

Acts 1-10

Intro

Acts 1–10 describes the establishment and growth of the early church, emphasizing the work of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles' preaching, and the expansion of the gospel from Jerusalem to Gentile regions. These chapters highlight key events like the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the boldness of Peter's leadership, the persecution of Christians, the conversion of Saul (Paul), and the inclusion of Gentiles.

- Covers about the first 10 years after Jesus' resurrection
- Mostly in Israel, but a little in Syria and Cilicia (Turkey)

Chapter 1

Intro

On one occasion, while he was eating with them....

Jesus commanded, “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.”

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

The Ascension

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city (~1 km)....

They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) ¹⁶ and said, "Brothers and sisters, [\[d\]](#) the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas

20 "For," said Peter, "it is written in the Book of Psalms:

"May his place be deserted;

let there be no one to dwell in it,'

and,

"May another take his place of leadership.'

Psalms 69:25, Psalm 109:8

²¹ Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, ²² beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."

They prayed. They cast lots. Matthias was chosen. We never hear from him again.

Chapter 2

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

When the day of Pentecost came, ...

they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them.

Foreigners in the city for the festival can understand their language.

Some attribute it to drunkenness, but...

Peter's Sermon at Pentecost

Peter stands up with the Eleven and addresses the crowd. They aren't drunk, but this is what was spoken about by the prophet Joel.

17 "In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

your old men will dream dreams.

18 Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,

and they will prophesy.

19 I will show wonders in the heavens above

and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

20 The sun will be turned to darkness

and the moon to blood

before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

21 And everyone who calls

on the name of the Lord will be saved.'[c]

(Joel 2:28-32)

22 "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

23 This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men,[d] put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. 25 David said about him:

"I saw the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,

I will not be shaken.

26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;

my body also will rest in hope,

27 because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,

you will not let your holy one see decay. → *Dead bodies are considered “fresh” up to 48 hours.*

28 You have made known to me the paths of life;

you will fill me with joy in your presence.’

(Psalm 16:8-11)

29 “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. 31 Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“‘The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand

35 until I make your enemies

a footstool for your feet.”’

(Psalm 110:1)

36 “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Fellowship of the Believers

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Chapter 3

The Lamé Beggar Healed

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer... *(They did this every day)*

A man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate, where he was put every day to beg. ³ When he saw Peter and John, he asked them for money.

Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”

Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong.

All the people were filled with wonder and amazement.

Peter Speaks in Solomon's Portico

When Peter saw this, he said to them: “Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate. ¹⁴ You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you instead. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, ...

Here it is a couple months after the Ascension and Peter is already calling Jesus the Creator.

... but God raised him from the dead. We, the two of us, are witnesses of this. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

¹⁷ "Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. ¹⁸ But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ... ²² For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. ²³ Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.' ^[a] (Deut 18:15-19)

²⁴ "Indeed, beginning with Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days. ²⁵ And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' ^[b] ²⁶ When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Peter is invoking Moses and Abraham – the two biggest names in Judaism.

Chapter 4

Peter and John Before the Council

The priests and Sadducees seize Peter and John and put him in jail because they were "teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. " ... *Remember, the Sadducees don't believe in the resurrection.*

Brought before the Sanhedrin (same people who killed their master). "By what power or what name did you do this?"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, ¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ Jesus is

“the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the cornerstone.’

(Psalm 118:22)

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. ¹⁵ So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. ¹⁶ “What are we going to do with these men?” they asked. “Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name.”

¹⁸ Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! ²⁰ As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

²¹ After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. ²² For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

The Believers Pray for Boldness

When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. 25 You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David:

**“‘Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
26 The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the Lord
and against his anointed one.’
(Psalm 2:1-2)**

27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus... 29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and

enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

- *Prayed in similar template to Lord's prayer.*
- *Prayed scripture*
- *Didn't ask for salvation or protection – They prayed for the mission to go forward in power.*

They Had Everything in Common

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.... And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all ³⁴ that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales ³⁵ and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.

- *Money came in at just the right time to fulfill all the needs.*
- *Live your life with an open hand and a receptive heart*

Chapter 5

Ananias and Sapphira

- *Also sold property, but kept some of the money and lied about it to make themselves look good.*
- *It isn't about the money. It's about the lying and pride.*

Many Signs and Wonders Done

- The apostles perform signs and wonders
- All are healed.

The Apostles Arrested and Freed

- The Sadducees again arrest the apostles and put them in jail
- Angel frees them from jail (the cell stays locked and the guards are none the wiser) and tells them to teach in the temple courts again
- Apostles brought before the Sanhedrin again.

“We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name. Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.”

29 Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings! 30 The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross.

31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. 32 We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

- Priests furious (of course)
- Gamliel stands up (Paul’s teacher)

I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.”

- We all know how that went.

40 His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. 42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Chapter 6

Seven Chosen to Serve

- Logistics starting to fail due to lack of man power in the organization. 7 men “full of the Spirit and wisdom” chosen to take over the widow ministry.
- The apostles were now able to devote their time to prayer and ministry.
- “The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.”

Stephen Is Seized

- Stephen performing great signs and wonders among the people
- Conflict with the Synagogue of Freedmen (prisoners and slaves freed and now settled in Jerusalem). More zealous of “pure Judaism” than Jews who never left Judea and therefore more in conflict with Stephen who was at the forefront of Christianity.
- Slander and false witnesses against Stephen to the Sanhedrin (what happened to pure Judaism?)

- Stephen's face was like the face of an angel???

Chapter 7

Stephen's Speech

- Stephen gives the Sanhedrin a history lesson, shows that he not only knows Judaism (like a good Jew), but also that the temple which he is accused of preaching against is not something that God wanted in the first place.

"You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! ⁵² Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him— ⁵³ you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it."

The Stoning of Stephen

- And, of course, they kill him.

54 When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

- Response to persecution:

59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

8:1 And Saul approved of their killing him.

Chapter 8

Saul Ravages the Church

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.

Philip Proclaims Christ in Samaria

¹⁴ When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. ¹⁵ When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

- Philip explains scripture to an Ethiopian Eunuch. An important official in charge of all the treasury of the Ethiopian queen.
- Eunuch is baptized
- Philip whisked away by the Spirit.
- Ethiopia has some of the oldest Christian churches and remains nearly 50% Christian today.

Chapter 9

The Conversion of Saul

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. 8 Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. 9 For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

- Ananias told in a vision to place his hands on Saul. He's worried because it is "The Saul"

But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

- Scales fall from his eyes, he is healed and he is baptized

Saul Proclaims Jesus in Synagogues

- Saul starts preaching in the synagogues in Damascus. He knows the scripture and now makes logical proofs that Jesus is the Messiah.
 - Remember, he is Gamaliel's disciple.
- Saul talks and debates with Hellenistic Jews.
- Everyone tries to kill Saul
- The believers ship him off to his hometown – Tarsus (Turkey)

The Healing of Aeneas

- Peter heals Aeneas – who had been paralyzed for eight years

"Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat."

- Peter raises Dorcas from the dead.

He got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up.

Chapter 10

Peter and Cornelius

- Cornelius a roman centurion. Told by an angel in a vision to send for Peter.
- Peter has his vision of unclean animals telling him to eat three times.

"Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

- As Peter was wondering about the vision, Cornelius' servants come and invite him. The Spirit tells him to go with them.

- Cornelius has gathered all his relatives and close friends to greet Peter and listen to him.

27 While talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. 28 He said to them: “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean. 29 So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?”

- Cornelius tells him about his angel vision and says,

“Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us.”

Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.

- Peter witnesses to the group
- The Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message and they spoke in tongues praising God.
- The Jews with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Spirit was being poured out even on Gentiles.

Then Peter said, 47 “Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.