

Acts of the Apostles



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(A Study Series by Joe Neil Clayton)

Introduction-- In this detailed book of New Testament history, Luke, the "beloved physician" (Colossians 4:14), continues his account of the activities of Jesus, but these acts are those which were performed through His apostles. He writes in the 3rd person, until 16:10, when he changes to the 1st person, indicating when he joined the Apostle Paul's company. This history covers less than 40 years, but reveals to us how much was accomplished in the spread of the gospel in that short period of time.

The text is in the New King James (in column on the left, so that you can use the blank area on the right for your own notes), with cross-references inserted in the text. Questions follow each section. Opinion questions will be included, and identified.

Chapter 1

1 The former account I made, O Theophilus (Luke 1:1-3), of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen (compare John 16:13-15), 3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days (compare John 14:19-24 and 1 Corinthians 15:5-8) and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Compare Acts 8:12, 19:8, 28:23, 31). 4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me (Compare Luke 24:46-49); 5 "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now (See Acts 2:1-4)."

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the "former treatise/ account" which Luke had written?
2. What is the meaning of the Greek name, Theophilus?
3. Why do you think Jesus chose to reveal himself only to His disciples after His resurrection?
4. What appearances of Jesus did Paul list in 1 Corinthians 15?
5. What was the "promise" of Verse 4?
6. How many days did the Apostles witness Jesus' appearances?
7. About how many days after His last appearance did the Apostles receive "power?"

Chapter 1

6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Compare Mark 9:1.) 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you (See Acts 2:4); and you shall be witnesses to Me (Compare Acts 2:32) in Jerusalem (Compare Isaiah 2:1-3), and in all Judea and Samaria (Compare Matthew 10:5-6), and to the end of the earth." (NOTE: This verse comprises a brief outline of the Acts.) 9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight (Compare Mark 16:19-20). 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee (Compare Acts 2:7), why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." (Compare Mark 13:26, Revelation 1:7 and Hebrews 4:14.)

QUESTIONS:

1. Why, in your opinion, did Jesus refuse to answer the Apostles' question about the restoring of the Kingdom?
2. In Mark 9:1, what did Jesus say would come with the kingdom?
3. When would the Apostles receive power, according to verse 8?
4. What kind of witnesses did John say the Apostles were, in 1 John 1:1-2?
5. What would the outline of Acts consist of, according to verse 8? (See next page)

1st section _____

2nd section _____

3rd section _____

6. Why was it important for the Apostles to begin their work in Jerusalem?
7. How did Jesus ascend into heaven, according to Verse 9?
8. How will Jesus come again, according to Verse 11?

Chapter 1

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey (NOTE: The traditional distance set by Rabbinical speculation in the Talmud, about 1/2 mile.). 13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus (Compare Luke 8:1-3), and with His brothers (Compare John 7:1-5).

QUESTIONS:

1. From the information in Verse 12, can we assume that Jesus ascended to heaven on the Sabbath?
2. Can we rightfully assume that the "upper room" of Verse 13 was the same one mentioned in Mark 14:15?
3. What is the difference between "prayer" and "supplication," in Verse 14?
4. Had the brethren of Jesus always believed in Him?

Chapter 1

15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, 16 "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled (Compare Luke 22:37), which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus (Compare Psalm 41:9 and John 13:18); 17 "for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry." 18 (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity (See Matthew 27:3-7); and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. 19 And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it' (Psalm 69:25); and, 'Let another take his office (Psalm 109:8).'

21 "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection." 23 And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen 25 "to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." 26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias (Compare Proverbs 16:33, 18:18). And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

QUESTIONS:

1. What prophecy spoken by David did Peter possibly have in mind in Verse 16?
2. At this time, had Peter been given the gift of prophecy?
3. Did Judas Iscariot actually purchase a field with the betrayal money he received?
4. What were the qualifications needed for an Apostle, according to Peter?
5. Why were two men suggested for the one apostolic office, do you suppose?
6. How did God show His approval of their method of choosing a successor?

Chapter 2

1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come (called the "Feast of Weeks" in the Old Testament. See Deuteronomy 16:16 and Leviticus 23:5-21.), they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (Compare Acts 6:3-6) and began to speak with other tongues (See Verse 11), as the Spirit gave them utterance.

QUESTIONS:

1. According to Leviticus 23, what method was used to determine the time of the "Feast of Weeks?"
2. The people who received this filling of the Holy Spirit are referred to only as "they" in this paragraph. Who were they, and how do we determine their identity?
3. Some religious people attempt to connect the "tongues, as of fire" in this passage with the baptism of fire in Matthew 3:11-12. In your opinion, is this a legitimate connection?
4. In your opinion, were the "deacons" of Acts 6:3-6 filled with the Spirit in the same way these were on the Day of Pentecost?
5. Were the "tongues" in Verse 4 a form of unknown ecstatic speech, or true languages that could be understood?

Chapter 2

5 *And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language (See Verse 4). 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes (Converts to Judaism. Compare Esther 8:17 and Zechariah 8:23), 11 "Cretans and Arabs--we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." 12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?" 13 Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."*

QUESTIONS:

1. Why were Jews from so many countries gathered in Jerusalem at this time?
2. What "sound" caused them to come together in the presence of the Apostles?
3. What emotions did the people experience in Verses 6 and 7?
4. How do you suppose they recognized the Apostles as Galileans?
5. How many races and places are named in verses 9 to 11?
6. What emotions did the people have in Verse 12?
7. Why did some mock the Apostles, according to Verse 13?

Chapter 2

14 *But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15 "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day (Compare Matthew 20:1-7). 16 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel (Joel 2:28-32a):*

17 *`And it shall come to pass in the last days (Compare James 5:1-3), says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh (Compare Psalm 65:2 and Isaiah 66:23); Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy (See Acts 21:9), Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days (Compare Acts 10:45); And they shall prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day*

of the LORD (Compare Isaiah 13:9-13). 21 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.' (Compare Romans 10:11-15.)

QUESTIONS:

1. How did Peter defend himself and the Apostles from the charge of drunkenness?
2. To what prophecy did Peter connect the events of that day?
3. When did the "last days" begin, according to Peter?
4. Some religious teachers use Verse 17 to support the idea that the 120 disciples of Acts 1:15, which included women, received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, along with the Apostles. How would you show that this is not so?
5. Were the "wonders" of Verses 19-20 to be literally fulfilled, or are they figurative?
6. Which verse in Joel's prophecy has the greatest significance for us, do you think?

Chapter 2

22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst (Compare John 14:10), as you yourselves also know-- 23 "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death (Compare 2 Samuel 12:9); 24 "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it (See Isaiah 53:1-12). 25 "For David says concerning Him (Psalm 16:8-11):

'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. 27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'

29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 "Therefore, being a prophet (See 2 Samuel 23:1-2), and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne (See 2 Samuel 7:12-13 and Psalm 89:3-4), 31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why, in your opinion, was Peter careful to identify the Lord as "Jesus of Nazareth" in Verse 22, and referred to him as "this Jesus" in Verses 32 and 36? (Compare Luke 3:29.)
2. Were the Jews guilty of crucifying Christ, even though the deed was done by Roman soldiers?
3. Why was it impossible for death to hold Jesus (see Verse 24)?
4. What phrase in Isaiah 53 confirms the death of Christ? His resurrection?
5. Even though the prophecy of David in Psalm 16 is written in the 1st person (I, my, me), how does Peter show that David was not speaking of himself?

Chapter 2

32 "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear (Compare John 15:26-27). 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" (Compare Mark 16:19, Hebrews 1:13, 10:13.)

36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

QUESTIONS:

1. Peter says that the Apostles were "witnesses" of the resurrection of Jesus. How many others, approximately, also saw Jesus after he was raised? (1 Corinthians 15)
2. What was the promise Jesus received from the Father, according to Verse 33, the Holy Spirit, or the promise made by the Holy Spirit?
3. According to Peter, what must be the conclusion of this divine evidence?

Chapter 2

37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart (Compare Acts 7:54), and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." (See Genesis 12:1-3, and compare to Acts 7:17, 13:32-33.) 40 And with many other words he testified and

exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." (The American Standard Version reads, in the active sense, "Save yourselves---") 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why, after listening to Peter, do you think his hearers assumed that there might be something they should do?
2. Which of the two things Peter told them to do in Verse 38 is the more important?
3. What do you think was the "gift of the Holy Spirit" mentioned in Verse 38?
4. What was the "promise" mentioned in Verse 39?
5. Does Verse 40 suggest that converts must do something to be saved?
6. In what things did the converts on Pentecost "continue steadfastly?"

Chapter 2

43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles (Compare Acts 5:11-12). 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need (Compare Acts 4:32-35). 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house (See 1 Corinthians 11:22), they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Compare Ephesians 2:19-22.)

QUESTIONS: (next page)

1. Why was it good for the Apostles to work "wonders and signs? (See Mark 16:20.)
2. What do you think is the significance of the statement in Verse 44, which says, "All who believed were together, and had all things common?"
3. How often did the new converts go to the Temple?
4. Was the breaking of bread in Verse 46 a reference to the Lord's Supper, or to a

common meal?

5. Was this a time when the new disciples of Christ enjoyed a measure of popularity?
6. Even though the Greek Text does not have words to back up the phrase "to the church" in Verse 47, do you think that the phrase is descriptive of what happened?

Chapter 3

Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour (Josephus says the 9th hour was the time of the evening sacrifice. Antiquities, XIV, 4:3; and compare Exodus 30:1-8 and Luke 1:8-10.). 2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; 3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you (Compare Matthew 10:8): In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." (Compare John 14:13, and Colossians 3:17.) 7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them--walking, leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God. 10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him (Compare Acts 14:8-18). 11 Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's (Compare Acts 5:12), greatly amazed.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why, do you suppose, did Peter and John go up to the Temple at this hour?
2. Could the lame man walk before his healing? _____ How did he go to the gate entrance?
3. Does the Scripture indicate that the lame man was seeking a healing?
4. Did he suppose that Peter intended to heal him?
5. Was Peter left-handed? (See Vs. 7)
6. What word in the text shows that the healing should be considered a miracle?

7. When Paul healed a lame man in Acts 14, what was the reaction of the observers?
8. What was the reaction of those who observed Peter's healing powers?
9. What use did the early Christians make of Solomon's Porch?

Chapter 3

12 So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? (Compare Daniel 2:28-30.) 13 "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant (This word is *paida*, indicating a son who serves. The same word appears in Vs. 26) Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go (See Luke 23:20-21). 14 "But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you (Compare Mark 15:6-8), 15 "and killed the Prince of life (Compare John 17:1-3), whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. 16 "And His name, through faith in (This preposition in Greek is *dia*, which should be translated "through," as in the latter part of the verse.) His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all (Compare Matthew 17:14-21). 17 "Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers (See Acts 13:27). 18 "But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled (Compare Luke 24:25-27). 19 "Repent (or, "change your mind") therefore and be converted (or convert--"follow the change of mind with a change of action." Compare Matthew 3:8.), that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things (A reference to Revelation 22:1-2? Compare Matthew 19:28), which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. 22 "For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. 23 'And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' (See Deuteronomy 18:15-19, and compare John 1:21, 6:14.) 24 "Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. 25 "You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' (See Genesis 12:1-3.) 26 "To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities." (Compare Romans 1:16-17.)

QUESTIONS:

1. Was it only modesty that caused Peter to give credit for the miracle to the authority of Jesus?
2. What descriptive terms or titles are used in Verses 13-15 to apply to Jesus?
3. In Verse 16, was Peter speaking of the faith of the lame man to be healed, or of his own faith in the power of Jesus?
4. In Verses 17-18, Peter said that the suffering of Christ was predicted by "all the prophets." Is this literally true?
5. What is the difference between repenting and converting, as in Verse 19?
6. Does the blotting out of sin depend only on repenting and being converted?
7. The word translated "restoration" in Verse 21 is found only this one time in the New Testament. What do you think will be "restored" at the end of Christ's stay in heaven?
8. Moses said that the prophet the Israelites should look for would be like him. In what ways is Jesus like Moses?
9. What will happen to the person who does not hearken to that prophet?
10. In Verses 25-26, Peter addresses the Jews in the Temple. Do you think that he understood at that time that the promise made to Abraham about the blessing of all families on earth included the Gentiles?
11. Did Peter get to finish his sermon on this day? (See Acts 4:1-3.)

Chapter 4

Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, 2 being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead (Compare Acts 23:8, Luke 20:27 and 1 Corinthians 15:12-13). 3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening (See Acts 3:1). 4 However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand (Compare Acts 5:14).

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the Pharisees agree with the Sadducees on the matter of the resurrection of the

dead?

2. The Apostles were not interrogated in the night, but why was Jesus tried during the night, in your opinion?
3. When it says in Verse 4 that many "believed," does this indicate that this is all that a person has to do to be saved? _____ Why?

Chapter 4

5 And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, 6 as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas (Compare John 18:12-13), John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem (These leaders were mostly of the Sadducee sect). 7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: 9 "If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man (See Acts 3:2), by what means he has been made well, 10 "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. 11 "This is the `stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone (See Psalm 118:22-23, and compare Matthew 21:23, 33-46).' 12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Compare John 14:6)." 13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men (Compare John 7:14-15, and Luke 12:11-12), they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. 14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

QUESTIONS:

1. If the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, why do you suppose they wanted to be religious?
2. What does Verse 7 say is identical to doing something in the name of someone?
3. Was Peter reluctant to bring up the subject of the resurrection of the dead before these examiners?
4. If there is no salvation, except in Jesus, what hope will Jews have today, if they deny that He is the Christ?
5. What conclusion did the rulers come to, when they saw the boldness of the Apostles?

6. Even though they could not refute the fact that a marvelous healing had been done, are there men today who will deny obvious facts?

Chapter 4

15 *But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it (Compare John 11:47). 17 "But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." 18 And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. (Compare Acts 9:27.) 19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge (Compare Acts 5:29). 20 "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Compare 1 John 1:1-3 and 1 Corinthians 9:16.) 21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done (Compare Matthew 9:8). 22 For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.*

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the council deny that a "notable miracle" had been done?
2. What did the council hope to accomplish by severe threats?
3. Was Peter inclined to respect the commands of this council? _____ Why?
4. What circumstances caused the council to release the Apostles?
5. What, in your opinion, did the age of the healed man have to do with this matter?

Chapter 4

23 *And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25 "who by the mouth of Your servant David have said:*

'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.' (See Psalm 2:1-2.)

27 *"For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius*

Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 "to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done (Compare Acts 2:22-23). 29 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness (Compare Acts 9:28-29).

QUESTIONS:

1. This section contains an example of public prayer: what can we learn from this example about acceptable parts of prayer?
2. Did the prophecy of Psalm 2 accurately describe the conspiracy against Jesus Christ?
3. Did the prayer of the disciples include a request for the oppression of the rulers to cease?
4. What requests were made at the end of the prayer?
5. Was their prayer answered?

Chapter 4

32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common (See Acts 2:46). 33 And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. 34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need (Compare Hebrews 10:32-36, and 1 Corinthians 12:26). 36 And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, 37 having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

QUESTIONS:

1. Is this an example of communal living that is binding on Christians?
2. Who was given help in this distribution?
3. Can relief work of this sort be done for congregations in need by other

congregations? (See 2 Corinthians 8:13-15)

4. Since Barnabas was a Levite, do you suppose that he gave up his portion of the Tithe when he became a Christian?
5. Should Christians today be willing to make the same sacrifices, if the need arises?

Chapter 5

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. 2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? 4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." (See Hebrews 4:12-13, and compare Joshua 7:1-26.) 5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. 6 And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

7 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much." 9 Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? (Compare Deuteronomy 13:6-8, and Matthew 4:7.) Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." 10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. 11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think that the example of Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37) caused Ananias and his wife to try this deception?
2. Is it possible to lie to the Holy Spirit, or to God?
3. When a disciple sold his property to use the funds for benevolent work, was he required by command to give all the proceeds of the sale?
4. In the last part of verse 4, Peter said, "You have not lied to men..." Is this true?
5. In your opinion, was Peter's question to Sapphira in verse 8 an attempt to trap her into repeating the lie of her husband?

6. How is it possible, do you suppose, that Sapphira had not heard of the death and burial of her husband?

Chapter 5

12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. (See Acts 2:43, 4:33.) And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. 13 Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. 14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, 15 so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. (Compare Galatians 2:6-9.)16 Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

QUESTIONS:

1. How did the working of miracles aid in the converting of the multitudes?
2. Is there a conflict between verse 13 and verse 14?
3. Does verse 15 show the prominence of Peter in the Jerusalem church, when compared to other events in Acts and other references?

Chapter 5

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation (the Greek word here is zelos, meaning "jealousy." Compare Matthew 27:17-18.) 18 and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. 19 But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out (See Hebrews 1:13-14.), and said, 20 "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life." (The Greek word for "words" here is rhema, not logos, so it should be interpreted "the message.") 21 And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. 22 But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported, 23 saying, "Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing outside before the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!" 24 Now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be. 25 So one came and told them, saying, "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!" 26 Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned (See verse 13 above, then compare Acts 6:8-14.).

QUESTIONS:

1. Was the jealousy of the Sadducees against the Apostles justified, do you think?
2. Though it is not mentioned in the text, how do you suppose that the Angel was able to take the Apostles out through the doors without the knowledge of the guards?
3. When the officers went to get the Apostles out of the prison, and did not find them, what facts puzzled them?
4. The obedience of the Apostles to the command of the angel put them in jeopardy with the council. Why? (See Acts 4:18.)

Chapter 5

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, 28 saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? (See Acts 4:18.) And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!" (See Matthew 27:20-26.) 29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men. (Compare Mark 7:5-9.) 30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. 31 Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." (Compare 1 John 5:6-7.) 33 When they heard this, they were furious and plotted to kill them.

QUESTIONS:

1. With what "doctrine" had the Apostles "filled Jerusalem?"
2. Why was this "doctrine" offensive to the High Priest and the Council?
3. Why were the members of the Council unwilling to be held responsible for the blood of Jesus at this time, when they had been willing before (Matthew 27:26)?
4. What principle did Peter and the Apostles proclaim in verse 29 regarding authority?
5. In what way, other than inspired words, did the Holy Spirit bear witness to the facts about Jesus?

Chapter 5

34 Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people (See Acts 22:3.), and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while. 35 And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men. 36 For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing. 37 After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census (See Luke 2:1-2.), and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed. (Compare Mark 13:22-23.) 38 And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; 39 but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God." (Compare Matthew 15:13-14, and Acts 11:11-17.) 40 And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them (See Deuteronomy 25:2-3, and 2 Corinthians 11:24.), they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name (See 1 Peter 4:12-16, and Matthew 5:10-12.). 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

QUESTIONS:

1. Was the advice of Gamaliel to the Council based on sound principles?
2. Gamaliel told of false "Christs" that had appeared in the past. What did Jesus warn against in Mark 13:22-23?
3. The council agreed with the advice of Gamaliel, so why did they have the Apostles beaten?

Were the Apostles discouraged, because they suffered shame for the name of Jesus?

5. Does verse 42 explain how the Apostles had "filled Jerusalem" with their doctrine?

Chapter 6

1 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists (Jews who spoke Greek, and followed Greek cultural customs), because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good

reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom (compare Ephesians 5:18), whom we may appoint over this business; 4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." (Compare 1 Corinthians 12:27-31.) 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, 6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. (Compare Acts 13:2-3.)

7 Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the Apostles think of themselves as too important to "serve tables?"
2. Why did men who were merely servants taking care of a benevolent work need to be full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom, do you think?
3. Which of the seven men chosen for this work went on to other types of work? (See verses 8-10, and chapter 8, verses 4-5.)
4. Was the "Laying on of hands" done to give these men special gifts of the Spirit, do you think?

Chapter 6

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen [the Greek word here is λιβερτινοσ,] (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen. 10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke. 11 Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." (Compare 1 Kings 21:7-10.) 12 And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon him, seized him, and brought him to the council. 13 They also set up false witnesses who said, "This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law; 14 "for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us." (Compare Matthew 24:1-2, Hebrews 8:6-13 and Romans 4:13-15.) 15 And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Stephen's opponents have to ignore, in order to charge him with error?

2. Was their first charge against him true, do you think?
3. Was their second charge true, in view of later developments in the establishment of Christianity?

Chapter 7

Then the high priest said, "Are these things so?" 2 And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, 3 and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.' 4 Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell. 5 And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him. (Compare Hebrews 11:8-16.) 6 But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years. (See Genesis 15:12-16.) 7 'And the nation to whom they will be in bondage I will judge,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and serve Me in this place.' 8 Then He gave him the covenant of circumcision (See Genesis 17:9-14.); and so Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. 9 And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him 10 and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. 11 Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance. 12 But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. 13 "And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh. 14 Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people (Compare Genesis 46:26-27; Exodus 1:5; and Deuteronomy 10:22.). 15 So Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers. 16 And they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why, do you suppose, did Stephen begin his answer to the charges brought against him in chapter 6 by recalling the history of the Jews?
2. Is there a key in the related scriptures connected with verse 14, which will help to solve the apparent discrepancy between Stephen's number of souls belonging to the family of Jacob, and those given by Moses?

Chapter 7

17 *But when the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt 18 till another king arose who did not know Joseph. 19 This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live. 20 At this time Moses was born, and was well pleasing to God; and he was brought up in his father's house for three months. 21 But when he was set out, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son. 22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds. 23 Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. (Compare Hebrews 11:24-26.) 25 For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand. 26 And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?' 27 But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? 28 'Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?' 29 Then, at this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he had two sons.*

30 *" And when forty years had passed, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai. 31 When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the Lord came to him, 32 saying, 'I am the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses trembled and dared not look. 33 Then the LORD said to him, 'Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. 34 I have surely seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.' 35 This Moses whom they rejected, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?' is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush. (Compare Isaiah 52:13-53.3.) 36 He brought them out, after he had shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years. 37 This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.' (See Acts 3:22-23.) 38 This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give to us (See Deuteronomy 5:2-3, 29:29.), 39 whom our fathers would not obey, but rejected. And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt, 40 saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' 41 And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.*

QUESTIONS:

1. How important was the work of Moses to the Jews?

2. Why, do you suppose, did Stephen dwell so much in his speech on the rejection of Moses by the children of Israel?
3. How did Moses turn the attention of the children of Israel from himself to another leader?

Chapter 7

42 "Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets:

'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? 43 You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, images which you made to worship; and I will carry you away beyond Babylon' (Amos 5:25-26.) 44 Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen (See Exodus 25:40, Hebrews 8:5.), 45 which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David, 46 who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob. 47 But Solomon built Him a house. 48 However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:

49 'Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the LORD, Or what is the place of My rest? 50 Has My hand not made all these things?' (Isaiah 66:1-2.) 51 You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! (Compare Deuteronomy 9:5-6, 10:16, 30:6, and Jeremiah 4:4.) You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. 52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One (Compare Matthew 23:34-37, and Mark 12:1-12.), of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, 53 who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it." (Compare Hebrews 2:1-4.)

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the Israelites often turn from God to worship idols?
2. Why, do you suppose, was the Tabernacle called the "Tabernacle of witness?"
3. Do Stephen's remarks about the Tabernacle (house of God) contribute very much to the general theme of his defense, in your opinion?
4. What word did Stephen use that describes a common Jewish characteristic?

5. Does the history of the Jews fit well with Jesus' parable of the wicked husbandmen?

Chapter 7

54 When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. (Compare Acts 2:37.) 55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God (See Psalm 110:1.), 56 and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; 58 and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." (Compare Luke 23:34, and 2 Timothy 4:16.) And when he had said this, he fell asleep (Compare 1 Thessalonians 4:14-15.).

QUESTIONS:

1. When the hearers of Stephen were "cut to the heart," did they respond like those in Acts 2:37?
2. Do you think there is any significance to the fact that Stephen saw Jesus "standing" at God's right hand, rather than sitting (see Mark 16:19)?
3. Do you think that those who were stoning Stephen were forgiven, as a result of a possible favorable answer to his prayer in Vs. 60?
4. Did Saul sin by guarding the garments of those who stoned Stephen?

Chapter 8

Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. 3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison (Compare Acts 9:1-2, 22:4, and Galatians 1:13). 4 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word (Compare Acts 11:19-20). 5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them (Compare 1 Corinthians 1:23, and see verse 12, below). 6 And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did (See Mark 16:20). 7 For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. 8 And there was great joy in that city.

9 But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, 10 to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." 11 And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. (Compare Deuteronomy 18:10.) 12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. 13 Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

QUESTIONS: (next page)

1. What motivated Saul to persecute Christians? (See Acts 22:3-4, Philippians 3:6)
2. Philip is said to have "preached the word," and to have "preached Christ," in verses 4 and 5, but what subjects were apparently included in this preaching in verse 12?
3. Why do you think that the Samaritans did not condemn Simon for his sorcery, according to the Law of Moses?
4. Does the description of the conversion of Simon suggest in any way that he was less sincere than the other converted Samaritans?

Chapter 8

14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (Compare John 14:12-14). 16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them (Compare Acts 10:44-46). They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (See Acts 2:38, 10:47-48). 17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit (Compare Acts 19:1-6).

QUESTIONS:

1. Why, in your opinion, did the Apostles need to come all the way from Jerusalem, in order for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit?
2. What necessary conclusion must we draw from this about Philip's miraculous power?
3. What two things did the Apostles do, in order for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit?

Chapter 8

18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit." 20 But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! 21 You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. 22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23 For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." (Compare 2 Peter 2:20-22.) 24 Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me." 25 So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

QUESTIONS:

1. Is it easy for new converts to slip back into the sinful things they practiced before conversion? (See 1 Corinthians 3:1-3.)
2. What is the definition of the word "simony" in the English dictionary?
3. What do you think Peter meant, when he said, "You have neither part nor portion in this matter?"
4. When Simon appealed for the prayer of the Apostles, what do you think he was referring to in the phrase, "the things which you have spoken?"

Chapter 8

26 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south (or, literally, "toward the sun at noon") along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. 27 So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians (Compare Jeremiah 38:7), who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, 28 was returning (See Deuteronomy 16:16). And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." 30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" 31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" (Compare Nehemiah 8:8.) And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 33 In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His

generation? For His life is taken from the earth." (Isaiah 53:7-8)

34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" (Compare Acts 10:47.) 37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (This verse is missing from most of the important Greek manuscripts, but is comparable to Matthew 16:16; John 11:27; Romans 10:9-10, and 1 John 4:15.) 38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 Now when they came up out of the water (See Matthew 3:16a), the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where was Philip, when he received the instruction to go down to the road between Jerusalem and Gaza?
2. Using a map, calculate about how far Philip had to travel to meet the Eunuch.
3. Why were eunuchs used in places of great responsibility during ancient times?
4. The Samaritans were influenced to hear the preaching of Philip, because of the miracles he performed. Why were no miracles involved in the conversion of the Eunuch, do you think?
5. Do you think it was providential, or just coincidental, that the Eunuch was reading a prophecy of Christ, when Philip met him?
6. If Philip preached only about Jesus, why did the Eunuch want to be baptized?

Chapter 9

1 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord (See Acts 26:10), went to the high priest 2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way (Compare Acts 24:5, 14), whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem (Compare Acts 26:11). 3 As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. 4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. (The

following words in bold are not found in any Greek text, but were probably borrowed by some scribe from language in Acts 22:10, and 26:14.) [It is hard for you to kick against the goads." 6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him,] "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." (Compare Acts 22:10.) 7 And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one (Compare Acts 22:9, and John 12:28-29). 8 Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank (Compare Nehemiah 9:1-2).

QUESTIONS:

1. By his association with other persecutors of Christians, do you consider that Saul was guilty of being an accessory to murder?
2. What words in this passage show the fanatic zeal of Saul in pursuing Christians?
3. What change is revealed in Saul, when he addresses Jesus as "Lord?"
4. Does the information in verse 7 contradict that of Acts 22:9?
5. What attitude is shown by the fact that, after the vision, Saul neither ate nor drank anything for three days?

Chapter 9

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." (Compare Exodus 3:4.) 11 So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. 12 And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight." (Compare 1 Kings 17:9, and see Isaiah 46:10.) 13 Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine (Compare John 15:15-16) to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. (Compare Galatians 2:8-9, and Acts 26:1-2.) 16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." (See Acts 20:22-23; 1 Corinthians 4:9-12; 2 Corinthians 11:23-27; and 2 Timothy 2:9-11.) 17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. (Compare Acts 22:16.)

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was Ananias reluctant to obey the commission of the Lord to go speak to Saul?
2. In verse 12, the Lord says that Saul had seen a vision of Ananias coming. Do you think that this was a fact, or was it a manner of speaking peculiar to the Godhead?
3. Do you think that God violated His rule of showing no partiality, when he made an enemy like Saul a "chosen vessel?" (Are all disciples chosen in this way?)
4. Did Saul truly have to "suffer many things," in order to serve the Lord?

Chapter 9

19 So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus. 20 Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. (Compare Acts 17:1-3.) 21 Then all who heard were amazed, and said, "Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?" 22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ.

QUESTIONS:

1. How was Saul able to preach Jesus as the Christ so soon after his baptism?
2. Was it an advantage to Saul in persuading his hearers, do you think, that he was a new convert?
3. How did Paul "prove" that "this Jesus" was the Christ, according to verse 22? (See Acts 17:1-3.)

Chapter 9

23 Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. 24 But their plot became known to Saul. (Compare Acts 23:12-16.) And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. 25 Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket. 26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. 28 So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. 29 And he spoke boldly in the name of

the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him. (Compare John 15:18-19.) 30 When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus. (Compare Paul's narrative in Galatians 1:15-18.) 31 Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

QUESTIONS:

1. Was it lawful for the Jews to plot to kill Saul, after he converted to Christ? (See Deuteronomy 18:20.)
2. Why were the disciples at Jerusalem reluctant to receive Saul?
3. Since the "churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace" after Saul's conversion, does this in any way indicate that Saul was the leading persecutor of Christians among the Jews?

Chapter 9

32 Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. 33 There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. 34 And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed." (Compare Acts 3:12-16.) Then he arose immediately. 35 So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

36 At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. (Compare 1 Timothy 2:9-10, 5:10.) 37 But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. 38 And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. 39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. 40 But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. (Compare 2 Kings 4:32-35.) 41 Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord. 43 So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with Simon, a tanner.

QUESTIONS:

1. Dorcas was "full of good works," but are Christian women the only ones charged to do them? (See Ephesians 2:10.)

2. What was the good effect of the miracle of verse 34? Of verses 40-41?

Chapter 10

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, 2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. (Compare Verse 22.) 3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!" 4 And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. (See Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 49:5-6, and Malachi 1:10-14.) 5 Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. 6 He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do." (Compare Acts 22:10.) 7 And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. 8 So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

QUESTIONS:

1. Is there any indication in these verses that Cornelius was a proselyte (a convert to Judaism)?
2. In Cornelius' response to the vision of the Angel, what is similar to Saul's response to the voice of Jesus?
3. Does verse 4 say that Cornelius' prayers were answered?
4. How did Cornelius' prayers and alms serve as a "memorial" to God?
5. Why didn't the Angel tell Cornelius how to be saved, rather than having him send for Peter? (See 1 Corinthians 1:21.)

Chapter 10

9 The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. 10 Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance (Greek, εκστασις,) 11 and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. 12 In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. 13 And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." 14 But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." (Compare Deuteronomy

14:6-19 and Mark 7:17-20.) 15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." 16 This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again. 17 Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant (See Verse 28, below), behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. 18 And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Peter refuse to obey the voice out of heaven, when it commanded him to "rise, kill and eat?"
2. What did the heavenly voice say in response to Peter's objection?
3. Did Peter suspect that there was a hidden meaning in the vision?
4. Do you think that the arrival of the messengers from Cornelius at the door of the house, at the precise moment when the vision of Peter was ending, was merely coincidental, or was it providential? (See Verse 20.)

Chapter 10

19 While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. 20 Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them." (Compare Acts 8:29.) 21 Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" 22 And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man (See Verse 35 below, but compare Romans 6:16-18), one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you." 23 Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the Spirit tell Peter the purpose of the men who were seeking him?
2. Peter was instructed to go with them, but he deferred this until the next day. Why do you think he did this?
3. When the messengers from Cornelius called him a "just (or, righteous) man," were they expressing their opinion, or the true spiritual condition of their master?

Chapter 10

24 *And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends.* 25 *As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.* 26 *But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man." (Compare Matthew 14:33, and Revelation 19:9-10.)* 27 *And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together.* 28 *Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. (Compare Deuteronomy 7:1-6; Isaiah 52:1, 11.) But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.* 29 *Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?" (see Verse 22.)* 30 *So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,* 31 *"and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. (Compare 1 Peter 3:12.)* 32 *'Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.'* 33 *So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God." (Compare Matthew 28:19-20.)*

QUESTIONS:

1. If it is wrong for men to be worshiped, did this rule apply to Jesus? Why?
2. How many days passed between the appearance of the angel to Cornelius, and the arrival of Peter in Caesurae?
3. What convinced Peter that he could disobey the laws which separated Jews from Gentiles?
4. The messengers of Cornelius had already answered Peter's question concerning the purpose of his summons, so why, do you think, did Peter ask the same question of Cornelius?
5. Cornelius said that his prayer was heard, but the angel had merely said that his prayers were a "memorial." Does God hear the prayers of those who are not saved?
6. What had Cornelius done, which showed his interest in the salvation of others besides himself?

Chapter 10

34 *Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.* 35 *But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.* 36 *The*

word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ--He is Lord of all-- (Compare Ephesians 2:13-18.) 37 that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. 40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. (Compare Luke 24:41-43; John 21:13, and also compare John 14:19-20, 22; Acts 1:1-3, 8.) 42 And He commanded us to preach to the people (See Mark 16:15), and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. (Compare John 3:17, 5:22, and 2 Timothy 4:1.) 43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins." (Compare Romans 3:21-22, and Isaiah 52:12-53:5.)

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is acceptable to God, according to Peter in verse 35?
2. Did Peter preach the gospel identified by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4?
3. Why didn't Jesus appear to others beside his disciples?
4. Is there a contradiction between the statement of John 3:17, and that of 5:22?
5. Peter says that the prophets bore witness to the fact that faith in Jesus leads to remission of sins, but what other witness does Paul add in Romans 3:21-22?

Acts 10

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. 45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. (Compare Acts 19:1-6.) Then Peter answered, 47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. (Compare Acts 2:38.) Then they asked him to stay a few days. (Compare Acts 15:6-11.)

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the purpose of God, do you think, behind the pouring out of the spirit on the household of Cornelius?

2. Why do you suppose the Jews who had accompanied Peter were so astonished at hearing the Gentiles speak with tongues?
3. Did Peter see this receiving of the Holy Spirit by Cornelius as something similar to what he and the apostles had received?
4. Is water baptism in the name of Jesus commanded to all who believe the Gospel?
5. Was the "command" of Peter to be baptized based on his own authority, or that of Christ? (See 2 Peter 3:2.)

Chapter 11

1 Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. 2 And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision contended with him, 3 saying, "You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!" 4 But Peter explained it to them in order from the beginning, saying: 5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object descending like a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came to me. 6 When I observed it intently and considered, I saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. 7 And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' 8 But I said, 'Not so, Lord! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.' 9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, 'What God has cleansed you must not call common.' 10 Now this was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven. 11 At that very moment, three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent to me from Caesarea. 12 Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. 13 And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, 14 'who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.' (Compare Acts 10:6, 22, 32-33.) 15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. (Compare Acts 2:1-4.) 16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 if therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" 18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the brethren in Jerusalem have the view that Peter had done wrong in going in to Gentiles?

2. Did Peter tell the story of his experience accurately?
3. By what was the household of Cornelius saved, according to verse 14?
4. According the language of verses 15-17, did Peter think that the gift received by the household of Cornelius was another fulfillment of the baptism of the Holy Spirit?
5. What conclusion did the brethren in Jerusalem reach, after Peter told his story?

Chapter 11

19 Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. (Compare Acts 8:1-4.) 20 But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. 22 Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. 23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. 24 For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

25 Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. 26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

QUESTIONS:

1. What effect did the martyrdom of Stephen have on the spread of the gospel?
2. Did Barnabas live up to his name in the things he did at Antioch?
3. What do we know of the activities of Saul in Tarsus from the time he went there after he departed from Jerusalem (Acts 9:31)?

Chapter 11

27 And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 Then one of them, named Agabus (See Acts 21:10), stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. 29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. (Compare 1 Corinthians 16:1-3.) 30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. (Compare Acts 4:34-36.)

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the advantage of having a prophet in this situation?
2. What precedent is set in these verses for the relief of the hungry?

Chapter 12

1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. (This was Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great; he was nephew to Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist, and brother to his wife, Herodias. He was made king by the Emperor Caligula, and was put in possession of all the territories formerly held by his uncle Philip and by Lysanias;....To these the Emperor Claudius afterwards added Judea and Samaria; which made him king over nearly all the dominions possessed by his grandfather, Herod the Great.) *2 Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. (Compare **Matthew 20:20-23**.)* *3 And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. (See **Exodus 12:15-17**.)* *4 So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.*

QUESTIONS:

1. Luke's passion for detailed reporting gives us the name of the oppressor of the church, but fails to tell us how he came to be a ruler in Judea. How did he become king over territory including Jerusalem?
2. There are two Apostles named James. Which one was killed by Herod?
3. Why, do you suppose, did Herod assign four squads of soldiers to guard Peter?

Chapter 12

5 Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. *6 And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison.* *7 Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands.* *8 Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me."* *9 So he went out and followed him, and did not*

know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. 10 When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

QUESTIONS:

1. Does this event suggest that the prayers of the church for Peter were effective? If so, why were they later surprised to find that he had escaped? (See verses 14 and 15 below.)
2. How, do you suppose, did Peter escape the notice of the two soldiers at his side, when the Angel caused his chains to fall off, and led him away, after he clothed himself?
3. Did Peter think that what was happening to him was real?
4. How was the Iron Gate opened for them?

Chapter 12

*11 And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people." 12 So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark (See **Acts Verse 25**, below, and see also **13:5**, **13:13**, and **15:36-38**), where many were gathered together praying. 13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer. 14 When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate. 15 But they said to her, "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "It is his angel." (Compare **Luke 24:1-11**.) 16 Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. 17 But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James (See **Acts 1:13**) and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place. 18 Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. 19 But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that they should be put to death. (Compare **1 Kings 20:38-42**.) And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there.*

QUESTIONS:

1. After the Angel left him, did Peter become convinced that his escapes was real?

2. Where did he go, after his escape?

3. When Rhoda announced that Peter stood outside at the gate, did they believe her? Why do you think this was so?

4. If James had been killed by Herod, why did Peter tell them to “tell these things to James?”

5. What did Herod do to the guards who had been on duty when Peter escaped?

Chapter 12

*20 Now Herod had been very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; but they came to him with one accord, and having made Blastus the king's personal aide their friend, they asked for peace, because their country was supplied with food by the king's country. 21 So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. 22 And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" 23 Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. 24 But the word of God grew and multiplied. 25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their ministry (See **Acts 11:27-30**), and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.*

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the angel of God strike Herod, so that he was eaten with worms?

2. What ministry had brought Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem?

Chapter 13

*1 Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch (See **Luke 3:1**), and Saul. (Compare **Ephesians 4:10-11**.) 2 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted (See **Matthew 9:14-15**), the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.*

QUESTIONS:

1. All of the men named in verse 1 were either prophets or teachers. According to Ephesians 4:11, could a person be a teacher, without being a prophet?

2. How do we know that men of prominence were being converted, and were rising in the church to become teachers?
3. How do you think the Holy Spirit revealed his message about Barnabas and Saul?
4. What was the purpose of laying hands on Barnabas and Saul, do you suppose?

Chapter 13

4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. 5 And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John (See Acts 12:25) as their assistant. 6 Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus, 7 who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. (Compare Jeremiah 27: 15; Deuteronomy 18:10-12.) 9 Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? 11 And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. (Compare 2 Kings 6:13-20.) 12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord. 13 Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where did Barnabas and Saul find the most ready audience for their teaching in Cyprus?
2. Was Bar-Jesus (or, Elymas) a Jew who followed faithfully the Law of Moses?
3. Why do you think that Saul did not strike Elymas with permanent blindness?
4. When it says that the "proconsul believed," does this mean that he was converted? (See Acts 18:8, 16:33-34.)
5. In what verse, does Luke begin to identify Saul as Paul?

6. Did John's departure from Barnabas and Paul cause a problem, later? (See Acts 15:36-41.)

Chapter 13

14 *But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. 15 And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." (Compare **Luke 4:14-20**.)* 16 Then Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God (this addressed to proselytes), listen: 17 "The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it. 18 Now for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness. 19 And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment. 20 After that He gave them judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. 21 And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. 22 And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' (Compare **1 Samuel 13:14, 16:1**.) 23 From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior--Jesus-- (See **Psalms 89:20-37; Matthew 22:41-46**.) 24 after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.' 26 Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. 27 For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him. 28 And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. 29 Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. 30 But God raised Him from the dead. 31 He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. 32 And we declare to you glad tidings--that promise which was made to the fathers. 33 God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.' (**Psalms 2:7**) 34 And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken thus: 'I will give you the sure mercies of David.' (**Isaiah 55:3-4**) 35 Therefore He also says in another Psalm: 'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.' (**Psalms 16:10**) 36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption; 37 but He whom God raised up saw no corruption. 38 Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; (Compare **Acts 2:22-36**) 39 and by Him everyone who believes is justified

from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. (See **Hebrews 10:1-10**.)⁴⁰ Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you: 41 'Behold, you despisers, Marvel and perish! For I work a work in your days, A work which you will by no means believe, Though one were to declare it to you.'" (Compare **Habakkuk 1:5-6**.)

QUESTIONS:

1. Even though the sermon of Paul was a very brief history of the Jews, did he present the facts, accurately?
2. Did Stephen use the same method shown here in his own defense (Acts 7)?
3. Was it generally accepted that the Christ would be a descendant of David?
4. Which quotation from the Old Testament prophets did both Paul and Peter use in proving that the Christ was raised from the dead?
5. Was the passage quoted by Paul from Habakkuk 1 intended to be used as a prophecy of Christ, or was he simply borrowing the language for his purposes?

Chapter 13

42 So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles (the proselytes) begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. 43 Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God (Compare **Titus 2:11-13**). 44 On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. (Compare **Deuteronomy 32:19-21; Malachi 1:10-11**.) 46 Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'" (See **Isaiah 49:5-6**, and **Romans 1:16**.) 48 Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region. 50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region (Compare **Acts 17:5**). 51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them (See **Matthew 10:14**), and came to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the Jews fulfill prophecies concerning them by their reaction to Paul's sermon?
2. Paul says that Isaiah 49:5-6 was a command. Is that passage in the form of a command, in your opinion?
3. When it says, "as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed," does this mean that certain ones of the Gentiles had been specially predestined to be saved?
4. When Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust from their feet, do you think they were showing hatred or contempt for the city?

Chapter 14

1 Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed. 2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. 3 Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace (Compare Acts 20:32), granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. (See Mark 16:20.) 4 But the multitude of the city was divided: part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles. (See Luke 12:51.) 5 And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them, 6 they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region. (Compare Matthew 10:22-23.) 7 And they were preaching the gospel there.

QUESTIONS:

1. Are the "Greeks" of verse 1 the same as the "Gentiles" of verse 2, do you think?
2. If the "unbelieving Jews" were stirring up trouble, why, in your opinion, does verse 3 say that the company of Paul "stayed there a long time?"
3. Signs and wonders bore witness to the "word of His (God's) grace," according to verse 3. What would this word do for the hearers, according to Acts 20:32?
4. Should Paul and his companions have expected that their work would be divisive?

5. What circumstances finally caused the evangelists to flee from Iconium?

Chapter 14

8 And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. 9 This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed (Compare Matthew 9:28-29), 10 said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked. 11 Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" 12 And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. (These are the Greek names for these gods, which the Romans called Jupiter and Mercury. Zeus was the highest of the gods of Greek mythology, and Hermes was his wing-footed messenger.) 13 Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes. 14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out 15 and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, 16 who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. (Compare Psalm 147:19-20; Acts 17:30, but also see Psalm 81:10-12.) 17 Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Compare Acts 17:24-28, and Matthew 5:44-45.) 18 And with these sayings they could scarcely restrain the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

QUESTIONS:

1. Since the crippled man in this incident had never walked, how do you think he learned instantly to "leap and walk?"
2. What did Barnabas and Paul do, when they realized that their hearers were preparing to offer sacrifice to them?
3. Verse 14 seems to suggest that Barnabas and Paul were both apostles. In what sense could Barnabas be an apostle? (Compare the word "messenger" in 2 Corinthians 8:23, and Philippians 2:5.)
4. When Paul referred to the "Living God," what is implied in this statement about the gods Zeus and Hermes? (See Jeremiah 10:10-15.)

5. What was the common message of Paul, when speaking to Gentile idolaters?

6. Was it a mistake for Paul to restore the crippled man, in this case, since it almost caused a riot?

Chapter 14

19 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. (This may have been the incident that prompted Paul to write 2 Corinthians 12:2-5.) 20 However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." (Compare Matthew 24:9; John 16:33, and Romans 5:3, 12:10-12.) 23 So when they had appointed elders in every church (Compare Titus 1:5), and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (Compare Acts 20:32.) 24 And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. 25 Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. 26 From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. (See Acts 13:1-3.) 27 Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. 28 So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.

QUESTIONS:

1. If Paul was thought to be dead by those who stoned him, why do you suppose he was able to rise up, go into the city, and the next day travel to Derbe?

2. As Paul and Barnabas went from city to city, they preached the gospel. What was their purpose, when they returned and passed through the same cities?

3. We do not seem to have the same sort of tribulation that the early Christians experienced, today, but should we prepare ourselves to endure it if it comes?

4. Why did Paul feel the need to report all that he had done before the church in Antioch?

Chapter 15

1 *And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."* 2 *Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.* 3 *So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren.* 4 *And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.* 5 *But some of the sect of the Pharisees (Compare Acts 26:1-5.) who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses."*

QUESTIONS:

1. Were the men from Judea adding a condition of salvation to those given by Jesus? (See Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; and Luke 24:46-47.)
2. Paul and Barnabas were both circumcised Jews. Why do you suppose they decided to dispute the teaching of the men from Judea?
3. Who received Paul and Barnabas in Jerusalem, according to verse 4?
4. What group of men insisted that it was necessary for Gentile converts to be circumcised and to keep the Law of Moses?

Chapter 15

6 *Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.* 7 *And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.* 8 *So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us,* 9 *and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. (See Acts 10.)* 10 *Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? (Compare Acts 7:51-53; Romans 2:17-23; Galatians 5:1.)* 11 *But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they." (Compare Galatians 2:15-16.)* 12 *Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles.* 13 *And after they had become silent, James (probably the brother of Jesus, Galatians 1:18-19.) answered, saying, "Men and*

brethren, listen to me: 14 Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. 15 And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 16 `After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; 17 so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.’ (See Amos 9:11-12.) 18 Known to God from eternity are all His works. 19 Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, 20 but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. (These were practices which were forbidden to Jews, and also to those “sojourners” who lived among them. Leviticus 17:8-9, 12-15, 18:6-26.) 21 For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

QUESTIONS:

1. According to Peter’s statements....

What things contributed to the salvation of the Gentiles (Verse 7)?

What was the purpose of God in giving the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles (Verse 8)?

How did God cleanse the hearts of the Gentiles (Verse 9)?

2. According to Peter, did the Israelites have a reputation as keepers of the Law?

3. Are there prophecies, other than the one quoted by James from Amos, that show God’s intention to save the Gentiles?

4. What did James propose, at the end of the discussion?

5. The prohibitions suggested by James are found in the references following verse 20, but why do you think James thought they could be imposed on the Gentiles in the New Testament age?

Chapter 15

22 Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren. 23 They wrote this letter by them:

“The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch,

Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings. 24 Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, 'You must be circumcised and keep the law' --to whom we gave no such commandment-- 25 it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: 29 that you abstain from things offered to idols (Compare 1 Corinthians 10:24-32), from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell." (See Acts 21:25.)

30 So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. 31 When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. 32 Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words. 33 And after they had stayed there for a time, they were sent back with greetings from the brethren to the apostles. 34 However, it seemed good to Silas to remain there. 35 Paul and Barnabas also remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

QUESTIONS:

- 1.How many were involved in choosing to send Barsabas and Silas to Antioch, according to verse 22?
- 2.Did the letter written to the Gentiles seek to correct the confusion over circumcision?
- 3.What phrase in the letter shows that it was not based on the opinions of men?
- 4.Do you think that this letter is still binding on Gentiles today, or was it written to cover only a local problem for a limited amount of time?

Chapter 15

36 Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing." 37 Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark. 38 But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. 39 Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus; 40 but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think Paul was so strongly opposed to taking John Mark with them on their second tour?
2. Even though they did not go together, how did Paul and Barnabas fulfill the purpose of visiting the brethren in every city where they had preached on their first journey?

Chapter 16

1 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek (see 2 Timothy 1:2-5). 2 He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek (compare Galatians 2:1-3. 4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem (see Acts 15:28-29). 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

QUESTIONS:

1. Does verse 1 suggest that Timothy was converted during Paul's first work in Lystra, or later, after he had left?
2. What influenced Paul to want Timothy to go with them on the evangelistic tour?
3. Why didn't Paul circumcise his helper, Titus, as he did Timothy?
4. What were the decrees which Paul urged the brethren to keep?

Chapter 16

6 Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia (but see Revelations 1:4). 7 After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them (Compare Acts 13:4 and 1 Peter 1:1). 8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to

Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. 11 Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day came to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. (NOTE: It was a Roman colony, and McGarvey says, "it was the first city of that region in point of celebrity, because it was the scene of the great battle in which Brutus and Cassius were defeated by Marc Antony [and Octavius]." This battle, and a second between the same forces, climaxed the Roman civil war that followed the assassination of Julius Ceasar in 44 BC.) And we were staying in that city for some days.

QUESTIONS:

1. Though the Spirit of God did not permit Paul and his companions to preach in Asia at this time, did this prohibition remain permanent?
2. Who guided them on their original evangelistic journey?
3. Though the Spirit did not permit them to preach in Bithynia at this time, did that area have no Christians in it later, when Peter wrote his first letter?
4. What did Paul conclude from his night vision of the Macedonian man?
5. How do we know that Luke joined Paul on this trip to Macedonia?

Chapter 16

13 And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. 14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira (see Revelation 1:11), who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul (compare Luke 24:44-48, and Matthew 13:14-15). 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.

QUESTIONS:

1. Men always took the lead in Sabbath Day worship in the synagogues. Who do you suppose took the lead in the Sabbath prayer sessions by the river?
2. In what province was Lydia's home city of Thyatira?
3. Luke reports that the Lord opened Lydia's heart to heed the word. How does He describe this action in Luke 24:45?

4.If God shows no partiality, was the opening of Lydia's heart to heed the word a special favor to her?

5.What caused Lydia to want to be baptized?

Chapter 16

16 Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. (Compare Deuteronomy 18:10-14.) 17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." (Compare Mark 5:2-7.) 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour. 19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. 20 And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; 21 and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe." 22 Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. 23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. (Compare 2 Corinthians 6:4-5, and Acts 22:23-29.) 24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

QUESTIONS:

1.Was divination forbidden among the children of Israel?

2.Did the slave girl who had the spirit of divination speak the truth about Paul and his fellow-workers?

3.Why do you suppose Paul endured the girl's proclamations "for many days," before casting out the spirit of divination in her?

4.In Acts 22:23-29, Paul prevented the authorities from beating him. Why do you suppose he did not prevent them in the same way this time?

Chapter 16

25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open,

supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. (See Acts 12:18-19.) 28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." 29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Compare Acts 2:37-38.) 31 So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. 34 Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the Jailor feel that he needed to kill himself?
2. How would you explain the fact that no prisoners escaped, after the doors were jarred loose, and everyone's chains were loosed by the earthquake?
3. Do you think that the Jailor may have had knowledge of the teaching of Paul which caused him to ask, "What must I do to be saved?"
4. Does verse 31 reveal all that a person needs to do to be saved? Explain your answer.
5. What action of the Jailor shows that he repented?
6. If all of the Jailor's family were baptized, does this prove that the baptism of infants is a lawful practice?

Chapter 16

35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the officers, saying, "Let those men go." 36 So the keeper of the prison reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Now therefore depart, and go in peace." 37 But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us openly, non-condemned Romans, and have thrown us into prison. And now do they put us out secretly? No indeed! Let them come themselves and get us out." 38 And the officers told these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans. 39 Then they came and pleaded with them and brought them out, and asked them to depart from the city. 40 So they went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think Paul waited until the time of his release to reveal that he was a

Roman citizen, and exempt from the kind of treatment he had received?

2. How important was the work of Paul in Philippi, in respect to his work in other places after that? (See Philippians 4:15-19)

Chapter 17

*1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ." 4 And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas. (Compare **1 Thessalonians 1:1-8**.) 5 But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. 7 Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king--Jesus." 8 And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. 9 So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.*

QUESTIONS:

1. Even though Paul and his friends worked here in Thessalonica only a short time (see Vs. 2), what were the strengths of the church they left behind?

2. Were the unbelieving Jews in this city like those of Acts 13:45-50?

3. What kind of reputation had Paul and his friends gained, according to Vs. 6?

4. What do we know of the eventual outcome of the arrest of Jason and the brethren? (See 1 Thessalonians 2:14.)

Chapter 17

10 Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. (Compare John 7:45-52, 1 Peter 1:10, and John 5:39.) 12 Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. 13 But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds. 14 Then immediately the brethren

sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there. (Compare Mark 5:15-20.) 15 So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed.

QUESTIONS: a

- 1.The noble Berean’s “searched the Scriptures,” and many agreed that Paul was telling the truth about Jesus. But, do all searches of Scripture lead to truth? Why?
- 2.From Vs. 14, can we learn something about the tactics of Paul, and his reason for taking along others with him on his evangelistic journeys?

Chapter 17

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. 17 Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. 18 Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. [NOTE: McGarvey says, “The two classes of philosophers whom he encountered were the antipodes of each other, and the practical philosophy of each was antipodal to the doctrine of Paul. The Stoics taught that the true philosophy of life was a total indifference to both the sorrows and pleasures of the world; while the Epicureans sought relief from life’s sorrows in the studied pursuit of its pleasures. In opposition to the former, Paul taught that we should weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15); and in opposition to the latter, that we should `deny’ ourselves in reference to all ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:12).”] And some said, “What does this babblers want to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,” because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection. 19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new doctrine is of which you speak? 20 For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean.” 21 For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

QUESTIONS:b

- 1.In what place, other than the synagogue, did Paul do his daily preaching?
2. In your opinion, is it good to have a curious mind, when “strange things” or “doctrines” are brought to our ears?

Chapter 17

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; 23 for as I was passing through and considering the objects of

*your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: 24 God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 And He has made from one (blood) every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth (see **Genesis 1:26, 2:7**), and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' 29 Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. (Compare **Isaiah 46:5-7**.) 30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."*

QUESTIONS:

1. What incident gave Paul the theme for his sermon to the Athenians?
2. What new concepts did Paul introduce to the minds of his hearers in Vs. 24?
3. What were his points about God in Vs. 25?
4. What do we learn from Vs. 26 that confirms the truth of Genesis 1:26, 2:7?
5. According to Paul in Vs. 27, what was God's purpose in creating man?
6. What false concept about God does Paul condemn in Vs. 29?
7. What is the universal command of God, according to Vs. 30?
8. Why should we obey this universal command, according to Vs. 31?
9. In your opinion, why didn't Paul continue with his sermon, and introduce more of the Gospel to his audience, after referring to Christ in Vs. 31?

Chapter 17

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter." 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris,

and others with them.

QUESTIONS:

1. In spite of the skepticism of most of his audience, who believed Paul, and joined him?

Chapter 18

After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. 2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome) [See Psalms 44:9-14. NOTE: This happened in 52 AD]; and he came to them. 3 So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers (see Acts 20:34-35, and 2 Corinthians 11:8). 4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks. 5 When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 9:16), and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. 6 But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean (compare Acts 20:26). From now on I will go to the Gentiles (Compare Acts 13:44-46)."

QUESTIONS:

1. In what two ways did Paul find financial support for his work?

2. Does Verse 5 suggest that Paul had to be forced to preach the gospel? (Compare 1 Corinthians 9:14-18.)

3. Was the shaking of garments in Verse 6 a sign similar to shaking dust off of the feet, as in Acts 13:51?

Chapter 18

7 And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized (see 1 Corinthians 1:10-17). 9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city (compare Acts 23:11)." 11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was Paul thankful in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 that he had personally baptized only

a few people in Corinth?

2. Why do you think Paul had to have some special assurances from the Lord from time to time?

Chapter 18

12 When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat, 13 saying, "This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law." 14 And when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you. 15 But if it is a question of words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such matters." 16 And he drove them from the judgment seat. 17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes (compare 1 Corinthians 1:1), the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think the Jews who opposed Paul took their case against him before the Roman authorities?

2. Did Gallio or the Greeks give the Jews any help in their complaint against Paul?

3. Could the Sosthenes of 1 Corinthians 1:1 be the same person as in Verse 17?

Chapter 18

18 So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila were with him. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow (see Numbers 6:2-5, 13-21, and Acts 21:17-26). 19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, 21 but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem (compare Acts 20:16. NOTE: This phrase about attending a feast is missing from most ancient manuscripts.); but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus. 22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. 23 After he had spent some time there, he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think Paul took a vow that had to be fulfilled at the Temple in Jerusalem, if Christians were no longer required to obey the laws of the Old Testament?

2. What feast was Paul anxious to attend in Acts 20:16?

3. In which verses of this paragraph do we see the end of Paul's second journey, and the beginning of his third?

Chapter 18

24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately (Compare 1 Timothy 2:11-15). 27 And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace (compare Ephesians 2:8); 28 for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. (Compare 1 Corinthians 3:4-6.)

QUESTIONS:

1. From these few verses, what can we learn about the character and abilities of Apollos?

2. If Aquila's wife Priscilla participated in explaining the way of God to Apollos, did she violate the command of Paul in 1 Timothy 2:12, do you think?

3. Did the work of Apollos in Corinth apparently cause some men to form a faction in his name, according to Paul?

Chapter 19

QUESTIONS:

1. Is it possible that these disciples who had been baptized into John's baptism were the result of some of the preaching of Apollos, before he was better taught?

2. Do you conclude from this incident that John's baptism was sufficient to save a person completely?

3. Other than salvation, what benefit came to these men, after they were baptized?

Chapter 19

8 And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. 9 But when some were hardened and did not believe (or rather, disobedient), but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. 10 And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks (compare Acts 16:6). 11 Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, 12 so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them (compare Acts 5:14-15).

QUESTIONS:

1. How frequently did Paul teach in the school of Tyrannus?
2. Though he was once forbidden by the Spirit to preach in Asia, how effective was Paul's work in Asia at this time?
3. Was the healing of sickness the main work of the Apostles, in your opinion?

Chapter 19

13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches (compare Matthew 7:21-23)." 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know (see Luke 4:33-34), and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. 19 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver (compare Acts 8:9-13). 20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

QUESTIONS:

1. Can we conclude from this incident that a person can invoke the name of Jesus in the wrong way, or for the wrong reason?
2. Why do you suppose "the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified" by the victory of the evil spirit over the sons of Sceva?
3. When the text says, "the word of the Lord grew mightily," do you think it means that

there was a growth of the volume of words, or that the word grew in power?

Chapter 19

21 When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome (see Acts 23:11, and compare Romans 15:24-28)." 22 So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time. 23 And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. 24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. 25 He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. 26 Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. 27 So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship." (Compare 2 Timothy 4:14.) 28 Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" 29 So the whole city was filled with confusion, and rushed into the theater with one accord, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul's travel companions. 30 And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him. 31 Then some of the officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent to him pleading that he would not venture into the theater. 32 Some therefore cried one thing and some another, for the assembly was confused, and most of them did not know why they had come together. 33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander motioned with his hand, and wanted to make his defense to the people. 34 But when they found out that he was a Jew, all with one voice cried out for about two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" (Compare Matthew 6:7.) 35 And when the city clerk had quieted the crowd, he said: "Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Zeus? 36 Therefore, since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly. 37 For you have brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess. 38 Therefore, if Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a case against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. 39 But if you have any other inquiry to make, it shall be determined in the lawful assembly. 40 For we are in danger of being called in question for today's uproar, there being no reason which we may give to account for this disorderly gathering." 41 And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly (Gk. ἐκκλησία *ekklesia*, the word that is translated "church" in our Bibles).

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think it was good for Paul to make long-range plans to visit Rome?

2. What do you think was the chief motivation for Demetrius' attempt to oppose Paul's work in Asia?
3. Why, in your opinion, did those who did not know the purpose of the riot participate in it?
4. If Paul had been assured of his safety by the Lord when he was in Corinth, why did the friends of Paul prevent him from going into the theater at Ephesus to confront the rioters?
5. What reasons did the city clerk give to persuade the rioters to disperse?

Acts 20

After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia. 2 Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece 3 and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. 4 And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia— also Aristarchus (See Acts 19:29, 27:2; Colossians 4:10, and Philemon 24) and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus (See Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7; 2 Timothy 4:12; and Titus 3:12) and Trophimus of Asia (See Acts 21:29). 5 These men, going ahead, waited for us at Troas. 6 But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread (See Exodus 23:15), and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days.

QUESTIONS:

1. What do we learn about Aristarchus from the references that follow his name?
2. What do we learn about Tychicus from the references that follow his name:
3. What feast was connected to that of Unleavened Bread? (See Numbers 28:16-17.)

Acts 20

7 Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread (Compare 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:17-34), Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together. 9 And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. 10 But Paul went down, fell on him, and

embracing him said, "Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him." (Compare 2 Kings 4:32-35.) 11 Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed. 12 And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted. (Note: This was in an evening, and, since the breaking of bread did not occur until after midnight, it satisfies Jewish and Roman time-keeping for the first day of the week. The Jew's day began at sunset, and the Roman's at midnight.)

QUESTIONS:

1. How would you show from verse 7 that the Lord's Supper should be taken every First Day of the week?
2. What was the purpose of the assembly, according to Paul in 1 Corinthians 11?
3. In the Troas church, which was made up of both Jews and Gentiles, apparently, would it be expedient to break bread after midnight?

Acts 20

13 Then we went ahead to the ship and sailed to Assos, there intending to take Paul on board; for so he had given orders, intending himself to go on foot. 14 And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. 15 We sailed from there, and the next day came opposite Chios. The following day we arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium. The next day we came to Miletus. 16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost.

QUESTION:

1. In verse 6 we learn that Paul and company left Philippi after the days of unleavened bread. They used 5 days to sail to Troas, where they stayed 7 days. From Troas, Paul hoped to reach Jerusalem by the Day of Pentecost, celebrated about 7 weeks after Passover. About how many days would be left to complete this journey?

Acts 20

17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church (Compare Verse 28, and 1 Peter 5:2-4). 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, 19 serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; 20 how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, 21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and

faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself (Compare Revelation 12:9-11), so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God (Compare Ephesians 2:4-7, and Verse 32 below). 25 And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. 26 Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men (Compare Ezekiel 3:18-21, Acts 18:5-6). 27 For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. (Compare John 16:12-13.) 28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood (Compare Revelation 5:9-10). 29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

QUESTIONS

1. At Miletus, Paul called for the elders of the church in Ephesus. What other title is given to these men in Verse 28?
2. What were these men told to do, in Verse 28?
3. What things comprised the “manner” of Paul’s life among the Ephesians “from the first day?”
3. Is this “manner” a good pattern for preachers, elders and teachers?
4. Why was Paul unmoved by the testimony of the Holy Spirit that he would have to endure “chains and tribulations?”
5. Why did Paul consider that he was “innocent of the blood of all men?”
6. Paul says that God purchased the church with His own blood. Do you think that he actually meant to say that Christ did this?
7. Are there examples today of the actions described by Paul in Verses 29-30?
8. In verse 31, Paul says he “warned” every one night and day for three years. What other things did Paul do in Ephesus, according to this text?

Acts 20

32 So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified (Compare James 1:21.). 33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 34 Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me (Compare 1 Corinthians 9:13-18 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12). 35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak (Compare Ephesians 4:28). And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Note: There is no record of this saying of Jesus in the New Testament. Compare a similar case in Jude 14-15.)

36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

QUESTIONS

1. What two things can be gained from God through the "word of His grace?"
2. Did Paul have a right to receive wages from his work as an evangelist?
3. What things motivated Paul to work with his hands to support himself?
4. According to Ephesians 4:28, what should a wage-earner do with part of his money?
5. Is an outward show of emotion, as in verse 37, acceptable among Christians?

Acts 21

1 Now it came to pass, that when we had departed from them and set sail, running a straight course we came to Cos, the following day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. 2 And finding a ship sailing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. 3 When we had sighted Cyprus, we passed it on the left, sailed to Syria, and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload her cargo. 4 And finding disciples, we stayed there seven days. They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem (See the sequence of events in Acts 19:21, 20:22-23, 21:10-13, and 23:11). 5 When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till we were out of the city. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed. 6 When we had taken our leave of one another, we boarded the ship, and they returned home. 7 And when we had finished our voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day. 8 On the next day

we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven (See Acts 6:1-6), and stayed with him. 9 Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied (Compare 1 Corinthians 11:3-5).

10 And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea (Compare Acts 11:27-28). 11 When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, `So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" (Compare verses 30-33.) 12 Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." 14 So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

QUESTIONS:

1. If Paul was "bound in the Spirit" to go to Jerusalem, was it still acceptable for the disciples at Tyre and Caesarea to advise him not to go there?
2. Paul was determined to go to Rome, after he went to Jerusalem. Did the Lord approve of this plan?
3. Was Paul willing to face any sort of opposition, in order to spread the gospel?
4. Was the prophecy of Agabus fulfilled in every detail?

Acts 21

15 And after those days we packed and went up to Jerusalem. 16 Also some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us and brought with them a certain Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to lodge. 17 And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18 On the following day Paul went in with us to James (See Acts 15:13ff, and Galatians 2:11-12), and all the elders were present. 19 When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. 20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law (Compare Galatians 1:14); 21 but they have been in-formed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs (Compare Acts 16:1-3). 22 What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. 23 Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. 24 Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly

and keep the law. 25 But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.” (See Chapter 15)

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them (See Numbers 6:13-20, and compare 1 Corinthians 9:19-23). 27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, 28 crying out, “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.” (See Numbers 18:7, and compare 2 Chronicles 26:16-18) 29 (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

QUESTIONS:

1. What position was held by James in the church at Jerusalem, do you think?
2. What was Paul’s attitude about the traditions of the fathers, before his conversion? (See Galatians 1:14.)
3. What was the purpose behind the advice of the elders for Paul to join in paying his vow with the four members of the church?
4. What did the Law of Moses require of the Nazarite, in order to end his vow?
5. Do you think that Paul followed these rules in completing his vow?
6. In your opinion, did Paul sin by observing the Law of Moses in this vow?
7. Had Paul taken Trophimus, a Greek, into the Temple?
8. What was Paul’s rule in trying to win those under the Law, and those without law?

Acts 21

30 And all the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut (Compare Malachi 1:10). 31 Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32 He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 33 Then the commander came near and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and he

asked who he was and what he had done. 34 And some among the multitude cried one thing and some another. So when he could not ascertain the truth because of the tumult, he commanded him to be taken into the barracks. 35 When he reached the stairs, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob. 36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, "Away with him!" 37 Then as Paul was about to be led into the barracks, he said to the commander, "May I speak to you?" He replied, "Can you speak Greek? 38 Are you not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a rebellion and led the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?" 39 But Paul said, "I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I implore you, permit me to speak to the people." 40 So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, saying,

QUESTIONS:

1. What do you think was the purpose behind the closing of the doors of the Temple, after Paul was taken out?
2. Why do you think Paul spoke to a Roman officer in Greek?
3. Whom did the commander of the garrison think Paul was?

Acts 22

"Brethren and fathers, hear my defense before you now." 2 And when they heard that he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, they kept all the more silent. Then he said: 3 "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today (Compare Galatians 1:14 and Romans 10:1-2). 4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, 5 as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished (Compare Galatians 1:13 and Acts 26:9-11). 6 Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. 7 And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' 8 So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.' 9 And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. 10 So I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.' (Compare Luke 16:19-31, and 1 Corinthians 1:21.) 11 And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.

Questions:

1. From verses 37 and 40 in the previous chapter, and from verse 2 of this chapter, do we learn that Paul was bi-lingual?
2. Though Paul was born in Tarsus of Cilicia, where did he go for his education?
3. How did Paul show his zeal for God and for the Law, after his education?
4. Does verse 9 agree with Acts 9:7? (Explain your answer.)
5. Why do you suppose Jesus did not instruct Paul in what he was to do, rather than sending him into Jerusalem for the instruction?
6. Why do you think Jesus did not prevent Paul from his acts of persecution in Judea, before he extended his work to distant places like Damascus?

Acts 22

12 Then one, Ananias, a devout man according to the law (compare Luke 2:39), having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, 13 came to me; and he stood and said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that same hour I looked up at him. 14 Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you (compare Acts 9:15) that you should know His will (compare Galatians 1:11-12), and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. 15 For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard (compare Acts 1:8, 16-22). 16 And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins (compare Revelation 1:5), calling on the name of the Lord.' (Compare Joel 2:32, Acts 2:21, and Romans 10:12-15.) 17 Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance 18 and saw Him (compare Acts 26:16-18) saying to me, 'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.' 19 So I said, 'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. 20 And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.' 21 Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.'"

22 And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!" 23 Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air, 24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging, so that he might know why they shouted so against him.

QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think that Luke described Ananias as a “devout man according to the Law,” rather than as a “Christian?”
2. Are all men specially chosen to be servants of Christ, as Paul was?
3. What things indicate that Paul believed in Christ, and repented of his sins, before Ananias commanded him to “Arise and be baptized?”
4. Does Paul mention the appearance of Jesus in the Temple at Jerusalem in any of his writings?
5. What do you think was Paul’s reason for making the statements in verses 19-20?
6. What do you think caused the Jews to become so angry in verse 22?

Acts 22

25 *And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, “Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and un-condemned?”* 26 *When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, “Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman.”* 27 *Then the commander came and said to him, “Tell me, are you a Ro-man?”* (See Acts 21:37-38.) *He said, “Yes.”* 28 *The commander answered, “With a large sum I obtained this citizen-ship.”* (NOTE: It is said that Messalina, the wife of Emperor Claudius often granted citizenship in exchange for bribes.) *And Paul said, “But I was born a citizen.”* 29 *Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him. (Compare Acts 16:35-39.)* 30 *The next day, because he wanted to know for certain why he was accused by the Jews, he released him from his bonds, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down and set him before them.*

QUESTIONS

1. In this incident, Paul used his Roman citizenship to avoid being scourged. Why do you think he did not do the same, when he was in Philippi (Acts 16:19-24)?
2. Was Roman citizenship valuable enough to pay a large sum of money to obtain it, do you think?
3. If Paul was born a citizen, what does this say about his Jewish ancestors?
4. Does this passage indicate that Paul had the right as a Roman to bring formal charges against the officer who ordered him to be bound and scourged?

Acts 23

1 Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." (Compare Acts 24:16, 26:9.) 2 And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth. 3 Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! (Compare Matthew 23:27-28.) For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?" 4 And those who stood by said, "Do you revile God's high priest?" 5 Then Paul said, "I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, `You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people (see Exodus 22:28).'"

6 But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee (see Philippians 3:4-5); concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!" (Compare Acts 24:15.) 7 And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided (compare Galatians 5:19-20). 8 For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection— and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. 9 Then there arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the Pharisees' party arose and protested, saying, "We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God." (NOTE: This last phrase is missing from many manuscripts, and could be a "gloss" borrowed from Acts 5:39.) 10 Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks.

QUESTIONS

1. Was Paul in the wrong for calling Ananias a "whitewashed wall?"
2. What did Paul do, after he learned that Ananias was the High Priest?
3. Why did Paul's mention of the resurrection of the dead cause such dissension?
4. Why, suddenly, do you suppose that the Pharisees changed from being Paul's accusers to acting as his defenders?
5. What do Pharisees "confess," which the Sadducees do not?
6. Was the commander's concern for the safety of Paul based on his recent discovery of his Roman citizenship, do you think?
7. When great dissension arose, what did the commander fear would happen to Paul?

Acts 23

11 But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as

you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.” (Compare Acts 19:21, and Acts 21:13-14.) 12 And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul (compare Acts 9:23, 29, 20:19). 13 Now there were more than forty who had formed this conspiracy. 14 They came to the chief priests and elders, and said, “We have bound ourselves under a great oath that we will eat nothing until we have killed Paul (compare Numbers 30:2). 15 Now you, therefore, together with the council, suggest to the commander that he be brought down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to make further inquiries concerning him; but we are ready to kill him before he comes near.”

16 So when Paul’s sister’s son heard of their ambush, he went and entered the barracks and told Paul. 17 Then Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, “Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him.” 18 So he took him and brought him to the commander and said, “Paul the prisoner called me to him and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you.” 19 Then the commander took him by the hand, went aside and asked privately, “What is it that you have to tell me?” 20 And he said, “The Jews have agreed to ask that you bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more fully about him. 21 But do not yield to them, for more than forty of them lie in wait for him, men who have bound themselves by an oath that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him; and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you.” 22 So the commander let the young man depart, and commanded him, “Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me.”

23 And he called for two centurions, saying, “Prepare two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spear-men to go to Caesarea at the third hour of the night; 24 and provide mounts to set Paul on, and bring him safely to Felix the governor.” 25 He wrote a letter in the following manner: 26 Claudius Lysias, to the most excellent governor Felix: Greetings. 27 This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them. Coming with the troops I rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. 28 And when I wanted to know the reason they accused him, I brought him before their council. 29 I found out that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but had nothing charged against him deserving of death or chains. 30 And when it was told me that the Jews lay in wait for the man, I sent him immediately to you, and also commanded his accusers to state before you the charges against him. Farewell.

31 Then the soldiers, as they were commanded, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. 32 The next day they left the horsemen to go on with him, and returned to the barracks. 33 When they came to Caesarea and had delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. 34 And when the governor had read it, he asked what province he was from. And when he understood that he was from Cilicia, 35 he said, “I will hear you when your accusers also have come.” And he commanded him to be kept in Herod’s Praetorian.

QUESTIONS

1. After Jesus assured him that he would “bear witness at Rome,” what did Paul do

- to help the promise to come true? (See Acts 25:11-12.)
2. Had there been other plots against the life of Paul before this time?
 3. Were Jews required by the Law of Moses to perform their oaths without fail?
 4. Were these 40 conspirators able to perform their oath?
 5. What was the name of the Roman governor of Judea and its surrounding provinces?
 6. In what verse do we finally learn the name of the commander in Jerusalem?
 7. Was the Commander entirely truthful in his letter to the governor regarding his knowledge of Paul's Roman citizenship?
 8. Did the Romans have any legal reason to punish Paul?
 9. How many men were in the escort that was sent with Paul, when he left Jerusalem?
 10. How many went on with Paul from Antipatris?
 11. Does verse 34 indicate that the Roman Governor had jurisdiction over the home province of Paul?

Acts 24

Now after five days Ananias the high priest came down with the elders and a certain orator named Tertullus. These gave evidence to the governor against Paul. 2 And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation, saying: "Seeing that through you we enjoy great peace, and prosperity is being brought to this nation by your foresight, 3 we accept it always and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. (Compare John 11:47-51. NOTE: Not long after these events, the Jews rose in rebellion against Roman rule, and were crushed, as Jesus predicted in Luke 21:20-24.) 4 Nevertheless, not to be tedious to you any further, I beg you to hear, by your courtesy, a few words from us. 5 For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world (see Acts 17:1-9, 13), and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes (see Vs. 14 below). 6 He even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him, and wanted to judge him according to our law. 7 But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took him out of our hands, 8 commanding his accusers to come to you. By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him." 9 And the Jews also assented, maintaining that these things were so.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think that Tertullus was sincere, when he thanked the Roman governor for his acts as ruler of the province?
2. What were the accusations brought against Paul by his accusers?
3. Which of these accusations was true, do you think?
4. In vs. 7, do you think that Tertullus was criticizing Lysias, the Roman commander in Jerusalem, for his handling of the situation there?

Acts 24

10 Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: "Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a judge of this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself, 11 because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. 12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city. 13 Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me. 14 But this I confess to you, that according to the Way (compare John 14:6) which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets (compare Romans 3:20-22). 15 I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. 16 This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men (see Acts 23:1, and compare 1 Corinthians 10:32). 17 Now after many years I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation (See Romans 15:25-27), 18 in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult. 19 They ought to have been here before you to object if they had anything against me. 20 Or else let those who are here themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council, 21 unless it is for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day (see Acts 23:6-10).'"

QUESTIONS:

1. Did Paul compliment the governor in the beginning of his defense?
2. Was worship Paul's main reason for returning to Jerusalem (see vs.11)?
3. What term did Paul use in the place of the word "sect?"
4. When Paul said he believed in "all things which are written in the Law and in the

Prophets," did this mean that he obeyed those things?

5. When Paul says, "I brought alms to my nation," do you think he was including those who were not Christians?
6. Paul again used the tactic of mentioning the resurrection of the dead before his accusers. Did it produce similar results in this session?
7. Do you think the Roman governor would be interested in judging a case which involved the subject of the resurrection of the dead?

Acts 24

22 But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the Way, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case." 23 So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him.

24 And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. 25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come (compare Titus 2:11-14), Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you." (NOTE: Felix and Drusilla were living in adultery, according to the historian Josephus, and this may have motivated Paul to speak as he did.)

26 Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him. 27 But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was Felix's reason for delaying Paul's case?
2. What subjects did Paul discuss with Felix, when he came with his wife, Drusilla?
3. What happened to Felix, as a result of Paul's lesson? What did he say to Paul?
4. Was Felix an honest judge, do you think? _____ Why?
5. How long did Felix keep Paul in bonds?

Acts 25

1 Now when Festus had come to the province, after three days he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem. 2 Then the high priest and the chief men of the Jews informed him against Paul;

and they petitioned him, 3 asking a favor against him, that he would summon him to Jerusalem— while they lay in ambush along the road to kill him. 4 But Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there shortly. 5 “Therefore,” he said, “let those who have authority among you go down with me and accuse this man, to see if there is any fault in him.” 6 And when he had remained among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, he commanded Paul to be brought. 7 When he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood about and laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove, 8 while he answered for himself, “Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all.”

QUESTIONS:

1. Had the enemies of Paul forgotten their purpose to kill him?
2. Why did Festus refuse to transfer Paul’s case to Jerusalem?
3. Why do you suppose the Jews were unable to make a good case against Paul?
4. In what things did Paul say he had not offended?

Acts 25

9 But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?” 10 So Paul said, “I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. 11 For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar.” 12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, “You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!”

QUESTIONS:

1. How did Paul use his Roman citizenship to avoid being taken to Jerusalem for trial?
2. Why do you think Paul was so willing to yield to a death sentence, if he had been found guilty of a crime worthy of death?

Acts 25

13 And after some days King Agrippa and Bernice (NOTE: She was the licentious sister of Drusilla, and at this time was only having an affair with Agrippa, according to Josephus.) came to Caesarea to greet Festus. 14 When they had been there many days, Festus laid Paul’s

case before the king, saying: "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix, 15 about whom the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, when I was in Jerusalem, asking for a judgment against him. 16 To them I answered, 'It is not the custom of the Romans to deliver any man to destruction before the accused meets the accusers face to face, and has opportunity to answer for himself concerning the charge against him.' 17 Therefore when they had come together, without any delay, the next day I sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in. 18 When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation against him of such things as I supposed, 19 but had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. 20 And because I was uncertain of such questions, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters. 21 But when Paul appealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I could send him to Caesar."

22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself."----"Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him." 23 So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command Paul was brought in. 24 And Festus said: "King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole assembly of the Jews petitioned me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying out that he was not fit to live any longer. 25 But when I found that he had committed nothing deserving of death, and that he himself had appealed to Augustus, I decided to send him. 26 I have no-thing certain to write to my lord concerning him. Therefore I have brought him out before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the examination has taken place I may have something to write. 27 For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner and not to specify the charges against him."

QUESTIONS:

1. By asking King Agrippa to review the case against Paul, what was Festus trying to accomplish?
2. The Jews had brought specific charges against Paul, so why do you think Festus said the things in vs. 26-27?

Acts 26

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: 2 "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer for myself before you concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, 3 especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently. 4 My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. 5 They knew me from the first,

if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. (Compare Philippians 3:4-5.) 6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers. 7 To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. (Compare Philippians 3:8-11.) For this hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. 8 Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead? (Compare Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:27; and Philippians 3:20-21.) 9 Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. 11 And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. 12 While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13 at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. 14 And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' (Compare Proverbs 13:15, 22:5.) 15 So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. 17 'I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, 18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light (Compare Ephesians 5:8, 1 Peter 2:9.), and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' (Compare Acts 20:32.) 19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance. (Compare Matthew 3:7-8.) 21 For these reasons the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22 Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come— 23 that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead (Compare 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Colossians 1:18.), and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.'" (Compare Ephesians 3:8-10.)

Questions:

1. Why was Paul happy to make his defense before King Agrippa?
2. Paul's account of his salvation in this chapter is similar to the accounts in chapters 9

and 22. What minor differences do you see from those accounts?

3. What commission did Jesus give to Paul in verse 16-18?
4. Do you think Paul's statement in verses 19-21 reveals the true reason he was seized in the Temple? (Compare Acts 21:26-29.)

Acts 26

24 Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!" (Compare 2 Kings 9:1-13.) 25 But he said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason. (Compare John 8:46-49.) 26 For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe." 28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian." (Compare Acts 11:26.) 29 And Paul said, "I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains." 30 When he had said these things, the king stood up, as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them; 31 and when they had gone aside, they talked among themselves, saying, "This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains." 32 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Questions:

1. Was Festus the first person to think that an inspired person was mad?
2. Were Paul's statements in verses 26-27 meant to be compliments to the king, or do you think he was speaking truth about the king's knowledge?
3. If verse 32 is true, why do you think Paul appealed to Caesar? (See Acts 28:19.)

Acts 27

And when it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to one named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment. 2 So, entering a ship of Adramyttium, we put to sea, meaning to sail along the coasts of Asia. Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, was with us. 3 And the next day we landed at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him liberty to go to his friends and receive care. 4 When we had put to sea from there, we sailed under the shelter of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. 5 And when we had sailed over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. 6 There the

centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, and he put us on board. 7 When we had sailed slowly many days, and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, the wind not permitting us to proceed, we sailed under the shelter of Crete off Salmone. 8 Passing it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea. 9 Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over (NOTE: "that is, the famous yearly fast of the Jews, the day of atonement, which was on the tenth day of the seventh month, a day to afflict the soul with fasting; it was about the 20th of our September. That yearly fast was very religiously observed; but (which is strange) we never have any mention made in all the scripture history of the observance of it, unless it be meant here, where it serves only to describe the season of the year. Michaelmas is reckoned by mariners as a bad time" --- from Matthew Henry's Commentary), Paul advised them, 10 saying, "Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives." (But see verses 22-24, 30-32, 42-44 below.) 11 Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul. 12 And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised to set sail from there also, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete opening toward the southwest and northwest, and winter there. 13 When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete. 14 But not long after, a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon. 15 So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let her drive. 16 And running under the shelter of an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. 17 When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; and fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis Sands, they struck sail and so were driven. 18 And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the next day they lightened the ship. 19 On the third day we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands. 20 Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on us, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up. 21 But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss. 22 And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, 24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' 25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. 26 However, we must run aground on a certain island."

27 Now when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven up and down in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land. 28 And they took soundings and found it to be twenty fathoms; and when they had gone a little farther, they took soundings again and found it to be fifteen fathoms. 29 Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors

from the stern, and prayed for day to come. 30 And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, 31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off. 33 And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored them all to take food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing. 34 Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you." 35 And when he had said these things, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken it he began to eat. 36 Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. 37 And in all we were two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship. 38 So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea. 39 When it was day, they did not recognize the land; but they observed a bay with a beach, onto which they planned to run the ship if possible. 40 And they let go the anchors and left them in the sea, meanwhile loosing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore. 41 But striking a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves. 42 And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. 43 But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land, 44 and the rest, some on boards and some on parts of the ship. And so it was that they all escaped safely to land. (See Luke 1:1-4.)

Questions:

1. Why do you think the Centurion in charge of the prisoners was so kind to Paul?
2. What size ship was needed to carry 276 persons on board, do you think?
3. Were the mariners fortunate to have Paul as one of their passengers?

Acts 28

Now when they had escaped, they then found out that the island was called Malta. 2 And the natives showed us unusual kindness; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold. 3 But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand. 4 So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live." 5 But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. (Compare Mark 16:17-18.) 6 How-ever, they

were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had looked for a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god. (NOTE: Other instances of superstitious judgments like this appear in Genesis 42:18-22; 2 Samuel 16:5-10; and Jonah 1:7-16; but compare Judges 9:52-56 and Amos 5:18-19.)

Questions:

1. Paul was one of the victims of the shipwreck. Why do you suppose he helped to gather wood for the fire?
2. Do you think that people today who handle poisonous snakes in their religious activities are to be compared to Paul on this occasion?
3. Do superstitions often hinder the receiving of the truth?
4. Is it true that God has visited retribution on sinners?
5. Do personal calamities always indicate sin as the cause? (See John 9:1-7.)

Acts 28

7 In that region there was an estate of the leading citizen of the island, whose name was Publius, who received us and entertained us courteously for three days. 8 And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him. 9 So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed. (Compare Matthew 4:23-24.) 10 They also honored us in many ways; and when we departed, they provided such things as were necessary.

Questions:

1. How did Paul win the honors that were given to him and his companions by the citizens of Malta?
2. Did the news of Paul's power to heal spread in the same way as the healings done by Jesus?

Acts 28

11 After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was the Twin Brothers, which had wintered at the island. 12 And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days. 13 From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, 14 where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days. And so we went toward

Rome. 15 And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage. 16 Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

Questions:

1. Do you suppose that the Centurion permitted Paul and his company to accept the invitation of the brethren at Puteoli?
2. How do you think the news of Paul's approach reached the brethren in Rome?

Acts 28

17 And it came to pass after three days that Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. So when they had come together, he said to them: "Men and brethren, though I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, 18 "who, when they had examined me, wanted to let me go, because there was no cause for putting me to death. 19 "But when the Jews spoke against it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation. 20 "For this reason therefore I have called for you, to see you and speak with you, because for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." 21 Then they said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea concern-ing you, nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you. 22 "But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect (see Acts 24:5, 14.) , we know that it is spoken against everywhere." 23 So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. (Compare Nehemiah 8:2-3, 18.) 24 And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. 25 So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, 26 "saying, `Go to this people and say: "Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you will see, and not perceive; 27 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.'" (Compare Isaiah 6:9-10, Matthew 13:14-15, and Acts 13:40-41.) 28 "Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!" 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves. (Compare Matthew 10:34-36.) 30 Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented

house, and received all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

Questions:

1. Why do you think Paul did not tell the leaders of the Jews about his recent trials in detail?
2. Had the Jewish leaders received any messages accusing Paul of wrongdoing?
3. What fact in this section shows that the leaders were very interested in what Paul could tell them?
4. Paul uses Isaiah 6:9-10 here to warn his hearers against rejection of the truth. What prophecy did he use as a warning in Acts 13:40-41?
5. From the things we learn about the captivity of Paul in these last few chapters of Acts, do you think it was hard for him endure?
6. What do you think is the greatest value to be received from our study of the book of Acts?