

## THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

### SESSION 85 | SUMMARY OF ACTS

#### WAS THERE AN ACTS 29?

- Because of the abrupt ending of the book of Acts, there have been numerous “discoveries” of an “Acts 29.”
- One of the most famous is called the *Sonini Manuscript*, which first appeared in 1871 as an English translation of an purportedly ancient Greek text.
  - It claims that Paul went to Spain and then to Brittain, where he preached at the site that is now St. Paul's Cathedral.
  - It is impossible that this document is accurate because it is a theological mixture of kingdom and grace, preaching kingdom to gentile audiences.
  - If the document were ever proven to be legitimate, any kind of Pauline-based mystery theology would have to be abandoned.
- More famous in our day is the Acts 29 movement. This movement is an evangelical, left-leaning, charismatic, Calvinistic church planting organization. It is named Acts 29 because of their believe that modern believers are the completion of the book of Acts.
- In truth, the book of Acts does not finish the story.
  - This does not demand that there was a book/chapter/letter that finishes the story.
  - The book of Acts is about God's revelation of transition from the national gospel of the kingdom to the individual gospel of grace. The theological information given, when combined with Luke and Romans, is perfectly sufficient with no “Acts 29” needed.

#### THE SUMMARY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

- In chapter 1, the focus is on the 12, and the continuation of their work, which is about the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel by God. The apostles select a replacement for Judas (under the guidance of Scripture and with a unity of spirit). They are promised the fulfillment of the Father's promise of power from on high.
- In chapter 2, the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4), which was promised in Joel 2:28, is fulfilled, in part but not whole. They received the Holy Ghost, but the time of judgment did not come.
- In Acts 3-8 the apostles proclaim the Kingdom gospel to the Jewish nation. They are fully obedient to the Torah, living fully within Judaism, and proclaiming with the manifest power of God in the Holy Ghost. By the end of Acts 8, the national leadership rejects the message.
- In Acts 9 Paul is introduced, and he becomes a member of the *Way*, also known as *the sect of the Nazarenes*.
- In Acts 10-12, the ministry of Peter on the Kingdom begins to stretch to gentiles, and then begins to diminish.
- In Acts 13-14 Paul ministers both to Jews and Gentiles, outside of Judea. He receives the *mystery*, the Gospel of the dispensation of grace, and begins to proclaim it in places where the national Gospel is rejected and where Gentiles are present. Acts 13:38-39 is the first recorded presentation of the grace gospel.

- By Acts 15, the fact of presentation of the Gospel of grace, separated from the Torah, has reached the ears of the leaders of *the Way*. A confrontational meeting takes place in Jerusalem. When Paul shares the revelation he had received, the apostles, with Peter's consent, along with James, the Lord's brother, give endorsement to this new Gospel. They ask Paul and his followers to be careful not to offend Jewish people as they accept this new Gospel and begin to serve the God of Abraham and the Jewish Messiah as gentile believers.
- In Acts 16-28 there is a mixture of clear *individual* Gospel presentations (such as Acts 16:31) and clear *kingdom* Gospel presentations (such as Acts 17:31) both being proclaimed by Paul, varying by audience.
- By the end of Acts 28, one can understand why there is a book called *Romans*, as well as the identity of those Romans (members of *the Way* living in Rome), and have the historical background for the theological lessons of the book.
  - Luke is the history of the presentation of the King.
  - Acts is the history of the presentation of the Kingdom.
  - Romans is the *theological* history of the rejection of the King and His Kingdom and the transition to the mystery of grace.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

- The Scriptures should be taught as follows:
  - Creation through Babel: *how we got here, how we messed up, how bad things became.*
  - Abraham through Moses: *how God entrusted His plan for a Savior within one family.*
  - Moses through 1 Samuel 7: *how God fulfilled His promise to turn that family into a nation, yet the Savior never came forth.*
  - 1 Samuel 8 – Malachi: *how God patiently dealt with that nation, though they continually rejected His word and His ways.*
  - The Gospels: *how God finally sent the promised Savior, who displayed every proof of being both Messiah and Son of God, yet was rejected by that nation, being put on the cross where He would die, then be buried and rise again on the third day, after which He would send His apostles to the world to proclaim Jesus as the promised King for the nation of Israel.*
  - Acts: *how God set aside that nation for a temporary period of time as an act of grace, not providing the prophesied judgment but rather revealing a mystery dispensation for the salvation of all the world.*
  - Romans – Philemon: *how God has given instruction for living in this dispensation of the grace of God.*
  - Hebrews – Revelation: *how God will deal with that nation after this mystery dispensation has come to a close.*
- The book of Acts is the *transition* book that separates the church from the nation of Israel and grace from Kingdom. If the book of Acts is not correctly understood, the teaching of the doctrines of Christian living will be completely confused by foreign material.