

Bible Study June 9, 2021

ACTS 1 (Part 2) AMPLIFIED VERSION

Dunamis

(Greek for: Power/Potential/Ability) – (Separate the Natural from the Supernatural).

In the book of Acts, Luke continues the story he began in his Gospel, covering the 30 years after Jesus was taken up into heaven. During that short time the church was established, and the Good News of salvation was spread throughout the world, even to the capital of the Roman Empire. Those preaching the Good News, though ordinary people with human frailties and limitations, were empowered by the Holy Spirit to take it all over the world. In Acts we learn about the nature of the church and how we, like these early believers, can turn our world upside down.

PETER'S MINISTRY (1:1–12:25)

The book of Acts begins where the Gospels leave off, reporting the actions of the apostles and the work of the Holy Spirit. Beginning in Jerusalem, the church is established and grows rapidly; then it faces intense persecution, which drives the believers out into the surrounding areas. Through this dispersion, Samaritans and Gentiles hear the Good News and believe.

Establishment of the church

Acts 1:1-11 is the bridge between the events recorded in the Gospels and the events marking the beginning of the church. Jesus spent 40 days teaching his disciples, and they were dramatically changed. Before his resurrection, they had argued with each other and had deserted their Lord. One of them, Peter, had even lied about knowing Jesus. Here, in a series of meetings with the living, resurrected Jesus, the disciples had many questions answered. They became convinced of his resurrection, learned about the Kingdom of God, and discovered their power source—the Holy Spirit. By reading the Bible, we can sit with the resurrected Jesus in his school of discipleship. By believing in him, we can receive his power through the Holy Spirit to be new people. By joining with other Christians, we can take part in doing his work on earth.

The Reason & Work of the Holy Spirit

- 1) Receiving the Holy Spirit marks the beginning of the Christian experience.**
- 2) The Holy Spirit provides the unique power of our new lives. He begins a lifelong process of change to make us more like Jesus.**
- 3) Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as an advocate, counselor, or comforter. The Holy Spirit guides us, teaches us, and helps us to understand the message God has given us in the Bible**
- 4) The Holy Spirit unites the Christian community in Christ (Ephesians 2:19-22). He can be experienced by all, and he works through all**

Matthias Replaces Judas

12Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. 13When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying.

Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the zealot), and Judas (son of James).

After Jesus was taken up into heaven, the disciples immediately returned to Jerusalem and had a prayer meeting. Jesus had said they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit in a few days, so they waited and prayed. When you face a difficult task, an important decision, or a baffling dilemma, don't rush into the work and just hope it comes out the way it should. Instead, make your first step prayer for the Holy Spirit's power and guidance.

A *zealot* could be anyone who was zealous for the Jewish law. The Zealots may have been a radical political party working for the overthrow of Roman rule in Israel through violence.

14They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

At this time, Jesus' brothers were with the disciples. During Jesus' lifetime, they had not believed he was the Messiah (John 7:5), but his resurrection must have convinced them. Jesus' special appearance to James, one of his brothers, may have been an especially significant event in their conversion (see 1 Corinthians 15:7).

15During this time, when about 120 believers were together in one place, Peter stood up and addressed them. 16“Brothers,” he said, “the Scriptures had to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided those who arrested Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David. 17Judas was one of us and shared in the ministry with us.”

This was the first church business meeting. The main order of business was to appoint a new disciple, or *apostle*, as the 11 were now called. While the apostles waited, they were doing what they could—praying, seeking God's guidance, and getting organized. Waiting for God to work does not mean sitting around doing nothing. We must do what we can, while we can, as long as we don't run ahead of God.

How could someone who had been with Jesus daily betray him? Judas Iscariot had received the same calling and teaching as everyone else. But he had chosen to reject Jesus. Judas had hardened his heart and joined in a plot with Jesus' enemies to put him to death. Judas remained unrepentant to the end, and he finally committed suicide. Although Jesus predicted this would happen, the choice was Judas's. Those privileged to be *close* to the truth are not necessarily *committed* to the truth. We may see all sorts of evil in Christian circles, such as sexual sin, financial mismanagement, or betrayal, but God's plans cannot be thwarted. When the choices people make seem unfathomable and confusing, look for what God is doing to bring hope in the situation.

18(Judas had bought a field with the money he received for his treachery. Falling headfirst there, his body split open, spilling out all his intestines.

Matthew says that Judas hanged himself (Matthew 27:5); Acts says that he fell. The traditional explanation is that when Judas hanged himself, the rope or branch broke, causing Judas to fall and his body to burst open.

19*The news of his death spread to all the people of Jerusalem, and they gave the place the Aramaic name Akeldama, which means “Field of Blood.”*

20*Peter continued, “This was written in the book of Psalms, where it says, ‘Let his home become desolate, with no one living in it.’ It also says, ‘Let someone else take his position.’*

21*“So now we must choose a replacement for Judas from among the men who were with us the entire time we were traveling with the Lord Jesus—**22**from the time he was baptized by John until the day he was taken from us. Whoever is chosen will join us as a witness of Jesus’ resurrection.”*

The apostles had to choose a replacement for Judas. They outlined specific criteria for making the choice. After finalists were chosen, the apostles prayed, asking God to guide the selection process. This gives us a good example of how to proceed when we are making important decisions. We should set up criteria consistent with the Bible, examine the options, and pray for wisdom and guidance to reach a wise decision.

Many people consistently followed Jesus throughout his ministry on earth. The 12 disciples were his inner circle, but others shared the disciples’ deep love for and commitment to Jesus.

23*So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. **24**Then they all prayed, “O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen **25**as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs.” **26**Then they cast lots, and Matthias was selected to become an apostle with the other eleven.*

The disciples became apostles. *Disciple* means “follower” or “learner,” and *apostle* means “messenger” or “missionary.” These men now had the special assignment of spreading the Good News of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Wisdom Keys:

1. You have been gifted with the promised Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit leads and guides us.
3. As Believers it is our responsibility to tell others about Jesus.

John 16:13-16 – (Inside Knowledge)

13 *But when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth [full and complete truth]. For He will not speak on His own initiative, but He will speak whatever He hears [from the Father—the message regarding the Son], and He will disclose to you what is to come [in the future]. **14** He will glorify and honor Me, because He (the Holy Spirit) will take from what is Mine and will disclose it to you. **15** All things that the Father has are Mine. Because of this I said that He [the Spirit] will take from what is Mine and will reveal it to you.*