

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

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Luke's first book provides the template for this, his second book, in which he tells that 'the Life of Jesus is lived again in the Life of the Church: it is a Life of Mission that the Spirit brings to birth, directs in the World and sustains through every kind of trial'. His scheme begins with activities in Jerusalem (and nearby), turns centrally on what happens from the new base of Antioch (both in Jerusalem and in Psidian Antioch) and ends in Rome.

Section 1: 1.1-26 Prologue; Pre-Ascension Promises of the Spirit for Witnessing; Angels' Announcements;
(26 verses) **the Pre-Pentecost Days in Jerusalem; Judas' Replacement**

I(A(Prologue)BB')I'(ABB') 1.1-5/6-8/9-11 : 1.12-14/15-22/23-26

Section 2: 2.1-42 Pentecost; the Birth of the Church's Mission; the Spirit is given; All can be Saved, Three-thousand are!
(42) I(AA')C(ABB')I'(AA') 2.1-4/5-13 ; 2.14-21/22-28/29-36 ; 2.37-39/40-42

Section 3: 2.43-5.42 The Developing Church in Jerusalem: Arrests, Trials and Judgements

(110) I(ABB'A')C(abb')I'(ABB'A') 2.43-3.10/11-26/4.1-12/13-22 ; 4.23-31 ; 4.32-5.11/12-25/26-32/33-42

Section 4: 6.1-9.31 The Jerusalem Church: Stephen's Speech & Martyrdom; Persecution and Scattering; Saul's Conversion

(146) I(AA')C(ABB')I'(AA') 6.1-4/5-7 ; 6.8-8.1a/8.1b-40/9.1-25 ; 9.26-27/28-31

Section 5: 9.32-11.26 Peter, on Mission: the Role of Vision and the Spirit; Jesus is Judge

(86) I(ABB')C(ABB')I'(ABB') 9.32-43 ; 10.1-23/24-48/11.1-18 ; 11.19-26

Section C: 11.27-15.35 Three Journeys of Saul (Paul) and Barnabas, from Antioch:

(144) **(I) To Jerusalem and back (taking famine relief); James' Death; Peter's Escape;**

Saul & Barnabas deliver the relief

I(abb')C(ABB')I'(abb') 11.27-30 ; 12.1-9/10-15/16-20 ; 12.21-25

(C) On Mission, to Psidian Antioch, (Saul) Paul Turns to the Gentiles'

I(ABB') 13.1-3/4-7a/7b-12

C(I(ABB')C(AA')I'(ABB')) 13.13-16a/16b-25/26-41 ; **13.42-43/44-47** ; 13.48-52/14.1-3/4-7

I'(ABB') 14.8-18/19-22/23-28

(I') To Jerusalem and back (over the Law and Gentiles); Peter's Speech; James' Proposal;

The Importance of Paul and Barnabas to the Church

I(abb')C(ABB')I'(abb') 15.1-5 ; 15.6-11/12-21/22-29 ; 15.30-35

Section 5': 15.36-18.23 Paul, on Mission: the Role of Vision and the Spirit; Jesus is Judge

(103) I(ABB')C(ABB')I'(ABB') 15.36-16.10 ; 16.11-40/17.1-15/17.16-18.8 ; 18.9-23

Section 4': 18.24-22.29 In Ephesus, Uproar; Sufferings Ahead for Paul; and in Jerusalem, Uproar and Paul's Arrest

(153) I(AA')C(ABB')I'(AA') 18.24-26/27-28 ; 19.1-41/ 20.1-38/21.1-22.21 ; 22.22-25/26-29

Section 3': 22.30-26.32 Paul's Trials: the Judgements and his Appeal to Caesar

(122) I(ABB'A')C(abb')I'(ABB'A') 22.30-23.11/12-22/23-35/24.1-21 ; 24.22-27 ; 25.1-12/13-22/23-26.23/24-32

Section 2': 27.1-28.15 Paul's Eventful Journey to Rome; All are to Die, but no, All 276 are Saved!

(59) I(AA')C(ABB')I'(AA') 27.1-3/4-6 ; 27.7-26/27-38/39-28.6 ; 28.7-10/11-15

Section 1': 28.16-31 In Rome: Paul's Witnessing continues; Belief & Disbelief – Gentiles and Jews

(15) I(ABB')I'(ABB') 28.16/17-20/21-22 : 28.23-24/25-28/30-31

LUKE'S GOSPEL (added here, so that comparison can be made with the above)

For Gentiles: it is a fresh representation of the contents and meanings of Mark's and Matthew's Gospels, re-structured and re-mythologized. The presentation begins, turns and ends on actions, happening, or about to happen in Jerusalem, which highlight and contrast the workings of law and grace.

Section 1: 1.1-80 Prologue; Angel's Announcements: Promises of Births;

(80 verses) **Belief and Disbelief; John the Baptist's Birth**

A(Prologue: aa')B(AA')B'(AA') 1.1-2/3-4; 5-25/26-38; 39-56/57-80

Section 2: 2.1-52 Jesus' Birth; Salvation

(52) I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 2.1-20; 21-40; 41-52

Section 3: 3.1-4.44 Jesus' Baptism, Genealogy, Three Trials & Rejection

(82) I(ABA')C(ABA')I'(ABA') 3.1-20; 21-4.30; 31-44

Section 4: 5.1-8.21 'Sinners to Disciples'

(159) I(4AA')C(ABA')I'(4AA') 5.1-6.19; 20-49; 7.1-8.21

Section 5: 8.22-9.43a Jesus' Identity: 'the Christ', His 'Death',

(77.5) Glorious Return as Judge, His Glory: Disciples' Purpose

I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 8.22-56; 9.1-22; 23-43a

Section C: 9.43b-19.48 Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem

(436.5) **(I) Setting Out; Fate of Jesus & Cities; 3 'Disciples'?**

I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 9.43b-50; 51-10.20; 10.21-24

(C) His Teachings on 'the Way' 10.25-18.30 -----

(I') Arriving; Fate of Jesus & Jerusalem; 3 'Servants'

I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 18.31-19.10; 11-28; 29-48

Section 5': 20.1-21.36 Jesus in the Temple: His 'Death', 'the Christ',

(83) Return as Judge in Glory; Disciples' Purpose

I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 20.1-19; 20-21.4; 5-36

Section 4': 21.37-22.53 'Disciples to Sinners'; Jesus' Arrest

(51.5) I(2(AA'))C(ABA')I'(2(AA')) 21.37-22.13; 14-30; 31-53

Section 3': 22.54-23.25 Jesus' Three Trials & Denials/Rejections

(42) I(ABA')C(ABA')I'(ABA') 22.54-62; 63-23.12; 13-25

Section 2': 23.26-56a Jesus' Death; Salvation

(29.5) I(ABB')C(ABA')I'(ABB') 23.26-31; 32-49; 50-56a

Section 1': 23.56b-24.53 Angels Announce, 'Jesus is Risen!';

(53.5) Belief & Disbelief; a New Promise (of Jesus)

A(AA')B(AA')B'(AA') 23.56b-24.7/8-11; 13-27/28-35; 36-43/44-53

1 Inheriting Eternal Life: Law and Love

ABB' 10.25-29; 30-37; 38-42

2 Prayer: Right Praying, Persistence, Holy Spirit is Given

ABB' 11.1-4; 5-8; 9-13

3 The Kingdom of God: what is Internal is Important

ABB' 11.14-36; 37-54; 12.1-12

4 Earthly/Heavenly Riches: the Coming of the Son of Man

ABB' 12.13-21; 22-34; 35-48

5 Divisions, Warning & Prudence, Repentance

ABB' 12.49-59; 13.1-5; 6-9

C Kingdom: Entry; Jerusalem: Jesus is to be killed there

I(ABB')C(AA')I'(ABB') 13.10-30; **13.31-33/34-35**; 14.1-24

5' Divisions, Warning & Prudence, Repentance

ABB' 14.25-35; 15.1-10; 11-32

4' Earthly/Heavenly Riches: Coming Judgement

ABB' 16.1-15; 16-18; 19-31

3' The Kingdom of God: is Within, not Coming with Signs

ABB' 17.1-10, 11-19; 20-37

2' Prayer: Persistence, Right Praying, Receiving Kingdom

ABB' 18.1-8; 9-14; 15-17

1' Inheriting Eternal Life: Law and Love

ABB' 18.18-23; 24-27; 28-30

Where 'A' signifies the presence of a lower-level abb' formation (likewise also B & B'); where AA' are parts in simple parallelism; where ABA', ABB'A' and ICI' are parts in chiasm (as 1,2,3...C...3',2',1'); and where ABB' and abb' are three-part progressions, where A is introductory, B is the first development and B' is the second and completing development (as also a, b and b').

There have been only two single verse changes to the above charts since they appeared in the first edition of **New Testament: New Testimony to the Skills of the Writers and First Readers**, in 2006. In principle, the charts are little changed since they were first published in **Sliced Bread: the Four Gospels, Acts and Revelation: their Literary Structures**, in 1988.

The Purpose of the Writer of the Acts of the Apostles:

As I state at the head of my two charts: Luke's first book is the template for his second, in which he tells that 'the Life of Jesus is lived over again in the Life of the Church: it is a Life of Mission that the Spirit brings to birth, directs in the World and sustains through every kind of trial'.

When the charts of Luke's Gospel and of Acts are compared, correspondences of theme and structure become apparent. Common details are also seen in the texts of corresponding sections (book to book) throughout the works. Common to the two Central Sections, for example, are two (balancing) 'Sabbaths' in each; references to 'eternal life' which are found nowhere else; 'shakings' of 'the dust off ...feet' and 'entry into the Kingdom'; the use of *erchomeno* which is an uncommon expression, in Lk. 13.33 and Acts 13.44, at the very heart of both books; and the Gentile Mission, prefigured in the Gospel's Central Section, but a reality and true focus in the Central Section of Acts.

Unlike Mark and Matthew, Luke ended his Gospel as he began it, in the setting of the temple, in Jerusalem. In the opening of Acts, the same rhetor rewrites earlier details of the ascension and sets the early days of the church meaningfully against the backdrop of the Jewish Feast of Weeks. His motive here is theological. Traditionally, the rhetor's primary purpose is judged to be historiographical, to tell how the church began life in Jerusalem and ended up in Rome. But literary analysis, I think, restores the theological motive to the rhetor. And this literary and rhetorical analysis, when compared with that of all the New Testament Books, lends to the view that Luke (or his rhetor?) is *the* Literary Artist of them all.

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For more on this literary approach to reading the Greek NT texts, get your copy of **NTNT(4)**, and for its historical value, a copy of **Sliced Bread**.