

“Spoken and Fulfilled”

-> Pastor Damian Mericka / 26 APR 2020

Text: Acts 1:12-26

Series: Acts: Kingdom Vision 20/20

Introduction: With everything that has happened- from Jesus’ resurrection to the many proofs He provided His followers with- there is still an elephant in the room. Judas Iscariot- his betrayal of Jesus and subsequent suicide. What did Judas’ presence mean for the earthly ministry of Jesus; what did his absence mean for the post resurrection Apostles waiting to be sent out? We know everything worked out for the greater good- Jesus is now alive and with Him is the gift of eternal life. But was this always a part of God’s plan? Was Judas God’s failure? What does the life of Judas mean for you and me today? *How are we to understand God’s Sovereignty through His spoken and fulfilled word?*

A Safe Place: “*The Upper Room*”

Turn to Acts 1:12-14. The place the Disciples returned to in Jerusalem is referred to as *the* upper room- in the Greek emphasis is on *the* referring to something already mentioned or understood to be commonly known. Remember, Acts is Part 2 of the author Luke’s writings. The Gospel of Luke was Part 1. The Upper Room mentioned by Luke in Part 1 was where the following took place:

- 1) The Passover / Lords Supper (Luke 22:12-13)
- 2) The Promise of the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-23)

The Disciples most likely returned to the very place Jesus revealed that He was both leaving them and sending them the Helper- the Spirit of God!

Luke narrates that the Disciples **obeyed** Jesus and returned to Jerusalem, in the Upper Room and awaited the arrival of the Helper. There was no doubt or fear among any of them that what Jesus said would happen. They were in one accord in prayer. This was not a prayer meeting about Martha’s toe or Matthews headache- it had a specific focus: *The Spirit coming*. What did they understand this Spirit would bring? (Note Acts 1:8 with John 14:12-14).



The value of God’s Promises in our lives can be seen by how we labor in prayer for them.



God's Sovereignty: "Prophecy Spoken and Prophecy Fulfilled"

Continuing in Acts 1:15-20 Ten days of prayer would occur between Jesus' Ascension and the time of Pentecost. During this period Peter stands to address the elephant in the room- Judas Iscariot. Judas who had been among the original Twelve Disciples was no longer. There are a few things in the text Luke wants the readers to understand as this narrative moves forward.

God is Sovereign

- **Scripture is Fulfilled.** The Disciples are remembering what Jesus said with understanding from the Spirit of God. They are now being led to navigate life from God's Word. Remember Jesus came to fulfill the Law (Matthew 5:17) and spoke of events before hand to strengthen their faith to trust God in His timing (John 14:26 & 29).
 - Acts 1:16(a). **First**, Peter affirms the Scripture (Old Testament) had to be fulfilled. *Why?* Because of the source of Scripture: *God Himself*.
 - God is *greater* than the idols of *Nations* -> Isaiah 46:1-13 (Key- Vv. 8-10)
 - God is *greater* than the idol of *self* -> Psalms 115:1-18 (Key- v. 3)
 - Acts 1:16(b)-17. **Second**, the Scripture foretold the role of Judas. To understand how God's Sovereignty exists between prophecy *spoken* and prophecy *fulfilled*, we need to step back and look at the journey of Judas.
 - Judas was chosen by Jesus to be one of the Twelve at the latter end of the selection process; *empowered to do the work of Gospel Ministry* (Luke 5:12-16 / John 6:71 / Mark 3:13-21)
 - Judas held the money bag and regularly stole from it; this character spoke into Jesus' Ministry negatively (John 12:6).
 - Judas followed his sinful heart to choose betrayal (Matthew 26:14-16) fulfilling the desire of Satan (John 13:21-30) and ultimately fulfilling the Sovereign Will of God (Matthew 26:24-25).
 - Acts 1:18-20. **Third**, this was fulfilled in both the eyes of those who followed Jesus and those who did not. In Matthew 27:3-10 we have the ultimate end of Judas. A place where broken pottery was thrown was purchased to be a burial ground for strangers. This endgame was prophecy *spoken* by God through David in Psalms 69:25 & Psalm 109:8; *fulfilled* now in Judas. In this we see the Sovereignty of God bridge the *spoken* and *fulfilled* (Note -> Romans 9:19-24)

Ephesians 1:11

"In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will."

Apostolic Vacancy: “Qualifications”

Acts 1:20-26. As the weight of what happened with Judas is felt by all in that Upper Room, Peter leads these 120 men and women into the need at hand- “Let another take his office”.

The selection for filling this office would come from the men present in that Upper Room. Whereas Jesus chose them in and of Himself, we find the Disciples exercising discernment at the Spirit’s leading. (The Divine Baton passed from Jesus to the Spirit). This is a new Dispensation- an era where Jesus said the Gospel will go forth into all the world. From Jerusalem, to Samaria, then out to all the earth (**Acts 1:8**)

This is a time between Israel as a Nation receiving *Promise* and knowing *Fulfillment*.

As Jesus told the Disciples in **Acts 1:6-7**, so Paul clarifies in **Romans 11:7-12**.

Such a person needed to have been a part of this movement from the very beginning (Not a novice **1 Timothy 3:6**); beginning with John’s Baptism all the way up through Jesus’ Ascension. Why such a qualification?

Because following Jesus was so hard only one empowered by the Spirit could endure the cost from beginning to the end (**John 6:60-71**). There will be some just like Judas- who will begin and continue for great lengths of time but never be an actual part of the Kingdom of God.

Feel the weight of that.

Understanding, Believing, and Submitting to the Gospel are essential not only for the successor to this office, but for all believers. The Gospel is the foundation on which the Acts Narrative moves forward on; getting it right in the beginning is vital.

What is the Gospel Jesus preached at the beginning and what the Apostles now proclaim; the same which we are continuing to preach today?

- **John 1:29.** The Baptism of John identified Jesus as the lamb from God to atone for sin.
- **Mark 1:14-15.** A turning away from sin (repentance) and belief (faith) in the Atonement.
- **John 3:16-21.** This action is “new birth” into God’s Kingdom through Jesus that transforms us from the inside out. (Note: Matthew 5:2-12)
- **John 14:15.** It manifests as obedience to Jesus on those who receive it.
- **1 Corinthians 1:18.** It is foolishness to those perishing (whom we witness to).
- **Romans 5:8-11.** We are enemies of God and under Wrath without atonement.
- **Romans 1:16-17.** Despite how the world views and responds to it, believers are not ashamed.
- **1 Corinthians 15: 1-11.** It is possible to start but not finish; some having believed in vain.



Atonement

Comes from the Hebrew *kaphar* meaning to cover, purge; to enclose with pitch (note Genesis :14)



As two are put forward (meeting the qualification), the now Apostles rely further on the Spirit to reveal God's choice through lots (**Proverbs 16:33**). This is the last mention of lots being used in the New Testament as the coming of the Holy Spirit in full measure will nullify its need.

Application Time.

Judas' presence among the Disciples reminds us of the weight to take the Gospel seriously. Yes, God is Sovereign working all things in accord with the counsel of his own will. Yes, Jesus chose Judas knowing he would steal from Him, preach falsely alongside Him and ultimately betray Him- yet Judas walked and did life alongside the other Disciples. Judas stuck around longer than most who would abandon Jesus.

Luke closes this chapter with an emphasis on the Gospel believed and lived out as a measure of one's maturity and strength of faith in God.

As we continue doing life in this world under this time of quarantine, we would benefit greatly to examine our own lives and affirm the Spirit's presence and work in transforming us.

Do we believe the full Gospel of Jesus Christ? Are we submitting to the transformation the Spirit is doing within us? Are we faithfully proclaiming and living out the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

As we see many who started following Jesus fall away from Him, let us keep our anchor secure in Him! Let us not give in to the temptation to change the Gospel to get a greater response; let us not seek to equip sinners to continue sinning. (*Like Judas -> Ephesian 4:28*)

If we truly believe the Gospel, like the Apostles let us obey Jesus and be in prayer for His **spoken** Word to be **fulfilled** in our lives and world today!

Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand...

-Acts 1:16