

Acts of the Apostles Summary (Book Study)

The genre of the book of Acts is Narrative History, with several Sermons. Luke the author of the Gospel of Luke, who also was a doctor and Gentile, wrote it about 60-62 A.D.

The key personalities of Acts are Peter, Paul, John, James, Stephen, Barnabas, Timothy, Lydia, Silas, and Apollos.

Luke wrote the book of Acts (Acts of the Apostles) to record how believers were empowered by the Holy Spirit and worked to spread the Gospel of Christ, and to be a model for the future church.

The book of Acts is also the history of the birth, the founding, and the spread of the Church from Jerusalem to Rome, the very heart of the Roman Empire. It also records the transition of the Church from being almost exclusively a Jewish institution into becoming a Gentile and an international institution. Consequently, it records the transition of Christianity from a Jewish religion into an international religion.

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS

1. **The ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:4-12; 15-26):** was followed by 10 days tarrying in prayer, and the choice of Matthias as an Apostle in place of Judas
2. **The day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13):** the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples, furnishing them equipment for service.
 - **(Acts 2:14-36)** Peter's sermon resulted in the conversion of 3000 souls
3. **The 1st persecution (Acts 3:1-4:1,23-33):** the healing of the lame man followed by a fearless address by Peter, which led to the arrest of John and himself. They were released; but the church assembled in prayer, resulting in the manifestation of divine power.
4. **A terrible judgment on Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11):** they both died because of their deception. This was followed by a season of rapid growth, and a manifestation of miracle-working power in the church. Persecutions arose and disciples were imprisoned, but were delivered by an angel of God, and continued their work in spite of the opposition
5. **Seven Deacons appointed (Acts 6:1-7:1-60):** among them was Stephen whose miracles and convincing preaching led to his martyrdom.
6. **The 1st Evangelistic Campaign (8:1-40):** evangelism grew outside of Jerusalem out of the scattering of the Christians by the persecutions under Saul of Tarsus. Peter, Philip and John preached with great success at Samaria, when the Holy Spirit fell upon the Samaritans, which set the stage for the work among Gentiles.

7. **The Conversion of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1-22):** while on tour of persecution . He preached first in Damascus and then retired to Arabia (Gal 1:17), returning to Damascus, he labored till driven out by the Jews. He next went to Jerusalem and attempted to help the church there, but the hatred against him was so bitter he was compelled to leave, and returned to his early home at Tarsus.
8. **Peter's enlightening Vision (Acts 10:9-17):** while on Apostolic tour he came to Lydda where Aeneas was healed, and at Joppa, Dorcas was raised from the dead. While there the vision occurred, which sent him out to preach to a Gentile congregation in the home of Cornelius at Caesarea. The Holy Spirit sanctioned his work by coming upon the Gentile assembly.
9. **2nd Persecution (Acts 12):** The church suffered great persecution by Herod Agrippa I, who killed James, the brother of John, with the sword. Peter was also apprehended and thrown into prison, and thrust into prison , but escaped through an angelic deliverance.
10. **Paul's 1st missionary journey (Acts 13-14:28):** Paul and Barnabas ordained by the church in Antioch as foreign missionaries, accompanied by John Mark for evangelistic tour. Work began in the Island of Cyprus, then to Perga in Asia Minor where John Mark deserted the party. Paul and Barnabas carried their evangelistic campaign to Antioch in Pisidia, then returned southeast to Iconium Lystra, where Paul was stoned, and they departed to Derby. It is estimated that they covered 1,500 miles and lasted about 2 years.
11. **Paul's 2nd missionary journey (Acts 15-18:22):** Starting from Antioch with Silas as his companion, Paul re-visited the churches in Asia Minor he had established on his 1st journey, and extended the work to Galatia and Phrygia, and westward to Troas. Here the missionaries were called to Europe by vision, and came to Philippi, at which place they were beaten and imprisoned, but were miraculously delivered by an earthquake (Acts 16:25-26). As they moved forward they found the Bereans very receptive to the truth, but Athens proved to be poor soil for the gospel seed. Here Paul met violent opposition , but was encouraged by a vision and remained to found a flourishing church. Their journey back to Antioch, by way of Jerusalem, stopping off at Ephesus, is estimated to be about 3 years and traveled about 3,500 miles.

12. **Paul's 3rd missionary journey (Acts 18-21):**

Leaving the home church in Antioch, Paul re-visited the churches in Galatia, Phrygia and came to Ephesus. Paul's preaching and miracle working made a profound impression, putting to confusion those who used black arts and deceived people. A great work was accomplished, and a church founded, but labor troubles made it wise for Paul to leave, and departed to Macedonia and Greece. He remained 3 months at Corinth, then re-visiting the churches of Macedonia came to Troas, where he preached at midnight a midnight sermon and raised Eutychus to life. Arriving at Jerusalem he found himself the object of intense hatred and conspiracy against him was formed. He was arrested under false charges, but the Roman soldiers rescued him from the mob. His Roman citizenship secured him certain rights.

13. **The voyage to Rome (Acts 23-24):** Paul was taken to Caesarea and was a prisoner for 2 years, during which time he appeared before Felix, Festus, and King Agrippa, but having appealed to Caesar, he was sent to Rome, where chained to a soldier, he preached to Caesars' household and others who came to him. While there he wrote epistles to various churches he had founded. He was finally beheaded in Rome in A.D. 67.