

Acts Notes

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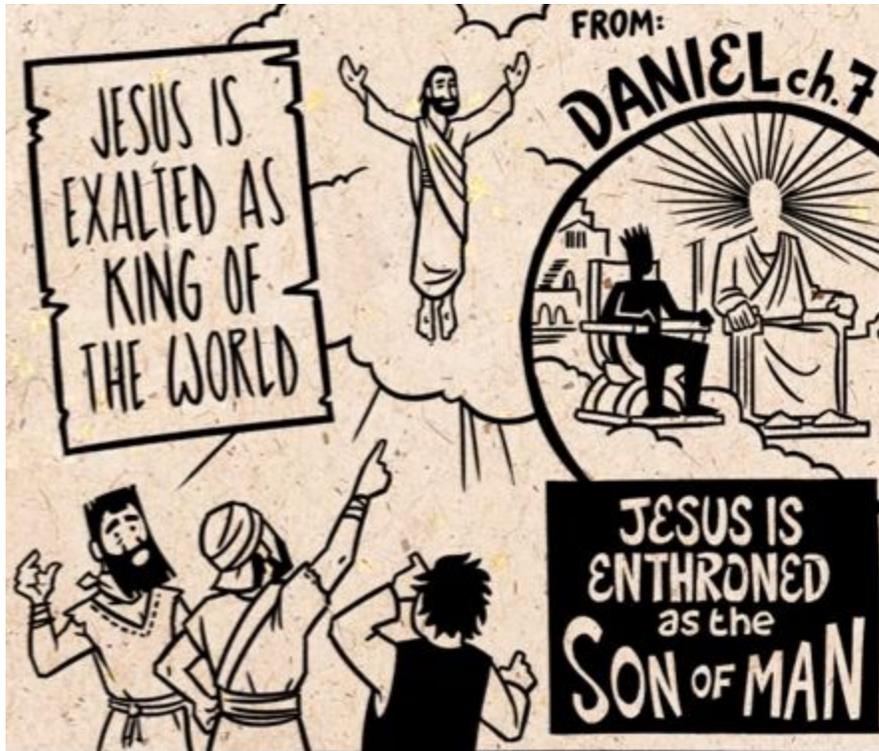
- A unified, two volume work
- From the same author: Luke
 - A traveling co-worker with Paul ([Col 4:14](#), [Philemon 24](#))
- [1:1](#): Implication: all the things Jesus **began** to do and teach
 - Acts = what Jesus **continued** to do and teach
- Traditional Name: The Acts of the Apostles
 - A more accurate name: The Acts of Jesus and the Holy Spirit

[Book of Acts Timeline](#)

Chapter 1 Introduction

The risen Jesus spends 40 days with the disciples teaching them about the Kingdom of God

- This connects back to the story of Luke's Gospel
 - Jesus claimed that he was restoring God's Kingdom over the world beginning with Israel
 - Called Israel to live under God's reign by following Him
 - He was enthroned as King through giving of His Life in Death and Resurrection
- He Promises that the Spirit would soon come and immerse them in His personal presence
 - Fulfills prophetic hope ([Isaiah 32](#), [Ezekiel 36](#), [Joel 2](#))
 - New Temple in the Messianic Kingdom filled with God's presence
- **When this happens: The Spirit will empower...**
 "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth"(See [1:8](#))



From here Jesus is taken up from their sight in a cloud (See [Daniel 7](#))

- Jesus is being enthroned as the Son of Man who was vindicated after His suffering and now shares in God's rule over the world. He promises that He will return one day.

Themes and Design

A story about Jesus leading His people by the Spirit to go out into the world and invite all nations to live under His reign

How God's Kingdom came on Earth as in Heaven through Jesus and His Spirit and His Church

Examples of Faithfulness to King Jesus:

- Sharing the good news in word and action
- Forming diverse communities where people are equals
- Trusting in the power and guidance of the Spirit to lead the way forward

Chapters 2-7 In Jerusalem

The message begins by being spread here.

Chapter 2 Pentecost

- Jesus followers wait until the Feast of Pentecost when all of the Jewish pilgrims from all over the ancient world were in the city.
- The Holy Spirit comes on the Disciples as a great wind
- Something like flames appear over each person's head
In the Past: [Exodus 40](#), [2 Chronicles 7](#)
In the Future: [Ezekiel 43](#), [Haggai 2](#)
- Together they started announcing and telling stories of God's mighty deeds
- Speaking in languages that they didn't know before, but all of the people gathered there understood perfectly

The New Temple is Jesus' New Covenant Family - the people of Jesus

Israel reunified under the Messianic King ([Isaiah 11](#), [Ezekiel 37](#))

- Luke describes the international multi-tribe makeup of all of the Israelites who were there at Pentecost and responded to Peter's message
- The apostles keep calling Israelites to acknowledge Jesus as their messiah and thousands upon thousands respond forming new communities of generosity of worship and celebration...but not everybody celebrated

Chapters 3-5 A Tale of Two Cities

2:46 - 5:42 Jesus' Disciples Gather Daily in the Temple Courts and House to House

3-4a - 5b Peter Heals and Preaches in the Temple--Arrested and Tried

- Two stories
- Arrested by the temple leaders then Peter delivers a sermon stating that Jesus is the true King of Israel

4b - 5a Jesus' Followers Sell Possessions to Support the Poor

- Center of all of this, story of Jesus followers donating property and possessions to the poor to a common fund for the poor, but seems randomly placed, yet not
 - Practice described in the laws of the Torah; Supposed to be happening through the Jerusalem Temple and its leaders ([Deuteronomy 15](#))
 - Luke's point: The New temple of Jesus' community is now where people encounter God's generosity and healing presence.

Chapters 6:1-8:3 First Persecution

Conflict between the two temples culminates in Chapters 6-7

Jesus' followers continue to multiply, requiring more leaders

- Stephen - a bold witness for Jesus in Jerusalem
 - Ends up getting arrested and he's accused of speaking against and threatening the temple
 - He gives a long speech showing how Israel's leaders have always rejected the messengers God sent them including Jesus and now His disciples
 - The Jerusalem leaders are enraged; murder Stephen; then launch a wave of persecution against Jesus' followers that drives most of them from the city
 - **Paradox:** Luke shows how this tragedy is the means by which Jesus' people are now sent out into Judea and Samaria

Chapters 8-12 Judea and Samaria

How the mostly Jewish, Jerusalem-based community of Jesus became A Multi-ethnic, international movement

Chapter 8 Philip in Samaria

Land of Israel's hated enemies and many of them come to follow Jesus

Chapter 9a Conversion of Saul of Tarsus

Saul ([Pharisee](#)) = later Paul

Sworn enemy and persecutor of Jesus' followers until he personally met the risen Jesus (See [9:3-4](#)); Then became a passionate advocate on behalf of Jesus.

Chapters 9b-11a Peter and Cornelius

Peter has a vision about how God does not consider non-Jewish people ritually impure or unworthy of joining Jesus' family

- Peter is led by the Spirit into the house of a Roman soldier, full of non-Jewish people
 - They all respond to the good news about Jesus

- The Spirit shows up upon them powerfully just as He did to the Jewish disciples in Chapter 2

Chapters 11b The Church in Antioch

Antioch - Largest and most cosmopolitan city in that part of the Roman empire

- Barnabas: Jewish leader from the Jerusalem church, goes along with Paul to help lead this church community
 - Became the first large multi-ethnic church in history
 - Where Jesus' followers are called Christians (See [11:26](#))
 - 1st international missionaries are sent out

Chapters 13-28 The Ends of the Earth

Chapters 13-20 The Missionary Journeys

Stories about Paul and his co-workers traveling to different cities around the Roman Empire announcing the good news that Jesus is King.

Themes

- Continued mission to Israel - whenever Paul enters a new city, he always goes to the Jewish synagogue first to share Jesus is King of Israel AND the Nations!
 - Most often people receive this
 - Some oppose Paul and even throw him out of town as a dangerous rebel who opposes the Torah and the Jewish tradition

Chapter 13-14 Asia Minor

Interior of modern Turkey

Chapter 15 The Jerusalem Council

After the 1st journey, tension culminates

Some Jewish Christians in Antioch **claim**:

Unless non-Jewish people become Jewish by **practicing circumcision, the sabbath, obeying the couture food laws**, that they can't become part of Jesus' family

- Paul and Barnabas radically disagree so they take this to a leadership council in Jerusalem
- Peter, Paul, James (the brother of Jesus) - show from scriptures (Amos) and experience that God's plan was to always include non-Jews in His covenant people
 - They write a letter:

- Requiring non-Jewish people to stop participating in pagan temple sacrifices but don't require them to adopt an ethnic Jewish identity or obey the laws in the Torah.
- Groundbreaking: Jesus is the Jewish Messiah, but He is also the risen King of all Nations.
- Membership in Jesus' family is not based on ethnicity or Torah observance, but simply on trusting and obeying Jesus and following His teachings.

Chapter 16-18a Asia Minor and Greece

Chapter 13-14 Asia Minor and Greece Again!

Concludes with Paul's journey back to Jerusalem

Chapters 14, 16-17, 19 The Clash of the Cultures

Clash between the early Christians and the Greek and Roman world: Theme of the Missionary journeys: Phillipi, Athens, Ephesus

Paul declares: The risen Jesus is the one true God and King and shows up other gods as powerless and futile.

- Accused as a dangerous social revolutionary
- Stories show how multi-ethnic, monotheistic Jesus communities did not fit into any cultural boxes known to the Roman people

Chapter 17-18 Accusations of Rebellion

Said of Paul and Christians:

He is defying Cesar, saying there's another King Jesus (see [17:7](#))

The Christian way of life does challenge to many Roman cultural values, and they were announcing another King, but every time is brought up before these charges, he is not seen as a threat and released.

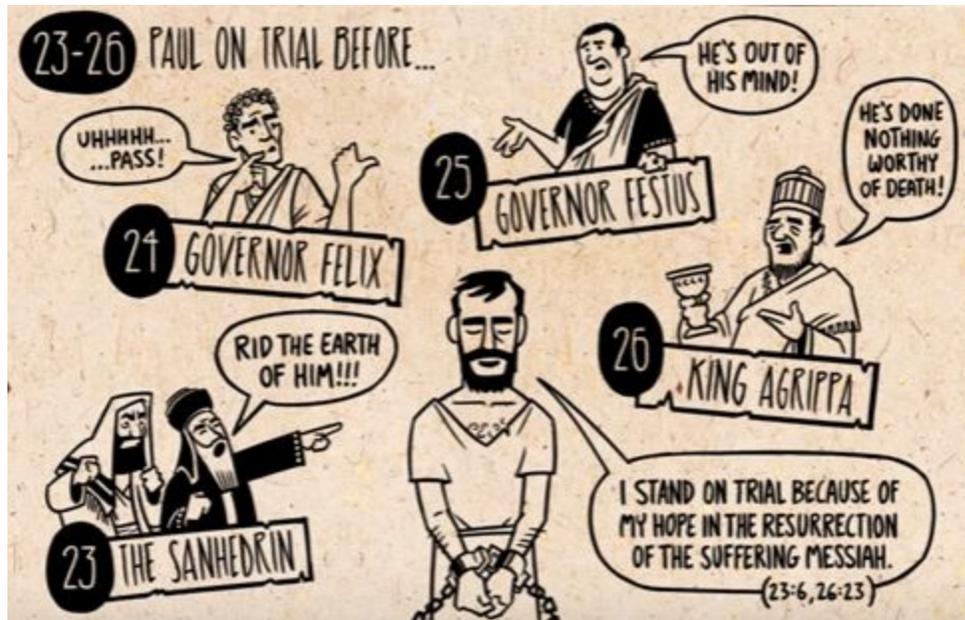
The Paradox of the Early Church:

- A Jewish messianic movement but ethnically diverse
- Men, women, rich, poor, slave, free all treated as equals
- Loyal to Jesus alone

But they posed no military threat to Rome because Jesus taught them to be people of peace

The only crime they can be found guilty of is not conforming to the status quo.

Chapters 21-28 Paul's Witness Spreads to Rome



Chapters 21-22 Paul is Arrested in Jerusalem

His final missionary journey -

- his controversial reputation precedes him
- he gets attacked by Jewish people who think he has betrayed Israel (see [21:28](#))
 - Attracts the Roman soldiers who think that he is a terrorist from Egypt starting a rebellion (see [21:38](#))
 - So he gets arrested

Chapters 23-26 Paul on Trial Before...

Chapter 23 [The Sanhedrin](#)

- The Jewish leaders - "Rid the Earth of Him"
- Paul says "I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the suffering messiah (see [23:6](#), [26:23](#))"

Chapter 24 Governor Felix

Puts Paul off for the next Governor Festus

Chapter 25 Governor Festus

Paul's out of his mind! Brings Paul before King Agrippa

Chapter 26 King Agrippa

Paul ends up in prison for years and the crime never stick
Roman legal machine can't just turn him away so he appeals to the highest court

Paul's imprisonment allows time to compose his apostolic letters and his missionary legacy continues long after he dies:

- To: Colossae
- To: Ephesus
- To: Philippi
- To: Philemon

Chapter 27 Eventually Paul Sent as Prisoner to Rome

Near death Shipwreck

Chapter 28 Under House Arrest in Rome

Awaiting his delayed trial

Host meetings in a nice house

- Holds regular meetings that reach Jews and Gentiles
- Paul announced the kingdom of God for two full years, boldly teaching all about the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, totally unhindered. (see [28:30-31](#)) right under Caesar's nose in Rome.