

## IT WAS NO COINCIDENT:

The Jewish Ordinances of Feast Days Were  
For the Purpose of Gathering Israel In  
Jerusalem, So Making Necessary  
Circumstance

By Creating Audiences to Which God Could  
Tell His Good News – the Gospel!

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*In the New*

**Testament**, Jerusalem is mentioned by  
name all in all **139 times**:

Roughly 76 times in Hebrew and 63  
times in Greek.

In Luke-Acts, which covers about 27.5  
% of the New Testament, we find the  
Greek version Hierosolyma **27 times**  
and the version transliterated from  
the Hebrew Ierousalēm **64 times**.

When God had Moses create the Law with its commandments and ordinances, He had a focus of what should take place in a far future era: He had planned it all to come to its full use and potential when time arrived to present His Messiah, Jesus Christ, to His own people like we learn from reading the historic writings, the four Gospels and Acts.

For a Jew, even Jews scattered around in the Roman Empire, it was of great importance to meet up in Jerusalem for the Holy Feast days, such as Passover and Pentecost.

Paul kind of skipped his planned stay with the Ephesians in Acts 20:16, NASB,

« For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.” (Editor's emphasize).

So he (it was 57 CE) could make it to the **Pentecost in Jerusalem**. In this concern, Paul was just one among thousands of Jewish 'Pilgrims' to go to Jerusalem. God wanted His people to fill up the place, so He could talk to them and let them know His will and His plans etcetera.

Jerusalem was indeed the very pinnacle of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, so He could let them all hear this merry message of salvation. The Gospel of the millennial kingdom promised them through His prophets. Dan. 2:44 is but one of the verses pointing to that future earthly kingdom; for not

to mention Gabriel's greeting and message given to Virgin Mary, Luke 1:32, 33 of Jesus to become the ruler of the house of Jacob (Israel).

In the four Gospels and in Acts God and Christ was **dealing with Israel only**. The Gentiles among them could at best only become proselytes, leaning on the blessings intended for the nation of God Jehovah.

It seems to yours truly that **Pentecost** was meant to be the time of Gospel preaching in the 34 years of Acts history, and the audiences were mainly Jews, with a minority of Gentiles (proselytes). Sure, Passover as well, but we just read what Paul did in Acts 20:16 which undoubtedly tells us that it was of the greatest importance to get there for the feast of Pentecost!

## Jerusalem as found in the Acts

In Luke and Acts we count 27 times as Jerusalem is mentioned by name, in the Greek language.

Let us check it out. I will just go to Acts.

Acts also tells of Jerusalem mentioned just by 'town or city' – in the everyday knowledge that it was Jerusalem.

Acts 1:4 says, NASB,

*"Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave **Jerusalem**, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me."*

The reason for this order was of course that Christ wanted the arrival of the Holy Spirit and signs to be heralded to the Jews in full public – in the midst of a multitude, so they would understand that God was dealing with them.

This idea, to have the Gospel mostly preached in a situation where there were multitudes present in **Jerusalem**, can be seen throughout Acts. This will come to light as we move on in this study.

But we cannot overlook the importance of Jesus' command, of having His disciples present in the city of **Jerusalem**.

He did not tell them to go to Galilee and stay at Capernaum, or to go to Bethany or to Caesarea. No, - the place for them to be was **Jerusalem**. That was where God had planned for **Jewish multitudes** to hear the Gospel of the Kingdom, with signs following, so they could come to faith in Jesus as their rightful God sent Messiah.

Actually, we cannot even find that Peter or anyone else of the apostles ever went out of Israel for world-wide mission. They stayed inside Israel, the entire time. Peter is reported going to places like Joppa, Lydda, Caesarea and others – when Acts does not say he stayed in Jerusalem. We never find Peter travelling abroad, like what Paul did. Only Paul was called by God to go to us Gentiles. Thus we only find him in Jerusalem casually, and not as if he ministered to Israel. He went to the synagogues in the dispersion, preaching to Jews there, and eventually turned to Gentile proselytes when Jews rejected him.

Acts is a historic book telling of **Israel's falling away from God** as His nation, - for we cannot see that the nation as a whole received Jesus as their Messiah. Only a minority of Jews came to faith in Him during these 34 years, 28-62 CE.

Acts 1:12-14 gives us the flock of believers – as they stayed in **Jerusalem**, NASB,  
*"12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away."*

*13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James."*

*14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers."*

## Chapters in Acts and the twelve's whereabouts

ACTS 2: They were present in Jerusalem. The coming of the Holy Spirit. Signs and manifestations of sounds likened with a stormy weather. Tongues of fire upon all in the audience. Speaking in tongues, by 13-14 different languages.

ACTS 3: They still were in Jerusalem. Text implies that it may have been during one of the Feasts, either Passover or Pentecost. Maybe a year later now, in 29 CE.

ACTS 4: Still in Jerusalem, 29 CE and verses 4 and 5 speak of multitudes coming to faith in Jesus. This confirms to us that it was one of the Feasts.

ACTS 5: The great 'Healing Wave' causing people in cities near Jerusalem to carry their sick ones and putting them on the streets where Peter was given by God to heal them all. They were delivered as the shadow from Peter fell on them, and it is still 29 CE, NASB,

*"12 At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico."*

*13 But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem."*

*14 And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number,"*

*15 to such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by*

at least his shadow might fall on any one of them.

16 Also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all being healed".

ACTS 6: Here we are also in **Jerusalem**, sometime later than 29-30 CE, and we are introduced to the first martyr, Stephen. Jerusalem is not mentioned by name, but we find in verse 15 that he stood before the Sanhedrin Council defending himself against their false accusations. This council resided always in the temple, and not at the streets in any town elsewhere.

ACTS 7: Still in the temple – we learn of Stephen's speech to his accusers. And his death by being stoned. Also we get the first mention in NT of the apostle Paul, at an early stage (Saul) – as he participated by keeping Stephen's garment. Thus he consented in this false judgment of a fellow Jew.

ACTS 8: The persecution of the Messianic Christians started. They were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria – but the apostles stayed in **Jerusalem** it says.

ACTS 9: Paul is seen in his furious errand to persecute the believers, by going from Jerusalem to Damascus (around 200 km) to arrest and jail the believers. Paul came back to **Jerusalem**, as a fresh convert and now a burning strong believer in Jesus Christ!

Verse 26 - When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; **but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.**

We learn that now Barnabas cared for Paul, and guided him along - for they were afraid of him still.

ACTS 10: Peter is back into focus, as Luke gives us the special incident with the Roman captain Cornelius at Caesarea. Peter visited Lydda, Joppa, and finally Caesarea it says. Where he preached the kingdom-gospel to Cornelius and his guests. But the other apostles must have stayed in Jerusalem, since it says so in chapter 11.

ACTS 11: Peter reports to those in **Jerusalem** (verse 2) to fully explain what went down as he had been in fellowship with...God forbid...Gentiles! It was forbidden to keep fellowship in any form with a 'hound' – a Gentile. They had not even admittance to the temple site. Peter had to explain to the brethren how God in a vision commanded him to go to Cornelius' house and preaching to them. Some scholars hold that it may have been around forty guests in the house hearing Peter's speech.

ACTS 12: Yet another Holy Feast taking place in Jerusalem, namely the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, the Passover. It had

become the year 44 CE (Roman files are telling of Herod Agrippa's death this year, ref. Acts 12:20-25. This year Herod persecuted the leaders of the Messianic assembly in Jerusalem, killing James and casting in jail Peter (with the intent to have him executed). In other words, still no word in Acts of the twelve apostles going abroad for mission. Peter – as he escaped jail being rescued by an angel of the Lord – is not reported fleeing the land. It simply declares, verse 19 - "Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and was spending time there". It is obvious that he took refuge among those who had come to faith in Jesus when he preached to them in Cornelius' house, Acts 10. Think of the pure sarcasm or irony in this situation, Peter fled Jerusalem escaping a Roman prison, and then next finding refuge in the very center of Roman rule in Israel, Caesarea!

As for the remaining chapters in Acts we find JERUSALEM mentioned in these ones:

Acts 13:27, 31; Acts 15; Acts 21:16; Acts 21:11-13, 15, 17, 31, Acts 22:5, 18; Acts 23:11; Acts 24:11; Acts 25:1, 9, 15, 24;

Acts 28:17 is the very last verse in which we find Jerusalem mentioned, NASB,

"After three days Paul called together those who were the leading men of the Jews, and when they came together, he began saying to them, "Brethren \*, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans."

## Conclusion

Thus we have sifted through Acts systematically. This produces a very clear and consistent conclusion:

Acts reported history by Luke's hand tells of a mission NOT to the entire world, but firstly to the nation of Israel. Peter was the leader of the early period as they preached the Kingdom-Gospel (of the millennial reign at the Second Advent) inside the land of Israel. Later on we find the apostle Paul being sent on several journeys outside the land, into the provinces of the Roman Empire, mainly those in Asia Minor (Spain is also mentioned, but no details, Rom. 15:23, 24, 28). It is doubtful anticipating that Paul ever made the trip to Spain. This is still in disputes. Quote from NASB,

"23 but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you

24 whenever \* I go to Spain - for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while -

28 Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put

“my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain.”

When Paul wrote the epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, he was in jail for the second time. First time was not really a jail, but a rented lodging it says. But the second one was a very real Roman jailhouse, called *Carcere Mamertino*. At this situation it was that Christ revealed to Paul the Mystery (Eph. 3:1-9) of the Church dispensation, what he called ‘One New Man’ in Eph. 2:14, 15 and revealed to him that the Law of Moses had been abolished by Christ.

But in the entire timeline of Acts 28-62 CE we find repeatedly words in Acts telling us that the saints – Jews and their proselytes – kept the Law, as well as the New Covenant to Israel (Heb. 9:15). Rom. 3:31 even says that they established and upheld the Law. In other words, this proves that it is NOT the Church we see in the Acts book, it is the Messianic Israel which also included the Jews in the dispersion. They were expecting the Second Advent in their own life time, if only Israel would repent to Jesus Christ (Acts 3 and Peter’s speech).

The Church of the ‘One New Man’ is not the same body as the Acts-body. We, the believers of 2024 and on, are the Church of the ‘One New Man’ – preaching the Grace-Gospel of Paul, which has got as hope of salvation the heaven up above (Col. 3:1-4). The Church is never going to enter that millennial kingdom on earth!

The Grace Gospel revealed to Paul for us, is nowhere to be seen in the four Gospels or in Acts.

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