

Acts of the Apostles

Chapters 1-5

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.³ After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴ While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me;⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He replied,

"It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The Ascension of Jesus

⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them.¹¹ They said,

"Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Matthias chosen to replace Judas

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away.¹³ When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and

Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.¹⁴ All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said,

¹⁶ "Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus--¹⁷ for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry." 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 This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their language Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)²⁰ "For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'Let his homestead become desolate, and let there be no one to live in it'; and 'Let another take his position of overseer.'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 must become a witness with us to his resurrection."

²³ So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias.²⁴ Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen²⁵ 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 added to the eleven apostles.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.⁶ And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.⁷ Amazed and astonished, they asked,

"Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia,

Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,¹¹ Cretans and Arabs-- in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."

¹² All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another,

"What does this mean?"

¹³ But others sneered and said,

"They are filled with new wine."

Peter addresses the crowd

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,

"Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵ Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning.

¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. ²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. ²¹ Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

²² "You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know-- ²³ this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. ²⁴ But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. ²⁵ For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; ²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope. ²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. ²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' ²⁹ "Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, 'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his

flesh experience corruption.³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear.³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand,³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool."' ³⁶ Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

The First Converts

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"

³⁸ Peter said to them,

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him."

⁴⁰ And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying,

"Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

⁴¹ So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Life among the believers

⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles.⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common;⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts,⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Peter heals a lame man

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon.² And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from

those entering the temple.³ When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms.⁴ Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us."⁵ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.⁶ But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk."

⁷ And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.⁸ Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.⁹ All the people saw him walking and praising God,¹⁰ and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter speaks in Solomon's Portico

¹¹ While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's Portico, utterly astonished.¹² When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, "You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk?¹³ The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him.¹⁴ But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you,¹⁵ and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.¹⁶ And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.¹⁷ "And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.¹⁸ In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer.¹⁹ Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out,²⁰ so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus,²¹ who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets.²² Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you.'²³ And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people.'²⁴ And all the prophets, as many as have spoken, from Samuel and those after him, also predicted these days.²⁵ You are the descendants of the prophets and of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, 'And in

your descendants all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'²⁶ When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you, to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Peter and John before the Council

While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them,² much annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead.³ So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.⁴ But many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand.⁵ The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem,⁶ with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.⁷ When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders,⁹ if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed,¹⁰ let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.¹¹ This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.'¹² There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus.¹⁴ When they saw the man who had been cured standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition.¹⁵ So they ordered them to leave the council while they discussed the matter with one another.¹⁶ They said, "What will we do with them? For it is obvious to all who live in Jerusalem that a notable sign has been done through them; we cannot deny it.¹⁷ But to keep it from spreading further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name."¹⁸ So they called them and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.¹⁹ But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge;²⁰ for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard."²¹ After threatening them again, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people, for all of them praised God for what had happened.²² For the man on whom this sign of healing had been performed was more than forty years old.

The believers pray for boldness

²³ After they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and everything in them, ²⁵ it is you who said by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant: 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things?' ²⁶ The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers have gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah."²⁷ For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, ²⁸ to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. ²⁹ And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, ³⁰ while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus."³¹ When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

The Believers share their possession

³² Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³ With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵ They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. ³⁶ There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"). ³⁷ He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Ananias and Sapphira

But a man named Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property;² with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some of the proceeds, and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ "Ananias," Peter asked, "why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land?" ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us but

to God!"⁵ Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard of it.⁶ The young men came and wrapped up his body, then carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.⁸ Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price." And she said, "Yes, that was the price."

⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."

¹⁰ Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.¹¹ And great fear seized the whole church and all who heard of these things.

Apostles heal Mary

¹² Now many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico.¹³ None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem.¹⁴ Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women,¹⁵ so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by.¹⁶ A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.

The apostles are persecuted

¹⁷ Then the high priest took action; he and all who were with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), being filled with jealousy,¹⁸ arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.¹⁹ But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, brought them out, and said,

²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and tell the people the whole message about this life."

²¹ When they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and went on with their teaching. When the high priest and those with him arrived, they called together the council and the whole body of the elders of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.²² But when the temple police went there, they did not find them in the prison; so they

returned and reported,

²³ "We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside."

²⁴ Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were perplexed about them, wondering what might be going on. ²⁵ Then someone arrived and announced,

"Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"

²⁶ Then the captain went with the temple police and brought them, but without violence, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people. ²⁷ When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying,

"We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us."

²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered,

"We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

³³ When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. ³⁴ But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, respected by all the people, stood up and ordered the men to be put outside for a short time. ³⁵ Then he said to them,

"Fellow Israelites, consider carefully what you propose to do to these men. ³⁶ For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him; but he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and disappeared. ³⁷ After him Judas the Galilean rose up at the time of the census and got people to follow him; he also perished, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁸ So in the present case, I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone; because if this plan or this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; ³⁹ but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them-- in that case you may even be found fighting against God!"

They were convinced by him, ⁴⁰ and when they had called in the apostles, they had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ As

they left the council, they rejoiced that they were considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name.⁴² And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease to teach and proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.