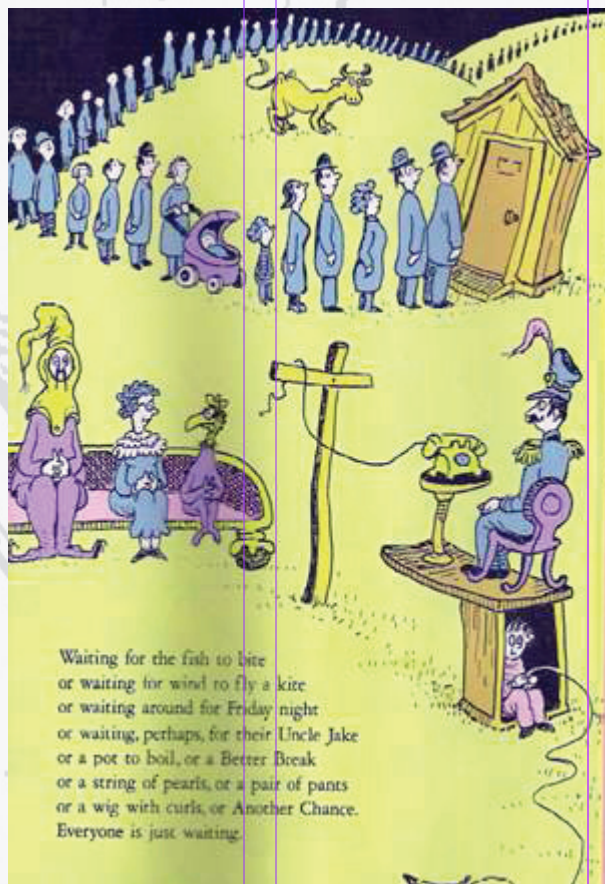


A copy of this lesson is posted in Adobe pdf format at <http://cranfordville.com> under [Bible Studies](#) in the Bible Study Aids section. A note about the [blue, underlined](#) material: These are hyperlinks that allow you to click them on and bring up the specified scripture passage automatically while working inside the pdf file connected to the internet. Just use your web browser's back arrow or the taskbar to return to the lesson material.

- a. Preparing, vv. 12-14
- b. Filling a vacancy, vv. 15-26

How they prepared themselves for these expectations is the basic point of Acts 1:12-26. And it provides us with helpful insight as we anticipate the return of our Lord at the close of human history.

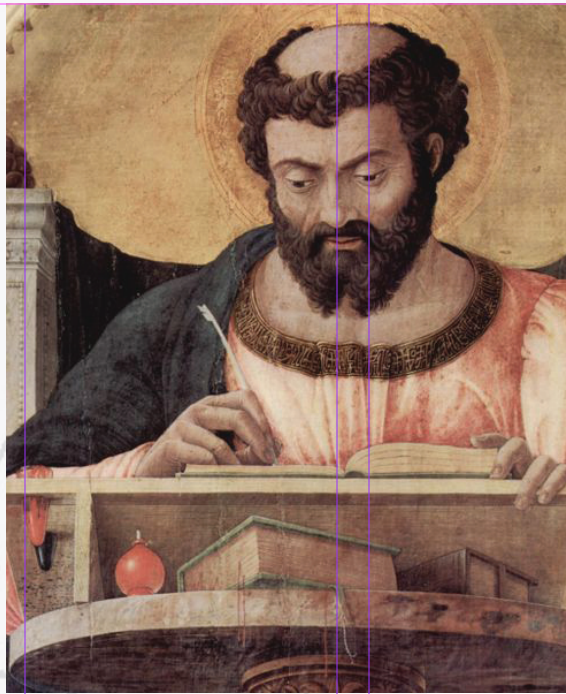


From [previous studies](#) in Acts we will draw most of the background materials. New material will supplement this as it relates to the study of our passage.

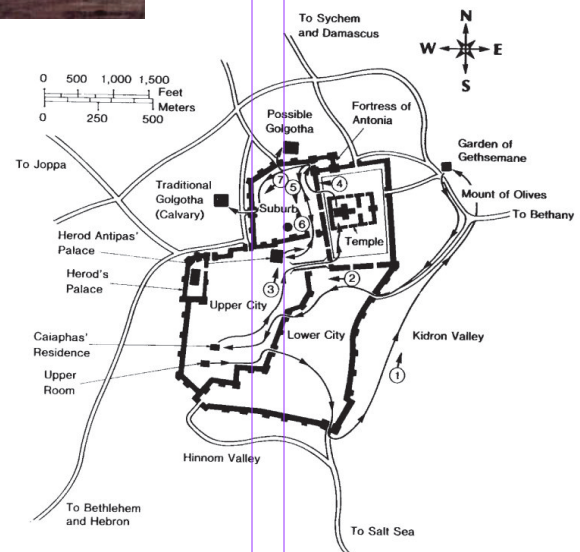
Page 1 of Acts 1:12-26 Bible Study

External History.

The Prologues of both the Gospel of Luke (Lk. 1:1-4)¹ and of Acts (1:1-3)² tie the two documents together with a common author, traditionally understood to be [Luke](#) the physician. Acts covers the first three decades of the beginnings of the Christian movement by tracing how the gospel moved from Jerusalem, the Jewish religious center of the world, to Rome, the political and military center of the world of that time. Although neither document specifically identifies [Luke](#) as the author, early church tradition has linked him to these writings without serious questioning of its accuracy, as is the case with other documents in the New Testament. The time and place of the writing of both documents are less certain. Logic would assume that Acts was written sometime after the timing of the ending of the narrative about AD 61 in chapter twenty-eight. And that the gospel was written prior to that. Other evidence suggests that a period of time lapsed between the end of Acts and the actual writing of the documents. For one thing, Luke's dependence on Mark's gospel (mid to late 60s date) as a major source of his gospel narrative will argue for a date in the 70s to mid-80s of the first Christian century



for the gospel. The persecution of Christians in Rome by Nero in the 60s very likely forced a delay in the production of these writings until Luke could move from Rome to a safer location. Most are convinced this was somewhere in the northeastern Mediterranean region. Depending on the identification of Theophilus, Luke very possibly was taken in by this wealthy Roman official and provided with the opportunity to complete his work after years of collecting materials. [Early church tradition](#) links Luke to Antioch as his birthplace, and that he died an old man "in Thebes, the capital of Boeotia".



¹¹ Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, 2 just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, 3 I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent [Theophilus](#), 4 so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

²¹ In the first book, [Theophilus](#), I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning 2 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.

Internal History. The time and place markers inside Acts 1:12-26 are limited, but reasonably clear. The disciples walked the half mile ("[sabbath day's journey](#)") from Mt. Olivet to the upper room inside the city of Jerusalem (vv. 12-13). There they continued meeting over the following weeks until the Day of Pentecost (v. 14). Although not stated directly simple arithmetic indicates that the episode of selecting Matthias (vv. 15-26) took place sometime between the end of the 40 days before Jesus ascended and the occurrence of Pentecost that came 50 days after Passover. Thus Luke's "[in these days](#)" (v. 15) alludes to this ten day time frame after ascension and before Pentecost. The choosing of Matthias presumably took place in the upper room where the disciples gathered together (v. 14).

b. Literary

Genre. The **broad genre** of Acts is that of history. But history in the ancient Roman definition, rather than in a modern western definition. In setting forth the first three decades of Christian history, Luke used a variety of building blocks to present his story. The sources utilized by him are not readily detectable, although some scholars will sense some indication of sources being quoted or else re-worked. This comes mostly from writing style shifts in the underlying Greek text that are impossible to sense in English translation.

The more helpful aspect of genre is to identify the patterns of material that his information was shaped into in order to tell his story. Years ago I participated in a Greek reading group comprised of six biblical scholars at both Southwestern Baptist Seminary (2 members) and Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University (4 members) in Fort Worth, Texas. We met twice monthly for several hours and together read Greek texts from classical writers and other writings outside the Greek New Testament. One of the more interesting writers that we read was Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a Roman

historian at the beginning of the Christian era. In one of his tractates he described how good history should be written in that period of time. Our group took the standards that he set forth and applied them to the book of Acts. We concluded that when measured by standards of history writing in Luke's own day and time he would be graded

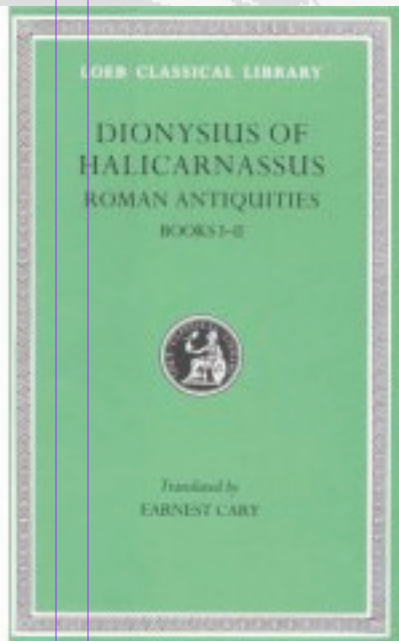
very high. This stands in contrast to occasional modern scholars who write Acts off as a very poor and unreliable history.

What were the building blocks that Luke used in writing Acts? Basically two kinds of material surface: narratives and speeches. The narratives divide out into two basic groups: 1) those that describe a particular event, like the healing of the

lame man in 3:1- 10, and thus are labeled episodic narratives; and 2) those that summarize long periods of time by fundamental patterns or traits, the so-called summary narratives. Inside the episodic narrative category a couple of repetitive patterns of narratives can be identified in Acts: a) miracle narratives and b) commissioning narratives. These two types will only account for a small portion of the episodic narratives, but the repetitive pattern is sufficiently frequent to identify them as sub-genres. The miracle narrative is similar to those found in the gospels, as well as in Jewish and Greco-Roman literature of the period. The commissioning narrative has Jewish roots in the Old Testament with God's calling of Abraham to come into the land of Promise in Genesis. At its heart is an episodic narrative in which the individual encounters God in a direct manner and out of that encounter is "assigned a job" to do by God. This becomes the central mission of the person's life from that point on.

The second category, the speeches, also divide into two foundational types: 1) the missionary speech in which a Christian leader presents the gospel message to a group with the objective of converting the listeners to faith in Christ; and 2) the defense speech in which a Christian leader is defending the gospel and/or Christian witness to it before a hostile group, usually in some time of legal or court room setting. For example, Acts 3:11-26 falls into the category of a "missionary speech." Peter is presenting the gospel to the crowd made curious by the healing of the lame man.

One important aspect of this to remember: Speeches were an essential part of writing history in the ancient world. This in large part, because, just like theology (θεολογία), history (ιστηρία) was a sub-discipline of philosophy (φιλοσοφία). Thus history was not produced out of curiosity about the past. Rather, history was produced in order to advocate a particular way of approaching life in the here and now (φιλοσοφία). The past was seen as having validated this philosophy for today. Speeches gave the history writer the primary vehicle for advocating his philosophy. In that world Luke would not have considered himself to be a historian. Rather, he would have viewed himself as a philosopher using history as his platform. This is reflected in Acts through many ways. One of the clearest illustrations is his philosophical designation



of Christianity as the Way (ἡ ὁδός), like in Acts 9:2 -- “and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.” In the past several decades of modern scholarship, this has been increasingly realized and thus much discussion centers around Luke’s “theology” contained in Acts.

This does not necessarily mean that the history writer creates fictional speeches by his central characters in order to advocate his particular philosophy. Some ancient historians did this and Dionysius severely criticized them for doing it. Instead, he argued that a good history writer would take actual speeches from actual individuals. In his selective interpretation of what had been said he would emphasize the points that agreed with his own philosophy. This is what we find in the various speeches in Acts. Luke condensed the speeches of the individuals down considerably and highlighted those aspects that he himself wished to stress to his readers. None of the speeches in Acts takes over two or three minutes to read; yet, we know from the narrative elements surrounding the speeches that some of them lasted several hours, like Paul’s all nighter referred to but not recorded in Acts 20:7-12.

To be sure, this way of writing history is dramatically different from the way history is written in our day. But if we’re to play fair with an ancient history writer we must evaluate his work in terms of the standards in place when he wrote his history, and not by standards -- in this instance -- that were developed two thousand years later. To call Luke a poor historian is to call Henry Ford a poor car maker because his



first automobile doesn’t measure up to the standards of a 2008 Porche GT3.



The **sub-genre** of 1:12-26 is that of episodic narrative. Verses 12-14 have a touch of being summary in nature, but the summarizing aspect is mainly seen in verse 14 where Luke’s use of the periphrastic imperfect tense verb construction (ἦσαν προσκατεροῦντες) reflects his [summarizing tendencies elsewhere](#) in Acts. Clearly vv. 15-26 reflect an episodic narrative nature, but do not contain any of the repetitive patterns that mark off either the miracle or commissioning episodic narratives.

Literary Context. The literary setting for 1:12-26 is relatively clear. This is presented in the [Outline of Acts](#) that I published years ago:

Introduction (1:1-26)

1. Preface (1-5)

2. Final appearance of Christ (6-11)

3. *Picture of the church in the period between ascension and Pentecost (12-26)*

I. Witnessing in Jerusalem (2:1-8:3)

II. Witnessing in Judea and Samaria (8:4-12:25)

III. Witnessing to the Uttermost Part of the Earth (13:1-28:31)

Everything in 1:12-26 is preparatory; the group of believers are getting ready for [Pentecost](#) and the very unusual nature that this particular Jewish festival would hold for all Christian history. It would be the realization of the promise of the Father that Jesus had mentioned. Luke, in his narration, clues us into this. But the disciples, at that moment of time, had no understanding of what lay ahead. They were just seeking to be faithful to the Lord’s instructions to wait in Jerusalem.

II. Message

Literary Structure. The internal thought flow of our passage divides itself into two natural units of expression: a) the returning to the upper room in Jerusalem from Mt. Olivet to begin a pattern of ongoing prayer in anticipation of the fulfillment of Jesus’ instruction to wait in Jerusalem until the promise of the Father (vv. 12-14), and b) the choosing of Matthias to take Judas’ place among the apostles (vv. 15-26). For a detailed explanation of this based on the Greek text see the [Block](#) and [Semantic](#) diagrams, along with the [Summary of the Rhetorical Structure](#), in the larger internet version of this study. Our study will be organized around this understanding.

a. Preparing, vv. 12-14

Greek NT

12 Τότε ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἀπὸ ὄρους τοῦ καλουμένου Ἐλαιῶνος, ὃ ἐστὶν

NASB

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath

NRSV

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath

NLT

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. 13 When they arrived,

ἐγγὺς Ἱερουσαλὴμ σαββάτου ἔχον ὁδόν. 13 καὶ ὅτε εἰσῆλθον, εἰς τὸ ὑπερῶον ἀνέβησαν οὗ ἦσαν καταμένοντες, ὃ τε Πέτρος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἀνδρέας, Φίλιππος καὶ Θωμᾶς, Βαρθολομαῖος καὶ Μαθθαῖος, Ἰάκωβος Ἀλφαίου καὶ Σίμων ὁ ζηλωτὴς καὶ Ἰούδας Ἰακώβου. 14 οὗτοι πάντες ἦσαν προσκατεροῦντες ὁμοθυμαδὸν τῇ προσευχῇ σὺν γυναιξὶν καὶ Μαριὰμ τῇ μητρὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ.



Notes:

This first pericope stands as a summary expression in a couple of ways. Luke's typical use of the periphrastic imperfect tense verb construction in ἦσαν προσκατεροῦντες ("were continually devoting themselves") is the language found in his clearly defined [Summary Narratives and Summary Statements](#) found in the remainder of Acts, as well as in his gospel account. Also, Luke lists the apostles by name with limited characterizations of three of them. This he did previously in his gospel account in [Luke 6:13-16](#). What we see in vv. 12-14 is a summary of patterns of activity by the apostles once they returned to their gathering place inside the city of Jerusalem. From the [Internal History](#) discussion above we know that approximately ten days elapsed between Jesus' ascension and the Day of Pentecost which will be described in Acts 2, as the next item after our passage. Thus Luke is summarizing the main features of activities by the apostles during that time.

Verse 12 takes us from Mt. Olivet into Jerusalem narratively: "Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away." The apostles left from where

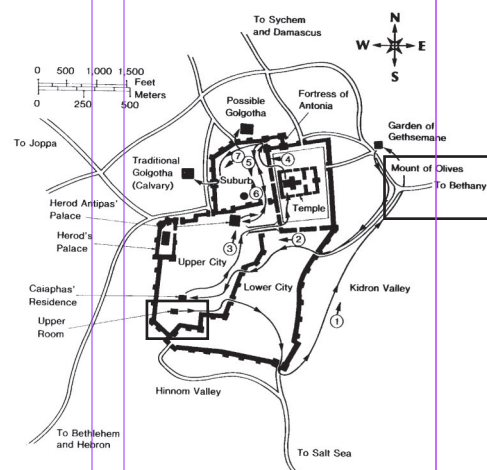
day's journey away. 13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. 14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

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.

they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying. Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the Zealot), and Judas (son of James). 14 They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

Jesus had ascended back into Heaven (cf. vv. 6-11). Because Luke's non-Jewish audience were not familiar with the geography in and around Jerusalem, he identifies the location of Mt. Olivet as a "sabbath day's journey" (σαββάτου ἔχον ὁδόν) from Jerusalem.

This Jewish reference meant the allowed distance one could walk during the Jewish sabbath without breaking the prohibition against "working on the sabbath." Hans



Conzelmann (*Acts of the Apostles, Hermeneia Commentary*, Logos Systems) documents from ancient sources the distance involved:

A Sabbath day's journey is 2000 ells, which equals 960 yards.³³ Josephus agrees, giving the distance as 5 stadia.⁴⁴

So their walk wasn't far (v 13). They returned to "the room upstairs where they were staying" (τὸ ὑπερῶν ἀνέβησαν οὗ ἦσαν καταμένοντες). Traditionally this is the same location as where Jesus instituted the Last Supper on Thursday night of the Passion Week. Although not certain, this was probably the same location. The designation "room upstairs" is explained by Newman and Nida (*Translator's Handbook*, Logos Systems) as

The room is literally "the room upstairs," and this word is used elsewhere in the New Testament only in Acts 9.37, 39 and 20.8. The type of room referred to is a tower-like construction built on the flat roof of an oriental house and reached by a stairway from the outside. Nothing further is known regarding the identity of this particular room.

At this point Luke inserts a list of the Eleven who constituted this core group of followers of Jesus. This listing stands in parallel to similar lists in the gospels:

Acts 1:13b

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.

Lk. 6:14-16

14 Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, 15 and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, 16 and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Matt. 10:2-4

2 These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

Mark 3:16-19

16 So he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); 17 James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); 18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

To be sure, the gospel lists contain twelve names and the Acts list only has eleven, since Judas is no longer a part of the group. As might be expected, the names in the Acts list correspond exactly with those in Luke's gospel list. They pretty much correspond to the list of names in Matthew, but slight deviation exists from the list in Mark.

³³ Str-B 2.590-94.

⁴⁴ Ant. 20.169; Bell. 5.70 gives the distance not of the mount, but of the Roman encampment.



One particular significance of the Acts listing is the grouping of the names, as Newman and Nida (*Translator's Handbook*, Logos Systems) note:

As can be seen clearly from the Greek text, the names in this list are grouped in a rather unusual way. The first four names form a unit, while the next four names are paired off, and the following three are listed in a series with special identification. The TEV has attempted to reproduce something of this structure, but in a form much more natural than the literal rendering employed in the RSV

The twelve were chosen by Jesus to preserve his ministry and teachings. Consequently, they formed the core leadership of the movement once Jesus ascended back to the Heavenly Father. The New Testament is made up of "apostolic writings" that can be traced back to one of these men directly or indirectly, the apostle Paul, or else one of the physical brothers of Jesus. As such they occupied a unique leadership role in early Christianity. That role ceased

with the death of the last of these apostles.

Their activities during this 'waiting' period are defined in verse 14: "All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers" (οἱ πάντες ἦσαν προσκατεροῦντες ὁμοθυμαδὸν τῇ προσευχῇ σὺν γυναιξίν καὶ Μαριάμ τῇ μητρὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ). When Jesus had told them to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father (cf. Acts 1:4), this 'waiting' was interpreted to primarily mean spending time in prayer together as a group. Preparing for whatever God was going to do in giving them divine power meant communicating with God in a continuous pattern of praying. Such a pattern of prayer not only kept them sensitive to God's leadership, but also helped bring them together in the bond of common purpose; see ὁμοθυμαδὸν, which is uniquely Lukan with 10 of the 11 total NT uses occurring in Acts.

As the Louw-Nida *Greek-English Lexicon* (topic 31.23) defines it,

pertaining to mutual consent or agreement — 'with one mind, by common consent, unanimously.' οἱ πάντες ἦσαν προσκατεροῦντες ὁμοθυμαδὸν τῇ προσευχῇ 'all these continued in prayer with one mind' Ac 1.14. In a number of languages 'with one mind' would need to be rendered as 'prayed for the same things' or 'said the same in their prayers.' ἔδοξεν ἡμῖν γενομένοισμαδὸν ἐκλεξαμένοις ἄνδρας πέμψαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς 'we unanimously agreed to choose some messengers to send to you' Ac 15.25. The expression 'we unanimously agreed' may also be rendered as 'we were in agreement that.'

Not only were the eleven apostles in complete agreement about what to pray for but also Luke mentions the presence of certain women along with Jesus' mother Mary and his brothers. Although not named here, they most likely were those ladies named in Lk. 8:1-3 and alluded to in 23:49.

Lk. 8:1-3. "1 Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, 2 as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources."

Lk. 23:49. "But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things."

Thus the group was diverse with many coming out of very different backgrounds. But they shared a passion for Christ and a determination to obey his instructions to wait for the "promise of the Father" in Jerusalem. They spent their days together prayer for just that, while not knowing exactly how their prayers would be answered.

What is the relevancy of these verses to us today? In this very historical oriented narrative, a couple of items suggest themselves. First, these early followers of Jesus were very obedient to the Lord's instructions to wait in Jerusalem. Did they know exactly what they were waiting for? No. Jesus had only defined it as "the promise of the Father" (v. 4) and the receiving of divine power associated with the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them (v. 8). To be sure, this is rather vague.

Perhaps, they connected some dots with Jesus' mention of the Holy Spirit and the current Jewish association of the Spirit of God and the giving of the Law to Moses with the [Festival of Pentecost](#) that lay just in front of them time wise. But even with the messianic associations with Pentecost in some streams of apocalyptic Judaism, one can hardly imagine that this

small group of disciples of Jesus understood much in advance about what God was going to do at that Jewish festival.

This points us to trusting God and keeping His instructions whether we have a clear sense of what God plans to do or not. Our walk is a walk of faith based on unconditional trust of God's will and leadership. We place our lives into His hands and trust Him to use us as He chooses.

The passage also points us to the central role of prayer in Christian discipleship. Here the focus is on cooperate praying by the group, and not just individuals praying independent of one another. They met constantly together to pray and they were unified in their praying. God's people are always at their best when they are together on their knees before Almighty God seeking His leadership and blessing. That's just as true today, as it was for this group in AD 30.



b. Filling a vacancy, vv. 15-26

Greek NT

15 Καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις ἀναστὰς Πέτρος ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν εἶπεν· ἦν τε ὄχλος ὀνομάτων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὥσει ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι· 16 ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, ἔδει πληρωθῆναι τὴν γραφὴν ἣν προεῖπεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον διὰ στόματος Δαυὶδ περὶ Ἰούδα τοῦ γενομένου ὁδηγοῦ τοῖς συλλαβοῦσιν Ἰησοῦν, 17 ὅτι κατηριθμημένος ἦν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ ἔλαχεν τὸν κλῆρον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης. 18 οὗτος μὲν οὖν ἐκτήσατο χωρίον ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδικίας καὶ πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησεν μέσος καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ· 19 καὶ γνωστὸν ἐγένετο πᾶσι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν Ἱερουσαλὴμ, ὥστε κληθῆναι τὸ χωρίον ἐκεῖνο τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν Ἀκελδαμάχ, τοῦτ' ἔστιν χωρίον αἵματος. 20 γέγραπται γὰρ ἐν βίβλῳ ψαλμῶν· γενηθήτω ἡ ἔπαυλις αὐτοῦ ἔρημος καὶ μὴ ἔστω ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν αὐτῇ, καί· τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ λαβέτω ἕτερος. 21 δεῖ οὖν τῶν συνελθόντων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν ἐν παντὶ χρόνῳ ᾧ εἰσηλθεν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς, 22 ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος Ἰωάννου ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ἣς ἀνελήμφθη ἀφ' ἡμῶν, μάρτυρα τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ σὺν ἡμῖν γενέσθαι ἓνα τούτων. 23 Καὶ

NASB

15 At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, 16 "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. 17 "For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry." 18 (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out. 19 And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Aakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'Let his homestead be made desolate, And let no one dwell in it'; and, 'Let another man take his office.' 21 "Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us — 22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with

NRSV

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

NLT

15 During this time, when about 120 believers were together in one place, Peter stood up and addressed them. 16 "Brothers," he said, "the Scriptures had to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided those who arrested Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David. 17 Judas was one of us and shared in the ministry with us." 18 (Judas had bought a field with the money he received for his treachery. Falling headfirst there, his body split open, spilling out all his intestines. 19 The news of his death spread to all the people of Jerusalem, and they gave the place the Aramaic name Akeldama, which means "Field of Blood.") 20 Peter continued, "This was written in the book of Psalms, where it says, 'Let his home become desolate, with no one living in it.' It also says, 'Let someone else take his position.' 21 "So now we must choose a replacement for Judas from among the men who were with us the entire time we were traveling with the Lord Jesus — 22 from the time he was baptized by John until the day he was taken from us. Whoever is chosen will

ἔστησαν δύο, Ἰωσήφ τὸν καλούμενον Βαρσαββᾶν ὃς ἐπεκλήθη Ἰουστος, καὶ Μαθθίαν. 24 καὶ προσευξάμενοι εἶπαν· σὺ κύριε καρδιογνώστα πάντων, ἀνάδειξον ὃν ἐξελέξω ἐκ τούτων τῶν δύο ἓνα 25 λαβεῖν τὸν τόπον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης καὶ ἀποστολῆς ἀφ’ ἧς παρέβη Ἰούδας πορευθῆναι εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον. 26 καὶ ἔδωκαν κλήρους αὐτοῖς καὶ ἔπεσεν ὁ κλῆρος ἐπὶ Μαθθίαν καὶ συγκατεψηφίσθη μετὰ τῶν ἑνδεκα ἀποστόλων.

us of His resurrection.” 23 So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen 25 to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” 26 And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

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join us as a witness of Jesus’ resurrection.” 23 So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they all prayed, “O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen 25 as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs.” 26 Then they cast lots, and Matthias was selected to become an apostle with the other eleven.

Notes:

The one noteworthy action of the group of disciples beyond their praying was the selection of a replacement to fill the vacancy left by Judas in both his betrayal and subsequent death.

The literary structure of verses 15-26 is twofold. For a detailed analysis of the Greek text structurally, see the [Block](#) and [Semantic](#) Diagrams, along with the [Summary of the Rhetorical Structure](#) section, in the larger internet version of this study. First, Peter makes a proposal to the group, vv. 15-22. Then, the group places two individuals before the apostles for them to select the replacement, vv. 23-26.

First, the proposal, vv. 15-22. Luke uses literary creativity in structuring this part of the text. It is made up of four elements. **1)** Narrative introduction to Peter’s speech with parenthetical insertion of the number of the group (v. 15). **2)** The first part of Peter’s speech, vv. 16-17. **3)** Another parenthetical insertion by Luke explaining the death of Judas, vv. 18-19. **4)** The completion of Peter’s speech, vv. 20-22. The splitting of Peter’s speech is not unbalanced. The first part, vv. 16-17, focuses on Judas’ death as scriptural fulfillment. The second part, vv. 20-22, cites with heaving reworking both Ps. 69:25 and Ps. 109.8 as the OT texts being fulfilled. The first one points -- in Peter’s interpretation -- to Judas’ death. But the second one provides a reason to fill the vacancy left by his death.

The core declaration in the narrative intro in verse 15 is simply “Peter...said...” (Πέτρος...εἶπεν...;

cf. [Block diagram #4](#)). Tacked onto it are several qualifying elements. He spoke “in these days” (ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις). This refers back to the days of the group’s constantly meeting for prayer, and was during this ten day period between ascension and Pentecost. Peter stood up before the group before beginning to speak, “after having stood up in the middle of the brothers” (ἀναστὰς Πέτρος ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν). His needing to stand up to be heard prompts the parenthetical insertion, “(together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons)” (ἦν τε ὄχλος ὀνομάτων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὥσεί ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι). Luke approximates the number rather than insisting on it being exactly 120 individuals. The symbolic significance of this number is significant, as William Willomon (*Interpretation Commentary*, Logos System) notes:



The community which gathers to wait and to pray is an unusual one—a fact attested by Luke’s parenthetical mention in 1:14 of women who had been with Jesus since Galilee (Luke 8:2; 23:49, 55; 24:10–11) and of Jesus’ mother and brothers. The inclusion of women in the roster of the community would not have been missed by a second-century reader, as an indication that already we have a group which breaks barriers.

Furthermore, we have a thoroughly Jewish community which has a mission to the house of Israel. In Luke 9:1–6, the Twelve were sent to Israel. Jesus promised that these Twelve would sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes (Luke 22:28–30). The twelve tribes must have twelve witnesses, thus the concern within this section to find a replacement for the traitor, Judas.

The number one hundred and twenty also figures prominently in the mission to Israel. According to Jewish law one hundred and twenty males were required to form a synagogue with its own council—already the disciples have enough people to form a legitimate community. All is done in faithfulness to Judaism, says Luke.

Now Luke has us ready to hear the beginning of Peter’s speech, vv. 16–17. To be sure, not all scholars and Bible translators are convinced that vv. 18–19 represent Luke’s parenthetical insertion, rather than being a part of Peter’s words. But the flow of the Greek text favors the insertion understanding. In Luke’s presentation of Peter’s words spoken before the group, we get only the ‘bare-bones’ summary of the essence of what he said, not a detailed recording of every word. Otherwise, Peter would be the quickest preacher to ever live, being then able to deliver a complete sermon in less than ten seconds!

The core structure of Luke’s summary of his speech to the group revolves around the twice repeated Greek impersonal verb δεῖ (= “it is divinely mandated”) in verses 16 and 21; cf. the [Block Diagram](#) #s a and c. First comes εἰδεῖ (“it **was** divinely mandated”) in the Greek imperfect tense form. In this part (vv. 16–17, 20), the death of Judas was a divine mandate of OT scripture spoken through David in Psalm 69:25. Then comes δεῖ (“it **is** divinely mandated”) in verse 21 in the Greek present tense verb form. Set forth as an implication of Ps. 109:8 (οὖν), it focuses on replacing Judas as a scriptural mandate. So Peter’s emphasis revolves around the past action of Judas and the present need to replace him among the Twelve. And both of these aspects are interpreted as fulfilling OT prophetic scripture.

Judas is described by Peter as **1)** the one who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus (τοῦ γενομένου ὁδηγοῦ τοῖς συλλαβοῦσιν Ἰησοῦν); **2)** was numbered among the Twelve (κατηριθμημένος ἦν ἐν ἡμῖν); and **3)** was allotted a share in the ministry that Jesus ordained for the Twelve (ἔλαχεν τὸν κλῆρον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης.). The first one underscores why his death was predicted in scripture. The second and third are set up as foundational statements (ὅτι) to the scripture fulfillment in Judas’ death. The first descriptor points to the Psalm 69:25 quote in v. 20a, while the second and third point to the second quote from Psalm 109:8 quote in v. 20b. So Luke tightly weaves both Judas’ death and his replacement into OT scripture. Peter understood these OT texts to provide the direction for what had happened and what was to happen.

Luke then inserts an account of Judas’ death (vv. 18–19), which is similar generally but significantly different in some details from Matthew’s account of Judas’ death:

Acts 1:18–19

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.)

Matt. 27:3–10

3 When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. 4 He said, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” But they said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.” 5 Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. 6 But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.” 7 After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter’s field as a place to bury foreigners. 8 For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, 10 and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord commanded me.”



John Polhill (*New American Commentary*, Logos Systems) provides helpful summation of these two narratives:

Luke provided us with the story of Judas's demise in vv. 18–19. Judas purchased a field (literally, “an estate or farm”) with “the reward he got for his wickedness.” The reference is clearly to the money the temple officials agreed to pay Judas for leading them to Jesus (Luke 22:5). The language is more obscure in the remainder of v. 18: “And becoming prone, he burst in the middle, and all his entrails poured out” (literal translation). The NIV probably is right in interpreting the strange phrase “becoming prone” as “fell headlong.”⁵⁵⁹ The picture is that of a fall so severe as to open his body cavity and cause his inner organs (*splanchna*) to spill out. In consequence of this gory death the field became known by Jerusalem locals as Akeldama. For his non-Semitic readers, Luke translated the Aramaic word—“that is, Field of Blood.” Matthew gave a fuller account of Judas's death. Despite significant differences in detail, the main emphases are the same in the two accounts — the purchase of a field with Judas's blood money, the grisly death of the betrayer, the naming of the field “Field of Blood.”⁶⁶⁰ For



⁵⁵⁹ Evidence exists that some of the early versions of Acts took *πρηνή* (“prone”) as *πρησθεῖ* (“swollen”); for the Syriac, Georgian, and Armenian versions translate it as “having swelled up.” Perhaps this was an early attempt to explain how a headlong fall could lead to rupture. There may be some connection with a later tradition of Judas's death, attributed to Papias by Apollinarius of Laodicea, according to which Judas became ill and swelled up to such enormous proportions that even an ox cart could not negotiate past him in a narrow street. See *Beginnings* 5:22–30. One should also not overlook the parallel with the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in 2 Macc 9:8.

⁶⁶⁰ The most significant difference between the two accounts is that Judas hung himself in the Matthean version. An early attempt to deal with this is found in the early Latin Vulgate, where “prone” is translated “suspended.” Augustine likewise suggested that the rope by which Judas hung himself broke, causing him to fall headlong and burst open. For a harmonization of all the differences between the two accounts, see C. W. Carter and R. Earle, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959), 20–21; A. B. Gordon, “The Fate of Judas According to Acts 1:18,” *EvQ* 43 (1971): 97–100. For the view that the Judas tradition originated as a midrash on *Akeldama*, see M. Wilcox, “The Judas Tradition in Acts 1:15–26,” *NTS* 19 (1973): 438–42; F. Manns, “Un Midrash Chrétien: Le Recit de la mort de Judas,” *RSR* 54 (1980): 197–203.

Peter the recollection of Judas's gruesome end must have been a grim reminder of his own denial of his Lord as he now sought to lead the assembly to fill the abandoned post.

Luke's use of the two passages from the Psalms reflects the LXX and a movement toward his Greek speaking, rather than Aramaic speaking, readers, as John Stott (*The Message of Acts, The Bible Speaks Today*, Logos Systems) notes:

It is written is a set formula used for the introduction of a quotation from the Old Testament. The first passage quoted is Psalm 69:25. The Psalm has the plural form:

**“May their houses become empty,
Let no one live in their tents.”**

Peter uses it in the singular since he applies the meaning of the Psalm solely to Judas. The second passage quoted (Psalm 109:8) is an almost exact quotation from the Septuagint. Whereas the first passage expresses the wish that the house or home of Judas would be left empty, the second passage expresses the need for *someone else* to take his place of service, and thus serves as a transition to verses 21–26. *Place of service* (variously rendered “office,” “ministry,” “charge”) should be translated in such a way as to show that the emphasis is upon the service that the apostle renders rather than the office which he holds. It is not at all likely that at this early date the institutional life of the church had become so developed as to have had an office of apostleship. In any case, Luke defines the primary function of an apostle as *a witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus* (vv. 21–22).

Verses 21–22, one sentence in the Greek text, place on the table the necessity of filling the vacancy in light of the scripture mandates in the preceding Psalms quotes. The sentence focuses on the requirements for consideration to this position. Essentially, the individual must have traveled with Jesus and the Twelve “from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us.” This was the period of Jesus' earthly ministry as connoted by the phrase “during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us.” With this prerequisite put forth, Peter then spelled out the essential mission of this replacement apostle: “one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.”

Substantial implication is present with these pa-

rameters. It assumes that a larger group of people, unnamed by the gospels, did travel with Jesus from the outset of his public ministry. Luke in 8:1-3 provides some hint toward this, but none of the gospel accounts bothers to detail any of this information. Also, the assumption is that several of those individuals were present in the group of 120 gathered in the upper room that day.

Then, the decision, vv. 23-26. The group then selected two individuals, Joseph called Barsabbas and Matthias, to present to the apostles for them to select the replacement apostle. These two individuals are hardly known outside of this passage, as Polhill (NAC, Logos Systems) observes:

The assembly put forward two candidates who met the qualifications, Joseph and Matthias (v. 23). Joseph is described as also having been called Barsabbas, “son of the Sabbath.” Jews and proselytes often bore Gentile nicknames, among which “Justus” was common (cf. Acts 18:7; Col 4:11). Nothing more is known of Joseph except for a later tradition cited by Eusebius that as a result of his missionary work he was forced to drink poison and suffered no ill effects.⁷⁶² Matthias, whose name means *gift of God*, is merely mentioned with no further fanfare. Later tradition speculated that he became a missionary to the Ethiopians or that his bones were buried in Germany at Treves.⁸⁶³ In the Acts text Joseph is given such prominence that one would expect *him* to have been chosen, perhaps a reminder that God’s ways are not always man’s ways.⁹⁶⁴ The assembly did turn the matter over to God by praying for divine direction (v. 24).

Before making their choice, the apostles pray, seeking God’s leadership: “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” Once they had prayed, “they drew lots for them, and the lot

⁷⁶² From the second century on, there are many such traditions about the other apostles that seem primarily to be later attempts to fill in the gaps left by Acts. They are usually fanciful and offer little historical credibility. Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 3:39) attributes the Joseph tradition to one of Philip’s prophesying daughters. See C. S. C. Williams, *The Acts of the Apostles*, HNTC (New York: Harper, 1957), 61.

⁸⁶³ For Ethiopia see Bruce, *Acts*: NIC, 51; for Germany see Haenchen, *Acts*, 162. Other traditional speculations were that Matthias is another name for Zacchaeus (according to Clement of Alexandria) or Barnabas (*The Clementine Recognitions*): *Beginnings* 4:14–15.

⁹⁶⁴ Schneider, *Apostelgeschichte* 1:120.

fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.” Once more, Polhill’s comments (NAC, Logos Systems) are helpful:

The Greek text reads literally “they gave lots to them.” The meaning seems to be that they *assigned* lots for them. The method was likely the one depicted in the Old Testament. Marked stones were placed in a jar and shaken out. The one whose stone fell out first was chosen (cf. 1 Chr 26:13f.). Some have wanted to see Matthias selected by vote of the church,¹⁰⁶⁶ but the text points more to the ancient procedure of lot-casting. One should not be put off by the “chance” element. In the Old Testament the outcome was always seen to be determined by God. That was probably the consideration in this case. Before Pentecost, before the presence of the Spirit to lead it, the church sought the direction of God and used the Old Testament procedure of securing divine decision. After Pentecost the church in Acts made its own decisions under the direction of the Spirit. In this particular instance it was all the more important that the decision be the Lord’s, not theirs. Like his first selection of the Twelve, its constituency was his to determine.¹¹⁶⁷

How do verses 15-26 relate to us today?

Some thoughts come to mind about legitimate and ill-legitimate applications of these verses. **First**, the role of leaders in the church is important. Peter spoke as the leader of the apostles who were the acknowledged leaders of the larger group. But Peter wisely involved the entire group in the decision making process of finding a replacement for Judas. That remains vitally important in church life today. **Second**, both the apostles and the church understood that the individual chosen should be the person that God had selected, not one of their own choosing. They sought that understanding through prayer. This remains valid for our day as well. **Third**, although they “cast lots” to determine God’s will, this was a temporary measure which concluded here, as Polhill points out above. This method no longer applies to churches making a decision. In our American democratic culture, voting becomes the preferred way as it works off the assumption of the prayerful decision of each member of the group.

When the community of believers is sincerely seeking God’s leadership -- both its leaders and its members -- good things will happen and the community stands a much better chance of finding God’s will. **Then and now!**

¹⁰⁶⁶ Munck (*Acts*, 10) argues for casting by ballot.

¹¹⁶⁷ Reicke, *Glaube und Leben*, 26.

Greek NT	NASB	NRSV	NLT
<p>12 Τότε ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἀπὸ ὄρους τοῦ καλουμένου Ἐλαιῶνος, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐγγὺς Ἱερουσαλὴμ σαββάτου ἔχον ὁδόν. 13 καὶ ὅτε εἰσῆλθον, εἰς τὸ ὑπερῶν ἀνέβησαν οὗ ἦσαν καταμένοντες, ὃ τε Πέτρος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἀνδρέας, Φίλιππος καὶ Θωμᾶς, Βαρθολομαῖος καὶ Μαθθαῖος, Ἰάκωβος Ἀλφαίου καὶ Σίμων ὁ ζηλωτὴς καὶ Ἰούδας Ἰακώβου. 14 οὗτοι πάντες ἦσαν προσκατεροῦντες ὁμοθυμαδὸν τῇ προσευχῇ σὺν γυναιξὶν καὶ Μαρὶάμ τῇ μητρὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ.</p> <p>15 Καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις ἀναστὰς Πέτρος ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν εἶπεν· ἦν τε ὄχλος ὀνομάτων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὥσεί ἐκατὸν εἴκοσι. 16 ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, ἔδει πληρωθῆναι τὴν γραφὴν ἣν προεῖπεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον διὰ στόματος Δαυὶδ περὶ Ἰούδα τοῦ γενομένου ὁδηγοῦ τοῖς συλλαβοῦσιν Ἰησοῦν, 17 ὅτι κατηριθμημένος ἦν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ ἔλαχεν τὸν κληῖρον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης. 18 οὗτος μὲν οὖν ἐκτήσατο χωρίον ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδικίας καὶ πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησεν μέσος καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ. 19 καὶ γνωστὸν ἐγένετο πᾶσι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν Ἱερουσαλὴμ, ὥστε κληθῆναι τὸ χωρίον ἐκεῖνο τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν Ἀκελδαμάχ, τοῦτ' ἐστὶν χωρίον αἵματος. 20 γέγραπται γὰρ ἐν βίβλῳ ψαλμῶν· γεννηθήτω ἡ</p>	<p>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 up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, 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.</p> <p>14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.</p> <p>15 At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, 16 "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. 17 "For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry." 18 (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out. 19 And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>14 All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. 13 When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying. Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the Zealot), and Judas (son of James). 14 They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.</p> <p>15 During this time, when about 120 believers were together in one place, Peter stood up and addressed them. 16 "Brothers," he said, "the Scriptures had to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided those who arrested Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David. 17 Judas was one of us and shared in the ministry with us." 18 (Judas had bought a field with the money he received for his treachery. Falling headfirst there, his body split open, spilling out all his intestines. 19 The news of his death spread to all the people of Jerusalem, and they gave the</p>

Ἐπαυλὶς αὐτοῦ ἔρημος καὶ μὴ ἔστω ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ λαβέτω ἕτερος. 21 δεῖ οὖν τῶν συνελθόντων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν ἐν παντὶ χρόνῳ ᾧ εἰσῆλθεν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς, 22 ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος Ἰωάννου ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ἣς ἀνελήμφθη ἀφ’ ἡμῶν, μάρτυρα τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ σὺν ἡμῖν γενέσθαι ἓνα τούτων. 23 Καὶ ἔστησαν δύο, Ἰωσήφ τὸν καλούμενον Βαρσαββᾶν ὃς ἐπεκλήθη Ἰοῦστος, καὶ Μαθθίαν. 24 καὶ προσευξάμενοι εἶπαν· σὺ κύριε καρδιογνώστα πάντων, ἀνάδειξον ὃν ἐξελέξω ἐκ τούτων τῶν δύο ἓνα 25 λαβεῖν τὸν τόπον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης καὶ ἀποστολῆς ἀφ’ ἧς παρέβη Ἰούδας πορευθῆναι εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον. 26 καὶ ἔδωκαν κλήρους αὐτοῖς καὶ ἔπεσεν ὁ κλῆρος ἐπὶ Μαθθίαν καὶ συγκατεψηφίσθη μετὰ τῶν ἑνδεκα ἀποστόλων.

language that field was called Aakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 “For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his homestead be made desolate, And let no one dwell in it’; and, ‘Let another man take his office.’ 21 “Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us — 22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.” 23 So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen 25 to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” 26 And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

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 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 added to the eleven apostles.

place the Aramaic name Akeldama, which means “Field of Blood.”) 20 Peter continued, “This was written in the book of Psalms, where it says, ‘Let his home become desolate, with no one living in it.’ It also says, ‘Let someone else take his position.’ 21 “So now we must choose a replacement for Judas from among the men who were with us the entire time we were traveling with the Lord Jesus — 22 from the time he was baptized by John until the day he was taken from us. Whoever is chosen will join us as a witness of Jesus’ resurrection.” 23 So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they all prayed, “O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen 25 as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs.” 26 Then they cast lots, and Matthias was selected to become an apostle with the other eleven.

Greek NT Diagram

12	Τότε			
1	ὑπέστρεψαν			
	εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ			
	ἀπὸ ὄρους			
	τοῦ καλουμένου Ἐλαιῶνος,			
	ὃ ἐστὶν ἐγγὺς Ἱερουσαλήμ			
	σαββάτου ἔχον ὁδόν.			
13	καὶ			
	ὅτε εἰσῆλθον,			
	εἰς τὸ ὑπερῶν			
2	ἀνέβησαν			
	οὗ ἦσαν καταμένοντες,			
	τε			
	ὁ Πέτρος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἀνδρέας,			
	Φίλιππος καὶ Θωμᾶς, Βαρθολομαῖος καὶ Μαθθαῖος,			
	Ἰάκωβος Ἀλφαίου καὶ Σίμων ὁ ζηλωτὴς καὶ Ἰούδας Ἰακώβου.			
3	14 οὗτοι πάντες ἦσαν προσκαρτεροῦντες			
	ὁμοθυμαδὸν			
	τῇ προσευχῇ			
	σὺν γυναιξίν			
	καὶ			
	Μαριὰμ τῇ μητρὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ			
	καὶ			
	τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ.			
15	Καὶ			
	ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις			
	ἀναστὰς ...			
	ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν			
4	Πέτροςεἶπεν·			
	τε			
5	ἦν ὄχλος			
	ὀνομάτων			
	ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ			
	ὥσεὶ ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι·			
16	ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί,			
a	ἔδει πληρωθῆναι τὴν γραφὴν			
	ἣν προεῖπεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον			
	διὰ στόματος Δαυὶδ			
	περὶ Ἰούδα			
	τοῦ γενομένου ὁδηγοῦ			
	τοῖς συλλαβοῦσιν Ἰησοῦν,			
17	ὅτι κατηριθιμημένος ἦν			
	ἐν ἡμῖν			
	καὶ			
	ἔλαχεν τὸν κλῆρον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης.			

		μέν			
6	18	οὗτος... ἐκτήσατο χωρίον			
		ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδικίας			
		καὶ			
7		πρηνὴς γενόμενος			
		ἐλάκησεν μέσος			
		καὶ			
8		ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ·			
	19	καὶ			
9		γνωστὸν ἐγένετο			
		πᾶσι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν Ἱερουσαλὴμ,			
		ὥστε κληθῆναι τὸ χωρίον ἐκεῖνο τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν Ἀκελδαμάχ,			
		τοῦτ' ἔστιν χωρίον αἵματος.			
	20	γάρ			
b			γέγραπται		
			ἐν βίβλῳ ψαλμῶν·		
		γενηθήτω ἡ ἔπαυλις αὐτοῦ ἔρημος			
		καὶ			
		μὴ ἔστω ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν αὐτῇ,			
		καί·			
		τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ λαβέτω ἕτερος.			
	21	οὗν			
c		δεῖ...			
		τῶν συνελθόντων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν			
		ἐν παντὶ χρόνῳ			
		ὥ			
			εἰσῆλθεν		
			καὶ		
			ἐξῆλθεν		
			ἐφ' ἡμᾶς		
	22	ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς,			
			ἀρξάμενος		
			ἀπὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος Ἰωάννου		
			ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας		
			ἧς ἀνελήμφθη		
			ἀφ' ἡμῶν,		
		μάρτυρα τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ			
		σὺν ἡμῖν			
		...γενέσθαι ἓνα τούτων.			
	23	Καὶ			
10		ἔστησαν δύο,			
		Ἰωσήφ			
		τὸν καλούμενον Βαρσαββᾶν			
		ὃς ἐπεκλήθη Ἰοῦστος,			
		καὶ			
		Μαθθίαν.			

	24	καὶ προσευξάμενοι			
11		εἶπαν·			
d		κύριε καρδιογνώστα πάντων, σὺ...ἀνάδειξον			
		ὃν ἐξελέξω... ἓνα			
	25	ἐκ τούτων τῶν δύο λαβεῖν τὸν τόπον			
		τῆς διακονίας ταύτης			
		καὶ			
		ἀποστολῆς			
		ἀφ' ἧς παρέβη Ἰούδας			
		πορευθῆναι			
		εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον.			
	26	καὶ			
12		ἔδωκαν κλήρους αὐτοῖς			
		καὶ			
13		ἔπεσεν ὁ κλῆρος			
		ἐπὶ Μαθθίαν			
		καὶ			
14		συγκατεψηφίσθη			
		μετὰ τῶν ἑνδεκα ἀποστόλων.			

Semantic Diagram

				1	Τότε	1	Aor	Act	Ind	3	P	(οἱ μαθηταί)
					καὶ							
I--				2		2	Aor	Act	Ind	3	P	(οἱ μαθηταί)

				3		Impf	---		Ind	3	P	οὗτοι πάντες
					Καὶ							
				4		2	Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	Πέτρος
					τε							
				5		Impf	---		Ind	3	S	ὄχλος
					οὖν							
				6		1	Aor	Dep	Ind	3	S	οὗτος
					καὶ							
				7		1	Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	οὗτος
					καὶ							
				8		1	Aor	Pass	Ind	3	S	πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ
					καὶ							
				9		2	Aor	Dep	Ind	3	S	(αὐτό)
II--					Καὶ							
				10		1	Aor	Act	Ind	3	P	(ὄχλος = αὐτοί)
					καὶ							
				11		2	Aor	Act	Ind	3	P	(οἱ μαθηταί)
					καὶ							
				12		1	Aor	Act	Ind	3	P	(οἱ μαθηταί)
					καὶ							
				13		2	Aor	Act	Ind	3	S	ὁ κληρὸς
					καὶ							
				14		1	Aor	Pass	Ind	3	S	(Ματθίας)

Summary of Rhetorical Structure

The passage naturally divides into two segments: 1) a summary of activities after returning to Jerusalem from the Mt. of Olives (#s 1-3), and 2) the choosing of a replacement for Judas (#s 4-14).

The first unit (#s 1-3) depicts first the return from the mount (# 1), and to the upper room in Jerusalem (# 2). Inserted as an independent list are the names of the eleven who witnessed the ascension of Jesus on Mt. Olivet. These are grouped into three groups of four with the third group containing only three names. Once back in Jerusalem these men focused on prayer (# 3). Others who gathered with them are mentioned as 1) unnamed women, 2) Mary, the mother of Jesus, and 3) the brothers of Jesus here unnamed.

The second unit (#s 4-14) subdivides naturally into two blocks of material: 1) Peter's proposal to replace Judas (#s 4-9) and the group's selection of Matthias (#s 10-14). In the first sub-unit, Luke does some very creative writing. He injects parenthetical material in the midst of Peter's verbal proposal. First, Peter speaks (# 4), but Luke interrupts with an identification of the group as numbering 120 people (#5). Then Peter begins speaking with his initial words recorded (#a). This is interrupted with the depiction of Judas' death (#s 6-9). Then Peter's speech is resumed (#s b-c).

The selection of a replacement (#s 10-14) begins with the group standing two individuals before the Eleven (# 10). The eleven then pray for God's guidance (# 11), cast lots (# 12), and the lot falls on Matthias (# 13). He is then added to the group of apostles (# 14).