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The book of

Acts

*Practical guide to accessing
the miracle power of God*

Denise Padayachee

The book of Acts

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Note that the scripture verses used in this book are from various Bible versions, including the English Standard Version (ESV), New King James Version (NKJV), New International Version (NIV) and The Passion Translation (TPT).

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Foreword

There are few accomplishments greater than inspiring, equipping and activating just one life. Look at Ananias in the Book of Acts. He only had one impacted life to his credit, the Apostle Paul, and we know how earth-shaking that turned out. Well Denise Padayachee has impacted hundreds of men and women through her relentless pursuit of Jesus and her unquenchable obedience to His mandate to unleash an army of Jesus lovers everywhere. Denise has a unique ability to unlock the storehouses of heaven that are resident in every child of God. I have seldom seen someone so determined and able to help others hear God's voice and act upon that voice. She is truly an Ascension gift minister, with a unique blend of the apostolic and the prophetic. Denise lays foundations and creates environments and atmospheres where heaven meets earth.

Denise's teaching is some of the best I have heard when it comes to getting people out of the seats and onto the streets. She literally takes people from hiding to abiding; from fear into freedom. Her book *The book of Acts* is a God-inspired tool that activates life changing partnerships between the Holy Spirit and the followers of Jesus. It is full of revelation and activation. It will put more capacity in your hands and bring more glory out of your hearts.

There are few leaders I recommend more highly than Denise. I have seen her in action for many years, and I can say, unequivocally, that Denise is a major gift to the Body of Christ. The most significant demographic in this season is "everybody". Denise is among a new breed of kingdom-minded leaders who are all about empowering others. I am so thankful to be on this journey with Denise, and I look forward to seeing thousands of believers activated by her to live more powerfully everywhere.

Dr Bill Bennot, Senior Leader, Journey of Grace Church

Author, Unstoppable Kingdom

How best to use this book

Acts has been written to help individuals, groups and churches transition into revival culture. We will go on a journey together starting with the love of the Father and baptism in Holy Spirit before moving on to partner with the Acts of Holy Spirit. The aim of this book is to make the supernatural accessible to everyone whilst also addressing difficult tensions and concepts.

One of my primary passions is for people to understand who God is and who they are considering that reality, therefore I often return to the concept of beholding and becoming in this book. It is a concept which I believe is a key to accessing the supernatural. I have written a booklet called *Beholding and Becoming – A Practical Guide* which is available in print and as an eBook (<http://www.wellstraining.co/ebooks/>) and is recommended to be used in conjunction with Acts to take the transformative journey of identity deeper. Some sessions and activations contain references from this booklet.

I would also strongly advise the reader to re-read the Book of Acts during this course, as it will propel your faith and risk-taking to new levels as faith is imparted to you and you see what's possible.

Activations, questions for reflection, and ministry are incorporated throughout the book to help the reader to engage with the concepts or to provide the facilitator of a group with tools to help the group engage with the concepts. I believe that the activation of what is learned is integral to equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, otherwise it can remain mere head-knowledge.

I care deeply about head-knowledge becoming heart-revelation and manifest experience. These activations are just a window into what is possible. When I facilitate this course, there will be many other activations included and therefore more windows and doorways opened to you, which are invitations to encountering God. But they are not an end in themselves. My hope is always that these “windows” and “doorways” will lead you into encounters with the Person and place that you can live from forever.

Each session also includes a declaration for the week. It is my belief that declarations are powerful tools that also help Truth sink from the head to heart-level. Declaring Truth out loud enable us to reject lies and align our hearts and minds with God's, as well as create the future reality that we will live in.

Finally, don't race through the book but savour the journey and take time to practice and activate what you learn.

Thank you for accepting the invitations coming your way. May you enjoy the satisfying and exhilarating adventure of co-labouring with God!

Introduction

The gospels are bursting with amazing testimonies of supernatural things that Jesus did. Blind eyes, deaf ears, the mute, lame and crippled are healed. He multiplied bread and fish, walked on water and forgave sin. But the example of living a supernatural life didn't stop in the gospels with Jesus; the Book of Acts records incredible supernatural activity happening through the disciples and the early church. In these books we see the raw power of Jesus' death and resurrection and of the Holy Spirit at work through all who believed.

He extends this promise, and the great adventure of Christianity, through the generations to you:

"These signs will accompany those who have believed; in my name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (Mark 16:17-18)

"In the last days, God says, I will pour out My Spirit on all people; your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on My servants, both men and women, I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy." (Acts 2:17-18)

This was prophesied by the prophet Joel in the Old Testament and declared again to herald the beginning of the fulfilment in

We have a rich heritage of supernatural activity and power revealed to us by Holy Spirit through Jesus and the early church. As we watch church history through the centuries, we see evidence of this fire burning all along: sometimes like wildfire in revivals and sometimes only a flame nurtured by a few who saw further than the rest. Today we stand as a generation who can herald the prophecies we grew up with, of the end-times revival, the billion-soul harvest, the great outpouring, the greatest mission movement the world has seen. Drawing from what Jesus purchased with His blood and Holy Spirit came to bring, we can be the ones long prophesied about:

"His generation yet to be born will glorify him. And they will all declare, 'It is finished.'" Psalm 22:31 [The Passion Translation]

So, I write this course with a fire burning in me for my generation, believing that this was prophesied long ago about us! Will you be one of those who lives a life that testifies to the finished work of the cross? Will we be the ones who will ALL declare "It is finished"?

The Book of Acts

[It is recommended that you read through the Book of Acts while doing this course. But I want to whet your appetite for what's possible by giving you some glimpses now from the chapters of this incredible book.]

- **Acts 1:** Jesus says to His disciples, “You’re going to receive **power** (dunamis) when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will **be my witnesses to the ends of the earth**”. Then He was taken up before their eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight!
- **Acts 2:** The disciples are still gathering together waiting and praying because Jesus said to “wait for the promise of the Father” (Acts 1:4) and then one crazy day heaven came down and invaded their room with *tongues of fire* and a violent wind. They spoke in *new tongues* and *seemed like drunk people* immediately after, so much so that the crowd that gathered to see what was going on even made fun of them and said they had had too much to drink!
- **Acts 2:** Peter, the same **Peter** who denied Jesus, the same Peter who failed, now forgiven and filled with the Spirit, becomes *bold as a lion* and *He preaches* his heart out! The people were cut to the heart and cried out, “What must we do?” *Three thousand people were saved* that day!
- **Acts 3:** Peter and John heal a man crippled from birth.
- **Acts 4:** Peter, still full of Holy Spirit, addresses the Sanhedrin. When they see Peter and John’s courage and realise they are *ordinary, unschooled men*, they are astonished and took note that *these men had been with Jesus*. Peter and John are imprisoned and but when they are released they go home and have a prayer meeting! “After they prayed the place where they were meeting was **shaken**. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (again) and continued to speak the Word of God with **boldness**” Acts 4:31.

- **Acts 5:** “Now *many signs and wonders* were *regularly done* among the people by the hands of the apostles” (Acts 5:12). More and more people believe and “as a result people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that **at least Peter’s shadow** might fall on some of them as he passed by” (Acts 5:14–15).
- **Acts 6 and 7:** Stephen the waiter, described as being full of the Spirit and of God’s grace and power, did *great signs and wonders* among the people. Even when they were about to stone him they said his face was transfigured like that of an angel.
- **Acts 8:** Phillip leads an Ethiopian eunuch to God and baptises him. When they come out of the water, Philip disappears. “***The Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away***” (Acts 8:39) and then he appeared in another town!
- **Acts 9:** Peter heals a man called Ananias who had been *paralysed and bedridden* for eight years. When Tabitha dies, Peter sends all the wailers out of the room and says to her “***Tabitha get up!***” and she does. Many people get saved after that.
- **Acts 10:** God tells Peter to share the Truth with the Gentiles and while he is still sharing the Word with Cornelius’s household, the *Holy Spirit can’t seem to wait* any longer and baptises them all without anyone praying for or laying hands on them.
- **Acts 12:** Peter’s *prison break!* He’s made to sleep between two soldiers, bound with two chains with sentries standing guard at the entrance of his cell. An angel appears, his chains fall off and he walks past the guards without being seen.
- **Acts 13:** Paul and Barnabas are sent off into the mission fields with prayer and fasting. While they’re at it, a sorcerer called Elymas opposes them. Saul, full of Holy Spirit looked straight at Elymas and said, “*You are a child of the devil ... you are going to be blind*” and *immediately* Elymas could not see.
- **Acts 14:** A man crippled and *lame from birth* jumped up and began to walk for the first time in his life!
- **Acts 16:** A fortune-telling slave girl gets *delivered* and her owner is upset about it. Paul and Silas are then stripped, flogged and imprisoned! What do they do? Sing. They were praying and singing at about midnight and

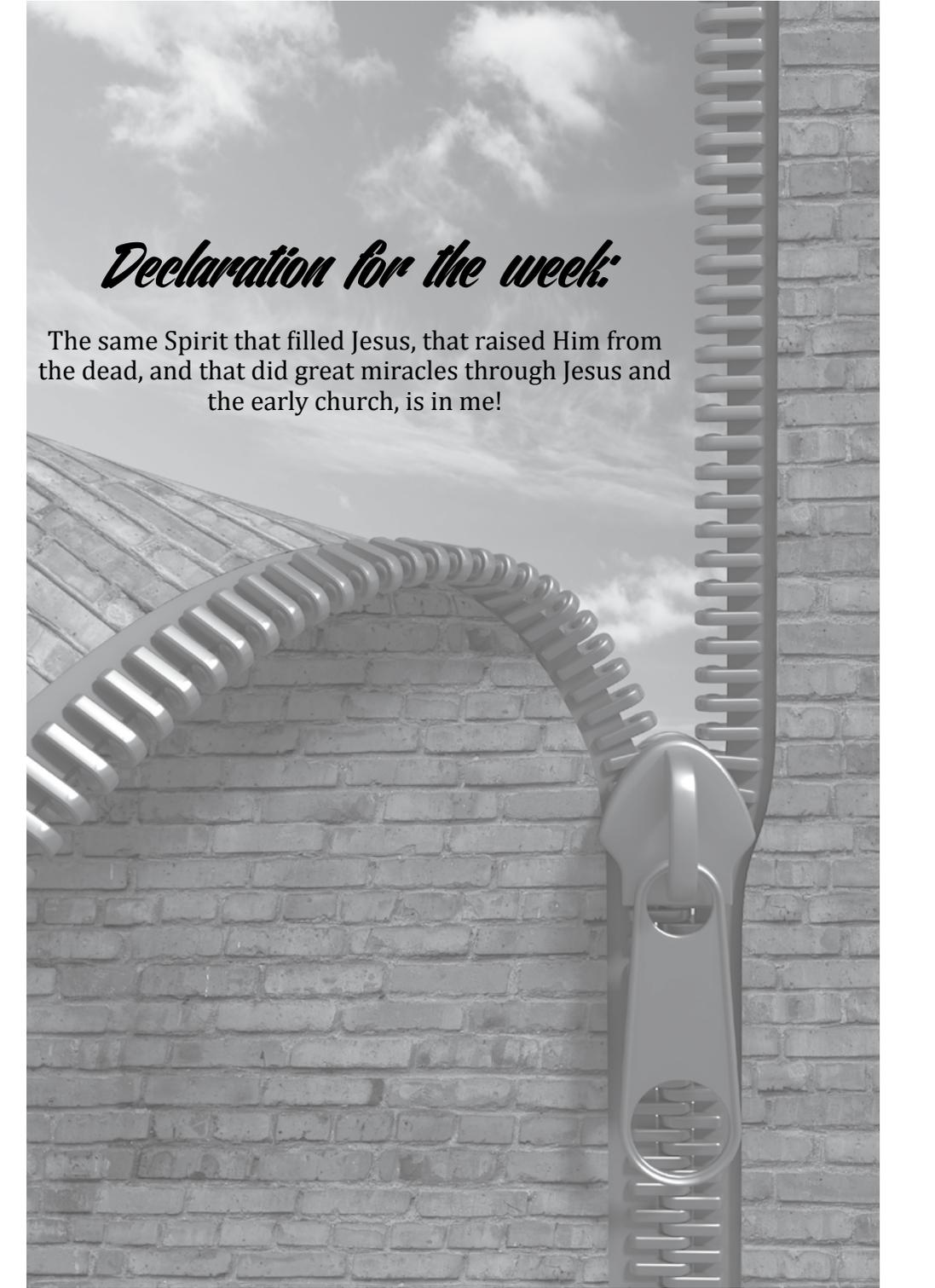
suddenly the *second episode of prison break* happens, this time even more dramatically than the first time; there's a violent earthquake, the *prison doors fly open* and everybody's chains are loosed. The jailer wakes up, gets saved, takes them to his house and washes their wounds. His family also come to salvation as a result. They get word that the magistrate gave orders for them to be released but Paul refuses and requests to be escorted out personally. And they do: "*So they came and apologised to them. And they took them out and asked them to (please) leave the city*" (Acts 16:35–40).

- **Acts 19:** God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even *handkerchiefs and aprons* that had touched him were taken to the sick and their illnesses were cured, and the evil spirits left them.

I am excited for the signs of the Kingdom that are going to accompany you as you believe.

Questions for reflection

1. Which of the supernatural activities above make you hunger for more of God's Spirit?
2. After seeing examples of what is available for a believer, write down seven things that you are believing for during this course.
3. Write down one of the most supernatural and impossible things that you can think of happening to you and ask Holy Spirit to help you to believe for it.



Declaration for the week:

The same Spirit that filled Jesus, that raised Him from the dead, and that did great miracles through Jesus and the early church, is in me!

Love and identity

A. THE FATHER'S LOVE REVEALED

"Behold, what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God. And that is what we are!" (1 John 3:1)

That we can be called *children of God* is lavish love indeed! The parable of the prodigal son also reveals the incredible heart of Father God. While the prodigal was still a long way off, his father saw him and, filled with compassion, ran to him. This parable, taught by Jesus, makes us aware of God as the Father who loves and forgives, though we return shame-covered and having wasted everything He gave us, He looks for our return and runs to us with open arms, kisses and compassion. The son asked for forgiveness and to work as a servant, but the father's response was, *"bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to celebrate"* (Luke 15:22-24). He responds to the son's return and remorse by restoring his sense of *identity, worth and authority*. Our Father in heaven does no less.

When the older son returns home from the field, he takes offense at the celebration for his brother and refuses to go in, so the father comes out to meet him. The elder brother complains that he works so hard and does not even get a goat, to which the father replies, *"Son, you are always with me and all that I have is yours"* (Luke 15:31).

The picture of the merciful father running to his son to save him from shame and the consequences of his actions is a picture of what happened for us when God stretched out His eternal hand to save us from our own sin and filth. And the incredible words spoken by the father to the elder brother, is what we have now – access and authority. That is one of the most