



Daughters **STUDENT
BOOK**
OF THE *Promise*



**JUDITH BENTLEY &
KRISTIN HOOVER**

Daughters
OF THE
Promise

What people are saying about
Daughters OF THE *Promise*.

“Daughters of the Promise is an excellent resource to place into the hands of any lady in your congregation, but especially the young ladies! In a world whose pendulum has swung from devaluing women to burdening them unfairly with a perceived need to compete with men, Judy Bentley and Kristen Hoover bring a biblical perspective to a woman’s value. By examining select women from the Book of Acts, they help contemporary women understand that if they know who they are and what they believe, they too can change their world! I highly recommend it.”

- Scott Graham

“My friend, Judy Bentley, and her daughter, Kristin Hoover, who are both passionate about helping more women learn to love the Word, have brought you an excellent Bible study for women. It is well written, scripturally based, and includes historical notes that make it very interesting reading. It is anointed and challenging, as well as inspirational. You will be uplifted as you delve into this study of the women of Acts!”

- Joy Haney

“Judy Bentley and Kristin Hoover have introduced to us some New Testament daughters of the promise and let us know through these powerful Bible studies that we have the right to claim our spiritual inheritance just as these anointed women did. This book reminds us that gender does not preclude one from being included in any of the ministries of the church.

I have used this Bible study many times and have had amazing results as the women I was teaching came to a realization that they too could have this wonderful inheritance of salvation and take ownership of a calling to minister in some fashion.

I highly recommend this Bible study. It is well written, easy to teach, and anointed by God. It is a great tool, and I enjoy using it. Every time I teach it, I become excited all over again, as it never loses its freshness.”

- Orvada Churchill

“You hold in your hands a unique treasure! *Daughters of the Promise*, by Judy Bentley and Kristin Hoover, is a collection of Bible studies for women, by women, and about women.

Daughters of the Promise focuses on the Book of Acts and the recorded stories of women who were part of those incredible early days of the church. These lessons will prove to be invaluable to you in your personal devotion. If you are a teacher or Bible study leader, you have a new series!

Because these women were who they were, believed what they believed, and did what they did, they changed their world. So can I, and so can you.”

- Mickey Mangun

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OF THE
Promise

BY JUDITH BENTLEY
AND KRISTIN HOOVER



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by Judith Bentley and Kristin Hoover

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Introduction

*God created women for
a divine purpose.*

And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh (Genesis 2:21-24).

By example, Jesus showed His attitude toward women. They were a key component in His ministry. Sometimes they were named, and other times they were referred to as “the women.” They were always there. They were women of prayer, passion, and power.

Our Lord chose twelve men to be His apostles. He founded His church on their ministries. He revealed His doctrines through their preaching. Their stories were reported by Luke in the Book of Acts. It is important to note that throughout the Book of Acts, there were always “the women.” They were vital to the church’s inauguration, ministries, miracles, and even persecutions.



The Book of Acts serves as a pattern for us today. As we peruse its pages, God's plan for women becomes evident. In the changing times in which we live, it is vital that we get the message right.

We invite you to become involved in this life-altering study entitled *Daughters of the Promise*. Learn about these amazing women—who they were, what they believed, and how they changed their world. Follow their example, and you will enter into a new dimension of victorious living.

Personal Notes from *Judy*

My passion for teaching home Bible studies came during the eight years I ministered in Russia and the countries of the former Soviet Union. There were very few church buildings in which to conduct services, so we chose to live in apartments with big living rooms.

My classes often consisted of atheists, new believers, and an occasional Bible scholar. The combinations of people I taught covered a wide span of ages, from the young to the elderly, often gathered in one living room.

My favorite Bible studies were the ones I compiled from the Book of Acts. They were all about the women of the early church—who they were, what they believed, and how they changed their world.

I continued teaching these lessons in church prayer groups and home Bible study groups after returning to America. The lessons are universal in their appeal. Women everywhere can relate.

Kristin and I have put our heads and hearts together, and compiled these lessons for the glory of God and for the growth of His Kingdom.

We pray that God's Spirit will empower you and give you wisdom as you undertake this exciting challenge. May God richly bless your ministry.

Personal Notes from *Kristin*

I have had the pleasure of teaching many Bible studies in my own home. This calls for some flexibility since I have several young children. Nevertheless, with a little preliminary planning, it is possible to have an effective Bible Study with children in the house. It can even be an advantage, since other mothers may need to bring their children also. Here are some practical suggestions:

- A clean environment for the study is always best.
- You can give a study even if you have young children! We make our study a family affair. There are times when the children interrupt, needing a drink, or even needing to be helped in the bathroom. If you can be relaxed about it, your guests will be also. We usually have everyone's children playing together away from the study with the promise of a treat at the end. On some occasions we have brought the children in to pray with us, adding a new dimension altogether. If you do have young children, stress to them that they are being a witness for Jesus while mommy teaches.
- I try to have a dessert time afterward for everyone. It's amazing how chatting over a piece of pie, will open up further discussions and often lead back to prayer.

Tips for Teaching a *Home Bible Study*

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).



We want to encourage you in your quest to teach a home Bible study. God empowered you to be a witness when He filled you with His Spirit. His anointing will cover the areas in which you may feel you are lacking. You are a fulfillment of Acts 1:8!

Getting Started

Many visitors feel the touch of Jesus when they walk through our church doors, but they don't know where to go from there. People may leave the altar after being in the presence of God, and yet they need a personal mentor to lead them into living a victorious Christian life.

A combination of studying the Word, prayer, and the personal touch of a home Bible study are wonderful outreach tools. Once you see the need, and pray to be used in this manner, God will open the doors for you. One person will tell another, and God will increase your ministry.

When you invite someone to be part of your study group, it is helpful to tell them specifically what you are studying in order to build excitement and encourage attendance. For example, "We are studying the lives of the women of Acts and how these women changed their world. This week's lesson is on deliverance. I hope you can join with us on Thursday."

It is essential to read through each study before teaching and to pray for a divine anointing as you teach. It is helpful to underline key words, phrases, or sentences you wish to bring out in the lesson. In the margin, place comments you wish to add or examples of your own that complement the lesson. Every Bible study group has different needs depending on spiritual maturity. You must cater the lessons to fit the needs of your particular group.

Teaching


You need not be an eloquent speaker for God to use you in teaching a Bible study. He only needs a willing vessel.

We encourage you to use this study's format without feeling tied to reading each line of the text word for word. It is meant to be a guide that can be adapted to the needs of your group. Insert your own examples and personal stories to make the Word come alive.

Prepare thoroughly and then relax. The Word will do its work.

Participation

Encourage others to participate with their own stories that relate to the topic. Sometimes you may need to redirect the conversation back to the outline, but always work to create an open feeling where others feel free to contribute. Where there are multiple Scriptures, invite other participants to read for you. Where there is a long passage, break it up into segments with alternating readers.



*Faith cometh
by hearing,
and hearing
by the Word
of God.*

During teaching, the Word of God builds faith in hearts. Make sure to spend time in prayer at the close of your lesson.

There are sometimes uneasy moments when your voice is the only one heard in prayer. It is the job of the group leader to encourage opening up in prayer and to demonstrate an anointed prayer life. Asking for specific prayer requests will encourage participation. It is a sign of a successful lesson when you see someone drawing closer to God in prayer.



What Is the
Book of Acts?

Acts is the fifth book in the New Testament, and it is written by the physician Luke. The Bible is more easily read if we know the purpose of each of its divisions.

The Old Testament tells of all the time periods before the birth of Jesus. It begins with the creation of the world, it tells of the worldwide flood, and it records the history of the people of Israel. It tells the rules and regulations God gave the Jewish people. It also gives the moral laws established through the Ten Commandments. These moral laws were given for all people and for all times. Many of our civil laws of today are based on these biblical commandments.

The New Testament begins with four books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These books tell of the life of Jesus here on earth. It includes His birth, His miracles, His teachings, and the great sacrifice He made for our sins.

At the end of these books, we read that Jesus died, was buried for three days, and then came back from the dead. He reconnected with His followers for forty days. During this time He revealed to them His future plans for establishing His church here on earth. He promised them that they would be filled with His Spirit. This would empower them to take His message to all the world.

It happened just as Jesus told them. The story of the establishing of God's church is found in the Book of Acts. The doctrines, the preaching, and the actions of God's early church in this book give all generations a pattern to follow if we truly desire to be a part of God's kingdom.

The books that follow Acts contain letters written to the church with instructions concerning how we should live once



we become born again Christians. The last book of the Bible is the Book of Revelation. In this book God gives us a vision of the future and of the end-time events.


Our lessons in this series come from the Book of Acts. We will particularly be studying the part that women played in God's plan for His church. The entire book is a great read. It is action packed. Read it and be blessed.



Lesson 1

Mary Was There

They all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren (Acts 1:14).



Scripture Text: Acts 1:1-14

Core Truth: Mary was closer to Jesus than any other person, yet she realized her need for salvation.



Personal Reflection Journaling


As women we are caregivers to others by our nature. Yet we each must recognize our own needs. Take a moment to write down the needs in your life. In what ways might you need God?



Introduction

From the beginning of creation, we learn the story of womanhood. From Mother Eve came sin; from Mother Mary came salvation. From Eve came rebellion against the will of God; from Mary came submission to the will of God. Eve was cursed; Mary was blessed.

In the Garden of Eden, the original home of Adam and Eve, God spoke a curse to the serpent. Kernelled in this curse was a prophecy concerning Mary and the Christ child she would birth.



*And I will put
enmity between
thee and the
woman, and
between thy seed
and her seed; it
shall bruise thy
head, and thou
shalt bruise his heel
(Genesis 3:15).*

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was part of the plan of God from the beginning. Of all the women who ever lived, she is the most notable. Her life provides a fascinating series of interactions between a mother and the son she birthed.

As we study the lives of women in the early church, our first encounter is with this blessed woman, Mary.

Acts 1

The first chapter of Acts records a very special event. Jesus had recently been crucified and three days later, He rose from the dead. He spent forty days with His followers, teaching them of “things pertaining to the kingdom,” (Acts 1:3).

Jesus gave His last set of instructions to His followers in Acts 1. He instructed them to go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father. He told them that soon they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost and they would receive the power to be His witnesses.

Then Jesus was taken up to Heaven in a cloud. Two angels appeared to tell Jesus' followers:

This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven (Acts 1:11).

No doubt the disciples were in a state of awe and shock with many mixed emotions. They followed Jesus' instructions and made the short trip to Jerusalem where they waited in an upper room for the promise of the Father.

Special care was made in the Scriptures to note that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was present for the great spiritual event Jesus promised.

Mary was the woman God had elevated to the highest position of womanhood. She became the body through which the Christ child was born. Now she was preparing to be part of the new birth Jesus had promised to give his followers. Jesus called this infilling the birth of the Spirit.

These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren (Acts 1:14).

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5).

Mary and the others prayerfully awaited the promise of the Comforter.

Let's go back to Mary's teen years and trace the steps that brought her to this great moment in time.

Mary's Character

What do we know about this girl from the obscure village of Nazareth?

- She was morally pure: "A virgin espoused to a man" (Luke 1:27).
- She was highly favored: "Hail, thou art highly favored" (Luke 1:28).
- The Lord was with her: "The Lord is with thee" (Luke 1:28).
- She was humble in spirit: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord" (Luke 1:38).
- She was a willing vessel: "Be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38).
- She was a worshiper: "My soul doth magnify the Lord" (Luke 1:46-55).
- She was a meditator: "Mary pondered these things in her heart" (Luke 2:19).



Personal Reflection:

Identify characteristics Mary emulated that you would like to build in your own life. How can you grow in these areas?

Mary Was There for the First Miracle

Mary played a key role in the first miracle of Jesus at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11).

Mary had witnessed the impossible from the moment the angel spoke the name Jesus to her. She remembered the angel's words: "For with God, nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).

Her faith was strong. Knowing Jesus could do anything, she played a big role in Jesus' first miracle. As told in the Book of John, Mary and Jesus were guests at a wedding. When the hosts of the wedding party discovered there was no wine left for the guests, Mary took the problem to Jesus. Then she turned to the servants and said these important words: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5).


Jesus instructed the servants to fill the six stone water pots with water. Then He told them to serve the governor of the feast from the water pots. As they did so, the water miraculously turned into wine. The party continued, and everyone was delighted with the best wine of the evening.

This very practical miracle was the first one of Jesus' ministry. Mary was there and participated in bringing it to pass.

There is no doubt about it. Mary was a true believer. Mary boldly took what would forever be the first step toward salvation: believing.

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

As Mary believed, we too must believe. We must believe He is our only hope for salvation. We must believe that He knows the intimate details of our lives. We must then place our future in His hands as we follow Him.



*Believe on the
Lord Jesus
Christ and thou
shalt be saved
(Acts 16:31).*

Mary Was There for Calvary

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene (John 19:25).

Surely the most difficult day of Mary's life was the day her innocent son met His death on a cruel instrument of torture. While others forsook Him, Mary stayed with Him until the end. She saw the nails placed in His hands and the blood that flowed from his body.

In the midst of His agony, Jesus acknowledged the presence of Mary at the cross. He committed her to the care of His disciple, John.

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman behold thy son.

Then saith he unto his disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home (John 19: 26-27).

Is it possible Mary understood the purpose for it all? Her tears mingled with His blood at the foot of the cross. It was all a part of God's plan to redeem us. There could be no salvation for our lost souls, except this innocent Lamb gave His life for us.

Hebrews 9:22 tells us that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. It is through the shed blood of Jesus that the price of our redemption from sin was paid.

As Mary stood at the foot of the cross, so we must make our own way to Calvary. The curse of sin is upon our lives, and the stains are impossible to remove without the blood of Jesus. As we kneel in repentance, we ask God to cleanse us by His blood. He will forgive us and give us the strength to live a new life in Him.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Mary, for being there.

Mary Was There for the Resurrection

Three days after Jesus was buried, He triumphantly rose from His grave to new life. Of all those who witnessed this miracle, Mary was probably the most joyful and the least surprised. It is possible that Mary had listened carefully to Jesus' words as He ministered and knew that Calvary was not the end.

We often speak of Thomas as the disciple who doubted the resurrection of Jesus. But the Bible tells us that all the disciples doubted the resurrection miracle until they had seen Jesus with their own eyes.

Jesus chose to appear to the women first. They were quick to believe and tell others of the miracle.

Mary was there. As Mary rejoiced in His resurrection, so we rejoice in the new life He brings.

Mary Was There for Christ's Ascension

To whom he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3).

Mary experienced a wide range of emotions from the time of Jesus' arrest, throughout the torture he endured, during his burial, and then at His glorious resurrection. The time she spent near Him during the forty days after his resurrection must have been a great source of comfort to her heart. She followed closely and listened, knowing there was more to come.

Surely Mary sensed the words she heard as Jesus spoke to them on the Mount of Olives were some of His last words here on earth. These are the words she heard Him speak:

And being assembled together with them. commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith

he, ye have heard of me.

For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:4, 5, & 8).

Jesus then ascended into Heaven. Mary and the assembled women determined to follow His instructions and become a part of the kingdom He had so often talked about.

Mary Was There for Pentecost

Obediently, the disciples traveled the short journey to Jerusalem. There they waited for the promise.

Mary was there— at Bethlehem, at Cana, at Calvary, at the Resurrection, and at His departure. Now she would be there for the outpouring of God's Spirit on the day of Pentecost. She had given birth to the Savior, and now she was to receive a new birth experience.

In the next part of our lesson, we will visit the historical day when Jesus initiated His plan of salvation for generations to come. We, like Mary, need to make the spiritual journey to Pentecost and be filled with the Spirit promised to us in God's Word.

Something to Ponder

Mary serves as a beautiful role model for women of every generation. In the changing times in which we live, Mary still lives as an example of purity, courage, solid faith, and simple obedience to God.

A few years ago a strange robbery was reported in the news. Vandals broke into a large department store in the middle of the night. Nothing was taken but some unusual damage was done. The vandals simply went through the store switching the price tags.

The next morning all the employees arrived and the store opened its doors. Business went on as usual. It wasn't until noon, that employees became aware something was very wrong. Items such as mink coats were selling for \$25 while a simple scarf was selling for \$325. They finally realized that while they were sleeping, someone had switched the price tags.

Needless to say, the managers of the store had a huge task trying to correct all the wrong price tags.

The robbery draws a strong parallel to the moral climate in our world today. Worthless and evil things have been made to look valuable. On the other hand, things of great worth, such as moral purity and obedience to God's Word, are made to look cheap and unimportant.

More than ever, it is necessary that we have a strong moral compass to guides our lives. That strength comes from seriously following God's Word. If we maintain strong biblical values, we, like Mary, will be highly favored and blessed by God.

Application

- Mary set a wonderful example of good mothering. She chose to be there for every important moment in her son's life. She was there in the good times and the bad. She knew joy and she knew deep sorrow. In the end, it all paid off. She set an example for all humanity when she chose to obey the parting words of Jesus and journey to Jerusalem to receive her own personal promise on the day of Pentecost.
- Mary was probably closer to Jesus than any other human being. She understood that all mankind was in need of a savior. She recognized that Jesus was God in flesh who came to earth to redeem all who believe on Him and obey His Word.

Like Mary, we too must recognize our need for salvation. We begin by believing that the blood of

Application

Jesus Christ was shed for us. We repent by asking Him to forgive our sins and take control of our lives. Repentance causes us to turn from the sins of the past and enter into a new life in Christ.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new (II Corinthians 5:17).

When we repent of our sins, we turn from our old ways of living and our old ways of thinking. We take on a brand new lifestyle in Christ. We commit ourselves to obeying God's Word and serving Him faithfully.

Our sins are remitted through baptism in the name of Jesus.

And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord (Acts 22:16).

Then we wait expectantly to be filled with the promise of the Father.



Questions for Discussion

Reflect on the questions below and write in your answers to be prepared for sharing your thoughts during the group discussion time.

- What do we know about the personal relationship between Jesus and His mother?

- What part does believing play in our salvation?

- What is repentance? Who needs repentance?

- If Mary was such a blessed woman, why was it necessary for her to receive salvation?

- What changes would you like for God to make in your life?
