

CHURCH

What new thing did you learn from this week's reading?

What stood out the most to you from the reading?

Take a moment to read & reflect upon favorite passages from this week's part of the story?

THE STORY CONTINUES

Luke 1.1-4; 24.36-53; Acts 1-12; Jeremiah 31; Hebrews 8-12; James 1-3;

1 Peter 1-2; Jude

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BOOK OF ACTS

Seven Themes¹:

- 1 God the Father orchestrates,
- 2 Christ, the risen and enthroned One, rules
- 3 through the empowering Spirit,
- 4 causing the Word [gospel] to progress,
- 5 bringing salvation to all flesh, and
- 6 forming the church, who
- 7 continues to witness about the triune God to the ends of the earth.

God the Father:

acts (2:11; 14:27; 15:4,7-8,14; 21:19),
speaks (2:17; 3:21; 7:6-7; 8:14),
attests to Jesus (2:22),
raised Jesus from the dead (2:24; 3:15,22,26;
4:10; 5:30; 7:37; 10:40; 13:30,37; 26:8),
anointed Jesus (10:38),
appointed him to be judge (10:42),
swore an oath to David (2:30),
is seated in the heavens (2:33; 7:56),
made Jesus Lord and Messiah (2:36; 5:31),
calls people (2:39),
deserves worship (2:47; 3:8-9; 4:21; 16:25;
17:17; 18:7,13; 22:3; 23:1; 24:14-16),
is the God of Israel's ancestors (3:13,25;
7:17,32,46; 13:17; 22:14),
fulfilled what he said in the Scriptures (3:18;
13:33),
deserves obedience (4:19; 5:4,29; 10:4),
listens (4:24),
reveals (4:31; 6:7; 10:28; 12:24),
orchestrates (5:39; 10:15),
delivers (7:25,35,45),

punishes (7:42; 12:23),
has power (8:10),
gave the Holy Spirit (5:32; 8:20; 11:17),
is glorious (7:2,55; 11:18),
great (10:46),
gracious (11:23; 13:43; 14:26; 27:24),
present (7:9; 10:33),
is alive (14:15),
helps (26:22),
does not show favoritism (10:34),
appoints witnesses (10:41),
is to be feared (13:16, 26),
performs wonders (15:12; 19:11),
calls (16:10),
created all things (17:24),
commands (17:30)
demands repentance (20:21),
deserves thanks (27:35, 28:15),
has a plan (20:27),
establishes a church (20:28)
provides salvation (28:28).

¹ Schreiner, Patrick. *Acts: The Christian Standard Commentary*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2022. Pg 7-8.

Pentecost

“The prominence of the Spirit in Luke's narrative from Pentecost onwards makes clear beyond doubt that for Luke the mission of the church could not hope to be effective without this empowering from ... (the Spirit of God) which *transcends human ability and transforms human inability*.”²

1. Permanence.

“Pentecost represents a new chapter in God’s Story when God the Spirit comes to live permanently within individual followers of Jesus Christ.” - Duvall, 228.

- I will be your God
- You will be my people
- I will live among you.

Jeremiah 31.33

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

Lev 26.12

I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.

Ezek 37.27

My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people.

2 Cor 6.16

For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

“I will live with them
and walk among them,
and I will be their God,
and they will be my people.”

See Duvall, 233.

2. New Community

The Holy Spirit creates a new community. See Acts 2 below.

3. Fulfillment

The Spirit has been poured out on the “true Israel” in order to bring the message to all nations, thus fulfilling God’s original purpose. Duvall, 232

² Dunn, James D. G. *The Acts of the Apostles*. London, UK: Epworth Press, 1996. Pg 12.

ACTS 2.42-47

They were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Reverential awe came over everyone, and many wonders and miraculous signs came about by the apostles. All who believed were together and held everything in common, and they began selling their property and possessions and distributing the proceeds to everyone, as anyone had need. Every day they continued to gather together by common consent in the temple courts, breaking bread from house to house, sharing their food with glad and humble hearts, praising God and having the good will of all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number every day those who were being saved.

GOSPEL PROGRESS IN ACTS

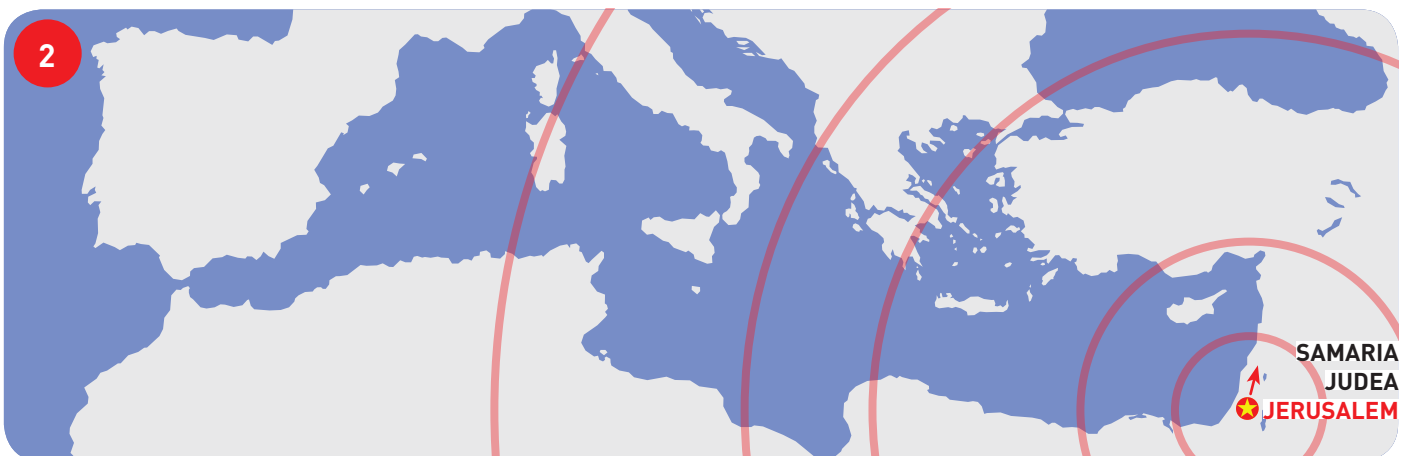
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1:1 - 6:7

THE GOSPEL STARTS IN JERUSALEM

- 1:1-26 The risen Lord Jesus promises his gathered disciples that they will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on them and they will be his 'witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth' (1:8).
- 2:1-47 Many Jewish people, gathered from 'every nation under heaven' to celebrate Pentecost in Jerusalem, hear the gospel of Jesus. More than 3000 people receive the good news and are baptised as believers (2:41, 47).
- 3:1 - 4:31 Many of the Jews who heard Peter and John preach the gospel in the temple believe, in total about 5000 men (4:4).
- 4:32 - 6:7 Despite much persecution, the word of the Lord continues to increase, with multitudes of both men and women in Jerusalem being added to the Lord, including a great number of the priests (5:14-15; 6:7).



6:8 - 9:31

THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO JUDEA & SAMARIA

- 6:8 - 7:60 The gospel continues to be powerfully preached by Stephen, until he is executed by the Jewish leaders.
- 8:1-40 In God's sovereignty, the terrible persecution of the church leads to the spread of the gospel throughout Judea and Samaria (8:1), fulfilling the first stage of Jesus' mission (1:8). Philip preaches in Samaria, with many locals joyfully embracing the gospel, including Simon the Magician (8:6, 12-13, 25). Lastly, Philip sees an Ethiopian eunuch come to faith in Jesus (8:35-38).
- 9:1-31 Saul, the great persecutor of the Christian church, comes to faith after being confronted by the risen Lord Jesus (9:17-22) and is commissioned to evangelise 'the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel' (9:15). To the shock of the Jews, Saul (now Paul) immediately proclaims Jesus in the synagogues of Damascus (9:20) and the church multiplies, with newfound peace throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria (9:31).



3 **9:32 - 12:24 THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO THE GENTILES**

9:32 – 11:18 After Aeneas is healed, residents of Lydda and Sharon turn to the Lord (9:35). Likewise, after Tabitha is raised, many in Joppa trusted in Jesus (9:42). Finally, to the shock of the Jewish believers, the Holy Spirit converts the Gentile Cornelius and all his household to the gospel (10:44). The doors are now open for the Gentile mission to begin!

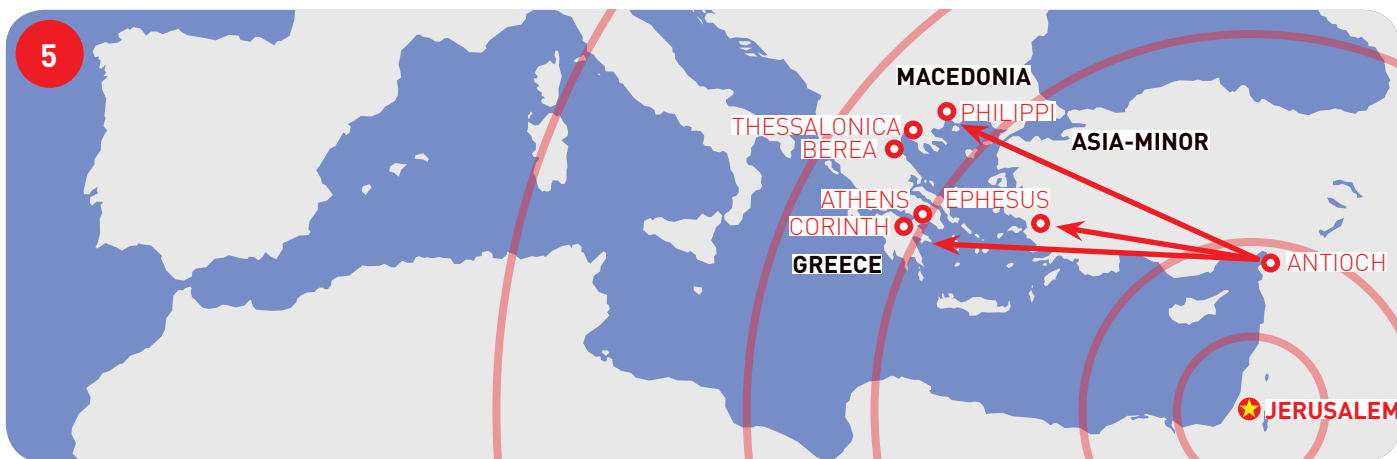
11:19 – 12:24 On account of the persecution, the gospel spreads to the Jews as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch. Uniquely, the gospel is preached to the Gentiles as well in Antioch, with many coming to faith in Jesus (11:21-24). The church is fully established through the preaching ministry of Barnabas and Saul (11:26), and Antioch becomes the new base for Paul's three missionary journeys into Asia-minor, Macedonia and Greece. Back in Jerusalem, the word of God 'increases and multiplies, despite the imprisonment of Peter and execution of James (12:24).



4 **12:25 - 16:5 THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO ASIA-MINOR**

12:25 – 14:28 After being commissioned for gospel mission (13:2-3), Paul and Barnabas sail from Antioch (in Syria) to Cyprus and then onto Pisidia and Galatia, visiting the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. Along the way they face much opposition to their preaching from both Jews and Gentiles, culminating in Paul almost stoned to death (14:19). Nevertheless, by God's grace, a Roman leader (13:9), and many Gentiles believe and the gospel spreads through the whole region (13:48-49; 14:1, 21, 27).

15:1 – 16:5 Despite the call for Gentile believers to be circumcised, the Jerusalem Council sends delegates to the largely Gentile church in Antioch to encourage them in their faith (though urging them to not be a stumbling block to the Jewish believers). Furthermore, though Paul and Barnabas part company, the apostles revisit and strengthen the churches planted on their previous mission together (15:39-40; 16:1), and the number of believers continue to grow (16:5).



16:6 - 21:16 THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO EUROPE

- 16:6 – 17:15 Guided and empowered by the Spirit, Paul and Silas bring the gospel to Macedonia, namely in the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea. Despite them being imprisoned, beaten and lynched, many come to faith in Jesus: Lydia and her household (16:14-15), the Philippian jailer and his family (16:30-34), a few Jews, many devout Greeks and several leading women (17:4-5, 12).
- 17:16 - 18:22 Despite being mocked for his belief in the resurrection in Athens, some men and women join Paul and trust in Jesus (17:34). Likewise in Corinth, despite strong opposition from the Jews, Crispus the ruler of the Synagogue, his whole household and many Corinthians believe the gospel and are baptised (18:8).
- 18:23 – 19:41 Paul speaks for two years in Ephesus 'so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks' (19:10). After Paul performs extraordinary healings and exorcisms in the name of Jesus, fear falls on the residents, who praise the name of Jesus and many repent of their evil practices. 'So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.' (19:20)
- 20:1 – 21:16 Paul travels throughout Macedonia and Greece, encouraging, instructing and farewelling the churches of these regions, as well as the Ephesian elders, on his way to Jerusalem.



21:17 - 28:31 THE GOSPEL ON THE WAY TO ROME

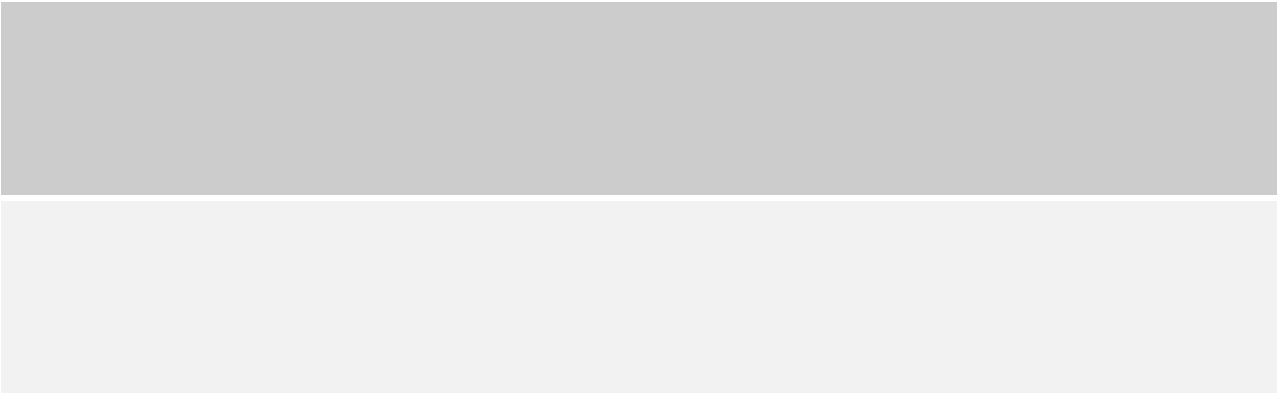
- 21:17 – 23:35 In the face of hostility, arrest, imprisonment and an assassination plot, Paul still manages to speak the gospel to all the gathered Jews in Jerusalem, to the Jewish council and to his Roman captors.
- 24:1 – 26:32 Again during his self-defence, Paul explains the gospel to the Roman Governors, Felix and Festus, and Agrippa, King of Judea in fulfilment of Jesus' promises to him (Acts 9:15-16).
- 27:1 – 28:31 Despite being bound on a ship, shipwrecked on Malta and imprisoned in Rome, Paul witnesses to the sailors and soldiers, the Maltese people, and the Jews and Gentiles in Rome. The book of Acts concludes with Paul 'proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.' (28:31). From Rome, over many centuries, the gospel continues to spread to 'the ends of the earth'.

JAMES



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1/2 PETER



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JUDE

HEBREWS

HOMework

Memorize

- Romans 3.22b-24

Biblical Text

- Acts 13-21
- Romans 1, 3-6, 8, 12
- 1 Cor 12-15
- 2 Cor 3-5
- 1 Thess 4-5
- 2 Thess 2

Read

- Duvall/ Hays – *Living God's Word*, Chapter 18

Complete

- Choose one writing assignment from Duvall/ Hays – *Living God's Word*, pg 274.
- Personal Reflection Question: What role does the Holy Spirit have in your life?