NEW TESTAMENT · HISTORY · BOOK 44 OF 66

Acts

Ye shall be witnesses unto Me (1:8)

28	Luke	c. A.D. 30–62	Jerusalem → Rome
Chapters, 1,007 Verses	Author	Events Covered	The Gospel Spreads

STRUCTURE

The Book in Six Parts

Acts follows the plan Jesus gave in 1:8, moving outward from Jerusalem. The first parts centre on Peter; from chapter 13 on, the story follows Paul.



Each bar shows that part's share of the 1,007 verses.

I 1:1–8:3 · 256 verses

Jerusalem

The ascension, Pentecost, the first church and Stephen.

II 8:4–12:25 · 183 verses

Judaea and Samaria

Philip, Saul's conversion, Cornelius, Antioch.

III 13:1–15:35 · 115 verses

First Journey

Cyprus and Galatia; the Jerusalem council.

IV 15:36–18:22 · 102 verses

Second Journey

Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth.

V 18:23–21:16 · 101 verses

Third Journey

Ephesus, farewell at Miletus, on to Jerusalem.

VI 21:17–28:31 · 250 verses

To Rome

Arrest, trials, shipwreck and Rome.

CHAPTER 1:8

The Plan of Acts

Before He was taken up, Jesus gave the outline of the whole book.

> *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*
>
> Acts 1:8 (KJV)

1 CHAPTERS 1–7

Jerusalem

The church is born at Pentecost and grows in the city, in spite of threats and the death of Stephen.

2 CHAPTERS 8–12

Judaea and Samaria

Scattered believers preach everywhere; Samaritans, an Ethiopian and a Roman centurion believe.

3 CHAPTERS 13–28

The Uttermost Part

Paul carries the gospel across Asia Minor and Greece, and at last to Rome.

ACTS AT A GLANCE · PART 2 OF 5

Pentecost and the First Church

CHAPTER 2

The Day of Pentecost

Fifty days after the Passover, the promised Holy Ghost came upon the waiting disciples.

2:2
A Mighty Wind
"A sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" filled the house.

2:3
Tongues of Fire
"Cloven tongues like as of fire" sat upon each of them.

2:4–11
Other Tongues
Men from every nation heard "the wonderful works of God" in their own language.

2:16–21
Joel Fulfilled
"I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh."

2:36
Lord and Christ
God raised up Jesus and made Him "both Lord and Christ."

2:41
Three Thousand
"The same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

> *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*
>
> Acts 2:38 (KJV)

CHAPTERS 2–6

The First Church

Luke gives a picture of the believers in Jerusalem in the first days.

2:42 · TEACHING AND PRAYER
"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

4:13 · BOLDNESS
"they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

5:41 · JOY IN SUFFERING
"rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

4:32 · ONE HEART
"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul"

5:29 · OBEYING GOD
"We ought to obey God rather than men."

6:7 · GROWTH
"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly"

ACTS AT A GLANCE · PART 3 OF 5

Sermons, Saul and the Gentiles

PREACHING IN ACTS

Great Sermons and Speeches

About a third of Acts is speeches. They show what the apostles preached: Jesus died, God raised Him up, and all must repent and believe.

2:14–40
Peter at Pentecost
Jesus crucified and raised, “both Lord and Christ.”

3:12–26
Peter at the Temple
“Repent ye therefore, and be converted.”

7:2–53
Stephen’s Defence
Israel’s history and the resisting of the Holy Ghost.

10:34–43
Peter to Cornelius
“God is no respecter of persons.”

13:16–41
Paul at Antioch
The forgiveness of sins through Jesus.

17:22–31
Paul at Athens
The unknown God who made the world.

20:18–35
Paul at Miletus
Farewell to the Ephesian elders.

22:1–21
Paul in Jerusalem
His conversion told to the crowd.

26:2–23
Paul Before Agrippa
“I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.”

> *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”*
>
> Acts 4:12 (KJV)

CHAPTER 9

Saul Becomes Paul

The man who led the persecution became the apostle to the Gentiles. Acts tells his conversion three times (chapters 9, 22 and 26).

1 7:58; 8:3
The Persecutor
Saul watched Stephen die and “made havock of the church.”

2 9:3–6
The Light from Heaven
“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.”

3 9:10–18
Ananias
The Lord said, “he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles.”

4 9:20
The Preacher
“Straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.”

His Hebrew name was Saul; from 13:9 Luke calls him by his Roman name, Paul.

CHAPTERS 10–15

The Door Opened to the Gentiles

The biggest question in Acts: could Gentiles belong to God’s people without first becoming Jews?

8:26–39
The Ethiopian
An official of queen Candace believes and is baptized.

10:9–16
Peter’s Vision
“What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.”

10:44–48
Cornelius
The Holy Ghost falls on Gentiles as on the apostles at the beginning.

11:19–26
Antioch
Greeks believe; the disciples are first called Christians.

14:27
The Door of Faith
God “had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.”

15:1–29
The Jerusalem Council
Gentiles are not required to be circumcised to be saved.

> *“But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.”*
>
> Acts 15:11 (KJV)

Paul’s Journeys and the Road to Rome

CHAPTERS 13–21

Paul’s Three Journeys

Paul travelled thousands of miles by land and sea, starting churches in the main cities of the Roman world. Many of his letters were written to these churches.

1 13:1–14:28 · c. A.D. 46–48

First Journey

With Barnabas (and Mark at first): Cyprus, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe. **Letter:** Galatians.

2 15:36–18:22 · c. A.D. 49–52

Second Journey

With Silas and Timothy: Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth. **Letters:** Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

3 18:23–21:16 · c. A.D. 53–57

Third Journey

About three years at Ephesus; Macedonia and Greece; Troas; Miletus. **Letters:** Ephesians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans.

Dates are approximate. The letters named were written to churches founded or visited on that journey; some were written later.

CHAPTERS 21–28

Arrest, Trials and the Road to Rome

Paul’s last journey was as a prisoner, but it carried the gospel before governors and kings and at last to Rome.

21:27–36

Seized in the Temple

Rescued from the mob by the Roman captain.

23:11

The Lord’s Promise

“So must thou bear witness also at Rome.”

24:25

Before Felix

Felix trembled at “judgment to come.”

25:11

Before Festus

“I appeal unto Caesar.”

26:28

Before Agrippa

“Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”

27:1–44

The Shipwreck

Fourteen days in a storm; all 276 people reach land.

28:1–10

Melita

Paul shakes off a viper and heals the sick.

28:16

Rome at Last

Paul lives under guard in his own hired house.

28:31

No Man Forbidding

He preaches the kingdom of God with all confidence.

ACTS AT A GLANCE · PART 5 OF 5

People, Themes and Key Verse

WHO'S WHO

People of Acts

1–15
Peter
Preached at Pentecost; opened the door to Cornelius.

6–7
Stephen
One of the seven; the first martyr.

8; 21:8
Philip
The evangelist; preached in Samaria.

4:36; 9:27
Barnabas
"Son of consolation"; Paul's first partner.

9–28
Paul
Persecutor turned apostle to the Gentiles.

15:13
James
The Lord's brother; leader in Jerusalem.

15:40
Silas
Paul's partner on the second journey.

16:1
Timothy
A young disciple from Lystra.

16:14
Lydia
A seller of purple at Philippi.

18:2, 26
Aquila and Priscilla
Tentmakers and teachers.

18:24
Apollos
Mighty in the scriptures.

16:10
Luke
The writer; the "we" of the journeys.

BIG IDEAS

Key Themes

The Holy Ghost
Power, guidance and boldness for the church.

1:8; 2:4; 13:2

Witness
From Jerusalem to the uttermost part of the earth.

1:8; 28:31

The Resurrection
The centre of the apostles' preaching.

2:32; 4:33; 17:31

Jew and Gentile
Saved alike by grace through faith.

10:34–35; 15:9–11

Prayer
The church prays at every turning point.

1:14; 4:31; 12:5

The Word Grows
Nothing can stop the spread of the gospel.

6:7; 12:24; 19:20

KEY VERSE

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Acts 1:8 (KJV)