

Kids' Chronicle

God makes Paul a 'light to the Gentiles'

BY JOE SARNICOLA

After arriving at Antioch, Paul and his traveling companions went to the synagogue on the Sabbath. They listened to the readings from the Law and the words of the prophets. Then a messenger quietly delivered a note to Paul from the synagogue officials. It said, "My brothers, if one of you has a word of exhortation for the people, please speak."

Paul nodded to the messenger and then stood up to address the people in the synagogue. "Fellow Israelites and you others who are God-fearing, listen," he said. Paul reminded the people how God had delivered their ancestors out of the slavery of Egypt into the promised land of Canaan. Then God provided judges to administer the Law. When the people asked God for a king to rule over them, Saul became the first king. The next king was David, who God described as "a man after my own heart." Many years later came John the Baptist, and Jesus, the savior of Israel.

"The inhabitants of Jerusalem and their leaders failed to recognize Jesus," Paul continued. "Even though they found no grounds for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to put him to death." Paul paused for a few seconds and then added, "But God raised him from the

dead."

When Paul had finished speaking, he was invited to return to speak on the next Sabbath. Many Jews and converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who was with him, to learn more about God. Paul encouraged them to remain faithful to the grace of God.

Paul and Barnabas came back to the synagogue on the next Sabbath, and a large crowd had gathered to listen to them. But some of the Jewish leaders were jealous, and they tried to persuade the people not to believe anything Paul and Barnabas said.

Paul immediately said to the Jewish leaders, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first, but since you reject it and condemn yourselves as unworthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I have made you a light to the Gentiles, that you may be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

The Gentiles heard this news and rejoiced and glorified God, because the

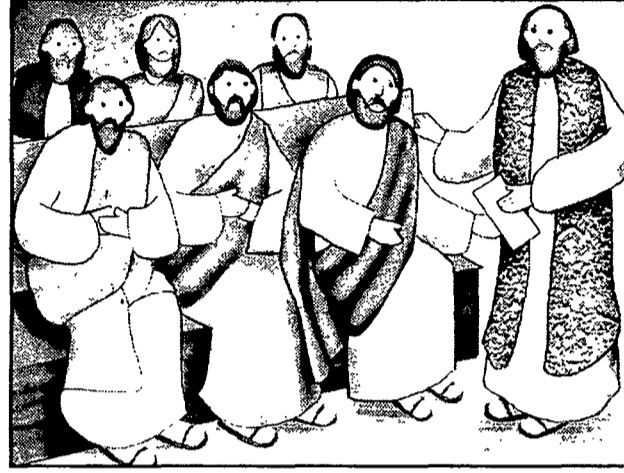


Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

promises of God had never been offered to them before.

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
Acts 13

Q&A

1. What did the Jewish leaders do when Paul returned to the synagogue?
2. How did the Gentiles respond to Paul's announcement?

Bible Trivia

Who greeted Saul (Paul) as a brother in Acts 9?

Send Answer to: Catholic Courier Bible Trivia, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624. Please include your name, address and school name. All entries must be received by May 3, 2001. A winner will be selected at random from all the correct entries submitted. The winner to the last trivia question was Amanda Widzinski, a student at Walt Disney School, Rochester. In answer to "How many epistles written by John are included in the New Testament," she answered three.

Bible Accent

The apostle Paul is an important figure in the history of the church. He was trained as a Pharisee, so he was very knowledgeable about Jewish law. However, the Pharisees often saw strict adherence to the laws of God as being more important than the brotherly love preached by Jesus and later by his followers. Before he became an apostle, Paul was present and consenting when Stephen was killed as the first Christian martyr.

Paul was also a Roman citizen, by virtue of his birth, which meant he was entitled to privileges that only Roman citizens were allowed to have.

After God struck Paul with temporary blindness, Paul converted to Christianity and became a preacher, a missionary and an author of several books of the New Testament. Some of Paul's adventures and tribulations are told in the Book of Acts.

St. Alphege

St. Alphege joined the English monastery of Deerhurst in Gloucester while still a young man. For a period of time he lived a solitary life until he was appointed as the abbot of the monastery at Bath. After the death of St. Ethelwold, the bishop of Winchester, Alphege was named as his replacement. Alphege demonstrated such a strong commitment to caring for the poor that it was said that no one needed to beg while Alphege was bishop of the diocese. He was promoted 22 years later to the position of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

When Danish invaders brought death and destruction to Canterbury, Alphege, instead of fleeing, appealed to the Danes to stop their fighting. They captured him and threw him into prison. When the English could not afford to pay his ransom, Alphege was killed by his captors, in the year 1012. We honor him on April 19.

Puzzle

Paul traveled to many places in order to preach about Jesus. Can you unscramble the names of some of them? Refer to Acts 13-19 for help. Answers on page 8.

1. SPRUCY _____
2. MELASUREJ _____
3. TRINCHO _____
4. CHIONTA _____
5. IASA _____
6. HESPESU _____
7. IOCUMIN _____
8. SNEATH _____

COURIER CLASSIFIEDS

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