

Acts 25:1—12 Paul before Festus

- Festus took over the governorship of Judea when Felix was called back to Rome.
- He ended up dying after serving only two years.
- Three days after arriving in Caesarea he went to Jerusalem. The leaders in Jerusalem requested that Paul be brought back to Jerusalem for a trial. Their real motive was to ambush and kill Paul on his way back.
- After visiting 8—10 days, Festus traveled back to Caesarea for an official hearing against Paul to see if he should be given to the Jerusalem leadership.
- During the hearing Festus asked Paul if he would go back and be tried in Jerusalem. Paul knew that would be certain death and appealed to Caesar to be tried at Rome.

Acts 25:13—22 King Agrippa's visit

- Several days after Paul's hearing, King Agrippa and his sister Bernice (Sister of Agrippa and Drucilla ; wife of Felix) came to visit and pay their respects to Festus as the new governor.
- After many days, Festus told King Agrippa about Paul. King Agrippa wanted to hear what Paul said personally so Festus arranged for a meeting the next day.

Acts 25:23—27 Paul and Agrippa meet

- With much pomp, Agrippa entered the auditorium and accompanied by military commanders and the prominent men of the city. Paul was brought in by the command of Festus.
- Festus summarized the events leading up to Paul's arrest and concluded that he could find nothing worthy of death. This examination of Paul was to help Festus write his case about Paul when sent to Caesar.

Acts 26:1—12 Paul's defense

- Paul was given the opportunity to speak for himself.
- Paul was standing trial for preaching the hope of the promise that was given to Israel's ancestors.
 - Notice that Paul was not preaching the promise—the coming King and the Millennial Kingdom. He was preaching the hope of the promise specifically Jesus Christ and His resurrection.
- He was once vehemently opposed to Jesus Christ, locking believers up and also seeing that some were put to death.

Acts 26:13—18 Paul retells of his conversion

Acts 26:19—23 Paul's ministry after his conversion

- He was preaching to Jews and Gentiles that they need to repent and perform deeds appropriate to repentance.
 - This was not a gospel of repentance and baptism but the plea to change their minds about who Jesus Christ is then do works because of Jesus Christ. This message is no different than what we have today for us. Those who become saved are encouraged to do works.
- Because of this preaching the Jews wanted to seize him and kill him even though what he proclaimed about Jesus Christ was written about in the Old Testament prophets.

Acts 26:24—32 Festus' outburst

- Festus interrupts abruptly saying Paul is out of his mind. Literally he said “Your writings are driving you mad.” Meaning the Scripture being used (the writings) were the source of his madness.
- It seems that conviction turned Festus to anger.

- Paul calmly but firmly said that he utters words of sober truth then drew Agabus into the conversation by saying “Do you believe the prophets? I know you do.”
- King Agrippa’s reply of being “Almost persuaded” is a misinterpretation. It would probably better read: “Do you think that in such a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian?”
- After hearing Paul speak for himself, King Agrippa said that Paul could have been released if he hadn’t appealed to Caesar.

Acts 27:1—28:10 Paul’s trip to Rome

- From Caesarea they sailed along the coast, north of Cyprus and on to Myra in Pamphylia.
- It was late September or early October and sailing conditions were poor. With difficulty they sailed on to Fair Havens on the island of Crete but couldn’t harbor there during the winter so they sailed on to try to get to Phoenix, also on Crete.
- 14 days of hurricane-force winds caused them to wander in the Mediterranean Sea until they shipwrecked on the island of Malta, 70 miles south of Sicily.
- It was here they stayed for the winter.

Acts 28:11—31 Paul arrives at Rome

- In late February or march they left Malta and sailed to Italy and finally arrived at Rome.
- Paul had relative freedom while in house arrest and was able to have visitors, even large numbers (28:23) and preach what he wanted to preach.
- He had the opportunity to preach Christ to the Jews in Rome persuading them from the prophets. Some believed while others didn’t.
- God’s pronounces His final rejection of Israel through Paul in verse 28.
- Paul is allowed to preach while under house arrest for two years. Anyone who wanted to see him could. He was completely free to teach about Jesus Christ, a luxury he didn’t have when he was free.

Paul after Acts

- Many believe this was Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome. After the two years he was released and went on his fourth missionary journey. Shortly after that he was arrested and sent to a Roman dungeon until his death.
 - Paul wrote to churches expecting to visit them so it seems he was looking forward to his release (Philippians 2:24)
 - The prison epistles events do not match up with the events of his imprisonment at the end of Acts.
 - Tradition states that Paul traveled to Spain. (But never trust church tradition!)

Possible itinerary and dates based on his writings

1. Rome—released from prison A.D. 62
2. Spain A.D. 62—64 (Romans 15:24, 28)
3. Crete A.D. 64—65 (Titus 1:5)
4. Miletus A.D. 65 (2 Timothy 4:20)
5. Colossae A.D. 66 (Philemon 22)
6. Ephesus A.D. 66 (1 Timothy 1:3)
7. Philippi A.D. 66—67 (Philippians 2:23—24; 1 Timothy 1:3)
8. Nicopolis A.D. 66—67 (Titus 3:12)
9. Rome A.D. 67

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Acts, the conclusion

- Acts can only be understood dispensationally. If you try to use the events in Acts to define your theology, you will end up confused and frustrated. If you divide Acts incorrectly, you will need to perform doctrinal gymnastics to make everything fit.
- Acts explains why God changed His dealings with Israel. It is a segue between the Gospels and Paul's Epistles.
 - The Gospels show how Israel rejected God the father through the rejection and death of prophets in the Old Testament and finally John the Baptizer. Although Israel didn't kill John, they stood by and did nothing.
 - John 1:6—7** ⁶There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.
 - Acts 7:52** "Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?..."
 - The Gospels show Israel rejecting God the Son by demanding his death at the hands of the Romans. His plea to the Father for forgiveness toward Israel allowed them another chance.
 - Matthew 27:25** And all the people said, " His blood shall be on us and on our children!"
 - Acts shows Israel's rejection of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament made it clear that the Holy Spirit would come in the last days of Israel's prophecy. It was also clear that the Holy Spirit would not be given until Jesus Christ had ascended into heaven. This was Israel's last chance to accept her Messiah and might explain why blasphemy of the Holy Spirit would not be forgiven. The rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit came in the form of Stephen being stoned to death by the hands of the Jews.
 - Acts 2:16—17** ¹⁶but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND;
 - Acts 2:33** "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.
 - Acts 7:59**They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"
- God is still dealing with Israel as late as Acts 3. They are still the sons of the covenant and the Gentiles are still to be blessed through Israel's rise.
 - Acts 3:25** "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.'
- Paul's commission was separate and distinct from the 12 Apostles.
 - Why would God need to raise up Paul to reach the Gentiles when He could be using the Apostles and their disciples? Under the Kingdom program the Gentiles would be reached by Israel. Under the Grace program, Israel had fallen which necessitated raising up Paul to fill in the gap.
 - If Paul's message was the same as the 12 Disciples then why did the Jews desire to put Paul to death but there is no record of their desire to kill the 12?
 - If Paul's message was the same as the 12 Disciples then why did he need to go to Jerusalem to explain and defend what he was teaching? If it were the same it would need no explanation.
 - The risen and glorified Jesus Christ personally came to Paul to reveal the Mystery to him alone. The Holy Spirit revealed the truth of Paul's message to the other prophets and apostles. (see Ephesians 3:5)
 - Why did Peter pull back to eat and fellowship with the Jews in Galatians 2 if Paul was preaching and teaching the same thing as the Jerusalem Church? Peter was afraid of what the Jerusalem church would do if they were all seen to be one so he separated himself as he would have done before Paul's preaching of the Gospel of the Grace of God.

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