

Acts 1: the Ascension of Christ

- Acts: 3rd longest NT Book (LK, MT). MT & AC same length; Luke wrote 30% of NT.
- Penned to Gentile audience.
- Addressed to Theophilis (*one who loves God OR one who is loved by God*)
- Purpose: historical, Christological, missionary, apologetic, didactic
- Written late 62AD/early 63AD – end of the 2 years mentioned in 28:20
- Probably written over an extended period of time – Luke might have kept a journal
- Themes: past times, principles, preaching, prayer, progress
- Ch. 1 prepares for Ch. 2's great events

1. Ascension – v. 1-14

- 1: 1st account (Luke), Gospel told life of Christ
- To be effective in teaching, we must first live what we teach, 1 Tim. 4:16.
- 2: orders/commands: Great Commission
- 3: qualifications of apostleship: witness res. Jesus 40 days of appearances
- Jesus only had one kind of kingdom in mind; apostles had many.
- 4: apostles' lack of understanding is basis for 4-8
- 5: commanded not to leave Jerusalem, starting place for church
- Baptized: HS to guide them as promised in Jn. 14:26, 15:26, 16:13
- 6: minds elsewhere; restoring Israel was only mindset
- 7: times/epochs/ages: both emphasize it is not their place to know the exact time; now HS came with power
- 8: witnesses: nudge to get them started, map: start at home (Jerusalem), expand nearby (Judea, Samaria), reach out to all world (uttermost)
- 9: lifted up: doesn't mean Heaven up
- 10: not 1st time they had seen Him mysteriously depart since res., Lk. 24:31; didn't have to wonder long, angles as witness
- 11: message: 1. challenge, work now up to them; 2. comfort, one day He will return; victory is assured!
- 12: Jerusalem last place they would've chosen to go to.

- 12: (crucifixion, persecution, enemies), home & families in Galilee, no tie to Jerusalem.
- Sabbath's Day Journey: not ascension on Sabbath but a distance, Ex. 16:29, Num. 35:5, about 2000 cubits (18/20in), $\frac{3}{4}$ to 7/8 mile.
- 13: Apostles staying in Jerusalem (4th & final list). Judas missing. Zealots political group ded. to overthrow Rom. in Palestine; unity
- Staying: kept their belongings, thought it all 120 mentioned in v. 15 here, *not sure*
- 14: helps to wait with others; interesting group, family of Jesus present; last mention of Mary in NT; regardless who was here, ded. to prayer
- *With one mind*: 11x in book

2. Replacement of Judas – v. 15-26

- 15: Peter takes control of group; replacement needed for Judas
- 16: Judas was a guide to those who arrested Jesus in Gethsemane
- 17: counted among us: Judas was an apostle. Warning here: all followers can fall away.
- 18-19: explanation to Gentile readers of death of Jesus
- Compliments Mt. 27:6-7: priests used money from Judas to buy a field, Potter's field, clay removed from soil to make vessels, field worthless – "strip-mined"; scattered body parts would lower value to 30 pcs. silver
- 20: Ps. 65:25, 109:8
- 21-22: did not set a precedent to perpetually reappoint apostles, Judas turned aside (25)
- 3 req: 1. accompanied apostles, man rules out women, 2. been w/ Jesus and apostles during ministry, 3. witness His res.
- Why 12 when HS fell? Why 12 at all? To correspond to 12 tribes
- 23: apparently only 2 qualified: Joseph Justus (Heb) Barsabbas (GK) [son of Sabbath, born on Sabbath?]
- Matthias: trad. one of 70, Luke 10:1
- 24,25: 2 men, 1 position: God decides, 2nd mention of prayer. "To go to one's own place" = "to go to the place one deserves to go because of one's own actions/"
- 26: Lots: not exactly sure, group effort. Did not vote, God chose! Common OT thing, Lv. 16:8, Num. 26:56, Pr. 16:33 God chooses
- Once the HS comes, casting lots never used again.
- One of the 12 – meant to be the 12th – NOT PAUL!
- Matthias' name does not appear again.

Lessons:

- Jesus gave specific commands on how to preach and to whom (1:8). We would do well to obey His commands in all aspects.
- Judas took the wrong way out of dealing with his sins. Taking one's life never solves the problem – it only ever creates more problems.
- God chose Matthias as the replacement for Judas. Ultimately God's Will is always accomplished.

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