

Abounding Grace Christian Church

The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Church – Part 4

I. Exposition of Chapter One (Continued).

A. Verses 21-22 - Qualifications for Judas' Replacement.

1. Someone who had accompanied the other apostles from the beginning of Jesus' ministry (baptism by John) to the day when He was taken up (ascension).
2. Someone who witnessed His resurrection.
3. Notice that this shows that there were other believers besides the Twelve who followed Jesus throughout His entire earthly ministry. We know He had 70 other disciples who He sent forth to minister (cf. **Luke 10:1**). We also know other disciples ceased from following Him (cf. **John 6:66**). According to Stanley Horton, the early third century historian, Eusebius, claimed that Matthias (who they are going to choose) was one of the 70 (or 72 as some other translations say).¹
4. **NOTE:** Most understand the necessity of a replacement because Jesus mentioned that the 12 disciples would sit on 12 thrones in the messianic kingdom judging the 12 tribes of Israel (**Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30; cf. Revelation 21:14**).

B. Verses 23-26 - The disciples pray and cast lots to select a replacement for Judas.

1. **Verse 23** – Two men are proposed: “...Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.”
2. **Verse 24** – “And they prayed and said, ‘You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen.’”
 - a. This shows again the priority prayer had with the early Church. (cf. **1:14**).
 - b. They are doing the same basic thing Jesus did when He was going to choose the original Twelve. He prayed all night (**Luke 6:12-16**).
 - c. They prayed for guidance because they knew the Lord “...know[s] the hearts of all...” Here we see an acknowledgement that God is All-knowing (omniscient). Cf. **John 2:24-25** and **Acts 15:8**.

Dr. Thomas Constable states:

“They acknowledged that only God knows people's hearts (1 Sam.16:7) and did not make the mistake that the Israelites did when they chose King Saul. They wanted God to identify the man after His heart as He had done with David.”²

3. **Verse 25** – “...to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.”

- a. As mentioned last time, Judas had part in the ministry of Jesus (cf. **verse 17; Matthew 10:1-4**).
- b. “...from which Judas by transgression fell...” – Judas fulfilled the prophetic Scripture as was seen in **Psalm 69:25** and **Psalm 109:8 (Acts 1:20)**. Also **Psalm 41:9**.
 - 1) The question is sometimes asked, “If it was prophesied ahead of time, did Judas have a choice?”
 - 2) It's important to understand that God knowing something ahead of time does not mean He determined it or predestined it. He just knew. “**God Foreknew, He Foresaw, and thus, through the mouth of the Prophets He FORETOLD!**”³
 - 3) Judas had a choice! God just foreknew what that choice would be.
 - 4) “**Judas by transgression fell.**” – His fall was over a love for money – **Matthew 26:6-9; John 12:1-6; I Timothy 6:10**.
- c. “...that he might go to his own place.” – People may wonder if Judas may have repented and went to Heaven, however this phrase seems to answer that question. Note the following:
“to his own place’ This is an euphemism for ‘damnation.’ Satan used him for his purposes (cf. Luke 22:3; John 13:2; 27), but Judas is responsible for his choices and actions (cf. Gal. 6:7).”⁴

¹Stanley M. Horton, *Acts: A Logion Press Commentary* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2001), 51.

²Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Acts* (<http://www.soniclight.com>: Sonic Light Publication, 2010), 23.

³Kevin J. Conner, *The Book of Acts* (Portland, OR: Bible Press, 1973), 17.

⁴Robert James Utley, *Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts*, vol. Volume 3B, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2003), 20.

1) Dr. Stanley Horton makes an additional interesting point:

“It is important to notice also that the fact Judas became a lost soul made his replacement necessary. When King Herod had James the brother of John put to death, no one was chosen to take his place (Acts 12:2). James would rise again to judge and rule with the Twelve in the coming kingdom.”⁵

4. Verse 26 – **“And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”**

“Probably the two names were written on stones placed in a container. When the stones were shaken out of the container, the first stone to fall out was considered the Lord’s choice.”⁶

a. Remember, they were not yet filled with the Holy Spirit, as they would be. They prayed before doing this and we must believe they discerned by the Holy Spirit that Matthias was the right man. This is the one and only time the church is seen as doing this, making it not a normal way to receive God’s guidance.

b. Even though Matthias is not mentioned by name after this, neither were most of the other apostles. Church tradition tells us that he was martyred in Ethiopia.⁷

II. Exposition of Chapter Two.

A. Verses 1-4 – The **“Promise of the Father” (1:4)** arrives. The disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit.

1. Verse 1 – **“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”**

a. The word **“Pentecost”** is a Greek word, transliterated into English and means **“fiftieth.”** This feast fell on the fiftieth day after Passover. Ernest Gentile states:

“The events of Acts 2 occurred on the second great feast of the year. It was actually a harvest festival, when the firstfruits of the wheat harvest were presented to the Lord. It was called the ‘Feast of Weeks’ because it was celebrated on the day following the passage of seven Sabbaths, a week of weeks, after Passover. It was called ‘Pentecost’ because it occurred...the fiftieth day from the first Sunday after Passover.”⁸

b. We know that Jesus, our **“Passover Lamb” (cf. I Corinthians 5:7)** rose from the dead on the first Sunday after Passover, so being He was with His disciples for 40 days after His resurrection before His ascension (1:3), it was 10 days that they waited for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit which Jesus commanded them to wait for (1:4).

c. **“...they were all with one accord in one place.”** – Remember they were in one accord in prayer on the day Jesus ascended to Heaven (1:14) and now ten days later they are still gathering together with the **“same mind”** or **“same purpose”**. Presumably, they were still in prayer, still seeking God. They understood they could do nothing without Him. Perhaps when the Church today is devoted to prayer and the same mind and purpose of fulfilling God’s will, we will also experience a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

2. Verse 2 – **“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting,”**

a. The word **“suddenly”** means, **“unexpectedly”**. Horton defines it as, **“...surprisingly and without warning...”⁹**

b. **“...came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind...”**

“But before the outpouring of the Spirit came, two unusual signs gave further connection with Old Testament symbolism. First, came a sound from heaven as of a mighty, rushing wind, a wind with carrying power, also suggests that this was more than the breathing of the Spirit in regeneration that brings new life. Again, it speaks of power for service.”¹⁰

⁵Horton, 52.

⁶Stanley D. Toussaint, “Acts,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 357.

⁷Utley, 20.

⁸Ernest B. Gentile, *The Glorious Disturbance: Understanding and Receiving the Baptism with the Spirit*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2004), 82.

⁹Horton, 54.

¹⁰Stanley M. Horton, *What the Bible Says about the Holy Spirit*, (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1976), 140.