**ACTS IN ACTION**

***Main Characters in Acts so far:***

Jesus – Tells the apostles to ”Be my witnesses”, then ascends into heaven.

Peter – Preaches on Pentecost and in Jerusalem, does several miracles. Brings the gospel to the Gentiles.

Stephen – Preaches the gospel to the Jews then is Martyred in Jerusalem

Philip – Baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch

Ananias – Bravely went to Damascus and baptized Saul

Saul of Tarsus – A leading Pharisee who became the Apostle Paul after receiving Jesus and being filled with the Holy Spirit.

**ACTS 11:19-26**

**19**Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. **20**Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. **21**The Lord’s hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

**22**News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. **23**When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. **24**He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

**25**Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, **26**and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

**Acts 12**

It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. **2**He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword.

 **3**When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. **4**After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

**5**So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

**6**The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance.**7**Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists.

**8**Then the angel said to him, “Put on your clothes and sandals.” And Peter did so. “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me,” the angel told him. **9**Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. **10**They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

**11**Then Peter came to himself and said, “Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen.”

**12**When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.**13**Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. **14**When she recognized Peter’s voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, “Peter is at the door!”

**15**“You’re out of your mind,” they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, “It must be his angel.”

**16**But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished.

**17**Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. “Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this,” he said, and then he *left for another place*.

**18**In the morning there was no small commotion among the soldiers as to what had become of Peter. **19**After Herod had a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the guards and ordered that they be executed.

*James is now the recognized leader of the mother church in Jerusalem, and Paul is rising to prominence in the church everywhere else.*

Matt 13:55-56 “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? **56**Aren’t all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?”

**James 1:1-8**

**1**James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

**2**Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30269a)] whenever you face trials of many kinds, **3**because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.**4**Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. **5**If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. **6**But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. **7**That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. **8**Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

James 1  (NLT)

**1**This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am writing to the “twelve tribes”—Jewish believers scattered abroad.

Greetings!

**2**Dear brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+1&version=NLT#fen-NLT-30229a)] when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. **3**For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. **4**So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

**5**If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. **6**But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. **7**Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. **8**Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.

* For you know that when your faith is tested, >>> your endurance has a chance to grow.
* when your endurance is fully developed, >>> you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.
* If you need wisdom, >>> ask God, and he will give it to you.
* when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone.
* Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea
* A double-minded person is unstable in all they do.
* James 1:8 “A double-minded is unstable in all they do.”

**Acts 12:21-24**

**21**On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. **22**They shouted, “This is the voice of a god, not of a man.” **23**Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

***24But the word of God continued to spread and flourish.***