

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ACTS



Concerning the things fulfilled in our midst

The title Luke gave to his 2 volume work is 'The things fulfilled in our midst' Luke 1:1

(Amos 3:7 'God does nothing but first He reveals His secrets to His servants the prophets)

Reason for writing two volumes Luke 1:4 'seemed good to me also...so that you may have certainty concerning the narratives about which you have been misinformed [or inadequately informed]' cf. the use of the same verb Acts 18:25, 21:21, 24.

The author was a participant in some of the events in Acts. The narrative changes there is third person plural 'we' in 16.10-17, 20.5-15, 21.1-18, 27.1-28.16. The author who is writing in Rome 28:14 'and so we came to Rome'

The sources: the author had official legal proceeding of Paul trials in Caesarea Maritima in Acts 23.26-26.32. He even copies an official letter from the tribune, Claudius Lysias, to governor Felix, 23.25-30. See also Luke 1:1-4

Volume 1 Luke describes the contents 'In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began both to do and to teach' (Acts 1.1)

1. Preface and title 1:1-4

The birth and manifestation of the Messiah 1.5-4.30

I. The Acts of the Messiah "What Jesus began to do" 4:31-9.50

II. The Teaching of the Messiah ("and began to teach") 9:51-19:44

The Fulfillment of the Messiah's Mission 19.28-24.53



Volume II of 'The things that have been fulfilled in our midst' 'my witnesses in Jerusalem..... and to the end of the earth' Acts 1:8. Rome was often spoken of as 'the end of the earth'
At the end of each segment Luke records how the gospel worked.

- I. **Acts 1.1-6.7 Jerusalem under Peter's apostleship and the Eleven**
 'And the Word of God increased' 6.7

- II. **Acts 6.8-9.31 Greek-speaking Jewish Christians, Samaria, Coastal Palestine, Damascus**
 'church built up and multiplied'

- III. **Acts 9.32-12.24 Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch**
 'But the Word of God grew and multiplied'

- IV. **Acts 12.25-16.5 Asia Minor and Galatia**
 'So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily'

- V. **Acts 16.6-19.20 Paul, Silas, Aquila and Priscilla and Apollos Greece and parts of Asia Minor**
 'So the Word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily'

- VI. **Acts 19:21-28.31 Paul in Jerusalem, Caesarea and Rome**
 'preaching ... the Lord Jesus Christ openly and not hindered'

The ending of Acts is important as the last word in ancient writings was often the last word. The word 'unhindered' in Act 28:31 means there was 'no legal impediment' to Paul preaching in Rome or a person associating with him being considered guilty by association. See the legal rulings of governors concerning Jesus in Luke 23.4, 14 and Paul in Acts 25.25, 26:31-32. There was nothing illegal under Roman law in embracing the unstoppable gospel.

See Philippians 4. 22 'all the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household cf. Philippians 1:13. This unstoppable gospel harvests some from Caesar's household in Rome.

