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Mistaken Identity

Key References: Acts 14:8-18; *The Acts of the Apostles,* chap. 18, pp. 179-187; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp. 69-75; Our Beliefs, nos. 3, 22, 11















powertext

"Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them" (Acts 14:15).

Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 60.

powerPoint

When we give God the honor, others learn to worship Him.

Imagine you have just come in first place in a national competition. How do you feel? Everyone wants to congratulate you, and reporters want to talk to you. How easy do you think it would be to remember those people who helped train you and supported you? In our story today Paul and Barnabas remembered to give God the credit for their success.

Again Paul and Barnabas were on the road. They had such good news about God, the Creator and Savior. But in the two towns in which they had just preached, two things had happened. Some people had gladly heard their message and accepted Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah. But others had not accepted Him and had caused a lot of trouble for those who had. Usually the people who were most angry about the Messiah's messengers were fellow Jews. This time as the two men traveled they decided to preach in towns where there were no Jews that would persecute them. They chose to go to Lystra, where most of the people worshipped in a temple dedicated to a god named Jupiter.

As usual, the two men were surrounded by crowds of people willing to listen to their message. Not too many exciting things happened in little towns like Lystra. So everyone came out to hear what the newcomers were preaching.



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Sunday

READ Read Revelation 4:11 and this week's story, "Mistaken Identity."

THINK How would you feel if you were wrongly accused when you were trying to follow God's commands?

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Acts 14:15.

PRAY Ask God to work through you the way He worked through Paul and Barnabas.

Monday

READ Read Acts 14:8–10.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, describe in words or in a picture what "faith to be healed" looks like.

THINK Think about a time when someone showed great faith. Tell someone else about it.

PRAY Ask God for the honesty to give Him the glory when you are praised.

Tuesday

READ Read Acts 14:11, 12.

RESEARCH In an encyclopedia or other reference book, discover who were Zeus and Hermes.

THINK Are there people or things in your life that you put before God?

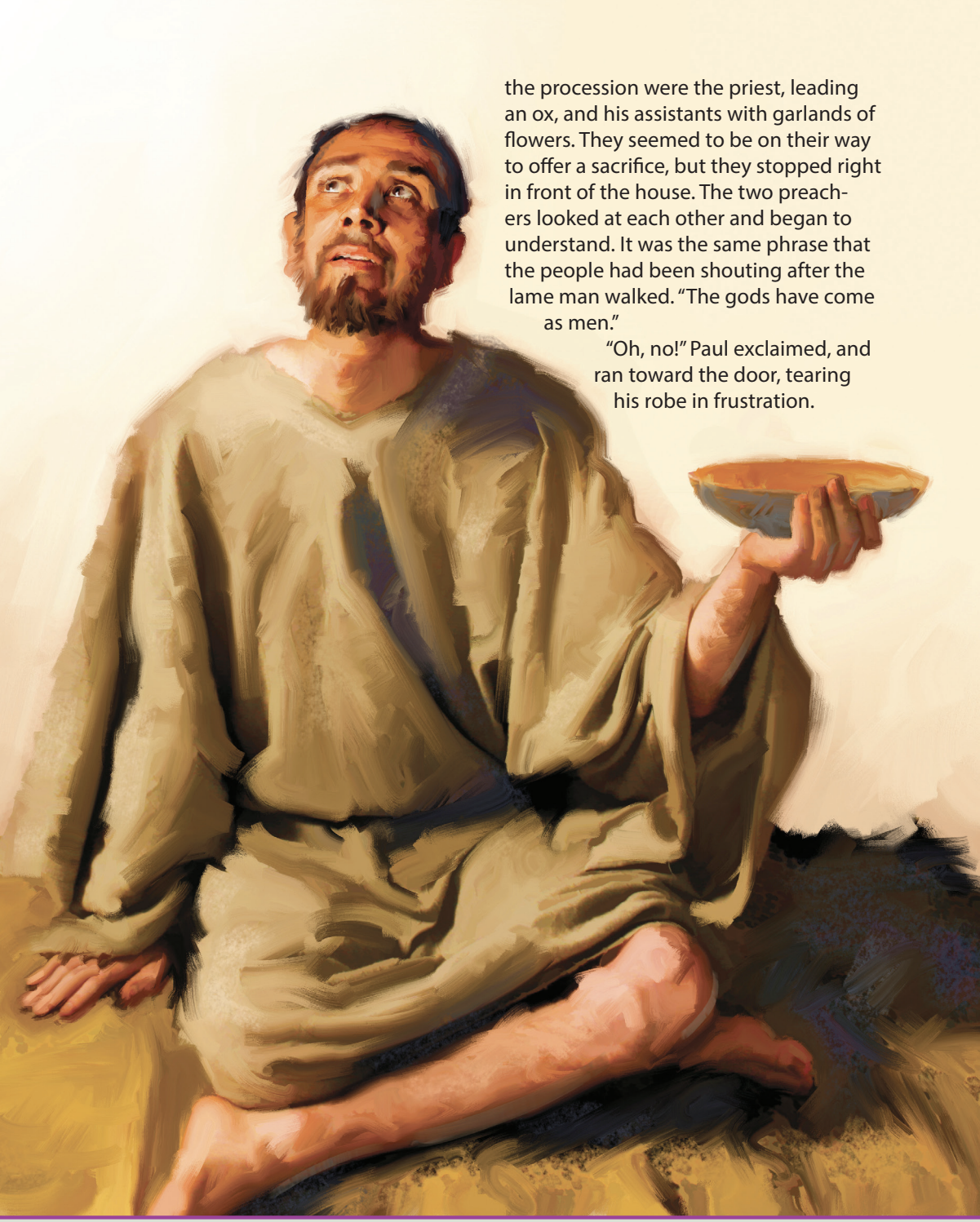
PRAY Ask God to help you see Him as your greatest hero.

Paul looked around as he preached about the God who had made the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the other wonders of nature. Paul was enjoying being able to introduce these people to the concept of the Creator God for the first time. He moved on to the topic of God the healer.

As Paul looked at the eager faces that were turned toward him, one particular set of eyes kept drawing his attention. A man was sitting on the ground near the front of the crowd. It was obvious from the look of his withered legs that he could not stand. He had probably never stood or walked in his life. Every time Paul caught the crippled man's eyes, it was as if God were impressing him that here was a true-hearted believer. Paul felt sympathy for the man, and stopping his sermon, he looked right into those eager eyes and said, "Stand up and walk."

Without a moment's hesitation, the lifetime cripple leaped up and began walking around. The crowd around them was speechless. And then a voice from the crowd announced with a loud voice in their native dialect, "The gods have come as men." One voice after another picked up the cue, and soon everyone was shouting and cheering. Paul and Barnabas, glad to have the attention off of themselves, slipped away to the house in which they had been told they could rest.

After a short while Paul and Barnabas heard a commotion outside. It sounded like a parade of some kind. It seemed that everyone in town was coming down the road toward their house. In front of



the procession were the priest, leading an ox, and his assistants with garlands of flowers. They seemed to be on their way to offer a sacrifice, but they stopped right in front of the house. The two preachers looked at each other and began to understand. It was the same phrase that the people had been shouting after the lame man walked. "The gods have come as men."

"Oh, no!" Paul exclaimed, and ran toward the door, tearing his robe in frustration.

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Wednesday

READ Read Acts 14:13, 14.

THINK Why did Barnabas and Paul tear their clothes? What are some other ways people react to alarming news?

CREATE Make a sign to hang in your room that says "To God Be the Glory."

REVIEW Review this week's power text.

PRAY Thank God, who blesses everyone even if people do not acknowledge Him.

Thursday

READ Read Acts 14:15-18.

THINK What does what happened to Paul and Barnabas tell you about people?

ASK Ask an adult about a time they gave God the honor when someone praised them.

REMEMBER When we give God the honor, others learn to worship Him.

Friday

READ For family worship, have everyone find and read a Bible verse that magnifies the Lord.

SING Sing or play a song using the word "magnify" (or "glory," "praise," "honor").

CREATE Using a piece of wire or a paper clip, form a small loop at one end. Rub a little cooking oil on the loop, then dip it in water. The thin film of water in the loop works as a mini magnifying "glass." Try it out.

PRAY Pray that your life will always magnify the Lord.

Barnabas was close behind him and called to the people: "Don't! Stop! We're not gods!"

Paul stepped in front of the people. The noise heightened. "Why are you doing this?" he cried out to get the people's attention. The people began to quiet down. Paul began to speak now that he had their attention. "We are men,



just like you. The reason we are preaching to you is that we want you to recognize and worship the true God, who created all of us, who heals us, and who saves us. He gives good things to all of us. Look at the harvest. Look at the fruit trees. They are all gifts from His goodness. We are not gods!"

Though the people did not seem to be convinced, they did stop their preparations for a sacrifice. Paul and Barnabas continued to talk with them and tried to explain to them that the only true Healer was the God of heaven and earth. They were only His messengers.

Life was unpredictable for the disciples! In the last two towns they had been condemned as troublemakers. In this one, they were being honored as gods. They had to remember to trust God for strength in bad times, and give Him glory in good times. Being the Messiah's messengers was certainly a calling full of surprises!

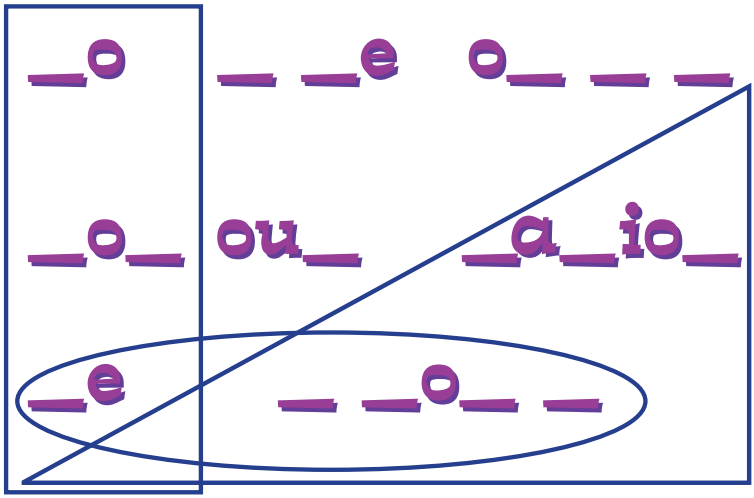


PUZZLE

7

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

Instructions: Below is a Bible verse that has the consonants missing. Each shape in the key tells you the missing consonants for that shape. Some letters are in more than one shape. Note that the letters in the key are not in order.



Key:

outside = n r t l y h

d G
T b

l g b y r

l g
S v y r r