

Acts of the Apostles Chapter 1

Molly and I have been talking about certain factual stories in the book of Acts. It's called Acts because it tells about the actions or ACTS of the original Apostles, some disciples, various leaders in the world, Paul and his fellow brothers in Christ. There is considerable proof that Luke, the physician who wrote the third gospel account about Christ, simply continued his story about those who helped the Church to grow. It tells about the spread of the Word from Jerusalem to all of the Roman empire and from Jew to Gentile (non-Jews).

The book was written to a man named Theophilus. So was the gospel. So, Theophilus received two very long books of history and a summary of what really happened regarding Jesus of Nazareth. There are 28 chapters in the book of Acts. They are filled with speeches, people talking about faith and the actions of many who are committed to Christ and the Church.

Luke begins the book of Acts by reviewing what happened at the end of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. He tells about Jesus being taken up to heaven after His resurrection from being dead. Luke then tells the story of how Matthias was selected to join the other 11 Apostles in leadership to replace Judas who hanged himself after he betrayed Jesus to the Romans and the Jewish leaders.

The 11 Apostles were; Peter, John, James and Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. Not to be confused with the other Judas.

It is very interesting that Peter took charge. He quoted the old testament scriptures. Remember, there were no new testament scriptures at this time. Peter explained what happened to Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus. He then said that according to the scriptures the 120 disciples gathered together should select a replacement to be one of the twelve main Apostles. The scripture he quoted was Psalms. "May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it, and, "May another take his place of leadership."

The Apostles and disciples who were gathered together put up two names of men who had been with Jesus since the day He began his ministry. They selected Justus and Matthias. They prayed for a decision blessed by the Lord. They actually cast lots and the lot fell to Matthias. He became the twelfth apostle.

Casting lots is very simple. You take dice, flip a coin, selecting cards or tossing polished sticks. This means that no one person can make a selection based upon what they want to be the outcome. The outcome is purely due to chance, which is due to how the dice end up or the side of the coin that faces upward. No man can control the outcome.

Scripture: Acts 1: 12 – 26

Questions:

1. Was the book of Acts a book of poetry or history?

2. Who wrote the book of Acts?
3. Who was one of the leaders of the apostles who took charge right away?
4. Who were the two men who were selected to have a chance to become the twelfth apostle?
5. Who was the twelfth apostle before Matthias was chosen?
6. How was Matthias finally chosen?

Next Steps: If Matthias was chosen to replace Judas. And Paul was also an apostle. How many total apostles were there?