



Behavior That Indicates What We Believe
Acts 1:13-1:26
(Lesson #3)



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OUTLINE of Acts Chapter 1:

- 1) The First Account to Theophilus – (1:1-3)
- 2) The Promise of the Holy Spirit – (1:4-8)
- 3) The Ascension of Christ – (1:9-11)
- 4) Waiting in Jerusalem – (1:12-14)
- 5) The Selection of Matthias (1:15-22)
- 6) Matthias is Numbered with the Apostles (1:23-26)

1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, 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 All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

1:12 - So the ascension, Jesus being caught up happened in Bethany. Here Luke records they returned to Jerusalem, outlining that they went by the Mount that was called Olivet.

Interesting Note: The distance between Jerusalem and Mt Olivet is a Sabbath's Day journey.

Now according to Rabbinic law, a **Sabbath Days journey was 2,000 cubits** or almost **3/4s of a mile**. This Rabbinic law came from the Hebrew Bible, although it is not as obvious as you might have guessed. (Ex 16:29; Num 35:1-4; Num 32:2-5).

In **Numbers 35** God set up cities of refuge, where if you accidentally killed someone, you could flee to for safety. We will not develop that teaching here, only to show where the Rabbis got **2,000 cubits**.

So, the rabbis combined these two different ideas to determine a Sabbath Day's journey of 2,000 cubits.

Before we leave verse 12, a **reminder of what Luke tells us at the end of his gospel**: “*51 While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple blessing God.*” (Lu 24:51-53 ESV)

They had the command to wait and thus they stayed in Jerusalem **excited, expectant, and filled with joy**.

The Greek is **(megas) joy**.

And they were continually in the temple blessing God.

FIRST BEHAVIOR: Before we leave verse 12, we see one of the things that the early church believed. **They believed they were to be obey their risen King and Lord Jesus Christ.**

Jesus had told them to stay in Jerusalem and although they could have thought of many reasons that was a bad idea, they stayed, in Jerusalem, waiting for the Promise from the Father, waiting to be clothed with power from on high, waiting to be baptized by the Holy Spirit, waiting to receive power.

As commanded, in a hostile environment, where Jesus had just been murdered in a plot that involved the Romans and the Jewish leaders. **They waited, they obeyed!**

Vs 13-14 - So it appears they are staying in the city, and when they had entered the city, they went to “the” upper room.

The **definite article** is used in the Greek and this is likely, although we cannot be sure the same “upper room” mentioned in Luk 22:8-12 and Mar 14:12-15. We will look briefly at the Luke text.

So, Luke tells us in his gospel, that it was a “**large**” **furnished upper room**. It is likely the **same place** where they celebrated their last **Passover Meal** together.

It could have had multiple adjoining rooms or **one large open room**, we simply do not know for sure.

But they went back to the **upper room** where they were **temporarily staying**: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

This is one of the four lists of the apostles that we have in our Bible (Mat 10:2-4; Mar 3:16-19; Luk 6:14-16, and Acts 1:13). Here in Acts, there are only 11 of the original 12.

All of these, in context for sure the 11 apostles, and Mary, and the other women were in **one accord**. The Greek word used here that is translated as “**one accord**” is: **ὁμοθυμαδόν (homothumadon)**.

This is the first time this Greek word is used. It is used **12 times** in the Greek New Testament, 11 of those times are in the book of Acts.

It is a compound word of two words, the first meaning to “**together**” and the second meaning “**rushing along**.” To **move along together in one accord**.

It is a beautiful **picture of the body of Christ** all with different personalities and functions **working with one mind** (for the glory of Jesus and the expansion of His kingdom).

It is to be “**like minded**.” It is to operate in one accord. It is to rush along together in unison.

SECOND BEHAVIOR: The second thing that we see about their behavior that indicated what they believed is they were **like minded**, they were in it, to win it, together!

The only use of this Greek word outside of the books of Acts is (Ro 15:5-6 ESV).

Vs 14 - Not only were they of **one accord**, but notice **they devoted themselves to prayer**.

THIRD BEHAVIOR: They gave themselves to **prayer**.

The women are there, the apostles are there, Mary the mother of Jesus is there, and they are all together praying.

Notice among the 11 were the women (we do not know all that were present. Some women who had been with Jesus, likely some of the wives of those apostles were present.

What do you imagine that they are praying for? Yes, we would be right to suspect that they are probably among other things, praying for the **promise of the father**.

They are likely praying to be clothed with power from on high. They are likely praying to be baptized by the Holy Spirit and all which that means!

THE POINT: Prayer was an **integral part** of the **behavior** of the early church, which indicated a great deal about their belief.

Consider what James said about prayer in (Jam 4:2-3).

APPLICATION: Is prayer an integral part of our daily lives?

AS AN FYI... This is the last time that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is mentioned in the New Testament.

Notice also with them were Jesus' brothers!

Now Jesus had brothers and sisters. Although we are not told the names of his sisters, we are told the names of his brothers in (Mar 13:55-56).

In John 7 Jesus' brothers went to the **Feats of Booths** and we saw what they said to him and even why (Joh 7:2-5).

So, it seems, as best we can map it, that following his resurrection, but prior to His ascension, **at least two of Jesus' brothers, if not all of them**, placed faith in Jesus as the risen Messiah.

Judas – who authored Jude, we see what he wrote at the opening of his letter (Jude 1:1)

James – who authored James, we see what he wrote at the opening of his letter (Jam 1:1).

At least these two brothers were **numbered among the 120**.

Remember what I told you last week? **There is no level of opposition, hatred, or unbelief that a good resurrection cannot fix!**

15 ¶ In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, 16 "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. 17 For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry."

Vs 15 - In those days, in this roughly 10-day period between the ascension and the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), during this time, Peter stood up among the brothers.

So, Peter **takes the lead if you will**, yet it is clear his primacy did not mean he had sole authority.

Yet Peter stepped up as the leader. Peter will preach the first sermon of the new church (during Pentecost recorded in Acts 2), Peter is going to be used to bring Cornelius' family (Gentiles) to faith (Acts 10).

Peter is going to be used mightily by God! Now as you consider this, remember who we are talking about:

This is the guy who; was there arguing with the other disciples about who was the greatest (Mar 9:33), was the first to speak on the Mt of Transfiguration (Mar 9:5), resists the reason Jesus had to come to earth (Matt 8:33), fails to stay awake the night before Jesus is killed (Mar 14), pulls back from the Gentiles in fear of what those of the circumcision group might say (Gal 2:11), Etc. :

This is the guy who denied Jesus three times!

Peter had made a **mess of things**, but Peter gets back on track with God is used mightily by the Lord.

APPLICATION: God is not worried about your missteps. God can use people, if they will stop following their own ways and desires and start following God. Keep in mind, even after the ascension, Peter was not perfect! Peter surely teaches us this!

Then we are provided with a **parenthetical** that at this point the company of believers, was in all, **about 120**.

Countless had followed Jesus during his **3 ½ year ministry**, but at this point the movement it is now **down to about 120 people**.

IN HIS SHOES: OK, so you are **Theophilus**, what would you think of this movement so far?

It was during this time that **Peter stood up!**

Vs 16-17 - During this time, Peter stood up and said: "**Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled...**"

OK, so that I do not bury the lede, Peter is about to say that when Judas betrayed Jesus, it was foretold in the Scriptures (Old Testament). Let that sink in!

Now before we unpack this any further, I want you to see the **THIRD BEHAVIOR of the early church**. Peter and likely the others had a **very high regard for the Scriptures**, and now that the **Scriptures had been opened to them, they were seeing Jesus in verses where they had never seen Jesus before!**

This point is important! For the **volume of the book is written about him! They were seeing it and they were responding to what they were seeing!**

What Peter is saying is that this had to happen, for God had predicted that it would happen. Now he was not saying this is God's fault, but rather the Scriptures had foretold that this would happen.

And if God says it... That settles it! Thus, the Scriptures had to be fulfilled.

Then he says **the Holy Spirit spoke through the human author David**.

Let's step away from the text for a moment for Peter reveals **what he believes about the Scriptures**. What he believes is spot on what I believe and what I believe the Bible teaches about itself.

FIRST, The Scriptures are dual authored by a human author, in which the Holy Spirit worked in and through.

SECOND, as you think about this, it brings me to a second point, namely understanding dual authorship. The Scriptures are of dual authorship, but the Holy Spirit did not violate the person being used, did not take them over, the Holy Spirit did not subjugate their character, nature, or personality, but rather **moved them** to recall things they had heard, seen, or whatever.

The Holy Spirit used the understanding of the human author, what they saw, and their language. If they had a large vocabulary, the Holy Spirit used that large vocabulary. If they were originally a fisherman by trade with a smaller vocabulary, God used that. This is the **marvel of the Scriptures!** We get a hint to this from a couple of different verses including (II Tim 3:16-17; II Pet 1:20-21).

The scriptures are that which the **Holy Spirit spoke (desired to communicate)** and in this case He did so through **the human author King David**.

This means, we should see the Bible as the revealed mind of the Holy Spirit as He moved people to write based on what they saw and knew. This means different accounts will come from different perspectives.

The main point, at this point, before we unpack the point. Is that Peter is seeing Jesus in these Old Testament verses and Peter has stepped up and is the "leader" of this group.

Vs 17 - So at least at this point, Peter felt it was **important to keep the number at 12**. Notice he describes Judas as being "**numbered among us.**" He further states he was **allotted his share in this ministry**.

This is what Peter is saying that Judas lost or gave up when he betrayed the Son of God.

18 (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. 19 And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the Book of Psalms, "'May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it'; and "'Let another take his office.'

Vs 18 - With his wickedness Peter states, this **man acquired a field, with the reward of his wickedness.**

Then we are giving very graphic details about the death of Judas. He tells us that he fell headlong, and that he burst open in the middle, and that his bowels **gushed out!** Sounds like a Physician doesn't it!

Now this text here in Acts 1, creates two potential problems that I want you to see and understand.

Let's look at Matthew's account as recorded in Matt 27:1-10).

FIRST PROBLEM: Lets quickly look at the first problem: Luke said Judas acquired a field, Matthew tells us that the chief priests purchased the field.

Which is it? I suspect both. The chief priests could not put the money back in the treasury, for it was blood money, they were not going to take the money themselves, but they could use it to benefit the community, so they went and in the name of Judas, purchased a field to bury strangers in.

So, both Luke and Matthew are correct, based on their observations (the chief priests purchased it), but by way of the law (it legally belonged to Judas). The legal documents would have had Judas as owner of this property.

SECOND PROBLEM: Luke says that Judas fell headlong and his bowels gushed out, Matthew simply says he went out and hung himself. Seems to be a contradiction! Possibly but I do not think so.

Although we are not sure, the best idea is that both are true. There are **three different opinions** of how both can be true.

- 1) He hung himself, but the rope broke and he fell headlong and his guts burst open. We don't know where he hung himself or the details of his killing himself. But we can imagine if the rope broke, he could bounce on rocks and his abdomen broke open.
- 2) Another option is that Judas hung himself, and when he was cut down by those who found him, it is possible that his body fell and his abdomen broke open.
- 3) Fruchtenbaum believes that Judas defiled the city when he hung himself and when it came to the attention of the priests, they went and cut him down and threw him over the city wall and thus he burst open as he bounced down the ravine.

Now let's be honest, although the exact details have been lost to history. As we are about to read all of this became common knowledge to everyone in Jerusalem. We may not be sure, they likely were very sure.

Vs 19 - What Judas did became "**common knowledge**" and it appears that they started calling the field "Akeldama."

This is an **Aramaic term** and it too is a **Hapax Legomenon**. In Aramaic it literally means **field of blood**.

It was given this name by the Jews dwelling in and around Jerusalem.

KEY POINT: One key point about verse 19: is how Luke refers to Aramaic language, it is "their language" and we know it was the common language for Jews who lived during the times of Jesus.

I would say this is yet further proof that Luke was a Gentile.

Vs 20 - Here Peter finds two references in the Psalms about Judas, the first is a quote from **Psalm 69:25**, the second is a quote from **Psalm 109:8b**.

Let's draw the points out that Peter makes and then let's go look at the verses he quotes:

POINT #1 – It is written in the Psalms, let his **habitation** (ASV, KJV, Phil), **his house** (CEV), **homestead** (Darby) **dwelling** (HCSB, NKJV) his **residence** (NASB).

The Greek word here is also a **hapax legomenon**. It is only used here in the entire Greek New Testament. It seems to be referring to his dwelling that it became desolate (uninhabited).

POINT #2 – Seems to be a reiteration of the first point, let it be desolate, let there be no one to dwell in it.

POINT #3 – Let **another take his office**. We understand what these words mean and I suspect once Peter connected Psalm 109 to Jesus and Judas. This caused him to move quickly to replace Judas.

So, from Psalm 69 and Psalm 109 Peter received direction and he took action. That is what I believed happened.

Both of these Psalms are what we call **imprecatory Psalms**, where David is praying a prayer against his enemies. **Peter** saw in the two Psalms, at least in a single verse in each of the Psalms a picture of what **Judas did to Jesus**.

“1 ¶ « To the choirmaster: according to Lilies. Of David. » Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. 2 I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me. 3 I am weary with my crying out; my throat is parched. My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God. 4 More in number than the hairs of my head are those who hate me without cause; mighty are those who would destroy me, those who attack me with lies. What I did not steal must I now restore?” (Ps 69:1-4 ESV)

*“16 Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good; according to your abundant mercy, turn to me. 17 Hide not your face from your servant; for I am in distress; make haste to answer me. 18 Draw near to my soul, redeem me; ransom me because of my enemies! 19 You know my reproach, and my shame and my dishonor; my foes are all known to you. 20 Reproaches have broken my heart, so that I am in despair. I looked for pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none. 21 They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink. 22 ¶ Let their own table before them become a snare; and when they are at peace, let it become a trap. 23 Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see, and make their loins tremble continually. 24 Pour out your indignation upon them, and let your burning anger overtake them. 25 **May their camp be a desolation; let no one dwell in their tents.** 26 For they persecute him whom you have struck down, and they recount the pain of those you have wounded. 27 Add to them punishment upon punishment; may they have no acquittal from you. 28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living; let them not be enrolled among the righteous.” (Ps 69:16-28 ESV)*

“1 ¶ « To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. » Be not silent, O God of my praise! 2 For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking against me with lying tongues. 3 They encircle me with words of hate, and attack me without cause.” (Ps 109:1-3 ESV)

*“4 In return for my love they accuse me, but I give myself to prayer. 5 So they reward me evil for good, and hatred for my love. 6 ¶ Appoint a wicked man against him; let an accuser stand at his right hand. 7 When he is tried, let him come forth guilty; let his prayer be counted as sin! 8 May his days be few; **may another take his office!** 9 May his children be fatherless and his wife a widow! 10 May his children wander about and beg, seeking food far from the ruins they inhabit! 11 May the creditor seize all that he has; may strangers plunder the fruits of his toil!” (Ps 109:4-11 ESV)*

Thus, **Peter moved to appoint someone** else to the **Apostolic office of Judas!**

We did not read all that is contained within both of these Psalms, but enough for us to get a picture of what Peter read, the verse (at a minimum he saw) connected to what Judas did which caused him to act the way he acted.

We see, in the original context what the Psalm was likely about, David's enemies, but we see Peter, with a new found understanding of the Scriptures and the realization that the volume of the book is written about Jesus, finds the **ultimate (Jesus) meaning in both of these texts.**

21 So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us — one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection." 23 And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen 25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." 26 And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."

So having concluded a number of things about Judas, once Peter connected him prophetically to Psalm 69 and 109 it seems Peter concluded, as likely many of us would, that he needed to take steps to replace Judas.

After all, *Psalm 109:*⁸ *Let his days be few, And let another take his office.*

Vs 21-22 - So Peter initiates the process of replacement by outlining the requirements of the replacement:

- A) He must have accompanied the apostles all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them. Beginning from the baptism of John, until the day that he was taken up. (vs 21-22)
- B) He would have had to been a witness of Jesus' ministry from baptism to ascension.
- C) He must have seen the resurrected Jesus.

He needed to be here from the start. Starting with the baptism by John the baptizer all the way until the ascension. That would mean he would have to be among the **120 that are present now in the upper room.**

Peter made the compelling argument that **"one of these men", must be counted with us** (the eleven) as **witness of the resurrection.**

That should cause a pause, the apostles were to **serve as witnesses of the resurrection!**

This would bring the total back to twelve. He must become a (with us) a **witness to his resurrection!** Peter stood up among the 120 and said this is **what we must do!**

Vs 23 - Then it seems through **some type of voting or discussion** they put forward two men who met the **qualifications as outlined by Peter.**

Their names **Joseph** (Hebrew name) called **Barsabbas** (Aramaic), who was also called **Justus** (likely his surname). And **Matthias** (same as Matthew).

So out of the 120 in the upper room, these two are put forward as meeting the requirements to be an apostle.

Vs 24-25 – FOURTH BEHAVIOR: They **believed God would answer their prayer.** We said earlier they believed in prayer, but it was more than that! They believed God would step across the boundary between the natural and the supernatural and answer their pray!

We even know, at least in the macro-sense, what they prayed:

- 1) You Lord know what is on the **inside of people, you know what is in the hearts of people.**
- 2) Show us **which one you have chosen, out of these two** to take the place in this ministry, as an **apostle of Jesus**, the office **that Judas turned aside from** and went to his **own place.**

This text is descriptive, it is describing to us what they did. I will leave it to us to answer if and in which ways it is also prescriptive.

Now that language for Judas, that he **“turned aside to his own place”** is a little vague and the meaning is not obvious.

Bill Mounce (eminent modern day Greek Scholar) translates vs 24b – 25 like this: *“You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen, to take over this place of apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go to the place where he belongs.”*

Many connect Judas’ suicide, to his turning away to his **“own place”** and they conclude that suicide is the unforgivable sin, since you cannot repent of it and they will often use this verse to make that point.

But another question should be asked prior to that question. **Was Judas saved?**

Two important questions: **WAS JUDAS SAVED** and **IS SUICIDE THE UNPARDONABLE SIN?**

Time permitting, we will tackle both of those questions!

Vs 26 – They boiled it down as best they could, they prayed, and they cast lots. They **flipped a coin**, they likely put two **rocks in a sack with a name on each rock**, and then poured a rock out of the bag. They set up a 50/50 lot, and the lot fell on Matthias and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Judas is replaced and his replacement first met the requirements as set forth by Peter and then decided by lot.

In the Old Testament, the lot was an accepted method of **determining the will of God** (Pro 16:33).

- a. The lot was used at the **division of the land of Canaan** among the several tribes (Nu 26:55; 34:13).
- b. At the **detection of Achan** (Jos 7:14, 18)
- c. The **election of Saul to be king** (1Sa 10:20,21)
- d. The **distribution of the priestly offices of the temple service** (1Ch 24:3, 5, 19; Lu 1:9)
- e. Over the two goats at the **Day of Atonement** (Le 16:8) (The sacrificial goat and the scapegoat).

SO YOU KNOW: This is the last use of the lot to determine the will of God, in the Bible. I believe this is because each of us is **now indwelt by the Spirit of God**. Remember Acts is a book of transitions!

I would remind us that the Bible teaches: *“This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.”* (2Co 13:1 ESV)

When you are inline with the Bible, you have sought additional direction from the Spirit, ask God to establish his direction in the mouth of two or more witnesses. I believe He will do it!

As we leave the apostles we are still during this time between the ascension of Jesus Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Peter has initiated the replacement of Judas as one of the inner 12, and Matthias is now numbered among the Lord’s apostles **“the twelve.”** The small group of 120 is staying in Jerusalem, waiting for the promise from the Father. Namely that they would be clothed with power from on-high, that they would be baptized by the Holy Spirit of God in not many days.

That is where we will pick up next week, eager, excited, and Pentecost arrives!
