

# THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTER 1, VERSES 1-12

29 May 2015

**THE TITLE:** Accurate. The apostles, having received the Holy Ghost (John 20:22) acted in accord with the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ to go, teach all nations (Matthew 28:18), and baptize believers (Acts 16:16). In this writing we are given the acts of Peter, James, John, and “the eleven” in the first chapters. Later we are given the acts of Paul, Silas, and Barnabas (also apostles: Acts 14:14).

**SIZE:** Acts contains 28 chapters, 1067 verses and 24,250 words.

**PURPOSE:** Acts is a transitional book, moving the believer from the Old Testament doctrines of the four Gospels to the New Testament doctrines of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Acts give a PATTERN for true biblical Christianity:

1. Street preaching.
2. Answers to prayer.
3. Soul-winning.
4. Doctrinal controversy.
5. Persecution.
6. The revelation of Salvation by the Grace of God alone.
7. Christians organized into local churches.
8. Believers ONLY partaking of water baptism.
9. Expectancy of the immediate return of the Lord Jesus Christ.
10. Christian charity and unity of purpose.
11. Missions and missionary activity as the essence of obedience to the Lord Jesus.
12. Bible teaching in the local assembly.

**AUTHOR:** Luke the “beloved Physician” (Col. 4:14). In Acts 1:1, the writer mentions a “former treatise” written to “Theophilus.” Luke is the one who wrote to Theophilus (Luke 1:3). Luke finished writing Acts before 70 A.D. (the destruction of the temple hadn’t happened yet). He records events that took place as late as 65 A.D.

**1:1** Reveals the authorship and teaches us to “*practice what we preach.*” Acts is a continuation of what “**Jesus began both to do and to teach.**” Jesus didn’t teach one thing and do another thing. In fact He condemned that practice (Matt. 23:2-3).

**1:2** Jesus Christ gave commandments to the apostles before He was taken up. These commandments are recorded in Mark 16:14-20. Acts 1:2 proves the legitimacy of Mark 16.

**1:3** The Lord showed himself to be alive after his death (“**his passion**”) by “**many infallible proofs.**” The word infallible removes any possibility of an erroneous report of his resurrection. New bible versions use the words “*convincing proofs.*” You can be convinced of one thing today and another thing tomorrow.

Jesus spoke to the apostles about things pertaining to “**the kingdom of God.**” This is not the earthly kingdom on earth promised to the nation of Israel (Matthew 8:11). The kingdom of God is not something that you can see with your eyes. It is a spiritual kingdom “**within you**” (Luke 17:20-21).

So Jesus is didn’t instruct the disciples about bringing in the earthly kingdom. He instructed them about bringing in the spiritual kingdom. You can only enter this kingdom through the new birth.

**Daniel 9:24-27** speaks of 70 weeks of years (490 years). Messiah is cut off after 483 years (Jesus dies on the cross). That leaves 7 more years for God to deal with the Jews. That will take place in during the Tribulation. Therefore, you can’t say God is dealing with the Jews to give them a chance to bring in the Jewish Kingdom in the early chapters of Acts. You can’t add years to God’s plan.

**1:4** The Lord commanded the disciples to wait in Jerusalem (Luke 24:49) for “**the promise of the Father.**” This is the promised Comforter (John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7).

**1:5** Jesus told the disciples they would be “**baptized with the Holy Ghost**” after a few days. They had already received the Holy Ghost (John 20:22). Baptism is always immersion. That’s why he compared it to John’s baptism with water. The Lord filled the room in Acts 2 so that they were immersed in the Holy Ghost.

John the Baptist spoke of this baptism in Matthew 3:11. He spoke to a mixed crowd of believers and unbelievers. Believers would be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Unbelievers would be baptized with fire (hellfire). In Acts 1:5, the Lord only speaks of the baptism of the Holy Ghost because He’s speaking to believers.

**1:6** The disciples want to ask about the establishment of the Kingdom of heaven (on earth), but the Lord wants to talk to them about the Kingdom of God (Spiritual). They will understand this after the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

**1:7** Not only can you not know the day nor the hour (Matt. 25:13), but you also can’t know the “**times or the seasons**” (Acts 1:7). They’re obviously not going to be trying to bring in the Jewish kingdom or else they would be able to count the days until the Second Coming. There’s only 7 years left on God’s Jewish timetable.

**1:8** After the disciples receive the power of the Holy Ghost they are going to bear witness of Jesus Christ, starting from Jerusalem and extending outward “**unto the uttermost part of the earth.**” They are to tell people about Jesus Christ and faith in Him, not about restoring Israel. Jesus plans to build His church (Matthew 16:18). He knows this is going to take a lot of time and a lot of long steady work. But the church is already started before Paul ever gets saved. Notice: they will go out with the power of the Lord’s commandments (1:2), the power of his resurrection (1:3), and the power of the Holy Ghost (1:8).

There are seven references to the baptism of the Holy Spirit: Five PROPHETIC (Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, and Acts 1:8). One is HISTORICAL (Acts 11:16), and one is DOCTRINAL (1 Cor. 12:13). “**For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.**” This happened first in Acts chapter 2. How is it that some claim there is no Body of Christ until after Paul gets saved?

**1:9-12** The disciples saw Jesus ascend up to heaven in a cloud. Luke 24:51 supports this (but not in the new bibles). There are many Bible references that indicate that the Lord moves with clouds. --Psalm 24:7-10, --Psalm 47:5, --Matthew 24:30, --Matthew 26:64, --1 Thessalonians 4:17, --Daniel 7:13, --Revelation 1:7, 14:14, Nahum 1:3.

Two angels said the Lord went up with clouds and He’ll return with clouds (1 Thess. 4:17)

The Lord ascended from the Mount of Olives. He’ll return to the mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4).

The three times Jesus wept, He was on the Mount of Olives (Luke 19:41, John 11:35, Heb. 5:7). When He went up from the Mount of Olives, He left his sorrows behind.

**The first 11 verses of Acts summarize the entire book.**

1. His activity is continued (vss. 1, 2).
2. His resurrection is proved (vs. 3).
3. His disciples are comforted (vss. 4, 5).
4. His kingdom is recognized (vss. 6, 7).
5. His witnesses are instructed (vs. 8).
6. His ascension is accomplished (vs. 9).
7. His return is promised (vss. 10, 11).