

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 6 March 2016	Acts 1	Entrusted
2) 13 March	Acts 2	Empowered and Unified
3) 20 March	Acts 3	Benevolent
4) 27 March	Luke 24	Resurrected!
5) 3 April	Acts 4	Courageous
6) 10 April	Acts 5	Integrity & Faithful
7) 17 April	Acts 6	Selfless
8) 24 April	Acts 7	Forgiving
9) 1 May	Acts 8	Obedient
10) 8 May	Acts 9	Converted & Bold
11) 15 May	Acts 10	Accepting
12) 22 May	Acts 11	Engaging
13) 29 May	Acts 12	Extraordinary

INTRODUCTION

- As we move into the book of Acts we see the same types of healings as we see in the Gospels. The apostles and certain other disciples healed anyone & everyone of anything & everything, any time & every time, anywhere and everywhere they went.
- Throughout the book of Acts, Luke, the author, was meticulous with details. Classical scholar and historian, Colin Hemer, chronicled Luke's accuracy in the book of Acts with painstaking detail.
 - Hemer identified 84 facts just in the last 16 chapters of Acts, which have been confirmed by historical and archeological records. Luke also records 35 miracles in Acts. What is interesting of Luke's account is that all miraculous incidences are without embellishment, lending additional credibility to each of them.
 - If Luke was accurate with trivial details such as peculiar town names, the names of ships, and titles of officials for that time period, then it stands to reason he would also be just as meticulous in recording the miraculous accurately.
- Chapter 1.** The Apostles witness the ascension of Jesus Christ and they select a replacement for Judas. Matthias becomes the next Apostle, and, as we will soon see in the weeks ahead, is also able to heal everyone of everything just like the other Apostles did, but only for a season

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recall that God changed up the names and orders of the 12 tribes of Israel several times throughout Scripture. For example, the 12 gates of the New Jerusalem may not contain the name of the tribe of Dan since Dan is missing from the list of tribes depicted in Rev 7:5-8.
A Few Words on Casting Lots, Rolling Dice, or Laying Down Fleece Today.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Urim and Thummim (or sacred lots) – were stones that were tossed to determine God's leading (similar to rolling dice). These elements had a very strong cultural image for the Jews since God often conveyed his will to the Jews through these elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BUT, they were reserved for the Levitical Priests Other elements used to "inquire of the Lord" (though how it was done, is never revealed to us) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ephod (Priestly garment made of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine gold-twined linen, worn between the tunic and the breastplate, and which held the Urim and Thummin).. Ex 28:6-12; 1Sam 30:7-8 The Ark's Mercy Seat..... Ex 25:22 What about using Gideon's method of a fleece? Such practices seem bizarre to us today, similar to flipping a coin. BUT the Bible does state that the "casting of lots is in God's hands" (Prov 16:33), and "the lot puts an end to contention" (Prov 18:18) REMEMBER – We are NOT told in Scripture how such artifacts were used with accuracy, THEREFORE, they are not meant for us today Is God still using such practices today? NO Remember – The faithless seek signs&wondersMat 12:39; John 4:48 Since God conveys His will to us in more subtle ways today (Heb 1:1-2) through His Son (or His Word), then "laying down a fleece" involves a providential answer and not something that breaks the laws of physics If we lack something, such as wisdom, then ask for it. This includes asking for confirmation of God's leading. But know this - the answer will be a providential answer For example: "Lord, please confirm you are leading me into full time missions work?" The answer won't involve the Sun standing still, but it might involve a providential answer to financial support, or a long-closed door of opportunity finally opens up
Should we expect to see a Miracle or Providence?	

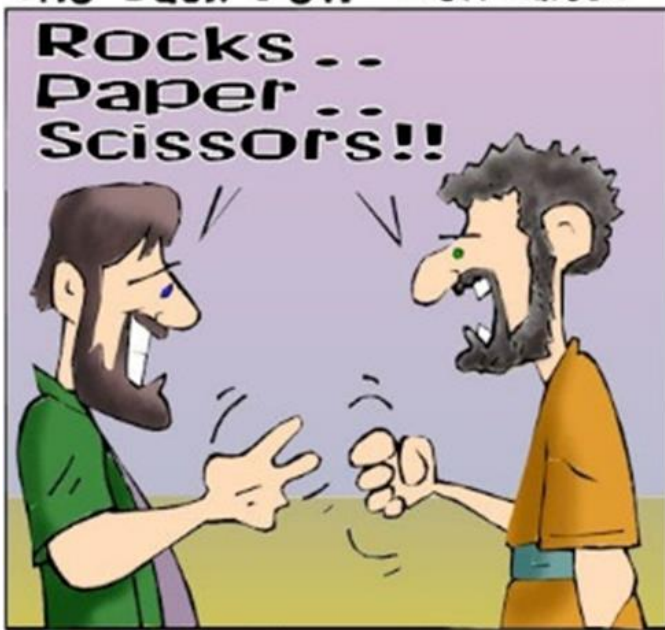
Passage	Comments
Acts 1:1-5	<p>Wait and Be Baptized With the Holy Spirit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jesus appeared to his disciples over 40 days, but we are given very little information what transpired in those appearances WHY? Fortunately Jesus did give His disciples "CONVINCING" proofs that He was fully alive. What would these proofs consist of?
1:6-11	<p>You Shall Receive Power...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v8. What kind of power? To work miracles like Jesus or to acquire wealth and wisdom? Remember – the power comes from the Holy Spirit who resides "in the inner man" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2Cor 4:16 the inner man is renewed everyday Eph 4:23 be renewed in the spirit of your mind Col 3:10 The new man is renewed in knowledge according to Christ 2Cor 5:17 We are new creations in Christ, old things are passed away, all things are new Yes, the Apostles would be blessed with Power to heal everyone of everything – for a season, BUT THE REAL POWER OF GOD IS TO CHANGE LIVES FOREVER
1:12-14	<p>Devoted to Prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v14. What does it mean to be "with one mind"? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They devoted themselves to prayer – What does this look like? Should we be devoted to prayer? Should prayer be our #1 priority? If not, what should have #1 priority? What did they pray for? Who did they pray for? Were they generic prayers or very specific prayers?
1:15-26	<p>Judas Lost His Seat At The Table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did Peter and the rest jump ahead of God by choosing Matthias? Was Matthias God's choice or man's choice? Wasn't Paul God's preferred replacement for Judas? Whose name (Paul, Matthias, or Judas) will be the 12th foundation stone of the New Jerusalem's wall? Rev 21:14 <p>CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scripture is silent about God's approval or disapproval of Matthias If Peter and the rest did jump the gun, God's will is not shortchanged by the Apostle's selection process, be it wrong or inappropriate. God is able to work with theirs and our shortcomings. Presumably, Matthias was able to work healings and miracles just like the other 11 Apostles because it is stated (though, implicitly) that the Holy Spirit filled him, as the others, and with the ability to speak in tongues (2:4), and to work many signs and wonders (2:43) We will have to wait till we get to see the New Jerusalem's city foundations to know whose 12th name is on the wall.

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- We may not be able to work the healings and miracles the Apostles and disciples were able to do during this season of miracles, but we do have the same Holy Spirit who enjoys empowering His obedient Saints to effectively live by and use God's word to change people's lives for all eternity

NEXT WEEK: Acts 2. The Apostles are empowered by the Holy Spirit to witness with many signs and wonders, "and the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." This begs the question, is the Holy Spirit working the same today?

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Before Matthias is chosen as the new Apostle there were several elimination rounds using a new highly sophisticated selection process. [Acts 1:12-26](#)