

- Song 60 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Barnabas and Paul Make Disciples in Faraway Places”:** (10 min.)
 Ac 13:2, 3—Jehovah chose Barnabas and Saul for a special work (*bt* 86 ¶4)
 Ac 13:12, 48; 14:1—Their hard work yielded results (*bt* 95 ¶5)
 Ac 14:21, 22—Barnabas and Paul strengthened the new disciples (*w14* 9/15 13 ¶4-5)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Ac 12:21-23—What do we learn from what happened to Herod? (*w08* 5/15 32 ¶7)

Ac 13:9—Why was Saul “also called Paul”? (*nwtsty* study notes)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ac 12:1-17

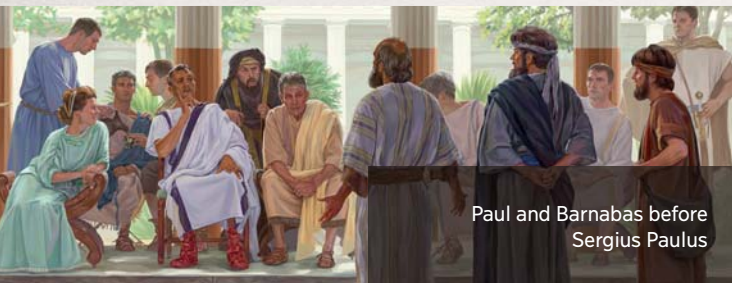
APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) *bt* 78-79 ¶8-9—Theme: Pray for Fellow Believers.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 65
- **“Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Helping ‘Rightly Disposed’ Ones to Become Disciples”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Jehovah God Will Help You* (video category FAMILY).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 45
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 55 and Prayer

ACTS 12-14 | Barnabas and Paul Make Disciples in Faraway Places




Paul and Barnabas before Sergius Paulus

13:12, 48; 14:1, 21, 22

Despite fierce opposition, Barnabas and Paul worked hard to help meek ones to embrace Christianity

- They preached to people of all backgrounds
- They encouraged new disciples “to remain in the faith”

 We can never know who is “rightly disposed for everlasting life” until we offer a witness, perhaps many times. Therefore, we preach to all without partiality.

To whom can I offer a Bible study this week?

What are some ways that I can encourage fellow Christians “to remain in the faith”?

It Means Their Life

(Ezekiel 3:17-19)

1. In this year of goodwill
by our God, all need to hear
That the day of his anger
will come, and it is near.

(CHORUS)

*It means their life, but not just theirs;
It means our own life as well.
It means their life if they obey,
So all the nations we must tell;
We must tell.*

2. There's a message to preach,
so we spread it all abroad.
We invite all to come and
be reconciled to God.

(Chorus)

(BRIDGE)

It's urgent, it's important,
That people listen, learn, and live.
We tell them, and we teach them;
Life-giving truth we freely give.

(Chorus)

Acts 12-14

12 About that time Herod the king began mistreating some of those of the congregation. ² He put James the brother of John to death by the sword. ³ When he saw that it was pleasing to the Jews, he also went on to arrest Peter. (This was during the days of the Unleavened Bread.) ⁴ He seized him and put him in prison, turning him over to four shifts of four soldiers each to guard him, intending to bring him out before the people after the Passover. ⁵ So Peter was being kept in the prison, but the congregation was intensely praying to God for him.

⁶ When Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping bound with two chains between two soldiers, and guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. ⁷ But look! Jehovah's angel was standing there, and a light shone in the prison cell. Hitting Peter on the side, he woke him, saying: "Get up quickly!" And the chains fell off his hands. ⁸ The angel said to him: "Get dressed and put on your sandals." He did so. Finally he said to him: "Put your outer garment on, and keep following me." ⁹ And he went out and kept following him, but he did not know that what was happening through the angel was real. In fact, he thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ Going past the first sentinel guard and the second, they reached the iron gate leading into the city, and this opened to them by itself. After they went out, they made their way down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

¹¹ And Peter, realizing what was happening, said: "Now I know for sure that Jehovah sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's hand and from everything that the Jews were expecting to happen."

¹² After he realized this, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John who was called Mark, where quite a few were gathered together and were praying. ¹³ When he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the call.

¹⁴ On recognizing the voice of Peter, she was so overjoyed that she did not open the gate, but ran inside and reported that Peter was standing at the gateway. ¹⁵ They said to her: “You are out of your mind.” But she kept insisting that it was so. They began to say: “It is his angel.” ¹⁶ But Peter remained there, knocking. When they opened the door, they saw him and were astonished. ¹⁷ But he motioned to them with his hand to be silent and told them in detail how Jehovah had brought him out of the prison, and he said: “Report these things to James and the brothers.” With that he went out and traveled to another place.

¹⁸ Now when it became day, there was quite a disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. ¹⁹ Herod made a diligent search for him, and not finding him, he interrogated the guards and commanded them to be led off to punishment; and he went down from Ju-de'a to Caes-a-re'a and spent some time there.

²⁰ Now he was in an angry mood against the people of Tyre and Si'don. So they came to him with one purpose, and after persuading Blastus, the man in charge of the king's household affairs, they sued for peace, because their country was supplied with food from the land of the king. ²¹ On a set day, Herod clothed himself with royal raiment and sat down on the judgment seat and began giving them a public address. ²² Then the people who were assembled began shouting: “A god's voice, and not a man's!”

²³ Instantly the angel of Jehovah struck him, because he did not give the glory to God, and he was eaten up with worms and died.

²⁴ But the word of Jehovah went on growing and spreading.

²⁵ As for Bar'na-bas and Saul, after fully carrying out the relief work in Jerusalem, they returned and took along with them John, the one also called Mark.

13 Now in Antioch there were prophets and teachers in the local congregation: Bar'na-bas, Sym'e-on who was called Ni'ger, Lucius

of Cy-re'ne, Man'a-en who was educated with Herod the district ruler, and Saul. ² As they were ministering to Jehovah and fasting, the holy spirit said: "Set aside for me Bar'na-bas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ Then after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

⁴ So these men, sent out by the holy spirit, went down to Se-leu'cia, and from there they sailed away to Cy'prus. ⁵ When they arrived in Sal'a-mis, they began proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as an attendant.

⁶ When they had gone through the whole island as far as Pa'phos, they met up with a Jewish man named Bar-Je'sus, who was a sorcerer and a false prophet. ⁷ He was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. Calling Bar'na-bas and Saul to him, this man was eager to hear the word of God. ⁸ But El'y-mas the sorcerer (for that is how his name is translated) began opposing them, trying to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹ Then Saul, also called Paul, becoming filled with holy spirit, looked at him intently ¹⁰ and said: "O man full of every sort of fraud and every sort of villainy, you son of the Devil, you enemy of everything righteous, will you not quit distorting the right ways of Jehovah? ¹¹ Look! Jehovah's hand is upon you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sunlight for a time." Instantly a thick mist and darkness fell on him, and he went around trying to find someone to lead him by the hand. ¹² Then the proconsul, on seeing what had happened, became a believer, for he was astounded at the teaching of Jehovah.

¹³ Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Pa'phos and arrived at Perga in Pam-phyl'i-a. But John left them and returned to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ However, they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pi-sid'i-a. And going into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, they took a seat. ¹⁵ After the public reading of the Law and the Prophets, the presiding officers of the synagogue sent word to them, saying: "Men, brothers, if you have any word of

encouragement for the people, tell it.” ¹⁶ So Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand, he said:

“Men, Israelites and you others who fear God, listen. ¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our forefathers, and he exalted the people while they lived as foreigners in the land of Egypt and brought them out of it with an uplifted arm. ¹⁸ And for a period of about 40 years, he put up with them in the wilderness. ¹⁹ After destroying seven nations in the land of Ca'naan, he assigned their land as an inheritance. ²⁰ All of that was during about 450 years.

“After this he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. ²¹ But afterward they demanded a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for 40 years. ²² After removing him, he raised up for them David as king, about whom he bore witness and said: ‘I have found David the son of Jes'se a man agreeable to my heart; he will do all the things I desire.’

²³ According to his promise, from the offspring of this man, God has brought to Israel a savior, Jesus. ²⁴ Before the arrival of that one, John had preached publicly to all the people of Israel baptism in symbol of repentance. ²⁵ But as John was finishing his course, he would say: ‘What do you suppose I am? I am not he. But look! One is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.’

²⁶ “Men, brothers, you descendants of Abraham’s family and those others among you who fear God, the word of this salvation has been sent to us. ²⁷ For the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize this one, but when acting as judges, they fulfilled the things spoken by the Prophets, which are read aloud every sabbath. ²⁸ Even though they found no cause for death, they demanded of Pilate to have him executed. ²⁹ And when they had accomplished all the things written about him, they took him down from the stake and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised him up from the dead, ³¹ and for many days he became visible to those

who had gone with him from Gal'i-lee up to Jerusalem. These are now his witnesses to the people.

³² “So we are declaring to you the good news about the promise made to the forefathers. ³³ God has completely fulfilled it to us, their children, by resurrecting Jesus; just as it is written in the second psalm: ‘You are my son; today I have become your father.’ ³⁴ And the fact that He resurrected him from the dead never again to return to corruption, He has stated in this way: ‘I will give you the expressions of loyal love promised to David, which are faithful.’

³⁵ So it also says in another psalm: ‘You will not allow your loyal one to see corruption.’ ³⁶ David, on the one hand, rendered service to God in his own generation, fell asleep in death, was laid with his forefathers, and did see corruption. ³⁷ On the other hand, the one whom God raised up did not see corruption.

³⁸ “Let it therefore be known to you, brothers, that through this one a forgiveness of sins is being proclaimed to you, ³⁹ and that from all the things from which you could not be declared guiltless by means of the Law of Moses, everyone who believes is declared guiltless by means of this one. ⁴⁰ Therefore, watch out that what is said in the Prophets does not come upon you: ⁴¹ ‘Look at it, you scorners, and be amazed, and perish, for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will never believe even if anyone relates it to you in detail.’”

⁴² Now when they were going out, the people pleaded with them to speak about these matters on the following Sabbath. ⁴³ So after the synagogue assembly was dismissed, many of the Jews and the proselytes who worshipped God followed Paul and Bar'na-bas, who, as they spoke to them, urged them to remain in the undeserved kindness of God.

⁴⁴ The next Sabbath nearly all the city gathered together to hear the word of Jehovah. ⁴⁵ When the Jews saw the crowds, they were

filled with jealousy and began blasphemously contradicting the things Paul was saying. ⁴⁶ Then Paul and Bar'na-bas boldly said to them: "It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken first to you. Since you are rejecting it and do not judge yourselves worthy of everlasting life, look! we turn to the nations. ⁴⁷ For Jehovah has commanded us in these words: 'I have appointed you as a light of nations, for you to be a salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

⁴⁸ When those of the nations heard this, they began to rejoice and to glorify the word of Jehovah, and all those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers. ⁴⁹ Furthermore, the word of Jehovah was being spread throughout the whole country. ⁵⁰ But the Jews incited the prominent women who were God-fearing and the principal men of the city, and they stirred up persecution against Paul and Bar'na-bas and threw them outside their boundaries. ⁵¹ So they shook the dust off their feet against them and went to I-co'ni-um. ⁵² And the disciples continued to be filled with joy and holy spirit.

14 Now in I-co'ni-um they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in such a manner that a great multitude of both Jews and Greeks became believers. ² But the Jews who did not believe stirred up and wrongly influenced the people of the nations against the brothers. ³ So they spent considerable time speaking with boldness by the authority of Jehovah, who bore witness to the word of his undeserved kindness by allowing signs and wonders to be performed through them. ⁴ However, the multitude of the city was divided; some were for the Jews but others for the apostles. ⁵ When both the people of the nations and the Jews with their rulers made an attempt to treat them insolently and stone them, ⁶ they were informed of it, and they fled to the cities of Lyc-a-o'ni-a, Lys'tra and Der'be, and to the surrounding country. ⁷ There they went on declaring the good news.

⁸ Now in Lys'tra there was a man sitting down whose feet were crippled. He was lame from birth and had never walked. ⁹ This man was listening to Paul as he was speaking. Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, ¹⁰ said with a loud voice: "Stand up on your feet." So the man leaped up and began walking. ¹¹ When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they cried out in the Lyc-a-o'ni-an language: "The gods have become like humans and have come down to us!" ¹² And they started calling Bar'na-bas Zeus, but Paul Her'mes, since he was taking the lead in speaking. ¹³ And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance of the city, brought bulls and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifices with the crowds.

¹⁴ However, when the apostles Bar'na-bas and Paul heard of it, they ripped their garments and leaped out into the crowd and cried out: ¹⁵ "Men, why are you doing these things? We too are humans having the same infirmities as you have. And we are declaring the good news to you, for you to turn from these vain things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them. ¹⁶ In past generations he permitted all the nations to go on in their ways, ¹⁷ although he did not leave himself without witness in that he did good, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying you with food and filling your hearts with gladness." ¹⁸ And yet despite saying these things, they barely restrained the crowds from sacrificing to them.

¹⁹ But Jews arrived from Antioch and I-co'ni-um and persuaded the crowds, and they stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, imagining that he was dead. ²⁰ However, when the disciples surrounded him, he got up and entered the city. On the next day he left with Bar'na-bas for Der'be. ²¹ After declaring the good news to that city and making quite a few disciples, they returned to Lys'tra, I-co'ni-um, and Antioch. ²² There they strengthened the disciples, encouraging them to remain in the faith and saying: "We must enter

into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.”²³ Moreover, they appointed elders for them in each congregation, offering prayer with fasting, and they entrusted them to Jehovah, in whom they had become believers.

²⁴ Then they went through Pi-sid'i-a and came into Pam·phyl'i-a,²⁵ and after proclaiming the word in Perga, they went down to At-ta-li'a.²⁶ From there they sailed off for Antioch, where they had been entrusted to the undeserved kindness of God for the work they had now completed.

²⁷ When they had arrived and had gathered the congregation together, they related the many things God had done by means of them, and that he had opened to the nations the door to faith.²⁸ So they spent considerable time with the disciples.

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Ac 13:9—Why was Saul “also called Paul”? (*nwtsty* study notes)

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- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ac 12:1-17

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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ACTS 12-14 | Barnabas and Paul Make Disciples in Faraway Places




Paul and Barnabas before Sergius Paulus

13:12, 48; 14:1, 21, 22

Despite fierce opposition, Barnabas and Paul worked hard to help meek ones to embrace Christianity

- They preached to people of all backgrounds
- They encouraged new disciples “to remain in the faith”

 We can never know who is “rightly disposed for everlasting life” until we offer a witness, perhaps many times. Therefore, we preach to all without partiality.

To whom can I offer a Bible study this week?

What are some ways that I can encourage fellow Christians “to remain in the faith”?

December 10-16

Treasures From God's Word

Acts 13:2, 3—Jehovah chose Barnabas and Saul for a special work

Acts 13:2, 3: As they were ministering to Jehovah and fasting, the holy spirit said: “Set aside for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

***bt* 86 paragraph 4**

But why did the holy spirit specifically direct that Barnabas and Saul be set apart “for the work”? (Acts 13:2) The Bible does not say. We do know that the holy spirit directed the choosing of these men. There is no indication that the prophets and teachers in Antioch contested the decision. Instead, they fully supported the appointment. Imagine how Barnabas and Saul must have felt as their spiritual brothers, without envy, “fasted and prayed and laid their hands upon them and let them go.” (Acts 13:3) We too should support those who receive theocratic assignments, including men appointed as congregation overseers. Rather than being envious of those who receive such privileges, we should “give them more than extraordinary consideration in love because of their work.”—1 Thessalonians 5:13.

Acts 13:12, 48; 14:1—Their hard work yielded results

Acts 13:12: Then the proconsul, on seeing what had happened, became a believer, for he was astounded at the teaching of Jehovah.

Acts 13:48: When those of the nations heard this, they began to rejoice and to glorify the word of Jehovah, and all those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers.

Acts 14:1: Now in Iconium they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in such a manner that a great multitude of both Jews and Greeks became believers.

bt 95 paragraph 5

Initially, Paul and Barnabas stopped at Iconium, an enclave of Greek culture and one of the principal cities of the Roman province of Galatia. This city sheltered an influential Jewish population and a large number of non-Jewish proselytes. According to their custom, Paul and Barnabas entered the synagogue and began preaching. (Acts 13:5, 14) They “spoke in such a manner that a great multitude of both Jews and Greeks became believers.”—Acts 14:1.

Acts 14:21, 22—Barnabas and Paul strengthened the new disciples

Acts 14:21, 22: After declaring the good news to that city and making quite a few disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. There they strengthened the disciples, encouraging them to remain in the faith and saying: “We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.”

w14 9/15 13 paragraphs 4-5

4 After visiting Derbe, Paul and Barnabas “returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. There they strengthened the disciples, encouraging them to remain in the faith and saying: ‘We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.’” (Acts 14:21, 22) At first, that statement might seem strange. After all, the

prospect of going through “many tribulations” would seem distressing, not encouraging. How is it, then, that Paul and Barnabas “*strengthened* the disciples” with a message that pointed to more tribulation?

5 We can find the answer if we look carefully at Paul’s words. He did not simply say: “We must *endure* many tribulations.” Rather, he said: “We must *enter into the Kingdom of God* through many tribulations.” So Paul strengthened the disciples by emphasizing the positive result of a faithful course. That reward was no mere illusion. Indeed, Jesus stated: “The one who has endured to the end *will be saved.*”—Matthew 10:22.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Acts 12:21-23—What do we learn from what happened to Herod?

Acts 12:21-23: On a set day, Herod clothed himself with royal raiment and sat down on the judgment seat and began giving them a public address. Then the people who were assembled began shouting: “A god’s voice, and not a man’s!” Instantly the angel of Jehovah struck him, because he did not give the glory to God, and he was eaten up with worms and died.

w08 5/15 32 paragraph 7

Acts 12:21-23; 14:14-18. Herod readily accepted glory that should be given only to God. How that differed from the immediate and emphatic rejection of undue praise and honor by Paul and Barnabas! We should not desire glory for whatever accomplishments we may have in Jehovah’s service.

Acts 13:9—Why was Saul “also called Paul”?

Acts 13:9: Then Saul, also called Paul, becoming filled with holy spirit, looked at him intently

Study notes

Saul, also called Paul: From this point on, Saul is referred to as Paul. The apostle was born a Hebrew with Roman citizenship. (Acts 22:27, 28; Philippians 3:5) It is therefore likely that from childhood, he had both the Hebrew name Saul and the Roman name Paul. It was not unusual for Jews of that time, particularly among those living outside Israel, to have two names. (Acts 12:12; 13:1) Some of Paul’s relatives likewise had Roman and Greek names. (Romans 16:7, 21) As “an apostle to the nations,” Paul was commissioned to declare the good news to non-Jews. (Romans 11:13) He apparently decided to use his Roman name; he might have felt that it would be more acceptable. (Acts 9:15; Galatians 2:7, 8) Some have suggested that he adopted the Roman name in honor of Sergius Paulus, which seems unlikely, since Paul retained the name even after leaving Cyprus. Others have suggested that Paul avoided using his Hebrew name because its Greek pronunciation sounded similar to a Greek word that referred to a person (or an animal) who swaggered when walking.—See study note on Acts 7:58.

Paul: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the name *Pau'los*, from Latin *Paulus*, meaning “Little; Small,” is used 157 times when referring to the apostle Paul and once when referring to the proconsul of Cyprus named Sergius Paulus.—Acts 13:7.

What has this week's Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week's Bible reading?

Bible Reading: (4 minutes or less) Acts 12:1-17

ACTS

Study Notes—Chapter 12

12:1

Herod: That is, Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great. (See Glossary.) Born in 10 B.C.E., Herod Agrippa I was educated in Rome. He cultivated friendships with various members of the imperial family. One friend was Gaius, better known as Caligula, who became emperor in 37 C.E. He soon proclaimed Agrippa king over the regions of Ituraea, Trachonitis, and Abilene. Later, Caligula expanded Agrippa's domain to include Galilee and Perea and gave Agrippa the title of king. Agrippa was in Rome when Caligula was assassinated in 41 C.E. Reportedly, Agrippa played an important role in resolving the crisis that ensued. He participated in tense negotiations between another powerful friend, Claudius, and the Roman Senate. The result was that Claudius was proclaimed emperor and civil war was averted. To reward Agrippa for his mediation, Claudius granted him kingship also over Judea and Samaria, which had been administered by Roman procurators since 6 C.E. Thus Agrippa came to be in charge of territories equaling those of Herod the Great. Agrippa's capital was Jerusalem, where he won the favor of the religious leaders. He is said to have observed Jewish law and traditions scrupulously by, among other things, offering sacrifices in the temple daily and reading the Law publicly. He is also said to have been a zealous protector of the Jewish faith. However, he belied his claim of being a worshipper of God by arranging gladiatorial combats and pagan spectacles in the theater. Agrippa's character has been described as treacherous, superficial, and extravagant. His rule was cut short when he was executed by Jehovah's angel, as described at Ac 12:23. Scholars place the death of King Herod Agrippa I in 44 C.E. He was at that time 54 years old and had reigned for three years over all Judea.

12:2

put James the brother of John to death: The execution probably took place about the year 44 C.E. James thus became the first of the 12 apostles to die as a martyr. Herod may have targeted James because that apostle was known to be particularly close to Jesus or because James had a reputation for fiery zeal. It was likely for this reason that James and his brother John had been given the surname Boanerges, which means “Sons of Thunder.” (Mr 3:17) Herod’s cowardly, politically motivated act did not stop the spread of the good news, but it did rob the congregation of a beloved apostle, shepherd, and source of encouragement. The expression **by the sword** may indicate that James was beheaded.

12:3

the days of the Unleavened Bread: The Festival of Unleavened Bread began on Nisan 15, the day after the Passover (Nisan 14), and lasted for seven days. (See Glossary, “Festival of Unleavened Bread,” and App. B15.) The frequent references in the Gospel accounts and the book of Acts to the various festival seasons show that the Jewish calendar continued to be observed by the Jews during the time of Jesus and the apostles. These festival seasons serve as a guide for determining the approximate time of Biblical events of that time.—Mt 26:2; Mr 14:1; Lu 22:1; Joh 2:13, 23; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2, 37; 10:22; 11:55; Ac 2:1; 12:3, 4; 20:6, 16; 27:9.

12:7

Jehovah’s angel: Starting at Ge 16:7, this phrase is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “angel” and the Tetragrammaton. When it occurs at Zec 3:5, 6 in an early copy of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag’ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in

Hebrew characters. This fragment, found in a cave in Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert, is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “Jehovah’s angel” in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts of Ac 5:19 read “Lord’s angel,” are explained in App. C.

12:8

Get dressed: Or “Gird yourself.” Apparently referring to securing a loose inner garment with a belt or a piece of cloth.—See study note on Lu 12:35.

12:11

Jehovah sent his angel: The phrase “sent his angel” calls to mind similar acts of deliverance mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, at Da 3:28; 6:22, God is said to have “sent his angel” to rescue Daniel and his companions.—Compare Ps 34:7; see App. C.

12:12

the house of Mary: The congregation in Jerusalem apparently met in a private home, that of Mary the mother of John Mark. The house was spacious enough to accommodate “quite a few” worshippers, and a servant girl worked there. So Mary may have been a relatively wealthy woman. (Ac 12:13) Further, the residence is referred to as “the house of Mary,” without any mention of a husband, so it is possible that she was a widow.

John who was called Mark: One of Jesus’ disciples, “the cousin of Barnabas” (Col 4:10), and the writer of the Gospel of Mark. (See study note on Mark Title.) The English name John is the equivalent of the Hebrew name Jehohanan or Johanan, which means “Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious.” At Ac 13:5, 13, this disciple is simply called John. However, here and at Ac 12:25; 15:37, his Roman surname,

Mark, is also given. Elsewhere in the Christian Greek Scriptures, he is referred to simply as Mark.—Col 4:10; 2Ti 4:11; Phm 24; 1Pe 5:13.

12:15

It is his angel: Both the Hebrew and the Greek terms rendered “angel” mean “messenger.” (See study note on Joh 1:51.) Those who referred to “his [Peter’s] angel” may have assumed that an angelic messenger representing the apostle was at the gate. It appears that some Jews believed that each servant of God had his own angel—in effect, a guardian angel, a view that is not directly taught in God’s Word. Jesus’ disciples knew, though, that throughout history, angels rendered personal assistance to God’s people. For example, Jacob spoke of “the angel who has been recovering me from all calamity.” (Ge 48:16) Also, Jesus said of his disciples that “*their* angels in heaven always look upon the face of my Father,” showing that angels take an active interest in each of Jesus’ disciples. (See study note on Mt 18:10.) Those gathered at Mary’s house would not have imagined that Peter himself was appearing in some angelic form, as if he had died and was now a spirit; they knew what the Hebrew Scriptures said about the condition of the dead.—Ec 9:5, 10.

12:17

Jehovah: Most Greek manuscripts use the term “the Lord” (Greek, *ho Ky’ri-os*) here. However, as explained in App. C, there are a number of reasons to believe that the divine name was originally used in this verse and later replaced by the title Lord. Therefore, the name Jehovah is used in the main text.

James: Most likely referring to Jesus’ half brother. He may have been next to Jesus in age, being the first named of Mary’s four natural-born sons: James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. (Mt 13:55; Mr 6:3; Joh 7:5) James was an eyewitness at Pentecost 33 C.E.

when thousands of visiting Jews from the Diaspora responded to the good news and got baptized. (Ac 1:14; 2:1, 41) Peter instructed the disciples to “report . . . to James,” indicating that James was taking the lead in the Jerusalem congregation. He is apparently also the James mentioned at Ac 15:13; 21:18; 1Co 15:7; Ga 1:19 (where he is called “the brother of the Lord”); 2:9, 12 and the one who wrote the Bible book bearing his name.—Jas 1:1; Jude 1.

12:20

the man in charge of the king’s household affairs: Lit., “the man over the king’s bedchamber.” Apparently, this was a highly respected person who was entrusted with considerable responsibility for the king’s house and personal affairs.

12:23

angel of Jehovah: Starting at Ge 16:7, this phrase is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “angel” and the Tetragrammaton. When it occurs at Zec 3:5, 6 in an early copy of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag’ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. This fragment, found in a cave in Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert, is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “Jehovah’s angel” in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts of Ac 5:19 read “Lord’s angel,” are explained in App. C.

12:24

the word of Jehovah: This expression has its background in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it appears as a combination of a Hebrew term for “word” and the divine name. Together with the expression “Jehovah’s word,” it occurs in some 200 verses. (Some examples are found at 2Sa 12:9; 24:11; 2Ki 7:1; 20:16;

24:2; Isa 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jer 1:4; 2:4; Eze 1:3; 6:1; Hos 1:1; Mic 1:1; Zec 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zec 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo'gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “the word of Jehovah” in the main text, although many Greek manuscripts of Ac 8:25 read “the word of the Lord,” are explained in App. C.

12:25

the relief work: Or “a relief ministrations.” This is the first recorded instance of Christians sending relief aid to fellow Christians living in another part of the world. The Greek word *di-a-ko-ni'a*, often rendered “ministry,” is also used in the sense of “relief work” at Ac 12:25 and “relief ministry” at 2Co 8:4. The use of the Greek word *di-a-ko-ni'a* in the Christian Greek Scriptures shows that Christians have a twofold ministry. One aspect is “the ministry [form of *di-a-ko-ni'a*] of the reconciliation,” that is, the preaching and teaching work. (2Co 5:18-20; 1Ti 2:3-6) The other aspect involves their ministry in behalf of fellow believers, as mentioned here. Paul stated: “There are different ministries [plural of *di-a-ko-ni'a*], and yet there is the same Lord.” (1Co 12:4-6, 11) He showed that these different aspects of the Christian ministry all constitute “sacred service.”—Ro 12:1, 6-8.

ACTS

Study Notes—Chapter 13

13:1

Herod the district ruler: That is, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great.—district ruler: Lit., “tetrarch” (meaning “ruler over one fourth” of a province), a term applied to a minor district ruler or territorial prince ruling only with the approval of the Roman authorities. The tetrarchy of Herod Antipas consisted of Galilee and Perea.—Compare study note on Mr 6:14.

13:2

were ministering: Or “were publicly ministering.” The Greek word *lei-tour-ge'o* used here and the related words *lei-tour-gi'a* (public service, or ministry) and *lei-tour-gos'* (public servant, or worker) were used by the ancient Greeks to refer to work or service performed for the State or for civil authorities and to the benefit of the people. For example, at Ro 13:6, the secular authorities are called God’s “public servants” (plural form of *lei-tour-gos'*) in the sense that they provide beneficial services for the people. At Lu 1:23 (see study note), the term *lei-tour-gi'a* is rendered “holy service” (or, “public service”) regarding the ministry of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist. In that verse, the use of the word *lei-tour-gi'a* reflects how it and related terms are used in the *Septuagint* in connection with the service performed by priests and Levites at the tabernacle (Ex 28:35; Nu 1:50; 3:31; 8:22) and at the temple (2Ch 31:2; 35:3; Joe 1:9, 13; 2:17). Such service included the idea of a ministry for the benefit of the people. However, the idea of holiness was included in some contexts because the Levitical priests taught God’s Law (2Ch 15:3; Mal 2:7) and offered sacrifices that covered the sins of the people (Le 1:3-5; De 18:1-5). At Ac 13:2, the Greek word *lei-tour-ge'o* is used in a more general sense, describing the

ministering by Christian prophets and teachers in the congregation in Antioch of Syria. The word refers to the different expressions of devotion and service to God, including such aspects of the Christian ministry as prayer, preaching, and teaching. The ministry performed by these prophets and teachers no doubt included preaching to the public.—Ac 13:3.

ministering to Jehovah: The Greek word *lei-tour-ge'o* (to minister; to serve) used in this verse often appears in Hebrew Scripture passages where the divine name is found in the original Hebrew text. For example, at 2Ch 13:10, the same Greek expression found at Ac 13:2 is used in the *Septuagint* to render the Hebrew phrase “ministering to Jehovah.” At 2Ch 35:3, the same Greek words are used to render the phrase “serve Jehovah.”—1Sa 2:11; 3:1; Eze 45:4; Joe 2:17; see App. C.

13:4

Seleucia: A fortified Mediterranean port town serving Syrian Antioch and located about 20 km (12 mi) SW of that city. The two sites were connected by road and by the navigable Orontes River, which flowed past Antioch and emptied into the Mediterranean Sea a short distance S of Seleucia. Seleucus I (Nicator), one of the generals of Alexander the Great, founded the city and named it after himself. Accompanied by Barnabas, Paul sailed from Seleucia at the start of his first missionary journey, in about 47 C.E. Seleucia was just N of Süveydiye, or Samandag, in modern-day Turkey. Silt from the Orontes has converted ancient Seleucia’s harbor into a marsh.—See App. B13.

they sailed away to Cyprus: A journey of about 200 km (125 mi). If winds were favorable, a first-century ship could travel about 150 km (93 mi) in a day. In unfavorable conditions, such a journey could take much longer. Cyprus was Barnabas’ home.

13:5

Salamis: Located on the E side of the island of Cyprus, Salamis was a sensible choice to start the preaching tour in Cyprus, although Paphos, located on the W coast, was the Roman capital. Salamis was closer to the missionaries' starting point near Syrian Antioch, and it was the cultural, educational, and commercial center of the island. There was also a sizable population of Jews in Salamis, a city that had more than one synagogue. Barnabas, a native of Cyprus, no doubt served as an able guide for the group. Depending on the route taken, the men may have walked at least 150 km (about 100 mi) as they preached throughout the island.

John: That is, John Mark, one of Jesus' disciples, "the cousin of Barnabas" (Col 4:10), and the writer of the Gospel of Mark. (See study note on Mark Title.) He is also called John at Ac 13:13, but the other three verses in Acts where he is mentioned add "who was [or, "the one also"] called Mark," his Roman surname. (Ac 12:12, 25; 15:37) John is the English equivalent of the Hebrew name Jehohanan or Johanan, which means "Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious." Elsewhere in the Christian Greek Scriptures, he is referred to as "Mark."—Col 4:10; 2Ti 4:11; Phm 24; 1Pe 5:13.

13:7

proconsul: The title of the governor of a province administered by the Roman Senate. Some Roman provinces, such as Judea, were imperial provinces under the direct rule of the emperor, who appointed a governor. Because Cyprus became a senatorial province in 22 B.C.E., it was governed by a proconsul. A coin from Cyprus has been found with the head and title of Roman Emperor Claudius (in Latin) on one side and "Under Cominius Proclus, Proconsul of the Cyprians" (in Greek) on the other side.—See Glossary.

13:9

Saul, also called Paul: From this point on, Saul is referred to as Paul. The apostle was born a Hebrew with Roman citizenship. (Ac 22:27, 28; Php 3:5) It is therefore likely that from childhood, he had both the Hebrew name Saul and the Roman name Paul. It was not unusual for Jews of that time, particularly among those living outside Israel, to have two names. (Ac 12:12; 13:1) Some of Paul's relatives likewise had Roman and Greek names. (Ro 16:7, 21) As "an apostle to the nations," Paul was commissioned to declare the good news to non-Jews. (Ro 11:13) He apparently decided to use his Roman name; he might have felt that it would be more acceptable. (Ac 9:15; Ga 2:7, 8) Some have suggested that he adopted the Roman name in honor of Sergius Paulus, which seems unlikely, since Paul retained the name even after leaving Cyprus. Others have suggested that Paul avoided using his Hebrew name because its Greek pronunciation sounded similar to a Greek word that referred to a person (or an animal) who swaggered when walking.—See study note on Ac 7:58.

Paul: In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the name *Pau'los*, from Latin *Paulus*, meaning "Little; Small," is used 157 times when referring to the apostle Paul and once when referring to the proconsul of Cyprus named Sergius Paulus.—Ac 13:7.

13:10

ways of Jehovah: Paul's reply to the Jewish sorcerer Bar-Jesus (recorded in verses 10 and 11) contains several expressions that have a background in the Hebrew Scriptures. Some examples are: The Greek phrase here rendered "distorting . . . ways" is found at Pr 10:9 ("making his ways crooked") in the *Septuagint*. The Greek words that appear in the phrase "*the right ways of Jehovah*" also appear in the *Septuagint* rendering of Hos 14:9. In that verse, the original Hebrew text uses the divine name ("For the ways of Jehovah are upright").—See App. C.

13:11

Jehovah's hand: This phrase, as well as “hand of Jehovah,” is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “hand” and the Tetragrammaton. (Some examples are found at Ex 9:3; Nu 11:23; Jg 2:15; Ru 1:13; 1Sa 5:6, 9; 7:13; 12:15; 1Ki 18:46; Ezr 7:6; Job 12:9; Isa 19:16; 40:2; Eze 1:3.) In the Bible, the term “hand” is often used figuratively for “power.” Since the hand applies the power of the arm, “hand” may also convey the idea of “applied power.” The Greek expression rendered “the hand of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah's hand”) also occurs at Lu 1:66 and Ac 13:11.—See study notes on Lu 1:6, 66 and App. C.

13:12

the teaching of Jehovah: The expression “the teaching of Jehovah” is synonymous with “the word of God,” used at Ac 13:5. That verse says that when Paul and his companions arrived in Cyprus, they “began proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.” As a result, the proconsul Sergius Paulus was “eager to hear the word of God.” (Ac 13:7) After witnessing what Paul said and did, Sergius Paulus was astounded at what he learned about Jehovah God and the teaching originating from Him.—See App. C.

13:14

Antioch in Pisidia: A city in the Roman province of Galatia. This city was situated on the border of the regions of Phrygia and Pisidia, so at different times in history it might have been considered part of one of these regions. The ruins of the city are located near Yalvaç in modern-day Turkey. Pisidian Antioch is referred to here and at Ac 14:19, 21. Anyone traveling from **Perga**, a city near the Mediterranean Coast, to Pisidian Antioch faced a difficult trek; this city was about 1,100 m (3,600 ft) above

sea level (see App. B13), and bandits roamed the treacherous mountain passages. “Antioch in Pisidia” is not to be confused with Antioch in Syria. (Ac 6:5; 11:19; 13:1; 14:26; 15:22; 18:22) In fact, most of the occurrences of the name Antioch in Acts refer, not to Pisidian Antioch, but to Syrian Antioch.

13:15

the public reading of the Law and the Prophets: In the first century C.E., this public reading was done “on every Sabbath.” (Ac 15:21) One feature of synagogue worship was the reciting of the Shema, or what amounted to the Jewish confession of faith. (De 6:4-9; 11:13-21) The Shema received its name from the first word of the first scripture used, “Listen [*Shema*], O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.” (De 6:4) The most important part of the service was the reading of the Torah, or Pentateuch. In many synagogues, the entire Law was scheduled to be read in the course of one year; in others, the program took three years. Portions of the Prophets were also read and explained. At the conclusion of the public reading, a discourse was given. It was after the public reading in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch that Paul was invited to speak words of encouragement to those assembled.—See study note on Lu 4:16.

13:20

during about 450 years: Paul’s discussion of Israelite history begins with a significant event, namely, when God “chose our forefathers.” (Ac 13:17) Paul apparently had in mind the time when Isaac was actually born as the promised offspring. (Ge 17:19; 21:1-3; 22:17, 18) Isaac’s birth definitely settled the question as to whom God would recognize as this offspring, an issue that had been in doubt because of Sarai’s (Sarah’s) barrenness. (Ge 11:30) From this starting point, Paul recounts God’s acts in behalf of His chosen nation down to the time when He **gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.** The period of

“about 450 years,” therefore, apparently spans from Isaac’s birth in 1918 B.C.E. to the year 1467 B.C.E. This period extends 46 years after the start of Israel’s Exodus from Egypt, in 1513 B.C.E. This end point is appropriate because the Israelites spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness and 6 years conquering the land of Canaan.—Nu 9:1; 13:1, 2, 6; De 2:7; Jos 14:6, 7, 10.

13:23

offspring: Or “descendants.” Lit., “seed.”—App. A2: The term “seed” in ancient Hebrew and Greek could refer to plant seed as well as to human offspring, or descendants, or to semen. Because it is no longer common in English to use the term “seed” when referring to humans, it was replaced with expressions that convey the intended idea according to the context. (Genesis 1:11; 22:17; 48:4; Matthew 22:24; John 8:37) In most cases, the term “offspring” is now used when referring to the Edenic promise, found at Genesis 3:15.

13:29

the stake: Or “a tree.” The Greek word *xy'lon* (lit., “wood”) is here used as a synonym for the Greek word *stau·ros'* (rendered “torture stake”) and describes the instrument of execution to which Jesus was nailed. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, Luke, Paul, and Peter used the word *xy'lon* in this sense five times altogether. (Ac 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; Ga 3:13; 1Pe 2:24) In the *Septuagint*, *xy'lon* is used at De 21:22, 23 to translate the corresponding Hebrew word *'ets* (meaning “tree; wood; piece of wood”) in the sentence “and you have hung him on a *stake*.” When Paul quotes this scripture at Ga 3:13, *xy'lon* is used in the sentence: “Accursed is every man hung upon a *stake*.” This Greek word is also used in the *Septuagint* at Ezr 6:11 (1 Esdras 6:31, *LXX*) to translate the Aramaic word *'a'*, corresponding to the Hebrew term *'ets*. There it is said regarding violators of a Persian king’s decree: “A *timber* will be pulled out of his house and he will

be lifted up and fastened to it.” The fact that Bible writers used *xy'lon* as a synonym for *stau-ros'* provides added evidence that Jesus was executed on an upright stake without a crossbeam, for that is what *xy'lon* in this special sense means.

tomb: Or “memorial tomb.”—Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”: A burial place in which the remains of a deceased person were placed. This term renders the Greek word *mne-mei'on*, which comes from the verb “to remind,” suggesting that the person who has died is remembered.—Joh 5:28, 29.

13:36

rendered service to God: Or “served the will (purpose) of God.” Here referring to all that God has purposed to do by means of his Kingdom, including everything that he has decided is essential for salvation. (Ac 20:25) The Greek word *bou-le'* is rendered “counsel [or, “direction; guidance,” ftn.]” at Lu 7:30 and “purpose” at Heb 6:17.20:27.

13:43

who worshipped God: The Greek word *se'bo-mai*, here rendered “who worshipped God,” means “to worship; to revere; to venerate.” It could also be rendered “God-fearing; devout.” (See study note on Ac 13:50.) The Syriac *Peshitta* renders it “who feared God.” One translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J¹⁸ in App. C4) uses the divine name here and the whole expression can be rendered “who feared Jehovah.”

the undeserved kindness of God: In view of Paul’s background as a resister of Jesus and his followers (Ac 9:3-5), Paul had every reason to emphasize Jehovah’s undeserved kindness. (See Glossary, “Undeserved kindness.”) Paul realized that it was only by God’s undeserved kindness that he was able to carry out his ministry. (1Co 15:10; 1Ti 1:13, 14) When meeting with the

elders from Ephesus, he speaks of this quality twice. (Ac 20:24, 32) In his 14 letters, Paul mentions “undeserved kindness” some 90 times, far more than any other Bible writer. For example, he refers to the undeserved kindness of God or of Jesus in the opening salutations of all his letters except his letter to the Hebrews, and he uses the expression in the closing remarks of every letter.

13:44

the word of Jehovah: This expression has its background in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it appears as a combination of a Hebrew term for “word” and the divine name. Together with the expression “Jehovah’s word,” it occurs in some 200 verses. (Some examples are found at 2Sa 12:9; 24:11; 2Ki 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isa 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jer 1:4; 2:4; Eze 1:3; 6:1; Hos 1:1; Mic 1:1; Zec 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zec 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo’gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (𐤅𐤍𐤐𐤔). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “the word of Jehovah” in the main text, although many Greek manuscripts of Ac 8:25 read “the word of the Lord,” are explained in App. C.

13:47

Jehovah has commanded us in these words: The quote that follows in this verse is taken from Isa 49:6, where the context of the original Hebrew text clearly identifies Jehovah as the one speaking. (Isa 49:5; compare Isa 42:6.) The fulfillment of the prophecy involves the work that Jehovah’s Servant, Jesus Christ, and his followers would do.—Isa 42:1; see study note on Lu 2:32 and App. C.

to the ends of the earth: Or “to the most distant part of the earth.” This prophecy is quoted from Isa 49:6, where the same Greek expression appears in the *Septuagint*. Isaiah foretold that Jehovah’s servant would be “a light of nations” and that salvation from God would “reach the ends of the earth.” When speaking in Pisidian Antioch, Paul and Barnabas indicated that these prophetic words constituted a command from Jehovah that Christ’s followers should serve as a light to the nations. The Greek expression, here rendered “to the ends of the earth,” is also used at Ac 1:8 (see study note) to show the extent to which Jesus’ followers would be witnesses of him.

13:48

the word of Jehovah: This expression has its background in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it appears as a combination of a Hebrew term for “word” and the divine name. Together with the expression “Jehovah’s word,” it occurs in some 200 verses. (Some examples are found at 2Sa 12:9; 24:11; 2Ki 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isa 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jer 1:4; 2:4; Eze 1:3; 6:1; Hos 1:1; Mic 1:1; Zec 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zec 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo’gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (𐤅𐤄𐤁𐤏). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “the word of Jehovah” in the main text, although many Greek manuscripts of Ac 8:25 read “the word of the Lord,” are explained in App. C.

were rightly disposed for: This expression describes certain Gentiles in Pisidian Antioch who **became believers** after hearing Paul and Barnabas preach. The Greek word here rendered “were rightly disposed for” (a form of the verb *tas’so*) has a wide range of meaning, including “to set; to position; to arrange; to appoint.”

The context helps to determine the intended meaning. Ac 13:46 contrasts certain Jews of Pisidian Antioch with the Gentiles mentioned here in verse 48. On the preceding Sabbath, Paul had given both groups a thorough witness by means of a stirring public discourse. (Ac 13:16-41) According to Paul and Barnabas, the Jews stubbornly rejected “the word of God” and showed by their attitude and actions that they did not “judge [themselves] worthy of everlasting life.” (Ac 13:46) The Gentiles in that city, however, showed a very different attitude. The account says that **they began to rejoice and to glorify the word of Jehovah.** So in this context, the Greek verb *tas’so* conveys the idea that these non-Jews in Antioch “put themselves in a position for” gaining life by showing an attitude, inclination, or disposition that could result in their gaining everlasting life. So the Greek term is appropriately rendered “were rightly disposed for.” Many Bible translations, though, render Ac 13:48 with such expressions as “were destined for; were appointed for,” which could give the impression that these people were predestined by God to gain life. However, neither the immediate context nor the rest of the Bible supports the idea that these Gentiles in Antioch were predestined to gain life, any more than the Jews there were predestined not to gain everlasting life. Paul tried to persuade the Jews to accept the good news, but they made a conscious choice to reject the message. They were not predestined to do so. Jesus explained that some would show by their actions that they are not “well-suited for the Kingdom of God.” (Lu 9:62) By contrast, these Gentiles in Antioch were among those whom Jesus said would show by their attitude that they are “deserving” of the good news.—Mt 10:11, 13.

13:49

the word of Jehovah: This expression has its background in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it appears as a combination of a

Hebrew term for “word” and the divine name. Together with the expression “Jehovah’s word,” it occurs in some 200 verses. (Some examples are found at 2Sa 12:9; 24:11; 2Ki 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; Isa 1:10; 2:3; 28:14; 38:4; Jer 1:4; 2:4; Eze 1:3; 6:1; Hos 1:1; Mic 1:1; Zec 9:1.) When this expression occurs at Zec 9:1 in an early copy of the *Septuagint* found at Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert near the Dead Sea, the Greek word *lo’gos* is followed by the divine name written in ancient Hebrew characters (יהוה). This parchment scroll is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “the word of Jehovah” in the main text, although many Greek manuscripts of Ac 8:25 read “the word of the Lord,” are explained in App. C.

13:50

who were God-fearing: Or “who worshipped God.” The Greek word *se’bo-mai* may also be rendered “to revere; to venerate.” The Syriac *Peshitta* renders the expression “who feared God.” Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J^{7, 8, 10, 18} in App. C4) use the divine name here, and the expression can be rendered “who feared Jehovah.”

13:51

they shook the dust off their feet against them: Paul and Barnabas here applied Jesus’ instruction recorded at Mt 10:14; Mr 6:11; Lu 9:5. Pious Jews who had traveled through Gentile country would shake what they perceived to be unclean dust off their sandals before reentering Jewish territory. However, Jesus apparently had a different meaning in mind when giving these instructions to his disciples. This gesture signified that the disciples disclaimed responsibility for the consequences that would come from God. When Paul did something similar in Corinth by shaking out his garments, he added the explanatory

words: “Let your blood be on your own heads. I am clean.”—See study note on Ac 18:6.

ACTS Study Notes—Chapter 14

14:2

the people: Or “the souls of the people.”—See App. A2 and Glossary, “Soul.”

14:3

by the authority of Jehovah: Lit., “upon the Lord.” (See App. C.) In the context of Ac 14:3, the preposition *e·pi'* (“upon”) is understood to indicate the grounds, or basis, on which the disciples were speaking boldly. The rest of the verse shows that God was bearing witness, or testifying, that what they preached was really his word and that they had his approval and support in doing so. (Compare Ac 4:29-31.) The Greek expression for “upon the Lord” can also be found in the *Septuagint* to render phrases where the Tetragrammaton appears in the original Hebrew text. (Ps 31:6 [30:7, *LXX*]; Jer 17:7) In line with this, some have suggested that the expression also conveys the idea of speaking “in reliance on Jehovah.”

wonders: Or “portents.”—See study note on Ac 2:19.

14:12

Zeus: The supreme god of the polytheistic Greeks. In Lystra, Barnabas was mistakenly identified as Zeus. Ancient inscriptions found near Lystra refer to “priests of Zeus” and “Zeus the sun-god.” The ship Paul traveled on from the island of Malta had the figurehead “Sons of Zeus,” that is, the twin brothers Castor and Pollux.—Ac 14:12; 28:11.

Hermes: A Greek god, said to be the son of Zeus, Hermes was regarded as the messenger of the gods. He was believed to be the discreet counselor of the mythological heroes and considered to be the god of commerce, skillful speech, gymnastic skill, sleep, and dreams. Because Paul took **the lead in speaking**, the inhabitants of the Roman city of Lystra identified Paul with the god Hermes. This identification harmonizes with their conception of Hermes as a divine messenger and a god of skillful speech. In fact, various words related to this name are used in the Scriptures referring to *translation* as well as to *interpretation*. (Some examples are the Greek verb *her·me·neu'o*, rendered “translated” at Joh 1:42 and Heb 7:2, and the noun *her·me·ni'a*, rendered “interpretation” at 1Co 12:10; 14:26; see also study note on Lu 24:27.) Among the archaeological finds in the vicinity of ancient Lystra are a statue of the god Hermes; an altar dedicated to Zeus and Hermes has also been discovered in that area. The Romans identified Hermes with their god of commerce, Mercury.

14:13

garlands: Or “wreaths.” The priest of Zeus may have intended to put these garlands on the heads of Paul and Barnabas, as was sometimes done to idols, or on themselves and the sacrificial animals. Such garlands were generally made of foliage and flowers, though some were made of wool.

14:22

the disciples: Or “the souls of the disciples.”—See App. A2 and Glossary, “Soul.”

14:23

appointed: Here the Scriptures show that traveling overseers, Paul and Barnabas, appointed the elders. They did so by **offering prayer with fasting**, showing that they viewed making

these appointments as a weighty matter. Titus and apparently Timothy are also described as taking part in appointing men as “elders” in the congregations. (Tit 1:5; 1Ti 5:22) The Greek word used here for “appointed,” *khei-ro-to-ne'o*, has the literal meaning “to extend (stretch out; lift up) the hand.” Based on this meaning, some have understood that the elders were elected by the congregation through a show of hands. But this Greek word is also used in a more general sense, without reference to how the appointing was done. First-century Jewish historian Josephus confirms this meaning of the term in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 6, chaps. 4 and 13 (Loeb 6:54 and 6:312), where he uses the same Greek verb to describe God’s appointment of Saul as king. In that case, a show of hands by the congregation of Israel did not vote King Saul into office. Rather, the Scriptures state that the prophet Samuel poured oil on Saul’s head and said: “Has not Jehovah anointed you as a leader?” This showed that Saul was appointed by Jehovah God. (1Sa 10:1) Also, according to the Greek grammatical structure of Ac 14:23, the apostles Paul and Barnabas, not the assembly or congregation, did the appointing (Lit., “stretching out of the hands”). In other situations, when qualified men were appointed to responsible positions in the first-century congregation, the apostles and other authorized men would literally lay their hands on them, a gesture that symbolized confirmation, approval, or appointment.—Compare study note on Ac 6:6.

elders: Lit., “older men.” In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation, although the term sometimes refers to physically older men. (See study note on Mt 16:21.) Just as older, mature men shared the responsibility of leadership and administration in communities of the ancient nation of Israel, so spiritually mature men served in the Christian congregations in the first century C.E. (1Ti 3:1-7; Tit

1:5-9) Although Paul and Barnabas were “sent out by the holy spirit” on this missionary journey, they still prayed and fasted when making appointments. Then they “entrusted [these elders] to Jehovah.” (Ac 13:1-4; 14:23) In addition to Paul and Barnabas, Titus and apparently also Timothy are described as taking part in appointing men as “elders” in the congregations. (Tit 1:5; 1Ti 5:22) There is no record of congregations independently making such appointments. The first-century congregations apparently had a number of elders who served together as a “body of elders.”—1Ti 4:14; Php 1:1.

they entrusted them to Jehovah: The Greek verb rendered “entrusted” is also used at Ac 20:32, where Paul says to the elders from Ephesus: “I entrust you to God,” and at Lu 23:46 to render Jesus’ words: “Father, into your hands I *entrust* my spirit.” This is a quote from Ps 31:5, where the *Septuagint* (30:6, LXX) uses the same Greek word for “entrust” and where the divine name appears in the immediate context of the original Hebrew text. The concept of entrusting oneself to Jehovah is expressed several times in the Hebrew Scriptures.—Ps 22:8; 37:5; Pr 16:3; see App. C.

14:25

the word: There is good manuscript support for the reading “the word” (*ton lo'gon*) here, and most modern translations follow that reading. However, there are other Greek manuscripts that read “the word of the Lord,” (*ton lo'gon tou ky·ri'ou*; see App. C and study note on Ac 8:25) and a few ancient manuscripts read “the word of God.” Additionally, at least two translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J^{17, 28} in App. C4) use the divine name here and in English can be rendered “the word of Jehovah.”

14:27

the door to faith: Or “the door of faith.” Jehovah opened this figurative door by giving people of **the nations**, or non-Jews, the opportunity to acquire faith. In the Scriptural sense, gaining faith includes the idea of cultivating trust that leads to obedient action. (Jas 2:17; see study note on Joh 3:16.) Paul used the term “door” in a figurative sense three times in his letters.—1Co 16:9; 2Co 2:12; Col 4:3.



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Herod Agrippa I

The coin shown here was minted about 43-44 C.E. by Herod Agrippa I, referred to at Ac 12:1 as “Herod the king.” The coin shows on one side the head of Emperor Claudius and on the other side figures of Claudius and Agrippa I. The inscription includes Agrippa’s name. Claudius’ predecessor and nephew, Emperor Caligula (who ruled from 37 to 41 C.E. and who is not mentioned in the Scriptures), appointed Herod Agrippa I to be king in the year 37 C.E. Later, Claudius placed more territory under Agrippa’s jurisdiction. Herod Agrippa I violently persecuted the early Christian congregation; he even had the apostle James executed and Peter imprisoned. (Ac 12:1-4) Herod retained his position of power until Jehovah’s angel struck him and he died.— Ac 12:21-23.

Related Scripture(s) Ac 12:1

- Song 60 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Barnabas and Paul Make Disciples in Faraway Places”:** (10 min.)
Ac 13:2, 3—Jehovah chose Barnabas and Saul for a special work (*bt* 86 ¶4)
Ac 13:12, 48; 14:1—Their hard work yielded results (*bt* 95 ¶5)
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- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ac 12:21-23—What do we learn from what happened to Herod? (*w08* 5/15 32 ¶7)

Ac 13:9—Why was Saul “also called Paul”? (*nwtsty* study notes)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ac 12:1-17

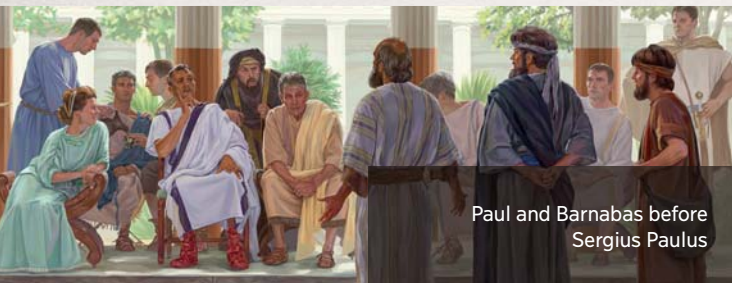
APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) *bt* 78-79 ¶8-9—Theme: Pray for Fellow Believers.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 65
- **“Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Helping ‘Rightly Disposed’ Ones to Become Disciples”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Jehovah God Will Help You* (video category FAMILY).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 45
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 55 and Prayer

ACTS 12-14 | Barnabas and Paul Make Disciples in Faraway Places




Paul and Barnabas before Sergius Paulus

13:12, 48; 14:1, 21, 22

Despite fierce opposition, Barnabas and Paul worked hard to help meek ones to embrace Christianity

- They preached to people of all backgrounds
- They encouraged new disciples “to remain in the faith”

 We can never know who is “rightly disposed for everlasting life” until we offer a witness, perhaps many times. Therefore, we preach to all without partiality.

To whom can I offer a Bible study this week?

What are some ways that I can encourage fellow Christians “to remain in the faith”?



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

●○○ INITIAL CALL

Question: What is the purpose of life?

Scripture: Ge 1:27, 28

Link: Why can we trust that God will fulfill his purpose?



○●○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: Why can we trust that God will fulfill his purpose?

Scripture: Jos 21:45

Link: What has God promised for the future?



○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: What has God promised for the future?

Scripture: Re 21:4

Link: How can we experience the blessings that God has promised?

First Return Visit

Question: Why can we trust that God will fulfil his purpose?

Scripture: Jos 21:45

Link: What has God promised for the future?

Ryan (Publisher): Hi Ben. It's me, Ryan.

Ben (Householder): Hi Ryan.

Ryan (Publisher): Great to see you again. How did the week go for you?

Ben (Householder): Not bad. Thanks.

Ryan (Publisher): That's good. I really enjoyed our conversation the other day, and I wanted to get back to you on the question I left at the end: Why can we trust that God will fulfil his purpose? What do you think?

Ben (Householder): Well, he's God, nobody can stop him.

Ryan (Publisher): True, and his track record proves it. This makes me think about what it says here at Joshua chapter 21 verse 45. Would you like to read that out loud for us?

Ben (Householder): OK. "Not a promise failed out of all the good promises that Jehovah had made to the house of Israel; all of them came true."

Ryan (Publisher): Thank you. So, what kind of reputation has God, whose personal name is Jehovah, established?

Ben (Householder): All of his promises came true.

Ryan (Publisher): Right. So, if you had a friend who always kept his word, would you believe him if he made you a promise?

Ben (Householder): Of course!

Ryan (Publisher): The Bible is full of promises that God has kept.

Ben (Householder): You know that makes sense.

[Ryan soliloquises: Ben seems to be receptive to discussing Bible topics so I think I'll offer him the Teach Us book]

Sample Conversations – December 2018

Ryan (Publisher): What we discussed regarding the purpose of life, is found in this little book: *What Can the Bible Teach Us?* It also contains many other interesting topics such as: *Why so much suffering?* This is your copy, if you'll read it.

Ben (Householder): Yeah. Sure, I'll read it

Ryan (Publisher): The next time I'm here, I'd like to discuss what God has promised for the future. If you want a preview, you'll find some of God's promises on pages 4 and 5 of the book.

Ben (Householder): OK. Thanks.

bt 78-79 ¶8-9—Theme: Pray for Fellow Believers.

⁸ The congregation knew well what to do. Acts 12:5 reads: “Consequently Peter was being kept in the prison; but prayer to God for him was being carried on intensely by the congregation.” Yes, their prayers in behalf of their beloved brother were intense, heartfelt pleas. The death of James had not plunged them into despair; nor had it caused them to view prayer as valueless. Prayers mean a great deal to Jehovah. If they are in harmony with his will, he will answer them. (Heb. 13:18, 19; Jas. 5:16) This is a lesson that Christians today will want to take to heart.

⁹ Do you know of fellow believers who are beset by trials? They may be enduring persecution, governmental bans, or natural disasters. Why not make them the subject of your heartfelt prayers? You may also know of some who are undergoing less noticeable forms of hardship, such as family troubles, discouragement, or some challenge to their faith. If you meditate before praying, you may think of a number of people to mention by name as you speak to Jehovah, the “Hearer of prayer.” (Ps. 65:2) After all, you need your brothers and sisters to do the same for you, should you come upon hard times.

Move Ahead!

(Hebrews 6:1)

1. Move ahead, move ahead to maturity!
Shine the light of the truth so that all may plainly see.
Try your best to improve in your ministry;
Trust in God for true success.
There's a place in the service for all.
It's the work Jesus did, you'll recall.
Look to God for support that you may not fall,
Standing firm for righteousness.
2. Move ahead, move ahead, boldly witnessing!
Everlasting good news to all sorts of people bring.
Join in praise to Jehovah, our God and King,
As we preach from door to door.
Though opposers would like us to fear,
Don't hold back, but let ev'ryone hear.
Tell the news that the Kingdom of God is here.
Teach the truth yet more and more.
3. Move ahead, move ahead, always follow through,
And improve in your skills,
for there's so much work to do.
Let the spirit of God keep on leading you.
Find the joy that is divine.
Love the people you work hard to find.
Keep returning to reach heart and mind.
And assist them to grow and to be refined,
So the light of truth will shine.

- Song 60 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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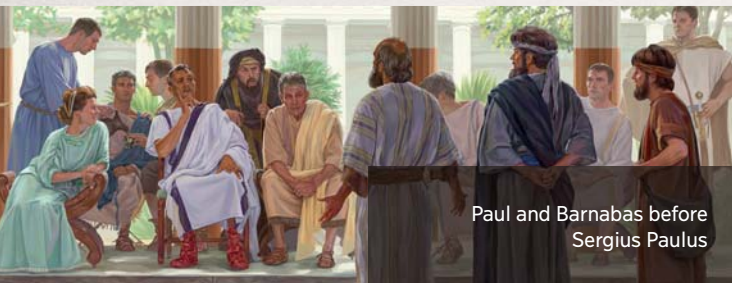
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To whom can I offer a Bible study this week?

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IMPROVING OUR SKILLS IN THE MINISTRY

Helping “Rightly Disposed” Ones to Become Disciples

WHY IMPORTANT: Jehovah makes seeds of truth grow in the hearts of those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life.” (Ac 13:48; 1Co 3:7) We work along with him by focusing our efforts in the ministry on those who respond to what they learn. (1Co 9:26) Bible students need to understand that Christian baptism is necessary to gain salvation. (1Pe 3:21) We help them to become disciples by teaching them to make changes in their life, to preach and teach, and to dedicate their life to Jehovah.—Mt 28:19, 20.

HOW TO DO IT:

- Remind Bible students that the purpose of their study is to help them ‘come to know’ Jehovah and please him. —Joh 17:3
- Help them to make spiritual progress by overcoming obstacles, such as bad habits and questionable association
- Strengthen and encourage them before and after their baptism.—Ac 14:22

WATCH THE VIDEO *JEHOVAH GOD WILL HELP YOU, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:*

- What fears might hold someone back from dedication and baptism?

- How can elders help Bible students to make spiritual progress?

- What does Isaiah 41:10 teach us about Jehovah?

- What qualities will enable us to serve Jehovah acceptably, even though we are imperfect?



How do we work along with Jehovah in making disciples?

Do You Ask for Referrals?

If you have a Bible student who is making good progress, have you asked him if any of his friends or relatives would enjoy learning what the Bible teaches? (Joh 1:40, 41) You might encourage him to describe the study arrangement to his friends and then arrange for you to demonstrate a Bible study to one of them. By asking for referrals, we keep searching for deserving ones.—Mt 10:11.



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Jehovah God Will Help You

[At older son's Baptism]

Youngest Son: When is your turn, Dad?

[Witnesses call at home]

Our family was contacted by Jehovah's Witnesses a few years ago.

[A study is conducted with the family]

Rachel started studying first. Soon, we all joined in. For the first time, we were all learning what the Bible really teaches.

[Husband looks down from the family home at his wife and sons witnessing]

It wasn't long before we were sharing the truth with others.

Well, most of us were. I knew it was the truth, but I didn't know if I could live up to everything Jehovah asks.

[Brother imagines himself out witnessing by himself]

Householder: Get away.

[Brother imagines himself on the platform at the Kingdom Hall]

What if I let everyone down? What if I let Jehovah down?

[At the Kingdom Hall – Brother says to his wife that he will meet her in the car]

Elder: You know, can you just give me one second?

Brother: Yeah, no problem.

Elder: All right. Yeah.

Jehovah God Will Help You

[In the Kingdom Hall carpark]

Elder: You OK?

A kind elder named Ben noticed I was struggling.

[Brother & Ben walking]

He took the initiative to help.

He asked, "What drew you to Jehovah in the first place?"

I guess it was learning that Jehovah isn't harsh and demanding, but that he's a loving Father.

Ben agreed and said, "When we do our best to serve Jehovah, he does the rest."

He explained that Jehovah knows our limitations and doesn't expect perfection. And he's always there to help because he wants us to succeed.

Then he read Isaiah 41:10: [A father and son are walking along a mountainous rocky road] "Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be anxious, for I am your God. I will fortify you, yes, I will help you, [Young boy slips and fall and cries out "Help!" Father helps boy up] I will really hold on to you with my right hand of righteousness."

I don't need to be perfect to serve Jehovah.

[Brother is baptised]

I just need to love him and trust him.

And he'll do the rest.

[Father and son walk hand in hand together]

POWER OVER MANY DEMONS

MATTHEW 8:28-34 MARK 5:1-20 LUKE 8:26-39

- EXPELS DEMONS INTO SWINE

As the disciples return to shore after their harrowing ordeal at sea, they experience quite a shock. Two very fierce men, both demon-possessed, come out from a nearby cemetery and run toward Jesus! One of the men becomes the focus of attention, possibly being more violent and having been controlled longer by the demons.

This pitiful man has been going about naked. Night and day, he is “crying out in the tombs and in the mountains and slashing himself with stones.” (Mark 5:5) He is so wild that people are afraid to pass along that stretch of road. Some have tried to bind him, but he tears the chains apart and breaks the fetters off his feet. Nobody has the strength to subdue him.

As the man approaches Jesus and falls at his



feet, the demons controlling him make him scream: “What have I to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I put you under oath by God not to torment me.” Jesus shows that he has authority over the demons, commanding: “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit.”—Mark 5:7, 8.

In reality, many demons are possessing the man. When Jesus asks, “What is your name?” the reply is: “My name is Legion, because there are many of us.” (Mark 5:9) A Roman legion is made up of thousands of soldiers; hence, many demons are ganging up on this man, reveling in his sufferings. They beg Jesus “not to order them to go away into the abyss.” They apparently realize what is ahead for both them and their leader, Satan.—Luke 8:31.

Grazing nearby is a herd of about 2,000 swine, animals that are unclean according to the Law and that Jews should not even own. The demons say: “Send us into the swine, so that we may enter into them.” (Mark 5:12) Jesus tells them to go, and they enter the swine. At that, all 2,000 of them stampede over the cliff and drown in the sea below.

When those taking care of the swine see this, they rush to report the news in the city and in the countryside. The people come out to see what has happened. As they arrive, they observe that the man from whom the demons came out is now well and acting sanely. Why, he is clothed and sitting at Jesus' feet!

People who hear of this or see the man are gripped with fear, not understanding what this may mean for them. They urge Jesus to leave their territory. While Jesus is boarding the boat to leave, the formerly demonized man begs him to let him come along. But Jesus tells the man: "Go home to your relatives, and report to them all the things Jehovah has done for you and the mercy he has shown you." —Mark 5:19.

Jesus usually instructs those whom he heals not to tell anyone because he does not want people to reach conclusions about him on the basis of sensational reports. In this case, the formerly demonized man is living proof of Jesus' power and can witness to people whom Jesus may not reach personally.

His testimony may also counteract any unfavorable report about the loss of the swine. So the man goes and starts proclaiming throughout the Decapolis what Jesus did for him.

- ◇ Why is attention focused on one of the two demon-possessed men?
- ◇ What do the demons know about their own future?
- ◇ For what reasons does Jesus have the formerly demonized man tell others about what Jesus did?

(Matthew 10:28)

1. Ever onward, O my people,
Let the Kingdom tidings go.
Tremble not before our foe.
Let all lovers of truth know
That my reigning Son, Christ Jesus,
To the earth has cast the foe,
Soon to bind the Devil, Satan,
Letting all his victims go.

(CHORUS)

*Fear them not, O my beloved,
Though their boasting threats may fly.
I will keep my faithful servant
As the apple of my eye.*

2. Even though your foes are many,
Though they threaten and revile,
Though they flatter and they smile,
To mislead and to beguile.
Fear them not, my faithful people,
Nor their persecution's heat,
For I will preserve the faithful
Till the vict'ry is complete.

(Chorus)

3. Never fear you are forgotten;
I am still your strength and shield.
Though you die upon the field,
Even death to me will yield.
Fear them not who kill the body
But cannot destroy the soul.
To the end may you be faithful;
I will bring you to your goal!

(Chorus)

OCTOBER 2018

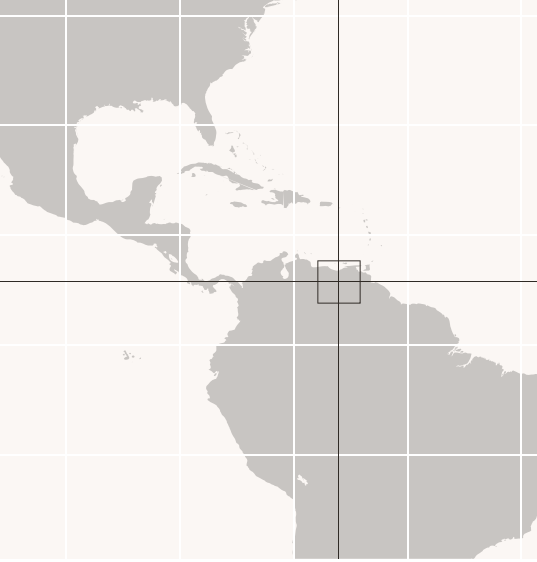
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
DECEMBER 3-30, 2018

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

VENEZUELA

A mother and her children enjoying some refreshment while sharing together in the ministry in Telares de Palo Grande, Caracas

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 WEEK OF DECEMBER 3-9

Speaking the Truth

16 WEEK OF DECEMBER 10-16

Teaching the Truth

Lying has become commonplace in today's society. How did the practice get started? What was the worst lie ever told? How can we protect ourselves from being deceived, and how can we show that we speak the truth with one another? How can we use our Teaching Toolbox to teach the truth in our ministry? These articles will explain.

29

Living Up to Our Name

(Isaiah 43:10-12)

1. Glorious Jehovah, almighty, eternal,
Perfect in justice, in power, in love.
Source of all truth and of infinite wisdom,
You rule as Sov'reign in heaven above.
We as your people delight in your service;
Your Kingdom truth we delight to proclaim.

(CHORUS)

*Being your Witnesses, great is our priv'lege.
Oh, may we ever live up to our name!*

2. Working together in your sacred service
Binds us as brothers in love and in peace.
Teaching the truth and reflecting your glory
Fill us with joy as your praises increase.
Known by your name, O Jehovah, our Father,
We have the honor to add to your fame.

(Chorus)



SONGS:
29, 53

**HOW WOULD YOU
ANSWER?**

What should be the focus of our ministry?

Why have we been given a Teaching Toolbox?

With which tool do you need to become more familiar?

Teaching the Truth

“O Jehovah, . . . the very essence of your word is truth.”—PS. 119:159, 160.

JESUS CHRIST was a carpenter and a minister. (Mark 6:3; Rom. 15:8) He perfectly mastered both trades. As a woodworker, he learned how to handle the tools of the trade, to turn lumber into useful products. As a teacher of the good news, he skillfully used his keen knowledge of the Scrip-

1, 2. (a) What work did Jesus make the primary focus of his life, and why? (b) What must we do to succeed as “God’s fellow workers”?

tures to help the common people understand the truths of God’s Word. (Matt. 7:28; Luke 24:32, 45) At 30 years of age, Jesus laid aside his carpenter’s tools because he knew that being a minister was the more important occupation. He said that the work of declaring the good news of the Kingdom of God was one reason why God sent him to the earth. (Matt. 20:28; Luke 3:23; 4:43) Jesus made the ministry the primary focus of his life, and he wanted others to join him in that work.—Matt. 9:35-38.

² We may not be carpenters, but we certainly are ministers of the good news. That occupation is so important that God is involved; we are called “God’s fellow workers.” (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 6:4) We acknowledge that “the very essence of [Jehovah’s] word is truth.” (Ps. 119:159, 160) That is why we want to be sure that we are “handling the word of the truth aright” in our ministry. (Read 2 Timothy 2:15.) To that end, we keep honing our skills in using the Bible, the principal tool that we use to teach the truth about Jehovah, Jesus, and the Kingdom. To help us succeed in our ministry, Jehovah’s organization has designated other basic tools that we need to be very familiar with. We refer to them as being in our Teaching Toolbox.

³ You may wonder why it is called a Teaching Toolbox and not a Preaching Toolbox. To “preach” means to declare a message; but to “teach” means to sound that message down into a person’s mind and heart, so that he will act on what he learns. During the remaining time that we have to witness, our focus must be on starting Bible studies and teaching people the truth. That means earnestly looking for all those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life” and helping them to become believers.—Read Acts 13:44-48.

⁴ How can we know who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life”? As in the first century, the only way to find those people is to give a witness. Thus, we need to do just as Jesus instructed: “Into whatever city or village you enter, search out who in it is deserving.” (Matt. 10:11) We do not expect insincere people, haughty individuals, or those with no spiritual inclination to respond favorably to the good news. We are looking for people who are honest, humble, and hungry for the truth. We can liken this search to what Jesus as a carpenter might have

3. On what should we focus during the remaining time that we have to witness, and how does Acts 13:48 help us to do that?

4. How can we know who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life,” and how can we find them?

done in looking for just the right wood for making furniture, doors, yokes, or other things. Once he found suitable material, he could get his toolbox, use his skill, and make the item. We must do likewise as we endeavor to make disciples of honesthearted people.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

⁵ As in any toolbox, each tool has a specific purpose. Take as an example the carpentry tools Jesus would have used.* He needed tools to measure and mark lumber; to cut, drill, and shape the wood; and to level, plumb, and fasten the pieces. Likewise, each tool in our Teaching Toolbox has a specific purpose. So let us look in our toolbox and see how to use these essential tools that we have been given.

TOOLS TO INTRODUCE US

⁶ **Contact Cards.** These are small but effective tools that we can use to introduce ourselves to people and direct them to our website, where they can learn more about us and even request a Bible study.

* See the article “The Carpenter” and the box “The Carpenter’s Toolbox” in the August 1, 2010, issue of *The Watchtower*.

5. What do we need to know about the tools in our Teaching Toolbox? Illustrate. (See opening pictures.)

6, 7. (a) How have you used the contact cards? (b) What dual purpose does the congregation meeting invitation serve?

Thus far, over 400,000 online Bible study requests have been received on jw.org, and hundreds more are requested every day! You can likely keep a few contact cards with you to take advantage of opportunities to witness as you go about your daily activities.

⁷ **Invitations.** What we commonly refer to as the congregation meeting invitation serves a dual purpose. It states: “You are invited to study the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Then it gives the option of doing that “at our public meetings” “or with a personal instructor.” Thus, this tool not only identifies us but also invites others who are “conscious of their spiritual need” to study the Bible with us. (Matt. 5:3) Of course, people are welcome to attend our meetings whether they accept a Bible study or not. If they do attend, they will see and hear what we have to offer in the way of true Bible education.

⁸ It is important that we continue to invite people to attend our meetings at least once. Why? They will see a sharp contrast between the spiritually rich environment at our meetings and the spiritually devastated condition within Babylon the Great. (Isa. 65:13) Ray and Linda, a married couple in the United

8. How important is it for people to come to at least one of our meetings? Give an example.

States, noted this some years ago. They decided that they needed to start going to church. They believed in God and felt a spiritual need, so they began going to all the churches in their city one by one. There were scores of churches and many denominations. From the start, the couple decided on two conditions that had to apply to any church they might join. First, they would have to learn something during the religious service, and second, the members of the church must look like people who claim to represent God. After several years, they had gone to every church in town, but they were sorely disappointed. They had not learned anything, and the churchgoers were far from dignified in their appearance. After walking out of the last church on their list, Linda went to her job and Ray went home. On his way, he drove by a Kingdom Hall and thought, 'Why not go in and see what they're all about?' Of course, that was the best experience of all! Everyone at the Kingdom Hall was warm and friendly and dressed very appropriately. Ray sat in the front row and loved what he learned! It was just as the apostle Paul said about the person who comes into a Christian meeting for the first time and declares: "God is really among you." (1 Cor. 14:23-25) Ray attended every Sunday after that; then he came to every

midweek meeting. Linda also began attending, and while in their 70's, they accepted a Bible study and got baptized.

TOOLS TO START CONVERSATIONS

⁹ **Tracts.** We have eight easy-to-use tracts that work very well as tools for starting conversations. Since these tracts began to be released in 2013, some five billion of them have been printed! The beauty of these tools is that when you learn how to use one of them, you are able to use all of them because they follow the same format. How can you use a tract to draw a person into a conversation?

¹⁰ You might choose to use the tract *What Is the Kingdom of God?* Show the person the question on the front as you ask: “Have you ever wondered what the Kingdom of God is? Would you say it is . . . ?” Then ask which of the three answers he would select. Without saying whether his choice is right or wrong, open to “What the Bible Says” on the inside, and share the featured scriptures, Daniel 2:44 and Isaiah 9:6. If possible, continue the discussion. Last, point out the follow-up question on the back under the heading “To Think About”: “What will life be like

9, 10. (a) Why are the tracts easy-to-use? (b) Explain how to use the tract *What Is the Kingdom of God?*

under the rule of God’s Kingdom?” That will provide the basis for your next conversation with the person. When you meet again, you can refer to lesson 7 of the brochure *Good News From God!*, which is one of our tools for starting Bible studies.

TOOLS THAT STIMULATE INTEREST

¹¹ **Magazines.** *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* are the most widely published and translated journals in the world! Because they have broad international exposure, the cover subjects are designed to appeal to people everywhere. We should use them as tools to stimulate a person’s interest in what really matters in life today. So that we can put these magazines in the right hands, however, we need to know the intended audience for each journal.

¹² *Awake!* is designed for readers who may have little or no knowledge of the Bible. They may know nothing about Christian teachings, they may be somewhat distrustful of religion, or they may be unaware that the Bible has practical value. A primary objective of *Awake!* is to convince the reader that

11. What are our magazines designed to do, but what should we know about them?

12. (a) For whom is *Awake!* designed, and what is its objective?
(b) What success have you recently had with this tool?

God exists. (Rom. 1:20; Heb. 11:6) It also aims to help the reader build faith that the Bible “truthfully is . . . the word of God.” (1 Thess. 2:13) The three cover topics for 2018 are: “The Way of Happiness,” “12 Secrets of Successful Families,” and “Help for Those Who Grieve.”

¹³ *The Watchtower*, public edition, focuses on spiritual matters for those who have a measure of respect for God and his Word. Although they may have some knowledge of the Bible, they do not accurately understand its teachings. (Rom. 10:2; 1 Tim. 2:3, 4) The three cover topics for 2018 answer the questions: “Is the Bible Still Relevant Today?,” “What Does the Future Hold?,” and “Does God Care About You?”

TOOLS THAT MOTIVATE

¹⁴ **Videos.** In Jesus’ day, a carpenter used only hand tools. These days, however, woodworkers also have power tools—saws, drills, sanders, nailers, and more. In addition to printed publications, we now have beautiful videos to show people—four of which

13. (a) For whom is the public edition of *The Watchtower* designed? (b) What success have you recently had with this tool?

14. (a) What purpose do the four videos in our Teaching Toolbox serve? (b) What success have you had in showing these videos?

are in our toolbox: *Why Study the Bible?*, *What Happens at a Bible Study?*, *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?*, and *Jehovah's Witnesses—Who Are We?* The videos that are less than two minutes in length work well on the initial call. The longer ones can be used on return visits and with those who have more time. These wonderful tools can motivate people to study the Bible and attend our meetings.

¹⁵ To illustrate, when a sister met a woman who had moved from Micronesia and whose first language is Yapese, our sister showed her *Why Study the Bible?* in her language. When the video began playing, the woman said: “This is my language. I can’t believe it! I can tell from his accent that he is from my island. He speaks my language!” After that, she said that she was going to read and watch everything in her language on jw.org. (Compare Acts 2:8, 11.) Consider another experience. A sister in the United States sent to her nephew overseas a link to the same video in his language. He watched it and e-mailed her: “The part about an evil power controlling the world particularly caught my attention. I signed up for a Bible study.” He lives in a country where our work is restricted!

15. Illustrate the impact that watching one of our videos in their own language can have on people.

TOOLS TO TEACH THE TRUTH

¹⁶ **Brochures.** How can you teach the truth to someone who has limited reading ability or who has no literature in his language? We have just the tool for that—the brochure *Listen to God and Live Forever*.^{*} An excellent tool for starting studies is the brochure *Good News From God!* You can show a person the 14 topics that are listed on the back cover and let him tell you which one interests him the most. Then start the study in that lesson. Have you tried this approach on your return visits? *Who Are Doing Jehovah's Will Today?* is the third brochure in the toolbox. It is designed to direct students to the organization. To learn how to use it on each Bible study, see the March 2017 issue of *Our Christian Life and Ministry—Meeting Workbook*.

¹⁷ **Books.** After a study has been started in a brochure, you can at any point switch to the book *What Can the Bible Teach Us?* This tool will broaden the

^{*} If the person cannot read, you can have him follow along in the brochure *Listen to God*, which contains mostly pictures.

16. Explain the specific purpose of each brochure: (a) *Listen to God and Live Forever*. (b) *Good News From God!* (c) *Who Are Doing Jehovah's Will Today?*

17. (a) What is the specific purpose of each study book? (b) What is required of all those who advance to baptism, and why?

person's knowledge of basic Bible teachings. After completing that book and if the student is making spiritual progress, continue the study in the book *How to Remain in God's Love*. This tool will teach the student how to apply Bible principles in everyday life. Remember, even after their baptism, new ones need to continue their study until completing both of these books. This will help them to have a solid foundation in the truth.—Read Colossians 2:6, 7.

¹⁸ As Jehovah's Witnesses, we have been entrusted with "the message of truth of the good news" that can lead people to everlasting life. (Col. 1:5; read 1 Timothy 4:16.) To that end, we have been given a Teaching Toolbox that is filled with just what we need. (See "Teaching Toolbox.") May we use these tools as skillfully as possible. Each publisher can decide which literature in the toolbox to introduce to an interested person and when. But our objective is not just to distribute literature; nor should we leave literature with people who show no interest in our message. Our goal is to make disciples of people who are honest, humble, and spiritually hungry—people who are "rightly disposed for everlasting life."—Acts 13:48; Matt. 28:19, 20.

18. (a) What does 1 Timothy 4:16 encourage us to do as teachers of the truth, and with what result? (b) As we make use of our Teaching Toolbox, what should be our goal?



TEACHING TOOLBOX

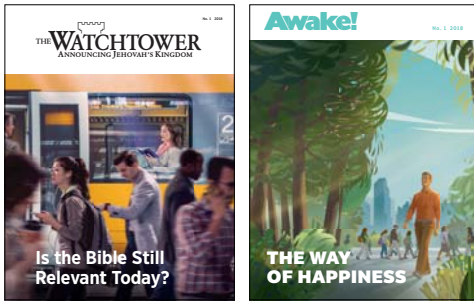
CONTACT CARDS AND INVITATIONS



TRACTS



MAGAZINES



VIDEOS



BROCHURES AND BOOKS



1. Morning comes.

Soon we will be

On our way to preach good news.

But it's dark outside,

And the rain starts to fall.

It would be easy to stay inside,
sleepy-eyed.

(CHORUS)

Positive thoughts and preparation,

Praying that we'll succeed;

This can provide the inspiration,

We'll surely need.

We're not alone; the angels guide us.

Jesus commands them all.

And with a loyal friend beside us,

We'll never fall.

2. Soon we'll see

Joy come our way

If these things we keep in mind.

And Jehovah sees

Ev'ry effort we make,

And he remembers the love we show;
this we know.

(Chorus)

