

# A Brief Outline of Acts

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## Introduction

As God begins his work among us after Jesus returns to heaven, we see important glimpses into the nature of the Kingdom: how the church begins and goes through growing pains, how trouble seems to come at the disciples from every imaginable direction, how their faith sees them through overwhelming odds and how they engage others with the gospel. We believe Acts is relevant to what is happening in our current world climate. We must engage the world just as they did. In seeing their triumphs and tragedies, we hope to turn the world upside down just as they did because of Christ living in us (Acts 17:16; Colossians 1:27).

For some this outline will be too long and for others too brief. For instance, why do Paul and other Jewish Christians still offer up sacrifices in the Temple? In an outline, we can only introduce possible solutions, which require further study. A full satisfactory answer must be gleaned, culled and sifted through careful research—an outline is obviously too brief for such an investigation. Hopefully, this either begins your study of Acts or inspires you to look at it again with fresh eyes.

Let me encourage you to keep a list of important events in Acts. Highlight them in this outline so you will be able to access them readily. In looking at the impact Jesus has on the lives of the disciples then, we see what the church ought to be now—people filled with God’s Spirit and continuing what Jesus began to do and teach (Acts 1:1). As a community of believers, we commit to following Jesus and listening to his voice above all others. The world offers a cacophony of solutions, philosophies and rules, but we preach Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2).

My prayer is that this study will help you to see how the disciples carried out Jesus' work so we can better engage our world today with the man from Nazareth.

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The Church begins and spreads (Acts 1-12).

### Prelude to Pentecost (Acts 1)

- The day of Pentecost comes fifty days after the Passover.

It celebrates the gathering of the harvest and to praise God for what he has given them.

People bring a portion of their crops and offer sacrifices to thank the Lord for his goodness.

On the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread the first fruit of the barley harvest is offered.

Fifty days later, the harvest celebration begins (also called the Feast of Weeks).

This marked the end of the main harvest.

Every Jewish male is required to participate in this festival at Jerusalem.

Jews from every nation under Roman rule are present to hear Peter's message.

- Jesus is taken up into heaven (Acts 1:1-11).

Jesus shows with many convincing proofs that he is risen (Acts 1:3; cf. 1 Corinthians 15:1-8).

The disciples go into Jerusalem to await the coming of the Holy Spirit as Jesus instructed (Acts 1:6-26).

The apostles<sup>1</sup> ask Jesus after he is raised from the dead whether he would restore the kingdom of Israel.<sup>2</sup>

Jesus tells them that it is not for them to know when God does things.

The Holy Spirit will empower them.

They must wait in Jerusalem after which they will witness of him to the world.

Jesus rose from the ground ascending into heaven while two angels tell them that he will come again in the same way that he left.

They return to Jerusalem where they go to an upper room to pray and await the master's promise (Acts 1:12-26).

- Matthias is chosen to replace Judas (Acts 1:12-26).

One hundred twenty disciples gather.

Peter argues that they must replace Judas.

Candidates have to be eyewitnesses of Jesus' ministry from John's baptism until his ascension.

The disciples choose Matthias by praying, casting lots, which fall on Matthias.

### Pentecost (Acts 2)

#### The Holy Spirit arrives (Acts 2:1-13).

- The disciples gather on the day of the Pentecost in Jerusalem.

Suddenly a sound of a violent wind tears through the temple and tongues of fire rest on the disciples.

The disciples now speak in many different languages.

- Crowds gather because of the violent sound of the wind only to be amazed at the disciples, but some accuse the disciples of being drunk.

#### Peter addresses the crowd (Acts 2:14-47).

- Peter lays out his case that the long-anticipated kingdom is come.

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<sup>1</sup>"Apostle" means one sent with a commission. It signified a special office of specially selected men that were to guide the early church until it reached maturity (cf. Ephesians 4:11-16).

<sup>2</sup>They thought Jesus would restore David's kingdom and throw off the oppression of the Roman Empire. They still did not understand that Jesus came to rule the hearts of men instead of geographic territory.

Peter begins with a prophecy from Joel.

This is the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh.

The kingdom of God and His Christ are here.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Jesus of Nazareth was accredited by God through miracles.

God handed him over to you according to His plan to save humanity.

Although with the help of lawless (the Romans) men you crucified him, God raised him from the dead.

David foresaw Christ's resurrection.

*"I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand" (Psalm 16:8-11).*

Peter points out that David could not have spoken of himself since the Jews knew where David was buried.

God raised Christ from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this fact.

- They devote their life to the teachings of the apostles to the fellowship of prayer to the breaking of bread and prayer.

Peter tells them about Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

Peter says, "Repent and let every single one of you be immersed for the forgiveness of your sins."

They devote their life to the teachings of the apostles to the fellowship of prayer to the breaking of bread and prayer.

- Peter warns them to separate themselves from this generation because it is filled with evil.

Three thousand respond to Peter's appeal by being immersed and by being added to their number by the Lord.

They listen to the apostles' teaching carefully, pray together, share meals and substance, praise God, and increase both numerically, as well as spiritually.

### Peter and John heal a crippled man (Acts 3-4).

- The crippled man is carried that gate every day and begs there.

Peter says him he has no money, but he offers him what he does have.

"In the name of Jesus of Nazareth—stand up and walk!"

The man stands and walks.

People begin to recognize that he is the cripple that they had seen at the temple gate earlier.

They puzzle over how this could have happened.

- Peter and John seize the moment to preach about Jesus.

This was done by the power of God through Jesus whom they crucified.

Turn to God, and he will refresh your souls.

- While Peter and John speak, Jewish priests arrest them because they do not approve of what Peter and John are teaching the people.
- They put Peter and John in jail overnight to decide to do with them in the morning.
- However, their efforts do not stop many from believing in Christ and becoming Christians.

Their numbers swells to 5,000 Christians counting only the men among them.

The Jewish leaders question the pair about how they healed the cripple.

Peter boldly stands before them and tells them that it is by the power of  
It is by Jesus Christ, whom they crucified, that the man stands before them whole.

Salvation is found only in Jesus.

- They take note that they had been with Jesus.

They see something familiar about them, and it reminds them of Jesus!

The leaders warn them to stop preaching about Jesus and let them go free.

Peter and John meet with the believers to pray for courage to preach the word.

The brothers join in heart and spirit.

Anyone with a need is helped.

Some sell land and fields in order to help their brothers and sisters in need.

Barnabas, whose name means "one who encourages," sells a piece of land and brings all of the money to the apostles for them to distribute among those who have needs.

Ananias and Sapphira sell a piece of property (Acts 5:1-11).

- They bring part of the money to the apostles to distribute to the poor, but claim they gave all the money
- They desire to have the notoriety which Barnabas possessed because of his generosity (cf. Acts 4:36-37).

However, instead of giving it all they decided to lie.

The money is theirs to keep; the apostles had not compelled them to give any part of it (Acts 5:4).

- Since they agreed to lie about the purchase price of the land, God strikes the pair dead.

God does not tolerate deception in His church.

God strikes down Ananias and Sapphira so others will not duplicate their actions.

- What would the early church have been like if God allows others to follow the example of Ananias and Sapphira?

Would people have learned to draw closer to God by people who lied so that others would have thought they were wonderful people?

How can we help each other if we have to lie so we can impress our friends?

God gave His son to die for us so that we could become like Him.

Anyone who loves someone that much is willing to discipline someone when he is wrong (cf. Hebrews 12:7-11).

God chooses to take the lives of two foolish people so that others would not become like them and wind up losing their souls.

Only God is able to judge the hearts of others.

Where the pair will spend eternity is not explicitly stated.

However, His warning against lying rings out, loud and clear.

- Peter points out that an act of deception even though it may be aimed at fooling men is directed at God.

To base any relationship on a lie places a wall between the people that we are trying to impress.

That lie must be covered up by other lies until it reaches a point where we must invent stories in order to keep up the charade.

Revealing the truth is to be avoided since exposing our weaknesses makes us vulnerable to attack.

- In contrast to us God never lies (Hebrews 6:10-19).

If God lies, then we can never be certain about anything that he says because he could just change his mind and do anything that he chooses.

Wouldn't it be great if we were more like God?

- When the church hears what happened to Ananias and Sapphira, they are filled with fear.

They are impressed with how awful sin is because of the drastic action that God takes.

God's action teaches us to live as God directs so that we will escape the plight of Ananias and Sapphira.

Sometimes God must take drastic action to help us see what he wants us to do.

However, do not think that everything that happens to us that is bad is to punish us for some wrong.

Remember Satan prowls like a lion seeking to devour us (1 Peter 5:8).

Instead of focusing on how bad things may be we need to examine what good can come of it and what we need to do to please God even in this situation.

### Jewish leaders try to stop the apostles from preaching about Jesus (Acts 5:12-42).

- While the apostles perform many miracles and convince many of the Jews, the other disciples are too afraid to stand up with the apostles for fear of being persecuted.

Nevertheless, the people gather to them bringing them their sick so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on them while passing by and heal them of their sickness.

The church grows in favor.

- Jewish leaders throw the apostles into prison to stop this perceived threat.

An angel leads them out of the prison during night and instructs them to return to the temple to preach the good news about Christ and his kingdom.

The apostles began teaching in the early morning hours.

- The high priest sends for the apostles.

To their surprise, the apostles are not there.

The jail is closed and locked with guards posted at the doors, but the jail is empty.

While pondering over what happened, the Sanhedrin receives news that the apostles are preaching about Jesus in the temple.

The guards retrieve the apostles from the temple but cannot use force because they are afraid that the people might stone them.

The Jewish leaders forbid them to preach and teach about Jesus and holding them responsible for Jesus' death.

Peter and the other apostles say that they must obey God rather than men.

Jewish leaders want to kill them, but Gamaliel advises them not to do it.

- If this is of God, then they cannot stop it.
- If it is not of God, then God will defeat it.

They agree to Gamaliel's advice; they have the apostles beaten, instruct them to never preach in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

### A dispute begins over the care of widows (Acts 6:1-6).

- Some feel that the Grecian widows, who were not born and bred in Palestine, are not being given an equal share of food which the church distributed daily to the poor and needy.
- The apostles tell them that they would not be fulfilling their duties before God if they have to wait on tables to insure that the distribution is being done fairly.

The apostles instruct them to choose seven men from their midst who are full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit.

They choose Grecian Jews to handle the matter

The apostles pray for them and lay their hands on them to symbolize that they are giving them authority over these matters.

- God's word reaches more and more people; the church grows so that even some of the Jewish leaders obey the gospel (Acts 6:7).

Stephen teaches about Jesus in the Grecian synagogue (Acts 6:8-8:4).

- He becomes so convincingly that his opponents cannot stop him except to take him before the Jewish leaders on trumped up charges.

They accuse him of saying things against Moses and the temple.

Everyone watches Stephen while the charges were being made and notes that his face looks like the face of an angel.

- Stephen answers their charges in sermon laced with Jewish history.

Abraham left his homeland at God's request promising to give the new land to his descendants, but getting none of it for himself.

God told Abraham that he would punish them with slavery.

God made a pact with Abraham in which circumcision became a sign of the agreement.

Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery because they were jealous of him.

However, God saved him from prison and made him governor of Egypt being second only the king himself.

Joseph invited all his relatives to come live with him.

The Israelites multiplied to the point that the people of Egypt became fearful of them and enslaved them.

God raised up Moses during these cruel times in the court of the king.

At the age of forty Moses defended a fellow Hebrew by killing an Egyptian taskmaster.

He fled to Midian and stayed there forty years until God spoke to him in a flaming bush.

God chose him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt even though they had rejected him some forty years earlier.

Even after seeing all the great miracles Moses did, the people still rejected Moses as their leader.

Joshua led the people into the Promised Land.

Solomon built a temple for God.

Even though David pleased God very much, he was not allowed to build the temple.

God does not live in a house fashioned by human hands.

Why do you insist on being like your fathers who refused to give their hearts to God?

You have always resisted God's Spirit!

Your fathers hurt every prophet and now you have crucified the Messiah who came to rescue us.

- In a blind rage, Jewish leaders take Stephen and stone him to death.

When Stephen tells of seeing Jesus standing at God's right side, many stop up their ears, run at him and threw stones at him until he dies.

A young man named Saul holds the coats of those killing Stephen.

Saul believes that Stephen deserves death.

He sides with Jewish leaders by dragging Christians to prison and having them killed.

The church scatters because of his intense persecution.

As they go, they spread the gospel, and many became Christians because of it.

Philip teaches about Christ in the city of Samaria (Acts 8:5-25).

- The people of Samaria were half Jewish.
- This is the first time that the gospel story was told to anyone who was not a full Jew.

The Jews and Samaritans have a long-standing dispute about where the temple should be located (cf. John 4:9, 20).

Even though there are religious and social tensions, they are still considered to be closely related to the Jews.

To this point, neither the apostles nor any of the believers think that Christ intended that they preaching the gospel to the whole world included non-Jews.

- Chapter 8 is an important pivotal point in Acts.

Philip preaches to those who are not fully Jewish by virtue of their birth.

He also teaches a proselyte.<sup>3</sup>

At this time in Acts, we see God slowly leading the people to see the need for the gospel to be preached to all people including the Gentiles (non-Jews).

- Philip performs miracles and cast out demons as he preaches of Jesus' power to save.

Many respond gladly and obey the gospel or good news.

Even Simon, a magician who tricked everyone into thinking he is a powerful wizard, becomes a Christian.

- Simon is amazed at what Philip did because he can spot trickery easily.
- What Philip does is real; so, Simon believes and is baptized (i.e., immersed).
- When the apostles hear about Philip's work and how well the people of Samaria have embraced the gospel, they send Peter and John to strengthen and encourage them.

Peter and John pray for the Samaritans, who have been baptized, to receive the Holy Spirit<sup>4</sup>.

Simon tried to buy this ability to give the Holy Spirit to other people from Peter and John.

- Peter warns him that trying to buy God's gift will end in certain doom.
- Simon asks Peter and John to pray for him so that this would not happen to him.

On the way home, Peter and John preached the good news in other cities in Samaria.

- Philip teaches and Ethiopian eunuch<sup>5</sup> about Jesus (Acts 8:26-40).

An angel of the Lord instructs Philip to travel a certain road and along the way he sees a man riding in a chariot reading from the book of Isaiah.

This particular eunuch is an important official in the queen's court and probably serving as the treasurer for the country of Ethiopia.

The eunuch is reading out loud from Isaiah 53 which is a prophecy concerning Jesus' trial and execution.

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<sup>3</sup> Proselytes were people who were not born Jews, but accepted the Jewish faith by being circumcised and going through certain ceremonial rites such as baptism. Although the text does not explicitly state that the Ethiopian eunuch is a proselyte, it seems that this is very likely the case.

<sup>4</sup> The Holy Spirit gave early Christians special abilities to perform miracles so people would know that their message was true (cf. 1 Corinthians 12). Some spoke in different languages which they never learned, some healed the sick, and others could see into the future. Since only God can do these things, people knew that what was being said had to be from God. God enabled his followers to do miracles so that the truth would be established and people for all time that what the apostles and others said was true because of the miracles they did.

<sup>5</sup> Mensevants of queens and princesses are often made eunuchs so that they can be trusted not to have sexual relations with the king's wives or daughters.

- PHILIP ASKS HIM AS HE PASSES BY IN HIS CHARIOT WHETHER HE UNDERSTANDS WHAT HE IS READING.
- THE EUNUCH REPLIES THAT HE NEEDS SOMEONE TO EXPLAIN IT SO PHILIP CLIMBS INTO THE CHARIOT AND PREACHED TO HIM JESUS.

When the chariot passes by a body of water, the eunuch asks Philip what hinders him from being immersed into Christ.

- THE EUNUCH STOPS THE CHARIOT AND PHILIP BAPTIZES HIM.<sup>6</sup>
- THE HOLY SPIRIT TAKES PHILIP AWAY AND THE EUNUCH NEVER SEES HIM AGAIN.
- PHILIP PREACHES THE GOOD NEWS IN ALL THE TOWNS FROM AZOTUS TO CAESAREA.

Saul goes to Damascus to arrest followers of Christ (Acts 9:1-31).

- HOWEVER, HE ENCOUNTERS JESUS ALONG THE WAY AND BECOMES A DISCIPLE HIMSELF.
- AS HE APPROACHES THE CITY, A BRIGHT LIGHT SUDDENLY ENGULFS HIM AND VOICE CALLS TO HIM ASKING HIM WHY SAUL PERSECUTED HIM.

*"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied (Acts 9:5).*

- SAUL IS INSTRUCTED TO GO INTO THE CITY AND WAIT UNTIL SOMEONE COMES TO HIM TO TELL HIM WHAT HE MUST DO.
- WHEN SAUL GETS UP FROM THE GROUND, HE CANNOT SEE.

Saul's fellow travelers hear a loud noise, but cannot understand what is said to Saul.

Then the men lead Saul into the city where he waits three days not eating or drinking anything during this time.

- THE LORD APPEARS TO ANANIAS WHO WAS A DISCIPLE OF JESUS LYING IN THE CITY OF DAMASCUS.

Jesus instructs Ananias how to get to where Saul is staying and to preach the good news to him.

Ananias had heard of the tremendous persecution which Saul had initiated in Jerusalem and is afraid to go to him, but after Jesus reassures him he leaves to see Saul.

Jesus selects Saul to preach the good news to the non-Jewish people and to kings as well.

- ANANIAS TELLS SAUL THAT CHRIST HAS SENT HIM.

Immediately, something like scales fall from his eyes and he can see once more.

Then Ananias immerses Saul into Christ.

- SAUL STAYS WITH CHRISTIANS IN DAMASCUS FOR A FEW DAYS.

He preaches about Jesus in the synagogues.

His preaching about Jesus became so powerful that his critics can no longer answer his arguments.

- SOME JEWS MAKE PLANS TO KILL SAUL; SO THE DISCIPLES LOWERED HIM IN A BASKET OVER THE WALL DURING THE NIGHT
- SAUL TRAVELS TO JERUSALEM TO MEET UP WITH THE BELIEVERS IN JERUSALEM, BUT THEY HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM BECAUSE THEY FEAR THAT IT IS TRAP.
- BARNABAS (CF. ACTS 4:36-37) TAKES SAUL TO THE APOSTLES.

Saul preaches about Jesus boldly until the disciples learn of another plot to kill him.

The brothers send him to Tarsus by way of Caesarea.

- THE CHURCH GROWS STEADILY IN JUDEA, GALILEE, AND SAMARIA; AND THE NUMBER OF BELIEVERS GROWS MORE AND MORE.

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<sup>6</sup>Verse 37 is not in many of the newer translations because it is not found in the early copies of the book of Acts. It seems that a very strong tradition led later scribes (people who copied the New Testament by hand) to include this verse in their edition. The tradition appears to be strong enough for us to say that this is what happened, but probably did not come from the hand of Luke as footnotes in later translations of the New Testament suggest.

- Peter travels through the area preaching Christ and healing the sick (Acts 9:32-43).

While visiting the disciples in Lydda, Peter heals Aeneas who has not been able to leave his bed for eight years.

- Aeneas arises immediately when Peter tells him that he is healed by the power of Jesus Christ.
- When the people of the city and the neighboring Plain of Sharon see what happened to him, they turn to the Lord.

In the city of Joppa Peter raises a godly woman from the dead.

- Dorcas made clothing for the poor when she was alive.
- After raising her from the dead, Peter stays at the home of a leatherworker named Simon.

- Peter preaches the good news to the first non-Jew (Acts 10:1-11:18).

In Caesarea a God-fearing Roman officer named Cornelius prays to God.

- An angel appears to Cornelius and instructs him to send for Peter in Joppa.
- Cornelius selects three men to go to Joppa to find a man by the name of Peter living with Simon the leatherworker.

While in Joppa, Peter has a vision of a sheet with animals which Jews are forbidden to eat and is instructed to kill and eat them.

- The episode repeats three times with Peter refusing to do so because he does not wish to disobey the dietary restriction in the Mosaic Law.
- The Lord tells Peter to go with the men sent by Cornelius.

When Peter arrives, Cornelius explains to Peter about the angel and tells him that he is prepared to do anything that the Lord may require.

- Peter finally understands that the gospel is also intended for non-Jewish people and begins to preach to Cornelius and his family about Jesus.
- The Holy Spirit comes down on Cornelius and others listening to the message.
- Peter argues that they cannot keep them from becoming Christians if the Holy Spirit has come upon the Gentiles just as he did upon them in the beginning (Acts 2:1-4).
- Peter then immerses them into Christ and stays a few days to instruct them further.

The Jews in Jerusalem become upset with Peter for preaching to the Gentiles (non-Jews).

- Peter explains everything that happened.
- The Jewish believers praise God that the good news is for the non-Jews as well.

- The good news travels to Antioch of Syria after Stephen was killed (Acts 11:19-30).

The Jerusalem church sends Barnabas to strengthen the believers.

Barnabas goes to Tarsus to get Saul to help him with the work in Antioch.

Herod kills the apostle James and imprisons Peter (Acts 12).

When Herod sees that killing James pleases the Jews, he imprisons Peter also.

- Sixteen soldiers guard Peter as he awaits trial.
- The night before the trial an angel rescues Peter from prison.
- When he arrives at the home of Mary the mother of John Mark, the believers are amazed to find them at their doorstep.

God strikes Herod with a fatal sickness when people proclaim him a god for a speech that he gives, but fails to give God the glory.

JOHN MARK GOES TO ANTIOCH WITH SAUL AND BARNABAS (ACTS 12:25).

- THE HOLY SPIRIT SETS APART BARNABAS AND SAUL TO PREACH THE GOOD NEWS TO PEOPLE IN OTHER NATIONS (ACTS 13:1-3).

BARNABAS'S NAME APPEARS FIRST AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TOUR AND THEN SHIFTS TO SECOND PLACE AS TIME PROGRESSES.

THIS SEEMS TO BE BECAUSE BARNABAS LEADS THE GROUP BUT SOON TAKES A BACK SEAT TO SAUL AS HE ASSERTS HIMSELF MORE.

BARNABAS HAS A SELFLESS ATTITUDE.

HE DOES NOT ALWAYS HAVE TO BE FIRST OR HAVE HIS OWN WAY.

HE IS PEOPLE ORIENTED.

BARNABAS TAKES PEOPLE UNDER HIS WING THAT NO ONE WANTS AND TURNS THEM INTO SPIRITUAL GIANTS.<sup>7</sup>

SAUL USES HIS HEBREW NAME WHEN HE LIVES AMONG THE JEWS, BUT WHEN HE PREACHES ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO THE GENTILES, HE USES HIS GREEK NAME "PAUL;" EVENTUALLY HE WILL GO STRICTLY BY PAUL SINCE HE IS THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES.

PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS BEGIN (ACTS 13-28).

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY INVOLVES ASIA MINOR (ACTS 13-14).

- BARNABAS, SAUL, AND JOHN MARK PREACH THE GOOD NEWS ON THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS (ACTS 13:4-12).

WHEN THEY COME TO THE CITY OF SALAMIS, THEY PREACH THE GOSPEL IN THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUES.

IN LATER LIFE, PAUL MAKES IT A PRACTICE TO PREACH TO THE JEWS FIRST WHEN HE WENT TO A NEW CITY BECAUSE THE GOSPEL HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THE JEWS FIRST (ROMANS 1:16,17).

GOD WANTS THE JEWS TO HEAR THE GOSPEL FIRST BECAUSE HE HAD CHOSEN THEM TO BE AN EXAMPLE TO THE NATIONS (CF. GENESIS 12:1-3; ISAIAH 51:1-8; ROMANS 1:16).

AT PAPHOS BARNABAS AND SAUL PREACH THE GOOD NEWS TO GOVERNOR, BUT A JEWISH MAGICIAN TRIES TO STOP THEM.

SAUL BLINDS HIM BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BECAUSE HE TRIED TO BLIND OTHERS TO TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD.

THE GOVERNOR BELIEVES WHEN HE SEES WHAT HAPPENED TO ELYMAS THE MAGICIAN.

- PAUL AND BARNABAS GO TO PISIDIA PREACHING THE GOSPEL IN THE CITY OF ANTIOCH (ACTS 13:13-52).

JOHN MARK RETURNS TO JERUSALEM.

PAUL PREACHES IN THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH.

PAUL TELL THEM ABOUT HOW THE PEOPLE DO NOT REALIZE THAT JESUS IS THE MESSIAH AND CRUCIFY HIM.

THE JEWS ASK THE PAIR TO RETURN ON THE SABBATH TO INSTRUCT THEM FURTHER.

DURING THE COURSE OF THE WEEK, PAUL AND BARNABAS TEACH THE GENTILES ABOUT JESUS.

THE NEXT SABBATH ALMOST EVERYONE IN THE CITY COMES TO HEAR, BUT THE JEWS BECOME JEALOUS AND CREATE A SCENE.

THE NON-JEWISH PEOPLE HEAR THEM GLADLY, BUT THE JEWS STIR UP CITY LEADERS AGAINST THEM SO THAT PAUL AND BARNABAS ARE FORCED OUT FROM THE CITY.

PAUL AND BARNABAS SHAKE THE DUST OFF AND GO TO ICONIUM (CF. MATTHEW 10:11-15).

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<sup>7</sup>BARNABAS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN A GREAT ENCOURAGER AS HIS NICKNAME SUGGESTS (ACTS 4:36). HE TOOK PAUL UNDER HIS WING WHEN NOT EVEN THE APOSTLES WOULD HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM FOR FEAR THAT PAUL'S NEW FOUND CHRISTIANITY WAS A CLEVER RUSE TO ROOT OUT CHRISTIAN LEADERS (ACTS 9:26-27). AFTER ARRIVING IN ANTIOCH, HE GETS PAUL TO HELP HIM WITH THE WORK (ACTS 11:22-26). UNDER HIS TUTORAGE JOHN MARK, WHOM PAUL REFUSES TO TAKE ON HIS SECOND JOURNEY, BECOMES SUCH A STRONG CHRISTIAN THAT PAUL ASKS TO SEE HIM AS HE FACES DEATH (2 TIMOTHY 4:11).

- In Iconium, many Jews and Greeks believe, but some of the Jews who did not believe turned many against Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:1-7).

Nevertheless, Paul and Barnabas are able to stay in Iconium a long time boldly teaching the word of God.

Finally, the Jews plot to stone them, but Paul and Barnabas learn of their plans and leave for Lystra and Derbe.

- In Lystra, Paul heals a cripple and the city thinks that he is one of the Greek gods (Acts 14:8-20).

When Paul and Barnabas realize what is happening, they try to stop the crowd from worshipping them.

He speaks to them of the one God who made all that is and shows kindness to all men by sending the rain and causing crops to grow.

Jews from Antioch and Iconium stir up the city against Paul.

They drag him out of the city, stone him, and leave him for dead.

However, God raises him up when the followers of Jesus gathered around him.<sup>8</sup>

The next day Paul and Barnabas leave for Derbe.

- Paul and Barnabas preach the good news in Derbe and strengthen the churches that they established on the way back to Antioch of Syria (Acts 14:21-28).

They encourage the believers to hold fast to Jesus Christ even through the hard times, which would surely come.

They establish elders in every church.

When they return to Antioch of Syria, they tell how God worked among the Gentiles.

### Christians confer in Jerusalem over the matter of Gentile converts (Acts 15:1-35).

- Jewish believers come from Jerusalem and tell the believers in Antioch that non-Jews have to become Jewish converts before they can become a Christian (Acts 15:1-35).

Paul and Barnabas argue against what they were teaching.

They decide to go down to Jerusalem with some others from Antioch to speak with the brothers in Jerusalem.

Paul and Barnabas tell how God has worked among the Gentiles to the brothers in Phoenicia and Samaria.

Some of the Jewish brothers assert that the non-Jews must obey the Law of Moses.

The apostles and elders gather to discuss the problem.

Peter relates how God had moved him to teach Cornelius and how the Holy Spirit came down on them as he had done in the beginning without them becoming Jews first.

Paul and Barnabas tell how God has worked among the Gentiles.

James, the brother of Jesus, shows how the Law of Moses speaks of God accepting non-Jews.

They decide to write a letter encouraging the brothers to keep on building their faith and not listen to those who expect them to become Jews.

They instruct them to avoid eating meat with blood in it and to avoid sexual immorality.

They send Judas and Silas to them to help their non-Jewish brothers.

Paul and Silas take the gospel to Europe (Acts 15:36-18:22).

- Paul and Barnabas separate because they disagree whether John Mark should go back with them to the churches that they established (Acts 15:36-41).

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<sup>8</sup> The text clearly implies a miracle occurred here. However, what is unclear is whether Paul was stoned to death then raised from the dead, healed from near death, protected from harm or something else. Clearly, he is left for dead by his enemies, which supports the first two options.

PAUL DID NOT WANT TO TAKE JOHN MARK.

THE PAIR DISAGREE SO MUCH THAT THEY DECIDE TO SPLIT UP.

PAUL TAKES SILAS.

BARNABAS TAKES JOHN MARK.<sup>9</sup>

- AFTER GOING THROUGH SYRIA AND CILICIA TO STRENGTHEN ALL THE CHURCHES, PAUL AND SILAS COME TO DERBE AND LYSTRA WHERE THEY MEET A YOUNG BELIEVER NAMED TIMOTHY.

THE BROTHERS IN ICONIUM AND LYSTRA SPEAK HIGHLY OF TIMOTHY.

PAUL CIRCUMCISES TIMOTHY SO THAT HE CAN TRAVEL WITH HIM.

TIMOTHY'S FATHER IS GREEK, BUT HIS MOTHER IS A JEWESS.

PAUL DOES NOT CIRCUMCISE TIMOTHY SO THAT HE CAN BE SAVED, BUT BECAUSE HE IS A JEW.

NOT ONLY DID CIRCUMCISING TIMOTHY HELP PAUL TO REACH MORE JEWS IN THE AREA WITH THE GOSPEL MESSAGE, BUT IT ALSO MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR TIMOTHY TO PREACH MORE EFFECTIVELY TO THE JEWS BECAUSE HE WAS NOW FULLY JEWISH.

BECOMING A CHRISTIAN DOES NOT MEAN ONE MUST LEAVE HIS CULTURAL HERITAGE.

ONE DOES NOT HAVE TO BECOME A JEW IN ORDER TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN.

JEWS ALSO DO NOT HAVE TO BECOME GENTILES IN ORDER TO BECOME CHRISTIANS.

- PAUL TRAVELS FROM TOWN TO TOWN GIVING THE DECISIONS MADE BY THE APOSTLES AND ELDERS IN JERUSALEM AND STRENGTHENING THE BROTHERS.

THE CHURCHES GROW LARGER EVERY DAY.

PAUL WANTS TO PREACH THE GOOD NEWS IN THE COUNTRY OF ASIA, BUT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES NOT ALLOW IT.

WHEN THEY REACH THROAS, PAUL HAS A VISION OF A MAN FOR MACEDONIA PLEADING FOR HELP.

PAUL KNOWS THAT GOD WAS TELLING HIM TO GO TO MACEDONIA SO HE MAKES IMMEDIATE PREPARATIONS TO LEAVE.

- PAUL AND SILAS GO TO THE CITY OF PHILIPPI (ACTS 16:11-40)<sup>10</sup>.

PHILIPPI WAS A ROMAN COLONY AND THE LEADING CITY OF MACEDONIA.

AS A ROMAN COLONY, IT RECEIVED PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT BY THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT.

ANYONE BORN IN PHILIPPI IS A ROMAN CITIZEN, WHICH CARRIED MANY BENEFITS NOT AVAILABLE TO OTHERS IN THE EMPIRE.

ON THE SABBATH DAY PAUL AND HIS COMPANIONS MEET WHERE JEWS GATHER FOR PRAYER.

A SYNAGOGUE REQUIRES TEN MALE JEWS—EVIDENTLY, THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH JEWS LIVING IN PHILIPPI OR PERHAPS SOME ORDINANCE PREVENTING IT.

WHILE THERE, THEY MEET A WOMAN NAMED LUDIA WHO MARKETS EXPENSIVE PURPLE CLOTH.

THE LORD OPENS HER HEART TO THE MESSAGE PAUL BROUGHT.

SHE AND HER WHOLE HOUSEHOLD ARE IMMERSSED INTO CHRIST.

SHE PERSUADES PAUL AND HIS COMPANIONS TO STAY WITH HER.

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<sup>9</sup> From Scripture we see two divergent personalities in Paul and Barnabas. Paul is task-oriented— anxious to get everything done. Barnabas is a people person who invests heavily in developing people. The pair recognize their differences and part company on good terms. In essence, the Lord's work doubles because of how they separate.

<sup>10</sup> Luke joins Paul's party at Throas, which was probably Luke's hometown. Verse 10 begins what are called the "we" passages because the author very carefully notes when he is with Paul and when he is not. Scholars use these passages to determine who the author is through a careful process of elimination by noting who is with the party when the "we" occurs.

PAUL HEALS A SERVANT GIRL WHO HAS A SPIRIT FROM SATAN IN HER, WHICH ENABLES HER TO TELL FORTUNES.

HER MASTERS ARE VERY DISPLEASED WITH PAUL BECAUSE SHE MADE A LOT OF MONEY OFF THE SPIRIT, WHICH CONTROLLED THE GIRL'S MIND.

THE OWNERS OF THE GIRL SEIZE PAUL AND SILAS AND DRAG THEM TO THE CITY OFFICIALS.

THE OWNERS TELL THEM THAT PAUL AND SILAS ARE TROUBLEMAKERS TEACHING THINGS THAT ARE NOT RIGHT FOR ROMAN CITIZENS TO DO.

THE CROWD KINDLES THEIR DENUNCIATION OF THE PAIR.

SO ROMAN OFFICERS RIP OFF PAUL AND SILAS'S CLOTHING FROM THEIR BACKS AND HAVE THEM BEATEN REPEATEDLY WITH RODS.

THEN THEY TOSS PAUL AND SILAS INTO JAIL.

THE JAILER PLACES THEM UNDER MAXIMUM SECURITY.

MOREOVER, THEIR FEET ARE PLACED IN WOODEN STOCKS TO INSURE THAT THEY CANNOT ESCAPE.

AROUND MIDNIGHT, PAUL AND SILAS SING HYMNS AND PRAY WHILE THE OTHER PRISONERS LISTEN.

AN EARTHQUAKE ROCKS THE FOUNDATION OF THE JAIL SO THAT ALL THE DOORS OF THE PRISON OPEN.

WHEN THE JAILER SEES THIS, HE TRIES TO KILL HIMSELF BECAUSE UNDER ROMAN LAW HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS PRISONERS AND SHARES THEIR FATE IF THEY ESCAPE.

HOWEVER, PAUL SHOUTS TO HIM NOT TO KILL HIMSELF BECAUSE NO ONE HAS ESCAPED.

THE JAILER QUICKLY RECOGNIZES THAT GOD WAS WITH THEM AND ASKS WHAT HE HAS TO DO TO BE SAVED.

PAUL AND SILAS TELL THEM OF JESUS, AND THE JAILER ALONG WITH HIS FAMILY IS IMMERSSED INTO CHRIST AFTER WASHING THEIR WOUNDS.

THE NEXT MORNING THE ROMAN OFFICIALS SEND WORD TO LET PAUL AND SILAS GO FREE.

HOWEVER, THEY REFUSE BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN BEATEN IN PUBLIC WITHOUT A TRIAL EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE ROMAN CITIZENS.

PAUL AND SILAS TELL THE MESSENGERS THAT THEY WILL NOT GO AWAY QUIETLY AFTER BEING TREATED SO HARSHLY.

WHEN THE CITY OFFICIALS HEAR THIS, THEY WERE AFRAID BECAUSE IT WAS AGAINST ROMAN LAW TO BEAT A ROMAN CITIZEN WITHOUT A TRIAL<sup>11</sup>.

SO, THE OFFICIALS COME TO THE JAIL AND ASK THEM TO LEAVE THE CITY.

PAUL AND SILAS GO TO LYDIA'S TO ENCOURAGE THE BELIEVERS AND THEN LEAVE.

PAUL AND SILAS PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS IN THESSALONICA (ACTS 17:1-10).

- PAUL ENTERS THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH, AS IS HIS HABIT, TO INTRODUCE JEWS TO JESUS.

HE SHOWS THEM HOW THE SCRIPTURES FORETELL OF HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

ONLY SOME OF THE JEWS ARE CONVINCED.

MANY GREEKS WHO WORSHIP THE ONE TRUE GOD, INCLUDING MANY PROMINENT WOMEN, JOIN PAUL AND SILAS.

THE JEWS ARE JEALOUS OF PAUL AND SILAS' SUCCESS SO THEY HIRE SOME MEN TO START A RIOT IN THE MARKETPLACE.

- THEY TRY TO FIND PAUL AND SILAS BUT CANNOT.

THEY BRING OUT JASON AND SOME OF THE OTHER BELIEVERS CHARGING THEM WITH FOLLOWING A KING OTHER THAN CAESAR AND WITH CREATING MISCHIEF WHEREVER THEY WENT.

THE CITY LEADERS MAKE JASON AND THE OTHER BELIEVERS PUT UP A SUM OF MONEY THEN SET THEM FREE.

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<sup>11</sup>BEATING NON-CITIZENS WAS ACCEPTABLE UNDER ROMAN LAW. HOWEVER, ONE WOULD HAVE TO PAY A HEAVY PENALTY FOR BEATING A ROMAN CITIZEN WITHOUT A TRIAL. VERY FEW PEOPLE WERE ROMAN CITIZENS IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE. ONE EITHER HAD TO BE BORN IN ITALY OR IN SELECT CITIES OUTSIDE OF ITALY; HE HAD TO PURCHASE HIS CITIZEN AT AN ENORMOUS PRICE. TO SAY THE LEAST BEING A ROMAN CITIZEN AFFORDED NOT ONLY STATUS, BUT PROTECTION AS WELL.

- That same night the disciples send Paul and Silas to Berea.
- The Jews in Berea eagerly listened to the message Paul and Silas brought (Acts 17:11-15).

They search the Scriptures daily to see whether Paul and Silas were speaking the truth.

Many of them become believers along with many important Greeks.

When the Jews in Thessalonica hear of their success, they come to Berea to stir up trouble.

So, the disciples wish Paul away to Athens while Silas and Timothy stay in Berea to strengthen the believers.

Paul sends word back to them for them to come to him as quickly as possible because he is all-alone in a strange and ungodly place.

Paul preaches the gospel in Athens (Acts 17:16-34).

- Idols fill the city, and the sight of them troubles Paul.

He speaks about the Christ with those worshipping the one true God in the synagogue and talks with people in the marketplace every day.

When Epicurean and Stoic philosophers<sup>12</sup> hear Paul, they take him to the Areopagus<sup>13</sup> where important leaders gather to discuss philosophy as well as other matters.

They think that Paul speaks new gods.

The people of Athens dedicate themselves to new fads and ideas.

- Paul explains his position.

Paul notes their interest in religion.

He observes the different things they worship.

One particular altar attracted his attention: an altar to "THE UNKNOWN GOD."

He tells them about this God.

He is the God who made all that is.

He needs nothing from man; man cannot exist without his presence.

God made man—deciding when and where he should live.

God fashioned man in his image and cannot be duplicated in rock or precious metals.

This God overlooks many, who turn away from him out of ignorance, but now demands that everyone turn back to him or perish.

God appoints a judge.

God chooses this man long ago and proved that he came from God by being raised from the dead.

Some laugh when they hear that Jesus had been raised from the dead.

However, some believe Paul and join him.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Epicurean philosophers thought the secret to life and happiness was through pleasure while Stoics believed that duty ought to guide one's life.

<sup>13</sup> The Areopagus was a highly respected court whose opinion was highly valued in the Roman Empire. The fact that they saw no crime in Paul's words helps to lay the basis for his innocence when he goes before Caesar.

<sup>14</sup> It appears that Luke takes the time to tell of Paul's confrontation with the leaders of Athens because the Romans admired the Greeks greatly. If the Athenian leaders found nothing dangerous in Paul's message, then perhaps the Roman authorities would be more likely to set Paul free. Luke also delineates two fundamental differences between paganism and Christianity: (1) the one creator God and (2) the resurrection and lordship of Christ. Luke differentiates how well the Greeks accept his message and how much the Jews stir up trouble as they did at Thessalonica and Berea. At Philippi Paul and Silas

- **PAUL GOES TO CORINTH (Acts 18:1-18).**

CORINTH WAS A MAJOR TRADE CENTER AND POSSESSED AN UNSCRUPULOUS REPUTATION FOR VICE AND EVIL EVEN AMONG THE PAGANS.

MANY MERCHANTS TOOK THEIR GOODS THROUGH THE CANAL AND OVERLAND ACROSS THE NARROW ISTHMUS IN ORDER TO AVOID THE DANGEROUS STORMS THAT SWEEP THE MEDITERRANEAN JUST SOUTH OF GREECE.

CORINTH WAS FAMOUS THROUGHOUT THE ROMAN EMPIRE FOR ITS SEXUAL IMMORALITY.

WHILE THERE, HE MEETS A JEWISH COUPLE WHO SHARE HIS OCCUPATION—TENT MAKING.

QUINTA AND PRISCILLA HELP PAUL SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS THERE.

THEY HAD LEFT ROME BECAUSE CLAUDIUS, THE EMPEROR OF ROME, COMMANDED ALL JEWS TO LEAVE ROME.<sup>15</sup>

PAUL PREACHES ABOUT JESUS AMONG THE JEWS AND GREEKS IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

WHEN SILAS AND TIMOTHY RETURN, PAUL DEVOTES ALL HIS TIME TO PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

HOWEVER, THE JEWS REJECTED HIS MESSAGE AND PAUL BEGAN PREACHING EXCLUSIVELY TO THE GENTILES.

MANY PUT THEIR FAITH INTO CHRIST INCLUDING CRISPUS THE LEADER OF THE SYNAGOGUE.

THE LORD TELLS PAUL TO PREACH THE GOSPEL BOLDLY WITHOUT FEAR, AND PAUL PREACHES THE GOOD NEWS FOR A YEAR AND A HALF.

THE JEWS TAKE PAUL TO GALLIO THE GOVERNOR AND CHARGE HIM WITH PREACHING THINGS AGAINST THEIR GOD.

GALLIO PROMPTLY DISMISSES THE CHARGES BECAUSE BELIEVING AND TEACHING NEW IDEAS IS NOT A CRIME.

AFTER GALLIO LEAVES, THE GREEKS GRAB SOSTHENES, THE JEWISH NEW LEADER, AND BEAT HIM.

PAUL STAYS MANY MORE DAYS AFTERWARD THEN LEAVES FOR SYRIA.

- **PAUL TAKES A JEWISH OATH AND PREACHES THE GOSPEL IN EPHESUS (Acts 18:19-22).**

PAUL NEVER STOPS BEING JEWISH EVEN THOUGH HE NOW WAS A CHRISTIAN.

HE REALIZES THAT HE WAS NOT SAVED BY ANY OF THE JEWISH PRACTICES.

HE KEPT HIS JEWISH TRADITIONS THE WAY WE CELEBRATE JULY 4 OR THANKSGIVING.

WE CELEBRATE THOSE DAYS BECAUSE WE ARE AMERICANS; PAUL DOES THE SAME.

PAUL HAS KEPT THE MOSAIC COVENANT.

SINCE NON-JEWS WERE NEVER UNDER THIS COVENANT, THEY ARE NOT OBLIGED TO KEEP ANY OF IT.

ALTHOUGH FAITH IN CHRIST SUPERSEDES THE MOSAIC COVENANT IN ALL RESPECTS, PAUL FELT OBLIGED TO REMAIN TRUE TO HIS JEWISH HERITAGE WHERE IT WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH HIS NEWFOUND FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

HE PREACHES THE GOSPEL TO THE JEWS IN EPHESUS AND PROMISES TO RETURN, IF GOD ALLOWS.

QUINTA AND PRISCILLA STAY IN EPHESUS.

THEY TEACH APOLLOS MORE ABOUT JESUS SINCE HE ONLY KNOWS WHAT JOHN THE BAPTIST HAD TOLD HIM ABOUT CHRIST.

PAUL GOES TO CAESAREA AND JERUSALEM GIVING GREETINGS FROM THE NEW CHURCHES.

HE FINALLY RETURNS TO ANTIOCH OF SYRIA.

### **Paul begins his third missionary tour (Acts 18:23-21:16).**

- **PAUL STRENGTHENS THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN GALATIA AND PHRYGIA (Acts 18:23-24).**

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WERE THROWN INTO PRISON WITHOUT A TRIAL BECAUSE THEY HELPED A POOR SLAVE GIRL. WHEN THE LEADERS HEARD THAT THEY WERE ROMAN CITIZENS, THEY WERE AFRAID BECAUSE THEY WERE THE ONES IN THE WRONG—NOT PAUL AND SILAS.

<sup>15</sup>CLAUDIUS ISSUED A COMMAND IN 49-50 A.D. AGAINST ALL JEWS. HE SENT THEM OUT OF THE CITY OF ROME FOR "CONSTANTLY RIOTING AT THE INSTIGATION OF CHRISTUS." MANY SCHOLARS FEEL THAT THIS IS AN ALLUSION TO DISPUTES BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND JEWS OVER CHRIST.

- He is concerned that they go beyond merely becoming Christians.
- He also writes letters to encourage the ones he taught to remain true to Christ.

Paul preaches the gospel in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-20:1).

- While on the way to Ephesus Paul meets twelve followers who only knew John's baptism.

They do not know about the Holy Spirit or about Jesus.

Apollos has known about Jesus and had spoken truly of him, but he knew only the baptism that John had taught.

- Thus the key difference is that these men did not know the one to whom baptism attached them.
- Paul baptizes again them because they do not know the Lord and only know a baptism of right living instead of coming into contact with the righteous one.

The Holy Spirit recreates us as he connects us with the saving blood of our Lord when put on the Lord's name in baptism.

Thus in order for baptism to be valid, it must unite us with Christ and one must know Christ in order to befriend and adore him as Lord and Savior.

These men only knew about good living.

- Paul introduces them to Jesus by teaching them and baptizing them into his name since living a good life cannot save us.
- Paul teaches in the synagogues for three months, but some of the Jews were closed-minded.

They speak evil of Jesus' way.

So Paul leaves them to teach in the school of Tyrannus and stays for two years.

Jews and Greeks all across that region hear about Jesus.

Paul performs many miracles.

- Some Jews try to duplicate Paul's ability to cast out demons and evil spirits.
- They command an evil spirit to come out of a person by using the name of Jesus.
- However, the evil spirit says that he knows Jesus and Paul, but that he does not know them.
- Then the evil spirit attacks them, and they flee from the house naked.

- When the people of Ephesus hear what happened, they hold Jesus in great honor.

As a result, many of the disciples confess that they had practiced magic or that they had committed other sins.

Many bring their books of magic and burn them.

The total worth of all the books was about 50,000 silver drachmas.<sup>16</sup>

- The gospel spreads decisively throughout the region.

Paul makes plans to go to Jerusalem by way of Macedonia and southern Greece.

He desires to go to Rome after returning to Jerusalem.

He sends Timothy and Erastus along with two of his helpers ahead of him while he stays in Asia.

Demetrius bands the silversmiths of Ephesus together to agitate the populace against Christians because not many people are buying their statues of the goddess Artemis.

Evidently business is hurting so bad that they decide to aim their fury at what they thought to be the cause—Paul.

They take Gaius and Aristarchus with them into the theater.

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<sup>16</sup>A drachma was worth about a day's wage. Figuring a minimum wage to be about twenty-eight dollars per day, the sum of money would be roughly equivalent to \$1.4 million in today's currency and market value.

The meeting becomes completely confused with people shouting different things.

The city clerk quiets the crowd.

He tells them that their goddess is great, but these men have committed no crime against her.

If there are any charges, then Demetrius should take them to court and not stir up any more disorder.

As it is, he will have to answer to his superiors for the disturbance done this day.

Then the city clerk sends them home.

When the trouble stops, Paul sends for the followers, encourages them, and departs for Macedonia.

He leaves others in his party behind so they can strengthen these fledgling Christians.

- Paul stays in Macedonia and southern Greece in order to strengthen the believers (Acts 20:1-6).

When he makes plans to sail to Syria from southern Greece, some Jews plotted to hurt him.

So he goes through Macedonia before setting sail for Syria.

He sends some members of his party ahead of him.

After the Passover, he sails from Philippi.

- On the first day of the week, Paul meets with the disciples at Troas (Acts 20:7-12).

Paul preaches till midnight.

However, a young man named Eurychus falls asleep and falls from the third floor.

It seems that the late hour and lack of oxygen in close quarters caused him to become drowsy and fall.

He was dead when they picked him up.

Paul tells them that he is alive and raises him up alive!

Then Paul speaks to them further before breaking bread with them.

Paul travels to Miletus (Acts 20:13-38).

- Paul hopes to reach Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost.

While in Miletus, Paul summons the Ephesian elders for some final words before pressing on to Jerusalem.

He knows that he will never see them again.

God allowed him to know what would happen to some of them so that he could warn them to avoid the pitfalls they will face.

He reminds them of his resolve to spread the gospel despite the adversity the Jews caused him.

Through it all, he never thinks of himself, but only how he can better serve his Lord.

He tutors them in their homes and in public about the changes they must make in their lives in order to please the Lord.

Now he must obey the Holy Spirit.

Imprisonment and hardship await him.

However, his own life does not matter—only the spread of the good news is important because he entrusts his life to God even though it will be a road of heartache and suffering for in the end it will be worth it.

- Paul preached only the kingdom of God to them.
- They must now hold onto what he has told them
- They must guard their lives and care for the church as a shepherd oversees his flock.

Men will try to twist the truth, and many will follow them.

He worked for his basic necessities.

He reminds them of Jesus' words, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive"* (Acts 20:35b).

- Paul kneels and prays with them.

They weep because Paul tells them that they would never see his face again.

They embrace and kiss before Paul went on board his ship.

- Paul greets many of the believers along the way and encourages them to keep following Jesus (Acts 21:1-16).

At Tyre, the believers through the Holy Spirit warn him of what will happen to him if he goes to Jerusalem.

At Caesarea, Philip's daughters also warn him about his impending imprisonment.

But Paul responds by saying, *"Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am not only ready to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for name of the Lord Jesus"* (Acts 21:13).

They try as they may to dissuade him, but Paul does not listen so they give up and ask that the Lord's will be done.

Thus, he goes to Jerusalem along with some of the believers knowing the fate awaiting him.

### Paul is imprisoned and taken to Rome (Acts 21:17-28:31).

Paul is imprisoned in Jerusalem (Acts 21:17-23:30).

- Paul visits the brothers and sisters in Jerusalem (Acts 21:17-26).

Paul brings greeting from the churches that he established and tells them how God has moved among the Gentiles bringing many people to Christ.

The disciples rejoice to hear the news.

However, they also heard a report that Paul taught the Jews not to follow Jewish customs.

James advises Paul to pay for a cleansing offering that four of the brothers made to prove to all that this was not true.

Many Jews have become believers since Paul left.

They are concerned about the reports they heard.

If Paul does not show that these accusations are false, then many will abandon the faith.

Paul takes the four men the next morning.<sup>17</sup>

They go to the temple after he participates in the cleansing ceremony.

The seven days are almost over when the offering for each man will be given.

- Some of the Jews from Asia grab Paul when they see him (Acts 21:27-40).

They accuse Paul of teaching things contrary to Moses' law.

They think that he has brought a Gentile into the temple area proper.

They claim that he teaches Jews outside of Palestine that they do not have to follow the Law of Moses.

Everyone in Jerusalem becomes violent, and they drag Paul outside of the temple.

They were about to kill Paul when a Roman detachment broke up the crowd and rescued Paul.

Chaos and confusion prevail.

The commander cannot tell why they were so furious with Paul.

So he tells the guards to take him into the barracks.

When Paul speaks to the commander in Greek, he is surprised.

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<sup>17</sup>The sacrifice mentioned here is probably the Nazirite vow (cf. Numbers 6:1-21). A person made a vow to the Lord for a specified amount of time observing certain dietary restrictions and not cutting his hair. At the end of the time he offered a sacrifice and shaved his head.

He wonders whether Paul is the Egyptian who led a rebellion against the government not long ago.

Paul tells him that he is a Jew from Cilicia and requests to address the crowd.

The commander agrees.

- Paul addresses the crowd in Hebrew (Acts 22:1-29).

The Jews become very quiet when they heard him address them in their native tongue.

He was a Jew from Cilicia, but had grown up in Jerusalem under the feet of Gamaliel, one of the great Jewish teachers of the period.

He has tried to destroy people of the Way (a reference to Christians).

On the way to Damascus to imprison people who followed the Way, he is struck by a brilliant light.

A voice from heaven asks him why he persecutes the person speaking to him.

He is told to go to Damascus where he is told what to do.

He is told to take the message this message to the Gentiles.

At this, the Jews shout that Paul should be killed.

The commander orders that Paul be taken inside and beaten for causing him so much trouble.

While they tie him to be beaten, Paul asks the officer in charge whether it is right to beat a Roman citizen without a trial.

The commander asks him if he is a Roman citizen.

The commander paid a great sum of money to get his citizenship.

Paul tells him that he was born a Roman citizen.

- Paul speaks to the Jewish leaders (Acts 22:30-23:22).

The commander orders the Jewish leaders to meet together in order to ascertain what their accusations are.

The commander takes off Paul's chains and brings him to the meeting.

Paul addresses the group.

Paul tells them that he has lived in all good conscience before God.

The high priest has the men standing next to Paul to slap him.

Paul tells Ananias, the high priest, that God will strike him for this because he sits in judgment of him and orders someone to strike him, which is contrary to the Law of Moses.

When the men next to him tell Paul that he has insulted the high priest, Paul apologizes.

Paul tells the assembly that he is being tried because of his belief in the resurrection.

The assembly became divided because some of them did not believe in a resurrection.

Those who believe in the resurrection of the dead said that they find no fault in Paul and an argument broke out concerning the matter.

The commander removes Paul because he is afraid the Jews will hurt him.

That night the Lord appears to Paul in a dream telling him to have courage for he will preach the gospel in Rome.

Forty Jews plot to kill Paul.

Paul's nephew hears of the plan and informs Paul and the commander.

Paul is taken to Caesarea for safety (Acts 23:23-26:32).

- The commander sent Paul to governor living in Caesarea of 470 men along with a letter explaining the situation (Acts 23:23-35).

- The Jews come to Caesarea to charge Paul before the governor (Acts 24).

They accuse him of making trouble among the Jews all over the world and of trying to desecrate the temple.

Paul tells the governor that they could not substantiate their charges.

He tells Felix that he worships the God of their ancestors as a follower of Jesus.

He returns to Jerusalem to bring money to help his people and to offer sacrifices.

Felix already knows much about Jesus, but decides to wait.

Paul preached more about Jesus to Felix as he was given opportunity.

He talks about righteousness, self-discipline, and God's coming judgment, but Felix puts off obeying the gospel.

Felix hopes that Paul will offer him a bribe to release him from prison, but Paul never does.

After two years, Porcius Festus becomes governor.
  - Paul requests to take his case to Caesar and defends himself before King Agrippa (Acts 25 and 26).

Important Jewish leaders request that something be done about Paul.

They request that Paul be brought to Jerusalem for trial because they plan to kill him there.

Festus tells them to come to Caesarea instead.

They make serious accusations, but Paul simply says that he is innocent.

Festus asks him if he was willing to go to Jerusalem for trial because he was trying to please the Jews.

Paul replies that he has done nothing wrong and Festus knows it.

He appeals to Caesar for judgment.

Festus tells him that he will go Caesar for judgment.

Festus tells King Agrippa about Paul's case and Agrippa wishes to hear the matter further.

Festus does not understand the charges and finds nothing worthy of death; he hopes that Agrippa could help sort out the matter before he sends him to Caesar.
  - Paul speaks in his behalf before Agrippa (Acts 26).

Paul tells of his background: educated in Jerusalem, a good Pharisee, and a persecutor of those who followed Jesus.

The leading Jews gave him power to put Christians in prison.

He persecuted them even in other cities.

While on the way to Damascus, Paul sees a light brighter than the sun which causes his party and him to fall to the ground.

A voice asks him why he fights against Him.

Jesus tells Paul that he has selected him to be a witness to him before the world.

He has obeyed that voice from heaven and has spread the message of Christ's resurrection throughout the non-Jewish world.

Paul tries to persuade Agrippa to become a Christian as well.

Festus thinks that Paul has been driven crazy by studying too much.

However, Paul points out that everything he spoke can be confirmed by eyewitness testimony.

Agrippa rejects Paul's offer and declares Paul innocent of any wrongdoing.
- Paul journeys to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:16).
- Paul's company set sail for Rome just before winter storms made the Mediterranean too dangerous for travel (Acts 27).

PAUL IS PUT UNDER THE CARE OF JULIUS, A ROMAN CENTURION (ACTS 27:1).<sup>18</sup>

PAUL MUST HAVE IMPRESSED JULIUS AS A MAN OF INTEGRITY BECAUSE HE ALLOWS HIM TO GO TO HIS FRIENDS AND RECEIVE WHATEVER CARE HE NEEDED (ACTS 27:3).

PAUL WARNS JULIUS THAT THEY SHOULD REMAIN IN FAIR HAVENS EVEN THOUGH IT IS NOT A GOOD HARBOR TO WINTER THE SHIP.

HOWEVER, THE PILOT AND CAPTAIN OF THE SHIP PERSUADES JULIUS TO GO ON (ACTS 27:8-11).

AFTER A GENTLE SOUTH WIND BEGINS BLOWING, THEY LEAVE THE HARBOR.

HOWEVER, THEY SOON FIND THEMSELVES IN HURRICANE FORCE WINDS.

UNABLE TO FIGHT THE STRONG WINDS, THEY SAIL WITH THE WIND.

SOON THEY THROW THE CARGO OVERBOARD.

THEY GIVE UP HOPE AFTER THE SUN AND STARS FAIL TO APPEAR AFTER MANY DAYS.

HOWEVER, PAUL PRAYS, AND AN ANGEL TOLD HIM THAT EVERYONE WOULD MAKE IT THROUGH THE STORM.

THE ANGEL TELLS HIM THAT HE MUST DEFEND HIMSELF BEFORE CAESAR AND THAT ALL OF HIS FRIENDS WOULD SURVIVE.

SO PAUL TELLS THEM TO TAKE COURAGE FOR WHAT LAY AHEAD BECAUSE AN ANGEL TOLD HIM THAT THEY WOULD RUN AGROUND ON AN ISLAND.

ON THE FOURTEENTH DAY, THE SAILORS SEE THAT THEY APPROACH LAND.

THE SAILORS TRY TO LEAVE THE BOAT ON THE LIFEBOAT, BUT PAUL TOLD THE CENTURION THAT THEY MUST STAY ABOARD IF THEY WERE TO BE SAVED.

AT PAUL'S WORD, THE CENTURION INSTRUCTS HIS SOLDIERS TO CUT THE ROPE TO THE LIFEBOAT.

PAUL TELLS EVERYONE TO EAT A GOOD MEAL AND THROW THE GRAIN OVERBOARD.

WHEN DAYLIGHT COMES, THEY SEE LAND; SO THEY RUN THE SHIP AGROUND ON A SANDBAR AND MAKE FOR THE BEACH.

THE CENTURION DOES NOT ALLOW THE SOLDIERS TO KILL PAUL.

ALL 276 ON BOARD ARE SAVED.

- EVERYONE ON BOARD MAKES IT SAFELY TO THE ISLAND OF MALTA AFTER THE SHIP WRECKS (ACTS 28:1-10).

THE ISLANDERS SHOW UNUSUAL KINDNESS TO THE SHIPWRECKED PASSENGERS AND CREW.

THEY BUILD A FIRE AND WELCOME THEM.

AN EXTREMELY POISONOUS SNAKE FASTENS ITSELF TO PAUL'S HAND WHEN HE REACHES TO PUT A LOG ON THE FIRE.

THE ISLANDERS THINK THAT PAUL MUST HAVE BEEN A TERRIBLE CRIMINAL TO HAVE SUCH A THING HAPPEN TO HIM.

AFTER NOTHING HAPPENS TO HIM, THEY CHANGE THEIR MINDS AND SAY HE IS A GOD.

THE CHIEF OFFICIAL OF THE ISLAND WELCOMES PAUL INTO HIS HOME.

THE MAN'S FATHER IS SUFFERING FROM A FEVER AND DYSENTERY.

PAUL PRAYS FOR HIM AND HEALS HIM.

AS A RESULT, THE ISLANDERS BRING THEIR SICK TO BE CURED.

THEY HONOR PAUL AND SUPPLY HIS PARTY WITH EVERYTHING THEY NEED.

ALTHOUGH LUKE DOES NOT SAY SO DIRECTLY, WE KNOW THAT PAUL TELLS THEM ABOUT JESUS.

PERHAPS THE REASON FOR THE STORM WAS SO PAUL COULD PREACH THE GOSPEL ON THE ISLAND OF MALTA.

IN ANY EVENT, GOD BROUGHT ABOUT GOOD FROM A DARK, TERRIBLE STORM.

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<sup>18</sup>A centurion commanded a hundred men in the Roman army.

PAUL PREACHES THE GOSPEL IN ROME (ACTS 28:11-31).

- AFTER THREE MONTHS, THEY CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY TO ROME.

SOME BROTHERS MEET PAUL AND HIS COMPANY AT PUTEOLI AND TRAVEL WITH HIM FOR A TIME.

PAUL THANKS GOD FOR THEM AND IS ENCOURAGED.

PAUL IS ALLOWED TO LIVE UNDER HOUSE ARREST AND PREACH THE GOSPEL FREELY.

JEWISH LEADERS COME TO HEAR PAUL'S CASE.

THEY SET UP A TIME FOR PAUL TO EXPLAIN THE COMING OF GOD'S KINGDOM.

SOME BECOME CONVINCED THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST.

PAUL SPENDS THE NEXT TWO YEARS IN ROME PREACHING GOSPEL BOLDLY WHILE UNDER HOUSE ARREST.

THE BOOK ENDS WITHOUT TELLING US WHAT HAPPENS TO PAUL.

- THE FACT THAT THE BOOK ENDS WITH PAUL FACING TRIAL HAS LEADS MANY TO BELIEVE THAT LUKE WRITES BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE CAESAR.

SCHOLARS BELIEVE THAT PAUL IS RELEASED FROM PRISON.

HE PROBABLY PREACHES THE GOSPEL IN SPAIN.

HOWEVER, HE IS AGAIN ARRESTED THEN EXECUTED.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO PAUL, WE KNOW THAT HE LOVED GOD SO MUCH THAT HE GAVE HIS LIFE TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

ONCE AGAIN, GOD TURNS PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AS A MEANS TO BRING ABOUT EVEN MORE GOOD.