

The ACTS of the Apostles: Disciples Then and Now



Week 1	The Birth of the Church - Intro & Acts 1 - 2
Week 2	The Early Church Community - Acts 3 - 8
Week 3	The Conversion of Paul - Acts 9:1-30
Week 4	Peter & Cornelius and the Council of Jerusalem - Acts 9:31-12:25 & 15:1-34
Week 5	Paul's Missionary Journeys - Acts 13 - 14 & 16 - 21
Week 6	Paul's Journey to Rome - Acts 22 - 28

A. The Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament Canon

1. Gospels
2. The Acts of the Apostles
 - a. second volume to the Gospel of Luke
 - b. bridge from the Gospels to the letters of Paul
3. Epistles of Paul
4. Epistles of John
5. Other Epistles

B. Historical Context of Acts

1. Author - Luke
 - a. Companion of Paul (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:24; "we" sections of Acts 16-28)
 - b. Physician (Col 4:14 - "beloved physician")
 - c. Gentile (?) - early tradition, born in Antioch (place where disciples first called "Christians" - Acts 11:26)
 - d. Historian - Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-5
2. Purpose
 - a. "orderly account" based on "eyewitnesses," after "investigating everything"
 - b. written to Theophilus ("God lover")
 - c. an apology (formal defense of beliefs) for faith in Christ
3. Date
 - a. Acts narrative covers from ascension of Jesus (approx 30 AD) through Paul's imprisonment in Rome (approx 62 AD)
 - b. possibly written around time of Paul's imprisonment (approx 62 AD)

C. Outline of Acts

1. The Establishment of the Church – Acts 1-7
2. The Expansion of the Church – Acts 8-12
3. Paul’s First Missionary Journey – Acts 13-14
4. The Council at Jerusalem – Acts 15
5. Paul’s Second Missionary Journey – Acts 16-18
6. Paul’s Third Missionary Journey – Acts 19
7. Paul’s Journey to Rome – Acts 20-28

The Birth of the Church – Chapters 1 – 2

A. Acts 1:1-5 – Prologue

B. Acts 1:6-11 – the Ascension of Jesus

1. v 6 – “restore the kingdom of Israel?” – Jewish and Gentile Christians
2. v 8 – a theme verse for Acts
 - a. the Holy Spirit – mentioned 13 times in Luke and 41 times in Acts
 - b. witnesses – preaching throughout Acts (Isaiah 43:10-12)
 - c. geography – movement of the gospel out from Jerusalem to known world
3. v 11 – the second coming of Jesus, the Messiah (Daniel 7:13-14)

C. Acts 1:12-26 – the selection of Matthias

1. v 14, 15 – about 120 disciples, including Mary, a possible source for Luke – devoting themselves to prayer
2. vv 16-20 – Judas Iscariot (Matt 27:5); Peter quotes Psalm 69:25 and Psalm 109:8
3. vv 21-22 – “a witness with us to his resurrection”
 - a. the significance of 12 apostles – (Simon) Peter, Andrew, James and John (“sons of Zebedee”), Matthew (Levi), Thomas (“the twin”), Philip, Bartholomew, James (“son of Alphaeus”), Simon (“the Zealot”), Thaddeus/*Judas (son of James)*, Judas Iscariot (“who betrayed him”) – Israel’s 12 tribes
 - b. the significance of eyewitnesses – giving testimony
 - c. ‘casting lots’ – a practice in the OT to discern God’s will (Leviticus 16:8, Numbers 26:55, 1 Chronicles 25:8, etc.)

Chapter 2 - Pentecost

A. Acts 2:1-41 - the Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost

4. **vv 1-4** - fulfillment of promise
 - a. Pentecost - Greek: 'fifty'; Hebrew: "Festival of *Weeks*" (*Shavuot*)
 - i. fifty days after *Passover* - celebration of receiving the Law (Lev 23:15-22)
 - ii. fifty days after resurrection of Jesus - promised Holy Spirit comes (Acts 1:8; John 16:13 - "guide you in all truth")
 - b. filled with the Holy Spirit
 - i. wind - Hebrew, *ruach*; Greek, *pneuma* - Spirit, wind, breath - God' life-giving power (Gen 1:2, Ezekiel 37:9, Psalm 104:29-30; John 3:8; John 20:22)
 - ii. fire - God's refining and reforming power (Ex 24:17, Deut 4:24, Luke 3:16)
 - c. "other languages" - gospel proclaimed cross-culturally
 - i. reversal of Babel? (Genesis 11:1-9)
 - ii. "speaking in tongues" - spiritual gift listed by Paul (1 Corinthians 12:28-31)
5. **vv 5-13** - the astonished crowd's response
 - a. locations listed north (Cappadocia), south (Egypt), east (Mesopotamia), and west (Rome) of Jerusalem
 - b. gospel spreads to the "ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8)
6. **vv 14-36** - Peter's preaches the gospel - first extended sermon in Acts
 - a. **vv 16-21** - fulfillment of prophecy - Joel 2:28-32
 - i. v 17 - Spirit poured on "all flesh" - all hear and speak the gospel of Jesus
 - ii. v 21 - salvation in the *Lord* - Joel, Yahweh; Peter, Jesus
 - b. **vv 22-24** - Jesus of Nazareth, handed over and crucified, raised from death
 - c. **vv 25-36** - Jesus, the true Lord and Messiah, the *anointed* one (2 Samuel 5:3, Psalm 2) - contrasted with David
 - i. Jesus rose from the dead, David did not (Psalm 16:8-11)
 - ii. Jesus ascended into heaven, David did not (Psalm 110:1, Luke 20:42)
4. **vv 37-41** - the astonished crowd's response - "what should we do?"
 - a. **v 38** - repent (*metanoia*) and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, sins forgiven, and receive the Holy Spirit - initiation into Christian faith
 - b. v 41 - 3,000 persons added to the disciples - birth of the church

B. **Acts 2:42-47** – characteristics of the early church – evangelism, in words and actions

(Lesslie Newbigin, "The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society")

1. v 42 – they devoted themselves to “apostle’s teaching and fellowship” and “breaking bread and prayers” – Word and Sacrament
2. v 43 – “many wonders and signs”
3. v 44 – “had all things in common” (Deuteronomy 15:7-8)
4. v 46 – “time in the Temple”; “broke bread at home”
5. v 47 – “praising God”
6. v 48 – “having the goodwill of all the people”

The Early Church Community - Chapters 3 - 8

Chapters 3 & 4 - Peter and John

A. Acts 3:1-26 - Peter and John, healing and preaching

1. vv 1-10 - a man restored to mobility
 - a. v 2 - "Beautiful Gate" - entrance to Temple; "alms" - charitable giving
 - b. v 6 - "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk"
 - i. 'name' - power and authority - also v 16
 - ii. commissioning of the twelve apostles - take no money, heal (Luke 9:1-6)
 - c. vv 9-10 - "all the people saw" and were "filled with wonder and amazement"
2. **vv 11-26** - Peter preaches the gospel
 - a. v 13 - God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, ancestors - rooted in Jewish faith
 - b. v 15 - "killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses"
 - c. v 18 - fulfillment of prophecy, Jesus is the Messiah
 - i. vv 22-23 - Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-19)
 - ii. v 24 - Samuel (1 Samuel 3:20)
 - iii. v 25 - Abraham (Genesis 12:3)

B. Acts 4:1-22 - Peter and John before the council

1. vv 1-7 - Peter and John arrested and questioned
 - a. vv 1-2 - priests, guards, Sadducees - Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead (Luke 20:27; Acts 23:8)
 - b. v 6 - high priests - Annas, father in law of Caiaphas, who both handed over Jesus to be crucified (John 11:49; 18:14)
 - c. v 7 - "by what power or by what name"
2. **vv 8-12** - Peter preaches the gospel
 - a. v 8 - "filled with the Holy Spirit"
 - b. vv 10-11 - "name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth," crucified and risen (Psalm 118:22, quoted by Jesus in Matthew 21:42, speaking of himself)
 - c. v 12 - salvation in his name alone

3. vv 13-21 – Peter and John are released
 - a. vv 13-14 – council has “nothing to say in opposition” to *boldness* of Peter and John and presence of the healed man
 - b. v 17 – order them not to speak to anyone in name of Jesus
 - c. vv 18-20 – Peter and John “cannot keep from speaking about that we have seen and heard” – eyewitnesses giving testimony to Jesus Christ
- C. Acts 4:23-31 – the disciples pray for *boldness* (outspokenness, plainness, frankness; Acts 2:29; Acts 28:31)
1. v 24 – “Sovereign Lord” – trust in God
 2. vv 25-27 – Psalm 2:1-3, applied to Herod, Pontius Pilate, Gentiles, and peoples of Israel
 3. vv 29-30 – proclamation in word and deed
 - a. v 29 – “speak your word with *boldness*”
 - b. v 30 – “heal, and signs and wonders” in the name of Jesus
 - c. v 31 – filled with the Holy Spirit, and spoke with *boldness*
- D. Acts 4:32-5:11 – Early Church Community
7. vv 32-35
 - a. v 32 – “no one claimed private ownership”... everything “held in common”
 - b. v 33 – “with great power apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ”
 - c. v 35 – “laid it at the apostle’s feet” – leadership of the twelve
 8. **vv 36-37** – Barnabas
 - a. Levite, tribe of Levi, priestly tribe; from Cyprus, Mediterranean Sea island
 - b. apostles gave him the name Barnabas, “son of encouragement” (exhortation, conciliation, comfort); sold field and gave money to community; “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith” (Acts 11:24)
 - c. later, advocate for Paul (Acts 9:27), apostle who accompanied Paul on first missionary journey (Acts 13:2); cousin of John Mark (Colossians 4:10)

Chapter 5 - Proclamation and Persecution

A. Acts 5:1-11 - Ananias and Sapphira - "but..."

1. vv 3-10 - rejection of communal relationship
 - a. not withholding, but attempted deception of God and the church - "lie to the Holy Spirit" (v 3) and "put the Spirit of the Lord to the test" (v 9)
 - b. Satan - 'adversary' - "Get behind me, Satan" (Matthew 16:23)
 - c. Peter in prophetic role, leader of the church
2. v 11 - first reference in Acts to "church," Greek, *ecclesia*, regularly summoned legislative body

B. Acts 5:12-42 - Healings, Persecution, Preaching

1. vv 12-16 - healings
 - a. v 12 - Solomon's Portico - located in 'Women's Court' of Temple Courtyard
 - b. vv 14 - "great numbers" added
 - c. v 16 - many people came "and they were all cured"
2. vv 17-28 - persecution
 - a. vv 17-21 - apostles arrested and freed
 - i. angel of the Lord opens the prison doors
 - ii. go and "tell the people the whole message about this life"
 - b. vv 21-28 - apostles brought before the council
3. vv 29-32 - preaching, "we must obey God rather than any human authority"

C. vv 33-39 - Gamaliel's counsel, "let them alone"

1. Rabban Gamaliel the Elder
 - a. Pharisee, teacher of the law, "respected by all the people" - Paul said he was "educated under Gamaliel" (Acts 22:3)
 - b. Grandson of Hillel the Elder; in Christian tradition, believed to have converted to Christianity
2. Uprisings - Jewish revolts against Roman rule
 - i. v 36 - Theudas?
 - ii. v 37 - Judas the Galilean - rebelled during census taken by Quirinius - census during which Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem (Luke 2:2)

D. vv 40-42 - apostles released and rejoice at being "worthy to suffer" for Jesus

Chapters 6 & 7 – Stephen’s Ministry and Martyrdom

A. Acts 6:1-7 – Early Church Community

1. v 1 – Hellenists and Hebrews
 - a. Greek-speaking Jewish Christians and Aramaic-speaking Jewish Christians
 - b. “daily distribution of food” – providing for those in need
2. vv 2-7 – service
 - a. v 2 – “wait on tables,” ‘serve,’ Greek *diakonia*, ‘deacon’
 - b. v 3 – “seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom”
 - c. v 5 – Stephen, “a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit”

B. Acts 6:8-7:60 – Stephen, following in the footsteps of Jesus

1. Acts 6:8-15 – Stephen’s Arrest
 - a. vv 8-10 – Stephen “full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people” – proclaims good news in word and deed
 - b. vv 11-14 – accused
 - i. accused by false witnesses – as Jesus was (Matthew 26:59-60)
 - ii. accused of speaking against the Temple – as Jesus was (Matthew 26:61)
 - iii. accused of blasphemy – as Jesus was (Matthew 26:65)
 - c. v 15 – face like an angel – countenance of Moses when received law (Exodus 34:29-35) and Jesus at transfiguration (Luke 9:29)
2. Acts 7:1-53 – Stephen’s Sermon
 - a. vv 1-8 – Abraham
 - i. God’s call of Abraham (Genesis 11:31-12:5; 15:13-14)
 - ii. God’s covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:9-10)
 - b. vv 9-16 – Joseph (Genesis 37-50) – rejected by brothers, God was with him
 - c. vv 17-44 – Moses – rejected by the people, God was with him
 - i. Moses’ youth in Egypt (Exodus 1-2)
 - ii. Exodus (Exodus 3-12)
 - iii. Wilderness (Exodus 13-40)
 - ~ vv 42-43 worship of pagan gods (quotes Amos 5:25-27)
 - ~ v 44 “tent of testimony” – tabernacle

- d. vv 45-50 – David
 - i. David’s son Solomon built the Temple, God’s house
 - ii. but God does not dwell in houses made by human hands (quotes Isaiah 66:1-2, which continues, “...but this is the one to whom I will look, to the humble and contrite in spirit, who trembles at my word.”)
- e. vv 51-53 – council rejected Jesus, though he is the Messiah
 - i. “stiff-necked” (Exodus 32:9) – Israelites in the wilderness, “opposing the Holy Spirit”
 - ii. persecution of prophets – Jesus laments over Jerusalem as the city that “kills the prophets” (Luke 13:34)
 - iii. “you” betrayed and murdered “the Righteous One,” Jesus Christ – the council received the law but did not keep it
- 3. **Acts 7:54-60** – Stephen’s Martyrdom
 - a. vv 55-56 – at his trial, Jesus said “the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God” (Luke 22:69)
 - b. v 59 – on the cross, Jesus said “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit” (Luke 23:42)
 - c. v 60 – on the cross, Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34)
 - d. introduction of Saul, who will become Paul – he watched their coats and “approved of their killing” Stephen (Acts 22:20)

Chapter 8 – Philip the Evangelist

- A. Acts 8:1-25 – The Gospel Spreads
 - 1. vv 1-4 – Persecution
 - a. v 1 – disciples “scattered throughout” Judea and Samaria (Acts 1:8)
 - b. v 3 – Saul “ravaging” the church, dragging Christians off to prison
 - 2. vv 4-25 – Disciples in Samaria
 - a. vv 4-8 – Philip, preached and healed and spread “great joy” in the city
 - i. Philip the Evangelist, not Philip the Apostle
 - ii. one of the Seven chosen to serve (Acts 6:5) – Paul stayed with him in Caesarea; he had four daughters with the gift of prophecy (Acts 21:8-9)

- iii. church tradition – became Bishop of Tralles (in western Turkey)
 - b. vv 9-24 – Simon Magus
 - i. vv 9-13 – claimed greatness – *even* he believed and was baptized
 - ii. vv 14-17 – Peter and John sent from Jerusalem to authenticate Samaritan mission – laid hands on believers, they received the Holy Spirit, apparently gift of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:4; Acts 10:45-46)
 - iii. vv 18-23 – Simon wanted to buy power of God – Peter rebukes him, his heart was not right with God, “bitterness” (Deuteronomy 29:18)
 - iv. v 24 – Simon Magus repented (?) – church tradition, he instigated heresies, perhaps Gnosticism
 - c. v 25 – Peter and John preach in Samaria
- B. vv 26-40 – Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch
1. v 26 – Philip directed by an angel to go south toward “wilderness road”
 2. vv 27-28 – the Ethiopian eunuch
 - a. from African nation; treasurer, position of power under Candace, title meaning ‘queen’; either a *proselyte* (convert to Judaism) or *God-fearer* (attended synagogue); dedicated enough to worship in Jerusalem
 - b. Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo church traces Christianity in Ethiopia to this Ethiopian eunuch
 3. vv 29-35 – Philip preaches the good news
 - a. v 29 – Philip directed by the Spirit to go to chariot
 - b. vv 30-34 – Ethiopian eunuch is reading Isaiah 53:7-8 – Luke/Acts consistently interprets Isaiah as speaking of Jesus Christ (e.g., Luke 4 and Isaiah 61)
 - c. v 35 – Philip explains the Scripture in terms of the good news – significant role of disciples in proclaiming Scripture (Romans 10:14-17)
 4. vv 36-39 – the Ethiopian eunuch is baptized
 - i. “what is to prevent me from being baptized?” – nothing
 - ii. he is baptized and goes “on his way rejoicing”
 5. v 40 – Philip “snatched away” by Spirit and “found himself” in Azotus (also known as Ashdod), on coast west of Jerusalem, proclaimed the good news up coast to Caesarea

Approximate Chronology of the Life of Paul

AD 5 Born in Tarsus (Acts 22:28)

35 Conversion (Acts 9:1-19; Acts 22:1-22; Acts 26:1-22; Gal 1:11-24; 1 Cor 15:8-10)

46-48 First Missionary Journey (Acts 13-14) *writes Gal*

48 Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15)

49-52 Second Missionary Journey (Acts 15-18) *writes 1 & 2 Thess*

53-57 Third Missionary Journey (Acts 18-21) *writes 1 & 2 Cor, Rom*

57-59 Imprisonment in Judea (Acts 21-26)

60-64 Imprisonment in Rome (Acts 27-28) *writes Eph, Phil, Col, Phm, Titus, 1 & 2 Tim*

64 Martyrdom in Rome

Chapter 9 – The Conversion of Paul

A. Acts 9:1-19 – The Conversion of Saul / Paul – a “Damascus Road” experience

1. vv 1-9 – the Road to Damascus

- a. vv 1-2 – Damascus, ancient and key commercial city in Syria, just above Galilee region in Israel, 150 miles north of Jerusalem – spread of Christianity, and spread of persecution – zeal of Saul
- b. v 2 – followers of “the Way” – very early name for Christians (Acts 11:26)
- c. vv 3-9 – Jesus encounters Saul
 - i. vv 4-5 – persecuting the church *is* persecuting Jesus; church is “the body of Christ” (e.g., Romans 12:1, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 4:12)
 - ii. vv 5-6 – Saul does as Jesus tells him, goes into Damascus
 - iii. v 9 – without sight, food, water for “three days” – reference to Jesus Christ in the tomb – Saul moves from death to life; “I have been crucified with Christ” (Gal 2:19)

2. vv 10-19 – Ananias and Saul

- a. Ananias – a man of good standing among the Christian and Jewish (Acts 22:12) communities
- b. vv 10-12 – also has a vision of the Lord – responds “Here I am” (response of Abraham, Moses, Samuel, and Isaiah)
- c. vv 13-16 – also converted by the Lord regarding his opinion of Saul – takes a great risk to go to Saul

- d. vv 17-19 – “Brother Saul,” Ananias greets Saul with forgiveness and hospitality – Saul is healed and filled with the Holy Spirit, baptized, regains his strength, and spends time with disciples
- e. *Name change occurs when he begins his missionary journeys (Acts 13:9)*

A note on conversion – Scripture affirms Jesus encounters different people in different ways – some conversions, like Paul’s, are punctiliar (occur in a point in time) – some, like the Twelve Apostles, are unfolding (occur over time) –

Fuller Seminary Professor Richard Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*

B. Acts 9:20-30 – Saul preaches and is persecuted

1. v 20 – Saul immediately proclaims in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God – goes to the very places for which he had letters of arrest
2. vv 21-22 – confounds his Jewish opposition with both the power of his arguments and the power of his transformation
3. vv 23-25 – Jewish opposition attempts to kill him, but “his disciples” sneak him out of the city, Saul has already gained a following
4. *According to Galatians 1:17-18, Saul left Damascus and spent three years in Arabia before going to Jerusalem, either before or after this incident*
5. vv 26-30 – Saul comes to Jerusalem and preaches boldly
 - a. the disciples fear him, but Barnabas advocates for him
 - b. the Hellenistic Jews want to kill him
 - c. the disciples send him to Caesarea and then Tarsus in Cilicia, his home town (Acts 22:3)

C. Acts 9:31 – the church has peace and increases in numbers

Peter & Cornelius & the Council of Jerusalem – Acts 9:31-12:25 & 15:1-34

Chapter 9 – Peter’s Ministry

- A. Acts 9:32-43 – Peter in Lydda (*approx 25 miles NW of Jerusalem*) and Joppa (*approx 11 miles from Lydda, coast of Mediterranean; 30 miles south of Caesarea*)
1. vv 32-35 – Aeneas is healed in Lydda – Peter states, “Jesus Christ heals you”
 2. vv 36-43 – Tabitha is resurrected in Joppa
 - a. v 36 – Tabitha in Hebrew, Dorcas in Greek, means *gazelle* – called “a disciple”
 - b. vv 38-39 – “devoted to good works and acts of charity,” including making clothes for widows – Dorcas Societies are named after her
 - c. v 42 – “many believed” because she was raised from death to life
- B. v 43 – Peter stays with “Simon, a tanner” – tanners dealt with the hides of dead animals, so the profession was ‘unclean’ by Jewish standards

Chapters 10 & 11 – Peter and Cornelius

- A. Acts 10 – Peter and Cornelius
1. vv 1-8 – Cornelius
 - a. lived in Caesarea, seaport and administrative center for Roman Empire
 - b. “centurion of Italian Cohort” – commander of 80-100 soldiers
 - c. devout *God-fearer* – Gentile aligned with the Jewish faith; believed in one God, read Torah, attended synagogue
 - d. “gave alms generously...and prayer constantly”; “upright and God-fearing,” respected by the “whole Jewish nation” (v 22)
 - e. sees angel of God in a vision – “your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God” – *memorial offering* in Jewish law (Leviticus 2)
 2. vv 9-23 – Peter’s vision
 - a. v 14 – “unclean” food – law God gave to Moses and Aaron (Lev 11); included pig, rabbit, and shellfish, described as an “abomination” (Lev 11:10-11)
 - b. *Gentiles ate ‘unclean’ foods and were considered ‘unclean’ by observant Jewish people*
 - c. v 15 – “What God has made clean, you must not call profane” – foundational shift for Peter and early church – Jesus taught purity centered in the heart, not the stomach, and “declared all foods clean” (Mark 7:19, Luke 11:41)
 - d. “three times” – Peter’s denial (Matthew 26:7) and restoration (John 21:17)

3. vv 24-48 – Cornelius’ household receives the gospel
 - a. v 28 – Peter – “unlawful” for Jews to associate with Gentiles; “but God has shown me that I should not call *anyone* profane or unclean”
 - b. v 34-35 – “God shows no partiality...”
 - c. vv 36-43 – Peter preaches the gospel
 - d. vv 44-48 – they receive the Holy Spirit, “just as” the disciples did, and they are baptized (like the Ethiopian Eunuch, Acts 8:36-38)

B. Acts 11:1-18 – Peter’s Report

1. vv 1-3 – Peter returns to Jerusalem, criticized by Jewish Christians for eating with Gentile Christians – the complaint of the Pharisees against Jesus (Luke 15:2)
2. vv 4-17 – Peter explains “step by step” what happened
 - a. both the vision of Cornelius and the vision of Peter are recounted twice
 - b. Peter makes clear this is the work of God
 - i. v 9 – voice from heaven saying, “What God has made clean, you must not call profane”
 - ii. v 12 – “Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us”
 - iii. v 15 – “Holy Spirit fell on them just as it had on us” (Acts 1:5)
 - iv. v 17 – “who was I that I could hinder God?”
3. v 18 – they praise God, repentance that leads to life given “*even* to the Gentiles”

C. Acts 11:19-30 – the Gospel continues to spread

1. vv 19-26 – disciples travel to Syria, north of Judea – *Phoenicia, Cyprus, Antioch*
 - a. vv 22-24 – church in Jerusalem sends Barnabas to verify Antioch mission
 - b. vv 25-26 – Barnabas brings Saul to Antioch, they teach there for a year
 - c. Antioch on the Orontes River
 - i. regional Roman Capital – one of the largest cities in the Empire
 - ii. home base for Paul – central city for early church – where disciples first called “Christians” (v 26)
2. vv 27-30 – the prophet Agabus (Acts 21:10) predicts a famine (food shortages during the reign of Claudius, 41-54 AD, due to a drought), and the Antioch disciples commission Barnabas and Saul to begin the “Jerusalem Collection”

Chapter 12 – The Disciples and Herod

A. Acts 12:1-5, 20-23 – James killed by Herod Agrippa I

1. James – one of the 12 Apostles (Matt 10:1-4, Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:13-16, Acts 1:13)
 - a. brother of John, “sons of Zebedee” (John 21:2) – named by Jesus, “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17; Mark 10:35-45; Luke 9:54-55) – called by Jesus to “fish for people” (Matt 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:1-11)
 - b. inner circle of Jesus, with Peter and John – Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-32); Jesus raised a girl to life (Luke 8:51-56); Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36); Gethsemane (Matt 26:36-46)
2. Herod Agrippa I
 - a. ruled over Palestine (41-44 AD), grandson of Herod the Great and Mariamne (Jewish Maccabean royalty), nephew of Herod Antipas
 - b. sought favor with the Jewish authorities by killing Apostle James and imprisoning (and planning to kill) Apostle Peter
 - c. died violently in Caesarea

B. Acts 12:6-19 – Peter arrested and miraculously rescued

1. v 12 – home of Mary, mother of John Mark – possible location of the Last Supper
2. v 12 – first mention in Acts of John Mark
 - a. likely author of the Gospel of Mark
 - b. cousin of Barnabas (Col 4:10); close friend of Peter (1 Peter 5:13, “my son, Mark”)
 - c. traveled with Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25) before leaving them (Acts 13:13) and causing a rift (Acts 15:39), which eventually healed (2 Timothy 4:11)
3. v 17 – first mention in Acts of James
 - a. half-brother of Jesus (Gal 1:19) – leader of church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13, 21:18) – wrote the book of James
 - b. did not initially believe in Jesus (John 7:5, Mark 3:21), came to believe, saw Jesus after resurrection (I Cor 15:7)
 - c. also known as “James the Just” – according to Church tradition and historian Josephus, was stoned to death by Jewish authorities

C. Acts 12:24-25 – gospel continues to spread; Saul, Barnabas, Mark return to Jerusalem

Chapter 15:1-35 - The Council at Jerusalem

A. Acts 15:1-21 "the Gentile Question"

1. vv 1-6 - the Council convenes
 - a. vv 1-3 - the debate in Antioch moves to Jerusalem
 - b. vv 4 - Paul and Barnabas report what "God had done with them"
 - c. v 6 - meeting of "apostles" and "elders" (Greek *presbuteros*, 'presbyter' and 'priest'), the leaders of the church; "disciples," all followers of Jesus (Acts 11:26); Paul uses "saints" (epistle greetings; e.g., Rom 1:7, 1 Cor 1:2, Phil 1:1)
2. vv 7-11 - Peter testifies
 - a. God sent Peter to the Gentiles (sent to Cornelius, Acts 10:19-20)
 - b. God gave Gentiles the Holy Spirit "just as he did to us" (Acts 11:15)
 - c. "cleansing their hearts by faith God has made no distinction between them and us" (Acts 10:34, 11:12) - justification by faith, not the law
 - d. Jewish people have not been able to keep the law, why burden Gentiles?
 - e. "we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will" (Paul's words in Romans 5:15, Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2:8, etc.)
3. v 12 - Paul and Barnabas testify
4. vv 13-21 - the Council, led by James, decides
 - a. vv 14-18 - fulfillment of prophecy - Amos 9:11-12, God will restore David's dwelling, so that Gentiles may seek the Lord
 - b. vv 19-21 - not required to keep the law of Moses, but four basic requirements: abstain from things polluted by idols (see 1 Cor 8-9); fornication; (consuming) whatever has been strangled; and (consuming) blood

B. Acts 15:22-35 - the letter to the churches

1. v 22 - introduction of Silas, also known as Silvanus (1 Thess 1:1, 2 Thess 1:1, 1 Peter 5:12, "a faithful brother")
 - a. an elder in Jerusalem (v 22) and a prophet (v 32)
 - b. accompanies Paul on his second missionary journey
2. vv 23-27 - representatives sent to reassure the Gentile Christians
3. vv 28-29 - "it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us"
4. vv 30-33 - the Christians in Antioch receive the news with joy

Paul's Missionary Journeys - Acts 13:1-14:28 & 16:1-20:38

Chapters 13 & 14 - Paul's First Missionary Journey (46-48 AD)

- A. Acts 13:1-3 - Paul and Barnabas are commissioned
- B. Acts 13:4-12 - Paul and Barnabas and Mark in *Cyprus*
 - 1. v 4 - Barnabas was from Cyprus (Acts 4:26)
 - 2. vv 6-8 - Paphos, the capital of Cyprus, center for Aphrodite worship in the ancient world; Sergius Paulus was the governor; Bar-Jesus/Elymas, a "magician and false prophet," worked for Sergius Paulus
 - 3. vv 9-12
 - a. "Saul, also known as Paul" - after this, Paul uses his Greek name
 - b. Paul, "filled with the Holy Spirit," rebukes Elymas, who is temporarily blinded, and Sergius Paulus believes the good news
- C. Acts 13:13-52 - Paul and Barnabas in *Galatia*: Antioch of Pisidia
 - 1. v 13 - Mark leaves Paul and Barnabas and returns to Jerusalem
 - 2. vv 14-41 - Paul preaches the gospel in the synagogue
 - a. v 14 - Paul first preached the gospel in Galatia "because of a physical infirmity" (Gal 4:13) - was this his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor 12:7)?
 - b. v 16 - Israelites and "others who fear God," *God-fearers*, Gentiles
 - c. vv 17-22 - the Exodus; Judges; Samuel; Saul; David, a man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14)
 - d. vv 23-41 - Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise
 - i. v 23 - from David's descendants "God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised"
 - ii. vv 24-25 - witness of John the Baptist (Luke 3:16)
 - iii. vv 26-39 - God has fulfilled promise "by raising Jesus," God's Son (Psalm 2:7); "promises made to David" (Isaiah 55:3); "not let Holy One experience corruption" (Psalm 16:10); Jesus rose from the dead, contrasted with David (Peter's Pentecost sermon, Acts 2:29-31)
 - iv. v 39 - freed by Christ, not by the law of Moses (see Galatians)
 - v. vv 40-41 - believe God is acting (Habakkuk 1:5)
 - vi. vv 42-43 - many "followed Paul and Barnabas"

3. vv 44-52 – Paul and Barnabas are persecuted
 - a. vv 45-46 – Jewish locals reject the good news
 - b. vv 47- Paul’s mission turns to the Gentiles; God intended Israel to be “a light to the Gentiles” (Isaiah 42:6 & 49:6); Jesus is called “a light for revelation to the Gentiles” and the glory of God’s people Israel (Luke 2:32)
 - c. vv 48-52 – Paul and Barnabas “shook the dust off their feet in protest” (Matt 10:14), went to Iconium; *Paul did not give up on his fellow Israelites (Rom 9-11)*

D. Acts 14:1-7 – Paul and Barnabas in *Galatia*: Iconium

1. v 1 – “same thing happened in Iconium”
2. vv 1-7 – Paul and Barnabas preach and God grants “signs and wonders” through them; the people are divided; the apostles are persecuted; the apostles flee and continue to proclaim the good news

E. Acts 14:8-20 – Paul and Barnabas in *Galatia*: Lystra and Derbe

1. vv 1-14 – after a man is healed, the people of Lystra declare that Paul and Barnabas are gods (acting from a local legend regarding Zeus and Hermes)
2. vv 15-18 – Paul preaches, in this context, using ‘natural revelation’ – turn from “these worthless things to the living God” (1 Sam 12:21, Habakkuk 2:18); God is the Creator of all life (Gen 1:1, Ex 20:11); sustenance and joy are a witness to God’s goodness (see Paul’s discussion in Romans 1)
3. vv 19-30 – Paul is stoned and left for dead; he gets up and goes back into the city and continues to proclaim the good news

F. Acts 14:21-28 – Paul and Barnabas Return to *Antioch in Syria*

1. vv 21-23 – they make many disciples and establish elders in the churches in Galatia
2. vv 24-28 – they return to Antioch in Syria and relate “all that God has done with them and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles”

Chapter 15 – Council in Jerusalem

- A. vv 2-5, 12 – Paul and Barnabas testify to all God has been doing among the Gentiles
- B. vv 36-41 – Paul and Barnabas part ways, over John Mark – Barnabas and Mark go to Cyprus; Paul and Silas head for Syria and Cilicia – at some point, Paul and Mark reunite (Col 4:10, 2 Tim 4:11)

Chapters 16, 17, 18 – Paul’s Second Missionary Journey (49-52 AD)

A. Acts 16:1-10 – Paul and Silas and Timothy *and* Luke in *Galatia and Asia*

1. vv 1-5 – introduction of Timothy
 - a. dear friend and student of Paul (“my beloved child,” 2 Tim 1:2, 1 Cor 4:17)
 - b. co-sender of many Pauline letters (2 Cor, Phil, Col, 1 & 2 Thess), representative of Paul (1 Cor 4:17, Phil 2:19)
 - c. Jewish Christian grandmother, Lois, and mother, Eunice (2 Tim 1:5), Greek father; circumcised, in order to minister to Jewish Christians
 - d. Church tradition, Bishop of Ephesus approx 64 AD, died approx 97 AD.
3. vv 6-10 – Paul and company stop in Troas (modern Turkey) – joined by Luke, “we passages” begin – Paul needed a physician (?)

B. Acts 16:11-40 – Paul and Silas and Timothy *and* Luke in *Macedonia*

1. **vv 11-15** – Paul and Co meet Lydia
 - a. Philippi – Roman colony, Jewish prayer by the riverside – man in vision (?)
 - b. Lydia – first recorded Christian convert in Europe – Greek “worshiper of God,” *God-fearer* – from Thyatira, merchant in purple cloth, purple dye was expensive – most likely a widow and head of her household (“she and her household”) – hosts Paul and company during their stay in Philippi (v 40)
2. vv 16-40 – Paul and Silas meet a Slave and a Jailer
 - a. vv 16-18 – Paul frees a female slave from a spirit of divination, costs her “owners” their opportunity for profit
 - b. vv 19-24 – the “owners” drag Paul and Silas before the authorities and accuse them of advocating customs unlawful for Romans, adding “they are Jews” – Paul and Silas are flogged and imprisoned
 - c. **vv 26-29** – an earthquake frees them, and they remain – jailers who let prisoners escape were subject to the prisoners’ punishment
 - d. **vv 30-34** – the jailer asks, “what must I do to be saved?” and they answer, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household” – the jailer tends to their wounds and feeds them
 - e. vv 35-40 – Paul and Silas claim their Roman citizenship and receive a public apology from the Roman authorities

C. Acts 17:1-9 – Paul and Silas in *Thessalonica*

1. vv 1-4 – Paul preaches in the synagogue, Jesus is the Messiah who died and rose again – some come to faith
2. vv 5-9 – the disciples are persecuted – Jason and believers are accused of “turning the world upside down” and saying “there is another king named Jesus” – Jason and believers are released, Paul and Silas move on

D. Acts 17:10-15 – Paul and Silas in *Beroae*

1. vv 10-12 – Paul and Silas preach in the synagogue – many come to faith
2. vv 13-15 – the disciples are persecuted – Paul moves on

E. Acts 17:16-34 – Paul in *Athens*

1. Athens, “cradle of Western civilization,” metropolis, filled with idols
2. vv 16-21 – Paul engages
 - a. v 17 – Paul preaches every day in the synagogue to the “devout” *and* in the marketplace to those who “happened to be there”
 - b. v 18 – center of philosophy – Epicureans: pleasure is the highest good of life – Stoics: overcome emotions and accept life circumstances
 - c. v 19 – Areopagus (Roman, “Mars Hill”) – name of the location *and* the legislative body
3. vv 22-34 – Paul preaches
 - a. vv 22-23 – Paul paid attention, ‘contextual’ sermon, “To an unknown God” (‘hedging their bets’) – Paul, God has made himself known
 - b. vv 24-31 – God is the giver of life – God is close to his creation, “in him we live and move and have our being” and “we too are his offspring” (Aratus of Tarsus, referring to Zeus) – God revealed himself in Jesus, whom he raised from the dead – God calls us to respond now
 - c. vv 32-34 – some scoff, some want to learn more, some believe

F. Acts 18:1-17 – Paul and Co in *Corinth*

1. Corinth, major commercial city, known for immorality (Las Vegas today?)
2. vv 1-4 – Priscilla (Prisca) and Aquila
 - a. left Italy when Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome (approx 49 AD)

- b. tentmakers (also leatherworkers) – companions of Paul, who went with him to Ephesus (Acts 18:19) and risked their lives for him (Rom 16:3)
- c. led a house church (1 Cor 16:19) and instructed Apollos (Acts 18:24-26)
- 3. vv 5-6 – Paul rejected by Jewish listeners, declares he will go to the Gentiles
- 4. vv 7-11 – many believe; Paul receives encouragement
- 5. vv 12-17 – Paul is persecuted – governor Gallio refuses to get involved – Sosthenes is beaten, for losing the case (?); he may have become a believer and companion of Paul (1 Cor 1:1, “our brother”)

G. Acts 18:18-23 – Paul returns to Antioch

Acts 18:24-28 – Ministry of Apollos

A. v 24-26 – Apollos – from Alexandria, center of Jewish scholarship

- 1. v 25 – instructed in “the Way,” but knew only baptism of John – perhaps not yet baptized in Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1-7)?
- 2. v 26 – Priscilla and Aquila explain the Way to him more accurately

B. v 27-28 – Apollos goes to Corinth, and becomes prominent in the church there – Paul writes, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth” (1 Cor 3:6) – also mentioned in Titus (3:13)

Chapters 19, 20, 21 – Paul’s Third Missionary Journey (53-57 AD)

A. Acts 19:1-41 – Paul in *Ephesus*

- 1. vv 1-10 – Paul preaches
 - a. vv 1-3 – like Apollos (Acts 18:25), these disciples had incomplete awareness – law and gospel
 - b. vv 4-7 – Paul explains John’s (water) baptism was for repentance, pointing to belief in Jesus, who baptizes “with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Luke 3:16) – these “about twelve” are baptized in the name of Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, and speak “in tongues and prophecies” (Acts 2:4, 10:46, 19:6)
 - c. vv 8-10 – Paul preaches there for two years
- 2. **vv 11-20** – Sons of Sceva
 - a. v 11-12 – God does healing work through Paul – “handkerchiefs” (for perspiration) and “apron” (for work), Paul making tents (?)

- b. vv 13-15 – sons of Sceva attempt to exorcize an evil spirit by “the Jesus whom Paul proclaims” – evil spirit declares, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” and overpowers them – healing power based in relationship (see Simon Magus, Acts 8:9-24)
 - c. vv 16-20 – many believe, confess their practices, publicly burn their books for practicing magic – and leave their old profession behind
3. vv 21-41 – Riot in Ephesus
- a. vv 21-27 – Paul preaches the good news in Ephesus, a center for the worship of Artemis (v 35) – Demetrius and the silversmiths react – first concern, losing business; second concern, Artemis scorned
 - b. vv 28-34 – a riot ensues – fellow disciples and officials keep Paul away – Gaius (Rom 16:23, 1 Cor 1:14) and Aristarchus (Col 4:10, Phm 1:24), companions of Paul – Alexander attempts a defense, but is shouted down
 - c. vv 35-41 – the town clerk, his position at risk, calms and dismisses the crowd
- B. Acts 20:1-38 – Paul and Co in *Macedonia, Greece, and Asia*
1. vv 1-6 – Paul and company journey through Macedonia and Greece to Troas
 2. **vv 7-12** – Paul’s address in Troas
 - a. v 7 – early church service: “first day of the week” (Sunday); night (after day’s work); Paul “holding a discussion” (preaching/teaching); “met to break bread” (meal, Communion) – Word and Sacrament
 - b. vv 8-12 – Eutychus falls asleep, falls out the window, dies, and comes to life in Paul’s arms
 3. vv 13-16 – Paul and company travel to Miletus – Paul “eager to be in Jerusalem” by Pentecost, wanting to deliver the ‘Jerusalem Collection’ (Acts 11:29-30)
 4. vv 17-38 – Paul speaks to the Ephesian elders
 - a. **vv 17-24** – Paul, following in the footsteps of Jesus – “on my way to Jerusalem,” knowing “imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me”
 - b. vv 25-35 – instructs elders to shepherd the flock (Jesus to Peter, John 21:15-19)
 - c. v 35 – “It is more blessed to give than to receive” – a quote of Jesus not recorded in the Gospels
 - d. vv 36-38 – they say goodbye to Paul

Chapters 21 - 28 - Paul's Journey to Rome

Chapter 21:1-26 - Paul's Journey to Jerusalem

A. Acts 21:1-16 - Paul and Co travel to Jerusalem

1. vv 1-6 - Paul and companions ("we") sail to Tyre - Paul is told by disciples "not to go on to Jerusalem" (v 4), but Paul continues (Acts 19:21) - *Jesus "set his face to go to Jerusalem," knowing what was to come (Luke 9:51)*
2. **vv 7-16** - Paul and companions travel to Jerusalem
 - a. vv 8-9 - visit Philip the Evangelist (Acts 6:5, Acts 8) and his four daughters
 - b. vv 10-11 - prophet Agabus (Acts 11:28) says Jewish religious leaders will "hand over" Paul to the Gentiles - *Jesus said he would be "handed over" to the Gentiles (Matt 20:19)*
 - c. vv 12-14 - Paul says he is ready to die for Jesus - disciples respond "the Lord's will be done" - *Jesus prayed "your will be done" in Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:42)*

B. Acts 21:17-26 - Paul and Co in Jerusalem

1. vv 17-19 - Paul visits James, brother of Jesus, and the elders and relates God's work among the Gentiles through his ministry
2. vv 20-26 - rumors spread Paul taught Jewish people to forsake their traditions - to disprove the rumors, Paul finances four men in their Nazarite vow - Paul, "all things to all people" for the sake of the gospel (1 Cor 9:19-23)

Chapters 21:27-23:11 - Paul's Trials in Jerusalem

A. Acts 21:27-36 - Paul falsely charged and arrested, *echoes charges against Stephen (Acts 6:11-14) and Jesus (Matthew 26:59-65)*

1. vv 27-30 - "Jews from Asia" accuse Paul of teaching against the Jewish people, law, and Temple, and of bringing Trophimus (Acts 20:4, 2 Tim 4:2), a Gentile, into the inner court (an offense punishable by death) - they stir up a mob that attempts to kill Paul
2. vv 31-36 - Claudius Lysias (Acts 23:26), Roman "tribune of the cohort" (military commander of 600 soldiers), breaks up the mob and arrests Paul

B. Acts 21:37-22:21 - Paul speaks to the crowd

1. vv 21:37-22:2 - Lysias believed Paul was an Egyptian rebel (led revolt in approx

54 AD) – Paul clarifies he is a Jew from Tarsus – Paul granted permission to speak, tells his story in Hebrew, crowd listens

2. vv 3-21 – Paul makes his defense to the crowd

a. vv 3-5 – Paul gives his background – Jew, born in Tarsus; brought up “in this city;” studied under Gamaliel; zealous for God, “as all of you are today;” persecuted “this Way” – commonalities with his listeners

b. **vv 6-21** – Paul recounts his conversion (Acts 9)

i. vv 6-13 – Damascus Road experience and encountering Ananias, “well spoken of by all the Jews living there”

ii. vv 14-16 – additional words of Ananias to Paul – “God of our ancestors” has chosen Paul to know his will, see the Righteous One, hear his voice, and be “his witness to all the world”

iii. vv 17-21 – Jesus tells Paul Jewish people will not accept his testimony – Jesus sends Paul to the Gentiles

C. Acts 22:22-30 – Paul claims his Roman citizenship

1. vv 22-23 – crowd incited by Paul’s mission to the Gentiles – *response of crowd to Jesus’ mission to Gentiles (Luke 4:22-30)*

2. v 24 – Lysias orders Paul to be taken into the barracks to be “examined by flogging”

3. vv 25-30 – Paul claims his Roman citizenship (against Roman law to punish a Roman citizen not found guilty of a crime) – Lysias desires to know charges against Paul, brings him before the Council

D. **Acts 23:1-11** – Paul makes his defense to the Council

1. vv 1-5 – Paul states his “clear conscience before God”

a. high priest Ananias orders him struck, unlawfully – *like Jesus (John 18:22-23)*

b. Paul responds to rebuke (Exodus 22:28) – didn’t see? sarcasm? doesn’t recognize the authority of Ananias, since he is not acting as high priest

2. vv 6-9 – Paul reads the crowd and finds a point of contention, resurrection, between the Pharisees and Sadducees

3. v 10 – Lysias, again, pulls Paul from a crowd threatening to kill him

4. v 11 – the Lord encourages Paul; the journey to Rome is ahead

Chapters 23:12-24:27 – Paul’s Trial before Felix

A. Acts 23:12-35 – the plot to kill Paul

1. vv 12-15 – forty Jewish opponents of Paul vow to kill him and conspire with the chief priests and elders to do so – *like Jesus (Matthew 26:3-4)*
2. vv 16-22 – Paul’s nephew (the only mention of Paul’s family in the NT) warns Paul and tells Lysias of the plot
3. vv 23-35 – Lysias sends Paul under guard to governor Felix in Caesarea
 - a. Caesarea was the seat of the Roman government in Judea
 - b. Felix – freed slave and brother of Pallas, who served Emperors Claudius and Nero; governor of Judea from approx 52-60 AD, known for his cruelty and corruption; second wife was Drusilla, daughter of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12)

B. Acts 24:1-27 – Paul before Felix

1. vv 1-9 – Paul is accused by Tertullus and others
 - a. “a pestilent fellow,” ‘public menace/enemy’ – agitator among all the Jews
 - b. “ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes” – reference to followers of Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 2:22, 4:10, 22:8)
 - c. attempting to “profane the temple” – Sadducees were leaders in temple system and pro-Roman
2. vv 10-21 – Paul makes his defense
 - a. vv 10-13, 17-20 – Paul states there is no proof for charges against him
 - b. **vv 14-16, 21** – Paul affirms “I worship the God of our ancestors” and hope in the resurrection (Acts 23:6) – centrality of the resurrection
3. vv 22-27 – Felix defers
 - a. vv 22-23 – gives Paul some liberty in custody, two years pass
 - b. vv 24-26 – listens to Paul speak about faith in Jesus Christ, but does not want to hear about “justice, self-control, and coming judgment”

Chapter 25:1-22 – Paul’s Trial before Porcius Festus

A. Acts 25:1-12 – Festus hears from Paul and his accusers

1. vv 1-5 – Jewish authorities in Jerusalem speak against Paul to Festus
2. vv 6-7 – Jewish authorities travel to Caesarea to accuse Paul before Festus

3. **vv 8-11** – Paul makes his defense
 - a. states his innocence
 - b. “I appeal to the emperor” – the right of every Roman citizen
4. v 12 – Festus agrees to send Paul to the emperor, to Rome

B. Acts 25:13-22 – Festus consults Agrippa

1. v 13 – Herod Agrippa II – son of Herod Agrippa I, brother of Drusilla and Bernice, last prince of Herod family
2. vv 14-21 – Festus recounts events, states Paul and Jewish leaders disagreed “about their own religion and about a certain Jesus” and his resurrection
3. v 22 – Agrippa states he would like to hear Paul for himself

Chapters 25:23-26:32 – Paul’s Trial before Agrippa

A. Acts 25:23-27 – Festus asks Agrippa and others to clarify the charges against Paul

B. Acts 26:1-23 – Paul makes his defense

1. vv 1-3 – addresses King Agrippa
2. vv 4-11 – gives his background
 - a. vv 4-5 – asserts his Jewish heritage
 - b. vv 6-8 – states that the resurrection of Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s promise to the people of Israel
 - c. vv 9-11 – speaks of his past persecution of Christians
3. vv 12-18 – recounts his conversion (Acts 9, 22; 1 Cor 15:3-11, Gal 1:11-16)
 - a. vv 12-18 – the Damascus Road
 - i. v 14 – ‘kick against the goads’ – an animal kicking against a pointed stick
 - ii. v 16 – ‘witness’ to what he has seen (Acts 22:15)
 - iii. v 17 – ‘sent’ – Greek *apostello*, apostle – to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15, 22:21; Gal 1:16), and kings and people of Israel (Acts 9:15)
4. **vv 19-23** – preaches the gospel

C. Acts 26:24-32 – the authorities respond

1. v 24 – Festus states Paul is ‘out of his mind’
2. vv 25-29 – Paul appeals to Agrippa; Agrippa’s response is sarcastic (?); Paul’s response is compelling
3. vv 30-32 – authorities agree Paul’s done nothing to deserve death or punishment

Chapters 27:1-28:10 – Paul’s Journey to Rome

A. Acts 27:1-44 – Paul and co set sail for Rome

1. vv 1-12 – Paul, Luke (“we”), Aristarchus (Acts 19:29, 20:4), and others (?) sail for Rome on an Alexandrian ship – Julius, a Roman centurion, treats Paul kindly, but ignores his warning– ‘the Fast’ is Yom Kippur (October)
2. vv 13-44 – the storm at sea and shipwreck
 - a. vv 13-20 - the ship encounters a violent storm, the sailors begin to lose hope
 - b. vv 21-38 – Paul encourages those on board to take courage; to stay together; and to eat – took bread, “giving thanks to God in the presence of all,” broke it, began to eat – Eucharistic
 - c. vv 39-44 – the ship strikes a reef; the soldiers plan to kill the prisoners, but Julius wants to save Paul, and so all the prisoners are spared

B. Acts 28:1-10 – Paul and co on Malta

1. vv 1-6 – Paul sets to work gathering firewood and is bitten by a viper; islanders react first with judgment and then with awe when Paul survives
2. vv 7-10 – Paul cures the father of Publius, a leading man in the community – many others come and are cured (‘treated medically’ by Luke, as well?)

Chapters 28:11-31 – Paul in Rome

A. Acts 28:11-16 – Paul and co arrive in Rome

1. vv 11-13 – Paul and companions set sail in another Alexandrian ship, with a figurehead ‘Twin Brothers,’ Greek gods Castor and Pollux, patrons of sailors
2. vv 14-16 – Paul and companions arrive in Rome, are greeted by disciples (he had previously sent a letter to the Romans) – Forum on Appian Way and Three Taverns, south of Rome – Paul allowed to live in a private residence in Rome

B. Acts 28:17-31 – Paul preaches the gospel in Rome

1. vv 17-22 – Paul speaks with the local leaders of the Jewish people, who have heard about the “sect” of Christianity, and not heard “anything evil” about Paul
2. vv 23-28 – Paul tells them about Jesus – some believe, some disagree – Paul quotes Isaiah 6:9-10, proclaims the Gentiles will listen (Acts 13:46-47, Acts 18:6)
3. (v 29 – *not in ancient texts*)
4. vv 30-31 – Paul preaches the gospel

During two (or more?) years of imprisonment in Rome, Paul

- worked (perhaps tent making?) to earn an income (Acts 28:30)
- wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus
- spent time with Luke, Aristarchus, Timothy, Tychicus, Mark, and others
- preached the gospel, including to his Roman guards, and encouraged fellow disciples (Phil 1:12-14)

According to church tradition, Paul was martyred under the rule of Nero in 60's AD.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." 2 Tim 4:7