

**Bible Study**  
**Acts 1 6-8**  
**September 3, 2024**  
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**Word Studies:**

Authority-

potential or resource to command, control, or govern, *capability, might, power*<sup>1</sup>The NT word is *exousia*, meaning rightful, actual and unimpeded power to act, or to possess, control, use or dispose of, something or somebody<sup>2</sup>

Power –

potential for functioning in some way, *power, might, strength, force, capability*<sup>3</sup>

Ability to do things, by virtue of strength, skill, resources, or authorization. In the Hebrew of the OT and the Greek of the NT, there are several different words used for power. What the Bible says about power may be subsumed under four headings: (1) the unlimited power of God; (2) the limited power God gives to his creatures; (3) the power of God seen in Jesus Christ; and (4) the power of God (by the Holy Spirit) in the lives of his people.<sup>4</sup>

Words deriving from the stem δυνα- all have the basic meaning of “being able,” of “capacity” in virtue of an ability;<sup>5</sup>

Witnesses-

one who affirms or attests, *testifier, witness*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 352.

<sup>2</sup> J. I. Packer, “Authority,” ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 105.

<sup>3</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 262.

<sup>4</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 1067.

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 284.

<sup>6</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 619.

In the Legal Sphere. In the LXX, too, μάρτυς belongs to the legal world and denotes the witness before the judgment, in the first instance the witness for the prosecution<sup>7</sup>

In this trial between God and the nations and their gods, Israel, on the basis of the guidance, deliverance and revelation which is grounded in its election and which it has experienced, will declare to the nations of the world the uniqueness, reality, and deity of God. Hence they are His witnesses...The content of the witness is thus a religious truth of which the witness is convinced on the basis of his experience. It is a religious certainty whose content he emphatically represents, for whose acknowledgment he strives, but for the correctness of which he cannot give any rational proof or present any empirical demonstration<sup>8</sup>

### Commentary Notes:

**Power** (δυναμιν [*dunamin*]). Not the “power” about which they were concerned (political organization and equipments for empire on the order of Rome). Their very question was ample proof of their need of this new “power” (δυναμιν [*dunamin*]), to enable them (from δυναμαι [*dunamai*], to be able), to grapple with the spread of the gospel in the world. **When the Holy Ghost is come upon you** (ἐπελθοντος του ἁγίου πνευματος ἐφ’ ὑμας [*epelthontos tou hagiou pneumatos eph’ humas*]). Genitive absolute and is simultaneous in time with the preceding verb “shall receive” (λημψεσθε [*lēmpesthe*]). The Holy Spirit will give them the “power” as he comes upon them. This is the baptism of the Holy Spirit referred to in verse 5. **My witnesses** (μου μαρτυρες [*mou martures*]). Correct text. “Royal words of magnificent and Divine assurance” (Furneaux). Our word martyrs is this word μαρτυρες [*martures*]. In Luke 24:48 Jesus calls the disciples “witnesses to these things” (μαρτυρες τουτων [*martures toutōn*], objective genitive). In Acts 1:22 an apostle has to be a “witness to the Resurrection” of Christ and in 10:39 to the life and work of Jesus. Hence there could be no “apostles” in this sense after the first generation. But here the apostles are called “my witnesses.” “His by a direct personal relationship” (Knowling). The expanding sphere of their witness when the Holy Spirit comes upon them is “unto the uttermost part of the earth” (ἕως ἔσχατου της γης [*heōs eschatou tēs gēs*]). Once they had been commanded to avoid Samaria (Matt. 10:5), but now it is included in the world program as already outlined on the mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:19=Mark 16:15). Jesus is on Olivet as he points to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the uttermost (last, ἔσχατου [*eschatou*]) part of the earth. The program still beckons us on to world conquest for Christ. “The Acts themselves form the best commentary on these words, and the words themselves might be given as the best summary of the Acts” (Page). The events follow this outline (Jerusalem till the end of chapter 7, with the martyrdom of Stephen, the scattering of the saints through Judea

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<sup>7</sup> Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 483.

<sup>8</sup> Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 484.

and Samaria in chapter 8, the conversion of Saul, chapter 9, the spread of the gospel to Romans in Caesarea by Peter (chapter 10), to Greeks in Antioch (chapter 11), finally Paul's world tours and arrest and arrival in Rome (chapters 11 to 28).<sup>9</sup>

1:6. The disciples' question, **Lord are You at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?** is most illuminating.

The sentence is introduced by the connective *so (men oun)*, which associates the thought of verse 6 with verse 5. In the disciples' minds the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the coming of the promised kingdom were closely associated. And well they should be, because the Old Testament frequently joined the two (cf. Isa. 32:15–20; 44:3–5; Ezek. 39:28–29; Joel 2:28–3:1; Zech. 12:8–10). When Christ told the disciples of the soon-coming Spirit baptism, they immediately concluded that the restoration of Israel's kingdom was near in time (cf. comments on “restore” in Acts 3:21).

1:7. Some conclude from the Lord's response that the apostles had a false concept of the kingdom. But this is wrong. Christ did not accuse them of this. If the followers of the Lord Jesus had an incorrect view, this would have been the time for Him to correct it. The fact is, Christ taught the coming of an earthly, literal kingdom (cf. Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:11–27; 22:28–30). Acts 1:3 states that the Lord instructed the disciples about the kingdom; He certainly gave them the right impression as to its character and future coming. What Jesus discussed here (v. 7) was the *time* of the coming of the kingdom. The Greek word for **times** (*chronous*) basically describes duration of times, and the word for **dates** (*kairous*) refers to both length of times and kinds of times (as in, e.g., “hard times”). The disciples were **not ... to know** either the times or the critical periods **the Father had set by His ... authority**. Later, further revelation would be made concerning these (cf. 1 Thes. 5:1).

1:8. This verse contrasts (*alla, but*) with verse 7. Instead of knowing the times or dates, the apostles were to be Christ's witnesses **to the ends of the earth**. This they were to do after they had been supernaturally empowered by **the Holy Spirit**.

The meaning of the clause **you will be My witnesses** is subject to question. Is this a command, or is it a simple statement of fact? Grammatically the words may be taken either way, but because of 10:42 (cf. 4:20) it is clearly an imperative in the future tense.

Probably “the ends (sing., ‘end’ in the Gr. text) of the earth” looks to Rome, the proud center of world civilization in the Apostolic Age, a significant distance from Jerusalem (more than 1,400 miles, as the crow flies).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Ac 1:8.

<sup>10</sup>sing. singular

6. On vv. 6–8 see Wilson (*Gentiles* 78–96) who, in dispute with Klein (*Apostel* 210), raises a number of important points.

οἱ μὲν οὖν (the first occurrence of a very characteristic Acts phrase, and a hint that Luke himself has formulated the sentence—so Weiser 51) συνεληθόντες. Davies (*Land* 265) thinks that μὲν οὖν signifies that the subject changes; Luke is no longer writing only of the close apostles (v. 2) but of a ‘more indefinite group’. The Greek is in fact ambiguous (see BDR § 251); it may be *those then who had assembled* (implying a fresh group), or *they, then, when they had assembled*. The context points to the latter alternative. The persons in question are to receive the Holy Spirit and to be witnesses (v. 8), and though it is not said in 2:1 that only the apostles received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost this may well be implied, and they were certainly the primary witnesses (1:22; 2:14, 32; 4:33). Thus it is the apostles who raise the question of this verse, as they were those addressed in v. 5.

ἠρώτων: as in classical usage, the imperfect is used for a question because the action of questioning is incomplete until an answer is given.

There is nothing in the word κύριε to show whether it is simply a respectful term used in addressing a person of some importance or has a specific theological content. The context shows that the speakers believe that the person addressed has the power at the appropriate time to restore government to Israel, that is, to put into effect (what is believed to be) the intention of God. He is the Messiah. For κύριος see further pp. 151f.

εἰ introduces a direct question. This use of the particle (which regularly introduces indirect questions) recurs at 7:1 but is not classical; it occurs elsewhere in the NT and also in the LXX, so that it is often explained as a Hebraism (BDR § 440; Zerwick § 401). The parallel with ὅτι, increasingly used to introduce direct as well as indirect statements, may have contributed to the development (cf. Zerwick § 402, n. 1). The question has been described as incredible after forty days of teaching about the kingdom of God. It may be that the reference to the Holy Spirit was taken to be a sign of the end; it is better to see here the way in which Luke provides an opportunity for a statement of great importance to be made.

χρόνος, normally an interval of time, must here denote a particular point in time: Is this the moment at which ...? It is thus indistinguishable from καιρός (cf. v. 7)—a warning that, in NT Greek, it is unwise to build much upon the distinction between the two words.

ἀποκαθιστάνεις, *are you restoring?* futuristic present. The verb form (instead of ἀποκαθίστημι) is an example of the tendency, begun already in Homer and virtually complete in Modern Greek (M. 1:55), to replace—μι verbs with verbs in—ω. The question shows a Jewish interest (Klausner, *Jesus* 402), and has been held to prove the existence of a Zealot element among the disciples of Jesus (Davies, *Land* 338, mentions but does not hold this view). It is nearer to the truth to say that Luke uses the question to underline the non-nationalist character of the Christian movement; the disciples asked it (thus by their failure to perceive the truth eliciting the positive statement of v. 8) before the gift of the Spirit in ch. 2. Thereafter they would be in no doubt about God’s

eschatological plans, which Luke clearly understands to be universal rather than nationalist. See however on v. 8; the spread of the kingdom will happen through the witness of the apostles. With ἀποκαθιστάνεις, cf. ἀποκατάστασις in 3:22. Since Mal. 3:23 (LXX) the word had been an apocalyptic terminus technicus (Haenchen; 149); according to Schneider 201 it represents מִקְיָה (but not in Malachi) and there is an element of repetition (Wieder) in it—the restoration of what had formerly been. The latter point is correct here, but is given by the context rather than by the word itself. Bultmann (*Exegetica* 375) believes that at 3:22 (see the note) we may see the typological method operating on the principle *Mosezeit—Heilzeit*. Whether the present passage is to be understood in the same way is, he says, doubtful. We may however be confident that it should not be understood in this way, at least in Luke’s intention. His concern here is not to bring out a parallel between the former Redeemer (Moses) and the latter Redeemer (the Messiah) but to point out a difference between a Jewish and the Christian understanding of the purpose of God. Restoration of the kingdom to Israel is regularly prayed for in the Eighteen Benedictions and in the Qaddish. In this verse the word βασιλεία stands by itself and probably means simply *sovereignty*; the apostles inquire whether Israel is once more to enjoy the wide dominion that it enjoyed in the time of David. According to Schille 71 it is necessary to supply with βασιλεία *of God*; this is correct only in the sense that when properly understood Israel’s sovereignty is a way of expressing God’s. It is, according to Luke, in the life of Christians that God’s sovereignty is expressed.

D has ἀποκαταστάνεις εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. Black (AA 115) suggests the possibility that here (and at Lk. 19:44, also D) we may have an Aramaism: εἰς could represent the Aramaic ܘ used as the sign of the direct object. His alternative explanation, however, that εἰς is a dittograph of the last syllable of ἀποκαταστάνεις, is more probable. Augustine (Ropes, ad loc.) several times has si in hoc tempore (re)praesentaberis, et quando regnum Israel. Bengel has the note, ‘Apostoli, re praesupposita, quaerebant de *tempore*: et pariter se habet subsequens responsio.’ This seems to be correct; that is, the apostles are not rebuked for asking an improper question; the question is a proper one, but no answer is to be given. See on the next verse.

7. The question of v. 6 receives no direct answer. Betz (98) compares the reply of Rhadamanthys to a similar question: ὁ δὲ ἔφασκεν ἀφίξεσθαι μὲν εἰς τὴν πατρίδα ... τὸν δὲ χρόνον οὐκ ἔτι τῆς ἐπανόδου προσθεῖναι ἠθέλησεν (Lucian, *Vera Historia* 2:27). There is however a good deal of difference between Acts and the *True Story*, and a more useful comparison is Mk 13:32, though in the Marcan context the parousia appears to be placed within the first generation of Christians (see however Cranfield, *Mark* 408). Luke is careful not to include the Son in his parallel to Mk 13:32 and to avoid any such approximation to the time of the end. *Begs.* 4:8 follows the Western text and translates, ‘No one can know’. This reading is found only in Augustine (Nemo potest cognoscere) and may reflect no more than inaccurate quotation (possibly of Mk 13:32) from memory. It is not denied (see the quotation from Bengel on v. 6) that there will be a time when the kingdom is restored to Israel, though the book as a whole makes clear

that Israel, the people of God, is receiving a new definition. This seems a better way of describing what is in mind than to say (Maddox 107) that the use of βασιλεία in Acts shows that Luke cannot mean that God will restore the kingdom of Israel. Bede with small variations quotes Jerome (MPL 26:181c): ... ostendit quod et ipse sciat ... sed non expediat nosse mortalibus; ut semper incerti de adventu iudicis sic cotidie vivant, quia die alia iudicandi sint; but Luke's intention is rather to emphasise a new development in God's dealings with the world than to threaten with the uncertainty of the future. Cf. Mekhilta Exodus 16:32 (59b): No one knows ... when the kingdom of the house of David will be put back in its place, and when the evil kingdom will be wiped out.

It is hardly possible in this verse to make a clear distinction between χρόνος and καιρός, though one might think of καιροί (unspecified points of time) separated by χρόνοι (unspecified intervals). See however on v. 6, and on 3:20, 21 and cf. Dan. 2:21; Eccles. 3:1; Demosthenes 3:16(32) (τίνα γὰρ χρόνον ἢ τίνα καιρόν). Some Latin texts have only tempus, or tempora, possibly because of a lack of suitable synonyms (but cf. the Vulgate, tempora vel momenta). Somewhat similarly the Peshitto has *zabna 'au zabne*, time or times; Cyprian (*Testimonia* 3:89) has tempus aut tempora.

In Acts τίθημι is most commonly used of putting something in a place; it is therefore probable that οὓς ὁ πατήρ ἔθετο ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ means *placed within his own authority*, that is, *reserved for his own decision*, rather than *appointed by his own authority*. Cf. Mk 13:32: only the Father (not even the Son—still less anyone else) knows the time of the end. It is possible that this withholding of information reflects a time of disappointment over the delay of the parousia (Bultmann, *E & F* 295); certainly Luke has himself come to terms with the fact that there was to be a perceptible interval between the resurrection and the end. But the intention seems primarily to be to lay stress on the gift of the Spirit and the role of the apostles as witnesses, both mentioned in the next verse.

**8.** The verse looks forward to ch. 2 and receives a measure of interpretation from that chapter, in which the apostles, represented by Peter, act as witnesses, having received power through the gift of the Spirit. The connection with the preceding verse is important, and there is no doubt that a measure of contrast is intended. 'Not the kingdom for Israel (Acts 1:6), but the power of the Holy Spirit for the church' (Maddox 106; see the context). The verse raises the question, of fundamental importance for the understanding of Acts, of the relation between the gift of the Spirit and the end. 'Der Geist ist nicht mehr Potenz der Endzeit, sondern Ersatz für sie' (Conzelmann 22). It is nearer to the truth to say that the Spirit is an anticipation of the Endzeit in the present. The apostles as witnesses will be equipped for witnessing but must not expect victory without delay. 'They must fight before they can hope to triumph' (Calvin 31).

δύναμις is apparent in the physical accompaniments (fire, wind) of the Spirit, and in the ability to speak with tongues (see on 2:4). δύναμις is used ten times in Acts. Three times (2:22; 8:13; 19:11) it means *miracles*; three times it is used of the power that effects miracles (3:12; 4:7; probably 10:38). Twice it refers to the power with which the apostles (4:33) and Stephen (6:8) do what they have to do—speaking and, probably, working miracles. At 8:10 Simon the Magus is said to be ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ

καλουμένη μεγάλη. This last reference contributes nothing, but the others may be added up to give the sense of δύναμις in 1:8. What is promised to the apostles is the power to fulfil their mission, that is, to speak, to bear oral testimony, and to perform miracles and in general act with authority. This power is given through the Spirit, and conversely the Spirit in Acts may be defined as the divine agency that gives this power. The Spirit is not defined here as the third of a Trinity of divine Persons, though it is associated with the Father and the Son (see especially 2:33; 5:3, 4; 10:38, and the notes). Cf. Mt. 28:20 for a different way of expressing the divine presence that aids believers. To say that in Acts the gift of the Spirit replaces an earlier conviction regarding the nearness of the parousia is an over-simplification of the evidence, but it is not wholly misleading.

With ἐπελθόντος ... ἐφ' ὑμᾶς cf. 2:3, ἐκάθισεν ἐφ' ἓνα ἕκαστον αὐτῶν; also Lk. 1:35, πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σέ (and note in this verse the association with δύναμις). The use of ἐπί is probably not intended to convey anything more precise than a general notion of inspiration; note the parallel between ἐπί and εἰς (in composition) in Lucian, *Philopseudes* 16, (The demons) εἰσεληλύθασιν εἰς τὸ σῶμα ... (the demon) ἐπήλθεν ἐς τὸν ἄνθρωπον (Betz 156). It is worth noting that in this context the demon speaks ἐλληνίζων ἢ βαρβαρίζων, ἢ ὅθεν ἂν αὐτὸς ᾗ.

What follows may be regarded as in a sense the apodosis to vv. 1, 2; it expresses the content of Luke's second volume. The apostles are to be witnesses, μάρτυρες. Witnessing is a major theme in Acts and will be frequently discussed. The apostles are specifically witnesses to the fact of the resurrection (1:22), that is, to the divine vindication of Jesus, the proof that he was what he had claimed to be, what the apostles now claimed that he was. Witness to the resurrection thus includes witness to all the other propositions of the Christian proclamation; cf. 26:22 (the suffering and resurrection of Christ); 10:39 (the whole story of Jesus), 13:31; 26:16. Cf. Isa. 43:10. What takes place in the life of the church is the valid continuation and fruit of the work of the historical Jesus. It goes however too far to say, 'Die Geschichte der Kirche ist Heilsgeschichte' (Haenchen; but Haenchen says rightly, 'Die christliche Kirche, wie die Apg sie schildert, ist eine Missionskirche' (150), and that what the present verse contains is not a simple table of contents but a promise (152).

The work of bearing witness is to begin in Jerusalem; see chs. 2–7. It will continue in (ἐν is expressed in P<sup>74</sup> κ B C<sup>3</sup> E Ψ m lat, omitted by A C\* D 81 323 pc) Judaea and Samaria; see chs. 8, 9. And it will go on ἕως ἔσχατου τῆς γῆς. ἔσχατου is to be taken not as masculine (*up to the last man on earth*), though there are parallels to this (see below), but as neuter. γῆ probably refers, as at 13:47, to the whole earth, not as is maintained by Trocmé to the land of Israel, though it is true that γῆ, like γῆρα and ארעא, is ambiguous in this respect. The phrase is a stock one; see Isa. 48:20; 49:6; Jer. 10:13; 1 Clem. 5:7 (τὸ τέλος τῆς οὐσίας, probably Spain); Horace, *Odes* 1:35:29f.: Serves iturum Caesarem in ultimos orbis Britannos; Sallust, *Catiline* 16:5: Cn. Pompeius in extremis terris bellum gerebat; Herodotus 3:25:1: ἐς τὰ ἔσχατα τῆς γῆς ἐμελλε στρατεύεσθαι. It has usually been supposed that in 'the end of the earth' there should be seen a reference to Rome (cf. Ps. Sol. 8:15: ἦγαγεν τὸν ἄπ' ἔσχατου τῆς γῆς, him who came from the end of the earth— Pompey the Great; it is likely that the Psalmist thought of

Pompey as coming from Rome, though geographically his route may have led him from Spain). Van Unnik (*NovT* 4 (1960), 39f.; see also *Begs.* 4:9) thought the reference a general one: the Gospel is to spread throughout the world. He claimed that ‘the book nowhere shows a special interest for the capital of the Imperium Romanum’ (39). This is hardly correct; see 19:21; 23:11, and the fact that the book does end in Rome. The truth probably is that the phrase does refer to Rome, but to Rome not as an end in itself but as representative of the whole world. It has been said that the reference cannot be to Rome because ch. 28 shows the mission to be still in progress; certainly Luke was aware of the existence of Spain and of other lands further west still untouched when Rome was evangelized, but an *a fortiori* argument would apply: if the Gospel can be preached and the church established in Rome there is no limit to their possible extension.

In the list of areas to be covered there is no reference to Galilee. Lohmeyer (*Galiläa und Jerusalem*, (1936), 52) notes that while Judaea alone would make a suitable connecting link between Jerusalem and the ‘end of the earth’, or Judaea and Galilee, or Judaea, Samaria, and Galilee, Judaea and Samaria (one unit for the Romans, as Luke notes at Lk. 3:1) is a combination not to be expected. He concludes that the omission of Galilee was intentional, and explains the omission on the ground that Galilee was already *terra Christiana*, where it was unnecessary for the apostles to go and to bear Christian testimony. Brandon (*Fall* 44) accepts the existence of a Galilean church as ‘very probable’. W. D. Land (265) is probably nearer the truth when he observes that Luke ‘pays no attention to any Christianity of any special significance in Galilee’. Luke has no stories to tell about Galilee and therefore does not include it in this programmatic verse. C. Burchardt (*ZNW* 61 (1970), 162) writes, ‘Meines Erachtens ist in der Tat mit dem Ende der Apostelgeschichte auch das in 1:8 angekündigte Zeugesein zu seinem Ende gekommen.’ This passage is thus to be distinguished from Mt. 28:18–20; it is not a command and promise applicable to the whole world but comes to an end with Acts 28:31. This however does not seem to be Luke’s point. Since the apostles are told that they will be witnesses up to the end of the earth it is implied that the end of the world (age) will not come till the end of the earth has been reached. The saying indicates Luke’s view of the future, though *Signum Crucis* 334) may put the matter too strongly when he claims that the promise contains ‘the hidden motivation of Luke’s two works, namely that the announcement of the message must go into all the world before the parousia’. Luke had other motivations also, but if this is kept in mind Dinkler’s is a valid observation, though it may be that in this context also the ‘end of the earth’ means Rome—or did so at some point in the course of the tradition.<sup>11</sup>

## Coming and Going

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<sup>11</sup> Stanley D. Toussaint, “Acts,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 354.



**1:6.** This question was the most natural one for the disciples to ask Jesus. He had been talking about the kingdom (1:3), and the references to the outpouring of the Spirit in the Old Testament were all in the context of Israel's restoration (Is 32:15; 44:3; Ezek 36:25–28; 37:14; 39:29; Joel 2:28–3:1).

**1:7.** See Matthew 24:36. Jewish apocalyptic writers often saw history as divided into epochs determined by God, yet they sometimes used their calculations of the epochs to predict that they were near the end. Jesus says that the Father has determined the time but not revealed it.

**1:8.** Although the time of Israel's restoration might be unknown, the end-time mission given to Israel, to be Spirit-anointed witnesses (Is 42:1, 4, 6; 43:10–12; 44:3, 8), is being given now. The disciples are thus to serve as the prophetic remnant within Israel. (When Israel had disobeyed God, he had always kept a remnant; see comment on Rom 11:1–5.)

Different ancient texts referred to different places by the phrase “ends of the earth.” Writers commonly meant Ethiopia (8:27), but in Acts the short-term strategic goal is Rome (the Psalms of Solomon 8:15 uses “ends of the earth” thus), to make an urgent impact on the empire. From a long-range perspective, however, all peoples are meant (Ps 67:1, 7; Is 45:22; 49:6; 52:10; so Acts 13:47).<sup>12</sup>

**1:6–8** Verses 6–8 are closely tied together. In v. 6 the disciples asked Jesus about the time of the kingdom. In v. 7 Jesus rejected speculation about “times” altogether and in v. 8 replaced this with the relevant subject—the Christian task in the interim period before the kingdom's coming.

The setting of the disciples' question is rather vague, “when they met together” (v. 6). The verses that follow clarify that this was the last time Jesus appeared to them, just prior to his ascension (v. 9), and that the location was the Mount of Olives (v. 12). It is not surprising from Jesus' prior remarks about the coming of the Spirit and the fulfillment of God's promises (v. 5) that the disciples concluded the final coming of God's kingdom might have been imminent. In Jewish thought God's promises often referred to the coming of Israel's final salvation, and this concept is reflected elsewhere in Acts (cf. 2:39; 13:23, 32; 26:6). Likewise, the outpouring of the Spirit had strong eschatological associations. Such passages as Joel 2:28–32 were interpreted in nationalistic terms that saw a general outpouring of the Spirit on Israel as a mark of the final great messianic Day of the Lord when Israel would be “restored” to the former glory of the days of David and Solomon.

Jesus corrected the disciples by directing them away from the question about “times or dates” (v. 7). These are matters wholly within God's own purposes and authority. During his earthly life Jesus had denied such knowledge even for himself (Mark 13:32). In denying such knowledge to the disciples, the hope in the Parousia is not abandoned.<sup>26</sup> If anything, it is intensified by the vivid picture of Jesus returning on the clouds of

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<sup>12</sup> Barrett, C. K. (2004). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the acts of the Apostles* (pp. 75–81). Edinburgh: T&T Clark.

heaven in the same mode as his ascension (Acts 1:11). Neither did Jesus reject the concept of the “restoration of Israel.” Instead, he “depoliticized it” with the call to a worldwide mission. The disciples were to be the true, “restored” Israel, fulfilling its mission to be a “light for the Gentiles” so that God’s salvation might reach “to the ends of the earth” (Isa 49:6). In short, to speculate on times and dates is useless. The Lord’s return does not revolve around such speculation but around God’s own purposes, and those purposes embrace the salvation of the world. The surest route to the Parousia is the evangelization of the world.

Verse 8 places the disciples’ question in proper perspective. The “restoration of the kingdom” involves a worldwide mission. Jesus promised the disciples two things: power and witness. The future tense here has an imperatival sense: “you *will* [must] receive power”; “you *will* be my witnesses.” Luke stressed this commission from the risen Lord at the close of his Gospel (24:47–49). All the same elements are there—the witness, the call to the nations, the power of the Spirit. The power they were to receive was divine power; the word is *dynamis*, the same word used of Jesus’ miracles in the Gospels. It is the *Spirit’s* power (2:1–21). The endowment with the Spirit is the prelude to, the equipping for, mission. The role of the apostles is that of “witness” (*martys*). In Acts the apostles’ main role is depicted as witnessing to the earthly ministry of Jesus, above all to his resurrection (cf. 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39, 41). As eyewitnesses only they were in the position to be guarantors of the resurrection. But with its root meaning of *testimony*, “witness” comes to have an almost legal sense of bearing one’s testimony to Christ. In this way it is applied to Stephen (22:20) and to Paul (22:15; 23:11; 26:16). The background to this concept is probably the servant psalms of Isaiah, where God called on his servant to be a witness (Isa 43:10; 44:8). L. Keck notes the close connection between the Spirit’s power and the witness to Jesus, observing that what was true of those first apostolic witnesses is still true of witnesses today: “The less Jesus is the core of witness, the less power we have.”<sup>32</sup>

The geographical scope of Acts 1:8 provides a rough outline of the entire book: Jerusalem (1–7), Judea and Samaria (8–12), the ends of the earth (13–28). As such it can well be considered the “theme” verse of Acts. It is not by accident that Jerusalem came first. In Luke’s Gospel, Jerusalem was central, from the temple scenes of the infancy narrative to the long central journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:28), to Jesus’ passion in the city that killed its prophets (13:34). The story of Jesus led *to* Jerusalem; the story of the church led *from* Jerusalem. Judea and Samaria are probably to be taken together; Judea was understood in the sense of the Davidic kingdom, which would include the coastal territories and Galilee as well. Samaria would be included within Judea in this broader sense, but it is mentioned separately because of its non-Jewish constituency. The “ends of the earth” are often taken as referring to Rome, since the story of Acts ends in that city.<sup>34</sup> The phrase is often found in the prophets, however, as an expression for distant lands; and such is the meaning in Isa 49:6, which may well lie behind Acts 1:8. In fact, the final verse in

Exegetical Outline  
Acts 1:6-8

Introduction:

Attention: My boy tried a dating site I told him his circle was too small.

Subject: God did not empower you just for to sit down in you circle but you have been given the Holy Spirit to go out and be missional

Scripture: Acts 1:6-8

Body:

- I. God's Authority over Plan
  - a. God will restore Israel in the end times
    - i. The Bible does refer to Israel's final salvation
      1. Joel 2:28–32 Acts (cf. 2:39; 13:23, 32; 26:6).
    - ii. His timing is under His authority
      1. potential or resource to command, control, or govern, *capability*
  - b. God has additional or interim plan
    - i. God will come on His own timing unrevealed to man
    - ii. **Neither did Jesus reject the concept of the "restoration of Israel." Instead, he "depoliticized it" with the call to a worldwide mission. The disciples were to be the true, "restored" Israel, fulfilling its mission to be a "light for the Gentiles" so that God's salvation might reach "to the ends of the earth" (Isa 49:6).**
    - iii. The Son of Man is coming like a thief Matthew 24:42 1 Thessalonians 5:2
      1. All will know Romans 1:18-20
  - c. **In a time where we want political peace could it be that God is giving us time for the gospel.**
    - i. Everyone wants justice but they need the God of Justice.
- II. Holy Spirit's Power
  - a. The interim plan is to empower the disciples through the Spirit
    - i. Power- Ability to do things, by virtue of strength, skill, resources, or authorization
    - ii. the word is *dynamis*, the same word used of Jesus' miracles in the Gospels. It is the *Spirit's* power (2:1–21). The endowment with the Spirit is the prelude to, the equipping for, mission.

- iii. ample proof of their need of this new “power” (δυναμιν [dunamin]), to enable them (from δυναμαι [dunamai], to be able), to grapple with the spread of the gospel in the world
    - b. The Holy Spirit would be sent by Jesus
      - i. Acts 2&3
        - 1. Miracles and Tongues
        - 2. 3000 Saved
      - ii. The Holy Spirit John 14:16 &16:5-11
        - 1. Will convict
        - 2. Help the disciples
    - c. The Holy Spirit Empowers Christians
      - i. He will convict those you evangelize
      - ii. He will help you with the words to say
    - d. The Holy Spirit was not for selfish intentions and gospel songs but for the gospel
      - i. Often times we sing songs telling the spirit to rain etc but it was for the gospel
- III. You will be witness all over the world
  - a. Witness- one who affirms or attests, *testifier, witness*<sup>13</sup>
    - i. In this trial between God and the nations and their gods, Israel, on the basis of the guidance, deliverance and revelation which is grounded in its election and which it has experienced, will declare to the nations of the world the uniqueness, reality, and deity of God. Hence they are His witnesses...The content of the witness is thus a religious truth of which the witness is convinced on the basis of his experience. It is a religious certainty whose content he emphatically represents, for whose acknowledgment he strives, but for the correctness of which he cannot give any rational proof or present any empirical demonstration<sup>14</sup>
  - b. The geographical scope of Acts 1:8 provides a rough outline of the entire book: Jerusalem (1–7), Judea and Samaria (8–12), the ends of the earth (13–28). As such it can well be considered the “theme” verse of Acts. It is not by accident that Jerusalem came first. In Luke’s Gospel,
    - i. . The “ends of the earth” are often taken as referring to Rome, since the story of Acts ends in that city.<sup>34</sup> The phrase is often found in the prophets, however, as an expression for distant lands; and such is the meaning in Isa 49:6

<sup>13</sup> Keener, C. S. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament* (Ac 1:6–8). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>14</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 619.