

Acts of the Holy Spirit Through the Apostles

I. The Holy Land – Greater Jerusalem Crusade headed up by Peter, the Fisherman (Chapters 1-12)

A. The Activities of Peter

1. **Peter and the 120** (1:1-26)
 - a. Luke writes his second letter to Theophilus. His first one (Luke) was written to tell what Christ did while on Earth through His physical body (Lk 1:1-4). His second letter (Acts) was written to tell what Christ was doing while in Heaven through His spiritual body, the Church
 - b. He begins by reminding Theophilus “of all that Jesus began, both to do and to teach (1:1). This, of course, was in stark contrast to the wicked Pharisees, who, according to Jesus, “say, and do not” (Mt 23:3)
 - c. Luke speaks of the “many infallible proofs” which surrounded the resurrection ministry. During that time, our Lord appeared at least 10 different times to His followers
 - d. Just prior to His ascension, Christ commanded His apostles that “they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father (1:4). Much ink has been used in attempting to explain these five words. What was this promise? Various passages of scripture make it clear that this promise of the Father (Joel 2:28) and also of the Son (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) was a reference to the arrival of the Holy Spirit. This new entity would introduce three completely new elements.
 - (i) It was to be universal. Previously, the Holy Spirit had confined His work among humanity to the nation Israel. There is no record before the book of Acts where He fell upon the Greeks or Romans or Babylonians, etc. But now He was coming to bless all repenting sinners everywhere.

- (ii) It was to be permanent. Although the Holy Spirit did come upon certain OT men, He often departed from them also.
- As illustrated by Samson. This Hebrew strongman enjoyed the presence of the Holy Spirit on various occasions (Judges 14:6, 19; 15:15). But then, because of sin and immorality, God's spirit left Samson. One of the most tragic verses in the Bible records this event, when Samson awakes to hear Delilah ** (Judges 16:20).
 - As illustrated by Saul. As with Samson, the Holy Spirit came upon Saul, but later left him, as demonstrated by the following passages (I Sam 10:10, I Sam 16:14)
 - As illustrated by David. The Spirit of God came upon David when he was anointed by Samuel (I Sam 16:13) and, as far as it can be determined, remained with him until death. But David realized the Holy Spirit had departed, and on at least one occasion, pled with the Lord about this matter (Ps 51:11. No Christian today need ever (or should ever) pray this prayer. However, millions of believers could probably, with profit, pray the next phrase of David's Psalm of confession (Ps 51:22). David offered this prayer after his great sin with Bath-Sheba.
- (iii) It was to be perfecting. That is, His new ministry would now be to make all repenting sinners grow in grace and be like Jesus. This was not the case in the OT. There is no indication that the moral and spiritual natures of either Saul or Samson were advanced by the presence of the Holy Spirit. They apparently derived only His power and not His purity!

e. Jesus did not answer the apostles' questions concerning the precise time when God would restore the kingdom to Israel, but did promise them something far more important just seconds prior to His ascension (1:8). They were to be witnesses. A witness is simply a saved beggar telling a lost beggar where he found bread! This verse is a divine outline for the entire book.

- (i) Witnessing in Jerusalem (1-7)
 - (ii) Witnessing in Judea & Samaria (8-12)
 - (iii) Witnessing unto the uttermost part of this Earth (13-28)
- f. When He had spoken these words, our Lord was taken up by God's Shekinah Glory Cloud. This marks the seventh of at least nine appearances of this dazzling and divine cloud.
- (i) To Israel (Ex 13:21)
 - (ii) Over Holy of Holies (Lev 16:2)
 - (iii) Over Temple of Holy of Holies (2 Chron 5:11, 13)
 - (iv) In Ezekial's time (Ezek 10)
 - (v) At the birth of Christ (Lk 2:9-11)
 - (vi) At His transfiguration (Matt 17:5)
 - (vii) Here at His ascension (Acts 1:9)
 - (viii) Next at the Rapture (I Thess 4:7)
 - (ix) At His 2nd coming (Matt 24:30)
- g. As His disciples watched Him ascend, two Heavenly beings appeared (1:11). Who they are is unimportant, what they said of His return is.
- (i) The going was personal, as will be the return (I Thess 4:16)
 - (ii) The going was visible, as will the return (Ph 3:21)
 - (iii) The going was from Mt. Olive, as will the return (Zech 14:4)
- h. The 11 Apostles return to Jerusalem, joining the 120 in the Upper Room. This was the same room used for the Last Supper (Luke 22:12)
- i. We are told that "these [120] all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (1:14). Likemindedness used 12 times in the NT, 11 in Acts. God and Satan's people favor this word. The believers acted with one accord in:
- (i) Supplication (1:14)
 - (ii) Expectation (2:1)
 - (iii) Communication (2:46)
 - (iv) Consecration (4:24)
 - (v) Separation (5:12)
 - (vi) Cooperation (15:25)

j. Among the 120 were “the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and ... His brethren” (1:14)

- (i) The Women – a reference to those godly women who had followed Jesus from Galilee: Joanna, Mary and Martha, Mary, mother of James the Less, Mary Magdalene, Salome, Susanna.
- (ii) Mary, the mother of Jesus – this is the last mention of her;
- (iii) His brethren – These are Jesus’ half-brothers (Mt 13:55, Mk 6:3)

k. During the prayer meeting, Judas is discussed (1:15-26)

- (i) Peter quotes 2 OT passages to prove the need to replace him (Isa 69:24 – his removal; 109:8 – replacement)
- (ii) It should be noted, however, that it was the defection, not the death that caused his replacement. James was not replaced (Acts 12:2)
- (iii) Two requirements concerning replacement:
 - The man had to have been a follower of Christ throughout His ministry, not a recent convert (John 15:27)
 - He had to have witnessed the Resurrection

l. At this point, two questions:

- (i) Was the method of the election unscriptural? They cast forth their lots (1:26). Names out in turn, the one that fell out first was taken.
- (ii) Was the election itself unscriptural? Some say yes, some say no.

m. Further earnest prayer preceded the vote (1:24)

2. **Peter and the Pentecostal crowd** (2:1-47)

- a. The Chronology of Pentecost – the word means “2nd of 7 feasts”, which occurs 50 days after harvest begins
- b. The comparison of Pentecost:

OT

50 days after Israel left Egypt

NT

50 days after Christ arose

Celebrated Israel's birthday
Witnessed slaying of 3000
Introduced in mighty way --
(Ex 19:16, 18)

Celebrated Christ's birth
Witnessed saving of 3000
Introduced in mighty way --
(Acts 2:2-3)

(i) NT Pentecost compared to Bethlehem: At Bethlehem, God prepared a body for His Son. At Pentecost, God prepared a body for His Spirit to work (I Cor 6:19, II Cor 6:16). Because of this, Pentecost can never be repeated, and neither can Bethlehem. The Church **promised** (Mt 16), **purchased** (Mt 27); **presented** (Acts 2; **church taken** (I Th 4); **judged** (I Cor 3), **Church united** (Rev 19).

(ii) NT Pentecost compared to Babylon:

Babylon

Sinful men working
God confounded language
God scattered men

Pentecost

Saved men waiting
God clarified language
God gathered men

c. The Congregation at Pentecost. The Apostle Peter preaches a message to explain just what was taking place, and why.

- (i) He begins by comparing what had just happened with Joel's OT prophecy (Acts 2:16-21, Joel 2:28-32). Ultimate fulfillment in tribulation.
- (ii) Peter then offers a 3-fold proof that Christ was indeed the Messiah: (a) His works (2:22), (b) Resurrection (2:24) – quotes Psalm 16:8-11, (c) ministry of Holy Spirit (2:33, Ps 110:1).
- (iii) Peter concludes by stating that Christ's resurrection was necessary because: (a) power of death could not hold the Prince of Life (2:24); (b) God promised David an eternal king and kingdom (2:30).
- (iv) The message of Peter shook his audience to their core (2:37)
- (v) Peter answers (2:38): no more controversial verse; Acts is transitional, not doctrinal, which was directed to Israel for murdering the Messiah. The preposition word used here can be "for" or "because of". Please note that Peter is NOT teaching salvation by water baptism.

d. The Communion at Pentecost (2:41-47).

- (i) 3000 Israelites saved
- (ii) They continued steadfastly in doctrine, fellowship, the Lord's table, prayer, baptism and praise and worship
- (iii) They enjoyed all things in common (2:44)

3. **Peter and the Lame Man** (3:1-11)

a. The Miracle

- (i) Peter and John went to pray
- (ii) They are confronted by a crippled beggar; Peter answers (3:6)
- (iii) The man is healed instantly (3:8; we have a reminder of the future age (Is 35:6), with the first of many miracles

b. The message (3:12-26): A huge crowd gathered at Solomon's porch. Peter uses this miracle to preach the gospel.

- (i) The Promoters of the Cross: Jews
They had delivered Him to Pilate (3:13)
They denied Him (3:13)
They preferred a murderer (3:14)

(ii) The Person of the Cross: Savior!

(iii) He is the Son (3:13)

- (iv) He is Jesus (3:13)
He is the Holy One (3:14)
He is the Just (3:14)
He is the Prince of Life (3:15)
He is the Christ (3:18)
He is the Prophet of God (3:22)

(v) The Prophecy of the Cross: OT Prophecies (Is 53)
(How Peter had changed both the man & the message!)

- (a) The man – from denying to boldness
- (b) The message – from Christ rebuker to Christ honorer

(vi) The Power of the Cross:

- (a) It was responsible for healing this Man
- (b) It assured the blotting out of sins (3:19, 26)

(vii) The Program of the Cross:

- (a) Christ would suffer (3:18)
- (b) God would raise Him (3:15)
- (c) He would ascend for a time (3:21)
- (d) He would return again (3:19-20)

(viii) The Plea of the Cross (3:19)

4. Peter and the High Priest (4:1-35)

- a. The Provocation (4:1-14)
 - (i) Peter and John Arrested (1-3)
 - (ii) In spite of this, 2000 new converts (4:4)
- b. The Examination (4:4-22)
 - (i) Peter required to explain what happened; Sanhedrin doing its job (Deut. 13:1-5)
 - (ii) Peter, filled with the Spirit, declares the miracle done in Jesus' name Whom they crucified. Fulfillment of Matt. 10:16-20
 - (iii) He then associated Jesus with OT prophecies (Ps 118:22)
 - (iv) He concluded with this reminder (4:12)
 - (v) The Sanhedrin sit amazed at this man's theology. They order Peter out, to discuss what this is (4:16)
 - (vi) When forbidden to preach Jesus' message, they reply (4:20)
- c. The Exaltation (4:23-35)
 - (i) Upon being released, they join others in praising God
 - (a) They prayed with one accord (4:24)
 - (b) They acknowledged the sovereignty of God (4:24)
Lord/Absolute Ruler (Lk. 2:28, Rev 6:10)
They relied upon the truth of Scripture, including it in their prayers (Ps 2, Acts 4:25-26)
They prayed specifically (4:29-30)
They sought only glory for the Lord (4:30). This was a prayer of faith. They prayed for the Lord to allow more of what got them into hot water. It is true that Christians are like tea, their real strength is brought out in hot water!
 - (ii) As a result of this prayer and praise meeting:
 - (a) The building was shaken by the Power of God (4:31)

- (b) The Spirit of God (4:31) filled the believers
- (c) The brotherhood was supplied by the grace of God (4:32-35)

5. **Peter and Annaias and Sapphira** (5:1-16)

- a. The deception (5:1-2). They lied concerning the amount of a gift. Their sin was in testing God.
- b. The discovery (5:3-4). Ananias is exposed and executed by God for lying to God. He committed the sin unto death (I John 5:16, I Cor 11:30-32).
- c. The deaths (5:5-10). 3 hours later, Sapphira was examined by Peter, and judged the same. Note that Satan had at first attached the Church from without. Now he attacks it from within, as a serpent.

6. **Peter and the Lawyer Gamaliel** (5:12-42).

- (a) Their deaths increased both the purity and the power of the Jerusalem Church (12, 16). Carefully consider the last 5 words.
- (b) The Apostles are cast into prison for their testimony by the Sadducees (5:17-18)
- (c) The angel of God frees them, to continue preaching (5:19-26)
- (d) They are again apprehended and charged with civil disobedience by the high priest (5:28)
- (e) Simon Peter speaks for the rest and declares (5:29); he is not rebellious (I Pet 2:13-14), but had to submit to God (4:20).
- (f) Peter then again accuses them of their crime against Jesus (5:30). Slew – “to murder with one’s own hands”
- (g) The council is cut to the heart (5:33). They are willing to murder the Apostles.
- (h) Enter a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a Jewish Ph.D. He offers sound advice (5:38-39)

- (i) The apostles were beaten and released with a warning not to preach Jesus again. Their reaction is stunning (5:41-42)

7. Peter and Simon the Sorcerer (8:14-25)

(a) Peter and John are sent by the Jerusalem Church to help in the new work, which had begun in Samaria as a result of Philip's preaching.

(b) Peter and John prayed for them (15). Why was the spirit withheld until Peter and John arrived? Because of the social and historical situation going on there. The Samaritans needed to be shown the truth. John 4:22 – "salvation is of the Jews". Peter used the keys given him (Mt 15:18-19) to open the door officially to the Samaritans. It is something wonderful to see John helping Peter. AS little as two years earlier, he had wanted to call fire down on them.

(c) A charlatan named Simon tries to purchase the power of God. His action gave us the word "simony" which is the buying and selling of religious rights and offices. Jesus discounted this kind of faith (John 2:23-26, 6:26, 66). P. T. Barnum attempted to get C. L. Spurgeon to work for him, offering \$1,000 a show. Spurgeon's answer: "I have before me your offer to come to America. You will find my answer in Acts Chapter 8, Verse 20". Very truly yours, C. L. Spurgeon.

B. The Activities of Stephen (6:1-7:60)

1. The Complaint of some Disciples (6:1)

(a) A problem had arisen from the rapid growth of the early Church. Those Jews who spoke only Greek complained that their widows were being discriminated against.

(b) They felt that they were not being given as much food in the daily distribution as the Jewish widows who spoke Hebrew.

2. The conference of the Twelve (6:2-4).

a. The Apostles felt their first priority was to give themselves to prayer and study.

b. Therefore, it was not proper for them to "leave the Word of God and serve tables" (6:2). The word for tables is related to banking; moneylenders sat at tables to conduct business (Lk 9:23, Mt 21:12). They were to look for qualified men to superintend the lives to the Believers.

c. Five requirements are listed for this office (note that the number "5" means grace and death):

- (i) They must be men;
- (ii) They had to be saved;
- (iii) they were to be reputable;
- (iv) They had to be spiritual
- (v) They were to possess wisdom. There was no room for double standards in the early church.

3. The Choice of the Seven (6:5-8).

- (a) All 7 had Greek names; they were from the Hellenistic group. This was a gracious gesture to those who were complaining.
- (b) Once chosen, they were set down before the apostles. They prayed and laid hands on them. This was done to portray:
 - (1) an act of benediction (Mt 19:13, 15, Gen 48:14-20)
 - (2) for healing (Mk 5:23, 6:5)
 - (3) to impart the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17, 19:17)
 - (4) for ordination (Acts 6:6, 13:3, I Tim 4:14, II Tim 1:6, Num 8:9-10)
 - (5) for identification (Num 8:12)
- (c) When this was done, the word of God increased (6:7). When the complaining decreased, the conversions increased (___ 51:12, 31)
- (d) Two of the original 7 deacons were to do great things. One was Phillip, and the other Stephen

4. The Sermon of Stephen (6:9-53)

- (a) The preaching of Stephen had offended the synagogue of the libertines, a group of former slaves who apparently had their own synagogue (6:9)
- (b) They were unable to resist the spirit, so they brought him before the Sanhedrin (10, 12). This wisdom was a fulfillment of Jesus' words (Lk 21:12-15)

- (c) Stephen is indicted on 3 false charges of blasphemy:
 - (I) Against God (11)
 - (ii) Against the Temple (13)
 - (iii) Against the Mosaic Law (11, 13)
- (d) Through all this, his face shone (15) from the radiant power of God, being full of the Holy Spirit (Ex 34:29-35; I Peter 4:14)
- (e) Stephen begins his defense by tracing the relationship between:
 - (I) God and Abraham (7:1-8)
 - (ii) God and Joseph (7:9-19)
 - (iii) God and Moses (7:20-44)
 - (iv) God and David (7:45-47)

(f) Stephen had been teaching that the Temple was not necessary to worship God. Jesus had already said it (John 4:20-24). Stephen points out 3 things to prove his assertion:

- (I) That God had blessed Abraham though they had not always lived in Palestine
- (ii) That during much of its time, Israel did not worship in the Temple
- (iii) That even their Temple did not save Israel from rebellion and disobedience.

(g) His speech was to show Israel that possession of the Temple had been neither a necessity for nor a guaranty of true worship.

- (h) Stephen closes by denouncing the wickedness of Israel's leaders (51)
- (i) There are 3 murders in Israel's history that marks her rejection of God: John **the Baptist** (rejecting the Father), **Christ** (rejecting the Son), and **Stephen** (rejecting the Holy Spirit).

5. The Stoning of Stephen (54-60)

- (a) His powerful sermon filled the crowd with hellish hatred. They were cut to the heart; they gnashed on him with their teeth (54).

They cried with a loud voice, they stopped their ears; they ran upon him with one accord (57).

- (b) This had no effect on Stephen. Why? He was full of the Holy Ghost. He looked up steadfastly, saw God's glory. He started and ended with God's Glory (55). He saw Jesus standing (55). Note that he was the first to see Jesus after His Ascension, along with Paul and John. This is the only statement that Jesus is standing. Why? He rises to receive His own. Some feel it was Israel's last chance to receive her king.
- (c) He is stoned by the mob. This was a lynching. Jewish law required a second trial, and then Roman permission had to be secured.
- (d) His death is similar to his Master's; he called on God (59 – Lk 23:46), he prayed for his enemies (60 – 23:34), and He fell asleep (60). This is God's description of a believer's death (Matt 27:52, John 11:11, Acts 13:36, I Cor 15:18, 20, 51; I Thess 4:13-15, II Pet 3:4)

C. The Activities of Philip (8:5-13, 26-40)

1. Shortly after his election as a deacon, Philip goes to Samaria and conducts a great evangelistic crusade.
2. Many were saved and miracles were performed, resulting in "great joy in that city" (8:8)
3. During the height of his ministry, Philip is instructed by God's angel to proceed toward "Gaza", which is desert (26). This was an ancient Philistine city near the sea, southwest of Jerusalem.
4. He is led to an Ethiopian eunuch official who was returning from a religious pilgrimage to Jerusalem.
6. Philip joined his caravan and noted the eunuch was reading from Isaiah 53. Philip asked, "understandest?" (30)
7. The eunuch's answer is a tragic reflection of all unsaved people (31, Luke 24:32, 45; Rom 10:13-15, 17)
8. The action of Philip is likewise a beautiful summary of the soulwinner's method of operation (35).
9. The eunuch believes and is baptized. Philip miraculously disappears (39), much like Ezekiel (3:12, 14; 8:3), Elijah (I Ki 182, II Ki 2:16)

Philip settles at Caesarea and will reappear in Chapter 21. The eunuch becomes the first missionary to Ethiopia.

II. THE WHOLE EARTH – GLOBAL CRUSADE HEADED BY PAUL THE TENTMAKER (13-28, 9:1-31; 11:19-13, 12:25)

A. His background

1. **His background**: Ancestry and youth – he was born and raised in Tarsus in Cilicia (21:39), of the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1). He was a “Hebrew of Hebrews” (Phil 3:5).
2. **Education**: Gamaliel taught him (Acts 22:3). He was a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee (23:6).
3. **Character**: to the best of his ability, he had attempted to keep the law (Phil 3:6). He performed everything with great zeal (Ph 3:6), and persecuted the Church in ignorance (I Tim 1:13).

B. His war against the Church

1. He “kept the raiment” of those that murdered Stephen, and consented to his death (7:57, 58; 8:1, 2; 22:20)
2. He made havoc of the Church (8:3). “Havoc” is a wild hog uprooting a vineyard.
3. He entered peoples’ homes (8:3)
4. He hounded Believers to death (22:5)
5. He beat Believers (22:19)
6. He voted to have them put to death (26:10)
7. He tortured them to elicit their cursing (26:17)
8. He wasted the Church (Gal 1:13)

C. Paul’s conversion (9:1-19, I Cor 15:7—10, I Tim 1:12-16)

1. He is blinded by a heavenly light while on his way to persecute “those of this Way” in Damascus (9:2)
2. He fell to the ground and heard Christ say: “Saul, why do you persecute me?” (9:4). He also saw Jesus at this time. This was the first of at least 7 instances when Paul saw the ascended Saviour. Also note that to persecute Christians in reality is to persecute Christ (Matt. 25, I Cor 12)
3. Paul is gloriously saved and led, still blind, into Damascus where he remained alone without food or water for 3 days.
4. God appears to a Believer in Damascus, Ananias, and gives him the first prospect card in history (9:11). The words “behold he prayeth” are a summary of Paul’s life. He begins his ministry with prayer and ends his ministry in prayer (II Tim 4:16). He prayed anywhere and everywhere, for anything and everything. Here is a partial list of references: Rom 1:9, 10:1; Eph 1:16; Phil 1:4, 9; Col 1:3, 9; I Thess 1:2; I Tim 1:3; Philemon 1:r.
5. Ananias is reluctant to go to Paul (9:13). How like us to resist going to someone because of his or her lifestyle. His objections are overruled by God (9:15-16), and God predicts Paul will become:
 - a. A chosen vessel: of honor (9:21), mercy (23) and of earth (II Cor 4:7), and a sanctified and worthy vessel (II Tim 2:21). Paul became all 4!
 - b. A gentile missionary (Acts 13:47, II Tim 1:11)
 - c. A suffering servant. It is doubtful that anyone has suffered as much for Christ.
 1. He was plotted against 7 times;
 2. He was mistreated (9:26)
 3. He was disliked (Phil 1:14-18)
 4. He was constantly opposed by his own at Antioch (13:45, 50); Iconium (14:2-5), Thessalonica (17:5, I Thess 2:2, 14-16), Berea (17:13), Corinth (18:6-12), Ephesus (19:26)
 5. He was stoned;
 6. He was pressured by Satan (13:8)
 7. He was beaten (16:19-24)
 8. He was ridiculed at Athens (17:18, 32), and Caesarea (26:24)
 9. He was lied on (24:5-9, 25:7)
 10. He endured a terrifying storm (27:14-20)
 11. Bitten by a snake (28:3-4)

12. Imprisoned in Caesarea (for 2 years) and in Rome (II Tim 1:8);
13. He was forsaken by all (II Tim 4:10, 16)

These things can also encourage us as long as we remember:

1. God can use even the most obscure saint (I Cor 4:1-5)
 2. We should never be afraid to obey God;
 3. God's works are always balanced;
 4. We must never underestimate the value of one person brought to Christ. In 1855, Edward Kimball led D. L. Moody to Christ, as did Norman Harrison lead Theodore Epp.
6. His sight is restored by God (9:17-18)
 7. Saul begins his ministry in that same city, the one he had come to in order to destroy Christians (19-22)

D. Paul's early ministry

1. Paul retires to Arabia for a 3-year retreat (Gal 4:17-18)
2. After returning to Damascus, he learns that the Jews were going to kill him. His friends provide escape. He heads for Jerusalem; he will return there at least 5 times.
3. Saul meets Peter and James (Jesus' half brother), and he is vouched for by Barnabus (9:26-28)
4. He left Jerusalem after a threat by the Grecians (9:29-31).
5. 10 years later, Paul joins Barnabus who had planted a church at Antioch – the term "Christian" was coined here (11:26)

E. Return to Peter

1. Peter and Aeneas (9:32-35) – an instant healing at Lydda
2. Peter and Dorcas (9:36-43) – Peter raises Dorcas at her funeral
3. Peter and Cornelius (10:1-11:18)
 - (a) After Dorcas, Peter stays in Joppa with Simon the tanner. Peter has allowed the Holy Spirit to show him the flaws in Judaism. Simon the tanner was unclean (9:43)

(b) In Caesarea, a Roman centurion is seeking salvation: he was a
(1) centurion, a commander of 100 soldiers and well spoken of;
(2) devout (John 7:17). However, he was not a proselyte, and he
desired to know God. (3) He was still lost, like Nicodemus in
John 3 – religious on the outside, dead on the inside.

(c) An angel appears and has him send for Peter.

Why did God not use the angel? He doesn't use animals or angels.
There are 3 factors in salvation:

- (1) The Spirit of God (John 16:8);
- (2) The Word of God (Rom 10:17)
- (3) The soulwinner of God (Rom 10:14)

(d) Cornelius sends for Peter, who is praying. God sends Peter a
vision to prepare him for his mission (10:13, Rom 11:32). That vision
addressed 3 things: food, because he was hungry, to speak to his
condition, and the limitation of the law.

(e) Peter reverts to his Jewish roots (10:14). If God is Lord, one
cannot say, "so". If one says "not so", he cannot be Lord (W. Graham
Scroggie).

(f) God answers. (10:15). Jesus had already taught this (Mark 7:14-
23).

(g) The 3 soldiers arrive, and Peter goes with them. It should excite
us to know that God prepares both sinner and soulwinner. Whenever He is
at work, He leads both ends of the line. (10:17-21). The Lord always
prepares us for what He is preparing for us. Nothing doubting, making no
distinction.

(h) Peter arrives and Cornelius tries to worship him (10:26). Peter
allows no worship of himself at all.

(i) Peter preaches to Cornelius (10:38-43). A short and pure
presentation of the Gospel. A perfect congregation (10:33): all present
wanted to hear the Word. They listened, believed and obeyed.

(j) **As** he spoke, God's spirit fell (10:44). This was the Gentiles'
Pentecost (11:17), with both the baptism and the filling of the Spirit.

(k) Peter baptizes all the converts.

(I) When Peter returns from his mission work, he explains all that happened to the Gentiles (11:1-18). They accepted - he notes that Christians are to receive one another and not dispute over cultural or personal convictions (Rom 14-15). In Acts 11:19-26, they encouraged – mature believers need to encourage new believers and enlist them in service, as it is better for 10 men to work than do the work of 10 men. Acts 11:27-30, they received help from the Gentiles – Winston Churchill said “we make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.” We are to show gratitude in practical ways to those who have helped us in our Christian life. Phillip Brooks asked what he would do to revive a dead church, and he says, “I would take up a missionary offering!”

F. Peter and the Angel of God (12:1-24).

1. **Herod Agrippa I**, the nephew of the murderer of John the Baptist, Grandson of Herod the Great (also known as a child murderer), and inquisition of Jesus (Lk 23:6-12). Opens persecution of James (Matt 20:20-28) and places Peter on death row. This fulfills Mt 20:23, Mk 10:39.

2. **On the day of his execution**, Peter sleeps soundly (12:6)

3. **On the other side of town**, a prayer meeting is going on (12:5). Thomas Watson said “an angel fetched Peter out of prison, it was prayer that fetched the angel.”

4. **Peter is supernaturally freed**, and goes to the prayer meeting (7-12). Here is an amusing account concerning prayer and faith. It is tragic and true that when God performs a miracle, the most surprised people are the ones who prayed the hardest! Isabel Kuhn said, “If this obstacle is from thee, Lord, I accept it but if it is from Satan, I refuse him and all his works in the name of Calvary.” Ian Redpath said “keep your chins up and your knees down ... we're on the victory side!” God works when churches pray, and Satan still trembles “when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees.

5. **Herod** then executes the guards (12:18, 19)

6. **Herod** then commits a horrible sin (II Thess 2, Rev 13), declaring himself God and accepting worship (12:20:24)

G. Paul’s First Missionary Trip (14-14)

1. Saul continues his work at Antioch, along with the other prophets and teachers in that amazing church. Some of these early leaders are recorded for us:
 - a. Simeon – called “niger”. He may have been the Cyrene in Mark 15:21. “Niger” means black, indicating he may have been from Africa.
 - b. Manren – the adjective describing Manren means foster brother. He and the wicked king Herod had apparently been raised together in the royal court.

2. One day, as these men were worshipping and fasting, the Holy Spirit commanded them “separate me, Barnabus and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them.” (13:2)

3. After a hand-laying dedication service, the Antioch Church sent forth the first foreign missionaries. One note, we see the Antioch Church is separate and independent from the church in Jerusalem. We also see the cooperation of the Holy Spirit and a local church.

4. At Paphos: Barnabus, Saul, John Mark preach their way across Cyprus to this port on the West Coast. Here 4 events happen (13:5-13):
 - (a) Saul is first called Paul (13:9)
 - (b) He performs his first miracles, blinding the falsely named Bar-Jesus who opposed the gospel (bar-Jesus means Son of Salvation). Paul called him “the child of the devil” (13:10).
 - (c) Peter and Paul perform similar miracles: both healed a lame man, both dealt with satanic pretenders, both were released from prison miraculously, and both raised the dead.
 - (d) The Governor (Sergius Paulus) is converted (13:12)
 - (e) John Mark leaves the team and goes home (13:13). Note: many young missionaries cannot handle the field their first time out.

5. At Antioch in Pisidia (13:14-50)
 - (a) Paul is invited to speak and delivers his first recorded message. It was similar to Stephen’s, that Paul heard and he used the same approach in the telling of Israel’s history. Paul stands (rabbis sit), thus gaining the Gentile listeners as he delivers his message:
 - (1) The Exodus deliverance;
 - (2) The wilderness wanderings;
 - (3) the conquest of Canaan;

- (4) the rule of Saul and David
- (5) the ministry of John the Baptist
- (6) The Crucifixion and resurrection of David's seed, Jesus
- (7) The invitation (13:3-39)

(b) Paul is invited to return the next Sabbath.

Note: William Carey was burdened with world missions. Dr. Ryland told him to sit down and shut up if God wanted the heathen saved, He will do it without your help or mine." More than one servant has had to enter the door of service w/o support. People with closed minds always stand in front of God's open doors.

H. His Role in the Jerusalem Council (15: 1-35)

1. A serious problem had arisen in the early church as to whether Gentile converts should submit to the Jewish rite of circumcision. Paul and Barnabus "had no small dissension and disputation" with these legalizers at Antioch (15:2). It would seem that at first, Peter and James (the Lord's half-brother) had also taken this position (Gal 2:11-12). The Judaizers did not deny facts but their interpretation.
2. A special conference was scheduled in Jerusalem to settle this dispute. The meeting apparently consisted of 3 sessions:
 - (a) The first public meeting (15:4-5)
 - (b) A private session of the apostles and elders (15:6)
 - (c) The second public session (15:7-29)
3. At the final session, the delegates heard the reading of three special "committee reports" given by a leading apostle (Peter), 2 missionaries (Paul & Barnabus), and the pastor of the Jerusalem church (James)
 - (a) Peter's report (15:7-11) – he reminds them how God had ordered him to preach to the Gentiles
 - (b) Paul and Barnabus (15:12) – they summarized the wonderful things God had allowed them to do during their first journey
 - (c) James' Report (15:13-21) – (1) he begins by summarizing God's stated present-day purpose (15:19); (2) He then reminded them that when this was completed, God promised to return (15:16, Amos 9:11-12); (3) James finally concludes (15:19-20). Notice that the final decision was by James, as the Holy Spirit (15:28) directed him.

4. This decision supported fully by the delegates, was put into letter form and delivered to the churches (15:22-23)
5. Paul and Barnabus returned to Antioch (15:35)

I. Paul's Second Missionary Journey (15:36 – 18:22)

1. Paul and Barnabus – their argument (15:36-39).
 - (a) Major difference between Paul and Barnabus: Paul asks “what can we do for the church?” and Barnabus asks “what can God’s work do for us?”
 - (b) Paul proposes a second missionary trip to confirm the local churches, which were organized during the first journey. Barnabus agrees.
 - (c) Barnabus proposes to take John Mark with them again. Paul quickly disagrees.
 - (d) Separation (15:39). Paul chooses Silas (Greek for “Saul”) and heads to Syria. Barnabus takes John Mark and leaves for Cyprus. Happily, the New Testament records that Paul was later reconciled to both Barnabus (I Cor 9:6) and John Mark (Col 4:10, II Tim 4:11). This is the last mention of Barnabus in the Book of Acts.
2. Paul and Silas – their achievements
 - (a) In Lystra (16:1-5): Timothy joins the team. He is circumcised by Paul because he was partly Jewish, and this way he wouldn’t give undue offense to the Jews. Later, Paul would refuse to circumcise Titus, a Gentile (Gal 2:3). This was an application of Paul’s stated principle in I Cor 9:20.
 - (b) In Troas (16:5-10): Paul is forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach in either Turkey or Bithnyia. We notice that the need alone did not by itself constitute the call. It may also be said they did not attempt to second-guess God. God’s perfect will is not always the easiest thing on earth to find, but once found, it becomes the most blessed (Matt 7:7-8, Lk 11:9-10).
 - (c) In a vision at Troas, Paul sees a man who pleads with him, saying (16:9)

- (d) The gospel team leaves immediately for Macedonia, now being joined by the beloved Greek physician, Luke. 16:10 is the first of several “we” sections.
- (e) In Phillipi (16:11-40): this section records the conversion of a business woman, a demon-possessed girl, and prison-keeper.
- (1) The business woman (16:13-15) – Paul gives a riverbank prayer meeting to lead Lydia, a maker of royal (purple) cloth to Christ. She and her household were then baptized and provided Paul and his team a base of operation.
 - (2) The demonic girl – Paul exorcised a demon from a slave girl and set her free. She had followed them (16:17); the demon within her clearly recognized the divine power working in Paul and his companions.
 - (3) The prison guard (16:19-40) – the owners become enraged over their loss of profit potential in the demonic slave girl and have Paul and Silas arrested as the “antichrists”. At midnight (16:25). This is the first worship service, first prayer and praise service in Europe. God’s birds can sing in darkened cages (Ps 42:8, 77:6). God sends a great earthquake, freeing Paul and his men. The jailer prepares to take his life, thinking the prisoners had escaped. Paul quickly reassures and encourages the jailer. His response to the demonstration of power is life’s biggest question (16:3)). Paul’s answer is the gospel in a nutshell (16:31).
 - (4) Not only the jailer, but also many in his house are saved and baptized that same night. Then comes a true Christian act: the convert (jailer) ministers to those who had shown him Jesus.
 - (5) The team then leaves Philippi after they receive an apology from the city officials. They did this after realizing they had beaten Roman citizens. Luke stays to oversee this new work.
- (f) In Thessalonica (17:1-10)
- (1) Paul spends three weeks here in the home of Jason. Organizing a church from Jewish converts. While there, he worked daily as a tentmaker that he might not be a burden to them (I Thess 2:9, II Thess 3:7-12)

(2) Here again, the gospel faces opposition from Jewish traditions. They drag Jason into court, failing to have him jailed on trumped-up charges. God's intervention always comes at the right time.

(3) Again, Paul, Silas and Timothy leave, this time for Berea.

(g) In Berea (17:11-14)

(1) Here Paul finds a fertile field for evangelism and discipleship (17:11)

(2) The Jewish troublemakers strike again, forcing Paul to leave. Silas and Timothy stay to strengthen the new converts.

(h) In Athens (17:15-34)

(1) Paul uses two forums here, the Synagogue and the open market

(2) He receives his first serious opportunity to reach the philosophers of Greek culture, some Epicureans and stoics. These philosophers were always look to investigate some new idea for their debates. Epicureans believed that God existed, He had no interest in men and their chief end was pleasure. Stoics believed that God was the world's soul that indwells all things. Lie's goal was to rise above all things and show no emotion whatsoever to pain or pleasure. Both groups looked down on Paul (17:18).

Note: A babblers is a bird building a nest, or picking straw. Paul was the first "cotton picker"

(3) Paul preaches Christ to them (17:22-23), and presents 4 truths about God:

(a) He is the creator (24, 25), not Apollos or Zeus

(b) He is the governor (26-29); all mankind descends from Adam, we all are of one blood, with no right to feel superior

(c) He is the savior (17:30), and ignorance has been overlooked until now

(d) He is the judge (17:31).

Paul even quotes one of their own poets, Erotus (28). Now, his ministry is moving into full swing as the Lord had said

(13:47, 14:27, 15:3, 12, Gal 2:2, Eph 3:1, 6, Col 1:27, I Tim 3:16, II Tim 1:11, 4:17

- (4) Listens to the Gentile responses (13; 48) now listen to the Jews (13:45). This causes Paul to draw this sad conclusion (13:46, 18:6, 28:28)

I. At Iconium (14:1-5)

- (1) Here many heard and believed the Gospel; again the unbelieving Jews stirred up trouble.
- (2) Hearing a plot, Paul & Barnabus leave for Lystra.

J. At Lystra (14:6-15)

- (1) The first act he performs is a healing of a man born crippled. The crowd tries to declare them gods, possibly Jupiter and Mercury. The poet Ovid (re BC) regards the mythical visit of Zeus and Hermes as humans to this area.
- (2) Determining not to make the same mistake, the priest of Jupiter in Lystra prepares to worship the team by the sacrifice of animals and flowers.
- (3) In horror, Paul ripped his clothing and admonished them (14:15): "all men are made of the same stuff" (James 5:17, Acts 10:26, Rev 22:9)
- (4) Peter preaching Christ, Paul is stoned and left for dead by the disappointed crowd which had been enraged by the trouble making Jews who had hounded Paul from Antioch and Iconium; note that some believe Paul actually died here and was then resurrected by God, experiencing at this time his heavenly visitation spoken of in II Cor 12:1-9. However, there is a time problem here, for the stoning occurred in 47 or 48 AD, and Paul wrote II Corinthians 7 years later, 55A.D. In chapter 12 of II Corinthians, he states that the event happened some 14 years earlier! At any rate, this may well have been where he received his scars for Jesus' sake, mentioned in Gal 6:17. Whether dead or unconscious, a miracle is still seen here (14:20)
- (5) The team proceeds to Derbe and then returns to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, revisiting and organizing new churches. This they accomplished through: (1) confirmation, (2) exhortation, (3) ordination, and (4) commendation (to God).
- (6) Paul and Barnabus then return to Antioch, where they excitedly "rehearsed all that God had done with them (14:37). Some believe Paul wrote Galatians at this time. Dr. Bob Pierce says, "others have done so much with so little, while

we have done so little with so much!” The wealth of America’s church, if invested in Evangelization, would see millions saved.

Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in Righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead.

(7) The reaction to the Gospel message was mixed, as it always is:

- (a) Some mocked. This, of course, would have included both the Epicureans, who disbelieved in a literal resurrection, and the Stoics, who ridiculed a personal resurrection. Paul’s work here was not a failure. One soul is worth the world. Governor Gallio – showed us the first instance of separation of church and state. He kept out of religious affairs.
- (b) Some delayed. Note: “We will hear thee again” (17:32)
- (c) Some believed.

K. In Corinth (18:1-18)

1. Here, Paul meets a Christian Jew named Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, who had recently been driven from Rome by the Empire at that time. To Paul’s delight, they too were tentmakers! This remarkable couple is mentioned 6 times in the NT. There are inscriptions in the catacombs which hint that Priscilla was of a distinguished family of high standing in Rome. Later, in Ephesus, a church met in their home (I Cor 16:19). In later years, they apparently moved back to Rome (Rom 16:3-5).

Warren Wiersbe says “when God opens doors, the enemy tries to close them, and there are time when we close the doors on ourselves because we get discouraged and quit.” Spurgeon says that by perseverance, the spirit reached the ark. V. R. Edmond Wheaton said, “It’s always too soon to quit.”

Rabbis say, “he who does not teach his son to work teaches him to steal.”

2. Silas and Timothy catch up with Paul at this time. Note: (1) they had been left behind at Perea with instructions to meet Paul in Athens, but this had not worked out (17:14-16). (2) Silas had left Berea for Phillippi to help Luke with the new church there (18:5); (c) Timothy, at Paul's request, had gone back to Thessalonica to oversee the work there (I Thess 3:1-2); (4) both men now greet Paul in Corinth. Silas brings a financial gift for Paul from the Phillippian church for his missionary support (II Cor 11:8-9), which allowed Paul to spend all of his time in missionary work. Timothy has a good report concerning the work in Thessalonica.

Note: 18:6 – “you have had your chance” (Neh. 5:13, Ezra 3:19-21) – “Blood on your hands” you bear the responsibility for another's death because you were not faithful to warn. Ezra 33:1-9 – blood on your head, blame for your own judgment (Josh 2:19). Also see I Cor 16:9. Spurgeon said, “the devil never kicks a dead horse!”

3. Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue, is gloriously saved, along with many other Corinthians, all of whom are baptized.
4. Paul is encouraged by God in a vision with the words (18:9-10) “Lo, I am with thee always!” Every minister and missionary serving in God's perfect will can boldly claim this precious promise concerning their particular field of service. He remains here for 18 months (18:11). During this time, he writes I & II Thessalonians.

To walk by faith means to see opportunities even in the midst of opposition. Pessimists see only problems. Optimist sees only potential. Realist sees the potential in problems.

5. Once again, the unbelieving Jews drag Paul into court before the governor Gallio, accusing him of blasphemy. Gallio quickly dismisses this religious-centered case.
6. Not to be denied an unruly Greek mob (doubtless organized by the Jews to harm Paul) grabs Sosthenes, the successor of Crispus, and severely beat him. This experiences apparently has led to his conversion to Christ (I Cor 1:1).
7. Paul leaves for Ephesus, accompanied by Aquila and Priscilla. At this time, we are told he had “shorn his head” for he had a vow (18:18); much debate has occurred as to

whether Paul was compromising his testimony by doing this OT action.

L. In Ephesus (18:19-21)

He abides here but a short while, declining their invitation to stay longer, (see verse 18, 21). Paul's last phrase here should condition all our plans! I Cor 4:19, 16:7; Heb 6:3, James 4:15.

M. In Antioch and Jerusalem (18:22)

J. Paul's Third Missionary Journey (18:23-21:16)

1. Paul leaves for Turkey again, visiting and encouraging the believers there.
2. About this time, an eloquent bible teacher named Apollos (born in Alexandria, Egypt) arrived in Ephesus on a preaching tour. Apollus had learned of the ministry and message of John the Baptist while still in Egypt, but knew nothing from that point on. Armed with these limited facts, he had traveled afar faithfully proclaiming what he knew.
3. In Ephesus, he is heard by Aquila and Priscilla who (18:26). **Note** that zeal without knowledge is dangerous. Knowledge without zeal is powerless.
4. After awhile, Appollos feels called to Corinth and leaves, carrying with him the written recommendation of fellow believers in Ephesus. In Corinth, he is greatly used of God (18:28) Appollos would later become pastor of the church at Corinth.
5. Paul arrives in Ephesus. His 2-year stay here was marked by 3 noteworthy events: The main feature of this city was the temple of Diana which was 418f x239fx 50f.
 - (a) The disciples of John (19:1-12). He meets 12 followers of John the Baptist and asks them a question (19:2). Their honest answer was (19:20). **Note**: They were not unaware of the existence of the Holy Spirit, for John had clearly revealed this (Matt 3:11, 16; Mark 1:8, 10; Luke 3:16, 22) but simply had not heard of this blessed ministry at Pentecost. Paul brings them up to date and baptizes all 12 in the name of Jesus. The record also says (19:6) or the next 3 months, he continues his synagogue ministry and, upon being opposed there, rents a public hall and carries on the work. He probably taught from 11:00 to 4:00 p.m., and worked as a

tentmaker both before and after this time slot. God performed great miracles through Paul at this time (19:12).

- (b) The divination's of Sceva (19:13-20). (Note that Ephesus was the center of the occult) A family of vagabond Jews composed of Sceva, a chief priest, and his 7 sons, had been watching Paul do his mighty miracles and decided to attempt a little exorcism of their own. Seeing a demon possessed man, they cried out (19:13); what followed would have been amusing were it not so tragic (16:15-16; Matt 7:21-23). Exorcism is a dangerous thing unless the Holy Spirit anoints the exorcist. This story quickly spread throughout the city and resulted in a great revival, for many believers who had been practicing black magic confessed their deeds. Over \$10,000 worth of occult books and magic charms were then burned at a public bonfire.

3. Marked periods of miracles in the Bible each lasted less than 100 years. 1. Moses 2. Elijah and Elisha and 3 Jesus and the Apostles.

The 3 purposes of Jesus' miracles were 1. To show compassion for human need (2) to teach a spiritual truth, and to present His credentials as the Messiah. Miracles do not save the lost.

- (c) The defenders of Diana (19:1`-3`. Paul feels led to return to Jerusalem and plans to visit Greece on the route back. Timothy and Erastus are sent ahead to meet him in Greece. About this time, a silver smith named Demetrius, whose business was selling silver shrines of the Greek goddess Diana, instigates a riot. This worship had been severely threatened by Paul's preaching. Soon the huge city amphitheater (capable of seating 25,000) is packed with a howling mob who chanted almost hysterically for 2 uninterrupted hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (19:34). The Temple of Diana (or Artemis) was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. The image within the temple was of a woman carved with many breasts to signify the fertility of nature.

The original stone from which the image had been carved was reported to have fallen from heaven, leading some historians to believe it may have been a meteorite. Paul determines to appear in the huge arena, along with some believers who had been dragged there by the mob, but is persuaded not to at the last minute. After a session of logical reasoning, the city clerk of Ephesus convinces the mob to settle any grievances in the

courts and the crowd finally disperses. During this period, he writes I & II Corinthians.

6. PAUL IN IRONS (20:1-12)

- (a) The Apostle spends 3 months passing through Greece and is preparing to sail for Syria when he discovers a plot by the Jews against his life, so he decides to go north to Macedonia first. During this time, he writes the book of Romans.
- (b) Timothy accompanies him on the first part of the trip and he picks up Luke as Phylippi.
- (c) At Troas a young man named Eutychus accidentally plunged to his death from an upper balcony after falling asleep during a midnight sermon preached by Paul. To the great relief of all Paul raises him from the dead and continues his sermon! At dawn he leaves for Jerusalem.
Note: Especially significant in this portion of scripture is the phrase “upon the first day of the week (20:7) this observance is corroborated by the early Fathers. Barnabas(AD100) Ignatius (AD107) Justin Martyr(AD145-150) Irenaeus(AD155-202)

7. **PAUL IN MILETUS (20:13-38)**

HERE Paul sends for the Ephesian elders who hurry to meet him at Miletus during a layover in his ship schedule. On this occasion the Apostle delivers his third main recorded discourse.

- a. His first was addresses to Jews in Pisidia (13:16-41)
- b. His second was to the Gentiles in Athens (17:22-31)
- c. His third as seen here was to the church (20:18-35)

Paul develops his message in a three fold manner here.

A. REVIEWING THE PAST

- (1) with much tears and toil he had for two years served God in Ephesus (20:19,31; also 2 Cor. 2:4)
- (2) He had taught publicly and house to house the grace of God to sinners and saints alike (20:20,21) It is significant that the world’s most famous theologian was also a great soul winner!
- (3) He had declared unto them “all the counsel of God” (20:27) Note: Paul did not major in the minors nor did he minor in the majors!
- (4) He had “coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel” (20:33) notice his testimony (20:34-35). This statement is not found in the four gospel accounts (although perhaps implied in Luke 14:12) His own life of course

perfectly exemplified it (2 Cor. 8:9; Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2_5-8; John 21:25)

(5) He could, therefore with confidence say (20:260

B. VIEWING THE PRESENT

1. His situation (20:22)
2. Their salvation (20:28)

C. PREVIEWING THE FUTURE

1. Paul prays that he might finish his course with joy (20:24) this he would surely do (2 Tim 4:7)
2. He then warned them that (20:29-30) Paul later writes timothy who was in Ephesus concerning the “grievous wolves” (1 Tim. 1:3-7) his prophecy concerning apostasy from “your own selves” was tragically fulfilled by men like Hymenaeus, Alexander, Philetus and others (1 Tim. 1:20; 2Tim. 2:17) Paul then commends them all to the grace of God, and the God of all grace. (20:32) After a tearful final prayer session, the apostle boards the ship and bids them farewell.

8. **PAUL IN TYRE (21:1-16)**

HERE he spends 7 days waiting the ship to unload its cargo. At this time Paul is warned by the Holy Spirit “ that he should not go up to Jerusalem” 21:4)

It would seem that the apostle missed God’s will here. He had already been warned during the beginning of his ministry by the Lord (22:18) Paul’s motive for going to Jerusalem at this time seems to have been his great love for his people (Rom. 9:1-5) and his hope that the gifts of the gentile churches, sent by him to the poor saints at Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25-28) would open the hearts of the law bound Jewish believers to the gospel of God’s grace. At any rate it is very significant that his Jerusalem stop (even though brief) was one of the very few where absolutely no fruit is recorded. After a meaningful prayer time Paul leaves Tyre and sails for Caesarea.

9 **PAUL IN CAESAREA (21:7-14)**

a. HE VISITS THE HOME OF Phillip the evangelist and his four unmarried daughters all of whom were prophetesses. These girls are the last mentioned in the Bible who had this gift. Others were:

1. Miriam (Exod. 15:20)
2. Deborah (Judges 4:4)
3. Isaiah’s wife (Isa. 8:3)
4. Huldah (2 Kings 22:14)
5. Anna (Luke 2:36)

b. He is again warned by God concerning his Jerusalem trip, this time by the prophet Agabus who demonstrated the treatment Paul would receive there by binding his hands and feet with the

apostle's belt. Agabus is joined by other believers in begging Paul not to go.

c. Fighting back tears, Paul answers (21:13)

10 PAUL IN JERUSALEM (21:15- 23:30)

- a. James and the elders in Jerusalem rejoice as Paul relates how God had blessed his missionary trips to the gentile world.
- b. Paul is then told of a rumor making its rounds among the Christian Jews in Jerusalem to the effect that he was teaching Jews to forsake Moses (21:21)
- c. To refute this rumor, he is advised to put himself under a Jewish vow of the shaven head and to sponsor four other young men who were doing the same. (21:22-25)
- d. Paul agrees but is later set upon by a mob when some Jews from Turkey saw him in the temple and wrongly concluded he had brought a gentile in with him (21:26-29)
- e. He is saved from certain death by the commander of the Roman garrison stationed there, and taken to the armory (21:31-34)
- f. After convincing the commander that he was not a certain Egyptian outlaw, Paul is allowed to address the Jewish mob (21:35-40) we notice he makes his defense on the same Roman stairway where Pilate had condemned Christ to death some 26 years prior. In fact the cries of the mob were very similar. (Luke 23:18; Acts 21:36)
- g. He briefly relates his conversion to Christ on the Damascus road. Some suggest a problem between Acts 9:7 and 22:9. In 9:7 we are told the soldiers with Paul heard the voice of Christ, in 22:9 Paul said they didn't this is easily resolved, in 9:7 the word "to hear" implies they heard a sound from an unidentified source. In 22:9 they did not hear it as intelligible speech.
- h. The crowd retains a hostile silence until he mentions his divine call to the gentiles. Upon hearing that hated word they go berserk (22:21-23)
- i. Paul is quickly brought inside the fort and ordered beaten to make him confess any crimes, but is spared of this when he informs the commander of his Roman citizenship. (22:24-29)
- j. Paul is brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin on the following day and defends himself. We now notice
 1. The reprisal against Paul 23:1-2 at the order of Ananias the high priest Paul is slapped on the mouth as once was our Lord (John 18:22)
 2. The retaliation of Paul (23:3): the phrase "whited wall" suggests a tottering wall whose precarious position had been disguised by a generous coat of whitewash. The meaning was that, although he had a high position, he would someday fall. He was assassinated 8 years later.

3. The Request of Paul (23:4-5): Paul due to his eye condition did not fully realize he was talking to the high priest and apologizes for speaking evil of a ruler.
4. The Ruse of Paul (23:6-10): Paul identifies himself as a Pharisee and a believer in the resurrection of the dead this causes an immediate split between the assembled Pharisees and the resurrection denying Sadducees. The clamor becomes so intense that the Roman commander again removed Paul.
5. The Revelation to Paul (23:11): note Paul had often hoped to get to Rome (Rom.1: 13) in Ephesus he had made definite plans to go, but he at this point was not sure he would get away from Jerusalem alive (Rom. 15:31) but now for the first time God had said it!
6. The Rescue of Paul (23:12-30): Paul's nephew learns of a plot by 40 fanatical Jews who had "bound themselves " (23:12) the Roman commander quickly removes Paul that very night to Caesarea, protected by 470 armed soldiers. He sends a letter on ahead to Felix in Caesarea, explaining why Paul is being sent to him.

11. PAUL IN CAESAREA (23:31-26:32)

- a. Before Felix (23:31-24-27): Both officially and personally Felix was noted for his evil deeds. Tacitus the Roman historian writes" Felix indulging in every kind of barbarity and lust exercised the power of a King in the spirit of a slave." Felix was later guilty of having jewish high priest jonathon (annas son)assassinated. Paul is accused before Felix by a crafty jewish lawyer from Jerusalem named Tertullus. The charges were threefold.

1. Treason : he was accused of disturbing the peace and creating political dissension not only in Jerusalem but throughout the world..
2. Religious heresy
3. Temple desecration

Paul is allowed to answer these lying accusations

1. to the first charge he pointed out that he had only been in Jerusalem 12 days and could not have possibly created all the alleged trouble in that brief time.
2. Concerning the second charge he showed he was actually more orthodox than some members of the Sanhedrin who denied the Old Testament doctrine of the resurrection (Dan. 12:2)
3. In regards to the third charge he reminded the court that the jews in Jerusalem itself could not make that indictment stick!

Felix defers sentence until he receives the official testimony of Lysias the arresting commander. Shortly after this time Paul had the opportunity to preach to both Felix and his wife Drusilla. This girl, not yet 20, was the youngest daughter of Herod Agrippa 1 (murderer of James) and the sister of Agrippa 2 and Bernice mentioned in 25:13. She had left a pagan Syrian King to marry Felix. Drusilla died 21 years later in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Luke records this dramatic preaching session for us (24:25)

B. BEFORE FESTUS (25:1-12)

In AD 58 there was a riot of pagans and Jews in Caesarea. Felix's soldiers put it down with such violence that the outraged Jews were able to force his recall. He was succeeded by Festus.

1. Festus resists pressure from the Jews to return Paul back to Jerusalem (where they planned to kill him en route)
2. Once again a wolf-band of Jewish lawyers come to Caesarea to make formal charges against the apostle.
3. Sensing that Festus would give in to the Jews and send him to Jerusalem (which would have meant certain death) Paul appeals to Caesar (25:11) The Caesar to whom Paul appealed was Nero, who began his reign in AD 54 his early years gave no hint of the cruelties which would follow.

C BEFORE AGRIPPA (25:13-26:32)

Agrippa 2nd (son of Herod Agrippa mentioned in 12:1) and Bernice come to Caesarea to visit Festus and Drusilla.

Bernice: was the sister of both Drusilla and Agrippa 2
Had been married to her uncle until his death.

Was now living with Agrippa 2nd in a relationship widely rumored to be incestuous.

Later left Agrippa