

Chapter One – Introduction and Choosing of Matthias

ACTS 1:15-26:

Having ascended to the Father after the forty days that the Lord would spend with His chosen (post-resurrection) and having left His chosen with specific instructions to stay in Jerusalem until they would receive the promise of the Holy Spirit; they have obeyed. It is during this time since the Lord would ascend and the coming of the Spirit to the Apostles, that they would complete some un-finished business.

Text #1:

Acts 1:15-20 “And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, **16** “Men *and* brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; **17** for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry.”

18 (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. **19** And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 “For it is written in the Book of Psalms:

*‘Let his dwelling place be desolate,
And let no one live in it’;* (Psalms 69:25)

and,

‘Let another take his office.’” (Psalms 109:8)

In Those Days: This is Luke's designation for the days before the coming of the promise, and since the Lord has ascended. These were the days that the disciples were, “**continually in the temple praising and blessing God**” (Luke 24:53).

First Parenthetical Statement: Luke also adds that when this event occurred, there were about 120 disciples present for this event. We should appreciate a couple of items here:

First, the temple complex, and not the upper room, would have been where this event would occur, just by the logistics of the number of disciples present.

Second, is that we should not consider that these were the only disciples of Jesus to be found at this time. We know that Paul would state that the Lord would have been seen by over 500 brethren at once, prior to his ascension (**1 Corinthians 15:6**). 120 were just the number present for this specific event.

Scripture had to be Fulfilled: Peter identifies that in the Psalm of David, not only did David write concerning the treachery of his own enemies; but was also, through the Spirit of God, looking forward to the events surrounding the betrayal of Jesus, by Judas, Note:

Psalm 41:9 “Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up *his* heel against me.”

Numbered with Us:

There are many today who have taken this statement by Peter, concerning Judas having been selected with them for this ministry, to mean that Peter is talking about the entire 120 that were present that day.

First, the disciples present this day were aware of the selection of the twelve disciples that Jesus chose for the preparation training and the commission they would receive (ministry – service) – see: **Matthew 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16**.

Second, Matthias would not be added to the 120, but to the eleven remaining – **Acts 1:26**. Judas had been selected by the Lord to be one of the twelve, and this is the recognition Peter is making at this time.

Second Parenthetical Statement: The words of this statement are specifically Luke's as a means of explanation to Theophilus of this event concerning Judas, which would not have been necessary for those assembled with Peter.

The other account of the death of Judas and the purchase of the field is recorded in **Matthew 27:3-10**. Although **Matthew's** account states that the priests bought the field, they did so with the money that belonged to Judas (it was never received back into the treasury); so, the field was a possession of Judas. **Matthew's** account states that Judas hanged himself; Luke as a physician is simply describing the detailed process and result of the hanging.

The “**Wages of Iniquity**” translated in many of our Bibles could also be translated as “**Reward of Unrighteousness**”. The wages or reward of his sin was thirty pieces of silver (**Matthew 26:14-16**). This fulfilled prophecy in this matter, as quoted in **Matthew 27:9-10** (which quotes from **Zechariah 11:12-13**; and **Jeremiah 32:6-9**). Uniquely, this was the price of separation (the breaking of a bond) for bad shepherds in the context of **Zechariah 11:12-13**.

Luke mentions in his statement that the field was called the “**Field of Blood**” in their own language (corresponding with **Matthew 27:8**). Luke is recording for Theophilus the Hebrew word that would have been spoken “**Akel Dama**” to the residence of Jerusalem, into the Greek counterpart, for his understanding.

- In the conclusion of this first portion of these events, Peter will quote from the Psalms to show that this was all to fulfill prophecy.

Text #2:

Acts 1:21-26 “Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.” 23 And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, “You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen 25 to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.” 26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”

Qualifications of an Apostle:

- This is not a practice of replacement of an existing Apostle of Jesus as Judas vacated his office prior to his fulfilling the post (receiving the promise of the Spirit and going out to the world to preach the Gospel). He was chosen to be but failed to achieve!
- This establishes that although Jesus chose the twelve initially, there were faithful men who followed Jesus from the beginning to His ascension, beside the chosen.
- From the baptism of Jesus to His resurrection, was a requirement for the purpose of eye witness testimony, and along with this one [**being chosen**] by the Lord (**Vs. 24**), establishes the qualifications of an Apostle of Christ (we will talk about the Apostle Paul in **Chapter Nine**; however, we will see that the Lord Himself would qualify, to the satisfaction of all, this Apostle chosen out of due season – **1 Corinthians 15:8**; and sent to the Gentiles – **Romans 11:13**).

Joseph: The Greek form of his name is either 'Son of Sabbas', or 'Born on the Sabbath'; dictated by the 'Bar' at the beginning. In addition, he is spoken of by his surname "Justus"; it was common practice in multilingual societies to be referred to by many names for the satisfaction of all the languages used (Simon, Peter, Cephas, and Bar-Jonah for example). All that is known of Joseph is found here.

Matthias: His name means "Gift of Jehovah". Virtually all that is known of him is also found here, except in **Chapter Two**, when the crowd hearing the Apostles speak, state that they were all "**Galileans**" (**2:7**). No further individual record of Matthias will be mentioned after this; we will only see him in the general sense when it will be recorded by the term 'Apostles' or 'The Twelve'.

Numbered with the Eleven:

There will always be debate over this occurrence and the unrevealed details as to the specifics; however, we must appreciate first the recognition by Peter that this had to be done to fulfill scripture. Second, is that it was done as the will of the Lord, and He is given credit for the selection, and no one else. Third, as I mentioned earlier, this process was never to be repeated upon the death of any of the others after they would receive their commission (James is killed in **Chapter 12:2**; and will not be replaced), to establish a [continual practice]. The Apostles of Jesus Christ would serve a specific purpose (**John 16:13; Ephesians 3:5; 1 John 1:1-4**).

Their ranks have been replenished by the Lord for the work they would receive as per **1:8**, they are complete, and all things are now ready!