

Acts 1.15-26: Adding Matthias to the Eleven Apostles, pt.2

Addition of Matthias: I. background (15), II. Peter's appeal to Scripture for it (16-22)

III. The casting of lots for the addition of Matthias, 23-26

Two candidates: Joseph and Matthias, 23, **And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias.**

Matthias chosen by prayer and the casting of lots, 24-26, ²⁴**And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place."** ²⁶**And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.**

A. The casting of lots in the Christian life

Even lots are determined by the Lord in His sovereign control of all things (Prov 16.33: **The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD**; Jonah 1.7: **So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah**). In the end, God chose Matthias just as Jesus chose the original twelve (Lk 6.13; Acts 1.2). Paul uses the same word, to choose or select in Ephesians 1.4 of our election **"before the foundation of the world."** Election implies a passing by of some since Matthias became an apostle and Joseph did not.

In Acts 1, prayer is the context of the casting of lots in which God's knowledge of the heart of all is affirmed (**You, Lord...know the hearts of all**) as the basis for the petition for His choice. The lot enters as a means by which God would make his selection clear.

Does this give credence to the idea that a Christian can participate in a lottery to learn if God wants him to be wealthy or not? I participate in the flipping of a coin (or a racquet) to decide who will serve first. Would we cast lots to choose a President? I received two special commentary sets by the drawing of names from a hat as a student at WTS. Wesley cast lots to determine if he should meet with Whitefield in the Colonies or return to England. Whitefield's response: this was wrong (and later Wesley conceded); decisions like this ought to be made by Christian prudence.

Note the rational (prudent) steps here: the two had to be eyewitnesses of the resurrection, God's will is sought by prayer, and then, in this case before the completed canon to guide us, they cast lots.

Critical principle: *to determine God's will as Christians*, the use of lots, as in OT distribution of the land and here in Acts, falls away (even choosing between men to serve, Acts 6, 13). Now, we are to prove God's will (Rom 12.1-2) by growing in knowledge and discernment to decide between good, better, and best (Phil 1.9-11). You may flip a coin to decide who will serve in tennis, but the winner of the toss still must choose for strategic purposes & for wealth, you work!

B. The numbering of Matthias with the eleven

...the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. We never hear of Matthias again in the NT. The central point must be symbolic with the Twelve as the new Israel in anticipation of the church built on the apostolic foundation.

Acts 1:12-26 records the obedience of the church waiting in Jerusalem for the Spirit. The death of Judas is viewed as God's judgment according to His plan (God is sovereign!).

This is a time of waiting according to the command of Jesus. Times of waiting occur often in the life of the church and the lives of Christians. We may wait in times of perplexity or weakness, but we have God's promise: **they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint** (Isa 40:31).