



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Acts/ Acts of the Apostles

The second book Luke addressed to Theophilus (**Luke 1:3**), Acts may originally have had no title.

The Greek manuscripts title it “Acts,” and many add “of the Apostles.” The Greek word translated “Acts” (*praxeis*) was often used to describe the achievements of great men.

Acts does feature the notable figures in the early years of the church, Peter (**chapters 1–12**) and Paul (**chapters 13–28**).

The book can be called as transitional book.

- From the Old Covenant to New Covenant.
- From Jews to Gentiles
- From Jesus to Holy Spirit
- From Jesus to Apostles
- History of Jews synagogue to Church

The book could more properly be called “The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles,”.

Since God superintending work was far more significant than that of any man. Holy Spirit's directing, controlling, and empowering ministry that strengthened the church and caused it to grow in numbers, spiritual power, and influence.

Author and Date

Since Luke's gospel was the first book addressed to Theophilus (**Luke 1:3**), it is logical to conclude that Luke is also the author of Acts.

The writings of the early church Fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome affirm Luke did write this book.

Luke is mentioned only 3 times in the NT (**Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11, Philemon 24**).

Luke was Paul's close friend, traveling companion, and personal physician (**Colossians 4:14**).

Luke was a careful researcher (**Luke 1:1-4**) and an accurate historian, displaying an intimate knowledge of Roman laws and customs, as well as the geography of Palestine, Asia Minor, and Italy.

In writing Acts, Luke drew on written sources (Acts 15:23–29; Acts 23:26–30), and no doubt interviewed key figures, such as Peter, John, and others in the Jerusalem church.

Paul's two-year imprisonment at Caesarea gave Luke good opportunity to interview Philip and his daughters, who were considered important sources of information on the early days of the church.

Acts 24:27,

Finally, Luke's frequent use of the first-person plural pronouns "we" and "us" (**Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–21:18; 27:1–28:16**) reveals that he was an eyewitness to many of the events recorded in Acts.

Luke wrote this book of Acts before the end of Paul's first Roman imprisonment (**A.D. 60–62**).

That date is the most natural explanation for the abrupt ending of Acts, which leaves Paul awaiting trial before Caesar.

Surely Luke, who devoted more than half of Acts to Paul's ministry, would have given the outcome of that trial, and described Paul's subsequent ministry, second imprisonment (**2 Timothy 4:11**)

Luke's silence about such notable events,

- ✓ Martyrdom of James, head of the Jerusalem church (A.D. 62 according to the Jewish historian Josephus),
- ✓ The persecution under Nero (A.D. 64), and
- ✓ The fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70)

Suggests he wrote Acts before those events transpired.

Background and Setting

Luke makes it clear in the prologue to his gospel, he wrote to give Theophilus accomplished during His earthly ministry. Accordingly, Luke wrote in his gospel “an orderly account” (Luke 1:3) of those momentous events.

Acts continues that record, noting what Jesus accomplished through the early church.

- ✓ Beginning with Jesus’ ascension, (Acts 1:15)
- ✓ The birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost, (Acts 2:41, 47)
- ✓ The growth of the church,
- ✓ Opposition to the gospel,
- ✓ Chronicles the spread of the gospel, and
- ✓ Paul’s preaching at Rome,

Theophilus, whose name means “lover of God,” is unknown to history apart from his mention in Luke and Acts. Whether he

was a believer whom Luke was instructing, or a pagan whom Luke sought to convert is not known. Luke's address of him as "most excellent Theophilus" (Luke 1:3) suggests he was a Roman official of some importance (**Acts 24:3; 26:25**).

Historical and Theological Themes

This is the first work of church history ever written.

Acts records the initial response to the Great Commission by Jesus in **Matthew 28:19-20**.

The book of Acts provides information on the first 3 decades of the church's existence and this material found nowhere else in the New Testament.

This book is not primarily a doctrinal work.

Acts 4:34-35,

Since there was a massive persecution, they sold everything and stayed and ate from the church. But we don't do that now since we are not persecuted that way.

Book of Acts emphasizes that Jesus of Nazareth was Israel's long-awaited Messiah, shows that the gospel is offered to all men not merely the Jewish people.

What strikes you is that the gospel of Luke,

The apostles who were

- ✓ Fearful,
- ✓ Confused,
- ✓ Bewildered
- ✓ Hiding, and
- ✓ Reluctant to preach

Were bold to preach to the authorities by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles were confused about who Jesus was because they were confused about the Old Testament.

Luke 9:45,

Luke 18:31-34,

They didn't understand the suffering of the Messiah because they couldn't connect it to the Old Testament.

However, after Jesus death and resurrection some of the disciples were on the road to Emmaus, they didn't know that Jesus had been raised from the dead. They were very sad because they had hoped that Jesus would be the Messiah.

Luke 24:20,

Jesus gives them a Bible study.

Luke 24:25-27,

For the first time understanding of the Old testament about His suffering, His death, the atonement, and His resurrection. For the first time they began to understand the Old Testament.

Luke 24:45,

Then Jesus ask them to stay back in Jerusalem for the Promise from the Father.

Luke 24:49,

This book stresses the work of the Holy Spirit (mentioned more than 50 times).

Acts also makes frequent use of the Old Testament:

Acts 2:17–21 (Joel 2:28–32);

Acts 2:25–28 (Psalms 16:8–11);

Acts 2:35 (Psalms 110:1);

Acts 4:11 (Psalms 118:22);

Acts 4:25, 26 (Psalms 2:1-2);

Acts 7:49-50 (Isaiah 66:1-2);

Acts 8:32-33 (Isaiah 53:7, 8);

Acts 28:26-27 (Isaiah 6:9-10).

- ✓ The book of Hebrews sets forth the theology of the transition from the Old Covenant to the New covenant.
- ✓ Acts illustrates the New Covenant's practical outworking in the life of the church.

Purpose

Luke is written to show the Jewish Messiah came to save all the human kind.

Showing the history of redemptive work of God through His apostles and the Church.

Acts is the only biblical book that chronicles the history of the church immediately after Jesus's ascension.

It provides us with a valuable account of how the church was able to grow and spread out from Jerusalem into the rest of the Roman Empire.

In only three decades, a small group of frightened believers in Jerusalem transformed into an empire-wide movement of people who had committed their lives to Jesus Christ.

Ending on a high note with Paul on the verge of taking the gospel to the highest government official, the Emperor of Rome.

Overview

The book of Acts has 28 chapters
1006 Verses

The New Testament has a total of 138,020 Greek words in the Analytical Greek New Testament (AGNT). Total number of words 138,020.

Author	Books	Words	% Percent
Luke	Luke & Acts	37,933	27%
Paul	14 books	32,407	23%
John	5 Books	28,092	20%

Outline of the Book of Luke

Prologue (1:1–8)

1. The Witness to Jerusalem (1:9–8:3)
 - a) The Anticipation of the Church (1:9–26)
 - b) The Founding of the Church (2:1–47)
 - c) The Growth of the Church (3:1–8:3)

- i. Apostles: Preaching, healing, and enduring persecution (3:1–5:42)**
 - ii. Deacons: Praying, teaching, and enduring persecution (6:1–8:3)**

- 2. The Witness to Judea and Samaria (8:4–12:25)**
 - a) The Gospel to the Samaritans (8:4–25)**
 - b) The Conversion of a Gentile (8:26–40)**
 - c) The Conversion of Saul (9:1–31)**
 - d) The Gospel to Judea (9:32–43)**
 - e) The Gospel to the Gentiles (10:1–11:30)**
 - f) The Persecution by Herod (12:1–25)**

- 3. The Witness to the Ends of the Earth (13:1–28:31)**
 - a) Paul’s First Missionary Journey (13:1–14:28)**
 - b) The Jerusalem Council (15:1–35)**
 - c) Paul’s Second Missionary Journey (15:36–18:22)**
 - d) Paul’s Third Missionary Journey (18:23–21:16)**
 - e) Paul’s Jerusalem and Caesarean Trials (21:17–26:32)**
 - f) Paul’s Journey to Rome (27:1–28:31)**

Conclusion:

What opportunities for sharing the gospel can you take advantage of in the days to come?

In every chapter of Acts, apostles such as Peter and Paul powerfully present the gospel to individuals and groups of people. The apostles portrayed in Acts shine with evangelistic zeal, showing a striking transition from the often-misguided disciples of the Gospels.

The apostles' faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus produced a noticeable change in their hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Too often, our own lives do not reflect that sort of change. We struggle with fears over how others will react to our faith or with breaking out of our own routine long enough to invest in the life of someone else who needs the gospel.

Let the book of Acts encourage you to walk more closely with God so that you might make Christ's name known with the boldness and the zeal of the apostles.