



Ascension. Salvador Dalí (1958)

THEMES IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

The Holy Spirit (Main Character)

- 5 dramatic outpourings (2:1-4;4:28-31;8:15-17;10:44;19:6)
- *Initiates and propels the geographic and demographic progress of the "Word of God".*
- *Derives from the resurrected Lord. Links Jesus and followers in a prophetic succession like that of Moses and Joshua (Deut. 34:9) or Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 9-14)*

The Life of the Church (ekklesia)

- Expresses the conviction that God's concern in history is the shaping of a people for his name (15:14) ; Acts 2:42-47;4:32-37.

The discernment of God's Activity:

- God moves ahead, initiates and guides; humans are challenged to

The Acts of the Apostles is the sequel to Luke's Gospel. It highlights God's plan of salvation, and how God established the new era that resulted from Jesus' ministry, death and resurrection. Acts affirms that a seemingly new movement (Christianity) is actually rooted in the promises associated with Judaism, yet includes Gentiles.

OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION: JESUS ASCENDS TO THE FATHER AND GIVES A MISSION (1:1-11)

- A. Review of book 1 to the ascension (1:1-5)
- B. The ascension and final testament: A promise for the disciples now and a promise to return (1:6-11)

II. THE EARLY CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (1:12-6:7)

- A. **Community Life:** Replacing Judas by depending on God and re-establishing the Twelve (1:12-26)
- B. **Pentecost** (2:1-41)
 1. *The event:* The coming of the Spirit (2:1-13)
 2. *The explanation:* The Spirit's coming shows Jesus is Lord, Messiah (2:14-36)
 3. *The reaction:* Repent and receive the promised gift (2:37-41)
- C. **Summary:** Community life (2:42-47)
- D. **The healing of the lame man and arrest of Peter and John** (3:1-4:31)
 1. *The event:* The healing of the lame man (3:1-10)
 2. *The explanation:* Peter preaches Jesus from Torah and promise (3:11-26)
 3. The arrest and leadership's deliberation (4:1-22)
 4. *The community reaction:* Prayer for boldness (4:23-31)
- E. **Community life and problems** (4:32-5:11)
 1. *All things in common:* The example of Barnabas (4:32-37)



Themes continued:

understand and follow God's initiative.
Examples: *Election of Matthias* (1:15-26);
preaching Gospel in midst of persecution
(4:23-31); choosing the seven (6:1-6);
acceptance of Paul as an apostle (9:26-30);
status of Gentiles (10-15); etc.

Universality

- Salvation is not only for those who are by heritage part of God's people; it is for everyone whom God calls (2:39).
- Examples: Cornelius (10:34-48), Greeks in Antioch (11:19-25); co-laborers: Barnabas, John-Mark, Silas, Timothy, Priscilla, Aquila, etc.



Pentecostes: A Contemporary Mexican Icon (Galería de Obras de Colección)

2. *Deceiving the Spirit and Judgment: Ananias and Sapphira* (5:1-11)

F. **Summary: Signs and wonders** (5:12-16)

G. **More persecution** (5:17-42)

1. Arrest, divine release and re-arrest (5:17-26)
2. Deliberations and release (5:27-42)

H. **Community life:** The Appointment of the Seven to help Hellenist widows (6:1-6)

I. **Summary of the Jerusalem community** (6:7)

42They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Acts 2:42

Let Us Break Bread Together (Traditional African American Spiritual)

Let us break bread together on our knees, (on our knees)
Let us break bread together on our knees. (on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees, (on our knees)
Let us drink wine together on our knees. (on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees, (on our knees)
Let us praise God together on our knees. (on our knees)
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.