

## How Are We to Determine the Will of God? (Acts 1:26+)

### What Questions Does Acts 1:26 Bring Up?

And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

#### 1. What does it \_\_\_\_\_ “to cast lots?”

Using marked stones or shards. One stone or shard would be marked differently from the others. Much like drawing straws or rolling dice (though not the exactly the same). God supervises the outcomes.

#### Casting Lots in Scripture... (OT)

1. **Aaron** decided which of the two goats was to be the scape goat (Lev 16:7-10).
2. **Achan** was identified by lot (Josh 7:14).
3. **Joshua** divided the land of Canaan by lot (Num 26:56ff, Josh 18-19).
4. **Jonah** was identified by lot (Jonah 1:17).
5. **Haman** used the lot to decide when to kill Jews (Esther 3:7)
6. **Nehemiah** cast lots to determine ministry times for the priests and Levites (Neh 10:34), and to determine who would live in Jerusalem (11:1).

#### Casting Lots in Scripture... (NT)

1. **Soldiers** used lots to “gamble” for Jesus’ clothing (Matt 27:35).
2. **Apostles** used the lot to choose Matthias (Acts 1:26).
3. **Nothing** past the action in Acts. The NT and the early church used nothing similar to casting lots after Acts 1.

#### Casting Lots in Scripture...

1. Did not replace the revelation of God.
2. Did not become a regular method of decision-making.
3. Was used only for very specific purposes to determine very specific answers.
4. Appears to be something God used in the past, but no longer uses now.

#### 2. Was this a \_\_\_\_\_ method for the apostles?

### The Apostles’ Use in Acts 1:26...

1. Did something that Jesus did not direct them to do (and could have done Himself).
2. Presumed to apply OT Scripture.
3. Prescribed man-made requirements for apostleship.
4. Wrestled with understanding the truth, even after the resurrection, until the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost.

#### 3. Is this a proper method for \_\_\_\_\_ today?

#### Using the Lot (or Similar) Today?

1. No church use in the NT whatsoever. (The church was not yet in existence in Acts 1.)
2. No direction to use such in the NT.
3. We are directed to live by the Word, not by lot.
4. Use should be limited to occasions where “flipping a coin” or such would make sense – determining a random outcome.

#### 4. What are the \_\_\_\_\_ for knowing God’s will?

#### The Biblical Order of Decision-Making...

1. Commands of God. Clear, concise orders to do or not to do something.
2. Principles of God. General directions that define our decisions.
3. Biblical Wisdom. We are called on to make wise choices as defined by Scripture.

#### SUMMARY...

**Because we have the completed Word of God, we are directed over and over to live by the Word of God, not temporary or mystical means of decision-making that God has not instructed us to use.**

**2 Pet. 1:2-4** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, <sup>3</sup> as His divine power has given to us **all things that pertain to life and godliness**, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, <sup>4</sup> by which have been given to us **exceedingly great and precious promises**, that **through these** you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (and **many** other passages...)