

# The Acts of the Apostles



## **Volume 1: Chapters 1-12** **A Self Study Guide**

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## Directions:

This is a booklet to aid you in your personal study of this book. Read through the text first, discovering God's precious truths for yourself. Write down the main point of each section of text and note the other key themes in the space provided. The text is provided for you to mark, color, and highlight things you find interesting and important. Use the margins on each side of the text and the backside of the page to make notations of the truths you discover and passages you do not understand. When you believe you have seen all there is in text, read and answer the questions in the booklet pertaining to that section of text. The questions are not an exhaustive list of things to look for in the text. The questions are to help you consider the points that the author was trying to convey to his audience. Be prepared to share your findings in class. To help you in your studies, two study texts are provided. The text on the left is the English Standard Version (ESV). This is an "essentially literally" translation, but maintains a greater readability than more literal translations. The text on the right is the King James 3 (KJ3) by Jay P. Green. This is an extremely literal translation, often sacrificing readability to communicate the literal tenses and meanings of the Greek words. The KJ3 is provided as a text for you when you want to break down the words for a deeper study of the original meaning.

## Introduction:

1. Read through Acts in one sitting. This will help you see the book as a whole unit. Note places in your Bible where there is a natural division in the book, i.e. changes in subject, emphasis, or thought. As you read through the book, use colored pencils to highlight and make notations. Mark any phrases or thoughts that give you an overall impression as to the theme of the book.
2. Jot down key words or phrases as well as key verses that show the themes of Acts.
3. Who wrote the book of Acts? How do you know?
4. Survey:
  - a. What is the purpose of the book of Acts?
  - b. There are a number of ways to outline the book of Acts. Fill in the charts below to determine the different ways to examine the book.

### Geographically:

Acts 1-7:

Acts 8-12:

Acts 13-28:

### Key Audience:

Acts 1-7:

Acts 8-9:

Acts 10-28:

### Apostolic Focus:

Acts 1-12:

Acts 13-28:

1:1 In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach,  
 2 until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.  
 3 To them he presented himself alive after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.  
 4 And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me;  
 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”  
 6 So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”  
 7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.  
 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”  
 9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.  
 10 And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes,  
 11 and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”  
 12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away.  
 13 And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James.  
 14 All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.  
 15 In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said,  
 16 “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.  
 17 For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.”  
 18 (Now this man bought a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out.

1:1 Indeed, O Theophilus, I made the first report concerning all things which Jesus began both to do and to teach,  
 2 until the day He was taken up, having given directions to the apostles whom He had chosen, through the Holy Spirit,  
 3 to whom also He presented Himself living after His suffering, by many infallible proofs, being seen by them through forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God.  
 4 And assembling together with them, He charged them not to leave Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father, “which you heard of Me;  
 5 for John indeed baptized in water, but you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days after.”  
 6 Then, indeed, having come together they questioned Him, saying, Lord, do You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?  
 7 And He said to them, It is not yours to know times or seasons which the Father placed in His own authority;  
 8 but you will receive power, the Holy Spirit having come upon you, and you will be witnesses of Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.  
 9 And having said these things, as they looked on, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him from their eyes.  
 10 And as they were intently looking into the heaven, He having gone, even behold, two men in white clothing stood by them,  
 11 who also said, Men, Galileans, why do you stand looking up to the heaven? This Jesus, the One being taken from you into the heaven, will come in the way you saw Him going into the heaven.  
 12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount, the one being called Of Olive Grove, which is near Jerusalem, having a journey of a sabbath.  
 13 And when they went in, they went up to the upper room where they were waiting: both Peter and James, and John and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the brother of James.  
 14 These all were continuing steadfastly in prayer and in supplication with one mind, with the women, and with Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.  
 15 And in these days, standing up in the midst of the disciples, (and the number of names together being about a hundred and twenty), Peter said,  
 16 Men, brothers, it was necessary for this Scripture to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke before through David’s mouth concerning Judas, the one having become guide to the ones seizing Jesus;  
 17 for he was numbered with us, and obtained the portion of this ministry.  
 18 Indeed, then, this one bought a field out of the reward of unrighteousness; and falling headlong, he burst in the middle, and all his bowels poured out.

1:1-11 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. How long did Jesus appear to people before His ascension? What was Jesus teaching before His ascension?
2. In verse 5, Jesus reiterates the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Where is the teaching of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the gospels? What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the gospels? When did Jesus say the baptism of the Holy Spirit would take place?
3. In light of your above answers, explain what the apostles are asking in verse 6.
4. Explain Jesus' response to the apostles' question. Does Jesus correct their understanding or does Jesus validate their question?

1:12-26 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

5. List the qualifications of an apostle, according to this text:
6. Are there any apostles today? Why or why not?
7. How many are gathered together here? Name some of the notable people who are gathered besides the apostles:

1:19 And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 “For it is written in the Book of Psalms, “ ‘May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it’; and “ ‘Let another take his office.’

21 So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”

23 And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias.

24 And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen

25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”

26 And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

2:1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.

2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.

6 And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

7 And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

8 And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome,

11 both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.”

12 And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”

13 But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.”

1:19 And it became known to all the ones living in Jerusalem, so as that field to be called in their own dialect, Akel Dama, this is, Field of Blood.

20 For it is written in the Book of Psalms, “Let his dwelling become deserted, and he not be living in it.” And, “Let another take his office of overseer.”

21 Therefore, it is necessary that of the men accompanying us all the time in which the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us,

22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when He was taken up from us, for one of these to become a witness of His resurrection with us.

23 And they set two: Joseph, the one being called Barsabas, who was called Justus, and Matthias.

24 And having prayed, they said, You, Lord, knower of all hearts, show which one You chose from these two,

25 to take the share of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.

26 And they gave their lots. And the lot fell on Matthias; and he was counted with the eleven apostles.

2:1 And in the day to be fulfilled, the day of Pentecost, they were all with one mind upon the same place and purpose.

2 And suddenly a sound came out of the heaven, as being borne along by a violent wind! And it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And tongues as of fire appeared to them, being distributed, and it sat on each one of them.

4 And they were all filled of the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave to them to speak.

5 Now there were Jews dwelling in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation of the ones under the heaven.

6 But this sound occurring, the throng came together and were confounded, because they were each one hearing them speaking in his own dialect.

7 And all were amazed and marveled, saying to one another, Behold, are not all these, the ones speaking, Galileans?

8 And how do we hear each one in our own dialect in which we were born,

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and those living in Mesopotamia, both Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

10 both Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the regions of Libya over against Cyrene, and the sojourning Romans, both Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretans and Arabians; in our own languages we hear them speaking the great deeds of God?

12 And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, What wishes this to be?

13 But ridiculing, others said, They are filled of sweet new wine.

8. Peter quotes Psalm 69:25 and Psalm 109:8 to draw the conclusion to appoint another apostle. Read Psalm 109 in its entirety. What was happening in David's life in this psalm that Peter would draw a parallel to the events of Judas and Jesus?

## **ACTS**

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## **2**

2:1-13 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other key themes:

1. What is Pentecost? What was this festival called in the Old Testament? When was this festival observed? Why is this festival important to the passage?
2. Why "tongues as of fire?" Do some research and find out what you can about what tongues of fires might have signified.
3. Who, exactly, did the Holy Spirit fall on? Give arguments to back up your answer.
4. As you carefully read the text, where did this event take place? How do you know?

2:14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words.

15 For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

16 But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

17 “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;

18 even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

19 And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke;

20 the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

21 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—

23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

25 For David says concerning him, “I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken;

26 therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope.

27 For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.

28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’

29 “Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne,

31 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.

33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and

2:14 But standing up with the Eleven, Peter lifted up his voice and spoke out to them, Men, Jews, and all the ones living in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words:

15 For these are not drunk, as you assume, for it is the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that having been spoken by the prophet Joel,

17 “And it shall be” in the last days, God says, “I will pour from My Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy;” “and your young men shall see visions,” “and your old men shall dream dreams;”

18 “and also I will pour out My Spirit on My slaves and slave women in those days,” and they shall prophesy.

19 “And I will give wonders in the heaven above,” and miraculous signs “on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

20 The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the” “coming of the great and glorious” “day of the Lord.”

21 “And it shall be that everyone who shall call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

22 Men, Israelites, hear these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man from God, having been exhibited among you by works of power and wonders and miraculous signs, which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know,

23 this One given up by the before-determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you having taken by lawless hands, having crucified Him, you killed Him.

24 But God raised Him up, loosening the throes of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

25 For David said as to Him, “I foresaw the Lord before Me through all, because He is at My right hand, that I not be shaken.

26 Because of this My heart rejoiced, and My tongue exulted; and My flesh also will dwell on hope,

27 because You will not abandon My soul in Hades, nor will You give Your Holy One to see corruption.

28 You revealed to Me paths of life; You will fill Me with joy with Your face.”

2:29 Men, brothers, it is permitted to say to you with boldness concerning the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is among us until this day.

30 Being a prophet, therefore, and knowing that God swore with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, as concerning flesh, to raise the Christ to sit down on his throne,

31 foreseeing, he spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, “that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.”

32 This Jesus, God raised up, of which we all are witnesses.

2:14-28 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

5. How many people stand up and begin preaching? How many people had the Holy Spirit fall on them?

6. How were the events of Pentecost the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy?

7. How were the events surrounding Jesus and the events of Pentecost the fulfillment of David's prophecy?

2:29-36 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

8. Now that you have read all of Peter's sermon, write down the key points of his message.

9. Upon ascending to the Father, what does Peter say that Christ received? Explain exactly what Christ received.

10. What is the "this" that was poured out that the people were "seeing and hearing?" How does this fit Peter's quoted prophecies?

2:37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

38 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.”

41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common.

45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.

46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts,

47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

3:1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

2 And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple.

3 Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms.

4 And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.”

5 And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.

6 But Peter said, “I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!”

7 And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.

8 And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

2:37 But hearing this, they were pierced in the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men, brothers, what shall we do?

38 And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, each one of you on the name of Jesus Christ to remission of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all the ones unto far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call.

40 And with many other words he earnestly testified and exhorted, saying, Be saved from this perverse generation.

41 Truly, then, the ones gladly welcoming his words were baptized. And about three thousand souls were added that day.

42 And they were continuing steadfastly in the doctrine of the apostles, and in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came to be to every soul, and many wonders and miraculous signs occurred through the apostles.

44 And all the believing ones were on the same place and had all things common.

45 And they sold possessions and belongings and divided them to all, according as anyone had need.

46 And according to a day continuing steadfastly with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they shared food in great joy and simplicity of heart,

47 praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to the assembly the ones being saved according to a day.

3:1 And on the same day Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth.

2 And a certain man, being lame from his mother’s womb, was being carried, whom they put according to a day at the door of the temple, the one being called Beautiful, to ask merciful gifts from the ones going into the temple;

3 who seeing Peter and John being about to go into the temple, asked merciful gifts.

4 But Peter, together with John, gazing intently toward him, Peter said, Look toward us!

5 And he attended to them, expecting to receive something from them.

6 But Peter said, There is no silver and gold to me, but what I have, this I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, rise up and walk about!

7 And laying hold of the right hand of him, he raised him up. And immediately his feet and ankle-bones were made firm.

8 And leaping up, he stood and walked about, and went with them into the temple, walking about and leaping, and praising God.

2:37-47 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

11. What was the gift of the Holy that had been promised to Jews and to the Gentiles? Why or why not is the Holy Spirit the gift?

12. How does Peter's exhortation to the people to "save themselves" fit the prophecy of Joel, quoted by Peter in Acts 2:17-21? In other words, what were the people saving themselves from?

13. What were the people being added to when they were saved (vs. 47)? How does this fit the gift of the Holy Spirit which had been promised by the prophets?

## **ACTS**

## **3**

3:1-8 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. Notice Peter's response in verse 6. Considering what we have read in Acts 2:44-45 and what we will read in Acts 4:34-35, why does Peter say that he does not have silver and gold?

3:9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God,  
 10 and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.  
 11 While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's, astounded.  
 12 And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?  
 13 The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him.  
 14 But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,  
 15 and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.  
 16 And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.  
 17 "And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.  
 18 But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.  
 19 Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out,  
 20 that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus,  
 21 whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.  
 22 Moses said, "The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.  
 23 And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people."  
 24 And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days.  
 25 You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed."  
 26 God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness."

3:9 And all the people saw him walking about and praising God.  
 10 And they recognized him, that it was the one who was sitting for merciful gifts at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. And they were filled with amazement and ecstasy at the thing having happened to him.  
 11 And the healed lame one was holding to Peter and John, and all the people ran together to them on the porch called Solomon's, greatly amazed.  
 12 And seeing this, Peter answered to the people, Men, Israelites, why do you marvel at this one? Or why do you stare at us, as if by our own power or piety we have made him to walk about?  
 13 The "God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob," "the God of our fathers," glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you gave over, and denied Him to the face of Pilate, judging to set that One free.  
 14 But you denied the Holy and Just One, and asked for a man, a murderer, to be granted to you.  
 15 And the Author of Life you killed, whom God raised up from the dead, of which we are witnesses.  
 16 And on the faith of His name, this one whom you see and know was made firm by His name, and the faith which came through Him gave to him this complete soundness before you all.  
 17 And now, brothers, I know that you acted according to ignorance, as also did your rulers.  
 18 But what things God before proclaimed through the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ should suffer, He fulfilled in this way.  
 19 Therefore, repent, and turn back, for the blotting out of your sins, so that times of refreshing may come from the face of the Lord,  
 20 and that He may send forth the One proclaimed to you before, Jesus Christ,  
 21 whom Heaven truly needs to receive until the times of restoration of all things, of which God spoke through the mouth of all His holy prophets from the age.  
 22 For Moses indeed said to the fathers, "The Lord your God will raise up to you a Prophet from among your brothers, One like me; you shall hear Him according to all things," as many as He may speak to you.  
 23 And it shall be, every soul, whoever should not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.  
 24 And also all the prophets, from Samuel and the ones in order, as many as spoke, also before announced these days.  
 25 You are sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made to our fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in your Seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed."  
 26 Having raised up His Servant Jesus, God sent Him first to you, blessing you in turning away each one from your iniquities.

3:9-26 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

2. Based on verse 19, explain repentance. Notice that Peter commands the people to do two things: (1) repent and (2) turn. What is repentance? Is Peter being redundant?

**DIFFICULT TEXT:**

3. Peter says that the people's repentance had a purpose. Explain the following terms Peter uses:

He may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus

Times of restoration of all things:

4. After you have written down your answers concerning the text, now grab some commentaries on verse 20-21. Write down their different answers concerning this text. Are their answers plausible? Write arguments for and against the positions you find.

5. How do your above answers fit into the prophecies of Moses and all the prophets from Samuel on?

ESV

4:1 And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them,

2 greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

4 But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

5 On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem,

6 with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders,

9 if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed,

10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well.

11 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.

12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

14 But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition.

15 But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another,

16 saying, "What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

17 But in order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name."

18 So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge,

20 for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."

21 And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened.

KJ3

4:1 And as they were speaking to the people, the priests, and the temple commander, and the Sadducees,

2 being distressed because of their teaching of the people, and continuing to proclaim in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them into custody until the morrow, for it was already evening.

4 But many of the ones hearing the Word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

5 And it happened on the next day that the rulers and elders and scribes gathered into Jerusalem;

6 also Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the high priestly family.

7 And standing them in the midst, they were inquiring, By what sort of power, or by what kind of name did you do this?

8 Then being filled of the Holy Spirit, Peter said to them, Rulers of the people and elders of Israel,

9 if we are being examined today on a good work of an infirm man, by what this one has been healed,

10 let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised up from the dead ones, in this name this one stands before you whole.

11 "This One is the Stone" having been despised by you, the ones building, the One coming to be into "the Head of the Corner;"

12 and there is salvation in no other One, for neither is there another name under Heaven having been given among men by which it is necessary for us to be saved.

13 But beholding the boldness of Peter and John, and having perceived that they are uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they recognized them, that they were with Jesus.

14 But seeing the man standing with them, the one having been healed, they had nothing to speak against him.

15 But commanding them to go outside the sanhedrin, they conferred together with one another,

16 saying, What may we do to these men? For that a known miraculous sign indeed has occurred through them is evident to all the ones living in Jerusalem, and we are not able to deny it.

17 But that it may not be spread abroad further to the people, let us threaten them with a threat that they no longer speak on this name, to no one of men.

18 And calling them, they ordered them not at all to speak, nor to teach on the name of Jesus.

19 But answering them Peter and John said, Whether it is right before God to listen to you rather than God, you judge.

20 For we are not able not to speak what we saw and heard.

21 But having threatened them again, they released them, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people, because all glorified God on the thing happening.

4:1-12 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

## KEY INFORMATION:

The Sanhedrin was the highest Jewish council in the first century. The word Sanhedrin is usually translated “council” in most versions. The Council had seventy-one members over which a high priest presided. The Sanhedrin included both of the main Jewish parties, Sadducees and Pharisees, among its membership. Since the high priest presided, the Sadducean priestly party seems to have been predominant, but some leading Pharisees also were members.

1. Who does Luke record as being the high priest? Who is the high priest in the gospels that has Jesus killed? How do we reconcile these two different people?
2. What does it mean that Peter was “filled with the Holy Spirit” in verse 8? Use other scriptures to defend your answer.
3. What is the point of calling Jesus “the stone that was rejected?” What arguments are being presented by Peter with this?

4:13-21 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

4. The Sanhedrin perceives that Peter and John were “uneducated, common men.” What does this mean? Were Peter and John unqualified to be apostles?

## ESV

4:22 For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than forty years old.

23 When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

24 And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them,

25 who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?

26 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed' —

27 for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness,

30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

34 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold

35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus,

37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

## KJ3

4:22 For the man on whom this miraculous sign of healing had occurred was more than forty years of age.

23 And being set free, they came to their own and reported to them as many things as the chief priests and elders said.

24 And hearing they with one passion lifted voice to God and said, Master, You are the God, the One "making the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all things in them,"

25 who through the mouth of Your servant David said, "Why did the nations rage, and the peoples meditate vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were assembled on the same day against the Lord, and against His Anointed One."

27 For on a truth both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the nations and the peoples of Israel, were assembled against Your holy Servant, Jesus, whom You anointed,

28 to do as many things as Your hand and Your purpose before determined to occur.

29 And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings and give to Your slaves to speak Your Word with all boldness,

30 in Your hand to stretch out unto healing and miraculous signs and wonders to happen through the name of Your holy Servant, Jesus.

31 And they having petitioned, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness.

32 And of the multitude of those who believed, the heart and the soul were one. And no one said any of the possessions belonging to him to be his own, but all things were common to them.

33 And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

34 For neither was anyone needy among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses, selling them, they brought the value of the things being sold,

35 and laid them at the feet of the apostles. And it was distributed to each one according as any had need.

36 And Joses, the one being named Barnabas by the apostles, which being translated is, Son of Consolation, a Levite, a Cypriot by nation,

37 a field being his, having sold it, he brought the money and placed it by the feet of the apostles.

4:22-37 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

5. Why is the lame man's age given to us now?

6. Explain how David's prophecy, quoted in verses 25-26, were fulfilled here. Is this what the original prophecy was speaking about?

6. At the conclusion of the scene, "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (vs. 31). What exactly does it mean that they were filled with the Holy Spirit? What happened?

7. Describe the circumstances and conditions of living for the first century Christians:

8. Who is Joses? Why is his name changed? Where is he from? What tribe is he from?

5:1 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property,  
 2 and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet.  
 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?  
 4 While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."  
 5 When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it.  
 6 The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him.  
 7 After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.  
 8 And Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much."  
 9 But Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."  
 10 Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.  
 11 And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.  
 12 Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico.  
 13 None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem.  
 14 And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,  
 15 so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them.  
 16 The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.  
 17 But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy  
 18 they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.

5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a property,  
 2 and kept back for himself from the price, his wife also being aware of it, and bringing a certain part, he placed it at the feet of the apostles.  
 3 But Peter said, Ananias, why did Satan fill your heart for you to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself from the price of the land?  
 4 Remaining, did it not remain yours? And being sold, was it not in your authority? Why is it you put this thing into your heart? You did not lie to men, but to God!  
 5 And hearing these words, Ananias falling down, he expired. And great fear came on all the ones hearing these words.  
 6 And rising up the young men wrapped him, and carrying out, they buried him.  
 7 And it happened, about an interval of three hours, not knowing the thing having happened, his wife also came in.  
 8 And Peter answered her, Tell me if you gave over the land for so much? And she said, Yes, of so much.  
 9 And Peter said to her, Why was it that it was agreed with you to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of the ones burying your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.  
 10 And she immediately fell by his feet and expired. And coming in, the young men found her dead, and carrying her out, they buried her beside her husband.  
 11 And great fear came on all the assembly and on all the ones hearing these things.  
 12 And through the hands of the apostles many miraculous signs and wonders among the people took place. And they were all with one mind in Solomon's Porch.  
 13 But of the rest, no one dared to be joined to them, but the people magnified them.  
 14 And more believing ones were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and of women,  
 15 so as to bring out the sick ones along the streets, and to place them on pallets and mattresses, that at the coming of Peter, if even his shadow might overshadow some one of them.  
 16 And also the multitude came together from the round about cities, bringing sick ones into Jerusalem, and ones being disturbed by unclean spirits, who were all being healed.  
 17 And rising up, the high priest and all the ones with him, which is the sect of the Sadducees, were filled of jealousy,  
 18 and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them publicly in custody.

5:1-18 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. How does the information about what Barnabas did in the last chapter tie into what Ananias and Sapphira did?
  
2. Write down everything we learn from the story of Ananias and Sapphira:
  
3. Why, exactly, did God kill Ananias and Sapphira for lying?
  
4. Note the two instances where the scriptures say that “great fear came upon” the people. Write down the reason for the people’s fear.
  
5. What does it mean that Ananias and Sapphira “tested the Spirit of the Lord?”
  
6. Who was performing the miracles, according to the text?
  
7. Why did no one dare to join with the apostles?
  
8. Explain the actions of the multitudes in verses 15-16:

5:19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said,  
 20 "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."  
 21 And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach. Now when the high priest came, and those who were with him, they called together the council and all the senate of Israel and sent to the prison to have them brought.  
 22 But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported,  
 23 "We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them we found no one inside."  
 24 Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, wondering what this would come to.  
 25 And someone came and told them, "Look! The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people."  
 26 Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.  
 27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them,  
 28 saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us."  
 29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men.  
 30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.  
 31 God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.  
 32 And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."  
 33 When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them.

5:19 But an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison during the night, and leading them out, he said,  
 20 Go! And standing in the temple, speak to the people all the words of this Life.  
 21 And hearing, they went into the temple about daybreak and were teaching. But having come near, the high priest and the ones with him called together the sanhedrin and all the eldership of the sons of Israel. And they sent to the jail to have them brought.  
 22 But having come near, the officers did not find them in the prison. And returning, they reported,  
 23 saying, Indeed we found the jail having been shut in all security, and the guards outside standing before the doors. But opening it, we found no one inside.  
 24 And when they heard these words, both the priest and the temple commander and the chief priests were perplexed about them, what this might come to be.  
 25 But having come, someone reported to them, saying, Behold, the men whom you put in the prison are in the temple, standing and teaching the people.  
 26 Then the commander going with the officers, they brought them, not with force, for they feared the people, that they might not be stoned.  
 27 And bringing them, they stood them in the sanhedrin. And the high priest asked them,  
 28 saying, Did we not command you by a command that you not teach on this name? And, behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine and intend to bring on us the blood of this man.  
 29 But answering Peter and the apostles said, It is right to obey God rather than men.  
 30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you seized, hanging Him on a tree.  
 31 This One God has exalted as a Ruler and Savior to His right hand, to give to Israel repentance and remission of sins.  
 32 And we are His witnesses of these things, and also the Holy Spirit, whom God gave to the ones obeying Him.  
 33 But the ones hearing were cut through, and they took counsel to kill them.

5:19-33 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

9. What were the apostles commanded to do when they were released from prison by the angel? Would you have obeyed the angel's command?

10. Explain the miracle that takes place. What makes this a miracle?

11. Why weren't the apostles arrested by force? What does this tell you about the crowds?

12. Read verse 28 carefully. Then write down what the apostles must have been preaching in the temple courts.

13. Explain the apostles' defense before the Sanhedrin in verses 29-32:

34 But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while.

35 And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men.

36 For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing.

37 After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered.

38 So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or this undertaking is of man, it will fail;

39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God!" So they took his advice,

40 and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.

42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

6:1 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.

2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.

3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch.

6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

34 But a certain one standing up in the sanhedrin, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law honored by all the people, commanded the apostles to be put outside a little while.

35 And he said to them, Men, Israelites, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do on these men.

36 For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming himself to be somebody, to whom was joined a number of men, about four hundred, who were killed, and all, as many as were persuaded by him, were dispersed and came to nothing.

37 After this, Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the Registration. And he drew considerable people after him. Yet that one perished, and all were scattered, as many as were persuaded by him.

38 And now I say to you, stand off from these men and leave them alone; because if this counsel is of men, or this work, it will be destroyed.

39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to destroy it, lest even you will be found fighting against God.

40 And they were persuaded by him. And calling the apostles, and having scourged them, they charged them not to speak on the name of Jesus, and set them free.

41 Then they indeed departed from the face of the sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were deemed worthy to be dishonored on behalf of His name.

42 And every day they did not cease teaching and preaching the gospel of Jesus the Christ in the temple, and according to each house.

6:1 But in those days, the disciples having multiplied, a murmuring of the Hellenists toward the Hebrews occurred, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving.

2 And having called near the multitude of the disciples, the Twelve said, It is not pleasing to us, having left the Word of God, to serve tables!

3 Then brothers, be looking for men among you receiving testimony, seven men full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint over this need.

4 But we shall continue steadfastly in prayer and the service of the Word!

5 And the saying was pleasing before all the multitude. And they chose out Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,

6 each of whom they made stand before the apostles. And having prayed, they placed their hands on them,

7 And the Word of God was growing, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem was multiplying exceedingly. Even a great crowd of the priests were obeying the faith!

5:34-42 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

14. What is the instruction of Gamaliel?

15. What historical events is Gamaliel describing in his advice?

16. What happened to the apostles? What was the reaction of the apostles?

## **ACTS**

**6**

6:1-7 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. Describe the problem with the widows:

2. What is the solution the apostles give?

3. What important lessons do we learn from the apostles' solution and their answer in verse 2?

a. Apply those lessons to the elders:

b. Apply those lessons to the evangelist:

6:8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people.

9 Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen.

10 But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

11 Then they secretly instigated men who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God."

12 And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council,

13 and they set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law,

14 for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us."

15 And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

7:1 And the high priest said, "Are these things so?"

2 And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,

3 and said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.'

4 Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living.

5 Yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him, though he had no child.

6 And God spoke to this effect—that his offspring would be sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years.

7 'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.'

8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

9 "And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him

10 and rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household.

11 Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food.

12 But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first visit.

13 And on the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh.

14 And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all.

15 And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers,

16 and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb

6:8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, was doing wonders and great signs among the people.

9 But some of the ones of the synagogue being called of the Libertines, rose up, also some Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some of the ones from Cilicia and Asia Minor, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they had no strength to stand against the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.

11 Then they suborned some men to be saying, We have heard him speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God!

12 And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes. And coming on, they together seized him and led him into the sanhedrin.

13 And they stood up false witnesses, who were saying, This man does not cease speaking blasphemous words against this holy place and the Law;

14 for we have heard him saying that this One, Jesus the Nazarene, will destroy this place and will change the customs which Moses gave over to us.

15 And having looked intently at him, all the ones having sat in the sanhedrin, saw his face as if it were the face of an angel.

7:1 And the high priest said, Tell me then if you thus hold these things?

2 And he said, Men, brothers, and fathers, listen! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, being in Mesopotamia before he lived in Haran,

3 and said to him, "Go out from your land and from your kindred," "and come into a land which I will show to you."

4 Then going out from the land of the Chaldeans, he lived in Haran. And after his father died, God moved him from there into this land in which you now live.

5 And He did not give to him an inheritance in it, not even a step of a foot. And He promised to give it to him for a possession and to his seed after him, there being no child to him.

6 And God spoke thus, that his seed would be an alien in a strange land, and they would enslave it and mistreat it four hundred years.

7 And God said, I will judge the nation to which you will be in bondage." And, After these things they will come out and will serve Me in this place.

8 And He gave to him a covenant of circumcision; and so he fathered Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day. And Isaac fathered Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs.

9 And being jealous of Joseph, the patriarchs gave him over into Egypt; and God was with him,

10 and plucked him out from all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh appointed him to be ruling over Egypt and all his household.

11 But a famine came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction. And our fathers did not find food.

12 But hearing grain was in Egypt, Jacob sent our fathers out first.

13 And at the second time, Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh.

14 And sending, Joseph called his father Jacob and all his kindred, seventy-five souls in all.

6:8-15 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

4. What are the charges against Stephen?

5. Based upon these charges, what do you think Stephen was preaching?

## **ACTS**

## **7**

7:1-16 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. Why do you think Stephen begins his defense against these charges by starting with the history of Israel?

2. What are some key themes thus far in Stephen's defense?

that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

17 “But as the time of the promise drew near, which God had granted to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt

18 until there arose over Egypt another king who did not know Joseph.

19 He dealt shrewdly with our race and forced our fathers to expose their infants, so that they would not be kept alive.

20 At this time Moses was born; and he was beautiful in God’s sight. And he was brought up for three months in his father’s house,

21 and when he was exposed, Pharaoh’s daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son.

22 And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.

23 “When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel.

24 And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian.

25 He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand.

26 And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?’

27 But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?’

28 Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’

29 At this retort Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

30 “Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush.

31 When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look, there came the voice of the Lord:

32 ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and did not dare to look.

33 Then the Lord said to him, “Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.

34 I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.’

35 “This Moses, whom they rejected, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge?’—this man God sent as both ruler and redeemer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush.

36 This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in Egypt and at the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years.

37 This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, ‘God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.’

38 This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us.

39 Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt,

15 And Jacob went down into Egypt and expired, he and our fathers.

16 And they were carried into Shechem, and were put in the tomb which Abraham bought for a price of silver from the sons of Hamor of Shechem.

17 But as the time of the promise drew near, which God swore to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt,

18 until “another king rose up” “who did not know Joseph.”

19 Dealing slyly with our family, this one mistreated our fathers, causing their infants to be exposed so as not to be kept alive.

20 In which time Moses was born and was truly fair to God; who was reared three months in his father’s house.

21 And he being exposed, Pharaoh’s daughter took him up and reared him for a son to her.

22 And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of Egyptians and was powerful in words and in works.

23 And when a time of forty years was fulfilled to him, it arose in his heart to look upon his brothers, the sons of Israel.

24 And seeing one being wronged, he defended him, and he avenged the one being oppressed, striking the Egyptian.

25 And he thought his brothers would perceive that God would give them deliverance by his hand. But they did not perceive.

26 And on the following day he appeared to them while fighting. And he urged them to peace, saying, Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong one another?

27 But the one wronging the neighbor thrust him away, saying, Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us?

28 Do you not want to kill me in what way you killed the Egyptian yesterday?

29 “And Moses fled” at this word. “And he became an alien in the land of Midian,” where he fathered two sons.

30 And forty years being fulfilled to him, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire of a bush in the desert of Mount Sinai.

31 And seeing, Moses marveled at the sight. And he coming up to closely observe, a voice of the Lord came to him:

32 “I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” But becoming trembling, Moses did not dare to closely look.

33 And the Lord said to him, “Loose the sandal from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.”

34 “Seeing, I saw the mistreatment of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and I came down to deliver them. And now, come, I will send you to Egypt.

35 This Moses, whom they denied, saying, Who appointed you a ruler and a judge, this one God has sent as ruler and redeemer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the Bush.

36 This one led them out, having worked wonders and miraculous signs in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea, and forty years in the wilderness.

37 This is the Moses, the one who said to the sons of Israel, “The Lord your God will raise up a Prophet to you from your brothers, One like me.” You shall hear Him.

38 This is the one who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, who received living words to give to us,

39 to whom our fathers did not desire to give ear, but thrust him away, and turned their hearts back to Egypt,

7:17-41 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

3. What does Moses' life story have to do with Stephen's defense? What is Stephen trying to prove by relating these points from Moses' life?

4. Key on verse 35 and explain what Stephen is pointing out here:

5. Key on verse 36 and explain what Stephen is pointing out here:

6. Key on verse 39 and explain what Stephen is arguing:

7. Write down other key themes in Stephen's defense:

40 saying to Aaron, 'Make for us gods who will go before us. As for this Moses who led us out from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'

41 And they made a calf in those days, and offered a sacrifice to the idol and were rejoicing in the works of their hands.

42 But God turned away and gave them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets: "Did you bring to me slain beasts and sacrifices, during the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?"

43 You took up the tent of Moloch and the star of your god Rephan, the images that you made to worship; and I will send you into exile beyond Babylon.'

44 "Our fathers had the tent of witness in the wilderness, just as he who spoke to Moses directed him to make it, according to the pattern that he had seen.

45 Our fathers in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our fathers. So it was until the days of David,

:46 who found favor in the sight of God and asked to find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob.

47 But it was Solomon who built a house for him.

48 Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands, as the prophet says,

49 "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?"

50 Did not my hand make all these things?"

51 "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you.

52 Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered,

53 you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

54 Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him.

55 But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

56 And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

57 But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him.

58 Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

60 And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

40 saying to Aaron, "Make for us gods which will go before us; for this Moses who led us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him."

41 And they made a calf in those days, and brought up a sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hands.

42 But God turned and gave them over to serve the host of the heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: "Did you not bring victims and sacrifices to Me forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?"

43 And you took up the tent of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, the figures which you made" "in order to worship them. And I will remove you beyond" Babylon.

44 The tent of the testimony was among our fathers in the wilderness, even as the One commanded, speaking to Moses to make it according to the pattern which he had seen,

45 which also was brought in, our fathers having inherited with Joshua, in the taking of possession of the nations, whom God thrust out from the face of our fathers, until the days of David,

46 who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob;

47 but Solomon built Him a house.

48 But the Most High does not dwell in temples made by hand, as the prophet says,

49 "Heaven is My throne, and the earth a footstool of My feet; what sort of house will you build Me," "says the Lord," "or what the place of My rest?"

50 "Did not My hand make all these things?"

51 Oh stiffnecked and uncircumcised ones in heart and in the ears! You always fall against the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, you also do.

52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed the ones before proclaiming concerning the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become betrayers and murderers,

53 who received the Law by the ordinances of angels, and did not keep it.

54 And hearing these things, they were cut to their hearts and gnashed the teeth on him.

55 But being full of the Holy Spirit, looking intently into the heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right of God.

56 And he said, Behold, I see the heavens having been opened, and the Son of man standing at the right of God!

57 And crying out with a loud voice, they held their ears and rushed on him with one mind.

58 And throwing him outside the city, they stoned him. And the witnesses put off their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, he calling on God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And placing the knees, he cried out with a loud voice, Lord, do not make this sin stand against them. And having said this, he fell asleep.

7:42-60 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

8. Explain what Stephen is saying in verses 42-43, a quotation from Amos 5:25-27:

9. What does Solomon building a temple have to do with Solomon's defense?

10. Compare the response of these Sanhedrin leaders in verse 54 with the response of the people in the temple courts in Acts 2:37. How was their response the same? How was their response different?

11. What does it mean that Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit in verse 55?

12. What do we learn from Stephen's actions? What applications can you make to your own life?

8:1 And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2 Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him.

3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

4 Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word.

5 Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ.

6 And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did.

7 For unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying with a loud voice, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed.

8 So there was much joy in that city.

9 But there was a man named Simon, who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great.

10 They all paid attention to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great."

11 And they paid attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic.

12 But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed.

14 Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John,

15 who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit,

16 for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

17 Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money,

19 saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!

21 You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.

22 Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you.

23 For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity."

24 And Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

25 Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

1 And Saul was consenting to the killing of him. And in that day a great persecution took place on the assembly, the one in Jerusalem; and all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2 But devout men together carried Stephen and made great lamentation over him.

3 But Saul ravaged the assembly, having entered, going in according to the houses; dragging away men and women, he gave them over into prison.

4 Then, indeed, the ones being scattered, were going about, preaching the gospel, the Word.

5 And going down to a city of Samaria, Philip proclaimed Christ to them.

6 And with one mind the crowds heeded that being said by Philip in their hearing, and seeing the many miraculous signs which he did.

7 For many of the ones having unclean spirits, crying with a great voice, they came out. And many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed.

8 And great joy was in that city.

9 But a certain man, Simon by name, had long been doing magic in the city and amazing the nation of Samaria, claiming himself to be someone great;

10 to whom all were paying attention to him, from small to great, saying, This one is the great power of God.

11 And they were paying attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his doing magic.

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the gospel, the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 And Simon himself also believed, and being baptized was continuing steadfastly with Philip. And seeing miraculous signs and mighty works happening, he was amazed.

14 And the apostles in Jerusalem, hearing that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,

15 who going down prayed concerning them so that they may receive the Holy Spirit;

16 for He had not yet fallen on no one of them, but they were only being baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

18 But Simon having seen that the Holy Spirit is given through the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money,

19 saying, Give to me also this authority that to whomever I may lay on the hands he may receive the Holy Spirit.

20 But Peter said to him, May your silver be with you into perdition, because you thought to get the gift of God through money.

21 There is neither part nor lot to you in this matter, for your heart is not upright before the face of God.

22 Repent, therefore, from this wickedness of you, and petition God if perhaps you will be forgiven the thought of your heart.

23 For I see you being into the gall of bitterness and the bond of unrighteousness.

24 And answering Simon said, You petition to the Lord for me, so that nothing of the things which you have spoken may come on me.

25 Then indeed having earnestly testified and having spoken the Word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, even having preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

8:1-25 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. What else began happening on the day that Stephen was killed?
2. Who is Philip? How is he able to perform miracles?
3. Who is Simon and what is he doing?
4. Why did Peter and John go to Samaria from Jerusalem?
5. How was the Holy Spirit given to another person? What does this mean?
6. Were miraculous gifts given by the Holy Spirit at baptism? Which verses give you your answer?

8:26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place.

27 And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship

28 and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

29 And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot."

30 So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth.

33 In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth."

34 And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?"

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.

36 And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?"

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38 And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

8:26 But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, Rise up and go along south on the way going down from Jerusalem to Gaza. This is a deserted place.

27 And rising up he went. And, behold, a man, an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a potentate with Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship!

28 And he was returning. And sitting on his chariot he read the prophet Isaiah.

29 And the Spirit said to Philip, Go near and join yourself to this chariot.

30 And running near Philip heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, Then, indeed, do you know what you are reading?

31 But he said, How should I be able except someone shall guide me? And he called Philip near, coming up, to sit with him.

32 And the content of the Scripture which he was reading was this: "He was led as a sheep to slaughter, and as a lamb is voiceless before the one shearing it, so He does not open His mouth.

33 In His humiliation His judgment was taken away. And who will recount His generation? For His life is taken away from the earth."

34 And answering the eunuch said to Philip, I ask you, about whom does the prophet say this? About himself, or about some other one.

35 And opening his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture, Philip preached the gospel to him, Jesus.

36 And as they were going along the way they came on some water. And the eunuch said, Behold, water! What prevents me to be baptized?

37 And Philip said, If you believe from all the heart, it is lawful. And answering he said, I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip. And the eunuch did not see him any more; for he went his way rejoicing.

40 And Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities until his coming to Caesarea.

8:26-40 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

7. Comment on the evangelism technique of Philip when he approached the eunuch:

8. Why does the eunuch notice that there is water?

9. Verse 37: Some versions do not include this verse. Please get a Bible dictionary and commentaries to determine the reason why some version exclude this verse. Write down your findings below:

10. Why do Philip and the eunuch both go down into the water?

11. What happened to Philip exactly after the eunuch's baptism?

12. What local church did the eunuch belong to? Was the eunuch saved?

9:1 But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest  
 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.  
 3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.  
 4 And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"  
 5 And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.  
 6 But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."  
 7 The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.  
 8 Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.  
 9 And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.  
 10 Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord."  
 11 And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying,  
 12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight."  
 13 But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem.  
 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name."  
 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.  
 16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."  
 17 So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."  
 18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;  
 19 and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus.  
 20 And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."  
 21 And all who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?"  
 22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

1 But Saul, still breathing threat and murder toward the disciples of the Lord, coming to the high priest,  
 2 he asked from him letters to Damascus, to the synagogues, so that if he found any being of the Way, both men and women, they having been bound, he might bring them to Jerusalem.  
 3 But in the going it happened for him to draw near to Damascus, and suddenly a light from the heaven shone around him.  
 4 And falling on the earth he heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting Me?  
 5 And he said, Sir, who are You? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting; it is hard for you to kick against the goads.  
 6 Both trembling and being astonished he said, Lord, what do You desire me to do? And the Lord said to him, Rise up and go into the city, and it will be told you what you must do.  
 7 But the men traveling with him had been standing speechless, indeed hearing the sound, but seeing no one.  
 8 And Saul was lifted up from the earth, but his eyes having been opened he saw no one. And leading him by the hand they brought him to Damascus.  
 9 And he was three days not seeing, and did not eat or drink.  
 10 And there was a certain disciple in Damascus, Ananias by name. And the Lord said to him in a vision, Ananias! And he said, Behold, Lord, I am here.  
 11 And the Lord said to him, Rising up go along on the street, the one being called Straight, and seek a Tarsian, Saul by name, in the house of Judas. For, behold, he is praying.  
 12 And he has seen in a vision a man, Ananias by name, coming in and putting a hand on him, so that he may see again.  
 13 And Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how many bad things he did to Your saints in Jerusalem.  
 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all the ones calling on Your name.  
 15 And the Lord said to him, Go, for this one is a vessel of election to Me, to bear My name before nations and kings and the sons of Israel.  
 16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of My name.  
 17 And Ananias went away and entered into the house. And putting hands on him he said, Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me, Jesus, the One who appeared to you in the way which you came, that you may see again and be filled of the Holy Spirit.  
 18 And instantly fell away from his eyes as if it were scales. And rising up, he was baptized.  
 19 And taking food he was strengthened. And Saul was with the disciples in Damascus some days.  
 20 And at once in the synagogues he proclaimed the Christ, that this One is the Son of God.  
 21 And all the ones hearing were amazed and said, Not this one is the one destroying the ones calling on this Name in Jerusalem, and he had come here for this, that he might take them, having been bound, before the chief priests?  
 22 But Saul was more filled with power, and he confounded the Jews, the ones living in Damascus, proving that this One is the Christ.

9:1-22 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Damascus is the capital of Syria. It would have taken Saul at least 6 days to travel from Jerusalem to Damascus. This shows how far the message of Jesus had spread and Saul's motivation to persecute beyond Jerusalem.

1. Explain what Saul is doing and why he is going to Damascus:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What were the disciples of Jesus first called in the first century?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What does Ananias know about Saul? What is his reaction of the Lord's call to go to Saul?

## DIFFICULT QUESTION:

4. Carefully read verse 17. Ananias says he was sent so that Saul would "regain his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Ananias was not an apostle. So how could Ananias give Saul the Holy Spirit, since Simon said that only the apostles had the power to give the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18)? Carefully reread Acts 9 and Acts 22 to work on the answer.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What did Saul do immediately after his conversion?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What lessons do we learn from this instance in Saul's life? What life changes do we learn from Saul?

9:23 When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him,  
 24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him,  
 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.  
 26 And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple.  
 27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus.  
 28 So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord.  
 29 And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists. But they were seeking to kill him.  
 30 And when the brothers learned this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.  
 31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.  
 32 Now as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda.  
 33 There he found a man named Aeneas, bedridden for eight years, who was paralyzed.  
 34 And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose.  
 35 And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.  
 36 Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity.  
 37 In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. 38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, "Please come to us without delay."  
 39 So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them.  
 40 But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up.  
 41 And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive.  
 42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.  
 43 And he stayed in Joppa for many days with one Simon, a tanner.

9:23 And when many days were fulfilled, the Jews plotted together to kill him.  
 24 But their plot was known to Saul. And they carefully watched the gates both by day and by night so as to kill him.  
 25 But taking him by night, the disciples let him down through the wall, lowering in a basket.  
 26 And Saul arriving into Jerusalem, he tried to be joined to the disciples. And all feared him, not believing that he is a disciple.  
 27 But taking hold of him, Barnabas led him to the apostles and told them how he saw the Lord in the way, and that He spoke to him, and how in Damascus he spoke boldly in the name of Jesus.  
 28 And he was with them, entering in and going out in Jerusalem, and speaking boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus.  
 29 And he spoke and disputed with the Hellenists, and they took him in hand to kill him.  
 30 But knowing, the brothers led him down to Caesarea and sent him forth to Tarsus.  
 31 Then, indeed, the assemblies throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, had peace, being built up and going on in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplying.  
 32 And it happened, that Peter, passing through all those parts, also came down to the saints, the ones dwelling in Lydda.  
 33 And he found there a certain man, Aeneas by name, who had been lying on a pallet eight years, who was paralyzed.  
 34 And Peter said to him, Aeneas! Jesus the Christ heals you; rise up and spread for yourself. And instantly he rose up.  
 35 And all the ones dwelling in Lydda and the Sharon Plain saw him, who then turned to the Lord.  
 36 And in Joppa was a certain disciple Tabitha by name, which translated is called Dorcas (Gazelle). She was full of good works and of merciful deeds which she did.  
 37 And it happened in those days, being feeble, she died. And bathing her, they put her in an upper room.  
 38 And Lydda being near to Joppa, the disciples hearing that Peter is in it, they sent two men to him, entreating him not to delay to come to them.  
 39 And rising up Peter went with them, whom arriving they led him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him, weeping and showing tunics and garments how many things Dorcas made while being with them.  
 40 And having put all out, placing the knees, Peter prayed. And turning to the body he said, Tabitha, Arise! And she opened her eyes; and seeing Peter she sat up.  
 41 And giving her a hand he raised her up. And calling the saints and the widows he presented her living.  
 42 And it became known throughout all Joppa. And many believed on the Lord.  
 43 And it was considerable days that he remained in Joppa with one Simon, a tanner.

9:23-31 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

7. Explain what Paul was trying to do in Jerusalem. What was he trying to join? How did he try to join? Was he successful?

8. What group of people was Paul speaking and disputing with? Why them?

9:32-43 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Lydda was the district capital of Samaria in New Testament times. Christianity became a strong influence in Lydda by the second century.

9. Why did Peter heal Aeneas?

10. Why was Tabitha healed?

11. What is unusual about Peter staying with Simon, a tanner?

10:1 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort,  
 2 a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.  
 3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, “Cornelius.”  
 4 And he stared at him in terror and said, “What is it, Lord?” And he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God.  
 5 And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter.  
 6 He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside.”  
 7 When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who attended him,  
 8 and having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.  
 9 The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.  
 10 And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance  
 11 and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth.  
 12 In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air.  
 13 And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.”  
 14 But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.”  
 15 And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.”  
 16 This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.  
 17 Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon’s house, stood at the gate  
 18 and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there.  
 19 And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men are looking for you.  
 20 Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them.”

10:1 But a certain man, Cornelius by name, was in Caesarea, a centurion of a cohort. the one being called Italian,  
 2 a devout one and fearing God, with all his household, both doing many merciful deeds to the people and praying to God through all.  
 3 About the ninth hour of the day, he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming to him, and saying to him, Cornelius!  
 4 And he was staring at him, and becoming terrified he said, What is it, Lord? And he said to him, Your prayers and your merciful deeds went up for a memorial before God.  
 5 And now send men to Joppa and call for Simon who is being called Peter.  
 6 This one is lodged with a certain Simon, a tanner, to whom is a house by the sea. This one will tell you what you must do.  
 7 And went away the angel, the one speaking to Cornelius, who calling two of his servants and a devout soldier of the ones continually waiting on him,  
 8 and explaining all things to them, he sent away them to Joppa.  
 9 And on the next day, those ones traveling on the road, and drawing near to the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray about the sixth hour.  
 10 And he became hungry and wished to taste food. But as they were preparing, an ecstasy fell on him.  
 11 And he saw the heaven having been opened and a certain vessel like a great sheet coming down on him, being bound by four corners, and let down onto the earth;  
 12 in which were all the four-footed animals of the earth, and the wild beasts, and the reptiles, and the birds of the heaven.  
 13 And a voice came to him, Rise up, Peter, slay and eat.  
 14 But Peter said, Not at all, Lord, because I never did eat anything common or unclean.  
 15 And again a voice came to him a second time, What things God made clean, you do not make common.  
 16 And this happened three times, and the vessel was taken up into the heaven again.  
 17 And as Peter was perplexed within himself what the vision which he saw might be, even behold, the men, the ones having been sent from Cornelius, having inquired for the house of Simon, stood on the porch.  
 18 And calling out, they inquired if Simon being called Peter is lodged here.  
 19 And as Peter pondered concerning the vision, the Spirit said to him, Behold, three men are seeking you.  
 20 But rising up, go down and go with them, not discriminating, because I have sent them.

10:1-20 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. Who is Cornelius?

2. What do we learn about the fact that Cornelius' prayers had been heard and answered?

3. Explain Peter's vision. What is so difficult for Peter concerning the vision?

4. What was God's repeated message to Peter? What was the application?

5. Did Peter understand the application yet? How do you know?

10:21 And Peter went down to the men and said, "I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming?"

22 And they said, "Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say."

23 So he invited them in to be his guests. The next day he rose and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.

24 And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends.

25 When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.

26 But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man."

27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered.

28 And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.

29 So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me."

30 And Cornelius said, "Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing

31 and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.'

33 So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

10:21 And going down to the men, the ones being sent from Cornelius to him, Peter said, Behold, I am the one whom you seek. What is the cause for which you are here?

22 And the ones said, Cornelius, a centurion, a just man and one fearing God, and being testified to by all the nation of the Jews, was divinely warned by a holy angel to call you to his house and to hear words from you.

23 Then calling them in, he lodged them. And on the next day Peter went out with them. And some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.

24 And on the next day they entered Caesarea. And Cornelius was awaiting them, having called together his relatives and his intimate friends.

25 And as Peter was coming in, meeting him, Cornelius fell at his feet and worshiped.

26 But Peter lifted him up, saying, Stand up! I myself am also a man.

27 And talking with him, he went in and found many having come together.

28 And he said to them, You know how unlawful it is for a man, a Jew, to unite with or to come near to one of another nation. Yet God showed to me not to call a man, not one, common or unclean.

29 Therefore, I also came without objecting, having been sent for. Therefore I ask for what reason did you send for me?

30 And Cornelius said, From the fourth day until this hour I was fasting, and the ninth hour I was praying in my house. And, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing.

31 And he said, Cornelius, your prayer was heard and your merciful deeds were remembered before God.

32 Therefore, send to Joppa and call for Simon who is called Peter; this one is lodged in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea; who coming, he will speak to you.

33 Therefore at once I sent to you, and you did well to come. Now then, we are all present before God to hear all the things having been commanded you by God.

10:21-33 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

6. What is Cornelius' reaction to meeting Peter? What is Peter's response?

-- If Peter was the first pope, as Catholicism claims, how were Peter's actions different than modern popes?

7. Looking at verse 28, did God tell Peter to not call a man unclean? How did Peter come to this conclusion?

-- What were clean and what were unclean animals? (see Leviticus 11 for help)

8. According to his own words, why had Cornelius called for Peter?

10:34 So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,  
 35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.  
 36 As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all),  
 37 you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed:  
 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.  
 39 And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree,  
 40 but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear,  
 41 not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.  
 42 And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.  
 43 To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."  
 44 While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.  
 45 And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.  
 46 For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared,  
 47 "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"  
 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

10:34 And opening his mouth, Peter said, Truly I see that God is not a respecter of faces,  
 35 but in every nation the one fearing Him and working righteousness is acceptable to Him.  
 36 The Word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching the gospel of peace through Jesus Christ, this One is Lord of all.  
 37 You know the thing that happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed,  
 38 Jesus the One from Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all the ones having been oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him.  
 39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem, whom they killed, hanging Him on a tree.  
 40 God raised up this One the third day and gave to Him to become visible;  
 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses, the ones having been before hand-picked by God, to us who ate and drank with Him after His rising again from the dead.  
 42 And He commanded us to proclaim to the people and to witness solemnly that it is He Himself who has been marked out by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.  
 43 To this One all the Prophets witness, so that through His name everyone believing into Him will receive remission of sins.  
 44 As Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all the ones hearing the Word.  
 45 And were amazed the ones of faithful circumcision, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on the nations also.  
 46 For they heard them speaking in languages and magnifying God. Then Peter answered,  
 47 Not is able anyone to forbid the water that these not be baptized, who the Holy Spirit received, even as we also?  
 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to remain some days.

10:34-48 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other key themes:

9. What had Peter learned thus far in this whole experience, according to verses 34-35?

10. Why does the Holy Spirit fall upon Cornelius and his household?

11. Carefully read the text. What did it mean to the circumcised believers for them to be speaking in tongues?

12. Based upon all of this, what is Peter's response? Why?

11:1 Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying,

3 “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

4 But Peter began and explained it to them in order:

5 “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me.

6 Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’

8 But I said, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’

9 But the voice answered a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’

10 This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven.

11 And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea.

12 And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house.

13 And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter;

14 he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’

15 As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning.

16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’

17 If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?”

18 When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

11:1 And the apostles and the brothers, the ones who were throughout Judea, heard that the nations also received the Word of God.

2 And when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the ones of the circumcision disputed with him,

3 saying, You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them.

4 But beginning, Peter set out to them in order, saying,

5 I was being in the city of Joppa, praying. And in an ecstasy, I saw a vision: a certain vessel was coming down, like a great sheet, being let down by four corners out of the heaven; and it came as

far as me.

6 into which gazing, looking intently, even I saw the four-footed animals of the earth, and the wild beasts, and the reptiles, and the birds of the heaven.

7 And I heard a voice saying to me, Peter, rise up, slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not at all, Lord, because every thing common or unclean never entered into my mouth.

9 But a voice answered me the second time out of the heaven, What things God made clean, you must not make common.

10 And this took place three times, and all things were pulled up into the heaven again.

11 And, behold, at once three men stood at the house in which I was, having been sent from Caesarea to me.

12 And the Spirit said to me to go with them, not discriminating. And these six brothers also were with me, and we went into the man’s house.

13 And he told us how he saw an angel in his house, standing and saying to him, Send men to Joppa and call for Simon, being called Peter,

14 who will speak words to you by which you and all your household will be saved.

15 And in my beginning to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as also on us in the beginning.

16 And I recalled the Word of the Lord, how He said, John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

17 Then if God gave the same gift to them as also to us, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, and I, who was I to be able to hinder God?

18 And hearing these things, they were silent and glorified God, saying, Then God also gave to the nations repentance unto life.

11:1-18 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. Who confronts Peter? What is the problem? Why is this a problem?

2. How does Peter deal with this problem? Explain his answers:

3. Explain verses 15-17. What happened? What is Peter's argument?

11:19 Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews.

20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

22 The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

23 When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose,

24 for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

25 So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul,

26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

27 Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

28 And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius).

29 So the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea.

30 And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

11:19 Then, indeed, the ones who were dispersed by the oppression, the one having occurred over Stephen, passed through to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the Word to no one, if not to Jews only.

20 But some men from them, Cypriots and Cyrenians, who entering into Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believing turned to the Lord.

22 And the Word was heard into the ears of the assembly in Jerusalem concerning them. And they sent out Barnabas to go through as far as Antioch;

23 who having come, and seeing the grace of God, rejoiced. And he exhorted all with purpose of heart to abide near the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a considerable crowd was added to the Lord.

25 And Barnabas went out to Tarsus to seek Saul.

26 And finding him, he brought him to Antioch. And it happened that for them to be assembled to them in the assembly a whole year. And they taught a considerable crowd. And the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.

27 And in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem into Antioch.

28 And rising up one of them, Agabus by name, signified through the Spirit that a great famine was about to be over all the inhabited earth, which also happened on Claudius Caesar's time.

29 And according as any was prospered, the disciples, each of them, determined to send for ministry to the brothers living in Judea,

30 which they also did, sending to the elders through the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

11:19-30 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Antioch of Syria was the third largest city in the Roman Empire, after Rome and Alexandria.

4. Explain what is going on in Antioch:

5. Who is Barnabas? Be sure to add the information that we learned about him in Acts 4.

6. Why was Saul in Tarsus (recall Acts 9)? Why does Barnabas go to Tarsus to find Saul?

7. What disaster is prophesied? What is the response of the disciples in Antioch? Explain the mechanism of the relief effort:

12:1 About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.

2 He killed James the brother of John with the sword,  
3 and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread.

4 And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people.

5 So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

6 Now when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison.

7 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his hands.

8 And the angel said to him, "Dress yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me."

9 And he went out and followed him. He did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.

10 When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left him.

11 When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

12 When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

13 And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer.

14 Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate.

15 They said to her, "You are out of your mind." But she kept insisting that it was so, and they kept saying, "It is his angel!"

16 But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed.

12:1 And at that time Herod the king put on the hands to mistreat some of the ones from the assembly.

2 And he killed James the brother of John with a sword.

3 And seeing that it was pleasing to the Jews, he added also to seize Peter (and they were the days of Unleavened Bread),

4 whom capturing him also, he put him into prison, giving him over to four sets of four soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him up to the people after the Passover.

5 Therefore Peter was indeed kept in the prison, but fervent prayer was made by the assembly to God on his behalf.

6 But when Herod was about to bring him out, in that night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, having been bound with two chains, also guards were before the door keeping the prison.

7 And, behold! An angel of the Lord stood by, and a light shone in the building. And striking Peter's side, he aroused him, saying, Rise up in haste! And the chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said to him, Gird yourself, and bind on your sandals. And he did so. And he said to him, Throw around your garment and follow me.

9 And going out, he followed him, and did not know that this happening through the angel was true, but he thought he saw a vision.

10 And going through a first and a second guard, they came on the iron gate leading into the city, which opened to them of itself. And going out, they went on one street; and instantly the angel withdrew from him.

11 And Peter coming to be within himself said, Now I know truly that the Lord sent out His angel and delivered me out of Herod's hand, and out of all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And comprehending, he came onto the house of Mary the mother of John, the one being called Mark, where many were gathered together, and praying.

13 And Peter knocking at the door of the porch, a servant girl, Rhoda by name, came near to answer.

14 And recognizing Peter's voice, from joy she did not open the porch, but running in she reported Peter to stand before the porch.

15 But the ones said to her, You are raving. But she insisted, holding it to be so. And the ones said, It is his angel.

16 But Peter was continuing knocking. And opening, they saw him and were amazed.

12:1-16 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

1. What do you think was the impact on the disciples upon the news of the apostle James being killed by Herod?

2. Why was Peter arrested?

3. How was Peter released?

**DIFFICULT QUESTION:**

4. Why did the Lord allow the apostle James to die, but uses an angel to free the apostle Peter?

5. What were the disciples doing while Peter was imprisoned? What was their response?

12:17 But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Tell these things to James and to the brothers." Then he departed and went to another place.

18 Now when day came, there was no little disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter.

19 And after Herod searched for him and did not find him, he examined the sentries and ordered that they should be put to death. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time there.

20 Now Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon, and they came to him with one accord, and having persuaded Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their country depended on the king's country for food.

21 On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them.

22 And the people were shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!"

23 Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.

24 But the word of God increased and multiplied.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.

12:17 And signaling to them with the hand to be silent, he told them how the Lord led him out of the prison. And he said, Report these things to James and the brothers. And going out, he went to another place.

18 And day having come, there was not a little disturbance among the soldiers, saying, What, then, became of Peter?

19 And searching for him, and not finding him, examining the guards, Herod commanded them to be led away. And going down from Judea to Caesarea, he spent time there.

20 And Herod was very angry with the Tyrians and Sidonians. But with one mind they came to him. And persuading Blastus, the one over the king's bedroom, they begged peace, because their country was fed from the royal bounty.

21 And on a set day, having put on regal clothing, and sitting on the tribunal, Herod made a speech to them.

22 And the people cried out, The voice of a god, and not of a man!

23 And instantly an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give the glory to God. And having been eaten of worms, he breathed out his soul.

24 But the Word of God grew and increased.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, having fulfilled the ministry, and having taken with them the one being called Mark.

12:17-25 Main point: \_\_\_\_\_

Other key themes:

6. What happened to the soldiers who were guarding Peter? Who were the disciples to report the release of Peter to?

7. Explain the sin of Herod:

8. What lessons do we learn from Herod's sin and its consequences?