**The New Testament: Book of ACTS**

The story of Jesus’s disciples after his resurrection is told in the New Testament book called “The Acts of the Apostles.” It stands in the middle of the New Testament, between the four Gospels, of which it is the continuation, and the Epistles of Paul, whose mission is one of its chief subjects. The book of Acts is the sequel to the Gospel according to Luke, the third Gospel, and both may originally have formed two parts of a single work. Its dating therefore depends on the date assigned to the Gospel. Both works share many points of style, vocabulary, and theological ideas, and their unity is suggested by the two prologues that introduce them (Lk 1: 1– 4 and Acts 1: 1). The author of both the third Gospel and Acts is the same, and the tradition of the Church has always identified him as Luke. *Donald Senior; John Collins; Mary Ann Getty. The Catholic Study Bible (p. 1175). Oxford University Press. Kindle Edition.* Luke the beloved physician. In a sense a sequel to the gospel of Luke and is addressed to the same person, Theophilus.

**Main Theme**: the history of the early church development, from the ascension of Christ to Paul’s imprisonment at Rome and the opening of his ministry there. Many Bible students see in the book the formal beginning of the age of the Holy Spirit. The departing Christ makes the announcement of a great campaign of worldwide missions through human agency under the power of the Spirit.

**Part I: Home Missions**: with Jerusalem as the center the work mainly in Palestine among the Jews, the apostle Peter being the most prominent figure.

* + 1. The preparatory events.

The divine commission; 1:4-8

The ascending Lord; 1:10-11

The descending Spirit; 2:1-4

The worker’s equipment; 2:4, 4:31

* + 1. The ministries

Of Peter at Pentecost: 2:14-40, Peter’s second sermon; 3:12-28, Peter’s address to the Sanhedrin; 4:5-12

Of Stephen; 7:1-60

Of Philip and Peter: 8:5-25

Of Philip; 8:26-40

(3) Facts concerning the church

(a) The growth

(b) The filling with the Holy Spirit; 4:3

(c) The unity and benevolence; 4:32-37

(d) The spiritual power; 5:12-16

(e) The appointment of deacons; 6:1-6

(4) The persecutions of the church; 4:1-3, 17-22, 5:17-18, 40, 6:8-15

**Part II: Foreign Missions**: Opening with Jerusalem as the center of operations, which was soon transferred to Antioch in Syria.

* 1. Preliminary events leading to worldwide missions.
     1. The ministry of Philip in Samaria in association with Peter and John, 8:5-25
     2. The conversion of Paul, who becomes the great missionary and the leading figure in the church during this period, 9:1-30
     3. The broadening of Peter’s views by his vision at Joppa, resulting in his ministry among the Gentiles at Caesarea, 10:1-43
     4. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles at Caesarea and the vindication of Peter’s ministry there, 10:44-11:18

(e) The sanction of the work at Antioch by Barnabas, the representative of the church at Jerusalem, 11:22-24

(f) The bringing of Paul from Tarsus to Antioch by Barnabas and the cooperation of the two men in establishing the church in the place where the disciples were first called Christians, 11:25-26

(g) Parenthesis. The persecution of the church at Jerusalem by Herod. The death of James and the imprisonment and deliverance of Peter. 12:1-19

(2) The epochal event in the history of foreign missions. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit the sending forth of Paul and Barnabas as missionaries by the church at Antioch. John Mark accompanies them. 13:1-5

(3) Paul’s first missionary journey; Missionaries; Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark. 13:4-14:26

(4) The council at Jerusalem

* + - 1. The issue, 15:5-6
      2. Peter’s argument in favor of Christian liberty, 15:7-11
      3. The speech of James and the decision of the council in favor of exempting the Gentiles from the rules of the ceremonial law; 15:13-29. Judas and Silas are sent to Antioch to deliver the letter from the council to the church. 15:27-30.

(5) Paul’s second missionary journey, 15:36-18:22

* + 1. Preliminary events; A disagreement between Paul and Barnabas concerning John Mark. Silas chosen by Paul to accompany him on the journey. 15:36-40
    2. Places visited; Churches of Syria and Cilicia, 15:41, at Lystra, Timothy joins the missionaries, Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica. A storm of persecution breaks out again and Paul goes on to Athens leaving Silas and Timothy to establish the church, 17:13-15. Paul finds Athens go be filled with idols and preaches a sermon on Mars Hill but makes only a few converts to the faith. 17:13-15. At Corinth Paul is soon joined by Silas and Timothy, and the church is founded. The work is carried on in the midst of persecution for eighteen months, 18:1-17. After a considerable time, Paul bids the brothers farewell and sets sail for Syria, making a brief stop at Ephesus and closes his journey at Antioch, 18:18-22.

(6) Paul’s third missionary journey, 18:23-21-15. Galatia and Phrygia, 18:23, Apollos at Ephesus, 18:24-19:41, Macedonia to Greece, 201-2, Troas, 20:3-12, Miletus, 21:1-17

(7) Paul in Jerusalem and Caesarea 21:18-26:1-29; relates experiences and finally accused and sent before Felix where he appeals to Caesar, 25:1-12

(8) Paul’s journey to Rome as a prisoner, 27:1-28:31