

Acts - “Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles”

From Whom: The Book of Acts is sometimes called the 5th Gospel, it is a continuation of the Gospel of Luke, written by Dr. Luke. In the Book of Acts, Luke notes what Jesus accomplished through the actions taken by His apostles and disciples. Beginning with Jesus’ ascension, through the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost and closing with Paul’s preaching at Rome. It also records the mounting opposition to the gospel.

To Whom: As Luke makes clear in the prologue to his gospel, and again in the beginning of this book, he wrote to give Theophilus a “narrative of those things” (Luke 1:1, Acts 1:1) which Jesus had accomplished during His earthly ministry. Like Luke’s gospel, it is believed that Luke wrote Acts primarily for a gentile audience in Rome.

What/ Theme: Acts not only chronicles the spread of the gospel and the growth of the church but also records the initial response to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19, 20). It provides information on the first 3 decades of the church’s existence, material found nowhere else in the New Testament. Though not primarily a doctrinal work, Acts nonetheless emphasizes that Jesus of Nazareth was Israel’s long-awaited Messiah, shows that the gospel is offered to all men (not merely the Jewish people), and stresses the work of the Holy Spirit (mentioned more than 50 times).

Where/ When: The Book of Acts covers a span of time approximately 30 years. Recorded between A.D. 63-62, see “Where/ When” for the Book of Luke ac³ outline. This is the inspired record of the beginnings of the church. While Genesis records the origin of the physical universe, Acts records the origin of the Spirit-led church.

Key Verse: “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” *Acts 1:8 - NKJV*

Outline:

Prologue/Introduction (1:1–8)

1. The Witness to Jerusalem (1:9–8:3)

- a. The Anticipation of the Church (1:9–26)
- b. The Founding of the Church (2:1–47)
- c. The Growth of the Church (3:1–8:3)
 - i. **Apostles:** Preaching, healing, and enduring persecution (3:1–5:42)
 - ii. **Deacons:** Praying, teaching, and enduring persecution (6:1–8:3)

2. The Witness to Judea and Samaria (8:4–12:25)

- a. The Gospel to the Samaritans (8:4–25)

- b. The Conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch (8:26–40)
- c. The Conversion of Saul (9:1–31)
- d. The Gospel to Judea (9:32–43)
- e. The Gospel to the Gentiles (10:1–11:30)
- f. The Persecution by Herod (12:1–25)

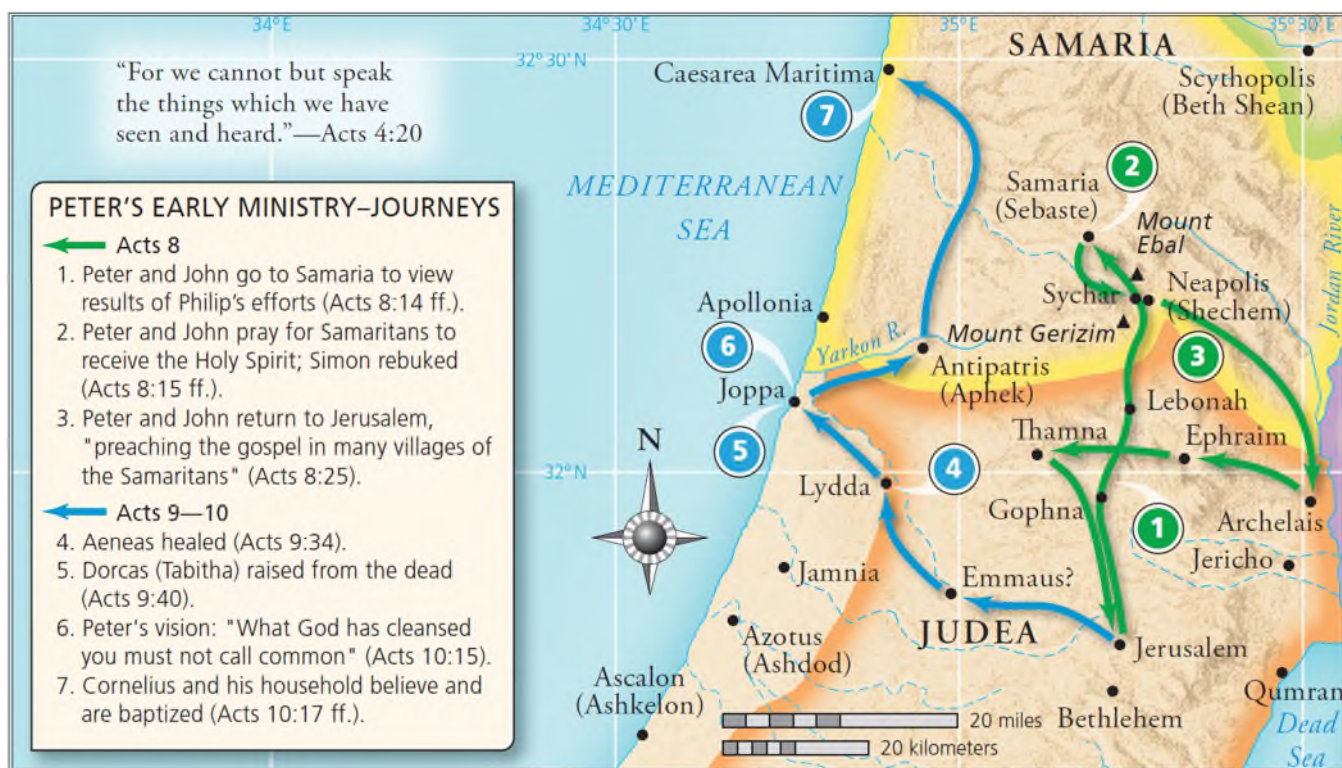
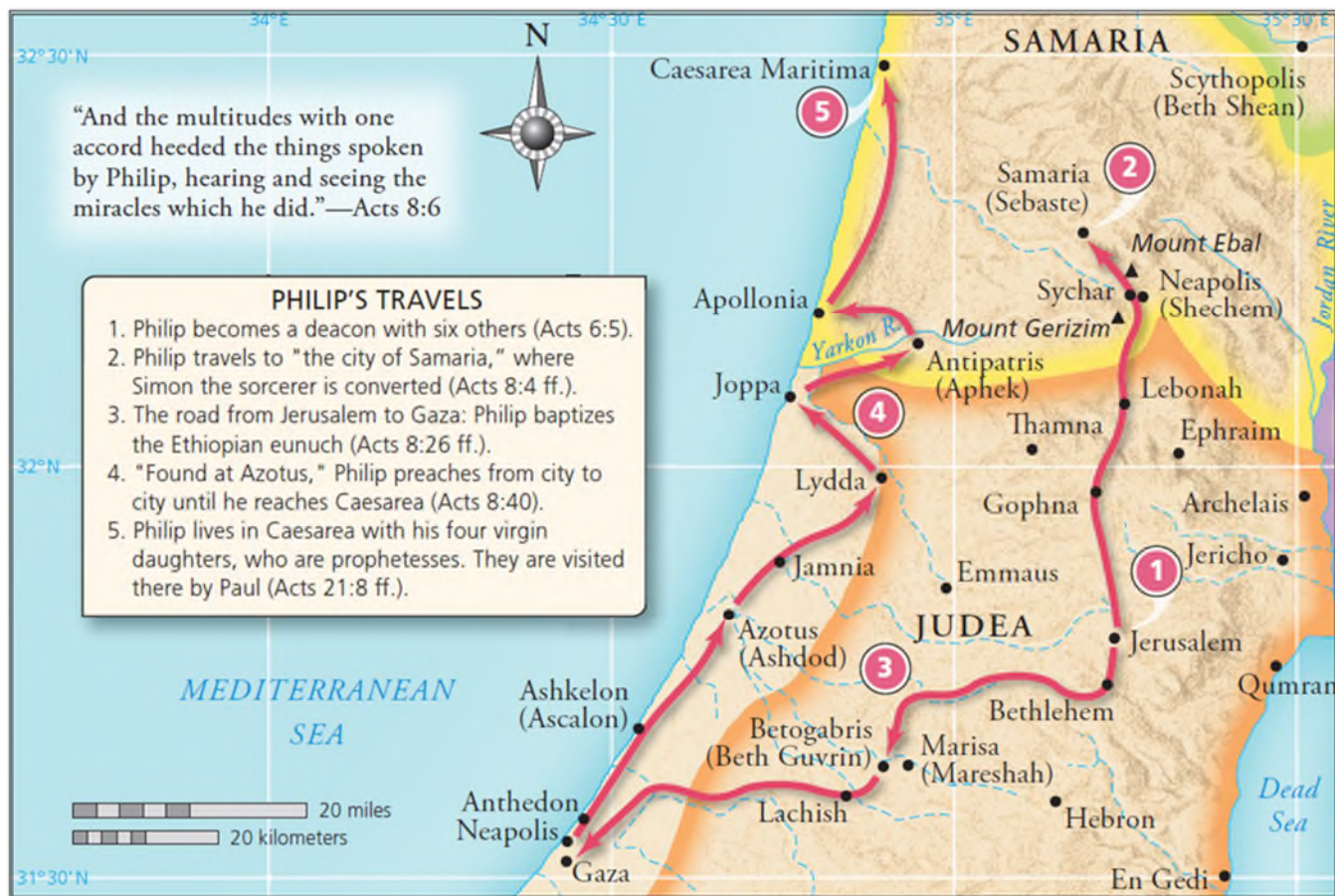
3. The Witness to the Ends of the Earth (13:1–28:31)

- a. Paul's First Missionary Journey (13:1–14:28)
- b. The Jerusalem Council (15:1–35)
- c. Paul's Second Missionary Journey (15:36–18:22)
- d. Paul's Third Missionary Journey (18:23–21:16)
- e. Paul's Jerusalem and Caesarean Trials (21:17–26:32)
- f. Paul's Journey to Rome (27:1–28:31)

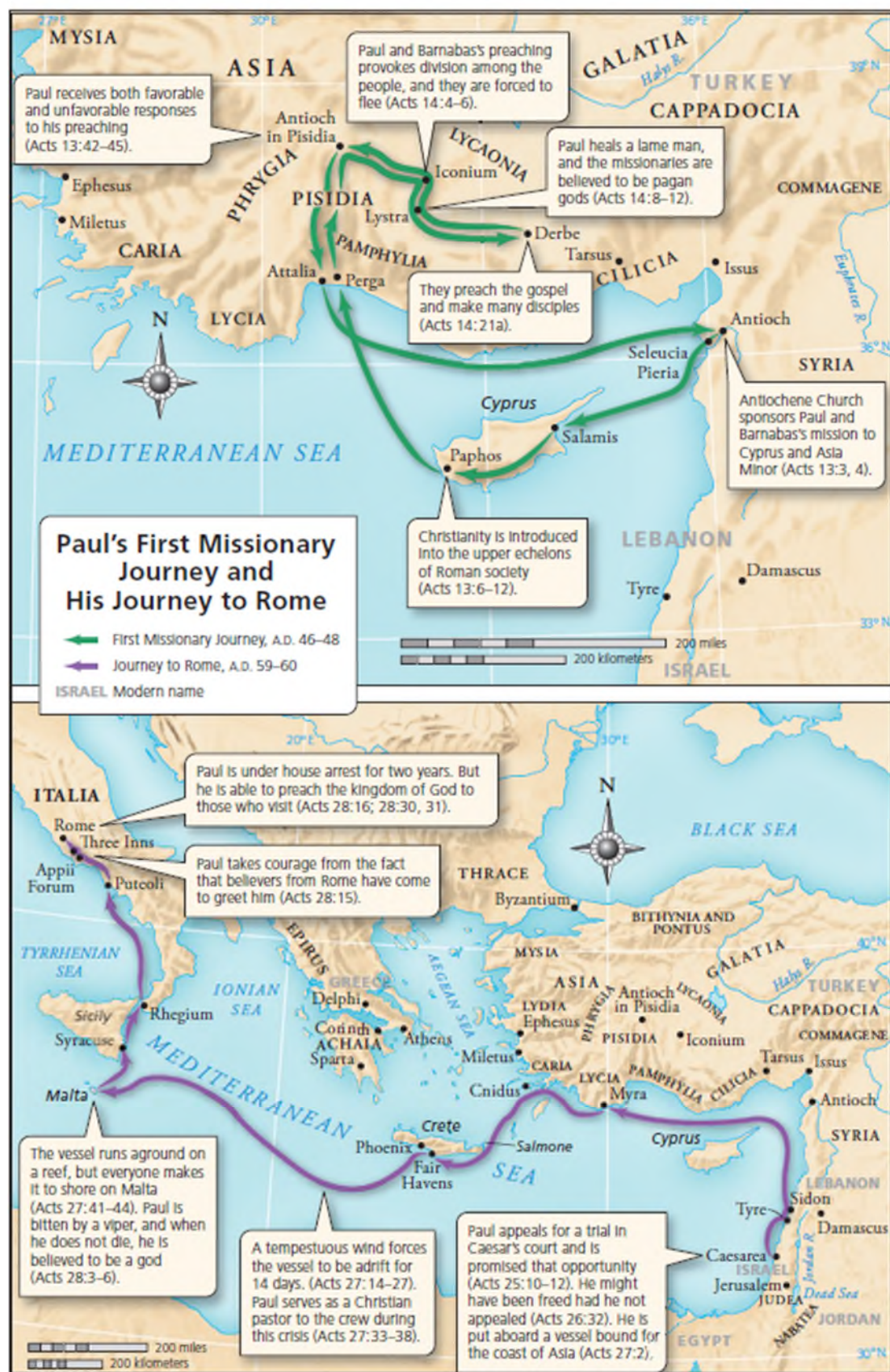
ACTS AT A GLANCE					
Focus	Witness In Jerusalem		Witness In Judea And Samaria	Witness To The End Of The Earth	
Reference	1:1 ————— 3:1		8:5 —————	13:1 ————— 21:17 — 28:31	
Division	Power Of The Church	Progress Of The Church	Expansion Of The Church	Paul's Three Journeys	Paul's Trials
Topic	Jews		Samaritans	Gentiles	
	Peter		Philip	Paul	
Location	Jerusalem		Judea And Samaria	Uttermost Part	
Time	2 Years (A.D. 33–35)		13 Years (A.D. 35–48)	14 Years (A.D. 48–62)	

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A COMPARISON OF PAUL'S TWO ROMAN IMPRISONMENTS	
First Imprisonment	Second Imprisonment
Acts 28—Wrote the Prison Epistles	2 Timothy
Accused by Jews of heresy and sedition	Persecuted by Rome and arrested as a criminal against the Empire
Local sporadic persecutions (A.D. 60-63)	Neronian persecution (A.D. 64–68)
Decent living conditions in a rented house (Acts 28:30, 31)	Poor conditions, in a cold, dark dungeon
Many friends visited him	Virtually alone (only Luke with him)
Many opportunities for Christian witness were available	Opportunities for witness were restricted
Was optimistic for release and freedom (Phil. 1:24-26)	Anticipated his execution (2 Tim. 4:6)



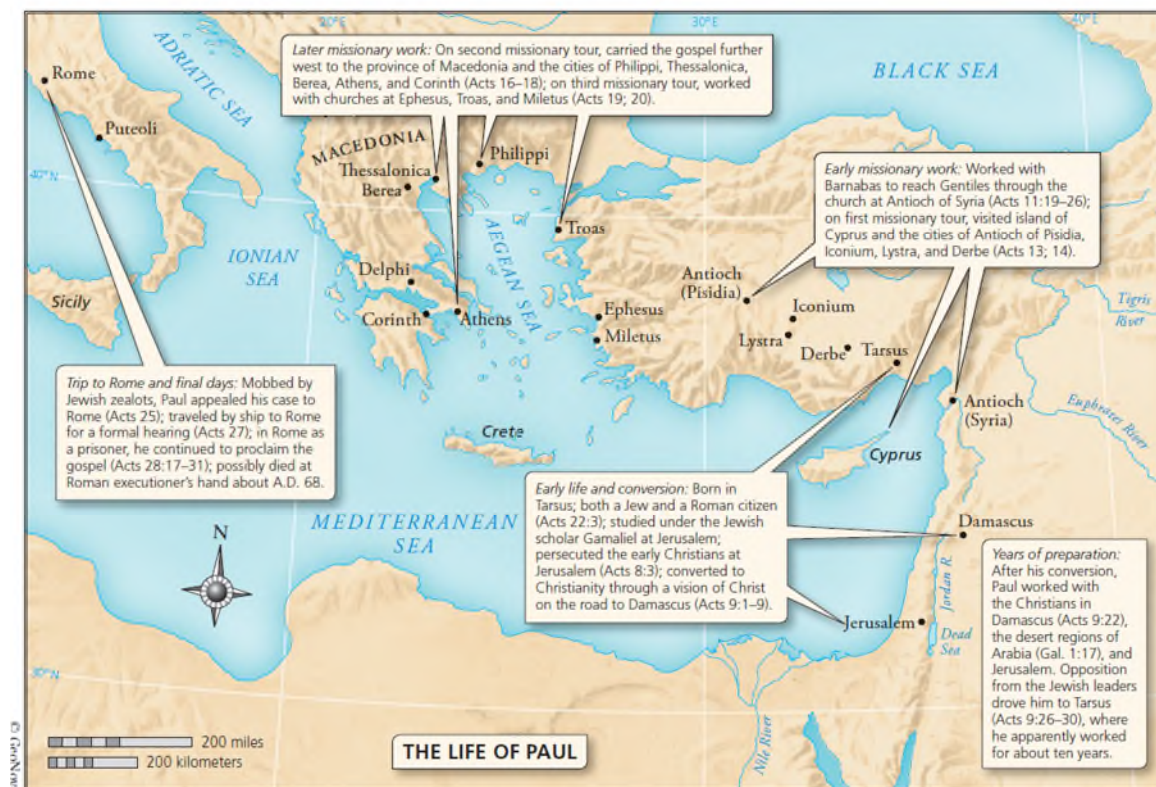
PAUL'S FIRST JOURNEY AND HIS JOURNEY TO ROME



PAUL'S SECOND AND THIRD JOURNEYS



THE LIFE OF PAUL



MAJOR SERMONS IN ACTS

Several important sermons and speeches are recorded in the Book of Acts. Over twenty are included with the majority coming from Peter (7 total) and Paul (11 total). Below are listed the more significant, together with the theme and text location.

Speech	Theme	Biblical Reference
Peter to crowds at Pentecost	Peter's explanation of the meaning of Pentecost	Acts 2:14-40
Peter to crowds at the temple	The Jewish people should repent for crucifying the Messiah	Acts 3:12-26
Peter to the Sanhedrin	Testimony that a helpless man was healed by the power of Jesus	Acts 4:5-12
Stephen to the Sanhedrin	Stephen's rehearsal of Jewish history, accusing the Jews of killing the Messiah	Acts 7
Peter to Gentiles	Gentiles can be saved in the same manner as Jews	Acts 10:28-47
Peter to church at Jerusalem	Peter's testimony of his experiences at Joppa and a defense of his ministry to the Gentiles	Acts 11:4-18
Paul to synagogue at Antioch	Jesus was the Messiah in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies	Acts 13:16-41
Peter to Jerusalem council	Salvation by grace available to all	Acts 15:7-11
James to Jerusalem council	Gentile converts do not require circumcision	Acts 15:13-21
Paul to Ephesian elders	Remain faithful in spite of false teachers and persecution	Acts 20:17-35
Paul to crowd at Jerusalem	Paul's statement of his conversion and his mission to the Gentiles	Acts 22:1-21
Paul to Sanhedrin	Paul's defense, declaring himself a Pharisee and a Roman citizen	Acts 23:1-6
Paul to King Agrippa	Paul's statement of his conversion and his zeal for the gospel	Acts 26
Paul to the Jewish leaders at Rome	Paul's statement about his Jewish heritage	Acts 28:17-20

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