory Verses: Acts 11:26

Memory Verse:

“And when he had found Rim, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26).

**THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH**

Peter’s preaching to Gentiles got him into hot water!

His challenge (Acts 10:47) to the six Jewish brethren (Acts 10:23, 45; 11:12) from Joppa was unanswered. The purpose of the miracle is clear.

**Gospel for Jew and Gentile**

God poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost on the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48) to convince the six Jewish Christians that Gentiles were entitled to receive the Gospel as well as the Jews. Nor were the Gentiles to be circumcised in order to become Christians. The brethren from Joppa were now taught as Peter had been by the vision on the housetop of Simon at Joppa (Acts 10:11-16, 28).

The gospel of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection was preached. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). The Gentiles repented, for in Acts 11:18 it is said of them, “Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”

The Conversion of Cornelius was complete when he and his household, “his kinsmen and near friends” (Acts 10:24) had submitted to the Lord in baptism (read Mark 16:15, 16; Gal. 3:27).

Good morals alone will not SAVE YOU. They did not save Cornelius (Acts 10:2, 3, 22, 30, 31). He was NOT SAVED until he heard and obeyed the gospel (Acts 11:14)!

**I. Peter Explains, But Refuses to Apologize (Acts 11:1-18)**

A. The accusation or censure (Acts 11:1-3).

1. The true report (Acts 11:1).

“And the apostles and brethren... heard... Gentiles had also received the word of God” (Acts 11:1): Peter expected when he returned to Jerusalem that he would have to give an account of his eating with Gentiles, of preaching the gospel to them, and of baptizing believing Gentiles without first circumcising them. The news spread like wildfire among the believing Gentiles without first circumcising them. The news spread like wildfire among the Jewish Christians. The case of the Samaritans was different. They were half Jews, though disliked (John 4:9; Acts 8:5-8). Here were real Romans. They believed in God. God approved them by sending the Holy Spirit upon them (Acts 10:44-48).

2. The angry contention (Acts 11:2).

“And when Peter was come... they of the circumcision contended with him” (Acts 11:2): The Jerusalem “Circumcision Party” was the Pharisaic or Judaizing wing of the disciples (Acts 15:5) who made circumcision necessary for all Gentile converts. “Contended” is a strong word, It means they separated themselves, took sides against, or made a cleavage. Jude 9 gives a true picture of it. The Devil objected to the bringing of Moses from his grave in Moab for the transfiguration (Matt. 17:3). The Circumcision, the

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 2 - PAGE 2

Jews, were very angry with Peter for his so-called defection. At least these Hebrew Christians had not learned that Peter was the first Pope, and therefore infallible! He was, of course, simply a messenger whose acts and words are discussed, blamed or approved, He was a Christian only!

### 3. The trifling charge (Acts 11:3).

“Thou went in to men uncircumcised... eat with them” (Acts 11:3): This action of Peter was a positive violation, not of the laws of Moses, BUT OF THE RULES OF THE ORTHODOX JEWS. Now where did the Lord command them to abstain from eating with Gentiles! It was a tradition, which often substitutes man’s will for God’s Word. It was the same complaint that the Pharisees had made against Jews when he ate with publicans and sinners (Luke 15:2). Peter had similar scruples when the vision came to him at Joppa, and when he entered the house of Cornelius in Caesarea (Acts 10:28). Peter had been led beyond the Circumcision Party!

Sprinkling for immersion, the mass for the weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7), and confession to a priest instead of to Christ are some samples of tradition to be rejected by New Testament Christians today (Matt. 15:6-9; Luke 15:12).

### B. The reply (Acts 11:4-18).

#### 1. The rehearsal of facts (Acts 11:4-14).

“But Peter rehearsed the matter...” (Acts 11:4): Peter began at the beginning and gave the full story of God’s dealings with him in Joppa and Caesarea. “Expounded” means he gave a deliberate and detailed narrative “in order.” He repeats his experience of Acts 10:9-22. God made it clear that what He had made clean man should not regard as unclean. When the three men came from Cornelius, “The Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting” (verse 12).

“These six brethren accompanied me...” (Acts 11:12): These were brethren of Joppa, but Peter had taken them to Jerusalem to confirm his words. He knew he would be called on the carpet!

“Peter... shall tell thee words... thy house... be saved” (Acts 11:14): Peter is anxious to show his Jewish brethren that he did not go to the house of Cornelius of his own initiative. He went under direct orders from God! Cornelius was NOT SAVED despite his moral goodness. Obedience to the gospel saves the sinner (Heb. 5:9; Acts 10:34-43).

#### 2. God’s seal of approval (Acts 11:15).

“The Holy Ghost fell on them...” (Acts 11:15): Peter’s Pentecost sermon is not repeated here, but the events are recalled. “He rests his defense, not on what he said, BUT ON WHAT GOD DID.” He identifies what happened to Cornelius and the apostles on Pentecost as being the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise to “baptize in the Holy Spirit” (Matt 3:11; Acts 1:5; 11:16), Holy Spirit baptism was not the water baptism which Jesus commanded the disciples to preach (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16). This was outpouring of the Holy Spirit by the Lord Jesus (Acts 2:33). It was always attended by miraculous phenomena. It signified God’s approval and was limited to the age of the apostles.

We are not to confuse the indwelling of the Spirit in our hearts with the miraculous power of the spirit. He comes into the heart of the believer who is immersed in obedience to gospel commands (Acts 2:38; 5:32; Gal. 5:22, 23).

The church began “in miracle and is continued by law. In its beginning everything must have been created by miracle. Whether the order of oak trees began with an acorn or an oak, we can not say, but for either to exist without the other would be a miracle, and in the beginning one of them was without the other.

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 2 - PAGE 3

But, of course, nature's laws perpetuates the order, each seed bringing forth after its kind" (W. R. Walker). Peter says Pentecost was "the beginning" of the Great Commission, of the preaching of the new covenant, of the new conditions of the gospel under the reign of our King and Saviour.

The law of conversion is the same for Jew and Gentile and has been since Pentecost. Man cannot change this law of pardon (Gal. 1:6-9).

### 3. A new meaning (Acts 11:16,17).

"Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 11:16): Peter recalls the words of Jesus in Acts 1:5. He understood this saying of Jesus, as he had not done before. God "gave them the like gift as he did unto us" on Pentecost. "What was I, that I could withstand God? All these extraordinary signs were then given in order to show Peter and the Jewish Christians that the Gentiles were acceptable to God. Peter changed his wrong conceptions when He knew God's will. Later he played the coward at Antioch (Gal. 2: 11-14).

### 4. A unanimous conclusion (Acts 11:18).

"Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18): The opposition gave up the controversy. They were convinced by the account, and assured that God had accepted the Gentiles, and had removed the barriers in the way of the Gentiles repenting and finding life through Christ.

## II. A Church Is Founded in Antioch (Acts 11:19-30)

### A. The beginning of the work (Acts 11:19-21).

"Now they that were scattered abroad... traveled... Antioch" (Acts 11:19): Luke starts over again from the same persecution of Saul and runs a new line of events up to Antioch. The apparent calamity of the scattering abroad of the Christians really issued in the great missionary movement which occupies practically the remaining part of Acts. They "preached the word to none but unto the Jews only."

"Men of Cyprus and Cyrene... were come to Antioch" (Acts 11:20): This is Antioch in Syria, the capital of Syria, built in 301 by Seleucus Nicator, the founder of the Seleucid Empire, which had been the Asiatic part of the vast empire of Alexander the Great. It was situated on the left bank of the Orontes River, about 15 miles from the Mediterranean, with Seleucia as its port. The city was set in a broad and fertile valley, and was shielded by majestic snow-covered mountains. It was called Antioch "the Beautiful and Golden." It boasted a population of 500,000. It was cosmopolitan. Many Jews were there. Its Grove of Daphne was so indecent that Constantine later abolished it by force.

"Spake unto the Grecians." The preachers were Grecians, or Hellenistic Jews. These preachers were following the example of Peter until after his experience with Cornelius. They did not know at first of the revelation to Peter. However, they "spake unto the Grecians." Again Gentiles hear and obey the gospel. Herod died (Acts 12:23) in the year 44 A.D. From Acts 11:26 we learn that Barnabas and Saul worked in Antioch a year before that event. This means that Barnabas brought Paul to Antioch in the year 43 A. D. From verses 22-25 Barnabas had not been in Antioch many months before he went for Saul. So he must have been sent from Jerusalem not earlier than the latter part of 42 A.D. So, the preaching to the Greeks had not

taken place earlier than the last of 41 or early 42 A.D. The baptism of Cornelius occurred in 40 or 41 A.D., as Luke shows that "uncircumcised Gentiles were not baptized until after Peter opened that door to them in Caesarea."

### B. Barnabas sent to Antioch (Acts 11:22-24).

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 2 - PAGE 4

“The church... in Jerusalem... sent forth Barnabas” (Acts 11:22): Barnabas himself was a Grecian Jew (Acts 4:36), and a friend of Saul (Acts 9:27). He was chosen as a suitable man to go to Antioch, and see whether there had been a real work of God. When “he came and had seen the grace of God, (he) was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord” (verse 23). Antioch is the first church named outside the bounds of Palestine. It was to become a great missionary center for the conversion of the Gentile world.

Luke pays a noble tribute to Barnabas (verse 24). “Much people was added unto the Lord” under such leadership.

C. Barnabas brings Saul to Antioch (Acts 11:25, 26).

“Then departed Barnabas... to seek Saul” (Acts 11:25): It is plain from Gal. 1:21 that Saul had not been idle in Cilicia. Tarsus was not very far from Antioch. Barnabas probably knew that Saul was a “Chosen Vessel” (Acts 9:15) of Christ to work among the Gentiles. Barnabas had “none of the littleness which cannot bear the presence of a possible rival” (Furneaux). The hour and the man met when Barnabas brought Saul to Antioch (verse 26). The door was open and God’s man was ready. God always has a man prepared for a great emergency in the kingdom. The call of Barnabas was simply the repetition of the call of Christ. So Saul came.

“A whole year they assembled themselves.” A. D. 44. Barnabas and Saul continued the work with great success.

“The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch”: Who gave them the name “Christian?” Was it given in derision, or as a title of reproach?

The Greek verb is “chramatidzo,” from the noun “chramatismos,” which means “an oracle.” The verb, therefore, means, “to speak as an oracle, to be divinely warned, to be called or named from a divine source.” Always when the word is used it is in the sense of a divine call, warning, or command.

Nine times in the New Testament the verb “chramatidzo” is translated with this divine sense clearly indicated (Matt. 2:12, 22; Luke 2:26; Acts 10:22, Romans 7:3; 11:4; Heb. 8:4, 5; 11:7; 12:25).

If Acts 11:26 were correctly translated it would read “And the disciples were divinely called Christians first at Antioch.” Such a rendering as this would then correspond to the translations given chramatidzo in the other passages in which it is used. If this correct rendering had been given, all the questions and disputes as to whether or not the name was given in derision would obviously have been impossible.

Meyer’s commentary on Acts makes this comment on Acts 11:26: “There is nothing to support the view that the term (Christian) was first used as a title of ridicule” (page 223).

D. The church must be missionary (Acts 11:27-30).

“Prophets from Jerusalem... Agabus” (Acts 11:27, 28): Agabus appears here, and once again in the narrative (Acts 21:10). On both occasions he is seen exercising the prophetic gift in its predictive element. A famine that he announced is master of history. What is valuable in chronicling it in the sacred record *is* that it was a crisis that brought out the true Christian spirit of these Gentile Christians.

“Great dearth... world... days of Claudius Caesar” (Acts 11:28): He was Roman Emperor A. D. 41-44. Josephus (Ant. VIII. 13, 4) appears to restrict the famine to Palestine.

“Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined.” (Acts 11:29): Christians must not only preach the gospel to “every creature” (Mark 16:15, 16), but we must care for the poor, as it is always famine time for some of God’s children somewhere.

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 2 - PAGE 5

“Determined to send relief.” They marked off the horizon, they determined to send, as they were able. They pledged to give as God entrusted money to them!” “Horrors,” I can hear some folks say, “did they do things like that then?” Christians always have done such things. Christians still do such things (II Cor. 8:1-5; Acts 20:35).

The worst of the famine came in A. D. 45. The warning by Agabus stirred the brethren in Antioch to send the collection on ahead! In Acts 20:17, 28: “elders” and “bishops” are used interchangeably as in Titus 1:5, 7. In Acts 21:18 Paul presented a later collection also to the elders. Since Peter and James (till his death) were in Jerusalem during the persecution in Acts 12, it is probable that the visit of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem came really after that persecution for Peter left Jerusalem (Acts 12:17). The “elders” here mentioned may include the preachers in Judea also outside of Jerusalem (Acts 26:20).

### Questions

1. When Peter returned to Jerusalem from Caesarea, what offense did his Jewish brethren charge against him (Acts 11:1-3; Mark 2:16; Acts 10:28; 15:1)?
2. What is the meaning of “contended” (Acts 11:2; Jude 9; Matt. 17:3)?
3. How did Peter prove that this new movement to the Gentiles did not originate with him, but with God (Acts 11:5-14)?
4. Who “bade” Peter to go to Cornelius (Acts 11:12)? How conclusive was Peter’s argument (11:12-14)?
5. Why mention the “six brethren” who accompanied him to Caesarea (Acts 11:12, 15; 10:23, 45)?
6. With what promise does Peter identify the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:15; Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5; 11:16)? What “beginning?”
7. What would have been Peter’s sin had he refused to go to these Gentiles (Acts 11:17)?
8. What unanimous agreement is reached after Peter’s explanation (Acts 11:18)?
9. What “scattering” and what “persecution” are referred to (Acts 11:19; 9:1; 8:4)?
10. Why were the three localities in the order given (Acts 11:19)?
11. When the preaching to Greeks (Acts 11:20, 19-3)? Was the work a success (verse 21)?
12. What city now comes before us which is to be the great Gentile center for missionary operations (Acts 11:20-26)?
13. How did the saints at Jerusalem show their interest in the church at Antioch (Acts 11:22)?
14. Over which did Barnabas rejoice, the grace of God, or the work of man (Acts 11:23)? What attributes of Barnabas are given (Acts 11:24)?
15. Why did Barnabas seek Saul at Tarsus (Acts 11:24b, 25; 9:15)?
16. Why did they remain in Antioch so long (Acts 11:26)? How long?
17. By whom were the disciples first called Christians? Why (Acts 11:26)? Cite nine other references of “divine” calling, or warning. Why do translators confuse people when a correct translation would stop arguments before they begin?
18. What confidence had the church at Antioch in Agabus (Acts 11:27)?
19. Why send relief to Judea, when the famine was to be in Antioch as well? Why send such men (Acts 11:30)?
20. When had the brethren in Judea appointed “elders” (Acts 11:30)?

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 3 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 3

Page 1

Acts 12

Memory Verses: Acts 12:5

Memory Verse:

“Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him” (Acts 12:5).

**PETER’S DELIVERANCE**

“Our fathers, chained in prisons dark, were still in heart and conscience free. How sweet would be their children’s fate, If they, like them, could die for thee! Faith of our fathers! Holy faith! We will be true to thee till death!” – F. W. Faber

Again persecution broke out in Jerusalem, and the first of the apostolic band suffered martyrdom at the hands of Herod.

Acts 12 is notable because after this Peter drops out of the history of Acts, and is mentioned only in Acts 15:7-11 where He defends Paul who had got into trouble with the Judaizers.

**I. James Martyred, Peter Delivered (Acts 12:1-10)**

A. The sufferers (Acts 12:1-4).

“Now about that time Herod the king.” (Acts 12:1): While Saul and Barnabas were at Antioch. That is, the early part of A. D. 44 since that is the date of Herod’s death. As suggested, Barnabas and Saul came down from Antioch to Jerusalem after the persecution by Herod at the end of 44 or the beginning of 45.

“Herod the king”: Accurate title at this particular time. Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great, was King of Palestine A. D. 42 to 44. Only for these three years was a Herod king over Palestine since the death of Herod the Great and never afterwards. Archelaus never actually became king though he had the popular title at first (Matt. 2:22).

“Put forth his hands to vex certain of the church”: This was a new persecution and persecutor. He intended to do harm or evil to the church. Herod Agrippa I was an Idumean through his grandfather Herod the Great and a grandson of Mariamne the Maccabean princess. A favorite of Caligula the Roman Emperor, he was anxious to placate his Jewish subjects while retaining the favor of the Romans. So he built theatres and held games for the Romans and Greeks and slew the Christians to please the Jews. Josephus (Ant. XIX. 7, 3) calls him a pleasant vain man scrupulously observing Jewish rites. Here we have for the first time political power (after Pilate) used against the disciples.

It had been eight years or more since the persecution and death of Stephen.

“And he killed James... with the sword” (Acts 12:2): Jesus called James a son of thunder along with his brother John. Jesus had predicted a bloody death for both of them (Matt. 20:23; Mark 10:38f). James is the first apostle who suffered martyrdom. Luke tells the story in seven Greek words, eleven in English. Did James remember Matt. 20:20-28 as his head was placed on the block of the executioner?

The Jews considered beheading a shameful death as in the case of the Baptist (Matt. 14:10).

“Pleased the Jews... he proceeded... to take Peter also” (Acts 12:3): Herod’s execution of James was a “feeler,” If the people objected, no more apostles would be killed. “It pleased the Jews,” so Peter was

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 3 - PAGE 2

arrested and placed in jail with extra precautions to prevent his escape (verse 4). Sixteen soldiers guarded Peter around the clock.

“Days of unleavened bread”: Luke locates the time of the year when Peter was arrested, the Passover. It was a fine time for Agrippa to increase his favor among the crowds there by extra zeal against the Christians. Did Luke obtain his information about the incident from John Mark at whose mother’s house the disciples gathered (Acts 12:12)?

“After Easter...” (Acts 12:4): The Passover week (Ex. 12:15, 16). “Easter” should be translated “after Passover.”

### B. The supplicants (Acts 12:5).

“But prayer was made without ceasing...” (Acts 12:5): Sixteen soldiers carefully guarded Peter. Agrippa I had heard of Peter’s previous escape (Acts 5:19) and so took no chances for connivance of the jailers.

It was a crisis for the Jerusalem church. James had been slain. Peter was to be the next victim “after Passover.” Hence “earnestly” the church prayed (late adverb from ‘ektenes,’ strained, from ‘ekteino,’ to stretch). In the New Testament is found only here, Luke 22:44 and I Pet. 1:22. It looked like a desperate case for Peter, “Without ceasing” the church sent up prayer to God for Peter’s deliverance.

What would Peter’s emotions be as he was jailed during the Passover season during which Jesus had been crucified about ten years before? Peter does not shrink from torture or death. Simon has now become “Peter” – “rock.”

The supplicants with unarmed hands lifted in prayer wield a mightier weapon than sword, spear or gun. Prayer changes things!

### C. The sleeper (Acts 12:6).

“Peter was sleeping between two soldiers...” (Acts 12:6): Herod planned to execute Peter on the day after the Passover week ended. “The stricter Jews regarded it as a profanation to put a person to death during a religious festival” (Hackett).

Peter was “sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains.” Two guards outside before the door and two inside, according to Roman rule. Did Peter recall the prophecy of Jesus that he should be put to death in his old age (John 21:18)?

### D. The supernatural (Acts 12:7-10)

“The angel of the Lord came... Arise up quickly” (Acts 12:7): Peter expected to die the next day. The church was now praying for his re-lease. The angel “smote Peter on the side” strongly enough to wake Peter from a sound sleep, and yet not rouse the guards. It was probably between 3 A.M. and 6 A.M., hours when changes in the guards were made. Peter tied on his sandals, threw his outer garment around him, and followed the angel (verses 8, 9). He soon found his escape was not a vision, but real and miraculous (verse 10; Matt. 18:10; Heb. 1:14).

The angel came in answer to prayer. He took Peter through the “first ward,” the two soldiers of the quaternion stationed by the door, and the “second ward” some other soldiers, not part of the sixteen, further on in the prison by the iron gate. The angel saw Peter through one of the narrow streets and then left him.

## II. A Prayer Meeting Interrupted by Prayers Being Answered (Acts 12:11-19)

“Peter... Now I know... the Lord... hath delivered me” (Acts 12:11): There was no further confusion of mind that it was an ecstasy (Acts 10:10). Peter gave God credit for his release! James had been put to death, and the Jewish people were eagerly waiting for the execution of Peter like hungry wolves.

“Considered... he came to the house of Mary” (Acts 12:12): Peter decided quickly what to do. The Christians often met to pray in the home of Mary. He would go there and relieve their anxiety. Mary was probably a wealthy widow, and the mother of John Mark (Acts 13:5, 13; 15:39). Probably many homes were opened to the Christians that night in Jerusalem as they prayed for Peter on what all supposed would be his last night on earth. Is your home noted for its praying too, or its straying from, our Lord Jesus Christ?

“And they said, Thou art mad” (Acts 12:15): When Rhoda heard and recognized Peter’s knock and voice (verses 13, 14), she ran to tell Mary and those gathered for prayer about it. They rebuked this female slave, although they had been praying that Peter would not deny his Lord when he faced death. Evidently they did not expect God to release Peter. God broke up this prayer meeting by answering prayers in a glorious way! “But Peter continued knocking...” (Acts 12:16): Now all heard the knocking. The whole group rushed out to the courtyard this time to make sure. They were “astonished”; they could hardly believe their eyes as they saw Peter.

“Beckoning... hold their peace” (Acts 12:17): There were probably loud exclamations of astonishment and joy. With a downward movement of his hand he silenced them. Peter was anxious for every precaution, and he wanted their attention. Peter told them the wonderful story of “how the Lord had brought him out of the prison.” “Go show these things unto James” -- not the apostle, but the brother of the Lord, so conspicuous after this as the leader of the church at Jerusalem. Peter’s message seems to recognize the fact that James was a leading man. Had the apostles retired from the city for fear of Herod? For notices of James see Acts 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19; 2:9, 12. “James, and the brethren” were probably in another meeting elsewhere. There was no place where all the thousands of disciples in Jerusalem could meet.

“And he departed, and went into another place”: Did Peter go to Rome? We do not know. He was recognized later as the apostle to the circumcision (Gal. 2:7; I Pet. 1:1). He may have been in Rome with John Mark when he wrote the First Epistle (I Pet. 5:13), unless it is the real Babylon. If Peter went to Rome during this early period, there is NO EVIDENCE THAT HE FOUNDED THE CHURCH THERE. If he had done so, in the light of II Cor. 10:16 it would be strange that Paul had not mentioned it in writing to Rome, for he was anxious not to build on another man’s foundation (Rom. 15:20).

If Peter really left Jerusalem at this time instead of hiding in the city, he probably did some mission work as Paul says that he did (I Cor. 9:5). “Keepers... put to death” (Acts 12:18, 19): When the absence of Peter became known it caused “no small stir among the soldiers” (verse 18). “According to the strict letter of Roman military law, the execution of the soldiers was a necessity” (McGarvey). They were responsible for the prisoners with their lives (Acts 16:27; 27:42). Herod had to admit Peter was released by a miracle of God, or that his soldiers had freed Peter. This they had not done. The king was determined not to admit the miracle. He chose rather to murder sixteen innocent men! “No wonder that the bloody wretch soon left the scene of so foul a crime, and made Caesarea his place of residence.”

## III. Herod’s Humiliating Death and the Return of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 12:20-25)

### A. The smiting (Acts 12:20-23).

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 3 - PAGE 4

“And Herod was highly displeased...” (Acts 12:20): The reason for this displeasure is not known. Tyre and Sidon were on the coast; Herod’s dominions occupied the country behind them. He was baffled, angry and conceited – defeated in his diabolical aim to kill Peter. Herod cut off huge grain shipments to Tyre and Sidon. By bribes (as in Matt. 28:14), Blastus made “peace.” “Hunger has signed many treaties.”

“Herod arrayed... oration... It is the voice of a god” (Acts 12:21, 22): Josephus says Herod was arrayed in a robe of silver tissue (Ant. XVII. 6, 8; XIX. 8, 2). It was the second day of the festival in honor of the Emperor Claudius, possibly his birthday.

The rays of the sun shone on Herod’s brilliant apparel and the vast crowd in the open amphitheater became excited as the king began to speak. The shouting audience said: “It is the voice of a god.” They did it to gain Herod’s favor. In the pagan sense of emperor worship, not as the Supreme Being, they said Herod was “a god.” It pleased the king’s vanity.

“The Lord smote him...” (Acts 12:23): The angel gently “smote” and awakened Peter (verse 7); here he “smote” Herod Agrippa I, a severe stroke of affliction. Like Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:30) pride went before a fall. He was struck down at the zenith of his power, like Mussolini and Hitler (see Matt. 23:12; Rom. 14:10-12).

Herod accepted impious flattery (Hackett) instead of giving God the glory. A nominal Jew, he was seized with violent pains in the bowels and died after five days of torture. Josephus (Ant. XIX. 8, 2) says that the refuting of his flesh produced worms. This Jewish writer gives further details, one a superstitious sight of an owl sitting on one of the ropes of the awning of the theatre while the people flattered him, an omen of his death to him. Luke simply says that God smote him.

B. A satisfying fact (Acts 12:24, 25).

“But the word of God grew and multiplied” (Acts 12:24): “But” suggests a contrast. The influence of the word of God kept extending, amid the exciting events in the life of the church. The death of James and the imprisonment of Peter could not “kill” the church. Persecution will never destroy the church (Acts 2:41; 4:32; 5:14; 6:7; 8:25; 9:31; 11:24). Sooner or later, Herod and those who opposed the Christ have been swept aside, while the march of the triumphant Word has never ceased for a moment.

“And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem... took with them John... Mark” (Acts 12:25): These missionary workers finished their work in Jerusalem. They took John Mark, Peter’s son in the gospel (Pet. 5:13) with them because of his fitness and willingness for the work of Saul. In Acts 13:5 John Mark appears as the associate of their missionary labors.

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 3 - PAGE 5

### Questions

1. Up to this point in the history of the Christian Church, from what power had her persecutions come (Acts 4:1-3; 5:17, 18; 6:9-13; 8:1-3)?
2. What king started civil persecution (Acts 12:1, 2)? What Herod was this? (See Josephus Ant. XIX. 5, 6; XIX. 5-8)
3. How did he begin the persecutions (Acts 12:2)? What encouraged him (Acts 12:3)? How many were four quaternions (Acts 12:4)?
4. At what season was this (Acts 12:3, 4)? How should "Easter" be translated in Acts 12:4?
5. What weapon did the church use against Herod (Acts 12:5; II Cor. 1:10, 11; 10:4)?
6. In what way was Peter guarded (Acts 12:6, 10; 5:19)? Why so many precautions (Acts 12:5; Deut. 32:36)?
7. What miraculous details recorded in connection with Peter's deliverance (Acts 12:7-10; Job 5:12)?
8. What were Peter's first and second reactions to his deliverance (Acts 12:9, 11)?
9. What does Acts 12:12 suggest as to the spiritual condition of John Mark's home? Do you follow I Thess. 5:17 in your home?
10. What evidence is found in Acts 12:13-15 that Rhoda was a true believer in Christ? Why say, "It is his angel?" (Verse 15; Matt. 18:10; Heb. 1:14)?
11. Were the members of this prayer meeting expecting Peter's deliverance (Acts 12:12-16, 5; see Acts 5:18-23)?
12. Why did Peter say, "Go show these things unto James" (Acts 12:17), and what James?
13. Did Peter go to Rome (Acts 12:17)? Do we KNOW Peter was ever in Rome (I Pet. 5:13)?
14. Why were the guards put to death (Acts 12:19)? What defense did they make? How should Herod Agrippa I have regarded the case?
15. With what two nations was Herod displeased (Acts 12:20)?
16. With what method did they effect peace (Acts 12:20)? How did Herod respond (Acts 12:21)?
17. What blasphemous sin was committed by the people (Acts 12:23)?
18. What was God's judgment upon him (Acts 12:23)? How does Josephus describe Herod's death (ANT. XIX. 8, 2)?
19. Why did the word now grow and multiply (Acts 12:24; I Pet. 1:24, 25)? Will persecution ever destroy the church of Christ (Acts 2:41; 4:32; 5:14; 6:7; 8:25; 9:31; 11:24)?
20. When the return of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 12:25)? Why take Mark with them?

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 4 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 4

Page 1

Acts 13

Memory Verses: Acts 13:2

Memory Verse:

“And he killed James the brother of John with the sword” (Acts 13:2)

**THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES**

Luke in Acts 13 begins the second part of Acts with Antioch as the center of operations, no longer Jerusalem. Paul now becomes the central figure instead of Peter.

The first distinctly missionary movement sprang from Antioch. It was independent of all official initiation. Jerusalem had hesitated too long to carry out the command of Jesus to take the gospel to the whole world. Antioch will receive that glory.

“Barnabas and Saul” (Acts 13:2) were the first missionaries to be sent out by the New Testament Church in Syria.

**“Every Christian is a Missionary”**

When Admiral Foote was in Siam, he invited the royal dignitaries to dinner on his vessel. As soon as the guests were seated at the table, he, as was his invariable custom, asked a blessing upon the food. The king in surprise said he thought only missionaries asked a blessing.

“True,” replied Admiral Foote quietly, “but every Christian is a missionary.” Jesus divinely commissioned every Christian to preach the Gospel to “every creature” (Mark 16:15, 16).

The “ministration” of Barnabas and Paul was the distribution of relief sent by the church at Antioch to Jerusalem Christians (Acts 11:27-30). Such a gracious act on the part of the Gentile Christians toward their Jewish brethren would soften Jewish prejudice toward the Gentiles receiving the Gospel. Mark returned with Barnabas and Saul to Antioch (Acts 12:12, 25).

**“Spiritual Separation”**

Acts 13 has been entitled “Spiritual Separation.” A simple outline is:

I. The Spirit (Acts 13:1, 2).

IV. The Sermon (Acts 13:14-43).

II. The Sending (Acts 13:3-5).

V. The Speaking (Acts 13:44-45).

III. The Sorcerer (Acts 13:6-13).

VI. The Shaking (Acts 13:46-52).

The first missionary tour of Barnabas and Saul is recounted in Acts 13, 14. The time is probably 45-48 A. D.

**I. An “Ordination” of Missionaries (Acts 13:1-3).**

“Now there were in the church... at Antioch” (Acts 13:1); Antioch in Syria now becomes the center of operations. Antioch a Gentile center would have the glory of taking the gospel to “ALL NATIONS” (Matt. 28:19)!

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 4 - PAGE 2

“Prophets and teachers”: A prophet spoke by inspiration, by the power of the Holy Spirit. A teacher may or may not have spoken by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. All prophets were teachers, but not all teachers were prophets. A prophet was a for-speaker of God, sometimes fore-speakers like Agabus (Acts 11:28).

The double use of ‘te’ here makes three prophets (Barnabas, Symeon, Lucius) and two teachers (Manaen and Saul). Barnabas heads the list (Acts 11:22). Saul comes last.

“Simeon that was called Niger”: He may have been the Simon of Cyrene who carried the Saviour’s cross (Matt. 27:32). As Niger means, “black,” some have fancied that he was an African, a Negro. Niger was as common a Roman surname as Black is now. Others think he was a full-blooded Jew, of dark complexion.

“Manaen... brought up with Herod the tetrarch”: He was nourished with or brought up with Herod, a prince, who later became Herod Antipas, the murderer of John the Baptist. He is now dethroned and an exile in Gaul. There were outstanding men in the great Greek church at Antioch.

“And Saul”: The greatest of these men is Saul. He is named last. His greatness had yet to be demonstrated.

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted” (Acts 13:2): These men worshipped before the Lord, fasting, and doubtless asking for guidance in the extension of Christianity.

Christian Jews were keeping up the Jewish fast (Luke 18:12). Fasting was also in the choice of elders for the Mission Churches (Acts 14:23). Fasting is not obligatory on the Christians, but they were facing a great emergency in giving the gospel to the Gentile world. We “minister” to the Lord when we obey His will and teach others His commandments (John 4:21-24). Prayer is a disturbing thing in a church. If each member of this church would “pray without ceasing” (I Thess. 5:17), pray with the Spirit and with the understanding, this church would quadruple its work in as many months!

“The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul...” (Acts 13:2): The Holy Spirit “said” by an inspiration to one of these prophets. “God, Who gave to our forefathers many different glimpses of the truth in the words of the prophets, has now, at the end of the present age, given us the Truth in the Son” (Hebrews 1:1f; see Acts 20:23).

“Separate me Barnabas and Saul.” Both men had been tried and shown to be worthy. By divine direction they are now formally consecrated to the work of preaching the gospel to Gentiles! Both men had been called to the ministry long ago, but now the call is to the special campaign among the Gentiles. God called; men separated, or formally set apart the workers.

“And laid their hands on them, they sent them away” (Acts 13:3): This was nothing more than a method of solemnly commending the workers to God who had called them to the work. The modern conception that only superiors may impose their hands on candidates for religious offices is “the invention of an unscriptural hierarchy” – it is unknown in the New Testament. They were not set apart to an order or rank in the kingdom, but to a work to which they were called. They were not made priests, or bishops, or cardinals, but missionaries. This act did not make Saul an apostle. Christ chose him, as He had Peter, John and others. This was not “apostolic succession”! The Holy Spirit still calls workers. Will you respond today?

“They sent them away” as missionaries of the church at Antioch to the heathen. They returned to report to the church (Acts 14:27) after a long missionary tour.

## II. Their Labors in Cyprus (Acts 13:4-12)

“So they... sailed to Cyprus” (Acts 13:4): Cyprus was the home of Barnabas (Acts 4:36). Seleucia was the seaport of Antioch, sixteen miles distant. Cyprus was an island about 100 miles distant. It would be natural for Barnabas to evangelize his own people first, as Saul had his people (Acts 11:25). Salamis was a town on the eastern shore of Cyprus (verse 5).

“And they had also John to their minister” (Acts 13:5): John Mark (Acts 12:25) volunteered to assist them “in every way in which a young man can serve his elders.” He was related to Barnabas (Col. 4:10). Minister is “under-rower” or assistant in the synagogue as in Luke 4:20. Did he help in baptizing and in preaching?

“They found... sorcerer... a Jew... Bar-jesus” (Acts 13:6): Paphos was known for the immoral worship of Venus. Bar-jesus (son of Jesus) was a profane, clever and spiritually blind Jew. Such tricksters exerted great influence over political leaders of the day. He was a magician. The law forbade witchcraft and magic (Deut. 18:9-22; Lev. 19:31). Bar-jesus also falsely professed inspiration as a “false prophet.”

“Sergius Paulus... desired to hear the gospel” (Acts 13:7): This deputy or “proconsul” was a “prudent man,” a man of understanding. It is amazing that he should be a victim of Bar-jesus, He had given up idolatry, and he was eager to hear Barnabas and Saul.

“But Elymas... seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith” (Acts 13:9): Elymas was another name for Bar-jesus. It means “The wise.” He probably assumed the name. Have you noted the extravagant claims made by such fakers, then and now?

Elymas knew that if the gospel won his great prize, his hold over Sergius Paulus was broken. There may have been a public discussion between Elymas and Saul. The magician used every trick to twist, to distort, and to pervert the gospel.

“Then Saul... called Paul” (Acts 13:9): The “also” does not mean that the name Paul was now given for the first time, rather that he had always had it. Note that . .

1. As a Jew and a Roman citizen, he doubtless had both names all the time. Two names, one Jewish and the other Gentile, were a common thing anciently. Remember John Mark, Symeon Niger, Barsabbas Justus.

2. Jerome held that that name of Sergius Paulus was adopted by Paul because of his conversion at this time. This is wholly unlikely.

3. Augustine thought that the meaning of the Latin Paulus, little, would incline Saul to adopt, “but as a proper name the word rather suggested the glories of the Aemilian family, and even to us recalls the name of another Paulus, who was “lavish of his noble life” (Page).

4. Among the Jews the name Saul was naturally used up to this point. From now on Luke employs Paul save when there is a reference to his previous life (Acts 22:7; 26:14). His real career is among the Gentiles. Paul is the name used by them. There is a striking similarity in sound between the Hebrew Saul and the Roman Paul. Paul was proud of his tribe of Benjamin, and so of King Saul (Phil. 3:5).

“Paul... filled with the Holy Ghost”: A special influx of power to meet this emergency. Paul denounced the shyster, calling him “You son of the devil” (verse 10)! This false prophet was making the Lord’s straight ways crooked. He has many successors. God smote him with blindness “for a season” (verse 11). This action convinced the deputy and he “believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord” (verse 12). The language implies that he became a Christian. The “believers” were those who accepted Christ.

### III. Another Antioch Entered (Acts 13:13-15)

“Now when Paul and his company...” (Acts 13:13): Paul after his encounter with Elymas is the leader. His “company” means a man with followers, “those around Paul.” Paul now becomes the central figure in Acts. “In nothing is the greatness of Barnabas more manifest than in his recognition of the superiority of Paul and acceptance of a secondary position of himself” (Furneaux).

“John departing... returned to Jerusalem”: We do not know why John Mark turned back at Perga. He may have been afraid of the perils from robbers, or sickness, of dislike of Paul’s methods (II Cor. 11:23f; Acts 15:39). It was a serious breach in the work, but Paul and Barnabas stuck to the work. Thank God for people who stick – until death (Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10c).

“Antioch in Pisidia... synagogue on the Sabbath day” (Acts 13:14): Antioch was 125 miles from Perga, a trading center, founded or enlarged by Seleucus Nicator in honor of his father Antiochus (king of Syria after the death of Alexander the Great). In every Gentile city there was a Jewish synagogue. Here the gospel was preached first to the Jews by the apostolic preachers.

“And after the reading of the law and the prophets...” (Acts 13:15): The law was first read in the synagogues till 163 B. C. when Antiochus Epiphanes prohibited it. Then the reading of the prophets was substituted for it. The Maccabees restored both. The reading was followed by the sermon as when Jesus was invited to read and to preach in Nazareth (Luke 4:16f). It was the duty of the rulers of the synagogue to select the readers and the speakers for the service. Paul had probably made prior arrangements to speak to the assembly.

### IV. Paul’s Sermon in Antioch (Acts 13:16-41) A, The introduction (Acts 13:16-22).

“Paul stood up...” (Acts 16:16): The Jewish method was to sit while speaking (Luke 4:20). The Greeks and Romans stood (Acts 17:22). This is the first recorded sermon of Paul’s that Luke has preserved for us. The Jews and God-hearers (Gentiles friendly to the Jews and their God) heard Paul’s sermon.

Paul is the leader now, and the more gifted speaker (Acts 14:12). “Beckoning with his hand” is an old verb to shake down, a dramatic gesture for quiet and order like Peter in Acts 12:17 and Paul on the steps of the tower of Antonia (Acts 21:40).

“The God... of Israel chose our fathers” (Acts 13:17): This was a tactful beginning. It arrested attention. Paul was a practiced preacher of the gospel that he began proclaiming at Damascus, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah of promise and the Saviour of the whole world both Jew and Gentile if they will only believe in him and be saved. It is possible that Paul based his sermon on the passages of the law and the prophets that had just been read. His opening words refer to Deut. 1:31, Plumptre says this was the lesson for the forty-fourth Sabbath of the year, which fell in July or August. The corresponding lesson from the prophets is found in Isa. 1:1-27, from which Paul also quotes.

“Destroyed seven nations...” (Acts 13:17-19): They are named in Deut. 7:1.

“He gave unto them Judges about... 450 years” (Acts 13:20): This statement seems to conflict with I Kings 6:1 which assigns 480 years to the period between the coming out of Egypt and the fourth year of the reign of Solomon. This would allow about 300 years to the period of the Judges. David’s reign was forty years, Saul’s the same, the period in the wilderness wandering the same, Joshua ruled about twenty-five years, add four years for Solomon, and we have 149 years, which taken from 480 years leaves 331 years for the time of the Judges and Samuel. The apparent discrepancy between Paul and the writer of I Kings 6:1 is

removed by the Revision. It changes the place where “And after that” occurs to “When he had destroyed the seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land for an inheritance for about 450 years. After these things (that is, after the allotment of the land and all before mentioned) he gave them Judges until Samuel the prophet.”

The 450 years probably includes the period from the departure out of Egypt to the reign of David, the two greatest eras in Jewish history before Christ. However, Robertson affirms “The 450 years run therefore from the birth of Isaac to the actual conquest of Canaan and does not cover the period of the Judges” (see on Acts 7:6).

“They desired a king... God gave unto them Saul” (Acts 13:21): The people were tired of theocracy, the rule of God over them (I Sam. 8:5; 10:1). Paul mentions with pride that Benjamin was the tribe of Saul (his name also), but he does not allude to Saul’s sin. God removed Saul as all unjust stewards are removed (I Sam. 15:16; Luke 16:4).

“He raised up unto them David.” (Acts 13:22): The Lord called young shepherd David to the throne. “A man after mine own heart” does not occur in this form in the Old Testament, but is implied in I Sam. 13:14. This does not imply that David was perfect or sinless, but that he sought to do the Lord’s will, instead of showing stubborn disobedience, like Saul. He showed nobility of purpose, sought the welfare of people, and aimed at a purer life.

B. Jesus preached as Saviour (Acts 13:23-39).

1. The proposition (Acts 13:23, 24).

“Of this man’s seed hath God... raised... Jesus” (Acts 13:23): For the promise of a Saviour of David’s seed, see II Sam. 7:12; Isa. 11:1; Zech. 3:8; 6:12. By “Israel” here Paul means the Jewish people, though he will later enlarge this promise to include the spiritual Israel both Gentile and Jew (See Rom. 9:6f). Read Psa. 132:11.

“John... baptism of repentance” (Acts 13:24): John preached before the Saviour’s coming. He was well known to the Jews. Most of them regarded the Baptist as a prophet (Matt. 3:1-12; John 5:32-35). Paul fixes attention not upon the time of Jesus’ birth, but upon the time that God “brought him to Israel as a Saviour.” His baptism was marked by repentance or a change of mind and life.

2. John’s testimony (Acts 13:25).

“I am not he...” (Acts 13:25): These precise words are not given in the Gospels, but the idea is the same as the disclaimers by the Baptist in John 1:19-27; Matt. 3:11.

3. Voices of the prophets fulfilled in His death (Acts 13:26-29).

“Men and brethren...” (Acts 13:26): Having declared the coming of the Saviour of the seed of David, Paul now shows us to whom his salvation was offered, not only to “children of the stock of Abraham,” but to “whosoever among you feareth God” – the Gentiles!

“Rulers, because they knew him not...” (Acts 13:27): Peter gives “ignorance” as the excuse of the Jews in the death of Christ. (Acts 3:17). Paul does the same about his conduct before his conversion (I Tim. 1:13). Ignorance lessened the degree of their guilt, but it did not remove it, for it was willing ignorance and prejudice. The “voices” of the prophets were heard as they were read aloud each ‘Sabbath in the Synagogue. In their ignorant condemnation of Jesus they fulfilled the prophecies about the suffering Messiah.

“And though they found no cause of death in him...” (Acts 13:28): The Sanhedrin charged Jesus with blasphemy; they could not prove it (Matt. 26:05; 27:24; Luke 23:32). Yet they desired Pilate to put Jesus to death. Scripture was fulfilled in His death (verse 29).

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 4 - PAGE 6

### 4. The resurrection of Jesus (Acts 13:30-37).

“But God raised him from the dead: And he was seen...” (Acts 13:30-31): This crucial fact Paul sharply presents as he always did. The resurrected Saviour was seen many days, forty in all (Acts 1:3). Jesus appeared to men, who knew him best, men who could not be deceived easily about the reality of His resurrection (verse 31).

“The promise... God, hath fulfilled... raised up Jesus” (Acts 13:32, 33): Paul declares the promise made the fathers was now fulfilled to their children (Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Psa. 2:7). “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” Paul gives the thought in Rom. 1:4. Jesus did not die again, and so is the first fruits of the resurrection (I Cor. 15:23; Rom. 6:9; Acts 13:34). Paul quotes Psa. 16:10 to show that Jesus did not see corruption in his body, a flat contradiction for those who deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

“For David... saw corruption” (Acts 13:36): David’s body “saw corruption.” Thy body of Jesus “raised again, saw no corruption” (verse 37).

“Up from the grave He arose  
With a mighty triumph o’er His foes;  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign:  
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!  
– Robert Lowry

### 5. Remission of sins proclaimed through Him (Acts 13:38-39).

“And by him all that believe are justified...” (Acts 13:39): Only through the Risen Saviour does God offer pardon (Acts 4:12; Rom. 3:25; 8:1-4). “By him all that believe are justified.” The law could not justify. Believe that Jesus is the Messiah, accept and obey Him as Lord and Saviour and He will JUSTIFY YOU BEFORE GOD! The law could not bring peace; only Jesus can (John 14:27).

### C. A warning (Acts 13:40-41).

“Beware therefore...” (Acts 13:40): Paul closes his sermon with a warning of the danger of rejecting Christ. Verse 41 is freely quoted from Habakkuk 1:5, “The Jews of Habakkuk’s day had refused to believe in the impending invasion by the Chaldeans, and yet it had to come” (Furneaux). Paul hurled a thunderbolt at the close. Titus in 70 A.D. brought about the destruction of Jerusalem because the Jews rejected the Saviour.

### 6. Immediate effect of the sermon (Acts 13:42, 43).

### 7. Results on the second Sabbath (Acts 13:44-49).

Questions

1. What city had been the center of missionary activity among the Jews (Acts 8:1, 4; 11:19)?
2. How was the church at Antioch equipped to become the center of missionary activity among the Gentiles (Acts 13:1)? Difference between prophets and teachers?
3. Why was Barnabas placed first, and Saul last? Meaning of foster brother?
4. What did Admiral Foote tell the royal dignitaries of Siam? Why (Mark 16:15, 16)?
5. Who were the first three missionaries sent out to the world from the church at Antioch (Acts 12:25; 13:2, 5; 26:18)?
6. Under whose direction and power did these messengers go (Acts 13:2, 4, 9, 52)? Why were they fasting (verse 2)?
7. Purpose of the prayer and imposition of hands (Acts 13:3, cf. 2)? Is this a precedent for “apostolic succession?”
8. What was the first opposition that they encountered (Acts 13:6-8)? Why Cyprus their first field (Acts 13:4; 4:36)? What is the typical import of this opposition (Acts 11:1, 2; 13:42-45; II Cor. 4:3, 4)?
9. What change in Saul’s name and relative position, and why (Acts 13:9, cf. 7, 13, 43)?
10. Why did John Mark turn back at Perga (Acts 13:13; 15:36-38)? What had been John’s duty as attendant (Acts 13:5)?
11. Where, and to whom, did Paul preach his first recorded sermon (Acts 13:14-17)? Why the strangers invited to speak (verse 15)?
12. How did Paul prove God’s goodness to His people (Acts 13:17-23)? Is there a conflict between verse 20 and I Kings 6:1? How did Paul know the length of Saul’s reign (verse 21)? How was David a man after God’s own heart (verse 22; I Sam. 13:14)?
13. Who had predicted the coming of Christ to deliver Israel (Acts 13:24, 27)? How the time fixed, and what was the promise (Psalm 132:11)?
14. What was the supreme miraculous evidence that Christ was Israel’s Deliverer (Acts 13:30-37; 17:31)?
15. What two classes were addressed (Acts 13:26, 16, 43)? What were Paul’s appeals (Acts 13:38, 39) and warning (Acts 13:40, 41) to the Jews?
16. How did the Gentiles show an enthusiastic desire to hear the Word of God (Acts 13:42-44)? How did Paul and Barnabas answer these envious Jews (Acts 13:45, 46)?
17. From whom did Paul and Barnabas receive their commission to evangelize the Gentiles (Acts 13:47; Isa. 42:6)? How far did this Gentile commission extend (Acts 13:47; Matt. 28:18-20)?
18. Points of contrast between the feelings and conduct of the Jews and Gentiles (Acts 13:45, 46, 48-51)? Why were they “ordained” or “determined to eternal life” (Acts 13:48, 16, 26, 43)?
19. Who were the “devout women” (Acts 13:50)? Why “shake off the dust of their feet against them” (Acts 13:51; Matt. 10:14)?
20. How could the disciples of Antioch of Pisidia be filled with joy under such circumstances (Acts 13:52)? Are you “filled with joy,” or are you a joy-killer (Phil. 4:11, 13, 19)?

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 5 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 5  
Acts 14

Page 1  
Memory Verses: Acts 14:19

Memory Verse:

“And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead” (Acts 14:19).

**PAUL STONED**

“The honorable women” (Acts 13:50) who were used as tools of those who persecuted Paul and Barnabas at Pisidian Antioch were not “honorable” except in title. They were Gentile women who had learned to revere the true God. Strabo, a Roman writer, declares that the women in this part of Asia exerted a powerful influence.

The rabbis were shrewd enough to reach the “chief men of the city” through these unscrupulous women.

The missionaries were “expelled” forcibly from the city. Paul doubtless alludes to this persecution in II Tim. 3:11 and II Cor. 11:25, 26. If this is so, Paul and Barnabas were publicly scourged with rods!

“They shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium” (Acts 13:51). This was a prophecy of the righteous judgment of God upon them (Mark 6:11; Luke 10:16). Iconium was about 100 miles southeast from Antioch in Pisidia, at the foot of the Taurus Mountains. It is still a large town, modern Konia.

**Spiritual Tribulation**

The blood of the martyrs is still the seed of the church, as Acts 14 shows. A simple outline follows:

- I. The Division (Acts 14:1-7)
- II. The Deliverance (Acts 14:8-10)
- III. The Deification (Acts 14:11-18)
- IV. The Decease (Acts 14:19, 20)
- V. The Development (Acts 14:21-23)
- VI. The Description (Acts 14:24-28)

**I. Success in Iconium (Acts 14:1-7)**

“In Iconium... they went both together... synagogue” (Acts 14:1): As compared with Antioch, a Roman colony, Iconium was a native Phrygian town of immemorial antiquity. It was situated near the western end of a vast, level plain, with mountains a few miles towards the West, from which streams flowed which made it a veritable oasis. Two important trade routes passed through it. It was on the road leading to Ephesus and Rome.

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 5 - PAGE 2

“Synagogue”: Just as in the island of Cyprus and at Antioch they went into the synagogue. In almost every principal place a colony of Jews and a synagogue were found. Paul and Barnabas spoke to their own people, in accordance with the customs of the synagogue, and first declared the gospel. It was a tremendous first meeting. This method uniformly reached some Jews, and a number of the “devout Greeks” who attended the synagogue to learn more of God. Thus was formed a nucleus of the church. “A great multitude... Jews .. Greeks believed!”

“Unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles...” (Acts 14:2): To disbelieve the word of God is to disobey God. Paul doubtless preached the same message as in Antioch for it won both Jews and Gentiles, and displeased the rabbis. Codex Bezae adds here that “the chiefs of the synagogue and the rulers” brought persecution upon Paul and Barnabas just as was argued about Antioch. The Jews outside the synagogue would poison the minds of the Gentiles against Paul and Barnabas.

“The story of THECLA suggests a means, and perhaps the apostles were brought before the magistrates on some charge of interference with family life. The magistrates however must have seen at once that there was no legal ease against them; and by a sentence of acquittal or in some other way the Lord gave peace” (Rackham).

The story of Paul and Thecla has apocryphal features, though Thecla may very well be an historical character here at Iconium where the story is located. The picture of Paul “cannot be considered authentic.” (Robertson) “He was bald, bowlegged, strongly built, small in stature, with large eyes and meeting eyebrows and longish nose; full of grace; sometimes looking like a man, sometimes having the face of an angel.”

“Long time therefore abode they...” (Acts 14:3): After the persecution and vindication there was a season for great evangelistic harvest. Paul and Barnabas continued to preach “boldly” at Iconium with great success. How long they continued here is unknown, but as the first missionary journey occupied 45-48 A. D., they were probably at Iconium for six months. The Lord “bore witness to the world of His grace as He always does, “granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.”

“But the multitude of the city was divided...” (Acts 14:4): A second explosion of persecution was bound to come. Everywhere Paul went he started a revival of turning to God through Jesus Christ and the Gospel Riots soon followed, it seems, because of unbelieving Jews. These Jews were disobedient to the Law of Moses as well as to the Gospel. Those who persecute Christians persecute Christ (Acts 9:4, 1).

“Apostles”: This is the first time in Acts that Paul and Barnabas are termed “apostles” (see also verse 14). Elsewhere in Acts the word is restricted to the twelve. Luke does not here employ “apostle” in that technical sense. An apostle must have followed Jesus from the baptism of John and to have seen the Risen Christ (Acts 1:22f). Paul had seen the Risen Christ (I Cor. 9:11; 15:8). We do not know whether Barnabas had seen the Risen Christ. Paul claimed to be an apostle on a par with the twelve (Gal. 1:1, 10-18). Originally, an apostle is one sent (John 13:16), like the messengers of the churches with the collection (II Cor. 8:23). Paul applies the term to James the Lord’s brother (Gal. 1:19), to Ephaphroditus (Phil. 2:25) as the messenger of the church in Philippi, and to Silas and Timothy (I Thess. 2:6; Acts 18:5), apparently to Apollos (I Cor, 4:9), and to Andronicus and Junias (Rom. 16:6f). He even called the Judaizers “false apostles” (II Cor. 11:13).

“And... an assault made .. to stone them” (Acts 14:5): The Jews with the help of the Gentiles wanted to stone the apostles, but they “fled unto Lystra and Derbe” (verse 6). “Paul and Barnabas had no idea of remaining to be stoned (lynched) by this mob. It is a wise preacher who knows when to stand his ground and when to leave for the glory of God.” Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, were not far from the Black Mountain. Lystra had been made a colony in B. C. 0 and Derbe was the frontier city of the Roman empire in the southeast. The region round about was “a high table land, ill watered, bleak, but suitable for sheep pasture” (Page). Paul went to centers of influence, “and there they preached the gospel” (verse 7).

## II. Stoned At Lystra (Acts 14:8-20)

### A. The deliverance (Acts 14:8-10).

“And there sat a certain man at Lystra...” (Acts 14:8): There was apparently no synagogue in Lystra, hence not so many Jews. Paul and Barnabas did open-air preaching, They probably had difficulty in being understood by the natives, though both Greek and Latin inscriptions were discovered here by Professor Sterrett in 1885. Paul was preaching to a crowd at the principal gate of the city. The “impotent” or “impossible” man heard Paul.

“The same... had faith to be healed” (Acts 14:9): The crippled man believed Paul could make him whole. “The idea that it was a faith which would ENABLE PAUL to make him whole finds no countenance in the Scriptures.” Paul had doubtless spoken of the miraculous cures wrought by Jesus or his own miracles at Iconium (verse 3). Seeing the cripple, Paul commanded: “Stand upright on thy feet” (verse 10). He leaped up with a single hound and began to walk. Luke may have obtained the vivid report of this healing from Timothy who may have witnessed it, and who was probably converted during Paul’s stay here (Acts 16:3).

### B. The deification (Acts 14:11-18).

“The people.... The gods are come down to us” (Acts 14:11): The people interpreted the healing as evidence of special favor toward their city on the part of the pagan gods. A temple of Jupiter (the Greek Zeus) divas at the city gate, Barnabas was identified with Jupiter (verse 12). Paul as chief speaker was called “Mercurius” (Greek Hermes). “The sacrifices proposed were accorded the gods whom they were supposed to be. The preservation of sacrifice among heathen people in all ages is evidence that God originally commanded man to thus worship Him.” Here sacrifice was perverted. Remember the people of Lystra were heathen. They believed in many gods. Their legends taught them that the gods had often come down in the form of men and interfered in human affairs. It is not strange, therefore, that when they witnessed this miracle they should conclude: “The gods are come down to us.”

“Brought oxen and garlands” (Acts 14:13). They prepared to offer sacrifices to the gods whom they supposed were visiting them in the persons of Paul and Barnabas. The “oxen” were for sacrifices; the sacrifices before being offered were crowned with garlands. The priest offering sacrifice also wore floral crowns.

“The apostles... rent their clothes... We also are men” (Acts 14:14, 15): To rend one’s garment to show displeasure appears here the last time in the Bible (see Gen. 37:29-34). McGarvey says the “Self-possession which thy Christian faith inculcates and imparts soon made it disappear from the customs of the Christian Jews.” Paul tells them he and Barnabas are not gods, but evangelists! Here we have Paul’s message to a pagan audience without the Jewish environment and he makes the same line of argument seen in Acts 17:21-32 and Rom. 1:18-23. At Antioch in Pisidia we saw Paul’s line of approach to Jews and proselytes (Acts 13:16-41).

Paul boldly calls the worship of Jupiter and Mercury and all idols “vain” or empty things, pointing to the statutes and the temple. Fatima who was paraded in Covington and placed in St. Mary’s cathedral comes under the same heading of “vanities” (I Cor. 8:4; I John 5:21).

“The living God ..”: Go the whole way. Our God is a LIVE GOD, NOT A DEAD STATUE. Paul is fond of this phrase (II Cor. 6:16; Rom. 9:26). The ONE GOD is ALIVE and He is the Creator of the Universe as Paul will argue in Athens (Acts 17:24). Paul here quotes Psa. 146:6 and has Gen. 1:1 in mind. See I Thess. 1:9, where a new allegiance is claimed. God had left the nations to their own conceits until it should be demonstrated that man by searching cannot find out God. The efforts of human wisdom were a

failure (verses 10, 17). Zeus (Jupiter, Latin) was the national god of the Greeks. He was regarded as the god of rain (Jupiter Pluvius) and Paul claims the rain and the fruitful seasons as coming from God (verse 17)! “Mercury, as the God of merchandise, was also the dispenser of food” (Vincent) Paul does not talk about laws of nature as if they governed themselves, but he sees the living God “behind the drama of the physical world” (Furneaux). Paul “restrained” the people, “that they had not done sacrifice unto them” (verse 18).

C. The decease (Acts 14:19-20).

“Jews from Antioch... persuaded the people... stoned Paul” (Acts 14:19): How fickle is public opinion, One day the Lystrans wanted to worship Paul and Barnabas; the next day they worked on Paul with stones! They listened to wicked Jews from Antioch and Iconium who denounced Paul and Barnabas, They may even have followed Paul and Barnabas along the fine Roman road on purpose to keep them on the run. The natives of Lystra listened to the plans to stone Paul. When he came forth to preach at the city gate, these hellish men made a “rush with stones already pre-pared, and pelted him to death in a moment. He fell inside the city gate.” They seized him by the hands or feet and literally dragged him from the city – enough to kill him, Paul refers to this one incident when alone he was stoned (II Cor. 11:25). The wounds inflicted may have left some of the scars mentioned in Gal. 6:17. They stoned Paul as the chief speaker (Mercury) and passed by Barnabas (Jupiter). It was a Jewish method of punishment as against Stephen and these Jews knew that Paul was the man that they had to deal with. Hackett notes that the Jews with two exceptions incited the persecutions that Paul endured –the two occurring in Philippi (Acts 16:16-40) and Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41).

The Jews were jubilant this time – Paul had escaped them at Antioch and Iconium. The pagan mob feel that they have settled accounts for their narrow escape from worshipping two Jewish renegade preachers, They felt it was a good day’s work for them all. Luke does not say that Paul was actually dead.

“The disciples stood round about him...” (Acts 14:20): How long these Christians stood near Paul we do not know. Nor how long they stood over him before he showed signs of returning conscience. How bitterly they must have cried. Young Timothy shed many tears over Paul (II Tim. 1:3-5). Wicked men hated Paul, but the occasion of his stoning brought to his side the dearest friend he ever knew (Phil. 2:19-22). A weakling could not rise up and depart “the next day” (verse 20b) for Derbe. Derbe was some forty miles distant, near the pass to the Cilician Gates.

## II. Success in Derbe, and the Return to Antioch (Acts 14:21-28)

A. The development (Acts 14:21-23).

“And when they had preached the gospel in that city... taught many... returned” (Acts 14:21): No persecution is mentioned at Derbe. They inhere not far from the well-known pass called the Gates of Cilicia. This was the road to Tarsus, Paul’s home. What a chance to visit his home and kindred! Or did they want to see him? As their Lord had commanded them to disciple people in heathen cities, they made many disciples in Derbe.

“They returned again to Lystra... Iconium, and Antioch”: Derbe was thy frontier city of the Roman Empire. The quickest way to return to Antioch in Syria would have been by the Cilician Gates or by the pass over Mt. Taurus by which Paul and Silas will came to Derbe on the second tour (Acts 15:41-16:1), but difficult to travel in winter. It was necessary to revisit the churches in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia to see that they were able to withstand persecution. Paul was a Roman citizen; however, he had not made use of this privilege as yet for his own protection. Against mob violence, it would count for little. Paul did not

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hesitate. He had been stoned in Lystra, threatened in Iconium, expelled in Antioch! Paul is persevering, and shows wisdom in conserving his work for Christ.

“Confirming the souls... exhorting... tribulation” (Acts 14:22): The “confirming” was not an outward rite, but words of cheer that strengthened their souls; the verb means “to make more firm, to give additional strength.” New converts from heathenism were ill-informed, persecuted, had broken family and social ties, and greatly needed encouragement if they were to hold out in “THE FAITH.” (Col. 1:23) Paul frankly warned the new converts in this heathen environment of the many tribulations through which they must enter the Kingdom of God as he did at Ephesus (Acts 20:20) and as Jesus had done (John 16:83). These saints were exhorted to be “faithful unto death” (Rev. 2:10c; Rom. 5:3; II Cor. 4:17; Heb. 12: 5-11).

“And when they had ordained them elders in every church...” (Acts 14:23): They needed some form of organization, though already churches. Observe that:

1. Elders were not appointed as soon as the churches were planted; time must be taken so as to know what men were fitted for the office (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
2. Elders were not appointed to preside over a district, but in EVERY CHURCH.
3. There was a plurality of elders in one church. It is unscriptural and anti-scriptural to have one bishop, or elder, OVER MANY CHURCHES!
4. They were set apart by “prayer and fasting” and laying on of hands.

It is not stated who selected the men, but from Acts 6:6 we would infer that they were chosen by the church under the advice of the apostles.

B. The description (Acts 14:24-28).

“And when they had preached the word in Perga...” (Acts 14:25). Here they had landed early in this missionary journey, but did not then, for some unknown cause, pause to preach the gospel (Acts 13:13, 14). They crossed from Perga to Attalia, the port of Perga, sixteen miles down the Cestus, and capital of Pamphylia, to find a ship for Antioch in Syria. It is now called Adala and for long was the chief harbor of the south coast of Asia Minor. We do not know why they did not revisit Cyprus. Was it because no permanent Gentile churches were founded there?

“And thence sailed to Antioch...” (Acts 14:26): This is the Syrian Antioch, site of the first Gentile church, the mother church of Gentile missions, the church that sent them forth several years before (Acts 13:1, 3). Exactly how long a time had been occupied in this missionary tour cannot be ascertained, but it is almost certain that the visit to Jerusalem recorded in Acts 11:20, 30 and 12:25 took place in A. D. 44. While that which is mentioned in Acts 15:2 took place in A. D. 51, there were likely six or seven years between. This time was occupied with the missionary journey and the stay at Antioch. The first probably extended over three or four years.

“And when they were come... gathered the church... rehearsed all that God had done” (Acts 14:27): Very properly Paul and Barnabas made a report to the church that had sent them forth. What a cheering report it was! The gospel had been planted in the great island of Cyprus, received by the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, and extended through Pamphylia, Pisidia and Lycaonia, strong churches having been planted in their principal cities.

“Abode there a long time...” (Acts 14:28): As near as we can learn about two years, no doubt busy all the time preaching in the great city. The experiment entered upon by the church at Antioch was now a pronounced success. The church at Antioch began it by the direct command of the Holy Spirit, prayed for the absent missionaries and rejoiced in their signal success.

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There is no sign of jealousy on the part of Barnabas when Paul re-returns as the chief hero of the missionary tour. There is real grace in being able to play “second fiddle” then, or now.

A new corner has been turned in the history of Christianity. What will Jerusalem think of the new developments at Antioch? Note that Paul and Barnabas MADE NO REPORT TO JERUSALEM!

### Questions

1. Where did Paul and Barnabas testify in Iconium, and what were the results (Acts 14:1)?
2. Who were the chief enemies of the gospel in Iconium (Acts 14:2-6)? Are those who persecute Christians persecuting Christ (Acts 9:4, 1)?
3. Paul and Barnabas “apostles?” In what sense (Acts 14:4; 1:22f; I Cor. 9:1f; 15:8)? Can you name others who were called “apostles” (John 13:16; Gal. 1:19; Phil. 2:25; I chess. 2:6; Acts 18:5; I Cor. 4:9; Rom. 16:6f)? Did Paul claim to be an “apostle” (Gal. 1:1, 16-18)?
4. How was persecution used to extend the missionary activity of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:6, 7)? Where were Lystra and Derbe (verse 6)?
5. What miracle did Paul perform in Lystra (Acts 14:8-10)? Whence the faith of the cripple (verse 9)?
6. How did the people attempt to justify and foster their idolatry through the miracle (Acts 14:11-13)? Why name them as they did (verse 12)? Why “garlands” (verse 13)?
7. Why “rend their clothes” (Acts 14:14)? Why the two-fold argument against this idolatry (Acts 14:15)?
8. From whom, and to what extent, did the next persecution come (Acts 14:19)? Who stoned Paul? How did they persuade the people (II Cor. 11:25)? Did Paul receive the “scars” at Lystra (Gal. 6:17)?
9. Did the Jews always incite the persecutions against Paul (Acts 16:16-40; 19:23-41)?
10. How did the disciples show their loyalty to Paul (Acts 14:20)? Who shed many tears over Paul at Lystra (II Tim. 1:3-5)? Could any weak-ling endure what he did here?
11. Where did Paul and Barnabas next minister (Acts 14:21)? Where was Derbe? Why didn’t Paul visit his own home at Tarsus at this opportune time?
12. What was their purpose in returning to the church in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch (Acts 14:21, 22)?
13. What was their two-fold exhortation to these disciples (Acts 14:22)?
14. What did Paul and Barnabas do in each church (Acts 14:23)? How many elders were in every church? How find competent men so soon? Meaning of “commended them to the Lord?” Is there any New Testament record of one elder or bishop over many churches?
15. What did they now do at Perga (Acts 14:25)? Why not on the first visit (Acts 13:13, 14)?
16. Where did they end their first missionary tour (Acts 14:26)? Distinguish the two Antiochs in this lesson. Why report in Antioch, and to whom?
17. What commendable statement is made of their work on this journey (Acts 14:26)?
18. Meaning of “opened a door of faith” (Acts 14:27)?
19. Where was the next period of ministry spent (Acts 14:28)? How long did they spend at Antioch?
20. Was Barnabas jealous of Paul when Paul returns as the chief hero of this missionary tour? Did they ‘report’ to the church at Jerusalem? Why not?

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**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 6

Page 1

Acts 15

Memory Verses: Acts 15:10,11

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Memory Verses:

“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they” (Acts 15:10, 11).

**THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM**

**The question of circumcising Gentile converts occupies Acts 15.**

God showed Peter “That I should not call any man common or unclean” (Acts 10:28). Then it was settled, definitely and finally (Acts 11:18) that Gentiles as well as Jews should have the Gospel!

In Antioch a new question was raised. Some Jewish troublemakers took the position that Gentiles after being baptized and receiving forgiveness of sins must be circumcised as a condition of their final salvation! Luke shows how this delicate question was settled and the peace and unity of the church maintained.

**Acts 15 Outlined**

“Spiritual Indoctrination” sums up the Council at Jerusalem in Acts 15.

- I. The Dissenters (Acts 15:1).
- I. The Declaration (Acts 15:2-4)
- II. The Discussion (Acts 15:5-21)
- III. The Delegation (Acts 15:22-35)

**I. The Occasion of the Conference (Acts 15:1-4)**

A. The dissenters (Acts 15:1).

“And certain men... from Judea taught... Except ye be circumcised... ye cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1): These men came from the mother church at Jerusalem where the gospel was first preached, where the original apostles had been the teachers. This gave great weight to their claims. They did not say the apostles had sent them. They did say that unless Gentiles were “circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.”

Evidently these men were from the party of the circumcision in the Jerusalem church (Acts 11:2). They heard of the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles in Cyprus, Pamphylia, South Galatia (Phrygia, Pisidia, Lycaonia). Had John Mark alter his desertion at Perga (Acts 13:13) field how Paul and Barnabas did not demand that Gentiles be circumcised in order to be saved.

These men who insisted that Gentile Christians must become Jews, had agreed in the Case of Cornelius and his group (Acts 11:1-18) after plain proof that it was the Lord’s doing. BUT they had not agreed to a

formal campaign to turn the exception into the rule and to make Christianity mainly Gentile with a few Jews instead of mainly Jewish with a few Gentiles.

Since Paul and Barnabas did not come up to Jerusalem, the leaders among the Judaizers decided to go down to Antioch and attack Paul and Barnabas there. They volunteered to go without being directed by the church, for the church did not send them (verse 24).

In Gal. 2:4 Paul with some heat describes these Judaizers as “false brethren, secretly introduced who sneaked in to spy out our liberty.” The Jerusalem Conference and the visit to Jerusalem in Acts 15:5-29 are one and the same (Gal. 2:1-10).

Jesus fulfilled and took the “law out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Col. 2:14). The ceremonial commands of the law, as circumcision, were not to be binding on His followers.

The attitude of the Judaizers was one of supercilious superiority. Paul and Barnabas were present, but these dissenters persisted in their efforts to force their views on the church in Antioch. It was a genuine crisis. “Except ye be circumcised... ye cannot be saved” was their dogmatic declaration! If this was true, then Christ died in vain. The “All things” of Matthew 28:18-20 does not include circumcision.

#### B. The declaration (Acts 15:2-4).

“Paul... dissension... determined... go up to Jerusalem” (Acts 15:2): Paul and Barnabas were not willing to see this Gentile church brow-beaten and treated as heretics by these self-appointed regulators of Christian orthodoxy from Jerusalem. The work at Antioch had developed under the leadership of Paul and Barnabas and they accepted full responsibility for it and stoutly resisted these Judaizers to the point of riotous outbreak. They made no impression on the Gentile church. They compelled Paul to think through afresh the whole gospel of grace, so they did Paul and us a real service. It was plain that there was no virtue in circumcision (Gal. 2:15-21).

The early Christians had disagreements. They had selfish avarice and lying with Ananias and Sapphira, murmuring over the gifts to the Grecian widows, simony in the case of Simon Magus, violent objection to the work in Caesarea, and now open strife over the great doctrine of GRACE VERSUS LEGALISM.

“They determined that Paul and Barnabas go up”: “They” are the brethren of the church at Antioch. The church clearly saw that the way to remove the dead lock between the Judaizers and Paul and Barnabas was to consult the church in Jerusalem to which the Judaizers belonged. Paul and Barnabas had won in Antioch. If they can win in Jerusalem, that will settle the matter. The Judaizers will be answered in their own church for which they are presuming to speak. Paul says he went up “by revelation” (Gal. 2:2), but surely that is not contradictory to the action of the church at Antioch. They were sent “unto the apostles and elders about this question.” Peter was not the Pope, you see.

“And being brought on their way by the church...” (Acts 15:3): A special escort of church members attended them on their journey as a mark of honor (See Acts 20:38; 21:5; I John 6). Antioch gave them a grand send-off.

“They caused great joy unto all the brethren”: They passed through Phoenicia, and going up to Jerusalem by the land route visited the churches of Phoenicia and Samaria, causing great joy by their account of so great success among the Gentiles.

“And when they were come to Jerusalem... received of the church” (Acts 15:4): The Jerusalem church gave them a cordial reception. This warm welcome publicly gave Paul and Barnabas an opportunity to tell the church about God’s dealings with the Gentiles. The thrilling story of the gospel, of Paul’s courage and sacrifice must have “drawn many tears from the eyes of the sympathizing audience.”

## II. Private Conversations and the Great Conference (Acts 15:5-29)

A. The question at issue (Acts 15:5, 6; Gal. 2:1, 2).

“But there rose up... Pharisees... circumcise... keep the Law of Moses” (Acts 15:5): The Pharisees were like some politicians. “If you can’t beat them, join them.” They could no longer resist the evidence in favor of the Gospel for Jew and Gentile. They had been baptized into Christ, but they still held their former Jewish ideas about circumcision being essential. They determined to keep the church under the Law of Moses (Gal. 2:4).

“And the apostles and elders came together...” (Acts 15:6): The public meeting was adjourned, and another gathering of “the apostles and elders” met to “consider this matter.” Doubtless it is here that the private conference of which Paul speaks in Galatians 2:1-10 took place. God defeated the aim of the Judaizers. Later Judaizers succeeded “in perpetuating it under the form of infant immersion and afterward infant sprinkling... The Roman apostasy perpetuates the daily sacrifice and pompous ritual of the temple.” Christians only hold to the New Testament and its commandments. Christians reject all customs and traditions of men (Matt. 15:8, 9).

“The apostles and elders”: Where was the pope? There was, and is, no pope over the New Testament church. James, NOT PETER, presides (verses 18, 19), Peter neither makes nor writes decisions. NOTHING is done in his name. A private interview of Paul, Barnabas, James, Peter and John showed they all agreed in all things. Gal. 2:6-10 gives the result of this interview. Plans were made for the public meeting.

B. Peter gives the first address (Acts 15:7-11).

“Much disputing, Peter rose up and said...” (Acts 15:7): One side insisted that the Gentiles must keep the Law of Moses and be circumcised, the other that they were not under the Mosaic covenant at all. Full questioning was permitted.

“Peter rose up” after long silence. He was the usual spokesman for the apostles. Paul probably asked Peter to speak up. Once again Peter showed how God had used him to preach to Gentiles – Cornelius at Caesarea (Acts 10:1f).

“A good while ago”: It was probably a dozen years since God “made choice” to speak by Peter’s mouth and the other Gentiles in Caesarea. It was now A. D. 50.

“And put no difference between us and them...” (Acts 15:9): God accepted the Gentiles just, as He accepted the Jews, and gave the Holy Spirit as a proof to us that He had accepted them (verse 8).

“Purifying their hearts by faith.” Jews held that Gentiles were unclean, but Peter declared that FAITH, the true circumcision of the heart and not of the body, purified them into fitness for the ordinances of Christ. Peter’s doctrine or teaching is that NOT CIRCUMCISION OF THE FLESH BUT THE FAITH THAT LEADS TO OBEDIENCE CLEANSSES FROM UNCLEANNES.

“Now therefore why tempt ye God... yoke upon the neck” (Acts 15:10): The Judaizers were implying that God had made a mistake this time, though right about Cornelius. They were refusing to follow the guidance of God like the Israelites at Massah and Meribah (Ex. 17:7; Deut. 6:16; I Cor. 10:9). The “yoke” was the imposing of Jewish obligations on Gentile Christians, The law of Moses was a “yoke,” Peter says, “which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear!” None could perfectly keep the law.

“But we believe that through the grace... be saved, even as they” (Acts 15:11): Grace, not law, is the hope of both Jew and Gentile. Gentiles were saved by “grace,” by faith and obedience to the gospel, just like the Jews on Pentecost (Acts 2:38-42).

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C. Paul and Barnabas speak (Acts 15:12).

“The multitude... gave audience to Barnabas and Paul” (Acts 15:12): The argument of each speech was “exactly the same, though based upon different facts, and these facts were presented in their chronological order” (McGarvey). They spoke after Peter’s reminder of his work among the Gentiles. Their work, like Peter’s, showed that God was with them. They gave some account of the miracles that God had wrought by their hands, thereby attesting the Divine favor.

D. James, half-brother of our Lord, gives the closing speech (Acts 15:13-21).

“And after that... James answered...” (Acts 15:13): It was expected that James, as President of the Conference or Council, would speak last. He wisely waited to give everyone an opportunity to speak.

Before the resurrection, the sons of Mary and Joseph did not believe in Jesus (John 7:1-5; Matt. 13:55, 56). The fact that they became disciples and leaders in the church is a strong argument for believing the evidences on which His resurrection rests. Only the resurrection convinced them He was the Messiah!

“Simeon hath declared how God at the first... Gentiles” (Acts 15:14): Simeon is the Aramaic form of Simon (Peter). “This little touch would show his affinities with the Jewish Christians, not the Judaizers.” This refers to Peter’s preaching and baptizing Cornelius and other Gentiles (Acts 10:1f). “For his name”: “Christian” was the name divinely given (Acts 11:26) to the followers of Christ.

“To this agree the... prophets” (Acts 15:15): The quotation he gives is from Amos 9:11, 12.

“I will return... build again the tabernacle of David...” (Acts 15:16): The tabernacle of David had fallen. Jesus, David’s greater son born of Mary, ascended to heaven and “being by the right hand of God exalted” (Acts 2:33) was made “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36; Heb. 12:1, 2). He sent the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 16, 38-42) and the church, the visible phase of Christ’s kingdom on earth, was begun! Jews and Gentiles were to be admitted into this church or kingdom on the same terms. Gentiles having so soon left idolatrous practices were in danger of relapsing into the former evil excesses of their former religious life.

“Wherefore my sentence is... trouble not them” (Acts 15:19): James sums up the case as President of the Conference in a masterly fashion and wisdom for which he is known. Those who are turning from the Gentiles unto God were the very kind of people referred to in Amos.

“But that we write... abstain from pollutions of idols” (Acts 15:20): There were four common customs of the Gentile world on which there should be a clear understanding. “Abstain” is to hold oneself back from eating meat offered in idol sacrifice, but from all the pollutions of the system of idolatry. Idolatry, fornication, and murder were the outstanding sins of paganism then and now (Rev. 22:15) (see Lecky’s “European Morals,” chapter V, and Conybeare and Howson’s “Paul,” chapter IV).

“Fornication”: Chastity was the exception instead of the rule among Gentiles at this period. Fornication is unlawful sexual intercourse of an unwed person.

“From things strangled, and from blood”: From the time of the law given to the race in the family of Noah, eating blood, and consequently eating things strangled was forbidden. In strangling the blood was retained in the flesh. The Mosaic Law prohibited the use of blood. “The Roman epicures were wont to drown fowls in wine and then use the flesh. It was a common thing to drink wine mingled with blood.” Such savage practices should be stopped. Christian expediency would not shock the Jews “in every city” (verse 21). Gentile Christians were to “abstain” from these things.

E. The first Christian letter: The great Charter of Gentile Christian liberty (Acts 15:22-29).

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“The apostles and elders with the whole church...” (Acts 15:22): Apparently a vote was taken which was unanimous, the Judaizers probably not voting. The apostles and the elders all vocally expressed their position “with the whole church.” It was a great victory. James was a practical leader, and he did not stop with speeches and a vote.

“Send chosen men... Judas surnamed Barnabas and Silas”: Judas is not otherwise known unless he is a brother of Joseph Barsabbas (Acts 1:23). Silas is a shortened form of Silvanus (I Pet. 5:12), These two were messengers of the church at Jerusalem.

“They wrote letters...” (Acts 15:23): A letter. Luke gives it in full, I suppose. They delivered a heavy blow against the Judaizers and completely repudiated their effort to impose the Law of Moses on Gentile Christians (verse 24). “The Holy Ghost” (verse 28) guided the church (verse 25) in making the decree. There was no governing clergy. From this time on, Peter is not mentioned in Acts. Paul’s ministry is given first place (verse 26).

“That ye abstain... from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well” (Acts 15:29): Gentile Christians were to “abstain from meats offered to idols” (I Cor. 8:1-13), from immorality (I Cor. 5:18). Any converted Gentile would be glad to make a concession to abstain from blood and from things strangled. This “necessity” was not a matter of salvation, but for fellowship between Jews and Gentiles. The peace and concord in the Jewish and Gentile fellowship will justify any slight concession on the part of the Gentiles. This letter is not laid down as a law, but it is the judgment of the Jerusalem Christians for the guidance of the Gentiles (Acts 16:4), and it had a fine effect at once (Acts 15:30-35).

The Judaizers did make trouble later. No sane agreement will silence perpetual and professional disturbers who will seek to unsettle Paul’s work in Antioch, in Corinth, in Galatia, in Jerusalem, in Rome.

“Fare ye well”: Be made strong, keep well, and fare well. Only found here in the New Testament.

### III. The Decree Delivered (Acts 15:30-35)

“So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch...” (Acts 15:30): When Paul and Barnabas returned and the letter was read to the church at Antioch, it caused great joy. The apostles were completely vindicated. Judas and Silas “exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them” (verse 32). They were dismissed for Jerusalem with benediction of peace (verse 33). “It pleased Silas to abide there still” (verse 34).

“Paul... Barnabas continued in Antioch...” (Acts 15:35): Probably for the greater part of a year, preaching, and assisted by many other laborers.

### IV. Why Two Companies Went Out Instead of One (Acts 15:36-41)

“Barnabas determined to take with them John...” (Acts 15:37): John Mark had abandoned them on the first tour (Acts 13:13). His reasons for drying so did not satisfy Paul. Hence he declined to take him on the second tour.

“The contention was so sharp between them...” (Acts 15:39): Neither would yield, so they then determined to work separately. This explains why two companies of workers went out instead of one. Barnabas, with Mark, went to visit the churches of Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas as his fellow laborer. Evidently a meeting of the church was held to commend Paul and Silas to God (verse 40-41). They went “through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches” (verse 41). We have no account of the founding of these churches, but we know that Paul had before this labored in these parts (Gal. 1:21).

Questions

1. Why did they listen to the men from Judea, in opposition to Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:1, 2)?
2. What question occupies Acts 15?
3. In what city was the first church council held (Acts 15:1-5)? What difficulty made the meeting necessary (Acts 15:1, 5)?
4. In what city were Paul and Barnabas ministering when the controversy arose (Acts 15:1; 14:26-28)? Did they allow the Judaizers to browbeat the Gentile Christians (Acts 15:2)? What did Paul call these men (Gal. 2:4)?
5. How does the issue made differ from that made with Peter (Acts 15:1, 5; 11:3)?
6. Why the reference to Jerusalem (Acts 15:2)? On what mission did the church at Antioch send Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:2-4)? Was this an appeal from the decision of a church to that of a council?
7. Meaning of “brought on their way by the church” (Acts 15:3)? Why the joy in Phoenicia and Samaria?”
8. To whom the rehearsal of Acts 15:4? Who led the opposition (Acts 15:5)? Upon what authoritative document did the believing Pharisees rely in their contention (Acts 15:1, 5, 21; Gen. 17:9-14)?
9. To what experience did Peter refer as being “a good while ago” (Acts 15:7; 10:9-28)? How had God proved conclusively to Peter that He would accept Gentiles who believed “the word of the gospel” (Acts 15:7, 8; 10:44, 45)?
10. To what condition did Peter liken one who is under the law (Acts 15:10)? What two groups of people referred to as “we” and “they” are saved “through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:28-30; 9:30-32)?
11. What evidence did Paul and Barnabas have that God saved Gentiles without circumcision (Acts 15:12; 13:46-49; 14:1-3, 7-10)?
12. What did James quote from Simeon (Peter) regarding God’s purpose among the Gentiles (Acts 15:13, 14; 10:34-45; 15:7-11; Eph. 3:3-10)? What is meant by the “tabernacle of David” (verse 16; Amos 9:11, 12)? Why the remark about preaching Moses (verse 21)?
13. What course of action is proposed by James (Acts 15:19, 20)?
14. Why say “with the whole church” (Acts 15:22, cf. 5)? What authority had the Judaizers who had gone to Antioch (Acts 15:24, cf. 1)? Why send Judas and Silas (verse 27)?
15. Why say “For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us” (Acts 15:28, 25)? Were the things specified parts of the law (verse 29)? Was this a compromise? Or was this a victory for Paul?
16. What four things were Gentile Christians told to abstain (Acts 15:20, 29)? Why was this necessary to keep away from these four things (Acts 15:20, 21; I Cor. 10:23, 24, 32, 38)? Was this short epistle merely the opinion of the Jerusalem church (verse 28)?
17. Who read the epistle to the multitude (Acts 15:30, 31)? In what sense were Judas and Silas prophets (verse 32)? Did Silas return to Jerusalem (Acts 15:33, 40)?
18. What was the primary purpose of the tour (Acts 15:36)?
19. Grounds of the contention between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:37-39)? What more is known of Barnabas?
20. What fitness had Silas for the work (Acts 15:22, 32)? When the churches planted in Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:41; 9:30; Gal. 1:18-24)? What confirming was this (Acts 15:41; 14:21)?

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 7 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 7

Page 1

Acts 16

Memory Verses: Acts 16:32, 33

Memory Verses:

“And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.” (Acts 16:32, 33).

**PAUL AND SILAS AT PHILIPPI**

“Why Two Companies Went Out Instead of One” (Acts 15:36-41) closed our last lesson.

The separation of Paul and Barnabas over John Mark was the result of a sharp contention, our very word for paroxysm in English. The “son of consolation” loses his temper in a dispute over his cousin and Paul used sharp words toward his benefactor and friend. It is so often that the little irritations of life give occasion to violent explosions.

When John Mark faced danger he flinched, flickered, and quit. “No one can rightly blame Barnabas for giving his cousin John Mark a second chance nor Paul for fearing to risk him again. One’s judgment may go with Paul, but one’s heart goes with Barnabas” (Robertson).

John Mark made good with Barnabas, with Peter (I Pet. 5:13), and finally with Paul (Col. 4:10; II Tim. 4:11). MAKING GOOD IN THE MINISTRY by Dr. A. T. Robertson tells this thrilling story.

Paul declined to have a quitter on his hands, and Barnabas was determined to give John Mark a second chance, Paul and Barnabas parted in anger and both in sorrow. The difference was over a man, not over a doctrine!

**“And Paul Chose Silas” (Acts 15:40)**

Paul chose Silas as his fellow laborer for the Second Missionary Journey (50-53 A. D.). He first appears as one of the leaders of the Judean church (Acts 15:22, 27, 32). Like Paul he was a Jew and a Roman citizen (Acts 16:21, 38). He was sent with the Jerusalem letter to the Gentiles (Acts 15:27). He is also called Silvanus (I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:1; II Cor. 1:19; I Pet. 5:12). Paul and Silas took the opposite course from the first tour, leaving Cyprus to Barnabas and Mark. Barnabas disappears from the text of the New Testament. Paul probably established the churches of Syria and Cilicia awhile in Tarsus after leaving Jerusalem (Acts 9:30; Gal. 1:21). The Second Missionary tour runs from Acts 15:36 - Acts 18:22.

Acts 16 may be outlined as follows:

- I. The Servant (Acts 16:1-5).
- II. The Spirit (Acts 16:6-11).
- III. The Seller (Acts 16:12-15).
- IV. The Stripes (Acts 16:16-24).
- V. The Singing (Acts 16:25).
- VI. The Salvation (Acts 16:26-34).
- VII. The Satisfaction (Acts 16:35-40).

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 7 - PAGE 2

### I. Timothy Joins Paul (Acts 16:1-5)

“Then came he to... Lystra... certain... disciple... Timotheus” (Acts 16:1): Or, Timothy, who now was about eighteen years of age. He was a convert of Paul’s former visit a few years before, “my own son in the faith” (I Tim. 1:2; I Cor. 4:17). “Let no man despise thy youth” Paul writes to him twelve years later. Timothy was taught the Scriptures by his “Grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice” (II Tim. 1:5). Paul loved him devotedly (I Tim. 1:3; 5:23; II Tim. 3:15; Phil. 2:19f). It is a glorious discovery to find a real young preacher for Christ’s work.

“Well reported of by the brethren...” (Acts 16:2): Timothy so conducted himself and used his ability for Christ that all spoke well of him.

“Go forth with him... circumcised him” (Acts 16:3): Paul chose Timothy as a traveling companion. “He circumcised him.” It is sometimes right to do a certain act under one set of circumstances and wrong to do the same thing under different circumstances. Paul refused to circumcise Titus, another Greek who labored with him (Gal. 2:3-5). Had he yielded to the Jews, Paul would have admitted that the gospel was not enough to save Titus. Of course, he could not admit this.

However, with Timothy the circumstances were different. He wanted to take the young half-Greek into synagogues with him. He did not desire to spend any time discussing the obsolete practice of circumcision, hence he voluntarily circumcised Timothy. For the sake of expediency Paul voluntarily removed the stumbling block to the ministry of Timothy. Otherwise Timothy could not have been allowed to preach in the synagogues, since he was both Jew and Greek. Timothy was ordained by the elders, and received special gifts by the imposition of the hands of the apostle (I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6).

“They delivered them the decrees...” (Acts 16:4): “They went through the cities” where churches were already planted. As they went, they “delivered them the decrees on circumcision and the Law of Moses” decided upon at Jerusalem (Acts 15:23-29). This is proof of Paul’s loyalty to the Jerusalem compact (Knowling). Silas was with Paul and his presence gave added dignity to the passing out of the decrees, a charter of Gentile freedom, since he was one of the committee from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 15:22, 27, 32). “Ordained” emphasizes the permanence of the conclusions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. It was a charter of liberty for continual living, not a temporary compromise. They united in harmonious fellowship Jewish and Gentile converts (verse 5).

### II. The Troas Vision (Acts 16:6-10)

“Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia...” (Acts 16:0): This was a Roman province west of Lycaonia in Asia Minor, running down to the seacoast of the Aegean Sea.

“And the region of Galatia”: Lay to the north of Lycaonia, and was entirely in the interior. It received its name from a settlement of Ghouls, an off shoot of a Gallic invasion of Greece in the third century before Christ. It became a Roman province in A. D. 26. No record is made here of the results of this tour. We learn elsewhere of numerous churches in Galatia. They were probably planted at this time (I Cor. 16:1; Gal. 4:14, 15; II Cor. 12:9, 10). Sickness had kept Paul longer in Galatia than he intended to stay.

“Forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia”: Paul proposed to carry the gospel into the province of Asia, so called by the Romans, of which Ephesus was the capital. The Spirit would not permit him to do so. Nor would He suffer them to turn to the right into Bithynia, nor turn back (verse 7). There was but one thing to do, GO STRAIGHT FORWARD! If God overrules us, He does so to give us a larger field (verse 8). Troas is the Troy of Homer, It was the place to take ship for Philippi. Twice again Paul will be here (II Cor. 2:12; Acts 20:6).

“And a vision... man of Macedonia... prayed... Come over... help us” (Acts 16:9): Like Peter’s vision at Joppa, it was a revelation. Like Peter’s, it called him to labor in fields before unentered. “A vision,” ‘horama,’ occurs eleven times in Acts, once in Matt, 17:9. The Holy Spirit from going had hindered twice Paul where he wanted to go. Would you have gone home with such rebuffs? Not Paul. The positive call now is to go “far hence to the Gentiles” (Acts 22:21).

“Come over... help us”: Now Paul understood God’s purpose, It was the cry of Europe for Christ.

“We endeavored to go into Macedonia...” (Acts 16:10): Now Luke the writer appears with Paul. The use of the plural is dropped in Acts 17:1 when Paul leaves Philippi, is resumed in Acts 20:5 when Paul rejoins Luke at Philippi. They sought to find a ship to carry them across. There is no intimation that they preached at this time at Troas, but a few years later a church was found here (Acts 20:6-12),

### III. Gospel Converts and Happenings in Philippi (Acts 16:11-40)

A. The first converts in Europe (Acts 16:11-15).

“Philippi... chief city... colony” (Acts 16:12): God favored the missionaries with a rapid journey (verse 11; Acts 20:6). Samothrace is an island about half way between Troas and Neapolis, the European port, where they landed. Philippi was the chief city of that part of Macedonia. It was situated about a mile east of the small stream Gangites, which flows into the river Strymon some thirty miles away. I once walked from the city to the Gangites with three intermediate boys, and found it to be ideal for baptizing.

In this valley the Battle of Philippi was fought B. C. 42 between the Second Triumvirate (Octavius, Antonius, Lepidus) and Brutus and Cassius. In memory of the victory Octavius made it a colony with all the privileges of Roman citizenship, such as freedom from scourging, freedom from arrest save in extreme cases, and the right of appeal to the emperor. Octavius planted here a colony of Roman veterans with farms attached, a military outpost and a miniature of Rome itself. The language was Latin. Here Paul is face to face with the Roman power and empire in a new sense.

The Greek Philip II (382-836 B. C.), father of Alexander the Great, renamed the city after himself. It was on the Egnatian Way, the Roman road, traces of which we saw when there.

“We went out of the city by a riverside... prayer... spake unto the women” (Acts 16:13): The little river Gangites was one mile west of the town. Philippi as a military outpost had few Jews. Probably there was no synagogue in the city. There was a “praying place” by the riverside. Here Paul and Silas met a few pious women to whom Paul spake. Sitting was the Jewish attitude for public speaking.

The “man of Macedonia” turned out to be a group of women (Furneaux).

Many modern Christians when away from home or living in a community where no New Testament Church is found drift into a denominational church or away from Christ entirely. What a lesson Lydia has for such. She was loyal to the royal within her. Luke’s use of the first personal plural implies that each of the four (Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke) preached in turn, with Paul as chief speaker.

“Lydia... was baptized” (Acts 16:14, 15): Lydia is Greek. She was probably a convert to Judaism. She was hundreds of miles from home selling purple cloth (now Turkish red). Thyatira, afterwards one of the seven churches of Asia, was in Lydia. She may have been named after the land, though Lydia is a common female name. Lydia was itself a Macedonian colony (Strabo, XIII. 4). Thyatira was famous (Rev. 2:18) for its purple dyes as old as Homer (Iliad, IV. 141) and had a guild of dyers as inscriptions show.

There was a great demand for this fabric as it was used on the official toga at Rome and in Roman colonies, We still use the term “royal purple.”

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 7 - PAGE 4

Lydia evidently was a woman of some means to carry on such an important enterprise from her native city. She was probably a freed-woman, a proselyte or a Jewess, wealthy, and probably a widow. When Paul writes to the Philippians he does not mention Lydia who may have died meanwhile. Robertson says she “certainly was not Paul’s wife.”

“Whose heart the lord opened”: Some of God’s providences fitted her for the reception of the gospel. God opens the heart by bringing the messenger and message together. Lydia heard the word, believed in and obeyed the gospel without delay. God calls us through the Gospel today (II Thess. 2:14; Rom. 10:9-17).

“Baptized”: In the apostolic period baptism always at once followed acceptance of the gospel. “One solitary convert, a woman, and she already a seeker after God, and a native of that very Asia where they had been forbidden to preach” (Furneaux). A new era had dawned for Europe and for women in the conversion of Lydia.

“And her household” (Acts 16:15): We do not know if Lydia was married or whether she had a child or children. The women who worked with her and the slaves made up her family (verse 13). Infant baptism cannot be inferred from any of the household baptisms (Acts 10:46; 15:9; 16:34; I Cor. 1:16; 16:15).

“Come into my house... abide there... constrained us” (Acts 16:15): The four evangelists made Lydia’s home their headquarters. Paul did not usually accept aid from his converts (Acts 20:33; II Cor. 12:17), but some moral force or hospitable persuasion was required. Lydia had her way as women usually do.

### B. Paul and Silas Scourged and Imprisoned (Acts 16:16-24)

“As we went to prayer...” (Acts 16:16): To the place of prayer (verse 13),

“A certain damsel possessed... spirit of divination”: Literally, she had “The spirit of a Pythoness.” Python was the name given to the serpent that kept guard at Delphi, slain by Apollo, who was called Puthois Apollo and the prophetess at Delphi was termed Phythia. Luke certainly does not mean to credit Apollo with a real existence (I Cor. 8:4). Plutarch, A. D. 50-100, says the term “puthones” was applied to ventriloquists. In the LXX those with familiar spirits are called by this word ventriloquists (Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27), including the witch of Endor (I Sam. 28:7). Possibly this slave girl had the gift of prophecy “by soothsaying.” Joint owners of this poor slave girl exploited her calamity, whatever it was, for selfish gain, just as men and women today exploit girls and women in the “white slave” trade. As a fortuneteller she was a valuable asset for all the credulous dupes of the community. Do you remember Simon Magus in Samaria and Elymas Bar-jesus in Cyprus who had won power and wealth as soothsayers? Luke does not say this girl foretold the future, but the people thought she did. She was a demoniac (see Luke 8:26-35).

“These men are the servants of the most high God...” (Acts 16:17): She may have heard Paul preach about Jesus as the way of salvation (John 14:6). Evil spirits offered testimony to the work and power of Christ (Mark 3:12; Luke 4:34). The Lord silenced them. Paul followed the example.

“In the name of Jesus Christ... come out of her” (Acts 16:18): The strange conduct of the damsel gave Paul and the rest an unpleasant prominence in the community. Paul delayed for many days, but the true witness which came from the wrong source worked up Paul to the place where he commanded the spirit “to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.” “In my name,” said the risen Lord, “shall they cast out devils” (Mark 16:17).

“Her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone” (Acts 16:19): “The two most important social revolutions worked by Christianity have been the elevation of woman and the abolition of slavery” (Furneaux). Lydia illustrates the first, and this slave girl the second, “The most sensitive part of civilized man is the pocket” (Ramsay).

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 7 - PAGE 5

“Caught Paul and Silas...” With rage the owners dragged Paul and Silas forcibly “into the marketplace unto the rulers” (see Acts 21:30). This was the Roman forum near which would be the courts of law as in our courthouse square.

“The magistrates”: Roman officers, two in number, called ‘duumviri’ or ‘duumvirs,’ answering to consuls in Rome. They were accompanied by lictors bearing rods (verse 35). “These men, being Jews” is a contemptuous use. The people of Philippi, unlike those in Antioch (Acts 11:26) did not recognize any distinction between Jews and Christians. These four men were Jews. This appeal to race prejudice would be powerful in view of the recent decree of Claudius expelling Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2). It was about 50 AD that Paul was in Philippi, They were accused of raising disturbances in Philippi.

“And teach customs... not lawful for us... being Romans” (Acts 16:21): This pose of patriotism is all sound and fury. Love of money not love for Rome moved these men. As Roman citizens in a colony they make full use of all their rights of protest. The Romans granted toleration to conquered nations to follow their religious customs provided they did not try to win the Romans. No Roman magistrate would pass on abstract theological questions (Acts 18:15), but only if a breach of the peace was made, or secret sects or organizations formed.

“And the multitude rose up together against them...” (Acts 16:22): The appeal to race and national prejudice raised a ferment. Without inquiry the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.” Paul, in I Thess. 2:2, refers to the shameful treatment received in Philippi, “insulted.” The Roman custom was to lay bare the boding and to beat it with the rods borne by the lictors. Paul says (II Cor. 11:25), “Thrice was I beaten with rods.” “Laid many stripes on them” (verse 23): Moses restricted the number of stripes (Deut. 25:3). “Five times received I forty stripes save one” (II Cor. 11:24). With the Romans there was no such restriction.

“They cast them into prison... inner prison... feet... stocks” (Acts 16:23, 24): The Roman public prisons had a vestibule and outer prison and behind this the inner prison, a dungeon with no light or air save what came through the door when open.

“The stocks”: An instrument of torture as well as confinement. The feet, stretched wide apart, were thrust through holes in a wall of wood, and the prisoner was fastened there. Robertson says “the stocks” was “a log or timber with five holes (four for the wrists and ankles and one for the neck) or two for the feet as here, to shackle the feet stretched apart (Job 33:11). This torment was practiced in Sparta, Athens, Rome and Adoniram Judson suffered it in Burma.”

C. The jailer and his family are baptized (Acts 16:25-34).

“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed... sang praises” (Acts 16:25) In the middle of the night, Paul and Silas were praying and singing, blending together prayer and praise. They probably used portions of the Psalms (see Luke 1:39f, 67f; 2:28f) with occasional outbursts of praise. Never had such sounds at midnight been heard from that inner prison. Bound, fettered, tortured, the spirit still had liberty, could pray and praise God. God heard them.

“There was a great earthquake...” (Acts 16:26): See Acts 4:31. If the prison was excavated from rocks in the hillside, the earthquake would easily have slipped the bars of the doors loose and the chains would have fallen out of the walls. “All the doors were opened.”

“And the keeper of the prison awakening... sword... would have killed himself” (Acts 16:27): It was an earthquake that would wake up anyone. Seeing the doors open, he “supposed that the prisoners had fled.” He was on the point of committing suicide as Brutus had done near here. Stoicism had made suicide popular as the escape from trouble like the Japanese hara-kiri. Were the prisoners so panic-stricken they did not rally

to the possibility of escape before the jailer awoke? He was responsible for the prisoners with his life (Acts 12:19; 27:42)? Paul reassured him (verse 28).

“Fell down before Paul and Silas” (Acts 16:29): The jailer was at the outer door and he wanted lights to see what was inside in the inner prison. He “fell down” before Paul and Silas in an act of worship as Cornelius before Peter (Acts 10:25).

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30): The jailer brought them out of the inner prison, probably into the prison court. Saved from suicide, and from danger of death because the prisoners are there, awed by the wonderful events, he was aware that these men had preached a new religion and salvation and asks this vital question.

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ... saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31): He was a heathen. FAITH was the first essential step. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). Faith leads to the acceptance of Christ, and salvation. Those on Pentecost asked this question, already believing Peter’s message on the Risen Christ, and he told them: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38).

“And thy house”: His “house” could listen to the “word of the Lord” (verse 32), hence they were not infants. It was needful to preach the word, for this heathen knew almost nothing of the gospel. In preaching the gospel, Paul preached baptism.

“Washed their stripes” (Acts 16:33): They were covered with bruises, blood and dust. The jailer bathed the stains left by the rods of the lictors (verse 22). His heart was now changed by repentance; he was now filled with the spirit of mercy.

“Baptized, he and all his, straightway”: If Paul had stopped with Acts 16:31 “faith only” folk might have some basis for their doctrine. But to stop there and leave out verses 33-34 is dishonest. This man now believed (verse 32), he showed his repentance (verse 33; Acts 2:38), and now he arose and was baptized, and washed away his sins (Acts 22:16). He was now “in Christ” (Gal 3:27), and hence a Christian!

The baptism could take place in the pool or tank in which he bathed Paul and Silas, or in the basin in the court for receiving the rain, or even in a swimming pool or bath found within the walls of the prison! Or in the nearby GANGITES RIVER. “The baptism was that of immersion, which formed an essential part of the symbolism of the act” (Meyer).

“Brought them into his house... rejoiced” (Acts 16:34): Now a Christian, the jailer set a “table” before them with food on it. They had probably had no food for a day. The whole household (family, warden, and slaves) heard the word of God, believed in the Lord Jesus, made confession, were baptized, and rejoiced! 0 happy day, happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away!

D. The prisoners are released (Acts 16:35-40).

“And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants” (Acts 16:85): The lictors were the sergeants. Possibly the praetors or ‘duumvirs’ here called “magistrates” had heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. They wished quietly to get rid of them. “Let those men go.” The Codex Bezae expressly says that the magistrates “assembled together in the market place and recollecting the earthquake that had happened they were afraid.”

The Porcian and Valerian laws exempted all Roman citizens from stripes or torture. The magistrates had broken the Roman law!

“Let them carne themselves and fetch us out” (Acts 16:37): Paul and Silas had been publicly scourged and tortured as evil doers, in violation of Roman law. Acts 22:25 teaches us that Paul was born a Roman citizen. His father, or some ancestor, had been admitted to Roman citizenship, a great privilege and honor.

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 7 - PAGE 7

Paul insisted that he and Silas should be publicly vindicated, not for their own honor, but for the sake of the church at Philippi. Christians must stand on their rights, and not be Casper Milquetoasts. Paul demanded that the magistrates, as a public acknowledgment that they had wronged and mistreated Paul and Silas publicly lead them out of prison. It was a bitter pill to the proud praetors.

“They feared, when they heard that they were Romans” (Acts 16:88): Had Paul insisted he could have had the magistrates severely punished. They might abuse aliens, but “to be a Roman was greater than to be a king.”

Cicero says, “To fetter a Roman citizen was a crime, to scourge him a scandal, to slay him – parricide.” Claudius had “deprived the city of Rhodes of its freedom for having crucified some citizens of Rome” (Rackham).

So the magistrates “came and besought them” (verse 39), “and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.” They kept on begging Paul and Silas to leave for fear of further trouble. The colonists in Philippi would turn against the praetors if they learned the facts, proud as they were of being Roman citizens!

“They... entered into the house of Lydia... comforted them and departed” (Acts 16:40) The four missionaries were guests of Lydia (verse 15), and probably the church met in her home. The church thus planted grew and was afterwards honored with an apostolic letter.

Note “they” here, not “we.” This is Paul and Silas, but not Luke and Timothy. The movements of Timothy are not perfectly clear till he reappears at Berea (Acts 17:15). Did Paul send Timothy to Thessalonica from Philippi with gifts of which Paul spoke later (Phil. 4:15f)? Then he followed Paul and Silas to Berea.

### Questions

1. From what city did Paul begin his second missionary journey (Acts 15:35, 36)? What was the primary purpose of the tour?
2. What difference of opinion caused a sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:37-39)? What more is known of Barnabas? Is it possible for a “quitter” to make good (Acts 13:13, I Pet. 5:13; Col. 4:10; II Tim. 4:11; Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13)?
3. What important difference in the way Paul’s first and second missionary journeys began (Acts 15:36; 13:2, 3)? Can God use even contention to increase the distribution of His word (Acts 15:39, 40)? When were churches planted in Syria and Cilicia (Acts 16:41; 9:30; Gal. 1:18-24)? How “confirm?”
4. What fitness had Silas for the work (Acts 15:40, see 22, 32; 16:21, 38)?
5. Who joined Paul and Silas at Derbe and Lystra (Acts 16:1-3)? What do we know of Timothy’s parents (II Tim. 1:5)? Would this make him offensive to the Jews? What do we know of his education (II Tim. 3:15)? When had he become a Christian (I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 3:10, 11)? Can a grandmother in the home be a blessing?
6. To what ceremonial act did Paul and Timothy submit that Jewish prejudice might be removed (Acts 16:3)? How reconcile the circumcision of Timothy with Gal. 5:2-4? In what was he well reported of at Lystra and Iconium (verse 2)?
7. Why deliver the “decrees” to these churches (Acts 16:4)? What resulted among the Jews and Gentiles (verse 5)?
8. How was Paul led out of Asia and into Europe (Acts 16:6-11)? Who overruled Paul’s wishes (verses 6, 7)? Why (verse 9, 10)?

**Questions (Continued)**

9. Where are Samothrace, Neapolis and Philippi (Acts 16:11)? What is implied in “a straight course’?” In what sense is Philippi the “chief” city” of that part of Macedonia? How did it come to be a “colony” (verse 12)?
10. When the writer of Acts begins using “we” (Acts 16:10), how does he indicate that Luke entered Europe with Paul’s company?
11. Who did the “man of Macedonia” (verse 9) turn out to be (verses 13, 14)? Why “suppose” there was a place of prayer? Why not go to the synagogue? Where is Thyatira, and for what is it noted (vs. 14)?
12. What was the character of Lydia as indicated by the text? How was her heart “opened,” and the effect of the “opening” (Acts 16:14, see 6, 7, 10, 18)?! Were any infants baptized in her household (Acts 16:15, cf. 13)? Why did she “constrain” the apostles (verse 15)? What ten things are recorded of Lydia (verses 14, 15)?
13. What is a “spirit of divination” (Acts 16:16, 18)? Why did Paul object to her testimony (Acts 16:17, 18)? Why not expel the spirit sooner (verse 18)?
14. Why did the masters not prefer their real complaint (Acts 16:20, 21, cf. 19)? Why call themselves Romans (Acts 16:21, cf. 12)? What was the motive of the magistrates (verse 22)? What the inner prison, and the stocks (verse 24)?
15. Why did not Paul and Silas sing before midnight (Acts 16:25)? Why did the jailer think of killing himself (verse 27)? How did Paul know what he was doing (verse 28)? Why had no prisoners escaped?
16. Why command “Believe” first (Acts 16:31, cf. 34)? How did the jailer know anything of salvation (verse 30, cf. 18)?
17. Was the baptism in or out of the house (verses 33, 34)? Was it in the prison (verse 30)? Were any infants in the household (verses 31-34)?
18. Why was the release ordered (Acts 16:35)?
19. Why the demand made by Paul (Acts 16:37)? In what sense were Paul and Silas Romans (Acts 16:37)? Why rights were thus conferred? Could Paul have caused the magistrates serious trouble (Acts 16:38, 39)?
20. What brethren (Acts 16:40, cf. 18)? Present results of Lydia’s faithfulness?

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**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 8

Page 1

Acts 17

Memory Verses: Acts 17:11, 30, 31

Memory Verses:

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so... And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:11, 30, 31).

**PAUL AT THESSALONICA AND ATHENS**

“WHEN the OUTLOOK is not good, try the UPLOOK” is a fine motto.

When Paul and Silas left Philippi, “they comforted” the brethren “and departed” (Acts 16:40). The lictors “had laid many stripes upon them” (Acts 16:23). Their bruised bodies housed hearts reinforced with “prayer and praise” (Acts 16:25)!

A journey of about 100 miles brought Paul to Thessalonica, and then about fifty miles farther along the Roman road, to Berea. His stay in the former city intimates how the gospel should be preached, his experience in Berea, how it should be received.

**Outline of Acts 17**

- I. The Converts (Acts 17:1-4)
- II. The Controversy (Acts 17:5-9)
- III. The Contrast (Acts 17:10-14)
- IV. The Curiosity (Acts 17:15-21).
- V. The Characterization (Acts 17:22-29)
- VI. The Counsel (Acts 17:30-34)

**I. Experiences at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9)**

A. The converts (Acts 17:1-4).

“They came to Thessalonica... synagogue” (Acts 17:1): They took the great Egnatian Way, one of the great Roman roads from Byzantium to Dyrrachium (over 500 miles long) on the Adriatic Sea, opposite Brundisium in Italy and so an extension of the Appian Way. Amphipolis was about 32 miles from Philippi, so called because the Strymon River flowed almost around (‘amphi’) it, the metropolis of Macedonia Prima, a free city and about three miles from the sea. Appolonia was 32 miles from Amphipolis. Probably only a night was spent in each.

“Thessalonica”: Now known as Salonika. There was a synagogue in this great commercial city. The population is about 70,000 today. It was originally called Therma, at the head of the Thermaic Gulf. Cassander renamed it Thessalonica after his wife, the sister of Alexander the Great. It was the capital of the second of the four divisions of Macedonia and finally the capital of the whole province. It shared with Corinth and Ephesus the commerce of the Aegean.

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“A synagogue”: One synagogue shows that even in this commercial city the Jews were not very numerous.

As a political center it ranked with Antioch and Caesarea in Palestine. It was a strategic center for the spread of the gospel, which sounded (echoed) forth from Thessalonica throughout Macedonia and Achaia (I Thess. 1:8).

“And Paul... reasoned with them out of the scriptures” (Acts 17:2): Paul first gave the Jews on the Sabbath, the seventh day, the opportunity to hear the gospel. It was “his manner” or custom to go to the Jewish synagogue to use the Jews and the God-fearers as a springboard for his work among the Gentiles.

“The scriptures”: The written Word of God is the only possible basis, the only infallible authority, the most valuable form of preaching then – and now. To these Jews and God-fearers Paul appealed to the Scriptures as text and basis of his ideas.

While Paul spoke in the synagogue only “three Sabbaths,” I Thess. 1:8 implies an extended stay. The church consisted mainly of Gentile converts (II Thess. 3:4, 7, 8) and seems to have been well organized (I Thess. 5:12). He received help while there several times from Philippi (Phil. 4:16) and even so worked night and day to support himself (I Thess. 2:9). His preaching there was misunderstood in spite of careful instruction concerning the Second Coming (I Thess. 4:13-5-5; II Thess. 2:10-12).

“Opening and alleging... Christ... suffered... risen again” (Acts 17:3). Luke means he opened the Scriptures as made plain by the mission and message of Jesus (Luke 24:32). It is akin to the opening of the mind of the disciples also by Jesus (Luke 24:45) and of the opening of Lydia’s heart by the Lord (Acts 16:14). Such exposition of the Scriptures as Jesus and Paul gave would lead to more opening of mind and heart. Paul was not only expounding the Scriptures, he was also “propounding,” the old meaning of “allege,” his doctrine or setting forth the Scriptures.

“We were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention” (I Thess. 2:2). There was heated discussion with the rabbis. They would not be convinced by Paul’s powerful arguments, for the Cross was a stumbling block to the Jews (I Cor. 1:23). He showed by the Old Testament that the promised Messiah should die, and rise again, that Jesus complied with these conditions, and hence must be the Christ. This was the very argument made by the Risen Jesus to the two on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:25-27). Isaiah 53 was a passage in point that the rabbis had overlooked. Peter made the same point in Acts 3:18, and Paul again in Acts 26:23.

The actual resurrection of Jesus was also a necessity as Paul says he preached to them (I Thess. 4:14) and argued always from Scripture (I Cor. 15:3, 4) and from his own experience (Acts 9:22; 22:7; 26:8, 14; I Cor. 15:8). “This Jesus, whom I preach unto you,” alleged Paul, “is Christ.” This is the conclusion of Paul’s line of argument. It is logical and overwhelming. It is his method everywhere – in Damascus, in Antioch, in Pisidia, in Thessalonica and in Corinth. Paul was an eyewitness!

“And some of them believed... Greeks a great multitude... chief women” (Acts 17:4): Some of the Jews who heard in the synagogue obeyed the gospel. This small group of Jews “consorted with” Paul and Silas by God’s grace.

The “God-fearers” among the Gentiles were less under control of the jealous rabbis, and so the Greeks responded more readily to Paul’s appeal. In I Thess. 1:9 Paul expressly says that they “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,” proof that this church was mainly Gentile (I Thess. 2:12).

“Chief women”: A large number of women of the very first rank in the city. They were openly friendly to Paul’s message, whether proselytes or Gentiles or Jewish wives of Gentiles as Hort holds. Here, as in Philippi, leading women take a bold stand for Christ. In Macedonia women had more freedom than elsewhere.

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Not all those converted belonged to the higher classes, for the industrial element was clearly large (I Thess. 4:11),

#### B. The controversy (Acts 17:5-9).

“But the Jews which believed not... set all the city on a uproar” (Acts 17:5): Persecution in Thessalonica followed the usual pattern. A part believed; others were willed with jealous hatred. The success of Paul was entirely too great to please the rabbis. I Thess. 2:3-10 Paul hints at some of the slanders spread against him by these rabbis – deceivers, using words of flattery as men-pleasers, after vain-glory, greed of gain.

“Lewd fellows”: “Vile fellows of the rabble,” The Jews called in the worst classes to aid them. Good-for-nothing idlers or burns from the market place, then or now, are ready for any dirty job. The church in Thessalonica caught some of these peripatetic idlers (II Thess. 3:10f) “doing nothing but doing about.” These market-loungers, loafers, or wharf rats were gathered probably in the agora itself, told their duties, and paid in advance.

“Assaulted the house of Jason”: Paul and Silas were guests of Jason. He may have been a Gentile (Jason the name of an ancient king of Thessaly), but the Jews often used it for Joshua or Jesus (II Mac. 1:7). The combination of rabbis and rabble burst into Jason’s house and searched up and down for Paul and Silas. They were getting ready to have a lynching party.

“And when they found them not, they drew Jason...” (Acts 17:6): If they could not find Paul, they could literally drag Jason his host and some other Christians whom we do not know.

“Unto the rulers of the city”: These officials of the town are called in the original “politarchs.” This word does not occur in Greek literature and used to be cited as an example of Luke’s blunders. SIXTEEN (16) epigraphically examples now exist in modern Salonica, and one is located in the British Museum. It was evidently a Macedonian term, and Luke’s use of it was in line with his habit of using accepted terminology. It is a fine illustration of the historical accuracy of Luke in matters of detail. “Politarchs” is the title for city officers in Thessalonica, a free city. They were burgomasters, mayors, or rulers of the city.

“These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also”: The mob cried to these burgomasters that the apostles had “turned the world upside down” – a fine compliment to the far reaching effects of Paul’s preaching. Christianity will right everything that is wrong. The evil man looks upon it as a turning-upside-down-system. While Christianity is revolutionary, on this particular occasion the rabbis and the hired loafers caused the uproar (verse 5).

“These all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar...” (Acts 16:7): A false charge. It was likely one to secure the attention of the magistrates. Jason had received the preachers. The charge was one of treason and was a sure way to get a conviction.

“There is another king, one Jesus”: “Although the emperors never ventured to assume the title ‘Rex’ at Rome, in the eastern provinces they were regularly termed “basileus” (Page). The Jews said to Pilate: “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:14). Christ is king, but over a spiritual king-dom. It was an attempt to make Paul mean something he did not say (see Mark 12:13-17) “They troubled the people and the rulers of the city” (verse 8) with this charge of disloyalty to the Roman Caesar, and an attempt to have another king.

“When they had taken security of Jason...” (Acts 17:9): The politarchs put Jason under a “peace-bond,” and “let them go.” Probably the demand was made of Jason that he see to it that Paul and Silas leave the city and not return. Does Paul refer to this in I Thess. 2:17f?

## II. The “Noble” Bereans (Acts 17:10-14)

“And the brethren... sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea” (Acts 17:10): They were sent away by night so as to leave without a fresh disturbance. Paul’s work had not been in vain in Thessalonica (I Thess. 1:7f; 2:13, 20). Paul loved the church. Two of them, Aristarchus and Secundus, will accompany him to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4); Aristarchus will go on with him to Rome (Acts 27:2).

“Berea”: About fifty miles southwest from Thessalonica, Berea is a modern town of some 6,000. It lies at the foot of Mt. Bermius, situated on a tributary of the Haliacmon. Its modern name is Veria.

“These were more noble...”: They were willing honestly to investigate the scriptures daily. In Thessalonica many of the Jews out of pride and prejudice refused to listen. Here the Jews joyfully welcomed the two Jewish visitors. Paul expounded the Scriptures daily as in Thessalonica, but the Bereans instead of resenting Paul’s new interpretation, examined (sifted up and down and made careful and exact research as in legal processes as in Acts 4:9; 12:19) the Scriptures for themselves. If you “search the scriptures daily,” God will bless you real good! How mistaken are those who believe that one must accept without examining the teaching of their church. Know the truth. Study the Word of God (Matt. 24:35; I Pet. 1:25). We must not put the reason of modernistic Protestants or the traditions of Councils of the Roman Catholic system above the Word of God today (II Tim. 3:15-17).

“Therefore many of them believed...” Acts 17:12): Honest study of God’s Word always wins converts, The converts were Jews and devout Greeks, both men and women.

“But... the Jews of Thessalonica... came... stirred up the people” (Acts 17:13): These Jews shook up the crowd like an earthquake (Acts 4:31) and disturbed like a tornado (Acts 17:8). Success at Thessalonica gave the rabbis confidence and courage. How long Paul was in Berea Luke does not say. A church was established here which gave a good account of itself and sent a messenger (Acts 20:4) with their part of the collection to Jerusalem. These troublemakers probably made the same charge of treason against Paul and Silas, “The brethren” swiftly “sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still” (verse 14).

## III. Paul “Resting and Sightseeing” at Athens (Acts 17:15-21)

“And they... brought him to Athens” (Acts 17:15): Some of the Berean brethren “conducted” Paul to make sure of his safe arrival. Paul sent an urgent message to Silas and Timothy to join him at once. From I Thess. 3:1, 2 we learn that Timothy was at once sent to Thessalonica.

Athens was “The eye of Greece.” It was the chief center of human philosophy.

“Paul waited... his spirit was stirred... saw... idolatry” (Acts 17:16): At first he seems to have intended to await the arrival of Timothy and Silas before he opened his work. His spirit was too much stirred to permit this. The city was “Full of idols.”

Paul the Jew from Tarsus was in the city of Pericles and Demosthenes, Socrates and Plato, Sophocles and Euripides. In its Agora Socrates had taught. Here was the academy of Plato, the Lyceum of Aristotle, the Porch of Zeno, and the Garden of Epicurus. Here men still talked about philosophy, poetry, politics, religion, anything and everything. Athens was the art center of the world. The Parthenon, the most beautiful of temples, crowned the Acropolis. It was 500 years old when Paul came to Athens.

As Paul walked around the city, “his soul was deeply vexed at the sight of the idol-filled city.” These statues were beautiful, but Paul was not deceived by the mere art for art’s sake. In the time of Nero Athens

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had, Pliny states, over 3,000 public statues besides countless private ones in the homes. Petronius sneers that it was easier to find a god than a man in Athens. Every gateway or porch had its protecting god.

Christ is “absolutely intolerant in religion” (John 14:6; Matt. 12:30; Acts 4:12; I Cor. 3:11). One can love and not tolerate. Paul loved all men in Athens, but he hated the idols and idolatry!

“Therefore disputed he in the synagogue... market” (Acts 17:17): First Paul reasoned in the synagogue at the services of the Jews and the God-fearers, then daily in the agora or market place to the late-comers. The agora is southwest of the Acropolis. It was a soul-lifting experience when I was there, as early one Lord’s Day, I read Acts 17, I Cor. 11:23-34. Matthew 26:26-29 as we sat on top of Mars’ hill and observed the Lord’s Supper!

“The Epicureans...” (Acts 17:18): Disciples of Epicurus, B. C. 342-271, who abandoned as hopeless the search by reason for pure truth (see John 18:38), seeking instead true pleasure through experience. Epicurus considered practical atheism the true view of the universe and denied a future life. Pleasure is the chief thing to be gotten out of life. He did not deny the existence of god, but regarded them as unconcerned with the life of men.

“Eat and drink for tomorrow we die,” was the philosophy of Lucretius and Horace. Of course, this low view of life led to sensualism, then and now.

“Stoics...” Disciples of Zeno, 360-260 B. C. This system taught self-mastery and hardness that ministered to pride or suicide in case of failure. It was a selfish and unloving view of life.

“In Epicureanism, it was man’s sensual nature which arrayed itself against the claims of the gospel; in Stoicism it was his self-righteousness and pride of intellect” (Hackett).

Knowling calls the Stoic ‘the Pharisee of philosophy’ and the Epicurean ‘the Sadducee of philosophy.’ Socrates tried 450 years before Paul to interest the passersby with some desire for better things. Paul had never faced a more difficult situation.

“What will this babbler say?” Paul spoke to anyone who showed the least interest. “Babbler” is “seed-picker” or picker up of seeds, like a bird in the market place hopping about after chance seeds. It was a contemptuous tone of supreme ridicule. Paul doubtless heard the comment. Probably the Epicureans made this sneer that Paul was a charlatan or quack.

“A setter forth of strange gods...” He spoke of God and the risen Jesus. Paul had the only true philosophy of the universe and life with Jesus Christ as the center (Col. 1:12-20).

“And they... brought him unto Areopagus...” (Acts 17:19): The Greek term for Mars’ hill (verse 22). This hill was a place of assembly. The Supreme Court of Athens met. It is west of the Acropolis, north of the agora and reached by a flight of steps in the rock. It was a polite meeting. “May we know what this new doctrine... is?” Courtesy, sarcasm, or irony (verse 20) prompted the question. They were always seeking “something newer” or “fresher” than new, the very latest thing (verse 21). “The new soon became stale with these itching and frivolous Athenians.”

### IV. A New Sermon from a New Text, But the Same Message (Acts 17:22-34)

#### A. The introduction (Acts 17:22, 23)

“Ye men of Athens... ye are too superstitious” (Acts 17:22): The Revised Version has “very religious,” a compliment to them. “I notice on every hand how deity-minded you are” (Berkeley). The city was “full of ideals” (verse 16).

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“Altar... TO THE UNKNOWN GOD” (Acts 17:23): They did not want to miss any gods – good or bad ones. Epimenides in a pestilence advised the sacrifice of a sheep to the befitting god whoever he might be! “Unknown God” is “AGNOSTO THEO.” Our word agnostic comes from it. Hort calls this the “confession at once of a bastard philosophy and of a bastard religion” (Hulsean Lectures, p. 64).

Paul was quick to use (his confession on the part of the Athenians of a higher power than yet known to them. “Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”

B. The “Unknown God” set forth (Acts 17:24-29).

“God that made the world...” (Acts 17:24): Paul describes God as the one true and Supreme God. The Athenians had 30,000 gods. They had a god for this and a god for that. The true God created all the details of the universe. Paul is using the words of Isa. 42:5. Note the things affirmed of God in verses 24-29:

1. God “made the world” (verse 24).
2. He is Lord of heaven and earth.
3. He dwells not in temples. Did he point to the Parthenon that housed Athena?
4. He is not worshipped by human hands (verse 25).
5. He gives life to all that lives.
6. He is made of one blood all nations (verse 26).
7. He appointed that all men should seek the Lord.
8. “We are also his offspring” (verse 28) – Writings of Aratus and Cleanthes.
9. The Godhead is not like any idol made by human hands.

C. A call to repentance (Acts 17:30, 31).

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at...” (Acts 17:30). The times of ignorance are the times when there was no revelation to those in darkness. “God winked at,” means He overlooked.

“Now commandeth all men... repent.” The gospel is worldwide. So is the command to “all men everywhere to repent.” The call is urgent. God has “appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness” by Christ. The judgment day is as sure as the RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST! This was a fact because Paul had SEEN the Risen Christ. Paul could give an eyewitness account of “Jesus and the Resurrection” (verse 18).

D. Immediate effects of the speech (Acts 17:32-34).

“Resurrection of the dead . . . some mocked: and others... hear thee again” (Acts 17:32): When these men heard of “a resurrection of dead men,” some “mocked.” The Greeks believed that the souls of men lived on, but they had no conception of resurrection of the body. They listened with respect till Paul spoke of the actual resurrection of Jesus from the dead as a fact. Then they did not care to hear any more. They began to “mock!” This “babbling” had now lost what he had gained with his light and flippant Epicureans. Probably the Stoics wished to “hear again of this matter.” “So Paul departed from among them” (verse 33).

“Howbeit certain men clave unto them, and believed” (Acts 17:34): No sermon is a failure that leads a group of men to believe in Jesus Christ. Dionysius the Aeropagite, one of the college of twelve judges who had helped to make Athens great, accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour. Eusebius says that he afterwards became bishop of the Church at Athens and died a martyr.

“A woman named Damaris, and others with them.” Not the wife of Dionysius, but an aristocratic woman, not necessarily an educated courtesan as Furneaux holds. “And others” was a group strong enough to keep the fire burning in Athens.

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Paul in I Cor. 2:1-5 alludes to his “failure” with philosophy in Athens when he FAILED TO PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED and he determined never to make that mistake again!

In the cross of Christ I glory,  
Tow’ring o’er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime!  
– John Roaring

### Questions

1. How did Paul begin his ministry in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1, 2; Thess. 2:1, 2)?
2. What three facts did Paul declare in this Jewish synagogue (Acts 17:3)? Were there any miracles wrought there (Thess. 1:5)?
3. Into what two classes did Paul’s preaching divide the Jews of Thessalonica (Acts 17:4, 5)? What means of support had the apostles (Phil. 4:15, 16; I Thess. 2:9)?
4. How did the Jewish mob prove it was neither pious nor patriotic (Acts 17:5-9)? Can you compare the persecutors with those in Antioch (verse 5; Acts 13:50)?
5. Meaning of “turn the world upside down” (Acts 17:7)? Ground of the accusation (Acts 17:6, 7)? Why the people and rulers troubled (verse 8)? Meaning of “taken security” (verse 9)?
6. Where was Paul’s next place of ministry (Acts 17:10)? In what sense were the Bereans more able than the Thessalonians (Acts 17:11)? To what is their belief merited (verses 11, 12)?
7. How did the envious Jews of Thessalonica persist in the opposition to Paul’s preaching (Acts 17:13; 14:19)? Motive of the pursuers (verse 13)? Why did Timothy and Silas remain (verse 14)? Why were they wanted so soon in Athens (verse 15)?
8. How was the city “full of idols” (Acts 17:16; Isa. 41:29; 44:9-20)? What the market place (verse 17)?
9. Who the Epicureans and Stoics (Acts 17:18)? Why call Paul a “babbling” Meaning of “strange gods”? How did they reach this conclusion?
10. What was the intellectual condition of the Athenians (Acts 17:18-21)? Why were they so curious to hear Paul explain his doctrine (verses 19-21)?
11. What evidence of the excessive zeal of the Athenians in false worship did Paul discover (Acts 17:22, 23)?
12. Meaning of the words rendered “too superstitious” (Acts 17:22)?
13. With what nine facts does Paul set forth the “Unknown God” (Acts 17: 24-29)?
14. Do you believe that God “made of one blood all nations of men” (Acts 17:26)? How will this help solve the problem of “integration” everywhere?
15. Why does God command “all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30, 31)? In what sense “winked at” (verse 30; 14:16)?
16. What motive for repentance is presented (verse 31)?
17. How did Paul prove the certainty of a future judgment (Acts 17:31)?
18. Into what three classes were the people divided regarding their attitude toward Paul’s message (Acts 17:32-34)?
19. Why mention Dionysius and Damaris (verse 34)? Who were they? Why were women allowed to be present?
20. How account for the “little” success at Athens (Cor. 1:23-25; 2:1-5)? Are you ashamed of “The Old Rugged Cross”?

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 9 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 9  
Acts 18

Page 1  
Memory Verses: Acts 18:9, 10

Memory Verses:

“Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.”  
(Acts 18:9, 10)

### **PAUL IN CORINTH**

Corinth means “Ornament.”

Mummius had captured and destroyed Corinth 146 R. C. Restored by Julius Caesar 46 B. C. it became a boomtown and was made a colony. It was in Paul’s day the capital of the province of Achaia and the chief commercial city of Greece with a cosmopolitan, free population of 200,000 at the height of its power, plus 500,000 slaves.

The summit of Acro-Corinthus was 1,800 feet high. It was impregnable. Corinth occupied a strategic geographical position. It was situated at the southern extremity of the isthmus. The Acropolis commanded a wonderful view over the Saronic Gulf on the East and the Corinthian Gulf on the west, as well as over central Greece and the Peloponnesus. From the Acro-Corinthus it is possible on a clear day to see the Acropolis of Athens 40 miles away.

#### **Corinthian Canal**

Because of its highly favored commercial position, it was known as “two-sea’d Corinth.” It had three harbors: Leachaem, 1.5 miles to the West, Cenchreae, 8% miles to the East, and Schoenus, also the East, but much less used than Cenchreae.

#### **When Was Paul in Corinth?**

Paul visited Corinth for the first time on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1). This tour lasted from 50-53 A. D. Paul spent eighteen (18) months in Corinth. Leaving Athens, the center of the intellectual life of Greece, Paul came to Corinth, its commercial center.

Acts 18 has been dubbed “Spiritual Isolation”: “And Gallio cared for none of these things” (verse 17). When matter’s of religion came up, he turned his back upon them, and he just did not care for those things. The world is full of “Gallios” today. The chapter may be outlined:

- I. The Toiler (Acts 18:1-3).
- II. The Testimony (Acts 18:4-11).
- III. The Trial (Acts 18:12-17).
- III. The Tarrying (Acts 18:18).
- IV. The Trip (Acts 18:19-23).
- VI. The Teaching (Acts 18:24-28).

### **I. Paul Begins the Work in Corinth (Acts 18:1-4)**

“After these things Paul... came to Corinth” (Acts 18:1): By sea it was 45 miles from Athens to Corinth. Situated on the narrow isthmus between Greece proper and the Peloponnesus, it had harbors on both the Aegean and the Adriatic seas. The temple of Aphrodite on the Acro-Corinthus had a thousand consecrated prostitutes. The very name of Corinthianize meant immorality. The Parthenon and the philosopher faced Paul at Athens. A worse situation faced him at Corinth. All the Greek cities had brought anxiety to Paul. What could be expected of licentious Corinth?

“And found a certain Jew named Aquila... wife Priscilla” (Acts 18:2): Corinth had a large Jewish population, because it was a trade mart. Aquila is the Latin for “eagle.” Paul founded him at Corinth on his arrival. Aquila and Priscilla were among the Jews expelled from Rome by Claudius Caesar in 50 A. D. Inscriptions on the catacombs hint that Priscilla was of a noble family and lost her caste when she married a Jew. She was a woman of great ability. Doubtless Paul converted them at Corinth. They went to Ephesus with Paul (verse 18) where later a church met in their house (I Cor. 16:19). A few months later they returned to Rome, where again a church met in their house (Rom. 16:3-5). They were loyal, devoted friends of Paul. They were natives of Pontus (Acts 2:9).

“He abode with them... they were tentmakers” (Acts 18:3): Edersheim says that a Jewish guild always kept together whether in street or synagogue so that by this bond of tent making Paul met Aquila and Priscilla.

Every Jewish boy, rich or poor, bond or free, was taught a trade. When no church supported him (I Cor. 9:14), Paul had to take time from the ministry to earn his living. This was not the wisest use of his time or ability (I Cor. 2:3; Gal. 6:6-9). Any honest work is not a disgrace. Rabbi Judah says: “Me that teacheth not his son a trade, death the same as if he taught him to be a thief.”

“And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath... persuaded the Jews... Greeks” (Acts 18:4): Paul toiled in making tents six days in the week in this strange city. On the Sabbath as was his custom he preached. He tried to persuade both Jews and Greeks or God-fearers who would come. Results were slower than usual. His time and strength were exhausted in tent snaking.

### **II. Helpers Arrive, and a Breach with the Jews (Acts 18:5-11)**

“And when Silas and Timotheus were come...” (Acts 18:5): When Paul left Berea for Athens they remained (Acts 17:14), but he sent for them to come. I Thess. 3:1 implies that Timothy was sent hack from Athens to Thessalonica. Some think they did not join him at all until Paul was in Corinth in early 52 A. D.

“Paul was pressed in the spirit...” The Revision reads “was constrained by the word,” the gospel message. “Paul was completely absorbed in preaching the Message” (Phillips).

Silas and Timothy arrived with gifts from Macedonia (I Thess. 3:6; II Cor. 11:9; Phil. 4:15). This set Paul free from tent making for a while so that he began to devote himself with fresh consecration to preaching. He was now assisted by Silas and Timothy (II Cor. 1:19). As clearly as he could, Paul showed the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah or Christ, God’s Anointed.

“And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed...” (Acts 18:6): Paul’s fresh activity aroused the rabbis as at Antioch in Pisidia and at Thessalonica in concerted opposition and railing or blasphemy. Paul was deeply stirred and “shook his raiment,” “undoubtedly a very exasperating gesture” (Ramsay).

“Your blood be upon your own heads... I will go unto the Gentiles”: Ashen Paul boldly preached that the risen Saviour was the Messiah or Christ, the Jews blasphemously resisted him. He had done his duty to

them. The responsibility was now theirs. Paul did not curse them, but gave “a solemn disclaimer of responsibility” as in Acts 20:26. The Jews used this very phrase in assuming responsibility for the blood of Jesus (Matt. 27:25; 23:35). He will now devote himself to Gentiles, though Jews will be converted also, as in Ephesus (Acts 10:1-10) and in Rome (Acts 18:23-28).

“And he departed... man’s house, named Justus” (Acts 18:7): A Gentile favorably impressed by Paul. He opened his home to the preacher. Evidently he was a Roman citizen and not Titus, brother of Luke (Gal. 2:1). The Revision reads “Titus Justus.” Some have supposed this man to be the Titus to whom the epistle was afterwards written. His house “joined hard to the synagogue,” having joint boundaries, or right next to. Did Paul choose this location because it was next to the synagogue? Anyway, it caught the attendants at the synagogue worship! In Ephesus when Paul had to leave the synagogue he went to the schoolhouse of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9f). The lines are drawn between the Christians and the Jews, drawn by the Jews themselves.

“And Crispus... believed... baptized” (Acts 18:8): Though Crispus was a Jew and a ruler of the synagogue (see Acts 13:15), he had a Latin name. Paul baptized him (I Cor. 1:14) himself, perhaps because of his prominence, though normally Silas and Timothy baptized most of the converts (I Cor. 1:14-17). When this prominent man left the synagogue to follow Paul to the house of Justus and obeyed the gospel, it was a glorious contrast to the bitter opposition of the other evil Jews.

The conversion of Crispus is not as fully described as that of the eunuch (Acts 8:20-29), but the process is the same faith comes from hearing the gospel preached (Rom. 10:17), confession (Rom. 10:10) and baptism follow belief. “Many” others kept coming to the Lord in Corinth. It was a continual revival after Silas and Timothy came. A great church was gathered here during the eighteen (18) months ministry of Paul (possibly 51-52 AD).

“Then spake the Lord to Paul... Be not afraid, speak” (Acts 18:9): The Lord literally told Paul, “Stop being afraid, go on speaking, and do not become silent.” Were there signs of a gathering storm before this vision and message from the Lord Jesus? Paul was deeply distressed by the Jews who rejected the gospel. He knew they would try every device to drive him from Corinth. He remembered Damascus, Jerusalem, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Thessalonica, and Berea. He had doubts! Should he move on, or become silent for awhile in Corinth?

Every preacher has to face such times of discouragement – indifference of members, misunderstanding of motives and methods used to advance the gospel, jealousy, and envy. Only by the grace of God can a preacher, even an apostle Paul, be faithful under such circumstances. In such a time of deep distress, the Lord appeared to Paul in a vision. When expelled from a synagogue, Paul usually went to another city. The Lord told him to “Stay put” (Acts 2:42; Rev. 2:10).

“I have much people in this city” (Acts 18:10): “I am with thee.” Jesus had given this promise to all believers (Matt. 28:20). Here he re-news it to Paul. This promise changes Paul’s whole outlook. Jesus had spoken to Paul before: on the way to Damascus (Acts 9:4), in Jerusalem (Acts 22:17f), in Troas (Acts 16:9) in great crises of his life. He will hear him again (Acts 23:11; 27:23). Paul knows the voice of Jesus.

“There is to me much people,” not yet saved, but who will be if Paul holds on. Paul taught here for eighteen months (verse 11), He was probably in Corinth a couple of years in all. His work extended beyond the city (II Cor, 11:10). There was a church in Cenchreae (Rom. 16:1).

I Thessalonians was written from Corinth after the arrival of Timothy, between verses 5 and 6. II Thessalonians was written later the same year between verses 11 and 12.

### III. Paul Is Brought Before Gallio (Acts 18:12-17)

“And when Gallio... deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection” (Acts 18:12): He was the proconsul. He was the brother of Seneca the Stoic, Nero’s tutor, and uncle of Lucan the author of the *Pharsalia*. His original name was M. Annaeus Novatus until Gallio the rhetorician adopted him. The family was Spanish. Gallio was a man of culture and refinement. Seneca says of him: “No one of mortals is so pleasant to one person as he is to all.”

Luke alone among writers says he was proconsul. Seneca speaks of him being in Achaia where he caught fever, a corroboration of Luke.

A whitish gray limestone inscription from the Hagios Elias quarries near Delphi, a letter of Claudius to Delphi, has been found which definitely names Gallio as proconsul of Achaia. This inscription states that Gallio came in the 26th acclamation of Claudius as Emperor in A. D. 51, that would definitely fix the time of Paul in Corinth as A. D. 50 and 51, or 51-52.

“Jews made insurrection”: They rose up against Paul, doubtless enraged at the success of his work. They always found some occasion to stir up strife.

“Brought him to the judgment seat”: The court of Gallio. The judgment seat was the “bema” (see Acts 12:21). The proconsul was sitting in the basilica in the forum or agora, The Jews had heard of his moderation, and sought to make an impression on him. For the second time Paul faces a Roman proconsul (see Acts 13:7), though under very different circumstances.

“This fellow persuadeth... contrary to the law” (Acts 18:13): Their charge was that Paul sought to persuade men to worship contrary to the Roman law. That is, he preached a new and unlawful religion. They did not accuse Paul of treason as in Thessalonica. They bring the same charge here that the owners of the slave-girl brought in Philippi (Acts 16:21).

“Gallio said unto the Jews...” (Acts 18:14): Before Paul could open his mouth in defense, Gallio rebuked the Jews, who were evidently not in his favor. “If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness”: A crime, act of a criminal, “according to reason I should have to put up with you.” He bluntly tells them the Jews have no case against Paul in a Roman court!

“But... your law... I will be no judge of such matters” (Acts 18:15) Gallio is not interested in their “parcel of questions” (Knowling) of “words and names.” He did not care whether “Jesus” should also be called “Christ” or “Messiah.” The Jews, Gallio knew, split hairs over words and names. Gallio had not been caught in the trap the Jews set for him. What they had said concerned Jewish law, not Roman law. This was an absolute refusal to allow a religious question to be brought before a Roman civil court. Gallio does not establish Christianity in preference to Judaism. This decision opened the door for Paul’s preaching all over the Roman Empire. Later Paul will argue (Rom. 9-11) that in fact Christianity is the true, the spiritual Judaism.

“And he drove them from the judgment seat” (Acts 18:16): He ordered his lictors to clear the court of the Jews.

“Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes... beat him before the judgment seat” (Acts 18:17): Sosthenes was the leader of the Jews who had opposed Paul. He had probably succeeded Crispus as chief ruler of the synagogue, and hence foremost among the accusers. The crowd saw that Sosthenes deserved the beating he had planned for Paul. They gave it to him. It did him some good, too, for he finally became a Christian (I Cor. 1:1), a co-worker with Paul whom he had sought to persecute. “And Gallio cared for none of those things.” “No one of these things was a care to Gallio.” He looked the other way with a blind eye while Sosthenes got his richly deserved beating. He was probably indifferent to religion, too.

#### IV. Paul Returns to Antioch (Acts 18:18-22)

“And Paul... had a vow” (Acts 18:18): How long Paul remained in Corinth after the Gallio affair we do not know. This period of “considerable days” may be included in the eighteen months “or in addition to it which is most likely” (Robertson). There was no reason for haste in leaving. He “took his leave” or bade farewell to the church. Only Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned as his companions; others may have been in the party.

“Shorn his head in Cenchreae... vow”: Cenchreae was the eastern harbor of Corinth, and received the commerce of Asia. A church was planted here (Rom. 16:1),

Jews were accustomed to make private personal vows (Gen. 28:20; Lev. 27:2; I Sam. 1:11; II Sam. 15:7). Paul complied with the custom of his race. Why? We do not know. Why he took the vow, for how long, and what the shaving of the head had to do with it, are matters of guessing. This was not the Nazarite vow. That would have required the hair to be shaved off in Jerusalem (Num. 6:18), and offered in the temple. This vow may have been a thank offering for the outcome at Corinth (Hackett). Paul as a Jew kept the ceremonial law, but he refused to impose it on the Gentiles!

“Ephesus... I will return” (Acts 18:19-21): Ephesus was the great commercial center of Asia Minor. He left Aquila and Priscilla there. The Jews gave him a favorable hearing in the synagogue (verse 19). He would not tarry now (verse 20). He wanted to keep the feast, probably Pentecost, at Jerusalem (verse 21). “I will return... if God will,” he promised. He did return (Acts 19:1), The sailing vessel took him to Caesarea (verse 22), Jerusalem, and Antioch to report his second mission tour as he had done at the close of the first when he and Barnabas came back (Acts 14:26-28). Paul had started the tour with Silas, had picked up Timothy and Luke, but came back alone! What a story he had to tell!

#### V. Paul’s Third Tour (Acts 18:23-28)

##### A. Second visit to Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23).

“He departed... went over all... Galatia and Phrygia” (Acts 18:23): After “some time” in Antioch, Paul departed to visit the churches he had planted on his last tour in Galatia and Phrygia. This is the beginning of his third missionary tour. It was 54-57 A. D.

##### B. Apollos in Ephesus and Achaia (Acts 18:24-28).

“And a certain Jew named Apollos...” (Acts 18:24): A native of Alexandria where there were thousands of Jews, Apollos was a man of the schools. He was learned or eloquent in the use of the scriptures. There is no excuse for ignorance on the part of Christians. You can “study” (II Tim. 2:15) from Genesis through Revelation with us if you will!

“Came to Ephesus... taught... baptism of John” (Acts 18:25): Boiling with zeal, Apollos taught accurately what he knew. He believed that Jesus was the one coming after John, but he had learned only the gospel of the Lord’s first commission (Matt. 10:6-7f). He was ignorant of the gospel of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20), and of Pentecost. He had the gospel in part, but he needed to show “the way of God more perfectly” (verse 26). Aquila and Priscilla probably invited him to dinner, and supplied his need, and equipped him for gospel work. Young preachers do not learn it all in school. This was his real postgraduate course!

“He was disposed to pass into Achaia...” (Acts 18:27): Greece, the province of which Corinth was the Roman Capital.

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“The brethren wrote”: This is the first instance of church letters. The brethren of Ephesus wrote to show the brethren at Corinth that the bearer was worthy of their confidence. Doubtless they testified to his soundness in the faith and Christian character. Paul alludes to such letters (II Cor. 3:1).

“He helped them much”: The believers at Corinth. Apollos was an instrument of God to help these believers. “For he mightily convinced the Jews... publicly... Jesus was Christ” (Acts 18:28): That Apollos was a man of God of great power is shown in I Cor. 1:12, 3-4-6. He was “well strung, at full stretch” in preaching Jesus as the Christ. In an open meeting Apollos had the last word where all could see the victory. He proclaims the same message that Paul did everywhere (Acts 17:3). He had not yet met Paul, but Aquila and Priscilla had instructed him. He was building in Corinth on the foundation laid so well by Paul (I Cor. 3:4-17).

### Questions

1. What is the meaning of Corinth? Site, size and importance of Corinth (Acts 18:1)? Was it an intellectual or commercial center? Why?
2. How did Paul support himself at Corinth (Acts 18:1-3)? His feeling at this time (I Cor. 2:1-5)? Where had he learned to make tents?
3. With whom did he become acquainted at Corinth (Acts 18:2)? What do we know about Aquila and Priscilla (verse 18; I Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:3-5; Acts 2:9)?
4. What did this tentmaker do every Sabbath (Acts 18:4)? Results?
5. Recent movements of Silas and Timothy (Acts 18:5; 17:15; I Thess. 3:1, 2)? Why the change on their arrival (Acts 18:5, 6)? To whom did Paul now turn?
6. Why admitted to the house of Justus (Acts 18:7, 8; see 19:9f)? Name of some other converts (I Cor. 1:14-16)? Did Paul generally baptize his converts? Why?
7. What need had Paul of the vision (Acts 18:9, 10)? In what sense had the Lord “much people” in the city? Why stay so long (verse 11)? As you survey the Christian Churches, is a long ministry better than a short ministry? Cite examples to back up your answer.
8. Who was Gallio (Acts 18:12)? Where did they bring Paul? What was Achaia?
9. To what law did the accusers refer (Acts 18:13-15)? What worship did they mean? Why did Gallio dismiss the case? Was it a great victory for Paul?
10. Who beat Sosthenes, and why (Acts 18:17)? For what things did Gallio not care, and why?
11. What kind of “vow” did Paul make (Acts 18:18)? Why? Was it a Nazarite vow (see Num. 6:18)?
12. Where is Cenchreae, and why pass through it (Acts 18:18)? Why did Aquila and Priscilla remain at Ephesus (Acts 18:19; cf. verse 21)?
13. Who said, “I will return again unto you, if God will” (Acts 18:21)? Did he (Acts 19:1)?
14. Why land at Caesarea (Acts 18:22)? Where did he then go, and why? Can you trace the whole tour on your map?
15. How an Alexandrian by race and yet a Jew (Acts 18:24; see 4:36; 18:2)? Meaning of “mighty in the Scriptures? What was the limit of his instruction?
16. By whom was Apollos instructed and baptized (Acts 18:36)? Was Priscilla a public teacher? Is there any excuse for Apollos or you to be ignorant of the WHOLE BIBLE? Why (II Tim. 2:15)?
17. Are YOU willing to teach those about you “the way of God MORE PERFECTLY” (Acts 18:26)? If not, why not (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16)?
18. Why did the church write to the disciples in Corinth (Acts 18:27)?
19. For what is this letter a precedent?
20. By what means did Apollos “convince the Jews... that Jesus was Christ” (Acts 18:28)?

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**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 10

Page 1

Acts 19

Memory Verses: Acts 19:20, 23

Memory Verses:

“So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed... And the same time there arose no small stir about that way” (Acts 19:20, 23).

**THE UPROAR AT EPHEBUS**

Paul’s third missionary tour began at Antioch (Acts 18:23), and probably lasted from 54-57 A. D. This included the two years and three months in Ephesus, his longest stay in any one place.

On this tour Paul wrote I and II Corinthians in Ephesus (I Cor. 16:8, 19), probably in 56 or 57 A. D. Galatians was written in A. D. 57, or a few months later from Corinth. The epistle to the Romans clearly places itself in the three months period (Acts 20:3) which Paul spent in Corinth just before going to Jerusalem. According to the best authorities in New Testament chronology this three month period was about Dec. 56 to Feb. 57 A. D.

After Apollos became a fully instructed Christian under Aquila and Priscilla, he left Ephesus for Corinth a short time before Paul came to Ephesus (Acts 18:24-28).

**Acts 19 Outlined**

- I. The Baptism (Acts 19:1-7).
- II. The Boldness (Acts 19:8-10).
- III. The Blasphemy (Acts 19:11-18).
- IV. The Burning (Acts 19:19).
- V. The Blessing (Acts 19:20-22).
- VI. The Brawl (Acts 19:23-41).

**I. The Growth of the Word in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-20)**

A. Paul reaches Ephesus, and baptizes twelve men (Acts 19:1-7).

“Paul... came to Ephesus” (Acts 19:1): Paul had promised, God willing, to return to Ephesus (Acts 18:21). He paid a short visit to the churches established on his first missionary journey (Acts 18:23), and made for Ephesus. He took the direct road through the Cayster Valley to Ephesus.

Ephesus means “Desirable.” It was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. The province of Asia included the western part of Asia Minor. The Romans took this country in B. C. 130. It was a jewel in the Roman Empire along with Africa. It was a senatorial province. It was full of great cities like Ephesus, Smyrna, Peragamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea – known as the seven churches of Rev. 2 and 3. It also included Colossae, Hierapolis and Apamea, and many others.

Located at the entrance to the valley of the Meander to the east, Ephesus was richer and larger than Corinth. Its population was 225,000. It was on the Imperial Highway from Rome to the East, and the Gateway to Asia Minor. The Temple of Diana or Artemis was at Ephesus – one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 10 - PAGE 2

“Finding certain disciples”: They were sincere men who had been baptized with John’s baptism (verse 3), but they were ignorant of the full gospel. “They were floating followers of the Baptist who drifted into Ephesus and whom Paul found” (Robertson).

“Have ye received the Holy Ghost...” (Acts 10:2): Paul asked this question to lead them to become aware of their imperfect obedience. They had heard nothing of the scenes of Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). Remember they lived many hundreds of miles from Jerusalem, in an age when each part of the world knew little of what transpired elsewhere.

“Unto what then were ye baptized? ..unto John’s baptism” (Acts 19:3): This question implies that the possession of the Holy Spirit is closely connected with a right baptism (Acts 2:38). The only case in which the Spirit was received before baptism was that of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-48). The reasons for the exception to the rule are given in the text. The fact that these disciples “have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost” showed something was wrong with their baptism (verse 4). Professor R. C. Foster’s “STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST” give us an excellent discussion of:

### John’s Baptism Vs. Christian Baptism

1. Preceded by repentance (Belief in God implied)	Vs.	Faith and Repentance – in Christ
2. By the Authority of God	Vs.	“In the name of...” (Matt. 28:19)
3. Was Temporary	Vs.	Permanent... “Always” (Matt. 28:20)
4. For Jews only	Vs.	“Every creature...” (Mark 16:15, 16)
5. Preparation for Coming Kingdom	Vs.	“Into Christ,” Kingdom (Acts 2:47; Gal. 3:27)
6. Unto Repentance	Vs.	“Remission of sins” (Acts 2:38b)
7. Not for Holy Spirit	Vs.	“Gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38c)

“When they heard this, they were baptized...” (Acts 19:5): A law is in force until it is repealed. John’s baptism was in force until Pentecost. After the Gospel was preached that day, John’s baptism was no longer valid, or in force (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38). After these twelve men were immersed “into Christ” (Gal. 3:27), Paul “laid his hands upon them” (verse 6) and imparted unto them the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. Paul corrected an imperfect baptism. Today we must correct defective baptism by a more perfect obedience.

“They spake with tongues”: It seemed proper that these men should enjoy not just the ordinary gift or influence of the Spirit, but that some spiritual gifts should be imparted (Acts 8:16, 17; Rom. 1:11). Speaking in tongues (1) edified only the speaker (I Cor. 14:4), (2) to benefit others demanded an interpreter (I Cor. 14:5-27), and (3) God could understand (I Cor. 14:2). This gift disappeared at an early date in the church.

“And all the men were about twelve” (Acts 19:12): After appearing in this episode, these twelve men disappear from our knowledge. They were now endowed for a useful work in the church. Did they have a great part in the religious revolution that was to transform all that part of Asia?

B. Paul preaches in the synagogue and in the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:8-12).

“And he... spake boldly... three months” (Acts 10:8): This was the longest uninterrupted period of teaching in the synagogue thus far in Paul’s ministry, unless Corinth was an exception (Acts 18:4). Paul’s idea of Kingdom of God was the church of God which Jesus, God’s Son, has purchased with His own blood

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 10 - PAGE 3

(Acts 20:28). Some hardened their heart like a gristle (verse 9), first refusing to believe and then refusing to obey (Acts 14:2; 17:5; Heb. 3:15). They “spoke evil of that way” (John 14:6).

“He departed... separated the disciples” (Acts 10:9): Those separated unto Christ withdrew from the synagogue (Rom. 1:1; Matt. 25:32). Paul now made a separate church as he had done at Thessalonica and Corinth.

“In the school of Tyrannus”: This was a philosopher’s schoolroom, one seating a few dozen people. The name Tyrannus, like our tyrant, is a common one. It is an inscription in the Columbarium of the Empress Livia as that of a physician in the court. Was this a relative of this physician lecturing on medicine in Ephesus and so a friend of Luke, the physician, and hence one who would be glad to help Paul about a place to preach?

The Codex Bezae adds “from the fifth hour to the tenth” as the time allotted to Paul for his work in this hall. This would be from 11 A. M. until 4 P. M., two hours before sunset. Paul had great freedom, and doubtless a great hearing. As the church grew there would be other places of meetings the “church that is in their house” – Aquila and Priscilla (I Cor. 16:19).

“And this continued by the space of two years...” (Acts 19:10). Paul reminded the Ephesian elders he had labored with them “three” years” (Acts 20:31), a following of the “uniform Jewish method of counting a part of a year at the close or the beginning of a period as if it were a whole year.”

“All they which dwelt in Asia heard the word...” The Roman province of which Ephesus was the capital. Paul’s preaching was powerful: (1) Note the results upon those who practiced magic (verse 19), (2) from the alarm of Demetrius (verse 24), and (3) from the statement of Pliny, forty years after this, to Trajan from Bithynia, that Christianity had caused the temples of the gods to be deserted. “For the contagion of this superstition has not only spread through cities, but also through villages and country places.”

“And God wrought special miracles...” (Acts 19:11): All “miracles” or “powers” are supernatural and out of the ordinary. Here God regularly wrought wonders beyond those familiar to the disciples and completely different from the deeds of the Jewish exorcists.

In Samaria Philip wrought miracles to deliver the people from the influence of Simon Magus (Acts 8:5-8f).

Here in Ephesus many came seeking the benefit of the healing power. Those who came would repeat what they had seen and heard, No islander we read later of “the seven churches of Asia” (Rev. 1:4). The whole province was evangelized, or as we would say: “The whole state was evangelized.”

Paul did not work miracles in Damascus, Jerusalem, Tarsus, Antioch, Pisidian Antioch, Derbe, Athens, Or Rome. He did perform them in Cyprus, Iconium, Lystra, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus and Melita. God used His own judgment in bestowing supernatural powers. Paul healed here. On another occasion he could not heal his own beloved friend and co-worker, Trophimus (II Tim. 4:20).

“So that from his body were brought... handkerchiefs or aprons” (Acts 19:12): God let his power go with articles that were carried from Paul to the sick. Paul did manual work at Ephesus (Acts 20:34) and so wore these aprons. Do you wonder how God could honor such superstitious faith? If God never honored any faith save that entirely free from superstition, how about Christian people who are troubled over the number 13, walking under a ladder, over the moon, or the rabbit’s foot? The woman with an issue of blood was healed when she touched the hem of Christ’s garment (Luke 8:44-46), as others sought to do (Matt. 14:36).

C. Exorcists exposed, and books of magic burned (Acts 19:13-20).

“Then certain... vagabond Jews, exorcists...” (Acts 19:13): These exorcists traveled around from place to place like modern Gypsy fortune-tellers. Jesus referred to them in Matt. 12:27. Josephus declares

that certain Jews claimed to expel demons (Josephus Antiquities VIII: 2, 5). He says that their knowledge of the art was derived from Solomon. These exorcists claimed they could cast out demons through certain magic practices and formulae. The devil helps such tricksters enough to deceive some unthinking people. These seven brothers had influence with some people, like modern Gypsy fortune-tellers or palmists. Some claim that the seventh daughter of the seventh daughter is more highly credited than others of her class! They thought that Paul used the name of Jesus in a magic way, so they tried to imitate him (verse 14). The evil spirit sprang on them, the two who tried to cast the spirit out of the man, and gave them a good beating (verses 15, 16) so that all Ephesus laughed at them.

“The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified” (Acts 19:17): Ephesus was a great seat of magical arts. This event caused people to remember that a misuse of the name of Jesus was dangerous. They revered Him more after these evil pretenders were exposed.

“And many that believed came... confessed... showed their deeds” (Acts 19:18); Believers kept coming, one after another, who had been secretly under the spell of these false spiritualists, just as some Christians today cherish private contacts with so-called occult powers through mediums, seances, of which they are ashamed.

“Confessed” It was time to make a clean breast of it all, turn on the light, reveal their secret habits.

“Showed their deeds”: Judgment was beginning at the house of God (I Pet. 4:17-19). The exposure of these exorcists laid the black arts bare as to their real character. The boomerang was tremendous. Gentile converts had a struggle to shake off their corrupt environment.

“Many... brought their books... burned them before all men” (Acts 19:19): All pretenders to magic in Ephesus were discredited by the experience of the sons of Sceva. Magicians who became Christians brought their evil books and burned them before “all men.” Ancient writers allude to these books. They were manuscript volumes of charms, incantations, and things of similar character.

These converted exorcists knew they were humbugs. They were led to renounce their evil practices.

“They brought their books together, and burned them”: What a glorious fire it would make, if *in* this church and this city, all the lewd, blasphemous degraded books, pamphlets, magazines and papers were brought together and burned!

“They counted the price of them”: If the “piece of silver” was the Attic drachma or Roman denarius (about 16 cents), the value of the books burned was about \$8,000.00 This is real repentance (Luke 13:3; II Pet. 3:9). Sam Jones says “Repentance is being so sorry for your meanness you stop it!”

“So mightily grew the word of God...” (Acts 19:20): The word kept on growing and gaining strength, About this time Paul wrote from Ephesus I Corinthians: “For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries” (I Cor. 16:9). Christ was triumphing in this city of vast wealth and superstition. For centuries Ephesus will be one of the centers of Christian power. “Timothy will come here and John the Apostle and Polycarp and Irenaeus.”

## II. The Greed of Gain (Acts 19:21-41)

A. Paul’s plan for future journeys (Acts 19:21, 22).

“Paul purposed in the spirit...” (Acts 19:21): A new stage in Paul’s career begins here, and a new division of Acts. Paul planned with the Spirit’s approval to make certain journeys. He determined after a journey into Macedonia and Greece, to visit the churches planted on his former tour, to return to Jerusalem, and then “I must also see Rome!” This was all carried out, but in a way at this time he did not foresee.

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“So he sent into Macedonia...” (Acts 19:22) Paul had sent Timothy to Corinth (I Cor. 4:17). He had requested kindly treatment of this young minister in his difficult task of placating the divided church (I Cor. 15:10, 11) that he might return to Paul as he evidently had before Paul leaves Ephesus. The apostle to the Gentiles then dispatched Titus to Corinth to finish what Timothy had not quite succeeded in doing with instructions to meet him in Troas. Now Timothy and Erastus (see Rom. 16:23; II Tim. 4:20) go on to Macedonia to prepare the way for Paul who will come on later. The reason why Paul “stayed in Asia for a season” is given in I Cor. 16:8f.

B. The mob of the silversmiths (Acts 19:23-34).

“And there arose no small stir” (Acts 19:23): The “way” refers to Christianity in Acts 9:2; 19:9; 24:22. There had been opposition and “stir” (see Acts 19:11-20). The fight with wild beasts in I Cor. 15:32, whatever it was, was before that Epistle was written and so before this new uproar. As a Roman citizen Paul could not be thrown to wild beasts, but he so pictured the violent opponents of Christ in Ephesus.

“Demetrius, a silversmith...” Acts 19:24): The name is common enough. He may or may not be the man mentioned in I John 12. No silver shrines of the temple of Diana have been found in Ephesus, only terracotta ones. Ramsay suggests that the silver ones would naturally be melted down. The poor would buy the terracotta, the rich the silver shrines (Ram-say, “Paul the Traveler,” p. 278).

“Shrines for Diana”: “Diana of the Ephesians” is mentioned only in Acts 19:24-35, is Artemis in the Greek, and her myths were of a very different sort. Her “shrines” were little “temples” containing an image of Artemis as imagined by the Asiatics, a combination of the Greek virgin goddess with the many-breasted and lewd Semitic moon goddess Ashtoreth. For the Ephesians, Artemis was the great nursing mother of Gods, men, animals, and plants, and was the patroness of the sexual instinct. Her images were ugly and lascivious like those of India, Tyre and Sidon, and not artistically beautiful like those of the Greeks. Her special worship was centered in the great temple at Ephesus. The reason for the location there was probably the finding of a very interesting meteorite that supposedly fell from heaven (Acts 19:35). Diana worship was “a perpetual festival of vice.”

The temple of Diana was built of white marble, 425 feet long by 220 wide, with 127 columns, four feet apart, and 60 feet high. In the inner sanctuary was the many-breasted woman, Diana, supposedly “the image which fell down from Jupiter” (verse 35).

“Craftsmen... workmen of like occupation” (Acts 19:25): This gathering of associated trade was not to strike, but a gathering of employer and employees to protest against the preaching of Paul! Men apart from God make all life center around the material. When preaching changes the thought, habits and touches the wealth of the craftsmen, that preaching must stop! The “many adversaries” (I Cor. 16:8-20) almost succeeded in killing Paul and his helpers (II Cor. 1:8-10) in the theatre which seated 24,500. Greed wanted to kill God’s servants then; it would silence them today.

C. The mob dispersed by the town clerk (Acts 19:35-41).

“And when the town clerk had appeased the people...” (Acts 19:35): This man was not a mere secretary, but the most influential person in Ephesus. He drafted decrees with the aid of the “strategoi,” had charge of the city’s money, was the power in control of the assembly, and communicated directly with the proconsul. He quieted the assembly, told them it was unlawful, and that “we are in danger to be called in question for this day’s uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse” (verse 39). He dismissed the assembly” (verse 41).

Questions

1. From what city did Paul begin each of his three missionary journeys (Acts 13:1-3; 15:35, 36; 18:22, 23)?
2. What commendable things are said of Apollos (Acts 18:24, 25)? In what respect was he deficient (Acts 18:25)? How were Aquila and Priscilla equipped to help him (Acts 18:1-3, 27, 28)?
3. Why Paul's first question to "certain disciples" (Acts 19:1, 2, cf. 6)? Why the second (verse 8)?
4. Can you give seven differences between John's and Christian baptism (Acts 19:3; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 3:27; Acts 2:38)? Were all of John's disciples to be baptized?
5. Do all who are truly baptized receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at baptism (Acts 2:38; Rom. 8:9, 14; I Cor. 6:19; Eph. 1:13)?
6. Why admitted to the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:8, 9) after departing from the synagogue? Time spent in both (Acts 19:8, 10)?
7. How could "all" in Asia hear through this preaching (Acts 19:10)? Why say "special" miracles (verse 11)?
8. Who were the exorcists (Acts 19:13)? After seeing Paul's extraordinary power, what did the sons of Sceva attempt (Acts 19:13, 14)? Who are the more powerful, demons or men (Acts 19:15, 16; Eph. 6:12, 13)?
9. How were the Ephesians affected by this incident (Acts 19:17, 18)?
10. When men believe and know the Word of God, what is their attitude toward occult books of the diviners (Acts 19:19, 20)?
11. Do you, as a Christian, have any lewd, anti-Christian books at home? Will you burn them right now? How much did the book-burning cost the Ephesian Christian (verse 19)? What was the result of this book-burning (verse 20)?
12. What two cities did Paul purpose to visit (Acts 19:21)?
13. Who is Diana (Acts 19:24)? By whom, and for what reason, were the silversmiths excited to rioting (Acts 19:23, 24)?
14. Why go to the theater (verse 30)? What of that theater now (McGarvey's LANDS OF THE BIBLE, p. 576)? Why did Paul wish to go in (Acts 19:30, 29)?
15. Who were the chief officers (Acts 19:31)? Purpose of the Jews and of Alexander (verse 33)? Why the latter not heard (verse 34)?
16. What the image referred to (Acts 19:35)?
17. On what selfish grounds did Demetrius and the silversmiths union oppose the revolutionary preaching of Paul (Acts 19:25, 26)?
18. What two-fold danger was suggested to arouse the mob (Acts 19:27)?
19. How did the town clerk reprove the mob (Acts 19:34, 35), and what was his warning (Acts 19:37-40)?
20. In their attitude toward Christianity, how were the Ephesians like, or unlike, men of our day when preaching touches the pocketbook?

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 11 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 11  
Acts 20

Page 1  
Memory Verses: Acts 20:7

Memory Verse:

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight” (Acts 20:7).

**PAUL TRAVELING TO JERUSALEM**

Paul began his work at Antioch, East End of the backbone of the Roman Empire.

He did his greatest work at Ephesus, center of the Empire’s backbone. In Ephesus when Paul preached the gospel, he moved men to action. The temple of Diana was 220 years in building. Her worship was “impure and shameless,” “a perpetual festival of vice.”

The gospel turned so many away from this evil worship that the silversmith guild of Ephesus caused a first-century riot (Acts 19:28-34). Many magicians were so soundly converted that they burned their black books of magic (Acts 19:18-20) to the tune of an \$8,000.00 fire! No wonder the story of Christ was heralded all over Asia Minor and Greece.

“Open doors” (I Cor. 16:8, 9) closed because of “many adversaries.” Paul now felt it was wise to leave Ephesus, and not further endanger the Christians. He plans to journey to the West End of the Empire.

**Acts 20 Outlined**

Acts 20 has been called “Spiritual Exhortation.” Let us note:

- I. The Evangelist (Acts 20:1-5).
- II. The Embarrassment (Acts 20:6-12).
- III. The Elders (Acts 20:13-35).
- IV. The Embarking (Acts 20:36-38).

**I. Further Travel and Preaching (Acts 20:1-6)**

A. Paul’s second visit to Macedonia and Greece (Acts 20:1-3a).

“And after the uproar... Paul departed... into Macedonia” (Acts 20:1): It had been Paul’s purpose to go into Macedonia (Acts 19:20), but to remain at Ephesus until after Pentecost (I Cor. 16:8).

“After the uproar,” the bustle and confusion of the riot ceased, Paul “exhorted” the disciples and departed to go into Macedonia. Luke here condenses what was likely a whole year of Paul’s life and work as we gather from II Corinthians, one of Paul’s “weighty and powerful” letters as his enemies called them (II Cor. 10:10). “This epistle more than any other is a revelation of St. Paul’s own heart: it is his spiritual autobiography and apologia pro vita sua.”

It was on his way to Greece that II Corinthians was written. He speaks in II Cor. 12:14 and 13:1 of coming “the third time” to Corinth. Hackett supposes that during the three years at Ephesus Paul made a flying visit to Corinth to correct disorders in the church there.

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 11 - PAGE 2

Paul expected to meet Titus at Troas for a report on the reception of I Corinthians. He was disappointed (II Cor. 2:12, 13). He was perplexed (II Cor. 7:5). Titus met him in Macedonia (II Cor. 2:13-7:16) and then visited Illyricum (Rom. 15:19f) to give II Corinthians time to do its work (II Cor. 8:16-20; 9:3, 4; 13:1).

“And when he had gone over those parts...” (Acts 20:2): We have no way of telling why Luke omitted the above year’s activity of Paul. After repeated attempts Corinth presented an open door. Titus had done his work well (II Cor. 13:1). Paul visited Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea and possibly other Macedonia churches.

“He came to Greece”: To Achaia (Acts 18:12; 19:21), and particular-ly Corinth, whither he had at last come again after repeated attempts, pauses and delays (II Cor. 13:1).

“And there abode three months” (Acts 20:3a): The coast was clear. God gave Paul an “open door” of three months, so fully had Titus done away with the opposition of the Judaizers there. “Three months” is literally “having done three months.” During this period Paul may have written Galatians as Lightfoot argued. Certainly he wrote Romans. Luke was not ignorant of Paul’s work during this period. He did not choose to enlarge upon it.

### B. Paul’s journey from Corinth back to Troas (Acts 20:3b-6).

“The Jews laid wait for him... sail... purposed to returned through Macedonia” (Acts 20:3b): After three months spent in gathering the offering for the poor in Jerusalem, Paul planned “to sail into Syria.” His old enemies the Jews, not the Judaizers whom Paul so vehemently discusses in II Cor. 10-13, “laid wait” to rob and probably kill him. These Jews cherished all these years their defeat at the hands of Gallio (Acts 18:5-17). They took advantage of Paul’s plans for departure to bring about his death if possible. They would either kill him at the docks in Cenchreae or push him overboard from the crowded pilgrim ship bound for the Passover. Paul decided to return through Macedonia, the northern section of Greece (see Gal. 2:6-10; I Cor. 16:1-4; II Cor. 8:1-15).

“And there accompanied him...” (Acts 20:4): There were no banks or paper currencies in this day. The benevolent money had to be carried in silver on the persons of the messengers.

“Sopater of Berea”: Paul calls him “my kinsmen” (Rom. 16:21).

“Aristarchus”: He was the one seized by the Ephesian mob (Acts 16:29).

“Secundus”: Is not named elsewhere. He probably accompanied Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 24:17; II Cor. 8:23; Rom. 15:25-26),

“Gaius of Derbe”: To distinguish him from another Gaius (Acts 19:29), Derbe was in Lycaonia (see Acts 14:6).

“Timotheus”: He was of Lystra near Derbe (Acts 16:1-4).

“Tychicus”: Supposed to be an Ephesian, See Col. 4:7, 8; Eph. 6:21; II Tim. 4:12.

“Trophimus”: He attended Paul all the way to Jerusalem (Acts 21:29; II Tim. 4:20).

These seven brethren in Christ were probably delegates of the various churches (II Cor. 8:19-23) and started from Corinth with Paul. Luke notes they accompanied Paul. The party may really have been made up at Philippi where Luke himself joined Paul, the rest of the party having gone on to Troas (verse 5f). These were from Roman provinces that shared in the collection, namely Galatia, Asia, Macedonia and Achaia. In this list three were from Macedonia, Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, two from Galatia, Gaius of Derbe and Timothy of Lystra; two from Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. NONE are named from Achaia. HAD CORINTH FAILED AFTER ALL (II Cor. 8:9) to raise its share of the collection after such eager pledging? Rackham suggests that Corinth may have turned the money over to Paul himself. Luke

joined Paul in Philippi, and could have handled the money from Achaia. Paul took the greatest pains to remove any opportunity for scandal in the handling of the benevolent funds!

“These... tarried for us at Troas” (Acts 20:5): We last saw Luke at Philippi, six or seven years previous (Acts 16:15, 17). He now rejoins Paul. Note the “us.” The seven brethren of verse 4 went on ahead from Philippi to Troas while Paul remained with Luke in Philippi.

“And we sailed away from Philippi... came... to Troas” (Acts 20:6): Paul was a Jew, though a Christian. He observed the Jewish feasts, though he protested against Gentiles being forced to do it (Gal. 4:10; Col. 2:16). This Passover was a year after in Ephesus when Paul expected to remain there till Pentecost (I Cor. 16:18). He was hoping to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost (Acts 20:16) as he did. This was probably 57-58 A. D.

“Sailed... Troas in five days”; The winds were contrary. In Acts 16:11 Paul had made the voyage in two days. They “abode seven days” in Troas to atone for the short stay in Troas before (II Cor. 2:12f) when Paul was so restless. He preaches a week to them.

## II. A Long Service at Troas (Acts 20:7-12)

“And upon the first day of the week...” (Acts 20:7): This is the first time we have services mentioned on the “first day of the week,” though in I Cor. 16:2 it is implied by the collections stored on that day. In Rev. 1:10 the Lord’s Day is the day of the week on which Jesus arose from the grave.

Worship on the “first day of the week” instead of the seventh naturally arose in Gentile churches, though John 20:26 seems to mean that from the very start the disciples began to meet on the first (or eighth) day. Liberty was allowed as Paul makes plain in Rom. 14:5f.

The “first day of the week” comes around EACH WEEK, not once each year or twice a year or quarterly.

“The disciples came together to break bread”: Of the Supper Jesus commanded: “This do... in remembrance of me” (I Cor. 11:20, 25). The LORD’S SUPPER is for the LORD’S PEOPLE, on the LORD’S DAY, in the LORD’S HOUSE, and is only to be taken in the LORD’S SPIRIT. Unless we do this, Jesus said we have “no life (spiritual) in us” (John 6:53). Teachers, leaders, people, it is vital to your own soul’s salvation that you BE AT THE LORD’S TABLE each first day of the week. Think, too, of the evil of your influence upon others if you are absent (I Cor. 8:12; Rom. 14:1).

“Paul preached... until midnight”: Though the special object of this weekly meeting was to “break bread” or observe the Lord’s Supper, preaching was a part of the worship (Acts 2:42). A church cannot flourish without regular meetings, even if they have to meet in the catacombs as became necessary in Rome. Since he was about to depart, probably never to see them again, all were anxious to hear the great apostle. He had much to say.

“And there were many lights...” (Acts 20:8): It was dark at night since the full moon or Passover was three weeks behind. These lamps were probably filled with oil, and had wicks that flickered and smoked. They did not meet in the dark.

“And there sat in a window... young man... Eutychus... deep sleep” (Acts 20:9): Eutychus means “fortunate.” He was sitting “in a window,” “epi tes thuridos,” an old word diminutive from “thura,” door, a little door. It was a latticed window, no glass, opened because of the heat from the lamps and the crowd. Our window was once spelled ‘veindove’ (Hudibras), perhaps from the wrong idea that it was derived from wind and door.

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Eutychus is a common slave name. The long sermon, the crowded room, and the late hour were too much for Eutychus. He “fell down from the third loft” (remember Ahaziah, II Kings 1:2), Hobart in MEDICAL LANGUAGE of ST. LUKE thinks Luke shows a physician’s interest in the causes of the drowsiness of Eutychus – the heat, the crowd, the smell of the lamps, the late hour and the long discourse.

The fall killed Eutychus. The people considered him dead. Luke the physician agrees with that view.

“And Paul went down, and fell on him...” (Acts 20:10): God through Paul restored his life. This is one of the seven resurrections in the Bible, besides that of Christ (see I Kings 17; II Kings 4; Mark 5, Luke 7, John 11; Acts 20:9). Paul told them “Trouble not yourselves,” or “stop making a noise” as the people did on the death of Jairus’ daughter (Matt. 9:23). Paul had just restored Eutychus, so “his life is in him.”

“When he therefore was come up... broken bread, and eaten... talked... till break of day” (Acts 20:11): Was this Sunday or Monday morning? “The brethren met in the early part of the night, yet it was “the first day of the week.” We have no evidence that either Jews or Gentiles had yet adopted the custom of counting the hours of the day from midnight. Consequently we must not suppose that the night in question was that belonging to Sunday, as it was then reckoned, or Saturday night, as we now style it. **IT WAS THE NIGHT FOLLOWING THE JEWISH SABBATH.**”

Anytime after sunset on Saturday evening “would be the Lord’s day as they counted it, and after midnight, which was the time of breaking the loaf on that occasion, was the Lord’s day as we count it” (McGarvey, “NEW COMMENTARY ON ACTS,” pp. 181, 182).

The second discourse lasted from midnight until dawn and was probably more informal (Acts 10:27) and conversational. Paul had remained over a week to have the privilege of observing the Lord’s Supper with them. He remained a week with the disciples at Tyre (Acts 21:4) and with the brethren at Puteoli (Acts 28:14). What a joyful scene over the lad’s restoration to life as Paul was leaving (verse 12).

### III. Traveling On (Acts 20:13-16)

“And we went before to ship... Paul... afoot” (Acts 20:13): Troas was on the northern, Assos on the southern side of a peninsula. Paul’s companions sailed around Cape Lectum. He walked about twenty miles over a paved Roman road, less than half the distance around the Cape. The apostle needed some time alone (see Matt. 23). Vast ruins now mark the site of the seaport of Assos, modern Behramkov, seaport of Mysia in Asia Minor, on the north coast of the gulf of Adramyttium, seven miles from the island of Lesbos to the south near Methymna, 20 miles south of Troas (verses 13, 14). Mitylene was the capital of Lesbos about thirty miles from Assos, an easy day’s sailing. The other places mentioned are located on the southward part of his trip, among the Aegean Islands (verse 15).

“For Paul had determined... to be at Jerusalem... Pentecost” (Acts 20:16): Paul sailed by Ephesus. His many friends there would needlessly delay him. Paul was a Christian Jew. He did not want to be there to observe Pentecost as a Jew, for in Col. 2:14 he teaches that Jewish laws and ordinances had been done away. But the feast would give him opportunity to preach the gospel!

It was only a year ago that Paul had left Ephesus in haste after the riot. Paul felt that the presentation of the collection at Pentecost to the Jewish Christians would have a wholesome influence as it had done once before (Acts 11:30; Rom. 15:25-33).

### IV. A Touching Farewell (Acts 20:17-38)

A. A review of his labors in Ephesus (Acts 20:17-21).

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“And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus... called the elders of the church” (Acts 20:17): Ephesus was thirty miles from Miletus, “a stiff day’s journey each way.” Not wishing to be left by an unexpected sailing of the boat, he called the Ephesian elders to come to him. No mention had been made before of their appointment, but it was Paul’s custom to “ordain elders ‘in every church” (Acts 14:23). These elders were also called “bishops” (verse 28, Revision). In the days of the apostles there was a plurality of elders in every church. These elders were “bishops” or overseers, There was no distinct episcopal order. Dean Howson, of the Church of England discloses in his “Acts,” page 475 that no special order of bishops was created in the lifetime of Paul or the apostles. He dates their origin about the close of the first or beginning of the second century.

“Ye know from the first day...” (Acts 20:18): Paul opens his heart to these men, as he does not to the average crowd of believers. What a fit-ting time for Paul to take stock of his ministry at the close of the third mission tour. He does not think he will see them again. The outlook and attitude is similar to the farewell address of Jesus to the disciples in the upper room (John 13:17). They personally knew of his ministry.

“Serving the Lord with all humility... many tears, and temptations ...” (Acts 20:19): Paul was with the church at Ephesus for “three years.” So far as we know he stuck there the whole period. He was serving the Lord with “all humility of mind.” Such humble-mindedness should mark every Christian, and in particular the preacher.

“With many tears”: Note the tears of Paul (II Cor. 2:4; Phil. 3:18). He was a man of deepest emotion, along with his high intellectual powers. He mentions his tears again in verse 31, tears of sorrow and of anxiety. Have you read the sermon of Adolphe Monod on “The Tears of Paul”? Consider also “The Tears of Jesus.”

“Temptations”: Or trials which “befell me.” Like the plot against him in verse 3, as well as the earlier trial before Gallio and the attacks in Thessalonica. Dwell on the allusions in II Cor. 11 to picture what Paul’s life was in Ephesus during these three years. Luke gives the outbreak of Demetrius (Acts 19:23-41), but Paul had already fought with “wild-beasts” there.

“And how I kept back nothing... profitable unto you” (Acts 20:20): Paul did not shrink or cower from preaching “that was profit-able unto you” (see Hab. 2:4; Heb. 10:38). Paul spoke fearlessly (I Thess. 2:4, 11; II Cor. 4:2; Gal. 1:10).

“Publicly, and from house to house”: Paul taught three months in the synagogue at Ephesus, two years in the school of Tyrannus, besides his teaching in the church assemblies. The greatest of all preachers preached from “house to house” as well as publicly. He was doing kingdom business in the house of Aquila and Priscilla (I Cor. 16:19).

“Testifying... repentance toward God... faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21): Peter did this (Acts 2:40). Paul here as in Rom. 1:16 includes both Jews and Greeks. “Repentance” and “faith” embrace the sum of Christian doctrine. “Repentance of our sins against our Creator, the resolve to turn from them; then faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour, by trust in his grace and obedience to his will.”

B. His own future (Acts 20:22-27).

“And now... I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem (Acts 20:22): Paul was “bound in my spirit” (Acts 19:21) from a high sense of duty. The Holy Spirit (verse 23) warned him that “bonds and afflictions abide me.” His own spirit was under the control of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:16). Paul was ready to die for Christ (verse 24).

“Ye all... shall see my face no more” (Acts 20:25): Paul does not state this as a revelation, but as his conviction. He thought he would soon die for Christ. Twice Paul will write from Rome (Phil. 2:24; Phil. 22)

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the hope of coming east again; but that is in the future, and here Paul is expressing his personal conviction and his fears. Paul did come to Ephesus again (I Tim. 1:3; 3:4; 4:13) and Troas (II Tim. 4:13) and Miletus (II Tim. 4:20).

“I am pure from the blood of all men” (Acts 20:26): He “had declared the whole counsel of God.” If men are lost they are responsible. See Acts 18:6. “All the counsel of God” (verse 27) is the “whole counsel of God!”

C. The future of the elders and their church (Acts 20:28-35).

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves...” (Acts 20:28): Here Paul calls the elders “overseers.” They are to hold your mind on yourselves. Preachers and elders must take heed unto themselves. No man can be so exalted that he does not need to watch.

“The flock”: The church, the fold of the Good Shepherd, of whom they were the under-shepherds, or pastors. These ministers are called elders (verse 17), bishops or overseers (verse 28) and shepherds (John 21:15-17; I Pet. 5:2; 2:25; Heb. 13:20; John 10:11).

“Church of God”: The “church of God was purchased with “his own blood.” See Rom. 9:5; Col. 2:9; Tit. 2:13; Col. 1:15-20; Phil. 2:5-11.

“Grievous wolves...” (Acts 20:29): False teachers. Jesus already so described false teachers (John 10:12). Six wolves are named (I Tim. 1:3, 4, 20; II Tim. 1:15; 2:17; I John; Rev. 2:6. Some of their own number would be “wolves” (verse 30), of whom he had “warned” them “night and day with tears” for “three years!”

“I commend you to God... word of his grace” (Acts 20:32): What a responsibility is on the elder and minister of God’s Word. IF WE HONOR THE WORD OF GOD, the GOOD OF THE WORD WILL HONOR US! That word will guide us in all our difficulties. It is able to build “you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified” or set apart to God (See I Cor. 1:2; 6:9-11). Every Christian is “sanctified!”

“I have coveted no man’s silver...” (Acts 20:33): Money did not induce Paul to labor in the work to which God called him, It offered no worldly rewards. At Corinth Paul made tents to support himself (verse 34) and “them that were with me.” Here we learn he did the same thing at Ephesus (Acts 18:3; II Thess. 3:10-12; I Cor. 4:11, 12). Timothy is warned to flee from the “love of money... the root of all evil” (I Tim. 6:10).

“It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35): Paul gave an example of laboring to help the weak. This is the very spirit of Christ (I Thess. 5:14; I Cor. 12:28; Rom. 5:6; 14:1). The Lord Jesus himself gave this saying. It is not in the four gospels. It is one of the sayings of Jesus in current use that Paul had received and treasured. This beatitude is illustrated by the whole life of Jesus, with the Cross as the culmination (See Matt. 5:3-11).

D. Parting from the elders (Acts 20:36-38).

“He kneeled down, and prayed with them all” (Acts 20:36): Kneeling is a fitting attitude (See Jesus in Luke 22:41), though not the only proper one (Matt. 6:5). Paul clearly prayed aloud.

“And they all wept sore... kissed him” (Acts 20:37): They all wept. They kept on kissing, or kissed him repeatedly, probably one after the other falling on his neck (see Matt. 26:49). The verb is the imperfect active of ‘kataphileo,’ intensive with ‘kata’ and repetition shown also by the tense.

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“Sorrowing... see his face no more” (Acts 20:38): They were tormented with the distressing thought that they would see Paul no more. They probably did see him again, but not until after Acts was written. They “accompanied him unto the ship,” a graphic picture of Paul’s departure from this group of elders.

### QUESTIONS

1. What ministry did Paul plan and perform before starting to Jerusalem (Acts 20:1-3)?
2. Can you give an outline of Acts 20, “Spiritual Exhortation”?
3. What letters were probably written during this time?
4. What plan of travels is Paul now pursuing (Acts 20:2, 3; 19:21)?
5. What the plot of the Jews (Acts 20:3)?
6. Why did seven men accompany Paul (Acts 20:4) and what do we know of them? Movements of Luke (Acts 20:5; 6:17)? Time since leaving Ephesus (Acts 20:6; I Cor. 16:6-8)?
7. Which day of the week, Saturday or Sunday, was observed by the apostolic church (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2)?
8. How often did the early Christians “break bread” or observe the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7)?
9. Why did Paul speak so long (Acts 20:7)? Why meet in a third story (verse 9)? Was Eutychus really dead (verses 9-12)?
10. When was the loaf broken (Acts 20:11, cf. 7)? Was it on the Lord’s Day? Why talk the rest of the night (verse 11, cf. 25)?
11. Why to Assos by land, and alone (Acts 20:13, cf. 22, 23)? What day of the week was this (verses 7, 11)?
12. Why was Paul’s journey to Jerusalem made in great haste (Acts 20:16)? Why would stopping at Ephesus delay him? Where did he meet the elders (verses 17, 18)?
13. To whom did Paul deliver each of the three lengthy speeches recorded thus far in the book of Acts (Acts 13:16; 17:22; 20:17, 18)?
14. What plots of the Jews (Acts 20:19; 19:9, 13)? Why teach from “house to house” (Acts 20:20)? Why the order of repentance and faith (verse 21)?
15. What did Paul reveal to the Ephesian elders regarding his Jerusalem trip (Acts 20:22-25)? What enabled Paul to say, “I am pure from the blood of all men” (Acts 20:26, 27, 28)? Why so indifferent about life (verse 24)?
16. What two-fold obligation rested upon the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:28)? Meaning of the word rendered “bishops” (verse 28)? How had the Holy Spirit made them such?
17. Meaning of the word rendered “feed” (verse 28)? How purchased with God’s blood (verse 28)? From whom or what was the purchase made (verse 28)?
18. Sources of the predicted evils (Acts 20:29, 30)? How were the elders to guard against these evils (verse 31)?
19. How for three years (verses 31; 19:8-10)? How was the world able to do so much (verse 32)? Were these elders supported by the church (verse 35)? Whence the quotation from Jesus (verse 35)?
20. How many elders present (Acts 20:36, 37)? Why was their sorrow so intense (verses 37, 38)?

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**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 12

Page 1

Acts 21

Memory Verses: Acts 21:13

Memory Verse:

“Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 21:13).

**PAUL AT JERUSALEM**

The purpose of Paul’s journey to Jerusalem was to deliver the offering of money from the Gentile churches to the poor saints in Jerusalem.

Paul had spent a year in gathering the offering (II Cor. 8:10). He had been warned repeatedly that to deliver it to Jerusalem meant imprisonment for him (Acts 20:23, 21:14, 11, 12). Paul had determined to bring the offering and demonstrate the unity between Jew and Gentile, both of whom were in Christ (Gal. 2:10; 3:26-29) through obedience to the same Gospel! This was an everlasting sign of the Christian brotherliness of the Gentile converts.

“Spiritual Resignation” is a suggested title for Acts 21. The outline:

- I. The Voyage (Acts 21:1-3).
- II. The Visit (Acts 21:4-6).
- III. Verdict (Acts 21:7-14).
- IV. The Veteran (Acts 21:15-16).
- V. The Vow (Acts 21:17-26),
- VI. The Violence (Acts 21:27-40).

Look again with us as Paul and his company is

**I. Speeding Toward Jerusalem (Acts 21:1-16) A. A week at Tyre (Acts 21:1-6).**

“After we were gotten from them... we came...” (Acts 21:1): Chrysostom, the Golden Mouthed, a Greek, says “gotten from them” means when they “had tarn away” from them. It was a sad parting for Paul and the Ephesian elders.

“We came with a straight course...” “Unto Cos,” about forty nautical miles south from Miletus, an island famous as the birthplace of Hippocrates and Apelles with a great medical school. Great trading place for many Jews,

“Day following unto Rhodes”: Fifty miles farther south, one of the most famous islands of the world. Noted for its beauty, its COLOSSUS, its defense by the Knights of St. John against the Turks, and for giving its name to Rhode Island, one of our fifty states. The great Colossus represented the sun, Helios, was 105 feet in height. An earthquake destroyed it in 224 B. C. It was destroyed by an earthquake in 224 B. C. It was called the island of ROSES. It was at the entrance to the Aegean Sea and had a great university, especially for rhetoric and oratory. Great commerce also.

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“Unto Patara”: A seaport on the Lycian coast on the left bank of the Xanthus. Once it had an oracle of Apollo that rivaled the one at Delphi. This was the course taken by hundreds of ships every season. At Patara a merchantman (large vessel) was boarded that would take them non-stop to Tyre (verse 2), where the ship was to be unloaded (verse 3).

“Discovered Cyprus, we left in on the left hand...” (Acts 21:3): Sailed in sight of Cyprus. This would arouse the memories of Paul’s first missionary labors here about fourteen years before (A. D. 44-45). They sailed south of Cyprus, and kept sailing till they came to Syria.

“And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days

(Acts 21:4): Search was made for them. Paul had not been there since the church was established. His companions were total strangers. Tyre was a free city of Syria in honor of its former greatness. Rocky promontories defended Tyre, one of them the famous “Ladders of Tyre.” Hiram, friend of David, rebuilt and fortified Tyre. Tyre exploited the cedars of Lebanon, which provided material for the famous Phoenician galleys. “Tyrian purple,” the product of the murex shellfish was also a famous export.

In 332 Alexander appeared before Tyre. He built a causeway, and finally stormed the city. Our visit to Tyre and a walk across the causeway, shows that it remains, as Ezekiel foretold, a place on which fishermen dry their nets (Ezek. 26:5, 14, 47:10).

Tyre was a very wicked city (Matt. 11:21), yet Christians were there (Acts 11:19; 15:3). The Holy Spirit revealed to some of them what awaited Paul in Jerusalem. The Christians entreated him of their own accord not to go on (see Acts 20:22). Duty came before comfort to Paul. “God’s method of saving the world is by placing good people in the midst of the wicked” (Matt. 5:13-16). The cost of being true may be terrific, but we must be faithful (I Cor. 10:13; Rev. 2:10c).

“We kneeled down... and prayed” (Acts 21:5): A tender farewell, “Wives and children” would sob as they kneeled on the sand. Prayer soothed each heart. “We took ship; and they returned home again” (vs. 6).

B. A few days at Caesarea (Acts 21:7-14).

“Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren... one day” (Acts 21:7): Ptolemais is modern Acre. The church there had one blessed day with Paul. What would we not give for the privilege of having him with us to advise and help in solving some vexing problems? If we had an inspired man to direct our every move, we would lose the discipline of self-dependence and responsibility. We would become helpless babes in judgment and morals. The moral principles of God’s word are available (Col. 3:17). We need not err if we follow His Word (II Tim 3:15-17). Possibly the scattered brethren (Acts 11:19) founded the church here, or Philip may have done it.

“And the next day we... came unto Caesarea” (Acts 21:8): A city built between 25-13 B. C. by Herod “the Great” at a vast cost and named in honor of his patron Augustus Caesar. Caesarea is the political capital of Judea under the Romans where the procurators lived. It had a magnificent harbor built. Most of its inhabitants were Greeks. This is the third time that we have seen Paul in Caesarea, on his journey from Jerusalem to Tarsus (Acts 9:30), on his return from Antioch at the close of the second mission tour (Acts 18:22), and now (Acts 21:8).

“Philip the evangelist... one of the seven”: One of the seven of Acts 6:3-6. He loved the gospel and became an evangelist (Acts 8:5-40). His residence was at Caesarea.

“Abode with him”: Philip had a large house to entertain nine men (Acts 20:4, 5). It was a joyful time. Paul would learn much from Philip of the early days of the church. Luke would gather much first-hand information of Acts (Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1).

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“Four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy” (Acts 21:9): Compare Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28f. The prophetic spirit in the Old or New Testament is not confined to a single sex. Deborah and Huldah are Old Testament examples. In the New Testament, Elizabeth, Mary Anna and the daughters of Philip are instances.

The Holy Spirit conferred this distinction upon them. There is no order of women prophets or official ministers in the New Testament. In our Bible school today women do most of the teaching. It is a valuable service, Luke appreciated the services of women for Christ as he shows in Luke 8: 1-3,

“A certain prophet... Agabus...” (Acts 21:10): He is named in Acts 11:28 as a prophet. He had probably come down to meet Paul. He “took Paul’s girdle” (verse 11), the belt or sash that bound the loose, flowing robe, and dramatically tells Paul he will be imprisoned at Jerusalem (see I Kings 22:11; Jer. 13:1-7).

“We... they... besought him not to go up to Jerusalem” (Acts 21:12) The prediction of Agabus harmonized with Paul’s own conviction that he was on his way to suffering. The entire group tried to turn Paul from going to Jerusalem, to unman him, but to no avail (verse 13; Luke 9:51; John 11:18).

“I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die...” (Acts 21:13): Spalatin begged Luther not to go to the Diet of Worms. Luther said: “Though devils be as many in Worms as tiles upon the roofs, yet thither will I go.” Paul was ready to be bound, or die at Jerusalem “for the name of the Lord Jesus.” Paul’s will could not be broken or even bent (verse 14).

C. Lodgings arranged for in advance at Jerusalem (Acts 21:15, 16).

“We took up our carriages... to Jerusalem” (Acts 21:15): Our bag-gage. “Carriages” once meant the things carried.

“There went with us... Mnason of Cyprus... with whom we should lodge” (Acts 21:16): Mnason was a well-to-do Cypriot who had a house in Jerusalem, and who furnished hospitality for Paul and his party on their return from the third missionary journey. He had been a Christian since the Day of Pentecost. “As the number of the first disciples lessened, the next generation accorded a sort of honor to the survivors” (Furneaux).

## II. A Successful Mission (Acts 21:17-26)

A. His reception (Acts 21:17-20a).

“The brethren received us gladly” (Acts 21:17): The journey had been completed in time for Pentecost (Rom. 15:30, 31). The offering had been acceptable to the Jewish Christians. This is the fifth time entered the Holy City since his departure on the journey to Damascus about twenty-two years before. It was near Pentecost, May A. D. 58,

“Paul went in with us unto James...” (Acts 21:18): Luke is present. “All the elders were present,” and clearly James is the leading elder and the others are his guests in a formal reception for Paul. Note that the apostles are not mentioned though both elders and apostles are named at the Conference in Acts 15. Were the apostles away on preaching tours?

“He declared particularly what things God had wrought...” (Acts 21:19): Paul took pains to gather up all that God did through Him, and gave all the glory to God. All who “heard it... glorified the Lord” (verse 20). There were “many thousands of Jews” which believe; the Greek reads: “How many ten thousands.” In Acts 4:4 there were 5,000 men who believed in Jerusalem.

B. Paul receives some advice (Acts 21:20b-26).

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“Purify thyself... charges with them” (Acts 21:24): James plainly told Paul that much false information had been circulated about the apostle. The elders did not believe it. He showed Paul that the Jews were “zealous for the law” (verse 20b), circumcised their children (verse 21), regarded the purifications of law even involving sacrifices as proper for Christians (verses 23, 24). However, James reaffirmed the will of the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:28, 29; 21:25; Gal. 2). Paul had circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3) as a matter of expediency, but refused to circumcise Titus when the Jews tried to say he was not a Christian until he was circumcised (Gal. 2:3-5).

“If a Jew desired to offer a sacrifice, he had that privilege, It was not sinful, though it was no longer obligatory!” So, as a matter of expediency Paul paid for the costly sacrifices for the four Jewish Christians and himself (Numbers 6:1-21; Acts 21:26). What Paul did was in perfect harmony with his principle of accommodation in I Cor. 9:20 when no principle was involved.

G. Campbell Morgan says: “It is impossible to escape the conviction that in doing so he was mistaken. The only purpose of his action was to maintain peace, which was not achieved.”

### III. A Satanic Mob (Acts 21:27-40)

A. Paul is assailed by the mob, and arrested by the captain (Acts 21:27-36).

“And when the seven days were almost ended...” (Acts 21:27): Seven days was an ordinary period of purification (Exodus 29:37; Lev. 12:2; 13:0; Num. 12:14). On the last of the seven days when Paul was completing his offerings about the vows on all five the incident took place that was to make him a prisoner for five years.

“The Jews which were of Asia”: These scoundrels had not been able to defeat Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41), but they tried to do it in Jerusalem. They do not hesitate to lie in stirring up a riot against Paul to kill him. The law they claimed to uphold condemned both lying and killing (Exodus 20:13, 16). They attacked and seized Paul before the charge is made.

“Help: This is the man...” (Acts 21:28): They cried out as if an outrage had been committed like murder or assault. These men were willing to murder, but not to profane the temple. The confused mob was about to kill Paul (verses 28-31) when for the second time he was rescued by a Roman officer (verses 31b-36).

B. Paul obtains permission to address the mob (Acts 21:37-40).

“May I speak unto thee?” (Acts 21:37): The chief captain in the tower of Antonia could overlook the temple. The fortress joined the temple wall and had two flights of stairs leading into the temple courts. The first thought of the commander was that the man seized was a great criminal. From verse 38 we learn that he supposed that Paul was an Egyptian rebel. Hence he ordered him bound.

When Paul reached the head of the stairs, as the soldiers into the fortress carried him, he addressed the officer in Greek. “Canst thou speak Greek?” Paul, of course, was not a pretended prophet and leader of the Egyptian assassins. This Egyptian brigand was probably illiterate and did not speak Greek.

“I am a man... Jew of Tarsus” (Acts 21:39): Tarsus was “no mean city,” a free city, Paul was entitled to some consideration. It was a daring request to wish to speak to this mob which was howling for Paul’s blood.

“And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs...” (Acts 21:40): The commander gave him permission to address the people. Paul stood at the head of the stairs with the vast throng in the court below. Beckoning with the hand to call attention, Paul addressed them in their beloved Hebrew tongue. Paul

## YEAR 5 - LESSON 12 - PAGE 5

waited till silence had come. His enemies at Corinth said that “his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible” (II Cor. 10:10)! There is no excitement, no resentment, but an earnest purpose on Paul’s part to benefit them by preaching Christ!

### Questions

1. Can you trace the journey from Miletus to Tyre (Acts 21:1-3)? For what was Rhodes famous? Why the change of ships (verse 2)? Why take the open sea from Patara to Tyre (see Acts 20:6, 14, 15; 21:1)?
2. In what sense “through the Spirit” (Acts 21:4)? How long did Paul remain in Tyre? Why the parting so solemn (Acts 21:5, 6)?
3. Who planted the churches in Tyre and Ptolemais (Acts 21:4, 7)?
4. One of what seven (Acts 21:8; 6:3-6)? How did he become an evangelist? In what way did Philip’s daughters prophesy (verse 9)?
5. Who was the notable prophet (Acts 21:10; 11:27, 28)?
6. Did the Holy Spirit forbid Paul to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:11)? Who besought him not to go (verse 12)? What did they finally conclude (verse 14)?
7. For whom was Paul ready to give his life (Acts 21:13; 9:1-3)?
8. Of what were Paul’s carriages (baggage) composed (Acts 21:15; 24:17; Rom. 15:23-26; I Cor, 16:1-3)?
9. By whom was Paul received in Jerusalem (Acts 21:16-18)?
10. How could they lodge in Jerusalem with Mnason of Cyprus (Acts 21:11)?
11. Relation between James and the elders (Acts 21:18)? What James, and why go to him? See Gal. 1:19, 2:12; Acts 15:13; 12:17)
12. Why so minute an account, and how far back did it extend (Acts 21:19; Gal. 2:2; Acts 15:12)?
13. Were the gifts accepted (Acts 21:17, 20; see Rom. 15:30, 31)?
14. What was the position of the Jewish disciples as to the law and circumcision (Acts 21:20, 21, 25)?
15. What did the elders now recommend (Acts 21:18-26; I Cor. 7:18-20; 9:19-23; 15:28, 29)?
16. What occurred before the Jewish ceremony was completed (Acts 21:27-32)? Who stirred up the riot (Acts 21:37-36)?
17. By what previous decisions had Jerusalem clearly revealed her attitude toward God (Luke 13:34; Matt. 21:32; Acts 2:22, 23; 7:54-58; 9:28, 29)?
18. Were the charges against Paul true (Acts 21:28, 24, 17, 29; 24:12-14; Rom. 3:1, 2; 9:3; 11:1; 15:25-27, 31; 3:31; Gal. 3:19-25)?
19. What was the determined purpose of this prejudiced mob (Acts 21:34-35; 22:22)?
20. For what noble purpose did Paul use his citizenship (Acts 21:37-40)?

**YEAR 5 - LESSON 13 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year V**

**First Quarter**

Lesson 13

Page 1

Acts 22

Memory Verses: Acts 22:16

Memory Verse:

“And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22: 16).

**PAUL’S DEFENSE**

Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin, a war-like tribe (Gen. 49:27). He was named possibly after King Saul. A native of Tarsus, the third university center of the world, Saul may have been taking post-graduate work during the time of Jesus’ public ministry.

He had a married sister in Jerusalem (Acts 23:16), kinsmen in Rome (Rom. 16:7, 11), and was doubtless a member of the Sanhedrin (Acts 26:10).

The conversion of Paul is thrice told in Acts (Acts 9:1-20; 22:5-16; 26:12-18). His vision was real. It was not just a dream.

Paul’s defense as here recorded is a rare and perfect example of Christian Argument. Acts 22 has been entitled “Spiritual Declaration.” Its outline:

- I. The Childhood (Acts 22:1-3).
- II. The Champion (Acts 22:4-5).
- III. The Conversion (Acts 22:6-13).
- IV. The Chosen (Acts 22:14-21).
- V. The Condemnation (Acts 22:22-23).
- VI. The Citizen (Acts 22:24-30).

**I. A Minister Tells His Own Nation Why He Is a Christian (Acts 22:1-21)**

A. A great light (Acts 22:1-6).

“Men, brethren and fathers...” (Acts 22:1): With these words Paul opens his defense, as he stood on the steps of the castle in custody of the Roman “chief captain” (Acts 23:33, 37). They are the very words used by Stephen (Acts 7:2) when arraigned before the Sanhedrin with Paul then present. Now Paul faces a Jewish mob on the same charges brought against Stephen. These waves are those of courtesy and dignity. These men were Paul’s brothers, Jews. They were the official representatives of the people, Sanhedrin, priests and rabbis. Paul’s purpose is conciliatory. He employs “his ready tact” (Rackham).

“My defense...” The term apologia (apology) is not our use of the word for apologizing for an offense, but the original sense of defense for his conduct, his life. He wants to talk himself off the false charge, or make his defense of his devotion to work among the Gentiles. Paul speaks in Aramaic and recites the actual facts connected with this change from Judaism to Christianity. The facts make the strongest argument. He first recounts the well-known zeal for Judaism in the persecution of the Christians and shows why the change came. He summarizes his work among the Gentiles and tells why he came to Jerusalem at this time. He answers the charge of enmity to the people and the law and of the desecration of the temple. It is a speech of great skill and force, delivered under remarkable conditions. Acts 26 covers some of the same ground, but for

a slightly different purpose as we shall see. Restudy Acts 9. Luke has been careful not to make every detail correspond. There is essential agreement in all three chapters.

“He spake in the Hebrew tongue...” (Acts 22:2): A sudden hush swept over the vast mob under the spell of the Aramaic. They would have understood Paul’s Koine Greek. They much preferred the Aramaic. It was a masterstroke.

“I am... a Jew...” (Acts 22:3): Paul recounts his Jewish advantages or privileges with genuine pride (Acts 26:4f; II Cor. 11:22; Gal. 1:14; Phil. 3:4-7). In Acts 21:39 he claimed Tarsus as his birth place. He was a Hellenistic Jew, not, an Aramaic Jew (Acts 6:1).

Paul showed the value of a good reputation. No asset is worth more to us than a good reputation (Prov. 22:1). It has to be earned. It is kept by living a life above reproach,

The implication is that Paul was sent to Jerusalem while still young, “from my youth” (Acts 26:4), how young we do not know, possibly when he was thirteen or fourteen years of age. Apparently he had not seen Jesus in the flesh (II Cor. 5:16).

“At the feet of Gamaliel...” The rabbis usually sat on a raised seat with the pupils in a circle around either on lower seats or on the ground. He was nourished in Pharisaic Judaism as interpreted by Gamaliel, one of the lights of Judaism (Acts 5:34f).

Gamaliel means, “Reward of God.” A Pharisee and eminent doctor of the law, Gamaliel was the grandson of Hillel. He was the first of only seven rabbis to be given the title of Rabban, our Rabbi. Rabbi, my teacher, was next. The lowest was Rab, teacher.

“As Aquinas among the scholars was called Doctor Angelicus, and Bonaventura Doctor Seraphicus, so Gamaliel was called the Beauty of the Law” (Conybeare and Howson).

“Zealous toward God, as ye all are this day”: In his conciliation, Paul went to the limit and put himself by the side of the mob in their zeal for the law. It was generous to interpret their fanatical frenzy as zeal for God. Paul is sincere as he proceeds to show by appeal to his own conduct.

“And I persecuted this way unto the death...” (Acts 22:4): “This way” avoids “any irritating name for the Christian body” by using this Jewish terminology. He persecuted “this way unto the death,” unto actual death as Acts 26:10 shows. “Both men and women died under his zealous persecution. Paul was ashamed of this fact. He pictured his former state as “a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious” (I Tim. 1:13), the first or “chief” of sinners” (I Tim. 1:15). This showed the lengths to which Paul went in his zeal for Judaism.

“As also the high priest doth bear me witness...” (Acts 22:5): Caiaphas was no longer high priest now, for Ananias is at this time (Acts 23:2), though Caiaphas may be still alive. “All the estate of the elders” was all the eldership, or the Sanhedrin (Acts 14:5) of which Paul was probably then a member (Acts 26:10). Some of those in the audience were Paul’s old companions in persecution. Paul tactfully calls the Jews his “brothers” as he did in Rom. 9:3. There is no bitterness in his heart. The apostle carried his persecution outside of Palestine, just as later he carried the gospel over the Roman Empire (Rom. 15:19).

“As I made my journey... a great light” (Acts 22:6): In Acts 9:3-10 the time of day is not mentioned. Light is the symbol of God. “I am the Light of the world” (John 8:12). This light appeared when the sun was at its brightest, and was brighter than the sun (Acts 26:13). The light of God has shone upon the earth many times, and always symbolized the presence of God, the overflowing of the divine presence of God, as

1. When the Shekinah (“that which dwells”) filling the temple (I Kings 8:11).
2. The peaks of Sinai were lit with a holy brilliance (Ex. 24:16).
3. The burning bush that would not be consumed (Ex. 3:2).
4. The glory of the Lord that shone on the shepherds when Christ was born (Luke 2:9).
5. The Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:5), and when

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6. Paul “was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light about me” (Acts 22:6), The Light blinded Paul (verse 11).

B. A great rebuke (Acts 22:7, 8).

“Saul... why persecutest thou me?” (Acts 22:7): The Light caused Paul to fall to the ground. The Voice spake in the Hebrew tongue (Acts 26:14). “Saul”: Saul’s name was repeated each time (Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:14). The same question is in each report: “Why persecutest thou me?” The piercing words stuck in Paul’s mind. What a rebuke God gave this “zealot for God!” He was persecuting Christ by persecuting those for whom Christ died. How quick Paul was to recognize “Jesus of Nazareth” (verse 8), who now is mentioned for the first time in the address.

When the teacher or preacher presents the truth to those who are not living up to it, it is easier to get angry at God’s messenger than it is to GET RIGHT WITH GOD (II Tim, 3:12, 16; 4:1-5). How many times across the years have I seen preachers “move on” when they preached “particulars” and “glittering” generalities.” You see it is easier to “fire” the preacher than it is for the local Diotrefes to repent!

C. A great call (Acts 22:9-13).

“They heard not the voice...” (Acts 22:9): Those with Paul did not understand what they heard (Acts 9:7) just as they beheld the light (Acts 22:9) but did not see Jesus (Acts 9:7). There is no contradiction between the “heard not” here and that of Acts 9:7, “hearing a voice.” The word “hear” is often used in the sense of “understand.” When Abraham Lincoln once addressed an audience, some at a distance shouted: “We cannot hear.” They could “hear” the sound of his voice; they could not “understand” what was being said.

“Go... it shall be told thee” (Acts 22:10): Paul was not “converted” by Jesus on the road to Damascus. The Lord told Paul to “Arise, and GO INTO DAMASCUS; and THERE it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.” The words to Paul were spoken in the Aramaic, “Saoul, Saoul” (verse 7). He obeyed the Lord (verse 11; 26:19).

“And one Ananias... (Acts 22:12): In Acts 9:10 we are told he was a disciple. Though a Christian, he was “a devout man according to the law.” He kept the law strictly. Paul adds “according to the law” to show that he was introduced to Christianity by a devout Jew and no lawbreaker” (Lewin).

“Brother Saul, receive thy sight” (Acts 22:13): Should a Christian call one who is not a Christian by the name “brother”? Well, if Ananias did not hit Saul in Christ at this time, he hit him in Adam as a “brother” in the flesh! “I received my sight and looked upon him” (Revised Version).

D. A great commission (Acts 22:14-16).

“The God of our fathers hath chosen thee...” (Acts 22:14): The God of the Jews took into His hands beforehand, and planned, proposed and determined that Paul should know God’s will, see His face, hear His voice, live in His presence, and tell His story!

“That Just One”: The Lord Jesus Christ. It was necessary that Paul “see” the risen Christ (I Cor. 9:1; 15:8), “For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard” (verse 15).

“And now why tarriest thou? Arise... be baptized... wash away thy sins” (Acts 22:16): Dean Howson (“Acts,” page 501) says that the verb baptize in the Greek is in the middle voice, and that accurately it is rendered, “Save thyself baptized.” Submit yourself to baptism. Get washed off as in I Cor. 6:11.

“Wash away thy sins”: Saul’s sins were not forgiven BEFORE HE WAS BAPTIZED, nor are ours (Mark 16:15, 16; I Cor. 6:11). In New Testament days it was unusual to delay baptism even one day after believing. Of course, this language shadows that Ananias thought that the penitent sinner was to be baptized

for the remission of sins (Acts 2:30). Paul held the same view (Tit. 3:5). Hackett says: “This clause states the RESULT OF BAPTISM in language derived from the nature of that ordinance. It answers to “eis aphesis hamartion” (2:38), i. e., submit to the rite in order to be forgiven... There can be no question of the mode of baptism in this case, for if it be held that baptized is uncertain in its meaning, wash away is a definition that removes the doubt.” As the final act of conversion, baptism, symbolically, is said to “wash away thy sins” (Rom. 6:4-6; Rev. 1:5; Acts 2:38).

E. A great sorrow and mission (Acts 22:17-21).

“When I was come again to Jerusalem...” (Acts 22:17): This vision was about three years after his conversion (Acts 9:28-30; Gal. 1:17, 18). Paul only consented to leave Jerusalem because God commanded him to go (verse 18). Paul felt that as the Jews knew of his part in the death of Stephen and the scattering of the church, he was the very man to bring them to the truth! However, the Jews branded him as a “traitor” to their cause. They wanted to kill him, not be converted by him (verses 18, 19).

“Consenting ... kept the raiment of them that slew him” (Acts 22:20): Paul adds here the item of “guarding the clothes of those who were slaying” Stephen. Paul recalls his very words of protest to Jesus. He did not like the idea of running away to save his own life right where he had helped slay Stephen. He is now skating on thin ice.

“I will send thee... unto the Gentiles” (Acts 22:21): This is a repetition by Jesus of the call given in Damascus through Ananias (Acts 9:15). Until now, Paul had avoided the word Gentile, but at last it had to come, “the fatal word” (Farrar).

## II. A Multitude Maddened by One Word (Acts 22:22-29)

A. Immediate effects of the speech (Acts 22:22-29).

“Away with such a fellow from the earth...” (Acts 22:22): They kept on listening with respectful attention until Paul speaks the word “Gentiles,” which was a red flag before these bulls of hate. They could conscientiously murder, but they could not conscientiously see some of their ceremonies neglected. They wanted to stone Paul. “Gentiles” was like a spark in a powder keg, or a torch to an oil tank. They said it was not fitting for such a fellow to live. He ought to have been put to death long ago, they cried!

“Threw dust into the air” (Acts 22:23): An Oriental way of showing displeasure. Their fury was uncontrolled. The explosion of pent-up indignation broke out worse than at first (Acts 21:30). It was a spasm of wild rage.

“And the chief captain... bade... be examined by scourging” (Acts 22:24): The chief captain ordered the “third degree” for Paul to find out what his crime was (verse 24-27). This way of beginning an inquiry by torture or inquisition was contrary to Roman law (Page).

“Is it lawful for you to scourge a man... a Roman, and uncondemned?” (Acts 22:25): Literally “when they stretched him forward” to scourge him, Paul claimed his rights of earthly citizenship as a Roman. Suffering for Christ’s sake is a holy privilege, but no man has any right to court martyrdom in order to allow men to sin when protest may prevent them. Paul glorified in the stigma of Jesus, but he did not fail to prevent scourging when it was in his power legally to do so. Meekness is not foolhardiness, and courage may express itself in preventing suffering as much as in enduring it.

“The centurion... Take heed what thou doest” (Acts 22:26): The centurion normally would carry out the chief captain’s orders. The name ‘Roman’ acted like magic. No officer dared to lay a hand in violence on a Roman citizen without trial. The claim was at once allowed, for it was a capital offense to make a false

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claim of citizenship, and none dared attempt it. “He who falsely pretended to Roman citizenship, was beheaded on the “Esquiline hill” (Suetonius).

“Art thou a Roman? Yea... free born.” (Acts 22:27, 28) Roman citizenship was gained by (1) reward for meritorious conduct, (2) inherited from a father who was born in a free city which had given some special service to the Emperor, or (3) UNLAWFULLY PURCHASED, “With a great sum obtained I this freedom” (verse 28).

Paul was born a Roman citizen, He belonged to a family of good social position. “Paul did not shrink from being scourged for Christ, but refused to be scourged as a criminal. He had acted honorably and refused to be branded with dishonor. It is lawful to “stand up” for one’s rights. It may sometimes not be expedient to do so (I Cor. 10:23). If any wonders how a Jew could be Roman, look around and see Jews, Germans, Irish, Italians and others who are American citizens!

“The chief captain also was afraid” (Acts 22:29): He had bound Paul for torture. He had violated the privileges of Roman citizenship. He was liable!

B. Paul is brought before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30).

“On the morrow...” (Acts 22:30): Lysias is determined to find out the truth about Paul, so he ordered the Sanhedrin to meet that if might investigate the charges against him.

Questions

1. Whose conversion is described in Acts 22? How many times is this conversion told in Acts (Acts 9:10-20; 22:5-16; 26:12-18)? To which tribe did Paul belong (cf. Gen. 49:27)?
2. What gained the attention of the multitude (Acts 22:2)?
3. What did Paul at one time have in common with his hearers (Acts 22:3, 4)? What was his distinction by blood, birth, training and practice? To whom did he appeal for verification for his statements (Acts 22:5)?
4. How did Paul prove that God, and not himself, had brought this radical change into his life (Acts 22:6-16)?
5. In what sense did those with Paul not hear the voice (Acts 22:9; 9:7; I Cor. 14:2)?
6. What things appointed, and when appointed (Acts 22:10; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38)?
7. Cause of Paul's blindness (Acts 22:11)? Can you state other occasions when the "great light" appeared (I Kings 8:11; Ex. 3:2; Luke 2:9; Matt. 17:5)?
8. Why did Paul emphasize the honorable reputation of Ananias among his fellow Jews (Acts 22:12, 13)? What was the whole speech of Ananias (Acts 22:13-16; 9:17)?
9. For what did the Lord choose Paul (Acts 22:14, 15)? Did Paul's birth and training (Acts 22:3) sufficiently equip him to be a witness for Christ (Acts 22:16)? Meaning of "wash away thy sins" (verse 16)?
10. To what Jerusalem visit did Paul probably refer (Acts 22:17; 9:26-28; Gal. 1:17, 18)?
11. Why did God command Paul to leave Jerusalem at this time (Acts 22:17, 18)?
12. Why did Paul hesitate to leave Jerusalem (Acts 22:19, 20)?
13. What were God's decisive instructions to Paul (Acts 22:21)?
14. What was Paul's last word that inflamed the Jewish multitude (Acts 22:21, 22)? How did the mob show its contempt for Paul (Acts 22:23)?
15. Meaning of examined by scourging (Acts 22:24)?
10. What startling question did Paul ask those who prepared to scourge him and what were the results (Acts 22:25-29)?
17. In what three ways was Roman citizenship obtained (Acts 22:27-28)?
18. How did Paul and the chief captain each receive his Roman citizenship (Acts 22:28)?
19. Why did the chief captain deliver Paul to the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30)?
20. When you wrongly criticize your preacher, teacher, or brother in Christ, do you realize that you are "persecuting" Jesus Christ (Acts 22:7)?