

Acts

Pastor Chad Wagner

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I. Introduction

1. This study is a verse-by-verse exposition of the book of The Acts of the Apostles.
2. I do not intend to spend a sermon on each verse, but rather move through it at a pace that will give an adequate explanation to each verse or passage, while trying not to “miss the forest for the trees.”

II. Overview

1. The book of Acts was written by Luke (**Luk 1:1-4 c/w Act 1:1**).
2. It picks up where the book of Luke left off with the ascension of Christ to heaven after promising to send the Holy Ghost to the apostles (**Luk 24:49-53 c/w Act 1:4-9**).
3. The first part of the book focuses mainly on Peter’s ministry (chapters 1-12), and the second part focuses mainly on Paul’s ministry (chapters 13-28).
4. Chapter highlights
 - A. Chapter 1: Matthias was chosen to replace Judas as the 12th apostle.
 - B. Chapter 2: the giving of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost and the conversion of about 3000 Jews on that day.
 - C. Chapter 3: the account of Peter and John healing a lame man and preaching to the Jews.
 - D. Chapter 4: Peter and John are brought before a council of Sadducees, rulers, elders, scribes, and the high priest and were threatened to stop preaching about Jesus.
 - E. Chapter 5: Ananias and Sapphira were killed by God for lying to the Holy Ghost; the apostles were put in prison and delivered by an angel; they were brought before the council again and beaten and released.
 - F. Chapter 6: ordination of the first deacons in the Jerusalem church; the Jews dispute with Stephen, suborn witnesses, and bring him before the council.
 - G. Chapter 7: Stephen gives his defense before the council and is martyred.
 - H. Chapter 8: a great persecution arises against the church in Jerusalem and the saints are scattered; Philip preaches and baptizes in Samaria; Simon the sorcerer is “converted” and tries to pay the apostles for the gift of the Holy Ghost; the Ethiopian eunuch is converted by Philip.
 - I. Chapter 9: Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus; Peter heals Aeneas, a man sick of the palsy for eight years; Peter raises Tabitha from the dead.
 - J. Chapter 10: the conversion of Cornelius by Peter.
 - K. Chapter 11: Peter’s recounting of the conversion of Cornelius; the church in Antioch is founded; Barnabas is sent from the Jerusalem Church to Antioch; Barnabas goes to Tarsus to get Paul and brings him to Antioch where they assemble with the church and teach for a whole year; a great dearth hits the world and the disciples in Antioch take up a collection for the brethren in Judea and send it to them by Barnabas and Saul.

- L. Chapter 12: Herod kills James the brother of John and puts Peter in prison; an angel delivers Peter from prison; Herod is killed by God; Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch after taking the relief to Jerusalem.
- M. Chapter 13: Barnabas and Saul are sent on their first evangelistic trip with John; they go to Seleucia, Cyprus, Salamis, and the isle of Paphos where they encounter a sorcerer named Barjesus/Elymas whom Paul blinds for a season; Saul is renamed Paul; Paul and Barnabas depart Paphos for Perga in Pamphylia and John returns to Jerusalem; Paul goes to Antioch in Pisidia and preaches in the synagogue; the Gentiles want to hear more on the next sabbath and the whole city shows up, which provokes the Jews to envy who raise up a persecution and expel them; they go to Iconium.
- N. Chapter 14: Paul preaches in the synagogue in Iconium and the unbelieving Jews stir up the Gentiles and try to stone him, and they flee to Lystra and Derbe; Paul heals a crippled man in Lystra and the pagans there think Paul and Barnabas are gods; the Jews stir up the people and they stone Paul, leaving him for dead; Paul and Barnabas depart to Derbe and return to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch where they confirm the disciples and ordain elders in the churches they started in those places; they pass through Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, and Attalia on their way back to Antioch; they tell the church in Antioch the story of their evangelistic trip and remain in Antioch for a long while.
- O. Chapter 15: a council is convened in Jerusalem to determine if the Gentiles need to keep the law of Moses; Paul and Barnabas meet with the other apostles and elders and decide that the Gentiles do not need to keep the law of Moses; they write up a few laws for the Gentiles to keep and send it by Paul and Barnabas to the Gentile churches; Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch, and after a while decide to return to the cities where they had preached and started churches to see how the brethren were faring; Paul and Barnabas have a sharp disagreement on whether to take John Mark, so they split up; Barnabas and Mark sail to Cyprus, and Paul and Silas go through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.
- P. Chapter 16: Paul meets a young converted man named Timotheus in Derbe and Lystra, has him circumcised, and takes him with him as he delivers the decrees from the council in Jerusalem to the Gentile churches. They go through Phrygia and Galatia, but the Spirit forbids them to go into Asia and Bithynia. They are then called to go into Macedonia and preach the gospel. After a few stops, they get to Philippi where they meet and convert Lydia. Paul casts a spirit of divination out of a young girl and ends up getting himself and Silas thrown into prison for it. While in prison, a great earthquake opens the prison doors and frees the prisoners, and the jailor and his house are converted and baptized. Paul and Silas are released from prison the next day.
- Q. Chapter 17: Paul and his travelling companions come to Thessalonica and reason out of the scriptures with the people in the synagogue for three sabbaths. When many believe, the unbelieving Jews cause an uproar in the city, and Paul and Silas are sent away by night to Berea. Paul preaches the gospel and converts many until the Jews in Thessalonica get wind of it and go to Berea to stir up trouble there, causing Paul and Silas to depart into Athens. In Athens, Paul disputes with the

Epicureans and Stoicks and then is taken to the Areopagus where he preaches the gospel on Mars' Hill, and some are converted.

- R. Chapter 18: Paul departs from Athens and comes to Corinth where he meets Aquila and Priscilla and stays and works with them while he reasons with the people in the synagogue every sabbath for a year and a half. The Jews make insurrection against him unsuccessfully, after which he sails to Syria with Aquila and Priscilla. He then goes to Ephesus, leaving Aquila and Priscilla there, before going to Caesarea and finally back to his home church in Antioch. After spending some time in Antioch, Paul departs on his third evangelistic trip, going over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia. A preacher named Apollos goes to Ephesus preaching the gospel as far as he understood it. Aquila and Priscilla teach him the way of God more perfectly, and he mightily convinces the Jews that Jesus is Christ.
- S. Chapter 19: Paul returns to Ephesus and finds about twelve men who had not been correctly baptized, which he baptizes and lays hands on, giving them the Holy Ghost. Paul spends over two years there preaching and disputing daily, and many in Ephesus believe and turn from their occultic religion. Paul's evangelistic success causes a silversmith named Demetrius, who is losing revenue in his idol-making business, to create an uproar which the townclerk had to put down.
- T. Chapter 20: Paul goes into Macedonia and then into Greece where the Jews lay wait to kill him. He sails to Troas where he assembles with the church, preaches until midnight, resurrects Eutychus after he falls asleep and falls from a loft, breaks bread with them, and preaches for the rest of the night. Paul goes to Assos, Mitylene, Chios, Samos, Trogyllium, and Miletus. At Miletus he calls for the elders of the church at Ephesus and warns them of spiritual dangers to come, after which they accompany him to the ship, weeping and sorrowing that they will see him no more.
- U. Chapter 21: During Paul's return trip to Jerusalem, he is warned twice to not go because of what would befall him there, but he goes anyway, not worrying about it. When he arrives at Jerusalem, he goes into the temple to perform a vow with some men. When the Jews see him in the temple, they create an uproar and try to kill him, but he is rescued by a band of soldiers.
- V. Chapter 22: Paul addresses the Jews and tells them the story of his conversion. When he gets to the part about being sent to the Gentiles, the Jews demand his death. The chief captain is going have him scourged until he finds out that he is a Roman citizen. The chief captain then calls down the chief priests and their council to interrogate Paul.
- W. Chapter 23: Paul stands before the council of the high priest, Pharisees, and Sadducees, and he shrewdly turns the Pharisees and Sadducees against each other by stating that he is a Pharisee and is being called into question because of his belief in the resurrection of the dead. The chief captain saves him from being pulled in pieces and takes him into the castle. A group of Jews conspire to kill him. His nephew learns about it and tells the chief captain who commands hundreds of soldiers to escort Paul to Caesarea to Felix the governor.
- X. Chapter 24: Five days later, the high priest and the elders bring an orator named Tertullus to make an accusation against Paul before Felix. After Paul gives his defense, Felix decides to wait for the chief captain to come so that he can

understand the matter fully. Paul remains in prison for two years until Festus replaces Felix.

- Y. Chapter 25: Festus goes to Jerusalem, and the high priest and the chief of the Jews attempt to convince him to have Paul brought to Jerusalem to be tried. Festus tells them to come to Caesarea to make their case against him, which they do. After Paul makes his defense, Festus asks him if he will go to Jerusalem to be judged, but Paul appeals to Rome to be judged there. When king Agrippa comes to Caesarea to visit Festus, Festus tells him about Paul, and Agrippa asks to hear him himself.
- Z. Chapter 26: Paul gives his testimony before Agrippa and almost convinces him to become a Christian. Agrippa deems Paul to be innocent and would have let him go free, had he not appealed to Caesar.
- AA. Chapter 27: Paul sets sail in a ship full of criminals for Rome, but a terrible storm at sea causes them to be shipwrecked on the island of Melita.
- BB. Chapter 28: After three months of wintering on the island of Melita, Paul and the other prisoners depart for Rome. When he arrives at Rome, he calls for the Jews and preaches the gospel to them. He dwells in a rented house in Rome for two years and preaches the kingdom of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ to all those who come unto him.

III. Acts Chapter 1

1. **Acts 1:1** – *The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,*
 - A. Luke is the author of the book of Acts (**Luk 1:1-4**).
 - B. The “former treatise” that Luke had written for Theophilus was the gospel of Luke.
 - C. Theophilus is only mentioned twice in the Bible (**Luk 1:3; Act 1:1**), so we next to nothing about him, except the following that we can deduce.
 - i. *Theophilus* means *friend of God* according to James Strong, Albert Barnes, Adam Clarke, and Matthew Henry, and *lover of God* according to John Gill and Matthew Henry.
 - a. He was therefore a friend and lover of God and also a disciple of Jesus Christ who had been instructed in the gospel (**Luk 1:4**).
 - b. He was a godly man like his spiritual father Abraham (**Jam 2:23**).
 - ii. Theophilus was apparently a man of high rank or nobility, as Luke addressed him as “most excellent” (**Luk 1:3**).
 - a. “Most excellent” was a title reserved for governors and the like (**Act 23:26**).
 - b. “Most excellent” was a similar title as “most noble” (**Act 24:3; Act 26:25**).
 - c. Theophilus was one of the “not many noble” which are called (**1Co 1:26**).
 - D. In his gospel, Luke wrote to Theophilus detailing “all that Jesus began both to do and teach” (**Act 1:1**).
 - E. In the book of Acts, Luke picks up where he left off at the end of his gospel and gives the history of the acts of the apostles, beginning immediately after the ascension of Christ until the AD 60s when Paul was first imprisoned in Rome.

2. **Act 1:2** – *Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:*
 - A. Before His ascension, Jesus commanded the apostles through the Holy Ghost (**1Pe 1:12**) to feed His sheep (**Joh 21:15-17**) and go into all the world and preach the gospel to all nations (**Mat 28:19-20**).
 - B. Jesus also gave commandments to the apostles through the Holy Ghost after He ascended to heaven.
 - i. Prior to His death, Jesus had promised the apostles that He would send the Holy Ghost, who was the Comforter, who would make known all things to them (**Joh 14:16-17, 26; Joh 15:26-27; Joh 16:12-15**).
 - ii. Jesus had instructed them to wait in Jerusalem after His ascension until they were endued with power from on high (**Luk 24:49**).
 - iii. After the Lord was taken up to heaven, He gave commandments to His apostles through the Holy Ghost whom He sent to them.
 - iv. The giving of His commandments by the Holy Ghost began on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and lasted to the death of John, the last apostle.
3. **Act 1:3** – *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:*
 - A. Jesus appeared to His apostles after His passion (suffering) and demonstrated that He was indeed risen from the dead by many *infallible* proofs.
 - i. Infallible *adj.* – Of things: Not liable to fail, unfailing. a. Not liable to prove false, erroneous, or mistaken; that unfailingly holds good.
 - a. The NIV replaces *infallible* proofs with *convincing* proofs.
 - b. Convincing – 1. Persuading or assuring by argument or evidence (dictionary.com - since this is not a KJV word and the latest usage in the OED for it is 1885)
 - c. There is a big difference between infallible proofs and convincing proofs.
 - ii. Some of the infallible proofs of Christ's resurrection included:
 - a. Having the disciples touch Him (**Luk 24:39-40; Joh 20:27**).
 - b. Eating food with them (**Luk 24:41-43**).
 - c. Performing miracles such as walking through walls (**Joh 20:19**) and causing them to catch a whole boat full of fish when they had caught nothing that night (**Joh 21:6-11**).
 - d. Appearing to a crowd of over 500 people at once (**1Co 15:6**).
 - B. Jesus was seen by the apostles for 40 days after His resurrection prior to His ascension.
 - C. He continued preaching the kingdom of God during that time as He did prior to it (**Mar 1:14-15, etc.**).
4. **Act 1:4** – *And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.*

- A. The apostles were told by Jesus to go into all the world and preach the gospel in all nations to every creature (**Mat 28:19; Mar 16:15; Luk 24:47**).
 - B. But before they did that, they were to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Ghost, who was promised by the Father, was given unto them (**Act 1:5**).
 - C. The Father had promised to send the Holy Ghost to the disciples after Christ departed this earth (**Joh 14:26**).
5. **Act 1:5** – *For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*
- A. They only had to wait about seven days for the Holy Ghost to be given unto them.
 - i. The Holy Ghost came on the day of Pentecost (**Act 2:1-4**).
 - ii. Pentecost was 50 days after the Passover (**Lev 23:15-16**).
 - iii. Jesus died at the time of Passover (**Joh 18:28, 39; Joh 19:14**).
 - iv. Jesus was in the grave for three days and nights (**Mat 12:40**).
 - v. Jesus spent 40 days on earth after His resurrection (**Act 1:3**).
 - vi. Therefore, the “not many days hence” until the Holy Ghost was given was seven days (50-3-40=7).
 - B. The apostles were baptized *with*, not *by*, the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.
 - i. John baptized *with* water by immersing believers in water (**Mat 3:6; Mar 1:5, 10**).
 - ii. John, not the water, performed the baptism.
 - iii. The apostles would be baptized *with* the Holy Ghost by being immersed in the Holy Ghost to the point of being filled with Him (**Act 2:4**).
 - iv. Jesus, not the Holy Ghost, performed the baptism (**Mat 3:11**).
 - v. Believers are baptized *by* the Holy Ghost when He adds them to the local church when they are baptized in water (**1Co 12:13 c/w Act 2:38, 41-42, 47**).
6. **Act 1:6** – *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*
- A. The apostles at this time were demonstrating that they still did not understand the nature of the kingdom of God which Jesus preached.
 - B. They appear to have thought that Christ’s kingdom was an earthly kingdom that was synonymous with the nation of Israel.
 - C. They were expecting God to restore the nation of Israel unto its former glory instead of being a vassal state of Rome (**Joh 6:15**).
 - D. Jesus made it clear in His preaching and teaching that the kingdom of God was not a physical, national, geographical kingdom, but rather a spiritual one (**Luk 17:20-21; Joh 18:36**).
 - E. Furthermore, Jesus told the Jews that the kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to others (**Mat 21:43**).
7. **Act 1:7** – *And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*
- A. Some have concluded that since Jesus did not say that God would *not* restore the kingdom to Israel, but only said that “it is not for you to know the times or the

seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power,” that therefore God *will* restore the kingdom again to Israel.

- i. But Jesus did *not* say that He would restore again the kingdom to Israel at that time or at any time.
- ii. Jesus simply told them that, “it is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.”
- iii. This is very similar to how Jesus answered Peter when he asked what was going to happen to John (**Joh 21:20-22**).
 - a. Jesus answered Peter with, “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.”
 - b. The disciples took His statement to mean that John would not die.
 - c. But Jesus did not say that John would not die; He simply asked, “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?” (**Joh 21:23**).
 - d. Likewise, Jesus did not say that He was going to restore again the kingdom to Israel.
 - e. As a matter of fact, Jesus said the opposite (**Mat 21:43**).

B. The broader lesson to glean from Jesus’ words is that there are some things that are secret and belong only to God (**Deut 29:29**), especially the timing of future events such as the second coming of Christ (**Mar 13:32; 1Th 5:1-2**).

8. **Act 1:8** – *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

A. *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:*

- i. Jesus had promised the apostles that after He ascended to heaven, He would send them the Holy Ghost who would teach them all things and bring all things that Jesus taught to their remembrance (**Joh 14:26**).
- ii. Knowledge brings strength and power (**Pro 24:5**).
- iii. The apostles went from being immature (**Mar 9:34**), weak cowards (**Mat 26:56**) to bold and fearless preachers (**Act 4:13, 29; Act 5:29; Eph 6:20**) after the Holy Ghost came upon them on the day of Pentecost.

B. *and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

- i. The apostles would begin preaching in Jerusalem (**Act 5:28**) and then branch out into Judaea and Samaria (**Act 8:1, 4-5**) before going into the uttermost part of the earth (**Mat 28:19; Mar 16:15**).
- ii. The apostles did as Jesus commanded and preached the gospel unto the uttermost part of the earth to all nations (**Rom 16:25-26**), all the world (**Col 1:5-6**), and to every creature (**Col 1:23**).
- iii. The uttermost part of the earth doesn’t necessarily mean the north or south pole, the Americas, or Japan, as the queen of Sheba (modern day Yemen) was said to have come from “the uttermost parts of the earth” (**Mat 12:42**).

9. **Act 1:9** – *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

- A. Jesus ascended to heaven in a bodily, audible, visible form (**Mar 16:19; Luk 24:39, 51; Joh 20:24-29**).
 - B. He went to heaven and is seated on the right hand of God in His resurrected body (**Eph 1:20**).
10. **Act 1:10** – *And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;*
- A. These two men were angels.
 - B. Angels appeared as men in white apparel at different times in scripture (**Mar 16:5 c/w Mat 28:1-3 c/w Luk 24:4-5 c/w Joh 20:12; Act 10:30 c/w Act 10:3**).
11. **Act 1:11** – *Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*
- A. This verse proves that the second coming of Christ will be a visible and public event, not an invisible and secret one.
 - B. Christ will return in *like manner* as the disciples *saw* Him leave (**Act 1:11**).
 - i. Like *adj.* - 1. Having the same characteristics or qualities as some other person or thing; of approximately identical shape, size, colour, character, etc., with something else; similar; resembling; analogous.
 - ii. Manner *n.* - 1. a. The way in which something is done or takes place; method of action; mode of procedure. b. *in like manner*, also *like manner*: in a similar way, similarly.
 - iii. The disciples *beheld* Christ ascending into the physical clouds of the sky (**Act 1:9**).
 - a. Behold *v.* - 7. *trans.* a. To hold or keep in view, to watch; to regard or contemplate with the eyes; to look upon, look at (implying active voluntary exercise of the faculty of vision).
 - b. The first six definitions were not cited by the OED after the 1400s.
 - iv. Christ departed into heaven in a physical body (see comments on Act 1:9 above).
 - v. Therefore, since Christ will return in *like manner* as He left, if Christ was physically seen leaving this earth in a physical body in the clouds, He will be physically seen returning in a physical body in the clouds.
 - vi. This is exactly what the scriptures teach.
 - C. Jesus Christ will *appear* and "they shall *see* the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven" (**Mat 24:30**).
 - i. Appear *v.* 1. To come forth into view, as from a place or state of concealment, or from a distance; to become visible.
 - ii. Jesus will *appear* the *second time* without sin unto salvation (**Heb 9:28**) and we will *see* Him (**1Jo 3:2**).
 - iii. Every eye shall *see* Him coming in the clouds, just as when He left (**Rev 1:7**).
 - iv. All tribes of the earth and all kindreds shall mourn and wail when they *see* Him coming (**Mat 24:30; Rev 1:7**).

- v. It's possible that Christ ascended to heaven with a shout and the sound of a trumpet, though it is not stated that He did (**Psa 47:5 c/w 1Th 4:16 c/w Act 1:11**).
- D. Acts 1:11 gives the lie to the false doctrines of Premillennial Dispensationalism and Full Preterism.
 - i. Premillennial Dispensationalism teaches that Christ will return secretly and silently to rapture the saints to heaven before the tribulation, seven years prior to His visible return.
 - a. This is patently false because Christ is only going to return once, and His second coming will be "in like manner" as He left.
 - b. See the "Millennialism, End Times, and the Reign of Christ" series for a full refutation of Premillennial Dispensationalism: <https://pastorwagner.com/millennialism>.
 - ii. Full Preterism teaches that Christ came back spiritually in 70AD.
 - a. This is patently false because Christ will return in His physical body "in like manner" as He left this earth.
 - b. See "Preterism Refutation" series for a full refutation of Preterism: <https://pastorwagner.com/preterism>.

12. **Act 1:12** – *Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.*

- A. Mount Olivet is also called the mount of Olives.
- B. The mount of Olives was a significant place in our Lord's life.
 - i. Jesus was known to spend time on the mount of Olives (**Joh 18:1-2 c/w Mat 26:30**).
 - ii. Jesus was *wont* (accustomed) to go to the mount of Olives (**Luk 22:39**).
 - iii. Jesus sometimes abode on the mount of Olives for the night (**Luk 21:37; Joh 8:1-2**).
 - iv. Jesus went to the mount of Olives prior to His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (**Mat 21:1; Luk 19:37**).
 - v. Jesus gave the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, the His second coming, and the end of the world on the mount of Olives (**Mat 24:3**), which is why it is referred to as the "Olivet Discourse."
 - vi. It was in the garden of Gethsemane at the base of the mount of Olives that Jesus went to pray and was arrested the night before His crucifixion (**Mat 26:30, 36-39**).
 - vii. Jesus left this earth from the mount of Olives (**Act 1:9, 12**).
 - viii. It appears that He may return to the mount of Olives (**Zec 14:1-9**).
- C. The apostles returned to Jerusalem as they were instructed (**Act 1:4**).
- D. Mount Olivet was a sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem, which is about 2/3 of mile.

13. **Act 1:13** – *And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.*

- A. The upper room might have been the same place where Jesus ate the Passover with them and served them the first communion (**Luk 22:12-20**).
 - B. These were the remaining 11 apostles.
 - C. By comparing the accounts in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts, it is clear that Judas the brother of James in **Act 1:13** and **Luk 6:16** is another name for Thaddaeus in **Mar 3:18** and Lebbeus Thaddaeus in **Mat 10:3**.
14. **Act 1:14** – *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*
- A. They had a prayer meeting wherein they were all in one accord as Christians are supposed to be (**Php 2:2; 1Co 1:10**).
 - B. This was a meeting of the first church (**Act 1:15**).
 - C. There were women in the church at this time, including Mary the mother of Jesus.
 - D. These were probably some of the same women that followed Jesus and ministered unto Him (**Mat 27:55-56**).
 - E. Jesus' brethren were believers by this point, but they had not been earlier in His ministry (**Joh 7:5; Mat 13:57**).
15. **Act 1:15** – *And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)*
- A. Peter was the prominent leader in the early Jerusalem church.
 - i. Jesus had given Peter the keys to His kingdom/church on this earth (**Mat 16:18-19**).
 - ii. Peter went from a weak, immature Christian who still needed to be converted in areas of his life (**Luk 22:31-32, 54-62**) to a bold leader in the church (**Act 4:13**).
 - B. There were about 120 members in the Jerusalem church at this time.
 - i. It appears that they had a membership roll with names of each member written down.
 - ii. Church membership is Biblical (**1Co 12:13-14, 27**).
16. **Act 1:16** – *Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.*
- A. The scripture Peter is referring to is **Psa 69:25** and **Psa 109:8** which he later quotes in **Act 1:20**.
 - i. We will look at these prophecies when we get to Act 1:20.
 - ii. Additionally, it was prophesied in **Psa 41:9** that Judas, a familiar friend of Jesus whom He trusted and ate with, would lift up his heel against Him.
 - iii. Judas was the guide of the soldiers who arrested Jesus (**Mat 26:47-49**).
 - B. These prophecies *must needs have been fulfilled* because whatever God declares will come to pass (**Isa 42:9; Isa 46:10**).
 - C. The Holy Ghost spoke through David when he prophesied of Judas betraying Christ (**2Sa 23:1-2**).
17. **Act 1:17** – *For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.*

- A. Judas was chosen by Jesus and numbered with the apostles (**Luk 6:13, 16**).
 - B. Judas obtained part of the ministry of the apostles, being sent by Jesus to preach the kingdom of heaven to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and to heal the sick, cleanse lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils (**Mat 10:5-8**).
 - C. He was also the church “treasurer” (**Joh 13:29**), but not a faithful one (**Joh 12:4-6**).
 - D. He was sent forth as a sheep in the midst of wolves and commanded to be wise as a serpent (**Mat 10:16**), but he was a wolf in sheep’s clothing (**Mat 7:15-20**) and a serpent who was of his father the devil (**Mat 23:33 c/w Joh 8:44 c/w Joh 6:70-71**).
18. **Act 1:18** – *Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.*
- A. It is likely that verses 18-19 are not Peter’s words, but rather Luke’s narrative for the benefit of those reading the book of Acts years later.
 - i. The apostles and other church members who were listening to Peter would have already know about the fate of Judas.
 - ii. Peter was speaking to Jews in Jerusalem, so there would not have been a need to tell them that the field was called Aceldama in their language, meaning the field of blood (**Act 1:19**).
 - iii. It is unlikely that the field came to be called “the field of blood” during the six weeks between Judas’ death and Peter’s address to the church several days after Christ’s ascension. It is more likely that it came to be known by that name over time.
 - B. *Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity;*
 - i. Judas betrayed Christ for thirty pieces of silver (**Mat 26:14-16; Luk 22:3-6**), which Peter called *the reward of iniquity*.
 - ii. Judas, feeling guilty for betraying an innocent man, tried to return the money to the chief priests and elders (**Mat 27:3**).
 - iii. When they would not accept it, he cast down the silver in the temple and went and hanged himself (**Mat 27:4-5**).
 - iv. Because it was blood money, they could not put it into the treasury, so they used the money to buy the potter’s field to bury strangers in (**Mat 27:6-7**).
 - v. Since the money still technically belonged to Judas, Peter gave him the credit for purchasing the field with it.
 - C. *and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.*
 - i. After hanging himself (**Mat 27:5**), he apparently fell headlong and burst asunder in the midst, causing all his bowels to gush out.
 - ii. This is information that was not included in the gospel records.
 - iii. There are a couple of possible explanations.
 - a. One possibility is that the rope could have broken after breaking his neck, and he could have fallen on a sharp rock which gashed his abdomen open causing his bowels to gush out.
 - b. It’s also possible that whoever found him cut the rope, allowing his body to fall on a rock which burst him open in the midst.
19. **Act 1:19** – *And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.*

- A. Because the field was bought with Judas' blood money, it was called the field of blood (**Mat 27:8**).
 - B. The purchase of the field with the 30 pieces of silver was prophesied by Jeremiah and Zechariah (**Mat 27:9-10 c/w Zec 11:12-13**).
20. **Act 1:20** – *For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.*
- A. The first part of Peter's quote (*Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein*) is from **Psa 69:25**.
 - B. The second part of the quote (*his bishoprick let another take*) is from **Psa 109:8**.
 - i. By comparing Act 1:20 with Psa 109:8, a *bishoprick* is an *office*.
 - ii. Bishoprick *n.* – 1. The providence of a bishop; a diocese. 2. The office or position of a bishop. 3. Overseership, office. (the OED cites Act 1:20 as a usage for sense 3)
 - C. Judas lost his office and his life, and was replaced by another man.
21. **Act 1:21** – *Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,*
- A. Peter instructs the church that they need to replace Judas with another man who is qualified to be an apostle.
 - B. The first qualification was that the man must have companied with the apostles for the entire earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.
 - C. Anyone who had not been with the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles from the beginning was not qualified.
 - D. This requirement disqualifies any man living today from being an apostle.
 - i. The apostle Paul was a special exception to this rule, as he did not company with the apostles and Jesus during his earthly ministry.
 - ii. However, he did meet the second requirement of seeing the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ (see next verse) as “one born out of due time” (**1Co 15:8-9; 1Co 9:1**).
 - iii. Paul was an apostle by the commandment of God (**1Ti 1:1**).
22. **Act 1:22** – *Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.*
- A. To be an apostle, the man would have had to have been with Jesus and the apostles from the day that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist until the day that Jesus ascended to heaven.
 - B. Secondly, to be an apostle, a man must have personally witnessed the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ.
 - C. The apostles gave witness with great power of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (**Act 4:33**).
 - D. No man today can meet either of the two requirements to be an apostle.
 - i. There are therefore no apostles today.
 - ii. But there are false apostles (**2Co 11:13**).
23. **Act 1:23** – *And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.*

- A. The only thing we know about these two men by deduction is that they companied with the apostles during the entire earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus and witnessed Him in His resurrected body.
 - B. They were both qualified to be an apostle, but the apostles did not know which one God had chosen for the office.
 - C. The next three verses explain how Mathias was chosen to be the twelfth apostle.
 - D. The scripture tells us nothing else about these two men.
 - i. If the memory of the lives of two men who were qualified to be apostles of Jesus Christ (and one who was an apostle) passed into oblivion, what chance is there that anyone will even know that any of us existed in 100 years from now?
 - ii. Answer: almost zero (**Ecc 2:16; Ecc 9:5**).
 - iii. Though we and our works will be forgotten by men, God remembers (**Mal 3:16**), which gives our lives eternal significance (**Mat 16:27**).
24. **Act 1:24** – *And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,*
- A. *And they prayed,*
 - i. When we have a decision to make and the best choice is not clear (or even when it seems to be), we should always pray to God for wisdom (**Jam 1:5**).
 - ii. Wise people seek knowledge (**Pro 18:15**) and attain unto wise counsel (**Pro 1:5**) rather than thinking they know everything.
 - B. *and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men,*
 - i. God knows the hearts of all men (**Heb 4:12; Jer 17:10; 1Sa 16:7**).
 - ii. We may think we know what's in a man's heart, but we are often wrong.
 - C. *shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,*
 - i. God had chosen one of these men to be an apostle.
 - a. The Holy Ghost makes a man an overseer (**Act 20:28**).
 - b. God uses men to ordain other men (**Tit 1:5**), but it is God who chooses to put a man into the ministry (**1Ti 1:12; Heb 5:4**).
 - ii. The apostles were apostles, not by men, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father (**Gal 1:1**).
25. **Act 1:25** – *That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.*
- A. *That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship,*
 - i. The appointment under consideration was that of an apostle.
 - ii. The eleven apostles were not jealous of their office and trying to keep another from it, but were desirous to ordain another man to share in their ministry.
 - B. *from which Judas by transgression fell,*
 - i. Judas lost his office due to sin (betrayal, deceit, covetousness, greed, suicide, etc.).
 - ii. Ministers of God, including pastors, can lose their office if they do not keep their bodies in subjection (**1Co 9:27**).
 - iii. A pastor must be blameless in order to hold the office (**1Ti 3:2; Tit 1:7**).

- iv. A steward, which is a title for the office of the minister (**1Co 4:1**), can lose his stewardship if he is not faithful (**Luk 16:1-2 c/w 1Co 4:2**).
- C. *that he might go to his own place.*
 - i. Judas died and his body went to the grave (**Ecc 3:20; Ecc 6:6**).
 - ii. Judas' soul and spirit went to hell (**Mat 26:24; Joh 17:12**), the place for which he was suited and which was prepared for him (**Mat 25:41; Joh 6:70**).
 - iii. "The phrase his own place means the place or abode which was suited for him, which was his appropriate home. Judas was not in a place which befitted his character when he was an apostle; he was not in such a place in the church; he would not be in heaven. Hell was the only place which was suited to the man of avarice and of treason." (Albert Barnes)
 - iv. "They are ready to receive him as a brother whom God hath chosen; for they are not contriving to have so much the more dignity themselves, by keeping out another, but desire to have one to *take part of this ministry and apostleship*, to join with them in the work and share with them in the honour, *from which Judas by transgression fell*, threw himself, by deserting and betraying his Master, *from the place* of an apostle, of which he was unworthy, that he might go *to his own place*, the place of a traitor, the fittest place for him, not only to the gibbet, but to hell - this was his own place. Note, Those that betray Christ, as they fall from the dignity of relation to him, so they fall into all misery. It is said of Balaam (Num 24:25) that he *went to his own place*, that is, says one of the rabbins, *he went to hell*. Dr. Whitby quotes Ignatius saying, There is appointed to every man *idios topos - a proper place*, which imports the same with that of God's rendering to every man according to his works. And our Saviour had said that Judas's own place should be such that *it had been better for him that he had never been born* (Mat 26:24) - his misery such as to be worse than not being. Judas had been a hypocrite, and hell is the proper place of such; other sinners, as inmates, have their portion with them, Mat 24:51." (Matthew Henry)

26. **Act 1:26** – *And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.*

- A. After praying to God for wisdom, the apostles cast lots to determine which man God had chosen.
 - i. Lot *n.* - 1. a. An object (app. usually a piece of wood) used in a widely diffused ancient method of deciding disputes, dividing plunder or property, selecting persons for an office or duty, etc., by an appeal to chance or the divine agency supposed to be concerned in the results of chance. The 'lots', each bearing the special mark of one of the competitors, were placed in a receptacle (in Homeric Greece a helmet); according to Greek procedure the vessel was shaken, the winning lot being that which fell out first; in Scandinavia (see Vigf. s.v. hlutr) the winning lot was drawn out by an uninterested party.
 - ii. The lot causes contention to cease (**Pro 18:18**).
 - iii. God controls the outcome of casting lots (**Pro 16:33**).

- iv. God has been known to use lots to reveal His will on a matter (**Jon 1:7**).
- v. God has also used lots to providentially guide human affairs (**Est 3:7**).
- B. Casting lots is not a practice that is commanded in the Bible for selecting a man to ordain to the ministry.
 - i. There are rules and guidelines established in scripture for selecting and ordaining a man to the ministry, such as:
 - a. Verifying that he meets the requirements (**1Ti 3:1-7; Tit 1:5-9**).
 - b. Being proved by serving as a son with the father in the ministry (**Php 2:22 c/w 1Ti 3:2, 10**).
 - c. Having a church call him to minister to them (**Act 16:9-10**).
 - ii. Under normal circumstances, one man will meet these criteria at a time when a minister is needed, and the decision will be clear.
 - iii. But if there happened to be two men who equally met the qualifications, and the pastor and the receiving church were equally divided between the men, a lot could be used to determine the will of God in the matter, as it was here.
- C. Matthias became the twelfth apostle.
 - i. Beyond that, we know nothing else about him.
 - ii. He was not the last apostle to be ordained though.
 - iii. There were more than 12 apostles.
 - iv. There were several other apostles, such as:
 - a. Jesus (**Heb 3:1**)
 - b. Paul (**Rom 1:1**)
 - c. James the Lord's brother (**Gal 1:19**)
 - d. Silas (**1Th 1:1 c/w 1Th 2:2, 6**)
 - e. Barnabas (**Act 14:14**)

IV. Acts Chapter 2

1. **Acts 2:1** – *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*
 - A. The day of Pentecost was 50 days after the Passover and seven days after Jesus ascended to heaven (see comments on Act 1:5).
 - B. The disciples tarried in Jerusalem until the Holy Ghost came, as they were instructed (**Act 1:4-5**).
 - C. They were “all with one accord” together.
 - i. Accord *n.* – 1. Reconciliation, agreement, harmony; concurrence of opinion, will, or action; consent.
 - ii. Church members are supposed to be of one mind and one accord (**Act 2:46; 1Co 1:10; Php 2:2**).
 - D. They were “in one place,” which means that they were assembling themselves together as churches should (**Heb 10:25**).
 - i. The Holy Ghost did not come upon them when they were in their houses studying on their own, but when there were assembled together in harmony as the church of God.
 - ii. The NT church existed before the day of Pentecost (**Mat 16:18; Mat 18:17**).

2. **Acts 2:2** – *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*
 - A. The Jerusalem Church meant in a house at this time, but it was not a “house church” in the modern sense.
 - i. The “house church” movement is an anti-church, anti-pastor, anti-authority movement.
 - a. “House churches” are often started by an unordained man with a bright idea and a disdain for true churches and pastors.
 - b. See sermon on The House Church Movement:
<https://pastorwagner.com/sermons/house-church-movement/>.
 - ii. A true church can meet in a house, and many churches in the Bible did (**Rom 16:5; 1Co 16:19; Col 4:15; Phm 1:2**).
 - iii. A church is a congregation of baptized believers, not a building.
 - B. The Holy Ghost filled the church’s meeting house like a rushing mighty wind.
 - i. The Holy Ghost is likened unto wind in the scriptures (**Joh 3:8**).
 - ii. This could have been part of what Jesus referred to as the kingdom of God coming with power (**Mar 9:1**).
 - iii. A similar thing happened when the tabernacle (**Exo 40:34**) and the temple were built (**2Ch 5:12-14; 1Ki 8:10-11**).
 - iv. God was showing that the place of His worship where He dwelt had changed from the temple to the NT church.
 - v. The time of reformation had come (**Heb 9:10**).
3. **Acts 2:3** – *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*
 - A. Cloven *adj.* – Divided lengthwise; split. b. Split to a certain depth, so as to give a double extremity; bifurcate, bipartite, double. (cites Tindale Bible, Act 2:3)
 - B. When the Holy Spirit filled the church, the apostles were given, as it were, cloven (split) tongues so that they could speak multiple languages simultaneously (**Act 2:4-8**).
 - C. It appears that the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues He provided was physically visible (it sat upon each of them) and had the appearance of fire.
 - D. The flames of a fire are cloven at the upper end, which would serve as a good symbol of cloven tongues.
 - E. The tongue is likened to fire (**Isa 30:27; Jam 3:5-6**).
4. **Acts 2:4** – *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*
 - A. The Jerusalem Church was filled with the Holy Ghost, which was evident by the Spirit giving them the ability to speak with tongues.
 - i. A similar thing happened when the gospel went to the Gentiles (**Act 10:44-46**).
 - ii. On two other occasions—one at the beginning of a Jewish church in Samaria (**Act 8:15-17**), and another at the beginning of a Gentile church in Ephesus (**Act 19:6**)—the apostles laid hands on newly converted church members and gave them the gift of the Holy Ghost.

- iii. By these four instances, God was showing that there was no difference between Jewish and Gentile Christians and churches (**Act 11:15-17; Act 15:7-9; Eph 2:11-22**).
 - iv. This being filled with the Holy Ghost was being baptized with the Holy Ghost (**Act 1:5**).
- B. A similar thing happened in the days of Moses when God took of the spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy elders, which caused them to prophesy (**Num 11:25**).
- C. “Tongues” refer to languages (**Act 2:6 c/w Act 2:8**).
- D. Tongues was one of the gifts of the Spirit given to the first century churches (**1Co 12:10-11**).
- i. The Holy Spirit gave them the ability to speak in other languages which they knew not.
 - ii. The reason for the Spirit giving the gift of tongues at that time is evident from the verses which follow.