

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 1ST, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

THE BOOK OF ACTS

Written by Luke, it is a continuation of a narrative written to Theophilus around 60 AD.

- History has given it the name "Acts of the Apostles," but it is really about the work of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of Peter and Paul.
- God the Father is revealed in the Old Testament, Jesus is revealed in the Gospels, and the Holy Spirit is revealed in Acts.
- It contains the beginnings of the Church and highlights how community, leadership, and vision are tied together to fulfill the mission of every Believer.
- It instructs the Church to say "yes" to God's plan, even in the face of opposition.
- It is the bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles (letters) of the New Testament.

JUDAS (ACTS 1:15-20) "IN THOSE DAYS"

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would come and instructed the disciples to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the Father's promise.

- After Christ's ascension, they would meet and pray as they waited for their opportunity to go beyond Jerusalem, into Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

"PETER STOOD UP"

At some point, Peter stood up to address the "Judas problem."

- He spoke to the 120 faithful disciples and followed his Teacher's pattern.
- He quoted scripture and explained why Judas had betrayed Jesus. Judas had fulfilled prophecy, and now, they were responsible for replacing him.

"IT WAS NECESSARY"

Judas had been a part of the ministry, walked with the disciples, and was close to Jesus. Now there was a void in their numbers.

- **During our "in-between" time, we should find our direction in Scripture, not just necessity.**
- **When we are anxious, do we jump wherever is convenient or look for direction (God's will)?**

THE END OF JUDAS

In the middle of Peter's first speech, Luke adds some information about Judas's demise.

- It's a gruesome image of the consequences of rejecting Christ and turning to any other plan for our future.
- **There is a great field of regret for everyone who chooses to deny Christ and follow their own path.**

MATTHIAS (ACTS 1:21-26) "THEREFORE"

Peter recognized the urgent need to restore the number of Apostles to 12. He had admitted that one had failed, but that didn't mean they couldn't move forward.

- They would have to consider the experience and commitment of each candidate.
- **We often fail when we consider charisma and potential above all else when seeking those who may lead us.**

A WITNESS OF HIS RESURRECTION

Not only would the candidates need to have been there at the beginning, but they would also need to have seen Christ in His resurrected body.

- They needed to have been there the whole time—through all the journeys and trials—because they would have to personally testify that the Jesus who discipled and was crucified was the same Jesus who returned.

"THEY PROPOSED TWO"

Joseph and Matthias were both qualified, yet they had been in the background for years without a title.

- These men had stayed faithful in the background and never expected to be counted as one of the 12.
- **Seeking title and position won't qualify us for future tasks; faithfulness and surrender will.**

"THEY PRAYED"

After finding men who fit the criteria, they prayed for spiritual insight.

- Believing that God had already chosen the right man—just as Jesus had chosen the first 12—they prayed for their wills to be aligned with God's choice.
- **Praying for God's will to be done is about preparing ourselves for God's will to be revealed. Will we be ok with His will?**

CASTING LOTS

After following God's command and preparing themselves in prayer, they cast lots as a show of faith in God's providence.

- This is the last time we see lots cast in the NT. After Pentecost, Believers would rely on the Holy Spirit to reveal God's will.
- **This is more about entrusting the final result to God.**

UNWRITTEN NOTES

Matthias was chosen; Joseph was not.

- Neither are mentioned again in the NT.
- We can have confidence that both men were satisfied with the outcome.
- **Neither man's worth was defined by the office they held or missed.**
- **The title doesn't make the witness.**
- **Are we at peace with the place God has placed us?**

PENTECOST (ACTS 2:1-13)

"THEY WERE ALL TOGETHER"

Pentecost coincides with the Feast of Weeks. Fifty days after Passover, the Jews celebrated God giving the Torah to Moses. Jesus was about to give the Holy Spirit to His Church!

- Many were gathered in Jerusalem, but we need to see that the disciples were together.
- **In our culture of digital isolation, we can find a unique power in physical presence and unity.**
- **Breakthroughs happen when we have a shared purpose.**

WIND AND FIRE

The Holy Spirit was ushered in by the sound of a violent rushing wind and flames that seemed to rest on the heads of the disciples.

- Pentecost would be a one-time event in the Church. The disciples' prayers didn't bring Pentecost down; prayer prepared them for what God was about to do.

We don't control the Holy Spirit any more than we can truly tame wind or fire.

BAPTIZED IN THE SPIRIT

As the presence of the Holy Spirit entered, each person was filled with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

- This was a unique filling for the Jews, and the Gentiles would receive a similar filling at the home of Cornelius in Acts 10.
- This baptism of the Spirit happens when a Christ follower is born again (salvation).
- Every authentic Believer has been baptized in the Spirit.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

The filling of the Spirit has to do with power for witness and service.

- We are not commanded to be baptized by the Spirit because God does that once and for all. We are called to be filled with the Spirit because we need His power to serve Him effectively.
- **The baptism of the Spirit means we belong to His Body; the fullness of the Spirit means our bodies belong to Him. One is salvation; the other is surrender.**

SPEAKING IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

The Holy Spirit didn't force them to learn one "holy language." He gave them the gift to speak in known languages.

- **Don't over-analyze or over-glorify this gift. God gave it so He could be known and glorified by all nations. When He chooses to do it around the world today, it will be for His glory and not for people to "show-off" their personal holiness.**

THEY HEARD THE SOUND

The wind and voices drew in all kinds of people (from at least 15 different regions), and each person could hear in their own language.

- It was a miracle of speaking and hearing. They understood the words of truth and were amazed, astounded, and perplexed.
- **Our responsibility is to share the gospel in a way that others can hear and understand. How they respond is up to them.**

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

In the middle of a literal miracle, some saw the Believers and said, "They're just drunk!"

- **We cannot please everyone, even when we are doing our most surrendered work.**
- **Skeptics will always try to downgrade any miracle that God may be doing in our lives as we serve Him.**
- **We can't let the mocking of a few distract us from the amazement of the many.**

DISCOURAGED

- Discouragement is easy to find.
- **It's usually our failure that plants the seed.**
- **God's purposes are not derailed by human failure. Even when we create a mess, there is a way to move forward through prayer, discernment, and obedience.**

CONFIDENCE

- It's hard to believe that we can fix what's broken.
- **It's especially hard when we feel left behind or out of the loop.**
- **If we will stop looking for success in recognition, position, or power, we may realize that success is about being ready to receive God's plan and move in obedience where He leads. That's confidence in Him!**

PURPOSE

- We all have some kind of purpose.
- **As Believers, we want people to come to our level of understanding.**
- **That's a problem. God tells us to GO and meet people where they are. If we are willing to show up and be filled with HIS PURPOSE, we will see the Holy Spirit's impact on our families, church, and community. Yes, the task is overwhelming. Are we ready to let the Holy Spirit overwhelm us? Surrender is our choice.**