

# Introduction

Writer: Luke

Time: 61-66 AD

Occasion: The book of Acts was written by Luke during the time Paul was writing the four prison epistles. This book continues where the book of Luke ends and could be entitled Second Luke. Acts begins from the end of the earthly ministry of Jesus to the formation and development of the church. In essence, it is the passing of the torch from Jesus to the church. The human subjects change in the book, but the message and the Holy Spirit's anointing remain the same.

Theme: The central theme of this book is the diminishing of the Jew and the increasing of the Gentiles. This theme is found in Acts 1:8, "...Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth."

Outline: *The Local Churches:*

Chapters 2-10: Jerusalem

Chapters 12-17: Antioch

Chapters 18-20: Ephesus

*The Predominate Characters:*

Chapters 1-5: Peter

Chapters 6-7: Stephen

Chapters 8-12: Barnabas, Philip, and Saul of Tarsus

Chapters 13-28: Paul

Background:

The book of Acts records the inception and expansion of the early church. The day of Pentecost began a new dispensation, the “mystery,” which was unknown to the Old Testament prophets. Another name for this new dispensation is the “church age” or “the dispensation of grace.” The major difference between the Old and New Testaments is the new ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was present in the Old Testament, but would only anoint specific individuals for specific purposes. The Day of Pentecost introduced the new birth and the infilling of the Holy Spirit to empower believers to fulfill the great commission.