

Ambassador College

The Acts

Notes and Course Outlines

The Acts

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Alphabetical List of The Apostles

1. Andrew
2. Bartholomew, who is the same as Nathanael
3. James, who is called "the Less", son of Alphaeus
4. James, who was called Boanerges by Christ, the son of Zebedee
5. John, who was called Boanerges by Christ, the son of Zebedee
6. Judas Iscariot (replaced with Matthias)
7. Judas, who is the same as Thaddeus, or Lebbaeus, the brother of James, son of Alphaeus
8. Matthew, who is called Levi
9. Philip
10. Simon Peter, who is the same as Cephas or Bar-jona
11. Simon the Canaanite, who is the same as Simon the Zealot
12. Thomas, who is the same as Didymus

Many of the Apostles had more than one name. The account in Acts differs from the Gospel accounts because Judas, the brother of James was also called Thaddeus in two Gospels. Also, Simon the Zealot was called Simon the Cananaean in the same two Gospels.

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The Acts

Introduction

Acts of the Apostles

Title of the book can be misleading. The preaching, journeys and adventures of

10 are by-passed. Significant acts of preachers of less importance are included. Title more properly should be "Acts of Apostolic men". Primarily the book is the Acts of Peter and Paul.

It is split in two parts

1. Acts 1-15 is the expansion of the Gospel and acceptance of the Gentiles and Peter is the main focus.
2. Acts 15:35 is the expansion of the Gospel to Imperial Rome and Paul is the main focus. Reason for the name is that the book is primarily a history. The reason why these two men are featured so much might be stated as Ralph Waldo Emerson said: "there is properly no history; only biography."

Author of the book

- Almost all agree the author is Luke.
- Acts 1:1 Former Treatise.
- Who ever wrote Acts also wrote a former account.
- Acts 1:1 Former treatise O Theophilus
- Luke 1:1-4 Luke wrote for Theophilus

Who was Theophilus?

Basically it is uncertain. The name means "Friend of God or lover of God."

1. Could be a generic term for all Christian readers who thought they were the friend of God or loved Him.
2. Often books intended for the general public were dedicated to friend or patron who contributed to the cost of publishing it.
3. Could have been a Roman official.
 - Called him "KRATISTE" or "most excellent"
 - Acts 23:26 This is used as a title of conspicuous rank.
 - Act 26:25 Also used for Festus.
 - Luke 1:4 Could be a specific Roman official who was being instructed in preparation for baptism.
 - KRATISTE can also be only a friendly greeting no more.
1. He could have been a hostile Roman official. Could Theophilus been a Roman Court official who had heard vague or hostile reports of Christianity as a subversive, troublesome movement and Luke sets out to correct this?

2. It has been suggested that Luke and Acts are trial documents directed to an officer of the court and it is in defense of Paul and Christianity. Much of Acts deals with showing that Christianity is not a threat to Rome.

What we know of Luke

1. Luke is mentioned my name three times in the Bible.
 - Col 4:14 "Luke and Demas greet you..."
 - 2Tim 4:11 "Only Luke is with me..."
 - Philemon Vs. 24 "Lucas a fellow laborer..."
 - All of the times are by Paul while in prison
1. Luke was a Gentile
 - Col 4:10-14 (not of the circumcision) He is the only non-Jewish writer of the NT Scriptures. Some scholars think that he may have been a freedman. Names with contractions ending in "as" were particularly common among slaves. (Phi Vs.24)
 - Greek and Roman masters often educated slaves as physicians and later freed them for their services.
1. A romantic tradition of Luke and Theophilus
 - Luke was the slave and doctor of Theophilus who became gravely ill Luke's skill and devotion brought him back to health. In gratitude Theophilus gave Luke his freedom. Luke to show his gratitude gave Theophilus what was the most precious thing he had: the story of Christ and His church.
1. Luke was a physician
 - Col. 4:14 - Luke the beloved physician.
 - Barkley writes in his commentary The Acts of The Apostles: "We could have guessed that Luke was a doctor because of his instinctive use of medical words. In Luke 4:35, in telling of the man who had the spirit of an unclean devil, he says "when the devil had thrown him down" and uses the correct medical word for convulsions. In Luke 9:38 when he draws the picture of the man who asked Jesus, "I beg you to look upon my son" he employs the conventional word for a doctor paying a visit to a patient. The most interesting example is in the saying about the camel and the needle's eye. All three synoptic writers give us that saying (Mat 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25). For needle both Mark and Matthew

use the Greek RAPHIS, the ordinary word for a tailor's or a household needle. Luke alone uses BELONE, the technical word for a surgeon's needle. Luke was a doctor and a doctor's words came most naturally to his pen." P. 2

1. Luke possibly born in Antioch.

- Many scholars feel that he was probably born in Antioch of a Macedonian family. Acts 6:5 Luke seems to show a special interest in Antioch. Eusibius says in his famous Church History: "Luke, by birth an Antiochene and by profession a physician was for long periods a companion of Paul." P109.

1. Luke became a companion to Paul.

2. Luke was not always an eye witness of events

- Luke 1:1-2 He wrote the Gospel of Luke from documents and facts related to him from the apostles themselves.

1. Luke became an eye witness when he joined Paul.

- Acts 11:25-26 Luke may have met Paul when he came to Antioch.
- Acts chapter 1-16 Luke writes in the third person.
- Acts 16:8 Luke joins Paul. (this about 50 A.D.)
- Acts 16:7 it says "they"
- Acts 16:10 Here it changes to "we"
- Acts 16:6-7 When Paul saw the vision some say it was a vision of Luke. (Many feel that he was a Macedonian)
- Acts 16:12 They went to Philippi (Named for Alexander's father Philip) Luke stayed in Philippi and served the church 5 1/2 years.
- Acts 17:1 Back to "they"
- Acts 20:1-5 Luke rejoined Paul in 55 A.D.
- Acts 27:1 He was Paul's companion in arrest.

1. Luke was a loyal faithful servant

- He accepted Paul's leadership without questioning. He did so even after Paul rejected his advice that he not go to Rome and it was proven to be good advice. He probably served Paul in bolstering his frail health. 2Tim 4:11 Luke stayed with him in danger and deprivation.

Style of the book of Acts

Luke was well educated As a physician his education level was high. Hebrews is

the most eloquent style in the New Testament Acts is the most clear the most literate. Luke is a master storyteller. Acts tells a story better than any others Acts is written in the same style as the Septuagint. The style is changed from Luke to Acts because there was a different audience. Luke's writing is self-effacing he does not mention himself Acts is written in plain chronological order. Luke 1:3 "in order" Luke is written primarily that way too.

E.M. Blaiklock writes in the Zondervan Encyclopedia:

"The book, in short, is the writing of one who had command of his material, who knew what he wished most to say, who could stress with patience and repletion his most significant reports, and could cut and abbreviate ruthlessly when his main purpose was not directly furthered by the narrative. Such decisiveness requires a clarity of mind and a literary ability of no mean order."

When was it written?

There are three possible dates:

1. 115 to 130 - This would eliminate Luke as the author If it was written later than Paul's death the historian would have been remiss for not including the rest of the story of the result of the trial, his later works, his arrest and conviction.
2. 80 to 95 - The book reflects a Rome that is free from the fierce hostility after Nero's fire and the extreme persecution that occurred after 64 A.D. There would be no need to detail Gentiles acceptance into the church if it were this late and the Jews had their nation destroyed and peoples scattered.
3. 64 to 66 - The book has no reference to the destruction of the temple in 77 A.D. None of the accounts could have been written much later than when the events occurred for them to have been so clear and accurate. The book ends abruptly with Paul in prison. If it were written any later than this it would probably refer to other earlier church writings. The most logical date is 64-66 A.D.

Purpose of the book

Every writing has a purpose. We tend to get out of a book or movie what we expect. We will see in them what others tell us is there. This is why it is so important to read the preface of a book. What was the author's intent? Every writer has a purpose or motive or point of view. There is always a primary message to any book or movie.

What did Luke want to say in the book of Acts?

- Luke was a historian and he wanted to give permanence to these extraordinary events that were taking place and of which he was a part. The events of Acts were something BIG!!!
- He sensed that this movement would change history. He probably felt compelled to commit them to paper.

What did God want to say in the book of Acts?

Luke may not have ever thought that what he was writing was to be a permanent part of the scriptures. God did know and He inspired what was included. So, Luke may have had a purpose but God had His own purposes that are now also evident in the book of Acts.

Seven reasons for the book of Acts

1. To show how the gospel went to the world through the power of the Holy Spirit.

There are six sections that each end with a progress report.

- Acts 1-6:7 It grew but was confined primarily to Jerusalem.
- Acts 6:8-9:31 Then it spread through Palestine and into Samaria.
- Acts 9:32-12:24 It spread to Antioch and the Gentiles were included.
- Acts 12:25-16:5 It extended to Asia Minor, Turkey, and Galatia.
- Acts 16:6-19:20 It's spread encompassed Europe, including cities such as Corinth, and Ephesus.
- Acts 19:21-28:31 It finally spread to the very capital of Imperial Rome.
- All this took 30 years to occur

1. To show that Gentiles were accepted into God's Church.

- The Household of God passed from national to international.
- Acts 10:28 The 1st Gentile who was not first a Jewish proselyte is baptized.
- Before this, there were two kinds of converts.
- The first was "Proselyte of the gate" Circumcised.
- The second was called a "God fearer." These believed in the God of the Jews and kept the commands, but did not go all the way and be circumcised.
- 2 Tim 1:11 Paul becomes the apostle to the Gentiles.
- Acts 15 a major decision from headquarters - what to require of the Gentiles.

1. To expose the beginnings of a false Christianity.
 - Acts 8:9-25 Simon Magus is identified.
 - 2 Kings 17:24 Samaritans were Persian peoples transported to Israel during the Assyrian captivity.
 - Many of these were descendents of Abraham.
 - They mixed the Pentateuch with the Babylonian Mysteries.
 - Simon mixed Babylonian Mysteries with Christian teaching.
 - Simon Magus was teaching up in Rome about 15 Years before Paul arrived.

1. To show that Christianity was a law-abiding religion throughout the empire and not a threat to Rome.

Paul and his teachings were made to appear as a threat to Rome.

- Acts 17:5-7 Envious Jews brought the charge "another king"
- Acts 18:12 Charged with teaching people to worship contrary to law.
- Acts 24:5 Charged with sedition.
- Acts ends with Paul in prison for such charges.
- Acts in a great part defends Paul the church and teachings.

Church members were shown to be good citizens.

- Acts 18:13-14 There was found no wickedness in them.
- Acts 19:37 Paul did not rob temples or blaspheme others.
- Acts 23:29 They did nothing worthy of bonds.

Paul had a good relationship with Rome.

- Acts 13:12 Sergius the governor becomes a Christian.
- Acts 18:12 Gallio was indifferent to accusations against the church.
- Acts 16:35 Officials had to apologize for wrongs against the church.
- Acts 19:31 Many chief officials were Paul's friends.
- Acts 28:28-31 He taught 2 yrs and no one forbid him.
- This showed that the church and its teaching were not a threat to anyone.

Some have suggested that Acts is a trial document.

- So much of it contains a defense of Christianity and the church that it might be just that in its main purpose.
- The book ends abruptly with Paul waiting for trial.

- The fact that it never goes on to show the result or any other works may indicate that it had served its purpose of defense of Paul and that was all it was intended to do.

1. To show how God handled many first time events

- Acts 2 1st time the Holy Spirit given.
- Acts 2 1st time tongues given.
- Acts 6 1st time Deacons ordained.
- Acts 8 1st time persecution is experienced.
- Acts 8 1st time heresy develops.
- Acts 15:37 1st time conflict of personalities occurs.
- Acts 14:23 1st time field churches raised up.
- Acts 15 1st conference to decide matters.

1. To link the gospels to the epistles.

- Without Acts the epistles of Paul would not be accepted by the Church.
- Acts 1:1 Takes up where the Gospel leaves off.
- Shows the beginning of the Church and Peter's Primacy.
 - a. Act 2:14:40 the first sermon.
 - b. Act 3:1-26 Peter heals publicly.
 - c. Act 4:8-12 Peter the spokesman to the Jews.
- Acts 8-13 shows Paul's conversion and the authority of his Apostleship.
- Acts 15 Shows Paul subject to church government and his link to Peter and the rest in Jerusalem.
- Acts 17:1, 18:1, 19:1 Show Paul establishing the churches that the later epistles would be written to.

1. To set and example for the succeeding eras of the Church of the tremendous faith and courage of the Apostle Paul.

- Acts 9:15 He was a chosen vessel of God.
- Acts 9:6 Once he knew God's will he was in complete submission to it.
- Paul showed great boldness when facing opposition.
 - a. 2 Cor 11:23-27 Suffered great physical abuse for his faith.
 - b. Acts 16:23 Paul endured beatings.

- c. Acts 14:19-20 Suffered stoning and perhaps died.
 - d. Acts 13:50 Thrown out of the city by the Jews.
 - e. Acts 14:5 Attacked by the Gentiles and countrymen.
- o Acts 20:17-35 In the face of possible death, his concern was not for himself but for the churches.

The world had to be prepared for the events of the book of Acts

The story of the book of Acts is the spread of Christianity within the confines of the Roman Empire

Luke wanted to write down what he experienced because he felt that he was part of something very big. He probably did not realize just how big however. In a similar way we probably don't realize fully today the import of what we are doing.

It took over 30 years to spread through the empire.

It took about 50 years to go worldwide in our time.

It took over 4000 years to set the stage.

Gal 4:4 God waited until everything was ready

Why not have Jesus appear 10 minutes after Adam sinned? Why not give the Holy Spirit instead of the law at Sinai? Why not start the church then and go out to the world?

It all had to happen at the right time.

God controlled everything so that all factors were in place before He sent His son. All was in place before He sent the Holy Spirit started His church and preached the gospel to the civilized world.

Daniel's dream helps us to understand.

Dan 2: 32-45 there was to be four successive kingdoms

Each kingdom contributed something necessary to what had to be in place first before Christ could come and the gospel go out.

- BABYLON: Was the head of gold
- PERSIA: Was the chest of silver
- GREECE: Was the belly of brass

- ROME: Was the legs of iron and clay

Notice that there is a descending order. It is as if the character of kingdoms has been decreasing each era. Certainly the best quality is given to Babylon. The rest are inferior in quality but stronger militarily.

1. The kingdom of Babylon developed over a vast period.
 - a. Civilization started on the Tigres and Euphrates River.
 - b. A major step was food production rather than gathering.
 - This led to a settled life
 - This led to building cities
 - c. A system of writing (Cuneiform) developed.
 - d. Babylon first became important about 2000 B.C.
 - Hammurabi forged a civilization in Babylon
 - This civilization produced the first forms of writing, a set of laws, studies in mathematics, astronomy and other sciences.
 - Developed 360 degree circle.
 - Developed 60 Minute hour.
 - Understood fractions squares square roots and could predict eclipses of the sun an moon.
 - They built networks of canals to carry water from the river.
 - Industry and trade developed.
1. The Assyrians contributed in shaping Babylon
 - a. They were a war-making machine
 - 1. They were the first power to have a standing army.
 - 2. Tiglath-Pileser III 744-727 BC and Sargon II 721-705 were mighty warriors that subdued the smaller loose kingdoms to forge an empire.
 - b. They had the first system set up to administer a vast empire
 - The closer provinces were governed by Assyrian Officials.
 - The outlying areas became dependent states.
 - They had Royal roads and mounted messengers to bring immediate word of any unrest or rebellion.

1. The strategy of the Assyrian Empire.
 - a. They conquered the state.
 - They set up a vassal state.
 - They then set up a subject king.
 - They exacted tribute.
 - They would pull out their troops.
 - b. If the vassal rebelled?
 - Set up a new king.
 - Seized some of the territory.
 - Deported some of the people.
 - c. If the vassal rebels again?
 - They took over all the territory.
 - They deported all the people except a few to teach the new settlers about the land.
 - They resettled different people in the land.
1. This world worked very well
 - a. Could not coordinate a revolt again.
 - b. Residents concerned with survival in new land.
 - c. No longer a purpose in revolt because land not yours.
 - d. Could not go back to homeland if occupied by others.
2. Bible records this strategy
 - a. God used the Assyrians to punish Israel.
 - b. 2Kin 15:19-20 an example of stage one.
 - c. 2Kin 15:28-29 an example of stage two.
 - d. 2Kin 17:4-6 an example of stage three.
 - e. 2Kin 17:24 Brought in others to replace deported ones.
3. Why is Assyria not mentioned in Daniel's dream?
 - a. Perhaps because they were simply before his time.
 - b. That Babylon was gold indicates that God did not rank Assyria higher.
 - c. It may be that God did not mention them because they were such a brutal and barbaric people.
 - d. They kept the empire in line by fear through atrocity and terrorism.
 - If anyone rebelled the area suffered brutal retaliation
 - There were bloody sieges that ended in disease and starvation

- Surrender only resulted in systematic torture and slaughter.
- They would leave forests of impaled prisoners or piles of severed heads to signal their victories.

An account of how Ashurbanipal dealt with the Babylonian people gives a good example of this point.

"I tore out the tongues of these whose slanderous mouths had uttered blasphemies against my god Ashur and had plotted against me, his god-fearing prince; I defeated them completely. The others I smashed alive with the very same statues of protective deities... I fed their corpses, cut into small pieces, to dogs, pigs, zibubirds, vultures, the birds of the sky and also to the fish of the ocean. After I had performed this...I removed the corpses of those whom the pestilence had felled, whose leftovers after the dogs and pigs had fed on them were obstructing the streets."

Babylon-539

- Nabopolassar and the Medes marched against Nineveh captured it and burned it to the ground.
- In 605 he defeated the Egyptians and took Carchemish.
- Nabopolassar died in this year and his son Nebuchadnezzar took over
- He initiated several attacks on Judah and sent many more captives to Babylon.

Babylonian strategy

1. They copied the Assyrian technique.
 2. They improved the system by selecting talented foreigners and used them in their government and naturalized them.
 - Dan 1:1-7
 - They given naturalized name Chaldean.
 - They given positions in the palace.
 - Daniel able to rise to 2nd in power.
1. Babylon greatly expanded the size of the Empire.
 2. The Empire was not so brutal under Nebuchadnezzar.
 - Dan 7:4
 - Lion with wings = Assyrian influence
 - Man = more humane

Once he felt secure he devoted much time to cultural pursuits and reconstruction. He made his capital the most notable capital in the world. He constructed new canals and navigable waterways. He erected magnificent buildings and extensive parks. The city occupied an area of about 200 square miles. It is famous for the seventh wonder of the world the hanging gardens of Babylon.

Contribution:

The Babylonian and Assyrian civilization was the first real world ruling civilization. It had a standing army and a means to administer the empire. It had a system of communication and record keeping.

The second empire was the Persian Empire

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The Acts

Chapter 1

Acts is not a handbook of Church doctrine although doctrine does appear. It is a Book of firsts.

Important Dates:

- Crucifixion -- April 25, 31 A.D.
- Christ on earth 40 days thereafter. Ascension would be on Thursday, June 7.
- Pentecost, Sunday June 17.

Note: Luke is the only gospel which mentions Christ's ascension.

Beginning of the Church (1:1-5:42)

Ascension of Christ (1:1-14)
Greeting (1:1-3)

vs. 1

Jesus began to DO and TEACH. This is the emphasis in the gospel of Luke.

Acts is a continuation of what Christ was DOING after the gospel accounts

Acts is: Transaction, deeds, Acts of Apostolic men (not all).

vs. 2

Gave commandment - wait in Jerusalem (Luke 24:49).

vs.3

Jesus showed himself.

The scriptures describe 10 different times Jesus was seen after his resurrection.

1. To women at tomb. Mary Magdalene and other Mary (the mother of James the less, (Matt 27:56-61, Mark 15:40) John 20:11-18.
2. Sunday afternoon. They held his feet. Mt 28:9-10, this took place after Christ's ascension.
3. To Simon. Luke 24:33-35. I Corinthians 15:5 identifies it was Simon Peter.
4. To two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Luke 24:13-35
5. To 10 disciples assembled behind locked doors. Luk24:36-43 and Jn20:19-24

(The first five times were all on one day)

6. One week later. Once assembled disciples, this time with them. John 21:14.
7. To seven disciples at Sea of Galilee. Jn21:1-3
8. To 500 on Mount in Galilee. 1Cor15:6
9. To James, his brother and other disciples. 1Cor15:7
10. After 40 days Christ's ascended from the Mount of Olives. Acts 1:3-12

* Ascended bodily

* How far in to the clouds did Jesus ascend before they could no longer see them?
1000 ft?

From MANY INFALIBLE PROOFS BY Morris P.93

The number 10, according to Bulinger's NUMBER IN SCRIPTURE is God's number of Divine order.

vs. 3

Christ's message was of the Kingdom of God.

Final Instructions (1:4-8)

vs. 4

Big assembly, literally eating with them. Luke 24:42-49

Christ resurrected:

- 29-30 A.D., Protestant
- 31 A.D., Church of God

- 33 A.D., Catholics

John 14:16 - Promise in O.T., i.e. Messiah would appear. Promise in N.T., i.e. Holy Spirit. "Wait for the promise of the Father . . ."

Holy Spirit not a doctrine in the O.T., but some must have been begotten.

vs. 6

Message made clear but not when.

vs. 7

Not imperative now, i.e. times or seasons.

Mat. 24:36 - unrevealed - No one knows the day or hour.

Apostles believed event to take place in their lifetime. Acts 1:6

vs. 8

"Witness," eye-witness of resurrection.

Holy Spirit is power, authority. It is omnipresent (not a person).

Three regions described:

1. Jerusalem
2. Palestine and Syria
3. Uttermost part of the world -

* TIBET? No! Western world

Ascension (1:9-14)

vs. 9

Christ ascended out of sight

vs. 10

Normal angels manifest themselves as men contrary to seraphim and cherubim. White symbolizes righteousness. Rev. 19:8

vs. 11

Christ's return, manner explained: Not the time

- Zech. 14:4
- I Thes. 4:14 -16

- I Cor. 15:45-53
- Rev. 19:11-15

Descent will be visible.

* This verse proves that the reward of the saved is not Heaven. Jesus returns from Heaven to the Mt. of Olives. Zech. 14:4

vs. 12

"Sabbath day's journey" - tradition:

{2,000 CB/cubits = 3/5 mi.}, i.e. wall to wall in a city.

Mt. of Olives to Jerusalem was about 3/5 miles.

Luke 24:52-53 After ascension they went to Jerusalem and continued worshipping in the temple.

vs. 13

Rented quarters

Luke 24: 52 -53 Temple as a place of worship

Apostolic list

*Apostolic list differs from that of the Gospels. Why the contradiction? Be prepared for a quiz.

Quiz:

- 1-3. List the three sets of brothers
- 4-5. What are two other names for Judas?
6. What is Simon the Zealot's other name?

vs. 14

"the women"

1. Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:2)
2. The other Mary (mother of James the less, Matt 27:56-61, Mark 15:40).
3. Mary, the mother of Jesus

"his brethren"

e.g., physical brothers and sisters. Assume part of 120. Shows God not building a male chauvinist church.

* 4 brothers and 2 sisters

Judas (1:15 - 22)

vs. 15

120 disciples

Disciple = learner or student.

(p. 15, Barclay)

120 = Completion, e.g. $10 \times 12 = 120$

120 were required to settle a civil matter and Luke may have done this on purpose, due to Jewish law.

vs. 16 - 17

Judas introduced

vs. 18 - 19

"Burst asunder in the midst" G.K. = elachsen mesoß, clang, to crack, to crash, like a falling tree.

Plausible explanation: May mean burst open in the middle due to ineptness in trying to hang himself. He hit rocks below.

Fact: Judas committed suicide in remorse (Mat. 27:5).

Jews are very tied to importance of burial. Present even today. Try to bury dead as close to Jerusalem as possible.

Judas' Motives

John 12: 6 - Judas was treasurer and thief. He didn't presume Jesus as a "lamb led to the slaughter," but when he realized that Christ was actually going to die, he hung himself.

Judas appearing in the:

- 1st resurrection - No
- 2nd resurrection - Possible
- 3rd resurrection - Also possible, Mark 14:21 The son of man indeed goeth. As it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! *good were it for that man if he had never been born.*

vs. 20

"Bishoprick" = (Greek) His office as overseer (Psalms 69:25; 109:8)

God's Spirit revealed meaning of these two Psalms. Therefore, God inspired Peter to say this. Good example of Bible interpreting the Bible.

vs. 22

Were to replace Judas.

Matthias and Joseph had to have been witnesses along with the apostles.

Matthias chosen (1:23-26)

vs. 23

1. Joseph called Barsabas

2. Matthias*

vs. 24 - 26

*appointed via casting lots (1:26)

Barclay writes in his commentary:

"It may seem strange to us that the method was that of casting lots. But amongst the Jews it was the natural thing to do because all the offices and duties in the Temple were settled that way. The names of the candidates were written on stones: the stones were put into a vessel and the vessel was shaken until one stone fell out; and he whose name was on that stone was elected to office." P. 17

Note: This is the last time in God's church that the casting of lots is ever used. After this they were given the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit will lead them into the truth. John 16:13, Matt. 18:20

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The Acts

Chapter 2

Holy Spirit Sent (2:1-13)

Gathering and Receiving Spirit (2:1-4)

vs. 1

"Pentecost" means "the fiftieth" (Author's name for e.g. The Feast of Weeks)

(The Feast of First Fruits -- Harvest reference)

50 days transpired counting from the first Sabbath Day after the Passover i.e. Sunday June 17th, 31 A.D.

Symbolism of Holy Days:

Passover, Old Testament pictures death angel passing over.

- Remission of sin (repentance)
- Reconciliation

Unleavened Bread, Exodus out of Egypt.

- Coming out of sin, crossing Red Sea (baptism).

Pentecost, The law given on Mt. Sinai.

- Wheat harvest
- Holy Spirit given. Laying on of hands
- 1st fruits called

vs. 1 (cont.)

"All" 120 present (1:15) at election of Matthias.

"in one place" e.g. The temple mount (vs. 46) is indicated.

vs. 2

"Rushing mighty wind" evidence of God's presence in natural elements supernaturally employed.

Example: appearance of God to Elijah in I Kings 19:11, 12.

Acts 4:31 "The place was shaken where they were assembled."

"House" oikos means House, residence, building

Luke 11:51 "Temple" is also Oikon therefore, they were in the temple.

See also (vs. 46). Mat. 21:13 Christ called temple his Father's house.

*Shows significance that they did mingle with Jews and that Church was continued there.

vs. 3

"Cloven tongues like as of fire"

Strong's:

Cloven means literally in distribution or divided.

Fire means specifically lightening; fiery.

* Point: Not a serpent's tongue!

vs. 4

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues"

(Greek) glossa means literal tongue (languages).

Glossa, vs. 4, 11.

Point: Not interpreted incoherent, unintelligible, speaking.

Tongues (2:4-13)

vs. 5

"out of every nation" -- From the dispersion, means from all over the world i.e. where Jews had gone.

During this time of the Spring Harvest the Weather is mild, making it easy for many to travel to Jerusalem. Therefore this made it possible for a large group to attend this Holy Day.

vs. 6

"In his own language" (Greek) dialektos means dialect. Were speaking in different dialects.

dialektos, vs. 6, 8.

Note: Each person from what ever nation they were heard them speak not only in their own language but their particular dialect. (verse 9)

Tremendous miracle of speaking and hearing.

vs. 7

???Note: Most likely only the twelve apostles spoke in the gift of tongues. (Acts 2:14, 15 Mark 14:70)???

vs. 8

Dialektos

vs. 9 - 10

Many different dialects . . .

*Proselytes i.e. converts to Judaism by circumcision.

First Gentile via citizenship Cornelius.

2 types of proselytes:

1. Full (circumcised)
2. Of the gate (uncircumcised)

Peter Speaks (2:14-40)
Miracle Explained (2:14-21)

vs. 14

Peter's Sermon given at the Temple Mount. 3000 added post-sermon.

How baptized? May have used "micvehs" to baptize the 3000 on the south side of the Temple Mount. Originally designed to cleanse the people before they entered the Temple Mount.

vs. 15

Jews began counting at 6:00 a.m. which means 3rd hour - 9:00 a.m.

vs. 16

Joel quoted

vs. 17

"In the last days" 2 possibilities:

1. 2/3 human history (man's government) had transpired up to that time, i.e. last days.
2. Jews thought Messiah was to come then, i.e. last days.

Peter was convinced that they were living in the last days.

Duality of Prophecy

Partially fulfilled by an event, e.g. Joel's prophecy.

Prophecy:

1. Foretelling future.

2. Inspired speaking.

vs. 21

"Call on the name of the Lord"

The Protestants misunderstand this. They believe all one has to do is to call upon "Jesus" to be saved. Peter's quote of Joel 2:32 includes the time when the kingdom will be on the earth and all flesh will know Him and obey him when salvation will be available to everyone. (Philippians 2:10-11)

First Sermon (2:22-40)

vs. 22

"Jesus" -- A man approved by God.

"Ye" -- Jewish leadership who put Christ to death.

"You know" -- Peter knew they knew.

Not important to dwell on who killed Christ or who is responsible, e.g., the Jews. Our sin put Christ on the stake, not the Jews' or Romans'. God doesn't hold them responsible.

vs. 25

Before Samuel, prophets were called seers. Consequently, after that time called prophets.

David quoted -- had meaning relevant to Christ's return.

Ps. 16:8

vs. 27

Hell (Hebrew) Sheol - the grave, (Greek) Hades - the grave.

Greek word alone does not verify meaning but rather the truth of the Bible.

vs. 29

Interesting to note: The place David was buried was known then.

"He is dead and buried."

Point: David not speaking of himself, but of Christ. Ie. "Holy One"

Note: Proof that David is not presently in heaven.

vs. 34

"Not ascended to heaven!"

Point: Patriarchs began to understand that there is a God family.

vs. 38

"Repent" -- to have remorse for what you did with the intent to completely change.

"baptized" IN WHOSE NAME?

Mat. 28:19 -- In the name of the father, and the son into the Holy Spirit which we do in the name of Jesus Christ (by the authority of).

Repentance requires belief and an attitude of change...also hating sin!

Formula for Baptism:

1. Believe
2. Repent
3. Baptized
4. Reception of Holy Spirit

vs. 40

"With many other words" -- took all day.

Point: Counseling for baptism takes time!

Church Begins Big (2:41-47)
Three Thousand Added (2:41-43)

vs. 41

3000 baptized

vs. 42

"breaking bread" -- eating a meal! i.e. common term.

Point: Not Lord's Supper

Sharing (2:44-47)

vs. 44

People of Jerusalem took the visitors into their homes.

Point: Not a Marxist, communist approach!

vs. 47

Only God can call! John 6:44, Acts 2:39, 1 Corinthians 1:26

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Chapter 3

Miracle and Consequences (3:1-4:31)

Healing (3:1-11)

vs. 1

The Miracle

Ninth hour = 3 p.m.

Devout Jews prayed three special times a day: 9 a.m.; 12 noon; 3 p.m.

Believed by rabbis that Abraham instituted morning prayer; Isaac at noon; Jacob that of evening prayer.

vs. 2

Customary for beggars to sit at entrance to a temple or shrine (most likely place to receive money).

vs. 6

"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" -- sizable group of people were present!

vs. 11

"Held Peter and John" = strong affection towards them.

"Porch that is called Solomon's" = a colonnade running the length of the east side of the outer court of the temple.

The Message

Peter's Answer (3:12-26)

vs. 12

Note: They give all the credit to God.

vs. 16

"His name through (the) faith in his name . . ."

vs. 19 (-21)

* Pivotal scriptures.

vs. 19

"Repent and be converted" (2:38)

"Time of refreshing" means when we are made new and immortal. Every last vestige of sin from our past life will be illuminated and we will then have holy righteous character, the will and the power to never sin again.

vs. 20 (-26)

Duality -- Seed of Abraham

Spiritual -- David to Christ

Physical -- Seed as a nation

vs. 21

God's government will now control the entire universe. The earth will no longer produce thorns and thistles. The animal's nature will change to live in peace and harmony. No longer horrible earthquakes, hurricanes, volcanic eruption...ect. God's law will be restored to mankind.

Restitution of God's government = Message.

Today -- only restitution of knowledge.

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Chapter 4

Peter and John Jailed (4:1-4)

vs. 1

"captain of the temple" means an official second only to the high priest who kept order in the temple. Also called Sagan.

Sadducees -- small, but influential. Wealthy, aristocratic class.

Reasons why Peter & John arrested:

1. Sadducees (in charge of temple) didn't believe in resurrection.
2. Wanted to discourage a riot or disorder in the court.

vs. 3

Sagan and Sadducees arrested Peter and John, putting them in jail overnight.

vs. 4

Not 5000 on same day as result of second sermon.

But, "was" (Greek) egenethe -- means "came to be."

120 - converted before Pentecost +3000 - converted on Pentecost = 3120 +1880
- converted on day of second sermon = 5000

vs. 6

Caiaphas - high priest (who had condemned Christ to be crucified).

High priest elected for life. (It was all in the family) - "kindred"

Annas - high priest - A.D. 6-15

Caiaphas - high priest - A.D. 18- 36.

Sanhedrin - Supreme Court of Jews

1. 71 members directed by high priest.
2. Sadducees (priests)
3. Scribes (experts in traditional law)
4. Pharisees (fanatics for law)
5. Elders (respected in community)

vs. 10-11

Point: Focus on Christ and not on Peter.

The tradition still exists in Masonic lore the stone that Jacob slept on was later carried by the priests in the wilderness it was brought into the Promised Land.

Christ was believed to be that rock (1 Corinthians 10: 4-6)

As Christ was rejected the stone would be rejected. Finally when the temple was to be built it was thought that this famous stone should be used as the cornerstone of Solomon's temple it was inspected by the architects they found it

very rough with a large crack. The crack could split it in two easily for this reason the builders condemned the stone as unfit they rejected it.

Masonic tradition continues to state at the building of the temple the stone was rejected as a corner stone still it was included in the temple it was made a part of the coronation ceremonies

In Israel's history Athaliah had the royal seed killed a nurse took the heir Joash & hid him several years the priest commanded that Joash be anointed king Joash was coronated as king & the pillar is mentioned.

and when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard *and* of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD. And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner *was*, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, Treason. (II Kings 11:13-14)

THE STONE WAS THE CORNER STONE UPON WHICH WE ARE ALL BUILT INTO A TEMPLE
EPHESIANS 2:19-20

vs. 12

Christ - the only name. Can't be saved by Buddha, Allah, etc.

I Tim. 2:5 -- one mediator

However, it is not only pronouncing his name.

Release (4:13-22)

vs. 13

"unlearned and ignorant" means Peter and John were not formally trained in the Rabbinic schools. Were not learned in studying the Talmud, etc. Also said of Christ, Jn. 7:15.

However, it doesn't that they were not educated.

Note: John's Gospel is considered to be eloquent Greek.

Point of wisdom not to educate ministry to the degree they can't relate to laity.

vs. 16

How did Luke (author) know what went on behind closed doors?

It's very possible that John and Peter told him what went on in the room.

Luke was a historian and he would have researched this.

vs. 19

Wasn't a question of right or wrong. God would judge.

Prayers, Encouragement (4:23-31)

vs. 24

Example of understanding a principle long after one is first exposed.

vs. 27

Pais (Greek) means child, servant.

Point: Same Greek word as servant in vs. 25.

vs. 29

Pray for boldness

vs. 31

Early New Testament Church had miracles. Today not same public drama.

God will once again intervene in mankind's affairs and then there will be miracles of this magnitude and greater.

Sacrifice for the Work (4:32-37)

vs. 32

Explained in 2:44 - 45

vs. 36

Barnabas is introduced.

Point: Were themselves from geographically Gentile areas.

1. Paul from Tarsus.
2. Barnabas from Cypress.

vs. 37

Barnabas' attitude revealed.

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Chapter 5

Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11)

vs. 1

"Ananias and Sapphira his wife"

vs. 2

Pretended to bring all the money they had received for a possession -- a direct lie in itself. Why? The acts of selling it was for the ostensible purpose of bringing it into common stock.

Hypothetical: Sold it for \$10,000 but told disciples they received only \$5,000 for it.

vs. 4

Selling of land was voluntary

Two fold:

1. First lie to God's ministry
2. Simony

Note: It shows that the Church didn't force them to sell it!

vs. 5

"Gave up the ghost" -- improper translation! Should read: "falling down, he breathed his last."

Note: God struck him down, not Peter.

Point: You cannot buy your way into ministry via fraudulent behavior.

vs. 6

"wound him up" means wrapped him (in his or their robes).

vs. 10

God in his mercy made it quick and painless.

- 1st resurrection: No

- 2nd resurrection: probably
- 3rd resurrection: ?

Note: Those once in the Church who have since left may come up in 2nd resurrection? Mr. Armstrong has alluded to it.

Miracles and Envy (5:12-42)
Signs (5:12-16)

vs. 13

Of the rest (?) Apparently had to do with wrong concepts of buying into ministry. Perhaps this act of Barnabas was one of many and the apostles begin to use him in the ministry and perhaps others in the congregation believed they could do similar acts to become part of the ministry.

"magnified" -- megalund (Greek) means to declare great. This irritated the high priest and the Sadducean Council. (vs. 17)

vs. 15

"Shadow of Peter." Catholic Church developed doctrine and beliefs of saints -- bones, clothing, etc. had powers.

vs. 16

Miracles of healing by Peter decreased as time went by though the 1st century.

Note: Can't presume all that were healed were converted.

Imprisonment (5:17-32)

vs. 17

High priest and Sadducees arrest apostles.

vs. 18

"common prison" -- too late in evening for a hearing.

vs. 19

"angel" -- angelos (Greek) means:

1. Messenger (one who brings tidings)
2. Angel

Guards didn't have keys. They would have to go to the chief jailer, (Warden) to get them.

vs. 20

Commanded to do this.

vs. 21

"council ... senate" = same body, i.e. the Sanhedrin.

vs. 23

When the angel miraculously opened the jail door he locked it again when they left.

vs. 24

Point: They knew God must have intervened

vs. 26

The apostles didn't resist arrest. Principle to be followed today.

vs. 28

"straitly" means strictly.

Peter again charged them with the death of Christ. Also vs. 30.

vs. 28-30

"Obey God rather than men!" BOLD. This man's blood. Why you make it sound like Jesus was an innocent man.

Peter denied Christ the first time. Now he and the other apostles are bold to speak.

The officers were afraid that people might try to stone them because the apostles were teaching that the Jewish leaders were responsible for killing Christ. These officers did not want Christ's blood on them. However, that is exactly what they wanted before. Mat. 27:35 -- They had said, let his blood be on us.

vs. 32

The Holy Spirit is a witness to these things also.

There is an external witness and an internal witness.

vs. 34

Gamaliel:

1. A Pharisee
2. One of the most respected men in the field of law. Given title of Rabban = highest rank for a doctor of law.

Book: The Life and Epistles of St. Paul by W.J. Conybeare

3. Grandson of Hillel and son of Simeon.

4. Died a Jew, not a Christian.

Gamaliel steps forward . . .

vs. 34 (cont.)

Two rival schools:

1. Hillel -- tradition making void the law.
2. Shammai -- original law of Moses making void traditions.

Gamaliel's Speech (5:33-42)

vs. 36

"Theudas" = c. 10 yrs. earlier (according to Josephus). This man led an insurrection in Galilee and aimed at getting the sovereignty of Jews but was defeated and put to death.

In Antiquities, book XX, Ch.V, Par.1, Josephus writes:

"Now it came to pass, that while Fadus was procurator of Judea, that a certain magician, whose name was Theudas, persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with them, and follow him to the river Jordan; for he told them he was a prophet, and that he would, by his own command, divide the river, and afford them an easy passage over it; and many were deluded by his words. However, Fadus did not permit them to make any advantage of his wild attempt, but sent a troop of horsemen out against them; who falling upon them unexpectedly, slew many of them, and took many of them alive. They also took Theudas alive, and cut off his head, and carried it to Jerusalem. This was what befell the Jews in the time of Cuspius Fadus's government....and besides this, the sons of Judas of Galilee were now slain; I mean of that Judas who caused the people to revolt, when Cyrenius came to take an account of the estates of the Jews"

vs. 37

"Judas of Galilee" = leader of religious group, i.e., Essenes according to Rabbi Abraham. However, Josephus says Judas only member this sect -- nevertheless, he failed at leading an insurrection against Cyrenius (also called Quirinius) as a result of Augustus' decree in 7 B.C. not being carried out.

Note: Taxing of Syria (as it was to the Romans) was done every 14 years, e.g. 7 B.C. /4 B.C. /6 A.D.

Josephus writes of this Judas in Antiquities, XVIII, I, I-6:

"Yet there was one Judas a Gaulonite, of a city whose name was Gamala, who taking with him Sadduc, a Pharisee, became zealous to draw them to a revolt, who said that this taxation was no better than an introduction to slavery, and exhorted the nation to assert their liberty; as if they could procure them happiness and security for what they possessed, and an assured enjoyment of a still greater good, which was that of the honour and glory they would thereby acquire for magnanimity...All sorts of misfortunes also sprang from these men, and the nation was infected with this doctrine to an incredible degree; one violent war came upon us after another, ...Judas and Sadduc, who excited a fourth philosophic sect among us ... agree in all other things with the Pharisaic notions; but they have an inviolable attachment to liberty; and they say that God is to be their only ruler and Lord. They also do not value dying any kinds of death, not indeed do they heed the deaths of their relations and friends nor can any such fear make them call any man Lord."

vs. 38 (-39)

Very profound statement from Gamaliel.

Point: Good advice for us!

vs. 40

"beaten them" -- illegally -- perhaps 39 stripes (40, save one).

vs. 42

"in every house" -- where God's people lived.

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The Acts

Chapter 6

Gospel begins to spread

Persecution promotes expansion (6:1-9:31)

Stephen's Ministry (6:1-15)

Deacons Ordained (6:1-7)

vs. 1

"Grecians" means Hellenists or Greek-speaking Jews who lived (that is temporarily) in Jerusalem.

"Hebrews" = native Jews; Aramaic speaking.

"widows neglected . . ." means the needy. The Aramaic speaking Jews looked down on (nationalistic prejudices) the foreign Jews. Thus, they were being neglectful in the distribution of alms and in caring for the physical needs of Grecians.

vs. 2

The church created this office based upon biblical principles and physical needs. In one sense the office of a Deacon should not have been needed. It was created because of a failure of the Brethren to serve one another. Christ hadn't commanded them to appoint officers.

vs. 5

1. *Stephen
2. *Philip
3. Prochorus
4. Nicanor
5. Simon
6. Parmenas
7. Nicolas (proselyte)

*Key roles

Jerusalem divided into seven wards by the Jews previously.

Note: All seven had Greek names, not Jewish.

vs. 7

Out of the Jewish priesthood came converted Church members. Did they have to give up their profession? We don't know.

Stephen (6:8-15)

vs. 9

"libertines" = freedmen or descendants of freedmen.

Jerusalem = national synagogues. These people hired and bribed people to speak against Stephen! We think may have been over-zealous.

vs. 11

"suborned" means secretly instigated.

vs. 12

"they" being ethnic Jews.

"the council" means the Jewish ruling Sanhedrin.

vs. 14

Stephen, probably speaking to change Mosaic customs, i.e. the rituals of Moses.

New Testament Church and Christ never, as far as the Bible indicates, offered sacrifices.

vs. 15

His face began to glow as the face of an angel. Was to show that Stephen had not spoken blasphemously of Moses.

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Chapter 7

Stephen's Defense (7:1-53)

History of God with Men (7:1-50)

vs. 1

The sermon of Stephen

"high priest" = Caiaphas (A.D. 18-36)

vs. 2

Resume of the Old Testament:

1. History of Church in the Wilderness.
2. Apology means oratory.
3. Today, the Jews are not allowed in Temple Mount! Speech psychology:
Establishes a common ground. Does not say one thing they could disagree with.

One of the finest speeches in history of man.

APPARENT CONTRADICTION

Solve these two contradictions by next class:

- Acts 7:6 = 400 yrs
- Gal 3:17 = 430 yrs
- Acts 7:14 = 75 people
- Gen 46:26 = 66 people

vs. 6

Apparent contradiction - Gal. 3:17 (430 years)

Paul is counting from the time that Isaac is born to the Exodus (430 years)

Where as Moses and Stephen are counting 400 years from the death of Abraham to the dividing of the Promised Land.

1. Whether it is exact or not is irrelevant. It is the difference in where one begins counting.
2. Israelites lived in Egypt more than 200 years. Israelites in actual slavery from 90-100 years.

TIME TABLE

- Abraham born 1972 B.C.
- Fled to Europe 1902 B.C.
- Returned 1899 B.C.
- Called 1898 B.C.
- Circumcision 1874-1873 B.C.
- Isaac born 1873-1872 B.C.
- Isaac 80 (? Error) 30 years old 1843 B.C.
- Exodus 1443 B.C.
- Death of Abraham 1797 B.C.
- Dividing of the land 1397 B.C.

vs. 14

Total = 75, apparent contradiction:

Gen. 46:27 (70)

1st combo: 66 - Total that "came into" - Gen. 46:26 + 4 - Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim, Manasseh = 70

2nd combo: 66 - Kindred (Gen. 46) + 9 - Jacob's sons' wives (Simeon's and Levi's wives are dead) = 75.

"All his kindred" - Acts 7:14. Joseph and his wife already in Egypt and not counted.

vs. 15-16

Means Jacob was buried at Hebron in a cave which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite (Gen. 23:16).

Joseph was buried at Shechem in a piece of ground Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor (Josh. 24:32).

Point: The two transactions are simply telescoped in these verses because of the pressure of Stephen's circumstances and need for brevity.

vs. 17

We feel that there were right around 2 1/2 million people coming out of Egypt. Higher figures seem improbable.

Point: Should have flexibility when we preach.

Exodus 12:37 -- 600,000 males came out of Egypt. We can conclude that there was at least 2 1/2 million.

All of Israel during time of Exodus did not remember freedom.

vs. 38

"church" -- ekklesia (Greek) means a popular meeting, assembly or church.

Point: Oracles are for us today.

vs. 42

Amos 5:21-27 - Paganism engulfed Israel; Amos warns of coming captivity.

Ezek. 20:21-25 - Rebellion of Israel

Ps. 81:12 - Paganism (walked in their own counsel)

Rom. 1:28 - God let them go their own way - didn't have Holy Spirit. Did not retain God in their knowledge.

vs. 43

II Chron. 28:1-4 -- King of Judah passed his children through fire.

Judah fell into a very low state of degeneracy.

vs. 45

Mistranslation. Jesus = Joshua.

vs. 48

See also: Acts 17:24 - dwells not in temples made with hands.

vs. 50-51

Abrupt change

Indictment (7:51-53)

vs. 51

Contempt of court

vs. 53

Bold statement. The Jews thought they had kept the law meticulously.

Stephen's Death (7:54-60)

vs. 54 -60

The stoning of Stephen

vs. 55

Fulfillment of prophecy

"standing" -- apparently Christ was very aware of the situation.

vs. 58

Tradition has it, Stephen was stoned at Solomon's Quarry.

Paul was upcoming Rabbinical student. Was Paul ever married? We don't know. Probably not. A member of Sanhedrin? Doubtful. Had to be 30, married and have children.

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The Acts

Chapter 8

Church in Canaan (8:1-8:40)

Saul - Persecution (8:1-3)

vs. 1

Saul and Jewish persecution of Church. Paul consents to Stephen's death.

Note: All scattered except apostles.

vs. 3

"made havock" means brutal cruelty i.e. like the ravaging of a body by wild animals.

Works of Philip (8:4-8)

vs. 4

As a result of persecution, it forced Christians out of Jerusalem to preach the Gospel where, e.g. Philip to Samaria. vs. 5 "down" to Samaria because of Jerusalem's elevation.

Samaritans - descendents of foreign settlers. Babylonian Assyrian transplants. Pentateuch worshippers II Kg. 17:23-41.

1. Judaism of Samaritans
2. Paganism of Chaldeans

Note: Jews did not associate with Samaritans. John 4:9 -- were looked upon as half-breeds spiritually and socially (racially).

Point: Salvation now open to whole world -- starting to reach out.

vs. 6

Miracles accompanied Philip's speaking.

Simon the Sorcerer (8:9-24)
Background (8:9-13)

vs. 9

Simon Magus. We believe is Simon Peter of Rome. Descendent of Nimrod and Balaam. A man who fascinated the people, like an astrologer or magician.

Speculation: He had an important position in Roman Catholic Church.

Possibly the first pope.

Account is given to expose Simon as the leader and founder of false church.

SIMON

- A Samaritan
- Used black magic, demonistic, bewitching powers, vs. 9
- Whole population heeded him, vs. 9
- Worshipped as "great one," vs. 10

- Known for a long time, vs. 11
- In name only, became Christian, vs. 13
- Knew God's power was greater
- Wanted to buy apostleship, vs. 18
- Simon was lawless
- He did not repent
- Died in Rome

Point: Luke describes the intentions of this man at such full length in order to show the Church of 62 A.D. that this man was not part of the Christian Church.

vs. 12

"believed" and were baptized, of course repentance also necessary.

OUTLINE OF SIMON MAGUS

1. Acts the key -- Beginning of true Church and false church.
2. Only records those events absolutely necessary for God's Church to be clear on.
3. Geography covered is Asia Minor, Greece and Rome.
4. Reason for the account in Acts 8 is to expose Simon as leader and founder of false system.
5. *Simon (see above)
6. Babylonian religion had come to Samaria through Babylonians who were brought in (II Kings 17:30, 31).
7. Simon mixed some Christian teachings with Babylonian ideas in effort to gain "universal religion."
8. Simon arrogated to himself central position in his religion. He always carried Christian name.
9. Simon went to Rome in 45 A.D. in days of Claudius Caesar and was honored as a god because of his magical powers. Called "Holy God Simon" on statue. Emperor and Senate had to grant approval for erection of statue.
10. This was the Simon who went to Rome not Simon Peter. Emperor Habrian was willing to have Simon's religion established in Rome in second century.
11. Found a female prostitute, Helen, in Tyre who became female principle to go along with Babylonian system.
12. Simon claimed he was creator. He and Helen were worshipped under titles of "Lord and Lady." She also held title of "Queen of Heaven."
13. Simon Peter (means father) taught out of scriptures but said not necessary to heed scriptures if believed in him and his grace.
14. (Catholic view is same on law.)

15. Simon had priests and images made of himself and Helen.
16. Simon honored (1st) eighth day of week instead of seventh.
17. Simon died and was buried in cemetery on Vatican Hill where chief gods of Rome buried.
18. Simon's teaching slipped into Catholic church, name Samaritan dropped, "Christian" came out.
19. It is now a "universal religion" that is Catholic church.

Peter and John (8:14-17)

vs. 14

Peter and John to Samaria.

Note: Philip may not have been necessarily authorized to lay hands on them.

Note: If authorized, an unordained man can baptize and lay hands on for the Holy Spirit, but ordained man are required to anoint sick and conduct marriages.

vs. 17

Laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit.

Simony (8:18-19)

vs. 18

"Simony" means buying for self a religious office. Apparently, Simon had never received the Holy Spirit.

Point: This example of Simon Magus led to the coining of the word, simony. This word came to mean the offering of money to purchase a position or office within the church.

Also he was exposing Simon Magus himself.

Peter's Rebuke (8:20-24)

vs. 20-21

Ministry is a gift of God

vs. 23

Point: Wrong attitude

Ethiopian Eunuch (8:25-40)

vs. 27

"eunuch" may not have been a full proselyte (rather a proselyte of the gate) because private parts missing.

Note: Jews wouldn't allow him to be a Jewish convert. Ethiopian by citizenship.

"Candace" a title, not name of person. A mother queen.

vs. 28

Ancient custom to read aloud, even by themselves.

Note: Probably a carriage, not a war-type chariot.

vs. 31

A right attitude for help (Rom. 10:14).

vs. 32

Isa. 53:7, 8 -- Quote from Old Testament.

vs. 35

Sidelight: When explaining, begin with the scripture in question.

vs. 37

Believe with all your heart

vs. 38

"into the water" signifies total immersion.

KEY: "they" . . . "both" -- which rules out sprinkling.

vs. 39

"out of the water" signifies total immersion.

vs. 40

Philip was taken and dropped off about 20 or 30 miles north at Azotus.

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The Acts Chapter 9

Saul's Conversion (9:1-31)

Struck Down (9:1-9)

Saul's conversion - 35 A.D.

Note: Account of conversion given three times in Acts, 22:5-6; 26:12-18. Also Gal. 1:15-2:2.

vs. 1

Paul diligent in persecution.

vs. 2

Christianity, at this time, was known as "the way."

Letter from Sanhedrin had authority over Jews as well as a letter from the high priest.

How could Paul have the authority over Jews that were outside the immediate jurisdiction of Jerusalem?

"The matter which Paul was coming to Damascus for would have contravened local laws had there not existed a special agreement with the Romans at the time." F.F. Bruce, author of the book "Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free" states: "When the Jewish state (that is Judah) won independence under the Hasmoneans, it had powerful patrons in the Romans who let the countries surrounding Judea know this and demanded that Judea should be granted the rights and privileges of a sovereign state, including the right of extradition...The history in I Maccabees 15:15-21 show this working:... 'If therefore, any traitors have escaped from their country to you, hand them over to Simon the High Priest to be punished by him according to the law of the Jews.'

PAUL

1. Of tribe of Benjamin.
2. Son of prosperous parents who were Jews and Roman citizens. Father was a tentmaker.
3. Grew up in *Tarsus.
 - *One of the busiest, most cosmopolitan cities in world. Also, one of the oldest.
 - *Busy trading center, i.e. end stop of caravan route from Asia.
 - *International in flavor.
 - *High attention to intellectual pursuits.
4. Acquired Roman citizenship in Tarsus.

Roman Citizenship:

God undoubtedly equipped His Apostle to the Gentiles with a 'birthright'

privilege that could carry enough authority to preserve Paul's life and at the same time help him fulfill his commission.

Mackington quotes Cicero to show the importance of Roman citizenship in his book, *The Rome of Saint Paul*:

"To bind a Roman citizen is a misdeed, to scourge him is a crime, to put him to death is almost a parricide." P. 102

HOW COULD CITIZENSHIP BE OBTAINED?

- A. Awarded for outstanding service. Probably awarded Paul's father for service in the army.
- B. It could be bought.
- C. Could get it because born in a Roman free city

* Some think that Tarsus was such a city and Paul acquired it this way.

Samuel Lumen explains the difference between freeborn and citizenship in his book, *Far Hence Unto The Gentiles*:

"The scattered Jews could hold citizenship in the particular city in which they lived if the city was a free city or colony. Only 'freemen' of a 'free city' could obtain this privilege, and the Judean Jews were not freemen and hence not able to obtain the privilege. Paul however, being born in the city of Tarsus was 'born free' since Tarsus had been made a free city in 41 B.C. But 'freedmen' status did not confer the rights of a Roman citizenship upon him. 'It only smoothed the way to his acquisition of the higher distinction. The granting of this privilege would compel his presence in Rome for the necessary formalities.'...Roman citizenship and its freedom were obtained with difficulty only through certain conditions. Only certain individuals could secure the treasured privilege, and they had to pay large sums to do so. But a freeman could 'obtain the distinction as a right by complying with the formalities, without monetary consideration.' ..."The difference between being a Roman citizen and being born free is evidenced in the behavior of the officer at the time of Paul's arrest in Jerusalem. When asked if he was the Egyptian who had been creating a disturbance, Paul replied that he was not, but was a Jew born in Tarsus. The officer would be aware that Paul was a freeman because Paul was born in Tarsus, and he ...'commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.' Paul immediately declared himself to be not only born free, but to be a Roman citizen as

well. This status caused them to release him from his bonds and treat him with courtesy." P. 130

5. Paul was probably a few years younger than Christ.
6. Spoke four languages.
7. Instructed at feet of Gamaliel.
8. Was an up and coming Rabbinical student.
9. Saul's misguided zeal led him to persecute the early Church.

Acts 9:21; I Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13; Phil. 3:6; I Tim. 1:13

Note: Paul ever married? We don't know. Probably not. A member of the Sanhedrin? Doubtful. Had to be at least 30, married, and have children.

vs. 3

Speculation: Paul walked 7 days alone which gave him plenty of time to think of Stephen and Gamaliel.

vs. 5

"It is hard for you to kick against the pricks" means defy the established authority.

Barbara M. Bowen writes on page 66 in her book, *Strange Scriptures That Perplex The Western Mind*:

"The plowman in Bible Lands carries in his hand a long pole or goad, with a sharp metal point or prick on one end of the pole and at the other there is a flat piece of iron which is used to clean the plowshare. Quite often the young ox, probably not well broken in, will kick, because he does not like his work. The plowman then holds the pole or goad in such a position that when the ox kicks again, he will kick against that prick of sharp point, and thus the animal will learn it doesn't pay."

Paul was evidently under conviction and was trying to stifle the pricking of his conscience by increasing the intensity of his persecution.

vs. 6

A sudden change of heart and mind. Totally submissive.

vs. 7

"hearing" but not seeing? See Acts 22:9. "But they heard . . ."

Key: Two meanings:

1. To hear.

2. To understand.

Point: They heard but did not understand.

Ananias (9:10-19)

vs. 13

Paul's fame had spread and Ananias was very aware. Saints (haggious, Greek) means holy.

vs. 15

Note: Chosen to bear name to Gentiles, Kings, and Children of Israel. Not an easy task, as we will see.

vs. 17

Seems that Paul received the Holy Spirit before he was baptized.

vs. 22

Paul spent three years in Arabia; possibly Petra. Taught personally by the Eternal. Gal. 1:12-17.

vs. 23

Coincidentally: "Many days" -- I Kings. 2:38 shows could represent three years (same phrase).

Trouble Comes (9:20-:26)

vs. 24

Approximately 38 A.D.

vs. 26

Paul spent 15 days in Jerusalem. Then, Paul is out of the scene for about five years. Acts 22:18.

Point: Not suddenly made an apostle.

James the Lord's brother is introduced - Gal. 1:19

Peace in Churches (9:27-31)

vs. 27

Barnabas - a wealthy Church member and merchant who was probably baptized along with original 3000.

vs. 30

Paul in Tarsus

vs. 31

Because Paul was converted, Churches had rest. Also because of what was happening in Roman Empire -- during reign of Caligula.

"were multiplied" -- shows growth once again.

TIMETABLE

- 35 A.D.
 - Damascus -- Paul baptized (counting back from Jerusalem conference). Acts 15.
- 37 A.D.
 - Tiberius dies.
 - Caligula replaces Tiberius as Caesar.
 - Caiaphas is removed.
 - Jonathan replaces Caiaphas as high priest.
 - Herod Agrippa is governor of Judea.
- 38 A.D.
 - Paul returns after three years in Arabia.
 - Damascus - Paul let out of town in a basket.
 - Jerusalem - Paul - 15 days.
 - Tarsus - Paul.
- 39 - 40 A.D.
 - Peter's vision - Acts 10
 - Paul joins Barnabas.
 - Death of James.
- 41 A.D.
 - Caligula is assassinated in Rome.
 - Claudius replaces Caligula as Caesar.
- 44 A.D.
 - Herod Agrippa dies.

Conclusion: Explains "Churches had rest" in Acts 9:31 - period from about 37 A.D. to 41 A.D.

Gentiles Come In (9:32-15:35)

Peter's Journeys (9:32-43)

Lydda (9:32-35)

vs. 32

Peter's journeys - Lydda, Joppa (Tabitha)

vs. 33

Two kinds of gifts of healing:

1. According to your faith; call for the elders; anointed cloths.
2. One healed had no idea what was going on.

Joppa - Tabitha (9:36-43)

vs. 40

Peter, interestingly enough, put out the doubters first.

Point: Is not a test of faith.

RAISED FROM DEAD

1. Son of widow of Zarephath, I Kg. 17:17-23 by Elijah
2. Shunammite's son, II Kg. 4:32-37 by Elisha
3. Man who fell into Elisha's sepulchre and was raised II Kings 13:21
4. Widow's son, Luke 7:12-15 by Jesus
5. Jairus's daughter, Luke. 8:49-55 by Jesus
6. Lazarus, John. 11:43-44 by Jesus
7. Dorcas, Acts 9:37-40 by Peter
8. Euthychus, Acts 20:9-12 by Paul
9. Jesus Christ Mt. 28:6
10. The Saints at Christ's death Mt. 27:52,53

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The Acts Chapter 10

Conversion of Cornelius (10:1-48)

vs. 4

God remembered what Cornelius did - took note of it!

Peter's Prayer, Vision (10:9-16)

Note: Protestants use to justify eating pork.

vs. 14

Interesting - "not so Lord . . ."

"common", koinon (Greek) means unclean by ceremony.

"unclean", akatharon (Greek) means impure, I Cor.7:14 "else were your children unclean"

Point: It has nothing to do with unclean meats. Used for unclean spirits.

vs. 15

"common" -- koinon

vs.16

"Thrice" -- number three is God making His will known.

Peter Meets Cornelius (10:17-27)

vs. 17

Peter doubted -- didn't know the purpose of the vision.

vs. 19

Used to prove trinity. John 16:13 -- Spirit will not speak of itself.

vs. 22

Cornelius -- just man; feared God.

vs. 23

Took 6 brethren with him (7 customary as witnesses).

Conclusion: Door to Gentiles is opened through Peter.

vs. 25

"good ole pope Peter the first", wouldn't let any man bow down and worship him.

Lesson of Vision (10:28-29)

vs. 28

"man common or unclean?" Means should no longer avoid Gentiles. Isaiah. 66:15-17.

Note: Peter was with Christ and still didn't eat unclean meat.

Conversation (10:30-43)

vs. 34

"God is no respecter of persons" -- also Ephesians 6:9

vs. 37

Also Mark 1:14-15

Conversion of Gentiles (10:44-48)

vs. 44

While Peter spoke! The Holy Spirit was given in the same manner as was given in 31 A.D.

vs. 45

Note: One of the few cases of Holy Spirit being given before baptism.

vs. 46

"tongues" -- glossa (Greek) means language. Baptism in water is commanded!

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The Acts

Chapter 11

Peter Defends Himself (11:1-18)

vs. 4 (-17)

Recounts story

vs. 18

Rom. 2:4 -- God's goodness

Church in Antioch (11:19-30)

First Gentile Church (11:19-25)

vs. 19

Church in Antioch.

Antioch lays on the main route for Mesopotamian and Arabian trade. Antioch was a major city between the West and Palestine. It was founded in 301 B.C. by Seleucas Nicator, founder of the Seleucid Empire. Was third largest city of

Roman Empire (est. 500,000) and was busy center for government and commerce.

Paul pastored Church here for one year (Acts 11:25-27) and used it for a headquarters. Began every major evangelistic tour from this point. Disciples first called Christians" in this city (Acts 11:26).

vs. 22

Church in Jerusalem sends Barnabas to Antioch.

vs. 25

Note: About nine years passed before Paul was mentioned here.

Barnabas and Saul (11:26-30)

vs. 26

"Christian" -- derogatory term used by citizens of Antioch.

Point: Was given them by external sources.

Drought: Josephus and Tacitus mention it.

vs. 28

Note: Not a worldwide famine. Claudius Caesar

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The Acts Chapter 12

Peter Imprisoned (12:1-24)

James Killed (12:1-2)

vs. 1

Arrest of Peter

Herod Agrippa I

1. Herod the Great -- Mat. 2:1 (in power when Christ born)
2. Herod Philip I -- Mat. 14:3 (responsible for John's death)
3. Herod Antipas -- Mark 6 (consents to John's death)
4. Herod Archelaus -- Mat. 2:22
5. Herod Philip II -- Luke 3:1 (founder of Philippi)

6. Herod Agrippa I -- Acts 12
7. Herod Agrippa II -- Acts 26 (Paul examined)

vs. 2

James (the brother of John).

Note: 1 of original 12 and first to be killed.

Peter Jailed, Delivered (12:3-17)

vs. 4

"Easter" - mistranslation. Comes from Anglo-Saxon version. Should read Passover.

"Quaternions" - 4 groups of 4 men.

vs. 6

In 2nd ward (see vs. 10). Took no chances with Peter!

vs. 8

Took off with nothing on.

vs. 10

Point: What you can do for yourself God doesn't need to do for you and vice-versa.

vs. 12

John Mark. Same one that fled down the street naked.

vs. 15

See also Hebrews 1:14.

Note: Angels do intervene in our lives.

Point: They had a perception of angels.

vs. 17

James the Lord's brother.

Reaction (12:18-20)

vs. 19

"examined" probably means whipped. Rome was brutal.

Herod's Death (12:21-24)

vs. 23

Josephus states: Herod was smitten in one day and died five days later (44 A.D.)

In Wars of The Jews, Josephus relates:

"After this the distemper seized his whole body, and greatly disordered all its parts with various symptoms; for there was a gentle fever upon him, and an intolerable itching over all the surface of his body, and continual pains in his colon, and dropsical tumours about his feet, and an inflammation of the abdomen, and a putrefaction of his privy member, that produced worms. Besides which he had a difficulty of breathing upon him, and could not breathe but when he sat upright, and had a convulsion of all his members; insomuch that the diviners said those diseases were a punishment upon him for what he had done to the rabbins. Yet did he struggle with his numerous disorders, and still had a desire to live, and hoped for recovery, and considered several methods of cure."

Bk.I, Ch. XXXIII, Par.5

The account of Josephus continues to reveal more of the character of Herod in the account of his death:

"He then returned back and came to Jericho, in such a melancholy state of body as almost threatened him with present death, when he proceeded to attempt a horrid wickedness; for he got together the most illustrious men of the whole Jewish nation, out of every village, into a place called the Hippodrome, and there shut them in. He then called for his sister Salome and her husband Alexas, and made his speech to them:-'I know well enough that the Jews will keep a festival upon my death; however, it is in my power to be mourned for on other accounts, and to have a splendid funeral, if you will but be subservient to my commands. Do you but take care to send soldiers to encompass these men that are now in custody, and slay them immediately upon my death, and then all Judea, and every family of them, will weep at it whether they will or no.'...So, Herod, having survived the slaughter of his son five days died... Now before the soldiers knew of his death, Salome and her husband came out and dismissed those that were in bonds, whom the king had commanded to be slain, and told them he had altered his mind, and would have every one of them sent to their own homes." Par.6-8

vs. 24

Word of God grew and multiplied (see 16:5)

First Evangelistic Tour (12:25-15:35)

Calling of Barnabas (12:25-13:3)

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The Acts

Chapter 13

Paul and Barnabas Sent

Point: The Church cannot bestow "apostleship" but can recognize it.

vs. 1

Note: Niger doesn't necessarily imply a black man. Probably a proselyte from Nigeria. A Jew from dispersion.

vs. 2

I Tim. 3:1-7 -- responsibility of overseer (ministers).

Note:

1. Could have been a voice.
2. Or could have inspired the collective church membership to draw the same conclusion.

Note: Paul was not an apostle until this moment.

Note: Original 12 now +3 (Barnabas, Saul, James)

Sailed to Cyprus (13:4-12)

vs. 5

John Mark with them. He may have been writing the book of Mark. Was a ministerial assistant.

Point: They preached the Word of God. Not Socrates, etc.

vs. 6 (-13)

Opposition from Satan . . . Bar-Jesus also called Elymas (vs. 8)

vs. 9

First use of "Paul" which means "little" vs. Saul which meant "destroyer."

Note: Was filled with Holy Spirit

vs. 11

Bar-Jesus struck blind because he sought to hinder.

Point: Don't fool around with God.

Antioch of Pisidia (13:13-52)
Journey (13:13-16)

vs. 14 (- 43)

Paul's sermon

vs. 14

Gal. 4:13-14 -- Paul was sick when he was in Galatia. Possibly malaria (Barclay, p. 102).

Antioch -- a different Antioch.

"Sabbath" could be a reference to Day of Pentecost.

Sermon (13:17-43)
Envy, Persecution (13:44-52)

vs. 22

David -- "a man after God's own heart, will fulfill all my will."

vs. 41

Hab. 1:5 -- Is where we get phrase, "the work."

vs. 42

"Sabbath" means 7 days (see vs. 44)

vs. 44

Jews wanted to keep Christianity a sect of Jerusalem.

Note: Obvious they were meeting during intervening week.

vs. 46

"...to the Jew first" Rom. 1:16.

Point: They saw that they would have to go to the Gentiles because the Jews resisted having been blinded by God.

vs. 48

"ordained" -- in the sense of eternal life.

vs. 51 Iconium -- about 90 miles away.

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The Acts Chapter 14

Iconium (14:1-7)

vs. 2

Once again Jews are persecuting the Church not Roman government.

vs. 3

Interesting to note that it took signs and wonders to gain the interest of the people.

vs. 7

Continued to preach the gospel.

Lystra (14:8-18)

vs. 8

Healing of a cripple in Lystra.

vs. 9

Paul and Barnabas spoke in Greek.

vs. 12

Chief spokesman.

Note: Mercury and Jupiter (father of gods)

vs. 19

Jews from Antioch stone Paul!

Miracle -- what courage! -- He returned to Derbe.

Derbe (14:19-23)

vs. 22

Important to remember -- Also Mat. 7:3. Much tribulation.

vs. 23

Local elders ordained -- I Tim. 3 and Titus 1.

Antioch (14:24-28)

No Comment...

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The Acts Chapter 15

Council at Jerusalem (15:1-35)

Problem (15:1-5)

Doctrine of circumcision essential to Jewish heritage.

vs. 1

"certain men" means certain members of Church -- possibly ministers.

vs. 2

Ministers gathered at Jerusalem to discuss matter.

vs. 3

"Brought on their way" -- trip was paid by Church.

vs. 4 - 5

Jerusalem Conference -- 1st in Church history, 49 A.D. Cultures are changed very slowly.

Note: The Church was in transition at this time. Many were still offering sacrifices at the Temple and there were many Priests who believed. They were still keeping the Jewish laws, sacrifices, washings and all of the various rituals. It would be natural for many of them to expect new converts to be circumcised.

Peter's Decision (15:6-11)

vs. 7

Note: Teaching change. Originally thought James, Lord's brother, was leader of Church in making doctrine. Why? Because, here in chapter 15 is an example.

vs. 9 - 10

Point: Israel's carnality brought on the sacrifices, etc. to remind them of their relationship with God.

Was a yoke to remind them of sin.

Was not until the golden calf that God introduced these various sacrifices.

vs. 11

Jew and Gentile alike through grace from God.

James' Statement (15:12-21)

vs. 13

James, Lord's brother speaks.

vs. 20

Example of problems that Gentiles had, but circumcision was still main subject.

Note: Ordinances kept "forever" which means so long as factors exist.

Israel becomes spiritual nation and circumcision becomes a spiritual subject, i.e. of the heart.

Marriage binding "forever..."

vs. 21

Sabbath day not done away.

Point: Things do not come all at one time. Circumcision took nearly 18 years to be resolved.

Letters (15:22-35)

vs. 23

Antioch: strong center (HQ) for Gentile Churches.

3rd largest city -- trading center.

vs. 24

Were part of Church (converted) and zealous for wrong cause.

vs. 28 - 29

It was mandatory for any Gentile to keep these basic tenants of the law in order to live among the Jewish community and not offend them.

vs. 32

Judas and Silas = prophets.

Two types of prophesying:

1. Inspired teaching.
2. Foretelling future.

Subject: Meat to idols.

1. Grew in knowledge
2. As part of ceremony; not good; take away
3. Rule: Don't eat meat sacrificed to idols.

Acts of The Apostles (15:36-18:22)
Second Evangelistic Tour

Disagreement (15:36 - 40)

vs. 38

Note: John Mark for some unknown reason did not continue in the first missionary journey. Thus Paul and Barnabas split up! This was not a split in the church just a disagreement in administration. Barnabas did not refuse what Paul wanted done. They did go back and visit the churches. They reached a mutual agreement so that the work could be done. It was a "win- win situation."

Note: Same one who wrote gospel of Mark.

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Chapter 16

Revisiting Churches, Timothy (15:41-16:10)

vs. 1

About 5 years since last visit.

Timothy:

1. Late teens, early 20's.
2. No father; had a good mother and grandmother, II Tim. 1:5
3. Was 2nd generation Christian

Note: You cannot be a Jew unless your mother is a Jew.

vs. 3

Point: Paul thought it better part of wisdom to have Timothy circumcised because of the offense an uncircumcised Jew might be to others.

vs. 7

Peter -- northward and eastward to Babylon, I Pet. 1:1

Paul -- westward. Did not go to Bythina.

vs. 9

Paul's vision -- Perhaps Alexander the Great. Some think it was Luke.

vs. 10

Luke joins group. Verse 8 "they" verse 10, "us".

Change in narrative (see vs. 17) from 3rd person to 1st person.

Also another first message to Europe .

Philippi (16:11-40)

Journey (16:11-12)

vs. 12

Philippi -- northern area of Greece.

Scene of one of the most famous battles in the world -- when Augustus won for himself the Roman Empire.

Gospel to Europe, Pentecost (16:13-15)

vs. 13

Either weekly Sabbath or Pentecost.

Genitive -- ton -- sabbaton (e.g. "of") Day of the Sabbaths (Feast of Weeks)
Sabbath probably Pentecost, 50 A.D. 19 year time cycle to the day.

vs. 14

Lydia from top-end of social scale; was a purple merchant. Purple dye had to be gathered drop by drop from a certain shell-fish. Very expensive. (1 lb. of wool to be dyed = (L 150) or equivalent to \$300 in our money today.

Diviner (16:16-21)

vs. 16

Slave girl known as Pytho = gives oracles to guide men about the future.

vs. 17

Luke refers to vs. 5

vs. 18

Example of casting out a demon and how it was done.

Point: Paul didn't go seeking them out (demons).

Beating, Jail and Release (16:22-34)

vs. 25

Pray and sing = formula for escaping.

vs. 27

Roman law -- According to it, the jailer would have to suffer the penalty the prisoner would have suffered if the prisoner escaped.

vs. 30

No doubt, this man had heard Paul (speak) preach.

vs. 32

They discussed it in length -- it didn't happen all at once.

Departure (16:35-40)

vs. 37

Paul used his rights as a Roman.

Point: We as Christians should exercise our rights under the law.

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The Acts

Chapter 17

Thessalonica (17:1-9)

vs. 1

Thessalonica:

1. 2nd place the gospel was preached in Europe; Philippi being the first.
2. Through it ran the great Roman Road from the Adriatic Sea to the Middle East called Egnatian Way.
3. Over 100 miles from Philippi to Thessalonica.
4. Paul's 1st canonized epistle was sent to the Church in Thessalonica from Corinth around A.D. 50.

vs. 2

"as his manner was" means he kept the Sabbath.

vs. 4

Point: God was calling men and women.

vs. 5

Jason is mentioned in Rom. 16:21 as one of Paul's countrymen, i.e. "kinsmen."

vs. 7

Paul's message: Christ as king -- The Kingdom of God.

vs. 9

"taken security" means made Jason put up bond, forfeitable if there were further trouble.

Berea (17:10-15)

vs. 11

Berea = 60 miles west of Thessalonica.

"search the scriptures daily" -- the Word of God.

vs. 14

Silas and Timothy stay in Berea.

Athens (17:16-34)

Paul With Athenians (17:16-21)

Athens, History of (emphasis on worship)

1. Little known before 1900 B.C.
2. Athens was one of the 1st city-states.
3. 1st king was named Cecrops.
4. 4. 682 B.C. saw beginning of elected officials (archons).
5. State becomes a democracy -- 508 B.C.
6. Persian Wars -- 490 B.C. & 480 B.C.

7. Becomes literary and artistic center of Greece.
8. Peloponnesian War (against Sparta) 431-404 B.C. Sparta won.
9. Became finishing school for the sons of wealthy Roman families.

Athens, Worship

1. Greeks worshipped many gods.
2. Each city-state had its own minor gods and worshipped it in its own way. Athens had city throughout Greece.
3. Zeus = chief god, ruling men and other gods -- lived on Mt. Olympus.
4. Hera = wife of Zeus, goddess marriage and birth.
5. Greeks held many festivals in honor of gods, e.g. dramas, prayers, animal sacrifices and athletic contests.
6. Religion seemed childish to many thoughtful Greeks.
7. Isis, an Egyptian goddess, and Mithras, a Persian god, attracted many followers.
8. Ancient Greek religion did not die until Roman Emperor Justinian in A.D. 529.

vs. 18

Philosopher's followers (schools of thought):

1. Epicureans: Followed Epicurus (341-270 B.C.)
 - Believed everything happened by chance.
 - Death was the end of all.
 - Gods were remote from world and did not care.
 - Pleasure was chief end of man.
2. Stoics: Followed Zeno (340-265 B.C.)
 - Believed everything was god -- god was fiery spirit.
 - All that happened was the will of God and therefore must be accepted without resentment.
 - That every so often the world disintegrated in a conflagration and started over again on the same cycle of events.

vs. 19

Areopagus: The venerable council that had charge of religious and educational matters in Athens.

(Greek) for Mars Hill.

Perhaps only 30 members.

Dealt also with cases of homicide.

vs. 21

To philosophize = major part of both Jewish and Greek culture.

Paul's Sermon (17:22-31)

vs. 22

"Superstitious" means religious.

All men are of one blood.

vs. 23

"The unknown God" means...

From Unger's Bible Dictionary:

1. Agnostos theos = Greek mg. unknown god. "...not addressed to the philosophers; they did not dedicate altars to unknown gods, but regarded all such proceedings as the mere superstition of the vulgar..."
2. 600 years before this a terrible pestilence had fallen on the city. A Cretian Poet, Epimenides, came forward with a plan. A flock of black and white sheep were let loose throughout the city from Mars Hill.
3. "Epimenes put an end to a plague in Athens by causing black and white sheep, which he had let loose on the Areopagus, to be sacrificed on the spots where they lay down, to the god concerned, yet not known by name, Viz., who was the author of the plague; and that therefore one may find in Athens altars without the designation of a god by name. From this particular instance the general view may be derived, that on important occasions, when the reference to a god known by name was wanting, as in public calamities of which no definite god could be assigned as the author, in order to honor or propitiate the god concerned by sacrifice, without lighting upon a wrong one, altars were erected which were destined and designated 'agnosto theo' (unknown God)."

vs. 26

God has set national boundaries. See Job 12:23.

vs. 28

Paul knew Greek literature and spoke Greek to these people.

vs. 30

"winked at" means "let it go on."

vs. 31

Theme = resurrection of dead. Also Isaiah 11:4; Revelations 20:4.

Departs (17:32-34)

vs. 34

Dionysius -- member of Areopagus;

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The Acts Chapter 18

49-50 A.D.

Corinth (18:1-17)

Aquila and Priscilla (18:1-3)

vs. 1

Corinth:

1. Approximately 500,000
2. Thriving commercial center
3. Center of pagan worship "Corinthianize" was a term adopted from Corinth's immorality that described one who was immoral. Manages to prostitute one's self.

vs. 2

"Jews to depart from Rome" means:

Claudius banished the Jews from Rome in an Imperial edict that was issued in A.D. 49 or 50. Seutonius, a Roman biographer for the Caesars says: Claudius drove the Jews out of Rome cause they were "incessantly raising tumults at the instigation of a certain Chrestus. (Christ)"

Prior to this the Jews had a history of causing problems for Rome therefore, they were "violently persecuted" by 3 successive emperors, e.g.: 4,000 Jews were sent as convicts by Tiberius to the island of Sardinia. Caligula also took his toll.

"Aquila and his wife Priscilla" -- loyal friends of Paul.

1. Mentioned in Romans 16:3 as having risked their lives for Paul. Doesn't say how.
2. Mentioned in I Corinthians 16:19 -- Greeting.
3. Mentioned in II Timothy 4:19 -- Priscilla also called Prisca.

vs. 3

Shows Paul as a tentmaker by trade. Jewish fathers were urged to teach their sons a trade -- tent making was an important trade in Tarsus.

Go To Gentiles (18:4-6)

vs. 4

Preached only on Sabbath -- probably because he worked during the rest of the week.

vs. 5

Silas and Timothy join Paul after staying in Berea.

vs. 6

Paul is fed up with the Jews -- henceforth to Gentiles.

Protection Promised (18:7-11)

vs. 7

The house shared a common wall with the synagogue.

vs. 7 (-8)

Crispus:

1. Chief ruler of the synagogue
2. Is converted.

vs. 10

"I have much people in this city," means that God was going to call a number of individuals in that city.

vs. 11

Paul resided in Corinth for 1- 1/2 years and wrote I and II Thessalonians.

Church Called Jews (18:12-17)

vs. 17

Possible that Sostenes (I Cor. 1:1) was same as one here.

Ephesus (18:18-22)

vs. 18

"Having shorn his head" means Paul shaved his head as part of the vow he had

made to God. A usual procedure for one who had "either been afflicted with a distemper, or with any other distresses." (Josephus).

Barclay explains the vow on page 138 of his commentary on Acts:

"When a Jew specially wished to thank God for some blessing he took the Nazirite vow (Numbers 6:1-21). If that vow was carried out in full it meant that for thirty days he neither ate meat nor drank wine; and he allowed his hair to grow. At the end of the thirty days he made certain offerings in the Temple; his head was shorn and the hair was burned on the altar as an offering to God. No doubt Paul was thinking of all God's goodness to him in Corinth and took this vow to show his gratitude"

Aquila may have taken this vow vs. Paul. Because he was expelled from his homeland.

Point: Be careful about making vows. It is safer not to (Ecc. 5:5) except in marriage and baptism.

vs. 21

"This feast that cometh in Jerusalem" means the Feast of Tabernacles, 52 A.D. This is the only logical reason why he emphatically refused to spend even a few days at Ephesus after long sojourns at lesser places -- 18:20." (L. 38 Correspondence Course.)

Some modern translations of the Bible omit Acts 18:21, as does the Catholic Version. But 95% of all Greek manuscripts include it. The only ones that leave it out are those 5% copied in Egypt and in Italy under the influence of Simon Magus' followers.

The Apostle Paul Kept the Feasts.

In 50 A.D. Paul crossed over from Asia into Europe and began to preach to gospel at Philippi "on the day of weeks" -- Pentecost 50 A.D. -- according to the inspired original Greek (Acts 16:13). Pentecost is also called the "feast of weeks" in the Old Testament (Deut. 16:10). After a few weeks at Philippi, Thessalonica (verse 6).

Paul came to Corinth in the late summer of A.D. 50. After spending several Sabbaths teaching in the synagogue (Acts 18:4), he continued to hold meetings in the house of Justus (verse 7) for "a year and six months" (verse 11). This brings us to the spring of 52 A.D. After a riot stirred up against the apostle was quelled, Paul yet "tarried there a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren and sailed thence into Syria" (vs. 18). It was now well into the summer of A.D. 52 --

the Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost were past. Obviously it was nearly time for the Feast of Tabernacles. Here then was a major way to the headquarters Feast at Jerusalem..." (Correspondence Course).

vs. 22

Down to Antioch.

Third Evangelistic Tour (18:23-21:26)
Apollos (18:23-28)

vs. 23

47-48 A.D. began to preach the Gospel.
52-53 A.D. - wrote book of Galatians.

vs. 24

Apollos: Learned, cultured, well grounded in the scriptures. Powerful orator.

vs. 25

"The way" = common title. (Also 9:2, 19:9).

"only the baptism of John" means as in 19:3.

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Chapter 19

Ephesus (19:1-41)
Rebaptism (19:1-7)

vs. 1

Coasts means borders of country.

vs. 2

Shows they weren't preaching the trinity.

vs. 3

Example of rebaptism: These men, like Apollos, had not heard of the Holy Spirit, thus, they were again baptized, into the name of Christ.

vs. 6

Spoke in tongues.

First time some of the disciples of John the Baptist had been rebaptized.

Hall of Tyrannus (19:8-10)

vs. 8

Three months.

vs. 9

The lesson: Do not cast your pearls before swine (Matt 7:6).

We should use any means at our disposal to preach the gospel according to the time frame in which we live and our circumstances. However, we can not go into the Jewish synagogues because the Jews have been turned against Christ from childhood. We also would not go into the prophesying Christian churches today because they are the synagogue of Satan.

vs. 10

Two years -- 55 A.D.

I Corinthians is written in 55 A.D.

Ephesus was a church city. Center of pagan worship. Diana was their goddess.

Anointed Cloths (19:11-12)

vs. 12

First use of anointed cloths for members that are too far away.

Overcoming Mystic Arts, Spirit (19:13-20)

vs. 16

Don't fool around with demons in the sense of exorcizing. However, you have authority (as shown in the Bible) when the problem related to you, personally, to call the demons out.

Ephesus: Center of Diana worship. Little models and trinkets were sold of Diana in the city.

vs. 19

50,000 pieces of silver?

Paul Aims for Rome (19:21-22) *Diana of the Ephesians (19:23-41)*

Losing Business (19:23-27)
Mob Scene (19:28-34)

vs. 28

These, "sayings," are the words of Demetrius quoting Paul;

Note: Paul's teachings came from the Old Testament and are the basis of the 2nd commandment. There was no New Testament at this time.

vs. 30

Another example of Paul's boldness.

Town Clerk's Address (19:35-40)

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The Acts Chapter 20

Various Cities (20:1-21:14)
Macedonia (20:1-4)

Preceding his visit to Greece Paul writes II Corinthians in winter 55-56 then he writes Romans (while in Greece).

Troas (20:5-12)

vs. 6

Obviously keeping Feast of Unleavened Bread because they were in Gentile cities and there certainly wasn't any pressure.

vs. 7

Saturday night = 1st day of the week not Sunday night.

Paul probably spoke that Sabbath day; had a potluck, then Paul spoke again until midnight.

vs. 9

Eutychus is raised from the dead.

Assos (20:13-16)
Miletas (20:17-18)

Ministerial Conference

vs. 17

Elders of church are called together (late spring/early summer -- 56 A.D.)

Paul's Farewell (20:19-35)

vs. 20

Paul had ordained elders in every city and he had called these elders of Ephesus to a meeting verse 17. He was visiting the elders in their houses not just common people. Not reason to go door to door like Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons.

vs. 25

Preaching the Kingdom of God.

vs. 26

Taken from principle in Ezekiel 33 (to preach a warning) Paul's responsibility to carry out his commission.

vs. 28

The Church of God.

vs. 29

Ask God to protect you from this.

vs. 35

"it is more blessed to give than receive" -- not found in the gospels nevertheless, Christ did say it. It was passed on.

Departure (20:36-38)

vs. 36

Prayed as a group. Why? Because of the emotion of the moment. Once in a while, not all the time.

vs. 38

It went over their heads. They sorrowed for the fact that he was leaving only.

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Chapter 21-22

Tyre (21:1-6)

vs. 3

Ancient tradition = to speak of ships in feminine gender.

Paul was determined to make it to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Caesarea (21:7-14)

vs. 8

Caesarea -- Phillip -- one of the original 12.

vs. 9

Example of the success of 2nd generation Christians.

vs. 13

Paul just told them -- "end of conversation"... "I'm going to Jerusalem, with or without you."

Paul to Jerusalem (21:15-26)

vs. 18

James, resident apostle at Jerusalem.

vs. 21

Paul didn't teach Jews to forsake Moses. He did teach them that both Jew and Gentile were exempt from certain rituals and sacrifices.

vs. 23

Recommendation of James...to show Jews, Paul wasn't opposed to them.

Forbidden for a Gentile to enter into the Jewish portion of the Temple.

Paul's Imprisonment (21:27-23:31)

Uproar (21:27-36)

Paul's Defense (21:37-22:29)

Paul Questioned (21:37-40)

vs. 39|

Tarsus -- not a backward city, by any means.

vs. 40

Paul spoke to them in Hebrew, as a priest would. Thus, the crowd was able to hear him.

Chapter 22
Paul's Speech (22:1-21)

vs. 1 (-21)

Rehearses the previous experience.

Paul Examined (22:22-29)
Scourging (22:22-24)

vs. 25

Paul's civil right is violated

vs. 26

They realized what done.

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Chapter 23-24

vs. 2

The high priest slaps Paul.

vs. 3

"whited wall" means plastic, hypocritical personality.

vs. 5

Paul apologizes -- He realized he was high priest.

vs. 9

Similar to Gamaliel's ruling.

vs. 11

Still to preach in Rome.

vs. 12

Vowed as a group to kill Paul.

The Reality of human nature...crazy world.

vs. 16

Paul's sister's son.

vs. 23

270 troops to guard this man.

Paul Uses Citizenship (23:25-29)

The Captain's Letter (23:25-31)

Paul With Ananias (23:30-24:5)

The Defense Before Felix (24:1-27)

A Flattering Speech and a False Charge (24:1-9)

vs. 1

Had all been premeditated.

Tertullus was a world renown prosecutor.

vs. 5

"sect of Nazarene" name given to the church from this time forward.

Paul's Defense (24:10-21)

vs. 14

Paul -- proves that Paul didn't do away with the law and the prophets.

Use against Catholics and Protestants.

Greek has intensity.

Version "Williams" -- Keep on worshipping = "believing" (KJV)

Impact reveals to us Paul continued to believe in O.T.

Roman law -- two year imprisonment is statute of limitations.

Plain Speaking to a Guilty Governor (24:22-27)

vs. 22

Felix had looked into the subject.

vs. 26

But was still looking for money.

vs. 27

Continued for two years.

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Chapter 25-26

Paul Before Festus and Agrippa (25:1-26:32)

Appeal to Caesar (25:1-12)

vs. 2

Office was new to Festus and he is suddenly confronted with Paul's case.

vs. 8

Right of self-defense is again exercised by Paul.

vs. 10

Learn to use your rights appropriately.

vs. 11

Once an appeal to Caesar is made it must be honored.

Festus and Agrippa (25:13-21)

vs. 13

Agrippa -- king of Syria and Judea.

Festus Seeks Material for His Report (25:22-27)

vs. 23

Paul before Agrippa.

vs. 25

"Done nothing worthy of death" -- changes the jurisdiction of the court.

vs. 26

Had better organized their prosecution before sending Paul all the way to Rome.

Defense of a Changed Man (26:1-11)

vs. 2 (-27)

Paul was careful in his wording to Agrippa.

vs. 8

Paul had done his homework -- he knew Agrippa believed for and against.

vs. 10

"I gave my voice against them" = leans toward possibility of Paul being member of Sanhedrin.

vs. 11

"Compelled to blaspheme" means Paul may have tortured Christians during his heavy Judaizing.

Surrender for Service (26:12-18)

vs. 14

"pricks" -- goads or wounds.

A Task Accepted (26:19-23)

vs. 19

Means: If God had appeared to you, you would have accepted it and would be on trial, instead of me.

vs. 20

Live your life according to your repentance.

vs. 22

Paul released that in every case that God was working with him.

A King Impressed (26:24-32)

vs. 26

This wasn't done in a corner. There are thousands of us.

vs. 32

Had he not appealed to Caesar, would probably have let him go. However, he knew he had to get to Rome.

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Chapter 27-28

The Voyage to Rome (27:1-28:31)

In Peril on the Sea (27:1-44)

The Last Journey Begins (27:1-8)

The Storm (27:9-44)

God Reassures Paul (27:21-26)

Escape from the Sea (27:27-44)

Malta (28:1-10)

Welcome at Malta (28:1-6)

Help and Healing (28:7-10)

Arrival in Rome (28:11-15)

Ministers to the Jews (28:16-25)

Paul Turns to the Gentiles and Preaches (28:25-31)