

Introduction

Sunday, August 30, 2020

ACTS

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✓ The book of Acts is the sequel to the Gospel of Luke. Luke begins his gospel with the announcement of the birth of John the Baptist and ends with our Lord's ascension into Heaven. The Book of Acts begins with the ascension and ends with the worldwide blindness of Israel and the acceptance of the gospel by the Gentiles.

Compare **Luke 1:1-4 & Acts 1:1-2; See Luke 24:45-53 & Acts 28:25-28.**

✓ Acts records the transition from Jew to Gentile (See **Romans 9, 10, & 11**), hence the common expression: "Rob Peter to Pay Paul". The book also shows us the transitions from:

- Judaism to Christianity
- Jerusalem to Antioch
- Peter to Paul
- The Revealed Plan to the Hidden Purpose.

✓ The book starts with Peter the Apostle to the Jews and closes with Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles. *As we will see in the outline, the Book of Acts is clearly marked off into three parts and two Acts; in order to understand the book the workman must consider the activities concerning the Holy Spirit and how He works through the apostles according to both the revealed plan & the hidden purpose that will be incrementally revealed in the book.*

✓ ACT I - Jew Only

1. Jerusalem. Chapters 1-7
2. Judea and Samaria. Chapters 8-12

The ministry in Act I is confined to the Jew ONLY; as God has been working through the nation of Israel in the past, so He continues working according to His Revealed Plan. The principle human agent is Peter.

Act_11:19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

✓ ACT II - Jew First

3. Uttermost parts. Chapters 13-28

Act II has to do with the Jews and their dealings/relationship with the Gentiles; but the message is always to the Jew FIRST. The principle human agent is Paul; note that prior to Acts 13 PAUL was always called SAUL (His Jewish name).

Acts 13:26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

✓ *Rom_1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

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Rom_2:9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

Rom_2:10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

✓ Paul spent the first three days, in every city he went, reasoning with the Jews and giving them the Gospel FIRST. **Acts 13:36 & 17:1-3**

Acts 17:1-3 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, 3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

The book of Acts is one of the *most misunderstood and misapplied* book in the New Testament. The transitional nature of the book makes its interpretation paramount to the understanding of God's plan and calling for the church; both the church (the callout out of God) during the Acts period and it's transition into the church (the called out of God) , the hidden mystery, at the closing of the Acts period.

✓

The Acts Period	The Period of the Mystery
1. It's appeal to the Law and the Prophets	1. The absence of appeal to the Old Testament, specifically concerning Israel.
2. The restoration of the Kingdom to Israel	2. The Kingdom to Israel in abeyance
3. The sign gifts of the Holy Spirit	3. The signs which followed believers no longer in view.
4. The Jew was placed first.	4. No dispensational advantage for the Jew.

✓ God's administrative changes no not alter certain fundamental truths. One's belief in Christ as Savior, Redeemer, as God manifest in the flesh, is still as valid today as it was in 30AD; all saints are saved sinners, but not all saved sinners have been gifted the same position in God's eternal kingdom.

It is important to note that NO CHRISTIAN appears in the book of Acts until **Acts 11:26**; it would be wise to use caution when applying any biblical truths discussed prior to the events in Acts 11 to the Christian today. The book of called, the ACTS of the APOSTLES. Not, the Acts of the Christians.

✓ To better understand this, let's look at "The Church"

The Church

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<i>The Called-out of God</i>	
(1) BEFORE the Foundation of the World	(1) FROM or SINCE the Foundation of the World
(2) The HIDDEN Purpose <i>Eph 1:4, 2:15, 3:9; Col 1:26</i>	(2) The REVEALED Plan <i>Matt 13:35; Rom 9:4 Heb 11:4-40, 12:22-24; Rev 13:8</i>
√ (3) The Fulfillment of this Calling <i>Eph 1:3, 1:20-21, 2:6, 2:15, 4:13 Phil 3:20-21; Titus 2:13 Col 3:1-3</i>	(3) The Fulfillment of this Calling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Pre-Second Advent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Kingdom: Psa 110:1; Mal 4:5-6; Matt 17:11; Joel 2:31 b. The Rebellion: Psa 2; Matt 24; II Thes 2:3; Rev 6-9 B. Second Advent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Millennial Kingdom: Rev 20:4 b. The Little Season: Rev 20:7 c. The Great White Throne: Rev 20:11 C. New Heaven and Earth and the Holy City <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. See Rev 21 and 22 <p>Time period for the earthly calling is 1,000 Generations. See Psa 105:8,9</p>
√ (4) Calling is Far Above The Heavens (the 4th Dimension - Celestial) <i>Eph 3:18</i>	(4) Calling is Earthly (Terrestrial) <i>Mat 8:11;</i>
√ The Question: When did the CHURCH Begin?	
Concerning the Heavenly: Before the Foundation of the World. <i>Eph 1:4; Eph 3:9</i>	Concerning the Earthly: With the calling of Abel. <i>Heb 11:4</i>
<p>When time is no more, all callings will be under one Headship. <i>Eph 1:9,10.</i> See notes on Ephesians Chapter 1</p>	

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✓ The Transitional Nature of The Book of Acts

The book of Acts is yet another example of history repeating itself. The Old Testament prophets had searched to understand the GRACE that was to be offered between the SUFFERING of the Messiah and the GLORY that was to follow; but that meaning was lost on the ruling religious leaders of the day and they rejected the work of the Holy Ghost in the Acts period.

1 Peter 1:9-12 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. 10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

✓ As we follow the work of the Holy Ghost during Acts we find that it's much like traveling across the country; traveling south along I5 you will eventually begin to see marked changes in culture. But the change is so incremental you barely notice, until you cross into Tijuana and realize we are far from where we started. The same is true with the book of Acts, the grace of God that was extended to the nation of Israel in Acts 2 was incrementally pushed toward the Gentiles and the reality of that transition is not fully apparent until the close of the book.

✓ When kept in the context of salvation, the regression of the old requirements present a fluid state in the Book of Acts. An honest step-by-step inquiry into the events unfolding in the book of Acts will clearly demonstrate this transition and the failure if Israel to realize the possibility of the Kingdom and accept their Messiah.

✓ The hope that was anticipated by believers during the Acts period was the speedy return of our Lord to setup an earthly Kingdom, this can be seen in the writing of the epistles during the time of the Acts period (approximately 30AD to 64AD).

*Romans 13:12 The night is far spent, **the day is at hand**: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*

*Romans 16:20 And the God of peace **shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly**. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

*1 Corinthians 1:7-8 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**: 8 Who shall also confirm you unto **the end**, that ye may be blameless **in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**.*

*James 5:7-9 Be patient therefore, brethren, **unto the coming of the Lord**. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive **the early and***

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latter rain. 8 *Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* 9 *Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.*

1 Peter 4:7 *But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.*

1 John 2:18 *Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*

Revelation 1:3 *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

Revelation 22:10 *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*

✓ We do not use the phrases "*stand at the door*", "*at hand*", or "*draw nigh*" for things to occur over 2,000 years in the future. When we are told that something is to "*shortly*" come to pass, we would expect it to occur in our generation.

But what these people did not know, was that God had a hidden purpose which he foreordained BEFORE the foundation of the world. The transition we see in the book of Acts is due to Israel as a nation rejecting their Messiah and God unveiling His secret. So that now, what was a possibility at that time is a future reality, while we WAIT for *the fullness of the Gentiles* to come in. **Rom 11.**

[The Restoration of Israel:](#)