

Acts.

A translation.



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GreyBurro@ScriptureOnline.org.

<http://www.ScriptureOnline.org>.

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The cover exhibits a bust of the Roman emperor Claudius. The original is located on the first floor of the Naples National Archaeological Museum in Naples, Italy, invoice number 6060. This bust is made of white marble. However, ancient sculptures were likely painted, not viewed in the raw. So, the bust has been colorized using Adobe Photoshop.

Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus (born 10 BC, died AD 54) was the fourth Roman emperor (AD 41-54). He was the uncle of his predecessor, Caligula. He had some physical disabilities: He limped, had hearing problems, stuttered, and drooled. Caligula was assassinated through a political conspiracy. Because of his disabilities, the conspirators may have selected Claudius thinking he did not pose a threat. Claudius may have died from poisoning by his wife Agrippina. She then had her son, Nero, installed as emperor.

Claudius is mentioned twice in Acts: once related to a famine (11:28) and once from an expulsion of the Jews from Rome (18:2).

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Acts.

The church starts in Jerusalem (1:1-8:3).

Jesus directs the representatives (1:1-11).

¹ I authored the first account, Theophilus, about everything that Jesus began to do and teach.^a ² It ended on the occasion when he directed the representatives through the holy spirit. He chose them. Then he ascended.³ After suffering, he demonstrated to them that he was alive with many proofs. They observed him for forty days. He spoke about matters related to the kingdom of God.

⁴ He joined them. He commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem. Wait for the promise of the father which you heard about from me.” ⁵ John immersed with water. You will be immersed with the spirit in a few days.”

⁶ When they gathered, they asked him, “Lord, exactly when are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

⁷ He told them, “You cannot know the precise times or occasions. The father has assigned them by his own authority.” ⁸ However, you will receive a miracle: The holy spirit will descend on you. You will become my witnesses starting from Jerusalem, then all Judea and Samaria, and finally to the end of the world.”

⁹ After he said these things, they saw him rise up. He went into a cloud outside their view. ¹⁰ They were staring at the sky when he left. Look, two men were standing near them dressed in white. ¹¹ They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? Jesus was taken away from you by lifting him up into the sky. He will definitely return back the same way you saw him travel into the sky.”

The representatives select Matthias (1:12-26).

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from Mount Olive. It is near Jerusalem, about one Sabbath walk away. ¹³ They returned. They went to the upper apartment where they lived. This included Peter, John, Jacob, Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, Jacob son of Alphaeus,

a) Compare Luke 1:1-3.

Simon the zealot, and Judas son of Jacob.¹⁴ They were constantly united in prayer. This included some women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

¹⁵ At that time, Peter stood up in the middle of the brothers (the size of the group was about one hundred and twenty). He said,¹⁶ “Men and brothers, the scriptures must be fulfilled. The holy spirit prophesied through David’s mouth: Judas became the one who helped them arrest Jesus.¹⁷ He was one of us. He was part of this operation.¹⁸ He purchased a field with dirty money. He fell head first, his body burst open, and all his guts spilled out.¹⁹ It became known to all the citizens of Jerusalem. That field is called Akel-Damach in their own language, that is, the Field of Blood.²⁰ It is written in the book of Psalms,”

Let his house be deserted.

Let no one live in it.^a

“And,”

Someone else can have his job.^b

²¹ “We must assemble the men who were always with Jesus when he traveled around with us.²² This begins from the immersion by John up to the day when he was lifted away from us. One of these people must become a witness of his resurrection along with us.”

²³ They nominated two people: Joseph Bar-Sabbas, also called Justus, and Matthias.²⁴ After praying, they said, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you choose.²⁵ He will receive the position of service and representation. Judas abandoned it to go his own way.”

²⁶ They drew straws. The straw pointed to Matthias. So, he joined the eleven representatives.

The disciples speak in many languages (2:1-13).

² It was time for the feast of weeks. They were together in the same place.² Suddenly a sound came out of the sky. It was like a powerful rushing wind. It filled the whole house where they were sitting.³ They saw separate flames of fire. They came down on each one of them.

⁴ They were all filled with the holy spirit. They started speaking in other languages. The spirit gave them this ability.

a) Psalm 69:25.

b) Psalm 109:8.

⁵ Spiritual Jews from every nation under the sky were in Jerusalem.
⁶ When this noise occurred, a crowd gathered. They were confused—each one of them heard them speaking in his own language.

⁷ They were shocked and amazed, “Are not the speakers all Galileans?
⁸ How is it that we can hear the languages from our birthplaces?” ⁹ Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, citizens of Mesopotamia, both Judeans, Cappadocians, Pontians, and Asians, ¹⁰ both Phrygians and Pamphylians, Egyptians and regions of Libya near Cyrene, Roman residents, ¹¹ including Jews and Jewish converts, Cretans and Arabs. We hear them speaking in our languages by the power of God.”

¹² Everyone was shocked and surprised. They asked each other, “What does this mean?”

¹³ Some others made fun of them. They said, “They have become drunk on cheap wine.”

Peter accuses Jerusalem (2:14-36).

Joel predicts these events (2:14-21).

¹⁴ Peter stood up with the eleven. He lifted his voice. He spoke out, “All you Jewish men and residents of Jerusalem, know this. Pay attention to my words. ¹⁵ It is not like you think: They are not drunk. It is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶ This is what the prophet Joel claimed,”

¹⁷ It will happen in the final days,

God said,

I will pour out my spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy.

Your young men will see visions.

Your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ On my male and female slaves

I will certainly pour out my spirit at that time.

They will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will perform wonders in the sky above
and miracles on the earth below.

There will be blood, fire, and clouds of smoke.

- ²⁰ The sun will become dark.
 The moon will become blood
 until the great and marvelous day of the lord comes.
- ²¹ Everyone who calls on the name of the lord will be saved.^a

God raises Jesus (2:22-36).

²² “Men and Israelites, hear these words. God approved a man, Jesus of Nazareth, for you. He performed miracles, wonders, and signs. God did them right through him right in your presence. You yourselves know about this.²³ He was handed over by a definite plan and with the prior knowledge of God. You executed him using nails, and wicked men helped you.²⁴ God raised him up. He released him from the sorrow of death. It was impossible for it to stop him.”

- ²⁵ “David says about him,”
 I always see the lord in front of me.
 He is at my right hand so no one can defeat me.
- ²⁶ My heart is glad and my tongue is happy.
 My body still lives on hope.
- ²⁷ You will not abandon my life to Hades.
 You will not let your holy one see destruction.
- ²⁸ You have shown me the path of life.
 You will fill me with joy in your presence.^b

²⁹ “Men and brothers, I can boldly tell you about our ancestor David. He died and was buried. We can even visit his tomb now.”

³⁰ “He was a prophet. He knew that God swore to him under oath: His descendants will sit on his throne.^c³¹ He already knew that he was speaking about the resurrection of the messiah: He would not abandon him to Hades. His body would not see destruction.^d

³² “God raised this Jesus up—we are all witnesses.³³ God lifted him up to his right hand. He received the promise of the holy spirit from the father. He poured out this event. You have both seen it and also heard it.”

a) Joel 2:28-32.
 b) Psalm 16:8-11.
 c) Psalm 132:11.
 d) Psalm 16:10.

³⁴ “David did not rise up into heaven. However, he said,”
The lord said to my lord, ‘Sit at my right hand.

³⁵ I will put your enemies under your footstool.’^a

³⁶ “Let the entire house of Israel know this for sure: God made him both the lord and the messiah. His name is Jesus. You crucified him.”

Three thousand accept (2:37-41).

³⁷ When they heard this, it pained their hearts. They said to Peter and the other representatives, “Men and brothers, what should we do?”

³⁸ Peter replied to them, “Change. Every one of you must be immersed in the name of Jesus the messiah for the forgiveness of your sins. You will receive the gift of the holy spirit. ³⁹ The promise belongs to you, your children, and even everyone far away. It belongs to everyone that our lord God invites.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them. He urged them, “Separate yourself from this crooked generation.”

⁴¹ Some accepted his message. They were immersed. They added about three thousand lives that day.

The church persists (2:42-47).

⁴² They persisted in the instruction of the representatives, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer. ⁴³ Fear came over everyone. The representatives performed many wonders and signs.

⁴⁴ The believers were all in the same place. They shared everything together. ⁴⁵ They sold their possessions and property. They divided it up with whoever needed it. ⁴⁶ They met together in the temple every day. They broke bread in their houses. They ate together gladly and with a common attitude. ⁴⁷ They praised God. The people liked them. Every day, the lord added more saved people.

Peter heals a crippled beggar (3:1-10).

³ Peter and John entered the temple during the three o'clock prayer.

² There was a man who was crippled from birth. He had to be carried. Every day, they set him at the temple gate called Beautiful. He begged for donations from the people who passed by the temple.

a) Psalm 110:1.

³ He saw Peter and John about to enter the temple. He asked for a donation. ⁴ Peter stared at him along with John. He said, “Look at us.”

⁵ He paid attention to them. He was waiting to see what else he could get from them. ⁶ Peter said, “I do not have any silver or gold. However, I can give you this: In the name of Jesus the messiah from Nazareth, walk.”

⁷ He grabbed him by his right hand. He lifted him up. His feet and ankles immediately became strong. ⁸ He gladly stood up and walked. He went into the temple with them. He was walking, jumping, and praising God.

⁹ All the people saw him walking and praising God. ¹⁰ They knew who he was—the beggar at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. They were filled with surprise and amazement at what happened to him.

Peter addresses the people (3:11-26).

You killed Jesus (3:11-16).

¹¹ He held on to Peter and John. Meanwhile, all the people swarmed to them at the covered walkway called the Wonder of Solomon. ¹² Peter saw them. He addressed the people, “Men and Israelites, why are you amazed by this? Why do you stare at us as if we made him walk by our own power or godliness?”

¹³ “He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the God of our ancestors. He honored his servant, Jesus. You handed him over and betrayed him to Pilatus. He wanted to release him. ¹⁴ You betrayed a holy and righteous man. Then you asked to release a murderer. ¹⁵ You killed the one who created life. However, God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶ This man had faith in his name. You saw him. You know him. His name gave him strength. Faith in him made his body healthy right in front of you.”

God predicts Jesus (3:17-26).

¹⁷ “Brothers, I know that you acted out of ignorance. So did your leaders. ¹⁸ God predicted these things through the mouth of all the prophets: His messiah would suffer. He certainly fulfilled it. ¹⁹ Change and turn to wipe away your sins. ²⁰ Refreshing times will come from the lord. He will send the messiah, Jesus. He was appointed for you. ²¹ Heaven had to

accept him until everything is restored. God spoke about this long ago through the mouth of his holy prophets.²² Moses said,”

The lord God will raise up a prophet like me from your brothers. Listen to everything he tells you.²³ Whoever does not listen to that prophet will be cut off from the people.^a

²⁴ Starting with Samuel and continuing one by one, all of the prophets spoke and declared about these times.

²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the deal that God made with your ancestors. He said to Abraham,”

Your descendants will bless all the families on earth.^b

²⁶ “God raised up his servant. He sent him to bless you when each of you change your evil ways.”

The council arrests Peter and John (4:1-22).

The council assembles (4:1-7).

⁴ While he was speaking to the people, the priests, temple officers, and Sadducees came to them.² They were displeased that they were teaching the people and announcing that Jesus rose from the dead.³ They arrested them. They put them in jail until the next day. It was already evening.

⁴ Many of those who listened to the message believed. The number of men was about five thousand.

⁵ The next day, the leaders, elders, and legal experts assembled in Jerusalem.⁶ This included the high priest Hannas, but also Kaiaphas, John, Alexander, and all the members of the family of the high priesthood.

⁷ They put them up front and demanded, “By what authority and in whose name did you do this?”

Peter addresses the council (4:8-12).

⁸ Peter was filled with the holy spirit. He told them, “Leaders of the people and elders,⁹ I suppose that we are being questioned for helping a sick man: Why was he healed?”

¹⁰ “It should be known to all of you and all the people of Israel: It was by the name of Jesus, the messiah, of Nazareth. You crucified him, but

a) Deuteronomy 18:15-16, 19.

b) Genesis 22:18.

God raised him from the dead. It was by him this man was made well right in front of you. ¹¹ He is,”

The stone that the builders despised.

It became the main cornerstone.^a

¹² “Salvation comes by no one else. There is no other name among men under the sky that can save you.”

The council releases Peter and John (4:13-22).

¹³ They noticed the boldness of Peter and John. When they determined that they were uneducated and common people, they were surprised. They figured out that they had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ They examined the man standing with them who had been healed. No one had anything to say against him.

¹⁵ They ordered them to leave the council chambers. After they let, they debated between each other, ¹⁶ “What are we going to do with these guys? The famous sign done by them is obvious to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. We cannot deny it. ¹⁷ However, so that it will not spread any more among the people. We should threaten them: They must stop speaking about this name to any of the people.”

¹⁸ So, they summoned them. They commanded them not to speak at all nor to teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ Peter and John answered them, “If it is right before God to listen to you instead of God, then you can be the judge. ²⁰ We will not stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

²¹ After threatening them further, they released them. They could not figure out any other reason to punish them because of the people, who glorified God because of what had happened.

²² The man who received the healing sign was more than forty years old.

Peter and John pray (4:23-31).

²³ After their release, they returned to their people. They reported everything to them that the high priests and elders said. ²⁴ When they heard, with the same mind they lifted their voice to God, “Master, you

a) Psalm 118:22.

created the sky, the earth, the ocean, and everything in them.²⁵ Through the mouth of the holy spirit, our father and your child David said,

Why do the nations rage?

Why do the people plot in vain?

²⁶ The kings of the earth stand.

The rulers meet together.

They plot against the lord and his messiah.^a

²⁷ “Both Herod and Pilatus, along with the gentiles and the people of Israel, certainly met in this city. They plotted against your holy child, Jesus. You anointed him.²⁸ They did everything that your hand and plan predicted would happen.”

²⁹ “Now, lord, look at their threats. Give your slaves the complete boldness to speak your message.³⁰ Stretch out your hand with healing, signs, and wonders in the name of your holy child, Jesus.”

³¹ While they were praying, the place where they were gathered started shaking. They were all filled with the holy spirit. Then they spoke the word of God with boldness.

The believers shared their possessions (4:32-37).

³² There was a large group of believers. They had the same heart and mind. No one claimed any possessions were his own. Instead, they had everything in common.³³ With great authority, the apostles testified about the resurrection of the lord Jesus. Everyone had favor and might.

³⁴ No one needed anything. Everyone who owned land or lived in homes sold them. They gave away the money they received.³⁵ They put it at the feet of the representatives. They distributed it based who had needs.

³⁶ The apostles called Joseph ‘Bar-Nabas’. Translated, this means ‘the son of encouragement’. He was a Levite. He was born in Cyprus.³⁷ He owned a field. He sold it. He brought the money. He put it at the feet of the representatives.

a) Psalm 2:1-2.

Ananias and Sapphira lie (5:1-11).

⁵ A man named Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold some property. ² He snuck some of the money away. He and his wife both knew about it. He brought part of it and put it at the feet of the representatives.

³ Peter said, “Ananias, because of this, the Opposer has filled your heart. You lied to the holy spirit. You snuck some of the money from the land away. ⁴ Before you intentionally sold it, did it not belong to you? Why did you make up your mind about this business? You did not lie to people—you lied to God.”

⁵ When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and stopped breathing. Everyone who heard about it was quite afraid. ⁶ Some young men got up. They gathered his things. They carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After about three hours, his wife came in. She was unaware of what had happened. ⁸ Peter asked her, “Tell me, did you give away such-and-such an amount from the field?”

She said, “Yes. Such-and-such.”

⁹ Peter said to her, “Why have you agreed to test the spirit of the lord? Look, the feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door. They are going to carry you out.”

¹⁰ She immediately fell down at their feet. She stopped breathing. The young men came in. They discovered that she was dead. They carried her out. They buried her with her husband.

¹¹ Great fear came on the entire church and everyone else that heard about these things.

The representatives heal the sick (5:12-16).

¹² Many signs and wonders were done among the people through the hands of the representatives. They all met with the same mind under the covered walkway of Solomon. ¹³ None of the others dared to join them. The people had great respect for them. ¹⁴ Many believers were added to the lord, including both men and women.

¹⁵ They brought the sick out into the streets. They set them on pallets and stretchers. When Peter passed by, his shadow would fall on some of them. ¹⁶ A crowd of people from around Jerusalem collected together. They brought the sick and those afflicted with impure spirits. They were all healed.

The council arrests the representatives (5:17-33).

¹⁷ The high priest got up along with all his people. He was a member of the party of the Sadducees. They were full of jealousy.

¹⁸ They arrested the representatives. They put them in the public jail.

¹⁹ At night, an angel of the lord opened the prison gate. He brought them out. He said, ²⁰ “Go. Stand in the temple. Tell the people about all the words of this life.”

²¹ After they heard this, they entered the temple in the morning. They were teaching. The high priest along with his people called a council meeting of the entire legislature of the sons of Israel. They told the prison to bring them in.

²² The deputies present could not find them in the prison. When they returned, they reported it, ²³ “We discovered that the jail was securely shut. The guards were protecting the gates. However, when we opened it, we found no one.”

²⁴ When the officers of the temple and the high priests heard these words, they were confused about what could cause this. ²⁵ Someone present reported to them, “Look, the men that we put in prison are standing in the temple. They are teaching the people.”

²⁶ The officers left along with the deputies went and took them. However, they did not use violence. They were afraid of the people. They did not want to be stoned. ²⁷ They brought them. They set them in the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ “We ordered you not to teach in this name. Look, you are filling Jerusalem with your doctrine. You are trying to lay the blood of this man on us.”

²⁹ Peter and the representatives answered, “It is necessary to obey God, not people. ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised Jesus. You killed him by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted this prince and savior to his right hand. He brought change and forgiveness of sin to Israel. ³² We are witnesses to these matters. God gave the holy spirit to those who believe in him.”

³³ Those who heard this were furious. They wanted to kill them.

Gamaliel persuades the council (5:34-42).

³⁴ A member of the council stood up. He was a Pharisee named Gamaliel. He was a professor of the law, highly respected by the people. He

ordered them to take the men outside for a brief period.³⁵ He spoke to them, “Men and Israelites, be careful about what you do to these men.”

³⁶ “In the past, Theudas rose up. He claimed that he was someone special. The number of people who hung with him was four hundred. He was executed. Everyone who believed in him scattered. It came to nothing.^a ³⁷ After this, Judas the Galilean rose up. At that time there was a census. He took some people with him. They were killed. Everyone who believed in him scattered.”^b

³⁸ “With respect to these things, I tell you, keep your distance from these men. Let them go. If their plan or action is from men, it will fail. ³⁹ However, if it is from God, you cannot stop them. You do not want to be found fighting against God.”

He convinced them.⁴⁰ They summoned the representatives. They beat them. They commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus. Then they released them.

⁴¹ They left the council rejoicing. They considered themselves worthy to be disrespected for his name.⁴² Every day, they did not stop teaching and proclaiming that the messiah was Jesus, both in the temple and also in their houses.

The disciples select seven servants (6:1-7).

⁶ At that time, the disciples were multiplying. The Greek speakers began grumbling against the Hebrew speakers. Their widows were neglected during the daily distribution.

² The twelve called an assembly of the disciples. They said, “It is not a good idea for us to neglect the word of God to wait tables.³ Brothers, find seven men among you with a good reputation that are full of the spirit and with wisdom. Appoint them to take care of this need.⁴ We will continue praying and caring for the word.”

⁵ The message pleased the entire assembly. They selected Stephen. He was a man filled with faith and with the holy spirit. They also selected Philip, Prochorus, Nikanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas. He was a Jewish convert from Antioch.⁶ They presented them to the representatives. They prayed. They put their hands on them.

a) Compare with Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 20.5.1.

b) Compare with Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.8.1 and *Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.1, 18.1.6.

⁷ The word of God grew. The number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied rapidly. Large numbers of priests obeyed the faith.

The Jewish council arrests Stephen (6:8-15).

⁸ Stephen was full of favor and power. He performed great wonders and signs among the people.

⁹ Some people from the place called the freedmen synagogue rose up. They were from Cyrene and Alexandria. They also included Cilicians and Asians. They were debating Stephen. ¹⁰ They were unable to refute the wisdom and spirit of his argument. ¹¹ They convinced some men to claim, “We heard him saying things slandering Moses and God.”

¹² They riled up the people, the elders, and the legal experts. They went over and arrested him. They brought him in to the council meeting. ¹³ They convinced witnesses to lie, “This man has continued to say things against the holy place and against the law. ¹⁴ We heard him say, ‘Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place.’ He plans to change the traditions Moses gave us.”

¹⁵ When all the people sitting in the council looked at his face, he looked like an angel.

Stephen persuades the council (7:1-53).

God promises Abraham (7:1-8).

⁷ The high priest spoke, “What is your response to these things?”

² He said, “Men, brothers, and fathers, listen: God demonstrated his glory to Abraham while he still lived in Mesopotamia. This was before he moved to Haran.^a ³ He said to him,

Leave your land and your family. Go to the land that I showed you.^b

⁴ Then he left the land of Chaldea. He settled in Haran. After his father died, he moved to this land where you now live. ⁵ He did not give him an inheritance or any platform for his foot. Instead, he promised to give it to him as his possession. He also promised it to his descendants after him,^c even though he had no children.

a) Genesis 11:31-12:1.

b) Genesis 12:1.

c) Genesis 12:7.

⁶ God definitely said,

His descendants would be strangers in another land. They would make them slaves. They would treat them badly for four hundred years. ⁷ I will judge the nation that enslaves you, God said, After this, they will leave. They will worship me in this place.^a

⁸ He gave the contract of circumcision to him.^b So, he gave birth to Isaac. He circumcised him on the eighth day.^c Similarly, Isaac gave birth to Jacob. Jacob gave birth to the twelve tribal leaders.

Joseph gains favor and wisdom (7:9-16).

⁹ Because the tribal leaders were jealous of Joseph, they sold him off into Egypt.^d However, God was with him. ¹⁰ He delivered him from all his attackers. He gave him favor and wisdom with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. He appointed him leader over Egypt and all his affairs.^e

¹¹ A famine came. It caused great trouble all over Egypt and Canaan. Our ancestors could not find enough food. ¹² Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt. So, first he sent our ancestors away.^f

¹³ Next, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers.^g Then it became obvious to Pharaoh that they were the family of Joseph. ¹⁴ Joseph sent them to bring his father Joseph and all his relatives, including seventy-five people.^h

¹⁵ So, Jacob went down to Egypt.ⁱ Eventually, he and our ancestors all died.^j ¹⁶ After they died, they were buried at Shechem in a tomb. Abraham bought it for some silver from the sons of Hamor at Shechem.^k

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- a) Genesis 15:13-14.
 - b) Genesis 17:10-14.
 - c) Genesis 21:4.
 - d) Genesis 37:8.
 - e) Genesis 41:41-45.
 - f) Genesis 42:1-5.
 - g) Genesis 45:3-4.
 - h) Genesis 45:9-11.
 - i) Genesis 46:5-6.
 - j) Genesis 49:33.
 - k) Genesis 23:2-20, 33:19, 49:29-32, 50:12-13.

Moses defends his brothers (7:17-28).

¹⁷ The time came near for the promise which God made to Abraham. The people grew and multiplied in Egypt. ¹⁸ After this, another king rose up in Egypt. He did not honor Joseph.^a ¹⁹ He tricked our people. He treated our ancestors poorly. He made them abandon their babies so they would not live.^b

²⁰ At that time, Moses was born. He was special to God. They nourished him for three months in his father's house.^c ²¹ When they cast him out, the daughter of Pharaoh took him in. She raised him as her own son. ²² Moses was given the greatest education in Egypt. He was strong in his words and actions.

²³ When the time was right, at forty years old, he wanted to visit his brothers, the sons of Israel. ²⁴ When he observed a person mistreating someone, he defended him. He got revenge against the oppressor. He killed the Egyptian.^e

²⁵ He tried to understand his brothers. God redeemed them through his hands. However, they did not appreciate it. ²⁶ The next day, he noticed some people fighting. He urged them to be peaceful, "Men, you are brothers. Why mistreat each other?"

²⁷ The man mistreating his neighbor pushed him away, "Who made you the ruler and judge between us? ²⁸ Do you want to kill me the way you killed the Egyptian yesterday?"^f

Moses leads Israel out of Egypt (7:29-43).

²⁹ Moses ran away because of this statement. He became an immigrant in Midian.^g He had two sons there.^h

³⁰ After forty years passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness at Mount Sinai. He was in the flames of a burning bush. ³¹ When Moses

a) Exodus 1:7-8.

b) Exodus 1:22.

c) Exodus 2:2.

d) Exodus 2:3-10.

e) Exodus 2:11-12.

f) Exodus 2:13-14.

g) Exodus 2:15.

h) Exodus 2:21-22.

saw it, he was amazed by the sight.^a He came to realize that it was the voice of the lord,³² “I am the God of your fathers. I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Moses was trembling. He did not dare to even look.³³ The lord said to him, “Take your shoes off of your feet. The place where you are standing is holy.³⁴ Look, I noticed the troubles of my people in Egypt. I heard their groaning. I came down to deliver them. Now, go. I send you to Egypt.”^b

³⁵ This is the Moses that they rejected, “Who made you ruler and judge?”^c

God sent him to be the ruler and deliverer. He used the angel who appeared to him in the bush.

³⁶ He led them out by doing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt,^d in the Red Sea,^e and in the desert for forty years.^f ³⁷ Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, “God will rise up a prophet like me from your brothers.”^g

³⁸ He is the one with the congregation in the desert. The angel spoke to him and our ancestors at Mount Sinai. He received living words to present to us.^h

³⁹ Our fathers did not want to obey him. In their hearts, they wanted to drive him away and go back to Egypt.ⁱ ⁴⁰ They said to Aaron, “Make us some gods who will lead us. This Moses guy, he may have taken us out of Egypt, but we do not know what is going to happen with him.”^j

⁴¹ So, he made a calf at that time. They brought a sacrifice to that idol. They rejoiced in the art of their hands.^k

a) Exodus 3:2-3.

b) Exodus 3:4-10.

c) Exodus 2:14.

d) Exodus 7:3.

e) Exodus 14:21.

f) Numbers 14:33.

g) Deuteronomy 18:15.

h) Exodus 19:1-6.

i) Numbers 14:3.

j) Exodus 32:1, 32:23.

k) Exodus 32:4-6.

⁴² God turned away. He let them worship the armies of the sky. This is just what is written in the book of the prophets,

You did not bring an animal or sacrifice to me for forty years in the desert, house of Israel. ⁴³ You did not take up the tent of Molech or the start of the god Rephan. You made images to worship them. I will carry you away past Babylon.^a

God does not live in a house (7:44-53).

⁴⁴ “Our ancestors had a tent of witness in the desert.^b He told Moses to build it just like the design he saw.^c ⁴⁵ Our ancestors brought it with Joshua with their possessions.^d God drove out the nations from our ancestors^e up to the time of David. ⁴⁶ He found favor with God. He requested that he could build a place for Jacob to live.^f ⁴⁷ However, it was Solomon who built that house.”^g

⁴⁸ “The exalted one does not live in a man made house. Just like the prophet says,”

⁴⁹ Heaven is my throne.

The earth is my foot stool.

What kind of house can you build for me?

Says the lord,

Where is my resting place?

⁵⁰ Did my hand not make everything?^h

⁵¹ “Your hearts and ears are stiff-necked and uncircumcised. You always resist the holy spirit. You are just like your ancestors. ⁵² Did your ancestors not persecute the prophets? Did they kill those sent before the coming of the righteous one? You have now become his traitors and murders. ⁵³ You received the law as the rules of angels, but you did not keep it.”

a) Amos 5:25-27.

b) Exodus 27:21.

c) Exodus 25:9, 25:40.

d) Joshua 3:14-17.

e) Joshua 23:9.

f) 2 Samuel 7:2-16.

g) 1 Kings 6:1.

h) Isaiah 66:1-2.

The council kills Stephen (7:54-8:3).

⁵⁴ When they heard these things, they set their hearts. They ground their teeth against him.

⁵⁵ He became full of the holy spirit. He gazed into the sky. He saw God's glory. He saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ He said, "Look, I see the sky open. The son of man is standing at the right hand of God."

⁵⁷ They shouted with a loud voice while holding their ears. They violently rushed at him with a common plan. ⁵⁸ They threw him out of the city and stoned him. The witnesses took off their coats. They set them at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they stoned Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, accept my spirit."

⁶⁰ Kneeling down, he shouted with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

After he said this, he died. ⁸ Saul was pleased that he died. That day began a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem. Except for the representatives, everyone was scattered around the countries of Judea and Samaria.

² Some devout men carried Stephen away. They made strong laments over him.

³ Saul caused great harm to the church. He broke into houses. He drug out both men and women. He put them in jail.

The church scatters to Judea and Samaria (8:4-9:43).*Philip goes to Samaria (8:4-25).*

⁴ Those who were scattered went around telling the good news of the word. ⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria. He proclaimed the messiah to them.

⁶ A large crowd paid attention to what Philip said. They listened with the same mind. They saw the signs he performed. ⁷ Many of them had impure spirits. They shrieked with a loud voice when they came out. He healed many who were paralyzed and crippled. ⁸ The people in that city became quite happy.

⁹ There was a man named Simon who had been living in the city as a sorcerer for some time. The gentiles in Samaria were impressed with him. He said that he was someone great. ¹⁰ Everyone both small and great paid attention to him, “He has the power of God. We think he is a great man.”

¹¹ They paid attention to him because he had been performing sorcery on them for some time. ¹² They believed in Philip’s good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus. Both men and women were immersed. ¹³ Simon also himself believed. He was immersed. He stuck tight to Philip. When he saw the signs and wonders he performed, he was amazed.

¹⁴ The representatives in Jerusalem heard about how they received the word of God in Samaria. They sent Peter and John to visit them. ¹⁵ They came down to pray for them so they might receive the holy spirit. ¹⁶ It had not yet fallen on any of them. They had only been immersed in the name of the lord Jesus. ¹⁷ They put their hands on them. Then they received the holy spirit.

¹⁸ Simon saw that the representatives put their hands on them. This gave them the spirit. So, he brought some money, ¹⁹ “Give me this power: If I put my hands on someone, then they will receive the holy spirit.”

²⁰ Peter responded to him, “May both your silver and you be destroyed. Did you think you could buy the gift of God with money?”

²¹ “You have no part nor share in this matter. Your heart is not right before God. ²² Change this wicked thought of yours. Pray to God that this thought of your heart might be forgiven. ²³ I can tell that you have fallen into angry bitterness and the bonds of injustice.”

²⁴ Simon responded, “Pray for me to the lord so that none of the things you have said will happen to me.”

²⁵ After they testified and spoke the word of the lord, they returned to Jerusalem. They proclaimed the good news in many villages of Samaria.

Philip meets a eunuch (8:26-40).

²⁶ An angel of the lord spoke to Philip, “Get up. Go down the road that heads south from Jerusalem to Gaza. This is in the wilderness.”

²⁷ So, he got up and went. Look, there was an Ethiopian man. He was a eunuch prince of Candace, the queen of Ethiopia. He was her treasurer. He had come to worship in Jerusalem. ²⁸ During his return, he was seated

in his chariot. He was reading the prophet Isaiah.²⁹ The spirit spoke to Philip, “Go over. Climb into his chariot.”

So, he went over. He climbed into his chariot.³⁰ While he had been running along, Philip heard him reading Isaiah the prophet. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

³¹ He answered, “How can I understand unless someone helps me?”

He invited Philip to come up to sit beside him.³² This is the place in the scripture he was reading,

He is like a sheep lead to the slaughter.

He is silent like a lamb before his shearer.

He did not even open his mouth.

³³ He is taken to judgment in humility.

Who can know his descendants?

His life is taken from the earth.^a

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “Please tell me: Who is this prophet talking about? Is he talking about himself, or someone else?”

³⁵ Philip opened his mouth. Beginning from this passage, he told him the good news about Jesus.³⁶ While they were traveling down the road, they came to some water. The eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Who would stop me from being immersed?”^b

³⁸ He commanded them to stop the chariot. They both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch. He immersed him.³⁹ They came up out of the water. The spirit of the lord took Philip away. The eunuch did not see him any more. He traveled along his way, rejoicing.

⁴⁰ Philip was located in Azotus. He went around telling the good news in all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

Saul proclaims Jesus (9:1-31).

A light blinds Saul (9:1-22).

⁹ Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the disciples of the lord. He went to the high priest.² He asked him to produce instructions to send him to the Damascus synagogues. This would permit him

a) Isaiah 53:7-8.

b) Earlier and more reliable manuscripts omit verse 37.

to locate anyone associated with the way, whether men or women. He wanted to bind them and lead them to Jerusalem.

³ While traveling, he came close to Damascus. Suddenly, a light flashed out of the sky on him. ⁴ He fell on the ground. He heard a voice speaking to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

⁵ He replied, “Who are you, sir?”

He said, “I am Jesus. You are persecuting me.

⁶ Get up. Go into the city. Someone will tell you what you have to do.”

⁷ The men traveling with him stood there speechless. They could hear the voice but could not see anyone. ⁸ Paul got up off of the ground. He opened his eyes, but he could not see anything. Taking him by the hand, they lead him into Damascus. ⁹ While there, he was unable to see for three days. He did not eat or drink anything.

Ananias speaks to Saul (9:10-17).

¹⁰ There was a particular disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The lord spoke to him in a vision, “Ananias.”

He responded, “Here I am, sir.”

¹¹ The lord told him, “Get up. Go to Straight Street. Look for Saul from Tarsus at the house of Judas. Look, he is praying.”

¹² He saw a man in a vision named Ananias. He came and put his hands on him so that he can see again.

¹³ Ananias responded, “Lord, I have heard about this man from many people. He had done terrible things to your holy people in Jerusalem.

¹⁴ He has authority from the high priest to bind anyone who calls on your name.”

¹⁵ The lord said to him, “Go. He is the chosen instrument to carry my name before the gentiles, kings, and the sons of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him that he must suffer many things for my name.”

¹⁷ Ananias left. He went to his home. He set his hands on him. He said, “Brother Saul, the lord sent me. You saw Jesus on the road that you were traveling. You will see again. You will be filled with the holy spirit.”

Saul is immersed (9:18-22).

¹⁸ Right then, something fell out of his eyes like flakes. He could see again. He got up. He was immersed.

¹⁹ After eating some food, he felt better. He spent time with the disciples in Damascus for several days. ²⁰ Right away, he was proclaiming that Jesus is the son of God in the synagogues. ²¹ Everyone who heard him was amazed, “Is not this the one who destroyed everyone who called on this name in Jerusalem? Did he not come here to bind them and take them to the high priest?”

²² Saul became strong. He disturbed the Jews who lived in Damascus. He proved that he was the messiah.

The disciples sneak Saul out (9:23-25).

²³ As time passed, the Jews planned how they could kill him. ²⁴ Saul became aware of their plot. They were watching the gates both day and night so they could kill him.

²⁵ The disciples took him at night. They snuck him out through a hole in the wall. They lowered him in a basket.

Saul meets with the representatives (9:26-31).

²⁶ When he arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples. However, they were all afraid of him. They did not believe that he really was a disciple. ²⁷ However, Bar-Nabas took him. He led him to the representatives. He told them about how he saw the lord along the road. In Damascus, he told him that he would speak boldly in the name of Jesus.

²⁸ He stayed with them when he entered and traveled around Jerusalem. He spoke boldly in the name of the lord. ²⁹ He spoke and also debated the Greek speaking Jews. They wanted to grab him so they could kill him. ³⁰ When the brothers realized this, they took him down to Caesarea. Then they sent him back to Tarsus.

³¹ The church experienced peace all over Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. They established and lived in the fear of the lord. They were filled with the comfort of the holy spirit.

Peter heals Aeneas (9:32-35).

³² Peter was traveling around all over. He went down to meet with the holy people living in Lydda. ³³ He located a man there named Aeneas. For eight years, he was confined to a bed. He was paralyzed.

³⁴ Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus the messiah heals you. Get up. Make your bed.”

He got up right away.³⁵ Everyone living in Lydda and Sharon saw him. They turned to the lord.

Peter raises Tabitha (9:36-43).

³⁶ In Joppa, there was a disciple named Tabitha. In translation, this means Gazelle. She was busy doing good deeds and taking care of the poor.³⁷ It just so happened at that time that she got sick and died. They cleaned her body. They laid it in an upper room.

³⁸ Lydda was close to Joppa. The disciples heard that Peter was there. They sent two men to request, “Do not delay visiting us.”

³⁹ Peter got up. He met with them. They took him and lead him into the upper room. All the widows were standing with him. They showed him all the coats and clothing. Gazelle made them when she lived with them.⁴⁰ Peter took them all outside. He got on his knees. He prayed. He turned toward the body. He said, “Tabitha, get up.”

She opened her eyes. She looked at Peter. She sat up.⁴¹ She gave him her hand. He helped her up. He called all the holy people and widows. He showed that she was alive.

⁴² This became known all over Joppa. Many people believed in the lord.⁴³ He stayed in Joppa for several days with someone named Simon. He worked with leather.

The church includes gentiles (10:1-21:14).

Peter takes the good news to the gentiles (10:1-12:25).

Cornelius repents (10:1-11:18).

Cornelius receives a vision (10:1-8).

¹⁰ There was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius. He was a commander of a military company named the Italians.² He and his family were religious and feared God. He performed many acts of charity for the people. He regularly prayed to God.³ He clearly saw a vision at about three o'clock one day. An angel of God came to him.

He said to him, “Cornelius.”

⁴ He stared at him. He was terrified. He said, “Who are you, sir?”

The church includes gentiles (10:1-21:14). Peter takes the good news to the gentiles (10:1-12:25).

He answered him, “Your prayers and charitable actions have gone up. God has taken notice of you.⁵ Send some men into Joppa. Ask them to bring Simon who is called Peter.⁶ He is visiting with Simon the leather worker. His home is close to the ocean.”

⁷ When the angel speaking to him left, he spoke to two of his servants and a religious military officer assigned to him.⁸ After he explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Peter receives three visions (10:9-16).

⁹ The next day, they were walking there. As they approached at the city, Peter was praying on the roof at about noon.¹⁰ Peter was hungry. He wanted to get something to eat. While he was getting ready, he went into a trance.

¹¹ He saw the sky open up. Something like a large sheet came down. It sat down on the ground by its four corners.¹² All kinds of animals with four feet, things that crawl on the ground, and birds of the sky were in it.

¹³ A voice came to him, “Get up, Peter. Slaughter and eat.”

¹⁴ Peter said, “I cannot, lord. I have never eaten anything vulgar or impure.”

¹⁵ The same voice came to him a second time, “If God made something pure, you cannot make it impure.”

¹⁶ This happened for a third time. Then the sheet rose back up into the sky.

Cornelius’s servants meet with Peter (10:17-24).

¹⁷ Peter was uncertain within himself about what the vision meant. Just then, the men sent by Cornelius arrived at the home of Simon. They were standing at the door.¹⁸ They called out to determine whether Simon called Peter was staying there.¹⁹ While Peter was pondering the vision, the spirit spoke to him, “Look, some men are looking for you.²⁰ Get up. Go down. Travel with them. Do not give it a second thought. I have sent you.”

²¹ Peter went down to the men. He said, “Look, I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason that you came?”

²² They responded, “Cornelius is our commander. He is a righteous man. He fears God. He is honored by the entire nation of the Jews. A

holy angel warned him to bring you to his house so he could listen to your words.”

²³ He called them inside as his guests. The next day, he got up and left with them. Some of the brothers from Joppa joined him.

Peter meets Cornelius (10:24-33).

²⁴ The next day, they arrived at Caesarea. He was waiting for them. He gathered his family and special friends together. ²⁵ When Peter arrived, Cornelius met him. He fell on his feet. He worshiped him. ²⁶ Peter picked him up, “Get up. I am just a man.”

²⁷ While talking with him, he came inside. Then he discovered the large crowd that had gathered. ²⁸ He said to them, “You know that it is unlawful for a Jewish man to meet with or associate with other nations. However, God has shown me that no man is vulgar or impure. ²⁹ I came when you requested, without complaint. So, I ask: Why did you send for me?”

³⁰ Cornelius said, “Four days ago, it was about this time. I was praying in my house at three o’clock. Look, a man appeared to me in shining clothes.”

³¹ “He said, ‘Cornelius, your prayers have been heard. Your charity is recognized by God. ³² Send to Joppa. Get Simon called Peter. He is visiting at the house close to the ocean with Simon the leather worker.’”

³³ “So, I sent for you right away. You politely agreed to come. Now we all are present before God. We intend to listen to everything the lord commanded you.”

Peter testifies about Jesus (10:34-43).

³⁴ Peter opened his mouth. He said, “I certainly understand that God does not discriminate. ³⁵ Every nationality that fears him and does right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ This is the message that he sent to the sons of Israel. He sent the good news of peace through Jesus the messiah: He is the lord of everyone.”

³⁷ “You know about the message proclaimed all over Judea. It started in Galilee with the immersion proclaimed by John. ³⁸ God anointed Jesus of Nazareth by the holy spirit and with power. He traveled around doing good works and healing everyone oppressed by the devil. God was with him.”

³⁹ “We are all witnesses of what he did both in the country of Judea and also in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree. ⁴⁰ God raised him on the third day. He made him visible, ⁴¹ not to all people, but to the witnesses that were previously chosen by God. We ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.”

⁴² “He ordered us to proclaim to the people. We testify that he is the chosen one of God. He is the judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about this: Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins.”

Peter immerses Cornelius (10:44-48).

⁴⁴ While Peter was speaking these words, the holy spirit fell on all those who were listening to the message. ⁴⁵ The circumcised faithful people who came with Peter were surprised—the gift of God poured out onto the gentiles. ⁴⁶ They heard them speaking in languages and praising God.

Peter said, ⁴⁷ “Who can deny the water for them to be immersed? They received the spirit just like we did.”

⁴⁸ He told them to be immersed in the name of Jesus the messiah. Then they asked him to stay with them for a few days.

Peter explains to the representatives (11:1-18).

¹¹ The representatives and the Jewish brothers with them heard that the gentiles received the word of God.

² When Peter came down to Jerusalem, the circumcision party separated themselves from him, ³ “You associated with uncircumcised men. You even ate with them.”

⁴ Afterwards, Peter began to explain to them, ⁵ “I was praying in the city of Joppa. I saw a vision while in a trance. Something like a large sheet came down from the sky. It sat down on its four corners. It came near me. ⁶ I stared at it. I looked and I saw animals with four feet on the ground, beasts, creeping things, and birds of the sky. ⁷ I listened. A voice spoke to me, ‘Get up, Peter. Slaughter and eat.’”

⁸ “I said, ‘I cannot, lord. Nothing vulgar or impure has ever gone into my stomach.’”

⁹ “The voice from the sky answered me for the second time, ‘If God made something pure, you cannot make it impure.’”

The church includes gentiles (10:1-21:14). Peter takes the good news to the gentiles (10:1-12:25).

¹⁰ “This happened for a third time. Then it went back up into the sky.
¹¹ Look, right then, three men were standing at the home where I was staying. They were sent from Caesarea to me. ¹² The spirit spoke to me to go with them, without complaining. These brothers came with me. I went into the house of a particular man. ¹³ He told us how he saw an angel in his house. He stood there and said, ‘Send them to Joppa. Bring Simon who is called Peter. ¹⁴ He will speak a message to you. You will be saved along with everyone in your house.’ ”

¹⁵ When I began to speak, the holy spirit fell on them, just like it did with us in the beginning. ¹⁶ Then I remembered the word of the lord which he spoke, ‘John immersed with water. However, you will immerse with the holy spirit.’ ”

¹⁷ “If God gave them the same gift when they believed in the lord Jesus the messiah, how can I resist God?”

¹⁸ When they heard these things, they stopped. They praised God, “Now God grants life to the gentiles who change.”

Greeks believe in Antioch (11:19-26).

¹⁹ Many scattered after the persecution against Stephen. They traveled to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. They did not speak the word to anyone except Jews.

²⁰ However, there were some men from Cyprus and Cyrene. They went to Antioch. They talked to Greeks. They told them the good news about the lord Jesus. ²¹ The hand of the lord was with them. A large number of people believed. They turned to the lord.

²² The Jerusalem church heard the news about them. So, they sent Barnabas out to Antioch. ²³ He arrived. He saw the favor of the lord. He was happy. He encouraged everyone to set their hearts to stick with the lord. ²⁴ He was a good man. He was full of the holy spirit and full of faith. Large crowds were added to the lord.

²⁵ He went to Tarsus to locate Saul. ²⁶ He found him. He brought him back to Antioch. They stayed with the church for an entire year. They taught large numbers of people. For the first time, the disciples in Antioch got the title ‘Christians’.

Antioch helps the Judean brothers (11:27-30).

²⁷ At this time, the prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

²⁸ One of them stood up. His name was Agabus. He declared through the spirit that there would be a great famine over the entire empire. This happened during the reign of Claudius.

²⁹ Some of the disciples decided to help the brothers living in Judea. Each of them could help as much as he determined. ³⁰ They did so. They sent it to the elders through Bar-Nabas and Saul.

Peter escapes prison (12:1-25).

Herod executes Jacob (12:1-2).

¹² After some time, king Herod reached out his hands to harm some of those in the church. ² He even executed Jacob, the brother of John, using the sword.

Herod arrests Peter (12:3-5).

³ He saw that this pleased the Jews. He was determined to arrest Peter. This was during the time of unleavened bread. ⁴ After he arrested him, he put him in prison. Four squads of soldiers took him to guard him. He intended to hand him over to the people after the passover. ⁵ He kept Peter in prison. The church offered up fervent prayers to God about him.



Claudius is a Roman emperor.

An angel saves Peter (12:6-11).

⁶ Herod was going to hand him over. That very night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. He was bound up with two chains. A jailer was at the door. He was watching the prison. ⁷ Look, an angel of the lord arrived. A light shone in the jail. Suddenly, he touched Peter's side. He stood him up, "Get up quickly."

His shackles fell off of his hands. ⁸ The angel spoke to him, "Get dressed. Put your sandals on."

This is what he did. He told him, "Put your clothes on. Follow me."

⁹ He left. He followed. He was unaware that this actually occurred by an angel. He thought he was watching a vision.

The church includes gentiles (10:1-21:14). Peter takes the good news to the gentiles (10:1-12:25).

¹⁰ First they passed by the prison. Then they came through an iron gate that lead to the city. It opened by itself. When they left, they went down one street. Suddenly, the angel left him. ¹¹ Peter was by himself. He said, "Now I completely understand: The lord sent his angel. He saved me from the hand of Herod and all the expectations of the Jewish people."

Peter comes to Mary's home (12:12-17).

¹² After he realized this, he went to the home of Mary. She was the mother of John called Mark. Many people were gathered there and praying. ¹³ When he knocked at the front door, a servant girl came. She went by the name Rhoda. ¹⁴ She recognized Peter's voice. She was so happy that she failed to open the door. She ran inside. She announced that Peter was standing at the door. ¹⁵ They said to her, "Are you crazy?"

She assured them that it was so. But they said, "It must be an angel."

¹⁶ Peter continued to shout, "Open up!"

Then they saw him. They were amazed. ¹⁷ He waved his hand at them without saying anything. He explained to them how the lord brought him out of the prison.

He also said, "Tell Jacob and the other brothers about these things."

Then he left. He went to another place.

Herod cannot locate Peter (12:18-19).

¹⁸ Around that time, there was a strong commotion among the soldiers: What happened to Peter? ¹⁹ Herod asked about him. When he could not locate him, he questioned the guards. He commanded that they be executed. He came down from Judea. He stayed in Caesarea.

Herod dies (12:20-25).

²⁰ People from Tyre and Sidon were united in their opposition against him. Blastus was his household manager. They persuaded him to ask the king for terms of peace, since their food was supplied through the royal treasury.

²¹ On a particular day, Herod put on his royal clothing. He sat on the bench to present them with a speech. ²² The people were shouting, "It is the voice of a god. It is not a man's voice."

²³ At that moment, an angel of the lord struck him because he did not give honor to God. He was eaten up by worms. His life ended.^a ²⁴ However, the word of God grew and increased.

²⁵ Bar-Nabas and Saul went back to Jerusalem. They finished their service. They brought John called Mark with them.

Paul goes on his first journey (13:1-15:35).

Antioch appoints Bar-Nabas and Saul (13:1-3).

¹³ The church at Antioch contained prophets and teachers: Bar-Nabas, Simeon called Black, Lucian from Cyrene, Manaen who grew up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.² They were serving the lord and fasting. The holy spirit spoke to them, “Appoint Bar-Nabas and Saul for me. They must perform the job which I chose them to do.”

³ After they fasted and prayed, they put their hands on them. They sent them out.

Paul goes to Cyprus (13:4-12).

⁴ They sent them out by the holy spirit to go down to Seleucia. They sailed toward Cyprus.⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as an assistant.⁶ They traveled around the entire island until they came to Paphos.



An inscription at Pisidian Antioch mentions Sergius Paulus.

There was a certain man there. He was a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus.⁷ He was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus. He was an educated man. He summoned Bar-Nabas and Paul because he wanted to hear the word of God.⁸ Elymus the sorcerer opposed them, or such his name means. He wanted to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

⁹ Saul, or rather Paul, was full of the holy spirit. He stared at him.¹⁰ He said, “You are full of deceit and all kinds of sneakiness. You are the son of the devil. You are the enemy of all righteousness. Will you not stop

a) Compare with Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 19.8.2.

The church includes gentiles (10:1-21:14).

Paul goes on his first journey (13:1-15:35).

trying to pervert the straight way of the lord? ¹¹ Now, look, the hand of the lord is against you. You will become blind. You will not see the sun for some time.”

He immediately fell into a hazy darkness. He had to go around being lead by the hand. ¹² When the proconsul saw this, it so happened that he believed. He was amazed by the teaching of the lord.

Paul goes to Pisidian Antioch (13:13-52).

Paul goes to synagogue (13:13-15).

¹³ Those with Paul left Paphos. They went to Perga in Pamphylia. John left them. He went back to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They left Perga. They went to Antioch in Pisidia. They entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day. They sat down.

¹⁵ After reading the law and the prophets, the synagogue leaders invited them, “Men and brothers, if anyone has a word of encouragement for the people, you should speak.”

Paul speaks at synagogue (13:16-41).

¹⁶ Paul stood up. He motioned with his hand. He said, “Men and Israelites, those who fear God, listen: ¹⁷ He is the God of this people Israel. He chose our ancestors. He lifted the people living in the land of Egypt. With his arm lifted up, he brought them out of there. ^a ¹⁸ For forty years, he put up with them in the desert. ^b ¹⁹ After defeating the seven nations in the land of Canaan, ^c he divided up their territory. ^d ²⁰ They lived there for four hundred and fifty years.”

“After this, he appointed judges ^e until the time of Samuel the prophet.”

²¹ “Then they asked for a king. God gave them Saul the son of Kish for forty years. He was a man from the tribe of Benjamin. ^f ²² After he removed him, he raised up David to be their king. ^g He gave this testimony

a) Exodus 6:1, 6:6.

b) Numbers 14:34.

c) Deuteronomy 7:1-2.

d) Joshua 14:1-5.

e) Judges 2:16.

f) 1 Samuel 10:20-24.

g) 1 Samuel 16:12-13.

about him, 'I found David the son of Jesse.^a He is a man according to my own heart.^b He will do everything that I want.'^c "

²³ "From his descendants, God brought the savior, Jesus, to Israel. So, he kept a promise.²⁴ Before he appeared, John proclaimed the immersion of change to all the people of Israel.^d ²⁵ When he finished the race, he said, 'I am not what you think I am. Look, someone is coming after me. I am not worthy to untie his shoes.'^e "

²⁶ "Men and brothers, sons born from Abraham, those among you who fear God, the message of salvation was sent to us.²⁷ Those who live in Jerusalem, along with their leaders, did not acknowledge him. When they condemned him, they fulfilled the voice of the prophets that are read every Sabbath.²⁸ Even though they discovered no reason for him to die, they asked Pilatus to put him to death.²⁹ When all the things written about him were complete, they took him down from the tree. They set him in a tomb."

³⁰ "However, God raised him from the dead.³¹ Over many days, people saw him while he traveled from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now witnesses for him to the people."

³² "We bring the good news to you: The promise made to the ancestors has come.³³ God delivered it to our children by raising Jesus. It is written in the second psalm,"

You are my son.

I have birthed you today.^f

³⁴ "He brought him back from the dead. He will never have to return to destruction. He certainly said,"

I will grant you the holy and faithful promises made to David.^g

³⁵ "He also said in another psalm,"

Do not allow your holy one to see destruction.^h

a) Psalm 89:20.

b) 1 Samuel 13:14.

c) Isaiah 44:28.

d) Compare with Matthew 3:1-2, Mark 1:4-5, Luke 3:3.

e) Compare with Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:11, Luke 3:16, John 1:27.

f) Psalm 2:7.

g) Isaiah 55:3.

h) Psalm 16:10.

³⁶ “In his own time, David served the plan of God, then he went to sleep. He was placed with his ancestors.^a He saw destruction.³⁷ However, God rose him so he would not see destruction.”

³⁸ “Let it be known to you, men and brothers: Through him forgiveness of sins has been proclaimed to you. The law of Moses cannot justify you from everything.³⁹ In him, everyone who believes is justified.⁴⁰ Look out: Do not let what is spoken about in the prophets happen to you,”

⁴¹ Look, you haters.

Be amazed and disappear.

I will do things in your days.

You will never believe these events

even if someone tells you.^b

Many follow Paul (13:42-52).

⁴² When they left, they requested that they return on the next Sabbath. They wanted them to discuss these matters with them again.⁴³ The synagogue dismissed. Many of the Jews and devout converts followed Paul and Bar-Nabas. They spoke to them. They convinced them to remain in the favor of God.⁴⁴ When the next Sabbath arrived, the entire city gathered to listen to the word of the lord.

⁴⁵ The Jews noticed the crowd. They became jealous. Some slanderers spoke against what Paul was saying.

⁴⁶ Both Paul and Bar-Nabas spoke boldly. They said, “It was necessary to speak the word of God to you first. However, you rejected him. You do not consider yourself worthy of eternal life. Look, we will turn to the gentiles.⁴⁷ The lord certainly commanded us,”

I made you into a light for the gentiles

to bring salvation to the end of the earth.^c

⁴⁸ When the gentiles heard this, they were happy. They honored the word of the lord. Many people believed. They were appointed to eternal life.⁴⁹ They took the word of the lord all over the region.

⁵⁰ The Jews stirred up the devout women who were influential and the important people in the city. They started a persecution against Paul and

a) 1 Kings 2:10.

b) Habakkuk 1:5.

c) Isaiah 49:6.

Bar-Nabas. They threw them outside their borders.⁵¹ So, they shook the dust off of their feet. They went on to Iconium.⁵² The disciples were filled with joy and the holy spirit.

Paul goes to Iconium (14:1-7).

¹⁴ The same thing happened in Iconium. They went into the Jewish synagogue. When they spoke, many Jews and also Greeks believed.² Some Jews did not believe. They stirred up and provoked the gentiles against the brothers.³ After some time, they spoke boldly about the lord. He confirmed the message of his favor by granting signs and doing wonders through their hands.

⁴ The people in the city were divided. Some sided with the Jews. Others agreed with the representatives.⁵ A gentile mob formed, joined by the Jews, along with their leaders. They intended to harm them and stone them.

⁶ When they realized it, they fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra, Derbe, and the surrounding region.⁷ They were telling the good news there.

Paul goes to Lystra (14:8-20).

⁸ There was a man sitting in Lystra. He was unable to use his legs. He was crippled since birth. He had never walked.⁹ He listened to Paul's speech. He stared at him. He noticed that he had faith for salvation.¹⁰ He spoke in a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet."

He jumped up and walked.¹¹ The crowd saw what Paul did. They lifted up their voice, speaking in Lycaonian, "They are like Gods. They have come down to us appearing to be humans."

¹² They called Bar-Nabas 'Zeus'. They called Paul 'Hermes' because he presented the messages.¹³ The priest of Zeus was located outside the city. He brought some bulls and wreaths to the city gates. He and the crowd wanted to offer a sacrifice.

¹⁴ The representatives, Bar-Nabas and Paul, heard about it. They ripped their clothes. They ran into the crowd. They were shouting,¹⁵ "Men, what are you doing? We are men with problems just like you. We brought you the good news: Turn away from vanity, and toward the living God. He

created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them.^a ¹⁶ In previous generations, he put up with all the gentiles going along their way. ¹⁷ He did not leave himself without any witness—he still did kind things. He gave you rain from the sky, times of plenty, lots of meat, and happiness in your hearts.”

¹⁸ While they were speaking, they could barely keep the crowds from making a sacrifice to them.

¹⁹ Some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium. They persuaded the crowds. They stoned Paul. They drug him outside the city. They thought they had killed him. ²⁰ The disciples looked around. They picked him up. They brought him into the city. The next morning, he left with Barnabas. They went to Derbe.

Paul goes back to Antioch (14:21-28).

²¹ They proclaimed the good news in that city. They made many disciples. Then they turned back toward Lystra, then on to Iconium, and finally to Antioch.

²² They strengthened the souls of the disciples. They urged them to remain in the faith, “There will be many persecutions, so it is necessary to enter the kingdom of God.”

²³ They selected elders for them in each church. They prayed with fasting. They presented them to the lord. They believed in him. ²⁴ After traveling through Pisidia, they went into Pamphylia. ²⁵ They spoke the word in Perga. Then they went down to Attalia. ²⁶ They sailed to Antioch from there. This is where they were committed by God’s favor to do the work which they completed.

²⁷ When they arrived, they gathered the church together. They told them everything which God had accomplished through them, namely, that they opened the door of faith for the gentiles. ²⁸ They stayed with the disciples for more than a short time.

a) Genesis 1:3-31.

Is circumcision required for salvation (15:1-35)?

Some require circumcision (15:1-5).

¹⁵ Some people came down from Judea. They taught the brothers, “If you are not circumcised according to the custom of Moses, it is impossible for you to be saved.”

² There was significant conflict and debate between Paul and Bar-Nabas and with them. So, they appointed Paul, Bar-Nabas, and some of the other brothers. They went down to meet with the representatives and elders in Jerusalem about this question.

³ Along the way, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria. They told them about the conversion of the gentiles. This made all the brothers quite happy. ⁴ When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, the representatives, and the elders. They told them everything that God had accomplished through them.

⁵ Some people from the party of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, “It is necessary to circumcise them. We must order them to keep the law of Moses.”

Peter speaks (15:6-11).

⁶ The representatives and elders met with them to consider this matter.

⁷ There was considerable debate. Peter stood up. He spoke to them, “Men and brothers, you know that long ago, God chose among you through my mouth. The gentiles would hear the word of the good news and believe.

⁸ God knows everyone’s heart. He testified using them. He gave them the holy spirit just like he gave it to us. ⁹ No one can discriminate between us and them. He made their hearts clean by faith.”

¹⁰ “Now, who can challenge God? Who is going to put a yoke around the neck of the disciples? Neither we nor our ancestors could carry it.

¹¹ We believed and are saved by the favor of the lord Jesus. In the same way, they are too.”

Jacob speaks (15:12-21).

¹² The entire crowd was silent. They listened to Bar-Nabas and Paul. They told how God performed signs and wonders among the gentiles through them.

¹³ After they finished, Jacob responded, “Men and brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴ Simeon told how God first looked out to accept some people from the gentiles into his name. ¹⁵ The message of the prophets agree to this. It is written,

¹⁶ After this, I will return.

I will rebuild the fallen tent of David.

I will rebuild what was destroyed.

I will make it straight again.

¹⁷ The rest of men will seek the lord.

All the gentiles will take my name for themselves.

The lord says he will make these things ¹⁸ known forever.

¹⁹ “I conclude that we should not trouble those who turn away from the gentiles toward God. ²⁰ We should write to them: Do not be corrupted by idols, sexual misconduct, strangled animals, and blood. ²¹ From ancient times, Moses has been preached in every city. He has been read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.”

The representatives write to Antioch (15:22-29).

²² Then the representatives, elders, and the entire church decided to select some men from their ranks. They sent them to Antioch with Paul and Bar-Nabas: Judas called Bar-Sabbas and Silas. These men were leaders among the brothers. ²³ They wrote by their own hand,

From the representatives, elders, and brothers. To the gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Greetings.

²⁴ We heard that some people left us. They troubled you with matters in order to disturb your souls. We did not tell them to do this.

²⁵ We decided with one voice to select some men. We sent them to you with our beloved Bar-Nabas and Paul. ²⁶ These men have committed their lives for the sake of the name of our lord Jesus, the messiah. ²⁷ We also sent Judas and Silas. They will verbally confirm these same matters.

²⁸ The holy spirit agreed. We put no more burden on you other than what is necessary. ²⁹ Stay away from idols, blood, strangled animals, and sexual misconduct. You will do well to avoid these things.

Be healthy.

Paul delivers the letter to Antioch (15:30-35).

³⁰ After they finished, they went down to Antioch. They met with a large group. They presented the letter to them. ³¹ When they read it, the encouragement made them happy.

³² Both Judas and Silas were themselves also prophets. With many words, they urged the brothers to remain strong. ³³ They spent some time there. Then they sent them back with peace from the brothers. They returned to those who sent them.

³⁵ Paul and Bar-Nabas stayed in Antioch. They taught and proclaimed the good news along with many other words of the lord.

Paul goes on his second journey (15:36-18:17).

Paul and Bar-Nabas separate (15:36-41).

³⁶ After some time, Paul said to Bar-Nabas, "We should go back and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the lord. How are they doing?"

³⁷ Bar-Nabas intended to bring John who is called Mark with him.

³⁸ Paul considered that he had deserted them in Pamphylia.^a He did not want to come with them in the effort. So, he did not want to bring him.

³⁹ This caused an irritation. They separated from each other.

Bar-Nabas took Mark. He sailed to Cyprus. ⁴⁰ Paul chose Silas. He left. The brothers sent him with the favor of the lord. ⁴¹ He passed through Syria and Cilicia. He strengthened the churches.

Paul goes through Anatolia (16:1-10).

Paul takes Timothy (16:1-5).

¹⁶ He arrived in Derbe and Lystra. Look, a certain disciple lived there named Timothy. He was the son of a believing Jewish woman. However, his father was a Greek. ² He had a good reputation with the brothers in Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted to take him along with him. So, he took him. He had him circumcised by the Jews who lived there. They all knew that his father was Greek.

a) Compare with Acts 13:13.

⁴ When they left the city, they committed them to guard the teachings determined by the representatives and elders in Jerusalem. ⁵ The churches remained strong in the faith. They grew in number every day.

Paul sees a vision (16:6-10).

⁶ They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian regions. The holy spirit prevented them from speaking the word in Asia. ⁷ After they came to Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia. The spirit of Jesus would not let them. ⁸ After passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas.

⁹ Paul saw a vision at night. There was a Macedonian man. He stood up and urged them, "Come to Macedonia. Help us."

¹⁰ When he saw the vision, we left right away toward Macedonia. We were of the opinion that God had invited us to tell them the good news.

Paul goes to Philippi (16:11-40).

Paul immerses Lydia (16:11-15).

¹¹ We sailed from Troas. We headed straight for Samothrace. The next day we reached Neapolis. ¹² From there, they entered Philippi. It is an important city in the region of Macedonia. It is a colony. We entered this city. We stayed for a while.

¹³ On the Sabbath day, we went outside the city gate near the river. We believed that there was a place of prayer. We sat down. We started talking with some women who joined.

¹⁴ There was a particular woman named Lydia. She sold purple fabric out of the city of Thyatira. She worshiped God. She listened. The lord opened her heart to accept what Paul was saying. ¹⁵ She was immersed, and so was her household. She was encouraged, "If the lord has determined that I am faithful, then come stay at my house."

She convinced us.

Paul heals a slave girl (16:16-23).

¹⁶ While we were going to prayer, we met a particular slave girl with a fortune-telling spirit. She was following us. She brought her masters a lot of money by telling the future. ¹⁷ She started following Paul. She shouted at us, "These men are slaves of the most high God. They are telling you the way of salvation."

¹⁸ She did this for many days. This bothered Paul. So, he turned toward the spirit and said, "I command you in the name of Jesus the messiah, come out of her."

It left her at that very moment. ¹⁹ Her masters realized that their expectation to make a profit was disappearing. They grabbed Paul and Silas. They drug them into the market to the rulers. ²⁰ They brought them before the officers. They said, "These men are troubling our city. They are Jews.

²¹ They teach certain customs. They are not legal for us to accept. No one should do so who is a Roman."

²² The crowd rose up against them. The officers took off their clothing. They ordered that they should be beaten with rods. ²³ They struck them with many blows. They threw them into jail. They ordered the jailer to hold them securely.

The jailer believes (16:24-34).

²⁴ He accepted these orders. He threw them into an inner cell. He secured their feet with stocks. ²⁵ In the middle of the night, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God. The other prisoners could hear them. ²⁶ Suddenly, there was a huge earthquake. The foundations of the prison shook. All the chains came loose.

²⁷ The head jailer woke up. He saw that the prison doors were open. He pulled out his sword. He was about to kill himself. He thought that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ Paul yelled with a loud voice, "Do not do this terrible thing to yourself. Everyone is still here."

²⁹ He asked for some light. He ran in. He was trembling. He fell down before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He brought them outside. He said, "What do I have to do to be saved?"

³¹ They replied, "Trust in the lord Jesus. Then you and your household will be saved."

³² They spoke the word of the lord to him and his entire household.

³³ He accepted them at that late hour. He washed their wounds. They immersed him and all his people right away. ³⁴ He took them to his house. He set the table. He and his entire house celebrated. They believed in God.

Paul leaves Philippi (16:35-40).

³⁵ The next day, the officers send their deputies with the message, “Free those men.”

³⁶ The jailer sent a message to Paul, “The officers told me that you are release. Now I can send you away without any problems.”

³⁷ Paul said to them, “They beat us openly without trial. I have Roman citizenship. They threw us into prison. Now, do they want to kick us out secretly? No. Let them come themselves and escort us out.”

³⁸ The deputies told these words to the officers. It frightened them when they heard that Paul had Roman citizenship. ³⁹ They came and apologized to them. They brought them out. They asked to escort them out of the city. ⁴⁰ They left the jail. They went to see Lydia. While they visited her, they comforted the brothers. Then they left.

Paul goes to Thessalonica (17:1-9).

¹⁷ They passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia. They came to Thessalonica. A Jewish synagogue was there. ² As usual, Paul entered them. For three weeks, he reasoned with them from the scriptures. ³ He opened them. He explained, “The messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. This is the messiah: It is Jesus. I announce him to you.”

⁴ He convinced some of them. They joined Paul and Silas. A large number were devout Greeks. It included quite a few influential women.

⁵ The Jews were jealous. They found some wicked men from the market. They attracted a crowd. They disturbed the city. They went to the home of Jason. They looked for them so they could bring them before the people. ⁶ They could not find them.

So, they drug Jason and some brothers before the city rulers. They cried out, “These people are upsetting the empire. They came here. ⁷ Jason has welcomed them. Everything they do is against the rules of Caesar. They say that there is another king, Jesus. ⁸ They have disturbed the people. The city rulers have heard about these things.”

⁹ Jason and the others paid a bail fee. Then they released them.

Paul goes to Berea (17:10-15).

¹⁰ At night, the brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ They had

a better attitude than the Thessalonians. They received the word with great enthusiasm. They examined the scriptures every day to see if what they contained was true.¹² Many of them believed. This included influential Greek women and quite a few men.

¹³ The Thessalonian Jews heard that Paul was proclaiming the word of God in Berea. They came there. They started disturbing and agitating the crowds.¹⁴ The brothers immediately sent Paul away to travel toward the ocean. Silas and Timothy stayed there.¹⁵ Some were selected to bring Paul to Athens. They received an order for Silas and Timothy. They should leave as soon as possible to join him.

Paul goes to Athens (17:16-34).

¹⁶ Paul waited for them in Athens. He was irritated because he saw so many idols in the city.¹⁷ He reasoned with the Jews and devout people in the synagogue, and with whomever he met in the market every day.

¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers talked to him.

Some said, "What is this blabbermouth trying to say?"

Others said, "He seems to be promoting foreign deities." (This is because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.)

¹⁹ They invited him to come to their council chambers, "We want to know: What is this new idea that you have been promoting?"²⁰ You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears. We want to know what these things claim to be about."²¹ (All the Athenians and foreigners living there waste their time with nothing other than speaking about or listening to some new idea.)

²² Paul stood in front of the council. He said, "Men and Athenians, I can tell that you are quite religious.²³ I have passed by and observed your shrines. I discovered an altar with the inscription, 'To the unknown god.' So, you worship what you consider unknown. I want to tell you about him.

²⁴ God created the world and everything that is in it.^a He is the lord of the sky and the earth. He does not live in any temple made by hand.²⁵ He does not need help from any human hands. He is the giver of all life, breath, and everything else.²⁶ From one man, he created every human nation living on every face of the earth. He chooses the limits of their

a) Genesis 1:3-31.

existence and the boundaries of their territory.²⁷ They should seek God if they want to touch him and find him. He is certainly not very far from each one of us,

²⁸ We live, move, and exist through him.^a

Just like one of your prophets has said,

We are his descendants.^b

²⁹ Since we are the descendants of God, we should not think that he is like anything gold, silver, or stone. He is not carved by a sculptor using human imagination, resembling some deity.

³⁰ God has overlooked temporary ignorance. Now he expects men everywhere and in every place to change.³¹ He has set a date when he will judge the world with righteousness. He will use a man he has selected. He gave everyone proof: He brought him back from the dead.”

³² They made fun of him when they heard about the resurrection of the dead. They said, “We will listen to you talk about this at another time.”

³³ So, Paul left their meeting.³⁴ Some of the men joined him. They believed. This included Dionysius, a member of that council, a woman named Damaris, and some others along with them.

Paul goes to Corinth (18:1-17).

Paul meets Akula and Priscilla (18:1-3).

18 After these things, he left Athens. He came to Corinth.² He met a Jew named Akula. His family was from Pontus. Just recently, he came from Italy with his wife Priscilla. (Claudius had required all the Jews to leave Rome.) So, he approached them.³ They were in the same business, so he stayed with them. He went to work, since they were all in the business of tent-making.

The Jews oppose Paul (18:4-11).

⁴ He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath. He persuaded both Jews and Greeks.⁵ Silas and Timothy came over from Macedonia. Paul was busy with the word. He testified to the Jews that the messiah was

a) Epimenides, *Cretica*.

b) Aratus, *Phenomena* 5.

c) Compare with Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, Claudius 25.

Jesus. ⁶ They resisted. They slandered him. So, he shook out his clothes. He said to them, “Your blood can be on your own heads. I am innocent. From now on, I will go to the gentiles.”

⁷ He left that place. He stayed at the home of someone named Titius Justus. He worshipped God. His home was next door to the synagogue.

⁸ Krispus was the synagogue ruler. He and his family believed in the lord. Many Corinthians listened, believed, and were immersed.

⁹ The lord spoke to Paul through a vision at night, “Do not be afraid. Speak. Do not be silent. ¹⁰ I am with you. No one will be able to grab you for the purpose of harming you. Many of my people are in this city.”

¹¹ He stayed there for one year and six months. He taught the word of God among them.

Gallio questions Paul (18:12-17).

¹² Gallio was proconsul over Achaia. The Jews rose up in unison against Paul. They brought him before the court, ¹³ “This man incites people to worship God in violation of the law.”

¹⁴ Paul was just about to open his mouth. Gallio interrupted, speaking to the Jews, “If they have done anything wrong or committed some serious crime, dear Jews, I would bear with you in these issues. ¹⁵ However, with regard to questions about words, names, or your law, you should pay attention to it yourselves. I have no intention of settling these matters.”



An inscription at Delphi mentions L. Junius Gallio.

¹⁶ Then he dismissed them from the court. ¹⁷ They all seized Sosthenes the synagogue ruler. They beat him right in front of the court room. However, none of these things mattered to Gallio.

Paul goes on his third journey (18:18-21:14).

Paul returns to Antioch (18:18-23).

¹⁸ Paul stayed with the brothers for many days. He said goodbye, then he sailed to Syria. Priscilla and Akula joined him. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrae because he made a vow. ¹⁹ He arrived at Ephesus. He left them there. After he entered the synagogue, he reasoned with the Jews.

²⁰ They asked him to stay for some more time. He did not agree. ²¹ He told them goodbye, “I will return to you, if God is willing.”

Then he sailed from Ephesus. ²² He went down to Caesarea. He got up and greeted the church. Then he went down to Antioch. ²³ After some time, he left. He passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia. He strengthened the disciples.

Paul goes to Ephesus (18:24-19:41).

Apollos demonstrates that the messiah is Jesus (18:24-28).

²⁴ There was a particular Jew named Apollos. His family was from Alexandria. He was an educated man. He arrived in Ephesus. He knew the scriptures quite well. ²⁵ He provided instruction in the way of the lord. He spoke with spiritual zeal. He taught about Jesus correctly, even though he was only aware of the immersion of John. ²⁶ He started speaking boldly in the synagogue. Priscilla and Akula listened to him. They explained the way of the lord to him more completely.

²⁷ He planned to travel over to Achaia. The brothers urged him to go. They wrote to the disciples to accept him. When he arrived, many of the believers met him with good will. ²⁸ With vigor, he openly convinced the Jews. Using the scriptures, he demonstrated that the messiah is Jesus.

Paul discovers some disciples of John (19:1-7).

¹⁹ At that time, Apollos went to Corinth. Paul was traveling through the interior regions. Then he came to Ephesus. He discovered some disciples. ² He said to them, “Did you receive the holy spirit when you believed?”

They replied, “We have not heard anything about the ‘holy spirit’.”

³ He said, “What were you immersed into?”

They replied, “The immersion of John.”

⁴ Paul said, “John immersed people who changed. He told the people that they would believe in the one coming after him. This person is Jesus.”

⁵ When they heard this, they were immersed into the name of the lord Jesus. ⁶ Paul put his hands on them. The holy spirit came on them. They spoke in foreign languages. They prophesied. ⁷ The total number of men was about twelve.

The church includes gentiles (10:1-21:14).

Paul goes on his third journey (18:18-21:14).

Paul reasons in the synagogue and academy (19:8-10).

⁸ He entered the synagogue. He spoke boldly for three months. He reasoned and persuaded them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ Some people became stubborn. They refused to believe. They spoke evil against the way with the crowds. He got away from them. He took the disciples to another place. Every day, he reasoned in the academy of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ He did this for two years. Eventually, everyone living in Asia heard the word of the lord. This included both Jews and Greeks.

Sorcerers respect the name of Jesus (19:11-20).

¹¹ God performed unbelievable miracles through the hands of Paul. ¹² When napkins or handkerchiefs from his person were brought to the sick, they delivered them from their diseases. Evil spirits left them.

¹³ Some people attempted this themselves. Some Jewish conjurers traveled around. They uttered spells for people who had evil spirits using the name of the lord Jesus, "I swear to you by Jesus whom Paul proclaims."

¹⁴ This included some seven sons of the Jewish high priest Skeva. They were doing this stuff. ¹⁵ The evil spirit responded. It said to them, "I know Jesus. I am familiar with Paul. Who are you?"

¹⁶ The man with the evil spirit jumped them. He overpowered them and made them all submit. They ran out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ This became well known among all the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus. Everyone was quite afraid. The name of Jesus was greatly respected.

¹⁸ Many people who believed began to confess and admit their behavior. ¹⁹ Quite a few people who practiced magic brought their books of magic. They burned them so everyone could see. They estimated their value. They calculated it to be fifty thousand silver coins. ²⁰ So, by the power of God, the word grew and strengthened.

Demetrius starts a riot (19:21-41).

²¹ When these matters were done, Paul determined in his mind to travel through Macedonia and Achaia. This was on his way toward Jerusalem. He said, "After I go there, I have to see Rome."

²² He sent two of his assistants to Macedonia, Timothy and Erastus. He himself stayed for a while in Asia. ²³ After some time, there was a

pretty big commotion about the way.²⁴ There was someone named Demetrius. He was a silver smith. He made silver figurines of Artemis. He made a good bit of money for the craftsmen.

²⁵ He gathered them and those who work on similar things. He said, “Men, understand that we get our wealth from these crafts.”²⁶ You see and hear that it is not just in Ephesus. Nearly everywhere in Asia, this Paul guy has persuaded large groups of people to change their situation. He claims that the gods are not made by hand.²⁷ Not only does this guy endanger our future. It might come to nothing. But he even considers the temple of the great goddess Artemis to be nothing. This will lead to the destruction of her great majesty. All of Asia and the empire worship her.”



²⁸ When they heard this, they became furious. They started shouting, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.”

²⁹ The city became full of confusion. With one mind, they rushed into the theater. They grabbed Gaius *Artemis is a goddess of Ephesus.* and Aristarchus the Macedonian. They were Paul’s companions.³⁰ Paul wanted to join the people. However, the disciples would not let him.³¹ Some of the Asian officials were his friends. They sent him a message: They urged not to bring himself into the theater.

³² Some people were shouting some things, and some other things. The assembly was in an uproar. Many people did not know why they even came together.³³ Some people in the crowd thought it was about Alexander. The Jews had pushed him to the front. This Alexander waived his hand because he wanted to address the people.³⁴ When they realized that he was a Jew, they all started shouting together for about two hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.”

³⁵ The public clerk asked for silence. He said, “Men and Ephesians, which man does not know that the city of Ephesus is where the temple of the great Artemis resides? She fell down from Zeus.”

³⁶ “These facts cannot be denied. We have to become calm. We should do nothing rash.³⁷ You brought these men, but they have not robbed any temples nor slandered our god.”

³⁸ “If Demetrius or the craftsmen who came with him have a complaint against anyone, they should bring it to the public assemblies or the pro-consuls. Let them bring formal charges against each other. ³⁹ If you want to charge anyone with anything, you should explain it during a lawful assembly. ⁴⁰ We are in danger of causing a riot today. There is no good reason to explain this uproar.”

After he said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

Paul returns through Macedonia (20:1-12).

²⁰ After the riot came to an end, Paul sent for the disciples. He comforted them. He said farewell. Then he left to go to Macedonia.

² He passed through those regions. He urged them with many words. Then he went to Greece. ³ He stayed for three months. He was going to sail to Syria. However, because of a Jewish plot against him, he decided to return through Macedonia. ⁴ He was joined by the Berean Sopater son of Pyrrhus, the Thessalonians Aristarchus and Secundus, Gaius from Derbe and Timothy, and the Asians Tychicus and Trophimus.

⁵ They went on ahead. They waited for us in Troas. ⁶ We sailed from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread. We joined them in Troas within five days. We stayed for seven days.

⁷ On the first day of the week, we gathered together to break bread. Paul reasoned with them. He intended to leave the next morning, so he continued to speak until it was the middle of the night. ⁸ There were many lamps in the upper room where we were meeting.

⁹ A particular young man named Eutychus fell asleep in the window. He was sleeping deeply while Paul was speaking at length. He was sleeping so hard that he fell down from the third floor. When they picked him up, he was dead. ¹⁰ Paul came down. He fell down on him and hugged him. He said, “Do not be afraid. He is still alive.”

¹¹ He went back up. He broke bread. He ate. He conversed for quite a while, until dawn. Then he left. ¹² They took the boy away alive. They were quite encouraged.

Paul goes to Miletus (20:13-38).

Paul summons the Ephesian elders (20:13-17).

¹³ We went ahead on the boat. We sailed to Assos. We planned to join Paul there. He arranged to meet us on foot. ¹⁴ When he joined us in Assos, we took him on board. We went to Mitylene. ¹⁵ We sailed from there the next day. We arrived at Chios. The next day we came to Samos. We stayed onboard until we came to Miletus. ¹⁶ Paul decided to sail past Ephesus because he was not going to spend time in Asia. He was in a hurry, if possible, to be in Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost.

¹⁷ He sent a message to Ephesus from Miletus: He summoned the elders of the church.

Paul speaks to the elders (20:18-35).

¹⁸ They came to him. He said to them, “You remember the first day I arrived in Asia. I stayed with you the entire time. ¹⁹ I served the lord with complete humility and fear. Jewish plots brought troubles against me. ²⁰ I did not hesitate to tell you anything helpful. I taught you out in the open and from house to house. ²¹ I testified to both Jews and Greeks: Change leads to God and faith leads to our lord Jesus.”

²² “Now listen: I am bound by the holy spirit to go to Jerusalem. I have no idea what will happen to me there. ²³ However, the holy spirit witnesses to me in every city that chains and persecutions wait for me. ²⁴ However, I do not consider the value of life to make any difference to me, except to finish my race. I received a duty from the lord Jesus: I must testify about the good news of the favor of God.”^a

²⁵ “Now look, I know that you all will not see my face any more. I have been passing through while preaching the kingdom. ²⁶ I tell you today: I am innocent from anyone’s blood.”

²⁷ “I have never hesitated to tell you the entire plan of God. ²⁸ Watch yourself and the entire flock. The holy spirit appointed you their superiors. Tend the church of God. He purchased it with his own blood.”

²⁹ “I know that, after I leave, savage wolves will join you. They will not spare the flock. ³⁰ Men will rise up among you. They will say twisted

a) Compare Acts 9:15-16.

things. They will draw disciples away after themselves.³¹ So watch out. Remember how, night and day for three years, I did not stop warning each one of you with tears.”

³² “Now I commit you to God and the message of his good will. He is able to build you up and give an inheritance to all those who are made holy.”

³³ “I do not want silver, gold, or nice clothes.³⁴ You yourselves know: My own hands have taken care of my needs and those with me.³⁵ I showed everything to you by working like this: We have to help the weak. Remember the words of the lord Jesus. He said,”

Blessed is the one who gives instead of the one who receives.^a

Paul leaves (20:36-38).

³⁶ When he finished saying these things, he kneeled down with everyone. He prayed.

³⁷ Everyone cried a great deal. They grabbed Paul by the neck. They began kissing him.³⁸ They were quite bothered by the words that he spoke. They were uncertain whether they would ever see his face again. They escorted him onto the boat.

Paul sails toward Jerusalem (21:1-9).

²¹ When we sailed, we left them. We traveled directly. We arrived at Kos. Next we came to Rhodes. From there we arrived at Patara.² We located a boat that was headed toward Phoenicia. We got on board. We sailed away.³ We saw Cyprus. We let it pass on the left side. We sailed toward Syria. We went down to Tyre. The boat unloaded its cargo there.⁴ We located the disciples. We stayed there for seven days. Through the spirit, they told Paul not to go to Jerusalem.

⁵ When our time was done there, we left. We went on our way. They all joined us up to the city limits, including the women and children. We kneeled on the seashore, then we prayed.⁶ We told each other farewell. We got into the boat. They went back to their own homes.

⁷ We continued the voyage from Tyre. We arrived at Ptolemais. We greeted the brothers there. We stayed with them for one day.

a) These words of Jesus are otherwise unknown except for their presence here.

⁸ The next morning we left. We arrived at Capernaum. We arrived at the house of Philip. He was an evangelist, one of the seven. We stayed with him. ⁹ He had four virgin daughters. They could prophesy.

Agabus prophesies against the return (21:10-14).

¹⁰ We stayed there for many days. One of the prophets from Judea named Agabus came down. ¹¹ He came over to us. He took a belt from Paul. He tied up his feet and hands with it. He said, “The holy spirit says this, ‘This belt belongs to this man. This is how the Jews will bind him in Jerusalem. They will deliver him into the hands of the gentiles.’”

¹² When we heard these things, both we and the residents urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³ Then Paul answered, “Why do you keep crying and breaking my heart? I am not just ready to be bound. I am ready to die in Jerusalem for the name of the lord Jesus.”

¹⁴ He was not persuaded. So we did not say anything else, other than, “Let the wish of the lord happen.”

Paul goes to Rome (21:15-28:31).

Paul has problems in Jerusalem (21:15-23:35).

Paul is arrested (21:15-23:11).

Paul goes toward Jerusalem (21:15-25).

¹⁵ After this time, we packed up. We headed up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶ Some of the disciples from Caesarea came with us. We brought them from where we were lodging, including Mnason who was from Cyprus. He had been a disciple for a long time. ¹⁷ We arrived in Jerusalem in good spirits. The brothers welcomed us.

¹⁸ The next day, Paul came with us to visit Jacob. All the elders were present. ¹⁹ He greeted them. Then he reviewed each event which God accomplished among the gentiles through his efforts.

²⁰ When they heard it, they honored God. They said to him, “You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed. They have all become zealous for the law. ²¹ They have heard this about you: You teach all the Jews living among the gentiles to abandon Moses. You tell them not

to circumcise their children nor live by the traditions.²² What about this? They will certainly hear that you have arrived.”

²³ “Do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow for themselves.²⁴ Join them. Purify yourself with them. Pay their expenses so they can shave your head. Then everyone will know there is nothing in what they heard about you. You yourself live by keeping the law.”

²⁵ “As far as the gentiles who have believed, we have already issued our judgment: They must keep themselves from idols, blood, strangled animals, and sexual misconduct.”

Paul goes to the temple (21:26-40).

²⁶ Then Paul welcomed the men. The next day, he purified himself with them. He entered the temple. He gave notice that he had completed the time of purification. He presented the offering for each of them.

²⁷ After the seven days were nearly complete, some Asian Jews saw him in the temple. They disturbed the entire crowd. They grabbed him by putting their hands on him.²⁸ They shouted, “Men, Israelites, help! This man has been teaching everyone in every place about the people, the law, and this place. He brought Greeks into the temple. He has defiled this holy place.”²⁹ (They had previously seen the Ephesian Trophimus with him inside the city. So, they presumed that Paul had brought him into the temple.)

³⁰ This excited the whole city. The people rushed forward. They grabbed Paul. They threw him outside the temple. Then they slammed the gates shut.

³¹ They wanted to kill him. The captain of a military regiment received the report that all of Jerusalem was in an uproar.³² He immediately got his soldiers and commanders. They ran down toward them. The captain and his commanders stopped them from beating Paul.³³ When the captain came near, he seized him. He ordered them to detain him with two chains. He inquired about who he was and what he was doing.

³⁴ Various people from the crowd shouted different things. He could not understand anything clearly because of the noise. He ordered them to bring him into the military base.³⁵ When they came to the stairs, the soldiers had to carry him because of the violence of the crowd.³⁶ Many of the people followed. They were shouting, “Take him away!”

³⁷ When they were about to enter the military base, Paul said to the captain, "If possible, may I have a word with you?"

He replied, "So, you know Greek?" ³⁸ Are you that Egyptian who caused a disturbance some time ago? He led four thousand assassins into the desert."

³⁹ Paul responded, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia. I am a citizen of no ordinary city. I request that you permit me to speak to the people."

⁴⁰ He gave permission. Paul stood on the steps. He gestured toward the people. They became completely silent. He called out in Hebrew,

Paul speaks in the temple (22:1-21).

²² "Men, brothers, and fathers, "Listen to the defense which I now present to you." ² (When they realized that he was speaking to them in Hebrew, They got very quiet. So he continued.)

³ "I am a Jewish man. I was born in Tarsus which is in Cilicia. I grew up in this city. I have been trained at the feet of Gamaliel in the careful analysis of the inherited law. I am zealous for God, just like you are today."

⁴ "I myself persecuted this way to the death. I arrested both men and women, and threw them into prison. ⁵ The high priest and the entire eldership will vouch for me. They sent letters to brothers in Damascus. I was going to arrest people there. I was shackling them, and taking them to Jerusalem to punish them."

⁶ "It just so happened that while I was traveling, I came near Damascus. Suddenly, about noon, a bright light from the sky shined around me. ⁷ I fell down on the ground. I heard a voice. It said to me, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?'"

⁸ "I answered, 'Who are you, sir?'"

"He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth. You are persecuting me.'"

⁹ "Those who were with me saw the light, but they did not hear the voice that was speaking to me. ¹⁰ I said, 'What am I supposed to do, sir?'"

"The lord said to me, 'Get up. Go to Damascus. I will tell you there everything that you are appointed to do.'"

¹¹ "I could no longer see because of the brightness of the light. So, those with me had to lead me by the hand to get me into Damascus."

¹² “There was a particular man, Ananias. He was devoted to the law. He had a good reputation with all the Jews living there. ¹³ He came to visit me. He stood there and said to me, ‘Saul, brother, look up.’ ”

“At that moment I could see him. ¹⁴ He said, ‘The God of our ancestors selected you to know his plan. You will see the righteous one. Hear the voice of his mouth: ¹⁵ You will testify to all men what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ Now, what are you waiting for? Get up. Get immersed. Remove your sins. Appeal to his name.’ ”

¹⁷ “So I returned to Jerusalem. I was praying in the temple. I fell into a trance. ¹⁸ I saw him. He spoke to me, ‘Hurry up. Leave Jerusalem right away. They will not accept your testimony about me.’ ”

¹⁹ “I said, ‘Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat those in the synagogues who believed on you. ²⁰ When the blood of Stephen poured out, I stood there. I gave approval. I guarded their clothes while they killed him.’ ”

²¹ “He said to me, ‘Go. I will send you to far away nations.’ ”

Paul is arrested (22:22-29).

²² They were listening to him until he said this. They raised their voices, “Wipe such a person from the face of the earth. He is not fit to live.”

²³ They were shouting, tearing their clothes, and throwing dust into the air.

²⁴ The captain ordered them to bring him into the military base. He told them to beat him. He questioned him to figure out the real reason they were shouting about him. ²⁵ They bound him with rope. Paul said to the commander, “If someone is a Roman citizen, is it legal to beat him without a finding him guilty?”

²⁶ When the commander heard this, he went to the captain. He reported, “What do you want to do? This man is a Roman citizen.”

²⁷ The captain approached. He said to him, “Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?”

He said, “Yeah.”

²⁸ The captain replied, “I got my citizenship with a large sum on money.” Paul said, “I was born one.”

²⁹ Those who intended to investigate him immediately moved back. The captain became afraid when he realized that he was a Roman citizen. He was the one who tied him up.

Paul addresses the council (22:29-23:11).

³⁰ The next day, he wanted to find out the real reason the Jews had accused him. He released him. He ordered the chief priests and the Jewish assembly to assemble. He brought Paul down. He placed him in front of them.

²³ Paul looked straight at the council. He spoke, "Men and brothers, I have conducted myself before God with a completely good conscience up to the present time."

² The high priest commanded those standing near him to slap him in the mouth. ³ Then Paul said to him, "God will slap you, you white-washed wall! You sit there in judgment of me according to the rule of law. How can you tell them to slap me contrary to the law?"

⁴ Those standing nearby said, "How can you speak disrespectfully to the high priest of God?"

⁵ Paul said, "I did not know that he was the high priest, brothers. It is written,"

You may not speak evil toward a leader of the people.^a

⁶ Paul realized there was a division between the Sadducees and the Pharisees. So, he shouted out in the council meeting, "Men and brothers, I am a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. I am on trial for the hope of the resurrection of the dead."

⁷ When he said this, it started an argument between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The crowd was divided. ⁸ (The Sadducees believe that there is no resurrection, angels, nor spirits. The Pharisees believe in them all.) ⁹ It caused a loud uproar. Some of the legal experts were members of the party of the Pharisees. They contended, "We find nothing wrong with this man. What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?"

¹⁰ The argument became great. The captain was afraid that they would tear Paul to pieces. He commanded the soldiers, "Go down and take him away from them. Then take him back to the military base."

a) Exodus 22:28.

¹¹ The next day, the lord came to him at night. He said, "Relax. Just like you testified about me in Jerusalem, you have to testify about me in Rome."

Lysias protects Paul (23:12-35).

The Jews plot to kill Paul (23:12-15).

¹² After some time, the Jews got together. They issued a curse on themselves: "We will not eat or drink again until we kill Paul."

¹³ There were more than forty people who made that oath. ¹⁴ Some of them approached the high priests and the elders. They said, "We swore a curse against ourselves. None of us will eat again until we kill Paul. ¹⁵ You need to inform the captain of the Jewish council. He must bring him down to you so that you can question him more precisely. When he gets near, we will be prepared to take him out."

The plot is broken (23:16-24).

¹⁶ The son of Paul's sister heard about the ambush. He came forward and entered the military base. He told Paul. ¹⁷ Paul called one of the commanders over. He said, "Bring this young man to the captain. He has something to tell him."

¹⁸ He took him. He led him to the captain. He said, "The prisoner, Paul, summoned me. He asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to tell you."

¹⁹ The captain took his hand. He took him away in private. He asked, "What is it that you want to tell me?"

²⁰ He said, "The Jews have made a deal: They will ask you to bring Paul to the Jewish council tomorrow. They want to question him more precisely about some matter. ²¹ You must not let them persuade you. More than forty men have prepared a trap against him. They have issued a curse against themselves: They will not eat or drink again until they kill him. Now they are ready. They are waiting for your cooperation."

²² The captain released the young man. He warned him, "Do not tell anyone about the things that you disclosed to me."

²³ He called for two particular commanders. He said, "Prepare two hundred soldiers that they must go to Caesarea, along with seventy horsemen

and two hundred spearmen, at nine o'clock tonight. ²⁴ Take a beast. Set Paul on it. Take him securely to the governor Felix.”

The captain writes Felix (23:25-30).

²⁵ He wrote a letter like this,

²⁶ Claudius Lysias to the excellent governor Felix. ^a Greetings.

²⁷ The Jews seized this man. They intended to kill him by themselves. I intervened. I saved him using the soldiers. I learned that he is a Roman citizen.

²⁸ I was trying to determine the reason that they accused him. So, I brought him before their Jewish council. ²⁹ I discovered that they had accused him regarding matters of their own law. He did not deserve death or imprisonment for the accusations.

³⁰ I was informed that they have created a plot against this man. So, I sent him to you. I have ordered his accusers to speak for themselves directly to you.

Paul goes to Caesarea (23:31-35).

³¹ The soldiers accepted the orders given to them. They took Paul. They lead him to Antipatris at night. ³² The next morning, they left their horses. They left with him. They returned to their military base.

³³ They went to Caesarea. They delivered the letter to the governor. They presented Paul to him. ³⁴ He read. Then he asked what province he was from. He answered, “From Cilicia.”

³⁵ “I will hear from you,” he said, “when your accusers get here.”

He ordered him to be held in the palace of Herod.

Paul defends himself before leaders (24:1-26:32).

Paul stands before Felix (24:1-27).

The Jews accuse Paul (24:1-9).

²⁴ After five days, the high priest Ananias came down with some of the elders and a particular spokesman, Tertullus. They clarified the charges against Paul to the governor. ² He was called forward.

a) Compare Flavius Josephus, Jewish Antiquities 20.7.1.

Then Tertullus began his prosecution, “We have enjoyed great peace because of you. There has been improvement in this nation because of your administration. ³ We accept you always and everywhere, excellent Felix, with deep gratitude. ⁴ I do not want to take too much of your time. I ask that you be kind enough to listen to us briefly.”

⁵ “We have discovered that this man is a pest. He causes riots among many Jews all over the empire. He is one of the top leaders of the Nazarene cult. ⁶ He tried to defile the temple. So, we arrested him. ⁸ You may examine him yourself. Then you can know why we brought all these accusations against him.”

⁹ The Jews agreed. They affirmed that these things were correct.

Paul presents his defense to Felix (24:10-23).

¹⁰ The governor nodded for him to speak. Paul responded, “You have been a judge over this nation for many years. I am happy to present my defense.”

¹¹ “You can confirm that, no more than twelve days ago, I went up to Jerusalem to worship. ¹² They did not find me causing any dispute or trouble among the people in the temple, nor in the synagogue, nor in any city. ¹³ They cannot present any evidence to you about their current accusations.”

¹⁴ “I admit this to you: Regarding the way, which they call a ‘cult’, I certainly worship the God of our ancestors. I believe in everything related to the law and what is written in the prophets. ¹⁵ I hope in God. They themselves accept it: There will be a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. ¹⁶ For this reason, I continuously attempt to have a clear conscience before God and man. ¹⁷ For many years, I performed charitable duties for my nation. I also presented offerings. ¹⁸ They discovered me purified in the temple for this reason. I was not with a crowd or causing any trouble.”

¹⁹ “There were some Asian Jews there. They should be present to make accusations, if they have anything against me. ²⁰ Otherwise, these men should state what crime they discovered. They made me stand before the Jewish council. ²¹ Unless it was the one thing I shouted when I was standing among them, ‘I am on trial today before you because of the resurrection of the dead.’”

²² Felix postponed the proceedings. He wanted to get some clarity about this way. So, he said, “When Lysias comes down, I will enquire more about you.”

²³ He told the commander, “Guard him but with some liberties. None of his people should be prevented from caring for him.”

Paul speaks to Felix again (24:24-27).

²⁴ After several days, Felix came with Drusilla,^a his wife, to Judea. He sent for Paul. He listened to him talk about faith in Jesus the messiah.

²⁵ He reasoned with him about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment. Felix became afraid. He responded, “Go away for right this moment. Take some time off. I will call you later.”

²⁶ At that time, he was hoping that Paul would offer him some money. That is why he frequently sent for him to talk with him.²⁷ Two years passed. Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus.^b He wanted to gain favor with the Jews. So, Felix left Paul in custody.

Paul stands before Festus (25:1-27).

The Jews plot an ambush (25:1-5).

²⁵ Festus arrived in the province after three days. He went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.² The chief priests and influential Jews appeared before him against Paul. They appealed to him.³ They asked for a favor from him, “Bring him to Jerusalem.” (They wanted to ambush him along the journey.)

⁴ Festus responded, “We are going to keep Paul in Caesarea.” (He himself intended to leave right away.⁵ “Some among you,” he said, “may go down with me. If he did anything wrong, they may accuse him there.”

Paul appears before Festus (25:6-12).

⁶ He stayed with them no more than eight to ten days. Then he went down to Caesarea. In the morning he was sitting on the bench. He commanded them to bring Paul.

⁷ They brought him out. The Jews who came down from Jerusalem were standing around him. They hurled many serious accusations against

a) Compare Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 20.7.2.

b) Compare Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 20.8.9, *Jewish Wars* 2.14.1.

him. However, they could not prove them.⁸ Paul issued a defense, “I have violated nothing in the Jewish law, neither in the temple nor in Caesarea.”

⁹ Festus wanted to show goodwill toward the Jews. So, he answered Paul, “Would you like to go up to Jerusalem? You could stand trial before me there regarding these matters.”

¹⁰ Paul responded, “I am standing before the bench of Caesar. This is where I deserve my trial. You already know this all too well.¹¹ If I have done anything wrong, or committed any act worthy of death, I could not avoid execution. However, if there is nothing to their accusations against me, no one should be able to hand me over to them. So, I appeal to Caesar.”

¹² Then Festus discussed this with his advisory committee. He replied, “You have appealed to Caesar. So, you are going to Caesar.”

Festus wants Herod’s opinion (25:13-22)

¹³ Some time passed. King Agrippa and Bernice^a came down to Caesarea. They greeted Festus.¹⁴ They spent a long time there.

Festus told the king about the trial against Paul, “There is a man who Felix left in prison.¹⁵ While I was in Jerusalem, the high priests and Jewish elders appeared before me about him. They wanted a judgment against him.¹⁶ I gave them an answer, ‘It is not the Roman custom to just grant anything to anyone. The accused must be permitted to face his accusers. He must have the opportunity to present a defense against the charges.’”

¹⁷ “They came here. Without delay, I held court the next day. I told them to bring the man here.¹⁸ The accusers stood before me. They presented no proof. I could not determine that he did anything wrong.¹⁹ They have issues toward him regarding their own superstitions and about some guy, Jesus, who died. Paul claims that he is alive.”

²⁰ “I have doubts about these issues. I asked him if he was willing to go to Jerusalem. I could hold a trial there about these charges.²¹ Paul appealed to stay here. He wants to be examined by the emperor. I told them to hold him until I can send him to Caesar.”

a) Compare Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 20.7.3.

²² Agrippa said to Festus, “I would like to give this man a hearing. Tomorrow,” he said, “I will hear him.”

Paul appears before Agrippa (25:23-27).

²³ The next morning, Agrippa and Bernice arrived with a big show. They entered the courtroom with the captains and the prominent men of the city. Festus ordered them to bring Paul.

²⁴ Festus spoke, “King Agrippa and all the men present with us, you can see this man. The entire Jewish populace asked to meet with me both here and in Jerusalem. They claim that he does not deserve to live any more.” ²⁵ I did not find any reason for him to be put to death. He himself appealed to the emperor. I decided to send him.

²⁶ “Concerning this matter, I do not have anything clear to write our lord. So, I brought him before you all and your excellence, king Agrippa. After your examination, perhaps I might have something to write.” ²⁷ It seems illogical to me to send a prisoner away, even though I cannot even state the case against him.”

Paul defends himself before Agrippa (26:1-32).

Paul explains his background (26:1-11).

²⁶ Agrippa said to Paul, “You have permission to represent yourself.”

Paul motioned with his hand. Then he began his defense, ² “Concerning all the Jewish accusations, king Agrippa, I consider myself blessed to be permitted to present a defense before you. ³ You are quite familiar with all the Jewish customs and issues. So, I request that you hear me out patiently.”

⁴ “The Jews are familiar with my life. I lived among my people in Jerusalem beginning from my youth. ⁵ They know me from the beginning—and if they are willing, they can testify to it. I lived by the strictest division of our religion as a Pharisee.”

⁶ “Now, I stand under judgment by the hope that was promised to our ancestors by God. ⁷ Our twelve tribes eagerly worshipped day and night. They hoped to attain it. The Jews accuse me because of this hope, dear king. ⁸ Why do you all think it is unbelievable that God raises the dead?”

⁹ “I once believed that it was necessary to strongly oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰ I did this in Jerusalem. I shut many of the holy

people up in prison. I took orders from the high priests. When they were condemned to death, I cast my vote.¹¹ In each synagogue, I frequently punished them. I compelled them to defame God. I was extremely furious at them—I pursued them even into foreign cities.”

Jesus speaks to Paul (26:12-18).

¹² “Because of this, I went to Damascus with the authority and power of the high priests.¹³ In the middle of the day, I was traveling down the road. I looked up, dear king. There was a light bright like the sun. It shined down from the sky on me and those traveling with me.¹⁴ We all fell down on the ground. A voice spoke to me in Hebrew, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? You harm yourself by kicking the prod.’¹⁵”

¹⁵ “I responded, ‘Who are you, sir?’”

“He said, ‘I am Jesus. You are persecuting me.’¹⁶ Get up. Stand on your feet. This is why I appeared to you: I choose you as a servant and witness. This includes what you have seen, but also what I will show you.¹⁷ I am rescuing you from your people and from the gentiles. I am sending you to them.¹⁸ You will open their eyes. You will turn them from darkness to the light, from the power of Satan to God. By believing in me, they will receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance with the holy people.’”

Paul describes his message (26:19-23).

¹⁹ “Therefore, king Agrippa, I did not become disobedient to the heavenly vision.²⁰ However, first in Damascus and Jerusalem, then in the region of Judea, and finally to the gentiles, I told them to change and turn to God. They must demonstrate conduct consistent with that change.²¹ This is why the Jews seized me in the temple. They tried to kill me.”

²² “It is only with God’s help that, up to this time, I stand as a witness to both great and small. I am not claiming anything other than what the prophets and Moses said will happen:²³ Namely, the messiah must suffer. He will be the first to rise from the dead. He will proclaim light both to the people and to the gentiles.”

a) This proverb occurs frequently in ancient Greek literature, for example, Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1624, Pindar, *Pythian* 2.95, Euripides, *The Bacchae* 795.

Festus and Paul interact (26:24-29).

²⁴ After his defense, Festus spoke in a loud voice, “You are crazy, Paul. Your advanced education has driven you insane.”

²⁵ Paul said, “I am not crazy like you claim, excellent Festus. I speak true and sober words.” ²⁶ The king knows about these matters. I boldly declare to him: I do not believe anything has been hidden to him. It did not happen in some corner. ²⁷ Do you believe the prophets, king Agrippa? I am sure that you do.”

²⁸ Agrippa responded to Paul, “Do you think that are going to turn me into a Christian in such a short time?”

²⁹ Paul said, “By God, I hope so. Whether great or small, not just you, but everyone who is listening today might become the same thing that I am—except for these chains.

The court confers in private (26:30-32).

³⁰ The king stood up, along with the governor, Bernice, and those sitting around them. ³¹ They went outside to speak among themselves, “This man has done nothing worthy of death or imprisonment.”

³² Agrippa said to Festus, “This man would be free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

Paul heads to Rome (27:1-28:31).

Paul sails toward Rome (27:1-28:10).

Paul sets sail (27:1-8).

²⁷ They decided that we should sail to Italy. They handed Paul and some other prisoners over to a commander of an imperial company. His name was Julius. ² We boarded a boat that sailed from Adramyttium. We were sailing toward various Asian ports. Aristarchus, from Thessalonica in Macedonia, joined us. ³ The next day, we headed down to Sidon. Julius treated Paul with courtesy. He allowed Paul to visit some friends. They took care of his needs.

⁴ We left from there. We sailed around Cyprus to avoid some hostile winds. ⁵ We sailed on the ocean past Cilicia and Pamphylia. We went down to Myra in Lykia.

⁶ The captain located an Alexandrian boat sailing toward Italy. We boarded it. ⁷ We sailed slowly for several days. With some difficulty, we arrived at Knidus. The wind did not allow us to go on. So, we sailed around Crete and Salmone. ⁸ With some trouble, we sailed forward. We came to a place called Good Harbor. It was near the city of Lasea.

The journey experiences trouble (27:9-26).

⁹ A good amount of time passed. It became dangerous for the boat to continue because it was already past the feast date. Paul made a recommendation. ¹⁰ He spoke to them, “Men, I can tell that there will be harm and great loss, not only to the cargo and the ship, but even our lives, if we continue the voyage.”

¹¹ However, the captain persuaded the pilot and ship owner, instead of listening to Paul.

¹² It was going to be inconvenient to keep the ship in the harbor for the winter. So, they decided to sail away from there. If possible, they hoped to arrive in Phoenix for the winter. It was a harbor in Crete that faced both southwest and northwest. ¹³ When a light wind blew from the south, they decided to implement their plan. They left, sailing close to the shore of Crete. ¹⁴ They did not get far. A violent wind, called a northeaster, struck them. ¹⁵ It seized the boat so violently that it could not handle the wind. We were out of control.

¹⁶ We ran past a particular island called Clauda. We were barely able to maintain control of the ship. ¹⁷ They continued to steer it with help. They tied up the bottom of the boat. They were afraid that they would perish in the Syrtis shallows. They lowered the sails. So, we drifted aimlessly.

¹⁸ We were thrown around on the waves. The next day, they started throwing cargo overboard. ¹⁹ On the third day, they threw the ship tackle overboard manually. ²⁰ Neither the sun nor the stars appeared for many days. Winter storms started threatening us. Finally, all hope of rescue left us.

²¹ We had to live without much food. Paul stood right in front of them. He said, “Dear men, you should have listened to me: Do not leave Crete. It will bring this harm and loss. ²² Now I urge you to be cheerful. None of you will lose their life, other than the boat itself.”

²³ “An angel of God appeared to me tonight. I belong to him. I worship him. ²⁴ He said, ‘Do not fear, Paul. You must appear before Caesar. Look, God has protected you and everyone sailing with you.’ ”

²⁵ “So, cheer up, men. I believe God—it will happen just like he told me. ²⁶ We will run aground on some island.”

The sailors come near land (27:27-38).

²⁷ After fourteen nights, we came across the Adriatic Sea. In the middle of the night, the sailors thought they were somewhere near land. ²⁸ They checked the depth—it was twenty outstretched arms. They went on a little further. They checked the depth again—it was fifteen outstretched arms. ²⁹ We were afraid that we might hit some rocks. So, they threw four anchors out of the back. They wished daylight would come.

³⁰ The sailors wanted to abandon the ship. So, they lowered the lifeboat into the water. They pretended that they were going to lower an anchor from the front of the ship. ³¹ Paul told the captain and his soldiers, “If they do not stay in the boat, you will not be preserved.”

³² Then the soldiers cut the ropes holding the boat. They allowed it to take off on its own. ³³ When it was almost daylight, Paul encouraged everyone to take food, “Today is the fourteenth day you have waited. You have gone without food. You have had nothing. ³⁴ Now I urge you to take some food. This is going to be our salvation. None of you will lose even a hair from his head.”

³⁵ He said these things. He took some bread. He gave thanks to God in front of everyone. He broke it. He started eating. ³⁶ Everyone became cheerful. They also took food. ³⁷ There were two hundred seventy-six of us on the boat. ³⁸ We had plenty to eat. To lighten the boat, they threw the grain into the sea.

The passengers reach dry ground (27:39-44).

³⁹ When it became daytime, they could not see the mainland. Some thought they could tell that there was a bay with a beach. They decided to try to run the ship onto the ground.

⁴⁰ They cut the anchors loose. They left them in the ocean. They untied the ropes that controlled the rudders. They lifted up the mainsail so the wind could blow them to shore. ⁴¹ They pointed toward the isthmus. They

ran the ship aground. The front of the ship was stuck. It would not move. The waves were breaking up the back of the ship.

⁴² One of the soldiers had an idea: Kill the prisoners. Then no one could escape by swimming away. ⁴³ However, the captain wanted to preserve Paul. He prevented them from implementing their plan. He commanded those who were able to swim to jump out first to try to reach the shore.

⁴⁴ For everyone else, they had to grab a board or something else from the boat. So everyone was safe on dry ground.

Paul reaches Malta (28:1-10).

²⁸ After they were safe, they learned the island was named Malta. ² The foreigners there demonstrated no ordinary kindness toward us. They started a fire. They brought us inside because it started to rain and it was cold.

³ Paul collected a bunch of dry wood. He set it on the fire. Because of the heat, a snake jumped out. It latched onto his hand. ⁴ When the foreigners saw the reptile hanging from his hand, they said to each other, “He must be a murderer. They saved him from the ocean, but Lady Justice will not let him live.”

⁵ He shook the reptile off into the fire. He experienced no problems. ⁶ They expected that he would get a fever or suddenly drop dead. They waited for a while. They saw that nothing unusual happened to him. They changed their mind—they said he must be a god.

⁷ Among the people at that place, there was a plantation. It belonged to an important man on the island named Publius. He graciously welcomed us as guests for three days. ⁸ The father of Publius developed a fever. He was so sick with dysentery that he had to lie down. Paul visited him. He prayed. He put his hands on him. He healed him.

⁹ After this, others on the island with diseases came. He healed them. ¹⁰ They gave us great respect. When we were ready to leave, they took care of our needs.



A coin features the Gemini twins, Castor and Pollux.

Paul arrives in Rome (28:11-31).

Paul enters Rome (28:11-16).

¹¹ After three months, we left in a boat. It had stayed on the island for the winter. It was from Alexandria. It was marked with the Gemini twins.

¹² We went down to Syracuse. We stayed for three days. ¹³ We navigated our way to Rhegium. After one day, a southern wind blew. On the second day, we arrive at Puteoli. ¹⁴ We discovered some brothers. They urged us to stay with them for seven days. This is how we came to Rome.

¹⁵ Some brothers from there heard about us. They came to meet us from the Appian Market and Three Taverns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God. It gave him courage.

¹⁶ He arrived in Rome. They permitted Paul to live by himself, with a soldier guarding him.

Paul meets with the Jews (28:17-22).

¹⁷ Three days passed. Paul called together some of the most prominent Jews. When they arrived, he said to them, "Men and brothers, I have done nothing against our people or the ancient customs. I am a prisoner from Jerusalem. They placed me in Roman custody. ¹⁸ They interrogated me. They wanted to release me because they found no reason to execute me. ¹⁹ When the Jews spoke against me, I was retained. So, I appealed to Caesar. It was not like I had any reason to accuse my own nation. ²⁰ For this reason, I asked to see and speak with you: I am bound with these chains for the hope of Israel."

²¹ They said to him, "We have received no documents about you from Judea. None of the brothers have come to report or speak anything bad about you. ²² We think it is fine to hear from you about what you think. Regarding this movement, we already know about it. People speak against it everywhere."

Paul welcomes people into his home (28:23-31).

²³ They made an appointment when they could come to visit him in his apartment in greater numbers. He explained the details to them from morning to evening. He testified about the kingdom of God. He persuaded them about Jesus using the law of Moses and the prophets.

²⁴ Some of them believed in his message. Others did not. ²⁵ They disagreed with each other. They were getting ready to leave.

Paul had one more thing to say, “The holy spirit said it well to our ancestors through Isaiah the prophet,”

²⁶ “Go to these people and say:

‘You will hear the message
but will not comprehend.
You will see things
but will not understand.’

²⁷ The heart of these people is hard.

They listen with deaf ears.

They have shut their eyes.

Otherwise, they would see with their eyes.

They would listen with their ears,

They would understand with their hearts.

They would turn.

I would heal them.^a

²⁸ “You can know that God sent salvation to the gentiles. They themselves will listen.”^b

³⁰ He stayed for two whole years in his own apartment. He welcomed everyone who visited him. ³¹ He proclaimed the kingdom of God. He freely taught about Jesus the messiah with complete boldness.

a) Isaiah 6:9-10.

b) Earlier and more reliable manuscripts omit verse 29.