

Acts

The Spread of the Gospel

I. PREPARING TO STUDY

A. Authorship

1. As in the Gospel of _____, the beloved physician never names himself as the author of The Book of Acts. Also like the gospel, he has been universally accepted as the human author of both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts from the very earliest of times.
2. Remember that Luke was not a _____. He was a Greek physician but was well educated in many fields including weather and seamanship.

B. Relationship to the Other Books of the Bible

The Book of Acts is not only between the gospels and the letters in its placement in our Bibles; it is the bridge of _____ between the two as well. Acts tells us how the power of the Holy Spirit, unleashed in the gospel, began to transform lives and change the world. As such, it is one of the keys to understanding the letters, especially Paul's. Many of the references to historical events made in Paul's epistles, and clearly recognized by his readers, would be unintelligible to us without the Book of Acts.

C. A Chronology of Acts and the Writings of Paul.

BIBLICAL EVENT	PLACE	KLASSEN	REFERENCE
The Birth of Jesus	Bethlehem	April 1, 5 B.C.	Mt.1:18-25 Lk. 2:1-20
Jesus is baptized.	Judea	Late Sept. or Oct., 25 A.D.	Mt.3:13-17 Mk.1:9-11 Lk.3:21-23
Jesus is crucified.	Jerusalem	Friday, April 15, 29 A.D.	Mt. 27 Mk. 15 Lk. 23 Jn. 19
Jesus appears to the apostles in the Upper Room.	Jerusalem	Sunday, April 17, 29 A.D.	Mt. 28:9-10 Mk. 16:14-18 Lk. 24:26-53 Jn. 19:19-30

Pentecost	Jerusalem	Sunday, June 5, 29 A.D.	Acts 2
Conversion of Saul (Paul)	Road to Damascus	37 A.D.	Acts 9
_____ teaches Paul in Arabia	Arabia	37-40 A.D.	Gal.1:11-24
Barnabas befriends Paul and vouches for him with the apostles.	Jerusalem	40 A.D.	Acts 9
Paul goes to his home town of Tarsus.	Tarsus	Late 40 or early 41 A.D.	Acts 11:25
Church established in Antioch; Barnabas sent to minister.	Antioch	41 A.D.	Acts 11:19-24
Barnabas goes to Tarsus to get Paul to come help him in Antioch.	Tarsus	43 A.D.	Acts 11:25-27
Relief offering sent to Judean Christians from Antioch by the hands of Barnabas and Paul.	Jerusalem	44 A.D.	Acts 11:28-30
The Holy Spirit calls Barnabas and Paul to go on their first _____ journey. They take John Mark with them.	Antioch	45 A.D.	Acts 13:1-5
John Mark leaves the mission and returns to Jerusalem.	Pamphylia	Late 45 A.D. or early 46 A.D.	Acts 13:13
Paul and Barnabas complete their first missionary journey and return to Antioch.	Antioch	Between 47 and 50 A.D.	Acts 14:21-28
Paul and Barnabas go to the Jerusalem Council.	Jerusalem	50 A.D.	Acts 15 Galatians 2
Paul writes _____ after the journey.	Antioch	50 A.D.	
Paul and Barnabas disagree over taking John Mark with them on a second missionary journey. Barnabas takes Mark and goes to Cyprus. Paul takes Silas and goes to Cilicia.	Antioch	50 A.D.	Acts 15:36-41

Luke joins Paul, Silas, and Timothy on the second missionary journey at Troas in Asia.	Troas	51 A.D.	Acts 16:6-10
Paul in Philippi where Lydia, the fortune telling slave girl, and the Philippian jailer are all saved.	Philippi	51 A.D.	Acts 16:11-40
Paul travels to Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth; but Luke remains in Macedonia.	Macedonia	51-54 A.D	Acts 17:1-18:28
On the way back to Antioch, Paul writes _____	While Traveling	54 A.D.	
Paul completes the second missionary journey.	Back to Antioch	54 A.D.	Acts 18:18-22
Paul writes 1 & 2 Thessalonians	Antioch	54 A.D.	
Paul's third missionary journey	Departing Antioch	54-58 A.D	Acts 19:1-20:38
Paul travels to Ephesus and then to Greece. He begins his trip back to Jerusalem by going through Philippi in Macedonia where Luke remains.	Philippi	58 A.D.	Acts 19:1-20:4
Paul writes _____ near the end of the third missionary journey.	While Traveling	58 A.D.	
Paul arrives in Caesarea and stays briefly in the home of Phillip before going to Jerusalem.	Caesarea	58 A.D.	Acts 21:1-14
Paul is arrested while visiting the temple in Jerusalem.	Jerusalem	58 A.D.	Acts 21:14-23:10
Paul is taken to Caesarea. Luke and others go with him.	Caesarea	June 58 A.D.	Acts 21
Paul writes Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and _____.	Caesarea	58 – 59 A.D.	
Paul, now a prisoner, begins the journey to Rome by ship. They are shipwrecked on Malta, but finally make it to Rome.	Jerusalem to Rome	60 A.D.	Acts 27:1-28:16

Paul imprisoned in Rome.	Rome	61 A.D.	Acts 28:16
Paul writes _____ and 1 Timothy.	Rome	61-63 A.D.	
Paul released from prison and rents a house in Rome.	Rome	64 A.D.	Acts 28:30-31
Possibly, Paul preaches the gospel in Spain. Luke completes the Book of Acts.	Spain	64-66 A.D. 64 A.D.	Rom. 15:24,28 Clement and other church fathers
Paul's second Roman imprisonment	Rome	65-67 A.D.	2 Tim. 1:8
Paul writes Titus and _____ Timothy.	Rome	65-66 A.D.	
Paul's death by beheading	Rome	67 A.D.	
Jerusalem destroyed by Romans	Jerusalem	70 A.D.	Josephus

II. EXAMINING THE TEXT

A. THE STRUCTURE

Acts 1:8 offers the theme of the book.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The Book of Acts naturally divides itself into two parts:

1. The gospel goes to Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria.
 - a. Chapters 1-12
 - b. Centers in Jerusalem
 - c. _____ is main character and later imprisoned.
2. The gospel goes to the ends of the earth.
 - a. Chapters 13-28
 - b. Centers in Antioch of Syria
 - c. _____ is main character and later imprisoned.

B. AN OUTLINE

Note: Much of the following outline is taken from the work of Dr. Al Stringfellow, Van Nuys, CA.

1. The Resurrection Ministry and Ascension of Christ – Chapter 1

The fifty days from the Lord's resurrection to the day of Pentecost is divided into 40 days and 10 days. The 40 days were the Lord's resurrection ministry (Acts 1:3) and the 10 days are indicated in the word Pentecost means "_____."

- He was seen in His resurrection body 40 days.
- He ascended into Glory.
- The coming of the Holy Spirit on the 50th day.

Acts 1:4-5 4 And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," *He said*, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Jesus means exactly what Scripture says. By Spirit baptism we are joined to (_____ in) the body of Christ – placed in His glorious body, the Church.

1 Cor. 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

The Spirit is the baptizer placing us in "the body" of Christ – "a building" – "the bride" – at the moment of our acceptance of Christ. Note that the Power was to come and then they were to be _____ (1:8-9).

2. The Holy Spirit at Pentecost – Chapters 2 & 3

- a. The Spirit Descended – fell on them. (1:1-3)

The Spirit _____ them. (1:4)

The Spirit worked through them. (1:41-47)

- b. The Day of Pentecost – Chapter 2

There can only be _____ Day of Pentecost – just as there can only be one Calvary, one resurrection, and one second coming. It will never be repeated.

- c. The Difference Pentecost Made

1) At Pentecost the Holy Spirit entered into a new temple.

- The tabernacle was an _____ tent until Exodus 40:35.
- The temple of Solomon was an empty shell until 1 Kings 8:10-11.

- In the New Testament, the Lord God is choosing a new temple, not made with skins and tapestries, nor of stone and fine ornaments.

This new temple is built on the foundation of Christ out of living stones who are regenerated believers in the Lord. (1 Pet. 2:5)

On the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came to indwell the _____ of God, all of us who believe, just as the Shekinah Glory of God had invested the tabernacle and temple with His glorious presence. So the Holy Spirit abides in His Church.

- 2) The Second difference Pentecost made is that the Holy Spirit came to dwell in _____ believer, personally, individually.**

John 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

- 3) A third Pentecostal difference lies in the fact that the gift of the Holy Spirit, after the Ascension of Jesus into heaven, is a personal indwelling in every believer and is never _____.**
In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit came and departed as God willed.

d. The Signs – Miracles of Pentecost (2:1-8)

What was the purpose of these signs and miracles of Pentecost? Should we pray for these gifts? Can we expect duplications in our day?

Besides the chapters of creation and the marvelous period of consummation in Revelation, there are three periods of miracles in the Bible.

- 1) First, the days of _____ in the introduction of the law.**
- 2) Second, the days of Elijah and Elisha in the times of the apostasy of Israel.**
- 3) Third, the days of Jesus and the apostles in the introduction of the new dispensation of grace.**

All of these periods had something in common. Without exception the purpose of the miracle or signs is that of _____.
God is introducing His _____ with His message by His sign from heaven. (Ex. 4:1-9 and 1 Kings 18:36-37)

The signs of Pentecost are (2:1-4)

- All in one accord, one place.
- Sound of a mighty wind.
- Tongues appeared as of fire.

- All believers were filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Some spoke in other languages as Spirit enabled.

The tongues here were not “_____ tongues,” but the Holy Spirit gave the ability to speak to people of other languages (like my speaking Chinese, a known tongue).

e. Peter’s Sermon and the First Church (2:14-47)

Peter quotes Joel 2:28-29 and that relates to this age of grace. He quotes Joel 2:30-31 and that relates to the consummation of this age and the _____ of Christ. The sermon is simply “Jesus, a man approved by God.”

Note verse 41, _____ souls were added. Note verses 42-47, they were happy, praising God, and the Lord added to the Church daily. The Church is the “Ekklesia” in Greek, meaning “called out ones.”)

f. The First Apostolic Miracle of the Church and Peter’s Second Sermon – Chapter 3

Five Thousand Saved! Then came the First Persecution.

Note in 4:4, “They heard, believed, 5,000 men” saved. After their release from prison, Peter and John went back to the Church, and they prayed.

3. The Tests and Victories of the Early Church – Chapters 4 and 5

Note the tests in 5:1-11, 17, 27-28, and 33-40. Along with the tests, God gives victories in 5:12-16, 19-26, 29-32, and 41-42.

a. _____ Martyred – A Deacon Who Spoke with Power – Chapters 6-7

He was the first martyr. The faith of Stephen in death challenged the man named Saul, who is mentioned here for the first time in 7:58.

b. The Church As Jesus Said in Acts 1:8 – Chapter 8

With great persecution of the Church at Jerusalem, the Church was scattered to Judea and _____. (8:1, 4)

4. The Conversion of Saul – Paul – Chapter 9

He was saved on Damascus Road, became a chosen vessel of God (v. 15), and began preaching _____.

5. The Gospel to the Gentiles – Chapter 10

The chapter is God’s approval on the salvation of _____, Jew or Gentile. Verses 44-48 have been called the “Gentile Pentecost.”

a. _____ Becomes Center of Gentile Church – Chapter 11

_____ is sent to Antioch as Pastor by the Jerusalem Church (v. 22-24) and he wants Paul to help (v. 25).

b. Persecution Again, But the Word Multiplied – Chapter 12

_____, the brother of John is executed. Peter is imprisoned.

The Church prayed for Peter. (v. 5)

Herod dies; God smote him. (v. 23)

But in the face of all this, the Church grew and multiplied. (v. 24)

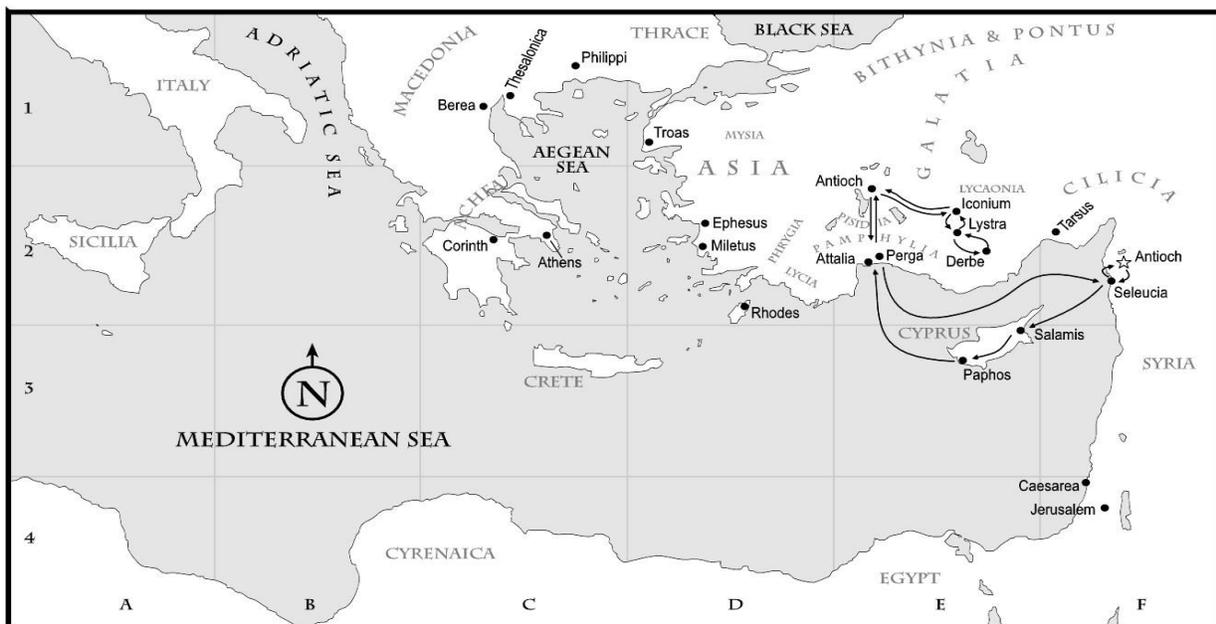
So the first section of the Book of Acts closes with the Gospel having been carried out exactly as Jesus instructed in Acts 1:8: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria.

History tells us the Jerusalem Church exceeded _____ after only seven years.

6. The gospel goes to the end of the earth.

a. **The First Missionary Journey – Chapters 13:1 – 14:28**

Acts 13:3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.



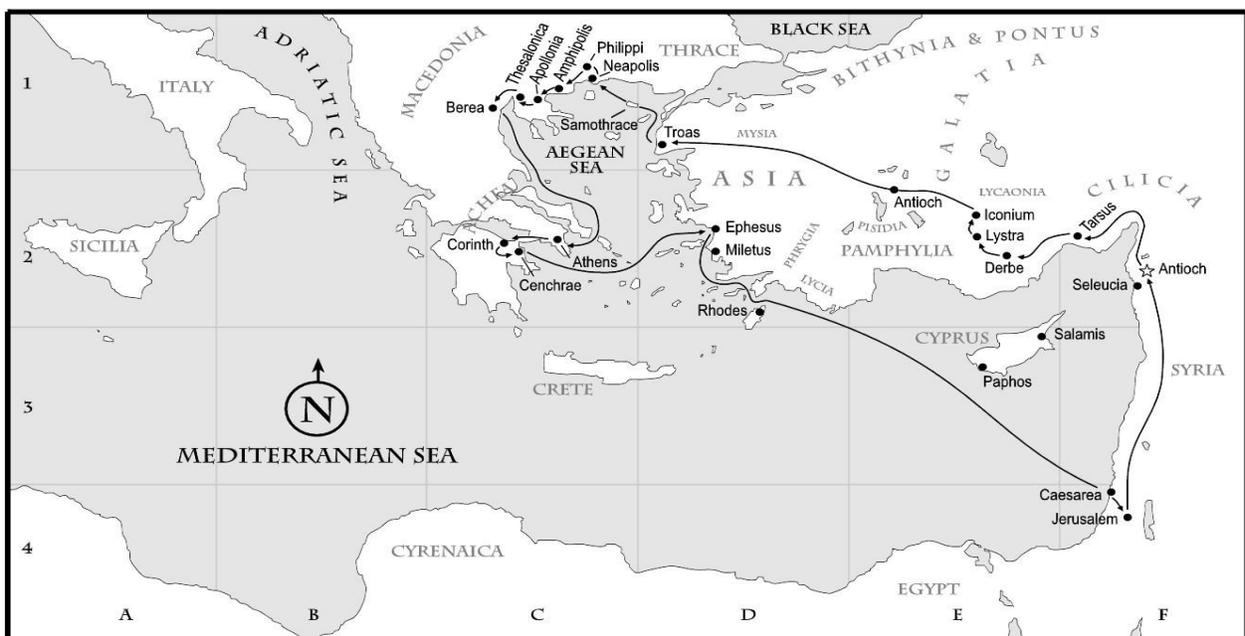
The churches are the churches of the ancient Roman province of _____ . Thus, Paul wrote back to these churches and the Book is the Book of Galatians.

b. The Jerusalem Council – 15:1-35)

There is given in this chapter a history of that conference but Paul gives the outcome of that conference in Galatians 1 and 2. Circumcision and the keeping of the law are not required for salvation.

c. The Second Missionary Journey (15:36 – 18:22)

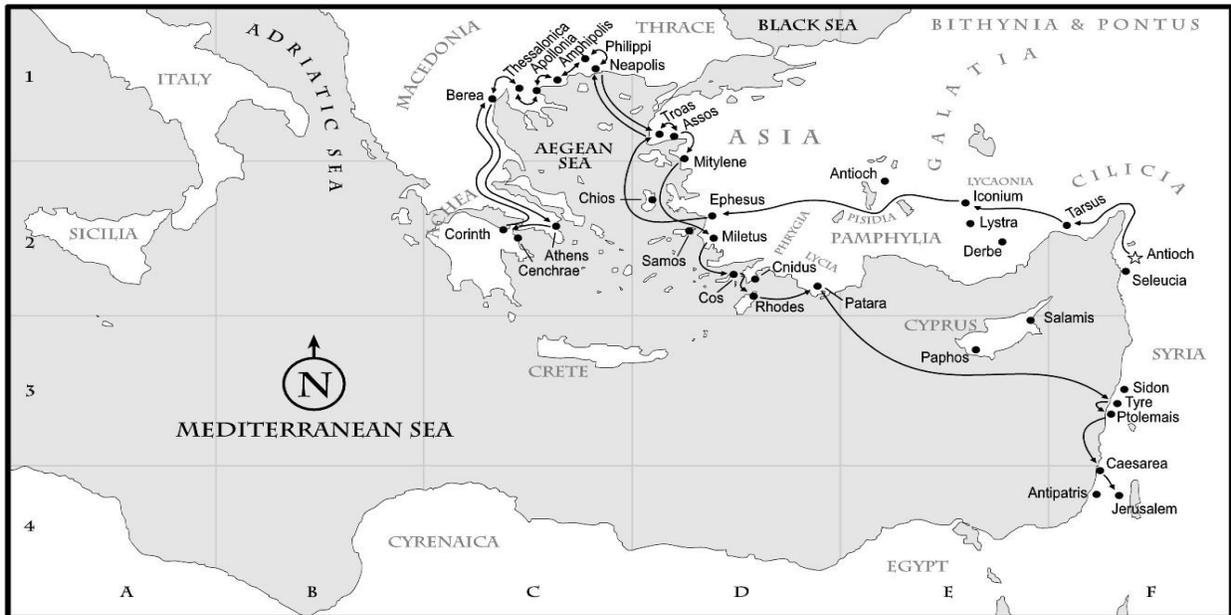
- 1) Paul and Barnabas disagreed over John Mark and they divide. Paul chose Silas and they went back to visit the churches in Galatia and he finds Timothy (16:1).
- 2) Paul wanted to go east (16:6-7) but the Holy Spirit wouldn't let him and they went west to Troas, by the sea, and God gave Paul the Macedonian vision. Luke, the author, joins them there and you notice it is "we" (v. 10) from this point on.
- 3) They cross to Neapolis (16:11), to Philippi (16:12), to Apollonia (17:1), to Thessalonica (17:1), to Berea (17:10), to Athens (17:15), to Corinth (18:1), to Ephesus (18:19), to Caesarea (18:22), up to Jerusalem and back down to Antioch.



d. The Third Missionary Journey (18:23 – 21:17)

Paul revisited the places of the first journey strengthening the churches (18:23) and the points of the second journey also (20:3). He goes from

Ephesus to Tyre (21:3), to Caesarea (21:8), and in 21:14-17 Paul goes to Jerusalem.



e. Paul As A Prisoner – Chapters 21-28

- 1) Paul arrested in Jerusalem. (21:18 – 22:29)
- 2) Paul before the Council (Sanhedrin) at Jerusalem (22:30 – 23:30)
 - a) The Sanhedrin was the highest Jewish tribunal of the day (called “council” in most Bibles). The Sanhedrin was made up of Pharisees and Sadducees
 - i. Note the assurance of the Lord to Paul in Acts 23:11 **But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.”**
- f. Paul Before the Governors (23:31 – 25:12)
 - 1) Felix and Festus were the Judean governors to whom Paul was next to appear for trial.
 - 2) In Chapter 24 he testifies before Felix in Caesarea. The result was that Felix left him bound for two years (27).
 - 3) In Chapter 25 Paul is before Festus at the judgment seat (6) and is asked to go to Jerusalem and appeal his case to Caesar (9-10).
- g. Paul before King Agrippa (25:13 – 26:32)

- 1) Festus, the governor, mentioned his problem with Paul to King Agrippa, an expert in Jewish custom and law (26:3) and he requested the opportunity to hear Paul's testimony. Paul preached to all three, Festus, Bernice, and Agrippa, and notice Paul just gave his testimony (26:1-28)
 - 2) The king could find no fault in Paul and would have liberated him if he had not appealed to Caesar (32).
- h. Paul awaiting trial in Rome (27:1 – 28:31)
- 1) The Lord had said in Acts 23:11 that Paul would bear witness of Him in Rome. Even through the perils of the voyage, Paul was assured of a safe arrival. Paul arrives in Rome by the Appian Way and is allowed to dwell by himself with a soldier that guarded him.
 - 2) He stayed there two years and preached to everyone that came to see him (28:30-31).

The Book of Acts ends here.

Conclusion: Luke wrote the Book of Acts about 64 A.D. Almost certainly Paul was liberated sometime after the first imprisonment. During his imprisonments Paul wrote Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, probably while still in Caesarea.

Seemingly, you cannot place the Pastoral Epistles in the Book of Acts (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus), but we do know from 2 Timothy 4 just before his martyrdom, that he wrote the Second Letter to Timothy. He was there in the Mamertine Dungeon about 67 or 68 A.D. He could have written 1 Timothy from prison or just before his last trip to Jerusalem.

The record stops there at the end of Acts and has no conclusion because the Acts of the Holy Spirit continue to work in and through us, His Body, the Church, to be concluded at the coming of Christ for His Church.