

Acts: Setting the Context

Lesson #1

An Overview:

In your own words, what is the book of Acts all about? How would you describe it?

How does it relate to the parables of Jesus, and Gospels in general?

What are some things that stand out to you from the book of Acts?

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*”

What can we learn about the book of Acts from this passage? (Matthew 24:3,14,34)

Mark 16:15-20

And He said to them, “*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.*” So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, *He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.*

How does this passage help us to understand the primary message and focus of the book of Acts? (Luke 11:20, Acts 2:22)

Luke 24:44-49

Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, *that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.*” Then *He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,* and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and *that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.*”

How does this passage add to our understanding of the book of Acts? (Genesis 22:15-18, Isaiah 32:14-18)

Acts 1:1-8

The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and to teach, until the day when He was taken up to heaven after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the

Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, *but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.*” So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “*Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?*” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; *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.*”

Based on its immediate context, what are the primary themes in the book of Acts?
(Ezekiel 37:11-14,21-22)

A summary of the message, themes, and overarching story of the Book of Acts:

1. It tells of the reality of the resurrection and enthronement of Christ in heaven as Israel’s God, King, and Messiah.
2. It reveals the identity of the true Israel, the true seed of Abraham.
3. It identifies the apostles as the inspired interpreters of the OT scriptures by recording “signs, miracles, and wonders”, which served to confirmation them in both word and deed.
4. It chronicles the fulfillment of Israel’s great commission (the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom into all the world) prior to the end of the Jewish/OC age. The message was that the reign of God has begun, those who embrace it will be saved, those who do not will be cut off from the people of God and destroyed.
5. It reveals the spiritual nature of the kingdom of God through the fulfillment of Israel’s OT promises.
6. It is the story of the restoration of Israel and all nations in fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, beginning with the remnant and extending to Gentiles; from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.