



Acts Book Study Chapters 11-12
Sunday July 07, 2024

ACTS CHAPTER ELEVEN

Peter: "Who Was I To Try And Stop God" (Acts 11:1-18)

God had done an amazing work at the house of Cornelius, the Roman Centurion. The Gospel had been preached for the first time to the non-Jewish world. Cornelius, his family and close friends had been saved, baptized in the Spirit, and in water.

As Peter heads back to Jerusalem, from Caesarea, the apostles and others question him. They are particularly concerned about Peter a Jew, having gone into the home of a Gentile (non-Jewish).

Peter recounts the entire experience. Some of the key points:

Acts 11:12

Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing.

Peter had a clear directive from the Holy Spirit in what He did. And God confirmed it in all that happened subsequently.

Acts 11:15-17

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning.

16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

17 If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?"

Vs 15: The "seed" (God's Word) and the "rain" (God's Spirit). We must have both to have a harvest.

The people believed the message about Jesus Christ. They got saved even before the "altar call"!

God baptized them right away with the Holy Spirit.

What happened on the Day of Pentecost, kept happening, and happened yet again at the house of Cornelius.

Everyone Agreed!

Acts 11:18



When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

Peter was not just presenting a private vision he had which no one else could verify. There were multiple incidents – God speaking to Cornelius very clearly, God speaking to Peter through a vision, and most importantly, what happened at Cornelius' house, were all in line and in agreement. The apostles agreed and glorified God. There were two additional unquestionable “witnesses” (events in this case) the corroborated Peter’s vision for it to be established (2 Corinthians 13:1).

God Expands Our Spiritual Understanding

God’s heart is for all people and God is not partial to anyone. From the time God called Abraham, His plan was to bless all the families of the earth. However, the church at that time thought that the Messiah, and the Gospel they were proclaiming were for the Jews only. God was expanding their spiritual understanding to help them understand what He was always speaking of – that the nations of the earth, all families of the earth were to be blessed.

The Church in Antioch (Acts 11:19-26)

Acts 11:19-21

There is a “flashback” here to what happened in Acts 8:1-4, where believers were scattered from Jerusalem. These believers went preaching Jesus in “Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch”, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only” (Acts 11:19). Phoenicia was a district (province) north of Galilee, along the Mediterranean coastline having cities such as Ptolemais, Zarephath, Tyre, and Sidon. This would be modern day Lebanon. Cyprus is an island off the Mediterranean coast. Antioch the capital of Syria about 300 miles north of Jerusalem, and 20 miles inland, was among the larger cities at that time, possibly the third largest city in the Roman Empire after the cities of Rome and Alexandria (in Egypt). Antioch was an important city that had a large Jewish population, and a larger non-Jewish community.

A church was established in Antioch, when the believers who had been dispersed brought the Gospel there. Some of the dispersed believers were from Cyprus, and some from Cyrene, in Libya, North Africa, who were able to reach the Hellenists, or Greek speaking Jews with the Gospel.



Acts – Book Study – Chapters 11-12
Sermon Notes, Sermon Outline and Small Group Study Guide



Once again, as in Samaria (Acts 8), the church in Antioch was not established by apostles or prophets, but by believers. Acts 11:21 states that the hand of the Lord was with them. The “hand of the Lord” is a Biblical term that refers to the power of God at work. These are the signs and wonders through healings, deliverance and miracles.

Leadership Matters - Barnabas At Antioch (Acts 11:22-24)

The apostles at Jerusalem recognized the need for good spiritual leadership for the new community of believers at Antioch, and they sent just the right person, Barnabas, the encourager. From the natural standpoint, Barnabas, was himself from the island of Cyprus, and hence would have also culturally related well with the Hellenistic Jewish believers at Antioch, compared to the 12 apostles who were Galilean Jews (Hebrew Jews) who were followers of Jesus.

Good spiritual leadership is important for the health of the local church.

Barnabas recognized what the Lord was already doing at Antioch and was glad. He did not become jealous that great things were happening apart from him. *“When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad”.*

He encouraged the believers to purposefully continue following the Lord. He did not seek to get people to follow him. *“..encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.”*



His own life and ministry caused the church to grow. Church growth is often connected to church leadership. *"For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord."*

We also see a great example of how the Jerusalem church helped nurture new churches, by sending them leaders who could serve and impart into their lives.

A Pivotal Moment – Barnabas Looks For Saul (Acts 11:25)

This is a pivotal moment in the history of the church, stated in one simple verse.

This would have been a 6-day journey, partly on sea and partly on land, covering about 300 kilometers.

What (or Who) prompted Barnabas to go looking for Saul?

Why did Barnabas go looking for Saul?

While there are obvious answers we could think upon, overall, we know that God was in this.

How important it is for us to help position people, move them into the right place, at the right time, for God's purposes for them as individuals and for the church to be released!

Developing A Leadership Team (Acts 11:26)

Barnabas and Saul taught the new believers for a whole year. With Barnabas as the primary leader, they worked together as a team.

An interesting outcome: 'the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch'. The term 'Christian' is mentioned only 3 times in the Bible (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). The term literally means 'a follower of Christ' and implies someone who is looking to become Christlike. Most historians think that this was a term used by those outside the faith, to refer to the disciples of Jesus, in a rather derogatory or demeaning manner.

A Prophetic Word And Material Help (Acts 11:27-30)

The Jerusalem church sent more leaders "prophets" to come and serve the church at Antioch.

This points to two things:

- Leaders were being raised up at the Jerusalem church. Other apostles (apart from the 12 apostles of the Lamb) and prophets were being raised up.
- The Jerusalem church sent their leaders out to serve other local churches, some on long term assignments, and some on short term assignments.



This is something for us to do for the churches we plant around the country and around the world.

Agabus is one of these prophets raised up in the Jerusalem church whom we read about in the book of Acts. He by the Holy Spirit prophesied about a famine that would come in the district of Judea (the word “world” is used in a limited sense, not literal sense).

Here is a great example of how the prophetic word can prepare and move the church into action, in this case, social action or humanitarian aid. Hence the church in Antioch prepared themselves and sent help to the believers in Jerusalem, through Barnabas and Saul.

Each one gave as they were able (Acts 11:29). No one was compelled, forced, or coerced into giving.

ACTS CHAPTER TWELVE

James - The First Apostle To Be Martyred (Acts 12:1-5)

Herod was the surname of a series of rulers who served under the Roman emperor. Herod the Great is the one who was ruling when Jesus was born. Herod Antipas was the next ruler, who beheaded John the Baptist. Herod Agrippa 1, the grandson of Herod the great was the king in Acts 12:1-2, who began to harass some of the believers, and then killed the apostle James. James, was the brother of the apostle John, and along with Peter was among Jesus’ three closest disciples. Herod Agrippa I, was trying to please the Jews who did not like the followers of the Way.

Peter's Second Angelic Jail Break (Acts 12:6-19)

Herod then got Peter put in prison. He assigned maximum security. Four squads, that is four guards at a time, on 6-hour shifts. In addition, Peter was in chains, bound to two soldiers. That is a total of 18 soldiers on duty to guard one man already chained and locked up! This time Herod was taking no chances. He remembered what had happened in Acts 4, with Peter and John, and then with the 12 apostles in Acts 5!

The contest then seemed to be between the king with his soldiers and prison, against a praying church.

Acts 12:5



Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.

The term “constant prayer” can also be translated “fervent prayer” or “earnest prayer”. After His first season of prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord Jesus was strengthened by an angel (Luke 22:43). "And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly...." (Luke 22:44). The same root word is used to refer to more earnest prayer.

We see the outcome – an amazing deliverance, that it took even Peter and the believers some time to accept as real!

The church was meeting in different homes, and we have the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, mentioned for us (Acts 12:12).

We need this kind of prayer happening today!

Herod was embarrassed, perhaps shocked, to say the least. He had the guards killed. Perhaps to avoid the shame of his ‘defeat’ he temporarily went from Jerusalem to the city of Caesarea.

Herod's End - When A Man Exalts Himself As God (Acts 12:20-25)

What we read here is so unusual. One day as Herod sat on his throne and gave an oration and the people exalted him as a god, an angel of God struck him dead.

While Herod met his end, the Scripture simply states:

Acts 12:24

But the word of God grew and multiplied.

SUMMARY

GOSPEL AND SALVATION CALL

SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TIME

Minister as the Spirit leads



Acts – Book Study – Chapters 11-12
Sermon Notes, Sermon Outline and Small Group Study Guide



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This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full-length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at our [sermons page](#). Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship, and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture references: *Please request Life group members to read Acts 11-12, before the Life Group Meeting. This can help save time.*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

1, 'What God has cleansed you must not call common.' (Acts 11:9). How can we apply this in our context today. Consider welcoming people who genuinely come to the faith from difficult backgrounds, life experiences, social communities, etc.



2, God expands our spiritual understanding as He did for the leaders in Acts 11:18. Are there examples in your own life where you had to "adjust" your spiritual understanding based on what you have seen in God's Word?

3, Barnabas went looking for Saul and brought him to Tarsus Acts 11:25. Discuss how important it is to help people be in the right place at the right time to see God's purposes fulfilled in their lives.

4, Discuss the importance of earnest prayer in relation to Peter's deliverance from prison (Acts 12:5).

If time permits, each one can take a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

1, families to be protected and strengthened

2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.

3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for all details to go well as we plan and build our Bible college and church facilities to serve the Lord and people.

Close by thanking God together.



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USEFUL RESOURCES

Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>

SERMON OUTLINE

The book of Acts records the first 40 years of the Early Church. This is a book study of the Acts of the apostles, or more correctly, the acts of the Holy Spirit through the early believers. As we study the book of Acts there are two compelling perspectives that we develop: (A) the Church's DNA – what a Spirit filled church would look like and (B) how the Church would go about fulfilling the Great Commission empowered by the Holy Spirit. We glean spiritual and practical insights from each chapter and share ways we can apply these in our lives. In this sermon we cover Acts chapters 11-12. We follow Peter as he recounts what God did in Caesarea at the house of Cornelius. We look closely at the birth of a new church at Antioch in Syria. We draw insights from Peter's deliverance from prison and the continued growth of the church, despite efforts to stop it.

KEYWORDS

Acts of the apostles, book study of Acts, Gospel preaching, Spirit filled church community, sermons, sermon notes, sermon outline, free sermon notes, free sermon outlines, Bible study resources



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REFERENCES/CITATIONS

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