

# ACTS

THE CHURCH CONTINUES  
PART II

LOTVLAYTON.ORG

# Acts Timeline

## 14 - 37 AD

- ❖ **14-37** - Tiberius reigns as Caesar over the Roman Empire.
- ❖ **26-37** - Pontius Pilate is governor of Judea.
- ❖ **30** - Jesus's trials, death, resurrection, and ascension. Matthias is chosen as a replacement for Judas Iscariot. Holy Spirit comes to the disciples in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost.
- ❖ **33-36** - Stoning of Stephen. Saul persecutes the church.

## 37 - 41 AD

- ❖ **37-41** - Caligula reigns as Caesar over the Roman Empire.
- ❖ **37** - Conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus.
- ❖ **37-41** - Saul is in the desert in Arabia for three years, visits Jerusalem, then he goes to Tarsus (Syria & Cilicia).
- ❖ **38** - Peter has the vision and meets Cornelius.
- ❖ **39** - Emperor Caligula removes Herod Antipas as Tetrarch of Galilee and replaces him with his nephew, Herod Agrippa, who had been a childhood companion of Caligula.

## 41 - 54 AD

- ❖ **41-54** - Claudius reigns as Caesar over the Roman Empire.
- ❖ **42** - Barnabas sent to Antioch. Paul joins him there.
- ❖ **44** - Martyrdom of James, son of Zebedee. Herod Agrippa dies.
- ❖ **44-47** - Believers respond to famine prophesied by Agabus.
- ❖ **46/47-48** - Paul's first missionary journey.
- ❖ **49** - Council at Jerusalem. Book of James is written.
- ❖ **49/50-52** - Paul's second missionary journey. Paul writes 1 & 2 Thessalonians.
- ❖ **53-57** - Paul's third missionary journey. Paul writes 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans. Matthew's Gospel account is written around this time.

## AD 54 - 70

- ❖ **54-68** - Nero reigns as Caesar over the Roman Empire.
- ❖ **57-59** - Paul's arrest in Jerusalem and imprisonment at Caesarea.
- ❖ **59** - The arrival of Governor Festus and Paul's trip toward Rome.
- ❖ **60-62** - Paul is shipwrecked and spends his first captivity at Rome. Paul writes Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.
- ❖ **62** - James, half-brother of Jesus and leaders of the church in Jerusalem, is martyred.
- ❖ **62-64** - John Mark writes his Gospel account. Luke writes his Gospel account and Acts.
- ❖ **64-66** - Peter writes 2 Peter; Paul's second captivity at Rome; Paul writes 2 Timothy.
- ❖ **66** - Paul is martyred in Rome.
- ❖ **67** - Peter is martyred in Rome.
- ❖ **70** - The Fall of Jerusalem

## Author / Setting / Recipient



Luke is writing a follow-up or sequel to his Gospel account, which was written to Theophilus. While it is most likely that Theophilus was a real person of high social standing, this name literally means "friend of God." This could mean that the recipient was anyone who wanted to know and be a friend of God. Luke, though, seems to have a particular focus on a Gentile (non-Jewish) audience.

One main difference from the Gospel according to Luke and the book of Acts is that Luke is a part of some of the events recorded here. When you read Acts, look for the "we" sections where Luke is traveling with Paul on his missionary journeys and participating in the ministry of the gospel personally. (c.f. **Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16**)

# Outline of Acts

Theme: The Church Continues

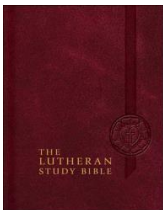
- I. Peter and his coworkers witness in Jerusalem and its environs (1:1–12:25)
  - A. “You will be my witnesses” (1:1–11)
  - B. Preparation and equipping (1:12–2:4)
  - C. God-fearing Jews from every nation (2:5–41)
  - D. The Word of God spreads in Jerusalem (2:42–6:7)
  - E. Stephen’s witness sealed in blood (6:8–8:1)
  - F. Philip’s work in Samaria and Judea (8:1–40)
  - G. The conversion of Saul (9:1–31)
  - H. Salvation for the Gentiles (9:32–11:26)
  - I. The Jerusalem church preserved in famine and persecution (11:27–12:25)
  
- II. Paul and his companions witness in Asia Minor and Europe (13:1–21:16)
  - A. Paul’s first mission tour: Asia Minor (13:1–14:28)
  - B. The council at Jerusalem (15:1–35)
  - C. Paul’s second mission tour: Europe (15:36–18:22)
  - D. Paul’s third mission tour: Asia Minor and Europe (18:23–21:16)
  
- III. Paul as prisoner witnesses from Jerusalem to Rome (21:17–28:31)
  - A. Jerusalem: Paul’s arrest and trial (21:17–23:31)
  - B. Caesarea: Paul’s witness before kings and governors (23:32–26:32)
  - C. Paul’s voyage to Rome (27:1–28:16)
  - D. Rome: Paul’s ministry as a prisoner (28:17–31)

Alternatively, here is a simpler, three-part outline:

From Jerusalem (1:1–6:7)

To Judea and Samaria (6:8–9:31)

To the ends of the earth (9:32–28:31)



## **The Empire in Acts**

This article will help you understand the terminology for governmental offices, officeholders, and other aspects of Roman rule. It will greatly enhance your reading of **Acts 13–28**. (Historians agree that terms can have various usages and meanings, depending on location in the empire.)

### **Governmental Offices**

#### **Caesar (17:7; 25:8, 10, 11, 12, 21; 26:32; 27:24; 28:19)**

Proper name that came to mean “emperor.”

#### **Proconsul (13:7–9, 12; 18:12; 19:38)**

Head of government in a Roman senatorial province; a former member of the Roman Senate acting “for the consul” (in behalf of the Senate); governor.

#### **Governor (23:24, 26, 33; 24:1, 10; 26:30)**

Term used for Roman legates, procurators, and proconsuls. The governor kept the peace of his province, commanded troops in its borders, applied law, and collected taxes.

#### **Magistrates (16:19–20, 22, 35, 36, 38)**

Properly called *duoviri* (“two men”; i.e., two men who were in charge of a Roman colony). They were sometimes called “praetors.” They presided in the courts, supervised the public treasury, and administered the law accumulated by Roman legislation and decree.

#### **Police (16:38)**

Official attendants (*lictors*) of the chief magistrates in Rome and Roman cities. In official processions, they carried symbolic bundles of rods, sometimes with an ax inserted. They served to inflict both corporal and capital punishment.

#### **City Authorities (17:6, 8)**

A magistrate (*politarch*) who formed a part of a town or city council; thus, a “city official.” A term for chief magistrates (5 or 6) who ruled in Macedonian cities. These officials were non-Roman; present at Thessalonica, for instance.

#### **Town Clerk (19:35)**

Chief executive officer of a governmental entity. The clerk executed decrees of popular assemblies in cities, drafted decrees, and had them engraved when passed. A kind of liaison officer between civic government and Roman provincial administration.

#### **Citizen (21:39; see also “Roman[s]” in 16:21, 37–38; 22:25–29; 23:27; 25:16; 28:17)**

Possessed the following rights: (1) vote in popular assemblies, (2) exemption from payment of certain taxes, (3) trial by local or Roman courts, (4) appeal of capital offenses, and (5) protection from scourging, whipping, torture, or injury.

## **Military Offices and Terminology**

### **Jailer (16:23, 27, 29, 36)**

Called *desmophylax*; keeper of a prison.

### **Tribune (21:31–33, 37; 22:24, 26–30; 23:10, 15, 17–19, 22; 24:8, 22; 25:23)**

Called a *chiliarch*; commander or military tribune. Lit, “a leader of 1,000”; he commanded a cohort (c 600).

### **Centurion (21:32; 22:25–26; 23:17–18, 23; 24:23; 27:1, 6, 11, 31, 43 [cf 10:1, 22])**

Roman officer commanding c 100 soldiers.

### **Soldier (21:32, 35, 37; 23:23, 31; 27:31–32, 42; 28:16 [cf 10:7; 12:4, 6, 18])**

Called *stratiotes*; served in groups of 100 (century), 200 (maniple), 600 (cohort), and 6,000 (legion)... In Judea, soldiers served as auxiliary troops with a potential strength of 760 foot soldiers and 240 cavalry (23:23, 32). Soldiers also served as spearmen (23:23).

## **Locations and Gatherings**

### **District (16:12)**

Term used for one of four parts into which Macedonia was divided by the imperial government.

### **Colony (16:12)**

Region created by the emperor in provinces (about 20 in number) for retired government officials and veterans of legions; included Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, Troas, and Syracuse. A colony possessed autonomous government and was sometimes immune from taxes.

### **Tribunal (18:12, 16–17; 25:6, 10, 17)**

A judicial platform or dais (*bema*) to which an official ascended to hold court; a term used for the court itself.

### **Courts (19:38)**

Court days or sessions; a meeting of the citizens with a proconsul presiding.

### **Assembly (19:39, 41)**

A regularly summoned legislative body (*ekklesia*).

### **Praetorium (23:35)**

Official headquarters and residence of the Roman governor of an imperial province.

## **Acts 13:1-3**

Why do believers fast? (c.f. **Matthew 6:16-18**)

What did the laying on of hands mean here?

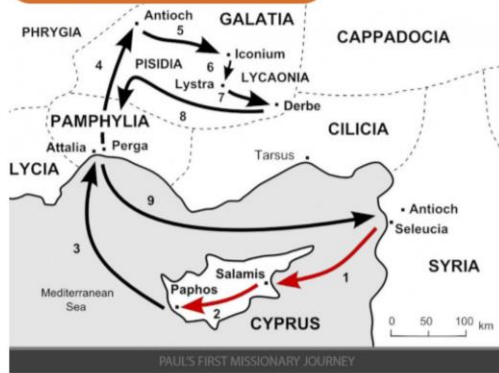


ACTS 13:4-12

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!

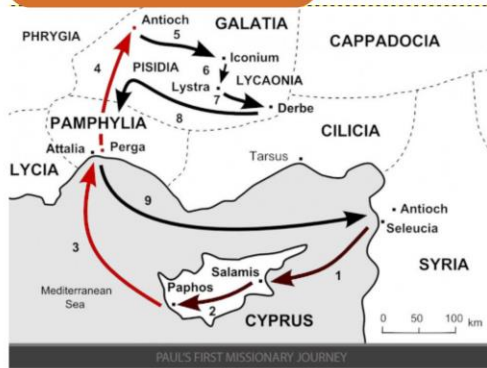


ACTS 13:13-52

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!



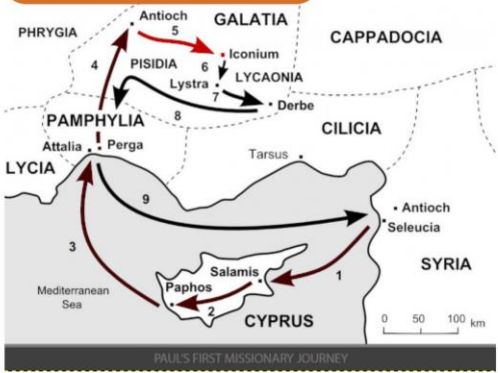


# ACTS 14:1-7

## MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!

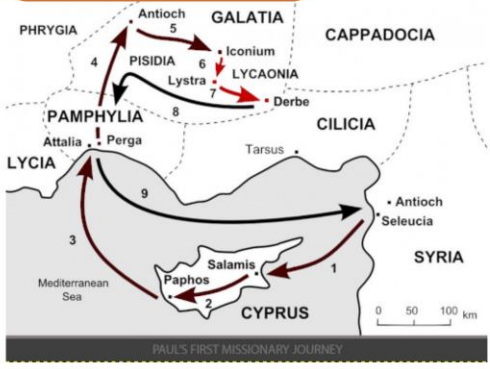


# ACTS 14:8-20

## MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!

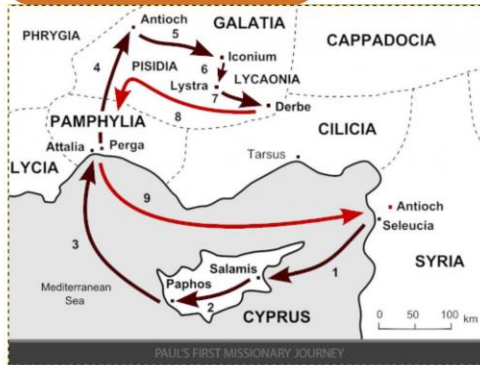


ACTS 14:21-28

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!

## **Acts 15:1-35**

What were some men from Judea teaching in Antioch?

What was the original purpose of commanding that Abraham and his male descendants be circumcised? Read **Genesis 17:1-27** & **Romans 4:1-17**.

This teaching resulted in a sharp dispute and debate. How did the church in Antioch handle the situation? How and when might we do the same?

What did the contingent from Antioch do while they were on their way to Jerusalem? What was the effect? How might we accomplish the same?

How does **verse 5** help flesh out what the Christian Church in these few years after Jesus' resurrection looked like?

What was the conclusion of the believers at the Jerusalem Council? (Compare with **Galatians 2:1-10**.)

Why these particular instructions to the Gentiles turning to the Lord? (C.f. **Leviticus 17-18; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Romans 14:1-23; Revelation 2:14,20; & Ephesians 4:2-3**.)

What prominent people do we hear about in **verse 22**? What else do we learn about them in **verse 32**?

What was the result of the delivery of the Jerusalem Council decision?

Why send representatives with the letter?



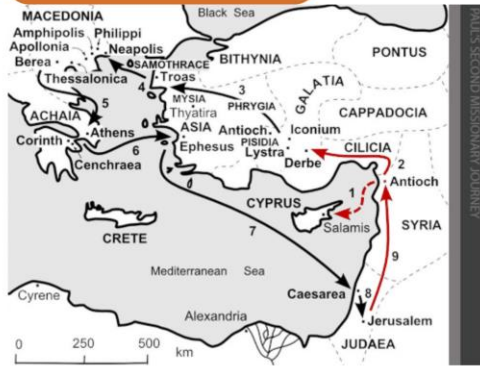
# ACTS 15:36-40

## MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

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WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

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NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

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NOTEABLE PREACHING?

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RESULTS?

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing results.

FUN FACT!

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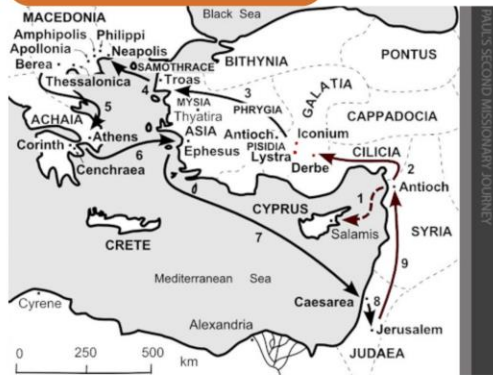


## ACTS 16:1-5

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!

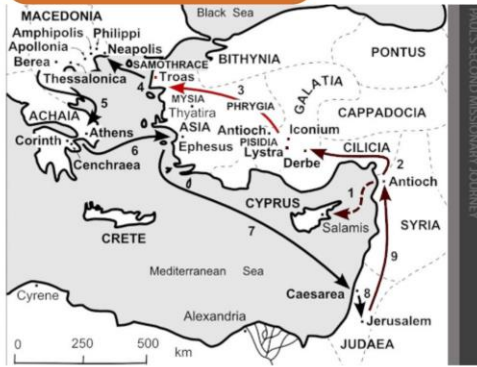


## ACTS 16:6-10

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!



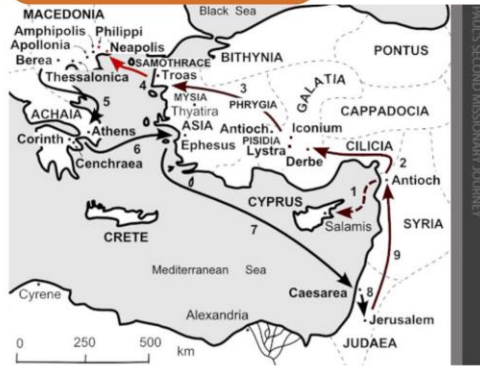


## ACTS 16:11-40

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!



Paul and Silas were singing prayers to the Lord as they endured the brutal discomfort of stocks and suffered the indignity of false imprisonment. Why could the apostles glorify God even in prison? Discuss how trouble in our lives can be a unique opportunity for witnessing to those around us.

How does the story of the jailer at Philippi help us look for evangelism opportunities in unlikely places?

Why did Paul insist that the magistrates escort them out personally?

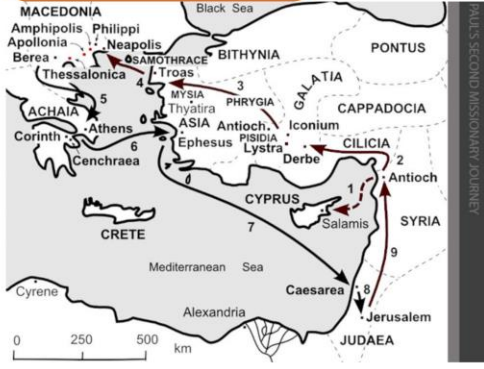


# ACTS 17:1-9

## MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

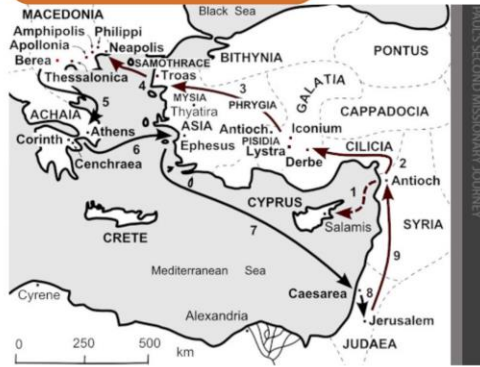


## ACTS 17:10-14

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

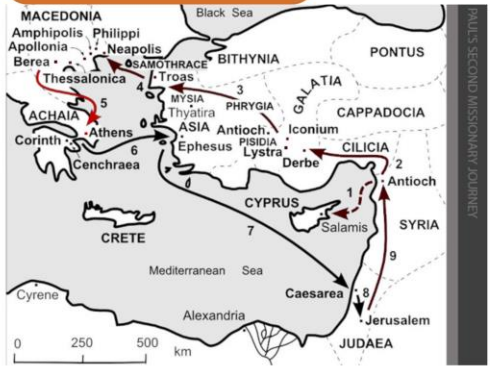
FUN FACT!

  
**ACTS 17:15-33**

# MISSION REPORT

**WHO WENT?**

**WHERE DID THEY GO?**



**WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?**

**NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?**

**NOTEABLE PREACHING?**

**RESULTS?**

**FUN FACT!**



How does the natural knowledge of God help in sharing our faith?



**Self-Reflection:** Think about a person or two you know with whom you have or would like to share the gospel. What do you know about them that might serve as a starting point for a conversation about Christ?

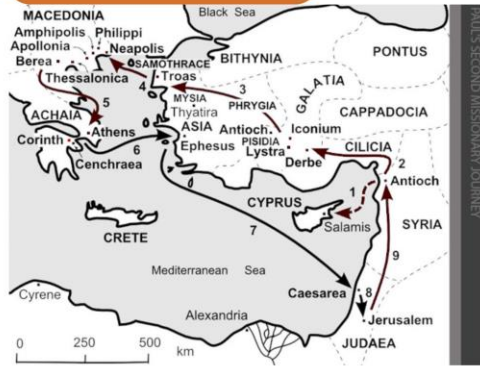
At what point did the Apostle Paul lose most of his audience? Why? Was this a miscalculation on the part of the Apostle Paul? Knowing his audience as he did, why did the Apostle Paul bring this point/these points up?

  
**ACTS 18:1-18a**

# MISSION REPORT

**WHO WENT?**

**WHERE DID THEY GO?**



**WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?**

**NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?**

**NOTEABLE PREACHING?**

**RESULTS?**

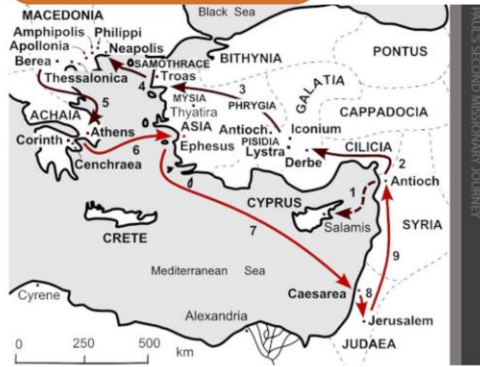
**FUN FACT!**

  
**ACTS 18:18b-23**

# MISSION REPORT

**WHO WENT?**

**WHERE DID THEY GO?**



**WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?**

**NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?**

**NOTEABLE PREACHING?**

**RESULTS?**

**FUN FACT!**





# ACTS 18:23-28

## MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!



For the most part the Roman empire accepted and legalized Judaism. But for some reason Emperor Claudius had ejected the Jews from Rome. How did God use this in his mission plans for Paul?

When Paul first arrived in Corinth, he spent significant time making tents. When Silas and Timothy arrived, it appears they helped support or brought gifts for Paul so that he could focus on sharing the Word. In what ways can members of a congregation ensure that their spiritual leaders are able to devote themselves to the study and sharing of God's Word?

How could we be like Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos?

What made Apollos a good preacher? (C.f. **1 Corinthians 3:1-9**)



## ACTS 19:1-41

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!



## ACTS 20:1-6

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!



# ACTS 20:7-12

## MISSION REPORT

**WHO WENT?**

**WHERE DID THEY GO?**



**WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?**

**NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?**

**NOTEABLE PREACHING?**

**RESULTS?**

**FUN FACT!**



# ACTS 20:13-38

## MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!

Today our society is trending toward a desire on the part of many to serve others, make a difference, leave the world a better place than they found it. Why does this make compassion and service-oriented efforts a great point of contact with the unchurched?



**Self-Reflection:** What community service opportunities already exist in my community? What opportunities to serve people in my community are not currently being met by other entities?

### **React: Thanksgiving “Reverse” Offering**

(From the pastor of another WELS congregation:) At our Thanksgiving service this year, we did a "reverse offering." Every person in attendance received an envelope with cash in it. They were told to bless someone in the community by giving the money away. One member gave their envelope of cash to a person in need. Another member gave theirs to someone who just needed some encouragement in their life. Someone gave theirs to a cashier at the grocery store. Someone else gave theirs to an employee at an oil change center. And another member purchased flannel fabric with their money and made lap robes for seniors at a local assisted living facility. Hearing the stories of our members being a blessing to others was heart-warming. It is truly more blessed to give than to receive.



ACTS 21:1-6

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!





ACTS 21:7-16

# MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START  
PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!



# ACTS 21:17-26

## MISSION REPORT

WHO WENT?

WHERE DID THEY GO?



WHERE DID THEY START PREACHING / TEACHING?

NOTABLE ENCOUNTERS?

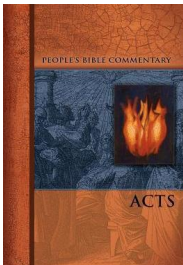
NOTEABLE PREACHING?

RESULTS?

FUN FACT!

The leaders in Jerusalem praised God for what he had done through Paul. But the Jewish Christians had heard a false report about Paul, and they thought he had rejected any use of Moses' laws. What did Paul teach? What plan did the Jerusalem leaders devise to correct the Jews' misunderstanding of Paul's teaching?

### **Acts 21:27-39**

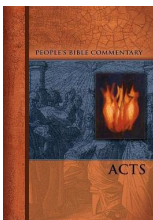


#### **PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Shaving Heads**

Men who had taken a vow would have their heads shaved on the seventh day after announcing their intention to make the sacrifices that concluded the period of the vow. The day after that they would offer the required sacrifice and burn their hair in the sacrificial fire. Before the time was up, before Paul could finish helping them with the ceremonial obligations, the apostle was charged with sacrilege.

Why are these Jews beating Paul?

Who does the commander think Paul is?

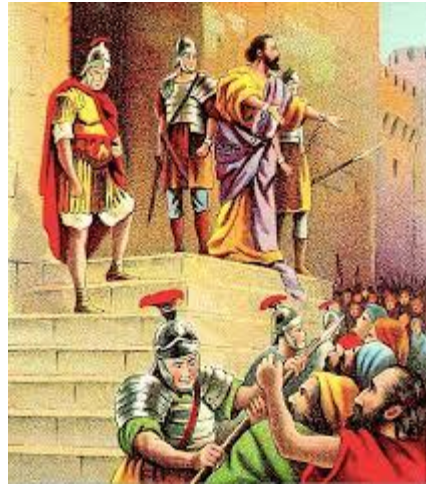


#### **PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Antonia Tower**

The Roman troops were quartered in the Antonia Tower, which overlooked the temple area from the northwest corner. It had been built there because through the years most disturbances in Jerusalem had begun in the temple area. Since the commander of these troops was a tribune, we can surmise that about six hundred soldiers were garrisoned in Jerusalem.

## **Acts 21:40-22:29**

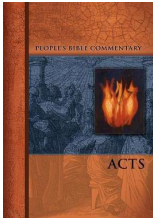
Outline Paul's defense.



What set the Jewish crowd off?

What good purposes would Paul have had for stopping the centurion from flogging him?

## Acts 22:30-23:11



### PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: The High Priest's Reputation

Ananias was high priest from about A.D. 47 to 59. His reputation was that of an insolent and violent man. When the revolt against Rome broke out in A.D. 66, he was assassinated by dagger men. Either Paul's address, "My brothers," or Paul's claim that he was a faithful servant of God, or both, enraged Ananias, and he gave the order to slap Paul.



What's a whitewashed wall? Why would Paul say this after being struck?

When Paul found out that the one ordering the slap was the high priest, he was concerned about showing disrespect for authority. He quoted from Exodus, emphasizing the special honor owed God's representatives, even when they were evil. In what ways can we show respect for leaders even when they are going against God's will?

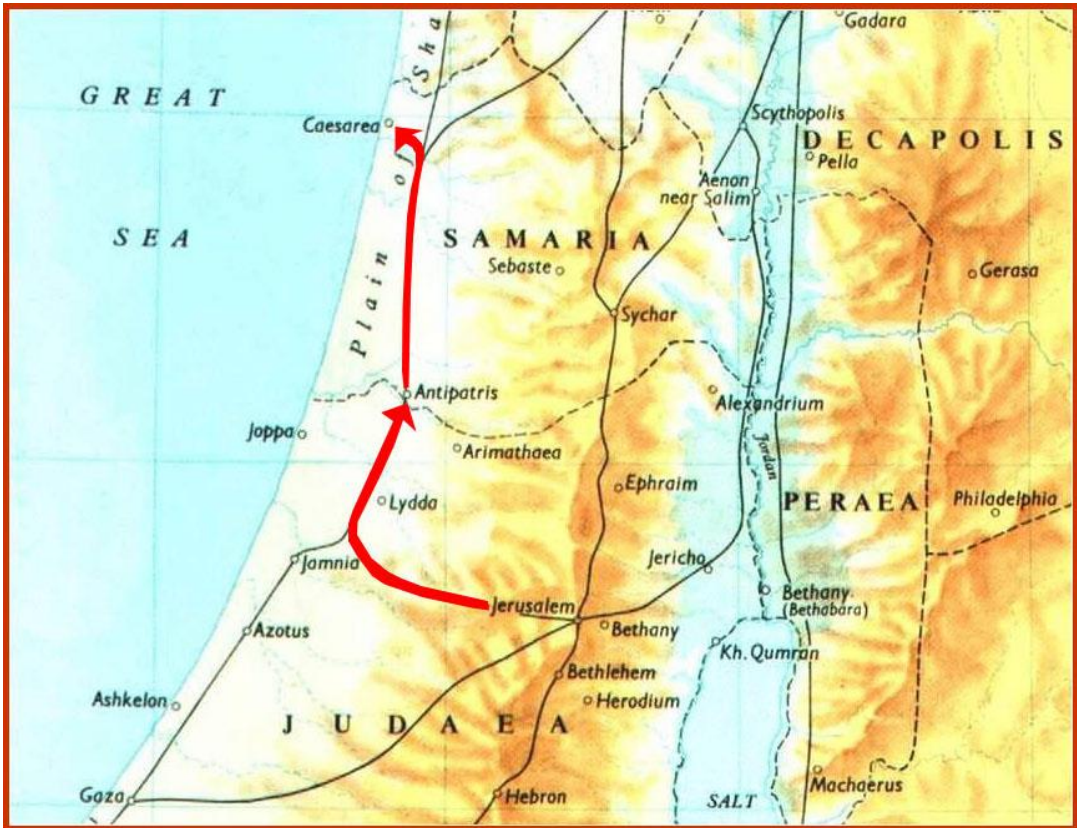
What tactic did Paul use in his defense before the Sanhedrin? When might we do something similar?

What does the Lord tell Paul that night?

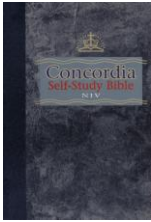
## Acts 23:12-35

What conspiracy had formed against Paul? How was it found out?

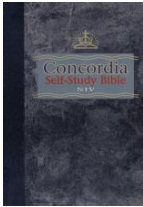
What was done about the conspiracy?



## CONCORDIA SELF-STUDY BIBLE: Felix



Antonius Felix. The emperor Claudius had appointed him governor of Judea c. A.D. 52, a time when Felix's brother was the emperor's favorite minister. The brothers had formerly been slaves, then freedmen, then high officials in government. The historian Tacitus said of Felix, "He held the power of a tyrant with the disposition of a slave." He married three queens in succession, one of whom was Drusilla.

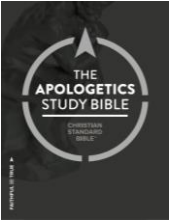


## CONCORDIA SELF-STUDY BIBLE: Herod's Palace

Erected as a royal residence by Herod the Great but now used as a Roman praetorium—the place for the official business of the emperor and/or to house personnel directly responsible to the emperor. Praetoria were located in Rome, Ephesus, Jerusalem (Jn 18:28), Caesarea and other parts of the empire. It also had a racetrack and theatre.



## Acts 24:1-27



### CSB APOLOGETICS STUDY BIBLE: Roman Legal Procedure

Luke's report of the case against Paul followed standard Roman legal procedure. Included in this was the prosecution brought by a lawyer (a rhetor). Tertullus (a well-known Roman name) may have been a Jew (**v. 6**), although he referred to the Jews (in **vv. 5, 9**) objectively. He delivered his speech, abbreviated by Luke, with the conventional concessions to Felix.

What are the charges against Paul?

The accusations Tertullus made against Paul are noted below. Study Paul's response, and tell how Paul defended himself against each of these accusations?

- Verse 5a, Tertullus' accusation:
  
- Paul's response:
  
- Verse 5b, Tertullus' accusation:
  
- Paul's response:
  
- Verse 6, Tertullus' accusation:
  
- Paul's response:



Why do you think Paul adds to his charges what he had said to the Sanhedrin that ultimately broke up their meeting?

What opportunity did Paul have after his initial hearing?

What was Felix's motive in sending for Paul?

### **Acts 25:1-12**

Why did the chief priests and Jewish leaders want Festus to send Paul to Jerusalem?

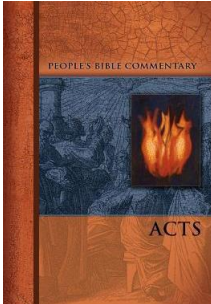
When asked if Paul would go to Jerusalem and stand trial, how does he respond?

When might be a good time for us Christians to appeal to our rights as citizens of this country?

Read **Romans 12:17-21**. How does God want us to respond when we are treated unjustly?

## Acts 25:13-27

### PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Who is King Agrippa?



King Agrippa was Herod Agrippa II. He was the son of Herod Agrippa I, who had James put to death with the sword and intended to do the same to Peter (**12:1-3**). His great-uncle was Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist (**Matthew 14:3-12**) and tried Jesus (**Luke 23:8-12**). He was the great-grandson of Herod the Great, who ordered the slaughter of baby boys in and around Bethlehem at the time of Jesus' birth (**Matthew 2:16**). Although Agrippa did not rule Judea, he had control over the temple and the right to name the high priest. He controlled certain territories in the north of Galilee and the south of Syria. He had

the title "king" under the authority of the Roman government. It was important that he and Festus get along well, in view of his temple responsibilities, which gave him influence in Jerusalem. Bernice was his sister, but a number of heathen writers of the first century say that she was living with him as his wife.

What did Festus understand of the charges against Paul?

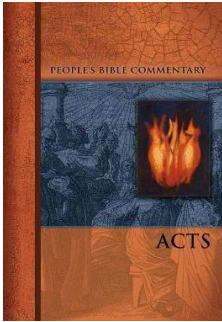
How could Festus have investigated the disputes?

What does Festus say is the point of the investigation now?

## **Acts 26:1-32**

Agrippa was the more seasoned leader, who understood the Jewish laws and writings. Agrippa motioned with his hand to let Paul have the floor. Examine Paul's defense by stating the main point or points in each of the following sections.

- **Verses 2-3**
- **Verses 4-5**
- **Verses 6-8**
- **Verses 9-11**
- **Verses 12-14**
- **Verses 15-16**
- **Verses 17-18**
- **Verses 19-23**



## PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Kick Against the Goats

An ox driver prods his animals with a sharp goad, pointed stick. To kick against the goad is to fight in vain and to be hurt in the process. As Paul was battling Jesus, he was doing just that. The self-righteous persecutor learned that his activities were only hurting himself and that they were useless. A proverbial saying expressed the foolishness of trying to fight against God. A stick with a sharp point is still used in some countries to control an ox and to get it moving in the right direction. The beast that resists by kicking against the goad only hurts itself.

Even as we recall our past sins like Paul, what does God tell us? Read **Psalms 103; Jeremiah 31:33-34; & Isaiah 53:4-6.**

What was Festus's response to Paul's defense?



An attempt to discredit someone's argument with personal attacks.

In his defense before Agrippa, Paul connected the Old Testament and Jesus. Why is this connection especially significant in Paul's witness to Agrippa?

What was Agrippa's response to Paul's defense?

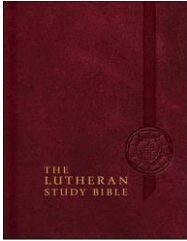
How would you show someone that what the Bible says is true and reasonable?

How can Paul's words in **verse 29** be words of encouragement for us today?

"This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar." Had Paul miscalculated in making that appeal? Why or why not?

## Acts 27:1-44

### Sea Travel in Paul's Day



Ancient sources indicate that travel on the Mediterranean Sea was governed by the seasons. March 10–May 27 was risky; May 28–September 14 was considered safe; September 15–November 11 was risky; and November 12–March 9 was dangerous, with disasters common. Paul mentions “the Fast” in **Acts 27:9**, which refers to Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement. Since this Jewish feast day occurred in September or October, we can assume that the journey to Rome took place during a “risky” season.

For most of his seafaring journey from Caesarea to Rome, St Paul traveled on two Alexandrian grain ships (**Acts 27:6; 28:11**). Here is what we know about such ships from Luke’s account and from other ancient sources.

### Cargo

Corn, wheat, and barley grown in Egypt were loaded on the ship in bulk (not in sacks or bins). Shifting weight, therefore, could cause ballast problems, and wet grain could swell in the hull, requiring adjusted ballast or undergirding of the ship (**Acts 27:17–18**).

### Route

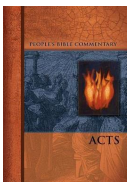
The route traveled from Egypt to Rome took an average of 10–20 days with favorable winds. Ships had to sail 1,000 nautical miles to make this trip.

### Size

Some grain ships could be as large as 180 ft long, 45 ft wide, and 40 ft deep. They could carry as much as 150,000 tons per year. Josephus claimed to have traveled on a ship like this loaded with 600 passengers. “This was the largest mercantile fleet known to Europe before the 1700s,” notes one scholar (Craig Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993], 401, 403).

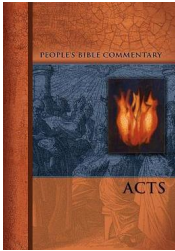
### Sea Travel

The Roman government’s fleet assured a measure of stability in a time when piracy was common. Sea travel was the principal means of transporting food to population centers.



### PEOPLE’S BIBLE COMMENTARY: The Fast

The fast to which Luke refers is the only fast day in the Jewish religious calendar, the great Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 16:29-30**). It is the day before the Jewish New Year, which comes in late September or early October.



## PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Aristarchus

Aristarchus, like Luke, had accompanied Paul to Jerusalem with the relief offering (**20:4**). He was one of the men who, with Gaius, were rushed into the theater of Ephesus by a raging mob (**19:29**). In **Colossians 4:10**, written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome, the apostle refers to Aristarchus as "my fellow prisoner." Luke does not report whether this coworker of Paul became a prisoner in Rome or while he was in Caesarea.



How did the centurion show special kindness to Paul on his trip to Rome?

Why did the majority dismiss Paul's advice to stay put in the port of Fair Havens?

What events led those sailing the ship to give up all hope of being saved?

What hope did Paul give the sailors?

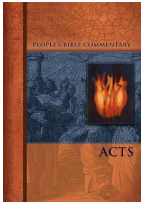
What purpose does God have whenever he shows the unbelieving world kindness? (c.f. **Acts 14:15-17; 17:22-31**)

This adventure story is also the story of calm in the heart of God's representative, Paul, who was trusting in God's promises. How did God use a Roman prisoner to steer the passengers and crew to follow his will?

Paul took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of a boatload of unbelievers. How can we give witness to our Savior in how we handle the regular activities of daily life?



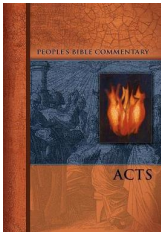
## Acts 28:1-10



### **PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Malta**

Malta is the small island about 60 miles to the south of Sicily, about 150 miles southwest of the "toe" of Italy's "boot." It was part of the Roman province of Sicily. When the ship broke up on the sandbar in the bay, it was about 500 miles west of where the storm first caught it off Crete.

What miracles did God perform through Paul in this section?

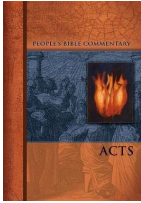


### **PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Castor and Pollux**

In Greek mythology Castor and Pollux were the twin sons of Zeus and Leda. There may be a bit of irony in Luke's mention of them, because sailors regarded them as their guardian, or patron, deities. Those who had been rescued by the God to whom Paul belonged and whom he served would know that a power higher than "the twins" is the ruler of wind and wave.

How did a hurricane wind play into revealing God's love for people of all nations and advance his plan of salvation?

## Acts 28:11-31



### PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: Jews in Rome

All Jews had been banished from Rome by Emperor Claudius in A.D. 49 (**18:2**). His edict was no longer in effect and, under Nero, there was once again a Jewish community in the capital. Paul greeted many Jewish believers in his epistle to the Romans, written three years before his arrival in the city.

As Paul approached Rome, fellow Christians heard of his coming and went out to meet him. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and literally received courage (**verse 15**). Why is regular contact with fellow Christians a great blessing?

Describe Paul's living conditions once he arrived in Rome.

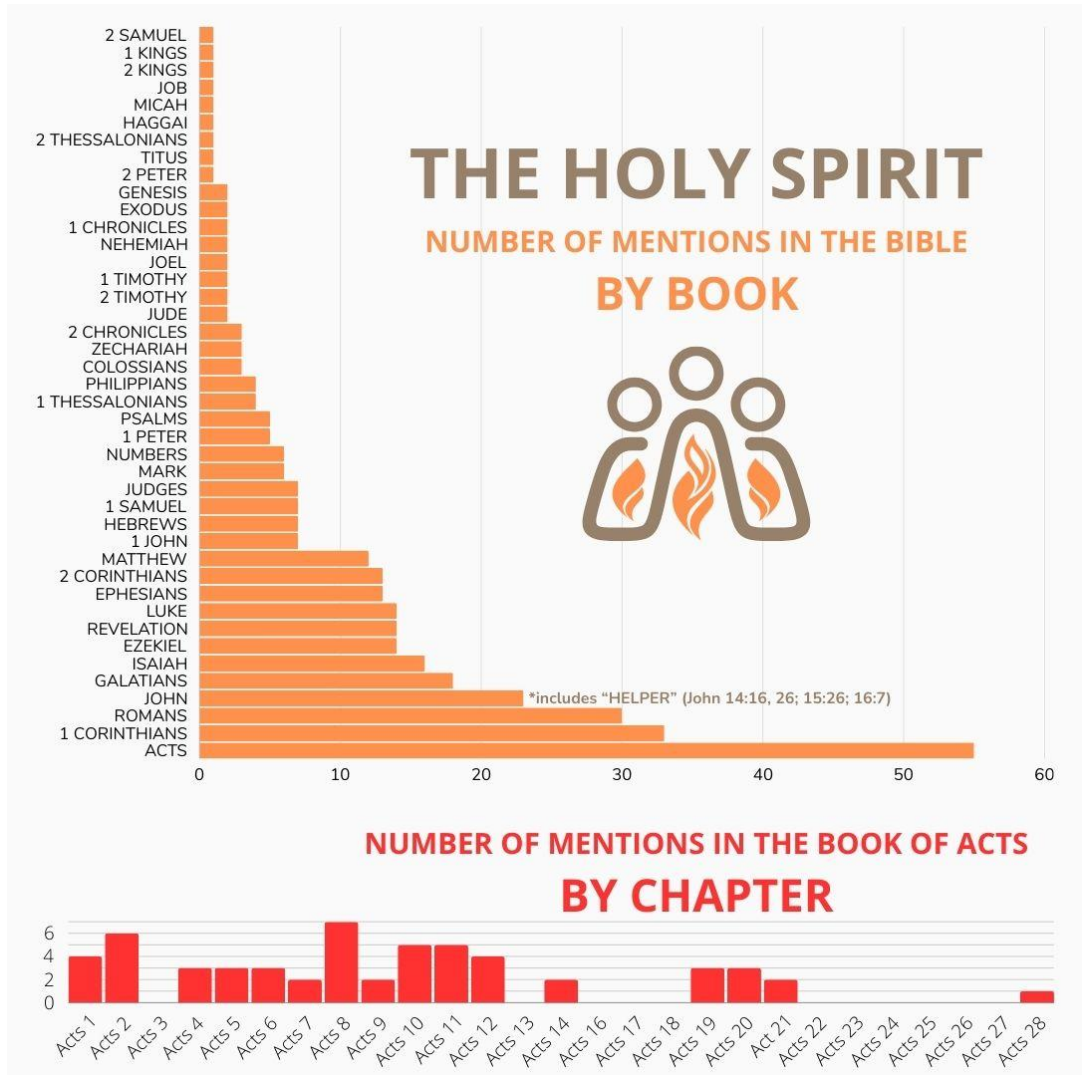
Why did Paul call together leaders of the Jews in Rome?

How did the Jews respond to Paul at this first meeting?

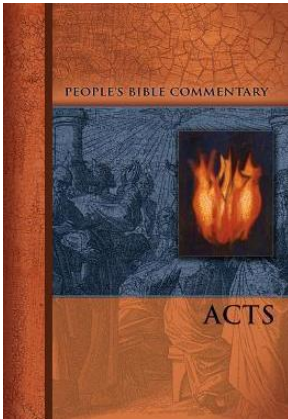
The Jewish people came to hear Paul explain his teaching. What did Paul attempt to do? What was the result?

How is the ending of Acts fitting for the entire book?

What are some notable takeaways from the book of Acts as we consider mission work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?



## PEOPLE'S BIBLE COMMENTARY: The End?



During the two years in Rome, Paul wrote several of his epistles: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and possibly Ephesians. The result of his trial before the imperial court was that he was acquitted: "I was delivered from the lion's mouth" (**2 Timothy 4:17**).

Thus Paul was free to continue his work, and it is clear that he revisited many of the places where his earlier journeys had taken him. He worked on Crete and left Titus there to complete the work of organizing the churches on that island (**Titus 1:5**). He revisited Miletus (**2 Timothy 4:20**) and probably Ephesus (**1 Timothy 1:3**). Perhaps he made a visit to Colosse and enjoyed Philemon's hospitality as he had hoped to (**Philemon 22**). He revisited Troas (**2 Timothy 4:13**) and went to Macedonia (**1 Timothy 1:3**).

It had been Paul's intention, before his arrest in Jerusalem and the subsequent voyage to Rome as a prisoner, to go to Spain (**Romans 15:24, 28**). He had expressed the hope that after a visit with the saints in Rome they would help him make that trip (**Romans 15:28**). Perhaps he was able to do so, but there is no biblical evidence that he did.

Somewhere, for some reason, Paul was arrested a second time. From prison in Rome he wrote his second epistle to Timothy. He expected to be executed this time. Ancient tradition says that he was beheaded at Rome, probably in AD 66. "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing" (**2 Timothy 4:6-8**).

The Spirit promised by Jesus (**1:5**) moved and empowered others to continue what the apostles began. To this day there are witnesses to the risen Savior carrying his saving name "to the ends of the earth" (**1:8**).

# ACTS

## of Jesus & the SPIRIT

# LUKE-ACTS

HOW GOD'S KINGDOM CAME ON EARTH AS IN HEAVEN THROUGH JESUS & HIS SPIRIT & HIS CHURCH

- EXAMPLES OF FAITHFULNESS TO KING JESUS
- SHARING THE GOOD NEWS IN WORDS & ACTION
- FORMING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES WHERE PEOPLE ARE EQUALS
- TRUSTING IN THE PROMISE & GUIDANCE OF THE SPIRIT

### 8-12 JUDEA & SAMARIA

HOW THE MOSTLY JEWISH, JERUSALEM-BASED COMMUNITY OF JESUS BECAME A MULTI-ETHNIC, INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

**8** PHILIP (IN SAMARIA)

**9** CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSAUS

**10-11a** PETER & CORNELIUS

**11b** THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH

**12** BARNABAS & PAUL

• DON'T CALL "PAGAN" SOMETHING GOD HAS PROMISED

• FIRST MULTI-ETHNIC CHURCH

• FIRST USE OF "CHRISTIANS" (11:26)

### 13-20 THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

ASIA MINOR

ANTIOCH

TARSAUS

**13-14** ASIA MINOR

**15** THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL

**16-18a** ASIA MINOR & GREECE

**18b-20** ASIA MINOR & GREECE AGAIN!

CONTINUED TO PASSION TO ISRAEL

HE OPPOSES THE "TOUGH"

THEY ARE KING OF THE ISRAEL AND THE NATIONS!

CONTRADICTING LUKAS' PROPHESY IN JESUS

PEOPLE IS NOT BASED ON ETHNICITY OR TORAH OBLIGATION, BUT SIMPLY ON TRUSTING & OBTAINING JESUS.

NO WAY!

UNLESS YOU BELIEVE THESE THINGS, THEY CAN'T BE SAVED! (16:1)

GOY THINGS ARE NOT TO BELIEVE AND TO BEAR IN YOUR HEARTS!

GOY THINGS ARE NOT TO BELIEVE AND TO BEAR IN YOUR HEARTS!

### THE PARADOX OF THE EARLY CHURCH

• A RACE MESSAGE, INTERPRETED...  
...but, obviously diverse

• MEN & WOMEN, RICH & POOR, SLAVE & FREE... all treated as equals

• LOYAL TO JESUS ALONE...  
...but not a military threat to Rome

**15** THE CLASH OF OUTLINES (CA. 14-16/17, 47)

• GALILEO

• JESUS

• THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH IS THE ONE TRUE GOD & KING!

**16-18b** ACCUSATIONS OF REBELLION (CA. 17, 18)

• JESUS BEYOND CLEAN, SHINING KING, JESUS

• JESUS BEYOND CLEAN, SHINING KING, JESUS

### 21-28 PAUL'S WITNESS SPREADS TO ROME

**21-22** PAUL ARRESTED IN JERUSALEM

HE TESTIFIES AGAINST OUR PEOPLE & OUR TEMPLE! (21:28)

HE'S OUT OF HIS MIND!

HE'S DONE THE SAME THING AS MANY OF YOU!

**23-26** PAUL ON TRIAL BEFORE...

**23** THE SANHEDRIN

**24** GOVERNOR FELIX

**25** GOVERNOR PESTUS

**26** KING AGRIPPA

I STAND ON TRIAL BECAUSE OF MY HOPE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE SUFFERING MESSIAH. (26:6)

**26** UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN ROME

PAUL ANNOUNCED THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PROMOTING TRUSTING ALL ABOUT THE LORD JESUS, THE MESSIAH, TRULY UNDEFEATED. (28:31)

### PAUL'S IMPROVEMENT ALLOWS THE TO COMPOSE HIS APOSTOLIC LETTERS

**27** THE GALATIAN LETTERS

**28** THE CORINTHIAN LETTERS

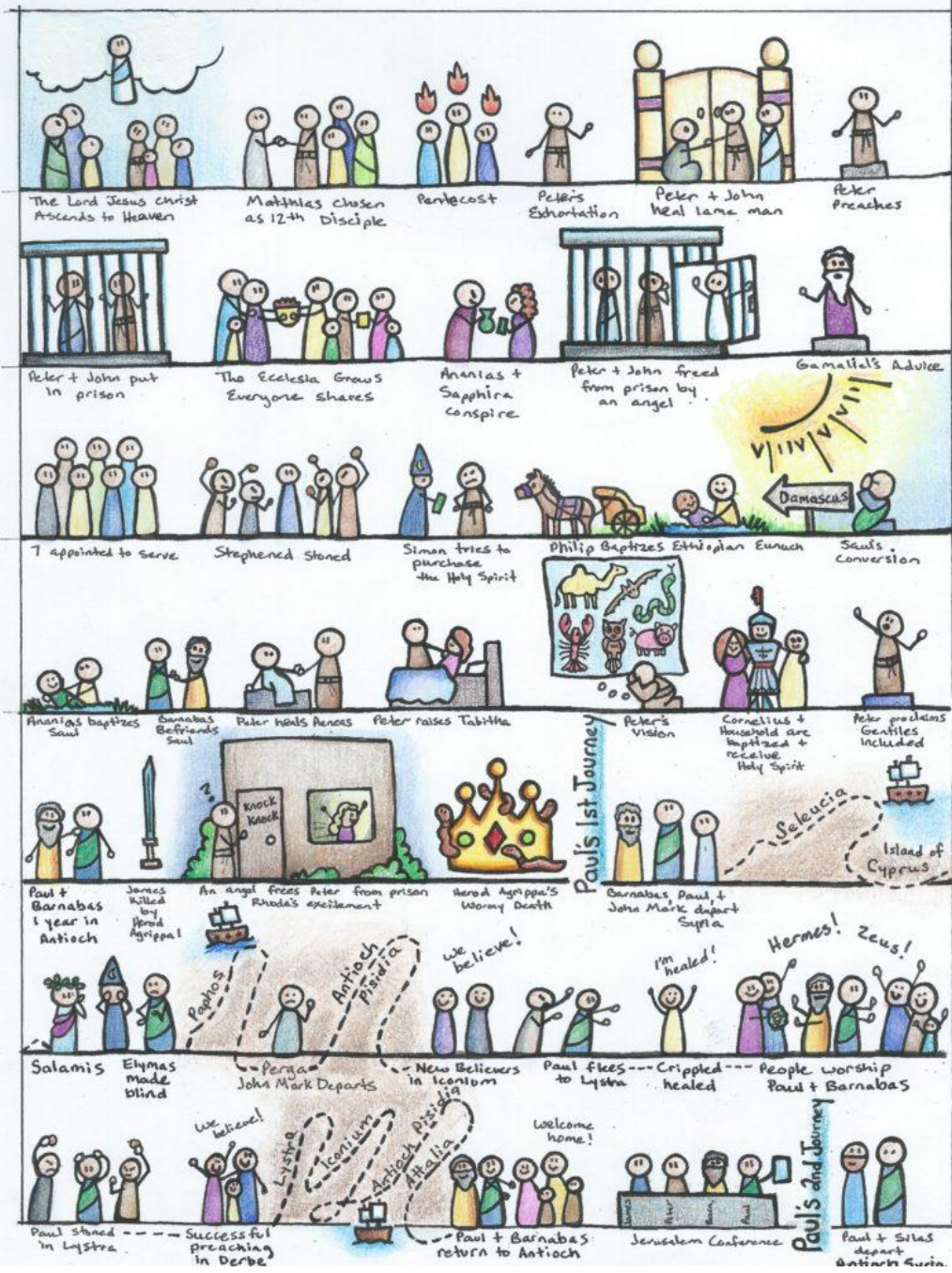
**29** THE ROMAN LETTERS

**30** THE PHILIPPIAN LETTERS

**31** THE COLLOSSIAN LETTERS

**32** THE PASTORAL LETTERS

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# LIGHT OF THE VALLEY

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