

**Baptist Basics University**  
Truth Must Be Preserved For Future Generations

**The Book of Acts**  
**Lecture Notes**

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## Lesson 1

# Introduction to Acts

The best way to begin studying a book in the Bible is to look at the basics. Who wrote the book? What is its purpose? What is its place in the canon of Scripture? Before we begin going through the book of Acts, let's look at some of the details of the book.

### I. Subject

- A. The actions of the Apostles after the Ascension of Christ
- B. History of the Early Church
- C. The Gospel taken from Jerusalem to the World - Acts 1:8 (KEY VERSE)

### II. Author - Luke

- A. Physician from Antioch (according to tradition)
- B. Travelled with Paul (II Timothy 4:11, Philemon 24, Colossians 4:14)

### III. Date

- A. Around 63 A.D.
- B. Covers about 30 years of history

### IV. Outlines of Acts

- A. According to spread of Gospel (1:8)
  - 1. To Jerusalem - chapters 1-7
  - 2. To Judaea and Samaria - chapters 8-12
  - 3. To the Uttermost Parts - chapters 13-28
- B. According to Key Figures
  - 1. Peter, Church at Jerusalem, and Jews - chapters 1-12
  - 2. Paul, Church at Antioch, and Gentiles - chapters 13-28

### V. Features of Acts

- A. Companion volume or sequel to the Gospel of Luke - 1:1
- B. Highly important as an historical document and glimpse into life at the time
- C. Takes place throughout Roman Empire
  - 1. 32 countries
  - 2. 54 cities
  - 3. 9 Mediterranean islands
- D. Despite being a book of "Acts", almost 20% of it is speeches/sermons

Lesson 2  
**Prelude to Pentecost**  
Acts 1:1-26

The first chapter of Acts fills us in on the events between the Resurrection of Christ and the day of Pentecost. This time period, about forty-eight days, was filled with much action. Christ Himself was present with the disciples for forty days after His Resurrection. This leaves only about a week between His Ascension and Pentecost.

I. Setting

- A. Jerusalem
- B. Between the Resurrection and Pentecost

II. Lesson

- A. From the Resurrection to the Ascension - vs. 1-14
  - 1. Continuing the narrative of the Gospel of Luke - vs. 1-2
  - 2. The proofs of the Resurrection - vs. 3
  - 3. Christ tells of the coming of the Spirit - vs. 4-5
  - 4. Disciples ask if the Millennial Kingdom was at hand - vs. 6
  - 5. It was not their concern - vs. 7
  - 6. The Power and the Mission - vs. 8
  - 7. The Ascension - vs. 9-12
  - 8. The Church in its infancy - vs. 13-14
- B. The Choice of Matthias
  - 1. Peter addresses the 120 gathered disciples - vs. 15
    - a. The prophecies about Judas - Psalm 41:9 - vs.16-17
    - b. The fate of Judas - vs. 18-19
    - c. More prophecies concerning Judas - Psalm 69:25 & 109:8 - vs. 20
  - 2. The requirements placed on Judas' replacements - vs. 21-22
  - 3. The two potential replacement - vs. 23
  - 4. The prayer for guidance - vs. 24-25
  - 5. The lots fall on Matthias - vs. 26
- C. Who was Matthias?
  - 1. Only mentioned in this passage
  - 2. Various traditions have him preaching in Europe or Africa
  - 3. Various traditions have him as a martyr or dying of old age
  - 4. Bottom line: we know basically nothing about him!
  - 5. Some consider the entire process to not have been God's will
  - 6. If anyone "replaced" Judas as an Apostle it was obviously Paul

Lesson 3  
**Pentecost**  
Acts 2:1-47

The disciples have followed the Lord's instruction and have been in Jerusalem awaiting the outpouring He promised. What happened there would change the course of human events, as the Apostles received the fulness of the Holy Spirit. The world would soon be turned upside down.

I. Setting

- A. Jerusalem
- B. Pentecost (Deuteronomy 16:9-12)
  - 1. Takes place on 6th of Sivan
  - 2. One of the three "pilgrimage feasts" with Passover and Feast of Tabernacles
  - 3. Called in Hebrew *Shavuot*, meaning *Weeks*
  - 4. Celebrated by giving of the First Fruits

II. Lesson

- A. The Outpouring of the Spirit
  - 1. The manifestation of the Spirit - vs. 1-4
  - 2. The miracle of tongues (languages) - vs. 5-11
  - 3. The varied opinions of the observers - vs. 12-13
- B. Peter's Sermon
  - 1. Defense of the miracle - vs. 14-15
  - 2. Fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32 - vs. 16-21
  - 3. The ministry of Christ - vs. 22-24
  - 4. Christ is prophesied in Psalm 16:8-11 - vs. 25-28
  - 5. David as a prophet - vs. 29-31
  - 6. Christ ascended and exalted - vs. 32-33
  - 7. Better than David, seen in Psalm 110:1 - vs. 34-36
- C. The First Fruits of the Church Age
  - 1. The hearers are moved - vs. 37
  - 2. They are to repent - vs. 38-39
  - 3. Peter sermon summarized - vs. 40
  - 4. 3,000 saved and baptized - vs. 41
- D. The Church Described
  - 1. The character of the Christians - vs. 42-43
  - 2. The community of the Christians - vs. 44-45
  - 3. The continuation of the Christians - vs. 46-47

Lesson 4  
**Peter's Sermon at the Temple**  
Acts 3:1-26

The Church Age entered with a flourish at the Day of Pentecost. God was not through working, and the next couple of chapters set the tone for the rest of the book: evangelism, miracles, and persecution. In this lesson we will see Peter and John making quite a stir at the Temple after healing a lame beggar.

- I. Setting
  - A. Jerusalem
  - B. After Pentecost, but necessarily soon.
- II. Story
  - A. Healing the Lame Beggar
    - 1. Peter and John enter the Temple at the evening sacrifice - vs. 1
    - 2. The sad state of the beggar - vs. 2-3
    - 3. The beggar is healed - vs. 4-7
    - 4. The beggar's witness - vs. 8-11
  - B. Peter's Sermon
    - 1. Peter draws in the crowd - vs. 12
    - 2. Their guilt before God - vs. 13-15
    - 3. The power of Christ in the healing - vs. 16
    - 4. Ignorance is no excuse - vs. 17-18
    - 5. The cure for their sin - vs. 19
    - 6. The Second Coming of Christ - vs. 20-21
    - 7. Moses prophesied of Christ - Deuteronomy 18:15,18-19 - vs. 22-23
    - 8. Even more prophesies point to Christ - vs. 24
    - 9. The special position of the Jews - vs. 25
    - 10. "To the Jew first" - vs. 26

We leave off in the midst of the story here. In the next lesson we'll see the opposition sparked by the events we covered today.

Lesson 5  
**The First Persecution**  
Acts 4:1-30

The Church is only at most a couple of years old and has not faced any real opposition. Many Jews and Romans alike saw these followers of Christ as a new sect of the Judaism. The stir created at Pentecost did not seem to garner much attention. The stir created in the Temple in chapter 3 did bring more attention on the new group, including for the first recorded time opposition.

I. Setting

- A. Jerusalem
- B. Immediately following the events of chapter 3
- C. Perhaps a year or two after Pentecost

II. Story

- A. The Arrest of Peter and John - vs. 1-4
  - 1. The cause: opposition to their teaching - vs. 1-2
  - 2. They were to be held overnight for trial the next day - vs. 3
  - 3. Regardless, many believed on Christ - vs. 4
- B. The Trial - vs. 5-12
  - 1. The “who’s who” of the accusers - vs. 5-6
  - 2. The interrogation - “By whose authority do you teach? - vs. 7
  - 3. Peter declares it was through Christ - vs. 8-10
  - 4. The rejection prophesied in Psalm 118:22 - vs. 11
  - 5. The Supremacy of Christ - vs. 12
- C. The Verdict - vs. 13-22
  - 1. Their opinion of Peter and John - vs. 13
  - 2. They couldn’t deny the miracle - vs. 14
  - 3. The decision reached in conference - vs. 15-17
  - 4. The command to no longer teach - vs. 18
  - 5. Peter and John refuse to stop - vs. 19-20
  - 6. The disciples are released - vs. 21-22
- D. The Reaction - vs. 23-31
  - 1. Peter and John report back to the Church -vs. 23
  - 2. The Church’s view of the Persecution:
    - a. God was still in control - vs. 24
    - b. Persecution was prophesied - Psalm 2:2,6 - vs. 25-26
    - c. Christ was also persecuted - vs. 27
    - d. It was all part of God’s Will - vs. 28
    - e. The Church needed grace to continue - vs. 29-30

Lesson 6  
**The State of the Early Church**  
Acts 4:31-5:16

We pick up this lesson at the conclusion of the events of the previous. The young Church has faced its first opposition from without. In this lesson we will first see the character of the early Church, and then see its first internal problem.

- I. Setting
  - A. Picks up immediately following the previous lesson
  - B. Jerusalem
  - C. Perhaps a year or two after Pentecost
- II. The Lesson
  - A. The State of the Early Church - 4:31-37
    - 1. The power of the Church - vs. 31
    - 2. The closeness of the Church - vs. 32
    - 3. The mission and power of the Church - vs. 33
    - 4. The generosity of the Church - vs. 34-35
    - 5. The example of Barnabas - vs. 36-37
  - B. Ananias and Sapphira - 5:1-11
    - 1. The devious plot - ch. 5:1-2
    - 2. Peter confronts Ananias - vs. 3-4
    - 3. Ananias expires - vs. 5-6
    - 4. Peter confronts Sapphira - vs. 7-10
    - 5. The Church learns from their example - vs. 11
  - C. The Spread of the Church's Influence - vs.12-16
    - 1. The public ministry of the Apostles - vs. 12-13
    - 2. The result of their ministry - vs. 14
    - 3. The people acknowledging the power - vs. 15-16

Lesson 7  
**The Second Persecution**  
Acts 5:17-42

Interest in the Christians, or at least the healings performed by them, has reached a point where the Jewish rulers can no longer ignore the growing movement. In fact, Christianity's popularity is such that the rulers must move carefully lest the people rebel against them. They arrest the disciples and bring them to trial.

I. Setting

- A. Jerusalem
- B. Probably within months of the events of 5:1-16

II. Lesson

A. The Arrest and Short Imprisonment

- 1. The Apostles thrown into prison - vs. 17-18
- 2. An angel releases them - vs. 19-20
- 3. The priests prepare for the trial, but the defendants are missing - vs. 21-23
- 4. They realize the trouble they could be in - vs. 24
- 5. The Apostles arrested again - vs. 25-26

F. The Trial

- 1. Accusation: disobeying previous order - vs. 27-28
- 2. Response: obey God not men - vs. 29
- 3. They are witnesses of Christ - vs. 30-32

G. The Verdict

- 1. They wanted to kill them - vs. 33
- 2. The counsel of Gamaliel - vs. 34-35
  - a. The example of Theudas - vs. 36
  - b. The example of Judas (not to be confused with Iscariot) - vs. 37
  - c. Counsel: Leave them alone and God will deal with them - vs. 38-39
- 3. Disciples beaten and again commanded to silence - vs. 40

H. The Reaction

- 1. The Apostles rejoiced - vs. 41
- 2. The Apostles continued preaching - vs. 42

Lesson 8  
**The First Deacons**  
Acts 6:1-15

The church has grown to a point that the Apostles are struggling to keep up with the demands of the ministry. This practical problem leads to the appointment of the first deacons. We will see a glimpse of their ministry before beginning the story of the martyrdom of Stephen.

- I. Setting
  - A. Jerusalem
  - B. Church is estimated to have 25,000 members
  - C. Perhaps three years after Pentecost
- II. Story
  - A. The Problem - (vs. 1-4)
    - 1. Some complain that “Grecians” (foreign-born Jews) were neglected - vs. 1
    - 2. The Apostles see that they need to delegate the solution - vs. 2
    - 3. The Church is to choose seven deacons - vs. 3
    - 4. The Apostles then continue their ministry - vs. 4
  - B. The Solution - (vs. 5-8)
    - 1. The deacons chosen- vs. 5
    - 2. The deacons ordained - vs. 6
    - 3. The work of the church grows with their help - vs. 7
    - 4. The growing ministry of Stephen - vs. 8
  - C. The Path to Stephen’s Martyrdom - (vs. 9-15)
    - 1. Stephen debates in synagogue - vs. 9
    - 2. Stephen persuades many to Christianity - vs. 10
    - 3. Bribed men bring false charges - vs. 11
    - 4. Stephen is brought to trial - vs. 12
    - 5. The charge: blasphemy - vs. 13-14
    - 6. Stephen is set to give his defense - vs. 15

We will take leave in the mid-story. In the next lesson we will hear Stephen’s sermon and witness his martyrdom. We will also see our first glimpse of a key figure in Acts and in the history of Christianity: Paul.

Lesson 9  
**The First Martyr**  
Acts 7:1-60

The church has been growing more popular and powerful with each passing day. The Jewish rulers could not sit by for much longer without taking drastic action. They found their opportunity when the newly appointed deacon Stephen stirred a local synagogue into a frenzy. Put on trial before a hostile crowd, Stephen's bold witness leads to his place in sacred history as the first Christian martyr.

I. Setting

- A. Jerusalem
- B. 34 A.D.???
- C. Continuation of events of 6:9-15
- D. Longest sermon/speech in Acts

II. Story

- A. The high priest examines Stephen - vs. 1
- B. Stephen's Sermon - vs. 2-53
  - 1. The History of Israel - vs. 2-50
    - a. Israel's origins - vs. 2-8
    - b. Israel into Egypt - vs. 9-16
    - c. Israel out of Egypt - vs. 17-36
    - d. Israel was rebellious from the beginning - vs. 37-44
    - e. Israel was rebellious in the place of God's blessing - vs. 45-50
  - 2. Pointing out the sin of Israel - vs. 51-53
- C. The crowd is enraged against Stephen - vs. 54
- D. Stephen's Theophany - vs. 55-56
  - 1. Saw it - vs. 55
  - 2. Said it - vs. 56
- E. The mob stones Stephen, Paul present and consenting - vs. 57-58
- F. The death of Stephen - vs. 59-60

Lesson 10  
**The Ministry of Philip - Part I**  
Acts 8:1-25

The growth of the Christian movement is only matched by its growing opposition. The persecution is only fanning the flames of the movement. We also see the growing number of leaders in the church, as evidenced by the ministry of Philip.

- I. Setting
  - A. Samaria - our first departure from Jerusalem
  - B. Soon after the death of Stephen
- II. Lesson
  - A. The Persecution
    - 1. The church is scattered - vs. 1
    - 2. Stephen is memorialized - vs. 2
    - 3. The wrath of Saul - vs. 3-4
  - B. Philip and Simon the Sorcerer
    - 1. The great revival in Samaria - vs. 5-8
    - 2. Enter Simon - vs. 9-11
    - 3. Simon joins with the Christians - vs. 12-13
    - 4. Peter and John visit Samaria - vs. 14
    - 5. The Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit - vs. 15-17
    - 6. Simon seeks to purchase this power - vs. 18-19
    - 7. Peter rebukes Simon for the offer - vs. 20-21
    - 8. Simon needs to repent - vs. 22-23
    - 9. Simon does, kind of - vs. 24
    - 10. The continued work of evangelizing Samaria - vs. 25

Lesson 11  
**The Ministry of Philip - Part II**  
Acts 8:26-40

We now come to one of the more famous episodes in the Book of Acts. The Holy Spirit brings Philip to witness to a visitor from Ethiopia. God went to quite a bit of trouble to get the Gospel to that man. Church history tells us that he returned to Ethiopia and established Christianity there.

- I. Setting
  - A. On road between Jerusalem and Gaza
  - B. Still around 34 A.D.
- II. Lesson
  - A. Philip commanded to go to the Gaza road - vs. 26
  - B. He meets an Ethiopian eunuch - vs. 27-28
    - 1. Ethiopia - kingdom of Kush, capital is Meroe
    - 2. Candace - queen Amanitare ( reigned A.D. 25-41)
    - 3. Treasurer
    - 4. Most likely a Jewish proselyte
  - C. Philip approaches - vs. 29-31
  - D. He was reading Isaiah 53:7,8 - vs. 32-33
  - E. Philip preaches Christ - vs. 34-35
  - F. The Eunuch wants to be baptized - vs. 36
  - G. The requirement of baptism - vs. 37
  - H. The Eunuch is baptized - vs. 38
  - I. The Spirit takes Philip - vs. 39
  - J. He preaches up the coast of Israel - vs. 40
- III. Epilogue
  - A. First recorded salvation of non-Jewish believer
  - B. Does not count as a Gentile because he was a proselyte
  - C. Tradition states that he brought the Gospel to Ethiopia

Lesson 12  
**The Conversion of Saul**  
Acts 9:1-25

The conversion of Saul is a watershed moment in the history of mankind. It was not just that Christianity's fiercest opponent became its most ardent supporter. Saul would eventually turn the world upside down through his writing and his missionary travels. The course of the Roman Empire and even European civilization would never be the same.

- I. Setting
  - A. Damascus
    1. Considered to be the oldest continually inhabited city in the world
  - B. Between 34 and 36 A.D.
- II. Lesson
  - A. The Damascus Road
    1. Saul's mission - vs. 1-2
    2. The great light - vs. 3
    3. The conversation with Christ - vs. 4-6
    4. His dumbfounded companions - vs. 7
    5. Saul's condition - vs. 8-9
  - B. Ananias
    1. God sends Ananias to Saul - vs. 10-12
    2. Ananias protests - vs. 13-14
    3. God's plan for Saul - vs. 15-16
    4. The visit to Saul - vs. 17-18
  - C. Saul the Christian
    1. Sight restored and baptized - vs. 19
    2. Preaches Christ - vs. 20
    3. The people are amazed - vs. 21
    4. The power of his preaching - vs. 22
  - D. Escape from Damascus
    1. The plot to kill Saul - vs. 23-24
    2. Let over wall in basket - vs. 25

Lesson 13  
**Peter and Paul**  
Acts 9:26-43

Though Paul will eventually dominate the narrative in Acts, we will be transitioning back to Peter for a few chapters. Paul will head to Jerusalem before returning to his native Tarsus. Peter will then heal both Æneas and Tabitha.

I. Setting

- A. Around 36 A.D.
- B. Jerusalem
- C. Lydda
  - 1. About 30 miles west of Jerusalem
  - 2. Also known as Lod
- D. Joppa
  - 1. Also known as Jaffa
  - 2. Jewish port city
  - 3. About 40 west of Jerusalem, 10 miles from Lydda

II. Story

- A. Saul's Entrance and Exit
  - 1. Barnabas helps Saul gain entrance into the church - vs. 26-27
  - 2. Paul's status and work in Jerusalem - vs. 28-29
  - 3. Paul's escape to Tarsus - vs. 30
  - 4. State of the churches at the time - vs. 31
- B. Peter Heals Æneas
  - 1. Peter travels around - vs. 32
  - 2. Finds and heals Æneas - vs. 33-34
  - 3. Many believe because of it - vs. 35
- C. Peter Heals Tabitha
  - 1. The godly Tabitha ("gazelle") dies - vs. 36-37
  - 2. They send for Peter - vs. 38-39
  - 3. Peter heals Tabitha - vs. 40-41
  - 4. Many believe because of it - vs. 42
  - 5. Peter stays in Joppa with Simon the tanner - vs. 43

Lesson 14  
**Peter and Cornelius - Part I**  
Acts 10:1-23

We now set the stage for one of the more important events in Acts: the Gospel given to the Gentiles. Peter will not only open the Church era by speaking at Pentecost but also open the Gospel to the non-Jews. We know Jewish proselytes have been saved (Ethiopian eunuch), but this is the first person not of Jewish blood and not a practicing Jew to be saved. In our first lesson on this momentous chapter, we will see God preparing Peter for the task.

I. Setting

A. Caesarea

1. Port city built by Herod the Great in 25 B.C.
2. Capital of Roman province of Iudaea
3. About 30 miles north of Joppa

B. Joppa

1. Also known as Jaffa
2. Jewish port city
3. About 40 west of Jerusalem
4. Peter is here after raising of Tabitha in Acts 9

II. Story

A. Cornelius

1. The faith of Cornelius - vs. 1-2
2. The angel's message to Cornelius - vs. 3-6
3. Cornelius sends for Peter - vs. 7-8

B. Peter's Vision

1. Praying at noon - vs. 9
2. The vision of the sheet - vs. 10-12
3. The command to eat them - vs. 13
4. Peter balks - vs. 14
5. God rebukes Peter - vs. 15
6. This repeats three times - vs. 16
7. The arrival of Cornelius' messengers - vs. 17-18
8. The Spirit leads Peter to go with the men - vs. 19-20
9. The mission of the messengers -vs. 21-22
10. Peter goes with them - vs. 23

Lesson 15  
**Peter and Cornelius - Part II**  
Acts 10:24-48

Christ came to God's chosen people, the Jews. He lived among them, preached among them, and brought the Gospel to them first. But Christ came not to bring salvation to the Jews only, but to the world. Some ten years after Christ's death and resurrection, the first Gentile is saved.

I. Setting

- A. Around 40 A.D.
- B. Caesarea
  - 1. Port city built by Herod the Great in 25 B.C.
  - 2. Capital of Roman province of Iudaea
  - 3. About 30 miles north of Joppa

II. Story

- A. Peter meets Cornelius
  - 1. Peter goes to Caesarea - vs. 24
  - 2. Cornelius tries to worship Peter - vs. 25-26
  - 3. Jew and Gentile meet - vs. 27-29
  - 4. Cornelius tells of his vision - vs. 30-33
- B. Peter's Sermon
  - 1. God sees all men the same - vs. 34-35
  - 2. The Gospel story - vs. 36-41
  - 3. The mission of the Apostles - vs. 42-43
- C. Salvation comes to the Gentiles
  - 1. The Holy Ghost falls on Gentiles - vs. 44-46
  - 2. Gentiles enter the church through baptism - vs. 47-48

Lesson 16  
**The Spread of the Gospel**  
Acts 11:1-30

Chapter Eleven of Acts marks a couple of very important events. First, we have the approval and acceptance of the Gospel going to the Gentiles. Second, we have the founding of the church at Antioch. This church will play a vital role in the saga of the early church.

I. Setting

- A. Around 40 A.D.
- B. Jerusalem - vs. 1-18
- C. Antioch - vs. 19-30
  - 1. Founded in 232 B.C. by Seleucus I Nicator
  - 2. Third largest city in Roman Empire, population around 500,000
  - 3. Capital of Seleucid Empire
  - 4. Large Jewish population

II. Story

- A. Peter defends the Gospel to the Gentiles
  - 1. It stirred a controversy - vs. 1-3
  - 2. Peter tells the story again to them - vs. 4-17
  - 3. It settles the matter - vs. 18
- B. The spread of the Gospel
  - 1. The gospel reaches Phoenicia, Cyprus, Cyrene, and Antioch - vs. 19-21
  - 2. Barnabas is sent to check on the church - vs. 22-24
  - 3. Barnabas brings back Paul - vs. 25-26
  - 4. The prophecy of the drought by Agabus - vs. 27-28
    - a. Drought took place in 44-45 A.D.
  - 5. The Antioch church sends relief to the Judean Christians - vs. 29-30

Lesson 17  
**Herod and Peter**  
Acts 12:1-23

As the church and the Gospel spread, we find that opposition follows. The most significant martyrdom yet in Acts takes place as the Apostle James is killed by Herod. Herod further tries to have Peter executed, but Peter is miraculously delivered.

I. Setting

- A. 44 A.D.
- B. Jerusalem - vs. 1-19
- C. Caesarea - vs. 20-24
- D. Herod Agrippa I
  - 1. Grandson of Herod the Great
  - 2. Reigned 37 to 44 A.D.

II. Lesson

- A. Herod's Persecution
  - 1. Herod has James killed - vs. 1-2
  - 2. Then arrests Peter - vs. 3
- B. Peter's Escape from Prison
  - 1. Peter kept in prison - vs. 4-6
  - 2. An angel leads Peter out of prison - vs. 7-10
  - 3. Peter realizes what has happened - vs. 11
  - 4. Peter goes to Mary's house - vs. 12
  - 5. No one believes Rhoda - vs. 13-15
  - 6. They let him in - vs. 16
  - 7. Peter tells what has happened - vs. 17
  - 8. The stir caused by Peter's escape - vs. 18-19
- C. Herod's Death
  - 1. Herod's vanity - vs. 20-22
  - 2. Herod's death - vs. 23

Lesson 18  
**The First Missionary Journey - Part I**  
Acts 12:24-13:52

Since Pentecost, the Gospel has spread throughout area surrounding Judea. People have carried the news of Christ as they travelled or moved throughout the Roman Empire. It does not seem that there has really been an organized effort to take the Gospel to new regions. Paul changes that as his ministry becomes prominent in Acts.

I. Setting

- A. Begins in Antioch
- B. 44-46 A.D.

II. Lesson

- A. Paul and company set apart for the mission
  - 1. Paul's status - 12:24-25
  - 2. Antioch's church leadership - 13:1
  - 3. Paul and Barnabas set apart - vs. 2-3
- B. The Journey Begins
  - 1. Seleucia - Seleucia Pieria, port city 20 miles west of Antioch - vs. 4
  - 2. Cyprus - Mediterranean island - vs. 4
  - 3. Salamis - major city on eastern coast of Cyprus - vs. 5
  - 4. They preach the gospel throughout the island with John Mark - vs. 5
  - 5. Paphos - on western coast of Cyprus, Roman capital - vs. 6
- C. Elymas the Sorcerer
  - 1. The false prophet enters - vs. 6
  - 2. Enter Roman proconsul Lucius Sergius Paullus - vs. 7
  - 3. Paul rebukes Elymas, who is blinded - vs. 8-11
  - 4. Paulus is converted - vs. 12
- D. Journey Continues
  - 1. Perga - capital of Pamphylia, north of Cyprus - vs. 13
  - 2. John Mark departs - vs. 13
  - 3. Antioch - Roman city and colony - vs. 14
- E. Paul's Sermon at Antioch in Pisidia
  - 1. At synagogue on Sabbath - vs. 14-15
  - 2. Summary of Israel's history - vs. 16-22
  - 3. Preaches Christ - vs. 23-37
  - 4. Conclusion - vs. 38-41
  - 5. The reaction and results - vs. 42-43
  - 6. The crowd of Gentiles on the next Sabbath - vs. 44
  - 7. The Jews hinder and resist - vs. 45
  - 8. Paul turns to the Gentiles - vs. 46-47
  - 9. The glorious results - vs. 48-49
  - 10. The Jews run them out of town - vs. 50-51
  - 11. Iconium - east of Antioch in Pisidia- vs. 51
  - 12. The mission continues - vs. 52

Lesson 19  
**The First Missionary Journey - Part II**  
Acts 14:1-28

Paul and Barnabas wrap up their first missionary journey after creating quite a stir in Asia Minor. While ministering in Lystra, they are mistaken for pagan gods. They finish their trip by revisiting most of their stops and returning to Antioch.

I. Setting

- A. We pick up at Iconium
- B. 44-46 A.D.

II. Lesson

A. Trouble at Iconium

- 1. Many are saved there - vs. 1
- 2. Opposing Jews stir up trouble - vs. 2
- 3. The ministry there - vs. 3
- 4. The plot against Paul and Barnabas - vs. 4-5
- 5. Escape to Derbe and Lystra - vs. 6-7
  - a. Derbe - on trade route, little known about it
  - b. Lystra - on Persian Royal road, market town, 60 miles from Derbe
  - c. Lycaonia - region in Asia Minor

B. Jupiter and Mercury

- 1. Paul heals a cripple man in Lystra - vs. 8-10
- 2. Mistaken for gods - vs. 11-13
- 3. Paul and Barnabas protest - vs. 14-17
- 4. It stops - vs. 18

C. Trip back to Antioch

- 1. Paul is stoned - vs. 19
- 2. Paul survives - vs. 20
- 3. Returns to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch - vs. 20-21
- 4. Set up the churches there - vs. 22-23
- 5. Returns to Antioch - vs. 24-26
  - a. Pisidia - region in Galatia, Antioch in Pisidia
  - b. Pamphylia - region along coast
  - c. Perga - capital of Pamphylia
  - d. Attalia - port city
- 6. Back at Antioch - vs. 27-28

III. Stats

- A. Took about three years
- B. Traveled about 1,400 miles

Lesson 20  
**The Gentile Controversy**  
Acts 15:1-35

The salvation of the Gentile people created several questions. Should they be required to become Jews also? What parts of the Mosaic Law should they observe? Paul's first missionary journey and the growth the church at Antioch have brought about a need to answer these questions and more.

I. Setting

- A. Jerusalem
- B. 49 A.D.

II. Lesson

- A. The controversy arises in Antioch - vs. 1
- B. Paul and Barnabas go to Jerusalem to settle it - vs. 2-4
- C. It was there, too - vs. 5
- D. A conference takes place - vs. 6
- E. Peter's sermon
  - 1. Reminds them of Cornelius' conversion - vs. 7-9
  - 2. Presses the issue - vs. 10-11
- F. Paul and Barnabas testify - vs. 12
- G. James' sermon
  - 1. Reminds of Cornelius' conversion - vs. 13-14
  - 2. Its according to Scripture - Amos 9:11-12 - vs. 15-17
  - 3. God had it all planned - vs. 18
  - 4. His conclusion - vs. 19-21
    - a. Pollution of idols - worship of and eating sacrifices to idols
    - b. Fornication - sexual sins
    - c. Things strangled - they had blood in them
    - d. Blood - eating or spilling, on top of previous
- H. Send messengers with this resolution - vs. 22
- I. The Message
  - 1. Address the problem - vs. 23-24
  - 2. The messengers - vs. 25-28
  - 3. The message - vs. 29
- J. Antioch received the message and is glad - vs. 20-32
- K. Silas stays with Paul and Barnabas in Antioch - vs. 33-35

Lesson 21  
**The Second Missionary Journey - Part I**  
Acts 15:36-16:15

Paul embarks on his second missionary journey, planning to revisit the places and people of his first trip. The Lord would lead Paul in a different direction, out of Asia Minor and into Greece. This move not only expands the bounds of the Gospel, it also is the first recorded missionary effort in Europe.

- I. Setting
  - A. Begins in Antioch
  - B. 49-52 A.D.
- II. The Lesson
  - A. The Division of Paul and Barnabas
    - 1. They prepare to go on another journey - vs. 15:36
    - 2. They disagree about John mark - vs. 37-38
    - 3. They cannot agree and split - vs. 39-40
    - 4. The journey begins - vs. 41
  - B. In Asia Minor
    - 1. Finds Timothy - vs. 16:1-3
      - a. Derbe - on trade route, little known about it
      - b. Lystra - on Persian Royal road, market town, 60 miles from Derbe
    - 2. Their ministry there - vs. 4-5
  - C. A Change of Plans
    - 1. The Spirit stops them - vs. 6-8
    - 2. The Macedonian vision - vs. 9-10
    - 3. To Philippi - vs. 11-12
      - a. Samothracia - independent island en route to Macedonia
      - b. Neapolis - port city for Philippi
      - c. Philippi - Roman colony, important city
    - 4. First Convert in Europe - vs 13-15
      - a. Goes to a Jewish meeting - vs. 13
      - b. Lydia believes - vs. 14-15

Lesson 22  
**The Second Missionary Journey - Part II**  
Acts 16:16-40

There are many popular episodes from the ministry of Paul. This is no exception, and among the most well known. Paul and Silas have just began their ministry in Philippi. They soon find themselves in trouble with the local authorities and setting up one of the most dramatic conversions in the Bible.

- I. Setting
  - A. Philippi
  - B. 49-52 A.D.
- II. Lesson
  - A. The Demon Possessed Girl
    - 1. Follows Paul mocking them - vs. 16-17
    - 2. Paul casts out demon - vs. 18
    - 3. Her masters charge Paul and Silas - vs. 19-21
    - 4. Paul and Silas beaten and imprisoned - vs. 22-24
  - B. God Delivers Paul and Silas
    - 1. They sing and pray - vs. 25
    - 2. The earthquake - vs. 26
    - 3. The keeper's reaction - vs. 27-28
    - 4. The keeper's conversion - vs. 29-32
    - 5. The keeper's kindness - vs. 33-34
    - 6. Paul and Silas are set to be released - vs. 35-36
    - 7. Paul plays the citizenship card - vs. 37
    - 8. The leaders panic and want Paul to leave quietly - vs. 38-39
    - 9. Paul and Silas leave town, head toward Thessalonica. -vs. 40

Lesson 23  
**The Second Missionary Journey - Part III**  
Acts 17:1-34

Paul continues his journey into the heart of Greece, and thus into the heart of the philosophical center of the world. After visiting Thessalonica and Berea, he arrives in Rome. After preaching there in the market, he is invited to explain his teaching on Mar's Hill.

I. Setting

- A. Begin en route to Thessalonica
- B. 49-52 A.D.

II. Lesson

- A. To Thessalonica on the Via Egnatia - vs. 1
  - 1. Amphipolis - important city on Via Egnatia
  - 2. Apollonia - midway between Amphipolis and Thessalonica
  - 3. Thessalonica - port city, major trade hub
- B. Paul preaches in Thessalonica - vs. 2-4
- C. Trouble arises - vs. 5-9
- D. Paul in Berea
  - 1. Berea - Small town west of Thessalonica - vs. 10
  - 2. The character of the Christians - vs. 11-12
  - 3. Trouble follows - vs. 13
  - 4. Paul sent to Athens - vs. 14-15
  - 5. Athens - leading Greek city, center of Greek world
- E. Paul in Athens
  - 1. Paul preaches in Athens - vs. 16-17
  - 2. To Mars' Hill - vs. 18-21
    - a. Epicureanism - It teaches that the greatest good is to seek modest pleasures in order to attain a state of tranquillity, freedom from fear ("ataraxia") and absence from bodily pain ("aponia")
    - b. Stoicism - teaches the development of self-control and fortitude as a means of overcoming destructive emotions.
    - c. Mar's Hill - place of court, debate, philosophy
  - 3. Paul's sermon - vs 22-31
  - 4. The reaction - vs. 32-34

Lesson 24  
**The Second Missionary Journey - Part IV**  
Acts 18:1-22

We wrap up Paul's second missionary journey with an eighteen month stay to Corinth before returning back to Antioch.

- I. Setting
  - A. Begin in Athens
  - B. 49-52 A.D.
- II. Lesson
  - A. At Corinth
    - 1. Corinth - vs. 1
      - a. On narrow isthmus
      - b. Major port
      - c. seat of Roman government in southern Greece
    - 2. Aquila and Priscilla - vs. 2-3
    - 3. Preaching to the Jews - vs. 4-8
    - 4. The Lord's message to Paul - vs. 9-10
    - 5. The eighteen month stay - vs. 11
  - B. Before Gallio
    - 1. Gallio - Roman proconsul of Achaëa, brother of Seneca - vs. 12
    - 2. The charge - vs. 13
    - 3. Gallio's judgment - vs. 14-17
  - C. The Return Trip to Antioch
    - 1. Cenchrea - eastern port of Corinth - vs. 18
    - 2. In Ephesus - vs. 19-21
    - 3. From Caesarea to Antioch, probably visiting Jerusalem - vs. 22
- III. Stats
  - 1. Took about three years
  - 2. traveled about 2,800 miles

Lesson 25  
**The Third Missionary Journey - Part I**  
Acts 18:23-19:41

Paul embarks on his Third Missionary Journey soon after completing his second. This trip will prove to his last visit to so many beloved churches that he had started and strengthened. In this episode we will meet Apollos the gifted preacher, find a group of John the Baptist's disciples, and survive a riot in Ephesus.

- I. Setting
  - A. 53-57 A.D.
  - B. Much of the trip is revisiting places
- II. Lesson
  - A. The trip begins - 18:23
  - B. Apollos - vs. 24-28
  - C. John's disciples - 19:1-7
  - D. The ministry at Ephesus - vs. 8-12
  - E. The sons of Sceva - vs. 13-16
  - F. The spread of the Gospel - vs. 17-20
  - G. The plan - vs. 21-22
  - H. The riot at Ephesus - vs. 23-41

Lesson 26  
**The Third Missionary Journey - Part II**  
Acts 20:1-38

Paul continues his "farewell" tour by visiting Macedonia and Greece before beginning his return to Jerusalem.

I. Setting

- A. 53-57 A.D.
- B. Much of the trip is revisiting places

II. Lesson

- A. Visits Macedonia and Greece - vs. 1-2
- B. The Jewish plot - vs. 3
- C. The traveling companions
- D. Poor Eutychus
  - 1. Paul arrives in Troas - vs. 6
  - 2. Paul preaches late - vs. 7-8
  - 3. Eutychus dies and is healed - vs. 9-12
- E. Sails down coast of Asia - vs. 13-16
- F. Paul and the Ephesian elders - vs. 17-38
  - 1. Nature of his ministry - vs. 18-21
  - 2. The future - vs. 22-24
  - 3. The fulness of his ministry - vs. 25-27
  - 4. Warnings - vs. 28-31
  - 5. Paul's example - vs. 32-35
  - 6. The tearful parting - vs. 36-38

Lesson 27  
**The Third Missionary Journey - Part III**  
Acts 21:1-17

Paul wraps up the Third Missionary Journey and arrives in Jerusalem.

- I. Setting
  - A. 53-57 A.D.
  - B. Much of the trip is revisiting places
- II. Lesson
  - A. From Miletus to Tyre - vs. 1-3
  - B. From Tyre to Caesarea - vs. 4-9
  - C. Agabus' prophecy - vs.10-13
  - D. To Jerusalem - vs. 14-17

Lesson 28  
**Paul and the Jews - Part I**  
Acts 21:18-22:30

Now in Jerusalem, Paul is once again catalyst for a Jewish riot. After being rescued and detained by the Roman garrison in the Fortress Antonia, Paul delivers one more defense before the Jews. When this fails, he uses something he has rarely asserted in the past: his Roman citizenship.

- I. Setting
  - A. Jerusalem
  - B. 58 AD
- II. Lesson
  - A. Meeting with the Church at Jerusalem - vs. 17-25
  - B. Trouble at the Temple - vs. 26-40
  - C. Paul's defense before the people - vs. 22:1-21
    - 1. His Jewish background - vs. 22:1-4
    - 2. His testimony - vs. 5-16
    - 3. The mission to the Gentiles - vs. 17-21
  - D. Paul the Roman - vs. 22-30

Lesson 29  
**Paul and the Jews - Part II**  
Acts 23:1-35

Paul is now a prisoner of the Romans. He is sent before the Sanhedrin to face his Jewish accusers. He then is transferred to Caesarea after a group of Jews vow to kill him.

I. Setting

- A. Jerusalem
- B. 58 AD
- C. Chamber of Hewn Stone in the Temple complex
- D. Less than 25 years after Paul's conversion

II. Lesson

- A. Paul and the High Priest - vs. 1-5
- B. Paul divides the crowd - vs. 6-10
  - 1. Pharisees
    - a. accepted all oral law and tradition
    - b. believed in afterlife and immortality of soul
  - 2. Sadducees
    - a. accepted only written law, rejected oral law and tradition
    - b. denied afterlife
- C. The Lord's plan for Paul - vs. 11
- D. The plot to kill Paul - vs. 12-15
- E. Paul's nephew reveals the plot - vs. 16-22
- F. Paul to be transferred to Caesarea - vs. 23-24
- G. The letter to Felix - vs. 25-30
  - 1. Marcus Antonius Felix
  - 2. Roman procurator of province of Judea - 52-58 AD
  - 3. Younger brother of Marcus Antonius Pallas, secretary of treasury in Rome
- H. At Caesarea - vs. 31-35
  - 1. Antipatris - town between Jerusalem and Caesarea
  - 2. Caesarea Maritima - Roman capital of Judea
  - 3. Cilicia - Roman province in southeast Asia Minor

Lesson 30  
**Paul and the Jews - Part III**  
Acts 24:1-27

Paul stands in trial under the Roman procurator Felix. The trial lacks any decisive ruling, and Paul is kept prisoner by Felix.

I. Setting

- A. Caesarea
- B. 58 AD

II. Lesson

- A. Before Felix - vs. 1
- B. The accusation by Tertullus - vs. 2-9
- C. The defense by Paul - vs. 10-
  - 1. The falsehood of their claims - vs. 10-13
  - 2. The true crime of Paul - vs. 14-16
  - 3. The events of Paul's arrest - vs. 17-21
- D. Felix postpones judgment - vs. 22-23
- E. The witness before Felix - vs. 24-26
- F. The next two years... - vs. 27

Lesson 31  
**Paul and the Jews - Part IV**  
Acts 25:1-27

The new Roman procurator Festus arrives in Judea and finds that he has inherited the case of Paul. In trial before Festus, Paul appeals to Caesar. Before sending him to Rome, Festus has Paul stand before King Agrippa in order to better ascertain the charges Paul is facing.

- I. Setting
  - A. Caesarea
  - B. 60 A.D.
- II. Lesson
  - A. Festus is informed about Paul - vs. 1-5
    - 1. Porcius Festus
      - a. Procurator of Judea
      - b. 58-62 A.D. - DATE CONFLICT WITH TIMELINE
  - B. The trial before Festus - vs. 6-9
  - C. Paul appeals to Caesar - vs. 10-12
    - 1. Roman citizen's right of appeal before Caesar's court
    - 2. Established in judicial reforms by Augustus
    - 3. Why did he do it? Theories:
      - 1. Avoid crucifixion - doubtful
      - 2. Get out of the judicial limbo he was in - probable
      - 3. Take Gospel to Rome - likely
    - 4. Caesar - Nero
  - D. Festus consults with Agrippa - vs. 13-22
    - 1. Agrippa II
      - a. Marcus Julius Agrippa
      - b. Son of Agrippa I and great-grandson of Herod the Great
      - c. Ruled various areas from 48 A.D. until death around 92 A.D.
      - d. Accused of incestuous relationship with sister Bernice
  - E. Paul before Agrippa - vs. 23-27

Lesson 32  
**Paul and the Jews - Part V**  
Acts 26:1-32

Paul stands before Agrippa and Festus in order to find the charges he is accused of. Paul gives a stirring testimony of his conversion and mission. Though found to be innocent, Paul's appeal to Caesar is set in motion.

I. Setting

- A. Caesarea
- B. 60 A.D.

II. Lesson

- A. Paul's testimony before Agrippa and Festus - vs. 1-24
  - 1. Background of the charges - vs. 2-5
  - 2. The charges - vs. 7-8
  - 3. The Damascus Road conversion - vs. 9-18
  - 4. Paul's ministry - vs. 19-23
- B. Festus' reaction - vs. 25-27
- C. Agrippa's reaction - vs. 28-29
- D. The verdict - vs. 30-32

Lesson 33  
**The Journey to Rome - Part I**  
Acts 27:1-44

Paul's appeal to Caesar has caused him to be sent to Rome. He begins what will become an eventful trip, to say the least.

I. Setting

- A. Begins in Caesarea
- B. 60-61 A.D.

II. Lesson

- A. The trip begins - vs. 1-2
  - 1. Under command of Julius, of a local cohort named in honor of Caesar
  - 2. Adramyttium - city in western Asia Minor
- B. First leg of journey - vs. 3-6
  - 1. Sidon - Former Phoenician city
  - 2. Cyprus - island in Mediterranean
  - 3. Myra, Lycia - city on southwest Asia Minor
  - 4. Alexandria - capital of Egypt
- C. Second leg of journey - vs. 7-8
  - 1. Cnidus - city on southwest corner of Asia Minor
  - 2. Crete - 5th largest Mediterranean island, south of Greece
  - 3. Salome - city on northeast crete
  - 4. "Fair Havens", Lasea - harbor and city on south central Crete
- D. Paul warns of the coming danger - vs. 9-13
  - 1. Phenice, or Phoenix - port on southwestern Crete
- E. The storm - vs. 14-20
  - 1. Euroclydon - storm blowing from Northeast
  - 2. Clauda - small island south of Crete
- F. Paul's message - vs. 21-26
- G. Danger ahead- vs. 27-38
  - 1. Adria - Adriatic sea
- H. The shipwreck - vs. 39-44

Lesson 34  
**The Journey to Rome - Part II**  
Acts 28:1-31

After surviving the shipwreck at Melita, Paul is finally transported to Rome. Here he is free, though still a prisoner, to continue preaching. He first makes and appeal to the Jews there, but once again turns his attention to the Gentiles.

I. Setting

- A. Begin in Melita
  - 1. Modern Malta
  - 2. Island in Mediterranean
- B. 61-63 A.D.

II. Lesson

- A. Paul and the viper - vs. 1-6
- B. Healing of Publius' father - vs. 7-10
  - 1. Publius - Roman governor of island
- C. The final leg of the trip - vs. 11-16
  - 1. Castor and Pollux - twin Roman gods
  - 2. Syracuse - city on western shore of Sicily
  - 3. Rhegium - town on southern "toe" of Italy, modern Reggio Calabria
  - 4. Puteoli - town in eastern shore of Italy, modern Pozzuoli
  - 5. Appii forum - post on Appian Way, 43 miles from Rome
  - 6. Three Taverns - 18 miles from Rome, place to greet travelers
- D. Paul's ministry to the Jews in Rome - vs. 11-24
- E. Paul again turns to the Gentiles - vs. 25-29
- F. Paul's two-year ministry in Rome - vs. 30-31

## Lesson 35

# The Rest of the Story

The Book of Acts ends abruptly with Paul ministering as a Prisoner in Rome. This is not the most climatic ending possible for a narrative, and traditions abound about what happens after the close of Luke's account and Paul's death.

### I. The Continuing Life of Paul

- A. Paul was beheaded sometime around 67-68 A.D.
- B. Paul possibly continued as a prisoner during this time
- C. Paul is possibly released around 63 A.D.
  - 1. Possibly the case is thrown out or he is found innocent
  - 2. There are many details in his writings that do not fit in the Acts account
- D. Possible stops for Paul
  - 1. Crete - Titus 1:5
  - 2. Nicopolis, Macedonia - Titus 3:12
  - 3. Hispania (Spain) - Romans 15:28
    - a. Clement of Rome wrote around 90 A.D. in letter to Corinthians: "By reason of jealousy and strife Paul by his example pointed out the prize of patient endurance. After that he had been seven times in bonds, had been driven into exile, had been stoned, had preached in the East and in the West, he won the noble renown which was the reward of his faith, having taught righteousness unto the whole world and having reached the farthest bounds of the West; and when he had borne his testimony before the rulers, so he departed from the world and went unto the holy place, having been found a notable pattern of patient endurance."
  - 4. Britain???
  - 5. Proposed "4th Missionary Journey"
    - a. 63-64 A.D.
    - b. Stops in Crete, Miletus, Colosse, Troas, Philippi, Corinth, Nicopolis
  - 6. Proposed "5th Missionary Journey"
    - a. 65-66 A.D.
    - b. Stops in Miletus, Troas, and Corinth - arrested here?
- E. Paul's Second Imprisonment - 67-68 A.D.
  - 1. Possibly arrested in Troas - II Timothy 4:13
- F. Paul's death
  - 1. Most traditions point to him being beheaded under Nero
  - 2. Some say that he was crucified upside-down as was Peter

### II. Why was Paul killed?

- A. Why would he be released, re-arrested, and killed?
  - 1. The Great Fire in Rome (64 A.D.) was blamed on Christians
    - a. Roman Historian Tacitus wrote: "As a consequence, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but, even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular. In accordance, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not as much of the crime of firing the city as of hatred

against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired."

b. Paul, as a leading figure in Christianity, would be a target for persecution.

2. The Jewish Revolt (66-73 A.D.)

a. Jews rebelled against Roman rule and a war ensued

b. Vespasian and Titus crushed the revolt

c. Jerusalem and Temple were destroyed in 70 A.D.

d. Paul, as a Jew, would be a target for persecution

III. Legacy of Paul

A. Apostle of the Gentiles

B. Took Gospel throughout the Roman world

C. Wrote 13 books of the Bible

IV. The Church after Paul

A. Christians were still a vast minority in the populace

B. Came to be seen as a separate movement, not as a Jewish sect

C. Continued to grow and spread

D. Remain fairly unified until the second century