



October 28, 2015

Acts 1:12 – 2:4

Pastor Gary Hamrick

1. **Acts 1:12–20** – *“Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, ‘Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus – he was one of our number and shared this ministry.’ (With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) ‘For,’ said Peter, ‘it is written in the book of Psalms, “May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,” and, “May another take his place of leadership.” ’ ”*
  - a. A Sabbath day’s walk would have been about three-fourths of a mile.
  - b. The disciples left the Mount of Olives and went to the Upper Room in Jerusalem, which may have been the same room where Jesus met with the disciples for what we know as the Last Supper.
  - c. Gathered in the Upper Room were about 120 Believers, some of whom are named:
    - i. The eleven disciples, the women (reference to the women who traveled with Jesus and supported him out of their means), Mary, and the half-brothers of Jesus.
    - ii. This is the last mention of Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the Bible.
    - iii. Jesus had at least four half-brothers and two half-sisters.
      1. **Mark 6:3b** – *“Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James,*

*Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?' "*

2. The brothers of Jesus were skeptical of Jesus at the beginning of his ministry, but something changed their minds from skepticism to belief.
  - iv. Everyone gathered in the Upper Room were constantly praying and waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit.
    1. Pastor Gary encouraged all Believers to be prayerful, patient, and willing to wait upon the Lord!
    2. Pastor Gary said, "One of the things I think is remarkable about this story is that 120 Christians actually stayed together... for a couple of days in the same room, and they didn't bite each other's heads off!"
  - d. At Peter's urging, they decided to select a replacement for Judas.
    - i. It's not known how long they had been in the Upper Room, in what ended up being ten days before the coming of the Holy Spirit, when Peter recommended selecting a replacement for Judas.
    - ii. Pastor Gary said, "[Peter interrupted] the prayer meeting. [I] have to be honest with you, there's debate [concerning] the rest of this chapter as to whether Peter was operating in the Spirit or in the flesh. [This] shouldn't surprise us entirely because there were a couple of occasions in the Bible where Peter sort of acted out of the flesh [and] not out of the Spirit. He was kind of an impulsive guy who said things and did things first and then thought about [things] later. [Bible scholars aren't sure] if this was directed by the Lord or [was] this just Peter's idea."
    - iii. This is the first time in the Bible that we read of Peter quoting Scripture: [Psalm 69:25](#) and [Psalm 109:8](#).
  - e. Judas bought a field indirectly not personally.
    - i. [Matthew 27:7-8](#) - *"So [chief priests and the elders] decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day."*
    - ii. There isn't a contradiction between [Acts 1:18](#) and [Matthew 27:5](#) concerning Judas' demise.
      1. [Matthew 27:5b](#) - *"Then [Judas] went away and hanged himself."*
      2. Pastor Gary said, "The idea is that he [hung] himself over a cliffside area, and either he [didn't] get the noose [around his neck correctly], and he [slipped] out of it, or the rope [broke resulting in a fall], or in the process of hanging himself... after some decay [a person's head would separate from their body, causing the body to fall and burst open]."
2. [Acts 1:21-22](#) - *"Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from*

*John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."*

- a. In [Acts 1:16](#) we see that Peter affirmed the inerrancy of Scripture.
  - i. Pastor Gary said, "If the Bible contradicts itself, then it's not without error, but it is without error because the Scripture must be fulfilled. So, Peter was saying that there [was] a fulfillment of David's words prophetically, and that's what gives credibility to the inerrancy of Scripture."
- b. In [Acts 1:16](#) we see Peter affirmed the inspiration of Scripture.
  - i. Pastor Gary said, "When David penned the psalms, which is the case for any human instrument who penned Scripture, they [were] simply being the vessels of the Holy Spirit. It [was] the Holy Spirit of God who [inspired] people to write the words to communicate the totality of the message that God [wanted] to communicate. [It's not as though any of the writers were in a trance.] When human vessels were instruments of inspiration, God used their God-given personality and their intellect and who they were and their life experience to communicate the clear message that God wanted to communicate."
  - ii. [2 Peter 1:21](#) - *"For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."*
- c. Peter mentioned one qualification for a person to be an apostle.
  - i. The person had to be an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord.
- d. According to [2 Corinthians 12:12](#), the person had to have the gift of miracles in order to be an apostle.
  - i. [2 Corinthians 12:12](#) - *"The things that mark an apostle - signs, wonders and miracles - were done among you with great perseverance."*
- e. Pastor Gary said, "There is debate and controversy today as to whether or not there are legitimate apostles. ... I would simply say that if you take the only two qualifications to be an apostle, [from] the Bible, that it's pretty unlikely that there are any apostles today. The gift of apostleship is different from the office of an apostle. ... When we see how apostles worked, [we see how] they had a great heart for starting [different works in ministry] and for giving careful oversight to doctrine. ... Some people still have [this] gifting, where they start fresh works of ministry and they start new things, but they just don't continue to oversee it; they hand it off to someone else... Strictly speaking the office of an apostle ended with the apostles unless someone can lay claim to having seen the resurrected Lord and having the gift of miracles. Now this brings up the question of the apostle Paul. [Paul qualified because he saw the risen Lord on the road to Damascus, and he had the gift of miracles, having healed the sick and raised the dead.]"
  - i. [1 Corinthians 15:8](#) - *"... last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born."*

3. **Acts 1:23–26** – *“So they proposed two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, ‘Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.’ Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.”*
- a. **Proverbs 16:33** – *“The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.”*
  - b. Pastor Gary said, “[They were still without the Holy Spirit at this time, so] casting of the lots was a way that God could reveal his will. ... We have the Holy Spirit now, so don’t go home and start rolling dice [to find out what God’s will is]! ... So, here’s the debate. Was [Matthias] really the one to be chosen? The argument as to whether or not he should be chosen [is that Matthias was] never mentioned again in the Bible [or in Church history]. It seems [like] the apostle to be chosen was Paul. ... The fact is that besides Peter, James, and John, none of the other apostles [are] mentioned in the Bible. So, I’m not sure you can make the argument that just because Matthias [isn’t mentioned again in the Bible, that he wasn’t supposed to replace Judas]. [If] nothing else it [was] necessary to replace Judas... so that emptiness won’t be hanging over their heads, [so to speak]. I don’t know, quite honestly, if this was the direct will of God or not, but I don’t think that it’s something that we can easily answer, and I don’t think that it’s something that we should dismiss as being unnecessary. ... I personally question whether Matthias should have been chosen. ... I think that Paul’s name [will] be on the wall [according to what will happen in **Revelation 21:14**]. ... Who knows?”
    - i. Paul came to faith in Christ about four years after Matthias was chosen to replace Judas, which means that he wasn’t a prominent figure in the Church until about fifteen years after the events of **Acts 1**.
    - ii. **Revelation 21:14** – *“The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”*
4. **Acts 2:1** – *“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.”*
- a. The Feast of Pentecost
    - i. By this time the Jews had been celebrating Pentecost for more than one thousand years.
    - ii. The English word Pentecost comes from Greek word pentekoste, which means fiftieth.<sup>1</sup>
    - iii. The Feast of Pentecost was fifty days after the Sabbath after Passover.
    - iv. The day after the Sabbath following Passover was Sunday (the first day of the week), the day Jesus rose from the dead.
    - v. In Hebrew, it’s called Chag Shavout, which means Feast of Weeks.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongsg=G4005&t=NIV>

- vi. There were two reasons to celebrate this feast.
    - 1. To commence the new grain harvest which was wheat. (See [Leviticus 23](#))
      - a. The Jews would bring a wave offering two loaves of bread made with yeast to the temple of God.
    - 2. To commemorate the giving of the Law. (See [Exodus 34:22](#))
      - a. God inscribed on stone the Ten Commandments and gave them to Moses on Mt. Sinai.
      - b. While Moses was meeting with God, the people engaged in revelry (sexual immorality and idolatry), and at the people's urging, Aaron, Moses' brother, created a golden calf that the people could worship.
      - c. When Moses came down from the mountain to the camp of the Israelites, he was stunned at the depth of their sin.
        - i. [Exodus 32:26-28](#) - *"So [Moses] stood at the entrance to the camp and said, 'Whoever is for the LORD, come to me.' And all the Levites rallied to him. Then he said to them, 'This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: "Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor." The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day **about three thousand of the people died.**"* (Emphasis added)
- vii. There is an interesting parallel between the events of Moses' encounter with the sinful Israelites and the Day of Pentecost in the book of Acts.
  - 1. [Acts 2:37-41](#) - *"When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call.' With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' Those who accepted his message were baptized, and **about three thousand were added to their number that day.**"* (Emphasis added)
  - 2. Pastor Gary said, "On the original celebration for the Day of Pentecost it was the giving of the Law. And when the Law was given, [about three thousand] Law breakers died. On the Day of Pentecost [in] Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit is given, [about three thousand] are saved. [The takeaway is this, we can't measure up

to the Law, so we die. The Holy Spirit is given, and by the help and grace of the Spirit we are redeemed, and we live and are saved.] There's an incredible contrast in these events, but God selected the Day of Pentecost as a reminder that on this day originally the Law was given, [and] look how many died? And now on this very day, some fourteen or fifteen hundred years after the incident with Moses... now the Spirit is given on the [Day of Pentecost] and rather than three thousand dying, about three thousand [got] saved. ... All of the other feasts [were to be celebrated] without yeast, and yeast in the Bible is a type or a picture of sin. ... Who [was] it that God [accepted] on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2? Sinners. [God was saying], 'Make your celebration with bread [made with] yeast - a type of sin - because there shall be a great day... when I will accept sinners as the offering and sacrifice of praise.' "

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the 1984 New International Version (NIV)