

Jews, Gentiles and the Arguments Over What the Christian 'Origin Story' Should Be

יהודים וגויים במעשי השליחים
צבי אריה לאם

1) Luke-Acts (early 2nd century CE), Stage One

Acts 1.4	While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father.	
Acts 3.1-2, 6	Luke 5.18-19, 23-24	
1 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. 2 And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple...6 But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk."	18 Just then some men came, carrying a paralyzed man on a bed. They were trying to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; 19 but finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus...23 Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? 24 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the one who was paralyzed—"I say to you, stand up and take your bed and go to your home."	
Acts 7.54-58		
54 When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. 55 But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" 57 But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. 58 Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him...		
Acts 8.1-3		
1...That day a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria. 2 Devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him. 3 But Saul was ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.		

2) Luke-Acts, Stage Two

Acts 9.3-6		
3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" 5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. 6 "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."		
Acts 10.9-16, 28-29	Ezekiel 4.12-15 (6 th century BCE)	
9 About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11 He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. 12 In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. 13 Then he heard a voice saying, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." 14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord (Μηδαμῶς, κύριε); for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean." 15 The voice said to him again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." 16 This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.	<p>(יב) וַעֲגַת שְׂעִרִים תֹּאכְלֶנָּה וְהִיא בְּגִלְלֵי צִאֲת הָאָדָם תִּעֲנֶנָּה לְעֵינֵיהֶם: ס (יג) וַיֹּאמֶר יְקֹנֶה כֶּכֶה יֹאכְלוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת לֶחֶמָם טָמֵא בְּגוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר אֲדִיחֶם שָׁם: (יד) וַאֲמַר אֲהֵה אֲדֹנָי יְקֹנֶה הַנֶּה נִפְשֵׁי לֹא מִטְמָאָה וּנְבִלָה וּטְרֵפָה לֹא אֲכַלְתִּי מִזְעִירֵי וְעַד עֵתָה וְלֹא בָּא בְּפִי בֶּשֶׂר פְּגוּל: ס (טו) וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי רְאֵה נִתְתִּי לָךְ אֶת (צפועי) צְפִיעֵי הַבְּקָר תַּחַת גְּלִלֵי הָאָדָם וְעִשְׂתִּי אֶת לֶחֶמְךָ עֲלֵיהֶם: ס</p>	
28 and he said to them, "You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but	12 You shall eat it as a barley-cake, baking it in their sight on human dung. 13 The Lord said, "Thus shall the people of Israel eat their bread, unclean, among the nations to which I will drive them." 14 Then I said, "Ah Lord God (Μηδαμῶς, κύριε θεε τοῦ Ἰσραηλ)! I have never defiled myself; from my youth up until now I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by animals,	

God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. ²⁹ So when I was sent for, I came without objection. Now may I ask why you sent for me?"	nor has carrion flesh come into my mouth.” 15 Then he said to me, “See, I will let you have cow’s dung instead of human dung, on which you may prepare your bread.”
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Acts 11.19-20, 25-26

19 Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that took place over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they spoke the word to no one except Jews. 20 But among them were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, on coming to Antioch, spoke to the Greeks also, proclaiming the Lord Jesus... 25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for an entire year they met with the church and taught a great many people, and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called “Christians.”

Acts 15.1	Galatians 2.11-13 (ca. the 50s CE)
-----------	------------------------------------

1 Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

11 When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. 12 For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. 13 The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. 14 But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

Galatians 1.6-7

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

3) Luke-Acts, Stage Three

Acts 15.22-29

22 Then the apostles and the elders, with the consent of the whole church, decided to choose men from among their members and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leaders among the brothers, 23 with the following letter: “The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the believers of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. 24 Since we have heard that certain persons who have gone out from us, though with no instructions from us, have said things to disturb you and have unsettled your minds, 25 we have decided unanimously to choose representatives and send them to you, along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. 28 For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials: 29 that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

Acts 28.14, 17, 23-26, 28

14 There we found believers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome...17 Three days later he called together the local leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, he said to them, “Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors, yet I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans.

23 After they had set a day to meet with him, they came to him at his lodgings in great numbers. From morning until evening he explained the matter to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets. 24 Some were convinced by what he had said, while others refused to believe. 25 So they disagreed with each other; and as they were leaving, Paul made one further statement: “The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your ancestors through the prophet Isaiah, 26 ‘Go to this people and say, You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive.

28 Let it be known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen.”