

## Bible Overview

# The Acts of the Apostles

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This is the second of the historical accounts of the first century written by Luke. The Acts commences where the gospel record concludes, at the time of the ascension of Jesus.

Whilst the book is historical, it is a great testimony to the Christians of the first century who withstood tremendous difficulties in their endeavour to hold fast to their faith and to preach the gospel.

- A **summary** of the highlights is appropriate.
- Jesus' ascension (1:11) "This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."
- The Day of Pentecost. Peter's preaching with the assistance of the Holy Spirit and the listeners' response is very illuminating. "Brethren what shall we do? Repent said Peter, "Repent and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (2:37 - 38).
- Stephen's trial for his belief and faith. His stoning and his forgiveness. "Lord, do not hold this sin against them," (7:60).
- The conversion of Saul and his subsequent preaching of Jesus "He is the Son of God" (9:20).
- Peter and Cornelius - the Gentile. God has no favourites, " ... in every nation anyone who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him. (10:35).
- Paul turns to the Gentiles. "I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles that you may bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth" (13:47).
- The difficulties of the Christian Church in accepting the concept of Gentile salvation (11:1 - 18), and partial fulfilment of the Law of Moses (15:1 - 35).
- Paul's journeys - his stonings, his preaching in all parts of Asia minor; his defence before Roman authorities; his steadfast faith in the one whom he for some years persecuted.
- Paul's house arrest in Rome and his continued enthusiasm for the preaching of the gospel (28:30 - 31).

The outstanding testimony of Peter, Stephen, Paul, Silas, Barnabas and others (including Luke) is encouragement for Christ's followers to stand up for their belief in him.

## Outline

1:1 - 14 Jesus' ascension

1:15 - 26 A new apostle

2:1 - 47 The Day of Pentecost

3:1 - 5:42 The preaching of Peter and John

6:1 - 8:3 Stephen's defence

8:4 - 40 The preaching of Philip

9:1 - 31 Saul's conversion

9:32 - 11:21 Peter and Cornelius - a Gentile convert

11:22 - 12:25 Jerusalem and Antioch

- 13:1 - 21:16 - Paul - the Apostle to the Gentiles
- 13:1 - 15:39 First missionary journey
- 15:40 - 18:6 Second missionary journey

18:7 - 21:16 Third missionary journey

21:17 - 26:32 The trial of Paul's faith

27:1 - 28:31 Paul's journey to Rome

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