

The Book of Acts

“You Shall Be My Witnesses”

**The Establishment and Growth
of the Lord’s Church**

Book of Acts in the New Testament

<u>Gospel</u> (4) Matthew Mark Luke John	<u>History</u> (1) Acts	Epistle (21) <u>Paul</u> (13) Romans 1 and 2 Cor. Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 and 2 Thess. 1 and 2 Tim. Titus Philemon <u>General</u> (8)	<u>Prophecy</u> (1) Revelation
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Time Period in NT History

Period 1

Preparation for the Church

c. A.D. 1 – 33

(Matthew through John)

Establishment of the Church

Period 2

c. A.D. 33 – 63

(Acts through Philemon)

Latter Developments in the Church

Period 3

c. A.D. 63 – 95

(Hebrews through Revelation)

Book Background

- Title: “Acts”, the title, originated c. A.D. 150. It refers to some of the acts of some of the apostles. Chapters 1-12 focuses on the acts of Peter and Chapters 13-28 focuses on the acts of Paul.

Book Background

- Authorship: Luke wrote both the gospel of Luke and Acts (Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1). Acts picks up where Luke leaves off (compare Luke 24:44-53 with Acts 1:1-11)

Book Background

- Authorship: Luke was a physician (Col. 4:14; Philemon 24; 2 Tim. 4:11) and a travelling companion to Paul (note the author's "we" sections in Acts: 16:10-13; 20:6)

Book Background

- Date: c. A.D. 33-63 (the establishment and growth of the Lord's church); c. 63 (book written)

Book Background

- Audience and Occasion: Luke wanted Theophilus (“lover of God”), a Greek and possibly a high official, to have an orderly and accurate history of the Jesus’ life (Gospel of Luke) and Jesus’ work (via the apostles) after he ascended to heaven (Acts).

Keys to the Book

- Key verse: Acts 1:8
- Key word: “Witnesses” (used for eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Jesus and miraculous powers to confirm the message)

Themes in Acts

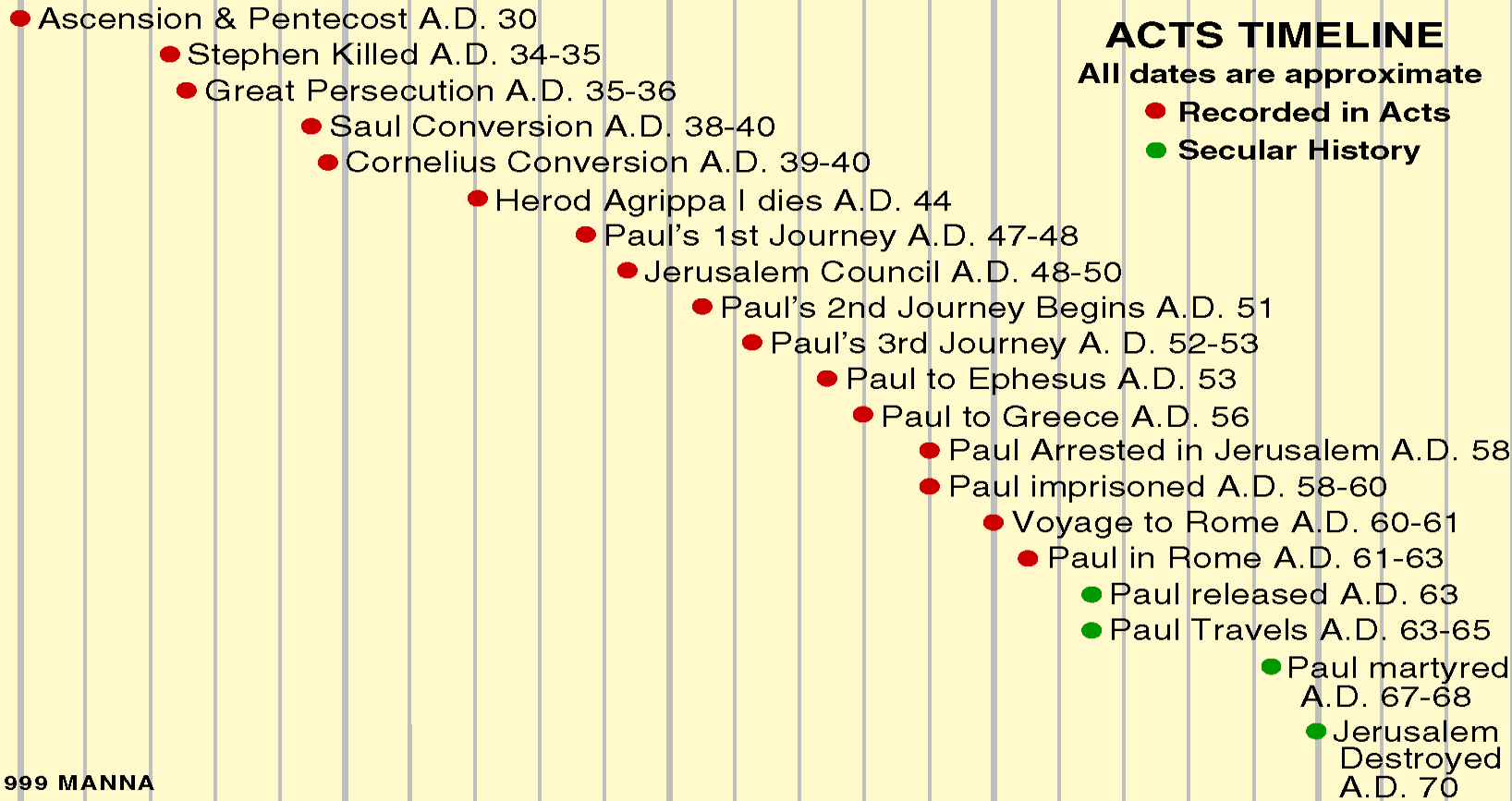
- The nature and content of preaching
- The way of salvation (cases of conversion)
- The work of the Holy Spirit
- The work, worship, and organization of the local church

Themes in Acts

- The opposition and persecution of unbelief toward Christians
- The personal testimony of those men who were eyewitnesses of the life of Jesus Christ

Themes in Acts

- The historical background or setting for several of the other NT books thereby giving insight into the proper understanding of their messages (Acts is also the “bridge” between the gospels and the epistles)

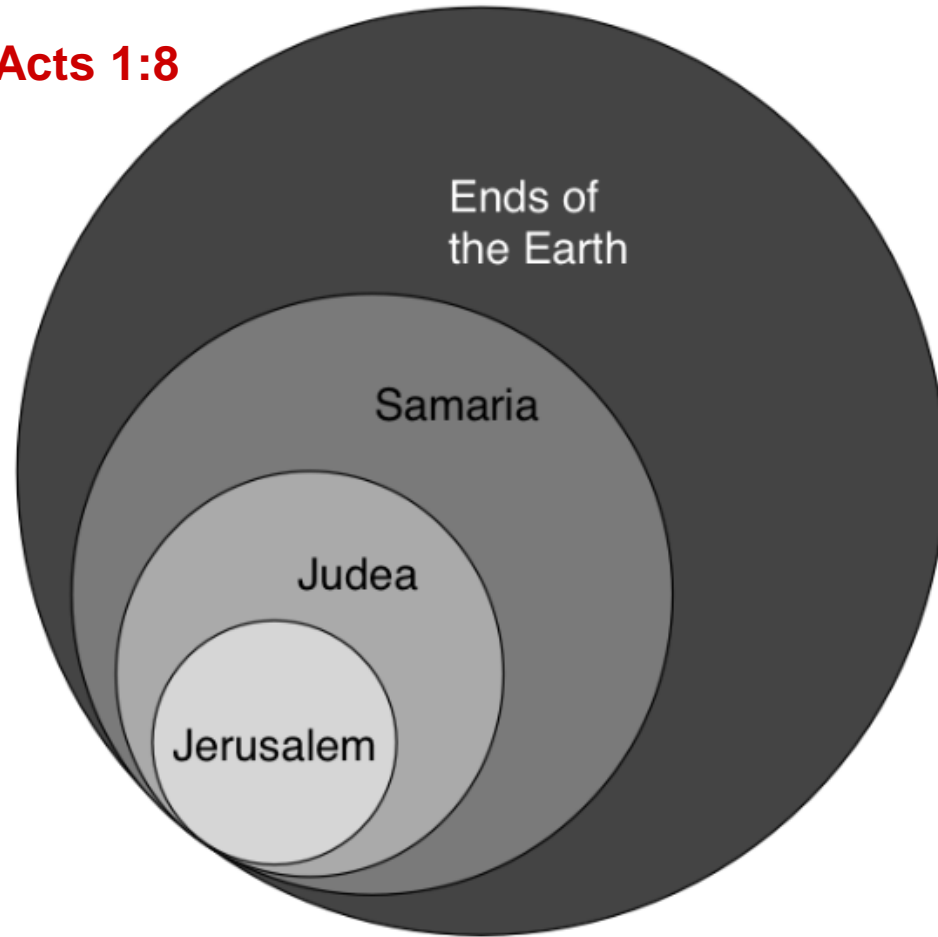


Outline of the Book

“You Shall Be My Witnesses” (Acts 1:8)

- In Jerusalem (Acts 1-7)
- In All Judea and Samaria (Acts 8-12)
- Unto the Uttermost Part of the Earth
(Acts 13-28)

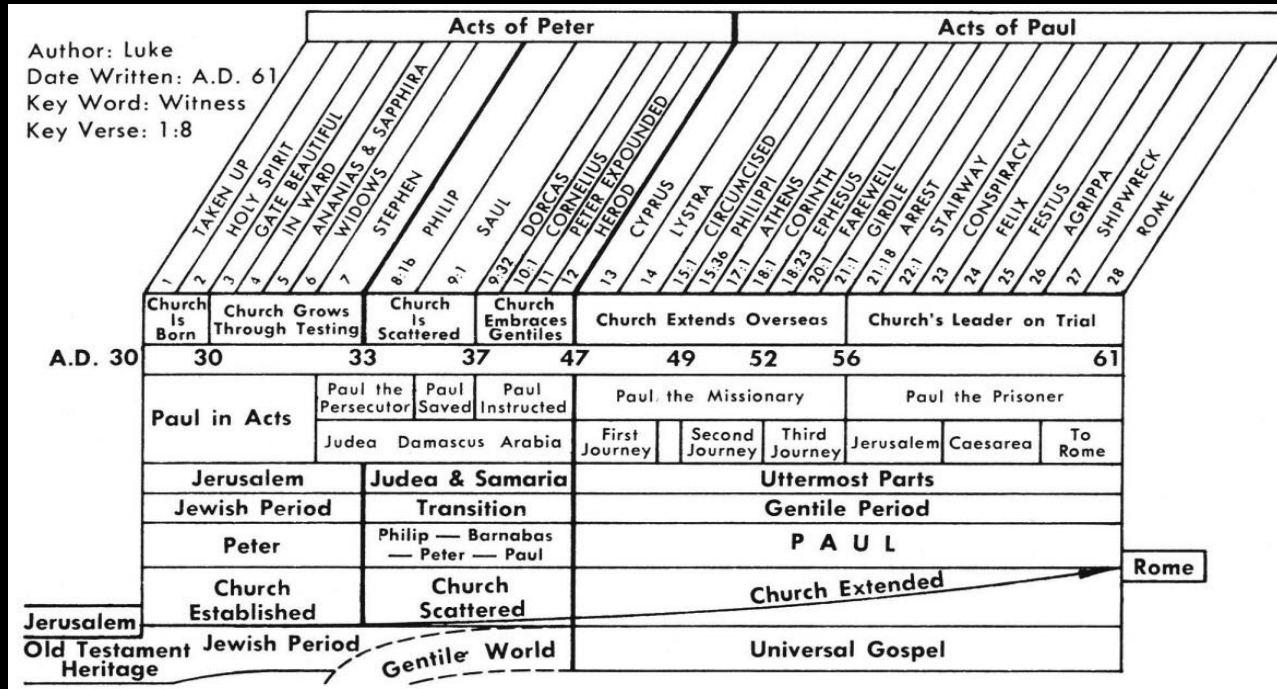
Acts 1:8



Outline of the Book

“You Shall Be My Witnesses”

(Acts 1:8)

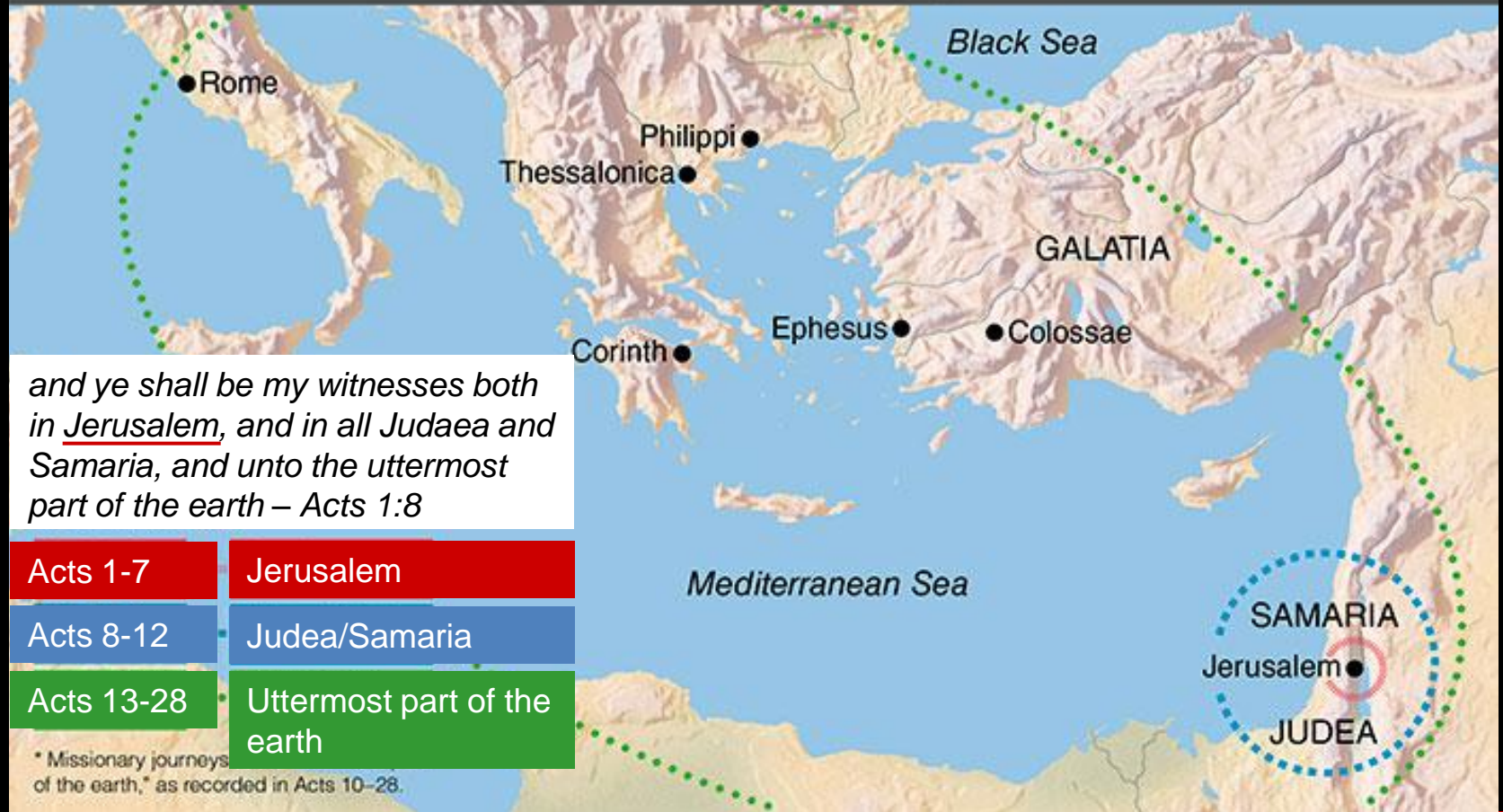


ACTS

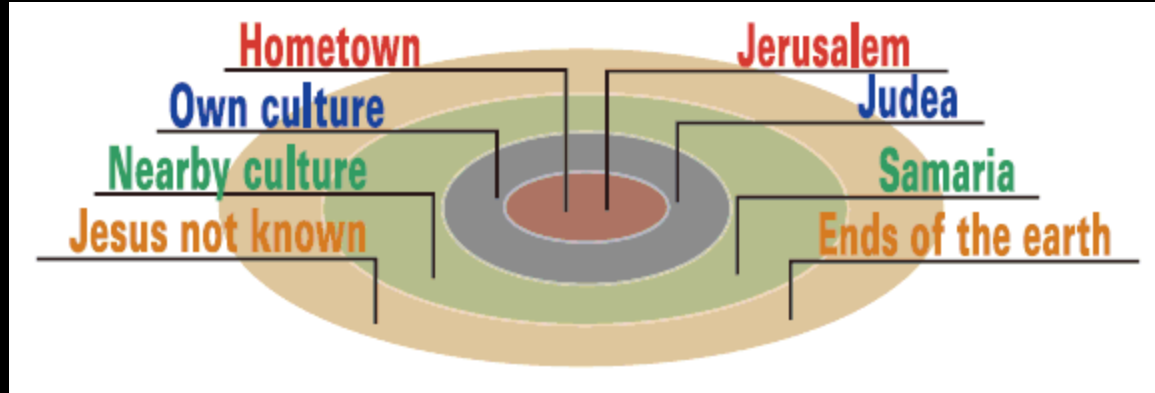
	The Church Established at “Jerusalem”	The Church Enlarged to “Judea and Samaria”	The Church Expanded to “the Ends of the Earth”
AD 30	The church is . . . born tested purified strengthened CHAPTERS 1–7	The gospel is . . . spreading multiplying changing lives breaking traditions CHAPTERS 8–12	The witness is . . . extended received and rejected changing lives unifying Jews and Gentiles CHAPTERS 13–28
Leaders	The apostle Peter		The apostle Paul
Emphasis	Jewish evangelism	Transition	Gentile evangelism
Time	AD 33 (1:1–2:47)	AD 36 (8:1)	AD 40 (9:32) AD 46 (13:1) AD 57 (21:18)
Scope	City evangelism	National evangelism	Cross-cultural evangelism
Theme	In the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus’s followers carry the good news of Christ to the world.		
Key Verse	1:8		
Christ in Acts	Jesus is the glorified, enthroned Savior, who continues His ministry in the world by means of the Holy Spirit working through His disciples until He returns (1:7–9).		

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Overview of the Acts of the Apostles



Will We Take the Gospel to the Lost?



Luke's Summaries of Church Growth

And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith – **Acts 6:7**

So the church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied – **Acts 9:31**

But the word of God grew and multiplied – **Acts 12:24**

So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily – **Acts 16:5**

So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed – **Acts 19:20**

preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him – **Acts 28:31**

Acts 1

Lessons for Today

1. Like Jesus, it is important for us to both do and teach God's word (1:1; Ezra 7:10).
2. We have "proof" (evidence) of the resurrection of Jesus because it was observed openly by many (eye) witnesses (1:3; 1 Cor. 15:1-8).

Acts 1

Lessons for Today

3. Jesus is coming again and we must be ready to meet him (1:11; Heb. 9:27-28).
4. Spending time together “continuing steadfastly in prayer” will encourage and strengthen brethren (1:14; Acts 2:42; 6:4; Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2).

Acts 1

Lessons for Today

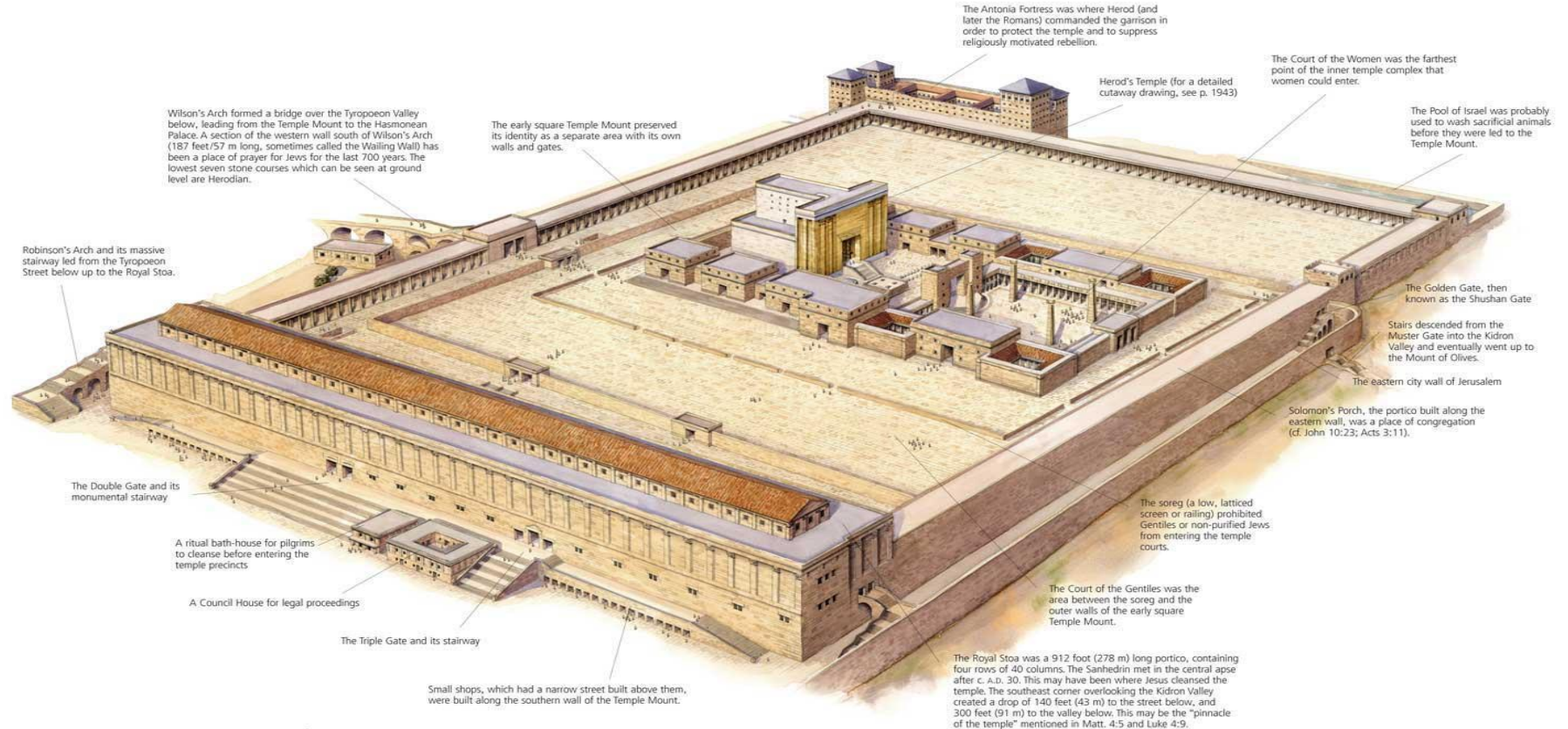
5. The scripture will always be fulfilled because God's word cannot be broken (1:16; Lk. 4:21).

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Herod's Temple in Jerusalem



Examples of Conversion

Matthew 28:18-20

Preaching	Believed	Repented	Confessed	Baptized	Saved
Pentecost (Acts 2:14-47)	Cut to Heart (v. 37)	Repent (vs. 37-38)		Baptized (vs. 38-41)	Remission of Sins (vs. 38-47)
Samaria (Acts 8:5-13)	Believed (v. 12)			Baptized (vs. 12-13)	
Eunuch (Acts 8:26-39)	Believed (vs. 36-37)		Confessed (v. 37)	Baptized (v. 38)	Rejoiced (v. 39)
Saul (Acts 9:1-18)	Fasted and Prayed (vs. 9-11)	Fasted and Prayed (vs. 9-11)		Baptized (v. 18)	Sins Washed Away (22:16)
Cornelius (Acts 10:34-48)	Believed (v. 43)			Baptized (v. 48)	Remission of Sins (v. 43)
Lydia (Acts 16:14-15)	Believed (v. 14)			Baptized (v. 15)	
Philippian Jailer (Acts 16:25-34)	Believed (v. 31)			Baptized (v. 33)	Rejoiced (v. 34)
Preaching Rom. 10:11-17	Faith Heb. 11:6	Repentance Luke 13:3	Confession Matt. 10:32 Rom. 10:10	Baptism Rom. 6:4 1 Pet. 3:21	Salvation Acts 4:12 2 Tim. 2:10

Acts 2

Lessons for Today

1. The promise of salvation to all who “call on the name of the Lord” is still for us today (2:21; Rom. 10:12-13).
2. Pointed and personal preaching like Peter’s is needed today to help people repent and turn to Jesus (2:22-41; 2 Tim. 4:2).

Acts 2

Lessons for Today

3. The life, death, burial, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus is the heart of the gospel (2:22-36; Rom. 16:25).
4. Jesus is Savior and Lord (2:36; 2 Pet. 1:11; 2:20; 3:2, 18).

Acts 2

Lessons for Today

5. When a heart is truly “pricked” by preaching it will make a change (2:37; Jn. 16:8-11).
6. We must repent and be baptized in order to obtain forgiveness of sins (2:38; Mk. 16:16; Ac. 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).

Acts 2

Lessons for Today

7. We save ourselves by receiving God's word (2:40-41; 2 Thess. 2:10; 1 Tim. 2:4; 4:16; Jas. 1:21).
8. Christians need to "continue steadfastly" in their service to Christ after their baptism and not fall away (2:42; Col. 4:2).

Acts 2

Lessons for Today

9. Benevolent help from the local church treasury was always given to needy saints, never to everyone in general (2:44-45; Acts 4:32-37; 6:1-3; 11:29; Rom. 15:31; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8-9; 1 Tim. 5:4-16).

Acts 2

Lessons for Today

10. The local church should be unified, sharing, worshipping, socializing (at home), happy, praising God, and influential together (2:44-47; Eph. 4:3; Phil. 1:27; Col. 4:14-15).

Acts 2

Lessons for Today

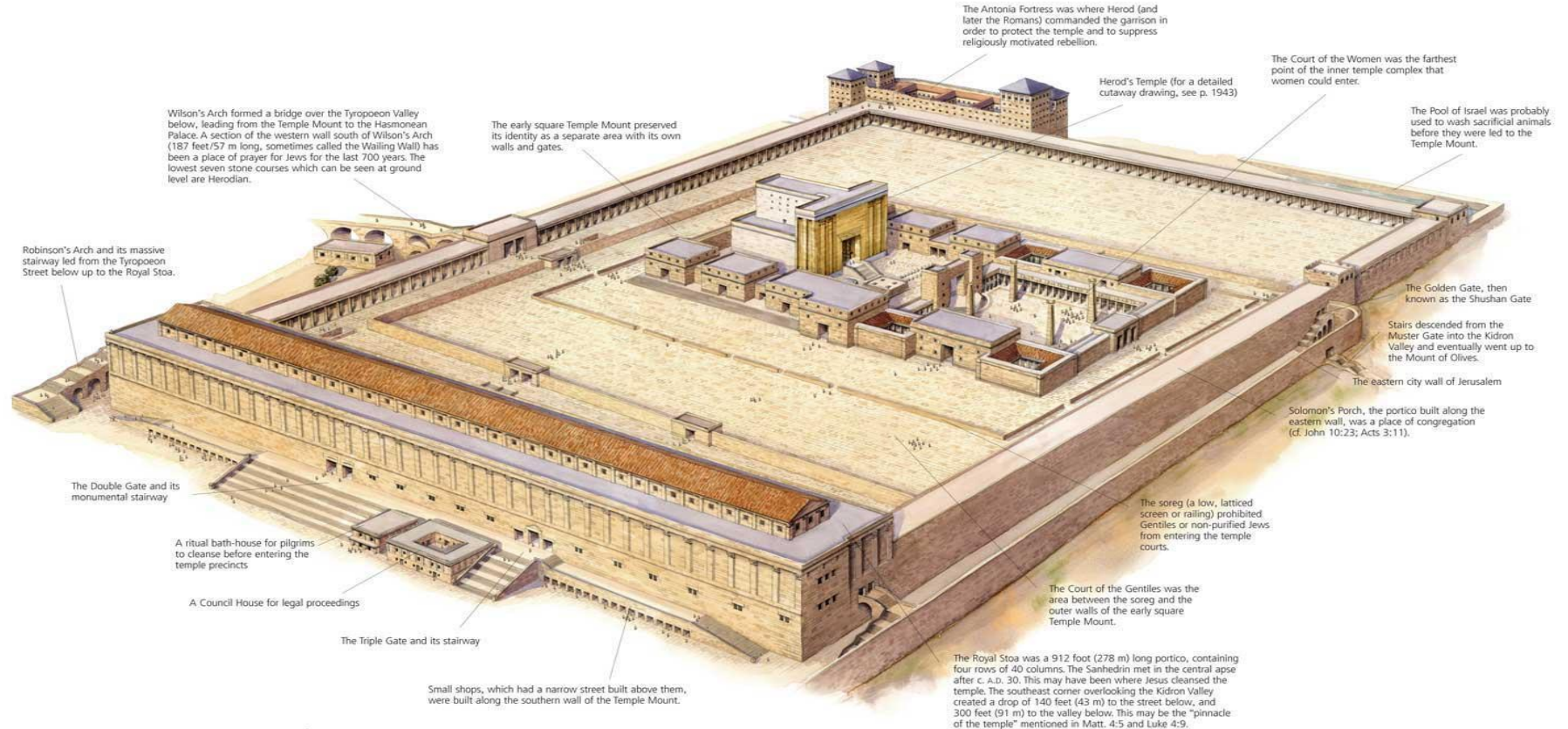
11. The Lord adds the saved to his church because he sets the terms of membership (2:47; Acts 5:14; 11:24).

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Acts 3

Lessons for Today

1. God is to be praised when he does great things for us (3:8-9; 1 Chron. 16:25).
2. Pointed and personal preaching like Peter's is needed today to help people repent and turn to Jesus (3:13-19; 2 Tim. 4:2).

Acts 3

Lessons for Today

3. Jesus is God's "Servant", the "Holy and Righteous One", and the "Prince of Life" (3:13-15; Acts 4:27, 30; Isa. 52:13 – 53:12).
4. The "name of Jesus Christ" is the authority of Jesus Christ (3:6, 16; 1 Cor. 5:4; Col. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:6; Jas. 5:14).

Acts 3

Lessons for Today

5. A person is still guilty of wrong even though he does it in ignorance (3:17; Acts 17:23, 30-31; Rom. 10:3; 1 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 5:2; 1 Pet. 1:14; 2 Pet. 3:16).
6. Repentance is needed for forgiveness of sins (3:19; Mk. 1:4; Lk. 17:4; Acts 2:38).

Acts 3

Lessons for Today

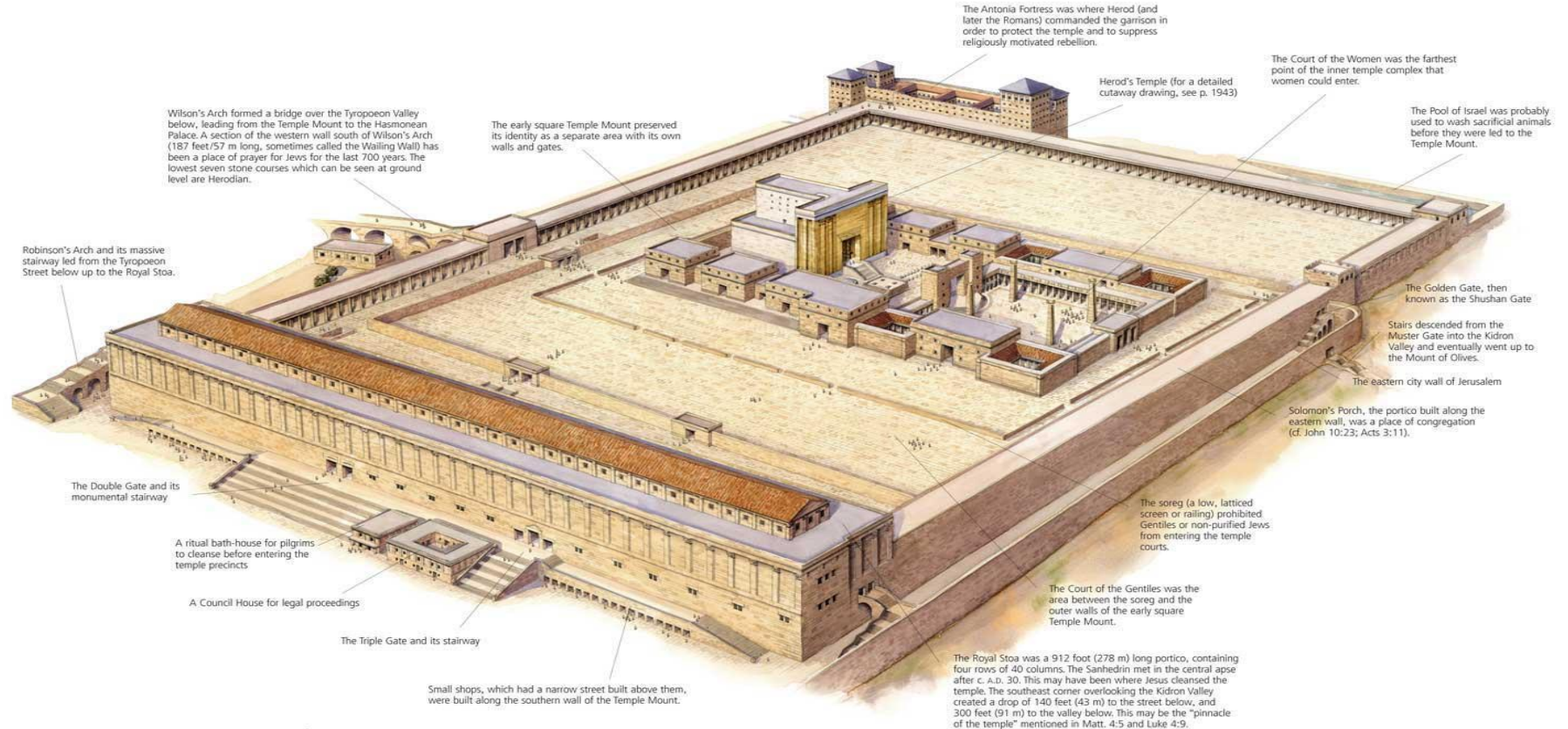
7. We must listen to (obey) Jesus or be destroyed (3:23; Mk. 16:16; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).
8. Jesus wants to bless us with forgiveness of sins (3:26; Psa. 32:1; Rom. 4:7-8).

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Acts 4

Lessons for Today

1. The Lord's church can grow even in the midst of persecution and opposition (4:4; Acts 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20).
2. When called upon to defend your faith, don't be timid or fearful (4:8-12; 2 Tim. 1:7).

Acts 4

Lessons for Today

3. Do not reject Jesus because there is no other way to be saved without him (4:11-12; Jn. 14:6).
4. People today need to see a Christian's boldness and willingness to identify with Jesus (4:13; Acts 15:26; 1 Pet. 4:14, 16).

Acts 4

Lessons for Today

5. Some people just will not accept the evidence of truth no matter how compelling it is (4:14-16; Jn. 11:10-11; 12:42; 2 Thess. 2:10-12).

Acts 4

Lessons for Today

6. Stand up to bullies. Do not be moved. Be steadfast and continue standing for what is right even in the face of opposition (4:19-20, 33; Acts 14:22; Rom. 5:3; 12:12; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Tim. 3:11-12; Rev. 2:10).

Acts 4

Lessons for Today

7. Let us turn to God in prayer in times of persecution. Let us pray together as Christians, not that persecution would be removed altogether, but that we would have boldness in the face of persecution (4:13, 17-31; 2 Cor. 3:2; Eph. 3:12; 6:19; Heb. 3:6).

Acts 4

Lessons for Today

8. Believers need to be unified with each other, loving, caring, and sacrificial one toward another (4:32-37; Jn. 13:34-35; 17:21; 1 Jn. 3:21).

Acts 4

Lessons for Today

9. Benevolent help from the local church treasury was always given to needy saints, never to everyone in general (4:32-37; Acts 2:44-45; 6:1-3; 11:29; Rom. 15:31; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8-9; 1 Tim. 5:4-16).

Acts 4

Lessons for Today

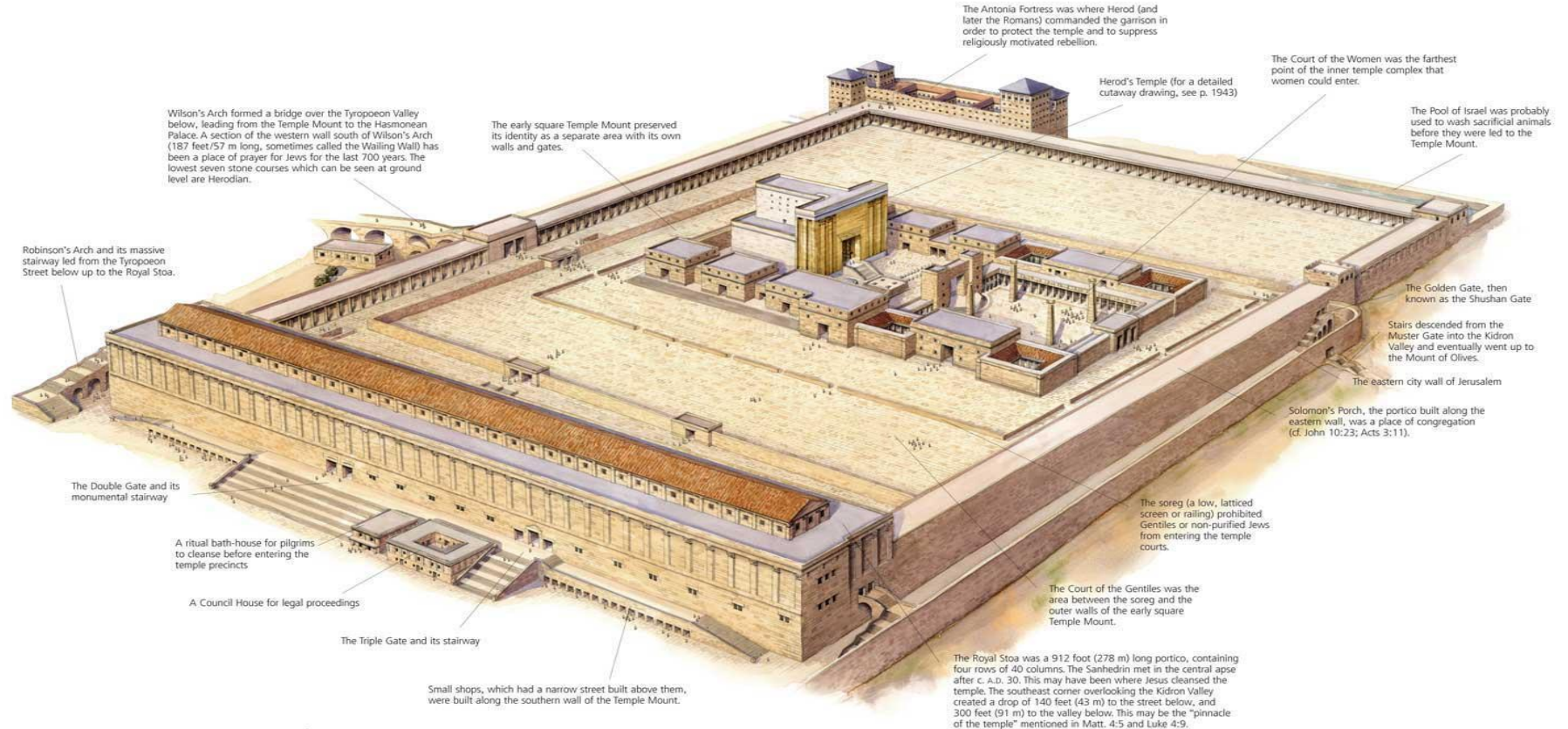
10. God will reward Christians with “great grace” when they do his will (4:33; 2 Cor. 12:9; Eph. 3:7, 20).

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Acts 5

Lessons for Today

1. Satan tries to destroy the church with outward persecution (Acts 4) and inward corruption (Acts 5:3; Eph. 4:27; Jas. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8).
2. Satan wants to fill your heart with evil, don't let him (5:3; Jn. 13:2; Eph. 4:27).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

3. Lying is a sin and hypocrisy in the church will be punished (5:3; Mt. 24:51; Rev. 21:8).
4. The Holy Spirit is a divine person of the Godhead, not a thing (5:3-4, 9; Eph. 5:30).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

5. Removing unrepentant sinners from the local church and keeping it spiritually pure is important for the health and growth of the Lord's church (5:1-11; Rom. 16;17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6-15).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

6. God's punishment should bring fear upon everyone (5:5, 11; 1 Tim. 5:19-20).
7. Not all unity is good unity (5:9; 1 Tim. 5:22).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

8. The Lord's church needs to be unified and growing (5:12-16; Rom. 15:6; Phil. 2:2).
9. "Believers", not infants, were added to the Lord (5:14; Mk. 15:16; Acts 18:8).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

10. Christians still have the privilege of speaking “the words of this Life” and preaching “Jesus as the Christ” (5:20, 42; Jn. 6:63, 68).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

11. When called upon to defend your faith, don't be timid or fearful (5:29-33; 2 Tim. 1:7).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

12. There are times when civil disobedience is necessary. When faced with two opposing commands, we must obey God rather than men (5:29; Ex. 1:15-22; Dan. 6:4-15).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

13. When you hear the truth, you can either be “pricked in the heart” to obey (2:37), or “cut to the heart” to disobey (5:33; Psa. 73:21; Acts 7:54).

Acts 5

Lessons for Today

14. No one can overthrow the work of God (5:39; Prov. 21:30).

15. It is an honor to suffer dishonor for “the Name” of Jesus (5:41; Jn. 15:21; Jas. 2:7; 1 Pet. 4:16).

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Luke's Six Summaries of Church Growth

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preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him – **Acts 28:31**

Acts 6

Lessons for Today

1. The needs of church members should never be neglected (6:1; 2 Chron. 29:11; Jer. 48:10).
2. There is always a need for Christian men who are willing to serve and minister to the needs of other Christians in the local church (6:2-6; 1 Tim. 3:10).

Acts 6

Lessons for Today

3. The preaching of the word should never be neglected while trying to minister to the needs of others (6:2, 4; 1 Tim. 4:6).
4. Congregational meetings from time-to-time are good to discuss the needs of the local church (6:2, 5; Acts 14:27).

Acts 6

Lessons for Today

5. We need Christians today like Stephen who are “full of the Spirit”, “full of faith”, and “full of grace” (6:3, 5, 8; Jn. 1:14; Acts 7:55; 11:24).
6. God’s word will always increase and never be bound (6:7; Acts 12:24; 19:20).

Acts 6

Lessons for Today

7. We are not saved by “faith only”. We are saved when we have an “obedience of faith” that is “obedient to the faith” (6:7; Rom. 1:5; 16:26).

Acts 6

Lessons for Today

8. The Lord's church can grow (2:47; 4:5, 5:14; 6:1, 7) even when it faces problems and obstacles from without (Acts 4-5) and from within (Acts 5-6).

Acts 6

Lessons for Today

9. Truth will always prevail (6:8-10; 2 Cor. 2:14).

10. Just because people make charges against another doesn't mean that those charges are true (6:11-15; Mt. 26:59-60).

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Acts 7

Lessons for Today

1. Let us always be ready to give an answer for what we believe and teach (7:1; 1 Pet. 3:15).
2. Being moved with jealousy against another can cause a person to do terrible things (7:9; Acts 5:17; 13:35; 17:5; Jas. 3:14, 16).

Acts 7

Lessons for Today

3. God will deliver us out of our afflictions (7:10, 34; Psa. 34:19).
4. God always keeps his promises (7:17; 2 Chron. 6:14-15).
5. Do we tremble in the presence of a holy God (7:31-33; Isa. 6:1-5)?

Acts 7

Lessons for Today

6. We need to be careful that we do not turn back in our hearts to the world, but keep pressing on to our promised land (7:39; Rom. 12:1; Jas. 4:4; 1 Jn. 2:15-17).
7. Idolatry is a constant temptation for God's people (7:40-41; Col. 3:5; 1 Jn. 5:21).

Acts 7

Lessons for Today

8. Let us never rejoice in what we make, but rejoice in what the Lord makes (7:41; Rom. 1:25).
9. It is important to always follow the pattern of God's word (7:44; 2 Tim. 1:13).

Acts 7

Lessons for Today

10. We resist the Holy Spirit himself when we harden our hearts against his word, refuse to hear it, and do not obey it (7:51, 54, 57; 1 Thess. 5:19-20).

Acts 7

Lessons for Today

11. Some people are “pricked in the heart” and obey (Acts 2:37) while others are “cut to the heart” and disobey (7:54; Acts 5:33).

Acts 7

Lessons for Today

12. It may be difficult, but like Jesus and Stephen, we must always have a forgiving attitude toward those who persecute us (7:60; Lk. 23:34; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13).

Acts 1-7 in Review

1. Luke's introduction, Jesus' final words, Jesus' ascension into heaven, waiting for Pentecost, and the selection of Matthias
2. The day of Pentecost, apostles filled with the H.S., preaching of the apostles, first converts, and local church activities

Acts 1-7 in Review

3. Peter heals the lame man and Peter's second recorded sermon
4. Peter and John arrested for preaching, appearance before the council, prayer to God for boldness, unity and benevolence of the believers, and Barnabas' generosity

Acts 1-7 in Review

5. The lies and deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, the growth of the church, the apostles imprisoned, second appearance before the council, and Gamaliel's advice
6. Seven chosen to serve, growth of the church, and Stephen's preaching/miracles

Acts 1-7 in Review

7. Stephen's sermon (defense), Jews' resistant response, Stephen's stoning to death, and the introduction of Saul the persecutor