

Acts Volume 1 - The Visual Bible (Acts 1:1-8:3)

So when they met together, they asked Him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After He said this, He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:5-11 NIV

When the day of Pentecost came, the believers were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:1-4 NIV Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit came He gave great boldness and wisdom to the believers. God still gives boldness and wisdom to His people when we ask Him.

Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. Acts 3:6-10 NIV People were amazed at the man's healing but the high priests and teachers of the law were angry and jealous.

Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old. Acts 4:18-22 NIV The high priests and teachers of the law were the same men who had insisted that Jesus be crucified. They were angry that they hadn't stopped the message of Jesus. Through the ages many people have tried to stamp out Christianity. It is happening in many countries today. Pray for Christians all over the world.

More and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed. Acts 5:14-16 NIV No matter how hard the Pharisees and Sadducees tried to stop the message of Christ it only caused it to spread. The power of God was working mightily in Peter and the other apostles. They did many miracles and preached in Jesus' name. The high priests and teachers of the law tried harder to stop the disciples.

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison. Acts 8:1-3 NIV Saul was one of the most determined to stop the spread of the Christian church. He beat the believers and put them into prison until God changed his own heart. Stephen was stoned to death. Doesn't it seem strange that the disciples should be hated for doing what is good? How do you think Christians suffer persecution in our country today?

Dear Lord, You alone have the answers to all of our questions. Fill Your church with wisdom and faith. Set our hearts on fire to know the truth of Your word. Let Your church arise to meet the problems of today. Pour out Your Holy Spirit on the Christian church all over the world. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.