

Acts 2-9 Series

"God Advances in Acts"

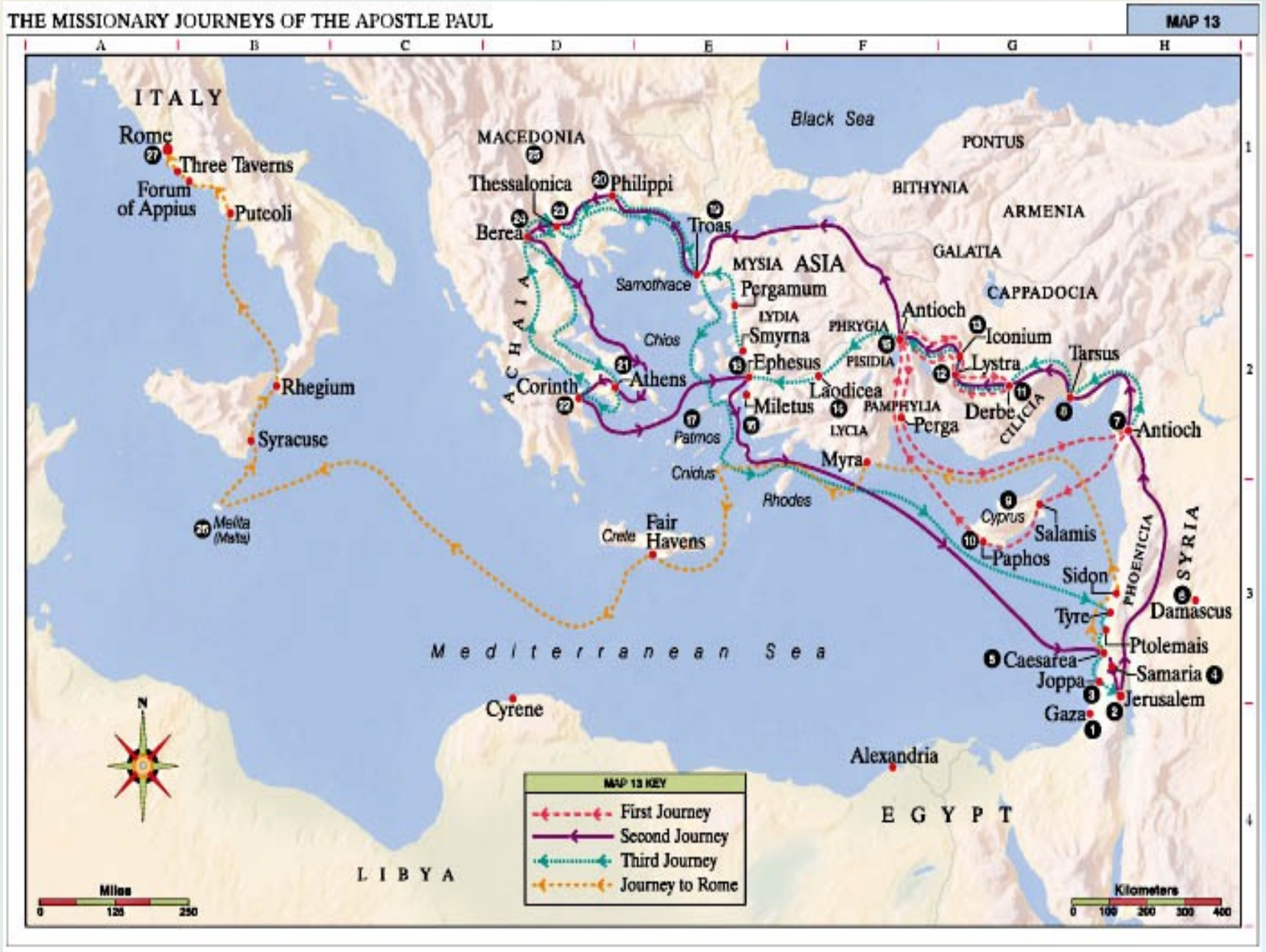
L'Amable Bible Chapel

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I. Franck

lamablebiblechapel.com

Introduction



Before Jesus leaves, he makes a prophecy…



8 "*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.*"

God is advancing…

Skim through Acts…

Acts shows God advancing

What do we see?

- **Power** & boldness
- Fearless **Proclamation**, miracles, transformation
- **Peril***: Challenges & persecution*
- **Progress** -- Rapid Church growth in numbers & in new regions

Personnel

- Growing leadership
- Grass roots movement
- Together forming the body of Jesus Christ

Acts shows God advancing

Acts reveals people responding

Acts 2: [41] Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. [42] They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. [43] Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. [47] …and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

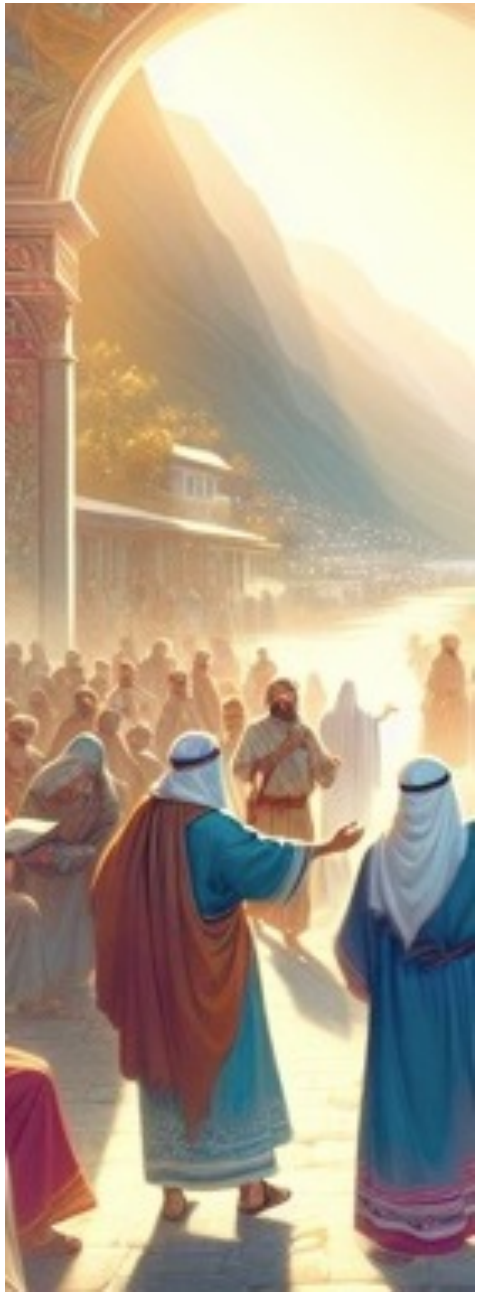


God pours out **Power**!

- Chapter 3--a miracle
- Peter and John –and a man lame from birth

“7 …In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk! 8 He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.



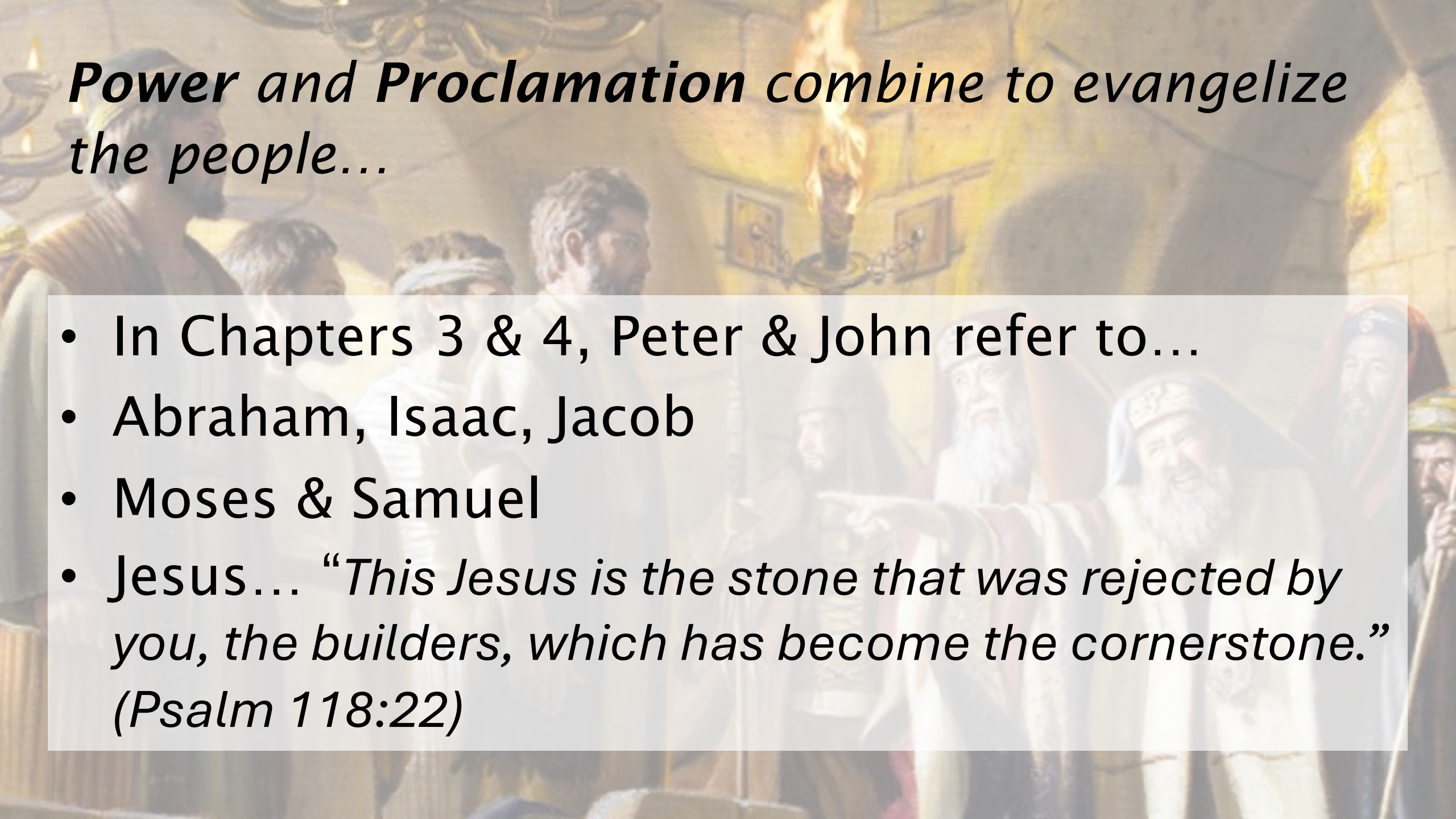


[11] While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon’s Colonnade.
[12] When Peter saw this, he said to them: “Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?... [15] You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Acts shows God advancing

Acts reveals people responding

16 By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.



Power *and* ***Proclamation*** *combine to evangelize the people…*

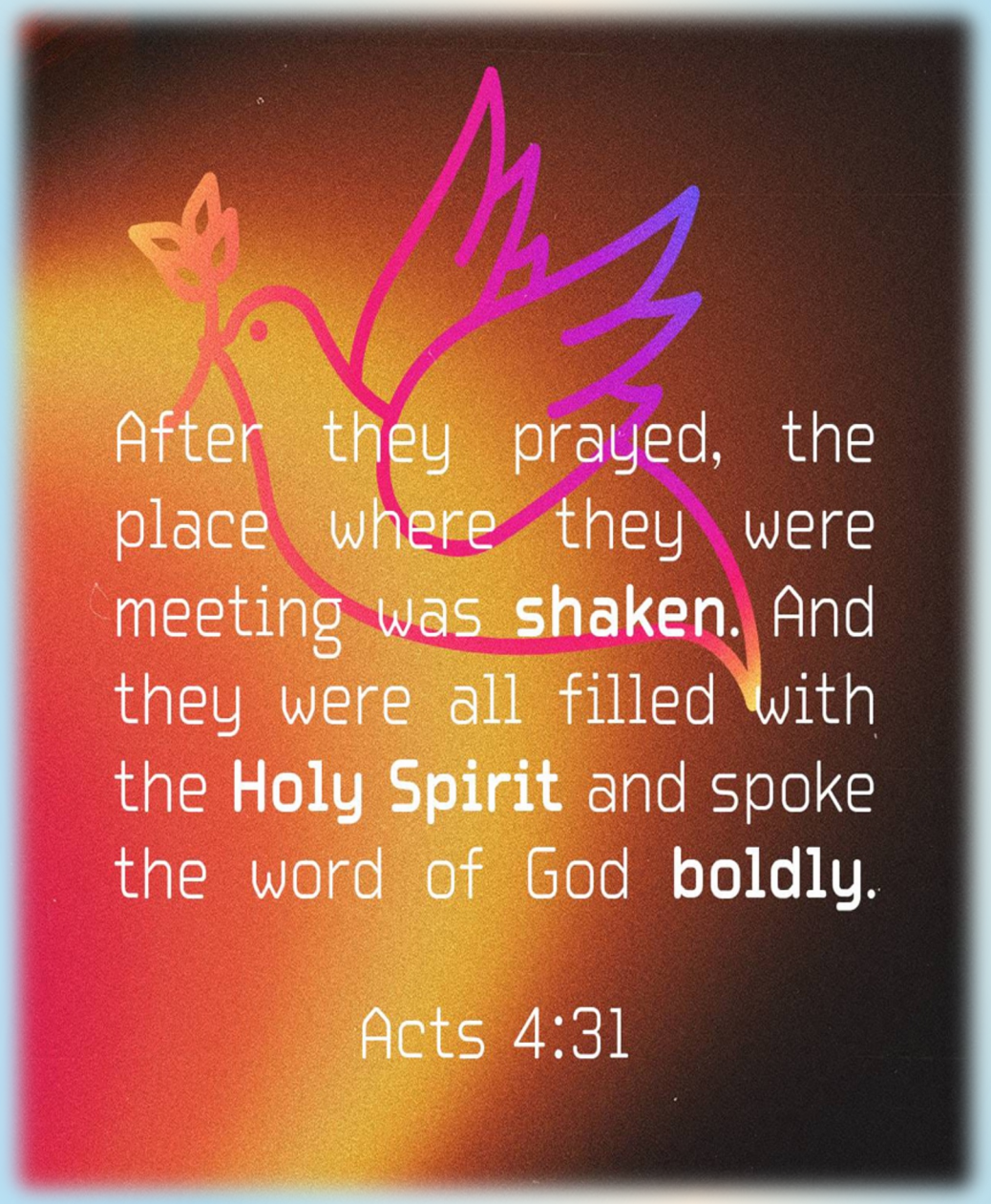
- In Chapters 3 & 4, Peter & John refer to…
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
- Moses & Samuel
- Jesus… "*This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone." (Psalm 118:22)*

- Chapter 4 – the healing leads to the testimony to the Sanhedrin…even to the High Priest

13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. 14 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.

Question: Why didn't Jesus do a miracle?

[23] On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. [24] When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them.



[25] You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David:
“‘Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
[26] The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the Lord
and against his anointed one.’



[27] Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.

[28] They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. [29] Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. [30] Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”
[31] After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

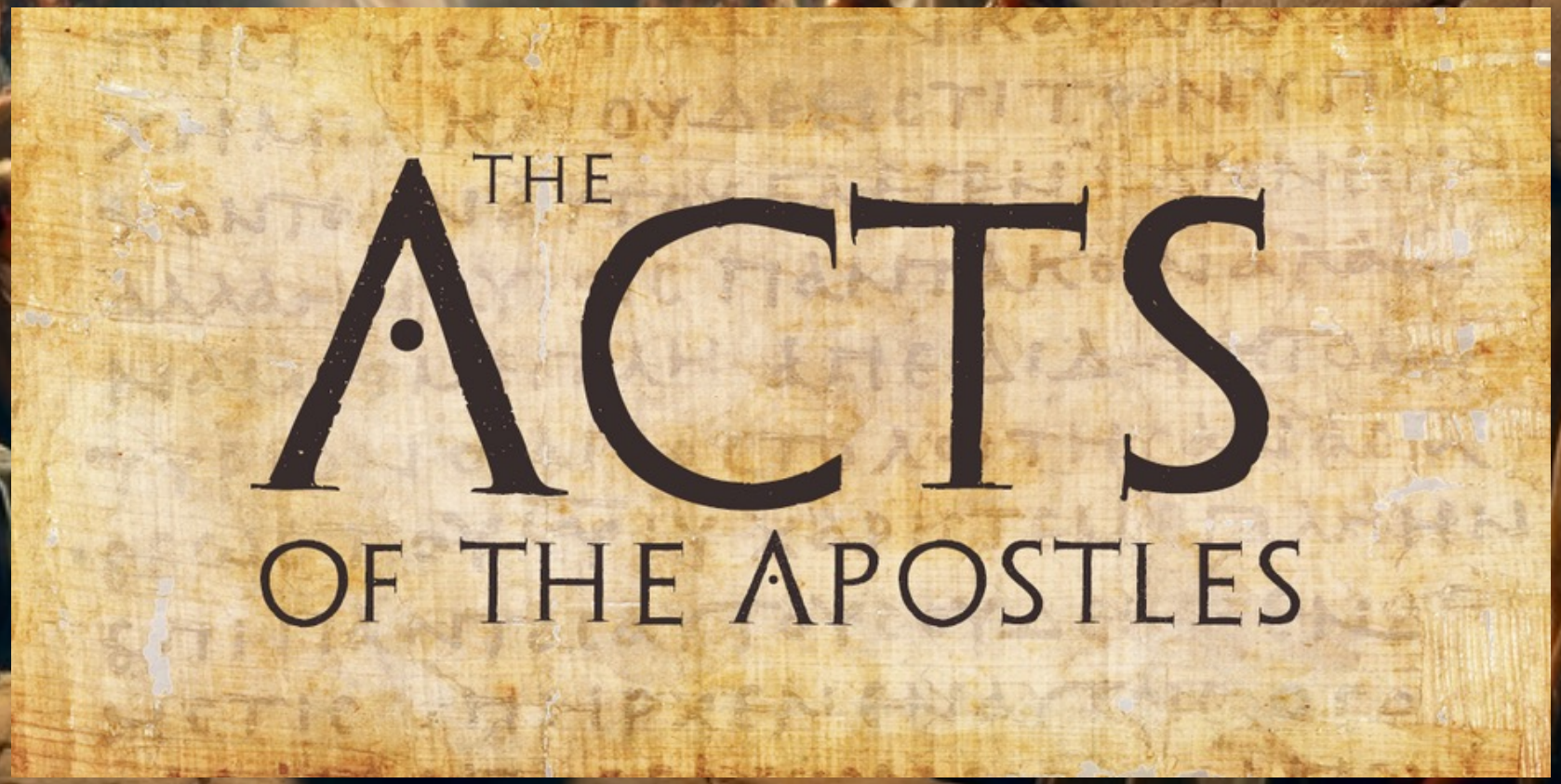
- 4:31—God shakes the house! (But a question)

Power…Proclamation…

God is advancing in Acts, and people are responding…







A new dynamic -- **Possessions**!

The Believers Share Their Possessions (Acts 4-5)



32 All the believers were one in heart and mind.
No one claimed that any of their possessions
was their own, but they shared everything they
had. 33 With great power the apostles continued
to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.
And God's grace was so powerfully at work in
them all 34 that there were no needy persons
among them.

For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales [35] *and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.* [36] *Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"),* [37] *sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.*



Barnabas exemplifies the new Way!

- A Levite from Cyprus
- Totally committed
- His reputation and a new name…*Barnabas*
- A tremendous example
- *However*…



Peril & Persecution



New internal and external challenges (Acts 5)

- (No chapter divisions)
- From Barnabas to Ananias & Sapphira
- How do we understand this?

5 [1] *Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife*
Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. [2] *With his wife's*
full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself,
but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.
[3] *Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so*
filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and
have kept for yourself some of the money you received for
the land? [4] *Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And*
after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal?
What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not
lied just to human beings but to God."



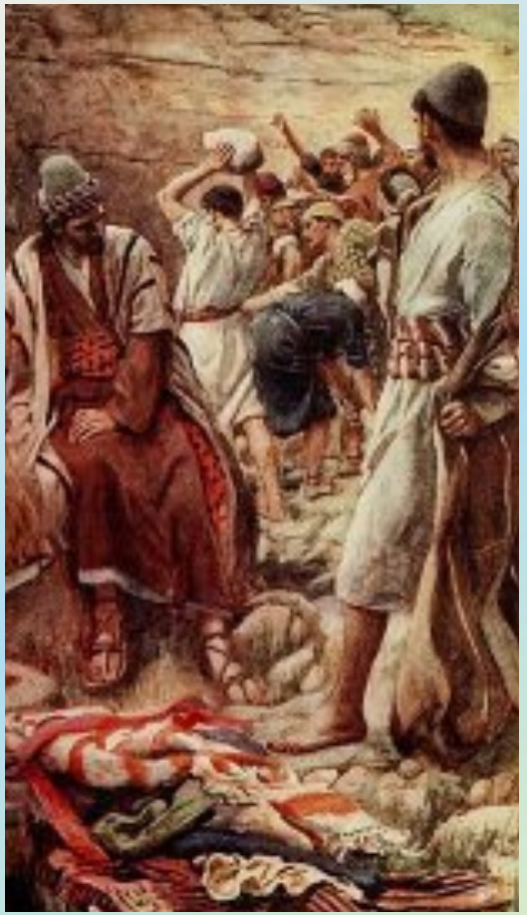
5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down
and died. And great fear seized all who
heard what had happened. 6 Then some
young men came forward, wrapped up
his body, and carried him out and buried
him.
7 About three hours later his wife came
in, not knowing what had happened.
8 Peter asked her, “Tell me, is this the
price you and Ananias got for the land?”
“Yes,” she said, “that is the price.”

9 Peter said to her, “How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.”
10 At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.
11 Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.



A series of victories and difficulties follow…

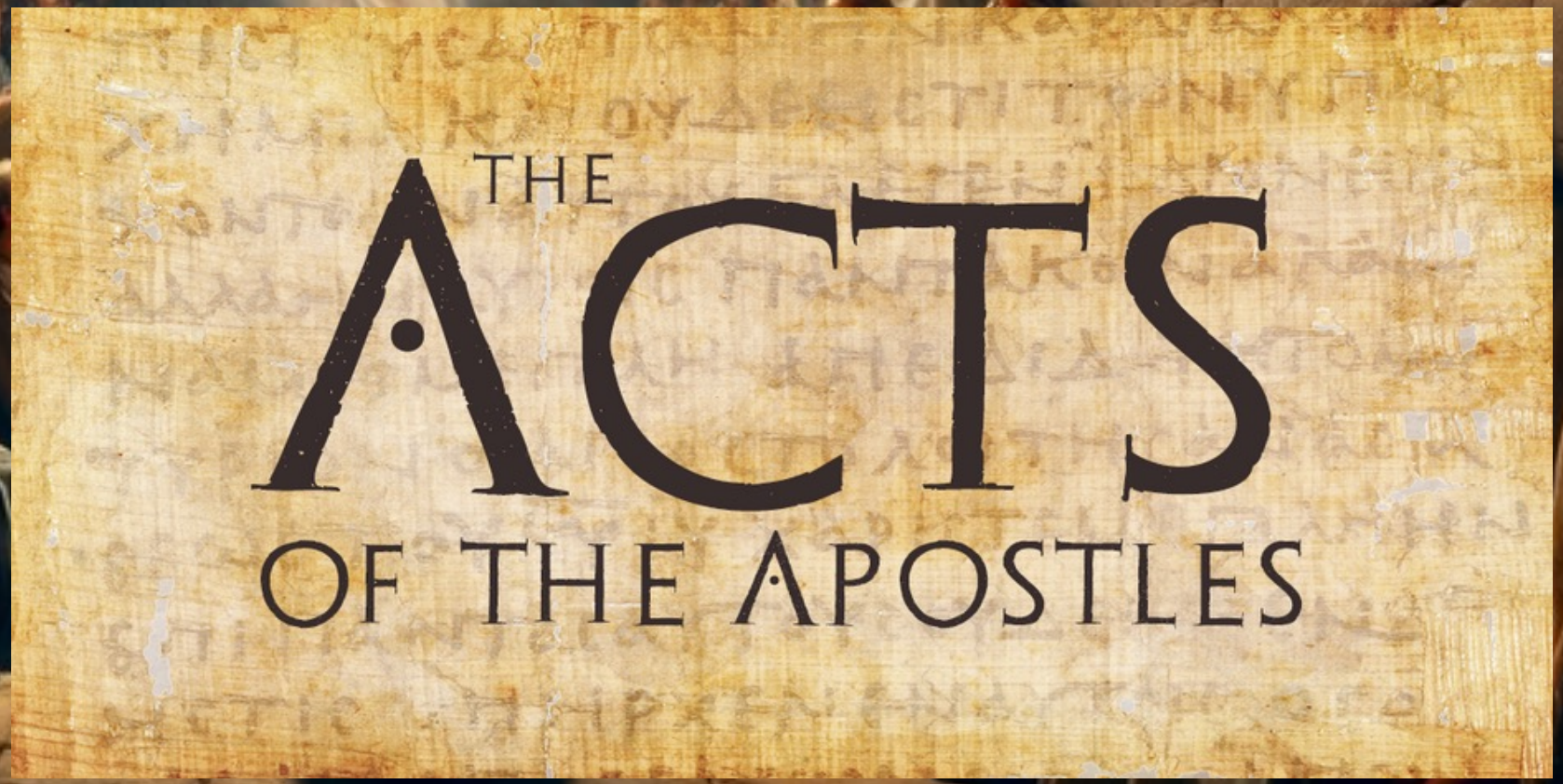
- Apostles heal, Apostles are persecuted (Ch. 5)
- Food distribution & Deacons (Ch. 6)
- Stephen preaches, Stephen is martyred (Ch. 7)
- The church is scattered, the church grows (Ch. 8)
- Saul persecutes, Saul is converted (Ch. 9)

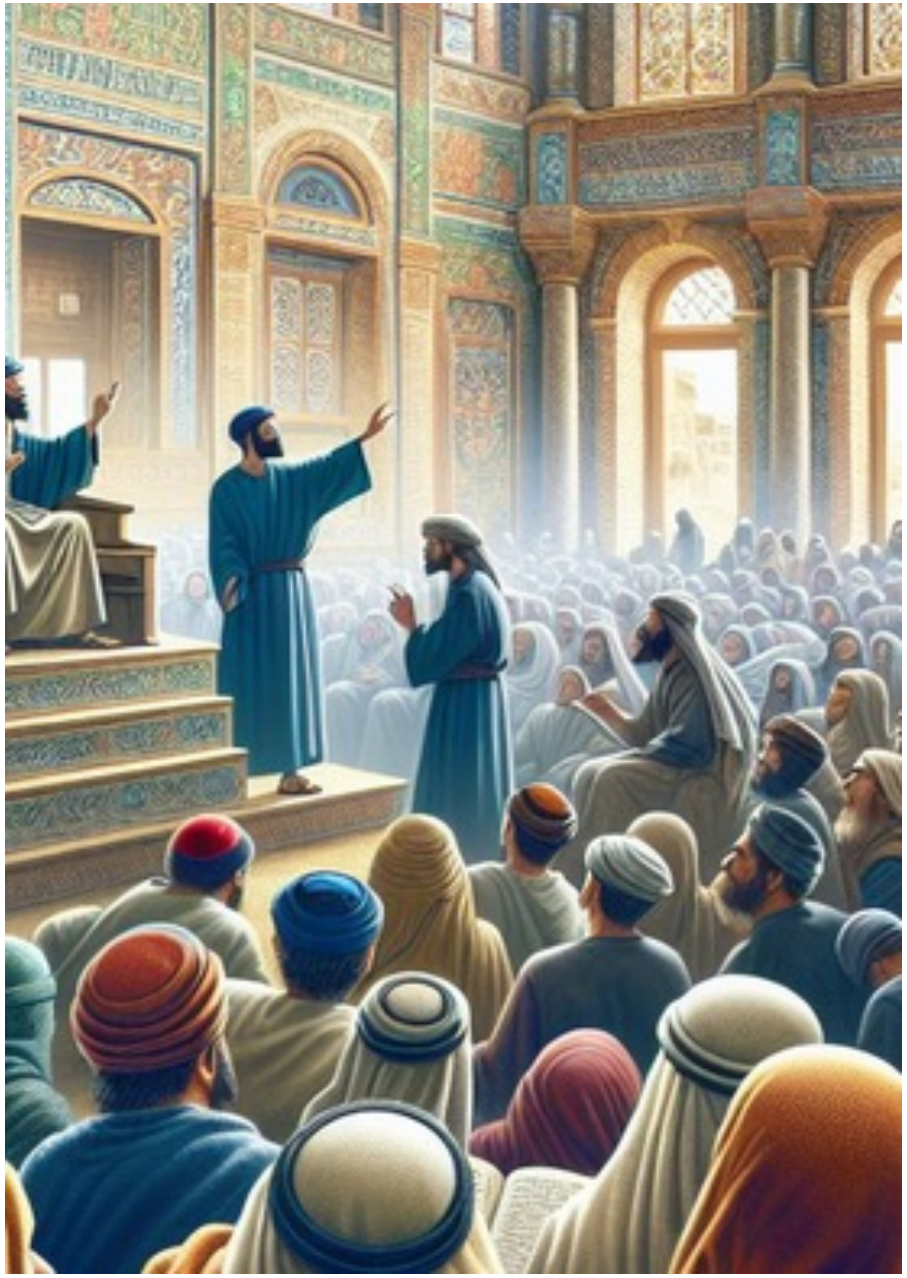


Power…Proclamation…

God advances in Acts, and people respond in spite of Peril and Persecution. The outcome is the Progress of the Kingdom







5 [19] *But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out.*
[20] *“Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people all about this new life.”*
[21] *At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people.*



[27] The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. [28] “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.”

[29] Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings! [30] The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. [31] God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. [32] We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”
[33] When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death.

- A Pharisee named Gamaliel intervenes
- He advises the Sanhedrin to let the men go—if there's nothing to this movement, it will fade away…



Is he a secret supporter?



38 “…in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.”
40 His speech persuaded them.



40 ...They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. 42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Power… Proclamation… but also Peril and Persecution

God is advancing in Acts, and people are responding…



Key questions…

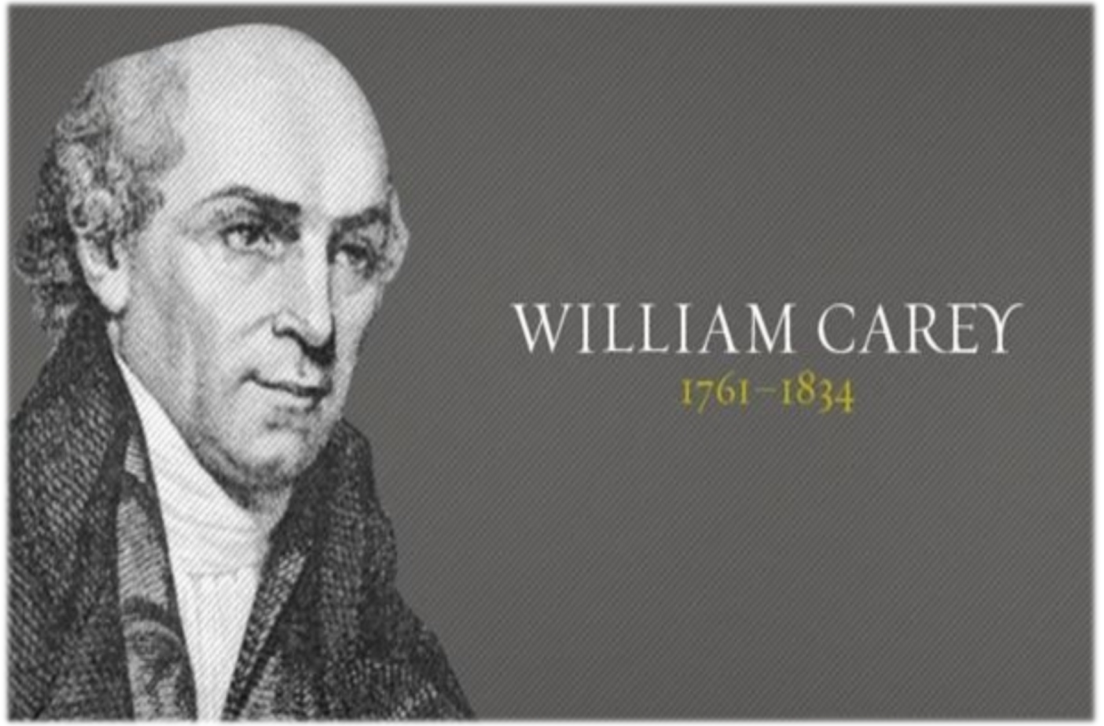
5 *41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.*

- What is our view of sovereignty… and responsibility?
- Two examples re. possessions. What does it mean today?
- What is our outlook?

Conclusion… William Carey

A new look at the Great Commission

He…"published a pamphlet titled *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, which led to his forming, with a dozen other ministers, the English Baptist Missionary Society." (Britannica)





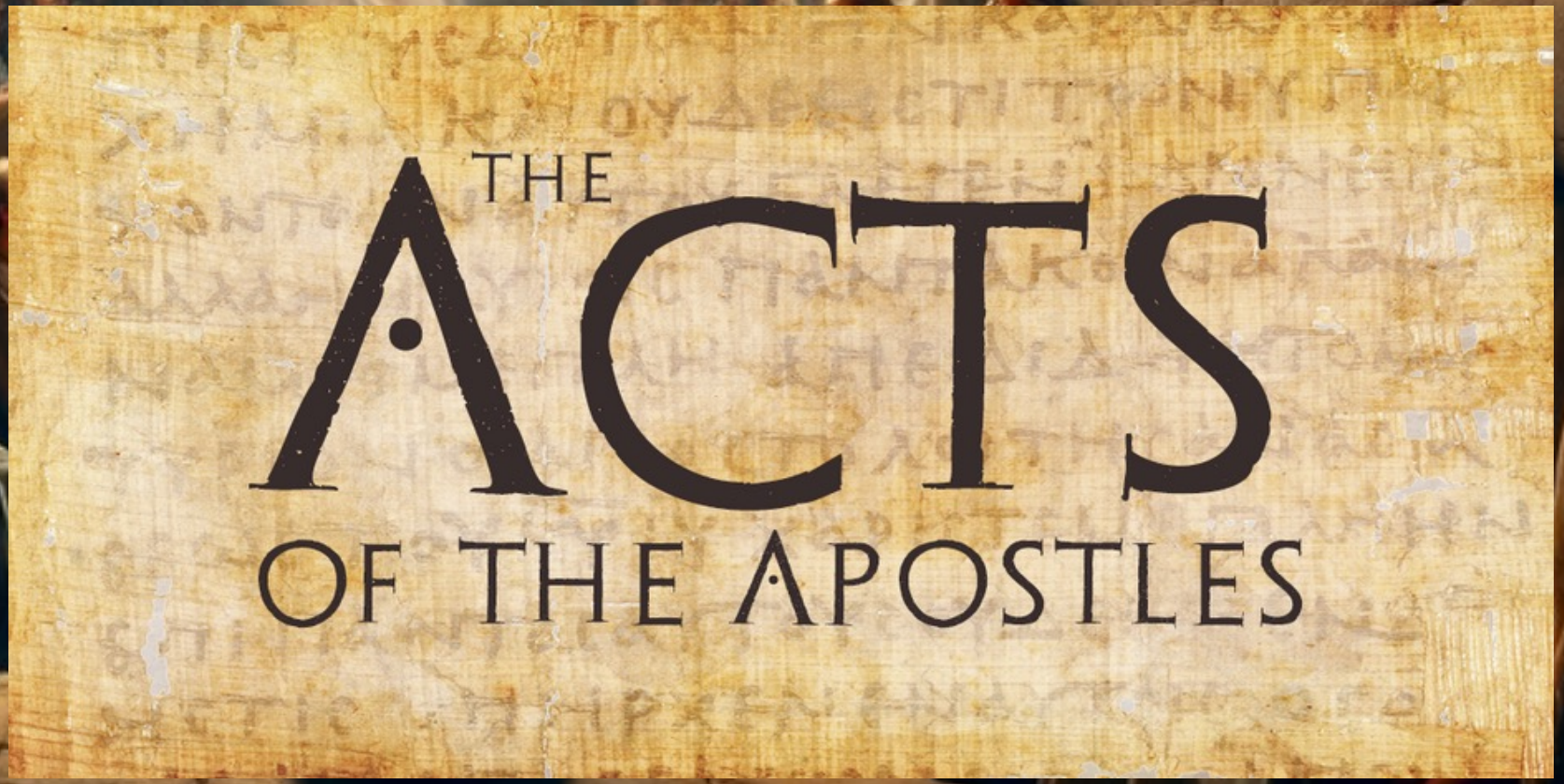
He and his wife travel to India…

Appointed in 1801 to teach Bengali, Sanskrit, and Marathi at Fort William College, Carey translated the Bible into Bengali, Oriya, Marathi, Hindi, Assamese, and Sanskrit. He also translated parts of it into 29 other languages and dialects… His social work extended beyond education to urge the government to outlaw such practices as infanticide and suttee (in which Hindu widows immolated themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres). He also encouraged the use of Indians as missionaries and led in the formation of the Agricultural Society of India in 1820.

Power…Proclamation…

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