

On the Sabbath they went to the synagogue for the services. ¹⁵ After the usual readings from the books of Moses and the prophets, those in charge of the service sent them this message: "Brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, come and give it."

¹⁶ So Paul stood, lifted his hand to quiet them, and started speaking. "Men of Israel," he said, "and you God-fearing Gentiles, listen to me.

¹⁷ "The God of this nation of Israel chose our ancestors and made them multiply and grow strong during their stay in Egypt. Then with a powerful arm he led them out of their slavery. ¹⁸ He put up with them through forty years of wandering in the wilderness. ¹⁹ Then he destroyed seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to Israel as an inheritance. ²⁰ All this took about 450 years.

"After that, God gave them judges to rule until the time of Samuel the prophet. ²¹ Then the people begged for a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years. ²² But God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.'

²³ "And it is one of King David's descendants, Jesus, who is God's promised Savior of Israel!

11. Discussion: (a) Why do you think Mark went home? (b) Why do you think Paul summarized Israel's history before introducing Jesus? (c) What is the connection between Jesus and David?

Scripture taken from the
Holy Bible, New Living Translation (NLT)
copyright © 1996, 2004 by Tyndale Charitable Trust.
Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers.

Study Guide Copyright © 2011 David B. Fenwick
Published and Distributed by **Yeshua Glow, Inc.**
5718 Monterey Road, Los Angeles, CA 9004

An Interactive Life Application Bible Study of the Acts of the Apostles for Small Groups

Key: Blue = New Testament Red = Words of Jesus

Green = Old Testament Quotes

Lesson 17

1. Background Information: In lesson 16 we learned how an angel delivered Peter from prison in answer to the prayers of the believers.

Acts 12:18-19 At dawn there was a great commotion among the soldiers about what had happened to Peter. ¹⁹ Herod Agrippa ordered a thorough search for him. When he couldn't be found, Herod interrogated the guards and sentenced them to death. Afterward Herod left Judea to stay in Caesarea for a while.

2. Discussion: Do you think God was ultimately responsible for the death of the guards? If so, did they get justice in eternity? Explain.

3. Herod's pride is his downfall.

Acts 12:20 Now Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. So they sent a delegation to make peace with him because their cities were dependent upon Herod's country for food. The delegates won the support of Blastus, Herod's personal assistant, ²¹ and an appointment with Herod was granted. When the day arrived, Herod put on his royal robes, sat on his throne, and made a speech to them. ²² The people gave him a great ovation, shouting, "It's the voice of a god, not of a man!"

²³ Instantly, an angel of the Lord struck Herod with a sickness, because he accepted the people's worship instead of giving the glory to God. So he was consumed with worms and died.

²⁴ Meanwhile, the word of God continued to spread, and there were many new believers.

²⁵ When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission to Jerusalem, they returned, taking John Mark with them.

4. Background Information: Still today, Tyre and Sydon are cities on the coast of Lebanon, north of Israel's border. Those cities were dependent upon Israel for grain. John Mark was probably the author of the Gospel of Mark. Saul and Barnabas were on a mission to bring aid to Jerusalem because it had been prophesied a famine was coming.

5. Discussion: Why did the angel strike Herod with a fatal disease? What can we learn from this?

6. The first missionaries are commissioned.

Acts 13:1-5 Among the prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch of Syria were Barnabas, Simeon (called "the black man", Lucius (from Cyrene), Manaen (the childhood companion of King Herod Antipas), and Saul. ² One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Dedicate Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them." ³ So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way.

^{13:4} So Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit. They went down to the seaport of Seleucia and then sailed for the island of Cyprus [in the eastern Mediterranean Sea]. ⁵ There, in the town of Salamis, they went to the Jewish synagogues and preached the word of God. John Mark went with them as their assistant.

7. Discussion: (a) Describe the Church at Antioch. Were the members all from similar backgrounds or from diverse backgrounds? Why is that important? (b) How was the decision made to send out the first Christian missionaries to the Gentile world? (c) Why do you think they went to the Jewish synagogues before going to the Gentiles?

8. The ministry on the Island of Cyprus.

Acts 13:6-12 Afterward they traveled from town to town [from East to West] across the entire island until finally they reached Paphos, where they met a Jewish sorcerer, a false prophet named Bar-Jesus. ⁷ He had attached himself to the governor, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. The governor invited Barnabas and Saul to visit him, for he wanted to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas, the sorcerer (as his name means in Greek), interfered and urged the governor to pay no attention to what Barnabas and Saul said. He was trying to keep the governor from believing.

⁹ Saul, also known as Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he looked the sorcerer in the eye. ¹⁰ Then he said, "You son of the devil, full of every sort of deceit and fraud, and enemy of all that is good! Will you never stop perverting the true ways of the Lord? ¹¹ Watch now, for the Lord has laid his hand of punishment upon you, and you will be struck blind. You will not see the sunlight for some time." Instantly mist and darkness came over the man's eyes, and he began groping around begging for someone to take his hand and lead him.

¹² When the governor saw what had happened, he became a believer, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

9. Discussion: (a) How can you tell that Elymas accomplished his sorcery through demonic power? (b) Do you think Paul's previous experience with blindness had anything to do with the curse on Elymas?

10. Paul Preaches in Antioch of Pisidia

Acts 13:13 Paul and his companions then left Paphos by ship for Pamphylia, [a Roman province in present day southern Turkey] landing at the port town of Perga. There John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ But Paul and Barnabas traveled inland to Antioch of Pisidia.