

The Book of Acts: the Work of the Holy Spirit

Objectives

To give an overview of the Book of Acts and to understand the role of the Holy Spirit

References

- ❖ The Holy Bible
- ❖ A Guide for the Seeker of the Holy Bible (Morshed El Talebeen)
- ❖ The Dove and the Lamb (Beit El Takrees)

Scriptural Verse

“For there are three who bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.” (1 John 5: 7)

Lesson Guidelines

The Book of Acts

- ❖ It is a must study Book because it reveals the fulfillment of the promise of the Bible “The descending of the Holy Spirit” and it is the subject written in the Epistles
- ❖ It starts with the ascension of Christ and lasts around 30 years to the end of the 2nd year of the imprisonment of St Paul in Rome
- ❖ St Luke, the Book Writer, recorded the birth of Christianity, the foundation of churches from Jews & Gentiles, the spreading of the Bible, the fate of some disciples and their struggle for the sake of Christ, the amazing success of their mission as a proof for the truth of Christianity and also the early Christian life of share and sanctity
- ❖ The aim of the Book is to prove Christianity through the work of the Holy Spirit in the disciples as the promise of the Lord and to show the mercy of God who accepted the gentiles
- ❖ It recorded clearly the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts

- ❖ The Book of Acts is called the Book of the Holy Spirit Who is glorified in the Pentecost
- ❖ The Holy Spirit not only grant gifts but He himself is the Divine gift (Acts 2: 38)
- ❖ The wisdom of St Stephen 7: 55, the virtues of Barnabas 11: 24, the joy of Samaria 8: 8, the eunuch of Ethiopia 8: 39, Paul and Silas in the prison 16: 25.....all these are the result of being filled by the Holy Spirit

Proofs of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit

- ❖ The Holy Spirit is God (Compare Acts 5: 3 & 4)
- ❖ The severe punishment of Ananias and his wife as they dishonoured the Holy Spirit
- ❖ The Divine Hypostasis called by Isaiah “God” (Isaiah 6: 8&9) is called by St Paul “the Holy Spirit” (Acts 28: 25)
- ❖ The Holy Spirit is claimed to be Hypostasis in Acts 8: 39, 13: 2-4, 16: 7, 20: 28....

Work of the Holy Spirit

- ❖ Reproved people of their sins (Acts 2: 37)
- ❖ Enlightened the mind of the believer: Compare Acts 1: 6 where the Apostles were seeking the earthly kingdom with Acts 3: 6 & 1 Peter 1: 4 when St Peter discovered the true treasure they have
- ❖ Gave orders: Separate to Me Barnabas and Saul Acts 13: 2
- ❖ Directed the service: they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach in Asia 16: 6 & 7
- ❖ Sanctified and comforted the believer: All their good deeds were from the fruits of the Spirit that are mentioned in Galatians 5: 22 & 23

- † Freedom from fear Acts 4: 19-20
- † Unity of heart and soul Acts 4: 32
- † Struggle to spread the Bible Acts 8: 4-5
- † Generosity Acts 2: 45 & 4: 34
- † The Spirit of prayer and love for the commandments Acts 2: 41-42
- † Joy in suffering for Christ's sake Acts 5: 41

Conclusion

The Book of Acts emphasizes greatly that the Holy Spirit was the working power in the 1st Christians and the Divine authority in their teachings.

Activities /Discussion Points

1. Sometimes we feel that the Holy Spirit was working powerfully in the early church and not anymore recently. Give examples of how the Holy Spirit works in the church today?
2. Pass out the verses to be discussed beforehand and have the class discuss them.