

INTRODUCTION

About the time the church in Antioch ⁽¹⁾ was beginning to grow, King Herod started a persecution in Jerusalem. **Acts 12:2** records that he had James the brother of John put to death, making him the first Apostle put to death. He had Peter put in prison until after the Passover. **Acts 12:5** makes the important point that the church was praying fervently for him.

Peter was miraculously rescued by an angel, and went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, where he told the people to inform James and the brethren. This is certainly James the elder at Jerusalem, brother of Jesus, not James the apostle, who had been killed a few days earlier. When Peter could not be found in prison the next morning, the guards were executed, and Herod left Judea for Caesarea.

In **Acts 12:20-23**, when Herod gave a speech, the people of Tyre and Sidon offered flattering praise, but when Herod did not give glory to God, an angel the LORD struck him with worms and he died. Jewish historian Josephus tells us that he suffered in agony for about a week before finally dying.

Acts 13 begins a new section in the narrative. The Holy Spirit has Barnabas and Saul set apart for the work. The church fasted, prayed, laid their hands on them, and sent them away.

Saul, Barnabas, and John-Mark journeyed to Selucia, a port city on the Mediterranean coast about 16 miles away from Antioch. From there they sailed to the city of Salamis on the east coast of the Island of Cyprus and began preaching in the local synagogues. They worked across the island until they arrived Paphos on the west coast. It is here that Saul's name was changed to Paul (**Acts 15:9**). It is also here that Paul performed a miracle while preaching the Gospel to Sergius Paulus, the Proconsul ⁽²⁾. A magician named Bar-Jesus (also called Elymas) sought to prevent the Proconsul from listening to Paul, but, as **Acts 13:9-11** tells us, Paul temporarily blinded him by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the only recorded miracle that an apostle ever worked to the injury of someone, but it completely convinced the proconsul.

From Paphos, Paul sailed northwest to Perga in Pamphylia (Asia Minor, modern day Turkey) where John decided to leave them and return to Jerusalem. From there, they travelled north to Pisidian Antioch. Paul preached in the synagogue converting many. Witnessing Paul's success, the Jews were filled with jealousy and began arguing against the Gospel message. Paul makes this statement in **Acts 13:46**, "*It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.*" The Gentiles rejoiced at this, and many in that region believed.

When a persecution was started by the Jews against Paul and Barnabas, they went east to Iconium. In Iconium they preached in the synagogue as was Paul's custom, and many believed, both Jews and Gentiles. A persecution arose in that city and they fled to Lystra and Derbe. In Lystra, Paul healed a man who had been lame from birth. The people misunderstood this miracle and, believing Barnabas to be Zeus and Paul to be Hermes, tried to offer sacrifices to them. After a vigorous protest, they were barely able to stop the sacrifices. Soon, Jews from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium came to the area and, with the help of the locals, stoned Paul, leaving him for dead. Undaunted, Paul and Barnabas went to Derbe and made many disciples.

Returning from Derbe through Lystra, Iconium and Pisidian Antioch, Paul and Barnabas strengthened and encouraged the disciples, appointed elders for them in every church, and commended them to the LORD. Coming to Perga, they preached the Word before going to the port city of Attalia and sailing home to Antioch in Syria. There Paul and Barnabas reported back the local church about all that God had done.

Survey of Acts - 06 (Acts 12-14)
Peter Arrested, Herod Dies, Paul's First Journey

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NOTES:

- 1) There are two Antiochs mentioned in this section. Antioch in Syria was the city where Paul and Barnabas started and ended their journey; Pisidian Antioch was a city in Asia Minor, where Paul reached a powerful sermon.
- 2) A Proconsul was a Roman official in charge of a province. Not all Roman provinces used Proconsuls; some were under military control. This has led many to question Luke's account, but secular history has confirmed that at the time of Paul's visit, Cyprus was indeed governed by a Proconsul.

QUESTIONS

1. James, Peter and Herod (Acts 12:1-24)

- 1.1 Who was the first apostle to be martyred for Christ?
- 1.2 Why did Herod have Peter arrested?
- 1.3 Why did Herod not kill Peter immediately?
- 1.4 List three significant things about the prayers being made for Peter in **Acts 12:5, 12**.
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
- 1.5 What do we learn about Peter in **Acts 2:6**?
- 1.6 Describe what happened when Peter was not found the next day.
- 1.7 Why was Herod struck dead in **Acts 12:23**?
- 1.8 After all of Herod's persecution, what was the result?

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2. Barnabas and Saul in Cyprus (Acts 12:25-13:12)

- 2.1 How did God have Barnabas and Saul set apart for the work?

- 2.2 What port did Barnabas and Saul sail from?

- 2.3 Cyprus is a large island off the coast of Syria. What two cities are mentioned on the island?
 - 1)
 - 2)

- 2.4 Who was Bar-Jesus (Elymas)? What was his relationship to the proconsul Sergius Paulus?

- 2.5 What verse records the name change from Saul to Paul?

- 2.6 What miracle happened in **Acts 13:9-11**?

- 2.7 Was there any compassion in God's punishment of Elymas? Why or why not.
 - 1)
 - 2)

- 2.8 What was the result of the miracle Paul performed?

3. Paul and Barnabas travel to Asia Minor (Acts 13:1-14:28)

- 3.1 List the six cities Paul and Barnabas visited while in Asia Minor, and one thing that happened in each.
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
 - 5)
 - 6)

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- 3.2 What changed between **Acts 13:2** and **Acts 13:13, 42**? Why is this important?
- 3.3 What did John do after Paul and his companions arrived at Perga in Pamphylia?
- 3.4 Paul's sermon at Pisidian Antioch is recorded in **Acts 13:16-41**. List 5 points that he makes.
- 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
 - 5)
- 3.5 Why did the Jews become jealous in **Acts 13:44-46**?
- 3.6 What did the Jews try to do to Paul and Barnabas in Iconium (**Acts 14:1-5**)?
- 3.7 In Lystra, Paul healed a lame man. What was the response of the people to this miracle?
- 3.8 Compare the attitude of Paul and Barnabas in **Acts 14:8-18** with Herod in **Acts 12:20-23**.
- 3.9 What did the Jews do to Paul in Lystra?
- 3.10 Paul and Barnabas went from Derbe to Pisidian Antioch in **Acts 14:21-23**, what did they do in every church?
- 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
- 3.11 What was the report that Paul and Barnabas gave when they got back to Antioch in Syria?