



**The Acts of the Apostles**

The Journey – 2020  
Jim Hoffman

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42 AD	Peter Led from Prison by the Angel	<a href="#">Acts 12</a>
44 AD	Herod Agrippa Dies	<a href="#">Acts 12:20</a>
48 AD	Paul's First Missionary Journey	<a href="#">Acts 13</a>
48 AD	Paul preaches in Pisidian Antioch	<a href="#">Acts 13:14</a>
48 AD	Paul and Barnabas in Iconium	<a href="#">Acts 14</a>
48 AD	Paul and Barnabas in Lystra and Derbe	<a href="#">Acts 14:8</a>
48 AD	Paul and Barnabas Return to Syrian Antioch	<a href="#">Acts 14:21</a>
48 AD	Return to Syrian Antioch	<a href="#">Acts 14:24</a>
48 AD	The Council at Jerusalem	<a href="#">Acts 15</a>
49 AD	Paul's Second Missionary Journey	<a href="#">Acts 15:36</a>

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- Acts 13:13 Paul and his companions then left Paphos by ship for Pamphylia, landing at the port town of Perga. There John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem. 14 But Paul and Barnabas traveled inland to Antioch of Pisidia.
- **John Mark leaving** – no one really knows why Mark left Paul and Barnabas, but there is no shortage of guesses as to why.
- What we do know is that Barnabas saw Mark differently than Paul did because in Acts 15 Barnabas wants to take Mark with them again and Paul doesn't – they split over this issue.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- Since so many others have guessed, why can't I? 😊
- Guess #1 – Paul was such an intense, take no prisoners sort of guy in his work, that if you didn't work as long and hard as Paul did he had no time for you.
- Guess #2 – Barnabas was much more willing to bring Mark along at his own pace than Paul was – remember what Barnabas means, "Son of Encouragement".

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- "But Paul and Barnabas traveled inland to Antioch of Pisidia."
- Next to Genesis 1:16 "**He also made the stars**" this may be the next most understated phrase in the bible.
- Because the trip from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia was a formidable one – it would involve endurance in that day like few other treks.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- More than 100 miles on foot across the Taurus Mountains up into the mountains to the city of Antioch of Pisidia on a plateau 3,600 feet in altitude.
- Theologians have called this trip, “one of the greatest points of heroism in the history of the early church”.
- As a side note, avoiding this trip is one of the guesses as to why John Mark left Paul and Barnabas in Perga.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

Taurus Mountains



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### The Acts of the Apostles

- Acts 13:14b On the Sabbath they went to the synagogue for the services. 15 After the usual readings from the books of Moses and the prophets, those in charge of the service sent them this message: “Brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, come and give it.”
- Paul’s first recorded sermon – no doubt not his first sermon, but the first one recorded for us.
- He had been preaching and teaching in Tarsus and also in Antioch of Syria – and evidently with lots of success.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- The synagogues were ready made audiences for the gospel.
- Where else were you likely to find gatherings of Men who wanted to talk about spiritual things?
- Imagine Paul's delight in being asked, "if you have any word of encouragement for the people, come and give it". 😊

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- **A quick sidebar here** – how many Jewish women were lost because they married spiritual duds?
- Women were not involved in "religious" things like the men were – there was even a special (lesser) spot for them in the synagogues and the temple.
- It would seem that God would treat them like all others who have never heard – not innocent, but with mitigating circumstances.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- Acts 13:16 So Paul stood, lifted his hand to quiet them, and started speaking. "Men of Israel," he said, "and you God-fearing Gentiles, listen to me.
- God fearers – we see the term again. (men who were far along to being fully Judaized, but not completely)
- Verses 17-29 are another recount of Israel's history, and in many ways the world's history, much like Stephen did in chapter seven.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- What is different in this case is that when Paul comes to the part where he names Jesus as Messiah they do not shut him down.
- This is either because the dispersed Jews were less power conscious than their brethren in Jerusalem, or there was growing belief that Jesus truly was Messiah.
- What we know for sure is that something had changed.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- Because Paul took the occasion to rehearse history, we should ask, "where is history going?".
- The ancient philosophers thought that history was just a series of pointless cycles – the players changed every 1,000 years or so, but nothing ever really happened.
- Sartre said that life was just a series of random, disconnected, meaningless events that come and go.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

Philosophy - a theory or attitude held by a person or organization that acts as a guiding principle for behavior.  
(a world view)

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- Philosophy orated by cynical unsaved people will always be flawed to some degree because they miss the main point of history, Jesus Christ.
- Honest philosophers have always sought out the meaning of life – no book on philosophy has ever been written that is superior to the bible.
- **"If there is no God, there is no purpose. If there is no purpose, then everything is permitted. If everything is permitted, we're a disaster."** Fyodor Dostoevsky

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- Many of the ancient philosophers were looking for that which brings unity to the diversity of the essential elements of life.
- Water, air, fire, and earth were such elements considered necessary for life, but they were not unified in their purpose.
- Most philosophers sought for that which ties them together in a very foolish way – they never considered God.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- So they were constantly looking for the quintessential (5<sup>th</sup>) "thing" that would be over and above the 4 elements that tied them all together into some purpose or meaning.
- They wanted to find what was behind the 4 elements that tied them all together – that which is not merely essential, but quintessential.
- Their understanding was that what they were looking for had to be boundless and ageless – and the bible answers that quintessential question. 😊

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- God is indeed “boundless” because he is omnipresent – he is literally present everywhere. God has no boundaries. (ponder that!)
- God is also “ageless” in that he is eternal – he would have been found to be present when water, air, earth, and fire came into being.
- To be ageless the philosophers knew the quintessential element would have to exist outside of time.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- So what is my point, and how does it relate to where history is going?
- My point is this – history has meaning and is going somewhere.
- The meaning of history is semi disguised in the word itself – “His Story” and so history is being carried along as he writes his story.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- 1 Why are the nations so angry?  
Why do they waste their time with futile plans?
- 2 The kings of the earth prepare for battle;  
the rulers plot together  
against the LORD  
and against his anointed one.
- 3 “Let us break their chains,” they cry,  
“and free ourselves from slavery to God.”
- 4 But the one who rules in heaven laughs.  
The Lord scoffs at them.
- 5 Then in anger he rebukes them,  
terrifying them with his fierce fury.
- 6 For the Lord declares, “I have placed my chosen king on the throne  
in Jerusalem,<sup>a</sup> on my holy mountain.”

The continuous battle that rages throughout history – who is going to be God?

In actuality the battle is over.

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**The Acts of the Apostles**

<sup>7</sup> The king proclaims the LORD's decree:  
 "The LORD said to me, 'You are my son,<sup>a</sup>  
 Today I have become your Father.'<sup>b</sup>

**The Son of God will prevail.**

<sup>8</sup> Only ask, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance,  
 the whole earth as your possession.

<sup>9</sup> You will break<sup>c</sup> them with an iron rod  
 and smash them like clay pots."<sup>d</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Now then, you kings, act wisely!  
 Be warned, you rulers of the earth!

**The casualties of war have hope.**

<sup>11</sup> Serve the LORD with reverent fear,  
 and rejoice with trembling.

<sup>12</sup> Submit to God's royal son,<sup>e</sup> or he will become angry,  
 and you will be destroyed in the midst of all your activities—  
 for his anger flares up in an instant.  
 But what joy for all who take refuge in him!

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**The Acts of the Apostles**

<p><b>1</b> A mighty Fortress is our God,          A Bulwark never falling;          Our Helper He amid the flood          Of mortal ills prevailing:          For still our ancient foe          Doth seek to work us woe;          His craft and power are great,          And, armed with cruel hate,          On earth is not his equal.</p> <p><b>2</b> Did we in our own strength confide,          Our striving would be losing;          Were not the right Man on our side,          The Man of God's own choosing:          Dost ask who that may be?          Christ Jesus, it is He:          Lord Sabaoth His Name,          From age to age the same,          And He must win the battle.</p>	<p><b>3</b> And though this world, with devils filled,          Should threaten to undo us,          We will not fear, for God hath willed          His truth to triumph through us:          The Prince of Darkness grim,          We tremble not for him;          His rage we can endure,          For lo! his doom is sure,          One little word shall fell him.</p> <p><b>4</b> That word above all earthly powers,          No thanks to them, abideth;          The Spirit and the gifts are ours          Through him who with us sideth:          Let goods and kindred go,          This mortal life also;          The body they may kill:          God's truth abideth still,          His Kingdom is forever.</p>
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**The Acts of the Apostles**

- We know where history is going, but we do not know God's timetable, nor can we fully relate to what life will be like when this epoch of time ends.
- In fact are we prepared for time to be no more?
- The bible gives some pretty strong hints that the day will come when the idea of time will be a relic of our day and something we will not have to deal with.

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The Acts of the Apostles

- Rev 21:4 “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and **death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.**” ESV
- Rev 21:23 **And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it,** for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ESV – what are the sun and moon if not critical pieces in time-keeping?

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The Acts of the Apostles

- Rev 22:4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 And **night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun,** for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. ESV
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that **with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.** ESV
- Psalm 90:4 For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night. ESV

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The Acts of the Apostles

- Moses and Peter are telling us in so many words that time is an irrelevant concept with God.
- There is an argument to be made that would say, “once we are in heaven, either individually or corporately, time shall be no more!”.
- So where is history going? **History is moving along on schedule to the conclusion of God’s redemption plan!**

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### The Acts of the Apostles

• Acts 13:44 The following week almost the entire city turned out to hear them preach the word of the Lord. 45 But when some of the Jews saw the crowds, they were jealous; so they slandered Paul and argued against whatever he said. 46 Then Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and declared, "It was necessary that we first preach the word of God to you Jews. But since you have rejected it and judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, we will offer it to the Gentiles. 47 For the Lord gave us this command when he said, 'I have made you a light to the Gentiles, to bring salvation to the farthest corners of the earth.'" 48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and thanked the Lord for his message; and all who were chosen for eternal life became believers. 49 So the Lord's message spread throughout that region. 50 Then the Jews stirred up the influential religious women and the leaders of the city, and they incited a mob against Paul and Barnabas and ran them out of town. 51 So they shook the dust from their feet as a sign of rejection and went to the town of Iconium. 52 And the believers were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. NLT

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- The pattern begins – Paul preaches, some believe, some do not, and some get angry.
- "But since you have rejected it and judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, we will offer it to the Gentiles."
- Paul makes very bold proclamation that goes like, "okay, you had your chance, I am now going to focus on the gentiles".

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- It seems sudden, but had no doubt been something the Lord was speaking to him about for awhile.
- Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.
- Luke 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

• Acts 13:50 Then the Jews stirred up the influential religious women and the leaders of the city, and they incited a mob against Paul and Barnabas and ran them out of town. 51 So they shook the dust from their feet as a sign of rejection and went to the town of Iconium. 52 And the believers were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. NLT

• So why shake the dust off your feet?

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### The Acts of the Apostles

• According to Bible historians, when a Jew returned from traveling in a Gentile land, he literally shook the dust from his clothes and feet because he did not want to bring heathen soil into Judaea. It was a gesture of disgust. Similarly, when the Apostles (led by Peter) in Israel's program went around preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, or when the Apostles (led by Paul) in our mystery program went around preaching the Gospel of the Grace of God, they "shook the dust" to show God's disapproval of their unbelieving audiences. It was an insult for a Jewish town to be treated as though it were Gentile (and, in fact, those unsaved Jews were just as unbelieving as the unsaved pagans)!

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### The Acts of the Apostles

• So after being rejected why were the believers so full of joy?

• A mob had just run Paul and Barnabas out of town – yet we read that believers were full of joy.

• **Reason #1** – the gentiles would no longer be 2<sup>nd</sup> class participants in Judaism, but now joint heirs in the kingdom of God and equal with the believing Jew.

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### The Acts of the Apostles

- **Reason #2** – in a strange sort of way they were rejoicing in the fact that the gospel was making inroads to new people and therefore making progress in the world.
- This would be one of those times that they would not have fully understood well enough on their own to rejoice.
- But the Spirit in them did and it would seem that he brought them a joy unspeakable, but expressible!

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### Questions

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