

Acts 1:9-11

This passage brings us face to face with the two most difficult conceptions in the New Testament:

1. The Ascension

2. The Second Coming

- *The Ascension.. 2 reasons it was an absolute necessity.*

1. Had to be that final moment when Jesus went back to the glory which was His.

2. Jesus had to give the disciples unanswerable proof that He had returned to His glory.

Response...the disciples “returned to Jerusalem with great joy.” Luke 24:52....knowing that Jesus was not gone from them but with them forever.

- ***The 2nd Coming***

We must remember 2 things:

1. To speculate when and how it will happen is not wise..but, to realize the season and the signs as to our preparation time is just “keeping oil in our lamps.”

2. The essential teaching of Christianity is that God has a plan for man and the world....

“History is not a haphazard conglomeration of chance events which leads to nowhere. It is a divine event to which the whole creation moves and when that consummation comes Jesus Christ will be Judge and Lord of all.

A Glimpse Into the Minds of the Apostles

Acts 1:12-20

- ❖ *Sabbath Days walk...Sabbath, a day of rest...a journey was limited to 2,000 cubits (a Sabbath Day's journey); How far...a cubit = 18"...therefore, 2000 cubits was about 0.6 mile.*
- ❖ *Jesus' brothers (four brothers are mentioned...also had at least two sisters) are present with the disciples..up until now, we only have known them to be opponents (Mark 3:21). What changed their minds? Was it their mother's persuasion? Was it their brother's death...His resurrection, His Ascension?*

The reality that Jesus was and still is who He said He was.... changes all hearts.

120 disciples in the upper room...pledged to Christ. Chances are, none had ever been outside the narrow confines of Palestine in their life.

These simple people were told to go out and evangelize the world.

***The Christian Church began from those small beginnings.
Harvest Assembly...that first Sunday, started with a handful...***

We have that same spirit...does it dwell in you?

***He will quicken your mortal body and make you that powerful
witness that will reach our world for Christ.***

Another question: Why did Judas betray Jesus?

Some Suggestions:

- *“Iscariot” means “man of Kerioth.” If that is true, Judas was the only non-Galilean in the apostolic band. He felt as he was the odd man out.*
- *Turned King’s evidence to save his own skin...embittered by this terrible thing, he killed himself.*
- *Greed for money...most dreadful bargain in history.*
- *Judas came to hate Jesus. Jesus was getting the glory; he wanted what Jesus had..and was.*
- *Iscariot could have come from the Greek word which means “dagger-bearer.” A band of violent nationalists who would do anything to set Palestine free. Judas might have been disappointed that Jesus was not willing to lead the nationalists to victory and he knew that Jesus had the power to do so. Judas would then turn on him to see that Barabbas was set free.*
- *Judas thought that Jesus would not die...but, that the intention was to force Jesus’ hand to be the King in which Judas understood He was to become...Judas, in seeing his plan going tragically wrong, in bitter remorse killed himself.*

No matter how it may be or why, Judas goes down in history as the blackest name among men.

***Summary: There can never be any peace for the man who betrays Christ.
Are there ways that we betray Jesus?***

What must we do to make things right?

***Confession...repentance...accepting the truth...Jesus has paid the price for our sins.
Do we acknowledge and give praise to Him for the sake of ourselves, our priorities, or
because we know that we are blessed to have Jesus as our “go between”?***

Acts 1:21-26

Luke records the replacement of Judas the traitor.

Note: The qualification for the replacement apostle was that one be a:

- ***Witness of Jesus' ministry from the beginning to end,***
- ***A witness of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.***

This passage indicates there were at least two other witnesses (Joseph and Matthias).

To go through a process of nomination typically indicates the group had to be more than just a few....to have sufficient candidates to choose from (1 Corinthians 15:6 indicates there were at least 500). To have such large numbers of witnesses undermines any conspiracy.

These were people with a variety of personalities and, in other scriptures, we see conflicts among them. If there were a conspiracy, surely the diversity of personalities would have exposed it long ago.

Casting lots--to see which candidate should replace Judas. This removes any bias which might be present if any of the candidates were "insiders".

The Judicial System used the same system (different method) to acknowledge "guilty or innocent" verdict.

Note: Perhaps Jesus specifically chose a variety of personalities to insure a credible unbiased witness after his departure.

Such a diverse group wouldn't be able to get the story straight even if they did try to cook up a story.

***What's cooking?.....The Truth...
Jesus died; He was buried; He arose; He's coming again!***

You can believe it or not! Your choice....Heaven or Hell?

