

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Approximate date: after the Gospel of Luke, 60-62 C.E., late 60s C.E., or 70s-80s C.E.

Time period: establishment of a more definitive history of the expansion of the gospel in the ancient world

Author: Luke the doctor

Location of author: Rome

Target audience and their location: Theophilus, and broad groups of Jews, Greeks, and Romans

People:

Yeshua the Messiah, Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas son of James, Mary (mother of Yeshua), Joseph or Barsabbas (or Justus), Matthias, Diaspora Jews, Sadducees, Caiphas, John (priest), Alexander (priest), Joseph or Barnabas, Ananias, Sapphira, Pharisees, Gamaliel, Stephen, Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicolas, Saul, Simon the magician (Simon Magus), Ethiopian eunuch, Ananias (from Damascus), Aeneas, Tabitha (Dorcas), Simon (tanner), Cornelius, Agabus, Mary the mother of John, John Mark, Rhoda, Simeon (Niger), Manean, Bar-Jesus (Elymas), Sergius Paulus, Paul (Saul's second name), James (brother of Yeshua), Silas, Timothy, Lydia, Jason, Epicureans, Stoics, Dionysius, Damaris, Aquila, Priscilla, Titius Justus, Crispus, Sosthenes, Apollos, sons of Sceva, Erastus, Demetrius, Gaius, Aristarchus, Alexander, Secundus, Tychicus, Trophimus, Eutychus, Philip the evangelist, Agabus, Mnason, Paul's nephew, Felix, Claudius Lysias, Tertullus, Drusilla, Porcius Festus, King Agrippa, Bernice, Julius, Cauda (a wind), Publius

People mentioned:

Theophilus, David, Judas Iscariot, John the Immerser/the Baptist, Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Cretans, Arabs, Pontius Pilate, Samuel, Herod, Theudas, Judas the Galilean, Moses, Abraham, Chaldeans, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Molech, Raphan (pagan gods), Joshua, Solomon, Candace, Isaiah, Claudius, King Herod, Blastus, Saul (son of Kish), Benjamin (tribe), Zeus, Hermes, Artemis, the Twins/Castor and Pollux (pagan gods)

Places:

Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Mount of Olives, Beautiful (Temple gate), Solomon's Colonnade, Cyprus, Antioch, Gaza, Azotus, Caesarea, Damascus, Tarsus, Lydda, Sharon, Joppa, Phoenicia, Seleucia, Salamis, Paphos, Perga, Pamphylia, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Pisidia, Attalia, Galatia, Mysia, Bithynia, Troas, Macedonia, Samothrace, Neapolis, Philippi, Thyatira, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Areopagus (Mars Hill), Corinth, Syria, Cenchrea, Ephesus, Achaia, hall of Tyrannus (in Ephesus), Assos, Mitylene, Kios, Samos, Miletus, Cos, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre, Ptolemais, Antipatris, Adramyttium, Aristarchus, Sidon, Myra, Lycia, Cnidus, Crete, Salmone, Fair Havens, Lasea, Phoenix, Syrtis, Adriatic Sea, Malta, Syracuse, Rhegium, Puteoli, Forum of Appius, Three Taverns (Three Inns), Rome

Places mentioned:

Akeldama (Field of Blood), Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontius, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Cyrene, Rome (2:9-10), Alexandria, Cilicia, Haran, Mount Sinai, Canaan, Italy

Key Themes and Events:

stated composition of previous text on the life and ministry of Yeshua / the Disciples ask Yeshua if He is going to restore Israel / Yeshua ascends into Heaven / Matthias is chosen to succeed Judas Iscariot

A SURVEY OF THE APOSTOLIC SCRIPTURES FOR THE PRACTICAL MESSIANIC

as an apostle / the Holy Spirit comes to the Believers on the day of *Shavuot*/Pentecost / the Holy Spirit enables the Believers to speak in foreign languages / Peter preaches a sermon of repentance to the travelers assembled for *Shavuot* / three thousand are saved / the new Believers devote themselves to the faith, continually fellowshiping with one another / Peter heals a beggar at the Beautiful gate in the name of Yeshua / Peter admonishes the onlookers to repent of their sins and believe in Yeshua / the Sadducees are disturbed at the proclamation of Yeshua's resurrection / Peter and John are arrested and taken before the Sanhedrin / Peter and John proclaim the power and authority of Yeshua before the Sanhedrin / Peter and John demonstrate great faithfulness toward God, continuing to proclaim the good news / the Believers share all their possessions / Annanias and Sapphira die for lying to the Holy Spirit / the Apostles heal many in the Temple complex / the Apostles are harassed and put in jail by the Sadducees / Gamaliel, a Pharisee, defends the Apostles' rights to proclaim that the Messiah has come / Hellenistic Jews are consecrated for the Lord's work / Stephen is falsely accused of speaking blasphemy against the Torah / Stephen delivers a defense to the Sanhedrin for believing in Yeshua / Stephen is rushed out and stoned to death by a mob / persecution of Believers is inaugurated by Saul / the gospel is proclaimed by Philip in Samaria / Simon the magician proposes to buy the Holy Spirit and is rebuked by Peter / Philip proclaims the gospel to the Ethiopian eunuch / translation of Philip from place-to-place / Saul's persecutions of the Believers expand / Saul encounters Yeshua on the road to Damascus / Ananias lays hands on Saul and his sight is restored / word reaches Jerusalem that Saul has been saved / Saul escapes those who want to kill him, hearing that he had been converted / Peter raises a dead woman in Joppa / an angel of God tells Cornelius to send for Peter / Peter has a vision of a sheet with animals / Peter testifies to Cornelius that God showed him how the nations have been cleansed via Yeshua / Cornelius and his household believe in Yeshua and are immersed / Peter tells the Jewish Believers in Jerusalem about the vision God has shown him / the Antioch assembly begins to swell with significant numbers of non-Jewish Believers / Herod has Peter arrested / Peter is broken out of prison by an angel, arriving at the prayer meeting interceding for his release / Herod dies a sudden death when addressing a public audience / Barnabas and Saul leave for their first journey / Paul shows Bar-Jesus (Elymas) to be a total fraud in front of Sergius Paulus / Paul proclaims the gospel at a synagogue in Pisidian Antioch / the synagogue leaders at Pisidian Antioch force Paul and Barnabas to leave / Paul and Barnabas proclaim the gospel at Iconium, and are forced to leave / Paul heals a lame man at Lystra / Paul and Barnabas are worshipped as Hermes and Zeus by the Lycaonians / Paul and Barnabas are stoned for dead by the crowd / Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch after their first journey / a debate arises in Antioch over what to do with the new, non-Jewish Believers / the Jerusalem Council convenes and sends its ruling to Antioch / Paul and Barnabas go their separate ways as the gospel expands among the nations / Timothy is circumcised by Paul / Paul is led by a vision to preach the gospel in Macedonia / Lydia and her household come to faith in Yeshua / a possessed woman in Philippi recognizes the truth of the message Paul and Silas are preaching / Paul and Silas are arrested in Philippi / an earthquake occurs freeing Paul and Silas of their chains / the Philippian jailor receives the Lord / Paul and Silas leave Philippi / Paul and Silas proclaim the good news in Thessalonica, but are forced to leave / Paul and Silas proclaim the good news in Berea, but are forced to leave when some Thessalonians become involved / Paul debates with the Epicureans and Stoics at the Areopagus in Athens / Paul becomes acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth / Paul reasons with the Corinthian synagogue about Yeshua / a breakaway group of Believers in Corinth assembles at the home of Titius Justus / Paul spends an extended time in Corinth / Apollos publicly debates with the Jews in Achaia over the Messiahship of Yeshua / Paul proclaims the gospel to the Believers in Ephesus / Paul spends two years in Ephesus / sons of Sceva attempt to cast out demons in the name of Yeshua / a riot ensues in Ephesus against Paul and his companions / the charges against Paul in Ephesus are dropped / Paul travels throughout Macedonia and Greece / Eutychus is raised from the dead at Troas / Paul bids farewell to the Ephesian elders before traveling to Jerusalem / Agabus warns Paul that he will be arrested / Paul arrives at Jerusalem and hears a false report that he teaches against the Torah of Moses / Paul is arrested on the false report that he has defiled the Temple / Paul defends himself to the crowds wanting to kill him / Paul uses his Roman citizenship to be treated fairly / Paul defends himself before the Sanhedrin, siding with the Pharisees over his belief in the resurrection / the Lord tells Paul that he must travel to Rome / some Sadducees conspire to kill Paul / Paul's nephew reports of a plot to kill him / Paul is transferred to safety in Caesarea / Paul defends himself before Felix / Paul is imprisoned in Caesarea for two years / the Sadducees want to press charges against Paul / Paul defends himself to Festus, claiming that he has

violated neither Jewish nor Roman law / Paul appeals to Caesar / Agrippa desires to hear Paul / Agrippa hears Paul's testimony of salvation and his missionary work / Paul begins his journey to Rome, sailing in the Eastern Mediterranean / Paul continues his journey, after Julius was told by him to wait / Paul says not to worry about the seastorms, as God has told him he will testify before Caesar in Rome / Paul and company are shipwrecked at Malta / Paul is bitten by a viper and not harmed / Paul heals Publius' father / Paul makes it to Italy / Paul is permitted to live in Rome by himself under guard / Paul proclaims the gospel to the Jews in Rome, with many believing, and many disbelieving / Paul is recorded as having lived in a rented house in Rome for two years

Key Scriptures: Acts 1:8; 2:38-39; 15:19-21 / **Prologue** (1:1-5); **Initial Events** (1:6-26); **The Establishment of the Jerusalem Assembly** (2:1-5:42); **The Beginning of Persecution** (6:1-9:31); **The Spread of the Gospel Among the Nations** (9:32-12:25); **The First Missionary Journey** (13:1-15:41); **The Second Missionary Journey** (16:1-18:23); **The Third Missionary Journey** (18:24-20:6); **Journey to Jerusalem** (20:7-21:17); **Paul in Jerusalem** (21:18-23:35); **Paul Before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa at Caesarea** (24:1-26:32); **The Journey to Rome** (27:1-28:31)¹

Theological Summary: The Acts of the Apostles, the Greek title of which is *Praxeis* (ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ) or "Actions," is the second book in a set written to Theophilus (1:1). While in the canonical order of the New Testament, the Book of Acts is separated from the Gospel of Luke by the Gospel of John, the Book of Acts was actually intended to be the second volume of a two-volume piece. Traditional authorship of the Book of Acts is given to Luke the physician, also author of the Gospel of Luke. Conservative expositors generally hold to Acts being written several years after the Gospel of Luke. Just as Luke's Gospel takes us from Yeshua's birth to His crucifixion in Jerusalem and subsequent resurrection, Acts now takes us from Jerusalem to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to Paul's trial in Rome. The events in the Book of Acts span across three decades from approximately 30-60 C.E.,² which means that any dating for the composition of Acts must begin in the early 60s, which if Luke is the real author, can place it as late as the early 80s. "In Acts, Luke conducts the reader on a whirlwind tour of three decades of church history. We visit Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Syria, Cyprus, many cities in Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and, finally, Rome. We witness everything from preaching and miracles to jailbreaks and shipwrecks" (Carson and Moo).³

The early Christian Church recognized Lukan authorship of Acts. Eusebius attested in his *Ecclesiastical History*, "That Paul preached to the Gentiles and established churches from Jerusalem and as far as Illyrium is evident both from his own expressions and from the testimony of Luke in the Book of Acts" (3.4.1).⁴ Conservatives today generally accept genuine Lukan authorship of Acts,⁵ something that went unchallenged until the Eighteenth Century. We know that Luke was a traveling companion of Paul, and with this various references to "we" seen in the Book of Acts regarding Paul's company, would by necessity include Luke (16:10-17; 20:5-21:19; 27:1-28:16). Like his Gospel, Luke immediately directed his account to Theophilus, likely his patron, or perhaps even a Roman official. As Acts ends with Paul in Rome, it may be safely assumed that Luke wrote Acts from Rome, and from Rome it was disseminated throughout the congregations of Believers in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Generally speaking, dating the Book of Acts often falls between those who think that the text was written prior to 70 C.E., and those who think that the text was written after 70 C.E. Those who advocate that Acts was written prior to 70 C.E., appeal to the fact that Paul's trial is not mentioned and that Acts seems to end abruptly. Speculating on this, it is thought that Acts was composed just prior to Paul's trial. Various evangelicals today lean toward a composition of Acts around 60-62 C.E.⁶ The fact that the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans in 70 C.E. is not mentioned in Acts, can be used in support of a pre-70 C.E. composition.

¹ Cf. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 400-402.

² H.J. Cadbury, "Acts of the Apostles," in *IDB*, 1:29; F.F. Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:43.

³ Carson and Moo, 285.

⁴ *Ecclesiastical History*, pp 68-69.

⁵ Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:35; Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 383-388; Carson and Moo, pp 290-296.

⁶ Cf. Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 2:37-38; Carson and Moo, pp 296-300.

A post-70 C.E. composition of Acts is also possible. While he personally leans toward a composition of Acts before 64 C.E.,⁷ Guthrie is aware of how “It would certainly not be impossible for Luke to have written Acts any time up to about AD 85 but it could hardly have been much later. A date between AD 70 and 85 is, therefore, preferred by the majority of scholars.”⁸ While Acts is described by some as an “incomplete story,” what it addresses is historically accurate, thorough, and demonstrates that it was written for a wide audience of Jewish, Greek, and Roman Believers.⁹ Conservative theologians generally tend to treat the Book of Acts as providing valuable historical background material for various Pauline letters like Galatians, 1&2 Corinthians, Philippians, or 1&2 Thessalonians.¹⁰

Some interpreters think that in addition to the Book of Acts having been written to simply attest to the history of the early community of Messiah followers, that it was actually written as a defense for the gospel message. Guthrie summarizes, “The author appears to go out of his way to show the close connection between Christianity and its antecedents in Judaism. The Christians, and particularly Paul himself, still observe Jewish ceremonial requirements: Timothy is circumcised and Paul takes a vow, while James, both at the Council of Jerusalem and on the occasion of his later meeting with Paul, draws attention to the relationship between Jewish practices and Christian procedure. The appeal to the Old Testament as predicting events which were happening in the Christian church would influence Jewish readers in the direction of a favorable view of the church. But it is in its approach to official relationships with the Roman Empire that Acts becomes most clearly apologetic.”¹¹ This viewpoint attests that Luke knew his historical account was going to be read by a broad group of people, and it had to be accurate regarding Jewish theological expectations from the Tanach, and be factual for Romans regarding the placement of the events in their regional settings.

Considering that Luke was likely in Rome when he composed the Book of Acts, and the wide target audience of this book of history, it seems most unlikely that it was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic.¹² A few Messianics espouse a Hebrew or Aramaic origin of this text, but it is an opinion based on spurious presuppositions.¹³ Like his Gospel, the Book of Acts demonstrates a vocabulary of a very high level of Greek, but certainly includes Semitic influences via the Septuagint, and “perhaps Aramaic or Hebrew documents relating the early events of Christianity in and around Jerusalem” (Gundry)¹⁴ were incorporated as source materials for the final Greek composition. These documents would likely have been second-hand notes regarding historical events. “It is noteworthy that the clearest evidence of an Aramaic substratum beneath Luke’s Greek appears in the first five chapters of Acts” (Bruce, *ISBE*).¹⁵ Of course, the events of Acts chs. 1-5 are contained to Jerusalem and the immediate vicinity, easily explaining for oral Semitic influences on the written Greek. Some of the various speeches in Acts may demonstrate non-Greek character,¹⁶ and others may demonstrate Greek character.¹⁷ As the events of Acts spread beyond the Holy Land, less and less Semitic influence is seen in the text. The Greek text has a grammar consistent with the LXX. The following summary from *IDB* is useful to remember when properly approaching the language issue of the Book of Acts:

“On the one side it has been argued that the whole first part of Acts is based upon a lost but coextensive Aramaic composition, which shows through the present Greek text by both overliteral translation and mistranslation. On the other hand, it is supposed that both the book of Acts and any written sources which it used were composed exclusively in Greek. If Semitisms appear, they then are to be attributed to the oral stage of transmission, and are echoes of the original speakers and narrators in Palestine...It is, however, not to be

⁷ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 355-361.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 362.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp 371-372.

¹⁰ Bruce, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *ISBE*, 1:40-42; cf. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 373-374; Carson and Moo, pp 319-320, 322.

¹¹ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 367.

¹² Cf. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 390-392, 398-399.

¹³ Cf. Bruce, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *ISBE*, 1:39.

¹⁴ Gundry, “Acts: A Promotion of Christianity in the Greco-Roman World at Large,” in *A Survey of the New Testament*, 296.

¹⁵ Bruce, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *ISBE*, 1:39.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 378-379; Carson and Moo, pp 320-321.

forgotten that the final author of both volumes could vary his style and was not incapable of importing, under the influence of the Greek OT which he knew, ‘Septuagintisms’ while composing himself in Greek.”¹⁸

The Book of Acts was composed to create a sort of history for the early Messianic community, bridging the narratives of Yeshua’s life to the spread of the good news throughout the First Century world. It gives us a defense of the early Messianic faith, depicting Believers’ endurance through persecution. Conservatives are willing to accept the Book of Acts as being historically accurate in its detail,¹⁹ and the author uses speeches from the early Apostles to communicate his main points. Liberals, on the other hand, tend to doubt in various ways the historicity and reliability of Acts,²⁰ although some prefer to view the author of Acts as “an apologetic historian of a very special sort” (*ABD*).²¹ Too often it is claimed by some liberals that the Book of Acts really focuses on the Apostle Paul, and not on the original Apostles as commissioned by the Messiah.²² Yet, how much of the focus on Paul and his work, has to do to the setting of the events portrayed, and not some sort of theological impetus? There continue to be vigorous discussions and debates as to how interpreters should best approach the historical nature of Acts.²³

The storyline of Acts begins with the ascension of Yeshua into Heaven, and the events that followed shortly thereafter with the giving of the Holy Spirit at *Shavuot* or Pentecost (chs. 1-3). From there we see how the Believers in Jerusalem grew in number, and how indeed many Jews came to faith in the Messiah of Israel and were Spirit filled (chs. 4-8). A rabbi from Tarsus, Saul, has an encounter with Yeshua on his way to Damascus to persecute Jewish Believers. Following this radical Christophany, he is commissioned by the Messiah to spread the good news to the nations (ch. 9). Greeks and Romans begin to come to faith in Israel’s Messiah in massive numbers, and debate arises among the Jewish Believers as to how they are to be incorporated into the fold (chs. 13-14). One of the book’s most important events is the Jerusalem Council, which laid the groundwork for the inclusion of non-Jewish Believers into the assembly, and what they were expected to do (ch. 15).

Acts contains much internal Biblical background information behind Paul’s epistles to the new congregations of Asia Minor, Greece, and the Mediterranean basin, and the missionary journeys which he undertook. In the second half of Acts (chs. 16-28), we see Luke’s account from him accompanying Paul on these journeys. Acts ends with Paul being tried in a religious court in Jerusalem, he testifies to his Jewish brethren about the Messiah, and then Paul travels to Rome with the intention of going before Caesar and testifying of Yeshua before him as well.

Christian theologians have widely considered the Book of Acts to represent the “beginnings of the Church,” which in many cases has been coupled with some kind of replacement theology, but not always. In contemporary theological examination, there has been a noticeable trend of reading the Book of Acts together with Luke. “The title ‘(The) Acts of (the) Apostles’ was given to it after its original close connection with the Gospel of Luke was broken....It looks as if the author in both volumes recorded as much as could be contained in a papyrus roll of normal length” (Bruce, *ISBE*).²⁴ The *ABD* entry does not even separate Luke and Acts, noting, “The decision to read these separate texts as a single literary work represents the triumph of a literary-critical approach to the NT writings,”²⁵ even if the *ABD* entry also does represent a few liberal presuppositions. “The Gospel of Luke...anticipates the Acts of the Apostles, and it also authorizes the narrative of the Acts, with Acts both continuing the narrative of God’s mighty acts of salvation begun with the births of John and Jesus (Lk 1-2) and at the same time showing how the significance of the Jesus story might be

¹⁸ Cadbury, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *IDB*, 1:35.

¹⁹ Bruce, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *ISBE*, 1:42-43; Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 371-373; Carson and Moo, pp 316-320.

²⁰ W.C. Robinson, Jr., “Acts of the Apostles,” in *IDBSup*, 8; Christopher R. Matthews, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *EDB*, 17; cf. Carson and Moo, pp 302-303.

²¹ Luke Timothy Johnson, “Luke-Acts, Book of,” in *ABD*, 4:408.

²² Cf. John T. Squires, “Acts,” in *ECB*, 1213.

²³ J.B. Green, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, pp 7-9.

²⁴ Bruce, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *ISBE*, 1:33, 36; cf. Green, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, pp 13-14; Carson and Moo, 285.

²⁵ Johnson, “Luke-Acts, Book of,” in *ABD*, 4:404.

worked out and articulated for changing times...Acts thus builds on the foundation established in Luke, demonstrating the ongoing relation of the church to the Jesus event by interpreting the significance of Jesus for a new day" (Green).²⁶

Today's Messianic Believers tend to give various amounts of importance to the Book of Acts. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in association with the festival of *Shavuot*/Pentecost tends to be highly valued (chs. 2-3), as is the Jerusalem Council ruling for the new, non-Jewish Believers coming to faith (15:19-21).²⁷ Areas of difficulty tend to be in evaluating Peter's vision (chs. 10-11),²⁸ the relationship of the early Believers to the mainline Jewish Synagogue,²⁹ issues regarding Paul and Peter and the Torah,³⁰ and *really understanding* the spread of the good news into the nations.³¹ The advice of Gamaliel toward the early Believers (5:17-42), is something that we not often consider for some of our own internal debates and squabbles. For a variety of complicated reasons, the further and further out from the Holy Land that the setting of events gets, the more difficult Messianic examination with the Book of Acts tends to be.³² As basic as it may sound, the challenges that Acts 1:8 presents much of today's emerging Messianic movement are larger than they should be: "you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." More needs to surely be evaluated from James the Just's acknowledgment that the nations coming to faith in Israel's Messiah, was a definite sign of the Kingdom of Israel being in the process of restoration (15:14-18; cf. Amos 9:11-12, LXX).

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²⁶ Green, "Acts of the Apostles," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, 13.

²⁷ Consult the author's commentary *Acts 15 for the Practical Messianic* for a more detailed examination of the Jerusalem Council, and the implementation of the Apostolic decree.

Be aware of the considerable textual variants appearing in Acts 15:24 and 21:25, from the critical edition Greek New Testaments used in modern versions like the RSV/NRSV/ESV, NASU, NIV/TNIV, and CJB, versus the Textus Receptus used for the KJV/NKJV.

²⁸ Consult the *Messianic Kosher Helper* by Messianic Apologetics (forthcoming).

²⁹ Cf. Green, "Acts of the Apostles," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, pp 18-19; Carson and Moo, pp 321, 325.

³⁰ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 374-376.

³¹ Cf. Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:46.

³² Cf. Johnson, "Luke-Acts, Book of," in *ABD*, 4:416-417; Carson and Moo, pp 288-290.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION ON ACTS:

1. Having just surveyed the Book of Acts, summarize what impacts or compels you the most concerning the text.
2. In your own words, what do you think took place on the day of *Shavuot*/Pentecost?
3. In your own words, what do you think took place at the Jerusalem Council?
4. Did you notice or consider the mobility of Paul and the early Believers, traveling from place-to-place proclaiming the gospel?
5. Do you think that Acts should be best understood as pertaining to the *Acts of the Apostles* or the *Acts of the Holy Spirit*? Describe your thoughts.
6. What critical lesson(s) do you think today's Messianic movement can learn from examining the Book of Acts?

REFLECTION ON ACTS' PLACEMENT IN THE CANON

Write two short paragraphs about what struck you about reading the Book of Acts: