



The Acts of the Apostles

The Journey – 2020
Jim Hoffman

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It would cost the early church dearly to tell the world about the one they knew as Lord Jesus.

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- **Fulfilling the Great Commission** – after following Jesus for 3 years and then spending another 40 days with him post resurrection, the “11” are ready.
- But ready for what? Ready to preach, ready to suffer, and ready to die?
- They saw what happened to their Lord and if he was tortured and killed, why not them?

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• **John:** The beloved John (the only one not martyred) was in exile on the Isle of Patmos before he was released and went to Ephesus where he died (A.D. 100-105).

• **Andrew:** was crucified on a cross with the shape of an "X." He was not nailed to the cross but was tied. It took several days before he died. It is said that he preached while hanging on the cross.

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• **Peter:** Tradition says that Peter died in A.D. 64-68 during Nero's persecution of the Christians. He was crucified upside down on a cross.

• **James, son of Zebedee:** died in A.D. 44 after he was beheaded by King Agrippa who had launched a new persecution of Christians. He was the first martyr from among the "11".

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• **Philip:** Philip died in Hieropolis, Turkey by hanging (A.D. 80).

• **Bartholomew:** It is believed that Bartholomew had ministered in Armenia and was flayed to death with knives in India.

• **Matthew:** Matthew died a martyr's death in Ethiopia

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- **Thomas:** Ancient tradition says that Thomas died near Madras, India in A.D. 70. He was killed with a spear.
- **James, the Less:** Tradition says that James was crucified in Lower Egypt and then sawed in pieces (A.D. 62).

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- **Thaddaeus:** Thaddaeus was martyred in Persia. He died via arrows.
- **Simon, the Zealot:** Tradition says that Simon was crucified. It is believed that he ministered together with Thaddaeus.

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- The "11" were young – Jesus was roughly 30 when he called his disciples and disciples were almost always younger than their rabbi.
- Peter was at least old enough to be married, perhaps in his mid-teens.
- Most, if not all, were working full-time so they were at least in their early teens.

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- You might say the “11” were rather ordinary young men.
- They were not “rabbi” material, but they were good enough for the work Jesus had for them.
- All they needed to be able to do was “change the world”. 😊

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120 people, in one tiny country would be used by God to reach the world with the greatest story ever told!

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- The 120 would go out into a world filled with paganism and all sorts works based religions including corrupt Judaism. (same as today)
- Even though Judaism taught that Messiah would come, when he was identified he was unwanted.
- Anywhere you find men who want to be their own god, God will be unwelcome.

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- To reach their world they will have to be ready to give their lives and will have to be 100% convinced of their message. (Acts 1:3 During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and **he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive.**)
- In fact one of the reasons why their voices were so powerful was that they were fully convinced of the resurrection of Jesus.
- People do not surrender their lives for a known lie.

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- But even a willingness to lay down their lives would not have been enough without the power of God that was given to them.
- Luke 24:48 You are witnesses of all these things. 49 "And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. **But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.**" NLT

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The question becomes this – what does “power from heaven” look like, and how would I know if I have it?

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- doo'-nam-is (Strong's G1411)
 - 1) strength power, ability
 - 1a) inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth
 - 1b) power for performing miracles
 - 1c) moral power and excellence of soul
 - 1d) the power and influence which belong to riches and wealth
 - 1e) power and resources arising from numbers
 - 1f) power consisting in or resting upon armies, forces, hosts

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Examples of where “doo'-nam-is”
clearly means miracles, signs, and
wonders.

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- Matt 11:20 Then Jesus began to denounce the towns where he had **done so many of his miracles**, because they hadn't repented of their sins and turned to God. NLT
- Matt 11:23 “And you people of Capernaum, will you be honored in heaven? No, you will go down to the place of the dead. **For if the miracles I did for you had been done in wicked Sodom**, it would still be here today. 24 I tell you, even Sodom will be better off on judgment day than you.” NLT
- Acts 2:22 “People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by **doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs** through him, as you well know. NLT

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Examples of where “doo'-nam-is”
clearly does not mean miracles,
signs, and wonders.

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- Eph 3:16 I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will **empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.** NLT
- Phil 3:10 I want to know Christ and **experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death,** 11 so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead! NLT
- Col 1:11 We also pray that you will be strengthened with all **his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy,** 12 always thanking the Father. NLT

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- **Perhaps a conclusion** for us on the power God has given us is to understand that His power is unlimited in its uses and uncontained in its scope. (omnipotence and omnipresence)
- It seems that God provides **his power, for his work, for his purposes,** when he has a willing vessel to work with.
- 2nd Cor 4:7 We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing ~~this~~ **great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.** NLT (doo'-nam-is (Strong's G1411))

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- Gal 2:20 My old self has been crucified with Christ. **It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.** So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. NLT
- Power from God allows (enables) us to do things we cannot do by ordinary means.
- The proof of His power is seen in our effectiveness in whatever ministry we attempt.

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- We know we have his power when we want to do the right things – Paul provides the proof for us below.
- Phil 2:12-13 Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. **13 For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.**

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- Job 26:7 “God stretches the northern sky over empty space and hangs the earth on nothing. He wraps the rain in his thick clouds, and the clouds don’t burst with the weight. He covers the face of the moon, shrouding it with his clouds. He created the horizon when he separated the waters: he set the boundary between day and night. The foundations of heaven tremble; they shudder at his rebuke. By his power the sea grew calm. By his skill he crushed the great sea monster. His Spirit made the heavens beautiful, and his power pierced the gliding serpent. **These are just the beginning of all that he does, merely a whisper of his power. Who, then, can comprehend the thunder of his power?**” NLT

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- **Author:** The Book of Acts does not specifically identify its author. From Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-3, it is clear that the same author wrote both Luke and Acts. The tradition from the earliest days of the church has been that Luke, a companion of the apostle Paul, wrote both Luke and Acts.
- **Date of Writing:** The Book of Acts was likely written between 61-64 A.D.
- **Purpose of Writing:** The book of Acts was written to provide a history of the early church.

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- Acts 1:8b (forms an outline for the book) "And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in **Jerusalem**, throughout Judea, in **Samaria**, and to the ends of **the earth**." NLT
- Jerusalem Acts 1:1 – 8:1
- Samaria Acts 8:1 – 11:18
- The world Acts 11:19 – 28:31

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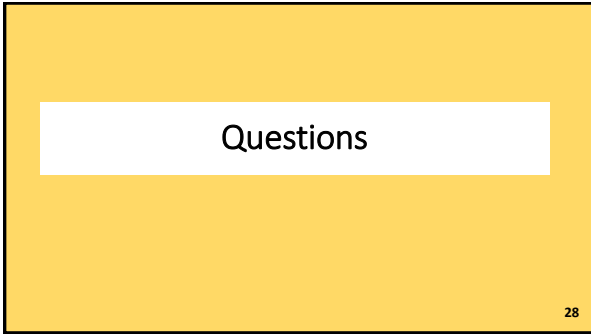
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"Luke wishes to make it clear that the progress of this faith was no mere product of human planning; it was directed by divine agency".
F.F. Bruce

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