



JANUARY 8, 2024

Acts Chapter 1

The Book of Acts was written by Luke, a Greek Physician.

Luke was from Antioch of Syria—which was a large and important city in Asia Minor, now modern-day Turkey. He was a gentile—not of Jewish heritage. Luke was a close friend and traveling companion of Paul on his missionary journeys. In Colossians 4:14, Paul refers to him as: Luke the beloved physician.

Many scholars believe that Luke wrote both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts while he was in Rome during Paul's first imprisonment.

Early historians wrote this after Luke's death: "He served the Lord without distraction, having neither wife nor children, and at the age of 84, he fell asleep in Boeotia, full of the Holy Spirit".

Most scholars believe Acts was written between 60-62 A.D.—before the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.), before the death of Paul (66-68 A.D.). Otherwise, Luke would have mentioned both events.

The book of Acts begins with the day of Pentecost and covers the beginning of the Church and the early spread of the Gospel across the earth—a time span of about 33 years.

In verses 1-3 we are told that Luke wrote both of his books to someone named Theophilus, which means 'lover of God'; 'Theo,' which means 'God' and 'philia' which means 'love.' These books are not only for the person Theophilus, but for all 'lovers of God' today.

Verses 4-5: Jesus encourages the apostles, 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

Verses 6-7 again references to the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 8: Jesus tells them that when they are filled with the Holy Spirit, they would be empowered to be witnesses of what they had seen—not only in Jerusalem and Judea but in



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Samaria and to the ends of the earth. This speaks of the blessing of salvation and redemption being not just for the Jewish nation, but for the Gentiles as well.

Verses 9-11: Records the ascension of Jesus into heaven (exalted to the right hand of the Father). This marked the end of His earthly ministry in bodily form. The ascension also meant that the continuing work of Jesus on the earth was now placed in the hands of His disciples.

Verses 12-14: Tells us that Jesus' brothers were in the upper room praying with the other disciples even though, at one time, they did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. We can assume that his brothers had a change of heart, they had become disciples, and followers of Jesus.

Regarding verses 15-19: From Matthew's Gospel, we know that Judas didn't actually buy the potter's field—known as the field of blood. The chief priests took the money Judas received for betraying Jesus, and they bought the field. Matthew's Gospel says Judas hanged himself. One explanation for the difference is that scholars think that perhaps Judas hanged himself over the edge of a cliff and the rope or branch of the tree broke and he fell to the rocks below and burst open.

Verses 20-26: As they were trying to determine who should take Judas' place, they prayed and came up with two names. Then they 'cast lots'—scholars think these were stones of different sizes or shapes that they would throw into the lap of someone or throw them on the ground—much like dice are rolled—and the result would be a way of determining God's will. The lots fell to Matthias and he became the apostle to replace Judas. This was the last time in the Bible lots were used to determine God's will. Now we have the Holy Spirit in us to lead us, guide us, and help show us the will of God.