

## ACTS

J Acts is the Book of Apostolic History. The sequel to the Gospel of Luke, Acts records primarily Peter and Paul's Apostolic ministries. Set in the Dispensation of the Church, Age of the Apostles, Acts presents the foundation of our present age during the charismatic period of New Testament revelation.

### TITLE

The title "Praxeis" was commonly used in Greek literature to summarize the accomplishments of outstanding men. Praxeis Apostolōn records the work of the Apostles in building the foundation of the Church.

### AUTHOR

Luke the Evangelist is the author of Acts. (Cf. Luke 1:1-4 with Acts 1:1,2). A traveling companion of the Apostle Paul (Col. 4:14; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24), long stretches of Acts are marked by a "we" narrative (Acts 16:10-40; 20:5-28:31).

### CHAPTER TITLES

1. Commission and Ascension
2. Pentecost
3. Lame Man Healed
4. The First Persecution
5. Ananias and Sapphira
6. The First Deacons
7. Stephen and Martyrdom
8. Philip and the Eunuch
9. Saul's Conversion on the Damascus Road
10. Peter and Cornelius
11. Peter Vindicates Ministry to the Gentiles
12. Peter in Prison
- 13-14. 1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey
15. Jerusalem Council
- 16-18. 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey
- 19-20. 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey
21. Paul Arrives at Jerusalem
22. Paul's Defense Before the Multitudes
23. Defense Before Sanhedrin
24. Before Felix

25. Before Festus
26. Before King Agrippa
27. Shipwreck
28. Rome

## CHAPTER OUTLINES

### ACTS 1

1. The Gospel of Luke closed with the Lord instructing His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they were clothed with power (Lk. 24:41-49), and His ascension to heaven (Lk. 24:50-53).
2. The Book of Acts begins with the Lord's ascension and the events which followed (Acts 1:1-11).
  - a. The Dispensation of the Church is not a stewardship that is tied to prophecy (times or epochs) (Acts 1:7).
  - b. The Dispensation of the Church is a stewardship that is tasked with world evangelism (Acts 1:8).
  - c. Every believer in the Dispensation of the Church is a martyr. μάρτυς #3144: *witness*.
  - d. Every believer in the Dispensation of the Church is admonished not to stand around uselessly, but to be found faithfully serving when the Lord does return (Acts 1:11).
3. The Eleven returned to Jerusalem, and began a daily prayer ministry there with the women who financially supported Jesus' ministry, as well as His earthly family (Acts 1:12-14). This exemplified the first priority for the Church: prayer.
4. Peter led a group of approximately 120 of the Lord's disciples in a prayer meeting to appoint a replacement for Judas Iscariot in The Twelve Apostles of the Lamb (Acts 1:15-26 cf. 2:14; 6:2; Matt. 19:28).

### ACTS 2

1. The Dispensation of the Church began on the first Day of Pentecost following the crucifixion and resurrection (Acts 2:1-4).
  - a. The Apostles and other believers in the upper room in Jerusalem received the filling of the Holy Spirit.

- b. The Spirit manifested Himself through them with miraculous linguistic ability for Jewish evangelism.
- 2. The blessing of Tongues on Pentecost provided for the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be proclaimed to the believing Jews who were saved under the Dispensation of Israel (Acts 2:5-41).
  - a. They are “devout men” (εὐλαβής #2126 v.5) a term only used of believers.
  - b. Peter explains that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a prophesied feature of the coming Kingdom (vv.14-21; Joel 2:28-32).
    - 1) Peter does not claim that Joel 2 is entirely fulfilled by this Acts 2 event.
    - 2) Joel 2 highlights Prophecy, but Acts 2 featured Tongues.
    - 3) Joel 2 indicates a world-wide outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but Acts 2 records a limited outpouring of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles in the upper room, followed by an outpouring upon 3000 additional souls. Subsequent passages in Acts record the progressive outpourings of the Holy Spirit upon believers ignorant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - c. The Jewish believers were pierced to the heart, and ushered into the Church as the Gospel of Jesus Christ was made clear (Acts 2:37-41).
- 3. Following Pentecost, Jerusalem Bible Church<sup>†</sup> established a four-fold pattern of activity (Acts 2:42-47).
  - a. Devotion to Apostolic teaching, fellowship, partaking communion, and corporate prayer.
  - b. Observation of Apostolic miracles, establishing the authority for New Testament Scriptures.

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<sup>†</sup> Pastor Bob’s nick-name for the local church of believers at Jerusalem.

- c. Mutual financial support for one another in the face of immediate national persecution.
  - d. Daily ministering to one another and witnessing to the lost.

### ACTS 3

1. Chapter three details the first recorded Apostolic miracle (Acts 3:1-11), and Peter’s subsequent sermon (Acts 3:12-26).
2. Peter & John performed a miracle similar to that which the Lord had done (Jn. 5:1-9).
3. Peter & John denied that the power was theirs, but belonged to the glorified Jesus Christ (Acts 3:13,16).
4. Peter & John proclaimed the Gospel to the astonished crowd, making it crystal clear that faith in Christ was the only means for obtaining salvation (Acts 3:16,19; for repent and turn cf. 1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 1:9).

### ACTS 4

1. Peter & John came under Sanhedrin attack, even as Jesus Christ had done (Acts 4:1ff.).
2. The Lord had fed 5,000 on one occasion, but Peter & John led 5,000 to the Lord on this occasion (Acts 4:2).
3. The Sadducees were the most alarmed at the Apostles’ message because it was a resurrection message.
  - a. Peter used the opportunity to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Sanhedrin itself (Acts 4:8-12).
  - b. The council was at a loss for what to do with Peter & John. They ended up issuing a gag-order that the Apostles rejected (Acts 4:13-22).
4. Following their release, Peter & John led Jerusalem Bible Church<sup>†</sup> in a corporate prayer meeting that shook the walls (Acts 4:23-31a).
5. As a result of their specific prayer request, the ministry of the Holy Spirit through them became a bold & confident speaking ministry (Acts 4:31b).

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<sup>†</sup> Pastor Bob’s nick-name for the local church of believers at Jerusalem.

6. The communal survival of Jerusalem Bible Church† is once again outlined (Acts 4:32-35), introducing Barnabas to the narrative of Acts (Acts 4:36,37).

P= It is important to understand that the communal living of the infant church in Jerusalem was not commanded by Scripture, the Lord, or His Apostles. It was the temporal-life application of the spiritual-life fruit of the Spirit (unconditional love).

### ACTS 5

1. Ananias and Sapphira were caught up in the charity fervor and sinfully attempted to deceive the Church with an untrue endowment (Acts 5:1-11).
2. The Apostles' popularity soared as their healing ministry was publicized, once again in imitation of the Lord's earthly ministry (Acts 5:12-16).
3. The Twelve are jailed by the Sadducees, released by an angel (whom the Sadducees do not believe in), and continued their daily teaching in the temple (Acts 5:17-25).
  - a. The Jewish Council then re-arrested the Twelve, and tried them for violating the previous gag-order (Acts 5:26-28).
  - b. When the Twelve confessed their "guilt," the council intended to execute them (Acts 5:29-32).
  - c. The Pharisee Rabbi Gamaliel takes a stand and delivers a message of wisdom (Acts 5:33-39).
4. The Apostles considered it a privilege to suffer shame for the name of Jesus Christ, and were emboldened to teach & preach all the more (Acts 5:40-42).

### ACTS 6

1. A problem arose in Jerusalem Bible Church† which required the Apostles to appoint servant-helpers (Acts 6:1-6).
  - a. The servant-helpers were tasked with day-to-day practical duties within the Church.
  - b. Their ministry freed the Apostles to devote themselves to prayer, and the ministry of the Word (in that order).

- c. Seven such men were established, according to the Apostle's estimate of the work-load. This event introduces Stephen to the Acts narrative.
  - d. These servant-helpers were also empowered to perform miracles with delegated authority from the Apostles.
2. Of all the servant-helpers, Stephen came under fire from a particular "Synagogue of Freedmen." This synagogue arrested Stephen, and filed malicious charges against him with the Sanhedrin (Acts 6:9-15).

### ACTS 7

1. Chapter 7 details Stephen's trial, where he delivers an entire "Walk Thru the Bible" evangelistic Bible class, covering Abraham to Solomon (Acts 7:1-50).
2. Stephen closes his message with a rebuke for the stiff-necked Sanhedrin (Acts 7:51-53), who promptly executed him under mob-justice (Acts 7:54-60).
3. This event introduces Saul of Tarsus to the Acts narrative.
  - a. Saul was a young man entrusted giving his ascent to the mob justice (Acts 7:58).
  - b. Saul cast his vote for Stephen's execution as a voting member of the Pharisee party within the Sanhedrin (Acts 8:1; 22:20; 26:10).

### ACTS 8

1. The death of Stephen marked the beginning of the Church's first great persecution—headed up by the crusader Saul of Tarsus (Acts 8:1-3).
2. The Lord directed for the persecution to spread the Gospel message in accordance with the Great Commission (Acts 8:4; 11:19).
3. After having been scattered, the servant-helper Philip (the Evangelist, Acts 21:8) bore tremendous fruit in Samaria (Acts 8:5-13).
4. The Apostles in Jerusalem dispatched Peter & John to Samaria to bestow the Holy Spirit upon the new believers (Acts 8:14-25).
5. Philip's next work assignment was to an Ethiopian court official (Acts 8:26-40).

## ACTS 9

1. Chapter 9 describes the Lord's first personal appearance to Saul of Tarsus, on the Damascus Road.
2. Saul received permission from the High Priest in Jerusalem to travel to various foreign lands and persecute the Church (in violation of Roman Law) (Acts 9:1,2; 26:11).
3. On the road to Damascus, the Lord appeared to Paul in the blinding light of His glory (Acts 9:3-9; 22:3-11; 26:9-18).
  - a. His companions were blinded and heard the voice, but not the message (Acts 9:7; 22:9).
  - b. Saul's one question for the Lord (Gr: κύριος, Heb: יהוה): identify Yourself by name.
  - c. The Lord's message was more of a commission than an invitation (Acts 22:10; 26:16-18).
  - d. Paul was the last-call for the Lord in commissioning His Apostles (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 15:8).
4. Saul was led into Damascus where he fasted and prayed, and received prophetic visions for three days (Acts 9:8,9,12).
5. Ananias of Damascus is the disciple on hand to minister to Saul and bring him into the fellowship of believers at Damascus Bible Church<sup>†</sup> (Acts 9:10-19).
6. Saul began an evangelistic preaching ministry in Damascus "for several days" proclaiming Jesus in the synagogues (Acts 9:20).
  - a. This was quite the shock to his fellow Jews.
  - b. At some point, Saul sojourned in Arabia (Gal. 1:17) to receive the mystery revelation of the Church Age from the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:12; 2:2; 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 11:23a; Acts 20:35).
7. Saul came to Damascus in order to persecute the Way, but had to flee Damascus because of Jewish persecution against the Way (Acts 9:22-25).

<sup>†</sup> Pastor Bob's nick-name for the local church of believers at Damascus.

8. Saul's first visit to Jerusalem as an Apostle demonstrated a reluctance on the part of Jerusalem Bible Church to accept him.
  - a. Barnabas, however, was a testimony to grace (Acts 9:26-28).
  - b. After a short stay, Saul was forced to flee Jerusalem because of a murder plot against him by his fellow Hellenistic Jews (Acts 9:29,30).
  - c. A Divine result of Saul's acceptance of Jesus as the Christ was a blessing to all Judea, Galilee, & Samaria (Acts 9:31).
9. Chapter 9 concludes with the ministry of Peter through Lydda, Sharon, and Joppa (Acts 9:32-43). Peter's ministry was remarkably imitative of Jesus Christ.
  - a. While teaching in Lydda Bible Church, Peter healed a paralytic named Aeneas (vv.32-35).
  - b. While teaching in Joppa Bible Church, Peter restored physical life to a girl named Tabitha (vv.36-43).

## ACTS 10

1. A Centurion named Cornelius was a God-fearing believer, with a believing household (Acts 10:1,2; cf. 11:17).
  - a. He and his household will be ushered into the Church through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.
  - b. Peter will learn and teach how the new Dispensation includes both Jews and Gentiles as stewards of God's plan and program.
2. The Lord sovereignly directed Cornelius to seek Peter (Acts 10:3-8), and directed Peter to accept Cornelius' invitation (Acts 10:9-23a).
3. Cornelius expected to meet the Christ, but instead met His representative Apostle—Peter (Acts 10:23b-26).
4. Peter taught a Bible class to the assembled Gentile believers (Acts 10:27-43).
  - a. When these Gentile believers accepted the message of the crucified Christ, they were Baptized by the Holy Spirit and ushered into the Dispensation of the Church (Acts 10:44-48).

- b. Thus, Caesarea Bible Church was established.

### ACTS 11

1. When Peter returned to Jerusalem, the Jewish believers in Jerusalem Bible Church there were disapproving of his fellowship with the uncircumcised (Acts 11:1-3).
  - a. Persecution was the infant Church's greatest external threat in Jerusalem.
  - b. Legalism was the infant Church's greatest internal threat in Jerusalem.
2. Peter reviewed his ministry in Caesarea and encouraged the Jewish believers to rejoice in the grace of this new dispensation (Acts 11:4-18).
3. Saul's Jerusalem persecution resulted in believers scattering out from Jerusalem (Acts 11:19). An amazing local church was planted at that time in the Syrian city of Antioch (Acts 11:20-30).
  - a. Evangelists were leading great numbers to Christ in Antioch, and Jerusalem Bible Church realized that Antioch Bible Church needed proper leadership (Acts 11:20,21).
  - b. The Apostle Barnabas (Acts 14:14; Gal. 2:9; 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 9:6) was designated to continue the evangelism, and build them up with solid Apostolic teaching (Acts 11:22-24).
  - c. Barnabas needed an assistant for the growing work of service in Antioch. He sent to Tarsus and brought Saul to help in the work (Acts 11:25,26).
    - 1) Saul had been called to Apostolic ministry in Syria, and now worked under Barnabas in a Syrian setting.
    - 2) The partnership of Barnabas & Saul built up a powerful local church which became the first body of believers to be known as "Christians" (Acts 11:26).
  - d. When prophets from Jerusalem Bible Church announced a coming famine, the grace-oriented believers of Antioch Bible Church sent a love offering (Acts 11:27-30). This event introduces

the Prophet Agabus to the Acts narrative.

### ACTS 12

1. James, the son of Zebedee, became the first Apostle of the Church to be martyred when Herod put him to the sword (Acts 12:1,2).
2. Herod found that his popularity increased among the Jews when he increased his persecution of the Christians, so he jailed Peter (Acts 12:3).
  - a. The believers in Jerusalem assembled in a private home (owned by Mary, the mother of John-Mark) and held a corporate prayer meeting for Peter's protection (Acts 12:5).
  - b. It was easier for Peter to get out of jail than to get into the prayer meeting!
3. Herod met with a terrible end (Acts 12:20-23), but the Christians he persecuted thrived (Acts 12:24).
4. John-Mark is introduced to the Acts narrative when he joins Barnabas and Saul for their return to Antioch (Acts 12:25).

### ACTS 13

1. Barnabas and Saul built up the believers of Antioch Bible Church, and equipped teachers to lead that church once they departed (Acts 12:1-3).
2. The Holy Spirit instructed Barnabas and Saul to undertake a missionary journey of evangelism, local church planting, and the appointing of elders (Acts 12:4ff.).
3. "The First Missionary Journey" was a tour of Cyprus and south-central Turkey.
  - a. Barnabas, Saul, and John-Mark arrived on Cyprus at the east coast city of Salamis. Their evangelism began in the Jewish synagogues.
  - b. They traveled throughout the island.
  - c. In the west coast city of Paphos, their conflict with a false-prophet/magician produced fruit in the Roman proconsul's soul.
4. The conflict with Elymas Bar-Jesus marks the point where Saul becomes known as Paul. It also marks the point when Paul's

name appears before Barnabas' in the Acts narrative.

5. John-Mark departed from the Paul & Barnabas party for unstated reasons (Acts 13:13) that will become a source of division later on (Acts 15:36-41).
6. Paul's sermon in Pisidian Antioch illustrates his approach to the Gospel when preaching to Jews: an Old Testament Walk-Through, followed by a summary of the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth, and concluding with an appeal to faith in Christ (Acts 13:16-41).
7. The message was so powerful that the people begged them to stay through the following week, and many became saved (Acts 13:42,43).
8. The extra week also gave the enemies of the Gospel time to prepare their attack (Acts 13:44-52).
9. "As many as had been appointed to eternal life believed" illustrates the relationship of Sovereignty in Divine election to faith in human reception of salvation (Acts 13:48).
10. Paul & Barnabas moved on, but Pisidian-Antioch Bible Church had been founded (Acts 13:52).

#### ACTS 14

1. Paul & Barnabas enjoyed another successful mission in Iconium—leading many to Christ, but sparking violent opposition (Acts 14:1-7).
2. In Lystra, they were considered to be the Greek gods Zeus and Hermes, because of the mighty power they demonstrated (Acts 14:8-18).
3. The Jewish enemies from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium pursued the Apostles to Lystra and influenced the mob there to stone Paul (Acts 14:19; 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 12:1-7).
4. Not even being stoned to death kept Paul from completing the missionary journey (Acts 14:20ff.).
5. Paul & Barnabas founded local churches in each city, appointing elders to continue the teaching ministry (Acts 14:21-23).

Returning to Antioch Bible Church, the Apostle-missionaries blessed the saints with their good report (Acts 14:24-28).

#### ACTS 15

1. False (legalistic) teaching came to Antioch Bible Church<sup>†</sup> from immature believers out of Judea (Acts 15:1).
  - a. This was a similar issue to the legalism that Paul had to deal with in Galatians.
  - b. This legalism was even worse, however, as it added an element to salvation by grace through faith.
2. These legalists produced great dissension in their debate with the Apostles Paul & Barnabas. It became obvious to the local church that the Apostles of Antioch needed to resolve the issue with the Apostles and elders of Jerusalem (Acts 15:2).
3. Once they arrived in Jerusalem, the source of the dissensions became clear—former Pharisees were attempting to dominate the Church through New Testament legalism, as they had once dominated Israel through Old Testament legalism (Acts 15:3-5).
4. The Apostles and elders came together for debate (without dissension) (Acts 15:6ff.).
  - a. Peter spoke from his experience with Gentile ministry (vv.7-11).
  - b. Paul & Barnabas related their ministry among the Gentiles (v.12).
  - c. James gave the final word, expressing the like-minded conclusion of the conference (vv.13-21).
    - 1) Apostolic authority will not place Law observance on any Gentile believer (v.19).
    - 2) Apostolic authority will urge Gentile believers to be mindful of stumbling blocks to Jewish evangelism (vv.20,21).
    - 3) Jewish believers in the early Church often chose to observe the Mosaic customs under the Law of Love so as to maintain a witness to their fellow Jews (Acts 16:3).
  - d. The Apostles and elders of Jerusalem drafted a letter, and commissioned leading men from the local church to go with Paul

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<sup>†</sup> Pastor Bob's nickname for the local church of believers at Antioch.

- and Barnabas back to Antioch, and settle the dispute there (Acts 15:22-35).
5. With the legalism controversy settled in Antioch, Paul & Barnabas planned a second missionary swing through Cyprus and Galatia (Acts 15:36-41).
    - a. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark along as well, but Paul adamantly disagreed.
    - b. The simple solution was to split up. The era of joint-ministry between Paul & Barnabas was over.
      - 1) Barnabas took John Mark and returned to the Cyprus churches.
      - 2) Paul took Silas and went by land to Galatia.

### ACTS 16

1. Derbe and Lystra had been a region of great conflict (Acts 14:8-20).
  - a. Through that ministry, a grand-mother, mother, and young man were brought into the Church (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 1:5).
  - b. Timothy joined Paul and Silas and began his training for the ministry (Acts 16:1-5).
2. Paul, Silas, and Timothy faced one dead end after another until they finally arrived in Troas (Acts 16:6-8).
  - a. In Troas, the “we” narrative begins (vv.10ff.).
  - b. Luke joins the missionary team—consisting of an Apostle (Paul), Prophet (Silas), Evangelist (Luke), and Pastor-Teacher (Timothy). This would seemingly be the ideal team for establishing local churches (Eph. 4:11,12).
  - c. Paul receives a Divine message to cross over to Macedonia, and the great missionary team is prepared to bring the Gospel to Europe (Acts 16:9-12).
3. On the Jewish Sabbath, Paul’s team went to the river, looking for a place of prayer (Acts 16:13).
  - a. The Jewish population of Philippi was evidently not large enough to support a synagogue.
  - b. There actually was a place of prayer (v.16), but on this day the Lord had Paul’s message designed for a woman named Lydia (Acts 16:14,15).
    - 1) Lydia was an Old Testament Gentile believer, who immediately accepted the Apostolic message and became a baptized member of the Church.

- 2) With her gift of hospitality, she hosted Paul’s party in her Philippian home.
4. Paul did succeed in finding the place where Jews met for prayer, and began a daily ministry there (Acts 16:16ff.).
  - a. His “commute” each day from Lydia’s house was harassed by a demonic slave-girl.
  - b. The demonic witness was similar to the witness the Lord experienced during His ministry.
  - c. Paul endured the harassment for many days, but finally commanded the spirit to depart.
5. Paul’s spiritual work in the slave-girl’s life resulted in a financial blow to the girl’s masters (Acts 16:19ff.).
  - a. The Roman slave-owners convinced the Roman magistrates that the Jewish missionaries were a danger to their city-state.
  - b. The Roman mob was stirred to beat Paul & Silas and throw them in prison.
  - c. On this day, Lord had Paul’s message designed for a Philippian jailer.
6. Paul & Silas conducted a praise & worship evangelistic service in their jail cell that night, and remained in jail until morning so that they might bear fruit with the jailer as well (Acts 16:25-34).
  - a. The clear gospel message: “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” was effective for the jailer, and for his household (vv.31-34).
  - b. Faith in Christ was followed by the ritual of water baptism (v.33).
7. The Roman officials tried to release Paul & Silas secretly only to discover the truth of the missionaries’ Roman citizenship (Acts 16:35-40).

### ACTS 17

1. Thessalonica had a large enough Jewish population to support a synagogue (Acts 17:1).
  - a. The “we” narrative disappears as “they” traveled through Macedonia. Luke apparently remained behind at Philippi.
  - b. Paul spent three Sabbaths there teaching Bible class to the Jewish and Gentile believers there.
  - c. Some fruit was born, but the Jews who rejected the message of Jesus Christ set the



- city in an uproar. They used Saul of Tarsus' old riot methodology in order to drive Paul and his party out of town.
- d. A believer named Jason had been their host in Thessalonica. He is forced to put up a bond and guarantee that Paul will not return to town.
  - e. This entire episode is the motivation behind the writing of 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians.
2. The believers of Berea Bible Church<sup>†</sup> establish an important principle for believers through the entire dispensation—search the Scriptures and see if these things are so (Acts 17:10-14a).
  3. The great missionary team has thus been scattered (Acts 17:14b). When Paul arrives in Athens, he is alone (Acts 17:15; 1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 3:1,2; Acts 18:5).
  4. The remainder of Chapter 17 details Paul's ministry in Athens apart from any personal assistants (Acts 17:16-34).
    - a. The idolatry of Athens provoked Paul's human spirit (v.16).
    - b. Paul followed his typical routine in reasoning with the Jews in the synagogue and the God-fearing Gentiles associated with them (v.17).
    - c. Paul also undertook public debates in the market place with the great Greek philosophers of his day. Paul's familiarity with their own poets and his willingness to debate with them opened the door for ministry (vv.18-21).
    - d. The famous "Sermon on Mars Hill" was largely laughed at, but a few examples of positive volition did step forward (vv.22-34).

### ACTS 18:1-11

1. Paul arrived in Corinth at perhaps the lowest point of his entire career (Acts 18:1; 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 2:3).
2. The Lord was already preparing Paul's encouragement, when He directed for the Jewish tent-makers Aquila and Priscilla to be driven out of Rome and settle in Corinth (Acts 18:2,3).

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<sup>†</sup> Pastor Bob's nickname for the local church of believers at Berea.

3. When Silas & Timothy rejoined Paul in Corinth, they came with a grace gift from Macedonia, and Paul was able to devote himself completely to the Word (Acts 18:5; 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 11:9; Phil. 4:15).
4. Corinth Bible Church<sup>†</sup> was established in the home of Titius Justus (Acts 18:7).
  - a. He lived right next door to the Corinthian synagogue itself!
  - b. The synagogue leader was even saved, starting a great evangelical avalanche.

Paul was assured by the Lord that Corinth will be a place of safety for him to settle in for a while (Acts 18:9-11). During this time, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians are written.

### ACTS 18:12-27

1. During Paul's stay in Corinth, the Jews from the synagogue delivered Paul over to the Proconsul Gallio (Acts 18:12-17).
  - a. Gallio refused to hear the case, having judged it to be an internal squabble among the Jews he had to put up with.
  - b. Gallio was indifferent to the subsequent beating of Sosthenes (Acts 18:17; 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 1:1).
2. Paul departed from Corinth, taking Priscilla and Aquilla with him (Acts 18:18-22).
  - a. During his Corinthian stay, Paul had taken a vow (Num. 6). This time being completed, he got a haircut and departed for Antioch (v.18).
  - b. At Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquilla to minister to the positive volition, but he pressed on to Antioch (vv.19-22).
3. Paul's "Third Missionary Journey" then begins (Acts 18:23ff.).
  - a. Before Paul arrives in Ephesus, an Alexandrian Jew named Apollos was teaching the Scriptures (Acts 18:24-28).
    - 1) He was familiar with the baptism of John the Baptist, but not the baptism of Christ.
    - 2) Priscilla & Aquila privately corrected his inaccurate message.
    - 3) Priscilla & Aquila encouraged Apollos to cross over to Corinth, and help the believers there.

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<sup>†</sup> Pastor Bob's nickname for the local church of believers at Corinth.



### ACTS 19:1-10

1. Paul arrived at Ephesus, and finds twelve confused disciples (Acts 19:1-7). Paul corrected their dispensational error, and ushered them into the Church.
2. Paul ministered for three months within the Ephesian synagogue, then relocated his ministry to the School of Tyrannus for a two year ministry (Acts 19:8-10). During this time, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians, and Romans are written.

### ACTS 19:11-41

1. Paul's Ephesian ministry was a high-point for him (Acts 19:11-20).
  - a. It featured tremendous miracles.
  - b. It served to train many pastor-teachers.
  - c. It allowed Paul to write 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians, and the great theological work of Romans.
2. Paul's Ephesian ministry was also a period of intensified angelic conflict (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 16:8,9).
3. Guided by the Holy Spirit, Paul understood the geographic will of God to be a journey from Asia to Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, and Rome (Acts 19:21,22).
4. Paul's last day in Ephesus was a riot (Acts 19:23-41).
  - a. Demetrius the silversmith instigated a disturbance at the Ephesus Chamber of Commerce (vv.23-27).
  - b. The Temple of Artemis (Roman Diana) at Ephesus was the largest Greek temple ever built, and one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Pilgrims came from all over the inhabited earth (v.27) in order to worship there, and return home with their own silver shrine (v.24).
  - c. The idol-makers demonstration through the entire city of Ephesus into an uproar, and prompted an emergency municipal assembly in the city theater, which seated 25,000 people (v.29).
  - d. Paul, the lawyer, was ready to defend Gaius and Aristarchus, but the Asiarchs (native rulers under delegated Roman authority) kept him from doing so (vv.29-31).
  - e. Another Jewish lawyer (Alexander) attempted to quiet the riot, but was shouted down (vv.32-34).

The town clerk succeeded in silencing the mob, and ordered for Demetrius' delegation to file formal charges in the Roman courts (vv.35-41).

### ACTS 20

1. Paul fled from Ephesus to Macedonia (Acts 20:1). While there, he wrote 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians.
2. He then came to Greece for three months (Acts 20:2,3a). While there, he wrote Romans.
3. Paul had a team of seven assistants (students) who went ahead of him as an advanced party (Acts 20:3b-5).
4. The "we narrative" returns at Philippi (Acts 20:6ff.) as Luke rejoins Paul's mission for the rest of Acts (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 4:11).
5. In Troas, Paul followed the example of Christ, and the instance of Peter, in restoring physical life to someone who had physically died (Acts 20:7-12).
6. Paul bypassed Ephesus in his hurry to be in Jerusalem for Pentecost (Acts 20:13-16).
7. While in Miletus, Paul summoned the elders/overseers (pastors) of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17,28&29).
  - a. πρεσβύτερος #4245: *an elder* (of age or office).
  - b. ἐπίσκοπος #1985: *an overseer*.  
ἐπισκοπέω #1983: *to oversee, care for*.
  - c. ποιμήν #4166: *a shepherd, pastor*.  
ποιμαίνω #4165: *to feed, tend a flock*.
8. Paul's farewell message to the Ephesian elders/overseers/pastors was to be on the alert, guarding themselves and the flock against the savage wolves (Acts 20:18-35).
9. Paul departed from them after a corporate prayer meeting (Acts 20:36-38).

### ACTS 21

1. Paul's journey to Jerusalem is a study in contradictions.
  - a. Paul had purposed "in the spirit" (ἐν τῷ πνεύματι) to go to Jerusalem prior to his trip to Rome (Acts 19:21).
  - b. Paul's orientation to Rome was slowly being altered to a preoccupation with Jerusalem.

- 1) "I must also see Rome" (Acts 19:21).
- 2) "I hope to see you in passing" (Rom. 15:24).
- 3) "I am ready . . . to die at Jerusalem" (Acts 21:13).
- c. Paul's was commissioned to minister "before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel" (Acts 9:15; see also Acts 22:18,21). Yet, his first contact in every city was always the local synagogue, turning to the Gentiles only after Jewish rejection (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 19:9).
- d. Why was Paul so oriented to the Jews? The Book he wrote just prior to his Jerusalem trip offers some clues:
  - 1) Paul testified that his carnal nature kept prompting him to defy the leading of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6&7).
  - 2) Although impossible to be separated from Christ (Rom. 8) Paul desired it for the sake of redeeming the Jews (Rom. 9).
2. In Tyre, the believers there kept telling Paul through the spirit (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος) not to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:1-6).
  - a. This witness was verified in Caesarea, when the prophet Agabus, in the company of four prophetesses, warned Paul against going to Jerusalem (Acts 21:7-11).
  - b. Even Paul's companions joined with the saints of Caesarea in begging Paul not to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:12).
3. Paul was ready to die in Jerusalem, and would not be persuaded by the multiple witnesses to the will of God (Acts 21:13).
  - a. Thus, we see Paul tested (& failing) in a similar manner to Peter (Matt. 26:35; Mk. 14:31; Lk. 22:33; Jn. 13:37).
  - b. Paul's companions had to defer to his apostolic authority, and surrendered Paul to the Will of God (Acts 21:14).
4. Paul was greeted by the legalistic church in Jerusalem, and heartily participated in their zeal for the Law (Acts 21:15-26).
  - a. James & his disciples were the source of false teaching that nearly destroyed the church in Antioch (Gal. 2:12).
  - b. There is no reference upon his arrival in Jerusalem to the grace gift that had been sent by the local churches of Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, & Achaia.
  - c. Paul spoke Divine activity among the Gentiles outside of Jerusalem (v.19).

- d. James spoke of great attendance in the church at Jerusalem, and their zeal for the Law (v.20).
  - 1) James also mentioned a slanderous report about Paul that the legalistic believers in Jerusalem accepted as true (v.21).
  - 2) James suggested that Paul participate in Mosaic ritual in order to prove himself a Law-keeper to the legalistic believers who believe Satanic lies (vv.22-26).
5. Paul fell victim to the Jerusalem Jews' favorite tactic of mob justice (Acts 21:27-30). This was a tactic pioneered by a young Saul of Tarsus!
6. God the Father overruled the mob justice by placing Paul into Roman custody and achieving His purpose in commissioning Paul to Gentiles & Kings (Acts 21:31-40).
  - a. The Roman Chiliarch (Claudius Lysias, Acts 23:26) asks Paul who he was and what he had done (Acts 21:33)—presenting the perfect opportunity to preach the Gospel to a Roman soldier like Peter had done years earlier.
  - b. Instead of redeeming the open door opportunity with a Gentile, Paul requested another chance to address the Jews (Acts 21:37-40).

## ACTS 22

1. Saul the crusader worked for the destruction of the Church (Acts 7-9), and now Paul the crusader worked to prevent the destruction of the Jews (Acts 22).
2. Acts 22 is a powerful message by Paul pleading for his "brethren and fathers" to follow his example and humble themselves before Jesus Christ (Acts 22:1-21).
  - a. He reviews his Damascus experience (vv.1-16).
  - b. He reviews his first Jerusalem experience (vv.17-21).
    - 1) The Lord commanded Paul to leave Jerusalem, as his testimony (μαρτυρία<sup>#3141</sup>) would only be rejected (v.18).
    - 2) Paul argued with the Lord that he was the perfect evangelist to deliver Jerusalem (vv.19,20).
    - 3) The Lord repeated the command: "Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles" (v.21).

3. The idea that God would minister to the Gentiles drove the Jews in Jerusalem to murderous rage (Acts 22:22,23).
4. The Chiliarch intended to torture the truth out of Paul until Paul made use of Roman political privilege to avoid the scourging (Acts 22:24-29).

### ACTS 23

1. Released by the Romans, Paul is placed before the Sanhedrin for additional examination (Acts 22:30; 23:1).
  - a. Paul has been so long away from Jerusalem politics, that he no longer recognizes the high priest (Acts 23:2-5).
  - b. Paul hasn't been too long away, though, to stir up the divisions between the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Acts 23:6-10).
2. The Lord urged Paul to take courage, informing him that his Jerusalem witness would be repeated in Rome (Acts 23:11).
  - a. Paul's solemn witness to the cause of Christ in Jerusalem was as a prisoner in custody on trial.
  - b. Paul's ministry in Rome will likewise come as a prisoner in custody on trial. We are left to speculate what Paul's Roman ministry might have been like, had he journeyed there rather than to Jerusalem.
3. The son of Paul's sister uncovered a conspiracy against Paul, and was able to thwart it by informing Paul of the matter (Acts 23:12-16).
4. The Chiliarch Claudius Lysius sent Paul up the chain of command surrendering him to a higher court under the Roman Governor, Felix (Acts 23:17-35). Thus, Paul's use of Roman political privilege placed him in Caesarea for over two years (Acts 24:27).

### ACTS 24

1. Felix presided over Paul's next trial, where Ananias made use of an expert Roman orator—Tertullus. (Acts 24:1).
2. The Jewish plea was essentially a change of venue motion, requesting Paul's transfer to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem for trial (Acts 24:2-9).

3. Paul professed his innocence of any offense in Jerusalem, and appealed to Felix's understanding of the Jews (Acts 24:10-21).
4. Felix knew something of The Way, but when he learned more of it, he became frightened (Acts 24:22-25).
5. Felix kept Paul in prison for two years. He was hoping to keep the Jews happy, and also hoping to receive a handsome bribe for Paul's release (Acts 24:26,27).

A Note on the Caesarean imprisonment: Scholars have engaged in tremendous debate concerning Paul's activities for these two years. Some are inclined to place the writing of Colossians & Philemon at this point rather than Paul's later imprisonment in Rome. Those who hold to a Pauline authorship of Hebrews also tend to make this imprisonment the time of its composition. Pastor Bob believes that the prison epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, & Philemon) belong to the first Roman imprisonment. (Pastor Bob also rejects the Pauline authorship of Hebrews. See Study Guide #50). It is, however, most probable that during the time of Paul's Caesarean imprisonment, Luke had the opportunity to conduct his Judean research and compose the Gospel of Luke.

### ACTS 25

1. (Marcus Antonius) Felix was procurator of Palestine from AD52-60. Porcius Festus was procurator of Palestine c.AD60-62.
2. The chief priests and leading Jews immediately make Paul's custody an issue for the new Procurator to address (Acts 25:1-5).
3. When Festus provides Paul the opportunity to voluntarily submit to the Sanhedrin (Acts 25:6-9), Paul chose rather to appeal to Caesar—the highest judicial court in the Roman empire (Acts 25:10-12).
  - a. The *ius appellacionis ad Caesarem* or right of appeal to Caesar was a feature of Roman citizenship from the time of Augustus onward.
  - b. The *appellatio* normally was exercised after a completed trial, with the condemned man contesting the lower court's verdict.
  - c. The provincial governor had some discretion, however, if it appeared the *appellatio* was frivolous or unwarranted (cf. Acts 25:12).

- d. Paul's appeal is more properly a *provocatio* requesting a change of venue to Rome even prior to the completion of any trial.
- 4. Before Paul could depart for Rome, Festus received a state visit from King Agrippa and his sister (lover) Bernice (Acts 25:13-27).
  - a. Herod Agrippa II was the son of the Herod (Agrippa I) who had James killed (Acts 12:2). He was in favor with the Emperor Claudius, and often entreated him on behalf of the Jews.
  - b. Festus reviewed Paul's legal case with Agrippa (Acts 25:14-21), and was grateful for Agrippa's assistance in filing his legal brief (vv.24-27).
  - c. Agrippa was eager to hear the case for himself (Acts 25:22,23).

#### ACTS 26

- 1. Chapter 26 consists of Paul's witness before King Agrippa. The expert in both Roman Law and Mosaic Law, Agrippa was nearly convinced that Paul's teaching was accurate (Acts 26:28).
- 2. Paul expressed his delight that Agrippa's expertise in Jewish customs and questions would make him an excellent judge (Acts 26:1-3).
- 3. Paul bore witness to what he had hoped for as a Pharisee (Acts 26:4-8), what he had found as a persecutor (Acts 26:9-19), and what he had declared as an Apostle (Acts 26:20-23).
- 4. Festus thought Paul was a lunatic, but Agrippa was definitely chewing on the issues (Acts 26:24-29).
- 5. Agrippa, Bernice, & Festus were in agreement that the charges against Paul were unfounded, but his *appellatio* left them no opportunity for an acquittal (Acts 26:30-32).

#### ACTS 27

- 1. Paul's transport to Rome was supervised by a Roman centurion named Julius (Acts 27:1).
  - a. The Augustan Cohort was an auxiliary unit in the Roman army. Its soldiers were promised Roman citizenship upon completion of 25 years of service.
  - b. There is no record of Julius' salvation, but under principles of Divine Establishment,

Julius serves to bless Paul throughout the journey.

- 2. Paul, Luke, & Aristarchus made up the missionary team bound for Rome (Acts 27:2).
- 3. Julius extended considerable leniency in Paul's "arrest" and generously allowed visitation privileges in Sidon (Acts 27:3).
- 4. Julius disregarded Paul's travel advice, and pressed on through the bad weather (Acts 27:4-13).
- 5. The greatest storm and shipwreck described in the Bible features the Apostle Paul's continued faithfulness to receive Divine instructions and preach messages of hope (Acts 27:14-44).

#### ACTS 28

- 1. God's plan in sending the storm placed Paul precisely where he needed to be—the island of Malta (Acts 28:1-10).
- 2. Paul finally made it to Rome, where he was given a generous incarceration arrangement (Acts 28:11-16,30,31).
- 3. Paul's first public message in Rome was to the Jewish population there (Acts 28:17-24). Their mixed response resulted in Paul's turning to the Gentiles (Acts 28:25-28).

Paul's two year "imprisonment" in Rome was the time-frame for the Books of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, & Philemon.