**The Acts of … the Apostles**

 **⮴the Spirit of God through**

**The *human* Writer and *original* Recipients**

**Luke, volume II**

'**No author is named specifically** … although the work has been **attributed to Luke as far back as we can trace**. **As early as the second century** records exist which state that **he wrote both the third Gospel and Acts** … In 1:1 the author claims that his present work is the continuation of another volume. The 'former treatise' to Theophilus is unquestionably the Gospel of Luke.' Kent, p.14

'Luke was **Paul's close friend and travelling companion** … he was a **careful researcher and an accurate historian** …' MSB, p.1429

'Luke's frequent use of the first-person plural pronouns "we" and "us" (16:10-17, 20:5-21:18, 27:1-28:16) reveals that he was an eyewitness to many of the events recorded in Acts.' MSB, p.1429

'… the book of **Acts was accepted** into the New Testament Canon **without hesitation because of its close association with the Gospel of Luke** …

* **both books are dedicated to the same man, Theophilus**
* **Acts refers to the first treatise** … understood as the Gospel
* the books contain **similarities of language and style**
* both contain common interests
* **Acts naturally follows** on from Luke's Gospel …' NTI, p.100-101

'The writer … sets forth, in his introductory sentences, that **the book is meant to be a continuation of a 'former treatise.'** It is addressed to a certain, 'Theophilus' … the third Gospel is written to a person of the same name, it is not unnatural to take these compositions to be the work of the same author … the unvarying tradition of antiquity has ascribed both works [Luke and Acts] to Luke.' CGT, p.xiii

'**All the traditions of the early Church ascribe the authorship of the Acts to the writer of the third Gospel … Luke** …' CGT, p.xx

**The *special* Theme or *Divine* Intention**

**Acts: the establishment, expansion and encouragement of the Church.**

'Since the book of Acts is a continuation of the third Gospel, it is reasonable to suppose that the purpose which is clearly stated there in the preface will obtain for this part of the work as well … **Luke's primary purpose was historical** and this must be considered as the major aim of Acts …' NTI, p.349

Luke 1:1–4

:1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us,

:2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word,

:3 it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus;

:4 so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

'This book reveals **the growth, persecution and missionary efforts of the early church**.' Panorama, p.459

'… it seems reasonable to accept the Acts as **a narrative written with the purpose of continuing the history of the Christian Church after Christ's ascension … a history of beginnings only … what manner the teaching of the Apostles was begun in each of these fields of labor [Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, uttermost]**.' CGT, p.xiv

**The title of the book …**

'… the title, by which the book is known to us, can hardly have been given to it by its author … **it contains no detailed account of the work of any of the Apostles except Peter and Paul** … merely some acts of certain Apostles … intermixed with the acts of others who were not Apostles …' CGT, p.xx

'The Greek manuscripts title it, 'Acts' and many add 'of the Apostles.' The Greek word translated **'Acts'** (*praxeis*) **was often used to describe the achievements of great men** … **Acts emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit (mentioned more than fifty times)** …' MSB, p.1429

**Note: For a title, I prefer, "The Acts of the Spirit of God through the Apostles."**

**The *unique* Position: The history of the Church**

'**The importance of this book cannot be exaggerated** … It is not without some significance that … Acts has been placed between the Gospel and the Epistles … it serves admirably as **a link between the records of Jesus and the apostolic correspondence**. In many ways the Epistles are not fully intelligible until they are read against the background of the book of Acts.' NTI, p.336

**'One does not find the institutional church in the life of Jesus. There are no Christian elders or deacons in the Gospels … The Book of Acts bridges this gap … Acts shows how the Christian movement**, based upon Christ's redemptive work as depicted in the Gospel accounts, **expanded from its Palestinian origins to the heart of the gentile world**. Acts provides also **a necessary background for understanding the Epistles**. Until one is familiar with Acts he really cannot comprehend the circumstances which caused the Epistles to be written.' Kent, p.14

'As the first work of church history ever penned, **Acts records the initial response to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20)**. It provides information on the **first three decades of the church's existence**, material found nowhere else in the NT.' MSB, p.1430

'The period of time embraced in this history is about thirty-three years, and includes the reigns of the Roman emperors Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero.' Schaff's, p.22

**The *basic* Outline**

Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea** and **Samaria**, and even to the **remotest part of the earth**.”

**Jerusalem** – 1:12, 19, 2:5, 14, 4:5, 16, 5:16, **6:7**

**all Judea** – 2:9, 14, 8:1, 9:31

**Samaria** – 8:1, 5, 9, 14, 9:31

**to the remotest part of the earth.”** – 13:1-28:31

1. **1:1-7:60 The Church *established* in Jerusalem**

 Ascension, the Spirit, the Church, and Persecution

1. **8:1-12:25 The Church *expands* to Samaria**

Saul, Samaria, and the Gentiles

1. **13:1-28:31 The Church extends to the remotest part of the Earth**

Paul's Journeys … from Antioch, Syria to Rome, Italy

1. **13:1-15:41 Paul's 1st Missionary Journey – *Establishing* ministry**

**'… they began to proclaim the word of God …' (13:5)**

*Antioch and Selucia,* Syria(13:1, 4)

*Salamis and Paphos,* Cyprus (13:4-12)

*Perga,* Pamphilia(13:13)

*Antioch,* Pisidian(13:14-50)

*Iconium*, Lycoania (13:51-14:6)

*Lystra and Derbe,* Lycoania (13:8-20)

*Derbe, Lystra, Iconium,* Lycoania(13:6, 20-21)

*Antioch*, Pisidian(13:24)

*Perga and Attalia*, Pamphilia(13:24-25)

*Antioch*, Syria(13:26)

1. **15:36-18:22 Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey – *Expanding* ministry**

**'… immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God has called us to preach the gospel to them.' (16:10)**

Syria and Cilicia(15:41)

*Derbe and Lystra*, Lycoania (16:1)

Prygian and Galatian (16:6)

Mysia (16:7)

*Troas*, Mysia (16:8)

*Samothrace*, Thrace (16:11)

*Neapolis and Philippi*, Macedonia (16:12-40)

*Amphipolis, Appolonia and Thessalonica*, Macedonia (17:1-9)

*Berea*, Macedonia (17:10-15)

*Athens*, Greece (17:15-34)

*Corinth*, Greece (18:1-17)

*Cenchraea*, Greece (18:18)

Ephesus, Asia (18:19-21)

1. **18:23-21:16 Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey – Encouraging ministry**

**'… strengthening all the disciples.' (18:23)**

*Caesarea and Antioch*, Syria (18:22)

*Galatian*, Phrygia (18:23)

Ephesus (19:1-20:1)

Macedonia, Greece, Macedonia (20:2-3)

*Troas*, Mysia (20:6-12)

*Assos, Mitylene,* *Miletus* (20:13-38)

*Cos,* Mysia (21:1)

*Patara*, Lycia (21:1-3)

*Tyre, Ptolemais*, Syria (21:3, 7)

1. **21:17-26:32 Paul's "4th Missionary Journey" – Examination ministry**

**'Brethren and fathers, hear my defense which I now offer to you.' (22:1)**

Paul's witness in detention and trials

*Jerusalem*, Judea

1. **27:1-28:31 Paul's "5th Missionary Journey" – Excursion ministry**

**'… it was decided that we should sail for Italy …' (27:1)**

Paul's Mediterranean Cruise

*Sidon*, Syria(27:3)

*Myra*, Lycia(27:5)

*Malta* (28:1)

*Syracuse*, Sicily (28:12)

*Rhegium, Puteoli, Rome*, Italy (28:13-14)

**Bibliography, with Abbreviations**

Primary sources

 ***Benware*** *Benware,* Paul N. *Survey of the New Testament.* Chicago: Moody, 1990

 ***Panorama***Crispin, Gerard. *The Bible Panorama.* Day One Publications, 2005

***Geisler*** Geisler, Norman. *A Popular Survey of the New Testament.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007

 ***Story***Goodspeed, Edgar J. *The Story of the Bible.*  University of Chicago Press, 1945

 ***Halley's***Halley, Henry H. *Halley's Bible Handbook.*  Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962

 ***W&B***Wilkinson, Bruce, and Boa, Kenneth. *Talk Thru the Bible.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983

Secondary sources

***Bengel*** Bengel, John A. *Gnomon of the New Testament.* Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1873

***Cambridge*** *Cambridge Study Bible.* Cambridge: *CGT,* 1977

***NTI***Guthrie, Donald. *New Testament Introduction.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1968

***MSB*** MacArthur, John.*MacArthur Study Bible.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006

***Schaff's***Schaff, Philip. *A Dictionary of the Bible.* Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1880

 ***Unger's***Unger, Merrill F. *Unger's Bible Dictionary.* Chicago: Moody, 1985

Specific sources

***Bruce*** Bruce, F.F. *The Book of Acts.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988

***CGT*** *Cambridge Greek Text … The Acts of the Apostles.* London: C.J. Clay, 1899

***Kent*** Kent, Homer A. *Jerusalem to Rome: Studies in the Book of Acts.* Grand Rapids:

Baker, 1972