

GOSPEL BREAKOUT

Summer 2021, Acts 11:19-30

September 19, 2021

Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection to Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to the Jews. Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was upon them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord..

Acts 11:19-21

Introduction: A short history of breakouts (and what stalls them)

The gospel arrives in Antioch (base camp for the breakout)

¹⁹ *Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews.* ²⁰ *Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.* ²¹ *The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.*

Acts 11:19-21

1. We are taken back to Acts 8:1: “On that day a great persecution broke out”
2. These men from Cyprus and Cyrene probably hadn't heard the stories of Acts 9-10
3. The Holy Spirit is at work, but “the Lord” is at the center of everything!

A better plan: Send Barnabas

²² *News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.*
²³ *When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.* ²⁴ *He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.*

Acts 11:22-24

1. The “mother church” this time shows no concern, hesitation or criticism – lessons learned!
2. Barnabas is still encouraging (see 6:36, 9:27) – but he isn’t a prophet, evangelist or apostle

Barnabas knows Rule 5

²⁵ *Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul,* ²⁶ *and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.*

Acts 11:25-26

1. Barnabas knows his limitations, and he recognizes the gifts of Saul of Tarsus (note the order!)
2. The plan: they *sun + agō* for a whole year because the church is already here
3. In a city that is dedicated to “Caesar’ians”, Antioch, is now the center of the mission of the church

Remember Jerusalem!

²⁷ *During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.* ²⁸ *One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)* ²⁹ *The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea.* ³⁰ *This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.*

Acts 11:27-30 (this relates to the history of Acts 12 and Galatians 1-2)

1. The Ephesian 4:11-16 church is already at work
2. There is one church – and they are already bearing one another’s burdens

Beachhead to breakout in on the islands

1) the church needs both encouragers and teachers (750 tons a day and a plan for Operation Cobra)

²⁵ Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶ and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch

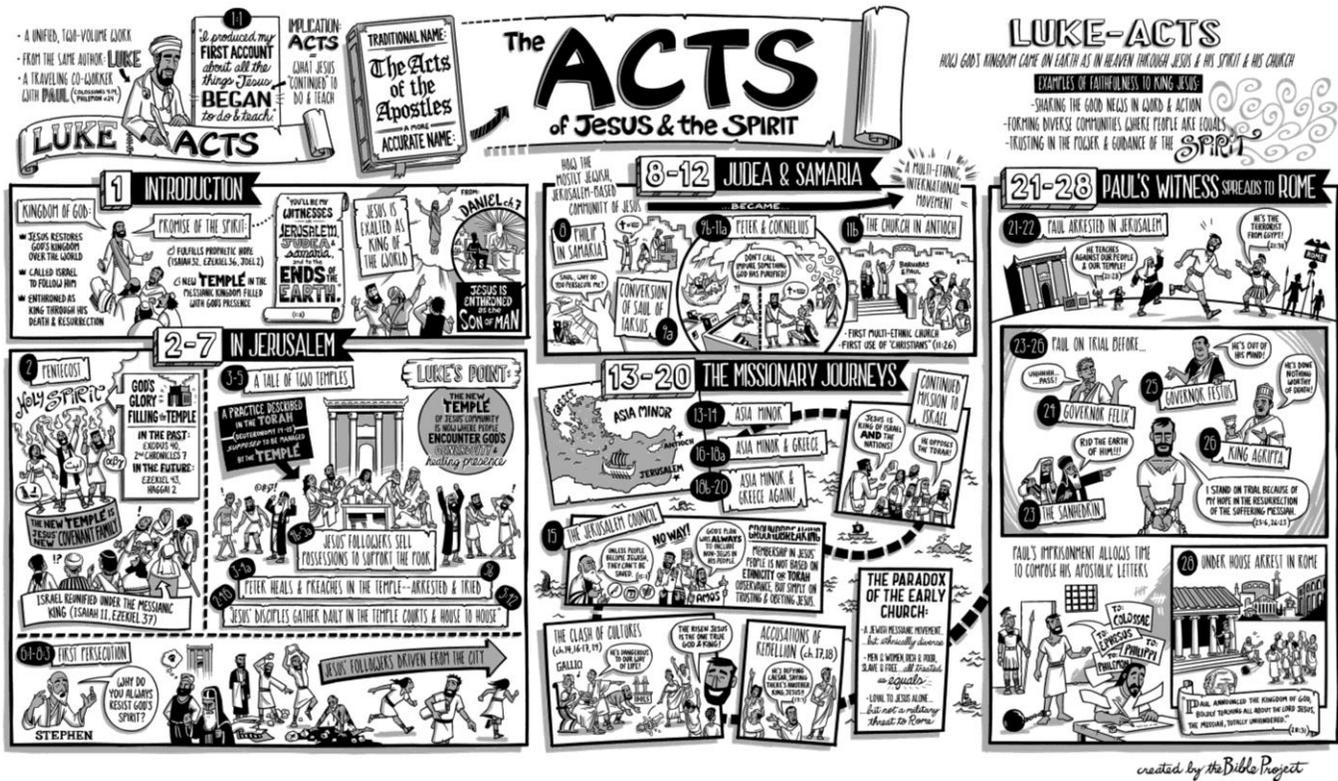
Acts 11:25

2) Those leading the breakout are not from Jerusalem – this is about how Anacortes reaches Anacortes

¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men)—
¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:11-20





Resources for further studies in Acts

The Bible Project team has great stuff on Acts at <https://open.life.church/items/179224-poster-jpg>

Spurgeon has fewer sermons on Acts available than I would hope at

http://www.romans45.org/spurgeon/index/r_ac.htm. His “Repentance Unto Life” sermon on this text is at <https://www.biblebb.com/files/spurgeon/0044.htm>

I really appreciate J.C. Ryle’s essay on conversion in Acts: <https://www.monergism.com/conversion-j-c-ryle> <https://www.onergism.com/conversion-j-c-ryle>

Alexander Maclaren has an especially helpful commentary on Acts available at

<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8397/pg8397.html>

Deffinbaugh has a helpful introduction at <https://bible.org/seriespage/unique-contribution-book-acts>

His Acts series is at <https://bible.org/series/studies-book-acts> His sermons on this text are at

<https://bible.org/seriespage/15-perfecting-peter-acts-932-1048G> and

<https://bible.org/seriespage/gentile-faith-jewish-fears-acts-1036-1130>

George Whitefield has a sermon on Saul’s conversion at <https://www.monergism.com/sauls-conversion>

I have really appreciated John Stott’s *The Spirit, The Church and the World: The Message of Acts* (IVP, 1990) and F. F. Bruce’s work: *New Testament History* (Doubleday, 1980) and *The Book of the Acts* (Eerdmans, 1984). For this passage, I also like Kistemaker’s commentary (Baker Book House, 1990).

Harry Boer, *That My House May Be Filled* (Eerdmans, 1957)

Carl Trueman has a good analysis of the world’s opposition in his recent essay “Dogma Drives the

Christian Life” at <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2021/08/dogma-drives-the-christian-life>

Carl Trueman’s conclusion in *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self* (Crossway, 2020) influenced my thinking on the church. His third point, the importance of proper natural law thinking, is reflected in Kevin DeYoung’s blog at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/gods-good-gift-in-making-us-men-and-women/>

Acts Timeline (ESV Study Bible)

	A.D.	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80
Death, resurrection of Christ (A.D. 33 [or 30])†		█										
Pentecost (30/33)		█										
Stephen stoned (31/33)		█										
Paul converted (33/34*)			●									
Paul meets with Peter in Jerusalem (36/37*)				█								
Paul ministers in Syria/Cilicia (37–45)				█	█	█						
Peter witnesses to Cornelius (38*)					●							
James, brother of John, martyred (41–44)					█							
Peter rescued from prison, leaves Jerusalem (44)					●							
Paul's second Jerusalem visit (famine relief) (44–47*)					█	█						
Paul's first missionary journey (46–47)						●						
Peter and Paul at Jerusalem council (48–49*)							█					
Paul's second missionary journey (48/49–51*)						█	█					
Claudius expels Jews from Rome (49)							●					
Paul's third missionary journey (52–57*)							█	█				
Paul ministers in Ephesus (52–55)							█	█				
Claudius dies; Jews allowed back to Rome (54)								●				
Nero's reign (54–68)								█	█	█		
Paul arrested in Jerusalem (57*)									●			
Paul imprisoned in Caesarea (57–59)								█	█			
James, brother of the Lord, martyred (62)										●		
Paul under house arrest in Rome (62*)											●	
Luke writes Gospel of Luke and Acts (62*)												●
Paul released, resumes ministry, rearrested (62–64)									█	█		
Paul and Peter martyred in Rome (64–67*)										█	█	