

Exploring the Bible



ACTS OF THE APOSTLES: PART I

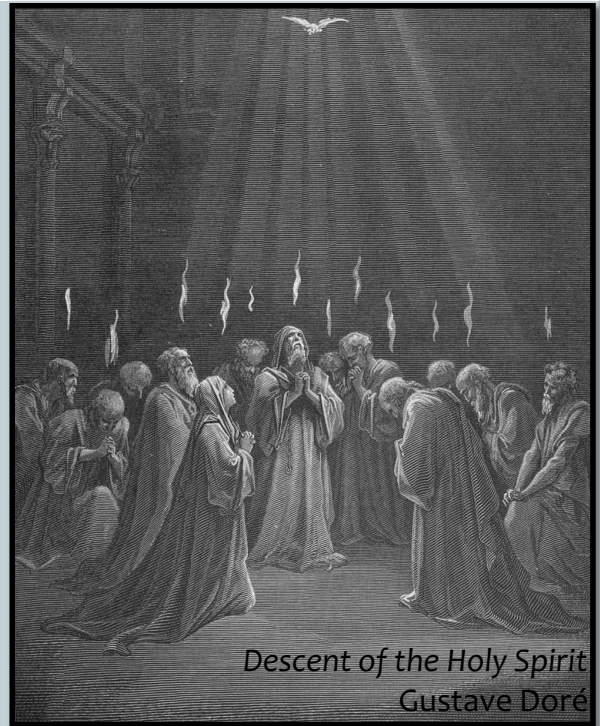
Ascension & Pentecost (Acts 1-2)



“And when he had said these things ... he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.” Acts 1.9

Ascension & Pentecost (Acts 1-2)

- The Holy Spirit comes on Pentecost
- The Holy Spirit comes “like a mighty rushing wind” with “tongues as of fire”
- All were amazed and perplexed: “What does this mean?”



Descent of the Holy Spirit
Gustave Doré

Ascension & Pentecost (Acts 1-2)

- Peter preaches with power: 3000 converts



St. Peter Preaching
Masolini da Panicale

- ❖ The Ascension & Pentecost accounts demonstrate that *the Holy Spirit is the power that enables the church.*

Pentecost (1750s)
Joseph Ignaz Mildorfer



Stoning of Stephen (Acts 6-7)



- Stephen's indicting speech against the Sanhedrin:
 - ✕ God does not dwell in "houses made by hands."
 - ✕ You persecuted the prophets
 - ✕ You have killed the Messiah
 - ✕ You have resisted the Holy Spirit
 - ✕ You have failed to keep the Torah
- The enraged Sanhedrin responds by rushing out and stoning Stephen.

Stoning of Stephen (Acts 6-7)



- The scene of Stephen's execution:
 - "full of the Holy Spirit"
 - "I see... the Son of Man"
 - "receive my spirit"
 - "do not hold this sin against them"
- ❖ Stephen's execution demonstrates that, through the Holy Spirit, converts do as Jesus did.

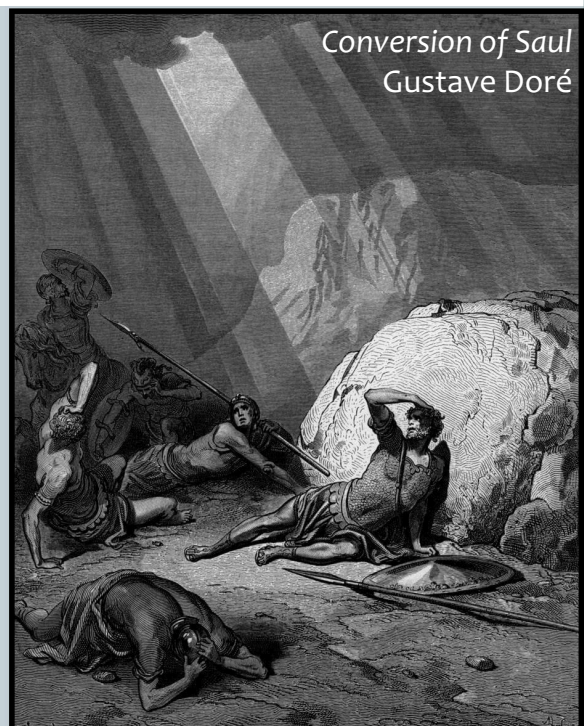


Stoning of Stephen
Richard Serrin

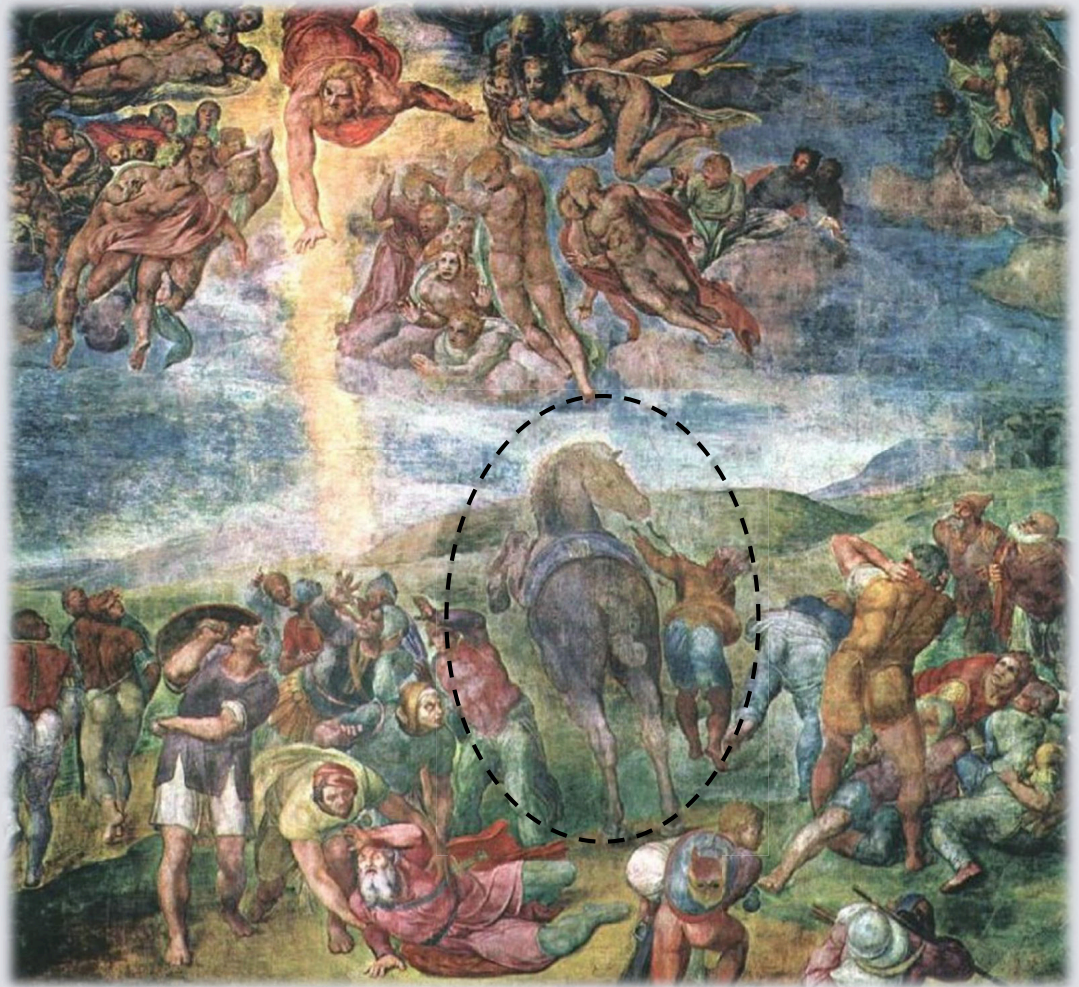
Conversion of Paul (Acts 9)



- Saul's first cameo appearance is at the stoning of Stephen
- Saul persecutes the church
- A voice says: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"
- Ananias reluctantly follows the Lord's instructions



Conversion of Saul
Gustave Doré



Conversion of Saul
Michelangelo

Conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10)



- Cornelius the “God-fearing” Centurion at Caesarea
- Through the Spirit, Cornelius & Peter meet
- Peter preaches; the Spirit descends like Pentecost



Peter Baptizing the Centurion Cornelius
Francesco Trevisani

Conversions of Paul & Cornelius (Acts 9-10)



- ❖ The conversions of Paul & Cornelius foreshadow the mission to the Gentiles and the transformation of Christianity from a movement within Judaism to an independent, universal faith.

Acts Part I: Summary



- The first part of Acts illustrates the book's key themes:
 - The role of the Holy Spirit
 - The connection to Jesus
 - The move from Jerusalem to Rome (“ends of the earth”)
- Jesus continues to communicate to his disciples
 - Paul (Acts 9)
 - Ananias of Damascus (Acts 9)
 - Cornelius (Acts 10)
 - Peter (Acts 10)