

# ASCENSION AND APOSTLESHIP

## QUOTE:

And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Acts 1:10-11

Either create a Bible Insert, or mark in the lined pages at the back/front of your Bible with a reference written in Acts 1.

## Yahweh's Final Appeal To Israel Both In The Land And In Dispersion.

*Key Verses:* Acts 1:8; 13:46.

*The Acts of the Apostles records the following:*

- The final complete conversion of the apostles.
- An account of the way both the Jews and the Gentiles responded to the preaching of the Gospel.
- The beginnings of ecclesias and the foundations of ecclesial life.
- It is a record of how the Father answered the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross (“Father forgive them for they know not what they do” - Luke 23:34). In Acts 1:8 we are given the extent of the preaching of the Gospel, while in Acts 13:46 the apostle shows the order – to the Jew first and then to the Gentile when the Jews rejected it. The record closes in Acts 28 when the Jews had been given an opportunity to understand what they had done, and to repent, and the Gospel had been preached to all the then known world.
- Acts shows a continuation of the enmity established in Eden (Genesis 3:15). See the progression in Acts 2:13; 4:18; 5:18, 40; 7:59; 26:10.
- By contrast it shows the illuminating power of the Word of God: Peter, who previously had denied his Lord, now preaches Christ boldly on the day of Pentecost, in the temple, and before the authorities. Saul is then transformed from a persecutor of the ecclesia to Paul, a follower of Christ.
- Acts also records the growth of the Ecclesia and the impact of the Gospel in various places:
  - Acts 2:41-47 – the impact of the preaching on the day of Pentecost
  - Acts 6:7 – the impact of the gospel in Jerusalem.
  - Acts 9:31 – the impact of the gospel in Judea and Samaria.
  - Acts 12:24 – the impact of the gospel in Syria.
  - Acts 16:5 – the impact of the gospel in Asia Minor.
  - Acts 19:20 – the impact of the gospel in Europe.
  - Acts 28:31 – the impact of the gospel on Rome.

*The Author:*

Luke, this is indicated by **Acts 1:1-3** which contains very similar words to the beginning of Luke (**1:1-3**). Luke appears in the record in **Acts 16:10** with the word “we”. He appears to have joined Paul at Troas, and accompanied him to Philippi, where he remained (**Acts 17:1,14** indicates he was not with them then), and rejoined as he passed through Philippi on his Third journey, accompanying him to Jerusalem (**Ch 20:5-21:18**). Luke was later to accompany Paul to Rome (**Ch 27:1-28:16 – cp Col 4:14**).

*Two Key Characters:*

The Signs and Wonders performed by Peter in Jerusalem were reproduced by Paul as he took the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. The following table shows:

<b>PETER</b>	<b>PAUL</b>
First Address – Ch 2:14-39	First Address – Ch 13:15-41
Lame Man Healed – Ch 3	Lame Man Healed – Ch 14:8-10
Rebukes Simon the Sorcerer – Ch 8:18-24	Elymas the Sorcerer struck blind - Ch 13:6-12
Influence of Peter’s Shadow – Ch 5:14-16	Influence of handkerchiefs from Paul – Ch 19:11-12
Laying on of Hands – Ch 8:14-17	Laying on of Hands – Ch 19:1-7
Peter Worshipped – Ch 10:25-26	Paul Worshipped – Ch 14:11-18
Tabitha Raised – Ch 9:36-42	Eutychus Raised – Ch 20:9-12
Peter Imprisoned – Ch 12:1-19	Paul Imprisoned – Ch 16 (also Ch 28)

*Summary of the two Parts of the Acts of the Apostles:*

<b>PART 1 – CH 1-12</b>	<b>PART 2 – CH 13-28</b>
• Jerusalem the Centre	• Antioch the Centre
• Peter the Chief Figure	• Paul the Chief Figure
• Out to Samaria	• Out to Rome
• Rejected by The Jews of the Land	• Rejected by the Jews of Dispersion
• Peter Imprisoned	• Paul Imprisoned
• Judgment on Herod	• Judgment on Jews

**Qualifications of an Apostle (Acts 1:21-22):** (Mark above or below in Acts 1-2)

- Must be one who has accompanied the Lord from his baptism until his ascension; so as to be a witness of his resurrection (**Acts 1:21-22**).
- Must be one who has seen Jesus and conversed with him (**1 Cor 9:1**).
- Must be chosen, ordained, and sent of the Lord (**Jn. 15:16**) and authorised by him to forgive and retain sins (**Jn. 20:22-23**).
- Must be able to work signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds, as signs of his apostleship (**2 Cor 12:12; Gal 2:8**).
- Must have believed the pure gospel of the Kingdom of God (**Gal 1:8**), have been immersed (**Acts 22:16**), and walked according to the truth of it (**Gal 2:14**).

(adapted from Elpis Israel, J.Thomas, Part Second, Ch.1, “Apostolic Succession”)