

## Acts 1:4-11 Answers The Holy Spirit Promised

### Introduction:

**Who wrote the book of Acts?** It was written by Luke. Luke was not one of the original disciples, nor was he an apostle. Luke was a later convert, a physician by trade (Col 4:11-14) and a traveling companion of Paul. He could be considered the equivalent of a modern day missionary. Tradition tells us he was a Gentile. Some think he was a Hellenized Jew.

**Location:** Luke ended his chronicle with Paul imprisoned in Rome. Since Luke traveled a lot with Paul it is thought that Luke wrote Acts in Rome in the early A.D. 60s.

**Look in your Bible; what is the full title of Acts?** The full title given to us by the church of history is The Acts of the Apostles. Perhaps a better title would be the Act of the Holy Spirit, because Luke's interest is in how the Holy Spirit **1)** was sent in place of Jesus **2)** overcame all obstacles in causing the Gospel to be spread from Jerusalem westward to Rome and **3)** changed the church from being predominantly Jewish to being predominately Gentile.

**Outline: Acts 1:8** is as good an outline of the book of Acts as any (*read aloud*). Acts is the history of how the Holy Spirit gave the church power to witness for Jesus in **1)** Jerusalem, **2)** Judea and Samaria, and **3)** on out to the end of the earth (which as I figure it is about 10 miles West of Villa Rica, Georgia).

**Read:** Let's all read 1:8 aloud in unison!

**Jerusalem is a city. What was the difference between Judea and Samaria (1:8)?** Judea was the geographical area surrounding Jerusalem. Samaria was the geographical area immediately north of Judea.

**Geography<sup>1</sup>** (see a map for general placement and proportions):

Draw a large **backwards letter C** to represent the Mediterranean Sea. The Promised Land was at the end of the sea.

Draw a small circle you like a **strawberry** to the right of the backwards C to represent the Sea of Galilee.

Draw a **crooked string** running straight down from the strawberry to represent the Jordan River. Draw a **cucumber with a bite taken out** of it at the end of the string to represent the Dead Sea.

**Galilee:** The area to the left of the Sea of Galilee is the region of Galilee.

**Judea:** The area to the left of the Dead Sea is the region of Judea. Judea covered the land area of the old nation of Judah.

**Jerusalem:** Place Jerusalem within Judea to the top left of the Dead Sea (at 10:00 on a clock).

**Samaria:** There is "some area" between Galilee and Judea, so we'll call it Samara! Samara was the name of the old capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel. Both city and country were destroyed by the Assyrians in 931 B.C. In Jesus' day the whole area was called Samaria.

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<sup>1</sup> Walt Wiley, Bible study class, Walk Thru The Bible Ministries, Atlanta, GA, 1982.

**Involve Class & Review Repeatedly:**

**30 years:** The book of Acts covers about 29 years, from A.D. 33 to A.D. 62.

**28 chapters** (thus there is a church planting ministry called Acts 29; we write the next chapter!).

<b>3 sections:</b> Jerusalem	Judea & Samaria	End of the Earth.
<b>Chapters 1-7</b>	<b>Chapters 8-12</b>	<b>Chapters 13-28</b>
2 years	13 years	14 years

\*\*\*\*Last week we covered Acts 1:1-3. Today we'll pick it up in 1:4, but by way of review, let's get a running start on it by beginning back in 1:1. Why did Jesus order the apostles not to depart from Jerusalem (1:1-5)? They were to wait for something called the baptism of the Holy Spirit (whatever that is!), 1:4-5. Luke did not explain it, he just reported it.

— 1:4 —

**Jesus ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem (1:4). Why might they have wanted to leave?** First, they were from Galilee, not Jerusalem. Second, Jerusalem was hostile toward Christianity. The leaders there had just killed Jesus!

**1. Jesus called the Holy Spirit the “promise of the Father” (1:4). In what sense did God the Father promise the Holy Spirit to them?** See *John 15:26*. Jesus told the apostles about the coming of the Holy Spirit at the Last Supper. He said the Spirit proceeds from the Father.

ESV **John 15:26** . . . when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

**Pneumatology:** The Holy Spirit is on an it; the Holy Spirit is a he, the third person of the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit). The Holy Spirit is God, not an impersonal force. He can be grieved. He decides which spiritual gifts you have. He regenerates us. He indwells us.

— 1:5 —

**2. Jesus said that John baptized with water (1:5). The word baptized (1:5) is from *baptizo* and remains an untranslated word in our Bibles. What does baptized (1:5) literally mean?** It literally means to dip or immerse. It was used of sunken ships.<sup>2</sup> John immersed people in water, but Jesus promised that the apostles would be immersed in the Holy Spirit.

**3. What does it mean to be baptized in the Holy Spirit (1:5)?** See *Acts 2, John 14:16. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 1:13-14*. Literally it means to be immersed in the Holy Spirit, saturated with the Spirit, overwhelmed with the Spirit. Luke dealt with this more in Acts 2 when this was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. In short, it was the special, prophesied, out pouring of the Spirit upon the church. In the Old Testament the Spirit came upon various people, but later left them.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, #907.

ESV **John 14:16** I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever

The baptism of the Spirit spoken of here was at one time event when the Spirit came upon all of God's people (the church) never again to leave again.

**Truth:** Every Christian since Pentecost has been grafted back into this one baptism at the moment of his salvation. If you belong to Jesus you have *already* been **baptized** by the Holy Spirit.

ESV **1 Corinthians 12:13** . . . in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

That which believers sometimes still lack is the **filling** of the Holy Spirit (Ep 5:18), which is the same as letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly (Col 3:16). The filling is commanded, the baptism is not commanded since it is automatic at salvation.

ESV **Ephesians 5:18** . . . be filled with the Spirit

**According to 1:5, how long would it be before they were baptized with the Spirit?** It would be "not many days from now." To be precise it happened on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus was crucified. Since Jesus appeared to them over a forty day period after His resurrection, they only had to wait about a week to ten days after He said this for the Spirit to come.

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**\*\*\*\*After Jesus promised the Holy Spirit, where did He go (1:6-11)?** Jesus ascended into a cloud (1:9) and has remained in heaven since! He sits at the Father's right hand interceding for us.

— 1:6 —

**Back in 1:5 Jesus promised the coming of the Holy Spirit. Now, in 1:6, what question did the apostles ask Him in response ("so")?** They wanted to know when the kingdom would be restored to Israel.

**4. In the apostles' minds, what was the link between the coming of the Spirit (1:5) and restoring the kingdom to Israel (1:6)?** See back to 1:3b, Daniel 2, Luke 17:20-21, 19:11. In the book of Daniel five successive kingdoms are prophesied, culminating with God's kingdom on earth (Babylonia, Persia, Greece, Rome, God's). They knew full well they were living in the days of the final kingdom before God's kingdom. During the forty days after His resurrection, Jesus spoke to them about the kingdom of God (1:3) and then finally told them to tarry in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Spirit (1:5). They evidently assumed that with the coming of the Spirit the kingdom of God was going to be manifested in a way we now associate with the future Second Coming. They also assumed it would be Israeli-centric.

ESV **Luke 19:11** . . . they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.

However, Jesus said:

ESV **Luke 17:20-21** The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.

**Dispensational Theology:** The apostles initially envisioned the coming of God's kingdom to include the restoration of geo-political Israel and the overthrow of the Roman Empire. This same belief is known today as Dispensational theology. Geo-political Israel was restored in 1947. They expect the Jerusalem temple will be rebuilt and the nations of the European Union will eventually reconstitute into sort of a revived Roman Empire that will oppose Israel. Then, at the Second Coming, the kingdom will be restored to Israel, just as the apostles asked (1:6).

— 1:7-8 —

**5. In 1:7-8, how did Jesus answer their question about Israel (1:6)? See John 16:12-13.**

**a)** He first said it was not for them to know times and seasons, 1:7. This is a good lesson for us to remember, too!

**Example:** On January 11, 2017, the Dekalb Neighbor newspaper ran a story wherein they took a look back at their archives. In a 1971 edition they found an amazing front page article that made predictions about 1972. In that 1971 article, staff writer Joyce Gemmill said that based on Bible prophecies 1972 would bring the unification of ten Western nations into one super power headed by an Emperor, a one world religion which embraced all faiths and a war among Russia and Arab nations to gain control of the vast mineral deposits in the Dead Sea. The 2017 column writer, Christine Fonville, promised "never to promote predictions on the front page of our newspapers because as I've learned in this industry, we never know what the future holds." Most telling is the fact that Hal Lindsey's *Late Great Plant Earth* came out in 1970 predicting these same events. Sister Gemmill evidently read it and was so sure Lindsey was right she put it in her 1971 column, predicting their fulfillment in 1972. She should have remembered Jesus' words, "It is not for you to know times or seasons" (1:7).

**Example:** *88 Reasons Why The Rapture Will Be in 88*, by NASA engineer Edgar C. Whisenant

**Example:** Baptist preacher William Miller predicted Jesus would return in 1843. So convincing were his arguments that it became a worldwide movement. Many people sold their possessions and assembled with Miller on the fateful date. It led to the start of the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

**b)** Jesus next began talking about taking the Gospel to the end of the earth by the power of the Holy Spirit, 1:8. Rather than confirm or deny their beliefs about Israel, He promised them power to spread the Gospel around the world.<sup>3</sup>

I believe they were wrong in their beliefs about the restoration of Israel, but were not able to bear the truth at that point in their lives. It was not until the coming of the Spirit that they would understand.

<sup>3</sup> *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 2080.

ESV **John 16:12-13** I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

**I. Howard Marshall:** “. . . the disciples would appear here as representative of those of Luke’s readers who had not yet realized that Jesus had transformed the Jewish hope of the kingdom of God by purging it of its nationalistic political elements.”<sup>4</sup>

**Based on 1:8, what was one purpose of the coming of the Holy Spirit?** The Holy Spirit would empower them to be His witnesses.

**Application:** It has been said that a successful witness sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.

**6. How does 1:8 help us begin to understand the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1:5)?** The baptism of the Spirit obviously had something to do with empowering the church to be a witness for Jesus in a way that Judaism never was.

**7. What demographics are reflected in the geography of 1:8?** Judea mostly consisted of Jewish people, Samaria consisted of people who were half Hebrew and half something else, and the end of the earth was made up of Gentiles. It is possible the apostles envisioned taking the Gospel only to the Jewish people dispersed in these places, but the Holy Spirit soon taught them differently.

ESV **Mark 16:15** . . . Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

ESV **Revelation 5:9-10** . . . you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.

**Literary Purpose:** In writing about the power of the promised of the Holy Spirit, Luke was helping Theophilus understand how the Gospel got from Jews in Jerusalem all the way to Gentiles in Rome.

**Application: How has 1:8 affected your life?** First and foremost hopefully each of us has personally heard and believed this very witness. Somebody told you the Gospel! Secondly, we too are to look to the Holy Spirit to empower us to be His witnesses here, now, where we live at this end of the earth.

Don’t think this power from the Holy Spirit to witness was just for the apostles! When the Jerusalem church was persecuted, everyone except the apostles left town. It was ordinary believers who first took the Gospel outside Jerusalem throughout Judea and Samaria:

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<sup>4</sup> | Howard Marshall, *Tyndale New Testament Commentary Series, Acts* (1980 repr., Downer’s Grove: IL, 2008), 64.

ESV **Acts 8:1, 4** . . . there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles . . . those who were scattered went about preaching the word.

ESV **Acts 11:19-21** Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word . . . some of them . . . spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

Because of the Holy Spirit, we too can do this! We just have to get out of our ghetto!

— 1:9 —

**According to 1:9, where did Jesus go after He spoke about the Holy Spirit?** He was taken up into a cloud.

**8. Why do you suppose this was Jesus' chosen method of departure (1:9)?** See *Daniel 7:13-14, Matthew 26:63-64*. Jesus' vertical ascent into the clouds was symbolic of His entry into heaven to sit at the Father's right hand: **1)** Daniel predicted the Messiah would come with the clouds up to the Ancient of Days (God the Father) and receive a kingdom, and **2)** Jesus Himself associated clouds with sitting at the right hand of God.

ESV **Daniel 7:13-14** I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

ESV **Matthew 26:63-64** . . . the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, ". . . you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

**9. Why was it even necessary for Jesus to leave at all (1:9)?** See *John 14:12-16, 16:7-8, 12-13*.

**a)** Jesus said if He did not go away the Spirit would not come.

ESV **John 16:7-8** . . . it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment

**b)** Jesus said the apostles could not yet bear what Jesus had to say, but that the Spirit would teach them.

ESV **John 16:12-13** "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth,

c) Jesus said after He went to the Father, through the Spirit His disciples would do greater works than Jesus did.

ESV **John 14:12-16** Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father . . . I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth . . . he dwells with you and will be in you.

— 1:10-11 —

**10. Look at the question the angels asked the apostles in 1:10-11 (“Why do you stand looking into heaven?”). What false expectations might the apostles have had when Jesus disappeared into the cloud (1:9)?** See *Matthew 17:1-8*. It is possible the apostles thought the cloud would dissolve and Jesus would be left with them again, just as had happened on the Mount of Transfiguration. The angels knew better. They saw no reason for cloud gazing due to the fact that Jesus was not going to return in person any time soon.<sup>5</sup> (He did come back in judgment in A.D. 70, but that was not the bodily return the angels promised).

**11. What promise did the angels make in 1:11?** They promised Jesus would come back again in the same way He left (bodily). There was a coming of Jesus in judgment in A.D. 70, but it was not a bodily coming. In that which we call the Second Coming, Jesus will return bodily, in person.

ESV **Hebrews 9:28** . . . Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

ESV **Titus 2:13** . . . our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ

ESV **1 Timothy 6:14** . . . keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**The Baptist Faith and Message of 2000**, X. Last Things: “According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth . . .”

We don't believe anything because the Baptists say so; rather we are Baptist because we believe that is what the Bible teaches. Moreover, it is the consensus of the church universal, reflected in all the creeds and most confessions, that Jesus will return personally and visibly to the earth.

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**So What?**

**Based on Acts 1, what is the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit?** Part of the purpose is to empower the church to be an effective witness for Jesus.

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<sup>5</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 41.

ESV **Philippians 2:15** . . . be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world . . .

ESV **1 Peter 3:15-16** . . . in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect . . .

**19. What is your relationship to the baptism of the Holy Spirit?**

**20. What can we learn about the Second Coming from Acts 1?** Jesus is coming again bodily, in person.

ESV **1 John 3:2-3** . . . we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we will be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

\*\*\*\* = ask this question before reading the text aloud. Doing so will cause focus.

- These lessons are designed for a 45 minute session and are based on the text of the ESV.
- You can hear this lesson being taught at [www.SermonAudio.Com/NTRF](http://www.SermonAudio.Com/NTRF).

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