

THE BOOK OF ACTS

Part 12 - Conclusion

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I. THE EXPANDING CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

- A. As discussed in part 1, *Introduction*, one of Luke’s primary goals in writing the book of Acts was to chronicle the birth of the Church through the outpouring of the promised Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. For good reason, the book of Acts has been traditionally called the “The Acts of the Apostles,” for throughout his account, Luke shows the vital role played by the apostles in the founding and expansion of the Early Church.
- B. Despite the almost continual opposition from the Jewish religious establishment (which often incited secondary persecutions and riots from the Gentiles), the apostles, elders and disciples of the Church boldly and fearlessly preached the gospel, ever extending and expanding its reach. The seed of Christ’s word was watered both with tears and the blood of many martyrs who made the ultimate sacrifice to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

II. ACTS AND BEYOND

- A. The book of Acts covers the period of time from A.D. 30 to A.D. 62 approximately. It is commonly believed that Luke finished writing Acts in A.D. 63, and there are several evidences to support this view:
 - 1. There is no mention of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus of Rome in A.D. 70;
 - 2. There is no mention of the outcome of Paul’s appeal in Rome (and his eventual release);
 - 3. There is no mention of the martyrdom of James in Jerusalem (A.D. 63), Peter’s execution in Rome (A.D. 64), or Paul’s second Roman imprisonment and execution under Nero in Rome (A.D. 67 or 68); [see *Section II.D: Timeline of New Testament History* on p.293].
- B. There is considerable evidence indicating that Paul was released from his two-year house arrest in Rome described in

Acts 28, and later rearrested, imprisoned and executed around A.D. 67 or 68:

1. Acts stops abruptly at this time;
 2. Paul wrote to churches expecting to visit them soon, so he must have anticipated a release (see Phil. 2:24; Phile. 22);
 3. A number of details in the Pastoral Epistles do not fit into the historical setting given in the book of Acts. These details indicate a return to Asia Minor, Crete and Greece after the events at the close of Acts;
 4. Tradition indicates that Paul went to Spain. Even if he did not go, the very fact that a tradition arose suggests a time when he could have taken such a journey.
- C. Well, here we are... we have come to the conclusion of the book of Acts and our study thereof. Hopefully, we know a bit more about the history of the Church. But, as we have emphasized from the beginning of this study, our hope and prayer is not to merely fill our heads with dates and historical facts; rather, that God would stir our hearts to continue what Peter, James, Stephen, Philip, Paul, Barnabas and a host of others started! We have received the same power they did to be Christ's witnesses in our home, our neighborhood, our workplace, and maybe even in the jungles of a foreign mission field. So let's "write" Acts chapters 29, 30, 31, etc. as we declare to the world, "There is another King, one called Jesus who is risen from the dead and coming soon in glory!"

D. Timeline of New Testament History

(All dates are approximate)

TIMELINE OF NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY		
YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Paul born in Tarsus of Cilicia (Acts 22:3; Phil. 3:5)	
15-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Paul trained under Gamaliel in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3)	
30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Jesus' death, resurrection, ascension;· Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)	
31	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Peter heals crippled man in temple (Acts 3)· Peter and John arrested by Sanhedrin (Acts 4)	
32	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Joseph (Barnabus) sells a field (Acts 4:36)· Ananias & Sapphira die; apostles arrested but released by angel (Acts 5)	
33	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Seven deacons chosen (Acts 6)	

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Saul arrives in Jerusalem · Stephen stoned to death, Paul present (Acts 7:59) · Saul persecutes the church in Jerusalem · Philip goes to Samaria, meets Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8) 	
35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Saul converted on road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-9) · Saul goes to Damascus (Acts 9:10-19) · Saul leaves for Arabia (Gal.1:17) 	
36-37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Saul remains in Arabia, possibly for 3 years 	
38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Saul returns to preach in Damascus · Saul's life is threatened, escapes to Jerusalem (Acts 9:23-29) · Barnabus introduces Saul to disciples · Saul with Peter 15 days (Gal.1:18-19) · Saul flees to Tarsus (Acts 9:29-30) 	

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Saul preaches in Cilicia and Syria for 5 years (Acts 9:30; Gal.1:21) · Peter's ministry in Judea, Lydda & Joppa (Acts 9:36-43) · Peter called to Caesarea by Cornelius (Acts 10) 	
40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Peter defends his ministry in Cornelius' house to the church leaders in Jerusalem (Acts 11) · Saul is preaching in Cilicia & Syria 	
41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Saul is preaching in Cilicia & Syria 	
42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Saul is preaching in Cilicia & Syria 	
43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Barnabus brings Saul back to teach in for a year in the church at Antioch in Syria (Acts 11:25-26) · Disciples in Antioch called "Christians" 	

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Agabus, a prophet from Jerusalem, visits Antioch church · Antioch church sends Paul & Barnabus to Jerusalem with aid (11:27-30) · James is beheaded by Herod Agrippa I · Peter is arrested, freed by an angel · Herod Agrippa I dies in Caesarea (Acts 12) 	
45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul & Barnabus return from Jerusalem to Antioch with John Mark (Acts 12:25) 	James writes James from Jerusalem
46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul & Barnabus leave on their first missionary journey, which lasts 2 years (Acts 13 - 14:28) 	
47	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul & Barnabas travel to Paphos, then to Perga & Pamphylia where John Mark departs for home (Acts 13:13) · Paul & Barnabas visit Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (Acts 13-14) 	

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul & Barnabas return to Antioch in Syria and report about their journey to the church (Acts 14:24-28) · Judaizers confuse the Antioch church 	<p>Paul writes Galatians from Antioch in Syria</p>
49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Jerusalem Council (Acts 15; Gal. 2:1-10) · Judas and Silas chosen by the apostles to return to Antioch with Paul and Barnabus (Acts 15:22) · Paul & Barnabas teach & preach in Antioch 	

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Contention over John Mark; Barnabus & John Mark to Cyprus (Acts 15:36-39) · Paul takes Silas on his second missionary journey, which lasts 2 years (Acts 15:40 - 18:23) · Paul & Silas go to Derbe & Lystra, Timothy joins them (Acts 16:1-5) · In Troas, Paul sees a vision of a Macedonian man; Luke joins the group as they sail for Philippi, where they meet Lydia (Acts 16:9-15) · Paul & Silas in prison in Philippi (Acts 16:11-40) · Paul preaches in Thessalonica, starts a church and a riot (Acts 17:1-10) · Paul goes to Berea, leaves Silas & Timothy and flees to Athens (Acts 17:10-15) · Paul in Athens alone (17:16-33) 	<p>Matthew writes his gospel of</p> <p>Matthew</p>

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul goes to Corinth alone, meets Aquila & Priscilla, is rejoined with Silas & Timothy (Acts 18:1-17) · Paul stays in Corinth, starts church, appears before Gallio (18:12) 	<p>Paul writes 1 Thessalonians from Corinth</p>
52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul leaves Corinth, sails for Ephesus, left Aquila & Priscilla in Ephesus (18:18-20) · Paul returns to Antioch, Syria 	<p>Paul writes 2 Thessalonians from Corinth</p>
53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul begins third missionary journey, which lasts 5 years (Acts 18:23 - 21:17) · Paul travels through Galatia and Phrygia, then arrives in Ephesus, · Aquila and Priscilla meet Apollos in Ephesus, explain the gospel to him (Acts 18:24-26) · Apollos goes to Corinth (Acts 18:27) · Paul stays in Ephesus for 3 years (Acts 19:1-41) 	

TIMELINE OF NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY

YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul is in Ephesus all year 	
55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul's ministry continues in Ephesus 	Paul writes 1 Corinthians from Ephesus
56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul leaves Ephesus for Corinth, Troas, Macedonia & Greece (Acts 20) · Paul exhorts the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts 20:15-38) 	Paul writes 2 Corinthians from Macedonia

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul arrives in Jerusalem, a riot erupts and he is arrested at the temple and put in prison (Acts 21:17-36) · Paul addresses the crowd (Acts 21:37 – 22:21) · Paul appears before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30 - 23:10) · Jews plan to kill Paul so he is transferred to Felix the governor in Caesarea (Acts 23:12-35) · Paul appears before Felix (Acts 24:1-27) · Paul is in prison in Caesarea for two years (Acts 24:27) 	Paul writes Romans from Corinth
58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul remains in prison in Caesarea 	

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul remains in prison in Caesarea · Paul appears before Festus and King Herod Agrippa II (Acts 25 - 26) · Paul appeals to Caesar so he is sent to Rome by Festus (25:11-12) · Paul sails for Rome; after a violent storm and shipwreck, they reach the island of Malta (Acts 27:1 – 28:10) 	
60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul arrives in Rome and is allowed to live by himself with a Roman soldier to guard him (Acts 28:14-16) 	Paul writes Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon & Philippians from Rome
61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul continues in Rome under house arrest 	

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul continues in Rome under house arrest · Peter comes to Rome · Paul is released from Roman imprisonment · Paul leaves on his fourth missionary journey, which lasts for 5 years (from A.D. 62-67); possibly travels to Spain or first visits Philippi and Corinth along with other churches in Achaia and Macedonia 	Peter writes 1 Peter from Rome
63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · James, the Lord's brother, is martyred in Jerusalem · Paul is in Spain 	Paul writes 1 Timothy & Titus from Philippi
64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul is in Spain · Peter is martyred in Rome · Paul returns from Spain to Crete & leaves Titus at Crete (Titus 1:5) 	Peter writes 2 Peter from Rome
65	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul travels through Macedonia and Asia 	

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YEAR	CHURCH	N.T.
A.D.	EVENT	BOOK WRITTEN
66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul probably spends time in Colosse, Ephesus, Miletus 	
67	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paul's second Roman imprisonment · Paul is executed by Nero in A.D. 67 or 68 	<p style="text-align: center;">Paul writes 2 Timothy from the Mamertine dungeon in Rome</p>
68-69		<p style="text-align: center;">Hebrews is written by an unknown author</p>
70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Titus besieges Jerusalem 	
94-96	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The apostle John sent to the Isle of Patmos by Emperor Domitian · John receives the book of Revelation · John is released from Patmos and returns to Ephesus (?) 	

