SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

Acts 1

You Shall Be My Witnesses — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

The risen Jesus proves He is alive, tells His people to wait for the Spirit, and gives them one job — to be His witnesses from home to the ends of the earth. Then He goes up in a cloud with the promise that the same Jesus will come back the same way, and His church begins where it must always begin: on its knees, together.

00 The Text

ACTS 1 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach,

2 until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

3 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;

5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.

11 They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

15 At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said,

16 "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.

17 "For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry."

18 (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out.

19 And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO ONE DWELL IN IT'; and, 'LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE HIS OFFICE.'

21 "Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—

22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

23 So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias.

24 And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen

25 to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place."

26 And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

Marked in the text

- **v1** "all that Jesus began to do and teach" — God — His character & actions
- **v3** "presented Himself alive after His suffering" — God — His character & actions
- **v3** "by many convincing proofs" — Time / place / contrast
- **v3** "over a period of forty days" — Time / place / contrast
- **v4** "not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised" — Command / instruction
- **v5** "you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" — Promise / blessing
- **v6** "is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel" — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** "It is not for you to know times or epochs" — Time / place / contrast
- **v8** "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" — Promise / blessing
- **v8** "you shall be My witnesses" — Command / instruction
- **v8** "even to the remotest part of the earth" — Time / place / contrast
- **v9** "a cloud received Him out of their sight" — God — His character & actions
- **v11** "why do you stand looking into the sky?" — Sin / warning
- **v11** "will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven" — Promise / blessing
- **v14** "with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer" — Command / instruction
- **v16** "the Scripture had to be fulfilled" — God — His character & actions
- **v18** "the price of his wickedness" — Sin / warning
- **v19** "Field of Blood" — Sin / warning
- **v20** "LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE HIS OFFICE" — Time / place / contrast
- **v22** "a witness with us of His resurrection" — Command / instruction
- **v24** "who know the hearts of all men" — God — His character & actions
- **v25** "Judas turned aside to go to his own place" — Sin / warning
- **v26** "the lot fell to Matthias" — God — His character & actions
- **v2** "Holy Spirit" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v2** "taken up" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v9** "lifted up" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v8** "witnesses" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v22** "witness" — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

01 Observation

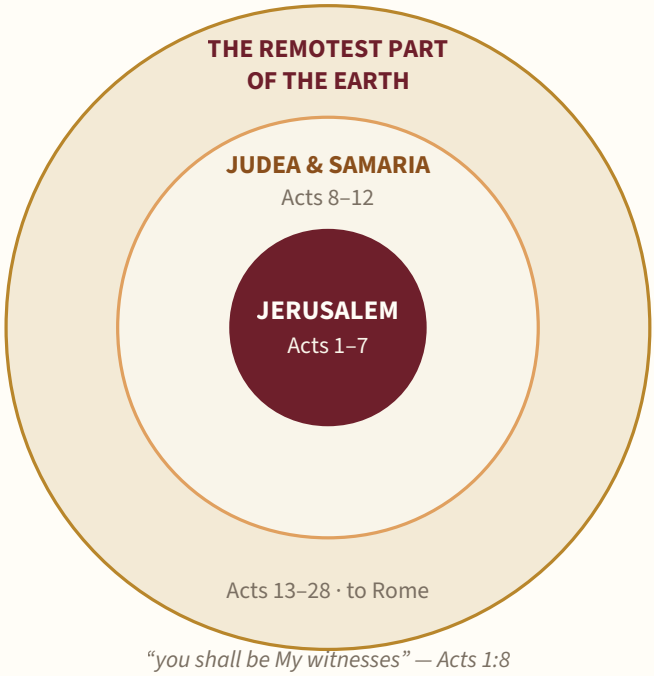
WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · ACTS 1:3

"To these He also △presented Himself alive after His suffering, ◷by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God."

FIGURE · JERUSALEM, JUDEA AND SAMARIA, THE EARTH

ACTS 1:8 — THE OUTLINE OF THE WHOLE BOOK



JERUSALEM · 1–7

Pentecost, 3,000 saved (2:41)
the Twelve, the temple, Stephen

JUDEA & SAMARIA · 8–12

Philip in Samaria (8:5)
Saul turned; Cornelius (10)

TO THE NATIONS · 13–28

Paul's journeys from Antioch
"we came to Rome" (28:14)

Read Acts 1:8 from the center out: the witness starts in the city that crucified Jesus and keeps widening until it reaches Rome.

Setting. Luke writes his second account to Theophilus (v1). For forty days after His suffering the risen Jesus appears to the apostles and speaks of the kingdom of God (v3). He orders them to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father (vv4–5). On the Mount of Olives (v12) they ask about restoring the kingdom to Israel (v6); He gives them Acts 1:8 and is taken up in a cloud (v9). They return to an upper room in Jerusalem and pray (vv13–14). Peter, among about 120 believers, leads them to replace Judas, and the lot falls to Matthias (vv15–26).

Structure:

- vv1–5 — **the forty days:** the first account (v1); orders by the Holy Spirit (v2); alive by many convincing proofs, forty days, the kingdom of God (v3); "wait for what the Father had promised" (v4); baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now (v5).

- vv6–11 — **the question and the cloud:** "is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (v6); not for you to know times or epochs (v7); power, witnesses — Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, the remotest part of the earth (v8); lifted up, a cloud (v9); two men in white (v10); "This Jesus … will come in just the same way" (v11).
- vv12–14 — **the upper room:** back from Olivet, a Sabbath day's journey (v12); the eleven named (v13); with one mind devoted to prayer, with the women, Mary, and His brothers (v14).
- vv15–26 — **Judas and Matthias:** Peter stands up among about 120 (v15); "the Scripture had to be fulfilled" (vv16–17); the field and Judas' death, Hakeldama (vv18–19); two psalms (v20); the qualifications — with us from John's baptism, a witness of His resurrection (vv21–22); Joseph Barsabbas and Matthias (v23); "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men" (vv24–25); the lot falls to Matthias (v26).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Jerusalem" ×5 — vv4, 8, 12 (×2), 19.
- "Jesus" ×5 — vv1, 11, 14, 16, 21.
- "looking / gazing / watched / sight" ×5 — vv9 (×2), 10, 11 (×2).
- "heaven" ×3 — vv2, 11 (×2); "sky" ×2 — vv10, 11.
- "Holy Spirit" ×4 — vv2, 5, 8, 16.
- "taken up / lifted up" ×4 — vv2, 9, 11, 22.
- "baptized / baptism" ×3 — vv5 (×2), 22.
- "had to / necessary / must" ×3 — vv16, 21, 22.
- "apostles / apostleship" ×3 — vv2, 25, 26.
- "together" ×3 — vv4, 6, 15; "with one mind" — v14.
- "field" ×3 — vv18, 19 (×2).
- "witness(es)" ×2 — vv8, 22; "chosen" ×2 — vv2, 24; "ministry" ×2 — vv17, 25.
- "kingdom" ×2 — vv3, 6; "Father" ×2 — vv4, 7; "prayer / prayed" ×2 — vv14, 24; "lots / lot" ×2 — v26.

Contrasts: John baptized with water ⟷ you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit (v5). "At this time?" ⟷ not for you to know (vv6–7). Restoring the kingdom ⟷ receiving power to witness (vv6, 8). Taken up from you ⟷ will come in just the same way (v11). Standing and looking into the sky ⟷ returning to Jerusalem to pray (vv11–14). Judas, counted among us ⟷ Judas, turned aside to his own place (vv17, 25). The price of wickedness ⟷ a share in this ministry (vv17–18). Men put forward two ⟷ the Lord who knows the hearts chooses one (vv23–24).

Shape of the chapter: two halves, each ending with the apostles. The first half (1–11) is Jesus speaking and leaving; the second (12–26) is the church waiting and praying. At the center, verse 8 points forward to the whole book, and verse 11 points forward to the end of history.

Chapter theme (my words): The risen Lord commissions His witnesses, ascends as King, and promises to return the same way; His people obey, pray with one mind, and restore the Twelve while they wait for the power He promised.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · ACTS 1:11

"They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, ☆ will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.""

FIGURE · HE WENT, HE WILL COME

"IN JUST THE SAME WAY" — ACTS 1:11

HE WENT · ACTS 1:9–12	HE WILL COME
"This Jesus" — the same Lord (v11)	"This Jesus … will come" (v11)
bodily, while they watched (v9)	"every eye will see Him" (Rev 1:7)
"a cloud received Him" (v9)	"with the clouds of heaven" (Dan 7:13)
from "the mount called Olivet" (v12)	"His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives" (Zech 14:4)
to the Father's right hand (2:33)	the kingdom restored to Israel (1:6; Rom 11:26)

The angels did not say "someone like Him," or "in some way" — the same Jesus, the same way.

Each line on the left is how Jesus left in Acts 1; each line on the right is how Scripture says He will return.

Why forty days of proofs? Because the whole book rests on eyewitnesses. *Tekmērion* (v3), used only here, means a proof that settles the question. Henry: "They were honest men, and one may depend upon their testimony." Sproul insists Luke wrote as an educated historian, not a myth-maker.

Was the disciples' question about Israel a mistake? Here the teachers differ, and I want to be fair. Henry thinks they were still dreaming of "external pomp and power," and that we should "expect the cross in this world, and … wait for the kingdom in the other world." Guzik reads it as a fair question after forty days of kingdom teaching: Jesus "did not say that there was to be no restoration of the kingdom to Israel" — He only refused to give the date. Sproul ties it to the Old Testament longing for Israel's restoration and notes that Jesus does not rebuke them. I land with Guzik. Jesus corrected the timing, not the hope. Peter will speak of "the period of restoration of all things" in 3:21, and Paul says "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). God has not torn up His promises to Israel; the church's job in the meantime is witness.

What is the power of 1:8 for? Witness. Sproul: "The reason for the outpouring of the Spirit is not to make you feel spiritual." *Dynamis* gives the ability; *martys* names the job — telling what we have seen and heard about Jesus.

What happened at the ascension? Jesus went up bodily, in the glory cloud — Sproul: "This was the shekinah cloud." It was His coronation: "They were watching the King of kings going to His coronation." Guzik: the visible departure meant "He was gone for good" — no more resurrection appearances, now the Spirit.

How will He come back? "In just the same way" (v11): the same Jesus, bodily, visibly, with the clouds, to the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4). Spurgeon: "He went up not in spirit, but in person," and "He will come down in person." I read Acts 1:11 with Zechariah 14 — a literal return to a literal mountain, when the kingdom the disciples asked about is finally set up. Before that, I believe the Lord will catch up His church to meet Him in the air (1 Thess 4:16–17).

Why pray for ten days? Because they were told to wait, and waiting people pray. Henry: "Those are in the best frame to receive spiritual blessings that are in a praying frame." Sproul: "Beloved, we cannot stand alone." Even Jesus' brothers are there — converted, Sproul says, by the resurrection, for "No one has ever been saved by somebody else's faith."

Was choosing Matthias right? Some say the apostles moved too fast and that Paul was God's twelfth. Guzik and Sproul disagree: the Scripture called for the office to be filled (Ps 109:8), they prayed first, and the lot was the Lord's (Prov 16:33). Sproul: "The Twelve were now filled out"; Paul "was not a disciple from the days of the baptism of Jesus." Guzik keeps a light touch: we will see in heaven "if the twelfth apostle of the Lamb is Paul or Matthias." I agree with them — Matthias was God's man, and the Twelve had to be whole before Israel's feast of Pentecost.

Are there apostles today? Not of this kind. The marks were: with Jesus from John's baptism, an eyewitness of the resurrection, chosen by the Lord (vv21–24). Sproul: "Beloved, there are no Apostles, in the biblical sense, today."

Word study (Greek):

- **convincing proofs — *tekmērion* (G5039):** a sure, settling proof; only Acts 1:3.
- **promise — *epangelia* (G1860):** "the promise of the Father" (1:4; Luke 24:49; Acts 2:33, 39).
- **restoring — *apokathistēmi* (G600):** to restore to a former state; compare 3:21.
- **power — *dynamis* (G1411):** ability, might — given for witness.
- **witnesses — *martys* (G3144):** one who testifies to what he has seen; later "martyr" (22:20).
- **cloud — *nephelē* (G3507):** the cloud that received Him (v9); Dan 7:13; 1 Thess 4:17.
- **taken up — *analambanō* (G353):** vv2, 11, 22.
- **with one mind — *homothymadon* (G3661):** one passion; ten of eleven NT uses in Acts.
- **devoting themselves — *proskartereō* (G4342):** to stick with it; 1:14; 2:42, 46; 6:4.
- **office — *episkopē* (G1984):** an overseer's charge (Ps 109:8; 1 Tim 3:1).
- **lot — *klēros* (G2819):** a lot cast, and the share it decides (vv17, 26).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Acts is volume two of Jesus** — what He began, He continues (v1).
2. **The resurrection was checked, not felt** — *tekmērion* (v3).
3. **Waiting was an order** — they could do nothing until the Spirit came (Guzik).
4. **Jesus corrected the timing, not the hope** — Israel's restoration still stands (v7; Rom 11:26).

5. **Power is for witness** — not to feel spiritual (Sproul).
6. **The ascension was a coronation** — the shekinah cloud (Sproul).
7. **Look up — but don't stand there** — look, but do not gaze (Spurgeon).
8. **A Zealot and a tax collector prayed as one** — *homothymadon* (v14).
9. **Judas did not spoil the plan** (Guzik, Henry).
10. **The Twelve had to be twelve** — Matthias, and no apostles today (Sproul).

Cross-references: Lev 23:15–16; Ps 69:25; 109:8; 110:1; Prov 16:33; Dan 7:13–14; Zech 14:4; Luke 1:1–4; 22:30; 24:44–53; John 7:39; 14:16; 16:7; Acts 2:1–4, 33; 3:21; 8:1; 22:20; Rom 11:25–27; 1 Cor 15:5–8; 1 Thess 4:16–17; Rev 1:7; 21:14.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · ACTS 1:14

"These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers."

FIGURE · THE TWELVE MADE WHOLE

THE TWELVE MADE WHOLE · ACTS 1:13, 21–26

Peter	John	James	Andrew
Philip	Thomas	Bartholomew	Matthew
James son of Alphaeus	Simon the Zealot	Judas son of James	MATTHIAS (v26)

The empty place: "Judas turned aside to go to his own place" (v25)

1 · WITH US	2 · A WITNESS	3 · CHOSEN
accompanied us all the time, "beginning with the baptism of John" (vv21–22)	"a witness with us of His resurrection" (v22) — saw the risen Lord	"show which one of these two You have chosen" (v24) — the Lord picks

Sproul's three marks of an apostle: with Jesus from the start, an eyewitness of the resurrection, commissioned by Christ.

Eleven names from verse 13 and the one added in verse 26, with the three tests the apostles used to fill Judas' place.

Command to obey — wait, then witness. Jesus told His men not to leave Jerusalem until the power came, and then to be His witnesses starting right there. I am quick to run ahead and do things for God in my own strength, and slow to wait and pray. This week I will pray before I plan. And I will tell one person in my "Jerusalem" — the people who know my past best — what Jesus has done for me.

Sin to confess — curiosity without obedience. The disciples wanted the timetable. I can spend more time on charts of the end times than on the man sitting next to me who needs Christ. I love prophecy, and I believe the Lord is coming for His church and will keep every promise to Israel. But I confess that I have sometimes been gazing instead of working.

Promise to trust — "This Jesus … will come in just the same way." The same Jesus who forgave Peter and called a tax collector is the One coming back. Not a different, harder Jesus. He went up bodily, and He will come down in person (Spurgeon). That is the hope I hold out to the men I serve — many of them have been let down by every man who promised to come back. This One will.

Example to follow — the upper room. A fisherman, a tax collector, a Zealot, the women, Mary and Jesus' once-doubting brothers — "with one mind … devoting themselves to prayer." Guzik: "the resurrected Jesus in their hearts was greater than any difference." I need other men, and they need me. Sproul: "we cannot stand alone."

Warning to heed — Judas. He was "counted among us and received his share in this ministry" (v17), and still turned aside. Being close to Jesus, even serving in ministry, is not the same as belonging to Him. I will keep short accounts with God and let my brothers ask me hard questions.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Luke says Acts is what Jesus continues to do. Where in my life right now is Jesus continuing a work He began — and am I cooperating with it? (1:1–3; Phil 1:6) *What Jesus began still continues (Guzik).*
2. Jesus told them to wait. What am I trying to do for God in my own strength that I have not first waited and prayed for? (1:4–5, 14) *They could do nothing effective until the Spirit came (Guzik).*
3. The disciples asked "when?" and Jesus answered "you shall be My witnesses." Which do I spend more energy on — the timing of His plans, or the job He gave me? (1:6–8) *Power for witness, not to feel spiritual (Sproul).*
4. Who is my "Jerusalem" — the people closest to me, who know my past best — and what would it look like to be a witness there this week? (1:8; Mark 5:19) *The witness starts at home and keeps widening.*
5. The angels asked, "why do you stand looking into the sky?" Is my hope in Christ's return making me busier and holier, or just more curious? (1:10–11; 1 John 3:2–3) *Look, but do not gaze (Spurgeon).*
6. Judas walked with Jesus for three years and still turned aside. What keeps me honest so that being near Jesus never becomes a substitute for belonging to Him? (1:16–18, 25) *He was counted among us — and went to his own place.*

Worship. The risen Lord who proved Himself alive, the King who went up in the glory cloud to His coronation, the Son who sends the promise of the Father, the Lord who knows the hearts of all men — this Jesus is coming again, in just the same way, and His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You are alive, and You are reigning. Forgive me for running ahead of You and for gazing when I should be working. Fill me with Your Spirit, not so I feel spiritual, but so I can tell the truth about You — at home first, and then wherever You send me. Make me a man of one mind with my brothers in prayer. Keep me from turning aside like Judas. And keep me ready, because You are coming back. Amen.

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