Acts

A New Vision of the People of God

Acts: The Spirit Empowers

("What Jesus continued to do")

Messianic Israel	World Mission
Acts 1—12	Acts 13—28
Peter	Paul

Acts Outline

I. The Spirit Empowers	II. The Spirit Empowers
Messianic Israel (1—12)	World Mission (13—28)
A. Messianic Renewal (1—5)	A. Mission Journeys (13—21)
1. Messianic Beginnings (1)	1. 1MJ: Asia Minor, JC (13—15)
2. Messianic Empowerment (2)	2. 2MJ: Maced., Achaia (16—18)
3. Messianic Witness (3–5)	3. 3MJ: Ephesus, Cor. (19—21)
B. Messianic Hellenists (6—12)	B. Mission Destiny (21—28)
1. Hellenist Leaders Emerge (6—7)	1. Denied: Jerusalem (21—23)
2. Hellenist Mission Advances (8—11)	2. Delayed: Caesarea (24—26)
3. Hellenist Center Shifts (11—12)	3. Achieved: Rome (27—28)

Acts 18–21: 3MJ

- 3MJ Statistics
- 3MJ Summary
- 3MJ Significance

3MJ Statistics

- 3MJ (Acts 18—21)
  - Companions: Timothy, Luke, Others
  - Date: 53–57, 4–5 years, 2500+ miles
  - Provinces: Cilicia, Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, Achaia, Lycia, Cyprus
  - Regions: Lycaonia, Pisidia, Phrygia, Lydia, Mysia, Judea
  - Islands: Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Cos, Rhodes
  - Cities: Ephesus, Corinth

3MJ Statistics

- 3MJ (Acts 18—21)
  - Companions: Timothy, Luke, Others
  - Date: 53–57, 4–5 years, 2500+ miles
  - Associated with delivering the collection to Jerusalem as representatives of Pauline churches: Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Tychicus, Trophimus
  - Islands: Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Cos, Rhodes
  - Cities: Ephesus, Corinth

3MJ Statistics

- 3MJ (Acts 18—21)
  - Companions: Timothy, Luke, Others
  - Date: 53–57, 4–5 years, 2500+ miles
  - Luke also mentions in passing Antioch, Philippi, Troas, Assos, Mitylene, Miletus, Patara, Tyre, Ptolemais, Caesarea, and Jerusalem
  - Islands: Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Cos, Rhodes
  - Cities: Ephesus, Corinth

Acts 18–21: 3MJ

- 3MJ Statistics
- **3MJ Summary**
- 3MJ Significance

3MJ: Ephesus

- Mute Points in Luke's Account
  - *Corinthian crisis* Paul endured: 1 Cor. 5:9; 7:1; 16:12; 2 Cor. 2:1–13; 7:8; 12:14
  - *Extent of dangers* Paul faced: 1 Cor. 15:32; 2 Cor. 1:8–11
  - *Symbolic collection* Paul gathered: 1 Cor. 16:1–4; 2 Cor. 8—9; Rom. 15:25–28
  - *Spanish mission* Paul planned: Rom. 15:24, 28

3MJ: Ephesus

Corinthian Crisis—Sorrowful Letter

"For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it, for I see that I grieved you with that letter, though only briefly" (2 Cor. 7:8)

- *Spanish mission* Paul planned: Rom. 15:24, 28

3MJ: Ephesus

Extent of Dangers—Trouble at Ephesus

"If with merely human hopes I fought with wild animals at Ephesus, what would I have gained by it? If the dead are not raised, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die'" (1 Cor. 15:32)

- *Spanish mission* Paul planned: Rom. 15:24, 28

Extent of Dangers—Trouble at Ephesus

"We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death so that we would rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. He who rescued us from so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us . . ." (2 Cor. 1:8–11)

3MJ: Ephesus

- Mute Points in Luke's Account

Symbolic Collection—Corinth's Part

"Now concerning the collection for the saints; you should follow the directions I gave to the churches of Galatia" (1 Cor. 16:1)

- *Spanish mission* Paul planned: Rom. 15:24, 28

3MJ: Ephesus

- Mute Points in Luke's Account

Symbolic Collection—Delivery

"So, when I have completed this, and have delivered to them what has been collected . . ." (Rom. 15:28)

- *Spanish mission* Paul planned: Rom. 15:24, 28

3MJ: Ephesus

Mute Points in Luke's Account

Spanish Mission—Future Plans

"So, when I have completed this, and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will set out by way of you to Spain." (Rom. 15:28)

- *Spanish mission* Paul planned: Rom. 15:24, 28

3MJ: Ephesus

Paul's Missionary Status

- **Paul now operates independently**
  - No Jerusalem representative (Barnabas, Silas)
  - No Jerusalem connection, or connection set?
- **Paul at height of persuasion and power**
  - Extent of miracles performed
  - Extent of mission impact (local, regional)
- **Ephesus is crown jewel of Gentile mission**
  - No other mission described this way
  - What could have been, had not Paul . . .

3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus: Paul's Crown Jewel

- **Ephesus—Introductory Narrative**
  - Apollos in Ephesus (18:24–28)
    - Rhetorical eloquence, scriptural knowledge
      - Priscilla and Aquila instruct deficiency
      - Commissioned to Corinth by Ephesians
    - Paul, however, is "light to the Gentiles"

3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus Narratives		
Introductory	Apologetics	Apollos (18:24–28)
Episodic Narratives Theme: Extraordinary	Spirit	Disciples (19:1–7)
	Preaching	Tyrannus (19:8–10)
	Miracles	Diseases (19:11–12)
	Reputation	Seven Sons (19:13–17)
	Impact	Burning (19:18–20)

3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus: Paul's Crown Jewel

- "knew only the baptism of John" (18:25)
- Apollos
  - Rhetorical eloquence, scriptural knowledge
    - Priscilla and Aquila instruct deficiency
    - Commissioned to Corinth by Ephesians
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Ephesus Introduction—Apollos

Paul is not the only early apologist, but he is the preeminent trailblazer of the Gentile mission, and that without need of any instruction by anyone. Apollos had great learning, as Paul, and great ability to confute opponents, as Paul, but Apollo's story is not the story of "light to the Gentiles." In the early church, Paul's mission best tells that story for Luke.

3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus: Paul's Crown Jewel

- **Ephesus—Episodic Narratives**
  - *Extraordinary Spirit:* JBapt disciples (19:1–7)
    - Paul instructs deficiency (cf. Apollos)
      - John's baptism only preparatory
      - Jesus' baptism is empowering Spirit
    - Paul's great concord with the Spirit
      - Paul lays on hands
      - Paul's recipients speak in tongues
      - Paul's recipients receive gift of prophecy

John the Baptist Disciples

Paul is functioning in ways that show all the manifestations of the presence and power of the Spirit in the early church. He is doing in one person what Peter, John, Agabus, and others were doing combined all together. Paul is a Spirit dynamo in full concord with the work of the Spirit at Ephesus.

- Paul's recipients receive gift of prophecy

3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus: Paul's Crown Jewel

- Ephesus—Episodic Narratives
  - *Extraordinary Spirit:* JBapt disciples (19:1–7)

Like the apostles, 6:6; Peter and John, 8:17; Ananias, 9:12; Antioch, 13:3

    - Jesus' baptism is empowering Spirit
  - Paul's great concord with the Spirit
    - Paul lays on hands
    - Paul's recipients speak in tongues
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3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus: Paul's Crown Jewel

- Ephesus—Episodic Narratives
  - *Extraordinary Spirit:* JBapt disciples (19:1–7)

Like Pentecost, 2:3; Cornelius's household, 10:46

    - Jesus' baptism is empowering Spirit
  - Paul's great concord with the Spirit
    - Paul lays on hands
    - Paul's recipients speak in tongues
    - Paul's recipients receive gift of prophecy

3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus: Paul's Crown Jewel

- Ephesus—Episodic Narratives
  - *Extraordinary Spirit:* JBapt disciples (19:1–7)

Like others in the early church, such as Agabus predicting famine, 11:28

    - Paul lays on hands
    - Paul's recipients speak in tongues
    - Paul's recipients receive gift of prophecy

3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus: Paul's Crown Jewel

- Ephesus—Episodic Narratives

  - *Extraordinary preaching (19:8–10):* In the lecture hall of Tyrannus Paul proves himself one of the greatest evangelists. Luke summarizes two years of preaching: "so that all those in Asia heard the world of the Lord Jesus" (19:10).
  - *Extraordinary miracles (19:11–12):* Miracles and exorcisms, plentiful and marvelous, more than with any other in Acts. Paul has extraordinary access to the miracle-working power of God.

3MJ: Ephesus

Ephesus: Paul's Crown Jewel

Ephesus—Episodic Narratives

- *Extraordinary reputation (19:13–17):* Seven sons of Jewish high priest, Sceva, invoking "Jesus whom Paul preaches" for exorcism. Evil spirit: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" (19:15). Paul receives acknowledgement by forces of evil on par with Jesus.
- *Extraordinary impact (19:18–20):* Magic books bonfire (50,000 silver pieces). Paul has devastating impact on belief in magic power.

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Much more than even described in Peter's encounter with Simon Magus (8:17–24)

Ephesus Narratives—Point

Luke's point in these six narratives (one introductory, five episodic) is clear: Ephesus is the crown jewel of the Pauline missionary enterprise. Paul's Ephesian ministry is unsurpassed in its success. Luke wants his readers to know where the Pauline ministry was heading until Paul himself got in the way. Paul simultaneously represents both Stephen speech themes: God active, God resisted.