Acts

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

Acts 3:6.

Yahweh Jireh Ministries

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INTRODUCTION.

The Book of Acts, also known as 'The Acts of the Holy Spirit' records the founding and history of the early Church.

The Book opens with the Saviour's Promise of the Spirit, Acts 1:4-8; followed by the Ascension, Acts 1:9; the prayerful waiting of the Disciples at Jerusalem, Acts 1:14; followed by the outpouring of the Spirit when the day of Pentecost was fully come.

The effect is immediate on the Disciples and those who heard them. Their words piercing and pricking the hearts of the thousands who repented, and became followers of the Crucified, but risen, Nazarene.

Peter, who had denied his Master, became the foremost in declaring Him the Risen Lord; he also, with Holy Boldness, faced the Jewish Rulers.

The Book of Acts is not merely a record of the establishing of the early Church by the Apostles; it also gives us the nearest thing to a True Standard of Christianity. It reveals the history of life, experience, Power of True Believers, and like men and women, filled with the same Holy Ghost, can manifest that same standard of Faith and Power today.

Author

Due to the style and manner of presenting the historical record, most Bible scholars agree that St. Luke is the writer.
Luke was known to both Peter and Paul, and uses their ministries extensively throughout the Book of Acts.

Date

Opinions differ as to the date, however, we do know that the record extends to about 62-63 AD.

Let us now note a few interesting thoughts, which were written before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost,

1. By our Lord's manifestation of Himself, there is again proof of His Resurrection, Acts 1:3,
2. Who were told to tarry, and why?
    a. The 120 in the upper room, Acts 1:15;
    b. The outpouring began on these at Pentecost,
    c. It will end for all flesh on the 120th Jubilee.

3. Matthias was preferred to replace Judas, Acts 1:16-26; was there a mistake on the part of the Disciples in choosing Matthias?

Three important facts stand out in the study of the Book of Acts,
1. The wonderful anointing of the Spirit that rested upon the disciples,
2. The disciples preached the Word in simplicity and power, without compromise,
3. They exalted the name of the Lord Jesus, and exercised the authority by faith, by the disciples.

The Book of Acts divided into two distinct sections: -
1. The continuation of home missions,
2. The start of foreign or Gentile missions.

Home Missions, Acts 1-8:4.

As the four Gospels form the Historical Record and Life of Jesus, so the Book of Acts forms the Historical Record and beginning and establishing of the early Church.

The Apostles simply proclaimed the truth of God, concerning the Sufferings, Death, Burial, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ. The Lord confirmed their testimony in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit.

Foreign Missions, Acts 8:1-28:31.

Persecution scattered the Gospel throughout the Gentile world.

HOME MISSIONS

Pentecost. Acts 1:1–2:13.

Literally, the 50th day, the 40–days Christ remained on earth with His Disciples after His Resurrection, and 10 days waiting – total 50 days, Acts 1:3 and 2:1.

1. The day of Pentecost.
   The time. The Death and Resurrection of Jesus had opened the way for the Holy Spirit to come. Jehovah appointed three Feasts in the Old Testament for Israel,

The Feast of Passover	Leviticus 23:4–5 and 15–21
The Feast of Pentecost	and
The Feast of Tabernacles	the Feast of Tabernacles

These three Feasts easily relate to the New Testament

Passover	the four Gospels
Pentecost	Acts and Epistles
Tabernacles	Book of Revelation

Israel, the Church in the Wilderness, Acts 7:38, kept the Feast of Pentecost at Mt Sinai 50 days after the Passover Lamb, which immediately preceded the Red Sea deliverance from the Egyptians.

The New Testament Church follows the same pattern, but keeping the Feast in Mt Zion, the New Jerusalem.

Under the Old Testament Pentecost.
The Law written on the Tables of Stone, the Aaronic Priesthood, and the Tabernacles are given, the Church established in the Wilderness.

Under the New Testament Pentecost.
The Law written on the Tables of hearts of men, the Church and Priesthood of believers given a pattern, and the Body of Christ established.

Contrast the Priest and Jews keeping the Ceremonial Feast at the Temple – yet God had finished with that by the rending of the Veil to the Holy of Holies.
The Lord's Disciples in the Upper Room were keeping the True Feast in the New Temple of the Church, e.g.

The Letter	The Shadow	The Form	The Ante-type	Prophecy
		became		
The Spirit	The Substance	The Reality	The Type	The Fulfilment

2. Supernatural manifestations. Acts 2:3.
   1. The Spirit descending, the outpouring,
   2. Divine Signs,
      a. The mighty rushing wind filled the house,
      b. The Cloven Tongues of Fire sat on each one of them,
      c. The Speaking with Tongues, they were filled with the Holy Spirit.
   3. The wind and the fire were both Old Testament signs of the Holy Spirit, for these signs touched the senses of 'seeing and hearing'. The Disciples both saw and heard the evidence of a True Witness and Testimony.
      Moses had a Pentecost experience in the desert, Exodus 3:3-5.
      For Elijah God caused an earthquake, the wind, and the fire, but He was not in them - He was the Small Still Voice that they heard, 1 Kings 19:12.
      Divine Manifestations, He caused them, but on the Day of Pentecost, again it was the Small Still Voice.
   4. Compare the Wind of the Spirit, Ezekiel 37:9 with John 3:8 and 20:22, the Breath and the Wind.
   5. The Fire of the Spirit, cp. Matthew 3:11-12.

   Jesus had the Dove of the Spirit on Him in Holy Spirit Baptism, for there was no sin in Him.

   There is one source of Divine Fire, and many tongues are set alight from that fire. As God arrested Moses through the Burning Bush in the desert, so God would arrest unbelievers through the New Burning Bush, the Church, that His Name, that His Holiness, would be convicting, converting, and convincing.

   Fire in the Bible is the symbol of Righteousness - God's Holiness. The symbol of Righteousness, of Judgement, the Word of God, which is like a Tongue of Fire, convicting of sin.

3. Filled with the Spirit. Acts 2:4.

Jesus taught the necessity of His leaving the Disciples that the Spirit could come and dwell in them, just as He had been with them, John 14:17. He had given them much teaching on the Ministry, Work, and Person of the Holy Spirit, John 14–16.

If Jesus remained with them, His Physical Body limited him and to local needs. He could walk and talk with them, but the only way He could be in them, and wherever His Spiritual Members were, was to return to the Father.
It opened the way for the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, the enter the lives of our Lord's disciples.
Thus, we have the very necessity for Jesus to leave this earth after His Glorious Resurrection; His Crucifixion had paid for sin, and now, by the Ascension, and the Holy Spirit given.

In Acts 1, we saw Jesus leaving, in Acts 2 we see the Spirit given; in the Gospels, it was 'Christ with them', but from now on, it will be 'Christ in them'.

This, then, is the Glorious Mystery of 'Christ in them' – the Hope of Glory, Colossians 1:27.

Note in Acts the different expressions used for the same experience,
Baptised with the Spirit, 1:5 and 11:15–17.
Immersion as into water.

Filled with the Spirit, 2:4, 4:31 and 6:5.
Filled as a vessel.

Receiving the Spirit, 2:38, 8:15–17 and 10:47.
Taking a gift from a giver.

Falling on them, 8:15–19, 10:44–45 and 11:15.
POared out from Heaven.

Came upon, 19:6,
Enveloping.

The Holy Spirit given, 2:38, 8:18–19 and 11:16–17,
The Fruit of the Spirit.

Poured on them, 10:44–45.
Abundantly supplied.

4. <u>They began to speak with other tongues. Acts 2:4</u>.
Referring to Mark 16:17, we find the Promise of this verse, 'The sign that would follow believers', the speaking in tongues – new ones.

1. From the fall to Babel man had one language, God was tolerant, He allowed each man to understand the other,
2. Babel to the end of the World man had many languages and total confusion; at Babel, we have the beginning of all Nations and Tongues. God did this because of man's disobedience to God's Word,
3. Pentecost, here Babel is reversed for some. God gave the sign of Tongues as a sign of Grace, and it came because of being obedient to God's Word – it was to be a blessing. Here Salvation was opened to all nations, to all believers, and to all kindred,
4. Heaven, Revelation 7, John beholds innumerable people of many Nations and many tongues, and yet their tongue was the same, 'Worthy is the Lamb'.

Contrast the two on earth,

Babel	Pentecost
Nimrod, the spirit of Satan, rebellion and blasphemy to glorify man here, bitumen bricks and slime, false unity to cause division. Let us make US a name in the city and the tower.	Christ, the Personage of God abiding here, with living stones of love. True tongues of unity magnifying God's Name, a Kingdom and a strong tower.
The Babylon of earth is obedience to Nimrod.	The Heavenly Jerusalem is in obedience to the Lord Jesus

They were not preaching the Gospel to Heathen Nations in Tongues, Acts 2:5–11. These New Tongues are not the Sanctified and Cleansed Tongues of the New Believer, for the Greek word 'tongues' is also translated languages.

The record in Acts is very clear, the disciples spoke in tongues.

In the Amplified Version of the Bible it reads, 'They began to speak in tongues, (different/foreign languages), as the Spirit kept giving

them clear and loud expressions in each tongue in appropriate words'.

Jesus had promised they would speak in New Tongues, Mark 16:17, the Disciples tongue is not therefore a new tongue.

As the Spirit gave them utterance, expression, and the Words to speak, Acts 2:6–8, the hearers heard them – the Disciples speak in the various foreign languages, Acts 2:11. Therefore speaking with a new tongue was a miracle of speech – not a miracle of hearing. It was a miracle of speech by the Spirit.
The Disciples spoke in a language they had never learned, languages they did not understand, yet the hearers understood quite naturally their own birth tongue, yet given supernaturally.

It was a convicting sign, ignorant Galileans speaking foreign languages. The hearers were Jews out of every Nation who had gathered for the Feasts of Passover and Pentecost. These Jews knew their own National Language, and the language of the country in which they were born; there were no Gentiles among them, yet the 17 countries listed covered the four corners of the then known earth. The Lord's Grace was to be manifested to all nations because of the Man Christ, who was born, raised, and died a Jew, but was raised a new man, His Body Jewish, but His Blood was Divine – not Jewish.

2. <u>The sign of tongues in Old Testament type</u>
God had used the sign of unknown tongues in the Old Testament. But never through a human voice,

<u>Balaam</u>, Numbers 22:30.
God used a dumb ass to speak in a tongue never learned by the speaker, but completely understood by the hearer. Cp. 1 Corinthians 1:27,

<u>Belshazzar</u>, Daniel 5:5 and 24–25
God wrote by the Hand, in an unknown tongue over against the candlestick – in the light – on the walls of Babylon. It was to be the sign of judgement on the fall of Babylon. Cp. Psalm 78:30.

<u>Israel</u>, Deuteronomy 4:33
God spoke in the Hebrew tongue to the Chosen Nation, but for His Vessel of speech He used a fire.

3. Why did God choose tongues?

Because of His Reversal of the sign of judgement at Babel, and His door of salvation opening to all nations.
God originated all languages, God can speak in any or all languages, He can, similarly, understand all languages.

God chose tongues as the distinct sign of Pentecost, and of evidence of being baptised in the Spirit. It is a tongue of fire, and is quite able to set Hell on fire.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came He did two things,

1. Tamed the untameable,
2. Took control of the human tongue.

He sat on each man and woman present. The Tongue of Fire sat on everyone to purify – burning up the dross and chaff that they might become the fuel of Divine Fire.
That others would see them as tongues of witnessing, convicting, converting 'fire power'.

As they saw God in the confusion of tongues at Babel, as God spoke to Belshazzar, so they would see God in the sign of 'Tongues' here, to those who believed, and those who did not.

4. The evidence of the baptism in Acts

In the Book of Acts 'speaking with other tongues' was a distinct sign of Baptism of the Holy Spirit. If the Church today had the record of the Book of Acts, and cast aside the traditional teaching and books of men, it would have to admit that the evidence in Acts of the reception of the Spirit was this sign. Why then, do we go outside the evidence of Scripture?

1. Acts 2:1–4, it was evident to both, individual and hearer that, on the Day of Pentecost the 120 had the Spirit baptism.
2. Acts 8:5–24, the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit baptism, through the laying on of hands. There must have been some distinct audible, visible, evidence and sign that made Simon want this power, yet not want the power that Philip had manifested earlier in healings, miracles, etc.
3. Paul the Apostle, chosen by the Lord, did not receive the Spirit until after the 'laying on of hands',
4. Acts 10:44–48 and 11:15–17, the Gentiles received the Holy

Spirit as Peter ministered the Word of Salvation. Peter's testimony was that 'the Holy Spirit fell on them, As it did on us at the beginning'; this was many years later after Pentecost. How did Peter know that God had baptised the Gentiles in the Spirit? He heard them speak in 'other tongues' and prophesy,

5. Acts 19:1-7, the Ephesians received the Spirit through the laying on of hands by Paul, how would Paul have known that they were not baptised in the Spirit? After he had laid hands upon them they spoke in 'other tongues' and prophesied.

The sign of 'New Tongues' followed those that believed and received, Mark 16:17. It was the accepted witness and evidence of the Spirit's reception in Acts, and Acts is the Divine Pattern for the whole Church Age.

Acts 1-2 is the only record of any tarrying for the Spirit; not tarrying but receiving is God's Will. The Rushing Wind, the Tongue of Fire, God has not repeated either in Spiritual Baptism, but the speaking in tongues is in each one.

The ability to speak in Tongues was of the Spirit, 1:8. The Disciples, spoke with Tongues, how? They let the Spirit speak the Words and Expressions through their mouths. It was, and is, the ability of the Spirit, not men. The Devil has counterfeited this sign, as with other Gifts of the Spirit, yet the Lord said, "Ask of the Father for the Holy Spirit, and He will not give you a serpent (devil)", Luke 11:9-13.

We must remember that although 'speaking in tongues' is the evidence of the Spirit's reception, Holy Living is the evidence of the Holy Spirit filled life.

The Holy Spirit comes to make us Holy, yet, sadly, it is possible to receive the Spirit, yet not walk nor live in the Spirit.

<u>Peter's first sermon</u>. Acts 2:14-47.

Peter, the Apostle, a respected Jew, Circumcised, Law abiding, uses the keys, Matthew 16:19, to open the door to three thousand converts.

Within this first Pentecostal Sermon are two important facts,

a. Joel,
b. Jesus.

It is still the same for all preaching.

1. Joel, the Prophetic Word, 'this is that', the Last Days of the Dispensation of the time allotted to mankind.
2. Three ways in which God has revealed His Will to and through the Old Testament Prophets were,
   a. Prophecy }
   b. Dreams } Numbers 12:6-8.
   c. Visions }

   Now, in the New Testament, the Prophetic is for all flesh, Sons and Daughters, Young men and Old men, Servants and Handmaids, class distinction is out.

   The Holy Spirit had, in the past been poured out on the Chosen Nation, with few exceptions. People such as the Priests, Prophets, and Judges, who could only begin their ministry at 30, and finish at 50.

   Joel's Prophecy covers the whole of this Age, as the Age of Pentecostal Outpouring, on not only the Early Church, but also right through to the Second Advent of Jesus; even after the Rapture, we have the two men, Revelation 11:3-14.
3. Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and the Spirit was now available - through Him - for all flesh, all mankind.

1. <u>Jesus - the living incarnate word</u>.
   Note the eight important facts that Peter declares concerning Jesus of Nazareth, these are in every sermon in Acts,

   <u>The Sinless Man</u>, Acts 2:22.
   Although in human form, He dedicated His Nazarite Vow and Consecration to His Father's Desire and Service.
   Nazarite, the title used by men, devils, and on the Cross.

   <u>The Perfect Man</u>, Acts 2:22.
   Approved of God in Miracles, Signs, Wonders; God did them through Jesus and by Jesus, never had God worked through any other as He did through Jesus; not Moses; not Elijah; nor Elisha, nor any other of the Judges. No man before could compare with any of the Works of Jesus. None could compete with His Claim. Jesus, by His Word, Works, and Claim, was the Son of God, and God was with Him, Acts 10:38.

   <u>The Crucified Man</u>, Acts 2:23.

The Divine Side, God's Plan to overcome man's lawlessness and wickedness as fulfilled above, Acts 13:27.

The Resurrected Man, Acts 2:24-32.
The central point in all Pentecostal Sermons is the Resurrection, for on it hangs all the previous and following facts, He uses David's Psalms that they did not, and could not; find fulfilment in David himself, for David and his tomb were still with them, 1 Kings 2:10, David, Psalm 22, gives a graphic picture of a crucifixion, David could not have been talking about himself, for again in 1 Kings 2:10 we read 'he slept with his fathers and saw corruption'. David had to wait for Christ to arise to enable his release from that place.

The Exalted Man, Acts 2:33.
No other man ever received the Spirit without measure as Jesus did. Again, it was the Office of the Messiah to receive this Divine Fullness, and then to pour out the Spirit upon all flesh - it was the Father's Promise, Joel 2:28.

The Ascended Man, Acts 2:34.
What is it that He first descended than Ascended? No other man ever descended from the Bosom of the Father, but the Son. The Son begotten before He descended, all other men were of the flesh. He though, is the Lord, the Son from Heaven, and the Man in Heaven.

The Enthroned Man, Acts 2:34-35.
This is the most important passage. The Perfect Sacrifice caused a Perfect Ministry. The Perfect Priest became the Heavenly Priest. Enthroned, no man, no angel, dare to sit next to the Father on the Throne, only the Divine Son. 'Sit on my right hand...' Matthew 22:44.

The Glorified Man, Acts 2:34-36.
Jesus, the image of God in man, through whom a race of people would obtain this image.
Heaven had never received a Man like this before. The Glorification of Jesus - as man - was the reception of the Name of God, His Father; God's Glory in that Name is the glorious climax of the sermon.

Church membership, Acts 2:37-47.

The result of Peter's preaching 'with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven', the revelation and declaration of the Triune Name, Acts 2:36, is deep conviction of the Spirit upon the hearers. The Lord, John 16:8–11, promised this conviction, bringing forth the question "What shall we do?" To get this in perspective one must realise that these were devout Jews, Acts 2:5. Peter gives the answer in Acts 2:38, where God's Standard from then until the end of the Age is laid down. God's word changes not.

Repentance.
Repentance here includes conviction, confession, and forsaking all sin, a complete change of mind towards God and His Son Jesus Christ; rejected and Crucified of man, but raised and Glorified by God His Father. This conviction, with its fruits of repentance manifested, would come by the Power of the Holy Spirit.

Water baptism.
Water Baptism – Baptism by immersion was not an optional extra in the early Church, but a Command of Christ, Matthew 28:18–20. Preached by the Apostles, Acts 10:48.

The Spirit also proclaimed these principles,
1. Before the Cross and Crucifixion, John's Baptism was ordained of God,
2. After the Resurrection and Ascension, Christ's Baptism was ordained of God. Water Baptism was to be in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Matthew 28:19.

Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
Note that in Acts, after the Day of Pentecost it is receiving the Holy Spirit, the one and only record of tarrying for the Spirit is in Acts 1, and the reason was, the Holy Spirit could not be given until Jesus was glorified, John 7:37–39. The set time for the Feast of Pentecost was not yet come; all other records speak of 'receiving the Holy Spirit'.

The Holy Spirit came from Heaven and is here on earth now, available to all the repentant and obedient.

The Apostles' doctrine.
The New Converts continued steadfastly, what a difference today. The Apostles Doctrine is definite in Hebrews 6:1–2; there are seven steps, and all are in Acts except the Doctrine of Perfection,
1. Repentance from dead works,

2. Faith towards God,
3. Baptism,
4. Laying on of hands,
5. Resurrection of the dead,
6. Eternal judgement,
7. Perfection of the Saints,

Here we see the importance of sound Doctrine, for in the Last Days many shall depart from the Faith, seduced by the doctrines of devils.

Fellowship.

1. Fellowship with the Father and the Son,
2. Fellowship with one another,

Not a sectarian fellowship; but a spiritual fellowship, all who are in the Light should have fellowship with each other. What a contrast to today.

Breaking of bread.

The early Disciples met to Break Bread on the first day of the week that Table of the Lord, symbolising the Showbread of the Tabernacle, a symbol of the New Covenant. The Children's Bread.
Divine Healing – Divine Health and Cleansing, the Unity of the Body of Christ.

Prayer.

At least 17 chapters in Acts have some reference to Prayer. The Prayers of the Saints is the Incense upon the Golden Altar, ascending to God the Father through the ministry of the High Priest – Jesus the Son.
A Prayer-less Church is a Powerless Church. The Church was born in Prayer, and this is how the Lord has added to the Church.

Peters second sermon. Acts 3:1-4:37.

1. The healing of the lame man, Acts 3:1-11.
   We now have the first recorded healing in Acts, although the Spirit did the healing – the medium of a human was used.
   1. Jesus, John 2:15, had cleansed the Temple,
   2. The Temple had seen the Teachings of Jesus, John 7:37-39,
   3. The Jews, John 18:39-40, had rejected Jesus,
   4. A Gentile, John 19:1-2 had crowned Jesus',
   5. God had split the Veil from the top to the bottom, Matthew 27:51,
   6. The Temple was then left desolate.

   Therefore, Jesus continued His Ministry of Healing From heaven, through the disciples.

Acts 3:4, 'look on us', to the man in need. Yet in Acts 3:12 where there was no apparent need, the Disciples asked the question 'why do ye look upon us?'

Acts 3:5, the man neither had Faith, nor expected the healing. He had been there for years, yet Jesus had not healed him. Now was different, the Power of God was there and used.
The result was fantastic.

Acts 3:6, 'Silver and gold have I none'. How like the Church of Laodicea that John was to write about, Revelation 3:17, they had riches, but no white raiment. It comes down to one thing, money or the power of God.

Acts 3:6, 'such as me has given me thee'. Peter did not tell the man to look towards Heaven to see if he could see God; did he tell the man to attend Church Meetings? The man did not even have to make an appointment; neither was his faith questioned. Peter had something to impart, and Jesus was very happy to confirm His Word in, and through, the Apostle, Mark 16:17.

Acts 3:6, 'In the Name', the first use of the Name in healing. Our faith is to command in the Name.

2. Not our power or holiness. Acts 3:12.
The Power (what He can do), and Holiness (what He is), is of the Risen Lord, and God desires both in His People. However, for those who have power and no holiness there is a tragic, but Divine Judgement, Judges 16:20.

3. Divine title. Acts 3:13.
The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, first used in the Burning Bush, after which the name 'I AM' is stated, Exodus 3.
There are only three men with whom God has been pleased to relate Himself. They are typical, symbolic men of the fullness of the Godhead Body; each manifest the characteristics and operations of the Godhead,
   1. Abraham (the Father) offers His only begotten Son,
   2. Isaac (the Son) from who proceeded,
   3. Jacob (the Holy Spirit), who anointed the Rock with oil.

Jesus declared Himself to be the 'I AM', John 8:56–59. The Father offered Jesus, and through Him, we, the Church (the Rock) have the Holy Spirit poured upon us.

4. His Name – faith in His Name – faith by Him. Acts 3:16.
   Faith received by the hearing of the Word reveals the Godhead, Psalm 138:2 and John 1:1–3.

5. The Crucifixion. Acts 3:17.
   It was a sign of ignorance for many people, but the religious leaders could not claim ignorance, Luke 23:34. Sacrifices were in place for 'sins of ignorance' under the Law Covenant, Numbers 15:22–29, but for the 'sin of presumption', no sacrifice was available; it was Divine Judgement, which was death, Numbers 15:30–31.

   Under the Covenant of Grace, Christ's sacrificial Blood covers the sin of ignorance, 1 John 2:1–2, but the sin of presumption is still unpardonable.

   The greatest presumptive sin is to presume God's Love and Grace, yet to reject His Son's Sacrifice for sin.

6. The prophets foretold Christ's sufferings. Acts 3:18.
   The declaration of many and diverse prophecies, over several thousand years, through many different people, over different generations.
   All fulfilled in one man – Jesus of Nazareth, prove absolute inspiration of writings directed by the Holy Spirit, the total infallibility of the Sacred Scriptures, and the Deity of Jesus as the Son of God.

7. Repentance. Acts 3:19–21.
   To have a change of mind, is to change the direction of a person's life. Seasons of refreshing from the Lord, Isaiah 28:12, just as the early and the latter rains in their appointed seasons.
   The Father will send the Son a Second Time, even as He sent Him the First Time, John 7:28–29; He was the Sent One, John 1:6.

   The Heavens must keep Him until the set time; they received Him, Acts 1:9, until the times of restoration (restitution) of all things, spoken by all the prophets since the world began.

   In its fullest meaning 'The Restoration takes men back to the Glory of Eden's Paradise, when Adam was a true son of God, before sin came in'. The latter glory will be greater through the Second Adam, Jesus Christ.

8. Moses foretold Christ the prophet. Acts 3:22-23. Compare. Deuteronomy 18:15-22.
Note, Christ would 'come from the midst of thy brethren', this foreshadowed the Incarnation of the Virgin, in the Tribe of Judah, and the house of David, like unto Moses. In His Birth and Ministry, we had signs, wonders, miracles, glory, teachings; He fulfilled the Mosaic economy of the Tabernacle Priesthood, the Feasts of Israel, and the Law - moral, ceremonial, and sacrificial.

In Matthew 5:17 we read 'the Law of Moses', but in verses 18, 20, 22, 26, 28, 32, 34, 39, and 44, we read, 'I say unto you'. Israel could not stand the Voice or Glory of God on Mt Sinai. Therefore, God called a man - Moses, Exodus 20:18-21. Moses spake all he was commanded in the Name of Jehovah, note also how Jesus fulfilled this is John 12:49-50.

9. Christ and His Church. Acts 3:24-26.
The many numbered seeds to bless all nations. Continuing into Ch. 4:1-2, we have the Resurrected Jesus. The Signs and Wonders were a declared proof of His Resurrection. God worked in spite of the opposition. It was a great harvest time. It was the fulfilment of the Feast of A Pentecost under the Law, the same Feast was also known as the 'Feast of First-fruits', and with it came five thousand converts, Acts 4:4.

The religious leaders oppose. Acts 4:5-6.

Christ's enemies are mainly religious enemies, and today we still have with us the same enemies,

THEN	NOW
The Priests	The ordained men
The Rulers	The kings, queens, and presidents
The Elders	The Church Councils
The Scribes	The modern translators
Annas and Caiaphas	The Pope and Archbishops
The Sanhedrin	The World Council of Churches

The Sanhedrin, the Great Council of the Jews, consisted of 70 members, and had the High Priest as President; they had the power under Roman

Rule to condemn to death, but could not actually put a person to death.

The Word of God bypassed Annas and Caiaphas under John's ministry, Luke 3:1–6. These High Priests shared in the Trial of Jesus; both condemned Him to death through false witnesses; Caiaphas even condemned himself to death by rending his High Priestly garment, forbidden under the Law, Leviticus 10:6.

The Sadducees did not believe in Angel, Spirit, or Resurrected Life, yet All these are in Acts. These leaders had all had the ministry of John the Baptist as a Prophet; then they had the three and a half years when Jesus had ministered as the Son of God. How far their hearts were from God, for,

1. They had no love of the Truth,
2. They would gladly believe a lie,

They were quite content to reject, and falsely condemn the innocent.

The 'New Move' of the Spirit began outside Judaism because it had degenerated into Fundamentalism, Hypocritical, and worst of all it had Ritualistic and Traditional Ceremonies.

1. <u>The challenge</u>. Acts 4:7.
   'By what power have ye done this? By what name have ye done this?'

   A man, lame from his mother's womb miraculously cured. He walked, he leapt, and he was praising God. The people who saw it praised God. Nevertheless, the religious leaders wanted to know in whose name had the miracle been done, they opposed, as they had before his death and resurrection, the very name, and the authority of that name, Mark 13:9–13.

   The council questioned Peter and John, and they were hated for His Name's sake, but they were not to premeditate on what to say, for the Spirit would give them words to speak in that same hour.
   The Hebrews had a law, Deuteronomy 13:1–4, concerning any prophet that did not do signs to encourage the people to God, but drew people away from Him, they were to be stoned to death after diligent enquiry for the truth.

   The religious leaders however just felt that this Jesus was another God, a false god that this 'sect' was introducing. However, had they followed God's law in Deuteronomy 13; they would have found out

that these people were not drawing people away from God, but they were very much in evidence of bringing people to God through the Name – Jesus of Nazareth.

2. The answer of Peter. Acts 4:8–12.
Peter had been baptised once with the Holy Spirit, And was still getting filled. The healing of the lame man was a good deed, what was wrong with that? The miracle happened by using a man's name, Jesus of Nazareth, and in case they had forgotten, he reminded them 'ye crucified Him' and 'God raised Him'. Now this man stands before you made complete through that Name.

What a stinging conviction was now upon them, the High Priest, the Rulers, and the Sanhedrin.
It was very evident that the miracle came by the power of a Name, for they had asked in 'what Name'. They knew that a Name could only have power if the person whose Name was used was alive, and they also knew that they had that person put to death, and no one could do a miracle like this using a dead person's Name.

This was irrefutable proof that Jesus was alive, well, and kicking, if not on this earth, then somewhere else, but worst of all, He was backing up the use of His Name on earth.
The priests had paid the guards large sums of money from the people's Tithes and Offerings to tell lies about the Resurrection Scene, Matthew 28:11–15, now their lies were coming back to haunt them as well. The Sanhedrin was also aware, that every true Prophet of Jehovah on the Old Testament times did their signs and wonders, prophesying and preaching in the Name of the Lord.
Their use of power in God's Name was their credentials, and here, this sign, this wonder, this preaching was being done in the finished atonement of the Lord Jesus.

3. The rejected stone. Acts 4:11.
The Stone set at nought – made nothing, cp. Genesis 28:18–19 and Mark 12:10. The builders found no place for Him; He was a Stone that they could not fit into their building – their religion.
The rejected Stone was the Anointed Stone; He became the smitten Rock from which the Living Waters flow, Exodus 17:6. He is the Foundation Stone of the Church, Matthew 16:18.
Jesus also alludes to Himself as the Stone after his Exaltation, Psalm 118:22. The Sanhedrin knew the Old Testament Scripture referring to the Stone or Rock was prophetic of the Messiah Himself.

Here Jesus is the fulfilment of all the 'Rock' means in prophecy.

Moses hid in the cleft of the 'Rock' while the Glory of the Lord passed by, and God declared His Name, Exodus 33:18–23. Christ is the declared Rock, and God's Glory now declared in Him.

4. Been with Jesus. Acts 4:13.
Whom have we been with? For we become very much like those with whom we spend most time.

5. Silencing proof. Acts 4:14–18.
Unchallengeable, undeniable proof to the Sanhedrin, they could not deny the miracle, they could not say it was false, for many knew the man.

6. For my Name's sake. Acts 4:17–18.
Cp. Matthew 24:9 and Luke 21:12–19.

True witnesses, Acts 4:19–22.

Must be those who are prepared to stand up and be counted for God; those who have seen and heard; they must obey god first. They cannot be hypocritical leaders who oppose Him.

1. Glorified God. Acts 4:21–22.
Not Peter, not John, they were the vessels used. No 'headlines' in the local papers glorifying man, just plain Scripture fulfilled.

"When the Holy Spirit comes He will glorify Me", John 16:14.

2. Their own company. Acts 4:23.
Where did they go? They went for a celebration.

Early church prayer meetings. Acts 4:24–31.

They joined their own to pray for more boldness, to have more Signs and Wonders, to preach the Word of the Resurrected Christ, despite the opposition. Their prayer based upon the Word as in Psalm 2; was to the Father through the Son and by the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 2:18.

In these verses, the four keys are there for us in the Book of Acts,

The WORD	verse 29	the KEYS of
The NAME	verse 30	the KINGDOM
The Spirit	verse 31	of HEAVEN
The PRAYERS	verse 31	in OPERATION

These four keys are on the one chain; they link together in one operation. In Matthew 16:18-20 Jesus said "Upon this rock (Himself) I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades (Hell) shall not prevail against it ... whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven".

Here in Acts the Lord is adding to His Church, Peter is using the keys to bind and loose, and the gates of Hades are not prevailing. The Lord is working from Heaven with His Church here on earth.
Without these keys, the Church stands powerless, bewildered, and ineffective before a religious and political world. Only these keys in operation make the Church His Church and effective in ministries.

The Keys that Satan took from the Church in the Dark Ages when sin abounded were,
1. He took away the WORD, making it a closed book,
2. He took away the NAME, giving it instead sectarian and denominational names,
3. The Spirit left as the Church turned from obeying and relying on the Spirit for Ministry,
4. PRAYER became a worship of idols, relics, superstition, and rites.

God is restoring these keys to His Church today as she marches forth to conquer. The Spirit, who gives Power to use the Name effectively, must anoint the Word after intercession by the saints.

What the rod was to Aaron and Moses, the Name was to the Early Church.

1. <u>Unity of believers</u>. Acts 4:32.
   See John 17:21-22, Christ's Prayer, 'that they all may be one', as in the unity of the Godhead. It was to be a Divine Unity - not man-made. It was to be,
   1. UNITY of the Spirit
   2. UNITY of the FAITH
   3. UNITY of the BODY.

2. Freewill offerings...at the apostles feet. Acts 4:34–35.
Giving was not compulsory; the Apostles did not command it, it was voluntary, a personal matter of how much you gave. It was money given to the disciples, not the Temple Treasury Mark 12:41. It was the money being brought forward into the New Temple, for use in the New Ministry of the Church; it was laid at the Apostles feet, note the plural. The people had confidence in what was being done with their money, for the Ministry was not out to enrich itself, what a difference to today.

Acts 3 and 4 centres on His Authority and Name, it is the one universal atonement, and there is no other Name or provision in the Old Testament for redemption.
Now Peter was saying the same thing in the New Testament concerning the Name and the Atonement of Jesus.

They commanded them, they threatened them, they were not to preach, or teach, in His Name, and His Name meant His Person, and His Atonement. Satan is very much against the use of that Name – it's a disaster to him, for the Name was not just a theory, doctrine, or theological argument in the Early Church, it was the power backing the Atonement.

The first sin in the early Church. Acts 5:1–11.

The scene now changes. In the middle of all the Glory. In the middle of all the Blessings. In the middle of all that Grace. In the middle of all that Power on the Ministry. Satan was there at work.
What had begun as Divine Blessings closes in Divine Judgement.

So far, satanic opposition had been from the outside, through the religious leaders, now Satan works in a more subtle way, through the inside, through the Members of the Church.
The enemy within is far more dangerous than the one without. Both Ananias and Sapphira were believers. Therefore, let us look at the sin,

What the sin was not. Acts 5:2, 4, and 8,
1. The sin was not in having the possessions,
2. The sin was not in selling the possessions,
3. The sin was not in refusing to give, giving was freewill,
4. The sin was not in giving it all, again that was a personal matter.

What the sin was. Acts 5:1, 2, 3, and 4,

1. The sin was in conspiring to keep back a part,
2. The sin was in letting the thought of Satan conceive in the heart,
3. The sin was in the acting out a lie, giving the wrong impression,
4. The sin was in not keeping a personal vow to give all,
5. The sin was attempting to deceive the Holy Ghost and the ministry.

It was not a sin of ignorance, but of presumption. Judas let Satan put the thought into his heart to betray Christ, John 13:27, the same thought ended in death. Sin, when conceived brings forth death. The process of all sin is,

1. The seed thought of Satan implanted, }
2. Conception of that thought in mind, } James
3. Formation and development, } 1:15
4. Birth, or sin brought forth, }

Now let us look at the progression of steps as the Spirit – through a man – cleansed the Church,

1. <u>The word of knowledge</u>. Acts 5:3–4 and 7–9.
   The Gift of a Word of Knowledge, 1 Corinthians 12:8; the Acts of the Holy Spirit manifested through a person. It is not a Gift of the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit knows all things; He searches the hearts of believers, and knows the thoughts afar off. The knowledge given was the Gift to Peter.

2. <u>The divine judgment</u>. Acts 5:5 and 9–10.
   The first record of Divine Judgement in the Church, the disciplining was not of a man, but was an act of the holy ghost. Peter did not execute the judgement; he was the tool used to deliver God's Verdict. There are some important truths here concerning the Holy Spirit,
   1. They lied unto God, and the Holy Spirit is the third part of the Godhead,
   2. Shows the personality of the Holy Spirit, they tried to tempt a person – the Holy Spirit,
   3. Shows the Omniscience of the Holy Spirit, He sees and hears all things,
   4. Shows the Omnipresence of the Holy Spirit, He is present everywhere,
   5. Shows the Omnipotence of the Holy Spirit; He administered the discipline through the death sentence.

   We see Satan as a liar and deceiver in this passage, the evil spirit working against the Truth – the Holy Spirit, whom we cannot

deceive.

Paul, 1 Timothy 6:9–17 gives a Divine Warning, the love of money. It is the love of money that is evil – not the money itself.

The first sin in Israel, also after great blessings and victories in entering the Promised Land, was also over money – gold and garments; Achan's sin, Joshua 7, which brought defeat to the whole camp until Divinely Judged through the Urim and Thummim, the sentence there was also death.
The first sin in the Early Church is also over money, again after great blessings and victories, again, when Divinely Judged the sentence is death.

Cp. Isaiah 4:4 and 33:14–17, the spirit of judgment and burning. Either sin had to go or the Holy Spirit went.
Had Ananias or Sapphira gone undetected, how much more sin would Satan have brought into the early church? So great was the Power and the purity of the Early Church, that sin – a lie – could not live in the presence of God.
Peter, as opposed to many time clergy was not after money or moneyed people.

When we see the Glory of the former house upon the latter house, sin will not live in his presence, for judgement will begin at the House of the Lord, 1 Peter 4:17.

How much sin goes undetected today? To have a glorious church, without a spot, without a wrinkle, or any such thing, Ephesians 5:26–27, the Holy Spirit will again be manifested as the Spirit of burning, to cleanse, to purify, to sanctify, for God is Love, God is Holy.

3. <u>The result of judgment</u>. Acts 5:5 and 11.
Not a division in the Church, no criticism of the Ministry etc., but a Godly Fear falls upon all – reverential fear – fear to grieve God, or to grieve the Holy Spirit. Fear of falling into the sin of deception, acting a lie, and attempting to deceive one another. It will not be the fear of man or Satan restored to the Church, but the Reverential Fear of God through a Divine Manifestation.

Fear fell outside the Church, upon the outsiders, Revelation 14:7. No man dare to join up, but the numbers increased daily to the Lord,

Acts 2:47.

The growth of the Church. Acts 5:12–42.

1. The power of God, Acts 5:12–16.
   The fear (Awe) of God manifests the Power of God upon the pure Church. The sick healed, unclean spirits driven out, how could the works of Satan, sin, sicknesses, demons, resist the Power of God? Note the word 'overshadowed', Acts 5:15,
   1. The Holy Spirit 'overshadowed' the Virgin Mary in the Supernatural Birth of Jesus – the Word made Flesh,
   2. The Holy Spirit 'overshadowed' the Early Church – the Spiritual Body of Christ, for it was continuing the same Ministry – bringing forth the Word.

2. Religious opposition increases. Acts 5:17–28.
   High Priest and the Council – blind, unrepentant leaders, they did not believe in,
   1. RESURRECTION, but the Tomb of Christ was empty, and many had seen Jesus, and had talked to many,
   2. ANGELS, yet many had seen the two men in white at the time our Lord Ascended into Heaven,
   3. SPIRIT, yet ordinary men were doing many works by the Holy Spirit, and the Book of Acts reveals all three.

   The motive behind the opposition was 'indignation' – self-righteousness, but the Greek word also means 'envy' and/or 'jealousy'. The same people because of envy had caused the crucifixion of Jesus.
   In spite of the miracles, healings, casting out of demons, and the manifestation of the Power of God. The religious leaders rejected the truth that could set them free, John 8:32 and 36.

   The Jewish leadership hated the name Jesus, as every miracle and witness became a conviction to him or her for Crucifying God's Christ. The Disciples, however, made sure 'Who' they meant in their preaching of their doctrine, Acts 5:28.

3. God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey him. Acts 5:32.

Christ, the 'Last Adam', came to restore us back to the obedience from which the 'first Adam' fell.

'By one man's disobedience all were made sinners, and death passed on all men', Romans 5:19.

By Adam's transgression from God's Law, he placed the yoke of being obedient to Satan upon all men. At that point Adam made Satan prince of the earth.

'So by one man's obedience shall many be made righteous, life being passed on all men', Romans 5:19.
Christ kept God's Law, opening the Way for man to come back to God, for through, and by the Cross, He broke the yoke of Satan on man.

Conviction and a word of wisdom. Acts 5:33-42.

The Word is a two-edged sword and cuts to the heart, Hebrews 4:12-13. Religious, disobedient hypocrites, exposed to the truth, sought to kill Jesus, John 8:40, and killed Him, John 19:17-18. Here the same rulers seek to kill the Apostles because of the same word, however, God has a witness for Himself right there in the midst of the Sanhedrin, Gamaliel, who feared not to speak in defence of the truth.

1. A word of wisdom. Acts 5:34-39.
   Gamaliel, at whose feet Saul had trained as a Pharisee, Acts 22:3, speaks a word of warning and wisdom to the Council. Pharisees - Separatist.

   Gamaliel, and Saul, were both doctors of the Law, and as such had a reputation with the people. Contrast the two cases Gamaliel cites,

Verses 30-31	Verses 36-38
Jesus of Nazareth, born in the days of taxation, rose from the dead, and many follow Him. His Disciples obey Him, they multiply, and many leave the Temple. The Holy Spirit comes to the obedient, and believers were added daily to the Church. IF IT BE OF GOD, YE CANNOT OVERTHROW IT, LEST YE BE FOUND TO FIGHT AGAINST GOD.	Theudas, boasts himself to be somebody. About 400 men join themselves to him. They slew him, and all who followed him were scattered and brought to nought. Judases of Galilee rose in the days of taxation drawing many people after him, and then perished. As many as obeyed him was dispersed. IF THIS COUNSEL OR WORK BE OF MEN, IT WILL COME TO NOUGHT.

Peter and John have been 'with Jesus', and are not drawing the people unto them. The Gospels, and Acts, reveal how the religious leaders were fighting against God, as revealed in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Is it different today? The answer is No.

Sadly, Church History reveals that the religious leaders of the day have opposed each 'New Move' by the Spirit, because God has used man to be his voice. God used John, Peter, and Paul, and through the years, Luther, Wesley, Finney, Calvin, and many others. Since the Book of Acts has not closed, yet God will call many others, who the religious leaders of that day will fight.
Gamaliel's attitude should be that of every believer,

1. Movements of man, maintained and energised by man, all collapse in due course,
2. False religious movements maintain existence because a false spirit has inspired and energised them by a false spirit, e.g. doctrines of devils and Satan himself,
3. The Spirit of GOD maintains and energises the true Church of Jesus Christ.

2. Disciples beaten. Acts 5:40.
In Acts 4:17-18 the Jewish leadership banned the disciples from preaching the Word; here they are beaten and flogged, for what? Teaching the Name and Ministry of Jesus.

3. They departed rejoicing. Acts 5:41.
In spite of the flogging, they rejoiced that they were worthy 'to suffer shame for the Name'. The Holy Spirit, in that hour, had given them the words to speak for a testimony against - not to them.

4. They continued. Acts 5:42.
What did they continue? Apostolic Preaching; the preaching that will bring signs and wonders, followed by Apostolic persecution, and results.

The appointment of Deacons. Acts 6:1-6.

The office of Deacon essentially means 'one called to serve, to be an attendant'. Note the following; they served the Church and the Apostles,

The Lord Jesus. Mark 10:45.
"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and

give His Life a ransom for many".

The 12 Apostles.
They acted as Deacons also, and learnt to be servants of all, in the spirit of Christ,

Timothy. Acts 16:1-3.
Served as a Deacon to Paul,

Tychicus. Ephesians 6:21-22.
Also served as a Deacon to Paul,

Epaphras. Colossians 1:7-8.
Served with Timothy to Paul,

Erastus. Acts 19:21-22.
Served with Timothy to Paul,

Onesipherus. 2 Timothy 1:16-18.
Also acted as a Deacon to Paul.

Therefore, the Ministry of a Deacon will be Christ re-living His Life and Ministry in, and through, that person as a servant.

It is quite evident from the Book of Acts and the Epistles that most of the ministries first proved themselves, and served as Deacons in the local Church. Ministering and distributing the freewill offerings to the needy, poor, thus these Deacons served the Ministry and the Church as serving the Lord.
They travelled, at times with the Apostles, from Church to Church, taking with them messages and reports of the Ministries etc.

The Elders and Deacons work together in the local Church, Philippians 1:1,

1. Elders were chosen by the Apostles,
   Deacons were chosen by the people.

2. Elders were chosen to rule,
   Deacons were chosen to serve.

Note, of the seven men chosen, Stephen is the first named, he is also the first Martyr of the Church, and his testimony is given in Ch. 7. Philip

the Evangelist, his testimony is in Ch. 8.
Both these men proved themselves in the Early Church.

How the deacons were chosen. Acts 6:1–2.

1. By the suggestion of the Apostles, it was still unity in the Ministry, but they required these men to cover the evident needs.
   The Deacons were chosen after they called the Church together to look – through the Holy Spirit – for men to serve at the tables.
2. Nominated by the people, Acts 6:3 and 5; there were seven men of an honest report, and full of the Holy Spirit, both in the Ministry and the assembly.

Why were the deacons were chosen. Acts 6:2.
The Law provided for the poor and needy, but in the Early Church they were neglected in the Daily Ministrations of the freewill offerings, for the Apostles, rightly so, were preaching the Word of God.
The Book of Numbers also records several cases of murmuring, and the Divine Discipline in each case, e.g. 11:1–3; 13:33; 14:2; 16:1–11; 17:5–10; 20:2–5; and 21:4–5.

The qualifications of deacons. Acts 6:3.
Acts 6:3 is an abridged version of 1 Timothy 3:8–13, where there are 16 qualifications listed.

1. A man from among you – must be a believer, not an outsider,
2. Of honest report – good character both inside and outside the Assembly,
3. Full of the Holy Spirit, not only Baptised in the Spirit, but filled with the spirit,
4. Full of wisdom,
5. Must be grave – reverent and sincere in the spirit,
6. Not double tongued, not double minded,
7. Not given to much wine, not drunkard or given to excess,
8. Not greedy for money,
9. Holding the Mystery of the Faith, a clear conscience,
10. Must be proven,
11. Must be above reproach,
12. Deacons' wives must be grave also,
13. Not slanderers,
14. Sober, self–controlled,
15. Faithful in all things,
16. The Office of Deacon is 'purchasing a good degree',

These qualifications are nearly the same as for a Bishop, 1 Timothy 3:1–7.

The ministry of a deaconess.
The Scriptures also reveal that God may give certain women the Office of Deaconess, perhaps the most notable of those being Mary, Martha, and Mary Magdalene, as all Ministered unto Jesus.

Increase and multiplication. Acts 6:7.

1. The Word of God increases – the Risen Lord, John 1:1–3, inspires the Word,
2. Disciples multiply greatly,
3. A great company of Priests become obedient to the Word. Great victory as the Priests realise that the Aaronic Priesthood is finished in God's Mind by the Testimony of the Rent Veil, that the Law Covenant had been surpassed by Jesus.

   A New Temple, a New Priesthood of believers, a New Covenant and Sacrifice, a New Heavenly High Priest at God's Right hand had come into effect.

Stephen's ministry. Acts 6:8–7:60.

He was full of Faith and Power, enabling him to manifest great Wonders and Miracles. Synagogues oppose the truth, just as Jesus had foretold, John 16:1–2, yet they could not resist the Wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke. The Holy Spirit speaking through Stephen, even as He had through the Lord.

False witnesses testify against Stephen, even as they had against Jesus, and accused of blaspheming the Temple, the Law, and Moses, yet all pointed to Christ Himself; the leaders who missed the Person to whom the Law and Moses pointed.

1. His life and ministry. Acts 6:8–15.
   1. Stephen as a Deacon, a servant of all, Acts 6:5,
   2. Chosen from among the people, Acts 6:3,
   3. Of honest report, full of the Spirit and Wisdom, Acts 6:3,
   4. Did great miracles and wonders among the people, Acts 6:8,
   5. Full of Faith and the Holy Spirit, Acts 6:5 and 8,
   6. Opposed by the Synagogue, Acts 6:9,
   7. They were unable to resist the Spirit of God in him, Acts 6:10
   8. The Sanhedrin charged him with blasphemy against Moses, the Law, and Temple customs, Acts 6:11 and 14,
   9. False witnesses testify against him, Acts 6:13,
   10. His face shone as an angel with the Glory of God, Acts 6:15.

2. In his trial before the Sanhedrin, and his death. Acts 7:54–60,
    1. His hearers, cut to the heart, gnash on him, Acts 7:54,
    2. He saw the Heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father, Acts 7:58. Jesus ascended, Jesus glorified.
    3. The Son of Man, the Heavenly Priest, the Glorified Humanity of Christ,
    4. He cried with a loud voice, they stopped their ears, Acts 7:57
    5. They cast him out of the city and stoned him, Acts 7:58,
    6. He committed his spirit to the Lord, Acts 7:59,
    7. He prayed for his enemies, Acts 7:60,
    8. He fell asleep, Acts 7:60.

Stephen's message.

It is significant that Stephen never mentions the Name of Jesus in his testimony, yet the whole message reveals Christ in his ministry, rejection, humiliation and exaltation to the Father's Right hand.

The Holy Spirit brought the application of the message to the hearts of the Council in conviction power. Their hearts becoming harder as they realised who was portrayed in each of the following examples, as Stephen brought them through a Historical Survey of the Chosen Nation.

1. It may be considered Nationally, Prophetically, Typically, Personally, and Dispensationally.
    1. In Stephen's speech, there is absolute Divine Order and Divine Pattern of Truth – progressively unveiled in this chapter. There are two key truths and they are summarised as follows,
    2. Each place or persons referred to are remarkable type of Christ,
    3. Each person experienced, in their life, the pattern that Christ did,
    4. Each was called, and sent by God,
    5. Their brethren rejected each the first time,
    6. Each was exalted of God, and accepted the second time,
    7. All reveal the failure of the Chosen nation to hear God through His Sent One,
    8. Each one is prophetical of Christ,
    9. The key verse must be Acts 7:13, 'And at the second time...' made known to his brethren,
        a. First time it was rejection, humiliation, spiritual blindness.
        b. Second time it will be exaltation, glorification, spiritual

deafness gone.

The glory of God – in the beginning God.

Only one Nation ever had the visible manifestation of the Shekinah Glory – Israel.

The illustrations in the message. Acts 7:2–53.

Abraham, Acts 7:2–7.
God first called Abraham in Genesis 11:13, but Abraham did not fully answer until the second call when his father died.
Abraham, a type of God the Father, the one who was willing to offer his only begotten son. Isaac became a type of God's Son to be slain.
It is interesting to note that God called a second time from Heaven at this sacrifice, Genesis 22:11 ff. Each time it is the second person of the triune Godhead.

The 12 Sons of Israel. Acts 7:8.
Each son had a Tribe named after him, bearing a Prophetical Name and a Prophetical Truth.

Joseph. Acts 7:9–19.
His father sent him to his brethren, rejected by them, and then sold for silver to the Gentiles. Elevated to a throne and given a name above all. His brethren accepted him the second time. All bow their knee before him.

Moses. Acts 7:20–38.
A type of Christ, he became Prophet Deliverer. At the time of his birth, all male children killed, and his brethren rejected him.
Accepted the second time and declares the Name 'I AM' in signs etc. The Law Covenant, the Tabernacle, and the Shekinah Glory are all associated with Moses. Note the 3 x 40, verses 23, 30, and 36.

The Church in the Wilderness. Acts 7:38–39.
The called out company, The Tabernacle, the Priesthood, the Sacrifice, and the Worship, all pointed to a type of New Testament Church on an earthly pilgrimage.

Aaron. Acts 7:40–43.
A type of Christ, he was rejected as God's Ordained High Priest by the rebellious Israelites. Exalted and accepted the second time along with his sons to the Priesthood.

Tabernacle of Witness. Acts 7:44.
A type of Christ, Christ, the True Tabernacle of Witness of His Father, in whom was God's Name, Glory, Habitation, and Voice. Speaking through Him, He became the mercy Seat, Numbers 7:89.

Joshua and Canaan Rest. Acts 7:45
Type of Christ, the Leader to the True Promised Rest, Joshua 5:2. Joshua (Jesus) brings messages of God's Promised Rest to Israel, is rejected, humiliated, and threatened with stoning, Numbers 13:16-14:10.

After 40 years, he is exalted of God as leader into Cana, after circumcision of the second generation. Accepted by the people the second time.

David, the King. Acts 7:45-46.
A type of Christ, Kingship, the Shepherd King; first a shepherd, second a king. Anointed in the midst of his brethren, he experienced rejection, humiliation, and suffering at the hand of Saul - the Lords anointed. Exalted to the throne and accepted by all the second time. A faithful army gathered unto him in his time of rejection, 1 Samuel 22:1-2. Israel's second king.

Solomon, the King. Acts 7:47-50.
A type of Christ, he built the Temple, by the Spirit. He was the son of David, a man of peace and wisdom; he used materials prepared by David before his death. Building by the Wisdom of God, he is richly Prophetic of Christ and the Church. The second veil rent at Calvary of the rebuilt Temple, the second Temple.

The Holy Spirit. Acts 7:51.
Under the Covenant of Circumcision, yet uncircumcised in heart. Rejected the Father and the Son (Second Person), and now rejecting the Holy Spirit.

The prophets, law, and angels. Acts 7:52-53.
All prophets were types of Christ, rejected, and humiliated, both by brethren and own Nation.

The First Tables of the Law were broken. The Second set kept in the Ark. Christ came to the Chosen Nation - His Own, was rejected and Crucified by them; but God exalted Him to His Throne, and He will return a second time, as king of kings.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

Persecution scatters the word. Acts 8:1–4.

The risk involved in centralisation. Persecution did not destroy the Word as the rulers had hoped, but instead scattered it – to a wider field, the world. Stephen's death, just like an ear of corn when it dies, caused a multiplication; a great harvest comes to birth through his death. Word of the Early Church was GO not COME.

Philip's ministry. Acts 8:5–40.

The Lord Jesus is the Supreme Evangelist – the Father's Herald, who announced the Good News of Salvation and Redemption, Luke 4:18.

To Samaria. Acts 8:5–8.

Note these Scriptures, Matthew 10:5; Luke 10:33; John 4:1–42 and 8:48. Though forbidden to go to Samaria before the Crucifixion, it is, in Acts 1:8, listed for a Godly Visitation, however, it is not until after the Ascension and Pentecost that the first visit takes place.

Philip, in Samaria, now preaches and proves the Power of the Kingdom in the Name, where there is great joy as they receive the WORD, and enter the Kingdom via the new Birth.
Philip preached the Good News, healed the sick, freed the possessed, and baptised others.

Simon the sorcerer. Acts 8:9–11 and 13.

The first recorded contact between Christianity and Spiritism.

1. A sorcerer practised magic arts. He was an enchanter with drugs, an observer of clouds, and practised witchcraft.
2. A magician practised divination, foretelling future events, and revealing secret things by supernatural means, all done with aid of evil spirits.

The whole city was in bondage to sin sickness, diseases, and demon power – through the witch doctor.

Contrast Philip the Evangelist with Simon the sorcerer,

1. Philip preaches Christ, setting men free from sin, sickness, demons etc., the Kingdom and Power of God's Name,
2. Simon preached himself, holding people in bondage to iniquity and

demons, the Kingdom and the Power of Satan.
The kingdoms at war,
1. Philip, full of the Holy Spirit,
2. Simon filled with evil spirits.

Peter and John, Apostolic Ministry. Acts 8:14-25.

Co-operation and recognition between the ministries. The Samaritans at first refused to receive the Apostles, but now the Holy Spirit is ministering to them; He supplied the Ministry that Philip lacked. He brought to manifestation the secrets of Simon's heart and exposed Himself under the right conditions.

Why did Simon want this Power? Why did he not want the Power as seen under Philip's Ministry? Evidently, some audible and visible sign was manifested from the laying on of hands, the Samaritans showing signs of receiving the Spirit. Simon's experience therefore was an external and not an internal experience.

Philip, personal ministry. Acts 8:26-40.

In the midst of a great revival around him, God transported Philip to a desert place for just one hungry soul, an Ethiopian from the line of Ham, Genesis 9:25. He is a man of authority and hungry for God: in Jerusalem, he had found ritualism, form, ceremony, tradition, and deadness, unbelief, and Temple corruption.

The Spirit, working from two ends brought the answer, working through the Word. The Evangelist only had one word - JESUS, and he preached it, the Life, the Death, the Resurrection, the Ascension. Now the first baptised believer in Africa.

Philip was in Samaria, he ran to the desert, was caught up and found in Azotus.

'Philip was the right man, in the right place, at the right time, saying the right thing, to the right person'.

Saul of Tarsus who became Paul the Apostle

Who was Saul? He was -
1. Circumcised on the eighth day, the Covenant of circumcision,
2. Of the stock of Israel,

3. Of the Tribe of Benjamin,
4. A Hebrew of the Hebrews,
5. A Pharisee,
6. Persecuting the Church to uphold the Synagogue,
7. Blameless in the righteousness of the Law,
8. A tent maker,
9. A Roman citizen.

1. Christians – people of the way. Acts 9:2.
The Lord Jesus is the Way, the Life, and the Truth, John 14:6. The way is a Person. Jesus is the Way. All other ways lead to destruction. He is the NEW and LIVING WAY, Hebrews 10:20; He became the WAY through His Death at Calvary.

The rent veil is God's Seal to us that the WAY is now open to His Eternal Presence, through the Atonement of the Lamb of God. This then is the glorious Truth involved in those of 'The WAY'. Judaism carried on in the Temple declaring that the WAY was not open. Yet God had testified to His Son's Sacrifice by the rent veil, and the only WAY to God is through Jesus Christ the Son.

For fifteen hundred years, the way to God remained closed, the veil testified to this: none dare go past the veil, except the Priest on the Day of Atonement, and He had to be cleansed by blood.

The sword and the Cherubim, Genesis 3:22–24, barred the WAY to the Tree of Life.
The veil and the Cherubim, Exodus 26:31–33, barred the WAY to the Holiest of all.

The New Way made open by the Godhead in the Atonement of Calvary – the new Temple – the New Priesthood – the Body and Blood of the Slain Lamb.

They knew early Church Christians as 'The Way', Acts 9:2, 18:26, 19:9 and 23, 22:4, 24:11, and 22, and 26:13.

2. Saul apprehended of Christ. Acts 9:3–9.
At midday the Light from Heaven was greater than the brightness of the sun; the Glory of the Risen Christ; the Glory of the Father on His Son.

Saul heard a voice, all those with him heard the voice, but, it was only Saul who heard and understood; those with him saw the Light, but it was Only Saul who knew that that light was the Lord.

"Why persecutest thou me?" Saul may well have persecuted Christ during His Earthly Ministry, but now was persecuting the Church, and that is exactly what the voice was referring to, for Saul was persecuting Christ in His Church –through the body members; thus the mystical union of Christ and His Church is revealed here.

"Who art thou Lord?" Saul realised that it was a Divine Visitation, but believed it to be God the Father, Jehovah of the Old Testament. Saul had sat at the feet of Gamaliel, Acts 22:3, and had learnt the Law and the Prophets; he knew that Jehovah had called twice to Abraham, Moses, and Samuel.
Therefore, Saul had called the voice 'Lord', the Lord of Deuteronomy 6:4. There was only one thing wrong, it was not the voice of the Father on a Divine Visitation, it was the voice of the Son.
The flash of understanding that would come with the next statement would make any man shudder in his boots, for the voice now said, "I AM (the same I AM of Exodus 3:14) Jesus whom thou persecutest".

Saul at this point would have remembered Stephen, for he had been instrumental in that killing. This was the one, the despised, the hated, Crucified Nazarene, who the religious leaders thought they had got rid of, was right now talking to one of the religious leaders as the Risen, Ascended, Glorified Christ, the Son of God. Jesus was all that he claimed to be, the Incarnate Son of God, Deity made Flesh, the Messiah of God. Crucified by man – resurrected by God.

"What would thou have me do Lord?" Saul now submitted to the Lord Jesus –even as he would unto God. Saul, to obey Jesus, had to submit to a Member of the Body of Christ, Ananias, by entering the city where the Lord confirmed His Will to Saul through a Member of the Body.

3. <u>Blinded eyes</u>. Acts 9:8.
The Glory of the Light blinded Saul's eyes; it was symbolic of the Spiritual Blindness of the heart of the Jew. It spoke of the Spiritual Blindness of Judaism, and understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures.

There was a literal, and Spiritual awakening as the scales fell away from his eyes,

1. He saw Jesus as the Christ,
2. He also saw fulfilment of the Law and Prophets in the Old Testament. What a contrast to the Saul who had set out from Jerusalem. Saul did enter Damascus, but not as the proud murderous, zealous Pharisee, but as a led, submissive, silent Christian.

The disciple Ananias. Acts 9:10–18.

As the Lord prepared both Philip and the Ethiopian, working from both ends, so also here, Ananias and Saul as both are prepared by visions from the same Lord.

1. Apostolic Ministry. Acts 9:15–18.
   1. Before Gentiles }
   2. Before Kings } Acts 13–28
   3. Before the Children of Israel }

   How comforting it must have been to Saul, as in Acts 9:17, he heard Ananias say, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus..." the confirmation of the Damascus Call. Therefore, we see Saul converted, healed of his blindness, baptised in Water, and filled with the Spirit.

2. Saul at Damascus certain days. Acts 9:19–22.
   At Damascus, Saul, using the Old Testament prophecies, preached that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, not just the Son of Man. His Virgin Birth, Sinlessness, and Deity personified Him as the Son of God in the flesh.

   Turning to Galatians 1:17, it explains the 'many days' of Acts 9:23, for at this time Saul went into Arabia. Galatians 1:18 tells us that he did not go up to Jerusalem for three years, at which time he only saw Peter and James, and abode in Jerusalem for fifteen days.

Saul in Jerusalem. Acts 9:26–29.

Saul, quite understandably, was not well received in Jerusalem by the Disciples, but Barnabas, who must have seen some of Saul's work, took him to the Apostles and spoke well of him. Saul spent much of his time going in and out of Jerusalem with the Apostles.

We also see the little spark at the beginning now becoming quite a flame, for Saul disputed so much with the Grecians 'that they went about to slay him'.

Saul returns to Damascus. Acts 9:30–31.

Tarsus was the capital of the Province of Cilicia from AD 72. The city stood in a plain some 10 miles inland, and a little above sea level. During the last century BC, the city was the home of a university where Greek thought coloured the intellect.

At this point let us consider what may be a unique parallel between the Old and New Testaments. Jacob, later renamed Israel by God, when pronouncing either a blessing or curse on his sons, Genesis 49, includes the sons of Joseph, giving a total of fourteen.

Of Dan, Jacob said, "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord", Genesis 49:16–18.

The city named after him – now known as Tell el-Kadi (Mound of the judge) – was the city in which Jeroboam set up the gold calf.

While Reuben lost his birthright, Genesis 35:22, John, in the Book of Revelation, 7:1–8 does not list Dan, thereby reducing the Tribes of Israel to thirteen. See notes 8–12 below.

Saul, later known as Paul, holds an exclusive position among the Apostles, and it is possible that his name will be in the foundations of the Holy City, Revelation 21:14.

1. The disciples chose Matthias by lot under the prayer of the eleven to replace the fallen Judas, Acts 1.
   The Lord chose Saul, direct from Heaven, in a vision, and by a voice, Acts 9.

2. The choice between Saul and Matthias as the twelfth Apostle to replace Judas, is foreshadowed in the Old Testament type,
   a. Matthias is recognised,
   b. Before Pentecost, Acts 1:26
   c. After Pentecost, Acts 2:14 and 6:2
   d. By Paul himself, 1 Corinthians 15:5.

Saul is seen as the 13th Apostle, holding a unique place in the Ministry of the Early Church, however. The following suggests that Saul will have his name in the foundations of the Holy City.

3. Type and prophecy – the New Testament fulfilment,
   a. God revealed to Natural Israel,
      God revealed to spiritual Israel,

   b. The Church in the Wilderness,
      The church of the firstborn,

4. The Lord God of your fathers, Exodus 3:15–16,
   Abraham,
   Isaac,
   Jacob,
   In the name of, 1 John 5:7,
   The Father
   The Son
   The Holy Spirit,

5. The 12 sons of Israel, Genesis 49,
   The 12 apostles, Matthew 10:1–4,

6. The 70 souls of Jacobs house, Genesis 46:27,
   The 70 sent forth, Luke 10:1,

7. The innumerable host of natural Israel, Genesis 22:17,
   The innumerable host of the redeemed, Revelation 7:9,

8. Reuben, one of Jacobs 12 sons sinned, lost, and forfeited his birthright, Genesis 35:22,
   Judas, one apostle sinned, fell, and lost his bishopric, Acts 1:16–20,

9. Jacob adopted two sons of Joseph, Manasseh – the elder – to become a great people: and Ephraim – the younger – to become a multitude of Nations, Genesis 48:19,
   The New Testament adopts two apostles, Matthias – chosen by lot: and Paul – chosen by the Lord – who becomes the apostle to the Gentiles, a multitude of nations, Acts 9:1–15,

10. Ephraim is set before Manasseh and receives a double portion of

blessing, Genesis 48:22,

Paul is set before Matthias on Acts, and receives a double portion of the spirit,

11. Ephraim's name is listed among the 12 Tribes,
Paul's name listed among the 12 apostles.

The very people Saul had been trying to kill three years earlier now help him to escape, and taking him down to Cæsarea, they sent him forth to Tarsus.

At this time the Churches in Judæa, Galilee, and Samaria had rest, Satan was on the defensive, the Holy Spirit was on the Move.

Saul, in his ministry is a prophetic 'pattern of the Last Day Apostles', the men who will lead the Church to perfection.

Compare Paul and Moses,

Moses	Paul
Revelation and pattern given to him of the Church in the Wilderness, he was given the Law Covenant, he was given the Aaronic Priesthood, and was given it on Mt Sinai.	Revelation and pattern given to him of the Church – the Body of Christ; the New Covenant, the Priesthood of Arabia, and all believers and given it in the same Arabian Desert.

Compare the two Sauls,
1. Both came from the Tribe of Benjamin,
2. Both had signs and wonders by the Spirit of God,
3. Both began with a 3-day and 3-night experience.

Saul the 'destroyer' now becomes Paul the 'worker'. The change in name meant a change in nature,
1. The 'old man' – the 'old nature',
2. The 'new man' – the 'new nature',

The Divine Nature of Jesus Christ.

Peter left Jerusalem at about the same time as Paul, Acts 9:32-35, but it is unlikely that they took the same road.

<u>Saints</u>. Acts 9:32.
Literally meaning 'Holy Ones', set apart, separate ones. All believers

called Saints, nothing more, nothing less.

Healing. Acts 9:33-35.

The Ministry of Healing – the Power of the Name gives further proof of the Risen Christ, confirming His Word with signs and Wonders. The result, two cities 'turn to the Lord'; they turned from Satan and his wickedness.

Peter, ministry at Joppa. Acts 9:36-43.

The Power of the resurrection life, the first record of an Apostle raising the dead, Matthew 10:8. The Disciples, not having the Power themselves sent for Peter the Apostle, the Power of resurrected life against death. Dorcas, who had the ministry of a Disciple, was known for her charitable works.

Peter put forth all, just as Jesus had, Matthew 9:25, before kneeling and praying to seek God's Will, before he spoke the word of faith, even as Elijah, 1 Kings 17:19; and Elisha 2 Kings 4:33.

The Gift of Miracles, many believed in the Lord, but not all. Every healing and miracle in Acts was a powerful demonstration or the reality of the Resurrected Christ – Jesus of Nazareth – the ascended Son of God. The resurrection of Dorcas here, and the resurrection of Lazarus by Jesus brings forth the same reactions, some believe.

Chapters 10 and 11.

In chapter 10, the Door of Faith is opened to the Gentiles, thereby beginning the fourth step as commanded by Jesus.

The Gospel to Jerusalem	the Church among the Jews
The Gospel to Judæa	Transition from Jew
The Gospel to Samaria	to Gentile,
The Gospel to the Utmost parts	the Gentile Church.

It is, therefore, necessary to note some brief facts concerning God's Plan, and Purpose, regarding to the Gentile Nations.
Acts 10 and 11 bring about a complete departure from all that has been. Jesus, by the Holy Spirit brings the Gentiles into 'the Mystery of the Body of Christ', which, before the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord had been a Body for the Jews only.

Since the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension, it has been a body for both Jew and Gentile.

Genesis 10:1–5 gives the first use of the term Gentile, and at the Tower of Babel we have the origin of all Nations, From the call of Abraham through to the First Advent of Jesus, God had dealt specifically with the Chosen Race – the Hebrews, to this Chosen Nation was entrusted,

1. The Sacred writings,
2. The Promise and the Covenants,
3. The Giving of the Law and Glory,
4. The Seed Race, through whom Christ would be born.

In spite of these entire God given advantages and privileges, the Chosen Nation was a failure, and became more corrupt than the Gentile Nations around her. Thus, Jesus came to His Own, and they received Him not, John 1:11.

Note also that the Ministry of Christ and the Apostles before the Cross was to be 'to the lost sheep of Israel'. , Jesus did not allow the 70 disciples to go into any city of the Gentiles, Matthew 10:5 and 8.
At odd times, the Gentiles did receive Blessings from Jesus, reaching over into the forthcoming Dispensation of Grace, which shamed the Chosen Nation, Luke 7:1–10 and John 4. These were the shadows of the coming Blessings, responses and Faith of the Gentiles after the rejection of Jesus by the Jewry.

In the Age of the Law, that time before the Birth of Jesus, there had been Blessings given in the Old Testament,

1. The city of Nineveh under the prophet Jonah,
2. Daniel in Babylon,
3. Joseph in Egypt,
4. Elijah and Elisha both ministered unto Gentiles,
5. Ruth,
6. Rahab,
7. Other Gentiles who were Circumcised and kept the Law.

The Old Testament Prophets had also foretold the day Coming in which the Gentiles would be blessed,

1. "In thy seed shall all NATIONS be blessed ..." Genesis 22:18,
2. To it shall the Gentiles seek..., Isaiah 11:10
3. And thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles..., Isaiah 54:3. With the help of a concordance, finding many other Scriptures is possible.

The New Testament also preached Gentile Blessings,
1. And in His Name shall the Gentiles trust, Matthew 12:18-21,
2. Preach the Gospel to every creature...Go ye into all the world...make ye disciples of all Nations, Matthew 28:18-19 and Mark 16:17-20,
3. A Light to lighten the Gentiles, Luke 2:32.

In Acts 10 and 11, prophecies start to become a fact on the Gentiles.

Peter the Apostle, does not, yet, realise or understand the Full Plan of God to include the Gentiles.
Peter is the Apostle to the Jews; Paul is the Apostle to the Gentiles. What then, is Peter doing here? Peter is preparing for Paul, the Apostle chosen by the Head of the Church for the Gentiles, Acts 9.

Acts 10 shows the door opened to the Gentiles through Peter, who then allowed the Ministry to pass to Paul.
1. Jesus gave Peter the keys of the Kingdom, Matthew 16:19,
2. Peter uses the keys of the Kingdom to open the Door to the Jews, Acts 2,
3. Peter again uses the keys of the Kingdom, this time to open the Door to the Gentiles, Acts 10.

Now consider Peter's ministry in opening the Door to Cornelius,
1. He was a Gentile,
2. He was a Centurion,
3. He was a devout man,
4. He was a proselyte of the Hebrew religion and faith,
5. He feared God with his house,
6. He gave much alms,
7. He prayed to God always.

<u>The visions, Peter's journey and preaching</u>. Acts 10:1-48.

1. <u>The vision to Cornelius</u>. Acts 10:1-8.
   God again works on both ends, upon Cornelius and Peter, in two separate visions. In the vision to Cornelius, the angel gave him all the facts for full OBEDIENCE.
   1. The Apostles name,
   2. His lodging place,
   3. The city,
   4. Peter's hosts occupation.

However, the angel did not minister the Word of Salvation unto Cornelius, for angels are but ministering spirits sent unto them who are the Heirs of Salvation. God required Peter, a man, not an angel, to speak the Word of Salvation, and Cornelius was immediately obedient.

2. The apostles vision. Acts 10:9–20.
The vision of the sheet has two distinct aspects,
1. The four corners of the earth – it was to be worldwide,
2. The clean and unclean beasts represented the mixing of Jew and Gentile in the Kingdom.

It was lowered three times – the perfect testimony of God; the common or unclean were about to be cleansed by God.

The revelation here went far deeper than the Ceremonial Law of meats did, Leviticus 11.
Animals.
Ox, bull, cow, heifer, calf, ram, ewe, lamb, he goat, she goat, kid, buck, doe, fawn, moose, elk, reindeer, antelope, gazelle, wild goats, wild ox, buffalo.

Birds.
Cocks, chickens, cranes, doves, ostrich, partridge, quail, sparrow, and turtle doves.

Creeping fowls.
Locust, beetle, grasshopper.

There is no point at looking at fish, for there would have been none in the sheet, however, it was the above animals that Peter was looking at.
The use of animals and birds is very significant, for today many Nations – both Jew and Gentile – are symbolised by both birds and animals.

Note Acts 10:19, the Spirit said, "I have sent them", the work of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling the Word of the Son, the Spirit and the Word working together as one.

Peter goes to Cæsarea. Acts 10:21–23.

Cæsarea, built between 25 and 13 BC, is on the coast of the Mediterranean about 25 miles NW of Samaria.
Herod intended it as a port for his capital, and they built a splendid harbour using great stone blocks to top the reef.

It was the home of Philip the Evangelist, who also entertained Paul and Luke there on the return leg of their third tour.
The Jewish war, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem, started with a riot in Cæsarea. In Church History it is also the birthplace of Eusebius.

The Spirit brought in,
1. Jews,
2. The Ethiopian,
3. The Samaritans,
4. Now other Gentiles,

Baptising them all into one body.

Peter the Jew (clean) under the same roof as Cornelius the Gentile (unclean).
Peter refuses the worship of Cornelius – for both were but men. However, the Holy Spirit has caused Luke to make two profound statements in one verse,
1. Acts 10:30, the four days – typical of the four thousand years from Adam to Christ. Then the Word of the Lord came to the Gentiles.
2. Acts 10:30, about the ninth hour, the evening sacrifice, cp. Matthew 27:46, at about the ninth hour, the Sacrifice and Atonement of Christ.

1. <u>Peter's sermon to the Gentiles</u>. Acts 10:34–43.
   Peter perceives that God is above all Nations, and looks upon the heart of men; racial, religious, and social prejudices are all removed by this fact.

   God does not respect a person, his face, his origin, Jew or Gentile,
   1. Pride of race }
   2. Pride of face } All cease to exist
   3. Pride of place } in the Body of Christ
   4. Pride of grace }

   The ministry of the Word covers Baptism, Ministry, Death, Burial, and the Resurrection of Jesus; it was a complete fulfilment of what the Prophets had said.

Note in Acts 10:38, the 'Godhead', God, the Father, anointed Jesus, the Son, with the Holy Spirit, the Third Person.

There is now utter dependence on the Holy Spirit to make Christ real to men – the remission of sins through, and believing upon, His Name.

2. The sovereign outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles. Acts 10:44–48.
Cp. Joel 2:28, "I will pour out my Spirit, in the Last Days on all flesh". The Holy Spirit had only been poured out on the select ones in the Hebrew Nation in Old Testament days.
There are two sovereign outpourings of the Holy Spirit – Acts 2:4 and 10:44 – the first on the Jews, and the second on the Gentiles. All others were through the Ministries of the Church, by the 'laying on of hands'.

God Baptised with the Spirit, man baptised with water; how then could Peter refuse them Baptism in water when God had already baptised them in the Spirit? For one was the pointer to, and completion of the other, Matthew 3:11.

Acts 10 is the New Testament revelation and fulfilment of the type found in Genesis 6–7,

1. Noah – preacher of Righteousness,
   Peter – preacher of Righteousness;

2. The three storied Ark
   The Triune God, yet One God of Salvation;

3. The Triune Ark,
   The Triune Name;

4. The seven each clean animals taken out,
   The House of Israel and Judah;

5. The 2 each unclean animal taken out,
   The Gentiles taken out;

6. The Word of Preaching,
   The Word of the Gospels;

7. The Holy Spirit striving and moving,
   The Holy Spirit moving and falling on men;

8. The animals all one in the Ark – unity,
   The Jew and the Gentile all one in Christ;

9. all enter by the Door,
   The Door of Faith into Christ;

10. Subdued natures – food for all,
    The Divine Nature – Spiritual Food;

11. No animals die in the Ark,
    All men can live in Christ;

12. The end of all ungodly flesh,
    The end of the fleshly life of sin;

13. The Flood Waters of Baptism,
    The Waters of Baptism for all.

Peter's testimony at Jerusalem concerning the Gentile visitation. Acts 11:1–18.

The Early Church had not understood the full revelation and distinction between Law and Grace. There is contention over the great Laws of Circumcision and Meats – Circumcision is dealt with in Ch. 15.

Peter testifies that it was the Holy Spirit who led him to the Gentiles; thus settling the whole matter for the Gentiles coming into the Blessings. Note the following,

1. The Spirit gave the vision to Peter,
2. The Spirit sent the angel to Cornelius,
3. The Spirit told Peter that He had sent the men,
4. The Spirit told Peter to go, doubting nothing,
5. The Spirit fell on the Gentiles as they listened to Peter preaching,
6. The Spirit manifested Himself through other tongues, just as He had done on the day of Pentecost
7. The Spirit overrules Peter's racial, religious, and social pride,
8. The Spirit made no distinction, why should Peter?
   a. In Acts 11:14, "... whereby thou shalt be saved ..." Salvation

in Christ.

b. In Acts 11:14, "... the Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning ..."

c. In Acts 11:18, God granted repentance unto Life out of Death.

Thus, Jew and Gentile are washed in the one Blood of the one Saviour, by the one Holy Spirit into the one Body of Christ, and Baptised together on the authority of His Name, Into the Triune Name of the Godhead, Matthew 28:19.

PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS.

Persecution scatters. Acts 11:19–21.

To scatter the Saints was to scatter the Word, Matthew 13:38; the seed is the Word; The Good seed are the Children of God – the Kingdom.

Antioch. Acts 11:22.

Antioch IN Syria, built in 301 BC it was the capital of Syria, and not to be confused with Antioch near Pisidia. Seleucius Nicator named it in honour of his father, Antiochus.
The city, set in a broad fertile valley, and shielded by majestic snow-covered mountains, was called Antioch 'the Beautiful and Golden'. It was also a great commercial centre.
It was from here that the Great Missionary Work and the founding of the Gentile Church started. Up to this point the chapters in Acts have centred on Peter and Jerusalem, from this point on, Acts centres around,

1. Paul,
2. The Church at Antioch,

Barnabas at Antioch. Acts 11:22–26.

The first mention of Barnabas is in Acts 4:36–37 bringing money to the Apostles feet. In Acts 9:27 he assists in bringing Saul to the Apostles.
Having been sent by the Apostles at Jerusalem to Antioch, he saw the Grace of God there, 'and exhorted them to cleave unto the Lord', Acts 11:23; but, being led of the Spirit he went to Tarsus – see the notes on Acts 9:30–31, page 38 – to bring Saul back to Antioch as the Apostle to the Gentiles.
Again, we see the co-operation and recognition of the Ministries, for together they taught the Word.
It was also at Antioch that the word 'Christians' is applied to the Disciples were first called. The Companion Bible says of this verse 'Though the name may have been given to the Gentiles at first in mockery, the usage of the word by the Holy Spirit indicated that its origin was Divine; the Jews could not, and would not, have given the name as 'CHRISTOS' to them was a sacred word'.
The Church at Antioch consisted of both Jew and Gentile converts, became known as 'CHRISTIAN', the Body of the Anointed One.

The prophet Agabus at Antioch. Acts 11:27–30.

The first mention of 'Prophets' in the Book of Acts; note the plurality. The prophet foretold – the Spirit recorded that it came to pass.
Elders are also mentioned here for the first time, Acts 11:30. Elders are discussed in Acts 14:23, page 58.
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Chapter 12.

This chapter brings to a close the ministry of Peter, the Apostle to the Circumcision, and upon the Church at Jerusalem. Peter is named just more time in Acts – 15:7–14. Only twice more does the Church at Jerusalem come into view,
1. On the matter of Circumcision, Ch 15,
2. Paul's final visit and rejected testimony, Ch 22.

Acts 1–12 covers Peter's Ministry from Jerusalem, the direct centre from which the Gospel went forth to Judea and Samaria; chapters 13–28 cover the Ministry of Paul, who, working from Antioch founded all the Gentile Churches.
1. The Church at Jerusalem degenerated from its former Glory into Legalistic, Pharisaical, Religionism, Sectarian, and Narrow-mindedness.
2. The Church at Antioch enters the Glory of Christ, which takes it to the utmost parts of the earth.

Political opposition to the Church. Acts 12:1–2.

Satan has used,
1. Religious opposition, Acts 4:1–3,
2. Opposition from within, Acts 5:3,

Now he uses political opposition. The sword killed James – the First Apostolic Martyr. James drunk his Master's Cup, and was baptised with the Baptism of Death.

The miraculous deliverance of Peter. Acts 12:3–19.

Why should Stephen be stoned to death, yet Paul raised up? Philip was miraculously transported for one soul, yet Paul left with many weary travels for Christ? Peter was delivered from prison, yet Paul left there to write letters and die? Why was Dorcas raised from the dead, yet not Stephen?
There can only be one answer – God rules in Heaven and on earth, and it is His Sovereign Will being done, in, above, and through all, and in spite of all things that men and devils can do, all things work together for

God, Romans 8:28.

Easter. Acts 12:4.

We need to note that Luke, in verse three declares that Peter had been placed in prison at the 'time of unleavened bread' – Passover.
Herod was waiting for 'Easter' to finish, a pagan festival celebrated by the Romans, and still is a pagan festival unto this day.

The believers' prayer meeting. Acts 12:5.

Though unceasing prayer was made, faith was evidently not being manifested, why? Because faith is dependant upon the knowledge of God's Will, and they did not know whether God Willed to deliver Peter from prison, or whether God Willed it to be the same as for James. It is impossible to have faith apart from the word, the Word of God.

Divine judgment upon Herod. Acts 12:20–25.

Herod hardened his heart despite the miraculous deliverance of Peter. It was Herod as 'lord', he dethroned God and enthroned himself; he ascribed deities to man. Clothed in purple and making an oration, he was willing to accept the praise that they should have given to God.
The same angel who delivered Peter smote Herod.

Ministries in the church at Antioch. Acts 13:1–4.

It is well worth noting the ministries set up by God,
1. The 12 Apostles, Acts 1,
2. The seven Deacons, Acts 6,
3. The Evangelist, Acts 8,
4. The Prophets, Acts 11:27,
5. The Elders, Acts 11:30,
6. Prophets and Teachers, Acts 13:1,
7. Apostles, Acts 14:14.

All the fullness of the Ministry and Spirit; the fullness of the Godhead is the Son of God, the Head of the Church. The fullness in turn is manifested in the many Members of the Body of Christ on earth.

1. Prophets.
    1. The Ministry of A Prophet.
        a. It is essential to understand the particular differences between the Old Testament and New Testament Prophets

for the proper recognition of this Ministry in the Church.

b. The Office of Prophet is a Ministry Gift of the Ascended Lord, Ephesians 4:11. There is no record that our Lord ever chose one Prophet before His Crucifixion and Ascension; He chose 12 Apostles only – the foundation of the Church. The Prophets Ministry is to the whole Church – the Body of Christ, until the Church comes to the perfect man, Ephesians 4:9–16. They revealed the Mystery Body of Christ to the Apostles and Prophets.

c. Christ is the Prophet – the Word, Deuteronomy 18:18. All other prophets point to Him. It is His Ministry in the body.

d. There are various types of Prophets in both the Old and New Testaments.

2. The Old Testament Prophet

Old Testament Prophets fell into five classes, a thing that also distinguishes the Old and New Testament Prophets,

a. Prophets of Guidance – Moses, Samuel, and Elijah were prophets in the Ministry of Guidance,

b. Prophets of Knowledge – Daniel and Joel, both were given – and used –the Word of Knowledge and the Word of Wisdom,

c. Prophets of Miracles – Elisha was the greatest prophet in performing miracles,

d. Prophets of Vision– Daniel, Zechariah, both of whom God was pleased to bless with visions of infallible prophecies, foretelling the future events of the Nations of the earth, and of scripture,

e. Prophets of Scripture – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, and the rest of the major and minor prophets,

In the fullest meaning of the word, God was foretelling the destiny of the Nations, Hebrew and Gentile, God spoke infallible scripture through fallible man.

It was only the Prophets of A, B, and C whom God used to do miracles.

3. The New Testament Prophet.

a. The Prophets were, without doubt, the ones through whom the Spirit spoke, Acts 13:2. By this was confirmation of God's Will, already known and revealed to Saul on the Road to Damascus by the Lord Jesus, and now confirmed through the mouth of Ananias, and reaffirmed by the

Prophets,

b. The Prophets in Acts 15:32 Ministered the Word of God to the Church in exhortation and confirmation, therefore Prophet also means 'a public expounder of God's Word', the Ministry of forth-telling - speaking the word,

c. According to 1 Corinthians 14:29-30 and 32 the Prophets had a distinct Ministry of utterance - prophecies -, which was part of the Prophetic Office. It means to 'flow forth' or 'to speak', to bubble over like a fountain. As well as exhortation, edification, and comfort, it also reaches into the realms of conviction of the secrets and the heart.

d. Acts 21:8-14 gives a remarkable distinction between the Gift of Prophecy and the Office of Prophet. Though Philip had four daughters that did prophecy, they were not Prophetesses, for God sent down Agabus the Prophet to foretell what would happen to Paul in Jerusalem, again confirming what Paul already knew.

e. Agabus foretold, by the Spirit, the coming famine in Acts 11:27-28, but he did not give any guidance about what to do. The Disciples responded in love, verses 29-30.

f. The New Testament also warns about false prophets, Acts 13:6; 2 Peter 2:1; and 1 John 4:1.

g. "By their fruits shall ye know them", Matthew 7:15, 24:11 and 24; Revelation 16:13.

However, Ephesians 4:9-11 remains the test for all Ascension Ministries.

4. Definition and Distinction.

a. Noting the difference in the Ministry of Prophecy is important,

b. There is a Prophecy of Scripture, 2 Peter 1:20. An inspired infallible prophecy,

c. There is the Spirit of Prophecy, Revelation 19:10. The Holy Spirit who inspires,

d. There is the Gift of Prophecy, 1 Corinthians 14:3 and 31.A fragmentary Word of Scripture, which must be judged by the infallible Prophecy of Scripture,

e. There is the Office of Prophet, 1 Corinthians 14:29-32. Thus, all may prophecy, but not all ARE PROPHETS.

5. Guidance Through the New Testament is,

a. The infallible Word of God, the complete revelation of Scripture,

b. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, always leading to, but never contrary to the infallible Word He inspired, Romans 8:14,
c. Often confirmed through Ministries God set in the Church.

2. Teachers.

The Ministry of Teachers.
This Gift is set thirdly in the church, 1 Corinthians 12:28-29. It is one of the Ascension Gifts, given to the Body of the Church, which, along with other Ministries, is to bring the Church to maturity.

Teachers in the Church.
God set teachers in the Church at Antioch, but Christ is the Teacher sent from God, John 3:2.

There is A Warning to Teachers.
The teacher is to receive the greater condemnation for any wrong teaching, he is not the 'schoolmaster', for his teaching is to be done by the Holy Spirit, James 3:1-2.

The Anointed Teacher.
This anointing only comes through the Holy Spirit, for He, the Holy Spirit, is the One in the world today who is the True Teacher, John 14:26.
The Comforter is the One who will lead us into all truths as in Christ, 1 Corinthians 2:13. The teacher works through the Word, being able to impart knowledge and understanding to the people, teaching the revelation of the Prophets and the Apostles.

'Thine Eyes Shall See Thy Teacher...', Isaiah 30:20.
Teaching with the authority of the Lord, Mark 1:22, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees, Matthew 7:28-29.

Illumination by the Teacher.
Wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and the anointing of the Spirit and the ability of the Spirit to enable the teacher to speak as the very oracle of God, 1 Peter 4:10-11.

The Holy Spirit Said..., Acts 13:2
They were ministering unto the Lord. They were fasting - subduing the flesh; and the Spirit spoke.
NOT man, not the Church, but the Personality and the Deity of the

Holy Spirit, "I have called them ... separate them unto Me..." The Spirit's Work, to call, to elect, to choose, to equip the Ministries, the call came from the Heavenly Headquarters not an earthly Headquarters They, the Prophets and teachers, Acts 13:1, they fasted, they prayed, then they laid hands upon them, Hebrews 6:1-2.

They Sent Them Forth.
The Assembly sent them forth on the orders of the Holy Spirit, humanity and Divinity working together, but it is the Holy Spirit who must equip and send.

Saul's first missionary journey. Acts 13:4-14:28.

Having departed from Antioch they came to Cyprus.

1. Ministry at Cyprus. Acts 13:4-5.
   An island - 148 miles long and 48 miles wide - lies off the coast of Syria. It is rich in copper deposits. In the Old Testament, it is known as 'The Isle of Chittim', Ezekiel 27:6.
   1. Paul went to the Jew first in the Synagogue.
   2. John Mark of Mark's Gospel was with them as their 'minister or deacon'.

2. Ministry at Paphos. Acts 13:6-12.
   At Paphos, Elymas the sorcerer was Divinely Judged By a Spirit filled Paul.
   1. Note the reason for this judgement,
      a. His sin - he was a Jew and knew the Scriptures, he knew that God would demand judgement, for false prophets were condemned in the Old Testament Ezekiel 34. He had also become a sorcerer - a dealer in evil spirits, charms, etc. He wilfully resisted God's Word and the Spirit of God.
      b. His character - he sought to turn others away from the Lord, he was a son of the Devil, an enemy of all righteousness, a perverter of the Way of the Lord, John 8:44.
      c. His judgement - the same Power of God that struck Paul blind on the Damascus Road now strikes Elymas blind for a season, this was also an Act of the Holy Spirit.
   2. Elymas' blindness was the symbol of his spiritual blindness and darkness.

No wonder the deputy believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. The mist upon Elymas – not seeing the sun – was symbolic of him not seeing the Son – the Light of the world.
Cp. Psalm 112:4 "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness..." The Power of God will be manifest in the last Days, the Divine Judgement.

3. At this time Saul the destroyer becomes Paul the worker, from now on it is Paul and Barnabas, not Barnabas and Saul, the new name, the new nature.

2. Ministry at Perga. Acts 13:13.
Perga in Asia Minor was the chief city of Pamphylia. Now called Murtana, it has well preserved ruins revealing an immense theatre capable of holding 13,000 people.
During Greek times the city had a temple dedicated to Diana, see notes 16–17 on page 74, Acts 19:24–35.

It was also here that John Mark departed from Paul and Barnabas, and went back, not to Antioch, but to Jerusalem where his home and mother were. The literal translation of his departure is that he 'drew away'.

3. Ministry at Antioch near Pisidia. Acts 13:14–52.
At this point, it is good to understand that there are two Antioch's in the Scriptures, one IN Syria, and the second near Pisidia.

1. Antiochus the father of Seleucius Nicator built Antioch near Pisidia.

However, to distinguish it from Antioch in Syria it is known as Antioch near Pisidia. In 25 BC, it became part of the Roman Empire in the Province of Galatia.

2. It is from here that we have Paul's first recorded sermon, and it follows a similar pattern to Peters preaching in Acts 2, and Stephens preaching in Acts 7.
3. To the Jew first, Paul appeals to their own Scriptures and the historic facts concerning Jesus of Nazareth, all spoken of in the Law and the Prophets. Paul appeals to them through the very Scriptures they profess to believe in.
4. Note Acts 13:27, religious blindness – spiritual deafness, to the very things they profess to 'see and hear'.
5. Acts 13:38–41, through "This Man ... by Him ... I work a work in your days ...that ye in no wise will believe ... though a man

declares it unto you". This man, Jesus, through a man, Paul, His Minister and Ministries, apply this to Church History and to the Church today.

6. Verses 42-43, the Gentiles respond to the Word of God; the Jews, God's Chosen Race are filled with envy, pride, hate, jealousy, blaspheming, bigoted, religious blindness to the Word, the Law, the Prophets. Through them - the Jews - opposition, persecution, manifest themselves against the Apostles, even as unto Christ in Jerusalem, Matthew 27:18.
7. Note the emphasis on 'The WORD', verses 5, 15, 26, 42, 44 and 48-49.
8. The Jews judged themselves, making themselves unworthy of Eternal Life by rejecting the WORD, putting it from them, even as men today.
9. Devout and honourable women, chief men, all deceived by satanic forces, who, by the same forces were stirred up against the Apostles. The Jews were looking for a redeemer, they should have known him, but they didn't.
10. They shook the dust from themselves, even as Jesus had told them, Luke 9:5. In spite of the rejection, they were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

4. Ministry at Iconium. Acts 14:1-6.

Now known as Konia, Iconium was one of the chief cities in the southern part of the Province of Galatia during the first century. Situated on the road from Ephesus to Rome, near the western end of a vast, but level plain, with mountains a few miles to the west, two important trade routes passed through it then; today it is still the main trading centre of the Lyconian Plain.

1. Again, Paul went to the Jew first, with great multitudes of both Jews and Gentiles believing.
2. Unbelieving Jews once again oppose the Word, and infect the minds of the people with evil. Unbelief always works this way.
3. The Lord confirmed the Word of Grace by signs and wonders done through the Apostles, Mark 16:20.
4. The result - two parties, yet the Gospel demands no neutrality, either for, or against the Lord, Luke 9:50 and 11:23.
5. Ministry at Lystra. Acts 14:6-20.

   We know very little about Lystra, other than the fact that it was a colony of the Augustinian Foundation with an aristocratic core of citizens. Its ruins are near the modern village of Katyn Serai.

   1. They preached the Gospel - the good news; the Law Age was

not good news.

2. The first recorded healing under Paul's Ministry; it is similar to Peter's healing in Acts 3. Typical of man, impotent in his walk with God, the man, a cripple from birth had never walked, Until the gospel of Christ came into his life. Paul perceived that the man had FAITH, and Paul, through the Word gave the command, Romans 10:17.
3. There was an immediate reaction to the Apostles 'as like gods'. Consider the following, Genesis 1:26 '...let us make man in our image...' Jesus was made in the likeness of man by the Incarnation, John 1:1-3 and 14, that man may once again be '...in the likeness of God...' Philippians 2:5-11.
4. Heathen, idolatrous priests sought to make a sacrifice, thereby rejecting the Supreme Sacrifice made at Calvary for all Sin.
5. Note the whole of Paul's sermon here to the Gentiles, verses 15-18, cp. Romans 1; it points to the God of Creation, Psalm 19.

   The gods that they were worshipping were made with their own hands, the gods were inferior to the people worshipping them; their gods had ears, eyes, mouths, arms, legs, etc, yet their gods were unable to see, hear, walk or speak, Psalm 115:1-8. How could the True Living God be like one of these things, inferior to themselves?
6. Paul is stoned to death, as was Stephen, but delivered by a miracle to fulfil his Ministry.

6. <u>Ministry at Derbe and return to Antioch</u>. Acts 14:20-28.

Derbe, a city in the SE corner of Lyconia, Asia Minor. It is about 3 miles NW of Zasta, and 45 miles S of Iconium.

They preached the Gospel and taught many.

1. They returned to Lystra - back to the place of stoning; Paul cared more for the Disciples there than the stones, even as Jesus had returned to places, John 11:8, before returning to Iconium and Antioch.
2. Acts 14:22-23, ministry, confirming, exhorting, tribulation, all to enter the kingdom of God. Ordaining and commending Elders - they were a called out company in every Church, called out by the Apostles, it was an act preceded by,
   a. Prayer and fasting,
   b. Confirmed by the 'laying on of hands'.

   Paul, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 lists the 15 qualifications that should be found in all Elders,

a. They are to be blameless,
b. The husband of one wife,
c. Vigilant, watchful – wide awake,
d. Sober, temperate in all things, have self control,
e. Good behaviour, chaste, not conceited,
f. Given to hospitality, not a miser,
g. Apt to teach, tend, rule, guide, lead the flock to greener pastures,
h. Not given to wine, quarrelling as drunks do,
i. No striker, not to hit the sheep, or hit the Word,
j. Not after money as hirelings,
k. Patient, patience with God and sheep,
l. Not a brawler or covetous, position seeker,
m. Rules own family well, home order type in God's House,
n. Not a novice, must be proven,
o. Good respect of outsiders in business life and work.

The Ministry of Elder is given in 1 Peter 5:1–4, and has 6 points,

a. Feed, not fleece the flock,
b. Take oversight of the flock,
c. To serve God willingly,
d. To serve readily,
e. Be an example to the flock,
f. Pray for the sick.

3. Elders always in the plural, not dictatorship or one man rule.
4. Elders and Deacons minister together in the Church.
5. Not voted in or out by the people. They are ordained by the 'laying on of hands' by other Elders, Apostles, Prophets; it takes place IN the Church after Prayer and Fasting.

The ministry of Elder dates right back to Moses, where they were the Older Men of the community, and made all major decisions. At Mt Sinai 70 went up with Moses, Exodus 24:1–2. Bishops, Elders, Presbyters, they all refer to the same office.

7. <u>Return to Antioch</u>. Acts 14:26.

On their return they declared what God had done for them, not what they had done for God. God had opened the Door of Faith to the Gentiles, Galatians 3:22–26.

The same Door that had opened to let the believing Gentiles in now shut the unbelieving Jews out – just as in the days of Noah, when God shut

the Door of the Ark, thereby shutting unbelievers out.

There are two sides to every door, the inside for believers, and the outside for unbelievers, John 10:7-9.

Christ is the Door, and any may enter in, by using the keyword FAITH. By using the keyword, several Churches were established in this first missionary journey.

The question of law keeping. Acts 15:1-35.

This is one of the most important chapters in Acts, for the principle established has remained throughout the whole Church Age. The contention threatened to divide the whole Church into two groups, Jew and Gentile, but the Truth of the Body of Christ is that there is only but one body, neither Jew nor Gentile, but all one in Christ.

1. Conflict between law and grace. Acts 15:1.
    1. Jew and Gentile, circumcised and un-circumcised.
    2. The Ritual Law against the Spiritual Law; flesh against the Spirit.
    3. Circumcision brings Salvation, or Salvation without circumcision is void.
    4. Dissension and disputation; Paul and Barnabas, both circumcised Hebrews, yet disputing with the Judaizing Teachers, mixing Law with Grace.
    5. The Council at Jerusalem. Jerusalem was not the Headquarters of the Church, but the meeting held there because the Teachers were there, and came from there.
    6. The Gentiles saved without circumcision.

2. The conference at Jerusalem. Acts 15:5-6.
    The Apostles this time receive Paul at Jerusalem.

    Who was there,
    1. Paul and Barnabas are received by the Church, Apostles, and Elders,
    2. The Church and the Ministry together, they declare what God had done among the Gentiles - the un-circumcised- that God had manifested His Grace unto Salvation without the rite of circumcision,
    3. The contention stated. Legalistic Pharisees, completely

ritualistic, missing the Spirit of the Law, but contending for the Letter, Romans 2:25-29,

4. The Apostles and Elders came together to consider the matter, note that the whole Church is there together for the question, but it is only the Ministry who have the discussion and reach a decision.

<u>The case for circumcision</u>. Acts 15:7.

1. There is much disputing for and against,
2. Circumcision was the Seal for the Abrahamic Covenant, Genesis 17, and established before the Law. A man refusing this rite excommunicated, for only the circumcised were as Covenant Seed and entitle to the promises and privileges built into the Covenant.
   So serious was this rite in Jehovah's eyes that He sought to kill Moses who had not brought his children into the Covenant Relationship based on that Covenant, Exodus 4:24-26,
3. The Law confirmed the rite of circumcision, Exodus 12:43-50 and Joshua 5:2-10. So important was this rite that none dare partake of the Feasts, whether they be Jew or Gentile.
4. Thus, the Pharisees and Judaizers had such in their case for circumcision,
   a. That it was the Seal of the Abrahamic Covenant,
   b. That it was also confirmed under the Mosaic Covenant.

Therefore, they would have the world divided into two classes, Jew or Gentile -circumcised or un-circumcised - Covenant People, or un-covenanted People. The Pharisees and Judaizers only wanted the Gentiles to enter the Blessings through the rite of circumcision and the keeping of the Mosaic Law.

<u>The case against circumcision</u>. Acts 15:7-11.

Peter's testimony - yet Peter is the Apostle to the Circumcision,

1. Peter's experience in Acts 10-11 concerning the ministry to the Gentiles, note the following facts that Peter emphasises,
2. Hear the Word of God and Believe, Acts 15:7,
3. God knows all Hearts, whether Jew or Gentile. God gave them witness by giving them the same Holy Spirit as on us, Acts 15:8,
4. God put no difference, made no Distinction, god purified their hearts by faith, Acts 15:9,
5. The rite of circumcision and the Law were a bondage that none were able to bear, Acts 15:10,

6. The summary of Peter, "Through grace (undeserved, unmerited favour of God to man), Jew and Gentile shall be saved", Acts 15:11.

Peter thus declares the Work of God by the Spirit upon the Gentiles, without the rite of circumcision, without the Law, thereby saving them by grace and faith, and the Spirit bears witness.
Peter concludes that neither Jew nor Gentile are saved through either the Law or circumcision, but by Grace only.

Paul and Barnabas testify. Acts 15:12.

1. Paul is the Apostle to the Gentiles, and testifies as to what God had wrought in miracles and wonders among the Gentiles – manifest proof that God was visiting the Gentiles in grace.
2. Miracles and wonders of grace had been, in the previous dispensations, mainly in the midst of the chosen people, god attesting by such that they were his chosen people, and he their god. God now testifies that the gentiles are his through grace.
3. The revelation that Paul received is, that all the world – jew or gentile – are guilty before god, and under death, with or without the law and circumcision. Only through god, acting through his grace, could anyone be justified at all.
   Circumcision with the law – which failed to keep the law – became un-circumcision; therefore, un-circumcision without the law failed to obey the law of conscience, thus all were under death.
   God moves in grace through his spirit and through Christ, to redeem both jew and gentile from death.
   Typified in Abraham, god promised grace to him through,
   a. Un-circumcision as a gentile, genesis 12:1-3,
   b. Circumcision as a jew, genesis 17:1-11.

Through this, Jew and Gentile are included in grace in the covenant of God. The spirit given to both, through grace and not through law or rites, Galatians 3:14.

The testimony of James through scripture. Acts 15:13-18.

1. It is worthy to note that the final appeal is to the infallible scriptures,
2. Ministry, testimony, and experience may confirm truth, but the word of god is truth itself, and is the final court of doctrinal appeal for all,
3. James quotes the old testament prophecy of Isaiah 11:10 and 54:1-5 and Amos 9:11-12.

The final sentence to the church. Acts 15:19-29.

1. The father said, "this is my beloved son, hear him", Matthew 17:5,
2. Unity of the spirit and the whole church hear him,
3. That Moses, the law, and Elijah the prophet, in the volume of the book, all pointed to him,
4. The final fourfold admonition,
    a. They were to abstain from meats offered to idols,
    b. They were to abstain from blood,
    c. They were to abstain from things strangled,
    d. They were to abstain from fornication.

The apostles and prophets ministry at Antioch. Acts 15:30-35.

1. The epistle read to the whole church at Antioch amid great excitement,
2. Two prophets, Judas and Silas, exhort and confirm the saints,
3. The apostles teach and preach the word
4. There is no doubt that at the point between verses 35-36 that peter visited them, cp. Galatians 2:11-21, and that Paul 'had to withstand peter to his face' for fear and compromise with the judean brethren over eating with the gentiles, and then refusing to do so later on. Peter backed out on his own testimony in acts 10 and the Jerusalem conference.

The true circumcision of the New Testament.

1. The true circumcision is of the heart - not the flesh, Deuteronomy 10:16;
2. Jeremiah 9:25-26; romans 3:30; and galatians 5:2-5, for even under the law, when Israel was circumcised in the flesh, god spoke to them that he desired the true circumcision of their hearts, Deuteronomy 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; colossians 2:11-12; and philippians 3:3,
3. The three things involved in the rite of circumcision in genesis 17 are fulfilled in the New Testament,
    a. The shedding of blood, and the cutting of the flesh,
    b. The invocation of the name - water baptism into the name of God,
    c. The rite - the seal of the covenant on the 8th day,
3. It is the new creature, the circumcision of the heart in, and by, the holy spirit that god recognises. The seal of the new covenant is the holy spirit, and he applies the scriptural

circumcision, through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

Paul's second missionary journey, Acts 15:36-18:22.

In Acts 15:36-41 Paul's concern for the local Churches is evident; Paul and Barnabas are still in contention over John Mark, and the way he left them on the last journey, though both are partly right. Paul realising some of the dangers on this journey fears that John Mark might again leave them.

It is also at this point that we have the last mention of Barnabas in Acts.

1. Ministry at Derbe and Lystra. Acts 16:1-5.
    1. Timotheus, Paul's Spiritual son, 1 Timothy 1:2, who no doubt came to know Paul through Paul's stoning on his first missionary journey, 2 Timothy 3:10-12. Timothy is Paul's most constant companion. Born of a mixed marriage, Timothy had a Greek pagan father, and a devout Jewish mother, who would have instructed him in the Sacred Writings of the Old Testament, then along came Paul and taught this devout mother and son that Jesus Christ was the fulfilment of the Old Testament Writings. It was at this time that Paul took Timothy and circumcised him 'That he might win some'; it was probably about this time that Paul ordained Timothy, and being Jewish/Gentile, he would be able to minister to both for Christ.
    2. Ministry to the Churches concerning the decrees settled at the Jerusalem Conference,
    3. The Churches established and increased daily.

2. Ministry forbidden in Asia. Acts 16:6-8.
    1. They had gone through Phrygia, an island Province of SW Asia Minor. Its tablelands, rising to 4,000 ft, contained many cities and towns, both considerable in size and wealth. Whatever else about the Province, its main renown comes from Paul's visit,
    2. They, Paul and Silas, were forbidden to go into Asia by the Spirit,
    3. They came to a district called Mysia, lying at the NW end of Asia Minor. Starting at the west, and going in a clockwise direction, it is bounded by the Aegean Sea, the Hellespont, the Dardanelles, the Propontis - the Sea of Mamora, Bithynia,

Phrygria, and Lydia,

4. They desired to enter Bithynia, a region along the northern edge of Asia Minor. Bithynia fronts onto the Black Sea and the Sea of Mamora. Its known history goes back past the sixth century BC from the 13th century it has been Turkish, or at least ruled by the Turks.
5. In '4 above' we saw how they desired to go, now they try to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit stopped them. There is an important truth here, the Spirit goes before the Word, the Spirit first – the Word follows.
6. Jesus had commanded them to preach the gospel everywhere, 'in the world', Mark 16:15–20, yet here the Holy Spirit restrains them. There is no disharmony in the Godhead, the Lord, working by the Spirit, sees, and knows all hearts; the Lord knew which cities were prepared to receive the Gospel, and those that were not.
7. The Spirit always moves first, for in Genesis 1:1–3, we read, '... the Spirit moved ... then God said the word'.
8. The Spirit and the Word always working together, 1 John 5:8. The Word without the Spirit is the letter that kills, for the Spirit gives the Word of life.
9. Passing by Bithynia, they came to Troas, a port in Mysia.

3. <u>Ministry in Europe</u>. Acts 16:9–40.
   1. The vision to Paul, forbidden and hindered by the Spirit to go into Asia, he is now shown where to go,
   2. The man from Macedonia, could
   3. that man, in Paul's vision, have been Luke?
   4. Luke certainly wrote the Book of Acts, and at this point there is a definite change in the writing, the 'they' now becomes 'we', suggesting that Luke is now getting his information 'first–hand'. Luke, when writing Acts, used the first person on four occasions, 16:10–17; 20:5–12; 21:1–18 and 27:1–28:16.
   5. From Colossians 4:14, it is evident that Luke is a physician,
   6. Tradition has it that Luke came from Antioch, and he certainly had a close knowledge of the Church there, yet he also seems to have a close affinity with the people of Philippi. As he was a physician, his association with Philippi can be traced back to the medical school there.
   7. From 2 Timothy 4:11, it is also evident that Luke was still with Paul after he had finished writing Acts.
   8. Passing by Samothracia, they came to Philippi.

4. Ministry at Philippi. Acts 16:12-2.
   Philippi, in the Plain of Mount Pangaeus was the chief town. It was the first European City to hear the Gospel as far as the records go.
   1. On the Sabbath Day Paul found himself, in about 53 AD, with a few women, on the banks of a river - symbolic of the Heavenly flowing water; these women were to be his first-fruits in his ministry there,
   2. Lydia of Thyatira, a seller of purple, she worshipped God and gave heed to the Word, God opened her heart and she and her family were all saved and baptised, and ministered unto God's Ministers.
      a. Yet in about the year 96 AD John, Revelation 2:18-29, wrote by the Spirit to the Church at Thyatira, where, in the Book of Revelations, the Church there represents the Pagan Church - the Dark Ages to the tribulation - where the emphasis is laid on works rather than its doctrinal beliefs.
      b. The word 'Thyatira' comes from two words meaning 'sacrifice and continual', yet in 96 AD we find instead of a flourishing assembly from that first prayer meeting, a Church that has rejected our Lord's Finished Work.
      c. They have, in Revelation 2:20, committed fornication, and eaten things offered to idols.
   3. Acts 16:16, a damsel filled with the spirit of divination, fortune telling, had been commercialised by her masters, earlier in her life she had made contact with an evil spirit, now she was filled with one. Her masters alleged that she could foretell future events and guide those who came to her for advice in return for a payment.
   4. Acts 16:17-18, this woman was not a willing 'satanic slave', as were Simon and Elymas, she was the victim of Satan and in need of deliverance, for the witness of an evil spirit is not desirable, Mark 3:11-12. Paul exorcised the spirit in and by the power of the Name, Mark 16:17. Devils tremble when men believe the Word of God, James 2:19

5. Paul and Silas imprisoned at Philippi. Acts 16:22-40.
   1. Paul and Silas were beaten and then thrown into prison. Commercial reasons, like the people of Gadara, Mark 5:16-17, they thought more of their possessions than they did of the needs of a demon-possessed person.
   2. Acts 16:25, the midnight hour, the blackest hour of the night,

Matthew 25:6;

3. it is both typical and prophetical of the end of this Age. Opposition by Satan as many devils evicted, but it will still be the hour of deliverance for many satanically held prisoners.
4. They were not dependent upon feelings or circumstances; they had a song and praise session, Psalm 126.
5. It was a house of restraint, it was a house of bondage, the other prisoners heard them, but above all God heard them, Isaiah 61:1-2.
5. There was a great earthquake; it was a Spiritually Ordained natural thing, Matthew 28:2.
6. Even the foundations shook.
7. The doors opened and the prisoners' bands fell away, what a testimony, what a witness, all through the testimony of the open door.
8. Note the following open doors,
    a. The Door of the Ark, Genesis 6:16,
    b. The Blood upon the lintel and the two side posts, Exodus 12:22-23,
    c. Entering in with the Bridegroom, Matthew 25:10,
    d. Into the sheepfold, John 10:7,
    e. The Name of the Door, Acts 14:27,
    f. It is the open door for those who would use it, Revelation 3:8.

It is possible to find many other open doors in the Bible with the help of a concordance.

9. Conviction and conversion, rushing into the jail, the jailer called for a light, asking, "What can I do to be saved?"

What did he want to be saved from? It could not be his bosses or masters, for the prisoners were still there. Another earthquake? That could well have been on his mind. However, we find the answer in his choice of the word 'Sirs', where he could have used any of the following,

    a. 'kuriotes', to have government over,
    b. 'kurieuo', to be lord of,
    c. 'kurios', and he had used kurios - God, Lord, Master, And on that choice of his word Paul gave him the Gospel message,

10. The whole household was saved and baptised; God uses anything and any situation to bring forth His Grace.

6. <u>Ministry at Thessalonica</u>. Acts 17:1-9.

1. Founded about 332 BC it was a small collection of towns dominating

the northern trade route, and the road from the Adriatic to Byzantium. The prolific coinage found in and around the area would suggest that it was a place of high prosperity. It became the capital of the Roman Province, and was Pompey's base a century later in his battle with Julius Caesar.

2. To the Jews first, on three Sabbaths he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures. Many of the Jews believed in two Messiahs through a misunderstanding of the Scriptures,
   a. A suffering Messiah,
   b. A reigning Messiah.
3. Paul preached that Jesus of Nazareth had been the Suffering Messiah, but was now the Reigning Messiah.
4. Jews again oppose as in other cities.
5. The motive was envy; they called it turning the world upside down, when in reality it was turning it the right way up.
6. Many believed.

7. Ministry at Berea. Acts 17:10-14.
   Berea, a city of SW Macedonia. Its origins appear to be lost in time.
   1. To the Jews first, note that these were nobler than the Thessalonians.
   2. They received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures to see if these things were so.
   3. Many believed, but the Thessalonian Jews came and stirred up trouble.
   4. Paul leaves, but leaves Timothy and Silas behind.

8. Ministry at Athens. Acts 17:15-34.
   Athens, in old times was the capital of Attica, one of the Greek States, but is now the capital of Greece. With a population of 750,000 people, it was the seat of Greek art, science, philosophy, and at one time an important University City.
   1. Paul again goes to the Jews first.
   2. Paul was stirred in his spirit (by the Holy Spirit) as he saw that the city was given to idolatry - the deification of everything as 'gods'.
   3. Whilst they had 'strange gods', they still had the curiosity to hear the 'new doctrine', but not to hear the truth. Jesus and the Resurrection, the True God revealed in Christ, but to them it was God doing a 'New Thing', Isaiah 43:9.
   4. Paul, on Mars Hill, the highest court in Athens. All men are religious by nature, just take a moment to consider what man

worships today.

1. Paul's sermon to the Athenians. Acts 17:22-31.
    1. The 'unknown god', Acts 17:23. They were full of gods and idols, this idol altar of the Greeks expressed the ultimate wisdom of the Greeks in the final confession, that God the Father cannot be known, and is unknowable, true, but for the fact that the Son can be known, Jesus the Christ who revealed the True God, and declared Him, John 1:14 and 18.
    2. The 'God of Creation', Acts 17:24. He is greater than any creation, and cannot be confined to mere human altars and temples, even Solomon realised this in his temple, Acts 7:48.
    3. 'God the sustainer and source of all life'. God needs not that man should give to Him, as he gave all to man first, Psalm 50.
    4. The 'God of mankind', Acts 17:26. God became the Father of all mankind when He created Adam. He created man in His Own Image, and set the bounds and lands for all men to dwell.
    5. The 'Omnipresent God', Acts 17:27. He is present everywhere at the same time.
    6. The 'Omnipotent God', Acts 17:28. He has power over all things.
    7. He 'God who is a Spirit', Acts 17:28. He is not made of inanimate things, e.g.
    8. materials, gold, silver, stones; these things are inferior to the man who makes them and worships them, they are life, but the unknown God is a life-giver.
    9. See note 5 page 58.

2. The God who demands repentance. Acts 17:29-34.
    1. The people had until that time, sat in darkness, there had been times of ignorance, but now there was a Light in the World, Jesus of Nazareth, and that Light preached through the Gospel.
    2. Through this Light He is now Judge of all. Only as man first believes in God will he be able to come to the Father, through the Appointed Son, John 14:1 and 6.
    3. That Man,
        a. The appointed judge- He was ordained of God
        b. The appointed day-the- Judgement Day
        c. The appointed standard- His Righteousness
        d. The appointed proof- His Death and Resurrection.
    4. The Spiritual Fruit of Athens,
        a. Some mocked }

b. Some procrastinated } so also today
c. Some believed }

9. Ministry at Corinth. Acts 18:1–7.
Corinth, under Roman rule Corinth was the capital of Achaia, a Roman Province. Whilst Athens remained the educational centre, Corinth was a city of wealth, luxury, and immorality.

At the height of its power, Corinth probably had a free population of 200,000, plus 500,000 slaves. It occupied a strategic position at the foot of the 2,000 ft high Mt Acrocorinthus. From the top of the mountain one has a commanding view of the Saronic Gulf to the east; the Corinthian Gulf to the west; and, on a clear day it is possible to see the Acropolis of Athens – some 40 miles away – whilst looking over central Greece.

Since the residents of Corinth drew most of their wealth from the sea, their god Poseidon figured prominently in their devotions, however, their greatest devotional time dedicated to Aphrodite, the goddess of love. Her temple had more than 1,000 'Heirodouloi', priestesses of vice that were not in other shrines in Greece.

At the time Paul arrived there to minister, no other city rivalled Corinth as a city of vice.

1. Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla; they were tent makers living at Corinth, where it would suggest that Paul worked to pay his way.
2. Once again, Paul went to the Jew first.
3. Comparing Acts 18:5 with 1 Thessalonians 3:6, it would seem most probable that Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians at this time,
   a. Some 12 months before – at the start of this missionary journey – Paul had established a Church at Thessalonica,
   b. Paul had sent Timothy to encourage and strengthen the Church there, and on Timothy's return the Apostle had been encouraged to write the Thessalonian Epistles,
   c. It is not very doctrinal in content, but consists mainly of exhortations, counsels, and personal reminiscences,
   d. The Epistle has 6 sections,
      i. The Salutation, Ch 1,
      ii. The reminiscence, Ch 2,
      iii. The messenger section, Ch 3,
      iv. The exhortation section, Ch 4,
      v. The future hope section, Ch 4–5,

vi. Duty and closing sections, Ch 5.

4. The Second Epistle was apparently written shortly after, as certain expressions in Paul's First Epistle had been misinterpreted, it is in three parts, and has a central theme of the Second Coming of Christ,
   a. The Salutation, Ch 1,
   b. Warnings against unrest and announcement of events, Ch 2,
   c. Apostolic example, benediction, and Salutation, Ch 3.
5. Paul turns to the Gentiles.
6. Crispus and his household believe, and all are baptised.
7. Acts 18:9–10, God tells Paul that He, God, 'has much people in this city'.
8. God also reassures Paul that no harm will come to his life there.
9. Paul ministers for a further 18 months in Corinth.
10. Paul charged before Gallio over the use of 'words, names, and laws', but Gallio did not care for the religious differences between the Jews.

10. Ministry at Ephesus and return to Antioch. Acts 18:18–22.

Ephesus, an old Ionian foundation. These foundations were Greek colonies surrounding the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Ephesus replaced Miletus as a trading port until its own harbour silted up, when Smyrna replaced it.

Although used primary as trading posts, and taking only a minimal amount of room to live in, great cities, and in some cases, royal capitals came from them. There were, in the heyday of Asia Minor, some 230 of these communities, each,

1. Proud of its own individuality,
2. Issuing its own currency,
3. Managing its own affairs.

Ephesus, built near the shrine of an old Anatolian fertility goddess, became the seat of an original cult. Under the Greeks she was known as 'Artemis', whilst the Romans knew her as 'Diana'.

Around the cult clustered much idol trade, hence the guild of silversmiths, whose livelihood was the manufacture of shrines and images of, and to, Diana.

1. Aquila and Priscilla travel with Paul.

2. Paul ministers to the Jew first, and promises to return if God permits.
3. Paul salutes the Church at Caesarea; it is also likely that he wrote to the Galatians from here at this time.
   a. Written to the 'Churches of Galatia', it is the only Pauline Epistle that is addressed to specific Churches, they were,
      i. All founded by Paul, 1:8, 11 and 4:19-20,
      ii. All the fruit of a single mission, 3:1-3 and 4:13-14,
      iii. All affected by the same disturbance, 1:6-7 and 3:1-14,
      The message of Paul had been received well by the Galatians, who had willingly suffered persecution for their faith, 3:4; and were running well when Paul left them, 5:7.
   b. The startling news that Paul received was 'that a sudden and drastic change had taken place in the Church towards Paul and his teachings'. The Galatians were reverting to Judaism and the Law.
   c. Whilst the Epistle is known as the 'Magna Carta' of the Church.
   d. It is a defence of the Doctrine of Justification, and a vindication of Paul's Apostleship, and can be divided into four parts,
      i. Salutation and Introduction, 1:1-9,
      ii. A narrative of Paul's experiences and his claim to True Apostleship, 1:10-2:14.
      iii. A defence of the doctrine of Justification by Faith, 2:15-5:6.
      iv. Warnings, instructions, and exhortations, 5:7-6:17.
   e. Paul returns to the Church at Antioch, bringing to a close his Second Missionary Journey.

<u>Paul's third missionary journey</u>. Acts 18:23-21:15.

1. <u>Ministry in Galatia and Phrygria</u>. Acts 18:23.
   1. They went over strengthening the Disciples.
   2. If Galatians was not written before this time, it would have been written shortly after this visit.

   2. <u>Ministry at Ephesus</u>. Acts 19:1-41.
   1. Paul came to Ephesus and found 'certain disciples' there, Acts 19:1.
   2. In Acts 19:2 he asks them the question "Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" The emphasis in Acts is on the 'believing and receiving' of the Holy Spirit. They did not know that the Holy Spirit had come, yet John, in his baptism had foretold of the Coming Baptism with the Holy Spirit, Matthew

3:1-11.

3. Paul questioned them about their water baptism, and the formula used. Had they been baptised according to the Words of Jesus, Matthew 28:19, "Into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost", they doubtless would have received the Holy Spirit, as most cases in Acts record Water and Spirit Baptism together.
4. Paul re-baptised the Disciples in (Greek = into) the Name of the Godhead; why did Paul re-baptise these Disciples? In order to invoke the godhead upon them, that they might receive the holy spirit. There was one essential difference between John's Baptism and Christ's order of Baptism - the invocation of the Name.
    a. Both Baptisms involved Repentance and Faith,
    b. Both Baptisms were by immersion, plunging beneath the water,
    c. Both involved the confession by a sinner, to a confession of Christ,
    d. Both, in requirements and mode of operation, were exactly the same, Wherein, then, was the difference? It was in the matter of the words of the formula, and the invocation of the Name upon them.

If the words of the formula were unimportant, then Paul had no reason to re-baptise them, But John's baptism was nameless. There is Power in the Name, whether in Salvation, Healing, Exorcism, Prayer, or Water Baptism.

5. The words of Scripture are completely infallible whether used by Jesus, Peter, Paul, John, or anyone else.
6. God sealed this act by imparting to them the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, through 'the laying on of hands' by Paul, for they 'spoke with tongues and prophesied'.
7. To the Jews first - 3 months ministry in the Synagogue.
8. Division, separation, some spoke evil of 'The Way'. For two years, Paul ministered the Word at Ephesus, and all in Asia heard the word. A great Door was opened to Paul through here.
9. Acts 19:11-12, special - not ordinary - miracles were done through Paul's preaching. Diseases and demons left the bodies of those afflicted, as items of clothing - handkerchiefs and aprons - touched by Paul are laid upon them. God, once again, used the channels of His appointing,
    a. He had used the Brazen Serpent to heal His People.
    b. He had used the Passover Lamb to heal them from their

sins.

c. He had used the hem of His Garment.

d. He had used His Spittle to give sight.

e. The waters of the Jordan; etc,

All manifesting his power, and it is the same God for us today.

10. Acts 19:13-20, opposition by the seven sons of Sceva - apostate Jews who presumed to use the Name to give themselves the same Power that Paul had over those who had evil spirits.
11. Evil spirits know who have power over them, whose commands they will obey, and also who may rightfully use the Name.
12. The evil spirits, using the human language, even as the Holy Spirit does.
13. Acts 19:17, the results made the Name great.
14. Acts 19:18-19, bringing books and magic arts, incantations, etc; all things used in contact with the evil spirits, all to be burned.
15. The Word grew mightily and prevailed, cp. Psalm 138:2.
16. Acts 19:28-41, the great goddess Diana,
    a. Opposition from the commercial world,
    b. Opposition had come from the Jew first, then the Gentile world, then evil spirits, and now the commercial world - the God of mammon affected!
17. Silver shrines of the goddess Diana - one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. Idolatry, gods of heathen men, heathen religions developed by the evil spirits behind the idols, all worshipped by the world. Jesus, in the likeness of His Father, came as a man, yet this was the deification of a woman.
18. Mob rule and confusion. Paul is restrained by his friends from danger. This is the only place in Scriptures where the word 'Church' is used of a building; the 'Church' is the called out company of believers, not a building made with their hands.
19. Order restored, Paul embraces the disciples.

3. <u>Ministry in Macedonia</u>. Acts 20:1-2.
    1. Timothy and Erastus go before Paul into Macedonia.
    2. Macedonia, lying geographically between the Balkan Highlands and the Greek Peninsular, was both a Greek kingdom and a Roman Province. The early history of the province is confused through the preoccupation and continual tension of tribal wars.
    3. It was probably at this point that Paul wrote 1 Corinthians before he proceeded to Macedonia,
        a. He had previously written a letter to the Corinthians, which

has not, unfortunately, come down to us, where he warned against associating with 'immoral persons', 1 Corinthians 5:9,

b. He had received a reply, alluded to in 1 Corinthians 5:10, 7:1 and 8:1, for they had replied, and submitted a number of questions seeking his opinion,

c. The Epistle may be divided into two parts,

i. The main theme – cleansing the Church from false Doctrines and Conceptions of the Ministry, intellectual pride, social disorders, and other disorders, Ch 1–11,

ii. Doctrinal Instruction and Advice, Ch 12–16.

4. After waiting in Asia Minor Paul then went into Macedonia.

5. The report that Titus brought Paul was most encouraging, for most of the converts had repented, and cast out the man who had led the revolt against Paul.

6. At this time that Paul then wrote 2 Corinthians, which can be divided into three parts,

a. The characteristics of the Apostolic Ministry,

b. Exhortations and instructions,

c. Paul's Apostleship.

4. Ministry in Greece and Corinth. Acts 20:2–3.

1. Paul ministered at Corinth for about three months, where the Jews threatened his life.

2. It was from here that the Letter to the Romans was written. Romans can be divided into two parts,

a. Doctrinal, Ch 1–11,

b. Practical, Ch 12–16.

They returned to Troas via Macedonia and Philippi.

5. Ministry at Troas. Acts 20:4–12.

Troas, a name applied to both a region and a city,

1. The region was in the NW corner of Asia Minor, in the district of Mysia; it was also a Roman Province,

2. The city – of which considerable ruins remain – was Alexandria Troas, about 10 miles from the ruins of ancient Troy. It was the port of call on the trade route between Macedonia and Asia.

3. The Missionary company of Acts 20:4,

Sopatar.

A Christian from the Church at Berea, he not only accompanied Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem, but he is the same person who is joined with Timothy, Lucius, and Jason in sending their greetings to the Church at Rome, Romans 16:21,

Aristarcus.
From Macedonia. Paul calls him a fellow prisoner, implying that he had been in prison for the Gospel's sake. This would be backed up by the fact that he was a convert from Judaism,

Secundus.
A Thessalonian Christian with a name of Latin origin. If he was one of the delegates entrusted with the collection, he probably accompanied Paul to Jerusalem, Acts 24:17,

Gaius.
A man of Derbe who accompanied Paul from Asia to Macedonia,

Timotheus.
Paul's'spiritual son',and later his official representative and fellow traveller. cp. Philippians 2:19-22, where we see how highly Paul esteemed this young friend,

Tychius.
An Asian, probably an Ephesian. As one of the delegation chosen to bear the collection, 2 Corinthians 8:19 ff., he would go all the way to Jerusalem with Paul. He was with Paul on his first Roman imprisonment and carried letters to the Ephesians, Ephesians 6:21; and to the Colossians, Colossians 4:7-9. Paul still had Tychius with him during his second Roman imprisonment, for Paul sent him to Ephesus, 2 Timothy 4:12, perhaps with a letter to replace Timothy.

Trophimus.
A Gentile Christian from Ephesus, Acts 21:29.
In Jerusalem, he was the innocent cause of the tumult, resulting in Paul's imprisonment when hostile Asian Jews thought that Paul had illegally introduced him to the Temple itself, Acts 21:29. Shortly before his final Roman imprisonment, Paul left Trophimus at Miletus, 2 Timothy 4:20.

These men were all the fruits of Paul's labours.

4. Acts 20:6, they abode there 7 days.
5. Acts 20:7, they ministered there, the Disciples came together to 'break bread on the first day of the week', not on the Sabbath as in the synagogue, 1 Corinthians 16:2. The 'first

day of the week' was the day on which the Early Church came together to 'break bread', fulfilling two specific Old Testament types concerning the 'morrow after the Sabbath',

a. Leviticus 23:9–14, the Sheaf of First fruits waved to Jehovah 'on the morrow after the Sabbath'. Paul interprets this 'Sheaf' as the Resurrected Christ before God – not on the Sabbath – but on the 'morrow after the Sabbath', which is the first day of the week, Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:1–2, Luke 24:1, and John 20:1, the Day of Resurrection.

b. Leviticus 23:15–21, the Feast of Pentecost and the presentation of the two loaves took place on the 50th day after the Waving of the Sheaves, i.e. 7 Sabbaths = 49, therefore the 50th day was the 'morrow after the Sabbath',

Thus, two important events in the foundation of the Church were,

a. The Resurrection of the Son of God – Jesus Christ,

b. The Outpouring of the Spirit of God,

Moreover, both took place, not on the Jewish Sabbath, but on the 'morrow after the Sabbath', which was the first day of the week.

If the Son of God and the Holy Spirit bypassed the Sabbath, then it showed that the 'Shadow' – see page 4 – was at an end, fulfilled in the true Sabbath rest of the Godhead.

6. Paul preached until midnight,

a. Eutychus fell asleep and died,

b. Paul raises him from the dead,

c. Resurrected Life through the Name.

6. <u>Journey to, and ministry at Miletus</u>. Acts 20:13–38.

Miletus had its beginnings in the 12th century BC, and continued with a very chequered career under many different occupations until 500 BC as from that time its history has been quite undistinguished. At the time of Paul's visit, the city, through silting, was 10 miles from the sea, and reduced to a city of no standing in the province of Asia.

1. Acts 20:13–16, the journey to Miletus.
2. From Miletus Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders to come to him.
3. Paul's final message to the elders of Ephesus,

a. Acts 20:18–19, Paul's message and ministry of sufferings and temptations,

b. Acts 20:20, Paul's personal and public ministry,

c. Acts 20:21, repentance towards God and faith towards Christ,
d. Acts 20:22–24, Paul's knowledge of coming afflictions,
e. Acts 20:25–27, Paul's purity from shunned responsibility,
f. Acts 20:28–30, Paul's warning and exhortation to the elders,
   i. To take heed of the enemy of self,
   ii. To take heed of the flock, the Holy Spirit had made them overseers, not man, although ordained of the Apostles,
   iii. The Church, purchased by His Blood,
g. The wolves, the enemy without,
h. The elders – the enemy within – drawing people to themselves, not God,
i. Acts 20:31, Paul, the example of minister and elder,
j. Acts 20:32, Paul commends to God and His WORD, those that are set apart,
k. Paul the worker, not covetous,
l. Paul's farewell prayer.

4. From reading the Lord's Epistle to the Ephesian Church, Revelation 2:1–7, we realise that this Church lost its 'first love' – a glorious beginning, but a tragic end.

7. Ministry at Tyre. Acts 21:1–6.

Tyre, a port city south of Sidon. The first record we have of Tyre is found in Joshua 19:29, but it then had an obscure history until emerging again with Hiram – a friend of David.

Ezekiel, Ch 27–28, paints a vivid picture of Tyre being powerful, wealthy, and a great trading port; yet the same prophet, Ch 26:5 and 14, 47:10 foretold that the fishermen would dry their nets upon the causeway, built by Alexander the Great to conquer Tyre – and still done today.

Tyre struck an early treaty with Rome, which lasted until 20 BC, but Tyre's remaining history is without significance.

1. Acts 21:1–3, the journey through to Tyre.
2. Finding Disciples there, Paul tarried 7 days.
3. Paul again warned of the trouble that awaited him in Jerusalem.
4. Acts 21:7, they departed to Ptolemais. Ptolemais is known in Joshua 19:30 as 'Accho'. It was the portion given to Asher, and is a seaport 8 miles north of Mt Carmel.

Accho translates as 'Acre' into the English language, therefore when the Crusaders occupied the town; the Crusaders named it 'St Jean de Acre'. In modern times, it was part of the Turkish Empire before coming under Egyptian control. The British then restored it to Turkey, and today it is

part of the nation of Israel, lying opposite the larger city of Haifa.

8. Arrival at Cæsarea. Acts 21:8-14.
1. The end of Paul's third missionary journey.
2. Paul enters Philip's house.
3. Philip had four daughters who did prophecy, but they were not Prophetesses.
4. God sent Agabus the Prophet down from Judea to Caesarea to signify to Paul what would happen in Jerusalem. The Will of God confirmed to Paul through the Ministry of a Prophet.
5. Cp. Acts 21:4 and 12, where it will be seen that at both Tyre and Caesarea the believers sought an assurance from Paul that he would not go, but Paul was aware that it was the Will of God for him to go up to Jerusalem.
6. Again, cp. Acts 21:13 and 20:22-25, though he did not know exactly what would befall him there, Paul was very much aware that bonds and imprisonment awaited him in every city. Agabus now tells Paul, by the Spirit, of his arrest and disposal to the Gentiles - the same as his Lord some years earlier - but above all, the Will of God was about to be done.
7. What a house of fellowship, Agabus the Prophet, Philip the Evangelist, Paul the Apostle.

PAUL IN JERUSALEM AND CÆSAREA.

At Jerusalem. Acts 21:17–26.

1. Acts 21:17–18, Paul was received of James and the Elders at Jerusalem.
2. Acts 21:19, Paul declares what God has done for the Gentiles.
3. Acts 21:20, note how the Jerusalem Church is now filled with Law/Grace believers, 'Which believe ... and are zealous of the Law'; Moses and Christ.
4. Bound by legality and customs of the flesh rituals.
5. Acts 21:1–24, they encourage Paul to take a vow to protect himself – and them – for receiving him.
6. The compromise and mixture of Law and Grace,
   a. Jews believe on Christ, and keep the Law to be saved,
   b. Gentiles need only to believe on Christ to be saved.
7. Paul's principles in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23 allowed him to submit to the vow.

The question is 'Was Paul right?' This act of purification and offerings led to Paul's arrest in the Temple. What purification was required? Paul had found all these in the Sacrifice of Christ, Hebrews 9.

Paul is arrested at Jerusalem. Acts 21:27–36.

1. Acts 21:27, the Asian Jews, there for the Feast of Pentecost, recognised Paul, and supposed that Trophimus, who is with Paul, is defiling the Temple.
2. Acts 21:30–31, the city is in uproar, and seeking to kill Paul.
3. Acts 21:32–36, note the tumult, Acts 21:34, it was the same for his Master, Luke 23:18 and John 19:15.
4. The Roman Authority rescued Paul.
5. Acts 21:37–40, Paul permitted to speak to the people.
6. Note in these closing chapters how the Word of the Lord through Ananias is fulfilled,
7. Acts 9:15, 'A chosen vessel unto me ... to bear My name ... suffer for My Name's Sake ...'
8. Before the Gentiles, Acts 13–20,
9. Before the Children of Israel, Acts 22–23,
10. Before kings (rulers), Acts 24–26.

Paul's testimony at Jerusalem. Acts 22:1–30.

1. Acts 22:1–3, he declares his former life as a Law abiding Jew and

Pharisee.

2. Acts 22:4-5, Paul admitted his zealousness against 'The Way'.
3. Acts 22:6-16, his personal call by God, followed by his conversion. To his Jewish hearers, had they recognised it, all these things were equal to many Old Testament manifestations of Jehovah to His Ministers; the account is very similar to Moses and the Burning Bush.
4. Calling on 'The Name' of the Lord Jesus, Acts 9.
5. Acts 22:18-20, the Lord warns Paul in a vision that they will not accept his word and testimony.
6. Acts 22:21, he tells them of his ministry to the Gentiles, the word 'Gentiles' was Paul's last word. Legalistic bigotry then prevailed.
7. Paul taken into Roman custody to be scourged.
8. Acts 22:25-29, in Acts 16:37 Paul used his plight as a Roman Citizen after the flogging, now he uses it before the flogging.
   It is at this point that Paul clearly demonstrates that the powers that are ordained of God are the powers of this world, and that all believers are allowed to avail themselves of their rights, Romans 13:1-7, but they must not conflict with either the Will or Word of God.
   For Paul's list of sufferings, see 2 Corinthians 11:23-28.
9. The Chief Priests and the Council commanded to appear to charge Paul.

<u>Paul's final testimony before the Sanhedrin</u>. Acts 23:1-23.

1. Acts 23:1, he testifies to a good conscience before God.
2. Paul is smitten contrary to the Law, and rebuked for cursing the High Priest. Paul had been away from Jerusalem for so long that he did not recognise the High Priest without his robes on - external righteousness, Matthew 23:27-39.
3. Acts 23:6-10, Paul divides the Council over the resurrection.
4. Acts 23:10-11, Paul again imprisoned, the Lord appears unto him, and reassures Paul that he will go to Rome to testify.
5. Divine Providence permits Paul's nephew to overhear the plot against Paul's life
6. The Lord uses Roman justice, Roman horses, Roman soldiers, etc, to provide Paul's journey to Caesarea, all to protect one man - God's Man.

This is Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, a place that had never accepted him.

What a contrast to the first scene in Jerusalem, the Day of Pentecostal Outpouring, the Ministry in Word, Signs, Wonders, yet the last scene we have is of a Law/Grace Church in Jerusalem.

Angels released Peter from prison in Jerusalem – through the power of prayer in that Church, yet the last scene we have is Paul in captivity of the Romans.

Paul's testimony before Felix. Acts 24:1–27.

1. Acts 24:1–9, Paul charged before Felix, called a pestilent fellow – a mover of sedition – a ringleader of the Nazarene sect – a defiler of the Temple, yet false testimony against Paul as against Christ. Cp. Exodus 20:16.
2. Acts 24:10–21, Paul answers the charges, he knew the Roman law and asked for witnesses.
3. Acts 24:22–27, Felix defers Paul's judgement and left Paul bound. Felix had more perfect knowledge of 'The Way'.
4. Acts 24:24, Felix heard the message 'The Faith in Christ' with his wife. Cp. this message with Isaiah 55:6–7 and John 16:7–14, the Ministry of the Holy Spirit, He reasoned of,
    a. Righteousness, Romans 3:21–26 and 10:3–13,
    b. Temperance, Romans 3:9–20,
    c. Judgement to come, Acts 17:31, Hebrews 9:27 and Revelation 20:11–15,
5. The response of Felix – bribery – corruption – a hardened heart, Matthew 16:26. A conviction of sin, a knowledge of 'The way', heard of Faith in Christ, trembled in guilt, yet procrastinated for a 'season', 2 Corinthians 6:12.

God's Time is now, yesterday is gone, and tomorrow may be too late. God has given you today. Cp. Proverbs 1:24–32 and Hebrews 3:7.

Paul's testimony before Festus. Acts 25:1–27.

1. Acts 25:1, Festus hears the charges against Paul at Jerusalem.
2. Acts 25:2–3, a corrupted Sanhedrin seeks to have Festus kill Paul.
3. Acts 25:3–6, Festus declares Roman justice.
4. Acts 25:7–8, unproven accusations laid at Caesarea against Paul.
5. Acts 25:8, Paul defends himself.
6. Acts 25:9, Festus seeks favour from the Jews.
7. Acts 25:10–12, Paul makes an appeal to Caesar and to Rome.
8. Acts 25:13, Agrippa and Bernice come to salute Festus.
9. Acts 25:14–21, Festus informs Agrippa of Paul's case from judgement. Acts 25:22–27, Agrippa desires to hear Paul for himself,
    a. Festus declares Paul's innocence; note, no favour had come from the Jews, Acts 25:9,

b. Festus gives flattery to Agrippa. Over all, and through all, Paul is a testimony of 'The Name' before rulers and kings.

Paul's testimony before Agrippa. Acts 26:1–32.

1. All the great men there, Acts 25:23.
2. Acts 26:1, Paul permitted to speak for himself.
3. Acts 26:2–23, Paul again declares his conversion and commission,
a. Acts 26:4–8, his past manner of life,
b. Acts 26:9–11, his persecution of the Church and the Name of Jesus.
c. Acts 26:12–15, his Divine arrest on the Damascus Road.
d. Acts 26:16–18, his Divine Commission, note the language in verse 18,
e. Acts 26:19–20, his obedience to the heavenly vision,
f. Acts 26:21–23, his persecution and constant witness.
4. Acts 26:24–26, Festus charges Paul with madness.
5. Acts 26:27, Paul appeals to King Agrippa.
6. Acts 26:29–32, Paul declared innocent by Agrippa.
7. Paul then sent to Rome on his own appeal.

PAULS JOURNEY TO ROME AS A PRISONER.

1. Paul's voyage to Rome and shipwreck at Melita. Acts 27:1-44.
    1. Acts 27:1-2, Paul sets sail for Rome, he has with him Luke and Aristarcus for company.
    2. Acts 27:3, at Sidon he is refreshed.
    3. Acts 27:4, contrary winds - spiritual and natural.
    4. Acts 27:5-8, a change of ships.
    5. Acts 27:9-11, Paul forewarns of a coming shipwreck. The 'Fast' - Day of Atonement feast, the 10th day of the month, Leviticus 23:27. The centurion believed the master of the ship more than Paul, thereby trusting in their own ability; Paul, however, knew the Master of the seas, and Paul trusted God.
    6. Acts 27:12, the majority rules, for the distant heavens looked peaceful to their self-confidence. Only one man had the mind of God.
    7. Acts 27:13-14, the south wind blew softly deceiving them, then unexpectedly the tempestuous wind came; but, as foretold by Paul, God does not lie.
    8. Acts 27:15-20, the ability of man frustrated, he is helpless, he has fear, he has to work against the elements of God as the storm fully breaks, tackling apparatus is thrown overboard, then darkness, no source of guidance, no light, all hope is taken away. God permitted them to come to the place where they could, and would believe Him and His Word.
    9. Paul testifies his Faith in God after a long abstinence. Cp. this with Luke.8:22-25, where it was the Lord's Will that the Disciples went to the other side, therefore no storm could hinder them or would stop them from reaching their destination. It was the Lord's Will that Paul went to the Rome; therefore no storm could hinder him or would stop him from getting there. Hopelessness was met by Faith in God, Psalm 107:23-30. Note also at this time how Paul reminded them of the word he had spoken, of their unbelief, of their disobedience to the Word; what they could not believe in peace, they might believe in the storm. God will preserve all the lives aboard for one man's Paul's - sake.
    10. Acts 27:25, cp. with Acts 27:11 - 'I believe God'.
    11. Acts 27:27-29, the midnight hour, note Exodus 12, the Passover took place on the 14th day at midnight; Acts 27:27, they were driven up and down; Acts 27:29, they wished for day.
    12. Acts 27:30-36, obedience demanded by Paul for all to be saved, their last hope was cut in the loosing of the lifeboats,

now it was all Faith in God.

13. Acts 27:37–44, all land safely, all are saved in spite of the soldiers.

2. Miracle of the vipers bite. Acts 28:1–6.
   1. Acts 28:1–2, they land on Melita and find barbaric people showing kindness.
   2. Acts 28:2, they kindled a fire because of the cold.
   3. Acts 28:3, Paul also gathered sticks.
   4. Acts 28:3, the vipers bit and fastened onto Paul's hand, the islanders think that he is a murderer trying to escape.
   5. Acts 28:5, Paul shook the beast off, and felt no harm. So also should Christians shake off the Devil and feel no harm.
   6. Acts 28:6, because he did not die they call him a 'god'.

3. Healing of Publius' father. Acts 28:7–10.
   1. Acts 28:7, Publius, the chief man on the island.
   2. Acts 28:8, his father was sick, Paul laid hands on him and he was healed.
   3. Acts 28:9, others came and were healed.

4. Continuation of Paul's journey. Acts 28:11–15.
   1. Acts 28:11, after 3 months they departed from Melita.
   2. Acts 28:12, they landed at Syracuse, tarrying there 3 days.
   3. Acts 28:13–14, on to Puteoli where the brethren desired them to stay 7 days.
   4. Acts 28:15, they are met at Appi Forum and escorted to Rome.

5. Arrival at Rome. Acts 28:17–31.

1. Acts 28:16, Paul stayed by himself with a soldier.
2. Acts 28:17–24, instead of Paul going to the Jews first, they had to come to him, where he expounded the Scriptures, the Law, and the Prophets. Again, some believed, some didn't.
3. Acts 28:25–31, Paul now turns to the Gentiles,
   a. It is thought that it was at this time, Acts 28:30, that Paul wrote the Prison Epistles,
      i. Ephesians,
      ii. Colossians,
      iii. Philemon,
   b. The 3 Epistles are dispatched by the same messenger, Tychius, Ephesians 6, Colossians 4:7–9, and Philemon 9, 13, and 17
4. Philippians, written about 64 AD would have come from this imprisonment.

5. 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus were also written from Rome at about 65 AD
6. Since Acts makes no mention of these letters, it cannot be presumed that Luke had left Rome at this time.

Acts closes with Paul in prison and facing death, 2 Timothy 4:6–8, yet he is still preaching and teaching, with confidence, no man stopping him.