

Chapter 1 : Library Resource Finder: Table of Contents for: The mystery of Acts : unraveling its sto

The mystery of Acts: Some historical problems in Acts I: A review of the text: Some historical problems in Acts II: Chronology and characterization.

It is not intended to be--and should not be used as--a source of modern, up-to-date information regarding atheistic issues. This document was included for historical purposes; readers should be extremely cautious in trusting anything in this book. For more information, see: But a thorough acquaintance with the history and moral systems of some of the oriental nations, and the practical lives of piety and self-denial exemplified in their leading men long anterior to the birth of Christ, and long before the name of Christianity was anywhere known, must convince any unprejudiced mind that such a claim is without foundation. And to prove it, we will here institute a critical comparison between Christianity and some of the older systems with respect to the essential spirit of their teachings, and observe how utterly untenable and groundless is the dogmatic assumption which claims for the Christian religion either any originality or any superiority. Of course if their is nothing new or original, there is nothing superior. We will first arrange Christianity side by side with the ancient system known as Essenism -- a religion whose origin has never been discovered, though it is known that the Essenes existed in the days of Jonathan Maccabeus, B. We have but fragments of their history as furnished by Philo, Josephus, Pliny, and their copyists, Eusebius, Dr. Ginsburg, and others, on whose authority we will proceed to show that Alexandrian and Judean Essenism was identically the same system in spirit and essence as its successor Judean Christianity; in other words, Judean Christianity teaches the same doctrines and moral precepts which had been previously inculcated by the disciples of the Essenian religion. Philo says, "It is our first duty to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness;" so the Essenes believed and taught. Philo says, "They abjured all amusements, all elegances, and all pleasures of the senses. Josephus says, "They neither buy nor sell among themselves, but give of what they have to him that wanteth. Eusebius says, "Even as it is related in the Acts of the Apostles, all the Essenes were wont to sell their possessions and their substance, and divide among all according as any one had need so that there was not one among them in want. So Philo relates things exactly similar of the Essenes. The text above quoted. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel. Their food was hyssop, and bread, and salt; and water their only drink. It will be recollected that neither Jesus nor Paul ever married, and that they discouraged the marriage relation. Christ says, "They that shall be counted worthy of that world and the resurrection neither marry nor are given in marriage. For "deacons," see i Tim. Pliny says, "They were the only sort of men who lived without money and without women. With respect to the death, burial, resurrection of Christ, see i Cor. Many texts teach us that Christ and his apostles did the same. Essenism put all its members upon the same level, forbidding the exercise of authority of one over another. Christ did the same. For proof, see Matt. For proof that Christ did the same, see Matt. The Essenes enjoined, "Doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. The Confucian golden rule, as taught by Christ. This parallel might be extended much further, but we will proceed to present the reader with a general description of Essenism, as furnished us by Philo, Josephus, and some Christian writers. Philo, who was born in Alexandria 20 B. C.; and lived to 60 A. They make no instruments of war. They repudiate every inducement to covetousness, None are held as slaves, but all are free, and serve each other. They are guided by a threefold rule: Of their love of God they give innumerable demonstrations, which is found in their constant and unalterable holiness throughout the whole of their lives, their avoidance of oaths and falsehoods, and their firm belief that God is the source of all good, but of nothing evil. Their love of man is proved by their benevolence and equality, and their having all things in common, which is beyond all deception. They reverence and take care of the aged, as children do their parents. The highest aim of their lives was to become fit temples of the Holy Ghost see i Cor. They taught the duty of mortifying the flesh and the lusts thereof, and to become meek and lowly in spirit; they answered by yea, yea, and nay, nay see Matt. Love of God; 2. Merciful justice to all men, and to avoid the wicked, and help the righteous; 3. The suppression of anger and malice, and the cultivation of a meek, lowly spirit; 5. The attainment of true holiness; 6. Becoming fit temples for the Holy

Ghost; 7. The ability to perform miraculous cures, and raise the dead; 8. Now, as the foregoing exposition shows that Essenism and Christianity are most strikingly alike in all their essential features, that the former system contains nearly every important doctrine and precept of the Christian religion, the question occurs here as one of momentous import, how is this striking resemblance, this identity of character of the two religions, to be accounted for? Does it not go far toward proving that Christianity is an outgrowth, a legitimate offspring, of Judean Essenism? Indeed, are we not absolutely driven to such a conclusion? Let us briefly recite some of the important facts brought to light by the investigation of the character and history of these two religions, and see if those facts do not bring them together, and weld them as one system -- as one and the same religion. Both are alike, and Essenism is much the older system. Both religions are an outgrowth of Judaism. Both were known and taught in Judea and in Alexandria. Josephus living in Judea, and Philo in Alexandria, neither of them speaks of Christianity, or refers to any such religion by that name, and yet both describe a religion inculcating the same doctrines and moral precepts, which they call Essenism. Is not this very nearly conclusive proof that Essenism was only another name for Christianity -- that it had not yet changed its name to Christianity? That famous standard author, Mr. Gibbon, was evidently of this opinion when he said, "Whether, indeed, the first of that sect the Essenes took the name of Christian when the appellation of Christian had as yet been nowhere announced, it is by no means necessary to discuss. Here is evidence that Gibbon believed that the Essenes, after having borne that name for centuries, changed the appellation to Christian. And we find still stronger language than this in the writings of the same author expressive of this opinion. In a note to chapter xv. And then we have the declaration of Christian writers, expressed in the most positive terms, that Essenism and Christianity were the same religion, the former name being used at an earlier period. Hear Eusebius, a standard ecclesiastical writer of the fourth century. He asserts positively, "Those ancient Therapeuts Essenes were Christians, and their ancient writings were our gospels. Will you then give it up? If not, we have other testimony of a similar character, rendering the proposition still stronger. Robert Taylor declares, "The learned Basnage has shown that the Essenes were really Christians centuries before Christ, and that they were actually in possession of those very writings which are now our Gospels and Epistles. And then we have the declaration of the author of "Christ the Spirit" p. Weiting, "that Jesus and John belonged literally to the society of the Essenes. De Quincy it says identified the Essenes as being the early Christians; i. Such testimony, coming from such a source, is entitled to much weight. And to the same effect is the testimony of Bishop Marsh, who admits that our Gospels were drawn from those of the Essenes. Thus far historical writers. We will now lay before the reader some historical facts, fraught with unanswerable logical potency, and pointing to the same conclusion. It is a fact, and one of deep logical import, and tending to correlate the conclusion of some of the writers cited above, who tell us the Christian Gospels were first composed by the Essenes; that the language in which those Gospels were originally written was Greek, the language in which the Alexandrian Essenes always wrote, while the evangelical writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, being illiterate fishermen, could have had no knowledge of any but the Jewish, their own mother-tongue, -- at least it is susceptible of satisfactory proof that they never wrote in any other language. Hence the conclusion is irresistible that they were not the original authors of the Gospels. The works of several authors are now lying at our elbow, who express the conviction unequivocally that the Gospels were copied, if not translated, from older writings. Le Clere, one of the ablest writers of his time, maintained this position, and did it ably. Another writer, a Mr. Hatfield, was awarded a prize in , by the theological faculty of Gottingen, for an essay, in which the position was ably argued that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were not the authors of the books which bear their names, but were mere copyists. Lessing and others concur with him in this conclusion. A circumstance confirming this verdict is found in the fact that the word church occurs in our Gospels, which were written before such an institution was established by those who were then called Christians. If Christianity was reestablished in the days of Christ and his apostles, they had nothing to originate, either with respect to doctrines, precepts, church polity, or ecclesiastical terms -- all being established for them centuries before that era. With these facts in view, it seems impossible that the two religious orders -- Essenes and Christians -- could have been in existence at the same time as separate institutions. The former must have ended when the latter commenced. Josephus says, "the Essenes were scattered far and wide, and were in every

city," being quite numerous in Judea in his time. But he makes no reference to any sect or religious order by the title of Christian -- strong inferential evidence, upon sound priori reasoning, that Christianity as yet was sailing under another name. Josephus must have known and named the fact, had there been a Christian sect or disciple there bearing that name. We are then upon the logical force of these and many other facts driven to the conclusion that Christianity began when Essenism ended, and the change was only in name. I challenge the whole Christian world to find the historical proof that Christianity commenced one hour before the termination of Essenism, or of Essenism over-lapping the Christian religion so far as to survive one day beyond or after its birth. I will confront them with the logic of dates, and defy them to find any proof except their own unauthorized, unauthenticated, and fictitious chronology, that a Christian was ever known in any country by that name prior to the time of Tacitus, A. That religion had not yet dropped the name of Essenism and adopted that of Christianity. Now, hard indeed must distorted reason fight the ramparts of logic and history to resist the conviction, in view of the foregoing facts, that Christianity is simply an outcropping of Essenism, either direct or through Buddhism. And even if it were possible to prove that the two religions never became welded together, yet it is not possible to disprove the striking identity of their doctrines, and the spirit of their precepts, and the practical lives of their disciples. And this identity, coupled with the fact that Essenism is the older system, is of itself most superlatively fatal to all pretension or claim to originality for the doctrines of the Christian faith. It is a matter of no importance whether Christianity was originally known by another name, so long as it can be shown that its doctrines had all been preached and proclaimed to the world centuries prior to the date assigned for its origin. And this is proved by the long list of parallellisms presented in the incipient pages of this chapter. And this proof explodes the pretensions of Christianity to an "original divine revelation," and brings it down to a level with pagan orientalism. And the fact that it sprang up in a country where its doctrine had long been taught by pagans and orientalists, must produce the conviction, deep and indelible, in all unbiased minds, that orientalism was the mother and heathenism the father of the Christian religion, even in the absence of any other proof. In fact, no other proof can be needed.

Chapter 2 : The Historical Errancy of the Bible - Godless Haven

A few basics -- Introducing introduction -- Enigmas of Acts -- How Luke met certain challenges: what He said and what he left unsaid -- How Acts tells its story I: characters, repetitions, parallels -- How Acts tells its story II: cycles, stereotyped scenes, mimesis -- Symbolism -- Some historical problems in Acts I: a review of the text.

February 8, 1871, In: Christianity, History In, a German businessman named Heinrich Schliemann published a book arguing for a historical Troy, located at a place called Hissarlik in modern Turkey. Despite having no training or formal education in archaeology, he began excavating the site of Hissarlik in 1870. Even after four years of excavations and a publication of his case, Schliemann still met with many challenges from skeptics like Professor R. Modern excavators have even claimed evidence of war and destruction that is estimated to date back to around B. Schliemann appears to have been vindicated. It would be a mistake, though, to believe that this means The Iliad is historically reliable. To say that the Homeric works are historically reliable would be an abuse of the term, since it overlooks major elements of the stories that are either historically unverified or historically untrue. Furthermore, there is the unique problem of applying historical method to supernatural claims. Even if it were true that the goddess Aphrodite rescued Paris from Menelaus, there is no way to establish the historicity of such a report. At best, we might be able to demonstrate that a strange woman did save Paris, but it would remain in question whether or not she was Aphrodite. Most of us would probably have little difficulty heeding these warnings against jumping to conclusions over Troy and The Iliad. Change the context to the Bible and any historical detail from its pages, and you often find that these concerns go right out the proverbial window. Some defenders of biblical inerrancy even go so far as to allege that such precautions are meant to unfairly discriminate against their specific beliefs. To a point, one can sympathize with the urge to historicize the Bible. If Jesus never existed, if he never died on the cross or rose again, then, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:12-14, the Old and New Testaments both feature a number of historical names, places, and events that call for some sense of historicity as well. But we must try to avoid drawing hasty conclusions about the overall picture. The real reason that miracles are not accepted by most historians is that they are improbable by definition, and historical method is all about constructing probabilities. Historians do not work with testable hypotheses because the past has already passed and will not repeat itself. Alexander the Great only died once. The Second Temple only fell once. It is also not possible for historians to make predictions based on history, at least not with the same reliability of which scientists are capable. Garraghan puts it succinctly in *A Guide to Historical Method*: Cumulative or converging evidence is virtually circumstantial. But, as already noted, the resulting certainty does not issue directly from the mass or cumulus of probabilities, since no number of mere probabilities added together can logically produce certainty. The aim of the historian is to get as close to objective truth as possible. This is achieved through the accumulation of data and the use of inductive reasoning to make plausible connections and propose a persuasive theory of what probably happened. This understanding of historical method is nothing unusual or biased. Historians must limit themselves to practical explanations, or else the field of history would become mired in all sorts of absurd and implausible ideas to be investigated, many of which could not be properly examined to begin with. Miracles cannot be historically established because, as C. This is part of what makes them so special and meaningful to many believers: All of this is an elaborate way of saying that miracles are understood as improbable events, and, as such, they serve no use to the historian trying to establish history in terms of probability. Thus, we can appreciate why historians do not seriously consider the possibility that Aphrodite rescued Paris from Menelaus. In short, history is not constructed from sheer possibilities. It has less to do with a bias against the supernatural and more to do with the practicality involved in historical method. This practicality also demands that each statement be evaluated on its own merits, not extrapolated to cover more than it is able. It is important to take these things into account with a rational approach to historical claims, whether these claims involve the Bible, the works of Homer, or any other source. If we play favorites or engage in special pleading, we stack the deck of probability, so to speak, which is unfair and unrepresentative of the actual facts. Hittites and Skeptics A common statement you will find in the works of Christian apologists like Lee Strobel and Josh McDowell is

that much to the dismay of skeptics, the claims of the Bible have been historically verified time and time again. The frequently cited example of this is the accusation directed against Bible critics for denying the existence of the Hittites until archaeologists discovered evidence for the fallen empire in the late 19th century. Apologists use an example like the Hittites to imply that the skeptics should not be trusted, because they have been wrong before. There are a number of problems with this kind of smear campaign. Right off the bat, we may notice that the overwhelming majority of these claims about the Hittites and other historical details mentioned in the Bible are accompanied by stories of skeptics who never are identified. We are sometimes told that educated scholars, even experts, denied the historicity of certain Biblical claims, and yet examples are rarely given. In the case of the Hittites, it looks as if some of these Christian apologists have made much ado about nothing. For some time, scholars debated whether the Hatti, or Kheta, found in Egyptian inscriptions might be identified with the Hittites. This is not the same thing as denying the Hittites ever existed, but is simply questioning the association of the Hittite identity with the identity of a name depicted on Egyptian inscriptions. To my knowledge, the earliest and only specific claim of Hittite denialism is from M. Kyle, one of the authors of *The Fundamentals*, a text which became the foundation of modern Biblical fundamentalism. Yet in his essay, Kyle does not name this mysterious skeptic, only noting he was one of the foremost European archaeologists at the time. Furthermore, after , when additional discoveries proved the Kheta were the Hittites, Budge addressed the Hittites as historical in updates of his books, *The Dwellers by the Nile* and *The Mummy*. Thus, it seems that he was only waiting for that sufficient evidence to become available. The only way to separate history from fiction is to investigate each individual claim, and there are many claims in the Bible that have not passed historical investigation. In fact, this is what ought to be the norm. Christians may use the Hittites and other examples to imply that skeptics were wrong before and could be wrong again, but it is no justification for believing something on insufficient evidence. The time to accept a proposition is when reason and evidence support it, not before. Apologists give the impression that many scholars denied the existence of the Hittites, yet all we find behind this claim is an anecdote from a Christian fundamentalist about his talk with an anonymous figure. But whether anyone ever questioned the existence of the Hittites is ultimately irrelevant, because historical claims should only be believed when there is reason to believe them. The problem is that many apologists are unwilling to play by the book and leave it at that. The existence of the Hittites is a non-controversial and believable possibility, even without evidence. If Christians were only asking that we give the Bible the benefit of a doubt about the Hittites, it would be understandable. However, their real reason for bringing up the subject is to imply the reliability of the Bible in general, which is entirely irresponsible. This is precisely the kind of unjustified extrapolation I referred to above; one proven fact cannot be expanded to justify another unproven claim, especially when there is little relation between the two. It would be like assuming that Aphrodite really did rescue Paris because of the existence of a historical Troy. I do not know of any sane person in history who considers the Bible to be a completely mythological text with no historical value whatsoever. Even those who deny the historicity of Jesus, Nazareth, and other details will typically agree that some of the Bible does include historically accurate details. Pontius Pilate was real, as indicated by the Pilate Stone. The ancient Canaanites were real, as found on the Merneptah Stele. Much of the geography described in the Bible is accurate. Of course, none of these details are extraordinary, nor can they be used to assume that the rest of scripture is equally historical. The same is true for the Pool of Bethesda and the title of politarch, both of which are used in *The Case for Christ* to argue for the historical accuracy of the gospels. A history book that contains one error still contains one error even if the rest of it is flawlessly accurate. No amount of truth will reverse a single mistake. The Historical Problems i. Herod and the Census The massacre of the innocents by Herod the Great is considered mythical by the majority of modern biographers of Herod. While Herod did execute several of his family members and may have been mentally unstable, there is no evidence that he killed off all the baby boys in Bethlehem. Herod the Great died no later than 4 B. Yet the Gospel of Luke puts the birth of Jesus during the census of Quirinius 2: Perplexingly, though, the author of Luke seems to imply that Herod the Great still ruled as king of Judea at the time 1: There is no evidence that the Romans ever took a worldwide census, nor is there evidence that they required citizens to return to their ancestral homelands, as the text of Luke suggests. The latter of these claims is quite easy to

debunk. Oikoumenen is Greek for earth, or world, in Luke 2: The most damning evidence that the word means the whole inhabited earth comes from Acts. Only in the face of troubling historical conflict is this Greek word assumed to mean something other than what it normally means. As for the possibility of an earlier census under Quirinius, there is simply no reliable evidence of it. Richard Carrier, a historian well versed in ancient studies, exposes the bizarre claims of Vardaman and disputes his micrographic letter theory in an article for *The Skeptical Inquirer*. This serves to underscore the fact that the census was seen as a new and unwelcome irritation by many Judeans. It is quite interesting that we find this kind of confused history in the Gospel of Luke, which is generally thought to have been written by someone with a high concern for accuracy. Acts and the Revolutionaries Acts 5: Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. As Josephus reports in his *Antiquities*, the revolt of Theudas occurred during the reign of Cuspius Fadus, which was 44 to 46 C. Obviously, if Gamaliel was speaking in 35 C. Most scholars date Luke-Acts as early as 80 C. However, the revolt of Theudas would have been more recent in time, and yet we still find the reference is inaccurate. The tense climate of first century Judea may well have been difficult to sort out at the time, as it is now in many ways.

Chapter 3 : SparkNotes: A Doll's House: Act Two

A few basics --Introducing introduction --Enigmas of Acts --How Luke met certain challenges --What He said and what He left unsaid --How Acts tells its story I --Characters, repetitions, parallels --How Acts tells its story II --Cycles, stereotyped scenes, mimesis --Symbolism --Some historical problems in Acts I --A review of the text --Some.

This commentary on Acts, his magnum opus, may be the largest and most thoroughly documented Acts commentary available. Useful for the study of not only Acts but also early Christianity, this work sets Acts in its first-century context. In this volume, the second of four, Keener continues his detailed exegesis of Acts, utilizing an unparalleled range of ancient sources and offering a wealth of fresh insights. This magisterial commentary will be an invaluable resource for New Testament professors and students, pastors, Acts scholars, and libraries. The indexes for the entire four-volume set may be downloaded under the Resources section on the left side of this page. Endorsements "This is the most expansive treatment of Acts in modern scholarship. Keener offers the reader a sweeping tour of the relevant ancient material and modern scholarship on Acts. He takes Acts seriously as a work of ancient history; at the same time, he is aware of the literary and rhetorical dimensions of the text. Sterling, The Reverend Henry L. This volume continues in the same vein as the first, with superbly detailed exegesis of the text as well as many helpful excursuses on more general topics of interest--with a wealth of material to back up all the claims made. Without any shadow of doubt, an indispensable reference work for all students of Acts and early Christianity. This second volume on Acts--packed with an incredible amount of contextual information as well as wisdom about the text itself--is bound to become a standard reference work for many years to come. Sell the dog and buy this book! It therefore will be the first commentary to which scholars, students, and pastors will turn with any question on the text of Acts. One might be daunted by such hefty volumes on one book of the New Testament, but be reassured: It is not only exhaustive in its historical detail, it is rich in inspiring interpretation. Garland, dean and holder of the Charles J. Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor University "Somewhat surprisingly, a socio-historical approach to Acts still needs to be defended and its value demonstrated. No one does this better--is more informed about ancient literature, parallels, and precedents, and more interactively and fruitfully engaged with contemporary literature and issues--than Craig Keener. His encyclopedic knowledge of ancient literature and his intelligent skill as an exegete make this a magisterial commentary. Andrews; senior scholar, Ridley Hall, Cambridge "Craig Keener has provided us with a rich gem of a commentary on Acts. One can use it and get a real sense of what this key work is all about. Bock, research professor of New Testament studies, Dallas Theological Seminary "This commentary sets Acts in its ancient social and historical setting. Keener shows convincingly how broadly and deeply Acts participates in ancient Hellenistic and Jewish thinking. This meticulous reconstruction fits well with his deep insights on Lukan theology in Acts. A marvelous, impressive, and inspiring commentary! Keener presents a socio-historical reading of the text with meticulous precision, and his knowledge of scholarly research is impressive. The book of Acts is read as a historiographical work in which its author rewrites traditions; the documentation from ancient Jewish literature is exceptionally rich. Keener treats hermeneutical issues and the historical reliability of the text astutely and clearly. From now on, any exegesis of Acts will need to take into account this major work. This is a commentary that will continue to serve as a detailed resource for both scholars and students wishing to explore the book of Acts. Porter, president, dean, and professor of New Testament, McMaster Divinity College "This book is a monumental exegetical commentary thanks to the amount of literary and social-historical information in it. Scholars and readers of the Acts of the Apostles will find it a precious source for consultation. He is author of 25 books, 5 of which have won awards in Christianity Today. More than a million copies of his books are in Continue reading about Craig S. If they maintain a comparable size, this will mean well over 4, pp. In this case Acts , these references are abundant. This commentary provides a trove of information for serious readers of Acts. One cannot but be impressed that Keener has managed to produce such a huge work, and this in addition to numerous other publications. It represents undoubtedly a tour de force and much more than a mere verse-by-verse exegetical treatment of the biblical text. It certainly

looks exhaustive in its magnitude, and it is intended for the widest possible readership, from students to researchers and pastors. Thus, it is indeed a research tool that cannot be ignored by anyone seriously engaged in the interpretation of Acts. Also extremely useful and usually extensive are the twenty excurses it contains. A standard reference work in Acts studies. Mihoc, *Review of Biblical Literature* "The mark of these volumes--which is one reason they are indispensable--is attention to the details of the ancient sociohistorical context in which the stories of Acts are set, supported by a multitude of references to wide-ranging ancient sources. The commentary of the second volume is supplemented along the way by thorough and helpful excurses, twenty in all, which occupy themselves primarily with matters of ancient societal institutions and practices that shed light on passages in Acts. Many of the discussions, not to mention the trove of references to ancient sources, will prove useful for those studying other ancient texts of the period beyond Luke-Acts--a rare feat for a New Testament commentary. The commentary generally remains accessible to upper-level undergraduates and dedicated laypersons, as technical discussions and non-English material tend to stay in the footnotes. I trust I am not alone in gratitude to Craig Keener for this massive work. In size alone it will certainly be the most extensive commentary on Acts ever penned. Keener musters a truly impressive array of knowledge about the Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts of the first century and has a command of the extensive literature on the Acts of the Apostles and related topics. This will certainly remain a standard resource work for study of Acts. This volume bursts with a zest for the text. Despite its length, a user-friendly layout renders it remarkably readable. The multitudinous footnotes bustle with generative conversation. Keener opens up the ancient world of Acts in new and vibrant ways to both scholar and non-scholar. It covers Acts 3: All I can say is whoa! I found these to be very useful, up to date in terms of research, compris[ing] excellent summaries of disputed topics. The references to primary and secondary sources mean that the research behind this book is positively encyclopedic. If you want a one stop shop for a thorough overview of issues, interpretation, and exegesis of the text of Acts, this is the way to go. This is the go-to commentary on Acts. Keener amazingly combines attention to great detail with verve and clarity in writing. For every topic in the commentary Keener provides a litany of Greek, Latin, and Jewish sources that illuminate the passage and provide greater depth of insight. In addition to the substantial commentary, Keener provides extensive excurses. These entries are a real strength of the work as Keener provides detailed investigations on topics that not only directly impact our understanding of the Acts text, but provide a broad understanding of specific issues from an ancient perspective. I would highly recommend these books for anyone interested in understanding the Acts text or the first century Christian context more broadly.

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In the first two Acts of the play we are introduced to some of the problems and dilemmas facing the couple such as the fact that they are entwined in an adulterous relationship, and that both of them are forced to show their devotion to Caesar. Along with being introduced to Antony and Cleopatra's strange love affair, we are introduced to some interesting secondary characters. One of these characters is Enobarbus. Enobarbus is a high-ranking soldier in Antony's army who it seems is very close to his commander. We know this by the way Enobarbus is permitted to speak freely at least in private with Antony, and often is used as a person to whom Antony confides in. In reply to this Enobarbus speaks very freely of his view of Cleopatra, even if what he says is very positive: We cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears; they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report. This cannot be cunning in her; if it be she makes a shower of rain as well as Jove. I, ii, After Antony reveals that he has just heard news of his wife's death, we are once again offered an example of Enobarbus' freedom to speak his mind, in that he tells Antony to "give the gods a thankful sacrifice" I. Obviously, someone would never say something like this unless they were in very close company. While acting as a friend and promoter of Antony, Enobarbus lets the audience in on some of the myth and legend surrounding Cleopatra. Probably his biggest role in the play is to exaggerate Anthony and Cleopatra's relationship. Which he does so well in the following statements: When she first met Mark Antony, she pursed up his heart, upon the river of Cydnus. In these passages, Enobarbus turns Antony's and Cleopatra's meeting into a fairy tale and leads the audience into believing the two are inseparable. His speeches in Act II are absolutely vital to the play in that this is what Shakespeare wants the audience to view Antony and Cleopatra. Also, in these passages, Cleopatra is described as irresistible and beautiful beyond belief -- another view that is necessary for us to believe in order to buy the fact that a man with so much to lose would be willing to risk it all in order to win her love. Quite possibly, these passages may hint that Enobarbus is himself in love with Cleopatra. After all, it would be hard to come up with such flowery language if a person were not inspired. Enobarbus may be lamenting his own passions vicariously through the eyes of Antony. This would be convenient in questioning Enobarbus' loyalty, which becomes very important later on in the play considering he kills himself over grief from fearing he betrayed his leader. The loyalty of Enobarbus is indeed questionable. Even though we never hear him utter a single disparaging remark against Antony, he does admit to Menas that he "will praise any man that will praise me" II. Shakespeare probably fashioned Enobarbus as a means of relaying information to the audience that would otherwise be difficult or awkward to bring forth from other characters such as Cleopatra's beauty and the story of her betrayal of Caesar, but he also uses him as way to inject some levity and humor in the play, showing the characters eagerness to have a good time. Evidence of this comes in Enobarbus' affinity for drunkenness. Bring in the banquet quickly: Mine, and most of our fortunes, tonight, shall be -- drunk to bed. In short, Enobarbus is used as any good secondary character should be; he relays information between characters, exposes other characters and their traits, gives background information, and lets the audience in on his surroundings and the general moods and beliefs of the times he lived in. He is not just used as a database however, through his speeches and his actions we find a fully developed person, someone with thoughts, motives, and feelings all his own -- a character who can't be summed up in just a few sentences. This change is significant. It shows growth in the char

Chapter 5 : Book of Acts - Read, Study Bible Verses Online

Hengel notes that Meyer's conviction "will seem mad to some 'historical-critical' commentators" if only, perhaps, because they are so unfamiliar with ancient history writing and its problems," in Between Jesus and Paul, 2.

Authorship of Acts Luke is the author of the book Acts. He was also the author of its companion work, the Gospel of Luke. Luke is uniformly identified as the author Acts by the second century A. The Anti-Marcionite Prologue to Luke c. The Muratorian Fragment lines ; c. Clement of Alexandria Strom. The Author was the Third Evangelist: This is implied in Acts 1: There close similarity in style and language between Luke and Acts d. The tone of Luke and Acts is similar: The end of Luke dovetails into the beginning of Acts f. Jesus only appears to his disciples in Jerusalem in Luke and Acts g. Themes left out of Luke as a synoptic are incorporated into Acts by design e. The Author Was a Companion of Paul This is a debated position, but there is good evidence for its support: There is no change in style which demonstrate these to be an external source. The differences can be accounted for in style, and context. The Author was Luke the Physician a. The earliest traditions identify the author with the expression of Colossians 4: The Date of Acts: The earliest date for the book of Acts is the two year imprisonment which is recorded in Acts The latest date for the book of Acts is in the second century writings of the church fathers C. Therefore, it is not determinative. The Neronian persecution of c. There is no evidence of oppression by Rome, even if the Roman officials are less than scrupulous. There is also no indication of oppression in Rome Acts This is an argument from silence and is not determinative. The Jewish revolt of A. This leads many to date the book no later than A. There may also be indirect allusions to the fall of Jerusalem in Luke especially Luke But these cannot be limited to the fall of A. Rather, it is a part of a greater whole--the final judgment upon the nation Luke Many subjects in Acts would have been prominent before A. Gentile admission to church fellowship, coexistence of Jews and Gentiles in the church, food requirements of the apostolic decree G. The above evidence leans heavily for a date that is prior to A. Jesus speaks predicatively and Luke understands this. The Sources of Acts A. It is certain that Luke used sources in his composition of his double work Luke 1: Therefore, both source and redaction criticism are limited. Purpose of Acts A. There are many candidates: While all of these play a part in the book, they are not adequate as an overall purpose. Luke-Acts must be approached as a double work with a single purpose that is historical but primarily theological in nature. They are the stewards of the promises to Israel. The reason it is primarily Gentile in nature is because the Jews rejected the message of Jesus as Messiah, and pushed the church out. Nevertheless, the Jews as a people are not rejected by God or his servant Paul. The promises will yet be consummated for the nation through the resurrected Jesus--the hope of Israel.

Chapter 6 : Acts of the Apostles - Wikipedia

Get an answer for 'What are some examples of a lack of communication in Acts I, II or III of Romeo and Juliet, preferably Act I or II.' and find homework help for other Romeo and Juliet questions.

Early Christianity and Jewish Christians The Gospel of Luke began with a prologue addressed to Theophilus; Acts likewise opens with an address to Theophilus and refers to "my earlier book", almost certainly the gospel. The apostles and other followers of Jesus meet and elect Matthias to replace Judas as a member of The Twelve. Stephen is arrested for blasphemy, and after a trial, is found guilty and stoned by the Jews. Saul of Tarsus, one of the Jews who persecuted the Christians, is converted by a vision to become a follower of Christ an event which Luke regards as so important that he relates it three times. Peter, directed by a series of visions, preaches to Cornelius the Centurion, a Gentile God-fearer, who becomes a follower of Christ. The Holy Spirit descends on Peter and Cornelius, thus confirming that the message of eternal life in Christ is for all mankind. Paul spends the next few years traveling through western Asia Minor and the Aegean, preaching, converting Gentiles, and founding new churches. On a visit to Jerusalem he is set on by a Jewish mob. Saved by the Roman commander, he is accused by the Jews of being a revolutionary, the "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes", and imprisoned. Paul asserts his right as a Roman citizen, to be tried in Rome and is sent by sea to Rome, where he spends another two years under house arrest, proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching the "Lord Jesus Christ".

Prior to the s, Luke's Acts was seen as a historical work, written to defend Christianity before the Romans or Paul against his detractors; since then, however, the tendency has been to see the work as primarily theological. On the one hand, Luke generally does not portray this interaction as one of direct conflict. Rather, there are ways in which each may have considered having a relationship with the other rather advantageous to its own cause. For example, early Christians may have appreciated hearing about the protection Paul received from Roman officials against Gentile rioters in Philippi Acts Thus Paul is depicted as a moderating presence between the church and the Roman Empire. Major turning points in the structure of Acts, for example, find parallels in Luke: These parallels continue through both books. There are also differences between Luke and Acts, amounting at times to outright contradiction. For example, the gospel seems to place the Ascension on Easter Sunday, immediately after the Resurrection, while Acts 1 puts it forty days later. While not seriously questioning the single authorship of Luke's Acts, these differences do suggest the need for caution in seeking too much consistency in books written in essence as popular literature. But details of these same incidents are frequently seen as contradictory: Acts speaks of "Christians" and "disciples", but Paul never uses either term, and it is striking that Acts never brings Paul into conflict with the Jerusalem church and places Paul under the authority of the Jerusalem church and its leaders, especially James and Peter Acts 15 vs.

Chapter 7 : Library Resource Finder: Staff View for: The mystery of Acts : unraveling its sto

and literary problems of Acts by several scholars who adopted different, and sometimes contradictory, approaches to the book. The third volume () dealt with the text of Acts; it was a work.

Additional Information In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: In the preceding chapters the fundamental action of the play is seen as a series of attempts to integrate "spirit" "Geist" or the ideal, symbolized by light, fire, or gold, with "world" sometimes "nature" or the real, embodied in the principle of water. In Act I this effort is structured as a series of descents in search of gold, the Mothers and, finally, the past. Act II continues this pattern. If Act I was an effort to conjure Helen through the forces of fire, Act II is the attempt to conjure her from the water. At bottom it deals with the same problem as Act I, how to generate a graspable rainbow, to bring up creative force or spirit from the depths to validate appearances. Act I characterized the goal in terms of fire, gold, myth, imagination, antiquity, and the beginnings of time. In Act II water imagery will predominate over fire; this represents a significant shift in focus. The emphasis will no longer be on the descent and the buried treasure, but on the ascent, on the continuity between lower and upper worlds, on how to go from spirit to concrete form. The emphasis will appear to be less on creating art than on creating life; but we understand, of course, that the fundamental identity of art and Nature in the play makes the distinction spurious. Furthermore, both art and Nature have become, through the process of descent in Act I, projections of the seeking human mind. It is a "show" created by Faust and stage-managed by that experienced director Mephistopheles. The curtains open to reveal Faust in the state of unconsciousness into which he had plunged at the end of Act I. As the travellers proceed to the Classical Walpurgis Night the act slips into a much deeper abyss: Erichtho is the witch Pompey consulted before the battle; the poet of whom she complains is Lucan, who portrays her most dreadfully indeed in his epic, Pharsalia. Lucan is important here, because he identifies the Thessalian setting both as a land of witchcraft and also as the cradle of history. But this transformation plunges us even deeper into the abyss of time, into the prehistorical world of mythology. This is, in fact, mythology at its very oldest levels, for the sphinxes identify themselves as the oldest of mythological creatures, too old ever to have seen Helen. The relative antiquity of the sphinxes is especially significant. It may seem obvious to us, but it was a new idea in the eighteenth century. The first significant periodization of ancient art was made by JJ. Winckelmann in his *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

Chapter 8 : Christianity Derived from Heathen and Oriental Systems

8 The best contemporary commentary on Acts, John Stott, The Spirit, The Church and the World (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity,), addresses most of the issues on the normative and non-normative events in Acts.

Dramatic irony is when the audience knows something which one or more of the characters is unaware of. Because of this, misunderstandings and lack of communication are prevalent. The biggest lack of communication is between Romeo with his parents and Juliet with her parents. Nether is able to discuss the most important things in their lives. In fact, there is no scene in which Romeo Shakespeare uses dramatic irony throughout his play Romeo and Juliet. In fact, there is no scene in which Romeo talks with his parents. For Juliet, it is always a one way discussion with her parents basically telling her what to do and think. Romeo also lacks true communication with Mercutio and Friar Lawrence. Lord Montague fails to realize his son is quite the romantic and falls in love easily. It never seems to occur to Romeo to communicate with his father about the fact he has fallen in love with a Capulet. Romeo has had a disturbing dream foretelling his imminent death. When he tries to tell Mercutio, his friend, always wanting to be the center of attention, launches into his Queen Mab speech, forgetting to listen to Romeo. At the close of the scene, Romeo tells the audience about his dream. The audience may assume that since Mercutio is his closest friend Romeo would discuss his private feelings with him. But Romeo never mentions Juliet to Mercutio. Maybe he is afraid because Mercutio is so committed to the feud and hates the Capulets. Romeo also lacks communication with Friar Lawrence. The Friar agrees to marry Romeo and Juliet because he thinks it may end the feud. He advises Romeo to take things slow and ease into his love with Juliet. They stumble that run fast. And later when he performs the marriage he reiterates his feeling that Romeo should calm down and reflect on what is happening. He fears that Romeo is rushing into something that may backfire. He says, in Act II, Scene 5, These violent delights have violent ends And in their triumph die, like fire and powder, Which, as they kiss, consume. The sweetest honey Is loathsome in his own deliciousness And in the taste confounds the appetite. Long love doth so. Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow. Romeo, of course, never listens. He plunges into his love for Juliet without communicating with anyone in his family, and in Act III he impulsively flies into a rage when Tybalt kills Mercutio.

Acts II Ministries had its humble beginning in a minister's home. After several years, numerous outreach activities, and three building projects, the thriving congregation now meets in a beautiful sanctuary which welcomes some old-timers and several new faces.

The messiness of the area around the Christmas tree indicates that the Christmas Eve celebration has taken place. Nora paces the room uneasily, muttering to herself about her dilemma. Rank is sick with a disease he inherited from his father, who was sexually promiscuous. Linde guesses that Dr. Linde remarks that Nora has changed since the previous day. Torvald returns, and Nora sends Mrs. Torvald tells her that Mrs. Linde will replace Krogstad at the bank. Torvald says that Krogstad is an embarrassment and that he cannot work with him any longer. He explains that they are on a first-name basis only because they went to school together and that this -familiarity humiliates him. He then goes into his study. After Torvald exits, Dr. Rank enters and hints that he expects something bad to happen soon. When it becomes apparent that he is referring to his health, Nora is visibly relieved that Dr. Rank is speaking about his own problem and not hers. When the end is near, he tells Nora, he will leave a calling card with a black cross across it to indicate that his death is imminent. Nora begins to flirt with Dr. Rank, coquettishly showing him her new stockings. She hints that she has a great favor to ask Dr. Before she is able to ask her favor, however, Dr. Rank confesses his love for her. This disclosure disturbs Nora, and afterward she refuses to request anything from him, even though he begs her to let him help. Rank how much fun she has with him, and he explains that he has misinterpreted her affection. Rank into the study with her husband and urges the doctor to keep Torvald there. Krogstad enters and announces that he has been fired. He says that the conflicts among Nora, himself, and Torvald could be solved if Torvald would promote him to a better job in the bank. Nora objects, saying that her husband must never know anything about her contract with Krogstad. She implies that she has the courage to kill herself if it means she will absolve Torvald of the need to cover up her crime. Krogstad tells her that even if she were to commit suicide, her reputation would still be in his hands.