

# **The Acts of the Apostles**

**A Commentary on the Greek Text  
Volume I**

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**Pumpkin Cottage Publications**

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# Preface



Not everyone is into science fiction, and certainly not the classic sci-fi movies of the fifties. Who could ever forget the 3D version of *It Came From Outer Space*? Well! probably most of those who saw it, but anyway .... My all-time favourite is not *The War of the Worlds*, with the modern versions outshining the 1950's original, but *The Forbidden Planet*, released in 1956 by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Of course, the cinematic effects have not aged well, but for the time, it was a thriller.

I'm not going to bore you with the plot, but it develops around the crew of a spaceship sent to the distant planet Altair IV to rescue an expedition that travelled there some 20 years earlier. The earlier expedition discovered an extinct advanced civilisation that had harnessed unlimited power, and had finally

developed the technique of using that power to do whatever they willed. Of course, they didn't count on the "id", the subconscious - we might call it original sin - and that was the end of that experiment! Anyway, Morbius, a scientist from the original expedition, found their underground power-source, tapped into it, and of course, his mental acerations were causing mayhem. Humanity was only saved by destroying the planet.

Ah yes, original sin, corruption, selfishness. Even when we shine, Paul would remind us that "our righteousness is but filthy rags." So, here is sci-fi reminding us that corruption is part of the human condition, and that although technological development may aid all that is good, in the hands of flawed humanity, it can also promote all that is evil.

When I was a youngster, milk was delivered by the milko on a horse and cart. He would measure out a pint of milk and put it in our billycan standing at the front door. So you see, In my lifetime I have witnessed amazing technological and social change. My fear is that technology is increasingly in the hands of Big

Brother, a sanitised Marxist humanism set on eradicating the remaining elements of Christian civilisation.

There is much good in socialism, which is why many of the early nineteenth century socialists were Christians. The principle of equity is a foundational New Testament truth, but of course, so is freedom. Yet, this new-age secular *heaven on earth* ignores the human condition; sin has no place in the new age of enlightenment. Descartes may proclaim "I think, therefore I am", but today it is "I think, therefore it's true." Such wisdom, such power, such potential for destruction.

Luke the physician, friend and colleague of Paul the apostle, is driven by the eschatology of Jesus, and the imperative to be his witness "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Luke's two-part literary effort is a detailed account of the last-days realisation of the kingdom of God in and through God's messiah, Jesus Christ, and of the urgency of making that truth known, even to the centre of Luke's world, godless Rome.

Luke sets us a challenge to do likewise, to play our part as "witnesses" in a godless age where the corruption of power threatens our very existence. Back when Luke wrote the book of Acts, there was no time to waste, and so it is for us today.

It is my hope that these notes aid your task of knowing the mind of Christ.

Bryan Findlayson, 2023.

\*



# Notes

**Commentary Intention:** This exegetical commentary aims to provide a foundation for expository preaching, assisting fellow pastors with *rusty* Greek to come to grips with the text. The Greek level is college years 2/3, with a focus on syntax to aid an understanding of the text - accents are only used where necessary. Highly technical issues are avoided, with the exposition primarily guided by the expressed views of respected published commentators. Where possible, the commentary is structured to conform with the readings of the Revised Common Lectionary.

**Format:** RCL study units - synopsis, context, structure, interpretation, homiletical suggestion and exegesis: the Greek word or phrase; a limited parsing; the English text (NIV and/or NIV11); a literal English translation (TNGEI, Accordance, Louw & Nida); syntax where necessary; comment, often with a published translation.

**Copyright:** No copyright provision covers this commentary, nor is citing expected. Where citing is required for academic purposes; Findlayson, *The Acts of the Apostles; A Commentary on the Greek Text, 2023.*

**Abbreviations:** See Series Addendum.

**Print:** Format; A5. For mono laser "render colour black."

**Greek:** Nestle-Aland / UBS 4 Greek New Testament.

**Greek Glossary:** See Series Addendum.

**Inclusive language:** Numerous older translations and paraphrases are used throughout the studies to enhance the meaning of the text. Latitude is given to sexist language, although alterations are sometimes made to the original text.

**Primary English Text Bible:** The New International Version, NIV, 1985, and / or NIV11, 2011, copyright by International Bible Societies and published by The Zondervan Corporation. All rights reserved worldwide. The full text is not provided under copyright requirements and it is recommended that a copy of the NIV be at hand.

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**Dedication:** To my children, Marelle, Paul and Justyne.

**Typos:** Forgive me! I keep finding clangers.



# Commentaries on the book of Acts

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**Blacklock**, Tyndale (*replaced*), 1959. 1D  
**Bock**, BECNT, 2007. 4  
**Bruce Gk**, *The Greek text and commentary*, Tyndale, 1951. GD  
**Bruce**, NICNT, 1951, revised 1988. 4R  
**Cho & Park**, NCC, 2 vols. 2019. 3  
**Conzelmann**, Hermeneia, (*Critical analysis*), 1963 / 72 trans. 5  
**Culy**, Culy, Parsons & Hall, HGT, Revised, 2 Vols, 2022. G  
**Dunn**, Epworth, 1996. 3  
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**Foakes-Jackson**, MNTC, 1931. 1D  
**Gaventa**, Abingdon, 2003. 3  
**Gooding**, *True to the Faith (Literary analysis)*,  
Hodder & Stoughton, 1990/5. 3R  
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**Hamilton**, *Bryn Bawr Greek Commentaries*, 1986. G  
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Keener has authored a non-technical "summary" in the NCBC, 2020.  
**Kellum**, EGGNT, 2020. G  
**Krodel**, Augsburg Commentaries, 1986. 4  
**Lake & Cadbury**, Macmillan; *esp. vols 3 & 4*, 1933. TD  
**Larkin**, IVP Commentary Series, 1995. 3  
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**Longenecker**, Expositors, 1981 /1995. 4  
**Marshall**, Tyndale, 1980. 2  
**Marshall**, *Guides*, Sheffield Guides, 1992. T  
**Munck**, Anchor (*replaced*), 1967. 3D  
**Neil**, NCB, 1973. 2D  
**Packer J. W.**, CBC, 1966. 1D  
**Parsons**, Paideia, 2008. 2  
**Peterson D.**, Pillar, 2009. 4  
**Polhill**, NAC, Broadman Press, 1992. 4  
**Schnabel**, ZECNT, 2014, 4

**Stott**, BST, 1990. 2R  
**Tannehill**, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, (Literary analysis),  
Fortress Press, 1990. T  
**Thomas**, REC, 2011. 3  
**Walton**, Word, 2008/9. 4  
**Waters**, EPSC, 2015. 2R  
**Williams C.S.**, Blacks, 1957. 3  
**Williams D.J.**, UBCS, 2011 / NIBC, 1990, / GNC, 1985. 2R  
**Williams R.**, Torch, 1953. 1D  
**Williams W.H.** Interpretation, John Knox, 1988. 3  
**Winn**, Layman's, 1961. 1D  
**Witherington**, SRC, Eerdmans, 1997. 3

**Key:**

Level of complexity: **1**, non-technical, to **5**, requiring a knowledge of Greek.  
Deceased: **D**. For publications no longer in print, search [bookfinder.com](http://bookfinder.com)  
Other identifiers: Recommended **R**; Greek Technical **G**; Theology **T**

The above is a selection of some of the English Bible Commentaries available on the book of Acts

# Analysis

*"You will be my witnesses  
in both Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,  
and to the ends of the earth."*

## **The Jewish mission of the early church, 1:1-12:25**

### **1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42**

- i] The Ascension 1:1-11
- ii] A church devoted to Prayer, 1:12-14
- iii] The restoration of the twelve, 1:15-26
- iv] The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, 2:1-13
- v] Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, 2:14-35
  - a) Introduction - answering the charge of drunkenness, 2:14-21.
  - b) The sermon proper - the gift of the Spirit, 2:22-36
- vi] Peter calls for repentance, 2:37-41
- vii] The life of the early Church, 2:42-47
- viii] The healing of the lame man, 3:1-10
- ix] Peter preaches in the temple, 3:11-26
- x] The arrest and trial of the disciples, 4:1-22
- xi] The believers join in prayer, 4:23-31
- xii] The life of the early Christians, 4:32-37
- xiii] Ananias and Sapphira, 5:1-11
- xiv] An overview of the apostles' ministry, 5:12-16
- xv] The disciples before the Sanhedrin, 5:17-42

### **2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25**

- i] The spirit of the gospel, 6:1-7
- ii] Stephen is arrested, 6:8-15
- iii] Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin, 7:1-56
- iv] Stephen's martyrdom, 7:57-60
- v] Samaria accepts the gospel, 8:1-8
- vi] Samaritans received the Holy Spirit, 8:9-25
- vii] Philip and the Ethiopian, 8:26-40
- viii] The conversion of Saul, 9:1-19a
- ix] Saul preaches fearlessly in Jesus' name, 9:19b-31
- x] Aeneas and Dorcas, 9:32-43
- xi] Peter's inclusive vision of *the way*, 10:1-16
- xii] Peter's meeting with Cornelius, the Gentile, 10:17-33;
- xiii] Peter's sermon to Cornelius and friends, 10:34-43

- xiv] The Holy Spirit came upon them, 10:44-48
- xv] Peter explains his actions, 11:1-18
- xvi] Team ministry in Antioch, 11:19-30
- xvii] Persecution in Jerusalem, 12:1-19a
- xviii] Herod gets his due while the gospel prospers, 12:19b-25

## **The Gentile mission of the early church, 13:1-28:31**

### **3. The gospel moves outward from Antioch, 13:1-15:41**

- i] The mission to Cyprus by Paul and Barnabas, 13:1-12
- ii] The mission in Pisidian Antioch, 13:13-43
- iii] The gospel for the whole world, 13:44-52
- iv] The mission to Iconium, 14:1-7
- v] The mission to Lystra and Derbe, 14:8-20
- vi] God opens the door for the gospel, 14:21-28
- vii] The Jerusalem conference, 15:1-21
- viii] Conference resolutions and action, 15:22-30
- ix] The stage is set for a new mission, 15:31-41

### **4. Gospel consolidation and expansion into Greece, 16:1-20:38**

- i] The call to Macedonia, 16:1-15
- ii] Paul and Silas in prison, 16:16-40
- iii] The mission to Thessalonica and Beroea, 17:1-15
- iv] The mission to Athens, 17:16-34
- v] The mission to Corinth, 18:1-17
- vi] The missionaries retrace their steps, 18:18-23
- vii] Apollos and the followers of John the Baptist, 18:24-19:7
- viii] The mission to Ephesus, 19:8-41
- ix] To Troas and the raising of Eutychus, 20:1-12
- x] Paul's farewell sermon, 20:13-38

### **5. The gospel reaches Rome, 21:1-28:31**

- i] Paul's journey to Jerusalem, 21:1-16
- ii] Paul and James, 21:17-26
- iii] The arrest of Paul in the Temple, 21:27-36
- iv] Paul's testimony, 21:37-22:29
- v] Paul's defence before the Jewish Council, 22:30-23:11
- vi] The attempted assassination of Paul, 23:12-22
- vii] Paul's transfer to Caesarea, 23:23-35
- viii] Paul's defence before Felix, 24:1-27
- ix] Paul appeals to Caesar, 25:1-12
- xi] Paul before Agrippa and Bernice, 25:13-27
- xii] Paul repeats his story, 26:1-32

- xii] The journey to Rome, 27:1-28:16
- xiii] The gospel preached in Rome, 28:17-31





# Introduction

The book of Acts records the first 30 years of the Christian church from its origins in Galilee and Jerusalem through the Mediterranean lands and into the centre of the known world, Rome. The author, Luke the physician and companion of Paul the apostle, writes Acts as a sequel to his gospel, detailing the movement of the gospel through the ministry of the apostles, with a particular focus on the Gentile mission of Paul the apostle.

Luke is indeed a historian, but also a theologian. Some have argued he was a novelist, if not myth-maker, but historian and theologian is a far better estimate. Luke sets out to explain the expansion of *the way* from Jerusalem to Rome under the hand of God's man Paul. Luke reveals how Paul's Gentile mission proceeds under both divine and apostolic authority. Paul is no schismatic running his own race, neither is he a heretic. Paul's gospel of God's grace in Christ bears all the marks of divine and apostolic authority.

When it comes to Paul's mission strategy and to his gospel, Luke is at pains to reveal both the hand of God and the approval of the apostles and the Jerusalem church. Luke's account of the acts of Paul serves to authorise, not just Gentile Christianity, but more particularly, the gospel upon which it rests, namely Paul's gospel of salvation by grace through faith apart from works of the law.

## Structure

The book of Acts entails Luke's account of the unfolding realisation of Christ's charge to his disciples in Acts 1:8:

*"You will be my witnesses  
in both Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,  
and to the ends of the earth."*

Luke's book of the apostles, proceeds with a particular focus on Paul the apostle and his gospel of grace, so validating his Gentile mission and his gospel. As such, Acts reveals the unfolding realisation of Christ's charge in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In determining the structure of Acts, there is an increasing focus on the book's literary structure, its *narrative flow*. Various approaches are proposed, eg., Goulder in *Lord of the Banquet*, suggests that Luke has used the life of Jesus to model the careers of Peter, Stephen and Paul. Tannehill in *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts* argues that Luke develops his narrative by constantly cross-referencing episodes in his story so producing a quilted, rather than mono story-line. All this is somewhat artful. It seems more likely that Luke is simply out to tell a story, a story with a particular purpose in mind.

Of the literary approaches to the book of Acts, Gooding in *True to the Faith* proposes a six part structure:

Christianity and the Restoration of All Things, 1:1-6:7;

Christianity's Worship and Witness, 6:8-9:31;

The Christian Theory and Practice of Holiness, 9:32-12:24;

The Christian Doctrine of Salvation, 12:25-16:5;

Christianity and the Pagan World, 16:6-19:20;

Christianity and the Defence and Confirmation of the Gospel, 19:21-28:31.

Luke's account of the movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the world / Rome is best treated historically and geographically. Luke is indeed an artful storyteller and theologian, but the book of Acts is shaped by history. Most commentators follow this approach, although, because Luke is a good storyteller, logical divisions are not always evident in the flow of the story. These notes follow the five-part structure proposed by Dunn:

Beginning in Jerusalem, 1-5;

The initial expansion, 6-12;

The Mission from Antioch, and the Jerusalem Council, 13-15;

The Aegean Mission, 16-20;

The final act: Jerusalem to Rome, 21-28.

Numerous other structures suggest themselves, eg., Waters opts for an episode by episode eighteen-part structure. Marshall, on the other hand, proposes a very simple three-part main structure:

Witnesses in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42;

Witnesses in Judea and Samaria, 6:1-11:18;

Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth, 11:19-28:31.

## **The text**

There are two distinct textual traditions for the book of Acts, the Alexandrian and Western texts. The text usually followed in the Bible is the Alexandrian text; it is assumed to represent the original textual tradition. The Western text incorporates extra details and is best represented by *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis*, identified as Codex D. This may mean it is a second edition produced by Luke, given that the Alexandrian text often presents as if it is an unedited first version, but most scholars regard it is a second century revision of the original.

## **Author**

There are very few certainties in life, and when it comes to Biblical scholarship, everything is debatable; none-the-less, there is strong evidence to believe that "Luke the beloved physician", Col.4:14, is the author of Luke-Acts.

Both books are linked by the writer himself (cf., Acts 1:1-2) and present in a similar writing style and language. The writer is obviously present with Paul at different times during his mission journeys (the use of "we" Acts 16:10-17, 20:5-21:18), and was with Paul when he reached Rome ("When we came to Rome", Acts 27:1-28:16). In his letter to the Colossians, Paul mentions those with him in Rome and Luke stands out in the list as the obvious contender, Col.4:14. By the second century, Luke is accepted as the author of Luke-Acts, eg., the Muratorian fragment AD 120.

## **Date**

Scholars of a more critical bent push the authorship of Acts out to the beginning of the second century, often depicting the book as a historical melodrama authored by an unknown novelist of the time. This seems very unlikely; none-the-less, a late date of around AD 95 is proposed by those who think the author used the *Antiquities*, the work of Josephus, a Jewish historian, in AD 93. The evidence that the author used Josephus is slender. Given that Acts follows the gospel of Luke ("my earlier book", Acts 1:1), there are those who argue that the work is post AD70, given that the gospel was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, but the mention in the gospel of Jerusalem surrounded by armies doesn't prove the gospel was written after the event. Jesus was well able to read the signs of the times. So, given the way the book of Acts abruptly ends with Paul imprisoned in Rome around AD 62, it is likely that Acts was written around the mid 60's, sometime before Paul's trial and martyrdom. A similar date for the gospel of Luke is also more than likely.

## **Recipients**

Given that Luke-Acts is a two-part work, Acts is similarly addressed to Theophilus. The ascription is problematic, but it is probably a literary device used to refer to believers in general, while at the same time identifying a key person involved in publication, most likely the person who financed the project. Throughout Acts, the emerging Christian church tended to be mixed congregations of Jews and Gentiles and it is likely that these are Luke's intended audience. The address used of Theophilus indicates his importance, and so possibly also indicates that the social makeup of a normal Christian congregation of the time was mixed - slaves all the way through to an educated elite.

## **Literary Genre**

Those of a more critical bent have tended to treat Acts as a historical novel loosely based on the events of the time. So, not really a work of history written to inform, but a melodrama written to entertain, so Haenchen. This judgment of the book is quite unfair because Acts compares well with other ancient historical

works; it presents as a classical historical monograph. Luke plays the role of a Greek historian who interprets and dramatizes the movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. As such, Acts is more like a historical treatise than a fictional novel.

As is typical of Greek historians, Luke includes speeches at important points in the action to draw out the meaning underlying the events. In Greek histories of the time, speeches were more artful creations than records of what was said. We know that Luke was present for some of the speeches and certainly had access to both speakers and audience alike, so we can expect that they at least reflect what was said at the time.

The speeches in Acts reflect the formal rhetoric of the time, at times a mixture of the three main forms:

- *Judicial*: the speaker seeks to persuade the audience to make a judgement about certain events;
- *Deliberative*: the speaker seeks to persuade the audience to take a particular action in the future;
- *Epidictic*: the speaker seeks to persuade the audience to accept / affirm a particular point of view in the present.

So, Acts is not just history, just as the gospels are not just history. As already noted, Luke has *an axe to grind*. There is no agreement on classification, but for myself, Luke-Acts falls into the nonfictional apologetic genre, with a sub-classification of self-help / how-to / self-improvement - how to witness.

## Purpose

Every writer has a purpose when they put pen to paper, and Luke obviously has his. As already noted, the purpose is obviously not to provide a general history of the early church, although Luke may have wanted to provide a history of the spread of Christianity from its Jewish roots to the Gentile world; Acts certainly has much to say about missionary expansion, and Luke's account of that expansion places an ongoing obligation on the church to witness for Jesus.

So, Luke may simply want to provide a practical frame for the life and mission of the church in light of Jesus' teachings. This is particularly evident in the opening of Acts where Jesus confirms that believers, in the power of the Spirit, are to serve as his witnesses worldwide. The rest of the book of Acts explains how this instruction is played out.

Conzelmann works this line, but extends it by arguing that Luke is providing a way forward for the Christian community stymied by the realised eschatology of Jesus - life lived in the Spirit rather than the immediacy of Christ's return (a practical solution to a failed eschatology).

Maddox in *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, focuses on Luke's opening statement in the gospel to Theophilus, "the hope of bringing home to Your Excellency the truth of what you have already heard", Lk.1:4, ie., to provide a confirmation of the truth of the gospel. So, Luke sets out "to reassure the Christians of his day that their faith in Jesus is not an aberration, but the authentic goal toward which God's ancient dealings with Israel were driving. The full stream of God's saving action in history has not passed them by, but has flowed straight into their community-life, in Jesus and the Holy Spirit", Maddox

In providing a model for how to do church, Luke focuses on the particular model evident in the ministry and message of Paul the apostle, such that as Acts progresses, the account becomes an *apologia* for Paul. This theory is widely held, although often expressed in different ways, eg., Paul is no criminal out to subvert Rome, or Paul is no anti-Semite out to defame Judaism and undermine Biblical teaching. In the nineteenth century, the Tübingen school proposed that Acts was written to gloss over the division that had developed in the early church between Petrine and Pauline factions - an interesting theory, although less than convincing. Luke is at pains to make the point that Paul is no heretic.

Under Jesus' imperative to go into all the world and proclaim the gospel, it is Paul, and his understanding of the gospel as outlined in his general letter to the Romans, who spearheads the gospel from Jew to Gentile, even to the centre of the known world, Rome, and this with the approval of the apostles, in particular, Peter and James. It is this model that Luke would have the Christian church emulate.

## Theology

**God has raised up a mighty Saviour:  
The day of salvation is upon us.**

A study of the third gospel indicates that Luke is not just a historian, a rote recorder of gospel tradition and reporter of early church history. Luke-Acts reflects Luke's theological perspective. This is not to suggest that Acts is a theological work, it is not, it is just that Luke's *apologia* reflects his theological perspectives, particularly in the recorded speeches.

### **Salvation - by grace through faith**

Luke's theological perspective reflects Paul's gospel of grace. In the language of today we would say that Luke is *reformed*.

It is very easy to think that Romans is a model for gospel preaching - sin, sacrifice, salvation - and that for some strange reason, Luke ignores the Pauline model. Yet, Romans is not a gospel tract; it addresses the heresy of nomism, arguing that God's grace is realised through faith in the faithfulness of Christ apart from works of the Law. Yes, Luke's account of the gospel is light on the blood /

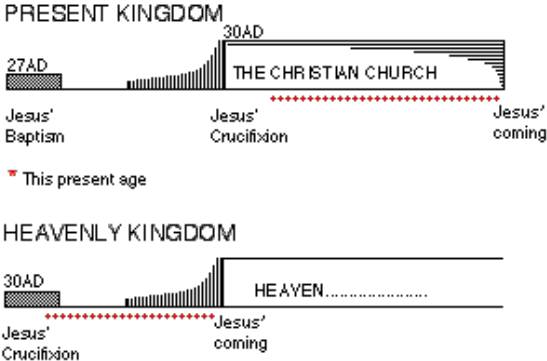
sacrifice of Jesus, but this most likely reflects early preaching, including Paul's preaching - Christ is Lord and he is risen, cf., Rom.10:9, Phil.2:6-11, 1Thess.1:9-10. And as for the consequences, as for Paul, so for Luke in Acts, it's all about accepting in faith the offer of forgiveness of sins, an offer made *without any strings attached*. Luke understands Paul's doctrine of grace.

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS = **BLESSINGS** = WORKS.

**Eschatology**

There is a sense where Paul, in his early letters, expected the *parousia* within his own lifetime, but then, in his later letters, he felt that he would be dead by the time Jesus returned. Luke's eschatology reflects the *not yet*, evident in a number of sermons, both in the terms of good news = blessing, and bad news = cursing / judgment, 17:31. Yet, at the same time, Luke's eschatology is realised, God's reign in Christ is *now*, a *now* experienced in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' ministry inaugurated the kingdom of God as a PRESENT reality, a *now* reality realised in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For Luke, Gabriel has sounded his trumpet, the new age of the kingdom of God has dawned and so, in the final moments of human history, Jesus' disciples are to share in sounding the trumpet, declaring the news from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Yet, at the same time, they await the final consummation of the kingdom, the *not yet*, where, in the presence of all his disciples throughout the ages, Jesus will be enthroned in the HEAVENLY kingdom, bringing to an end the world as we know it.



Commentators argue over whether Luke's eschatology is realised or futuristic, but as the diagrams below illustrate, it is both. The cross and empty tomb proclaim Jesus' victory; he is ascended to heaven and has come to the



The message is the *kerygma*, the gospel, the announcement that "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God at hand, repent and believe the gospel." The recorded speeches in Acts follow this formula. The first element, "the time is fulfilled", explains how Jesus, messiah and Lord, is the long-promised anointed one of prophecy, as confirmed by his life, death and resurrection. The second element of the message is consequential on the first, therefore "the kingdom of God is upon us." The reality of the covenant's realisation is presented as both good and bad news - good news for those who are inside the tent; bad news for those who are outside. The good news entails the forgiveness of sins, salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit, cf., 2:38, 10:43, 22:16. The bad news involves judgment, 17:31. The third element, "repent and believe", involves a call to respond to the message, "faith in the Lord Jesus", etc., cf., 2:38, 3:26, 4:30, 10:43, 11:18 ("life-giving repentance"), 16:18, .... For Luke, the outward sign of repentance / faith is baptism, at times administered as a family unit, 10:47, 16:31. This is associated with the gift of the Spirit. On a number of significant occasions of gospel extension - Jew, Samaritan, God-fearer, Gentile - the gift is accompanied by "tongues" / ecstatic prophecy.

As for the practical business of communicating the gospel, it is first and foremost universal - the message is for everyone, even to the ends of the earth. As for the messengers, they were initially the apostles, an exclusive number of twelve who have been with Jesus from the beginning. They are the prime witnesses to the words and works of Jesus. The responsibility to witness is then extended to others empowered by the Spirit to do so.

Luke constantly refers to people being filled with / full of the Spirit and speaking, 4:8, 31, .... For Luke, as for Paul, the gift of the Spirit is an essential element of a person's conversion, 19:2, serving as a ground for assurance, 4:31, 13:52. and the power for ministry, particularly in mission - the Spirit is "the Spirit of prophecy." Unlike Paul, Luke does not develop the Spirit's role in renewal / sanctification, but such is obviously beyond his remit.

By describing how the early church fulfilled Jesus' instruction to communicate the gospel to the ends of earth, Luke provides us with a pattern for gospel ministry today.

## **Interpreting Acts**

If our assumption is correct that Luke is using his Acts of the Apostles (specifically with respect to the ministry and message of Paul the apostle), as a model for doing church, then it is right to draw general conclusions from the narratives and speeches in Acts, even though they are specific to the occasion.



None-the-less, we do need to keep in mind that reports of events and speeches do not necessarily constitute, in themselves, a promise or command to us:

An is is not an ought; a description is not a prescription.

When it comes to promises and commands made to certain people at certain times, we must avoid the temptation of extending them uncritically beyond their time and situation and apply them to our own situation. A promise or command to a particular person at a particular point in time is not necessarily a promise or command for all believers. So, take for example the Philippian jailer: On the basis of his faith, salvation is promised to him and his whole family. It would be unwise to extend this promise to all who believe in Jesus, but the promise does show that God works in families, as evident elsewhere in the book of Acts, and scripture as a whole. Maybe the most that can be said is that a child is covered by a parent's faith until they choose to reject that faith, but even that may be going too far.

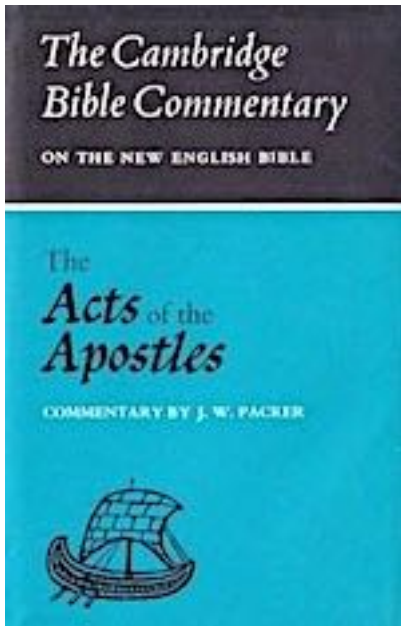
The point is, it is notoriously difficult to draw a propositional truth (a truth applying to all people throughout all time) from a narrative, or from a specific word addressed to a specific group of people. Luke's model for the Christian church, at best, only provides guidelines. If arrested, singing hymns won't necessarily open gaol doors - although, there's no harm trying!

It may help if we remind ourselves of the words of Miles Coverdale, "It shall greatly helpe ye to understand scripture, if thou mark not only what is spoken or wrytten, but of whom, and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth."



# Maps

The Mediterranean world  
Jerusalem  
Herod's Temple  
Samaria and Judea  
Syrian Antioch  
Cyprus  
Asia Minor  
Troas and Philippi  
Macedonia and Achaia  
Athens  
Corinth and Ephesus  
Crete and Malta  
Rome  
Paul's missionary journeys



The Cambridge Bible Commentaries from Cambridge University Press, produced in conjunction with the release of the New English Bible, were an excellent non-technical note-format commentary series which included the full text of the New English Bible translation.

Anyway, the purpose of this comment is to note the commentary on Acts in this series penned by J.W. Packer, not to be confused with J.I. Packer, the prominent evangelical author writing around the same time. J.W. was the headmaster of the Canon Slade Grammar School in Bolton, England, and his teaching abilities are evident in the commentary. This is particularly so with his use of maps, all serving to give a sense of place to Luke's account. J.W. has long gone to meet with his Maker, but I hope he, and the publishers, don't

mind me reproducing their maps in this commentary.

# Background Studies

- *The baptism / filling of the Spirit* - See Excursus;
- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *Water Baptism in Acts*, 2:37-41;
- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;
- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.
- *Righteousness before God apart from the Law*, 10:17-29.
- *Baptised in /into the Name of Jesus Christ* 10:44-48;
- *Salvation by households*, 10:44-48;
- *Gentile inclusion in the Christian church*, 11:1-18.
- *Prophecy in the New Testament*, 11:19-30.
- *Contextualising the gospel*, 16:1-15;

# Commentary

## 1:1-11

### The Early Church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### i] The Ascension

##### Synopsis

Again addressing Theophilus, Luke summarises the forty days following the resurrection of Jesus, and goes on to narrate his ascension.

##### Teaching

As with the incarnation, so also with the ascension, Luke introduces us to a theologically significant mystery. Christ must begin his reign in glory, for only then can the Spirit be poured out on God's elect people to enable them to communicate the gospel to the ends of the earth.

##### Issues

i] Context: *Gospel outreach to the ends of the earth*

Luke's acts of Jesus is followed up with his acts of the apostles, or more properly, some of the apostles. In his Acts of the Apostles, Luke records the extension of the gospel (the proclamation of the realisation / inauguration of the kingdom of God in the reign of Christ) from Jew to Gentile, from Jerusalem to Rome / the ends of the earth, and thus consequently, the transition from Law to grace. These acts unfold as follows:

- *Gospel outreach in Jerusalem, chapters 1-5*: From chapter 1 through to chapter 5, Luke deals with the birth of the Christian church / assembly of believers. This community of believers begins in Jerusalem as a gathering of believing Jews, Jews who follow in *the way* of the risen Christ.

- *Expansion into Palestine, 6-12*: Luke's story tells of the spread of *the way* from Jerusalem into Judea and Samaria where the gospel touches God-fearers.

- *The mission from Antioch, 13-15*: The gospel moves outward from Antioch, finally reaching Gentiles. It is as Gentiles become members of *the way* that Luke focuses on the ministry of Paul.

- *The Aegean Mission, 16-20*: Expansion into Greece. Although it is always Jew first and then Gentile, Paul's gospel ministry is now primarily focused on Gentiles.

- *Jerusalem to Rome, 21-28*: Luke now focuses on Paul's arrest and his appeal to Caesar.

So, the sect of *the way* has its foundation in Jerusalem; its roots are firmly fixed in the historic people of Israel, such that it is the "hope of Israel", 28:20. Yet, as Luke unfolds his story of *the way* he will relate how it extends to Gentile unbelievers and how this creates a divisive tension between Jerusalem and Rome / Law and grace.

The opening section, *Beginning in Jerusalem*, 1-5, presents as follows: Chapter 1 covers the period from Jesus' crucifixion leading up to the Day of Pentecost, which feast was held 50 days from the first Sabbath after the Passover. Chapter 2 recounts the fulfilment of Israel's hope in the outpouring of the promised Spirit of God and the emergence of God's renewed community / church. In chapter 3 we witness the continuation of Christ's messianic signs to Israel, but also the continuation of Israel's unbelief. The life of the Jerusalem church is further detailed as we move into chapter 5, with the chapter ending on the theme of Israel's unbelief.

ii] Background: *The Mediterranean world*

This map illustrates movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome and is reproduced from the Cambridge Bible Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, and is used with appreciation.



iii] Structure: *The ascension of Christ:*

A review of the concluding events of the "first book", v1-3;

"He appeared to them over forty days ....."

The promise of the Spirit, v4-5;

*"wait for the gift my Father promised .... "*  
The commission, v6-8;  
*"you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem .....*  
The ascension, v9-11.  
*"Jesus .... will come in the same way as you saw him go ...."*

iv] Interpretation:

Luke's story of *the Way* focuses on the communication of the gospel to the ends of the earth:

**God has raised up a mighty Saviour:  
The day of salvation is upon us.**

This message was related to the apostles by Jesus along with the command to take it to the ends of the world. With a particular focus on Paul the apostle, and his gospel of grace, Luke relates how the gospel message moves from Jerusalem to the centre of the world, namely Rome. So, the book of Acts is Luke's account of the unfolding realisation of Christ's charge to his disciples:

**You will be my witnesses in both Jerusalem,  
and in all Judea and Samaria,  
and to the ends of the earth.**

The future tense of this text from Acts 1:8, probably serves as an imperative, an imperative backed up with divine assistance, namely the empowering of the Holy Spirit for mission; "you will be (and you will be able to be) my witnesses."

Luke begins his story about the evolution of *the Way* by tying it to his first book. Through the victory of the cross, Jesus has fulfilled the long awaited covenant promises, and in so doing has realised the kingdom of God. This reality is evident in the resurrection of Christ, confirmed over a period of forty days during which time Jesus further instructed his disciples about the kingdom, v1-3. The fact that the kingdom is a *now* reality will be confirmed to the disciples in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and to this end, Jesus instructs his disciples to remain in Jerusalem for the Father's promised gift, v4-5. It is the Spirit who will equip the disciples for the mission Jesus now sets before them, namely to be his "witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth", even the centre of the world, Rome. "The church's primary task is to represent God faithfully, including witnessing to God's work in Jesus through the Holy Spirit", Bock.

In v6 the disciples evidence a continued lack of understanding when they align the kingdom of God with the kingdom of Israel. They have yet

to understand that Jesus' kingdom "is not of this world." Jesus responds with a "correction (v8) of the false perspective, or misleading emphasis articulated in v6", Dunn. A false perspective, on the part of the disciples, is probably what we are dealing with. The disciples dream of the day when the nation of Israel will be re-established as it was in the days of Solomon. They dream of themselves as the chief executives in the new kingdom, cf., Mk.10:35ff. Yet, the future state of the nation Israel is not their worry. It remains in the sovereign will of God, cf., Mk.13:32.

Jesus is non-committal over Israel's future; he knows only too well that things are about to be put right; Israel will soon be judged. As for the timing of that coming day, it is not for the disciples to know. Their focus must be on a spiritual kingdom "not of this world". What the disciples need to be concerned about is the task Jesus has set them.

The special task given the apostles by Christ is to proclaim the gospel, the message of God's sovereign grace in Christ. Christ's kingdom is realised when this message is proclaimed, heard, and acted on in repentance. They must proclaim this message from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. To carry on this work, the work Christ himself was engaged in, they will be "anointed" as Christ was anointed. They will receive an empowering of the Holy Spirit to enable them to carry out the work of witness-bearing, v8.

The narrative moves naturally into the ascension of Jesus. In fact, there is a sense where v1-11 serve as the final chapter of Luke's first book, while at the same time serving to tie his first book to the second. Although we love the image of Jesus rising upward, the "lifted up" is likely indicating destination rather than describing a visible "lifted up." The ancients viewed heaven as above so obviously, for Luke, Jesus must be "lifted / taken up." The scene is more likely describing Jesus being enveloped in a cloud and "hid from their sight."

The obvious distress of the disciples is countered by a word from "two men" dressed in "white robes" (no mention of wings!). Their comment to the disciples carries a touch of rebuke. There is no point standing around star-gazing. Jesus has ascended to the Father and now sits at his right hand, reigning in power and glory. What they can be sure of is that he "will come" in like manner to his "going". "The ascension of Jesus thus fulfils a double role in Luke's narrative: it both brings the epoch of Jesus' own ministry on earth to a close, and it points forward to the equivalent closure of the interim period of the church's witness in the return of Jesus", Dunn.

*Jesus' **ελευσεται**, "will come", in like manner to his **πορευομενον**, "going", v11. Jesus leaves in cloud and glory and will come in like manner, ie., in the same resurrection body, and in the cloud of the Shekinah-glory.*



New Testament commentators are divided on what *coming* the angels are referring to. Is this Jesus' coming as the Spirit of Christ at Pentecost, or is this his coming to earth in the last day, or is this his coming with his saints to the Ancient of Days?

The *parousia*, from Ezekiel's perspective, is a coming "into heaven" / an appearing with the "angels / messengers" (saints?) of Jesus. Yet, at the same time, this coming entails a *coming* in judgment upon the earth. The extension of human history within the moment of Jesus' ascension and enthronement is beyond our understanding. It is possible to understand something of this moment of divine grace (the moment we experience between Christ's going and coming) when we realise that only the created order is limited by time. Jesus left his disciples enveloped in the Shekinah-glory while appearing in like manner before the Ancient of Days, an appearing his disciples will experience at the resurrection of the saints. Somehow all flesh sees it, saw it, will see it, and weep! The generation which has grown up with Dr. Who is well able to understand such a rubbery notion of time. Those locked into a linear view of time will find it hard to grasp.

What is clear from the ascension is that Jesus has "ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things", Eph.4:10.

v] Homiletics: *Servants of a Glorious King*



I do love stain glass windows and when it comes to the ascension of Jesus, they can be spectacular. Of course, most of them follow the Superman line, "Up, up, and away", but it's not quite clear what actually happens when the cloud envelops Jesus. Anyway, on Ascension Day we remember that Christ is our reigning king, bringing all things into subjection to himself, and that we are his servants to this end.

Like the disciples, it's very easy to become focused on irrelevant issues. The disciples were still interested in the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. Little did they know that the political state of Israel was about to succumb to Roman power. So also for us, matters of churchmanship, denominational doctrines, social justice issues, church

growth, church/state relations..... and the like, all pale before a far greater purpose - to be his witnesses everywhere.

There is a sense where the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are examples of this witness. They tell the story of the Christ; they proclaim him saviour and Lord. This then was the task of the disciples, to testify to Jesus, to proclaim the gospel, and we thank them for their service.

Today, we have the honour of carrying this message to our broken world. There will be times when we can do it personally, but most often we will do it in the support of our local church and its outreach programs, missionary societies, the Bible Society, and the like. We must be ready, willing and able to speak for Jesus, and work to support others in this task.

It is important to add that the disciples were not left to undertake this task in their own power. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you", then "you will be my witnesses." The gift of the Spirit is a blessing for all believers, and he will support us in our daily service to Jesus.

So, like the Sower, let us sow.

### **Text - 1:1**

The ascension of Jesus, v1-11: i] A review of the concluding events of the "first book", v1-3. Luke opens his second book by linking it to the first, and so indicates to the reader their association, although not necessarily that they should be read as a whole. As with the gospel, the **λογος**, "word = literary composition" is addressed to Theophilus, a prominent believer who needs "assurance" and who has possibly financed Luke's literary project, ie., his patron.

**μεν** "-" - INDEED / ON THE ONE HAND. Often used to introduce an adversative comparative construction, **μεν** .... **δε** ..., "on the one hand ....., but on the other ...." If the comparison is between the first book and the second book, then we have something like "on the one hand I wrote a first book about ....., but on the other hand I wrote a second book about ....." Barrett suggests that Luke has in mind his second book but doesn't get around to spelling it out, ie., we have an anacoluthon. Yet, as Culy notes, Luke sometimes uses **μεν** on its own to introduce a major section and that surely is the intention here.

**πρωτον** adj. "**former [book]**" - [THEOPHELU, I WROTE THE = MY] FIRST [WORD, ACCOUNT = BOOK]. Attributive adjective limiting the accusative object "word". Used in Koine Gk. with the sense of **προτερος**, "former, earlier", although in classical Greek it would mean "first in a series."

**περι** + gen. "**about**" - ABOUT [ALL = EVERYTHING]. Expressing reference / respect; "with respect to ...."

**ᾧ** gen. pro. "**that**" - WHICH [JESUS]. Genitive by attraction to "everything".

**ηρξατο** [αρχω] "**began**" - BEGAN. The verb is completed by the two complementary infinitives "to do" and "to teach." Possibly just used here as a helper verb without any weight on the commencement of the action.

**τε και** ".... **and**" - BOTH [TO DO] AND [TO TEACH]. Correlative construction.

## v2

The sentence is somewhat complex with variant readings related to the Western text. Luke, having referred to the ascension in his gospel, again refers to it in his second book, so indicating that it serves as a hinge between the acts of Jesus and the acts of the apostles.

**αχρι** + gen. "**until**" - UNTIL [DAY]. Expressing time up to.

**ης** gen. pro. "-" - OF WHICH [HE WAS TAKEN UP *to heaven*]. Genitive by attraction, or intended as adjectival, idiomatic / temporal, "the day *when* he was taken up." To introduce the relative clause "of which he was taken up", the pronoun "which" should follow its antecedent "day". Its placement before the antecedent in the Gk. is probably emphatic, "until the *very* day", Culy.

**εντειλαμενος** [εντελλω] aor. mid. part. "**after giving instructions**" - HAVING GIVEN COMMANDS, INSTRUCTIONS = COMMISSIONED. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

**δια** + gen. "**through [the Holy Spirit]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [THE HOLY SPIRIT]. Expressing agency. This prepositional phrase sits between the commissioning of the apostles and their selection, presumably modifying both. The commissioning takes place just before the ascension, Lk.24:48-49, while the selection obviously refers to the call of the disciples, Lk.6:13. The Holy Spirit partners Jesus in his ministry, both in the selection and commissioning of the apostles, and he will now go on to partner the apostles in their ministry.

**τοις αποστολοις** [ος] dat. "**to the apostles**" - TO THE APOSTLES. Dative of indirect object after the participle "having given commands."

**ους** acc. pro. "-" - [HE HAD CHOSEN] WHOM. Accusative direct object of the verb "to choose"; "whom he had chosen"

## v3

Luke makes the point that Jesus' appearance to the disciples is evidentiary, a "convincing proofs." The word **τεκμηριον**, a once only use in the NT, is used in rhetoric as a form of proof, such that Jesus' presence with the disciples is evidentiary, a proven fact. Only Luke mentions the forty day stay, a number with significant OT parallels, Ex.34:28, Deut.8:2, ... The focus of Jesus' instruction is the gospel, the announcement of God's eternal reign in Christ.

**μετα το** + inf. "**after [his suffering]**" - [AND = ALSO] AFTER HE THE [TO SUFFER]. This preposition + the accusative articular infinitive serves to introduce

a temporal clause, antecedent time. The accusative subject of the infinitive is **αυτον**, "he", but see Culy. "For forty days after his death he showed himself to them in many ways", TEV.

**οἷς** dat. pro. "**to them**" - [HE PRESENTED HIMSELF] TO WHOM. Dative of indirect object.

**ζωντα** [**ζωω**] pres. part. "**that he was alive**" - LIVING. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "himself" standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object; "he presented himself as alive", Cassirer.

**εν** + dat. "-" - IN / BY [MANY PROOFS, SIGNS]. Instrumental use of the preposition expressing means.

**οπανομενος** [**οπανομαι**] pres. part. "**he appeared**" - APPEARING. The participle is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, "by appearing to them", or modal, expressing manner, "appearing to them over forty days", Moffatt.

**δι** [**δια**] + gen. "**over a period of [forty days]**" - THROUGHOUT, DURING. Temporal use of the preposition.

**λεγων** [**λεγω**] pres. part. "**[and] spoke**" - [AND] SAYING [THINGS]. The participle is adverbial, as above, means or manner; "and discussing", Moffatt.

**τα** + gen. "-" - THE THINGS [ABOUT]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "about the kingdom of God" into a substantive, accusative object of the participle "saying". The preposition **περι** expresses reference / respect.

**του θεου** "**[the kingdom] of God**" - [THE KINGDOM] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, either possessive, "God's kingdom", or if "kingdom" is taken verbally, "the righteous reign of God", then it would be either verbal, subjective, "the righteous reign *exercised by* God. The "kingdom" is best defined as the righteous reign / rule / kingship of God, now open to all people, in and through the ministry of the messiah. The gathering of this people, and the exercise of this reign, is inaugurated, and comes to fruition, in the person and work of Jesus. Its reality is imaged in the Old Testament, particularly in the historic kingdom of Israel, before finding its fulfilment in Jesus. For the people of Israel, the term "the kingdom of God" was highly charged, in that it encapsulated the messiah's establishment of the eschatological reign of God over Israel, in defiance of all secular powers, which powers will bow in adoration before God's mighty intervention in human affairs. There is, of course, debate over whether the kingdom is a time / space reality, or just a descriptor of divine rule. The kingdom as "the righteous reign of God" has more going for it, but as Wanamaker points out, the kingdom is both "domain and dominion." So, the kingdom of God is the dynamic now / not yet reign of God through Christ, the realisation of which brings eternal peace.

#### v4

ii] The promise of the Spirit, v4-5. Luke follows up with the record of the instruction Jesus gave to the disciples in the gospel, namely "remain in the city" for the "promise of my Father", Lk.24:49. The promise is the gift of the Holy Spirit, the covenant blessing promised to Abraham and his descendants (ultimately, the children of faith), cf., 3:25-26.

**συναλιζομενος [συναλιζω]** pres. part. "**on one occasion, while he was eating with them**" - [AND] EATING TOGETHER. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV. The word "sharing salt with", in this context probably means "eating with", although some have suggested "staying with."

**αυτοις "them"** - [HE COMMANDED, INSTRUCTED] THEM. Dative of direct object after the **παρα** prefix verb "to command."

**μη χωριζεσθαι [χωριζω]** pres. inf. "**do not leave**" - NOT TO DEPART. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Jesus commanded / instructed.

**απο** + gen. "-" - FROM [JERUSALEM]. Expressing separation; "away from."

**αλλα "but"** - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "not ....., but ....."

**περιμενειν [περιμενω]** pres. inf. "**wait for**" - TO AWAIT. The infinitive as for **χωριζεσθαι**.

**του πατρος [ηρ ρος]** gen. "**the gift my father [promised]**" - [THE PROMISE] OF THE FATHER. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic, "the Father's promise", Cassirer, or verbal, subjective, "the promise *given by* the / my Father." "The Father's promised *gift*", Barclay.

**μου** gen. pro. "**me**" - [WHICH YOU HEARD] OF ME. The genitive is ablative, source / origin; "from me."

#### v5

Luke picks up on the Baptist's prophecy concerning the one who will baptise with the Spirit and fire, cf., Matt.3:11, Lk.3:16. Mark drops the fire, and Jesus doesn't mention the fire here, although Luke certainly depicts the Spirit's coming in the terms of a downward flow of fire. The Baptist's mention of fire is usually taken to express the fire of suffering, judgment. So, as the Baptist immersed people in water so Jesus will immerse people in/with the Spirit. For "baptised in/with the Holy Spirit", see Excursus.

**οτι "for"** - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the disciples should not leave Jerusalem, but wait.

**μεν .... δε** "..., **but**" - [JOHN] ON THE ONE HAND [BAPTISED IN / WITH WATER] BUT ON THE OTHER HAND. Forming an adversative comparative construction.

**μετα** + acc. "**in [a few days]**" - [NOT] AFTER [MANY DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition. The statement is presented as a litotes where the negative is actually expressing a positive, as NIV.

**εν** + dat. "**with [the Holy Spirit]**" - [YOU WILL BE IMMersed = BAPTISED] IN / WITH [HOLY SPIRIT]. As with the dative **ὕδατι**, "in water", the preposition may be instrumental, expressing means, "with water", "with the Holy spirit", so Fitzmyer, but it may also be local, "in". Barrett suggests that Luke has used the simple dative as a locative, "in water", and the preposition as instrumental, "with the Holy Spirit". Dunn opts for a local sense for both water and the Spirit; "immersed in."

## v6

iii] The commission, v6-8: The disciples may dream of the restoration of the state of Israel, but such is well outside God's purpose. In fact, the political state of Israel will soon be annihilated. What the disciples need to focus on is the mission Christ has set them, namely, to communicate the gospel message to the ends of the earth. For this task they will "receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on" them.

**μεν ουν** "**so / then**" - FOR ON THE ONE HAND. This transitional construction establishes an inferential connection with the previous verse by the use of **ουν**, while indicating a forward move in the narrative by the use of **μεν**, which move is usually introduced by **δε**. So, the construction serves to open "a new section of the narrative, connecting it with the preceding section", Bruce.

**οί .... συνελθοντες [συνερχομαι]** aor. part. "**when they met together / then they gathered around him**" - THE ONES HAVING COME TOGETHER, GATHERED TOGETHER. The NIV has treated the participle independent of the article **οί**, so adverbial, temporal, so Barrett, "once, when they were all together", Barclay, but it is probably serving as a substantive, "those who were gathered together", so Culy.

**ηρωτων [αρωταω]** imperf. "**they asked**" - THEY WERE ASKING, QUESTIONING [HIM]. The imperfect is used for a question since the action is durative; it continues until the question is answered.

**λεγοντες [λεγω]** pres. part. "- " - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant. This participle, as with **λεγων**, is usually classified as attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the main verb. In the translation of the sentence, it is often treated as redundant, or at least semi-redundant, serving as a Semitic construction introducing direct, and sometimes indirect, speech. As such, it will often function in much the same way as a recitative **ότι**. Culy and

company make the point that an attendant circumstance participle should express a separate but related action to the main verb, not the same action. So, Culy will often classify such a participle as adverbial, serving to modify the main verb, usually expressing manner, or sometimes means.

κύριε [ος] "Lord" - LORD, MASTER, SIR. Vocative of address, probably here used as a respectful title.

εἰ "-" - IF. Here used instead of ὅτι to introduce a direct question, although when serving as an interrogative, εἰ is more regularly used for an indirect question.

εν + dat" at [this time]" - IN [THIS TIME]. Here adverbial, temporal, serving to pinpoint the time, although the particular word for "time" here often means "a period of time." So, rather than "during this age", the sense is probably "at this point of time."

ἀποκαθιστανεῖς [ἀποκαθιστανῶ] pres. "are you .... going to restore" - ARE YOU RESTORING, RETURNING. The word is often used in a technical way in Jewish theology of God's restoration of all things in the last day. In that day God sets things right. So, it is "restore" in the sense of "set right." So, the disciples' question is "at this point of time are you going to set right the state of affairs now prevailing in the kingdom of Israel?"

τῷ Ἰσραηλ dat. "to Israel" - [THE KINGDOM] TO ISRAEL? Dative of interest, advantage. It is very likely that the disciples have in mind a political restoration of the state of Israel.

v7

It is not for the disciples to know the time-frame for God's setting things right; such is a mystery. So, Jesus doesn't address their limited understanding of the kingdom. They look for the restoration of Israel, but God will set things right, and this time the right is not peace, but judgment - the destruction of Jerusalem.

ὑμῶν pro. gen. "for you" - [BUT/AND HE SAID TOWARD THEM, IT IS NOT] OF YOU. The genitive is adjectival, probably possessive; "the times, or dates, are not your concern."

γινῶναι [γινώσκω] aor. inf. "to know" - TO KNOW. Epexegetic infinitive explaining the content of what "is not yours", namely, to know the times or dates. Of course, it could also be treated as the subject of the main verb, here the verb to-be; "to know the times or dates is not for you to know."

χρονους η̄ καιρους "times or dates" - TIMES OR SEASONS. Accusative direct objects of the infinitive "to know." The distinction between these two times is hard to draw, possibly an interval of time, duration, as compared to a point of time, punctiliar. So, "the ages" and "the periods by which these ages may be

marked", Milligan. Probably a bit over-defined, so, "you don't need to know the times of these events", CEV.

εθετο [τιθημι] aor. "**has set**" - [WHICH THE FATHER] HAS SET, PUT, PLACED / APPOINTED, MADE. The sense "placed" under the authority of the Father seems best; "the Father has reserved for his own decision", Barrett.

εν + dat. "**by [his own authority]**" - IN = BY [HIS OWN AUTHORITY]. Here probably instrumental, "by", as NIV, although local, expressing the sphere of divine authority may well be the intention; "within his own authority", Culy.

v8

This verse is often viewed as establishing the theme of Acts. The disciples are ουχ, "not", to be concerned about issues like the restoration of Israel, and the dates and times "the Father has set by his own authority", αλλα, "but", they are to be concerned with the communication of the gospel, of giving testimony (μαρτυρες, "witness") in Jerusalem and to the ends of the earth, for which task they will be empowered by the Holy Spirit.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT [YOU WILL RECEIVE]. This strong adversative stands within a counterpoint construction; "it is not for you to know ....., but ....".

δυναμιν [ις εως] "**power**" - POWER, STRENGTH, AUTHORITY. Accusative direct object of the verb "to receive." Possibly "authority", but more likely divine strength to complete a divine task, here being "witnesses." The Holy Spirit is the facilitator of this power.

επελθοντος [επερχομαι] aor. part. "**when [the Holy Spirit] comes**" - [THE HOLY SPIRIT] HAVING COME UPON. The genitive participle with its genitive subject, "the Holy Spirit", forms a genitive absolute construction, best treated as temporal, as NIV. The disciples will be "clothed with heavenly power", Bruce.

εφ + acc. "**on [you]**" - UPON, ON, AT, TO [YOU]. Typical repetition of a prepositional prefix, here for the participle επελθοντος.

μαρτυρες [υς υρος] "**witness**" - [AND] YOU WILL BE WITNESSES [OF ME]. The word is used of a person who bears witness of events which they know about, although not necessarily having experienced them personally. Only the disciples can testify to the historicity and meaning of Jesus' life, death, resurrection and ascension, and it is their testimony upon which we base our own.

τε ... και ... και ... και "**and .....**" - BOTH [IN JERUSALEM] AND [IN ALL JUDEA] AND [SAMARIA] AND. Forming a correlative construction, "both .... and ...."

εως "**to**" - UNTIL / UP TO. Either spatial, "as far as the ends of the earth", or temporal, "until at last it reaches Rome", Bruce.

εσχατου neu. adj. "**the end**" - LAST = END [OF THE EARTH]. The sense of "last" may imply Rome rather than the extremities of the known world. Obviously



not masculine, "the last man." Luke's eschatology might have motivated the choice of this word, but in the end, the sense is "the utmost parts of the earth", namely, "everywhere", with the centre being Rome. All things come to an end at Rome. Today we would say something like, "and everywhere in the world", CEV.

v9

iv] The ascension, v9-11: After speaking with his disciples, a cloud envelops Jesus and he disappears from their sight. This cloud is a reminder of the transfiguration and represents the Shekinah-glory - the sign of God's presence. In the Church Year, the day of Ascension is celebrated 40 days after Easter. On this day the Christian church celebrates Christ's entry into glory and the taking up of his heavenly reign at the right hand of the Father. The disciples naturally look upward for Jesus, seeing he was going heavenward. When the cloud clears, two angelic messengers stand before them. Being "dressed in white" and "in dazzling apparel", is the usual fashion statement for angelic visitors, Lk.24:4. The angels, following their prime directive, convey a message to the disciples: Jesus now leaves in a cloud, and his coming will be in like manner. So, the apostles hurry back to Jerusalem to wait for the promised anointing.

ειπων [ειδον] aor. part. "**after he said [this]**" - [AND] HAVING SAID [THESE THINGS]. The participle is adverbial, probably introducing a temporal clause, as NIV. The aorist tense expresses punctiliar action; Jesus has finished speaking.

επηρθη [επαυρω] aor. pas. "**he was taken up**" - HE WAS TAKEN UP. Possibly a divine passive, where the passive implies that God is the agent of the action. The verb may be descriptive of a literal lifting up, or it may just be indicating the destination of Jesus; he is being taken to heaven. The Superman style *up, up, and away* is unlikely. It is more likely that, when Jesus finishes speaking, he is surrounded by the Shekinah-glory, which then drifts from the disciples' sight as Jesus is taken from them.

βλεποντων [βλεπω] gen. pres. part. "**before their very eyes**" - [THEY] LOOKING. Genitive participle and its genitive subject "they", forms a genitive absolute construction, usually translated as an independent temporal clause; "on saying this he was lifted up while they looked on", Moffatt.

νεφελη "**cloud**" - [AND] A CLOUD. Nominative subject of the verb "to take up." the image of a cloud serves to illustrate the presence of the divine. It images the Shekinah-glory, at times manifested in Solomon's temple.

υπελαβεν [υπολαμβανω] aor. "**hid**" - TOOK UP, LIFTED UP [HIM FROM THE EYES OF THEM]. Often taken to mean "received", as NIV, although that is not the sense of this compound verb. Movement needs to be conveyed, so "took him from their sight", NJB.

## v10

ὥς "-" - [AND] AS, WHILE. A temporal use of the conjunction serving to introduce a temporal clause; it was "while" they were gazing at the sky.

απειζοντες ησαν **"they were looking intently"** - THEY WERE GAZING [INTO HEAVEN]. The present participle and the imperfect verb to-be forms a periphrastic imperfect construction. Possibly serving to emphasise durative aspect: a continued gazing with fixed eyes. "While they were still gazing up into the sky", Barclay.

πορευομενου [πορευομαι] gen. pres. part. **"as [he] was going"** - [HE] GOING. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "he" forms a genitive absolute construction, best expressed as a temporal clause, as NIV; "as he went away", Barclay.

και ιδου **"when suddenly"** - AND BEHOLD [TWO MEN]. Expressing an immediate unexpected action, "but just then", Moffatt.

εν + dat. **"dressed in [white]"** - IN [CLOTHING WHITE]. As it stands, the preposition is local, expressing space, although given the assumed sense "dressed in white clothing", the preposition could be viewed as adverbial, expressing manner. The clothing serves to identify their supernatural origin, ie., they are angels.

αυτοις dat. pro. "them" - [HAD BEEN PRESENT WITH] THEM. Dative of direct object after the παρα prefix verb "to stand by."

## v11

The address of the angels reminds us that the first disciples were Galileans, a point that Luke seems to stress, cf., 22:59, 23:5. The designation ανδρες, "men", can be inclusive of women, since Luke often uses the word in public discourse. Jesus' going is like his coming, Ezekiel's coming of the glorious Son of Man to the Ancient of Days, a coming in the cloud.

εστηκατε [ιστημι] perf. **"[why] do you stand"** - [WHO AND = ALSO SAID, MEN OF GALILEE, WHY] HAVE YOU STOOD. Standing around and gazing into heaven is not the way to fulfil Christ's mission.

εμβλεποντες [εμβλεπω] pres. part. **"looking [into the sky]"** - GAZING [INTO THE HEAVEN]? The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their standing.

ο αναλημφθεις [αναλαμβανω] aor. pas. part. **"who has been taken"** - [THIS JESUS] THE ONE HAVING BEEN RECEIVED INTO, TAKEN UP INTO, BROUGHT ALONG WITH, CARRIED AWAY, CARRIED OFF. The NIV takes this participle as adjectival, attributive, limiting "Jesus". Again, if upward movement is being

expressed, it is only in relation to the intended destination - heaven above the sky. None-the-less, an upward ascent makes for a spectacular stained glass window!

ἀφ [ἀπο] + gen. "**from [you]**" - FROM [YOU INTO HEAVEN]. Expressing separation; "away from."

οὕτως adv. "" - THUS, IN THIS WAY. Here as a modal comparative, "the one having been taken up ..... in like manner will come."

ελευσεται [ερχομαι] fut. "**will come back**" - WILL COME, GO. The verb does not necessarily mean "come back"; better, "he will come." It is unclear what *coming* is in mind - come back to earth / come to the Ancient of Days (both??).

ὅν τροπον "**in the same way**" - WHICH WAY, MANNER [YOU SAW HIM GOING INTO HEAVEN]. This relative phrase is used adverbially with the meaning "in the same way", as NIV; "in the same way as you saw him go into heaven", ESV.

## 1:12-14

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### ii] A church devoted to prayer

##### Synopsis

Following Christ's ascension, the disciples return to Jerusalem and continue steadfastly in prayer.

##### Teaching

The community of the Way in Jerusalem, in their prayerful obedience, set a pattern for Spirit-empowered ministry.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11. Luke uses the movement of the disciples back to Jerusalem to set the scene for the events of Pentecost.

ii] Structure: *A church devoted to Prayer:*

The apostles return to Jerusalem, v12;

An upper room gathering, v13;

All are constant in prayer, v14.

iii] Interpretation:

Luke tells us that there were some 120 believers at the time of Christ's death, resurrection and ascension. Of this number, a core group maintain a vigil of prayer in a rented apartment in Jerusalem (possibly "the upper room") as they wait, under Jesus' instructions, for the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Just as Jesus was found in prayer before he received the Spirit, so Luke has the apostles doing the same thing. For Luke, the central business of prayer is the gifting of the Holy Spirit. He describes this core group of Galilean men and women as devoted ("constantly in prayer") and united (**ὁμοθυμαδόν** "joined together" = of one accord). "Though they are bereft of the Jesus that they had known, they find union together and engage in communal prayer to their God", Fitzmyer.

Dunn notes that Luke uses the narrative of the disciples waiting in prayer to separate Christ's ministry from the ministry of the Spirit. This is "an interval between Jesus and the Spirit; empty of either."

*Luke's list of the apostles*, v13. The list is identical with his earlier list in Luke 6:14f. Luke's list is similar to the list in Matthew (Matt.10:2f) and Mark (Mk.3:16f). The main difference is that Luke has Judas the son of James, rather than Matthew and Mark's Thaddaeus. Luke also describes

Simon as "the Zealot", where Matthew and Mark call him "the Cananaean". In Aramaic "Cananaean" is the same word as "Zealot". Zealots were Jewish nationalists who came to prominence during the first century in Jerusalem and who led the major revolt against Rome in 66AD. "Judas the son of James" is obviously the "Judas not Iscariot" of John 14:22.

v] Homiletics: *Constant in prayer*

Luke makes the point that the disciples "joined together constantly in prayer." For Luke, consistent prayer is a worthy aim in the Christian life.

Of course, consistent prayer does not mean persistent prayer. The parable of the midnight guest, Luke 11:5-8, seems to teach persistence in prayer, but it really teaches us of the "how much more" God will give to those who ask of him. The friend got the good thing he was after, although with some difficulty. How much more will God give his good gifts to those who ask him? If a human father gives good gifts to a son in need, how much more will God give his good gifts to those who ask him? So, be consistent in prayer, not persistent.

Luke also has something to say about the priority of prayer. Luke makes the point that Jesus was in prayer when the Holy Spirit descended upon him at the time of his baptism by John the Baptist. He makes a similar point of the apostles and those who had gathered with them in the upper room prior to the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. The priority of prayer rests with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Unlike Matthew, who leaves us in the dark with "Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you", Luke tells us what is given to those who ask, seek and knock. It is a good gift from our Father in heaven, and that gift is the gift of the Holy Spirit, Lk.11:13.

The gift of the Holy Spirit, in the sense of the reception of the indwelling presence of the Spirit of Christ, is a once only gift. All who believe in Christ receive the Spirit, are baptised, washed... with the Spirit. Yet, along with our need for the reception of the Spirit there is our need for the release of the Spirit. Luke will often use the word "filled" to describe the release of the Spirit's renewing power in the life of a believer. The indwelling presence of the Spirit of Christ enables us to live the Christ-like life.

The Spirit's strengthening for our Christian walk should be a priority of consistent prayer.

### **Text - 1:12**

A community devoted to prayer, v12-14. i] The apostles return to Jerusalem, v12: The ascension has taken place at the mount of Olives and the disciples now

return to Jerusalem to await the coming of the promised heavenly power. Luke tells us that the mount of Olives is a Sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem, cf., Exodus 16:29 and Numbers 35:5.

**τοτε** adv. "**then**" - THEN [THEY RETURNED INTO JERUSALEM]. Temporal adverb; the next event in a sequence.

**απο** + gen. "**from**" - FROM. Expressing separation; "away from."

**του καλουμενου** [καλεω] pres. pas. part. "[**the hill**] **called**" - [*the MOUNTAIN, HIGH HILL*] BEING CALLED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "mountain"; "a hill which is called = has a name. The article here is also taken with the noun **ορος** "mountain / hill", so "the mountain", not "a mountain."

**Ελαιωρος** [ων ονος] gen. "**the Mount of Olives**" - OF OLIVE GROVE. The genitive is adjectival, best classified as epexegetic, limiting the participle "being called = having a name", by specifying the name; "the hill named Olivet." It could also be classified as a predicate genitive where "the olive grove" stands in apposition to the participle "being called", asserting a fact about the participle, here what the "mountain" is called, cf., Wallace 102. Another possibility is a double case subject complement classification, so Culy. The hill lies opposite Jerusalem, separated by the Kidron valley. The hill has significance in prophecy, cf., Zech.14:4.

**εχον** [εχω] pres. part. "-" - [WHICH IS NEAR JERUSALEM] HAVING. The idiomatic participial phrase specifies / explains the sense of **εγγυς**, "near" (In what sense is Olivet near Jerusalem? It is a Sabbath day's journey), as such, the participle is best classified as adjectival, epexegetic, specifying "near"; "which is near Jerusalem, that is, a Sabbath day's walk from the city." To have *a Sabbath day on the way* is to walk, as required by the law, no more than 2,000 cubits, i.e., 2,000 medium size steps, or about one mile.

**σαββατου** [ον] gen. "**Sabbath day's [walk from]**" - [A WAY = JOURNEY] OF A SABBATH. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, attributive, limiting "way", a Sabbath day's way"; "a Sabbath days journey away", ESV.

### v13

ii] The apostles, along with "the women" and Jesus' mother and brothers, gather in the upper room for prayer, v12. This may be the room used for the last supper, or the room where Jesus appeared to the disciples. It may even be the room owned by the mother of John Mark, cf., 12:12. All are possibilities. Luke provides us with another list of the apostles, now only eleven due to the suicide of Judas, cf., Lk.6:14-16. There are some slight changes between this list and the one in Luke's gospel, but the players are the same. Of these eleven, only Peter, James and John get another mention in Acts.

ὅτε "when [they arrived]" - [AND] WHEN [THEY ENTERED INTO]. Temporal conjunction serves to introduce a temporal clause, as NIV.

τὸ ὑπερῶν [ον] "[to] room" - THE UPSTAIRS ROOM. An upper room is a room above the ground floor. In the US, it would be called the second floor, but in most English speaking countries, it is the first floor. this room is traditionally a small room constructed on a flat roof. It is often roughly built and impermanent. "They went to the room upstairs where they were staying", Cassirer.

ἦσαν καταμενοντες [καταμενω] pres. part. "[where] they were staying" - THEY WERE LIVING, STAYING. The imperfect of the verb to-be with the present participle forms a periphrastic imperfect construction, possibly emphasising aspect, here the duration of their staying in the upper room. "Which was their headquarters", Barclay.

τε .... και ..... και ..... "those present were .... and ..... and ..." - BOTH [PETER] AND [JOHN] AND [JAMES] AND [ANDREW, PHILIP] AND [THOMAS, BARTHOLOMEW] AND [MATTHEW, JAMES OF ALPHEAUS] AND. The conjunction τε with και serves to set up a correlative construction, here a list.

Ἰακωβου [ος] "[Judas] son of James" - [JUDAS] OF JAMES. As for "of Alphaeus", the genitive is adjectival, relational. The construction doesn't specifically state the family relationship intended, although usually "son of" is meant, BDF #162.4. "Brother of" is possible, cf., Jude 1. This Judas is obviously the "Judas, not Iscariot", of John, and probably the "Thaddeus" mentioned in Matthew and Mark.

#### v14

iii] Luke tells us that the apostles applied themselves to prayer, v14. In fact, they "joined constantly in prayer", "faithfully observing the appointed seasons of united prayer", Bruce. With the apostles, Luke records the presence of the women, most likely those who had gone up with the disciples from Galilee to Jerusalem. Mary the mother of Jesus is mentioned, as are Jesus' younger brothers. Although Jesus' brothers initially rejected him, they became believers following his resurrection. The most prominent brother is James. We are told that Jesus appeared to James after his resurrection, 1Cor.15:7. James later become a leader in the church, 12:17, 15:13, 21:18... Mark mentions three other brothers: Joses, Judas and Simon.

οὗτοι παντες "they all" - ALL THESE ONES. Nominative subject of the periphrastic construction "were persevering in."

ἦσαν προσκαρτερουντες [προσκαρτερω] pres. part. "joined together" - WERE PERSEVERING IN, CARRYING ON, DEVOTING THEMSELVES. Again, the imperfect of the verb to-be with the present participle forms a periphrastic

imperfect construction, probably emphasising aspect, here a constant devotion to prayer. They worked on their prayer life; stuck at it.

**ὁμοθυμαδον** adv. "**constantly**" - OF ONE ACCORD, WITH ONE MIND / PURPOSE. This adverb of manner expresses unity of purpose; "with one heart all these joined together", NJB.

**τη προσευχη [η]** dat. "**in prayer**" - IN/WITH/TO THE PRAYER. Dative of direct object after the **προς** prefix verb "to persevere in"; "the fellowship regularly met for prayer." "Constantly at prayer", REB.

**συν** + dat. "**along with**" - WITH [*the* WOMEN AND MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS]. Expressing association, accompaniment.

**τοις αδελφοις [ος]** dat. "**[his] brothers**" - [AND] THE BROTHERS [OF HIM]. It seems likely that these are Mary and Joseph's other children, younger brothers of Jesus - James, Joses (Joseph), Judas (Jude), and Simon. Although initially sceptical of Jesus' messianic credentials, James and the other brothers came to believe in Jesus, becoming full members of the Jerusalem church, with James taking a leadership role. The inclusion of Jesus' brothers in the assembly of the Way serves as another example of God's saving grace touching other members of a family. Those who hold to the perpetual virginity of Mary argue that the word here means half-brothers of Jesus, or even first cousins.



# 1:15-26

## 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

### iii] The restoration of the twelve

#### Synopsis

At this point in his account, Luke records the first official act of the Christian community in Jerusalem, namely, the appointment of a new apostle to replace Judas. There were not many who could say they were with Jesus from the beginning of his ministry, but from this group two were proposed and Matthias elected. The issue is managed by Peter who has obviously taken on a leadership role in the church. Luke also, in an aside, gives an account of Judas' demise.

#### Teaching

The appointment of a replacement for Judas reinforces the truth that the Christian church is the new Israel of God.

#### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11. A second scene separating Christ's ascension from the coming of the Holy Spirit.

ii] Structure: *The restoration of the twelve*

Setting, v15;

Peter addresses "the believers", v16-17;

Editorial comment, v18-19:

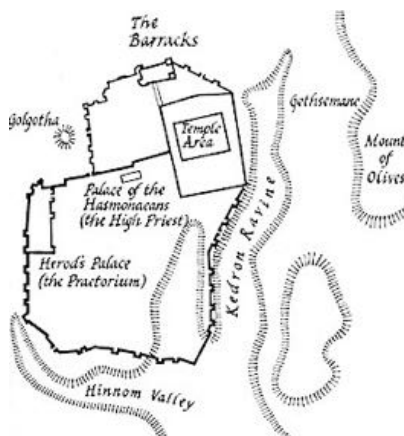
The betrayal of Judas.

Peter continues his address, v20-22;

The election of Matthias, v23-26.

iii] Background:

Jerusalem in the first century.



iii] Interpretation:

Luke's intentions are best discerned by asking a number of salient questions. Why has Luke bothered to record this rather insignificant event? Why did the apostles replace Judas; they never replaced James when he was executed? If they were going to fill such a vacancy, wouldn't they have been better advised to wait for God's man, Paul? How can two seemingly unrelated verses from the Psalms authorise this new appointment?

What we have in this passage is big-picture theology. The twelve apostles represent the twelve tribes of Israel, the remnant gathered from all Israel by God's Messiah Jesus; a people saved by grace through faith. Like Esau, Judas gave up his heritage and so he must be replaced, for the new age has dawned and the mission to all Israel and beyond now proceeds with urgency.

*"The Scriptures had to be fulfilled"*, v16: The events around the messiah's life, his sacrifice and glorification, are the subject of fulfilled Biblical prophecy. It seems that early in the life of the apostolic church, Old Testament texts were assembled as testimonies to Jesus' fulfilment of prophecy. Texts concerning Judas' betrayal are part of this proof-texting process. The mention of David as the source of some inspired texts is simply a reference to the Psalms, whose author, it was believed, was David. Verses about persecution, betrayal etc., of the psalmist were inevitably applied to Jesus, and likewise to Judas' betrayal, eg. Ps.41:9 in John 13:18.

Texts supporting the necessity for twelve apostles, and therefore the need to replace Judas, are less easily identify. Of course, Jesus wasn't really into proof-texting. The messiah's ministry sits firmly on the Biblical theology of the kingdom of God, such that scriptural texts, or testimonies, are but pointers to this theology. This is why they are at times less than convincing. So, Jesus is the long awaited saviour of the house of Israel, and that to all Israel, the twelve tribes of Israel. The apostolic band now represents this new Israel, the whole twelve tribes of Israel, and since Jesus has ascended to glory, the mission to all Israel must continue, the mission to save a people unto the Lord. So, the one who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage must be replaced.

*The difference in Luke's account of Judas' betrayal and death, and that of Matthew*, v18-19. The account here of the demise of Judas does not fit well with what Matthew says. Matthew says that Judas regretted his betrayal of Jesus, returned the money to the Jewish authorities and went and hanged himself. As the money was blood money, the authorities

purchased the potter's field as a cemetery for aliens. Luke says that Judas purchased the field and came to grief on it somehow.

We are actually not quite sure what the Greek word *πρηνης*, translated in the NIV as "[fell] headlong", actually means. In the first centuries of the Christian church, it was understood as "swelled up". So, it was commonly believed that Judas' stomach swelled up and burst open. Not a nice image! Christian scholars down the ages have tried to align the two stories. For example, many have suggested that the authorities purchased the field in Judas' name, so it was his, although he didn't sign the papers. Augustine suggested that when Judas hung himself, the rope broke and he fell headlong, bursting open his stomach in the fall.

What we have in the two stories is a generous description of Judas' end by Matthew and a less generous description by Luke. Is Luke reflecting the views of the leaders of the Jerusalem church by playing down Matthew's more generous description of Judas' end? For Luke, Judas is beyond all hope, but was he?

Luke records Peter's (the apostles' ??) words that "Judas left to go where he belongs." Some suggest that Peter is implying the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth, but that's not what Peter says. He is non-committal, for he doesn't know where Judas has ended up, either heaven or hell - that is between the Lord and Judas.

It is true that Judas is called "the son of perdition", and that the word perdition is used of the Antichrist, but the word means loss, destruction, or ruin and that well describes the end of the Antichrist as it does of Judas, but it doesn't actually say where Judas ended up - heaven or hell.

Even more fascinating is the use of a word *μεταμεληθεις*, "having repented", in Matthew's description of Judas' end, translated in the NIV as "was seized with remorse." The word means to change one's mind for the better. Again, some will counter with the reference to his suicide and argue that a person who commits suicide cannot be forgiven and share in eternity, but there is no scripture to support this argument.

So, was Judas beyond all hope? There is little evidence that the apostles forgave him, but then Jesus has a bigger heart than the apostles - his grace is boundless; his forgiveness beyond measure. If Judas did actually repent, did turn to God and ask for forgiveness, then he is surely forgiven, since betraying Jesus is not an unforgivable sin, cf., Matt.12:31.

We need to beware of judging a failed brother for "the last will be first and the first will be last", Matt.20:16.

v] Homiletics: *Judas the traitor*

I remember watching an interview with one of our more infamous

paedophiles, a former priest who had interfered with dozens of young children. When finally arrested, he confessed and listed all the children he had molested. He claimed he just couldn't help himself - for his it was *a special kind of love*. In court, he pleaded guilty and is now doing his time in gaol. In the interview, the journalist asked whether he believed God would forgive him. Without hesitation he affirmed his belief in God's mercy in Christ for those who repent of their sins. The journalist could hardly contain herself, disgusted to the core. His answer certainly made me cringe, but then, is there a limit to God's forgiveness?

In our reading today we learn how Judas ended his (*outline narrative*)

*For the body of the sermon, use elements of Interpretation above; "The difference in Luke's account of Judas' betrayal and death, and that of Matthew, v18-19."*

So, there we have it; was Judas saved? To be honest with you, I don't know. There is little evidence that the apostles forgave him, but then that's to be expected. Unlike we mere mortals, God's grace is boundless; His mercy beyond measure. If Judas did actually repent, did turn to God and ask forgiveness, then Judas is asleep in the arms of Jesus. And what of all our garbage? The grace that covered the sins of a traitor is the same grace that will cover our sins.

### Text - 1:15

The restoration of the twelve, v15-26: i] Setting, v15. Luke tells us that the Christian community in Jerusalem (or possibly all believers) numbered around one hundred and twenty. At a gathering of the disciples, Peter takes the lead and calls for the replacement of Judas the betrayer.

εν + dat. "in" - [AND] IN [THOSE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition; "at that time", Barclay.

αναστας [ανιστημι] aor. part. "stood up" - [PETER] HAVING ARISEN. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said"; "Peter stood up .... and said."

των αδελφων [ος] gen. "the believers" - [IN *the* MIDST] OF THE BROTHERS [SAID]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. Although masculine, the term is used collectively of men and women. The use of "brothers" for a group of men and women is acceptable, but gender specific language is in decline, so "Brethren", "fellow believers."

τε "-" - AND. The conjunction here is used to introduce a parenthesis, so bracketed as NIV.

ονοματων [α ατος] gen. "[a group]" - [THE CROWD] OF NAMES = PERSONS [WAS]. An example of a metonymy where a word is replaced by another linked word, so "names" = "persons"; "the company of persons", ESV. The genitive is adjectival, partitive, or exegetical, specifying "the brothers", "a company consisting of persons"; "there was a crowd", Moffatt.

επι + acc. "-" - UPON [THE SAME place]. Spatial; "in [that place]. Often επι το αυτο takes the idiomatic sense "altogether", Culy, possibly "in church fellowship", Omanson, although Culy is not convinced; "the company of persons assembled there numbered about one hundred and twenty."

ωσει "about" - LIKE, AS = ABOUT [A HUNDRED and TWENTY]. Variant ως. As for ως, when used with numbers this particle expresses an approximation, as NIV. Luke regularly tells us that his head counting is approximate. Here the count is approximately 120. Is this the whole number of believers, or is it only the Jerusalem community? The count may not include those in Galilee, or the countryside of Judea, or possibly women and children. At any rate, Jesus' church is a small one, which should encourage ministers today who are serving in small congregations (and getting smaller!).

## v16

ii] Peter proposes the replacement of Judas, v16-17. Peter argues that the betrayal of the messiah was all part of God's plan, long revealed in the scriptures. Sadly, Judas, one of the twelve apostles, has chosen to play the part. Peter mentions the Psalms as the main source of the testimonies concerning Jesus' betrayal. Both the betrayal of Judas (or more properly the betrayal of one of his own) and the appointment of someone to replace him, was necessary because it was subject to the overarching theology of the kingdom of God, as detailed in Old Testament prophecy. Note how Peter is the one who knows what "was necessary" and how he identifies the supporting scripture. Jesus used the Old Testament messianic testimonies to both shape and explain his ministry, and Peter is simply following his lead, Lk.24:44-45

αδελφοι [ος] "brothers" - [MEN,] BROTHERS. "Brothers" stands in apposition to "men". Is Luke being gender specific making the point that only men were present, or is Peter being typically Jewish in only addressing the men?

την γραφην [η] "the Scripture" - THE WRITING. Accusative subject of the infinitive "to be fulfilled"; "the scripture to be fulfilled was necessary" = "the scripture had to be fulfilled."

πληρωθηναι [πληρωω] aor. pas. inf. "to be fulfilled" - TO BE FULFILLED [WAS NECESSARY]. There is some debate over the classification of an infinitive with an impersonal verb. Traditionally, the infinitive / infinitival phrase was classified as a substantive, subject of an impersonal verb. In the Baylor HGT

series, this traditional classification is relegated. Culy and company hold the view that if the verb is impersonal, then the infinitive is properly complementary. Only if the verb is not impersonal can the infinitive function as its subject. In this commentary, verbs like **εξιστιν**, "it is permissible", or **δει**, "it is necessary", are treated as impersonal, and a related infinitive as their subject. So here we end up with "the scripture which foretold the Holy Spirit through ..... to be fulfilled was necessary." The modified noun "the scriptures" serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive. Note that the Western reading has "is necessary", but a past tense is better attested. The word is often used of divine necessity

**προειπεν [προλεγω]** aor. "**spoke long ago**" - [WHICH] SPOKE BEFORE, SAID BEFOREHAND, FORETOLD [THE HOLY SPIRIT]. "My friends, long ago by the Holy Spirit, David said", CEV.

**δια** + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [DAVID]. Instrumental, agency (intermediate agency, ie. "by the mouth"); "by the lips of David", Moffatt.

**περι** + gen. "**concerning**" - CONCERNING [JUDAS]. Expressing reference / respect; "with respect to, about, concerning Judas."

**του γενομενου [γινομαι]** gen. aor. part. "**who served**" - THE ONE HAVING BECOME [A LEADER, GUIDE]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, genitive in agreement with Judas, as NIV. "He brought the mob to arrest Jesus", CEV.

**τοις συλλαβουσιν [συλλαμβανω]** aor. dat. part. "**for those who arrested**" - TO THE ONES HAVING SEIZED, ARRESTED [JESUS]. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of interest, advantage, as NIV.

## v17

**οτι** "- " - THAT, BECAUSE, SINCE. Here probably expressing cause / reason; introducing a causal clause explaining why the vacancy occurred, "because" Judas, who was one of the 12 apostles, had abdicated his position, so Barrett. Barrett notes that, although unlikely, it could be recitative, ie., serving to express what the Holy Spirit said. Kellum also opts for reason arguing that it "presents the grounds for the assertion that Judas fulfilled Scripture; only a member of the Twelve could betray Christ."

**κατηριθμημενος ην** perf. pas. part. "**number**" - BEING NUMBERED [IN = AMONG US]. The participle, with the imperfect verb to-be, forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction, probably emphasising durative aspect; "he had been all along one with us."

**τον κληρον [ος]** "**shared**" - [AND HE OBTAINED, RECEIVED, ASSIGNED BY LOT] A PORTION. Accusative direct object of the verb "to receive." Here "appointed to the rank of apostle to share in our ministry."

**της διακονιας [α]** gen. "**in [this] ministry**" - OF [THIS] SERVICE, MINISTRATION. The genitive is adjectival, partitive; "one of this ministry." In the

narrow sense, "waiting on tables", although clearly here apostolic ministry is intended - apostleship in service. Jesus set the pattern of leadership in the Christian fellowship by describing it as "like one who serves", Lk.22:26. Waiting on tables was a menial task in the first century and was performed by servants and women. The English word "ministry" has long lost this impact, in fact the word is often used now in the sense of authority rather than service.

## v18

iii] The fate of Judas, v18-19. "The risen Lord is not frustrated by human rebellion and will not allow even apostasy to hinder the fulfilment of his saving purpose", Peterson D. Interestingly, Matthew says that Judas **μεταμεληθεις** "was seized with remorse" or better, "repented." In the NT the word for "repentance", of turning back to God, is **μετανοια**, but one wonders if Matthew is leaving the issue of Judas' salvation up in the air somewhat by his choice of **μεταμεληθεις**. If his repentance was genuine, then his betrayal of Jesus falls within the mercy of God. Judas' wickedness is repeatedly condemned in the scriptures, but if his repentance was genuine, is he not forgiven? If Judas can be forgiven then there is hope for all of us!!!! See above.

**μεν** "-" - INDEED. Often used by Luke to introduce a new section, here obviously a parenthesis and so v18-19 are usually bracketed.

**ουν** "-" - THEREFORE. Serving to introduce a logical connection, linking the parenthesis with the previous sentence.

**εκ** + gen. "**with**" - [THIS ONE] OUT OF, FROM. Expressing source / origin. "From the reward of his betrayal of Jesus, Judas purchased a field."

**μισθου [ος]** "**the reward / payment**" - *the* WAGES, PAY, REWARD. "The pay his villainy had earned for him", Barclay.

**της αδικιας [α]** gen. "**for his wickedness**" - OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "reward", probably attributive, "his unrighteous reward", Bruce, but possibly idiomatic / producer, "the reward *produced by* / *consequent on* his unrighteousness." "His unrighteous act."

**εκτησατο [κταομαι]** aor. "**bought [a field]**" - ACQUIRED, BOUGHT, GOT FOR ONESELF. [A FIELD]. Matthew has the Chief Priests and Elders buying the field with the money Judas gave back to them. Possibly they bought the field in Judas' name.

**γενομενος [γινομαι]** aor. mid. part. "**there he fell [headlong]**" - [AND] HAVING BECOME = FALLEN [HEAD FIRST]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "burst open." Possibly adverbial, temporal; "when he fell over" / "after becoming prostrate", Culy. There is some debate over the meaning of this phrase. Initially it was thought to mean "become swollen or inflamed." In early Christian tradition (Papias) it was believed that

Judas swelled up and burst open, but probably this was based on a later understanding of the word. Research favours a meaning of "forward / prostrate / headlong", possibly related to hanging himself as recorded in Matthew, so "there he hung himself." Barrett is unconvinced, opting for lit. "having come to be prone", so, "he fell flat on his face", Barrett. There is a reference in Wisdom 4:19 of the wicked falling headlong.

**μεσος** "-" - [HE BURST OPEN] *in the* MIDDLE. Judas burst open in the middle, that is, his stomach, or more likely his bowels, burst open and his intestines came out.

**εξεχυθη [εκχεω]** aor. pas. "**spilled out**" - [AND ALL THE INWARD PARTS OF HIM] WAS POURED OUT. A rather grotesque image, but it is one found in the OT, 2Sam.20:10.

## v19

**ὅ και** "-" - AND [IT BECAME KNOWN]. The relative pronoun **ὅ**, "which", is only found in some manuscripts, so "and it became known."

**πασι** dat. adj. "**everyone**" - TO ALL. Dative of indirect object. Obviously not exactly "everyone", but the news would get around.

**τοις κατοικουσιν [κατοικεω]** dat. pres. part. "**in**" - THE ONES DWELLING IN, INHABITING [JERUSALEM]. If we read the adjective **πασι**, "all", as a substantive, "everyone", then the participle is adjectival, attributive; "everyone who dwelt in Jerusalem."

**ὥστε** + inf. "**so [they called that field]**" - SO AS [THAT FIELD TO BE CALLED]. This construction, **ὥστε** + an infinitive, forms either a final clause expressing purpose (rare), or a consecutive clause expressing result. The accusative subject of the infinitive is "that field."

**τη ιδια διαλεκτω** "**in [their] language**" - IN ONE'S OWN DIALECT. Dative of reference / respect, "with respect to their own Aramaic dialect."

**αυτων** gen. pro. "**their**" - OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, possibly possessive, the language that belonged to Israel, or better, verbal, subjective, "the language which they speak."

**Ακελδαμαχ** "**Akeldama**" - AKELDAMA. Accusative noun standing in apposition to "that field." The meaning of this Aramaic word is disputed. It is suggested by some that it means "field of sleep" i.e., "field of the dead" = "cemetery".

**αιματος [α ατος]** gen. "**[field] of blood**" - [THAT IS, FIELD] OF BLOOD. The genitive is adjectival, probably attributive; "the bloody field", Culy.



v20

iv] Peter continues his address, v20-22. Either the editorial comment continues in v20, or Luke picks up on Peter's address again where Peter quotes scripture to support his argument. The testimonies come from Psalm 69:25 and 109:8. The point is that because of his wickedness, Judas rightly has no place numbered among the apostles and his position of authority should now be offered to another. Peter goes on in v21-22 to outline the qualifications and job description for the new apostle. He must be someone who has journeyed with Jesus from the time when John the Baptist was preaching and all the way through to the resurrection. The idea of traveling with Jesus implies that the candidate has been taught by Jesus. The job description defines an apostle as a "witness" to the "resurrection." Not just an eye witness, but someone who declares the truth of the resurrection - the message of new life in Christ, ie., the gospel. An apostle is a preacher of the resurrection.

γάρ **"For', said Peter"** - FOR. More reason than cause, explaining the previous assertion by quoting scripture.

γεγραπται [γραφω] perf. pas. **"it is written"** - IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN [IN BOOK OF PSALMS]. The perfect tense indicating a past act with ongoing consequences, namely, the scriptures' ongoing authority.

ἡ ἐπαυλις [ις εως] **"[his] place"** - [LET BECOME DESOLATE] THE DWELLING, PROPERTY, ESTATE [OF HIM]. Nominative subject of the verb "to become." The reference may be to the property of Judas, or the field of blood / the dead. The psalmist is certainly praying that the dwelling-place of his enemies becomes desolate, Psalm 69:25. Yet, Peter is probably quoting the text to support the desolation of Judas, not just his property. The idea is similar to the old First World War saying, "he ought to be shot and his cloths burnt", ie., all memory removed (often said of the officers at the time). For his wickedness, Judas loses his place of honour and is left with nothing other than a stained reputation.

ὁ κατοικων [κατοικεω] pres. part. **"[no] one to dwell [in it]"** - [AND LET NOT BE] THE ONE DWELLING [IN IT]. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb to-be.

την επισκοπην [η] **"place of leadership"** - [AND LET TAKE, RECEIVE ANOTHER] THE OVERSIGHT, SUPERVISION, OFFICE [OF HIM]. Accusative object of the verb "to take." In Psalm 109:8 the psalmist prays that his enemy be no more and that his now vacant position be given to someone else. As noted above, such testimonies are not proof-texts, but take on a prophetic nature through Biblical theology. It is through the theology of messiah's mission to all Israel, represented by the twelve, that the psalmist's vacant position becomes the apostles' vacant position.

## v21

**οὖν "therefore"** - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion.

**δεῖ "it is necessary"** - IT IS NECESSARY. Present tense this time, cf., v16. When James was executed some years later, it was not deemed necessary to fill the apostolic vacancy. See above for the theology.

**γενεσθαι [γίνομαι]** aor. inf. "**to choose**" - TO HAPPEN, BECOME [ONE OF THESE]. The sentence actually spreads out over two verses with this infinitive appearing at the end of v22; "it is necessary of the men journeying with us ..... to become a witness with us of his resurrection." The infinitival clause formed by the infinitive stands as the subject of the verb "is necessary"; for a complementary classification see **πληρωθῆναι**, v16. For the sake of a clear reading, the NIV has moved this infinitive with its accusative subject **ἓνα**, "one [of these (partitive genitive)]", to the beginning of v 21, "one of these to become = to choose one of the men", and has also repeated it in v22 with "for one of these must become". See Barclay, NJB, for a translation that follows the Greek order. "So we need someone else to help us tell others that Jesus has been raised from death. He must also be one of the men who was with us from the very beginning", CEV.

**των ..... ανδρων [ηρ ρος]** gen. "**of the men**" - MEN. The genitive here could be taken as adjectival, partitive, but **ἓνα**, "one", does not syntactically belong here, so the genitive is probably ablative, expressing source / origin; "therefore, it is necessary from the men having accompanied us .....

**συνελθοντων [συνερχομαι]** gen. aor. part. "**who has been with us**" - HAVING ACCOMPANIED, GONE TOGETHER WITH [US]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "men", genitive in agreement. The new apostle must be someone who journeyed with Jesus, i.e., sat under his instruction from the time of the preaching of John the Baptist through to the resurrection.

**εν + dat. "[the whole time]"** - IN [ALL *the* TIME]. Temporal use of the preposition; "during the time."

**ὧ̄ dat. pro. "-"** - IN WHICH. The dative is local, expressing space.

**εισηλθεν και εξηλθεν** aor. "**went in and out**" - [THE LORD JESUS] WENT IN AND WENT OUT. The aorist is a strange choice of tense for what is obviously repeated action, unless we have an ellipsis here, a shorthand way of saying "during the whole time that Jesus came to be with us and then later left us."

**εφ [επι]** acc. "**among**" - AMONG [US]. Spatial; "among us."

## v22

**αρξαμενος [αρχω]** aor. part. "**beginning**" - HAVING BEGUN. This nominative participle is probably best viewed as "a nominative absolute that has become adverbial", Begs. Defining the actual commencement of an apostle's witness

during the time of Jesus' going "in and out among us", ie., while "Jesus lived his life with us", Phillips.

**απο** + gen. "**from**" - FROM. Expressing separation.

**Ιωαννου [ης ου]** "**of John**" - [THE BAPTISM] OF JOHN. The genitive is adjectival, usually treated as verbal, subjective; "the baptism *performed by* John." Obviously not referring to the time when John was baptised, possibly when John baptised Jesus, but more likely to John's baptismal ministry and therefore his preaching ministry; "beginning with the preaching ministry of John the Baptist."

**έως** + gen. "**to**" - UNTIL [THE DAY]. Here the preposition takes a temporal sense, of time up to; "until".

**ής** gen. rel. pro. "**when**" - OF WHICH = WHEN [HE WAS TAKEN UP FROM US]. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic, of time, as NIV.

**τουτων** gen. pro. "**[for one] of these**" - [ONE] OF THESE. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

**μαρτυρα [υς υρος]** "**witness**" - A WITNESS, ONE WHO TESTIFIES. Defining the function of an apostle, and therefore Christian ministry in general.

**της αναστασεως [ις εως]** gen. "**of [his] resurrection**" - OF THE RESURRECTION [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, usually classified as verbal, objective.

## v23

v] The election of Matthias by lot, v23-26. Two candidates are put forward: Joseph, whose surname is "son of the Sabbath", and Matthias whom Eusebius says was one of the seventy disciples. In tradition, Matthias is recognised as the missionary apostle to the Ethiopians. Having selected the two candidates, the gathering prays, places the names in a hat and draws out Matthias. As for Judas, he abandoned his apostolic authority, sold it as it were, and left this life for a place known only to God. The twelve are again restored to head messiah's mission to all the tribes of Israel and beyond.

**εστησαν [ιστημι]** aor. "**they proposed**" - [AND] THEY PUT FORWARD, STOOD UP, SET UP. Augustine has "he proposed", "he" probably meaning Peter. The subject is most probably the apostles, but possibly the whole congregation; "they nominated."

**δυο** adj. "**two men**" - TWO. The adjective serves as a substantive, as NIV, accusative object of the verb "to put forward". Both "Joseph" and Matthias stand in apposition to "two men."

**τον καλουμενον [καλεω]** pres. pas. part. "**called**" - [JOSEPH] THE ONE BEING CALLED [BARABBAS, AND MATTHIAS WHO WAS CALLED JUSTUS]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Joseph"; "Joseph who was called

Barsabbas (the one born on the Sabbath)." As for Matthias, "Justus" may be his Roman name, or a given apostolic name. "Known as", CEV.

#### v24

The use of a method of chance has Old Testament precedence and follows careful selection and prayer, but we are wise to remember that an *is* is not an *ought*. Just because they did it at that time doesn't mean we should do it now, although having witnessed numerous ecclesiastical appointments one wonders if it wouldn't be worth a try!!!!

προσευξαμενοι [προσευχομαι] aor. part. "then they prayed" - [AND] HAVING PRAYED [THEY SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle, expressing action accompanying the verb "to say."

καρδιογνωστα [ης ου] voc. "[you] know [everyone's] heart" - [YOU LORD] HEART-KNOWER (one who understands the inner life) [OF ALL]. "O Lord (probably Jesus), the one who knows the innermost secrets of us all."

ὄν aor. "[show us] which" - [SHOW CLEARLY, SHOW FORTH = REVEAL *the* ONE] WHOM YOU CHOSE, PICKED OUT. Although situated at the end of the verse, the substantive adjective ἕνα, "*the* one", accusative direct object of the verb "to show clearly", likely serves as the head of the relative clause introduced by ὄν, "who". Jesus is doing the choosing. "Declare which of these two you have chosen", REB.

ἐκ + gen. "of [these]" - OF [THESE TWO *men* YOU CHOSE]. The preposition here serves in place of a partitive genitive.

#### v25

Luke's construction is indefinite and so he isn't specifically saying that Judas went to a place apart from God, the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. Still, the disciples probably believed that Judas was indeed eternally damned. Where Judas ended up is in God's hands. Luke is possibly just describing Judas' rebellion rather than his end;

λαβειν [λαμβανω] aor. inf. "to take over" - TO TAKE, RECEIVE. The infinitive probably introduces a final clause expressing purpose, "in order to take over." "To fill the place of this apostolic ministry", Moffatt.

της διακονιας ταυτης και αποστολης gen. "this apostolic ministry" - [THE PLACE = POSITION (vacancy of the apostolic office)] OF THIS MINISTRY AND APOSTLESHIP. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic, of definition, specifying the "vacancy"; "take up the vacancy in this ministry." The NIV treats "ministry and apostleship" as a hendiadys where a single idea is expressed in the Greek through two words joined by και. Culy suggests that και here is epexegetic, "even apostleship."

πορευθῆναι [πορευομαι] aor. pas. inf. "**to go [where he belongs]**" - [FROM WHICH JUDAS DEVIATED, TRANSGRESSED, TURNED ASIDE] TO GO, DEPART, TRAVEL, JOURNEY TO [HIS OWN PLACE]. The infinitive is probably adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to go." "Judah left to go the way he had chosen for himself", Barclay.

## v26

ἔδωκαν [διδωμι] aor. "**they cast**" - [AND] THEY GAVE = CAST. We would expect the verb "throw, cast" rather than "give". The lot is "cast" by placing the selected names on stones in a jar and throwing it about until one flies out. It is possible that "gave" here means "gave votes for them" = "and they voted for them and Matthias won."

κλήρους [ος] "**lots**" - LOTS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to give." A specially marked pebble, piece of pottery, or stick employed in making decisions based upon chance\*.

αὐτοῖς dat. pro. "- " - FOR THEM. Dative of interest, advantage.

ἐπι + acc. "**to [Matthias]**" - [AND THE LOT FELL] UPON [MATTHIAS]. Spatial.

συγκαταψηφισθῆ [συγκαταψηφιζω] aor. pas. "**added**" - [AND] HE WAS NUMBERED. As a hapax legomenon, a once only use in the New Testament, it is difficult to work out the meaning of this word; possibly "voted in and reckoned", Johnson. BAGD records only one other use outside the NT where it takes the middle voice; "join in a vote of condemnation". This further supports the possibility that here "gave lots" means "gave votes."

μετα + gen. "**to [the eleven apostles]**" - WITH [THE ELEVEN APOSTLES]. Expressing association, accompaniment.

## 2:1-13

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### iv] The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost

##### Synopsis

Following Christ's ascension, the disciples gather each day at the Temple for prayer. On the feast of Pentecost, they experience a rather strange occurrence. They hear the sound of something like wind echoing through the Temple colonnades. They know only too well that the wind is a symbol of God's Spirit - his breath, Ezk.37:9-14. The disciples also see something like streams of fire, or light, pouring down onto each member of the fellowship. Immediately they begin praising God in a miraculous way. The commotion causes a crowd to gather, and those in the crowd hear the disciples speaking in their own native language, or dialect. All hear and understand as one, and all are amazed.

##### Teaching

The outpouring of the Spirit serves to fulfil Jesus' promise to his disciples that they will be "clothed with power from on high" to enable them to serve as witnesses to Christ's saving work.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11.

ii] Background:

- *The baptism / infilling of the Spirit* - See Excursus;

iii] Structure: *The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost:*

Setting, v1;

The outpouring of the Spirit, v2-4;

The reaction of the crowd, v5-13:

iv] Interpretation:

The disciples have gathered in the temple for prayer and are miraculously endowed with God's presence and power, a presence in fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, and a power to realise the promise.

For Luke, his Acts of the Apostles begins at the feast of Pentecost. The festival of Pentecost (Feast of Weeks, Lev. 23:15-21) was originally an agricultural festival held 50 days after the Passover. By this time, the focus of the festival was on the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, focusing

particularly on the Covenant established between God and his people - the coming down of God to make a people for himself.

Luke doesn't draw out this theme, yet the thematic links are certainly present. God's coming down upon Mount Sinai, in the midst of his people, and his coming down upon the disciples, thematically align. The revolutionary nature of both comings also thematically aligns. Yet, from Luke's perspective, the event's importance lies in its fulfilment of a promise (Lk.24:49), and thus the enabling of the disciples to fulfil the mission assigned to them. None-the-less, the giving of the Spirit to the gathered disciples fulfils Pentecost's thematic purpose. They are now God's new-covenant people with the law written on their heart, commissioned and empowered to make known to broken humanity God's saving purposes in Christ.

*Filled with the Spirit*, v4: Luke tells us that the disciples were "filled", or washed, with the Spirit, and in response, they spoke in tongues. This giving of the Spirit is best understood as a personal coming of the Spirit of Christ to be with his people. It is a fulfilment of the expectations of Israel. The Prophets had spoken of the day when God would again visit his people and reside with them - pitch his tent with them. Pentecost is the fulfilment of this day, cf., Zech.2:10-13. In this sense it is the fulfilment of the promise of Jesus to his disciples that he would not leave them comfortless, but would return to them, John.14:15-18.

Many like to interpret this filling as a "baptism" - an empowering of the Spirit for service. Without a doubt there is power in the presence of the Spirit of God in a believers' life, a power that enables ministry. This is in line with Jesus' promise that the disciples would be "clothed with power from on high" so enabling them to serve as his "witnesses". This promise is evidenced when the disciples miraculously proclaim the "mighty works of God" to the amazed crowd. Yet, this is but a consequence of the gift of the Spirit whose presence realises what it means to to "in Christ."

*Speaking in tongues*: The phenomenon of "tongues" is not easily explained. Even those who were witnesses on the day of Pentecost were "amazed and perplexed." Here was a single word understood by people of different language groups in much the same sense as all those at Mount Sinai heard the law from the mouth of God. It is, in the fullest sense, a reversal of the curse of Babel. The disciples were therefore prophesying as foretold by the prophet Joel.

The form of their prophecy is ecstatic - abnormal, mysterious and not easily understood. Those who heard the disciples prophesy heard in their

own languages, or at least, in their own dialects. This miracle was repeated with Cornelius, Acts 11:15, and possibly also occurred on those other significant moments when the gospel moved beyond Israel to Samaritans, to God fearers, and finally to Gentiles. It does not seem to have become standard evidence for the gift of the Spirit. The Corinthian phenomenon (1Cor.12-14), although a form of ecstatic utterance, is probably not a miraculous communication event.

v] Homiletics: *Making Christ known*

I don't need to tell you how hard it is to witness for Jesus. It's true isn't it, the more we tell ourselves to evangelise the more we seem unable to evangelise. It's not easy to speak up for Jesus in a world that believes that Jesus should stay put in the manger and only come out at Christmas to meet with Santa.

The way forward is to understand clearly that God is bursting into our age, and if we are willing, he will use us to that end. Success in the Christian life, whether evangelism or whatever, does not come by trying to minister in our own power, but rather trusting the indwelling Spirit of Jesus to work his work through us.

From our reading today in Acts, we know that if we have given our lives to Jesus then he has entered our very being. As a result, we can expect the release of Jesus' resurrection power within us to make known the gospel, and through the gospel, gather a people to God.

Here lies our confidence, not in what we do, but in what Jesus is able to do through us. God is gathering a people to himself from our divided world. He is doing this through his Spirit-empowered word, preserved and proclaimed by his Spirit-empowered people.

As our age draws to a close, God is pushing ahead with his plan. So, are we willing, like the disciples of old, to let God work through us?

### **Text - 2:1**

The coming of the Spirit, v1-13; i] Setting, v1. It is the feast of Pentecost and the disciples have come together "in one place." In verse two the word οἶκος, "house", is used. The word usually refers to a dwelling, but it is also used for public buildings, temples and even sanctuaries. It seems likely that the disciples are gathered in the Temple court rather than the upper room.

εἰν τῷ + inf. "When" - [AND] IN THE [THE DAY OF PENTECOST TO BE FULFILLED]. This construction, the preposition εἰν + the articular infinitive, is usually temporal, expressing contemporaneous time, but possibly instrumental, expressing means, or result, even causal "since it was the day of Pentecost, they



were all together." Temporal is likely, "during", Moffatt; "on", CEV; although most opt for "when".

της πεντηκοστης [η] gen. "**of Pentecost**" - OF PENTECOST. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / of identification; "the day *known as* Pentecost."

συμπληρουσθαι [συμπληρω] pres. pas. inf. "**came**" - TO BE FULFILLED. The present tense may express ongoing action (durative), "was running its course", NEB, but probably not with an infinitive; "Had come", REB. The accusative subject of the infinitive is "the day."

όμου adv. "**[all] together**" - [THEY WERE ALL] TOGETHER. Here with a spatial sense. Possibly just the apostles (there is a variant that actually reads "the apostles"), but more likely the 120.

επι + acc. "**in [one place]**" - UPON [THE SAME *place*]. Spatial idiomatic phrase. As Culy notes, the adverbial phrase "all together" and the prepositional phrase "in one place", together form the complex predicate of the imperfect verb to-be ἦσαν, "they were."

## v2

ii] The outpouring of the Spirit, v2-4. The disciples are overwhelmed by the Spirit of God, an event which is described in the terms of a violent wind and tongues of fire. Both of these are Old Testament images of the Spirit of God, particularly of his power. cf., Ex.3:2, 19:16-19, 1Kgs.19:11-12, Matt.3:11. Luke is not so much describing an actual wind and fire, but is symbolically describing the Spirit's outpouring. None-the-less, there is nothing to hinder the Spirit's coming with such physical elements, and Luke does seem to make a point about the "sound" of their coming.

αφνω adv. "**suddenly**" - [AND A SOUND LIKE RUSHING OF VIOLENT WIND BECAME] UNEXPECTEDLY, SUDDENLY. The modal adverb serves to emphasise the miraculous; "All of a sudden", Barclay.

νηχος [ος] "**a sound**" - A NOISE, ROAR. Nominative subject of the verb "to become." In Luke 21:25 the noise is of a roaring sea, wind-like, vibrating, roaring.

ώσπερ "**like**" - AS, LIKE. Comparative.

φερομενης [φερω] gen. pres. part. "**the blowing**" - [*the sound* OF A VIOLENT WIND] RUSHING (expressing movement from one place to another). The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "wind"; "a mighty wind which was driving in on them", genitive in agreement with "wind." As for the genitive πνοης, "wind", it is likely adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / of production, so Culy, "like the sound *produced by* a strong blowing wind."

εκ + gen. "**from [heaven]**" - FROM [HEAVEN]. Expressing source / origin.

επληρωσεν [πληρωω] aor. "filled" - [AND] IT FILLED. The subject is unclear, is it "sound" or "wind"? "Sound" seems best.

τον οικον [ος] "the house" - [*the* WHOLE] HOUSE, ROOM, SPACE. Accusative direct object of the verb "to be filled." Given the general nature of the word, it is quite possible that the outpouring of the Spirit occurred somewhere in the temple precinct; "It filled the area where they were meeting."

οὐ adv. "where" - WHERE. Local adverb introducing a local clause.

vsαν καθήμενοι [καθημαι] pres. part. "they were sitting" - THEY WERE SITTING. The present participle with the imperfect verb to-be forms a periphrastic imperfect construction, possibly emphasising durative aspect.

### v3

Fire often accompanies Biblical theophanies (cf., Ex.3:2, 13:21-22, 14:24, 19:18, 24:17, ..... ) and here it is "distributed", RSV, to **ἕνα ἕκαστος**, "each individual", present. Presumably we are to understand this event as representing the gift of / being baptised with / washed with the Holy Spirit. So, more than likely realising 1:5 where the gift of the Spirit is expressed in the terms, "will be baptised."

ωφθησαν [ὄραω] aor. pas. "they saw" - [AND] APPEARED. If passive, the verb may be theological, a divine passive, God does the revealing, so "suddenly there came from heaven ..... and tongues were revealed to them", but it likely takes a middle sense, "appeared to them."

αυτοις dat. pro. "- " - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

διαμεριζομεναι [διαμεριζω] pres. pas. part. "that separated" - [TONGUES] BEING DIVIDED, PARTED, DISTRIBUTED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "tongues", as NIV. The **γλωσσαι**, "tongues", nominative subject of the verb "to see = appear", obviously has nothing to do with speaking in tongues / language, rather, the word is used here to describe a particular shape; the disciples saw something like fire that was distributed in the shape of tongues, so Barrett.

ὡσει "what seemed to be" - AS, LIKE. Comparative.

πυρος [υρ υρος] gen. "of fire" - *tongues* OF FIRE. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting an assumed "tongues"; "like fiery *tongues*", Culy.

εκαθισεν [καθιζω] aor. "[and] came to rest" - [AND] IT SAT [UPON EACH ONE]. A flickering flame over the head of an important person was a common image of the time. The Spirit came on each one of them; they all received the gift just as all were forgiven. The Spirit is for all believers, just as forgiveness is for all believers.

αυτων gen. pro. "of them" - OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. "And (it) settled on each one of them", Phillips.

v4

There does seem to be a distinction between baptised with the Spirit and filled with the Spirit, although it shouldn't be pressed, given that sometimes the terms mean much the same. None-the-less, it is likely that we have two separate actions here. In v3, the disciples receive the Spirit in the washing of fire, the "the distribution of tongue-like fire." They are no longer orphans. As promised, Jesus returns to them; the Spirit of Christ / the Holy Spirit immerses them with his presence. With the promised blessing of the covenant now realised in them, Luke goes on to tell us how the Spirit is released through them / fills them, such that they begin to prophecy. Being "filled with the Spirit" in Acts is often associated with ministry, particularly speaking, and that's certainly what happens here, cf., 4:8, 31, 13:9.

πνευματος ἁγίου gen. "**with the Holy Spirit**" - [AND ALL WERE FILLED] OF HOLY SPIRIT. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / of content; "they were all filled *full* of the Holy Spirit."

λαλειν [λαλεω] pres. inf. "**to speak**" - [AND THEY BEGAN] TO SPEAK. Complementary infinitive, completing the sense of the verb "to begin." "The disciples now did something they had not done before", Barrett; "They began to forcefully speak."

ἑτεροις dat. adj. "**in other [tongues]**" - IN OTHER KINDS OF [LANGUGES]. Instrumental dative, expressing means. Note Isaiah 28:11, referred to by Paul in 1Cor.14:21. The translation "foreign languages" is possible, but some form of ecstatic prophecy, miraculously, or otherwise understood by the crowd, is more likely. See Excursus, *The Pentecostal Blessings, Other Tongues*. We are left to wonder why Luke gives us so little information about this phenomenon. "They began to forcefully prophesy ecstatically."

καθως "as" - AS, LIKE. Usually translated as a comparative, "just as the Spirit enabled them." Speaking under the constraint of the Spirit involves speaking "as" = in the terms directed by the Spirit. Possibly causal here, "because", "because the Spirit had granted them the power of utterance", cf., BDF 236.

εδιδου [διδωμι] imperf. "**enabled**" - [THE SPIRIT] WAS GIVING. The imperfect tense is durative such that the "enabling" is ongoing. Possibly "gave each disciple the gift of tongues one after another", but unlikely. Luke does not clarify the relationship between what is obviously a once only act whereby the Spirit is given to a believer for life, and the seeming action of the Spirit, at a specific time and for a specific purpose, to "fill" (empower?) a believer for ministry.

αποφθεγγεσθαι [αποφθεγγομαι] pres. inf. "-" - *the ability* TO UTTER OUT ALOUD. As it stands, the infinitive functions as the direct object of the verb "to

give", "gave utterance to them", but it could be viewed as epexegetic, specifying an assumed "the ability." The word is used of forceful speech, even inspired speech, this adds weight to the idea that tongue-speaking had language content. Of course, we are left to wonder what the difference is between the Corinthian version of tongues and the Acts version, given that the Corinthian version seems devoid of language content.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**them**" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object

## v5

iii) The reaction of the crowd, v5-13. Hearing the enthusiastic utterances of the disciples, a crowd gathers. Luke tells us that they were amazed, a word often used of a pre-faith response by those who witness a messianic sign. As the crowd listens to the disciples, they hear them speaking in their own language / dialect. In v9-11 Luke lists, in circular fashion, the different lands represented in the crowd, while at the same time noting that they are either Jews, or converts to Judaism. It's as if Luke is telling us that the gospel is for all humanity, but that it derives from the children of Israel.

**δε** "**now**" - BUT / AND. Transitional, commonly used to indicate the next step in a narrative, as here.

**ησαν .... κατοικουντες [κατοικεω]** pres. part. "**there were staying**" - THERE WERE LIVING, DWELLING [INTO JERUSALEM]. The present participle with the imperfect verb to-be forms a periphrastic imperfect construction, possibly serving to emphasise durative aspect.

**ευλαβεις** adj. "**God-fearing**" - [JEWS,] DEVOUT, REVERENT, GODLY [MEN]. The word is missing in some manuscripts. "Devout men" stands in apposition to "Jews". Note that **Ιουδαιοι**, "Jews", is also missing in some manuscripts. Considered by some as originally a marginal notation. "Jews" in the sense of either race or religion. Possibly Jewish pilgrims from the Roman provinces visiting Jerusalem for the festival.

**απο** + gen. "**from**" - FROM [ALL *the* NATIONS]. Expressing source / origin.

**των** gen. "" - THE [UNDER THE HEAVEN]. This genitive article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase "under heaven" into an attributive modifier limiting "nations", "which are under heaven."

## v6

**γενομενης [γινομαι]** aor. part. "**when they heard**" - [BUT / AND, THIS SOUND] HAVING HAPPENED, [THE MULTITUDE ASSEMBLED]. The genitive participle and its genitive subject, "this sound", forms a genitive absolute construction, usually treated as temporal, as NIV. The crowd heard the speaking, not the wind.

συνεχυθη [συγχεω] aor. pas. "**in bewilderment**" - [AND] IT WAS CONFOUNDED, ASTONISHED, PERPLEXED. The word describes the total shock of those hearing the tongues; "they were astonished and amazed", Barclay.

ὅτι "**because**" - THAT = BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the crowd came together.

ἕς ἕκαστος adj. "**each one**" - EACH ONE *of them*. This distributive construction serves as the subject of the verb "to hear." The partitive genitive "of them" is assumed; "each one *of them*", Phillips.

ηκουον [ακουω] imperf. + gen. "**heard**" - WERE HEARING. The imperfect is durative, commonly used for speech. This verb takes a genitive of direct object, here αυτων, "them = these men"; "each one of them heard these men speaking in his own language", Phillips.

τη ιδιᾳ διαλεκτῷ [ος] dat. "**their own language**" - BY/IN HIS OWN DIALECT. The dative is adverbial, modifying the verb "heard", probably instrumental, expressing means; "by means of his own dialect." Was it different languages, different dialects, or different accents? Bruce suggests "manner of speech". The word is unclear. Was this a miracle of speech, or of hearing?

λαλουντων [αλεω] gen. pres. part. "**being spoken**" - [THEM] SPEAKING. Genitive complement of the genitive direct object of the verb "to hear", standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the object, i.e., they were speaking.

v7

Bock suggests that the question posed by the crowd (a summary of the crowd's response, so Marshall) is pejorative; "how is it that all these uneducated Galileans are using all these languages?" Note how Luke emphasises the emotional response of the crowd

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "**[utterly amazed] they asked**" - [AND THEY WERE AMAZED AND WERE MARVELLING] SAYING. Semi-redundant attendant circumstance participle introducing direct speech; see 1:6.

ουχ "**aren't**" - [BEHOLD, ARE] NOT. This negation is used in a question expecting a positive reply.

οἱ λαλουντες [αλεω] pres. part. "**[all these] who are speaking**" - [ALL THESE] THE ONES SPEAKING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "all these."

Γαλιλαιοι "**Galileans**" - GALILEANS? What identified them as Galileans? Some have suggested dress, but this is unlikely; more probably accent, which means it carried over into their tongue-speaking. This would support the view that there is language content to their words, and also, that the miracle is in the hearing, not the speaking.

## v8

All those present understand what the disciples are saying - Babel is overturned, the kingdom of God is at hand. "God is bringing the message of the gospel home to those who hear it", Bock.

**πως "how"** - [AND] HOW [ARE HEARING WE]. The interrogative particle serves to introduce a second question. The use of this particular interrogative adds a sense of confusion to the question.

**τη ιδια διαλεκτω** dat. "**in [our] native language**" - IN/BY/WITH THE LANGUAGE [OF US]. Moule suggests that the dative is a dative of accompaniment, "with", whereas Culy opts for an instrumental dative, expressing means, "by".

**εν + dat. "-"** - IN [WHICH WE WERE BORN]. Possibly local, expressing sphere, or reference / respect, "with respect to ....". The whole clause is idiomatic and takes the sense "in his own native tongue", Moffatt.

## v9

The list of countries and races probably reflects common lists of the time which served to identify the extent of the Jewish dispersion, while at the same time reflecting Biblical lists, eg., Gen.10:2-23.

**οι κατοικουντες [κατοικew]** pres. part. "**residents of [Mesopotamia]**" - [PARTHIANS AND MEDES AND ELAMITES AND] THE ONES DWELLING IN [MESOPOTAMIA]. The participle serves as a substantive, and as with all those listed, stand in apposition to the nominative subject of the verb "to hear", "we hear them speaking .....", v11.

**τε. "and"** - BOTH [JUDEA AND CAPPADOCIA, PONTUS AND ASIA]. Along with **και**, serving to introduce a series of correlative constructions. Sometimes **τε και** is used to express a closer connection.

## v10

**της Λιβυης [η]** gen. "**[the parts] of Libya**" - [BOTH PHRYGIA AND PAMPHYLIA, EGYPT AND THE PARTS = REGIONS] OF LIBYA. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

**της "-"** - THE [ACCORDING TO CYRENE]. The article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase, "according to Cyrene", into an attributive modifier limiting "Libya", genitive in agreement with "Libya"; "parts of Libya which are adjacent to Cyrene."

**κατα + acc. "near [Cyrene]"** - AGAINST, BESIDE. Here with a spatial sense.

**οι επιδημουντες [επιδημew]** pres. part. "**visitors from [Rome]**" - [AND] THE ONES SOJOURNING IN, VISITING [ROME]. The participle serves as a substantive. "Roman citizens", Barrett.

## v11

Barrett argues that the presence of the participle "speaking" indicates that the miracle is one of speech (v4 supports this view), rather than hearing, although referencing their "speaking" only states the obvious. Whatever is happening, the crowd understands that the disciples "are declaring with praise the new redemption that God has wrought for his people", Barrett.

**Ιουδαιοι [ος]** "**Jews [and converts to Judaism]**" - [BOTH] JEWS [AND PROSELYTES, CRETANS AND ARABS]. The inclusion in the list of "Jews" is unexpected; it is generally felt to be an early attempt to sort out a textual problem. Barrett suggests that the clause is in apposition to "Roman citizens" and was intended to mean "temporarily resident in Jerusalem."

**λαλουντων [λαλεω]** gen. pres. part. "**declaring**" - [WE HEAR THEM] SPEAKING. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "them" of the verb **ακουομεν**, "we hear", which often, as here, takes a genitive of direct object (a kind of ablative of source, "we hear *from* them"), standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the object.

**ταις ἡμετεραις γλωσσαις** dat. "**in our own tongues**" - BY/IN OUR TONGUES, LANGUAGES. Again, the dative is adverbial, possibly instrumental, expressing means, "by means of", so Culy, or expressing association, "in company with", so Moule, or modal, expressing manner of the delivery, so Kellum, "with our languages."

**του θεου [ος]** gen. "**[the wonders] of God**" - [THE MIGHTY ACTS] OF GOD. The genitive is usually taken as verbal, subjective, "the mighty deeds *that* God *has done*", Culy. Again, emphasising the language content of the hearing / speaking. The "mighty acts" are undefined, but given the context, they surely concern God's work of redemption recently completed in the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ.

## v12

Again, Luke stresses the emotional state of the crowd.

**λεγοντες [λεγω]** pres. part. "**they asked**" - [BUT/AND ALL WERE AMAZED AND PERPLEXED, BEWILDERED] SAYING [ANOTHER TO ANOTHER = TO ONE ANOTHER]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verbs "were amazed" and "were perplexed", while serving to introduce direct speech; "they were all amazed and perplexed and said to one another ....." For an adverbial classification see **λεγοντες**, 1:6 possibly consecutive, expressing result, "and so said to one another."

**τί "what"** - WHAT [CAN THIS WISH TO BE]. Interrogative pronoun. The form of the question is idiomatic, with the infinitive being complementary, completing

the sense of the verb **θελω**. The infinitive verb to-be here "bears the same sense as "mean" owing to the lack of a Semitic equivalent", Zerwick. "What on earth can this mean", Phillips.

### v13

Luke often recounts both a positive and negative response to gospel proclamation. So, some present mock the disciples, concluding that their words are nothing more than drunken gibberish. This may well indicate that, although the "tongues" of the disciples possessed language content, clarity is lacking. Peter cuts through the confusion by addressing the crowd and explaining what's going on. His sermon serves as the first clarion call of the gospel in the new age of the kingdom.

**ἕτεροι** adj. "**some**" - [BUT/AND] OTHERS. In v12 we are told **παντες**, "all", were amazed and perplexed, but here "some" make fun of the situation. Barrett says it is "careless writing", while Culy argues that the "all" is hyperbole. The point is clear enough; the behaviour of the disciples mystifies the crowd, some of whom go on to make fun of them.

**διαχλευαζοντες** [**διαχλευαζω**] pres. part. "**made fun of them**" - RIDICULING, MOCKING, JEERING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said", as NIV, "made fun of them and said", although Wallace classifies it as adverbial, modal, expressing manner; "some others sneered", Moffatt.

**ὅτι** "-" - [WERE SAYING] THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of direct speech, expressing what "they were saying."

**μεμεστωμενοι εισιν** "**they have had too much**" - THEY HAVE BEEN FILLED. The perfect participle with the present verb to-be forms a periphrastic perfect construction, possibly expressing their complete state of fullness. It is interesting that on one side people understood the prophetic nature of the "tongues", while on the other, there were people who put it down to intoxication - slurring of speech, mumbling? "They are drunk", CEV.

**γλευκουσ** [**ος**] "**wine**" - OF NEW WINE. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / of content; "filled *full of* wine." The word can be used of partly fermented "new wine", but here more likely wine preserved with honey, "sweet wine", Bruce.



## 2:14-21

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### v] Peter's Pentecost sermon, 2:14-35

##### a) Introduction - no drunkenness here

#### Synopsis

We can't be certain, but it is likely the disciples are gathered in the temple precinct ("the outer court", Longenecker), and it is there that they are washed with Holy Spirit in tongues of fire, and begin speaking in "tongues". A crowd gathers, but confusion reigns; some are amazed, others mock. So, before proclaiming the God's kingdom message / gospel to the crowd, Peter sets out to explain what has just happened.

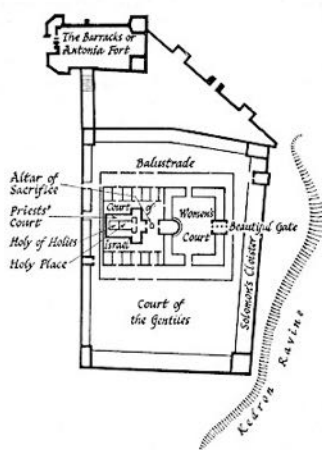
#### Teaching

The promised outpouring of God's Spirit is fulfilled.

#### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11. Luke's account of life in *the early church in Jerusalem* continues with Peter's *Pentecost sermon*, his *apologia*. The sermon has three parts, first, an introduction, v14-21, an example of judicial rhetoric, a *refutatio*, a rejection of the charge of drunkenness. The body of the sermon continues in judicial form, v22-36, ending with a deliberative conclusion where Peter draws out the need for decision.

ii] Background: *Herod's temple in the first century*



iii] Structure: *Sermon introduction:*

Explanation

Not drunkenness but the fulfilment of prophecy

Citation - Joel 3:1-5

iv] Interpretation:

The prophetic utterances of the disciples have prompted both amazement and confusion among the gathered crowd of worshippers in the outer court of the temple, with some even charging the disciples with drunkenness. So, Peter sets the record straight. Instead of drunkenness, the congregation is actually witnessing the fulfilment of a prophecy delivered by Joel (Joel 3:1-5). In his proclamation of the *kerygma* / gospel that follows, Peter will explain how Jesus has realised the long-promised blessings of the covenant for God's people Israel, but for the present, Peter wants his audience to recognise in the disciples' actions, not drunkenness, but a work of God's Spirit, a work prophesied by the prophet Joel.

### Text - 2:14

Peter's sermon-introduction, v14-21: i] Explanation - not drunkenness, but the fulfilment of prophecy, v14-16. Although a larger group than the eleven apostles received the Spirit, it is only Jesus' chosen representatives who now stand before the gathered crowd. Peter serves as their spokesmen - as they were "filled" to speak in "tongues", now Peter is filled **αποφθεγγομαι**, "to utter" (the word is used here of an inspired prophetic word, cf., 2:4).

**σταθεις [ιστημι]** aor. pas. part. "**stood up**" - [BUT/AND PETER] HAVING STOOD. The NIV takes this participle as attendant on the verb "to lift up, raise up", but it may just be adverbial, modal, expressing manner, "Peter, standing with the eleven", ESV. Although anarthrous (without an article), the participle may be treated as adjectival, attributive, "Peter, however, who was standing there with the eleven, raised his voice .....", Cassirer.

**συν** + dat. "**with**" - WITH [THE ELEVEN]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**the crowd**" - [LIFTED UP THE VOICE OF HIM AND UTTERED] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

**οι κατοικουντες [καοικεω]** pres. part. "**all of you who live [in Jerusalem]**" - [MEN, JEWS, AND ALL] THE ONES INHABITING [JERUSALEM]. The participle serves as a substantive, and along with "Jews", is a vocative in apposition to "men". Given that the "men" are Jews (the diaspora contingent??), and those who inhabit Jerusalem the local Jews, then obviously the **Ιουδαιοι** are probably "Judeans."

ὕμιν dat. pro. "to you" - [LET THIS BE KNOWN] TO YOU, Dative of direct object after the verb "to know." The pronoun **τούτο**, "this", serves as the subject of the verb "to know", not the direct object with "you" as the indirect object.

μου gen. pro. "**[what] I say**" - [PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE WORDS] OF ME. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "my words", or subjective, as NIV.

## v15

"It is far too short a time (after rising) to have gotten drunk off low-alcoholic cheap wine", Kellum. None-the-less, "the experience of glossolalia is ... sufficiently ambiguous to require interpretation", Johnson.

γὰρ "-" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the crowd should listen carefully, "because" what has occurred is not what they think.

ὥς "**as [you suppose]**" - [THESE ONES ARE NOT DRUNK] AS [YOU SUPPOSE]. Here the comparative introduces a characteristic quality, not "like", but "exactly as." Their assumptions are baseless. "These men are not, as you suggest, drunk", Barclay.

γὰρ "-" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the disciples' behaviour is not what the crowd thinks.

της ἡμέρας [α] "**[it's only nine in the morning]**" - [IT IS THIRD HOUR] OF THE DAY. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. "They haven't had time to get drunk; It's only nine o'clock in the morning", Peterson.

## v16

For Luke, the Pentecostal event is the fulfilment of prophecy, both *now*, realised, and *not yet*, eschatological; See Luke's eschatology in the Introduction.

ἀλλὰ "**No**" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not what you think, but ....." "No, what this signifies has been foretold by the prophet Joel", Cassirer.

το εἰρημένον [λεγω] perf. mid. part. "**what was spoken**" - [THIS IS] THE THING HAVING BEEN SPOKEN. The participle serves as a substantive, predicate nominative of the verb to-be.

διὰ + gen. "**by**" - BY [THE PROPHET JOEL]. Expressing agency. The Western text does not name the prophet; Barrett thinks that this variant may well be original.

## v17

ii] Citation - Joel 3:1-5. Peter explains the violent blast of wind and the disciples' prophetic utterances, as a fulfilment of Joel's last-days prophecy to the people of Israel. In the last days, when the Lord (here applied to Jesus??) will "rescue" his people, God's Spirit will fall on "all flesh" and they, in company with cosmic signs, will prophecy. For Luke, Gabriel's trumpet is sounding, the new

age of the kingdom has dawned. Note also how the text supports Luke's universalism; the Spirit comes upon **πασαν σαρκα**, "all flesh" = "all humanity", although for the present, the pentecostal blessings fall on "the sons and daughters" / Israel.

**εν** + dat. "**in [the last days]**" - [AND IT WILL BE] IN [THE LAST DAYS, SAYS GOD]. Temporal use of the preposition; "When the last days come", CEV. The LXX has **μετα ταυτα**, "after these things", indicating that Luke has skewed the text for eschatological effect.

**απο** + gen. "-" - [I WILL POUR OUT] FROM [THE SPIRIT OF ME UPON ALL FLESH, AND THE SONS OF YOU AND THE DAUGHTERS OF YOU WILL PROPHECY, AND THE YOUNG MEN OF YOU WILL DREAM DREAMS]. The preposition is used in the place of a partitive genitive. Not in the sense of a disciple receiving some of the Spirit / part of the Spirit, but of there being a distribution of the Spirit. Probably not expressing source as this would separate the person of the Spirit from his power. It is not the pouring out of the Spirit's power, but his person

**ενυπνιοις [ον]** dat. "**[will dream] dreams**" - [AND THE ELDERS OF YOU WILL DREAM] DREAMS. Dative of direct object after the **εν** prefix verb "to dream." Kellum suggests the classification dative of manner; Culy suggests an instrumental classification.

## v18

Best viewed as a parallel statement to v17 - a typical feature of Hebrew poetry. In this, and the previous verse, there are three parallel statements, but it seems likely that it is the second and third that stand together. The blessings of the covenant are ultimately for all humanity, but with particular reference to the children of Israel / the servants of the Lord - all are now set free. Luke adds "and they will prophesy", reinforcing the link to v16b.

**γε** "**even**" - [AND] INDEED [UPON THE MALE SLAVES OF ME AND UPON THE FEMALE SLAVES OF ME, IN THOSE DAYS I WILL POUR OUT FROM THE SPIRIT OF ME AND THEY WILL PROPHECY]. Intensive particle; "Indeed, in those days ....", Cassirer.

## v19

Joel draws on Sinai imagery to describe God's last-days coming, a coming associated with "signs" (Luke's addition to the LXX) and "wonders." All this associated with God's prophet Moses, imaged in Jesus' ministry and now his disciples. As already noted, any scholarly debate between supporters of a realised eschatology and supports of a futuristic / inaugurated eschatology, need not be pursued given that both apply - the kingdom is *now / not yet*. So, not only were these signs evident on Mount Sinai, the destruction of Jerusalem by the

Babylonians, as well as at Jesus' crucifixion, they are evident at Pentecost, will be evident at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and of course, at the end of the age. As for the signs themselves, cosmic imagery is used to illustrate the dissolution of all powers, often with particular reference to civil powers and authorities / judgment upon the nations, eg., Isaiah 13, judgment on Babylon, cf., v10; ref., Lk.21:25.

**εν** + dat. "**in [the heavens]**" - [AND I WILL GIVE WONDERS] IN [THE HEAVEN ABOVE]. Local, expressing space.

**επι** + gen. "**on [the earth]**" - [AND SIGNS] UPON [THE EARTH BELOW]. Spatial.

**καπνου [ος]** gen. "**of smoke**" - [BLOOD AND FIRE AND A VAPOUR] OF SMOKE. The genitive is adjectival, possibly epexegetic, specifying the vapour, "a vapour *which is made up of* smoke", but probably just attributive, "smoky vapour." Peterson D. opts for attributed, where the lead noun functions as the attributive adjective, "blood and fire and billowing smoke", Peterson D.

## v20

The cosmic signs of the dissolution of powers come "before" the day of the Lord is manifest (**επιφανη**, "evident" rather than "glorious"). That day is *now* in the outpouring of the Spirit in these last days, and *will be* in the last day.

**εις** + acc. "**[turned] to [darkness]**" - [THE SUN WILL BE TRANSFORMED] INTO [DARKNESS, AND THE MOON] INTO [BLOOD]. Expressing direction of action and arrival at, the preposition is used here to indicate "a change in state", Culy.

**πριν** + inf. "**before [the coming]**" - BEFORE [TO COME]. This construction, the temporal conjunction **πριν** + the infinitive, introduces a temporal clause expressing subsequent time.

**κυριου [ος]** gen. "**[day] of the Lord**" - [THE GREAT AND MANIFEST (evident) DAY] OF THE LORD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic; "the day *pertaining to* the Lord."

## v21

The conclusion of this text from Joel, proclaiming salvation for all who "call on the name of the Lord", leads comfortably into Peter's gospel sermon / his proclamation of the *kerygma*. The gospel calls for repentance, a turning to God in Christ for forgiveness, acceptance, and inclusion in the new age of the kingdom. God's call through Joel now becomes his call through Peter.

**εσται [ειμι]** fut. "-" - [AND] IT WILL BE. The use here of the future verb to-be serves to link this verse to **εσται**, v17; "And it will be *that* in the last days .....", "and it will be *that* all whoever call upon the name of the Lord ....."

πας adj. "-" - ALL. The adjective serves as the substantive "everyone", standing in apposition to ὅς ἄν, "whoever", subject of the future verb "will be saved." Its use is somewhat redundant, but emphatic, serving to reinforce "whoever"; "Whoever, *and I mean* everyone, who calls on the name of the Lord ...."

ὅς ἄν + subj. "**everyone [who calls]**" - WHOEVER [CALLS UPON THE NAME OF *the* LORD, *then* HE WILL BE SAVED]. Introducing an indefinite relative clause which, in the present context, is conditional. Here the actions of indefinite individuals produce a definite future action. Anyone who invokes God's name (his person), seeking his mercy in and through Jesus Christ, will be saved. Although Joel understands "the Lord" to be YHWH, Jehovah, New Testament authors tend to apply the reference to the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 2:22-36

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### v] Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, 2:14-35

#### b) The sermon proper - Christ and his resurrection

#### Synopsis

After the pentecostal experience of tongue-speaking, Peter sets out to preach to the gathered crowd. First, he answers the charge of drunkenness and then gives witness to Jesus' resurrection, linking this to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

#### Teaching

The resurrection of Jesus, the crucified one, testifies to the fact that he is now Lord. To stand approved under his reign, it is necessary to repent for the forgiveness of sins. By so doing, the believing person will receive the long-promised blessings of the covenant.

#### Issues

i] Context: See 2:14-21. There are three parts to Peter's sermon: The introduction in v14-21 explains the tongue-speaking phenomenon with reference to Old Testament prophecy. Then, in the body of the sermon, v22-36, Peter proclaims the gospel (*kerygma*), dealing with the resurrection and the consequent Lordship of Christ in v22-32, and the resultant outpouring of the Spirit in v33-36. Verse 36 restates the proposition that Jesus is both Christ / messiah and Lord. The sermon concludes with a call for repentance in v37-39.

ii] Structure: *Christ, his resurrection and the gift of the Spirit:*

Peter's Pentecost sermon, v14-39:

Introduction, v14-21;

The charge of drunkenness. Text Joel 2:28-32.

Sermon Proper, v22-36:

Christ is both Lord and Messiah. Text Psalm 110:1:

Proposition, v22-24;

Scriptural support, v25-28;

Argument #1, v29-32;

Argument #2, v33-35;

Conclusion, v36.

Response, v37-39:

*Repent and be baptised ...*

*for the forgiveness of sins ....*

*and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

iii] Interpretation:

Peterson D argues that Peter's sermon serves three functions in Luke's account of the gospel:

- It serves to explain the pentecostal event and answer the question of the bystanders. Joel's prophecy serves as the basis of this explanation, making the point that "this would happen as an eschatological event before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord";
- The sermon serves as an opportunity "to explain the significance of Jesus in the plan of God for his people" and to show that "God is the hidden actor behind Jesus' mighty works, his death, his resurrection, his exaltation and giving of the Spirit, and his enthronement as Lord and Christ";
- Finally, the sermon serves as a model of how the gospel is preached, here to Jews, and how its preaching changes lives. "The speech not only interprets what has happened; it causes something to happen. The audience makes a shattering discovery and is moved to repentance in large numbers", Tannehill.

So, what we have in the sermon is the following: a *refutatio*, a refutation of slanderous claims; an *apologia*, this is what we believe, the *kerygma* / the gospel; and a teaching model of how to present the gospel - the fulfilment of scripture being particularly relevant to Jews.

*The gospel in Acts*: Dodd in *The Apostolic Preaching and its Development*, notes six elements in the gospel sermons found in Acts, although not all six elements are found in each sermon:

- The age of fulfilment has dawned;
- This has taken place through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus;
- By virtue of the resurrection, Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of God, as messianic head of the new Israel;
- The Holy Spirit in the church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory;
- The messianic age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Christ;
- A concluding appeal for repentance. This appeal comes with the offer of forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of salvation to those who enter the elect community.



*The foundational elements of the gospel:* The format of the gospel is established in the synoptic gospels and carries through into the gospel sermons in Acts. The εὐαγγέλιον, "important news", presents as a three part announcement concerning the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, the coming / establishment / realisation of the kingdom of God, and the need to call upon the name of the Lord:

The time is fulfilled,  
the kingdom of God is at hand,  
repent and believe the gospel.

- The bulk of the gospel message, particularly when delivered to a Jewish audience, focuses on the first part, the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The message proclaims Jesus as the long awaited messiah, the one who comes to gather a people, a nation, a new Israel, to the living God.

- The second part focuses on the inevitable consequence of Christ's completed work, namely, the kingdom is upon us - salvation, in and through Jesus, is freely offered to both Jew and Gentile. There are two sub-divisions in the way this *news* is presented:

- *The news* can be presented as either, or both, *now / not yet*;
- *The news* can be presented as either blessings or cursings / good news, or bad news.

These elements are only evident in part; sometimes *the news* is good news, and other times it is bad news. *The news* is also often understated, although obvious, certainly to a Jew. Jesus is Lord, having risen from the dead, and as such all the promised blessings of the covenant are now available for all who call upon the name of the Lord, as are the cursings for those who ignore *the news*.

- The third part focuses on the necessary response to the gospel message, namely, turning to Christ and relying on his completed work on our behalf. Depending on the circumstances, the three major parts of the gospel are usually present in gospel presentations in Acts.

Of particular interest is Paul's Areopagus sermon delivered to Gentiles in Athens. The "time is fulfilled" element, applicable to Jews, is replaced by an argument leading to the conclusion that the kingdom is come, explained in the terms of humanity facing judgment, and this because Jesus is Lord, having risen from the dead.; See 17:16-34.

It is important to note the lack of any reference to Jesus' substitutionary death in Paul's sermon to Gentile philosophers. They would not easily

understand the significance of a blood sacrifice as an atonement for sin, as is the case for the unchurched today.

*Peter's use of Psalm 110:1, v34-35.* Peter argues that David cannot be the person referred to in the Psalm as he has not ascended into heaven, but rather is still in his grave, the site of which is commonly known. Only Jesus, a descendent of David, has risen from the dead and therefore the Psalm obviously refers to him.

The point Peter draws from the Psalm is clear enough: "the resurrection indicates Jesus' position at the Father's right hand, as the one who is seated at God's side. From this place of honour and unique glory, Jesus mediates the blessing of the Spirit and salvation in accord with the promise of God's plan. This reveals who Jesus is ..... tightly associating Jesus with God's unique glory", Bock.

*What Christology applies to Luke's use of the word "Lord"?* Christ is both **κυριον και χριστον**, "Lord and Christ / Messiah", v36. It seems likely that 2:21 is the first time in Acts when a text applying to God is applied to Jesus, "anyone who calls on the name of the Lord (Jesus) will be saved." This assumes, of course, that the one who pours out "my Spirit" is Jesus, cf., v18. This issue has never been resolved in Christendom with the Western church holding that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, and the Eastern church arguing that the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone.

Commentators are divided on whether Luke is using the title "Lord" for Jesus in the same sense as it is used of Yahweh. Certainly, in the present context, Jesus is Lord "over salvation and the distribution of salvation's benefits", Bock. If Luke is not confirming the divinity of Jesus, then he may be using the word "Lord" in the sense of the exalted one, the messiah who is "exalted to the right hand of God", so Dunn. As "Christ" is the title understood by Jews to refer to the messiah and commonly used that way by Luke for Jews, so "Lord" may well be commonly used by Luke as a messianic title suitable for Gentiles. If this is the case, then both titles refer to Jesus as the foretold cosmic messiah who, on behalf of God's new people, receives the authority to reign over an eternal heavenly kingdom.

iv] Homiletics: *Important News!*

The children in the auditorium sat watching the chalk-talk. Card tricks and puppets followed, and then a quick-sketch demo guaranteed attention. The message was a typical gospel presentation. In summary: "we are all sinners and therefore under the judgement of God. Jesus died to pay the

penalty for our sins. If we believe in Jesus, our sins will be forgiven and we will not face judgement." Of course, as is always the case, a forensic exposition of the cross can leave both children and adults confused. At least the card tricks were great!



Gospel preaching often focuses on the atonement. When the Australian evangelist John Chapman developed his Dialogue Evangelism presentation based on Acts 17, he would often face the question, "what about the blood?" He would reply, "What blood? Where?" Few seem to realise that the gospels themselves say little about the atonement; the reason for Jesus' death is hardly ever mentioned. The doctrine of the atonement is a substantial truth in

that it explains the workings of our salvation, but it is not the gospel, it's not God's important message to lost humanity.

The word gospel means important news. When the word is used in the Bible, it means important news from God. The important news is that God's eternal reign in Jesus is bursting in on humanity. When Peter speaks of God's coming kingdom he simply makes the point that wicked people may have crucified Jesus, but God did not allow the grave to hold him. Raised and ascended to glory, Jesus now reigns. He is the King of kings, the Lord of lords, and on the basis of his divine authority, we can live eternally in the presence of God.

So there we have it, since you can't keep a good man down, Jesus is now enthroned in glory, the new age has dawned. Do you want to be part of it? Ask Jesus!

### **Text - 2:22**

Peter's Pentecost sermon, v22-36: i] Peter lays down the central plank of his sermon, proclaiming that Jesus is Lord, God's anointed one, Messiah, v22-24. Jesus' "mighty works", or more rightly, "powerful signs of the kingdom", demonstrate the "finger of God" upon the people of Israel, and thus proclaim the inevitable truth that the new age of the kingdom of God has come upon mankind, cf., 11:20. Indeed, "God has visited his people", 7:16. Yet, God's chosen-one was handed over to "wicked men", i.e., those apart from the Law and covenants - pagan Rome. So, the messiah suffered, as it was foreordained he would. Yet, a higher court overturned the court of pagan Rome and reversed its death-sentence; it is not possible for death to hold the Lord, God's anointed one. As it was

ordained that the Lord / messiah would suffer, so it was ordained that he would enter glory, and this he has done by rising from the dead.

Ισραηλιται [ης ου] "**[men] of Israel / [fellow] Israelites**" - [MEN.] ISRAELITES, [LISTEN TO THESE WORDS]. Vocative, standing in apposition to "men"; "My fellow Jews", ...

ανδρα [ηρ δρος] "**a man**" - [JESUS THE NAZARENE] A MAN. Standing in apposition to "Jesus of Nazareth".

αποδεδειγμενον [αποδεικνυμι] perf. part. "**accredited**" - HAVING BEEN DESIGNATED, APPOINTED, ATTESTED, AUTHENTICATED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting man. As can be seen, the word can convey a number of meanings. Bruce opts for "attested", Barrett for "appointed", but possibly the less technical meaning of "a man marked out", "designated" ("approved", Calvin) is intended. "Authenticated", "proved", Phillips/CEV..., is certainly not acceptable, as if Christ's divine appointment needs to be proved to anyone.

απο + gen. "**by [God]**" - FROM [GOD]. Here the preposition expresses agency, "by", a rare usage. We would expect ὑπο.

εις + acc. "**to [you]**" - INTO [YOU]. Here the preposition probably expresses advantage, "for you."

δυναμεισι [ις εως] dat. "**by miracles**" - BY / WITH MIRACLES, MIGHTY WORKS [AND WONDERS AND SIGNS]. The dative is instrumental, expressing means. Christ was appointed / designated with accompanying signs. Note that in the New Testament this word is always used with "signs" - signs and wonders.

οἱς dat. pro. "**which [God did]**" - WHICH [GOD DID]. Dative by attraction.

εν + dat. "**among [you]**" - IN [MIDST OF YOU]. Local, expressing space.

δι [δια] + gen. "**through [him]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [HIM]. Expressing agency.

καθως "**as**" - JUST AS [YOU YOURSELVES KNOW]. Comparative; "All of you know this", CEV.

## v23

Peter doesn't mince his words here; guilt rests on the people - *ανειλατε*, "you killed *him*." The *ανομων*, "lawless, wicked *ones*" (possibly referring to the religious authorities rather than the Roman authorities), aided the people.

τουτον pro. "**this man**" - THIS, THIS ONE. Resumptive = "Jesus of Nazareth", v22.

εκδοτον adj. "**was handed over to you**" - *was* DELIVERED UP, GIVEN UP *to you*. Indirect object "to you" assumed; "Betrayed", Williams.

**ὀρισμένη [ὀρίζω]** perf. part. "**[by God's] set [purpose]**" - BY THE HAVING BEEN DETERMINED, SET [PURPOSE AND FOREKNOWLEDGE]. The dative is best taken as instrumental, as NIV, although see Wallace for dative of rule; "in conformity with", p157; "this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God", ESV. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the noun **βουλή** "purpose / council [of God]." There is no personal failure in the betrayal and execution of Jesus because "God himself foresaw and planned the whole", Barrett. "Betrayed in the predestined course of God's deliberate purpose", Moffatt.

**του θεου "God's"** - OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, usually treated as verbal, subjective.

**δια** + gen. "**with the help of [wicked men]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [*the HAND OF LAWLESS men*]. Instrumental, expressing agency. An example of the divine will being realised through the freely determined actions of corrupt people who are then held accountable for their actions. A classic example of this may be found in the Babylonian empire's invasion of Judea, an invasion which served as an instrument of God's judgment upon the people of Israel, but which none-the-less placed Babylon under divine judgment for its actions.

**προσπιξαντες [προσπιγγυμι]** aor. part. "**by nailing him to the cross**" - [YOU KILLED *him*] HAVING AFFIXED *him to the cross*. The participle is adverbial, probably instrumental expressing means, "by means of", as NIV, but possibly modal, expressing the manner of the killing. "You nailed up [and murdered]", Phillips.

## v24

**λυσας [λυω]** aor. part. "**freeing**" - [GOD RAISED WHOM] HAVING LOOSED, RELEASED. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner in which the action of being raised is accomplished, or instrumental, expressing means, "by freeing him from ....", or possibly temporal, "when he freed him from..." "Having destroyed the bitter pains of death." The antecedent of the accusative relative pronoun **ὃ**, "whom", is **τουτον**, "this one", v23.

**του θανατου [ος]** gen. "**the agony [of death]**" - [THE BIRTH PAINS] OF DEATH. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, "death pangs"; "the throes of death." The word **ωδινας**, "birthing pains", is often used figuratively of the suffering associated with the coming (birthing) of the messianic age. Jesus is "loosed" from these "pangs" in his resurrection. This idea is a bit cumbersome. Barrett's opinion is that the intended meaning is "cords / bindings of death", cf., Psalm 17:6, 114:3, where the LXX has read "pangs" for the MT "cords of death /Sheol". "God set him free from death", CEV.

**καθοτι** conj. "**because**" - FOR, BECAUSE. Causal conjunction explaining why Jesus was freed from the agony of death, "because ...". Jesus "is the one for whom it was impossible that the resurrection from the death should not take place", Barth.

**κρατεισθαι** [**κρατεω**] pres. pas. inf. "**to keep**" - [IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE HIM] TO BE GRASPED, TAKEN POSSESSION OF, HELD. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the negated verb "it was not possible". The accusative subject of the infinitive is **αυτον**, "him".

**υπ** [**υπο**] + gen. "-" - BY [IT]. Expressing agency, "by the agency of death"; "it was not possible to be held by it", ESV.

## v25

ii] Peter now confirms his claims through the testimony of scripture, v25-28. Peter uses this Psalm of David as a text in support of Jesus' fulfilment of the messiah's promised deliverance from death. Psalm 16:8-11, a psalm of David, is usually treated as messianic. The theme of protection from death is interpreted by Peter as deliverance from death. The LXX certainly enables this interpretation, although the MT does not. This, of course, raises interesting questions as to the authority of scripture.

**γαρ** "-" - FOR. Transitional, or establishing a logical connection.

**προορωμην** [**προοραω**] imperf. "**I saw**" - [DAVID SAYS OF HIM] I WAS FORESEEING / SAW BEFORE TIME. More likely, "have always before my eyes." Imperfect indicating an ongoing seeing and here with the force of the perfect tense. "I have ever fixed my eyes upon the Lord", Weymouth.

**δια παντος** "**always**" - [THE LORD BEFORE ME] THROUGH ALL. Temporal use of the preposition, idiomatic = "always", as NIV.

**οτι** "**because**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the Lord is always before him.

**εκ** "**at [my right hand]**" - [HE IS] FROM [THE RIGHT OF ME]. An idiomatic locative use of this preposition prompted by the partitive sense "of my right hand" = "at my right hand."

**ινα** + subj. "**I will not [be shaken]**" - THAT [I MAY NOT BE SHAKEN]. The NIV treats this construction as nominal, with **ινα** introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing a statement of faith prompted by the knowledge that the Lord is at his right hand. None-the-less, Barrett suggests that Luke would have understood the construction in its usual Greek sense as introducing an adverbial clause, final, expressing purpose; "God stands at my right hand (as armed defender, or perhaps as advocate) in order that I may not be moved (by my enemies)." Consecutive, expressing result, is also possible, "with the result that ....", so Culy.

## v26

δια τουτο **"therefore"** - BECAUSE OF THIS. This causal construction usually takes an inferential sense, drawing a logical conclusion, as NIV.

ηγαλλιασατο [αγαλλιαομαι] aor. **"[my tongue] rejoices"** - [THE HEART OF ME WAS CHEERED UP AND THE TONGUE OF ME] WAS EXALTED, REJOICED EXCEEDINGLY. "My words will be joyful", CEV.

ετι δε και **"also"** - BUT/AND IN ADDITION AND = ALSO. Forward referencing construction; "Besides, moreover".

η σαρξ [ξ κος] **"[my] body"** - THE FLESH [OF ME WILL REST, SETTLE, NEST, DWELL]. Nominative subject of the verb "to dwell." The TEV gets into a tangle trying to express the notion of the mortality of the "flesh" as against the hope of immortality, summed up in the phrase "rest assured in hope." The CEV cuts through it all with "I will live in hope." The sense is of the mortal body resting in the grave secure in the hope of the resurrection, "my body also will rest in hope", Weymouth. The term, "At rest", is often used of a deceased person today, but the imagery is useless without the additional "in hope" of the resurrection. As Billy Connolly once said of the occupants of a cemetery, "They're not resting, they're dead!"

επ [επι] + dat. **"in [hope]"** - IN [HOPE]. Possibly causal, "on the basis of / because of hope", hope that "you will not abandon my soul to Hades."

## v27

οτι **"because"** - THAT. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the psalmist rests in hope; "because ....."

την ψυχην [η] "-" - [YOU WILL NOT FORSAKE, DESERT, LEAVE BEHIND] THE SOUL [OF ME]. Accusative direct object of the verb "to forsake." The "soul" is the very self, a person's living being.

εις + acc. **"to"** - INTO. Expressing direction of action and/or arrival at.

αδην [ης ου] **"the grave / the realm of the dead"** - HADES. This noun refers to the place, or abode, of the dead, including both the righteous and the unrighteous, equivalent to the Hebrew term Sheol\*. "Thou wilt not leave me in the grave forsaken", Weymouth.

τον οσιον adj. **"[your] Holy One"** - [NOR WILL YOU GIVE] THE HOLY ONE [OF YOU]. This accusative nominal phrase functions as the subject of the infinitive "to see." "Thy godly one", "devoted servant", TEV. Note how the TEV tries to bring out the two ideas of devotion and dedication carried in this descriptive of the King Messiah.

**ιδειν [ὄραω]** aor. inf. "**to see**" - TO SEE [CORRUPTION]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "will give" = "will allow to see."

## v28

**μοι** dat. pro. "**to me**" - [YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN] TO ME. Dative of indirect object.

**ζωης [ἡ]** gen. "**of life**" - [*the* WAYS] OF LIFE. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / destination; "the paths *that lead to* life." Interestingly, the Hebrew text has "path" singular, the path to life through obedience. Why does Luke have "paths"? Given the context, Luke is probably speaking about the way out of the grave into a resurrected life, yet was there more than one way for the messiah? Surely not! The way of the messiah is the cross.

**εὐφροσύνης [ἡ]** gen. "**with joy**" - [YOU FILL ME] OF JOY. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content; "you fill me *full of* joy."

**μετα** + gen. "in" - WITH [THE PRESENCE OF YOU]. Expressing association / accompaniment, but possibly adverbial, expressing manner; "you will, by your presence, fill me with gladness", Cassirer.

## v29

iii) Peter justifies the application of the Psalm to Jesus, v29-32. Peter notes that David saw decay, his tomb being near Siloam for all to see. One of his descendants must take the throne of God's eternal kingdom, and obviously that descendent is Jesus, the one whose body did not suffer decay (for God raised him up). To this, Peter and the other disciples are witnesses. So, Peter's point is that David's words are not directed to himself, but are prophetically addressed to a greater descendent.

**αδελφοι [ος]** voc. "**Brothers**" - [MEN], BROTHERS. Vocative, standing in apposition to "men". The members of the congregation are "brothers" in that they are fellow Jews, "fellow Israelites", Williams.

**επειν [ειπον]** aor. inf. "**tell**" - TO SPEAK [WITH CONFIDENCE TOWARD YOU ABOUT THE PATRIARCH DAVID *is* BEING RIGHT, PERMISSIBLE]. The infinitive forms a nominal phrase which stands as the subject of the periphrastic construction "*is being right*" (the verb to-be is assumed) For a complementary classification see **πληρωθηναι**, 1:16. Culy thinks that the unexpected use of a participle here serves to convey politeness; "If I may be permitted to say with boldness ....." Peter makes the point that since David's tomb is nearby, then obviously the Psalm wasn't addressing him, since he has seen corruption. This is stirring the pot somewhat, given that Jewish tradition has David as one of the *seven immortals*.



**μετα** + gen. "-" - WITH [BOLDNESS]. Adverbial use of the preposition, expressing manner, "confidently", as NIV; "with no fear of contradiction", Barclay.

**ὅτι "that"** - THAT. Here introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing what Peter is confidently able to say about David, namely "that he was buried and that his grave is in our midst to this very day", Cassirer.

**καί** "-" - [HE DIED] AND = ALSO [AND WAS BURIED]. Adverbial, adjunctive.

**εν** + dat. "**with [us]**" - [AND THE TOMB OF HIM IS] IN = WITH [US]. Expressing association / accompaniment; "with us."

**αχρι** + gen. "**to [this day]**" - UNTIL [THIS DAY]. Temporal, expressing time up to a point; "his grave is in our midst to this very day", Cassirer.

### v30

David, as a prophet, looks ahead to the fulfilment of God's promise to him. The promise was delivered by Nathan and concerned a perpetual Davidic dynasty, 2Sam.7:12-16.

**ουν "but"** - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion: "[David] therefore, being a prophet and having known ....., (v31) having foreseen, he spoke about the resurrection of Jesus Christ that (by making the point that) he was neither abandoned to destruction nor [that] his body saw corruption." Peter is alluding to Psalm 132:11.

**ὑπαρχων [ὑπαρχω]** pres. part. "**he was [a prophet]**" - BEING [A PROPHET, AND HAVING KNOWN]. The participle may form a temporal clause, "while he was alive he was a prophet", Phillips, possibly causal, "because he was a prophet", although properly attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the main verb "he spoke", v31.

**ὅτι "that"** - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what David knew.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**him**" - [GOD SWORE] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

**ὄρκω [ος]** "**on oath**" - IN = WITH AN OATH. The dative is instrumental, expressing means; "by means of an oath."

**καθισαι [καθιζω]** aor. inf. "**that he would place**" - TO CAUSE TO SIT, [FROM THE FRUIT OF THE LOINS OF HIM, UPON THE THRONE OF HIM]. The infinitive introduced an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing what God promised. The preposition **εκ**, "from", expresses source / origin, and refers to a descendent of David, the Davidic messiah, who will sit on David's throne.

### v31

The content of the prophecy, with reference to v27, about the descendant of David, is that "the essential person of Jesus lives on; his flesh did not suffer corruption", Barrett.

**προειδων [προειδον]** aor. part. "**seeing what was ahead**" - HAVING FORESEEN *it*. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "he spoke", so translated as a simple secondary verb; "he knew what would happen (ie., the resurrection of the messiah) and so he told us ..."

**περι** + gen. "**of [the resurrection]**" - [HE SPOKE] CONCERNING, ABOUT. Expressing reference / respect; "about / concerning the resurrection".

**του Χριστου [ος]** gen. "**of Christ**" - [THE RESURRECTION] OF CHRIST. The genitive is adjectival, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic. Culy classifies the genitive as verbal, objective.

**ὅτι "that"** - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of the prophecy, what "he told us."

**ουτε ..... ουτε "not ..... nor"** - NEITHER [WAS HE ABANDONED INTO DESTRUCTION] NOR [THE BODY OF HIM SAW CORRUPTION]. Negated coordinative construction. Neither would the messiah's soul be lost, nor would his body decompose in the grave.

### v32

Peter is fulfilling his apostolic role as a witness to Jesus' messiahship, cf., Lk.24:48. Note how the focus of the apostolic preaching tends to be on the resurrection, a resurrection which implies the ascension of Jesus to his rightful place beside the Ancient of Days, ie., an inclusive resurrection / ascension.

**τουτου** pro. "**this [Jesus]**" - THIS [JESUS GOD RAISED]. Resumptive and emphatic by position, "Jesus is the man we are speaking of", Cassirer.

**οὗ** gen. "-" - OF WHICH. This relative pronoun may be masculine, thus referring to Jesus "of whom we are all witnesses", or neuter, referring to the resurrection of Jesus, "of which [fact] we are all witnesses." The latter is preferred. The genitive is probably adverbial, reference / respect; "with respect to which ..."

**ἡμεις "we [are all witness of the fact]"** - WE [ARE ALL WITNESSES]. Emphatic by use and position.

### v33

iv] Answering the obvious question, "where is Jesus now?", Peter speaks of Jesus' ascension and exaltation to the right hand of God, and his bestowal of the Spirit, v33-35. This Christ has now ascended on high to take his throne at the right hand of God, receiving from the Father the right and power to pour out the

Spirit on the children of God. In this way, he fulfils the words of Psalm 110:1. He serves as the Davidic king who sits at the right hand of God. He is the exalted messiah, ruler over heaven and earth. This fact is evidenced in the pentecostal experience of ecstatic prophecy (tongue speaking) just witnessed by the crowd.

**οὖν** "-" - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion; "having been exalted ... and having received ..... therefore, he has poured out ...." = "now that he has been exalted to the right hand of God, and now that he has received from the Father the Holy Spirit, whom he had promised, he has given this demonstration of the Spirit ....", Barclay.

**ὑψωθείς [ὑψοω]** aor. pas. part. "**exalted**" - HAVING BEEN LIFTED UP, EXALTED. The participle, as with **λαμβῶν**, "having received", is adverbial, taken either as causal, "because ...", or temporal, "when ..."

**τῇ δεξιᾷ** adj. dat. "**to the right hand**" - BY/TO THE RIGHT [OF GOD]. The dative may be instrumental, "by God's authority", or locative, "to the seat of God's authority." Instrumental is best; "uplifted then, by God's right hand", Moffatt. The genitive **τοῦ θεοῦ**, "of God", is adjectival, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic.

**λαμβῶν [λαμβανῶ]** aor. part. "**he has received**" - [AND] HAVING RECEIVED. The participle as for "having been lifted up", and linked to it by **τε**. Received as a gift of exaltation; received in the sense of received the authority to give the Holy Spirit, as promised in Joel.

**παρὰ** + gen. "**from [the Father]**" - FROM BESIDE [THE FATHER]. Here expressing source, as NIV.

**τοῦ πνεύματος [α ατος]** gen. "**of the [holy] spirit**" - [THE PROMISE] OF THE [HOLY] SPIRIT. A genitive of definition; "the promise which consists of / which is the Holy Spirit."

**εξεχεεν [εχκεω]** aor. "**he has poured out**" - [THIS] HE POURED OUT [WHICH YOU SEE AND HEAR]. Referring to Joel 3:1, identified in v17. Jesus has received the authority to pour out the Spirit, and has now done so.

### v34

To support his case, Peter quotes from Psalm 110:1; see "Interpretation" above. This Psalm is widely used in Christian apologetic, both in the gospels, Paul's epistles, and Hebrews.

**γάρ** "**for**" - FOR. More reason than cause, introducing textual support for Peter's claim that Jesus is now exalted to God's right hand.

**οὐ** "**[David did] not**" - NOT [DAVID]. Davies & Allison make the point that the position of this negation implies the meaning "It was not David who ascended", rather than "David did not ascend."

**εις** + acc. **to [heaven]**" - [ASCENDED] INTO [THE HEAVENS]. Expressing the direction of the action and/or arrival at. The clause makes the point that Jesus fulfils the promise of the Psalm in that it was not David who ascended.

**τω κυριω [ος]** dat. "[**The Lord said**] **to [my] Lord**" - [BUT/AND HE SAYS, THE LORD SAID] TO THE LORD [OF ME]. Dative of indirect object.

**εκ** "**at [my right hand]**" - [SIT DOWN] OUT OF, FROM [THE RIGHT OF ME]. As in v25, the preposition here carries a locative sense, "at/on". Sitting at the right hand of God implies sitting in a position of authority. Only Ezekiel's Son of Man has such authority.

### v35

**εως αν** + subj. "**until**" - UNTIL [I MAY MAKE THE ENEMIES OF YOU]. Introducing a temporal clause, indefinite future time. Implying that Jesus' authority ends when his enemies are subdued, but it may be saying that he uses his divine authority "during the time that it is necessary" to subdue the enemy, cf., 1Cor.15:24 for a text that supports "until".

**υποποδιον [ον]** acc. "**a footstool**" - A FOOTSTOOL. Accusative complement of the direct object "enemies", standing in a double accusative construction and stating a fact about the object, lit., "I make enemies a footstool of you."

**των ποδων [ους οδος]** gen. "**for [your] feet**" - OF THE FEET [OF YOU]. The genitive may be treated adjectivally, possibly possessive, or simply attributive, limiting "stool", "footstool", or adverbially, reference / respect, "a footstool with respect to feet" = "for feet."

### v36

v] Conclusion, v36: Peter finally gets to the punch line: Jesus is both Christ and Lord. He was "declared to be the Son of God with power .... by the resurrection from the dead", Rom.1:4.

As already noted in "Interpretation" above, the term "Lord" was often used in the sense of "Sir" - a title of respect. Yet, for an Old Testament Jew it was the "name above every name", the name of God himself - The Lord, *Adonai*. Yet, it is unlikely that Peter (even Luke) is drawing a direct equivalent (the speech most likely reflects an early / undeveloped Christology). So, Jesus is Lord, in the sense of the anointed one (messiah / Son of Man) who is enthroned at the right hand of the Ancient of Days with all authority and power, i.e., with the status of divinity. Paul the apostle will go on to develop Christ's divinity, his Lordship, providing the foundation-blocks for the doctrine of the trinity, cf., Phil.2:9 where a reverential title for Jehovah is applied to Jesus.

The reality of Jesus' status, authority and power, announces the dawning of the kingdom. The kingdom is now. It is the day when "all peoples on earth will be blessed", it is the day of "salvation". Peter's call to repent and believe the

gospel follows in v37-41. So, the apostolic testimony and scriptural prophecy serving to explain the events surrounding Jesus' death and the outpouring of ecstatic prophecy which had just occurred, combine to confirm the status and significance of Jesus - he is the long-awaited messiah, and he is Lord.

**οὖν** "**therefore**" - *therefore*. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion, namely, the implications of the speech. "So therefore / consequently", "God's resurrection and exaltation of Jesus accredits him as mankind's Lord and Israel's messiah", Longenecker.

**γινωσκειτω** [**γινωσκω**] pres. imp. "**let [all Israel be]**" - LET KNOW. "Know" in the sense of a man "knowing" his wife, ie., something stronger than just intellectual assent; "the whole house of Israel must realise for sure", Barclay.

**ασφαλως** adv. "**assured**" - ASSUREDLY, BEYOND A DOUBT [ALL HOUSE OF ISRAEL]. Adverb of manner; emphasising the truth of Peter's conclusion; what Israel may know for certain.

**οτι** "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception, expressing what Israel should be assured of (to know); "so then the whole house of Israel must realise for sure that .....", Barclay.

**εποιησεν** [**ποιεω**] aor. "**[God] made**" - [GOD] MADE, CAUSED TO BECOME [HIM]. "Appointed", Barrett, but possibly better "acknowledged". Given the context, the word may well mean "cause to become", in the sense of "appoint". The only problem is that Jesus was appointed as Messiah at his baptism. Barrett argues otherwise, but the messianic secret, evidenced during Jesus' life, does not mean that his appointment as messiah awaited his resurrection. We are on safer ground with Bruce who argues for "confirmed".

**τουτον** pro. "**this [Jesus]**" - THIS [JESUS]. The use of the pronoun here is intensive. The phrase, "this Jesus", stands in apposition to **αυτον**, "him".

**υμεις** pro. "**you**" - [WHOM] YOU [CRUCIFIED]. Emphatic by position and use.

**και ... και** "**both [Lord] and [Christ]**" - AND = BOTH [LORD] AND [CHRIST]. Forming a correlative construction. The accusatives, "Lord" and "Messiah, Christ", serve as the complement of the direct object "Jesus", so forming a treble accusative construction.

## 2:37-41

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### vij Peter calls for repentance

##### Synopsis

It's the day of Pentecost, and Peter has just explained to a gathered crowd why the disciples are speaking in "tongues", and how this fits with God's plan for the salvation of his people Israel. Peter now makes his final appeal.

##### Teaching

To stand approved under Christ's reign it is necessary to repent for the forgiveness of sins. By so doing, the believing person will be enlivened by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11.

ii] Background: *Water baptism in Acts*.

Luke's intended sense for the verb βαπτίζω, "to baptise", is not overly clear. The word often takes the literal sense "to dip in / sprinkle with water", but it can also be used figuratively. In the New Testament the word is sometimes used for "immerse / baptise in fire" (in a difficult situation, persecution), and "immerse / baptise in the Spirit". It does seem likely that the word is also being used figuratively in the phrase "immersed in the Name", i.e., it refers to something other than, or wider than, water baptism, namely, being immersed into the gospel, into the teachings of Christ, into the person of Christ, and thus under his authority; see "Baptised into the Name", 10:44-48.

It is obvious that dunking, dipping, sprinkling, ..., along with instruction, became part of the business of being baptised, given that the prime apostolic task is to immerse a person in the gospel. In Luke's commissioning (Lk.24, Acts 1), it's about being witnesses of Jesus' death, resurrection, to bring about repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The Markan appendix, 16:15-16, reflects a corporate understanding of "the gospel" and of "baptism", but note how Luke avoids this in his commission.

When it comes to water baptism itself, many commentators integrally link water baptism with repentance as a necessary element for forgiveness, but it is not unreasonable to argue that water baptism is but the outward expression of repentance; "an outward sign of repentance and remission of sins", Bruce. As such, it is the repentance which gains forgiveness, not the

outward sign. So, the likely sense of Peter's appeal to the crowd in Acts 2:38 is "repent, each of you expressing this outwardly in water baptism, *and do so* under the authority of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven, and *as a consequence*, receive the long promised gift of God's Spirit."

It is likely that "repent and be baptised [in the Name]" is a technical descriptor for what had become, by the time Luke wrote Luke/Acts, standard practice. So, gospel response (repentance and faith) was followed by formal instruction in the Christian faith ("in the Name"), followed by a public affirmation of that faith in water baptism (a baptism "in the Name" = confirmed under the authority of Jesus). Of course, on the day of Pentecost, given the enthusiastic response of many in the crowd, the niceties of Christian instruction would have to wait. Finding some water somewhere would have been the pressing issue (particularly if they were practising immersion!!!!); instruction can come later.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter's call to "be baptised" is similar to that of John the Baptist - a baptism (as a sign) of repentance for the forgiveness of sin. For *the Way*, there are two distinct additions:

First, it is "in the name of Jesus Christ." The phrase probably means something like "into the person and under the authority of Jesus Christ", both the person baptising as well as the person baptised. The apostles would often use the same words when they were performing a miracle. As noted above, being immersed into the person of Jesus is primarily an immersion in gospel truth.

Second, Christian baptism adds to John's baptism in that it is linked to "the gift of the Holy Spirit." The promised gift of the Holy Spirit is the gift of God's indwelling presence in the life of a believer which exhibits in divine power for ministry. The gift of, and the empowering of, the Spirit, are integrally linked, and belong to, all who "repent and believe."

As to the issue of how much water (sprinkling / dunking / immersing), the argument is akin to one that was of great concern during the middle ages, namely, how many angels reside on the head of a pin!!!

iii] Structure: *Christ, his resurrection and the gift of the Spirit:*

Peter's Pentecost sermon, v14-39:

Introduction, v14-21;

The charge of drunkenness. Text Joel 2:28-32.

Sermon Proper, v22-36:

Christ is both Lord and Messiah. Text Psalm 110:1:

Response, v37-39:

The divine demand;  
*Repent and be baptised ...  
for the forgiveness of sins ....  
you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*  
The crowd responds to Peter's sermon, v37;  
Peter calls for commitment, v38-39;  
Appendix / overview, v40-41.

iv] Interpretation:

We have before us what Dodd calls "an appeal for repentance", "The speech not only interprets what has happened; it causes something to happen. The audience makes a shattering discovery and is moved to repentance in large numbers", Tannehill.

See 2:22-36 for notes on Peter's gospel sermon.

v] Homiletics: *God in our midst*

On a number of occasions, Paul the apostle spoke of the struggle he went through in gospel ministry. He would often have to "argue" out the gospel with his hearers. It wasn't a take it or leave it business. In our reading today we find Peter similarly striving to convince his audience of the importance of his message. He "warned" them of the danger they faced, and "pleaded" with them to accept the salvation that was possible through Christ. As a response to that call, some 3,000 people chose to follow Christ.

Do we believe that the gospel has the power to inspire people to such enthusiasm and risk-taking today? Perhaps the appeal of Peter's message lay in the promise of a direct relationship with God in Christ; it was "for you and your children and for all who are far away." Perhaps the appeal of the message lay in the sincerity and conviction of the disciples. Perhaps it lay in the hope that the power which transformed these simple fishermen into orators can be a driving force within the lives of the hearers and their communities. If simple fishermen can be agents of God's Spirit, then there is hope for everyone.

Clearly, the Spirit can work with us as he worked with them. The mysterious power of the gospel still transcends human endeavour, both for the evangelist and the audience.

**Text - 2:37**

Peter's appeal for repentance, v37-41. i] The crowd responds to Peter's sermon, v37. To reject the messiah of Israel is a horrific crime, and obviously many in the crowd understood the consequences. "Brothers, what are we to do?" they cried.



δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

ακουσαντες [ακουω] aor. part. "**when the people heard this**" - HAVING HEARD *what Peter said*. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

κατενυγησαν [κατανυσσομαι] aor. pas. "**they were cut**" - THEY WERE PIERCED, STUNG, STABBED. The inward pain associated with anxiety and remorse. "They were cut to the quick", Phillips.

την καρδιαν [α] "**to the heart**" - IN THE HEART. Accusative of reference, although a locative dative variant exists.

τε ..... και "..... and" - [AND THEY SAID TOWARD] BOTH [PETER] AND [THE REST, OTHERS]. Forming a correlative construction. Luke includes the other apostles in this ministry; it is not all down to Peter.

τί +subj. "**what shall we do**" - WHAT [SHOULD WE DO, MEN, BROTHERS]. Here the interrogative pronoun is used with a deliberative subjunctive to introduce a direct question. The vocative "men, brothers" is a "fraternal Jewish form of address", Longenecker. "Brothers, brothers, so now what do we do?" Peterson.

### v38

ii] Peter calls for commitment, v38-39: Peter goes on to give an answer to the question. First, the people of Israel must recognise their rejection of God's messiah and turn to him for mercy (repent). Not only will their sins be forgiven, but they will receive the long-awaited outpouring of the Spirit. Second, they are to express that decision in water baptism". Peter goes on in v39 to make the point that the good news of God's mercy in Christ is not just for Jews, but for all mankind, for all who "call on the name of the Lord", Joel 2:32, Isaiah 57:19. The "all" Peter is speaking of here is probably the scattered remnant of Israel, but the "all" will inevitably include all humanity. Peter adds, it is for those whom "God will call." It could be argued that God's call serves to gather those predestined to salvation, ie., what we have here is an effectual call. The call is certainly effectual in that it gathers a lost people for salvation, yet those who become members of God's called-out people are those who choose to hear and act on the call to "repent and believe".

μετανοησατε [μετανοεω] aor. imp. "**repent**" - [BUT/AND PETER SAID TOWARD THEM] TURN, CHANGE DIRECTION. A call for a complete change in direction with regard to a person's attitude toward God, as opposed to a feeling sorry for wrongdoing, eg., "reform your lives", Fitzmyer. "Turn back to God", CEV.

ὅμων gen. pro. "[**every one**] of you" - [AND BE IMMERSSED EACH] OF YOU. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

**επι** + dat. "**in**" - UPON. Local, expressing space, "upon the foundation of, basis of"; "**on** the authority of Jesus", Bruce. Kellum suggests reference / respect, "concerning the name of Jesus." Interesting use of this preposition here, given that it is the only time it is used with the phrase "baptised in the name." The phrase usually has **εν** + dat., "in [the name]", cf., 10:48 (some texts read **εν** for this verse, but they are likely later adjustments), particularly when the phrase is used in a healing; either local or instrumental, "the Name" being an accompanying circumstance. The other preposition of choice is **εις**, "into", cf., 8:16, 19:5, with "baptising them in (into) the name" chosen by Matthew in 28:19. The preposition **εις** is often used instead of **εν**. There is probably no significance in the use of different prepositions, all intended to express the same sense, namely, "the power and authorisation for apostolic activity", Johnson. So, "on/in/into the name of Jesus Christ" = "committed to and identified with Jesus", Longenecker, "on the authority of" Jesus, Bruce; "under the authority of Jesus", Dunn.

**τω ονοματι [α ατος]** "**the name**" - THE NAME [OF JESUS CHRIST]. The "name" serves to express the substance of the person, but also their authority; "under the authority of Jesus." The genitive "of Jesus Christ" is adjectival, possessive.

**εις** "**for**" - TO, INTO = FOR. Here obviously the preposition expresses purpose; "in order to obtain." For forgiveness of sins and thus consequently covenant acceptance / covenant inclusion.

**των ἁμαρτιων [α]** gen. "**of [your] sins**" - [FORGIVENESS] OF THE SINS [OF YOU]. The genitive is adjectival, usually taken as verbal, objective.

**ληψεσθε [λαμβανω]** fut. "**you will receive**" - [AND] YOU WILL RECEIVE. "As a result of your becoming a new-born spiritual babe, he saturates your body, soul and mind with his very nature, which will increasingly make you, your thoughts, your responses, and the totality of what you are, reflect who he is", Junkins.

**του ἁγιου πνευματος** gen. "**of the Holy Spirit**" - [THE GIFT] OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. A genitive of definition, expegetic, explaining the nature of "the gift." Note Peter's call to faith is little different to that of John the Baptist. The differences being, "in the Name of Jesus Christ" and "the gift of the Holy Spirit"; See above. This "gift" is of the Spirit himself, not "the gifts of the Spirit", although the presence of the Spirit naturally opens access to the gifts.

### v39

The promise is the promise of the covenant, the new heart within, entailing the gift of the Spirit for renewal, and this apart from the law. Such fulfils the promise to Abraham, a promise which is central to Pauline theology, so Barrett, Johnson, cf., Jer.31:33, ie., "the covenant of grace", Bruce. On the surface at least, the promise is that of forgiveness and the gift of the Spirit. This promise is for

"all who are far off", presumably "the lost" of Israel (the Diaspora - Israel in exile), rather than the Gentiles, given that the audience was made up of Jews (not so Barrett). Of course, "the promise" inevitably applies to Gentiles, "the stranger within the gates", but all in good time. The promise is also for all whom God **προσκαλεσηται**, "will call". The promise is for God's elect people, although this says nothing about how a person becomes a member of God's elect people. Some, of course, do argue that an effectual call is intended here, although in this context, the word "call" means nothing more than "invite", or possibly a stronger "summon".

**γαρ** "-" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they should repent, "because ....."

**ὑμιν** dat. pro. "**for you**" - [THE PROMISE IS] TO YOU [AND TO THE CHILDREN OF YOU AND]. Dative of interest, advantage, "for you", but possibly a dative of possession, and so also "to your children" and "to the ones far into the distance."

**τοις** dat. "**who [are far off]**" - [TO ALL] THE ONES [INTO A DISTANCE]. Here the article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase **εις μακρῶν** "into far off" = "far off", into an attributive modifier limiting the substantive adjective **πᾶσιν**, "everyone", as NIV.

**ὅσους ἂν** + subj. "**for all whom**" - [*the* LORD THE GOD OF US MAY SUMMON, INVITE [AS MANY AS = WHOMEVER]. The pronoun "as many as" with **ἂν** + subj. forms an indefinite relative construction, direct object of the subjunctive verb, "to summon"; "It is to anyone whom the Lord our God invites", Barclay. Possible echo of Joel 3:5, not included in 2:17-21, so Fitzmyer.

#### v40

iii] Overview, v40-41: Israel was always a "faithless and perverse generation", Lk.9:41, yet within Israel there was a faithful remnant, a godly line. Ultimately, Jesus is that godly remnant, the faithful Israel, and those who attach themselves to Jesus, those who repent and believe, can now escape the judgment that hangs over the "corrupt generation."

**τε ..... και** "..... and" - BOTH [WITH MANY WORDS HE TESTIFIED] AND [WAS APPEALING TO]. Forming a correlative construction.

**λογοις [ος]** dat. "**with [many other] words**" - WITH [MANY] WORDS. The dative is instrumental, expressing means, "with / by", as NIV. This is an interesting comment, indicating that Luke's account is only a summary of Peter's sermon, a fact that probably applies to all the recorded speeches in Acts.

**αυτους** pro. "**them**" - THEM. Accusative direct object of the **παρα** verb "to urge, exhort, appeal to", a verb which usually takes an accusative of persons, as here. Not found in all texts. The imperfect verb "to urge", "he pleaded with them",

is probably iterative, "kept on urging", although speech, by its very nature, is durative and so often takes the imperfect. "He implored them", Phillips.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, virtually redundant, but serving to introduce direct speech.

σωθητε [σωζω] aor. pas. imp. "**save yourselves**" - LET BE SAVED. A reflective sense is possible, as NIV, but salvation from divine judgment, for the remnant of Israel, is a divine act of mercy, so "accept salvation", Barrett, cf. 2:21.

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM. [THIS CROOKED, BENT, GENERATION]. Expressing separation; "away from." "This twisted Generation", Johnson, cf., Deut.32:5.

#### v41

It is possible that in the conversion of 3,000 people we see a fulfilment of Jesus' promise of the "greater things" that will follow his ministry.

μεν ουν "-" - THEREFORE. Transitional; the conjunction ουν is inferential, expressing a logical conclusion, while μεν indicates the addition of a further linked element; See μεν ουν 1:6.

οί ... αποδεξαμενοι [αποδεχομαι] aor. mid. part. "**those who accepted**" - THE ONES HAVING ACCEPTED, WELCOMED, RECEIVED [THE WORD OF HIM WERE BAPTISED]. The participle serves as a substantive. Variant, "believed", but it is best to follow the NIV.

προσετεθησαν [προστιθημι] aor. pas. "**were added**" - [AND ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS/PEOPLE] WERE ADDED. Dunn suggests that the number is "propagandistic", but Longenecker and others disagree - Jerusalem's 100,000 + population, low ambient background noise and spacious areas allows large crowds to gather and hear speakers. Longenecker argues that the durative imperfect variant expresses a lengthened period of time over which people were added to the Christian community. Barrett also argues that the participle, taken as a substantive, similarly implies duration. None-the-less, "some three thousand additional persons being won over on that day", Cassirer, is not impossible.

εν + dat. "[**that day**]" - IN/ON [THAT DAY]. Temporal use of the preposition; "on that day", Barclay.

## 2:42-47

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### vii] The life of the early Church

##### Synopsis

Luke has gone into some detail in his record of events surrounding the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. He now gives us a thumbnail sketch of life in the first Christian church, the church that evolves following the conversion of some 3,000 people on the day of Pentecost.

##### Teaching

The gospel-focused interaction of the apostolic community of *the way*, in their mutual sharing and worship, prompted ongoing growth.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11.

ii] Background:

- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

iii] Structure: *The life of the early church*:

- Ministry focus of the early church, v42;
- Continuance of apostolic signs, v43;
- Communal lifestyle, v44-45;
- Worship, v46-47.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke's description of life in the apostolic Christian fellowship in Jerusalem, reveals a church embracing mutual care (they held all things in common) and devotion (they daily attended the temple), so demonstrating their commitment to Jesus as messiah.

The community's common ownership of property demonstrates a high level of commitment, although it is unclear to what extent this pooling of resources affects the private ownership of property. Acts records the ongoing ownership of property - houses, businesses, etc., cf., Acts 21:8. As Peter states in the incident with Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5, the property owned by them is theirs to do as they wish; there is no compulsion to sell it and donate part, or all, of the proceeds to the church. Although unstated, it is likely that Luke is describing the generous giving of surplus funds to a common purse. As for the community's continued involvement in Jewish practice and worship, their engagement with those outside the fellowship

evidences an evangelical spirit that stands opposed to inward-looking navel-gazing.

Luke repeats and expands his description of the early church in 4:32-37 and 5:12-16. The description is somewhat of an *apology*, an attempt to present the Christian fellowship in a positive light - they are a caring community, not troublemakers, a community firmly tied to Judaism, not sectarian separatists. The narrative also evidences Luke's overall thesis: the planting of God's messianic community through the preaching of the gospel, starting in Jerusalem, and extending to the ends of the earth / Rome.

#### v] Homiletics: *Principles of Christian Community*

We have to be careful how we handle narratives in the Bible. Just because someone did something at a particular point in time doesn't mean we have to follow suit for the rest of eternity. None-the-less, our reading today from Acts gives us an insight into the life of the early church following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and so it serves as a model for a Spirit-filled church today.

- The church was built on a foundation of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus. The believers "accepted his (Peter's) message", the message of the gospel. They were a people who experienced "the forgiveness of sins" and who "received the gift of the Holy Spirit."

- The church was built-up through the authoritative teaching of the apostles. The exposition of Biblical truth is central to the business of church.

- The church emphasized fellowship. The love feast was like a fellowship meal, and it possibly included the Lord's Supper. It was an expression of Eastern culture where eating together is a reflection of community.

- The church was a caring community. In the Greek text, the verbs chosen for "used to sell" and "used to give", express ongoing action - they indicate the established practice of the Jerusalem church following Pentecost. Although such a communal structure is beyond most of us, practical care toward each other is certainly within our grasp.

- The church was a joyous community respected by the wider society. There is nothing more attractive to an outsider than a friendly, happy, welcoming church.

- The church was a praying community. They devoted themselves to prayer. They sought the will of God and prayerfully relied on it. Let our church be a church at prayer.

## Text - 2:42

Life in the early church, 2:42-47. i] Ministry focus of the early church, v42. The early converts placed themselves under the authoritative teaching of the Lord, as conveyed through the apostles. As time went on, this apostolic teaching was recorded in the canon of the New Testament, and so a congregation today, which submits to the New Testament, submits to the apostolic faith.

Community in the early church was expressed in a number of ways:

- First, they fellowshiped together; they were a community of friends;
- Second, they shared in "the breaking of bread." This is most likely the Lord's Supper, but it could just be a fellowship meal shared by the congregation - a *love-feast* (the disciples would often share a meal with Jesus, a meal where he broke bread, blessed it, and shared it). If it is the Lord's Supper, then the "breaking" is referring to Jesus' body broken for us;
- Third, they devoted themselves to "prayer." We know that the members of the early church attended public worship at the temple, and joined in prayer during their house meetings.

δε "-" - but/and. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative / introducing a new literary unit.

ἦσαν ... προσκατεροντες [προσκατερω] pres. part. **"they devoted themselves to"** - THEY WERE CONTINUING STEADFASTLY, PERSEVERING, STICKING AT IT, NOT LETTING UP. The present participle with the imperfect verb to-be forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, probably emphasising durative aspect, i.e., "constant in their attention", Johnson; "they assiduously practised what they heard". The προσ prefix verb προσκατερω will often take a dative of direct object, as here, where it is followed by four dative nouns: "teaching / fellowship / breaking of bread / prayer". "They spent all their time in listening to the apostles", Barclay.

τη διδαξη [η] dat. **"the [apostles'] teaching"** - TO THE INSTRUCTION. The "teaching" is probably not distinct from the apostles' "preaching". The content is undefined, but probably the "tradition" παραδοσις, ethical and practical teaching, shaped by the gospel of God's grace in Christ; "a grounding in the central promise God had given in Jesus", Bock, contra Fitzmyer.

των αποστολων [ος] **"apostles"** - OF THE APOSTLES. The genitive is adjectival, usually treated as verbal, subjective, i.e., the apostles did the teaching, but possibly simply possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic.

τη κοινωνια [α] dat. **"to the fellowship"** - [AND] TO THE FELLOWSHIP. The article denotes that "there was something distinctive in the gatherings of the early believers", Longenecker. Presumably in the sense of a close association, "share the common life", REB. Other meanings are possible. Barrett lists four altogether:

- association;
- communalism;
- an equivalent sense to the breaking of bread;
- almsgiving - a sense which is supported by Paul's use of the word with regard the collection for the poor.

Lohse thinks the word describes a gathering for worship, cf., Barrett. "They were like family to each other", CEV.

**τη κλασει [ις εως]** dat. sing. "**to the breaking**" - IN/TO THE SEPARATION OF TWO PARTS. Probably a form of the Lord's supper is intended, since the word is packaged between two other significant Christian acts within the fellowship of believers. None-the-less, something akin to a fellowship meal / love feast may be intended, even some other cultic meal associated with the community's continued participation in temple worship.

**του αρτου [ος]** "**of bread**" - OF BREAD. The genitive is adjectival, usually classified as verbal, objective.

**ταις προσευχαις [η]** dat. "**to prayer**" - [AND] TO THE PRAYERS. Again, the presence of the article indicates particular prayers are in mind, possibly even set Jewish prayers.

### v43

ii] The continuance of apostolic signs, v43. In his sermon, Peter quotes Joel's prophecy concerning the dawning of the kingdom of God, a dawning heralded by "signs on the earth beneath." Jesus performed such signs, and the apostles were empowered to maintain continuity between Jesus' ministry and the apostolic community. The value of prophetic signs will wane as the Christian church becomes increasingly Gentile in makeup, but for Israel, such signs fulfil prophecy, and so proclaim the coming kingdom. Fellow Jews, who now witness these amazing events, are filled with awe.

**δε "-"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**παση** dat. adj. "**everyone**" - IN [EVERY] SOUL [AWE, FEAR, TERROR WAS BECOMING]. An idiomatic use of the dative, local, expressing sphere; "in every soul" = "everyone felt a deep sense of awe", Phillips. "Fear" is a possible sense for **φοβος**, even "amazed", CEV. Yet, if "everyone" refers to the Christian fellowship, then "awe", as in the sense of "reverential fear", seems better. The textual variant, "in Jerusalem, there was great fear upon everyone", attempts to widen those who are affected, and such is certainly a common response to "signs and wonders." "A feeling of awe was upon them all", Cassirer.

**τε ..... και "...., and"** - [MANY] BOTH [WONDERS] AND [SIGNS WERE BECOMING = BEING PERFORMED]. A correlative construction. "What revealed the



heavenly accreditation of Jesus is now used by Luke to confirm the heavenly approbation of the apostles", Fitzmyer.

**διὰ** + gen. "**by [the apostles]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [THE APOSTLES]. Instrumental, expressing agency.

#### v44

iii] Communal lifestyle, v44-45: The dynamic unity of the Spirit experienced by these early believers ("the believers were together" = in fellowship / community) most likely enhanced a sense of the early return of Christ and so prompted a reaction to private property. They "had everything in common", in the sense that they viewed their possessions as the property of all. As a result, they sold their assets and divided them according to individual needs. The sale of assets may explain the poverty of the Palestinian, prompting Paul's collection of the Saints. Yet, it does seem that many kept their homes and businesses (eg., fishing boats), so Luke may only be referring to the sale of surplus assets which the community then held in common. Luke does seem to embellish life in the Jerusalem church somewhat, but his description does provide an ideal for Christian community, and this in keeping with the significance of the outpouring of the Spirit. Of course, the communal life-style does fade over time, eg., 4:32-5:11. So, Luke is depicting a commonality highly regarded in the ancient world ("friends share everything"), and even practised by some groups, eg., Qumran.

**οἱ πιστευόντες [πιστεῦω]** pres. part. "**[all] the believers**" - [BUT/AND ALL] THE ONES BELIEVING. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the imperfect verb to-be; "all those who believed were ....." The aorist variant would read "those who had become believers", Barrett.

**ἦσαν [εἰμι]** imperf. "**were**" - WERE. The imperfect verb to-be here, as with the string of imperfect verbs that follow, is durative, expressing "established practice", Longenecker.

**ἐπι** + acc. "**together**" - UPON [THE SAME *place*]. Spatial; "[were] at, in [the same]" = "were together." The believers continued to meet together in the same place, or just regularly met together. A variant drops the verb to-be **ἦσαν** before the prepositional phrase and the conjunction **καί**, "and", producing the descriptive "together in common", ie., a communal society of believers.

**ἅπαντα** adj. "**everything**" - [AND WERE HAVING] ALL *things*. The adjective serves as a substantive, direct object of the verb "to have."

**κοινὰ** adj. "**common**" - COMMON. Accusative complement of the direct object "everything", standing in a double accusative construction and stating a fact about the object. Possibly common use rather than common ownership; "they remained owners of property, which they put to the common use of others", Fitzmyer.

v45

επιπρασκον [πιπρασκω] "sold" - [AND] THEY WERE SELLING. As with διμεριζον, "gave" ("divide" = "distribute"), the imperfect is durative, possibly expressing established practice, or even repeated action, so MHT III - the selling being when needed, from time to time. Possibly, "they pooled their resources that each person's need was met", Peterson, although better "it was their custom to sell their goods and possessions, and to share out the proceeds among them, as any might need", Barclay.

κτηματα [α ατος] "possessions" - [THE PROPERTIES AND] THE POSSESSIONS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to sell." Longenecker takes the view that the Christian community in Jerusalem adopted a form of communalism in line with the Qumran covenanters and this because they stressed the spiritual unity they possessed in Christ. Thus, he views "possessions" as "real estate" and "goods" as "personal possessions." Whether or not this is the case, it seems likely that "this sharing of material things in common is not a required communalism, but a voluntary caring response to need", Bock.

πασιν adj. "to everyone" - [AND WERE DISTRIBUTING THESE THINGS] TO ALL, EVERYone. The adjective serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object / interest - advantage. Presumably the distribution was to believers, although this is unstated.

καθοτι ἄν "-" - BECAUSE [CERTAIN = SOMEONE HAS NEED]. The causal conjunction καθοτι, "because", often used as an adverb by Luke, with the iterative particle ἄν, gives the sense "as / to (the degree) that." In classical Gk. ἄν + opt. = iterative action, i.e., repeated action, although the classical form has weakened. The repeated giving is as someone has χρειαν, "need", rather than daily.

v46

iv] Communal worship, v46-47: The believers gathered regularly in the temple for public worship, meeting in Solomon's colonnade on the east side of the outer court. As such, they functioned as a *haburah*, a Jewish sect, a feature of which was a communal meal. For the meal, they met "by households." Again, we are unsure if this meal was the Lord's Supper, or just a fellowship meal, but it is probably best to assume it was the *Master's Meal*. The community was enriched with a sense of rejoicing and generosity (better than "sincere") and enjoyed popular good-will. They were focused in their praise of God, and they grew in numbers daily. The "Lord added to their number" in the sense that God accepted those who believed in Christ - He added their number to the remnant.

τε "- " - THEN, SO, AND... It is not overly clear how the conjunction is being used here. Possibly as a sequential marker - the believers were loving toward each other (acted in generosity) and loving toward God (attended the temple for worship / instruction). The second use is similarly confusing. Culy suggests that we have a τε .... τε .... construction for a τε .... και .... construction, a "both .... and", ie., a correlative construction; "daily they [both] regularly frequented the temple with a united purpose and at home they broke bread together", Berkeley.

καθ ἡμεραν "every day" - ACCORDING TO DAY = DAILY, EVERY DAY. Idiomatic phrase formed by the distributive use of the preposition **κατα** + acc.; "day by day."

προσκαρτερουντες [προσκαρτερω] pres. part. "**they continued**" - PERSEVERING, DEVOTING *themselves*. As with the participle κλωντες, "breaking", an attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "they shared [food]"; "they ate together .... breaking bread ... and continuing/devoting with one mind in the temple." Yet, it may be adverbial, temporal, modifying the imperfect verb, as Berkeley above. The believers (not necessarily all) gathered in the temple, not just for the daily devotions, but also for the purpose of sitting under the teaching / preaching of the apostles; "day after day they met together in the temple", CEV.

ομοθυμαδον adverb. "**together**" - WITH ONE MIND. The weakened form of this adverb of manner is "together", but it possibly means "with one mind", or "unanimously".

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE TEMPLE]. Locative, expressing space.

κλωντες [κλαω] pres. part. "**they broke [bread]**" - [AND] BREAKING [BREAD]. The participle, as above. Most likely a reference to the Lord's Supper, although a regular daily meal may be intended.

κατ [κατα] + acc. "**in [their homes]**" - ACCORDING TO [HOUSE]. Another distributive use of the preposition **κατα**; "according to homes" = "from home to home" = "in each other's home"; "in their various houses", Barrett. Some argue that the reference is to a Christian meeting-house. Possibly "by households", ie., the communal meal was at the temple and the believers ate the meal together in family groups. For a *haburah*, a Jewish sect, a communal meal in the temple precinct was common practice.

μετελαμβανω [μεταλαμβανω] imperf. "**[ate] together**" - THEY WERE SHARING, PARTAKING OF [FOOD]. It is difficult to understand how this statement relates to the breaking of bread. Was this a different meal, say a fellowship meal together? It seems best to treat this verb as commencing a new sentence which runs through to the end of v47; "So they received nourishment, praising God with

happy and unruffled hearts, and enjoying the good will of all the people", Berkeley.

**εν** + dat. "**with [glad]**" - IN [GLADNESS, EXALTATION, AND SIMPLICITY, SINGLENESS]. Adverbial use of the preposition, modal, expressing manner; "gladly and sincerely." The noun **αφελότητι** is a hapax legomenon, once only use in the NT, in fact, an uncommon word outside the NT, therefore the sense is disputed. "Generosity", Bruce, but also possibly "simplicity of heart", Cassirer, = "sincerity".

**καρδιας [α]** gen. "**hearts**" - OF HEART. The genitive here is ablative, reference / respect, "a sincerity *with respect to* their hearts."

v47

**αινουντες [αινεω]** pres. part. "**praising [God]**" - PRAISING [GOD AND HAVING FAVOUR]. This participle, as with **εχοντες**, "having / enjoying the favour of", is attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the verb **μετελαμβάνον**, "they were sharing [food]", v46. They "ate together .... praised God and found (had) favour with all people." Possibly "giving God thanks before all the people", Begg, but rejected by Barrett. "They were always praising God and everyone liked them", Barclay.

**προς** + acc. "**of**" - TOWARD [ALL THE PEOPLE]. Here expressing association, a friendly relationship; "with all the people", ESV.

**προσεταιθει [προσθημι]** imperf. ind. act. "**added**" - [BUT/AND THE LORD] WAS ADDING TO (of people added to, attached to, a group or an individual). An alternate reading adds **τινα τη εκκλησια** - "they were added to the church."

**επι το αυτο** "**to their number**" - UPON THE SAME. The sense of this prepositional phrase is unclear and has prompted numerous textual variants. The preposition **επι** + acc. is obviously spatial, so possibly "in that place" - "the Lord daily added to their number *to the church* in that place, those who were being saved." Barrett argues that the phrase itself means "in the church / in church"; "one with the fellowship", Cassirer, "in the church fellowship", Bruce.

**καθ ἡμεραν** "**daily**" - ACCORDING TO THE DAY. Distributive use of the preposition, as above; "day by day."

**τους σωζομενους [σωζω]** pres. pas. part. "**those who were being saved**" - THE ONES BEING SAVED. The participle serves as a substantive, accusative direct object of the verb "to add to." Possibly a theological passive indicating that God was doing the saving, not the preachers.

## 3:1-10

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### viii] The healing of the lame man

##### Synopsis

Having recorded the lifestyle of the early Christian church in Jerusalem, Luke goes on to describe a miracle performed by Peter which would prompt a serious reaction from the religious authorities. The authorities thought that they had dispensed with Jesus and his *tricks*, and now here are his disciples up to the same antics. It is while Peter and John are on their way to attend afternoon prayers in the temple, that they come across a crippled beggar at Beautiful Gate. Peter responds with the classic line, "Silver and gold have I none, but what I do have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Of course, a commotion ensues when the cripple does rise up and walk, and this is when the trouble starts.

##### Teaching

Not only does Jesus' death and resurrection realise forgiveness and the gift of God's Spirit, but it inaugurates the restoration of all things.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11.

ii] Background: *Sources*. This narrative / miracle story, the healing of the lame man at the gate Beautiful, is typical of much of the recorded events in Luke - it evidences written and / or oral sources. Luke composes his overall account of the movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, and does so by including accounts from a variety of sources.

The story before us serves as an example of material which evidences prior existence. Barrett notes that it shows few traces of characteristic Lukan style. So, it is likely that Luke is adopting a story which already exists in the set tradition of the early Christian church. In fact, as Barrett notes, it is probably but one example of the many stories circulating about the miraculous deeds of the apostles. It is likely that these stories are part of set oral tradition, but as Wilcox notes, *in The Semitisms of Acts*, an Aramaic source is unlikely for this story. Barrett suggests a written source is more likely, something like a collection of miracle-stories ascribed to Peter.

iii] Structure: *The healing of the lame man*:

The miracle, v1-10;

Peter's explanation, v11-26;

The author of life, v11-16;  
Jesus is the long-promised Messiah, v17-21;  
Jesus is the prophet like unto Moses, v22-26.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke now switches the focus of his narrative from the life of the early church to the mission of the church. He sets out to establish that the mission of the early church is the same mission as that of Jesus. Luke makes the point that "the apostles carry on the prophetic power of Jesus in their deeds (v1-11) and words (12-26)", Johnson.

In his record of the miracle, Luke makes sure that we recognise that it bears all the marks of miracles performed by Jesus, in fact, there are linguistic parallels between this miracle performed by Peter, and the miracle performed by Jesus in Luke 5:17-26. So, Luke sets out to communicate the simple fact that "the apostles are prophetic successors of Jesus", Johnson. "Jesus can transform and give new life, and so can the deeds of those who he works through", Bock.

The miracle contains all the elements of a typical synoptic miracle story:

- An impossible situation sets the scene;
- An authoritative word of command;
- A complete cure is effected;
- Amazement expressed by the crowd.

Dunn notes also that the story has Pauline overtones, even parallels with the miracles Paul performs. A lame man is unable to participate fully in Israel's religious life, even barred from the Qumran community, so his healing not only emancipates his legs, but also his religious life - he enters the temple "walking and jumping and praising God." His healing is a portrayal of salvation, so Bock.

v] Homiletics: *The times they are .....*



It's hard to believe, but in the days when I was in school, public education of primary school students included, what was known as, General Religious Education. For one hour, every week, the State school teacher would read a Bible story and explain it to the students. It was a time when the Bible provided the moral backbone for Australia. The story was accompanied by an illustrated poster, published by the Department of Education, a poster just like this classical image.

It's no longer "The Times They Are A-Changin'", but rather, *the times they have a-changed*. As far as the chattering-class is concerned, the Bible is a racist, homophobic, sexist publication, full of disturbing myths best kept at arms-length from inquiring young minds.

Like the cripple at the Beautiful Gate, Western society is immobilised in a myth of its own making, with Christian revival its only hope. Such a miracle seems beyond imagination. Yet, as our reading from Acts today reveals, the authority of life from death that Jesus exercised, is now transferred to his disciples, his church. We have the authority to mobilise our immobilised society, and this through the power of the Good News from Jesus.

### **Text - 3:1**

The healing of the lame man, v1-26: i] The miracle, v1-10. In the ancient world, friends and family were essential for survival. Thankfully, the lame man had his share of friends and family, and they knew how best to help. People heading off for worship tend to be in the right mood for an act of almsgiving, given that karma tends to apply. Also, a congenital deformation is a distressing sight and inevitably prompts sympathy. Anyway, Peter and John are attending the temple at the hour of prayer when they come across the lame man. He appeals for their help, but they have no money on them. The apostles offer what they have, the power of the risen Christ. In the presence of all attending the temple that afternoon, the words of Isaiah find fulfilment; "Then will the lame leap like a deer." Just as with Jesus' miracles, the lame man plays his part in a divine drama (sign), a writing on a wall to a dying world providing a glimpse of the age to come, the age of fulfilment when everything that is old becomes new again.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND [PETER AND JOHN WERE GOING UP INTO THE TEMPLE]. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative. The imperfect verb "were going up" may be tendential / conative, expressing attempted action.

**επι** "**at**" - UPON. Temporal use of the preposition.

**της προσευχης [η]** gen. "**[the time] of prayer**" - [THE HOUR] OF PRAYER. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / temporal, limiting the substantive "time" by specifying the time in mind.

**την ενατην [α ατος]** acc. "**at three in the afternoon**" - THE NINTH. Standing in apposition to "time", further explaining the "time" in mind.

### **v2**

Luke has already informed us in his gospel that the lame and outcast will share in the eschatological banquet, and this particular man is about to experience a foretaste, Lk.13:13-22.

ὑπαρχων [ὑπχω] pres. part. "**who was [lame]**" - [AND A CERTAIN LAME MAN] BEING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "lame man."

εκ + gen. "**from [birth]**" - FROM [*the* WOMB OF *the* MOTHER OF HIM]. Adverbial use of the preposition, temporal, "since the time of his birth", Culy; "who had been born lame", Barclay.

εβασταζετο [βασταζω] imperf. "**was being carried**" - WAS BEING CARRIED [*and* THEY WERE PUTTING WHOM]. As with "they were putting." The imperfect may be taken as progressive, i.e., the friends and family were in the process of putting him at the temple gate. Culy suggests that the imperfect is customary, i.e., it was their custom.

καθ [κατα] + acc. "**every [day]**" - ACCORDING TO [DAY, TOWARD THE DOOR OF THE TEMPLE *complex*]. Adverbial use of the preposition, distributive, + the noun "day" is used to give the sense "daily".

την λεγομενην [λεγω] pres. part. "**called [Beautiful]**" - THE ONE BEING CALLED [BEAUTIFUL]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "door"; "that is called the Beautiful Gate", ESV. No knowledge of this gate exists; it was obviously a title specific to the time

του αιτειν [αιτω] pres. inf. "**to beg**" - OF THE TO BEG = IN ORDER TO BEG. The genitive articular infinitive is often expegetic, but here it is final, expressing purpose.

παρα + gen. "**from**" - FROM BESIDE. Here expressing source / origin.

των εισπορευομενων [εισπορευομαι] gen. pres. part. "**those going into**" - THE ONES ENTERING INTO [INTO THE TEMPLE]. The participle serves as a substantive. The repetition of the prepositional prefix εις is common idiom.

### v3

ιδων [οραω] aor. part. "**when he saw**" - [WHO,] HAVING SEEN, LOOKED INTENTLY AT [PETER AND JOHN]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

μελλοντας [μελλω] acc. pres. part. "**about**" - BEING ABOUT [TO ENTER INTO THE TEMPLE]. The participle, completed by the complementary infinitive εισιεναι, "to enter into", is the accusative complement of the direct object "Peter and John", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object.

λαβειν [λαμβανω] aor. inf. "**for [money]**" - [WAS ASKING, BEGGING] TO RECEIVE [ALMS]. The infinitive could be viewed as adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "was begging in order to receive alms", or as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect discourse, expressing what he was



asking, namely "that he receive alms", or possibly direct discourse, "he asked them strongly, 'Give me charity'", TH; "he asked to be given alms", Barclay.

#### v4

The language implies that "the man would not make eye contact", Kellum. "Peter struggles to make the apostolic action communal", Johnson.

**ατενισας [ατενιζω]** aor. part. "**looked straight [at him]**" - [BUT/AND PETER] HAVING LOOKED STEADFASTLY, GAZED [INTO = AT HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "to say"; "Peter fixed his eyes on him, as did John, and said ...." Possibly adverbial, temporal, so Kellum.

**συν** "**as did [John]**" - WITH [JOHN, HE SAID, LOOK AT US]. Expressing association, accompaniment.

#### v5

With his attention roused, the lame man "goes from 'asking' to 'expecting'", Kallum.

**ὁ δε** "**so the man**" - THE = HE BUT/ AND. This construction is often used to indicate a change in subject, here from Peter to the lame man.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**[gave] them [his attention]**" - [HE WAS PAYING CLOSE ATTENTION TO] THEM. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to pay attention to"; "He gave them all his attention", Barclay.

**προσδοκων [προσδοκαω]** pres. part. "**expecting**" - WAITING FOR, EXPECTING [CERTAIN = SOMETHING]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as causal, "because he expected to receive something from them."

**λαβειν [λαμβανω]** "**to get**" - TO RECEIVE [CERTAIN = SOMETHING]. Usually classified as complementary, but it may also be viewed as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception, expressing what the lame man expected, thought, namely, "that he was going to get something."

**παρ [παρα]** + gen. "**from**" - FROM [THEM]. Here expressing source / origin.

#### v6

Dunn suggests that the representation of apostolic poverty here is a story-telling device. But he notes that it could also reflect the poverty of the Jerusalem church, a church forced to sell property to survive. The economic state of the early church is reflected in Paul's collection for the saints in Palestine. As is often the case, there are economic consequences for following Jesus.

**ουχ ..... δε** "**not ....., but ....**" - [BUT/AND PETER SAID, SILVER AND GOLD IT IS POSSESSED] NOT [TO ME], BUT. Forming a counterpoint construction; "not ....., but ....". The dative pronoun **μοι**, "to me", is possibly instrumental, "by me", or possessive, "I do not have *any* silver or gold", Culy.

ὃ pro. "**what**" - [BUT/AND] WHAT [I HAVE]. Here serving to introduce a headless relative clause, ie., there is no antecedent.

σοι dat. pro. "**[I give] to you**" - [I GIVE THIS] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

εν + dat. "**in [the name]**" - IN = BY [THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, MESSIAH]. Probably instrumental, "by the name", with "the name" = the person = the power and authority [of Jesus Christ]. The genitive "of Jesus Christ" is adjectival, possessive.

του Ναζωραίου [ος] gen. "**of Nazareth**" - OF NAZARETH, [RISE UP AND WALK]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "from Nazareth", although Culy notes that technically it stands in apposition to the genitive "Jesus Christ", so "Jesus Christ the Nazarene."

v7

The miraculous nature of the miracle is conveyed in the use of the adverb παραχρημα, "instantly, immediately", cf., 12:23, 16:26.

πιασας [πιαζω] aor. part. "**taking**" - [AND] SEIZING [HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to raise up."

της .... χειρος [ειρ ρος] gen. "**by the [right] hand**" - OF THE [RIGHT] HAND, BUT/AND IMMEDIATELY THE FEET OF HIM AND THE ANKLES *of him* WERE MADE STRONG]. The genitive is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, as NIV.

v8

Again, Luke underlines the miraculous nature of the miracle in the "walking and jumping"; "there is obviously no need for any physical therapy to strengthen atrophied muscles", Kellum. "The verse conveys the fact that the man was fully cured", Barrett. Commentators have noted the *overloading* of the verse, even *clumsy Greek*, but as Bock notes, the language serves to express "the healing's complete success" and thus the newfound right for this lame man to enter into the temple, and the presence of God, as a whole person.

εξαλλομενος [εξαλλομαι] pres. part. "**he jumped [to his feet]**" - [AND] LEAPING UP [HE STOOD AND WAS WALKING AROUND]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to stand", "he leapt up and stood", Berkeley, but it may also be treated as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his standing up, "leaping up, he stood", ESV.

συν + dat. "**with [them]**" - [AND HE ENTERED] WITH [THEM INTO THE TEMPLE]. Expressing association, accompaniment.

περιπατων [περιπατεω] pres. part. "**walking**" - WALKING [AND LEAPING AND PRAISING GOD]. As with "leaping" and "praising", The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his entry into the temple courts.

v9

περιπατουντα [περιπατεω] pres. part. "[saw him] walking" - [AND ALL THE PEOPLE SAW HIM] WALKING [AND PRAISING GOD]. As with "praising", the participle is the accusative complement of the direct object "saw", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object.

v10

Jesus' authority to usher in the new age of the kingdom, so facilitating the bestowal of the promised blessings of the covenant, was outwardly expressed in wondrous signs (miraculous healings). At the hand of the apostles, the signs continue, so proclaiming the dawning of the new age. As with Jesus, so with the apostles, the crowd responds with amazement, but inevitably, only faith will save them.

ὅτι "as [the man]" - [BUT/AND THEY RECOGNISED HIM] THAT [HE WAS THE ONE]. Without the direct object αυτον, "him", ὅτι would introduce a dependent statement of perception, but given the presence of the direct object, ὅτι is expegetic, specifying the object "him", as NIV.

προς + acc. "begging" - [HE WAS THE ONE AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE OF THE TEMPLE] TOWARD [ALMS]. Here the preposition expresses purpose, "in order to seek alms"; "begging for alms", Cassirer.

βαμβους [ος ους] gen. "[filled] with wonder" - [AND THEY WERE FILLED] OF WONDER [AND AMAZEMENT]. As with the noun "amazement", the genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content, "filled *full of* wonder and amazement." The sense of the two descriptives may be something like "beside themselves", Kellum, "astonishment", Johnson, so Dun ....; "completely surprised", CEV.

επι + dat. "at" - UPON. Here the preposition expresses cause, "because of what has happened."

τω συμβεβηκοτι [συμβαινω] dat. perf. part. "what had happened" - THE THING HAVING HAPPENED, BEFALLEN. The participle serves as a substantive.

αυτω dat. pro. "to him" - HIM. Dative of direct object after the συν prefix verb "to happen, befall", although Kellum classifies it as a dative of interest, advantage.

## 3:11-26

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### ix] Peter preaches in the temple

##### Synopsis

In response to the healing of the lame man, an astonished crowd gathers in Solomon's Portico, inside the temple. Confronted by the crowd, Peter proclaims the gospel. Israel may have murdered their messiah, but God raised him up, so the new age foretold by the prophets, the age of "refreshing" and "universal restoration", is at hand. So, now is the time for Israel "to listen" and turn from her "wicked ways."

##### Teaching

The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11.

ii] Background: *The theological structure of the gospel*

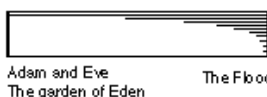
The **εὐαγγέλιον**, "gospel / important message", news from God, is proclaimed by the Baptist, Jesus and his disciples, through to today. It is a simple message, cf., Mk.1:15:

**The time is fulfilled,  
the kingdom of God is at hand;  
repent and believe the message.**

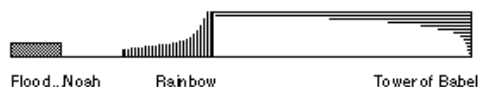
This message follows a pattern established in the history of God's people from the creation, to Noah, Abraham, Moses and the Exodus, through the time of the prophets and finally, in the life of Jesus Christ.

So, the story of the Bible is the story of humanity covenanted to God - "I am your God .... you are my people". It is the story of the creation of a kingdom, a community bound in fellowship under the Creator God. Although this community realises the kingdom in some form or other, it repeatedly fractures due to sin. Yet, God's covenant with his people cannot fracture. Ultimately, God, in and through the person of Jesus, realises the kingdom in perfection. The images on the next page seek to illustrate this flow of events.

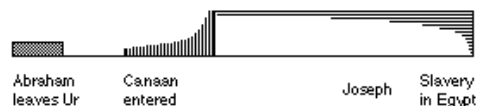
### CREATION KINGDOM



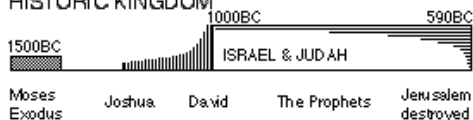
### POST-FLOOD KINGDOM



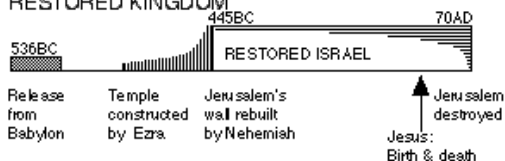
### ABRAHAMIC KINGDOM



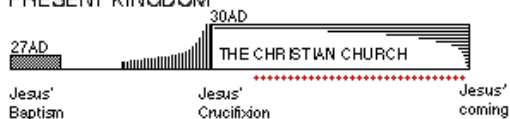
### HISTORIC KINGDOM



### RESTORED KINGDOM



### PRESENT KINGDOM

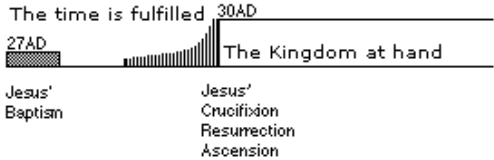


☞ This present age

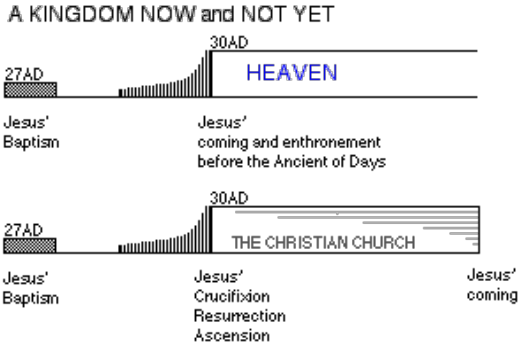
### HEAVENLY KINGDOM



As we see from the illustration below, the gospel is the news from God that Jesus has undertaken the journey to the promise land on our behalf (his **εξοδον**, "exodus", "which he was about to fulfil in Jerusalem", Lk.9:31) - **the time is fulfilled**. With the victory won and risen from the dead, Jesus now reigns in glory - **the kingdom of God is at hand**.



As the image below illustrates, the kingdom is both *now* and *not yet*, realised and inaugurated. So, we experience in-part the realisation of the kingdom and its blessings, but still await its fullness at the coming of Christ. Therefore, the gospel message deals with what it means to be in the kingdom *now*, and what it means in the *not yet*, that day when we experience the fullness of God's promised kingdom. Of course, it's not all good news, *blessing*. The gospel also relates the bad news, *cursing*, particularly what it means for those outside the kingdom in the last day.



As is typical of the sermons in Acts, they present the three key elements of the gospel:

- The first element, "**the time is fulfilled**", is usually present when the audience is made up of Jews. The fulfilment of prophecy in and through the person of Jesus, God's anointed messiah, climaxes in his resurrection

from the dead. With a Gentile audience, the issue of fulfilment is limited to the person of Jesus and his resurrection, rather than the fulfilment of scripture, cf., 17:31.

- Given God's vindication of his anointed one, "**the kingdom of God is at hand**", is upon us; all the promised blessings of the covenant are now available to God's people. As already noted, a gospel sermon can be good news, blessing, *now / not yet*, but also *bad news*, cursing / judgment, usually *not yet*.

- "**Repent and believe.**" The third element, the response, focuses on repentance.

These three elements are sometimes arranged differently in the gospel sermons in Acts, and are often introduced by a word addressing the immediate situation. A classic example of introductory material used to preface the gospel is evident in Paul's Areopagus address to Gentiles, cf., Acts.17.

So, in summary, the gospel's structure and content is as follows:

- i] Introduction;
- ii] The time is fulfilled;
- iii] The kingdom of God is at hand;  
Blessing: *now / not yet*;  
Cursing: *now / not yet*;
- iv] Repent and believe the gospel.

This structure is evident in the two gospels sermons recorded in Acts so far:

a) Acts 2:14-42

- i] Introduction - explanation of tongues
- ii] The time is fulfilled: 2:14:32
- iii] The kingdom of God at hand  
Blessing: the gift of the Holy Spirit: 2:33  
Cursing:
- iv] Repent: 2:38-40

b) Acts 3:11-26

- i] Introduction - explanation of the healing
- ii] The time is fulfilled: 3:17-18
- iii] The Kingdom of God at hand  
Blessing:  
*Now*: the forgiveness of sins, times of refreshing, 3:19  
*Not yet*: return of Christ, restoration of all things. 3:21  
Cursing:  
*Now*:  
*Not yet*: return of Christ, restoration of all things.

iv] Repent: 3:19a.

iii] Structure: *The healing of the lame man*:

The miracle, v1-10;

Peter's gospel sermon, v11-26;

Introduction: Why the lame man walks, v11-16;

The *Kerygma* / Gospel, v17-26;

The time is fulfilled, v17-18

Jesus is the long-promised Messiah;

Repent, 19a

The kingdom of God is upon us, 19b-21:

"forgiveness of sins";

"times of rest";

"universal restoration"

Biblical confirmation, v22-25;

All the prophets spoke of these days, v22-23;

Promised blessings of the covenant belong to Israel, v24-25.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke's record of Peter's address to the gathered crowd in Solomon's Portico serves as the second gospel sermon recorded in Acts. In this sermon, Peter first explains the miracle that has just played out at the temple gate. He then goes on to explain that Jesus, the messiah, an innocent man, only recently murdered by his own people, is alive, raised to life by God, and it is through faith in him that this lame man now walks.

Going on in v17-26, Peter explains that given Christ's messianic credentials in fulfilment of Israel's prophetic expectations, the outpouring of God's long-promised covenant blessings are at hand. For Israel to share in the blessings of the new age they must repent.

Dunn is of the view that Luke has drawn on a very old tradition to frame this sermon by Peter. It is certainly possible that a record of the sermons and acts of Peter existed in the early church and Luke may well be drawing on this source. Bock, quoting Hengel, argues that the early church's Christology probably developed in the first five years of the church. Dunn particularly notes that the Christology in the sermon "has a distinctly primitive ring" to it:

- *παιδα*, "Servant";
- *τον ἅγιον και δικαιον*, "Holy and Righteous one";
- *τον αρχηγον*, "the author, leader, originator"

Dunn also notes other ancient motifs:



- the promise of universal restoration (cf., Testament of Moses, 1:18);
- the idea that Jesus is the fulfilment of the promise of a prophet like Moses;
- the idea that Jesus, as God's servant, fulfils the covenant promise to Abraham of a blessing to all nations.

As for the rhetorical form of the sermon, Witherington classifies the opening section as judicial, a defence / apologetic, with v19-26 being deliberative, a form of rhetoric where the speaker seeks to draw a response from his audience.

v] Homiletics: *The Gospel*

It seems likely that Luke provides a model for the Christian church in his Acts of the Apostles - this is how they spread the gospel; go and do likewise! The gospel sermons in Acts also serve as models, as does the one before us (*develop Interpretation above*):

- i] Explanatory introduction;
- ii] Time is fulfilled - the murdered one is risen from the dead;
- iii] Kingdom of God is upon us - blessings / cursings;
- iv] Repent and believe.

**Good News Beads** - *key ring or bangle memory tool.*

*Made from a strand of fine leather cord and coloured wooden beads.*



- i] Gr. God's beautiful world;  
Purp. Polluted beyond measure;
- ii] Red. Renewed by Jesus on the cross;  
Cr. Came alive. *You can't keep a Good Man down!*
- iii] Bl. Because He lives, we can live eternally in God's new world;
- iv] Yel. You only have to ask.

### Text - 3:11

Peter's gospel sermon, v11-26: i] Introduction: Peter's explanation for the healing of the lame man, v11-16. This part of the sermon is introductory, explaining why the lame man now walks, and so serves to lead into the gospel proper.

κρατουντος [κρατω] gen. pres. part. "**while [the man] held on to**" - [BUT/AND HE] GRASPING, HOLDING ON TO [PETER AND JOHN]. The genitive participle and its genitive subject αυτου, "he", forms a genitive absolute construction, probably temporal, as NIV.

εκθαμβοι adj. "**were astonished**" - [ALL THE PEOPLE] AMAZED, GREATLY ASTONISHED. The adjective is attributive, limiting "all the people", "who were astonished." Luke has certainly not placed it in the attributive position. The ESV treats it as if standing in apposition, "all the people, utterly astounded, ran ....." Its position at the end of the sentence is emphatic.

τη καλουμενη [καλω] pres. mid. part. "**called**" - [RAN TOGETHER TOWARD THEM UPON = AT THE PORTICO] THE ONE BEING CALLED. The dative participle may be treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting "the portico", "which is called ....", or as a substantive standing in apposition to "the portico", "the one called"; "what was called Solomon's portico", Moffatt. "At the vestibule called Solomon's", Berkeley.

Σολομωντος [ων οντος] gen. "**Solomon's**" - *the portico* OF SOLOMON. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, limiting an assumed "the portico" which would serve as the dative complement of τη καλουμενη, "the one being called."

### v12

First of all, Peter dispels any notion that the disciples are themselves responsible for this healing; they are not *divine men*.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

ιδων [ορω] aor. part. "**when [Peter] saw this**" - [PETER] HAVING SEEN [*their reaction*]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

προς + acc. "**to [them]**" - [ANSWERED] TOWARD [THE PEOPLE]. This preposition is commonly used by Luke in place of a dative of direct object.

τι "**why**" - [MEN, ISRAELITES,] WHAT = WHY [ARE YOU WONDERING UPON = AT THIS]. Interrogative pronoun, introducing a rhetorical question and used with the adverbial sense "why?", but with the force of "You should not", Kellum - "They should neither marvel, nor assume." Culy suggests that the preposition επι, "upon", is causal here, "because of this."

ημιν dat. pro. "**[stare at] us**" - [WHY ARE YOU LOOKING STEADFASTLY AT, GAZING AT] US. Dative of direct object after the α prefix verb "to stare at."

ὥς "as if" - AS. This comparative functions adverbially here, modal, expressing manner, "as if ...", or concessive, "as though ...."

δυναμει [ις εως] dat. "by [our own] power" - BY [OUR OWN] POWER [OR GOODNESS]. The dative is instrumental, expressing means.

πεποηκοσιν [ποιεω] dat. perf. part. "we had made" - HAVING MADE. Although anarthrous, it seems likely that the participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the dative phrase "our own power or godliness", "which had enabled this man to walk", Cassirer. Culy suggests that it serves as a substantive, while Kellum suggests that it functions as an independent verb, presumably a periphrastic construction where the verb to-be is assumed. It is of course possible that it is functioning adverbially with ὥς, "as though having made / we made him walk by our own power or piety." The dative case would come from ἡμιν, "us", the dative referent for the clause.

του περιπατειν [περιπατεω] pres. inf. "walk" - [HIM] TO WALK. This construction, the genitive article with an infinitive, is possibly exegetic, specifying the enabling, but it is more likely adverbial here, expressing purpose, "in order that ...", or result, "with the result that ..." The pronoun αυτον, "him", serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive.

### v13

The people of Israel may have taken Jesus, an innocent man, and handed him over to be executed, but God glorified him - raised and seated him at his right hand. Peter identifies Jesus as παιδα, "child / servant [of God]." The title "Servant of the Lord", recalls both Israel as God's servant, as well as the great ones, Moses, David, ....., and in particular, the Servant in Isaiah's servant song, cf. Isa.52:13.

των πατερων [ορ ρος] gen. "the God of our fathers" - [THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB, THE GOD] OF THE FATHERS [OF US]. As with "Abraham", "Isaac", and "Jacob", the genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / subordination, "the God *who ruled over* our fathers."

Ιησουν [ους ου] "Jesus" - [GLORIFIED THE SERVANT OF HIM,] JESUS. Standing in apposition to παιδα, "servant / child."

μεν ..... δε "-" - [WHOM YOU] ON THE ONE HAND [DELIVERED OVER AND DENIED]. Usually forming an adversative comparative construction, here between this verse and v14, "*on the one hand* you handed over ....., *but on the other hand* you disowned the Holy and Righteous One ....." The contrasting statements are somewhat subtle. The point is that the people of Israel disowned someone they thought was a criminal, but as it turned out, they disowned the messiah.

κατα + acc. "before [Pilate]" - ACCORDING TO [THE FACE OF PILATE]. The phrase "according to the face" is idiomatic, meaning "a position in front of an

object, with the implication of direct sight", "face to face", Culy. "Whom you delivered up and repudiated before Pilate", Moffatt.

**κριναντος [κρινω]** gen. aor. part. "**though he had decided**" - [THAT ONE] HAVING DECIDED. The genitive participle and its genitive subject form a genitive absolute construction, concessive, as NIV, or temporal, "when he had decided", ESV.

**απολυειν [απολυω]** pres. inf. "**to let him go**" - TO RELEASE. The infinitive serves as the direct object of the participle "having decided" / dependent statement of perception / indirect speech, expressing what he had decided; "when his judgment was that he should be released", Cassirer.

#### v14

The people of Israel, complicit in the decisions of their leadership, thought they delivered up a blasphemer for execution, but they actually delivered up the messiah. Luke uses two more messianic titles for Jesus. "The Holy One" is a title normally reserved for God, cf., Lev.11:44-45. The title "the Righteous One" probably reflects Pauline theology where a believer stands right before God through faith in the faithfulness of the one and only righteous man. Being in Christ by faith, a believer is accounted as righteous before God - "the righteous will live by faith", Hab.2:4 / Rom.1:17.

**δε "-"** - BUT ON THE OTHER HAND [YOU DENIED THE HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS ONE]. Serving to complete the adversative comparative construction commenced in v13. Note the emphatic use of the personal pronoun **υμεις**, "you".

**χαρισθηναι [χαριζομαι]** aor. pas. inf. "**that [a murderer] be released**" - [YOU REQUESTED A MAN, A MURDERER] TO BE GIVEN. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing what they requested. Note that **φονεα**, "murderer", stands in apposition to **ανδρα**, "man".

**υμιν** dat. pro. "**to you**" - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

#### v15

Israel conspired to execute the life-giver whom God had raised up. This fourth title for Jesus is somewhat unclear. The word **αρχηγον** can mean "originator, author", even "hero, ruler, prince", but probably here, in contrast to the one who takes life, a murderer, v14, a causal sense is intended, "a giver" of life, or "one who leads to" life - cf., use in 5:31, "giver of salvation"???. Note again how Luke draws out the central function of discipleship - the disciples are witness to the resurrection.

**δε "-"** - BUT/AND. Probably contrastive here, rather than transitional. In fact, it presents as a second part to the adversative comparative construction, "but also on the other hand ....."

της ζωης [η] "[the author] of life" - [THE GIVER] OF LIFE. If we assume the verbal sense of the noun ἀρχηγόν, then the genitive is adjectival, verbal, objective.

ἐκ + gen. "from [the dead]" - [WHOM GOD RAISED] FROM [THE DEAD]. Expressing source / origin.

οὗ gen. pro. "of this" - OF WHICH [WE ARE WITNESSES]. The genitive is adverbial here, reference / respect; "with respect to which we are witnesses." "You no sooner killed the author of life than God raised him from the dead - and we're the witnesses", Peterson.

## v16

This is a very difficult verse, both to translate and interpret. Barrett views the Greek as clumsy - another example of the unedited Greek often found in Acts. Commentators tend to agree that Luke has clumsily sought to restate the opening phrase to clarify its intent, ie., remove any idea that the name of Jesus can magically be applied to achieve a miracle.

It is generally agreed that "the name" simply represents the person, and when used of Jesus, it represents the authority of his person. When it comes to "faith", most commentators see it as faith in Jesus, either exercised by the apostles, or the lame man; "faith in Jesus' name ..... has put this man on his feet", Peterson.

Yet, it seems likely that it is this understanding of "faith" that causes our problems. The πίστις, "faith, faithfulness", is probably Jesus' faith / faithfulness, such that τοῦ ὀνόματος, "of the name", is a subjective / possessive genitive rather than objective, ie., "the faith / faithfulness exercised by / belonging to the person of Jesus", rather than "faith applied to the name / person of Jesus." So lit.: "This miracle is because of / on the basis of the faith / faithfulness of / belonging to the name (the person and authority) of him (Jesus)."

Luke goes on by drawing out the sense of "name" καί, "and", "faith": First, the keyword word "the name", lit., "The name of him (the person and authority of Jesus) made strong (healed) this one whom you see and know." Then, with Pauline flare, Luke draws out the sense of the second keyword, πίστις, "faith", lit., "and the faith / faithfulness which is through / by means of him (αὐτοῦ, "of him" = Jesus) gave to him this wholeness." Obviously "him" is not the lame man because he only asked for money, and if the subject was the apostles, it would be "them". So, Peter is making the point that the healing rests on "the name" (the person of Jesus) and his "faith / faithfulness" (Jesus' faithful obedience to God the Father).

See my commentary on Galatians, Excursus I, "Key propositions in 2:16", for the classification of a subjective / possessive genitive, rather than objective

genitive, in the phrase **δία της πιστεως αυτου**, "the faith / faithfulness of him (Jesus)", usually translated as an objective genitive, "faith in him (Jesus)."

**επι** + dat. "**by [faith]**" - [AND] UPON [FAITH, FAITHFULNESS]. Causal use of the preposition; "because of, on the basis of."

**του οναματος [α ατος]** gen. "**in the name**" - OF THE NAME [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, usually treated as verbal, objective, but better subjective, or possessive. See above.

**ον** acc. pro. "**[this one] whom**" - [THE NAME OF HIM MADE STRONG THIS ONE] WHOM [YOU SEE AND KNOW]. Accusative object of the verbs "to see" and "to know."

**η** + gen. "**that comes [through]**" - [AND THE FAITH] THE ONE [THROUGH HIM]. The article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the instrumental preposition **δία**, "through, by means of", into an attributive modifier of "faith"; "the faith / faithfulness which is through him (Jesus)."

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**him**" - [GAVE] TO HIM [THIS WHOLENESS]. Dative of indirect object; "Has given him perfect health", Barclay.

**υμων** gen. pro. "**you**" - [IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL] OF YOU. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative; "In the sight of you all", Cassirer.

## v17

ii) The *Kerygma* / Gospel, v17-26: Peter gets into the gospel proper by establishing that Jesus has fulfilled the scriptures and thus, as God's anointed messiah, has ushered in the new age of God's kingdom. Therefore, it is required of Israel to repent if she is to share in God's promised blessings.

a) The time is fulfilled - Jesus is the long-promised Messiah, v17-18. Peter continues to focus on the person of Jesus. He has already made the point that Jesus, as God's servant, is the Holy and Righteous one, the author of life, and now he declares that Jesus is the messiah, the suffering servant of the Lord.

**και νυν** "**now**" - AND NOW. Transitional, indicating a move to the central argument of the speech.

**οτι** "**[I know] that**" - [AND NOW, BROTHERS, I KNOW] THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Peter knows.

**κατα** + acc. "-" - [YOU ACTED] ACCORDING TO [IGNORANCE]. Here expressing a standard, or adverbial, modal, expressing manner, "you behaved ignorantly."

**ωσπερ** "**as did**" - AS, LIKE [AND = ALSO THE RULERS (religious authorities) OF YOU]. This comparative coordinates a similar category; "you behaved in ignorance, just as your leaders did", Berkeley.

## v18

As the Suffering Servant, Jesus has fulfilled Israel's prophetic expectations.

**δε** "but" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument where Peter explains that the ignorant actions of the people of Israel, in delivering up Jesus for execution, are in fulfillment of the predictions of prophets; "In point of fact", Cassirer.

**οὕτως** adv. "this is how" - THUS [GOD HAS FULFILLED]. Adverb of manner, "thus, in this way", emphatic by position; "in the way you and your leaders set out to kill an innocent man, God has fulfilled ....."

**ὅ** rel. pro. "what" - THE THINGS WHICH [HE ANNOUNCED BEFOREHAND]. Introducing a headless relative clause, serving as the direct object of the verb "to fulfil." "The things" are the predictions of the prophets.

**διὰ** + gen. "through" - THROUGH [*the* MOUTH OF ALL THE PROPHETS]. Instrumental, expressing means; "what he had foretold by the mouth of all the prophets", Cassirer. An idiomatic expression, so "through the preaching of all the prophets", Peterson.

**παθεῖν [πασχω]** aor. inf. "saying that [his Messiah] would suffer" - *that* [THE CHRIST OF HIM] TO SUFFER. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what was announced beforehand by God through the prophets, "that his Christ would suffer", ESV, so Kellum. Culy opts for an epexegetic classification. "The Christ of him" serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive.

## v19a

b) Repent, v19a: The context seems to imply that Peter is calling for corporate repentance on the part of Israel, but it is more likely that individual repentance is in mind, as in 2:38. The sense of the verb **μετανοοῶ**, "to repent", is specified by the verb **επιστρέφω**, "to turn back." Repentance involves a recognition of being against God, of being opposed to his will, prompting a turning to Him for mercy and forgiveness. Repentance = turning back to God.

**οὖν** "[repent] then" - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion.  
**μετανοήσατε και επιστρέψατε** "repent ... and turn to God" - REPENT AND TURN BACK. Best viewed as a doublet, so Barrett, otherwise "repent" here ends up with a limited sense like "renounce sin."

## v19b

c) The kingdom of God is at hand, v19b-21. The repentant receive the blessings of "forgiveness of sins", "times of rest", and "universal restoration." The first and second intended purpose of the call to repent and turn to God is for

the present blessings of forgiveness of sins and "times of refreshing", v19. Note that the opening Gk. sentence covers v19-21.

εις το + inf. "**so that**" - INTO THE [TO BE REMOVED THE SINS OF YOU]. This construction, the preposition εις + the articular infinitive, usually introduces a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that your sins may be blotted out", i.e., for the forgiveness of sins.

ὅπως ᾧ + subj. "**and that**" - IN ORDER THAT. This construction introduces a purpose clause. As Culy notes, for a purpose clause, Luke prefers ινα + subj., but here he has used a classical construction which he has likely used from his source document.

αναψαξεως [εξ εως] gen. "**[times] of refreshing**" - [TIMES, SEASONS] OF REST, REFRESHING, REPOSE. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "times", "the times of refreshment that come from the presence of the Lord." The sense of the word here is unclear. In the LXX it is used of respite from punishment, Ex.8:15, for the cessation of suffering, Ps.38:14, the revival of God's people, 2Macc.13:11. Kellum suggests that Luke has in mind the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a refreshing "mediated through the Holy Spirit." "Showers of blessing to refresh you", Peterson.

απο + gen. "**from [the Lord]**" - FROM [PRESENCE OF THE LORD]. Expressing source / origin.

## v20

The third intended purpose of the call to repent and turn to God is for the future return of the Messiah, v20, and the restoration of all things, v21. This *not yet* is both good news, and bad news, blessing and cursing. "God, through Christ, will restore his fallen world to the purity and integrity of its initial creation", Barrett. For those included in the restoration, it's good news, for those outside, it's bad news. The promise has in mind "the ultimate renewal of the whole created order", Peterson D. Given the *now /not yet* eschatology of the scriptures, Jesus is already doing just that - all knees are bowing before him - but at the same time, the restoration of all things by Jesus still lies in the future. A process of restoration is probably not in mind, rather, it is, and will be.

και "**and that**" - AND [HE MAY SEND]. This conjunction serves to coordinate the subjunctive verb "may send" with ὥπως ἄν ελθωσιν, "in order that may come."

τον προκεχειρισμενον [προχειριζω] perf. mid. part. "**who has been appointed**" - THE ONE HAVING BEEN APPOINTED BEFOREHAND, CHOSEN BEFOREHAND. The NIV has taken the participle as adjectival, attributive, limiting τον ... χριστον, "the Messiah", but it may also be viewed as a substantive, direct object of the verb "to send", with "Christ Jesus" standing in apposition; "that he



may send forth to you him whom he has appointed beforehand, Jesus Christ", Cassirer.

ὁμιν dat. pro. "for you" - TO YOU [CHRIST JESUS]. Dative of interest, advantage.

## v21

Culy suggests that a **μεν ... δε** construction controls v21-24, eg., "on the one hand, God's holy prophets said heaven must hold him ....., v21, eg., Moses, re., the "Returning one", v22-23, "but on the other hand, the same thing is true of all the other prophets .....", v24. To further confuse matters, we have what looks like another **μεν .... δε** construction in v22-23. Presumably, Luke intends a linkage of clauses here, but how? Given that v19-21 is a single sentence in the Greek, it seems likely that the use of **μεν** in v21 is nothing more than emphatic, underlining the statement "until the time of restoration."

**δεξασθαι [δεχομαι]** aor. inf. "receive" - [WHOM] TO RECEIVE [IS NECESSARY]. The infinitive serves as the subject of the impersonal verb "it is necessary." The relative pronoun **ὃν**, "whom", serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive. See **πληρωθηναι**, 1:16, for a complementary classification.

**μεν** "-" - ON THE ONE HAND. Adversative / coordinative comparative construction; see above.

**αποκαταστασεως [ις εως]** gen. "[the time comes] for god to restore" - [UNTIL the TIME] OF THE RESTORATION, RENEWAL. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / temporal, limiting "time", "the time when God restores / renews all things."

**παντων** gen. adj. "everything" - OF ALL things. The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, verbal, objective.

**ὧν** gen. pro. "as" - OF WHICH [GOD SPOKE]. The genitive is probably adverbial, reference / respect, "about which God spoke through the prophets."

**απ [απο]** gen. "[long ago]" - FROM [THE AGE OF HIM]. Temporal use of the preposition. Idiomatic temporal phrase, as NIV.

**δια** + gen. "through" - THROUGH [MOUTH]. Instrumental, expressing means; "as God announced by means of his holy prophets of long ago", TEV.

**προφητων [ησ ου]** gen. "prophets" - [OF THE = HIS HOLY] PROPHETS. Genitive, standing in apposition to "holy".

## v22

iii] Biblical confirmation, v22-23. The mention of the prophets in v21 prompts Peter to confirm the *Kerygma* from the scriptures. He begins with a text from Deuteronomy 18:15-19. As promised long ago by the prophets, Jesus must be held in heaven until the time for the restoration of all things, namely, the

consummation of the kingdom. Moses mentions this Returning One, with the warning that those who fail to heed his words will be "cut off" when he returns. All the prophets have spoken about **τας ημερας ταουτας**, "these days" ("the times of restoration of all things", v21, rather than "the present days").

The text concerns the coming of the prophet like unto Moses. The tradition of a messianic Moses-like figure was quite strong at the time, even among the Samaritans, who identified him as the *Taheb*, "the Returning One", "the Restorer".

**μεν ... δε** "-" - INDEED / ON THE ONE HAND ..... Introducing an adversative comparative construction covering v22-24; "*On the one hand*, Moses said a prophet will rise up for you and you will listen ..... v24, *but on the other hand / in point of fact*, all the prophets from Samuel on have proclaimed these days." "And indeed, these are the words Moses has spoken, ..... (v24) Furthermore, all the prophets who have ever spoken, from Samuel onwards, have forecast these days", Cassirer.

**οτι** "-" - [MOSES SAID] THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of direct speech expressing what Moses said.

**υμιν** dat. pro. "**for you**" - [THE LORD GOD OF YOU WILL RAISE UP A PROPHET] TO = FOR YOU. Dative of interest, advantage; "for you."

**ως** "**like [me]**" - AS [ME]. Comparative; "just as he sent me", TEV.

**εκ** + gen. "**from among**" - FROM [THE BROTHERS OF YOU]. Expressing source / origin; "God will raise up a fellow Jew like me." Possibly a partitive use of the preposition; "Who will be of your own people", TEV.

**αυτου** gen. "-" - [YOU WILL HEAR, LISTEN TO] HIM. Genitive of direct object after to verb "to hear of." The NIV treats the future tense here as imperative.

**κατα** + acc. "**everything**" - ACCORDING TO [EVERYTHING]. Here with a distributive sense, as NIV.

**οσα αν** + subj. "-" - WHATEVER [HE MAY SAY TOWARD YOU]. Introducing an indefinite relative construction expressing unidentified extent. The construction functions as an attributive modifier, limiting the prepositional phrase "everything"; "everything that he says to you", Barclay.

## v23

Included in the quote from Deuteronomy are two phrases from Leviticus 23:29, "every soul / person", and "will be completely cut off from the people." This replaces "I will take vengeance", so emphasising exclusion from the promised kingdom of God and its associated blessings.

**δε** "-" - BUT. Introducing the second part of the adversative comparative construction commenced in v22.

ἥτις ἕαν "[**anyone**] **who**" - [IT WILL BE THAT EVERY SOUL] CERTAIN IF = WHOEVER. This indefinite relative construction introduces an attributive modifier limiting "every soul"; "every soul who refuses to listen to the prophet", Barclay.

του προφητου [ης ου] gen. "[**listen to**] **him**" - [DOES NOT HEAR, OBEY, TAKE HEED OF THAT] PROPHET. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to hear."

εκ + gen. "[**will be completely**] **cut off**" - [WILL BE COMPLETELY DESTROYED] FROM [THE PEOPLE]. Expressing separation; "No one who disobeys that prophet will be one of God's people any longer", CEV.

## v24

The restoration of all things by the Coming One like Moses, the Restorer, was announced "through his holy prophets", starting with the prophet Samuel. Those who fail to heed the announcement will be "cut off." It is unclear why Samuel, the prophet operative at the time of king David, is singled out as the beginning of a long line of prophets. Dunn suggests that he is the singled out because he is the first great prophet after Moses, and is "the first of Israel's great sequence of prophets."

δε "**indeed**" - BUT/AND [AND = ALSO THE PROPHETS]. Probably serving to introduce the second part of the adversative comparative construction commenced in v21; "but the same thing is also true for the other prophets", Marshall.

απο + gen. "**beginning with**" - FROM [SAMUEL AND]. A temporal use, "from the days of Samuel onward", is disputed by Culy; he argues that απο is not used temporally, so source / origin is likely intended, as NIV.

των gen. "-" - THE [CONSECUTIVELY]. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the adverb "consecutively, in order" into a substantive; "and *from his successors*"; "from Samuel and those who came after him", ESV.

ὅσοι pro. "**who have spoken**" - AS MANY AS [SPOKE]. The correlative adjective introduces an attributive modifier limiting the prophets, "who have spoken."

και "-" - AND = ALSO [ANNOUNCED THIS DAY]. Here adverbial, adjunctive; "also proclaimed these days", ESV.

## v25

The promised blessings of the covenant / agreement made with Abraham include the promise of a people / descendants, a land, and a blessing that extends to all peoples. This is Israel's inheritance.

ὑμεις pro. "**you [are]**" - YOU [YOU ARE]. Emphatic by position and use.

της διαθηκης [η] gen. "**of the covenant**" - [THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS AND] OF THE COVENANT [GOD MADE TOWARD THE FATHERS OF YOU]. Both Culy

and Kellum argue that the two genitives "of the prophets" and "of the covenant" do not equally modify the noun "sons", the first being possessive, the second descriptive. None-the-less, they could both be classified as adjectival, relational, given that "sons of" is an idiomatic expression for close association. "Sons of the prophets" virtually means "Israelites", as does "sons of the covenant" - "you are Israelites and so are inheritors of the blessings God promised your father Abraham"; "The promise of God for his prophets is for you, and you share in the covenant which God made with your ancestors", TEV.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "**he said**" - SAYING. The participle is probably adverbial, temporal; "when he said to Abraham", Moffatt.

προς + acc. "**to [Abraham]**" - TOWARD [ABRAHAM]. This preposition is often used by Luke in place of a dative of indirect object, as NIV.

εν + dat. "**through**" - [AND] IN [THE SEED OF YOU]. Instrumental use of the preposition; "through, by means of." "Through your children shall all the families of the earth be blessed", Phillips. The coordinate και, "and", comes from the quoted text.

της γης [η] gen. "**[all peoples] on earth**" - [ALL THE FAMILIES] OF THE EARTH [WILL BE BLESSED]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / local, "all the families *located in* the earth."

## v26

Peter still has in mind the Moses-like prophet that God raised up, v22, so probably not a reference to the resurrection and the sending of the Spirit to bless God's people. God sent his Moses-like prophet, the Returning One, to realise the promised covenant blessings, by prompting the people of Israel to repent / turn back to God. The "wickedness" is the way of sin, of being in a state opposed to God and so facing his condemnation. Note the Pauline strategy "first to you"; the gospel is to Jew first and then Gentiles.

αναστησας [ανιστημι] aor. part. "**when [God] raised up**" - HAVING RAISED UP [THE CHILD / SERVANT OF HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to send", but it may also be classified as adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

υμιν dat. pro. "**to you**" - [HE SENT HIM FIRST] TO YOU. Dative of interest, advantage. The position of this pronoun at the beginning of the Gk. sentence is emphatic.

ευλογουντα [ευλογεω] pres. part. "**to bless [you]**" - BLESSING [YOU]. The participle is adverbial, final, expressing purpose: "in order to bless you."

εν "**by [turning each of you]**" - IN [THE TURNING AWAY EACH *one of you*]. Instrumental, expressing means, as NIV. A partitive genitive is assumed by many translations, as NIV.

**απο** + gen. "**from**" - FROM. Expressing separation; "away from."

**ὑμων** gen. pro. "**your**" - [THE WICKEDNESS] OF YOU. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic, or verbal, "the wickedness *enacted by* you."

## 4:1-22

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### x] The arrest and trial of the disciples

##### Synopsis

The healing of the crippled man by Peter at the Beautiful Gate, and his subsequent sermon to the gathered crowd, 3:1-26, prompts a reaction from the Sadducees. Being politically aligned to the Roman government, the Sadducees do not sit easily with anything that might disturb the peace. So, they have both Peter and John arrested, and brought to trial before the Sanhedrin the next day. Peter leads the defence, impressing some of the religious authorities. Having heard Peter out, the two disciples are taken from the Sanhedrin while their supposed crime is discussed. The evidence of the cure, and the disciples' standing in the community, restrains further action against them, and so they are sent away with a warning not to preach or teach in the name of Jesus. Of course, Peter is his defiant self, telling the assembled authorities that "we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard."

##### Teaching

Christianity is not Judaism for "Jesus is the sole agent of eschatological salvation for all humanity", Fitzmyer.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11. Luke now presents us with a rapid sequence of events of life in the Jerusalem church where the apostles are brought before a hearing of the Sanhedrin, 4:1-22, after which they pray for, and receive, power for ministry, 4:23-31, progressing a powerful work among the people, 4:32-5:16, and inevitably finding themselves facing a second trial, 5:17-42.

ii] Structure: *The arrest and trial of the disciples:*

The disciples' arrest and overnight stay in jail, v1-4;

Their arraignment before the Sanhedrin, v5-7;

Peter's address, v8-12;

*"salvation is found in no one else."*

The deliberation of the religious authorities, v13-17;

Instruction given to Peter and John and their response, v18-20;

*"we cannot help speaking about what we have seen ..."*

The authorities back down, v21-22.

iii] Interpretation:

As is the case with many of the episodes in Acts, Luke "gives a dramatic presentation of apostolic courage and boldness", Fitzmyer. Barrett, on the other hand, argues that by the end of the episode, "three groups are clearly distinguished: the apostles and their company, the Jewish authorities, and the common people. This development is more important to Luke than his presentation of the personal courage of two Christian witnesses." In simple terms, Luke's message is that Christianity is not Judaism.

Of particular interest in the passage is the issue of authority for both the disciples and Israel's religious leaders. For Israel's religious leaders, the issue prompting the arrest and trial of the disciples is their teaching "in the name of Jesus", i.e., proceeding with the assumption that Jesus has / had the authority to teach matters of theology. As far as the religious leaders are concerned, the teachings of Jesus are not authorised; they are not sanctioned for the education of God's people, Israel. This fact prompts the authorities to arrest Peter and John and shapes the instruction given to them, namely, "not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus", v18. In much the same way as Jesus confirmed the authority of the Son of Man to forgive sins by saying to the cripple man "take up your mat and walk", so Peter confirms the authority of Jesus in the healing of the lame man. Given this miracle, Jesus is obviously the rejected stone, now the cornerstone, and therefore "salvation is found in no one else."

This issue of authority explains the rather strange statement in v2, *καταγγελλειν εν τω Ιησου την αναστασιν την εκ νεκρων*, "proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead." The issue of the resurrection of the dead is not raised at the meeting of the Sanhedrin because this apocalyptic hope was fully accepted by the Pharisees, even down to the use of a partitive *εκ* serving to make the point that it is the righteous alone who are raised from all those who are dead. The Sadducees would not agree, but they have heard it all before. The issue concerns the apostles' teaching that the resurrection of the dead is "in Jesus." The preposition *εν*, "in", is probably instrumental, expressing means, "by means of"; "by *the name of* Jesus" = "by *the authority of* Jesus." Of course, other interpretations are proposed, eg., "they were proclaiming by means of *the story of* Jesus the resurrection of the dead", Barrett;

*Peter's third gospel sermon*: Although Peter is addressing a question put to him by the religious authorities, his answer contains all four elements of the apostolic gospel / *kerygma*.

- Introduction. Peter sets the ground for his gospel message, and also, by implication, the answer to the question "Who put you in charge here?", by grounding his *apologia* in the healing of the lame man.

- The time is fulfilled. In presenting the gospel, particularly to Jews, the apostles established that "the time is fulfilled" by proof-texting messianic promises realised in the life and teachings of Jesus. Here, in v11, Peter uses Psalm 118:22 to remind his hearers that the messiah, although temporarily humiliated, is subsequently glorified. Although the verse originally referred to the nation Israel, it was later applied to the messiah, for he is viewed as a corporate figure, just as the king is a corporate figure. Jesus represents faithful Israel, humiliated, but inevitably glorified.

- The kingdom of God is at hand. The fulfilment of the covenant promise of an eternal community under God, is realised in the resurrection of Jesus, v10 - a believer finds salvation / life eternal in the resurrection life of Christ, v13. Again, we see the centrality of the resurrection in the apostolic witness to Jesus. Jesus is alive, and even now giving life.

- Repent and believe. Directly calling on the religious leaders of Israel to repent, at this point in the proceedings, would be overly provocative. Yet, the implication is certainly present in v12. If Jesus is the messiah, evidenced in the sign of the healing of the crippled beggar at the Beautiful Gate, then the blessings promised to Abraham of a kingdom, of "salvation", can come to Israel by no other person than Jesus. As Jesus delivered the beggar, so Jesus can deliver Israel. To ignore this deliverance is to face judgement. A response is clearly implied.

#### iv] Homiletics: *An exclusive faith*

In a pluralistic society it is not easy to be exclusive. People who take a narrow view of life's many issues are often regarded as bigots. Christians are increasingly being accused of narrow bigotry. Today, those with liberal progressive views are likely to be critical of Christianity. Mind you, political correctness is often itself bigoted, if not less than gracious.

We are tempted to back off when it comes to the exclusive claim of Jesus that "no one comes to the Father but by me", but Peter certainly didn't when he said that "only Jesus has the power to save", Acts 4:12a, CEV.

How do we maintain such an exclusive position in the face of the widely held view that "all rivers lead to the sea"? Today's New Age religions constantly promote a variety of beliefs, all claiming equal access



to nirvana. Of course, this is not Jesus' opinion, for he said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

In dealing with our relativist neighbour, there are two truths worth considering:

First. The Bible tells us that those who seek find. Any person reaching out to the creator God will find Him. We know, of course, that they will find Him through Jesus. So, our witness need not be objectionably confronting, for a gentle testimony, both in word and deed, is all that is required for the genuine seeker - those who seek find.

Second. Integrity demands that we remain true to our beliefs, yet that doesn't stop us respecting the beliefs of others. Mutual respect, where there are conflicting views, is actually a positive situation, rather than a negative one. We may even feel strong enough to admit that we could be wrong, that we don't have all the answers, but in an act of faith we choose to rely on Jesus.

So this then is our path: be gracious in the encounters of life, but unswerving in our faith

#### **Text - 4:1**

Peter and John before the Sanhedrin, v1-22: i] The disciples' arrest and their overnight stay in jail, v1-4; The issue of authority, and who should lead God's people, is evident in these opening verses. Moses, with signs and wonders, sought to lead the people of Israel, but was constantly frustrated. Jesus, with signs and wonders, even in rising from the dead, sought to lead God's people Israel, but was rejected. Now the apostles, with signs and wonders, stand up as God's authorised leaders of Israel. Some believe, even 5,000, but Israel's leadership typically rejects the authority of Christ's authorised leaders, and so arrests them.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**του ἱεροῦ [ον]** gen. "**temple [guard]**" - [THE PRIESTS AND THE CAPTAIN] OF THE TEMPLE [AND THE SADDUCEES]. The NIV treats the genitive as adjectival, attributive, limiting "guard"; "the chief of the temple police", Barclay.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**Peter and John**" - [CAME UP UPON, APPROACHED] THEM. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix verb "to come up upon."

**λαλουντων [λαλεω]** gen. pres. part. "**while [they] were speaking**" - [THEY] ARE SPEAKING. The genitive participle and its genitive subject **αυτων**, "they", forms a genitive absolute construction, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

**προς** + acc. "**to [the people]**" - TOWARD [THE PEOPLE]. The preposition is used here instead of a dative of indirect object.

v2

The religious authorities are **διαπονεομαι**, "exasperated, worn down", and this with particular reference to the Sadducees who deny the resurrection of the dead, cf., Lk.20:27. They are exasperated "because" (**δια το** + inf) the apostles are "teaching" and "proclaiming, preaching". Luke identifies the content of their word-ministry, specifically their "preaching", as the apostolic gospel / *kerygma*, summarised in phrase "the resurrection of the dead", which miracle is **εν τω Ιησου**, "in Jesus."

**διαπονουμενοι** [**διαπονεομαι**] pres. part. "**they were greatly disturbed**" - BEING EXASPERATED. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing manner, modifying the verb "to come up upon", v1.

**δια το** inf. "**because**" - BECAUSE THE [TO TEACH THE PEOPLE AND TO PROCLAIM]. Serving to introduce two causal clauses, explaining why the religious authorities are exasperated.

**εν** + dat. "**in [Jesus]**" - IN [JESUS]. The preposition is possibly local, "announcing, in the case of Jesus, the resurrection ..", or possibly reference / respect, "announcing, with respect to Jesus, the resurrection ...", although Bruce, Barrett, Peterson D, Fitzmyer, .... argue for an instrumental sense, expressing means, "announcing, by means of the story of Jesus, the resurrection of the dead." Bock argues that it is the resurrection of Jesus himself that is the issue of concern to the authorities, not the resurrection as such. The issue of the resurrection was regularly debated between the Pharisees and Sadducees, but claiming a resurrection from the dead, *in the case of Jesus* / *with respect to Jesus*, is another matter. The apostolic gospel focuses on the resurrection of Jesus, and by extension, goes on to announce the promise of resurrection from the dead for all who believe in him.

**εκ** + gen. "**of [the dead]**" - [THE RESURRECTION] FROM [THE DEAD]. The preposition expresses source / origin, "from the dead", ESV, but possibly serving as a partitive genitive, "of the dead" - a resurrection for the righteous ones among the dead.

v3

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**Peter and John**" - [AND THEY LAY ON HANDS] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

**γαρ** "**because**" - FOR [IT WAS EVENING]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the authorities held them in custody rather than put them on trial.

**εις** + acc. "**until [the next day]**" - [AND PUT INTO JAIL] INTO [THE TOMORROW]. The preposition is used here to express purpose / goal / end-view; "their purpose was to deal with them on the following day", Cassirer. The article

την serves as a nominalizer, turning the adverb "tomorrow" into a substantive, "the next day."

#### v4

Luke notes the approximate number of believers, either those converted on this day, or the total number of believers at this point of time. Either way, many of the common people have come to believe in Jesus, but the religious authorities are moving in the opposite direction.

δε **"but"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative; "Many of those who had heard Peter's sermon became believers", Barclay.

των ακουσαντων [ακουω] gen. aor. part. **"who heard [the message]"** - [MANY] OF THE ONES HEARING [THE WORD, BELIEVED]. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. The NIV, as with most translations, takes τον λογον, "the word", as the direct object of the participle, but it could also be the direct object of the verb "to believe."

των ανδρων [ηρ δρος] gen. **"[the number] of men"** - [AND BECAME THE NUMBER] OF THE MEN. The genitive is adjectival, expegetic, specifying "number", "the number, namely of men who believed, grew ...", or verbal, objective, so Culy. The noun "men" is unlikely to be generic as it was normal practice to count males / heads of families, ie., it was the cultural practice of the time.

ως **"about"** - AS = ABOUT [FIVE-THOUSAND]. Variant. When this particle is used with quantities it expresses approximation.

#### v5

ii] Peter and John's arraignment, v5-7. The Jewish authorities obviously expected the elimination of the sect of the Nazarene with the execution of Jesus, but they were wrong. At the hearing, the Sadducees are in the majority. Annas, the ex-high priest, and his mouthpiece son-in-law, Caiaphas, preside. Other members of the high priestly family are also present. John is probably Jonathan, son of Annas, who later succeeded Caiaphas. The disciples are asked by what authority they acted as they did on the previous day. Who gave them the authority to perform healings and make speeches in the temple precincts?

δε "-" - BUT/AND [IT HAPPENED, IT BECAME]. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

επι + acc. "-" - UPON. Temporal use of the preposition.

την αυριον **"the next day"** - THE TOMORROW. The accusative articular adverb serves as a substantive; "The next morning", CEV.

τους γραμματεις [υς εως] acc. **"teachers of the law"** - [THE RULERS AND THE ELDERS AND] THE SCRIBES. Along with the "[chief] priests / leaders" and

"elders", "scribes" serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive, "to gather together." The three representative groups indicate that the gathering of the Sanhedrin is for a formal session. Best rendered "the Jewish authorities." The scribes are "specialists in the law of Moses."

**αυτων** gen. pro. "-" - OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / subordination. The antecedent is unspecified, but obviously "the Jewish people."

**συναχθηναί** [**συναγω**] aor. pas. inf. "**met**" - TO BE ASSEMBLED, GATHERED TOGETHER, CONVENED [OF THEM]. The infinitive serves as the subject of the verb **εγενετο**, "it came about"; "on the next day the leaders, the elders and the scribes to be gathered of them came about / happened" = "on the next day a gathering of the religious authorities assembled in Jerusalem."

**εν** + dat. "**in**" - IN [JERUSALEM]. Local, expressing space.

#### v6

Annas was high priest from AD 6 to 15, appointed to the position by the Roman governor Quirinius. Although only high priest for 9 years, he continued to wield authority through the numerous members of his family who were to hold the position. Caiaphas was appointed by Valerius Gratus in AD 18 and held the position for eighteen years until sacked by Vitellius in 36AD. The identity of John is unclear. The Western text has Jonathan following Josephus who mentions Jonathan, the son of Annas, the high priest who served for one year after Caiaphas in 36AD, cf., NJB. There is no extant record of Alexander.

**εκ** + gen. "**[others] of [the high priest's family]**" - [AND ANNAS THE HIGH PRIEST, AND CAIAPHAS, AND JOHN, AND ALEXANDER, AS MANY AS WERE] FROM [THE HIGH PRIESTLY FAMILY]. The preposition is probably expressing source / origin, but possibly serves as a partitive genitive.

#### v7

Most commentators are inclined to identify two issues here: First, the source of the power used by the apostles to heal the lame man; Second, the authority by which the apostles acted, both in healing and preaching. Peter's address to the Sanhedrin certainly seems to address these two issues. Yet, as Bock notes, the question seems more related to the apostles' preaching. The issue is not "power" and "authority", but "authority". The interrogation is not "through what power ...?" (ie., the issue is not the miracle), but "by / on the ground of what authority; by whose name (name = person = authority) have you done this (**τουτο**, "this" = teaching / preaching in the temple)?" "Who put you in charge here?" Peterson.

**στησαντες** [**ιστημι**] aor. part. "**brought**" - [AND] HAVING STOOD, PLACED [THEM]. The participle may be treated as adverbial, temporal, "and when they had

set them in the midst", AV, or possibly causal, but also possibly attendant circumstance as NIV; "they made the men stand before them", Moffatt.

**εν** + dat. "**before**" - IN [THE MIDST]. Local, expressing space. "In the middle" is literally correct in that the Sanhedrin met in a half-round.

**επυνθανοντο** [**πυνθανομαι**] imperf. "**begin to question them**" - THEY WERE ENQUIRING. The imperfect, being durative, is possibly expressing ongoing action, although speech is often rendered by the imperfect tense. Here the imperfect may be inceptive, stressing the beginning of the action, as NIV.

**εν** + dat. "**by**" - IN = BY. Instrumental, expressing means, as NIV.

**δυναμει** [**ις εως**] dat. "**power**" - [WHAT KIND OF] AUTHORITY, POWER. The sense is unclear. The authorities may be asking the disciples to identify the supernatural force that was used to achieve the healing of the lame man; "how is it that you were able to make the lame man walk?" Yet, it seems more likely that they are asking by what authority they are teaching in the temple.

**ονοματι** [**α ατος**] dat. "**[what] name**" - [IN WHAT KIND OF] NAME. The "name" bears a person's authority; "who gave you the right", TH. The prepositional phrase is introduced by the disjunctive **η**, and so serves as an alternate version of the question "by what authority"; "By what authority *do you preach in the temple?* Who gave you the authority to do this?" - **δυναμει** and **ονοματι** "are used as almost synonymous", Dunn.

**υμεις** "**you**" - YOU [YOU DID THIS]. The emphatic use of the pronoun "you" here implies scorn. "By what authority do people like you do this?"

## v8

iii] Peter's address, v8-12. Following Jesus' instructions, Peter answers boldly, cf., Lk.21:14f. As already noted, the point of the question, posed by the religious authorities, is not overly clear, but if it is "Who put you in charge here?", a question regarding authority, Peter doesn't initially answer it. In his defence, Peter sets his own ground for his *apologia* (here an exposition of the gospel) by confronting his accusers with the sign / miracle of a lame man walking; "If (*for argument's sake*) we have been brought here to trial today for healing a sick man ....", Peterson. Peter then goes on to make the point that Jesus the messiah, now risen from the dead, is the one responsible for healing this lame man (**ουτος**, "this one" - the lame man is present either as a witness or prisoner), and that the apostles are acting in his "name", ie., under his authority.

**τοτε** adv. "**Then**" - THEN. Temporal adverb.

**πλησθεις** [**πιμπλημι**] aor. pas. part. "**filled**" - [PETER] HAVING BEEN FILLED. The participle is most likely adjectival, attributive, limiting Peter, "Peter, who was filled with the Holy Spirit". The aorist indicating punctiliar action; Peter was filled then and there to enable him to fulfil a particular purpose, namely, to speak

with authority. This phrase is constantly worked over in Christian theology and is often given a weight that it cannot carry. On numerous occasions in Acts, people are "filled" and speak. This is very much an Old Testament idea taken up by Luke. Such a use is obviously different to a person who is described as "full" (adjective) of the Spirit, in the sense of being a gifted person, eg., Stephen, 6:5.

**πνευματος [α ατος]** gen. "**with the [Holy] Spirit**" - OF *the* [HOLY] SPIRIT. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / of content; "filled full of."

**προς** + acc. "**to [them]**" - [SAID] TOWARD [THE RULERS]. The preposition is used here instead of a dative of direct object. Peter's address to the Sanhedrin is respectful; "rulers of the people and Elders of Israel", Moffatt - always a good move when facing a hostile crowd, eg., "Friends, Romans and countrymen, ....."

**του λαου [ος]** gen. "**of the people**" - OF THE PEOPLE [AND ELDERS]. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / subordination; "over the people."

## v9

**ει** + ind. "**if**" - IF. Introducing a conditional clause 1st class, where the condition is assumed to be true for argument's sake; "if, *as is the case for argument's sake*, we are being examined today ..... (v10) *then* let it be known to all of you ....." . Note the CEV which assumes an unequivocal statement, "You are questioning us today about a kind deed"; the NIV is to be preferred.

**ανακρινομεθα [ανακρινω]** pres. pas. "**[we] are being called to account**" - [WE] ARE BEING EXAMINED, INTERROGATED, QUESTIONED. "If today we are under examination", Barclay.

**σημερον** adv. "**today**" - TODAY. Temporal adverb.

**επι** + dat. "**for**" - OVER / ON ACCOUNT OF [A KINDNESS]. Here adverbial, expressing reference / respect; "with respect to a kindness." "A benefit we rendered to a cripple", Moffatt.

**ανθρωπου [ος]** gen. "**shown to a man [who was lame]**" - OF A [LAME] MAN. The genitive is adjectival, verbal, objective, after the verbal noun **ευεργεσια**, "a good deed, benefit, kindness"; "benevolent service to a cripple", Berkeley, "rendered to, shown to, ...."

**εν** + dat. "**and are being asked how**" - *to ascertain* IN = BY [WHAT]. Probably instrumental, expressing means; "by what means."

**εσωσται [σωζω]** perf. pas. "**he was healed**" - [THIS ONE] HAS BEEN HEALED / SAVED. The word is used of being saved, rescued, but also of being saved / rescued from disease, so, in this context, "healed, cured".

## v10

**υμιν** dat. pro. "**[know this], you**" - [LET IT BE KNOWN] TO YOU [ALL]. Dative of indirect object. "If you wish to know, then here are the facts", Barrett.

Ἰσραηλ **"of Israel"** - [AND TO ALL THE PEOPLE] OF ISRAEL. This proper genitive is adjectival, possibly possessive / attributive, "the people *who belong to the state of Israel*", although Culy classifies it as a genitive of identification.

οτι "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception, expressing what they need to take note of.

εν + dat. **"in [the name]"** - IN [THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST]. Instrumental use of the preposition, expressing means; "it is by the authority of Jesus Christ.

του Ναζωραιου [ος] gen. **"of Nazareth"** - THE NAZARENE. The genitive may be adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "from Nazareth" = Ἰησοῦς ἀπο Ναζαρετ, Mk. 1:9, although Culy argues that it technically stands in apposition to "Jesus Christ"; "Jesus Christ, the one who comes from Nazareth / the Nazarene."

ὄν rel. pro. **"whom"** - [YOU CRUCIFIED] WHOM. Accusative direct object of the verb "to crucify." Haenchen notes that the two relative clauses in this verse are creed-like formulations. Peter is directly apportioning blame to his audience. It's ὑμεῖς, "you", crucified, not "the Romans crucified." The "you" is emphatic by position and use.

ἤγειρεν [εγειρω] aor. **"raised"** - [GOD] RAISED, LIFTED UP [WHOM]. As is typical of the apostolic preaching, the resurrection of Christ is central to the gospel.

"You did the messiah harm, but God vindicated him by raising him from the dead. Thus, he, the stone rejected, is the cornerstone, the glorified messiah, the king of the kingdom. Consequently, eschatological salvation is not going to be found anywhere else other than through him."

εκ + gen. **"from"** - FROM [THE DEAD]. Expressing separation; "away from."

εν + dat. "-" - IN = BY. As above, instrumental, expressing means; "by this."

τουτω dat. pro. **"that this man"** - THIS *one*. "This person", or "this name", or both = "*it is by this person's authority that this man (one) stands ....*"

οὔτως pro. **"this man"** - THIS ONE [HAS STOOD]. Demonstrative pronoun serving as the nominative subject of the verb "to stand." "It is by his power that this man at our side stands in your presence perfectly well", Phillips.

ενωπιον + gen. **"before"** - IN FRONT OF, BEFORE. Spatial

ὑγιης adj. **"healed"** - [YOU] HEALTHY, WHOLE. Modifying "has stood", so here the adjective serves as an adverb. "Perfectly well", Fitzmyer.

v11

οὔτως pro. **"he is / Jesus [is]"** - THIS *one* [IS]. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. It may read better if expanded, given that "Jesus Christ" is the antecedent of "this *one*"; "Jesus is the one of whom the scripture says", TEV.

ὁ ἐξουθενηθεις [εξουθενεω] aor. pas. part. **"rejected"** - [THE STONE] THE ONE HAVING BEEN DISDAINED, DESPISED, SCORNED, NEGLECTED [BY YOU THE

BUILDERS]. The participle serves as a substantive standing in apposition to "the stone", "the stone, the one scorned", but it may also be treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting "the stone"; "the stone that was rejected", ESV - note how Luke has replaced the LXX **αποδοκιμω**, "to reject", with the verb "to scorn", although the point is clear enough. "The stone that did not measure up to the builder's expectation has become the most important stone in the edifice", Fitzmyer. "The stone which was contemptuously rejected by you builders", Barclay. Note that the preposition **υφ** (**υπο**) + gen. expresses agency, "by you", with the genitive **των οικοδομων**, "the ones building" standing in apposition to "you". Luke seems to have added "by you" to the original quote from Psalm 118:22, although he may be working off a particular LXX version.

**ὁ γενομενος [γινομαι]** aor. mid. part. "**which has become**" - THE ONE HAVING BECOME. The participle is possibly adjectival, attributive, as NIV, or is serving as a substantive standing in apposition to "the stone"; "this person has become ..."

**γωνιας [α]** gen. "**the capstone / cornerstone**" - [*the* HEAD] OF THE CORNER, CORNER *stone*. The genitive is adjectival, probably attributive, limiting "head stone", although Culy argues that it is partitive. This stone is the stone of stumbling that people trip over, and also the stone that falls and crushes. Jesus used this image, Mat.21:42ff, Lk.20:17ff, drawing on Isaiah's rejected stone that now trips people up, 8:14, and Daniel's stone that crushes, 2:35. Peter rightly picks up on the image in his preaching. As for the word itself, it can refer to the corner stone upon which a building is founded, a capstone / keystone at the highest corner of a building, or a keystone in an arch. Either way, it is an essential stone.

## v12

This sentence is somewhat awkward, with two clauses making the same point, the second explaining the first (**γαρ**, "for", used to provide reason). The "nothing other" in "salvation is in nothing other", is "no other name given humanity under heaven", namely, the name of Jesus, his person and authority, while "salvation" is explained as "by which it is necessary to be saved", i.e., the business end of being saved physically, socially and spiritually. The noun **σωτηρια**, "salvation", carries all these meanings, with the stress on "health" more evident in secular circles; "deliverance of human beings from evil, whether physical, political, cataclysmic, moral, or eschatological, and the restoration of them to a state of wholeness", Fitzmyer. Even though the healing / saving event performed on the lame man is still in mind, Luke uses the word here in its more particular theological sense of being rescued from this evil generation, 2:47, so as not to face divine retribution for sin.



**εν** + dat. "**in [no one else]**" - [SALVATION IS NOT] IN [ANY OTHER]. Expressing agency if **αλλω**, "other, another", is taken as masculine, as NIV, "there is salvation through no one else (the person of Jesus)", Berkeley, but if **αλλω** is taken as neuter (**ονομα**, "name" = authority, is neuter) then the preposition expresses means, "by no other means."

**γαρ** "**for**" - FOR [THERE IS]. Here more reason than cause, introducing an explanation of the opening clause.

**ονομα** "**name**" - [NO OTHER] NAME. The "name" represents the person and their abilities, power and authority, and although most translations transliterate the Greek text "no other name", the word "person" or "authority" makes more sense. "Salvation is found in no one else except Jesus, for there is no other person under heaven who has been given the authority to save mankind from the coming day of judgment."

**υπο** + acc. "**under**" - UNDER [HEAVEN]. Spatial. The phrase is idiomatic, very similar to the English idiomatic phrase "under the sun." "No one else in all the world", TEV

**το δεδομενον [διδωμι]** perf. pas. part. "**given**" - HAVING BEEN GIVEN. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "name", "no other name [under heaven] that has been given .."; "has been granted", REB. Probably a theological / divine passive; "given by God."

**εν** + dat. "**to [mankind]**" - IN = AMONG [MEN]. The NIV has assumed that a simple dative is intended, **ανθρωποις**, "to men", "to / for men", dative of interest, advantage (the preposition **εν** is missing in MS D and Latin texts). Local, expressing space / sphere is also possible; "among men." Culy suggests that **διδωμι εν** may be idiomatic, "to dole out / to distribute", which construction is followed by the dative of advantage "for mankind / people." Whatever the fine points of syntax, the sense is clear enough: "Christ is the only source and ground of salvation available for mankind", Barrett.

**εν** + dat. "**by**" - IN = BY [WHICH]. Instrumental, expressing means, as NIV.

**σωθηται [σωζω]** aor. pas. inf. "**[we must] be saved**" - [YOU] TO BE SAVED [IS NECESSARY]. The infinitive "to be saved" serves as the subject of the verb "is necessary", with the pronoun **υμας**, "you", serving as its accusative subject; for a complementary classification, see **πληρωθηται**, 1:16. Barrett makes the point that the intent is not well expressed. We virtually have a conditional clause where the protasis is not expressed; "if we are to be saved at all, it must be in this way, for there is no other." "Jesus Christ is the only source and ground of salvation available for mankind", Barrett. "It is by this name (person) we must be saved", Phillips.

### v13

iv] The deliberation of the religious authorities, v13-17; Peter has proclaimed a prophetic word to the authorities, and they are amazed, but not at the prophetic word, rather at the ability of uneducated men to argue on matters of theology. They would like to respond, but the evidence of the healing is standing in front of them, and so there is nothing they can say. Rather than address Peter's prophetic word, the authorities choose a political solution, and so seek to limit the apostolic *kerygma*. They command the apostles not to speak of Jesus any more.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

θεωρουντες [θεωρω] pres. part. "when they saw" - SEEING, OBSERVING. Along with καταλαβομενοι, "having taken = perceived", the participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

Πετρον [ος] gen. "of Peter" - [THE BOLDNESS, COURAGE] OF PETER [AND JOHN]. As also for "John", the genitive is adjectival, possessive, expressing the possession of a characteristic quality, "Peter's courage", or verbal, subjective, "when they saw the courage exhibited by Peter and John." "When they saw how Peter and John spoke without fear."

οτι "that [they were unschooled]" - [AND HAVING PERCEIVED] THAT [THEY ARE UNLEARNED, UNSCHOOLED MEN AND UNTRAINED, LAY-PERSONS, AMATEURS]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what the authorities perceived.

οτι "that [these men]" - [THEY WERE MARVELLING AND WERE KNOWING THEM] THAT [THEY WERE WITH JESUS]. "They were marvelling" = "They were staggered", Phillips. The pronoun αυτους, "them", serves as the direct object of the imperfect verbs "were marvelling" and "were knowing", with οτι introducing an object clause, complement of "them", serving as a dependent statement of perception expressing what the authorities know about "them", namely that what training they had in theological matters came from "outside the official circle, something the reader of Luke-Acts knows the details of because of Luke's gospel", Bock. Culy classifies οτι here as expegetic of αυτους.

### v14

The inability of the authorities to mount an argument against the apostles fulfils Jesus' words in Luke 21:15. Given the evidence standing before them, there is little they can say.

βλεποντες [βλεπω] "since they could see" - [AND] SEEING [THE MAN]. The participle is adverbial and treated as causal by the NIV, so also Kellum, but possibly temporal, so Culy; "but as they saw the man", Moffatt.

τον τεθεραπευμενον [θεραπερω] perf. mid. part. "who had been healed" - THE ONE HAVING BEEN HEALED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "man", as NIV.

ἔστωτα [ἴστημι] perf. part. "standing there" - STANDING. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the object "man", standing in a double accusative construction, and asserting a fact about the object.

συν + dat. "with" - WITH [THEM]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

αντειπειν [αντιλεγω] aor. inf. "they could say" - [THEY HAD NOTHING] TO SAY IN RESPONSE. The infinitive is exegetical, specifying "nothing"; "they were unable ..... to say anything by way of contradiction", Cassirer.

### v15

κελευσαντες [καλεω] aor. part. "they ordered" - [BUT/AND] HAVING COMMANDED. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, "when they commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another", ESV.

απελθειν [απερχομαι] aor. inf. "to withdraw" - [THEM] TO GO AWAY, DEPART [OUTSIDE THE SANHEDRIN]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the authorities "commanded." The accusative subject of the infinitive is αυτους, "them"; "The religious authorities commanded that they leave the Sanhedrin."

προς + acc. "-" - [THEY WERE CONSIDERING, CONFERRING] TOWARD [ONE ANOTHER]. Here the preposition expresses association / accompaniment. The NIV has the action of conferring as sequential in time; "and then conferred together." Culy notes that an imperfect verb following an aorist, as here, can carry this temporal sense.

### v16

λεγοντες [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to confer"; a Semitic redundant form serving to introduce direct speech.

τί + subj. "what [are we going to do]" - WHAT [SHOULD WE DO]. The interrogative pronoun τί with the deliberative subjunctive ποιησωμεν introduces the rhetorical question, "What shall we do .....?"

τοις ανθρωποις [ος] dat. "with [these] men" - TO [THESE] MEN. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect, "What shall we do *with respect to* these men?" The use of the demonstrative pronoun τουτοις, "these", is probably derogative; "these fellows."

ὅτι "-" - THAT. The function of this conjunction is unclear. At first glance it presents as causal, so Zerwick, but then what of γαρ, "for" (possibly transitional, or emphatic)? Both Culy and Kellum suggest that it introduces a nominal clause,

subject of an assumed verb to-be, with the adjective **φανερων**, "knowing" = "evident", serving as a predicate nominative; "For that a notable sign has been performed through them *is* evident ....", ESV. It could possibly be exegetical, given that the verse certainly specifies the quandary evident in the question posed by religious authorities.

**γαρ** "-" - FOR. Possibly expressing reason, introducing an explanation of the quandary evidenced in the authorities' question, but it may be linked with the **μεν / δε** construction, serving to reinforce a concessive sense, "for indeed ....., but .....", BDAG 629d, so Kellum.

**μεν .... αλλα** "....., **but** ...." - ON THE ONE HAND ..... (v17), BUT ON THE OTHER HAND. Forming an adversative comparative construction where **αλλα** is used instead of **δε**. In gauging the situation, the authorities realize that everyone in Jerusalem may well be aware of the miracle, but at the same time, to limit its impact, they really do need to restrict further public communication on the subject by the apostles.

**δι [δία]** + gen. "-" - [A KNOWN SIGN HAS BECOME] THROUGH [THEM]. Expressing agency.

**τοις κατοικοιςιν [κατοικεω]** "living" - TO [ALL] THE ONES LIVING IN [JERUSALEM *is* MANIFEST]. If the adjective **πασιν**, "all", is treated as a substantive, "everyone", as NIV, then the articular participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "everyone"; "everyone who dwells in Jerusalem." If, as ESV, "all the inhabitants of Jerusalem", then the participle serves as a substantive. The dative is a dative of interest, advantage; "that a remarkable sign has occurred for all the inhabitants of Jerusalem *is* obvious to all."

**αρνεισθαι [αρνεομαι]** pres. inf. "[**we cannot**] deny [*it*]" - [AND WE ARE NOT ABLE] TO DENY *what has happened*. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to be able." "What can we do with these men? By now it's known all over town that a miracle has occurred, and that they are behind it. There is no way we can refute it", Peterson.

v17

**αλλ [αλλα]** "**but**" - BUT. See **μεν .... αλλα** above.

**ινα μη** + subj. "**to [stop]**" - THAT NOT, LEST [IT MAY SPREAD]. Introducing a negated final clause expressing purpose; "in order that it may not spread further ..."

**επι** + acc. "**any further**" - UPON = YET [MORE]. The preposition **επι** + an accusative of measure, expresses the limit of the measure, here with the sense "no further."

**εις** + acc. "**among [the people]**" - INTO [THE PEOPLE]. This preposition expresses movement toward and arrival at.

**απειλησωμεθα [απειλω]** aor. mid. subj. "**we must warn**" - WE MAY WARN [THEM]. Hortatory subjunctive.

**λαλειν [λαλω]** pres. inf. "**to speak**" - [NO MORE] TO SPEAK [UPON THIS NAME]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing what the apostles are warned not to do, namely, "never again to speak to anyone in the name of this person Jesus", Barclay, i.e., not to address the people on matters of religion **επι**, "upon" = "reliant upon", "this name" = reliant upon the personal authority of this name = person = Jesus.

**μηδενι** dat. adj. "**to anyone**" - TO NO *one*. The adjective serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object.

**ανθρωπων [ος]** gen. "-" - OF MEN. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative.

### v18

v] The instruction given to Peter and John and their response, v18-20;. Given the significance of the miracle (the man has been a cripple for more than forty years), and the enthusiastic support of the common people for the apostles, the religious authorities limit their response to commanding that the apostles stop their preaching about Jesus. Maybe they thought that their spiritual authority carried enough weight to silence the apostles. Of course, both Peter and John defiantly resist their threats. The apostles may be theologically illiterate laymen and the Sanhedrin made up of professional theologians, but the apostles have been with Jesus for some three years, and now, risen from the dead, he is still at work; their task is to serve as witnesses, and to this end, they are not going to stop preaching and teaching about Jesus. If obeying Jesus requires disobeying and defying the Sanhedrin, so be it.

**και** "**then**" - AND. Coordinating conjunction; "So they called them in", Barclay.

**καλεσαντες [καλω]** aor. part. "**they called**" - HAVING CALLED [THEM, THEY COMMANDED]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to command"; "they called them and charged them", ESV.

**φθεγγεσθαι [φθεγγομαι]** pres. inf. "**[not] to teach**" - [NOT] TO SPEAK [NOR TO TEACH AT ALL UPON THE NAME OF JESUS]. As with "to teach", the infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing what the authorities commanded.

### v19

**ο δε** "**but**" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, here indicating a change in subject from the authorities to Peter and John.

**αποκριθεντες [αποκρινομαι]** aor. pas. part. "**replied**" - [PETER AND JOHN] HAVING ANSWERED [SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; redundant, but serving as an idiomatic Semitic construction introducing direct speech.

**προς** + acc. "-" - TOWARD [THEM]. Used here instead of a dative of direct object.

**ει** + ind. "-" - IF [IT IS RIGHT BEFORE GOD]. Introducing a 1st. class conditional clause where the proposed condition is assumed to be true; "if, *as is the case*, it is right ....., *then* you decide."

**ακουειν [ακουω]** pres. inf. "**to listen**" - TO LISTEN TO [YOU IS RIGHT BEFORE GOD]. The infinitive serves as the subject of the verb to-be, with **δικαιον**, "right", the predicate nominative of the verb to-be.

**μαλλον η̃ "or"** - MORE = RATHER THAN. The comparative adverb **μαλλον**, "more", and the comparative use of the particle **η̃**, when used together, form a coordinate construction of two alternatives: "x rather than / instead of y."

**του θεου [ος] "to God"** - *to listen to* GOD, *then* [YOU DECIDE]. Genitive of direct object after the assumed infinitive "to listen to."

## v20

**γαρ "as for us"** - FOR. Here introducing a causal clause explaining why Peter and John cannot obey the Sanhedrin's instructions; "because ....."

**ου ..... μη "[we can]not ...."** - [WE ARE] NOT [ABLE] NOT. A litotes, the use of a double negative for a positive; "We are only telling what, personally, we have witnessed", Junkins.

**λαλειν [λαλεω]** pres. inf. "**speaking**" - TO SPEAK [WHAT WE SAW AND HEARD]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to be able."

## v21

vi] The authorities back down, v21-22. Given the confines of the law and the support of the people, the religious authorities can do no more than to again warn the apostles and then let them go. Luke makes a point again of contrasting the stubbornness of the authorities and the positive response of the people, and also, the significance of the sign (the man had been a cripple for over forty years).

**οι δε "-"** - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Peter and John to the religious authorities.

**προσαπειλησαμενοι [προσαπειλω]** aor. mid. part. "**after further threats**" - HAVING THREATENED FURTHER [THEY RELEASED THEM]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV; "When they had further threatened them", ESV.

μηδεν εὕρισκοντες [εὕρισκω] pres. part. "**they could not decide**" - FINDING NOTHING. The participle is adverbial, best treated as causal, "because"; "they let them go since they were unable, because of the people ....., to devise any other means of punishing them", Cassirer.

το "-" - THE [HOW THEY MIGHT PUNISH THEM]. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the interrogative clause, πως + the deliberative subjunctive, "how might we punish them?", into a substantive, accusative object of the participle "finding."

δια + acc. "**because**" - BECAUSE [ALL THE PEOPLE WERE GLORIFYING GOD]. The preposition is causal, introducing a causal clause.

επι + dat. "**for**" - UPON. Here the preposition is probably causal, "on account of what had happened."

τω γεγονοτι [γίνομαι] dat. perf. part. "**what had happened**" - THE THING HAVING HAPPENED. The participle serves as a substantive, dative after επι.

## v22

It seems likely that there is an ellipsis (missing words) in this verse; "Because the man, upon whom the sign of healing was performed, was *a cripple* for more than forty years." This is particularly the case if we take γαρ as causal, "because". Why would the crowd be praising God "because" the healed man was forty years old? What has age got to do with it? They certainly would be praising God if the healed man had been a cripple for over forty years - that's certainly miraculous. Culy suggests that the man's state (crippled) is implicit, but Kellum argues for the traditional exegesis offered by Barrett, "the man was of more years (genitive of definition) than forty (genitive of comparison)."

γαρ "**for**" - FOR [THE MAN]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the crowd is praising God for the healing.

εφ [επι] + acc. "-" - UPON [WHOM]. Local, expressing space, identifying where the action of healing was performed.

της ιασεως [ις εως] "**[miraculously] healed**" - [THE SIGN] OF HEALING [HAD HAPPENED]. The genitive is adjectival, exegetical, specifying "the sign"; "the sign *which consisted of* of healing"

ετων [ος] gen. "**years**" - [WAS *a cripple*] OF YEARS. Emphatic by position at the beginning of the sentence. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / extent of time, limiting an assumed "cripple", so Culy; "for the man ..... was *a cripple over a period of* years, more than forty." "For the man ..... had been that way over the course of more than forty years!", Culy.

πλειονων gen. adj. "**over**" - OF MORE [OF FORTY]. Genitive adjective in agreement with "years", with τεσσαρακοντα, "forty", a genitive of comparison after πλειονων, "years more *than* forty"; "more than forty years *old*."

## 4:23-31

### The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### xij The believers join in prayer

##### Synopsis

Peter and John return to the gathered congregation of believers and relate all that has happened at the temple over the last two days. The congregation then bursts into thanksgiving and prayer, with Luke recording for us what amounts to a word of prophecy from the members. Following the prophetic word, the believers, filled with the Spirit, are fired-up to engage in fervent gospel proclamation.

##### Teaching

Through prayer, God's people are empowered for gospel proclamation.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-22.

ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;

- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;

- *Signs and wonders in Acts*: The relationship between the gospel and signs is an interesting one, particularly with it comes to their application today. For the people of Israel, the proclamation about the realisation / inauguration of the coming kingdom of God, was both in word and sign, as foretold by the prophets, so when you see that "the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor" (Lk.7:22), then you know that the kingdom of God is upon you. The signs were a visible proclamation of the coming kingdom, as much as were the words. So, in Luke's record of a church at prayer, 4:24b-30, it is quite reasonable for the apostolic church to request that God empower their proclamation of the kingdom in both words and signs.

Yet, when it comes to Gentiles, signs and wonders are nothing more than tricks, if not manifestations of the dark arts. So, it is evident in Acts that signs and wonders recede into the background as the mission moves from Jew to Gentile. With Gentiles, Paul argues his case rather than performs miracles. If there is a sign to Gentiles, it is love; "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another", Jn.13:35.



So, with respect to the interpretation of the intercession of the congregation in 4:24b-30, on one hand, Luke provides a model of a Christian congregation at prayer, both in form and content, but on the other hand, an *is* is not necessarily an *ought* / a description is not a prescription. Gospel communication rightly stands at the forefront of a congregation's intercession ("Thy kingdom come"), but this in words rather than signs and wonders.

As a side note, it is often argued that in the gospels and Acts, wonders, miracles, healings and the like, serve to authenticate the messenger and his message, but it is far more likely that they are the message - signposts of the kingdom; "If I by the finger of God drive out demons then the kingdom of God has come upon you", Lk.11:20.

• *Prophecy in the New Testament*: The role of a New Testament prophet remains somewhat unclear. We know from Acts that there were predictive prophets at work, eg., Agabus, 11:28, 21:10. There may well have been prophets similar to the Old Testament prophets, functioning alongside the Apostles to address primary revelation. This would imply that they, with the Apostles, provided the foundation for the New Testament Canon.

It is very interesting to note how the apostle Paul compares the ministry of tongue-speaking with prophecy in First Corinthians chapter 14. It is likely that the prophecy referred to here, represents a secondary form - a word-ministry of edification, exhortation and consolation for the church, cf., 1Cor.14:3. The prophet that Paul speaks of is not like an Old Testament prophet entrusted with primary revelation; Paul's prophet is a minister of the Word; a prophet who possesses the gifts to enable them to upbuild, encourage and console within the frame of a Biblical Word ministry.

It is likely that the congregation's intercession, recorded in Acts 4:24-30, takes the form of a prophetic word.

iii] Structure: *The believers join in prayer*:

- The apostles make their report, v23-24a;
- A prophetic word / prayer, v24b-30;
  - Ascription to God, v24b;
  - Scriptural underpinning, Ps.2:1, v25-26;
  - Fulfilment, v27-28;
  - Petition, v29-30.
- Filled for proclamation, v31.

iv] Interpretation:

Set free, the apostles head back to the Christian fellowship and recount all that has happened to them (τοὺς ἰδιοὺς, "their own *people*", the

Christian fellowship, or apostles / "their own *place*", a meeting place in Jerusalem, or the temple court where the believers regularly gathered). In response, the congregation bursts into a prophetic word of praise and thanksgiving. Although the religious authorities have set upon the apostles, they have actually set themselves against *του κυρου*, "the Lord" (Yahweh), and his *Χριστου*, "Christ / messiah". In standing against God's anointed, they have even aligned themselves with the secular powers. Yet, none of this frustrates the divine will, and so the prophetic word concludes with the prayer that, despite the opposition of the powers of darkness, the congregation of believers will be empowered to witness boldly. Their prayer is heard, and they are filled with the Spirit for ministry. Empowered by the Spirit, they set out to proclaim the gospel boldly.

As already noted, Luke uses his Acts of the Apostles as a manual on how to do church, with the *how to do* focused on Jesus' instruction, "you will be (and you will be able to be) my witnesses ..... to the ends of the earth." Here again, in this episode, Luke focuses on the business of church. Yes, it is in conflict with religious and secular authorities, as was Jesus, but this can never hinder God's will when it comes to the communication of the gospel. The business of church is the communication of the gospel, and to this end it will be divinely empowered. From Luke's perspective, the means of endowment for mission is prayer - like Jesus, the early church is in constant communication with God.

Obviously, Luke wasn't present to hear the prophetic word delivered on this occasion. As Dunn notes, "Luke is using the liberty of a dramatic historian, not attempting to act as a modern archivist". None-the-less, Luke may well be working off a model prayer commonly used in worship in the early church, a prayer that may well have its roots in the early days of the Jerusalem fellowship. There is the possibility that prayers found in the OT may have influenced the shape of this model, cf., Hezekiah's prayers, Isa.37:16-20, 2Kgs.19:15-19.

It is interesting to note that the prayer / prophetic word is directed to God, rather than Jesus, with Jesus identified as God's servant through whom God works. It is a word of praise and thanksgiving, acknowledging God's sovereignty, wisdom and counsel, and concluding with a petition, invoking "God's support for the coming need to proclaim the Christian message with boldness and courage", Fitzmyer.

v] Homiletics: *Going on with the gospel*

In Australia, during the 2022 Victorian State election, the Premier, Daniel Andrews, took an Anglican church to task.



Andrews attacked the church of their socially regressive views, such as their opposition to abortion and gay sex. Mind you, this opposition was identified by a journalist who found two published sermons on the subject over the last seven year, so the church certainly didn't have a fetish on these social issues. In the furore, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Rev. Peter Comensoli, spoke out to make the point that the sanctity of life and sex within heterosexual marriage, are fundamental beliefs for the Christian church. Mr. Andrews, a professed Roman Catholic, but also a champion for WOKE Australia (those of the political left focused on social injustice and discrimination), did not apologise.

In this age of affluence (fading affluence??), generation X+ is abandoning the Christian foundations of Western civilisation for the equity of equality. The Christian church is increasingly viewed as a regressive social institution. The march to marginalise Christianity does not bode well for Western culture, but for the church itself, being marginalised and oppressed is nothing new. Of course, the temptation we face is that we adjust our beliefs to retain acceptance in the wider community, but there is no sanctity in syncretism.

Luke, in his Acts of the Apostles, would have us note the way the Christian fellowship in Jerusalem reacted to the incarceration and inquisition of Peter and John. They recognised the sovereignty of God and thanked him for providing an opportunity for gospel proclamation in the context of oppression. To this they prayed that they too, with Peter and John, might be enabled to proclaim the gospel. And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and went forth proclaiming the gospel with boldness. And may it be so for us!

### Text - 4:23

The believers join in prayer, v23-31: i] The apostles make their report, v23. Peter and John return **προς τους ιδιους**, "to their own", to report, presumably to the Christian fellowship, but possible to the other apostles. Of course, **τους ιδους** may even be "their own *place / home*", but this is unlikely.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**απολυθεντες [απολυω]** pres. pas. part. "**on [their release]**" - HAVING BEEN RELEASED [THEY CAME TOWARD THE OWN = THEIR OWN]. The participle is adverbial, best taken as temporal, "When they were released", ESV.

**οσα** pro. "**[reported] all that**" - [AND TOLD, REPORTED] AS MUCH AS = WHAT *things*. Introducing a headless relative clause expressing what was reported.

**προς** + acc. "**to [them]**" - [THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE ELDERS SAID] TOWARD [THEM]. The preposition is used here instead of a dative of indirect object.

### v24a

Those present, on hearing the report, burst into praise with a prophetic word that exegetes the apostles' experience and seeks to progress it for those present.

**οι δε** "-" - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional construction, indicating a change in subject from Peter and John to the congregation of believers.

**ακουσαντες [ακουω]** aor. part. "**when they heard this**" - HAVING HEARD [THEY LIFTED UP IN ONE ACCORD *the = their* VOICE TOWARD GOD AND SAID]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal. The presence of the article **οι** may indicate that it serves as a substantive, "the ones having heard", but this is unlikely.

### v24b

ii] A prophetic word / prayer, v24b-30. a) Ascription to God, v24b. Addressing a prayer to God is reflected in other prayers in Acts, cf., 14:15, 17:24. Addressing God as creator reflects a pattern of prayers found throughout the scriptures, cf., Isa.37:16.

**συ** pro. "**you**" - [MASTER,] YOU. Vocative, standing in apposition to "Master".

**ο ποιησας [ποιω]** aor. part. "**made**" - THE ONE HAVING MADE [THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA]. If we take the pronoun **συ**, "you", as a substantive, then the articular participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "you"; "you who made the heavens ....." If we assume a verb to-be, then the articular participle serves as a substantive, predicate nominative of the verb to-be; "you *are* the one who made ....."

τα "-" - [AND ALL = EVERYTHING] THE [IN THEM]. The article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase "in them" into an attributive modifier of the adjective "all", which serves as a substantive, direct object of the participle "having made"; "and everything which is in them."

## v25

b) Scriptural underpinning, v25-26. The "rage / arrogance" and "emptiness" of the secular city, in its confrontation (παριστημι, "to take a stand", κατά, "against") with God's messiah, is revealed in the inspired words of David, words guided by the Holy Spirit.

ὁ ... ειπων [λεγω] aor. part. "**you spoke**" - THE ONE HAVING SPOKEN. Coordinate with the participle ὁ ποιησας, "having made", v24, so either adjectival, attributive, limiting "you", "you who spoke ...", or as a substantive, predicate nominative of an assumed verb to-be, "you *are* the one who spoke."

δια + gen. "**by [the Holy Spirit]**" - THROUGH [*the* HOLY SPIRIT]. Instrumental, expressing agency.

στοματος [α ατος] gen. "**through the mouth**" - OF THE MOUTH [OF DAVID, OF SERVANT OF YOU]. The function of the genitive is unclear. It may assume an instrumental δια, or serve as a genitive of means, as NIV, or it may be adjectival, exegetical, specifying the means by which God has spoken through the Holy Spirit, i.e., in the Psalm of David 2:1; "who spoke through the Holy Spirit in the words of our ancestor David", Barclay. The genitive proper "David" is adjectival, possessive, and the genitive "servant of you / your servant" stands in apposition to "David".

ινατι "**Why**" - WHY [*did the* NATIONS RAGE AND *the* PEOPLE IMAGINE EMPTY THINGS]? Crasis, ινα τι, "for what reason, why?"

## v26

της γης [η] gen. "**of the earth**" - [THE KINGS] OF THE EARTH [STAND BESIDE = TOOK A STAND]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / subordination, "over the earth." "The kings of the earth prepare for war", CEV.

επι + acc. "**[band] together**" - [AND THE RULERS GATHERED TOGETHER] UPON = AT [THE IT = THE SAME PLACE]. Spatial. Culy notes that the phrase επι το αυτο virtually means "together", and is somewhat redundant given the συν prefix of the verb "to gather together." "The leaders have assembled themselves in the one place", Cassirer.

κατα + gen. "**against**" - AGAINST [THE LORD AND] AGAINST [THE CHRIST]. Here expressing opposition.

**αυτου** "his [anointed one]" - OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive / relational, as NIV, or verbal, subjective, "against him whom he has anointed", Cassirer, ie., the Messiah, Jesus.

## v27

c) Fulfilment, v27-28. In fulfilment of the messianic Psalm of David, the "nations" (Gentiles = Rome), "the peoples" (the people of Israel), and "the kings, rulers" (Herod and Pilate) **συνηχθησαν**, "gathered together = plotted / united together", **επι** "against", God's Holy One, and yet, inevitably, what happened was nothing more than what God had foreordained. Even in the rage of the secular city, God's will is fulfilled - they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.

**γαρ** "-" - FOR. More reason than cause; introducing an explanation of the Psalm.

**επ [επι]** + acc. "**indeed**" - UPON [TRUTH]. The preposition here is adverbial, turning the noun "truth" into an adverb, "truly". The phrase **επ αληθειας** is idiomatic, used a number of times by Luke.

**τε και** "**and**" - BOTH [HEROD] AND [PONTIUS PILATE]. Forming a correlative construction; "both .... and ...."

**συν** + dat. "**with [the Gentiles]**" - WITH [*the* NATIONS AND *the* PEOPLE OF ISRAEL IN THIS CITY]. Expressing accompaniment / association. Culy classifies the proper genitive **Ισραηλ**, "of Israel", as a genitive of identification.

**επι** + acc. "**[to conspire] against**" - [GATHERED TOGETHER = PLOTTED] UPON = AGAINST [THE HOLY SERVANT OF YOU, JESUS WHOM YOU ANOINTED *as messiah*]. Here expressing opposition. It is unclear why Luke has used **επι** here to express opposition instead of **κατα** found in the quote in v26 - probably just stylistic.

## v28

**ποιησαι [ποιεω]** aor. inf. "**they did**" - TO DO. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, modifying the verb "to gather together"; "they were gathered together ..... in order to do ...."

**οσα** pro. "**what**" - AS MUCH AS = WHATEVER [THE HAND OF YOU AND THE WILL OF YOU]. The pronoun introduces a headless relative clause object of the infinitive "to do"; "to do to your anointed one all that (whatever) your might and purpose had already decided to do."

**προωρισεν [προοριζω]** aor. "**decided beforehand**" - DECIDED BEFOREHAND, PREDESTINED, FOREORDAINED. Barrett says of this verb that "Luke is thinking not of a general determinism, but of the special disclosures of God's purpose in the story of Jesus", so Barth, so similar to **προκαταγγελλω**, "to foretell", 3:18, 7:52, 13:24. Yet, we are on safer ground if we assume that Luke

is stressing the exercise of God's sovereign will in the events. "Peter has expressed the confidence that God is able to carry out his purpose even through rebellious human beings who do not accept his revealed will", Peterson D.

**γενεσθαι [γίνομαι]** aor. inf. "**should happen**" - TO DO. Object of the verb "to decide" / dependent statement of perception expressing what was decided, namely, "that all this should happen."

## v29

d) Petition, v29-30. Just as the secular city was gathered against God's **παιδα**, "servant", the messiah, so it is gathered against God's **δουλοις**, "servants", the Christian community. Just as God's "servant" was empowered to proclaim the gospel, so may God's "servants" be empowered to proclaim. The first part of the petition opens with the imperative "look upon", in the sense of "concern yourself with", ie., take note of the situation we have here where the powers of darkness are aligning, as evidenced in the **απειλας**, "threats", of the Sanhedrin. Then comes the request for action, namely that God empower his people for witness in the midst of their threats.

**και τα νυν** "Now" - AND THE NOW. This construction is only found in Acts and twice in the LXX. Culy suggests that it serves to introduce the main point.

**αυτων** gen. pro. "**their [threats]**" - [LORD, LOOK UPON THE THREATS] OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "their threats", or verbal, subjective, "the threats *which are made by* them."

**τοις δουλοις [ος]** dat. "**[enable your] servants**" - [AND GIVE] THE SERVANTS [OF YOU]. Dative of indirect object.

**λαλειν [λαλεω]** pres. inf. "**to speak**" - TO SAY [THE WORD OF YOU]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of cause expressing what they want God to **δος**, "give" = do for them, namely, "to boldly speak the word." "Make us brave enough to speak your message", CEV. The "word / message" is obviously the gospel.

**μετα** + gen. "**with [great boldness]**" - WITH [ALL BOLDNESS]. The preposition is adverbial here, turning "all boldness" into an adverb of manner, modifying the infinitive "to speak"; "to speak **boldly**", "fearlessly and freely to speak your word", Barclay.

## v30

The Greek in this verse is awkward and leads to a variety of interpretations. Presumably, the verse is controlled by the verb **δος**, "to give", from v29, so providing a second element to the congregation's prayer. As in v29, an infinitive introduces a dependent statement of cause expressing what the congregation wants God to give them, but there are two infinitives. The first infinitive

**ΕΚΤΕΙΛΕΙΝ**, "to stretch out", seems the likely suspect, but it stands with **ΕΝ ΤΩ**, a construction which usually introduces a temporal clause. This temporal clause may stand with the first request, that God give / enable them to proclaim the gospel "while you stretch out your hand for healings", or the second request. The intended sense is not clear. The second clause, introduced by a coordinate **ΚΑΙ**, is controlled by the second infinitive **ΓΙΝΕΣΘΑΙ**, "to become", and it is likely that it is this infinitive which serves to form the second dependent statement of cause expressing what the congregation wants God to give them, namely, "to become" = "the ability to perform" signs and wonders in the name of Jesus.

However we handle the two infinitives in v30, and the **ΕΝ ΤΩ** construction, Luke's point is simple enough; in v29 the gathered congregation (apostles??) ask that God **δοῦς**, "give", to them the ability to stand against the bluff and bluster of darkness and proclaim the gospel boldly without compromise. Now, in v29, they ask that God, while powerfully intervening, gives to them the ability to perform miracles through the name of his Holy Servant Jesus. See above, *Signs and Wonders in Acts*

**ΕΝ ΤΩ** + inf. "-" - IN THE [TO STRETCH OUT THE HAND OF YOU]. Introducing a temporal clause, contemporaneous time. The presence of numerous variants indicates the confusion caused by the opening clause.

**ΕΙΣ** + acc. "**to [heal]**" - INTO = FOR [HEALING]. Here the preposition is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to heal."

**ΓΙΝΕΣΘΑΙ [ΓΙΝΟΜΑΙ]** pres. inf. "**perform**" - [AND] TO BECOME [SIGNS AND WONDERS]. Introducing an object clause (object of the verb **δοῦς**, "to give", v29) / dependent statement of cause expressing what the congregation wants God to give them.

**ΔΙΑ** + gen. "**through [the name]**" - THROUGH [THE NAME OF THE HOLY SERVANT OF YOU]. Instrumental, expressing means. The prepositions vary with this phrase: **ἐπι**, "upon" = based upon the authority of Jesus; **ἐν**, "in" = on / by the authority of Jesus; and here an instrumental **δια**, "by means of / through", the authority of Jesus. The standout is "baptized into (**εἰς**) the name of Jesus."

**Ἰησοῦ [ος]** "**Jesus**" - JESUS. Genitive standing in apposition to "of you."

### v31

iii] Filled for proclamation, v31. As on the day of Pentecost, the infilling of the Spirit has a physical manifestation (here the **τοπος**, "place", was shaken), and a prophetic manifestation (the **λογον**, the divine mystery / the gospel, is proclaimed "boldly"). Presumably, those present spill out from where they are meeting to engage with those nearby. Luke hasn't told us exactly who they are, or where they are.



δεηθεντων [δεομαι] gen. aor. pas. part. "**after [they] prayed**" - [AND THEY] HAVING PRAYED. The genitive participle and its genitive subject αυτων, "they", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

ἦσαν συνηγμενοι [συναγω] perf. mid. part. "**where they were meeting**" - [THE PLACE IN WHICH] THEY HAVING BEEN ASSEMBLED [WAS SHAKEN]. The perfect participle with the imperfect verb to-be forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction, possibly emphasising durative aspect.

του ... πνευματος [α ατος] gen. "**with the [Holy] Spirit**" - [AND EVERYONE WAS FILLED] OF THE [HOLY] SPIRIT. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content, as NIV.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**[the word] of God**" - [AND THEY WERE SPEAKING THE WORD] OF GOD. The genitive may be classified as adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic, "the word *which is pertaining to* God", or verbal, objective, "the word *which* God *reveals*", or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "the word *which is from* God." Either way, the sense is clear enough.

μετα + gen. "**boldly**" - WITH [BOLDNESS]. Adverbial use of the preposition, modifying the imperfect verb "they were speaking", as NIV.

## 4:32-37

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### xii] The life of the early Christians

##### Synopsis

Luke has already described the life of the Christian community in Jerusalem, 2:42-47, and does so again in the passage before us. He notes the communality practised in the church, their sharing, such that there was "no needy person among them" - God's grace was powerfully at work in them. To this he gives the example of Barnabas who sold a field and gave the money to the apostles. Luke also notes the word ministry of the apostles, with special reference to their testimony concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

##### Teaching

The followers of *the way* are marked by love for their brothers and sisters in the Lord.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-22.

ii] Structure: *The life of the early church*:

A sharing community, v32;

A testifying community, v33;

A caring community, v34-35;

The example of Barnabas, v36-37.

iii] Interpretation:

Luke's first description of the Jerusalem church focused on their being Spirit-filled; they were alive with the Spirit. In the passage before us, Luke describes the continuation of congregational life, with particular reference to the church's experiment with communalism.

Dunn wonders whether Luke is looking at the past through rose-tinted glasses - the human tendency to view the past as the-good-old-days. This seems a little harsh, since Luke is probably intent on showing how the lives of the Spirit-filled members of *the way* are renewed. For the believers in Jerusalem, it is no longer all about self, but about using one's resources for the needs of their brothers and sisters. Of course, those Luke interviewed for his account of life in the Jerusalem fellowship may well be the ones wearing rose-tinted glasses!

It is also worth noting how Luke has offset this description of communal life with the following narrative on the sin of Ananias and

Sapphira, 5:1-6. The comparison between the two narratives is not the sharing, and non-sharing, of resources, but integrity. Luke underlines an important principle with respect to the ownership of property when Peter says "While the property remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal?" The story of Ananias and Sapphira reminds us that the example set by Barnabas, although a worthy one, it is not obligatory.

Setting aside the degree to which the church in Jerusalem practised communalism, it is clear that they were a loving church, caring for each other's practical needs, and that they were a testifying church, proclaiming the good news of Christ's resurrection. So again, Luke sets a model before us on how to do church, but not a model that requires a literal imitation.

*Communalism in the early church:* It is unclear why there is a need to generate funds at this moment, although Jervell has argued that the increased numbers of disciples, who have come in from Galilee to reside in Jerusalem, has prompted the need to pool resources. It has been suggested that Paul's collection for the saints in Jerusalem is directly a result of church members selling productive assets and so becoming destitute, although it may be prompted by a more immediate need - around this time there was a famine in Palestine. A theological imperative, in fulfilment of prophecy, is more likely - Gentiles bearing gifts to Israel.

If history is any guide, the driving force to create heaven on earth is usually eschatological. This is a community washed with realised eschatology; the kingdom is no longer at hand, it is here. They have only just witnessed the fulfilment of the long-awaited covenant promises in the outpouring of the Spirit. What is the point in possessing the debris of human innovation when it is all about to be consumed in the full realisation of the heavenly kingdom. Even Paul gives the impression that Jesus' return is imminent in his early epistles, and certainly the author of John's gospel feels it is necessary to address the belief that Jesus would return before the death of the beloved disciple. So, this is a community yet to settle down with a view of inaugurated eschatology.

It seems that Christianity soon took on the form of a House-Church movement, rather than communes like the Essenes, with members going about their lives in much the same way as the wider society. So, up until the Roman emperor Constantine, secular life was the dominant life-style of the Christian community. This doesn't mean that the church wasn't a strong serving community. In truth, persecution had welded believers together. The fact that Christianity became an illegal religion, and at times

persecuted, may well explain why communalism was never developed in the first centuries.

Once Christianity was adopted as the established church of the empire, the sense of community in the once struggling and persecuted Christian fellowships was lost. Monasticism was a response to the secularization of the church. St.Pachomius, a soldier under Constantine, was the founder of the Monastic movement. At his life's end, there were 7,000 believers living in communities. His order was based on prayer and work. The monasteries soon became self-sufficient and withdrew from society.

With the fall of the Roman Empire, monasteries became bastions for the preservation of society within a disintegrating civilization. They soon took on the role of converting and humanizing society.

#### iv] Homiletics: *Communalism*

Communalism is an interesting social system. It takes on various forms, but generally it involves the common ownership, or at least use of, personal assets. All share the common resources of the group, or society. Many people have tried to form communal societies, but other than the Christian ones, most fail within a generation. Christian communal fellowships will often survive for many generations, although in the end, they tend to fail; Human sinfulness (selfishness) has its way.

Christian communes often emerge out of a strong eschatological hope. There is a sense where the secular society is falling apart and believers, sensing that the end is near, ban together to stand before the dark days ahead. This feeling was certainly driving the Jerusalem church. The early believers, including Paul himself, initially believed that the second coming of Christ would be in the lifetime of the apostles and would be accompanied by painful tribulations.

When I lived in Comboyne, a very small isolated village, many of my neighbours were into developing a self-sustaining lifestyle. They saw the collapse of Western civilisation as an imminent reality. Maybe they are right! Still, when it all collapses and everyone is starving, we all know where the hoards will head.

It is quite possible that the Jerusalem church was not actually communal in the sense of communist. They were certainly sharing resources for the common good and particularly for the work of the gospel, but they probably didn't hold everything in common. The evidence points to the continued ownership of homes and businesses by individual members. The sale and distribution of surplus assets is most likely what is described in our reading today. As Peter later said to Ananias, "Didn't it (the land) belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't

the money at your disposal?" Acts 5:4. So, common ownership was not a community rule. Members sold and gave as they willed. Barnabas is presented as a notable example of generosity rather than the norm. So what we have is loving generosity driven by the immediacy of Christ's return.

Most believers don't seek community at the level of commune, but church is still community, and so, we can honour our Lord by extending ourselves in the sharing of our time, talent and tinkle for the upbuilding of our Christian fellowship and outreach to the world.

### Text - 4:32

They held all things in common, v32-37: i] A sharing community, v32. "All the believers" (literally "the community of believers") were of a common mind and demonstrated this fact by putting their property, most likely their surplus property, at the disposal of fellow members.

The Greek is somewhat awkward, given that the sentence begins with a package of genitives. The subject is "heart and soul", modified / limited by the genitive noun "multitude", which itself is limited / modified by the genitive participle "believers"; "the heart and soul of the multitude of believers was one."

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative; "And the multitude of them", AV.

του ... πληθους [ος] gen "all" - [THE HEART AND SOUL] OF THE MULTITUDE. The genitive is probably adjectival, possessive, "belonging to", but possibly adverbial, reference / respect; "and with respect to the multitude of believers, they were one *in* heart and soul." As the word is sometimes used of a civic or religious gathering, Luke may mean "congregation", even "assembly (church)", or better, "community", but then, he may be making the point that the believing congregation is now "a multitude." As for "heart and soul", given that the "heart", for a Jew, equates with "the seat of reason / intellect / thinking", and the "soul" the "centre of will / decision making", we may be better to go with "all felt the same way about everything", CEV. Van der Horst suggests that "one soul" = "one spirit", expressing a real friendship - "they are committed to each other in terms of resources", Bock.

των πιστευσαντων [πιστευω] gen. aor. part. "the believers" - OF THE ONES HAVING BELIEVED [WERE ONE]. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive / wholative; "the whole group of those who believed", NRSV. "The whole body of those who had placed their faith in Jesus", Barclay.

τι acc. pro. "[no one]" - [AND NOT ONE WAS SAYING *that*] CERTAIN = ANY. Accusative of respect, "no one was saying *with respect to* any of their

possessions"; "there was not one among them who claimed anything he possessed as his own property", Cassirer.

των ὑπαρχόντων [ὑπαρχῶ] gen. pres. part.. "of [their] possessions" - OF THE POSSESSIONS [*belonging TO HIM*]. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. As for the dative pronoun αὐτῶ, "to him", it serves as a dative of possession, as NIV.

εἶναι [εἶμι] pres. inf. "was [their own]" - TO BE [HIS OWN]. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they were saying, namely, that with respect to their possessions, they are not their own; "no one claimed their belongings just for themselves", Berkeley.

ἀλλ [ἀλλά] "but" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "not ....., but ....."

αὐτοῖς dat. pro. "they had" - [EVERYTHING COMMON WAS] TO HIM. Dative of possession. "Each member regarded his private estate as being at the community's disposal", Bruce.

### v33

ii] A testifying community, v33. The apostles continued their preaching ministry. Again, the focus of the apostolic preaching is on the "resurrection of the Lord Jesus" rather than the cross of Christ. The focus of the gospel is an empty tomb, such that in Christ's life we find life. God's favour ("grace") continues to support the ministry of the apostles. The power of the message, at times expressed visibly in miraculous signs, is probably what is meant by "much grace was upon them."

δυναμει [ις εως] dat. "with [great] power" - [AND] IN [GREAT] STRENGTH, POWER / CAPABILITY. The dative is probably adverbial, of manner, as NIV. Probably in the sense of how their preaching affected the crowds; "with great effect", Weymouth.

ἀπεδίδουν [ἀποδιδῶμι] imperf. "continued" - [THE APOSTLES] WERE GIVING. The durative imperfect possibility indicates ongoing testimony.

το μαρτυριον [ον] "to testify to" - TESTIMONY. Accusative direct object of the verb "to give." The witness / testimony may be specific to the resurrection, a witness of God's vindication of Jesus as the Christ; "the apostles powerfully asserted their personal knowledge of the fact of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus", Barclay. Yet, it does seem more likely that this is a witness to the gospel, the central statement of which concerns the resurrection of Christ. This is good news in that, given that he lives, we may live also. Of course, with the good news comes the bad news; "He has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him for the dead", Acts 17:31.

της αναστασεως [ις εως] gen. "the resurrection" - OF THE RESURRECTION. The genitive is adverbial, reference / respect; "with respect to the resurrection."

του κυριου [ος] gen. "of the Lord" - OF THE LORD [JESUS]. The genitive is usually treated as verbal, objective or subjective, depending on whether we view the verbal noun "resurrection" acting on Jesus (ie., the Father is the agent of Jesus' resurrection), or enacted by Jesus. Possibly just easier to classify the genitive as adjectival, possessive, identifying a derivative characteristic, "pertaining to the Lord." "Jesus" stands in apposition to "Lord".

χαρις [ις εως] "[much] grace / God's grace [was powerfully at work]" - [AND GREAT] GRACE. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. It is possible that the grace / favour toward the apostles comes from the crowd, "they were all accorded great respect", NJB, but divine favour is more likely; "God poured rich blessings on them all", TEV, or in a more general sense, "a wonderful spirit of generosity pervaded the whole fellowship", Phillips.

επι + acc. "upon / in" - [WAS] UPON [THEM ALL]. Spatial. At first glance, the "all of them" seems to refer to the apostles, but, given v32, the apostles and the multitude is more likely.

### v34

iii) A caring community, v34-35. The free-will offerings of community members, gained by the sale of (excess??) assets, was given to the apostles to distribute to church members in need. The distribution of offerings was later delegated to "the seven" - the deacons, cf., chapter 6. This allowed the apostles to get on with their preaching ministry. This was a church driven by a fervent belief in the *coming one* and so immediate needs transcend the desire to build up a property portfolio for retirement. As it turned out, God's judgement upon Jerusalem, with the sacking of the city in 70AD by the Romans, devastated property assets in and around the city.

γαρ "that" - FOR. More reason than cause, explanatory, providing the evidence that God's grace was upon them; "that was seen in the fact that there was not anyone in need among them", Culy.

ενδενης adj. "needy" - [NOT CERTAIN = ANY] IN NEED, NEEDY. Predicate adjective; "None of their members was ever in want", NJB.

εν + dat. "among [them]" - IN [THEM]. Local, expressing space, as NIV.

γαρ "for" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why there were no needy among them, "because .....".

κτητορες [ωρ ορος] "owned" - [AS MANY AS WERE] OWNERS, POSSESSORS. Predicate nominative; a hapax legomenon, once only use in the NT. "All who possessed estates and houses", Barclay.

χωριων [ον] gen. "land" - OF LAND [OR HOUSES]. The genitive may be classified as adjectival, verbal, objective, but it can also be treated as attributive, limiting "owners"; "landowners / homeowners." Most property was owned by either the rich, about 5% of the population, or the middle-class, about 10% of the population.

πωλουντες [πωλεω] pres. part. "sold [*them*, brought]" - SELLING [*them*, WERE BRINGING]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb εφερον, "to bring", but also possibly adverbial, temporal; "many who owned land or houses, when they sold them they brought the proceeds ...." The present tense indicates ongoing action, it is what they normally did.

των πιπρασκομενων [πιπρασκω] gen. pres. pas. part. "[the money] from the sales" - [THE PROCEEDS] OF THE THINGS BEING SOLD. The participle serves as a substantive, with the genitive adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, limiting "money".

### v35

παρα + acc. "at" - [AND THEY WERE PLACING *the proceeds*] BESIDE. Spatial. "Entrusting it to the apostles' care."

των αποστολων [ος] gen. "the apostles' [feet]" - [THE FEET] OF THE APOSTLES. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. A literal "laid at the apostles' feet" is possible, although the language is deferential, serving to emphasise the power and authority of the apostles who stand at the centre of the Christian community.

εκαστω dat. adj. "to anyone" - [AND THEY WERE DISTRIBUTING] TO EACH. The adjective serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object. Then they would give the money to anyone who needed it", CEV.

καθοτι αν "as" - AS, ACCORDING AS [CERTAIN = ANYONE WAS HAVING NEED]. This construction is used adverbially, expressing repetition. The construction is usually formed with an imperfect verb, as here, and serves as the Koine Gk. construction for the classical optative used for iterative / repeated action, cf., Zerwick #358. Wherever and whenever there was a need, it was met.

### v36

ii] The example of Barnabas, v36-37. Joseph's Christian name was Barnabas, son of encouragement. He was a Cypriote Jew with relatives and land in Jerusalem. As a Levite, he shouldn't have owned any land, but by this time the rule was ignored. By the first century, Levites lived in the same manner as their fellow Jews, and only some were employed to serve in the temple in a managerial capacity. Barnabas is given as an example of someone who acts with communal generosity.



τω γενει [ος] dat. "**from [Cyprus]**" - [AND JOSEPH, A LEVITE,] BY NATIONALITY, RACE, KIN [CYPRIAN]. A dative reference / respect; "with respect to his race, Cyprian." There was a large Jewish population in Cyprus and obviously Joseph / Barnabas is an early convert. Being a native of Cyprus, Paul included him in his first missionary journey. Barnabas returned to Cyprus after falling out with Paul. Barnabas stands as an example for the church, being dedicated to mission and mutual care.

ὁ επικληθεις [επικαλεω] aor. pas. part. "**whom [the apostles] called**" - THE ONE HAVING BEEN NAMED, CALLED BY A TITLE OR SURNAME [BARNABAS]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Joseph", as NIV.

απο + gen. "-" - FROM = BY [THE APOSTLES]. A rare instrumental use of this preposition to express agency; "called by the apostles Barnabas." Of course, it may just take its usual sense of source / origin, in that the name comes from the apostles. His Christian name "Barnabas" is an apostolic nickname, a play on words from the Semitic "prophet".

εστιν μεθερμηνευομενον [μεθερμηνευω] pres. pas. part. "**[which] means**" - [WHICH] BEING TRANSLATED. A present paraphrastic construction.

υιος [ος] "**son**" - SON. The word "son" is used here in the sense of inheriting a particular personal quality. So "son of encouragement" would mean that Barnabas possessed a gift of encouragement as if inheriting it from the father of encouragement.

παρακλησεως [ις εως] gen. "**of encouragement**" - OF ENCOURAGEMENT. The genitive is adjectival, relational. Possibly "son of Nebo", so Conzelmann, although unlikely since "Nebo" is a Babylonian god, so more likely the Semitic "son of the prophet", so "son of exhortation / refreshment / consolation / encouragement / comfort."

v37

πωλησας [πωλεω] aor. part. "**sold**" - [A FIELD BEING TO HIM] HAVING SOLD [*it*, HE CARRIED = BROUGHT THE WEALTH = PROCEEDS]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "brought", the subject of which is "Joseph"; "because he owned a field, he sold *it* and brought the proceeds ....." "Sold his farm", Phillips.

υπαρχοντος [υπαρχω] gen. pres. part. "**he owned**" - [A FIELD] BEING, HAVING BELONGING, POSSESSING [TO HIM]. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "field", forms a genitive absolute construction, most likely causal; "because he owned a field." The υπο prefix verb "to be, possess" will often take a dative of direct object, but best classified as a dative of possession. Note that Luke normally uses the word χωπιον for a piece of land. It is possible

that this uncommon word means not so much of a piece of land, but a property with a dwelling on it, a country estate, "a farm".

**προς** + acc. "**at [the apostles' feet]**" - [AND LAID *it*] TOWARD [THE FEET OF THE APOSTLES]. As in v35, here a spatial **προς** used instead of **παρα**. "He brought the proceeds to the apostles and entrusted it to their care."

## 5:1-11

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### xiii] Ananias and Sapphira

##### Synopsis

Luke, having recounted the story of the generosity of Barnabas in selling a property and donating the proceeds to the Christian fellowship, tells another story of generosity, but one that goes terribly wrong. Ananias and Sapphira, in similar fashion, sell their property, but only pretend to donate all the proceeds to the Christian fellowship - they secretly retain some of the proceeds for themselves. Peter exposes their lie, pointing out to them that the property, as well as the proceeds from its sale, was all theirs; the Christian fellowship had no claim on it. Yet, in lying to their brothers and sisters they lied to the Holy Spirit. Both Ananias, and then Sapphira, in turn face the shame of their actions and drop dead. "The whole church, and all who heard about this, were terrified", Barclay.

##### Teaching

The holiness of God cannot be trifled with, particularly when it comes to his holy temple, the community of believers.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-22.

ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;
- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

iii] Structure: *Ananias and Sapphira*:

Setting, v1-2;

Ananias and his duplicity, v3-6;

Sapphira, the collaborator, v7-11.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke continues his description of life in the Jerusalem church with an incident that contrasts with the integrity of Barnabas, a church member who sells a property and gives the proceeds to the church. Ananias and Sapphira do the same, but only pretend to give the full proceeds of the sale - their generosity is tainted by deceit. So, not only is this church tested by darkness without (the action of the Sanhedrin), but also darkness within, cf., Lk.22:31-32.

Peterson D. makes the point that the story further explains the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit within the life of the early church, a ministry which prompts awe among the population of Jerusalem, 2:43. Ecstatic prophecy is ushering in the new age of the kingdom, and this with the outpouring of its promised blessings and cursings - miraculous healings along with divine judgment.

The story certainly has something to say about integrity within the Christian fellowship, although again, the lesson provides a general principle rather than a specific promise. If the Lord intended striking dead every member of a congregation who is less than open and honest with their brothers and sisters, then every church in the world would be empty! So, in general terms, "this narrative warns against anything that hinders the expression of unity, love and holiness in the fellowship created by the Spirit", Peterson D. The warning is reinforced by making the point that actions which disrespect the Christian fellowship inevitably involve the disrespect of God. "Luke is teaching about respect for God through one's actions", Bock; "You have lied to the Holy Spirit / to God", 5:3, 4.

It is the raw infringement of the Holy Spirit that explains what seems like an unreasonable punishment of a minor offence. Ananias and Sapphira found themselves in an extraordinary moment in time, a moment of covenant fulfilment when the Holiness of God overshadows His people. This is a moment when "the spiritual realm has an almost tangible presence of raw, uncontainable energy, and where infringement of the holy can have devastating results", Dunn. Of course, this has Old Testament precedence, particularly with respect to the temple, cf., 2Chron.7:1-3. In the New Israel, God's dwelling-place is with his people, the community of believers (the two or three gathered together). So, in this moment of covenant fulfilment, the numinous is made tangible.

The narrative also has something to say about the use of one's resources - the stuff of time, talent and tinkle. There is a sense where the narrative exegetes the generosity of Barnabas. We are only told that Barnabas sells a field and donates the proceeds, not that he sold all his possessions and donated the proceeds. But just in case we didn't get the message, Luke draws out Peter's words to Ananias and Sapphira, reinforcing the fact that the property belongs to them, just as the proceeds belong to them, and what they did with it all, is their business, not the business of the Christian fellowship. Integrity surmounts generosity, Matt.6:3.

It is possible that there are allusions to the story of Achan, Josh.7:1, 19-26, and possibly Abijah, 1Kings 14:1-18). Of course, allusions to an

Old Testament story do not necessarily mean that the original narrative serves as the creative foundation for a later story of fiction. Fitzmyer covers the many questions raised as to the historicity of the events recorded. Yet in the end, the narrative sits within the context of the miraculous realisation of the kingdom of God, and so, we either believe, or don't believe, in miracles.

v] Homiletics: *Shot and their cloths burnt*



Uncle Bert, or more properly Albert Ellis, was a first world war veteran. He was a man of many sayings. There was one he would often repeat from the trenches of Flanders, originally directed at the officer class: "They ought to be shot and their cloths burnt" - or to put it another way, every evidence of their existence should be removed. I might say, he also had the view that wars can be easily settled by putting all politicians in the middle of a stadium, giving them a gun, and letting them shoot it out.

I foolishly used Bert's saying on one occasion. I put it on a note attached to the church gate as a warning to those who kept leaving it open. In an age of political correctness, tongue-in-cheek sayings get easily swamped in the need for offence. I paid a price for my foolishness - I was cancelled by the ladies of the children's guild!

The treatment of Ananias and Sapphira seems a little unfair. They were a generous couple, although not as generous as they pretended to be, and for that they were struck dead, and, in line with Bert's saying, they were disposed of without recognition or mourning - "shot and their cloths burnt." They thought they could connive together to deceive God's people, *the apple of God's eye*, and not bring upon themselves divine repercussions. Like the people of Israel during the Exodus, they put God to the test. Anyway, when Ananias dropped dead, the young men of the congregation wrapped him up in a shroud, and buried him without ceremony, and when Sapphira dropped dead, they did the same thing with here. Ananias and Sapphira got much the same treatment as Nadab and Abihu, two sons of Aaron, who infringed the holiness of God, and as a consequence, were consumed by fire, unceremoniously dragged outside the camp with the

instructions that they should not be mourned (Leviticus chapter 10) - "shot and their cloths burnt."

Now thankfully, because God is a merciful and loving God, rarely is an affront to his person, his holiness, automatically dealt with like this, because if it were, we would all be little piles of ashes. So, the story of Ananias and Sapphira, like Nadab and Abihu, is a story that warns us about the unimaginable holiness of God. We learn from our reading today that divine holiness is not ethereal, somewhere out in the universal ether, but it enshrouds our world, and in particular, the church - the two or three gathered with Jesus. Remember what Peter said, "You have not lied to man, but to God."

I want you, today, to recognise the significance of the two or three gathered together with Jesus in this place, and how this gathering is shrouded with the divine holiness of God.

### Text - 5:1

Ananias and Sapphira, v1-11: i] Setting, v1-2. Luke introduces the narrative by explaining how two members of the community of believers collude together in a feigned act of unqualified generosity.

δε **"now"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

ονοματι [α ατος] dat. **"named [Ananias]"** - [A CERTAIN MAN] BY NAME [ANANIAS]. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect; "with respect to his name, Ananias."

συν + dat. **"together with"** - WITH [SAPPHIRA THE WIFE OF HIM, SOLD PROPERTY]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

### v2

συνειδυης [συνοιδα] gen. perf. part. **"with [the wife's] full knowledge"** - [THE WIFE AND = ALSO] HAVING KNOWN = COLLUDED, CONNIVED. The genitive participle with its genitive subject, "the wife", forms a genitive absolute construction. Given that it is not at the beginning of the sentence, it is probably used by Luke to form a parenthetical statement; "But a man name Ananias - his wife, Sapphira, conniving in this with him - sold a piece of land, secretly kept part of the price for himself, and ...", Peterson.

απο + gen. **"[part] of [the money]"** - [AND HE STOLE (mid. "appropriated for himself") *some*] FROM = OF [THE PRICE]. Here serving in place of a partitive genitive.

ενεγκας [φερω] aor. part. **"brought"** - HAVING CARRIED = BROUGHT [A CERTAIN PART]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, "and then brought the rest to the apostles and made an offering of it", Peterson.

παρα + acc. "[put it] at" - [HE PLACED *it*] BESIDE = AT [THE FEET OF THE APOSTLES]. Spatial.

### v3

II] Ananias and his duplicity, v3-6; The inauguration of the kingdom will face testing by the powers of darkness, and Ananias and Sapphira have failed the test, cf., Lk.22:31. Yet, in the presence of the divine, the deceit of darkness is unable to remain hidden from the eye of the prophet. Peter says that Ananias, in succumbing to temptation, **ψευσασθαι**, "has, as a result, lied to" the Holy Spirit. The verb will sometimes take a dative of the person lied to / against, as in v4, "You have not lied to / against men, but to / against God." Both "men" and "God" take a dative. In this verse, "Holy Spirit" is accusative. The verb can also mean "to falsify", and so the sense here is possibly "Satan has filled your heart with the result that you have falsified *the work of* the Holy Spirit." The show of Spirit-inspired generosity performed by Ananias and Sapphira is a sham, cf., Johnson.

**δια τί** "how is it that" - [BUT/AND PETER SAID, ANANIAS] BECAUSE OF WHY = WHY [SATAN FILLED THE HEART OF YOU]. Causal construction introducing a interrogative clause.

**ψευσασθαι** [**ψευδομαι**] aor. inf. "that [you] lied to" - [YOU] TO LIE TO / FALSIFY [THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND TO STEAL = RESERVE, APPROPRIATE]. As with "to steal", the infinitive is adverbial, probably consecutive, expressing result, "with the result that you ...." The accusative subject of the infinitive is **σε**, "you". Technically, the two infinitives align, but the sense is better expressed when the second infinitive is treated as instrumental, expressing means; "Why have you allowed Satan to take control of you, such that (with the result that) you falsify the work of the Holy Spirit by retaining part of the price you received from the sale of the land?", so Barclay.

**απο** + gen. "**some of [the money]**" - *some* FROM = OF [THE PRICE]. Possibly just expressing separation, "away from", or used instead of a partitive genitive with "some" assumed.

**του χωριου** [**ον**] gen. "**you received for the land**" - OF THE FIELD. The genitive is adjectival, verbal, subjective, or descriptive, idiomatic, "the price *which was generated by the sale of* the field", as NIV. Kellum suggests it is partitive.

### v4

The problem for Ananias and Sapphira is not the ownership of property; communal sharing within the brotherhood is voluntary. Their problem is that they lied to God.

**ουχι** "didn't" - *is it NOT a fact that*. Introducing an interrogative clause where the question assumes a positive answer.

**μενον** [μενω] pres. part. "**it belong**" - REMAINING. As with "having been sold", the participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "*Is it not a fact that when the land was yours (remaining to you), it remained *your own*, and when you sold *it* .....*"

**σοι** dat. pro. "**to you**" - [IT WAS REMAINING] TO YOU. As with the dative adjective **ση**, "to yours"", it is fronted for emphasis and serves as a dative of possession.

**εν** + dat. "-" - [AND HAVING BEEN SOLD, IT WAS] IN [THE AUTHORITY TO YOURS]. Local, expressing a state or condition; "Was it not at your disposal after it was sold?", Cassirer.

**τί ὅτι** "**what made [you think]**" - WHAT *became* THAT [YOU PLACED THIS ACTION IN THE HEART OF YOU]? The interrogative **τί**, "what?", with an epexegetic **ὅτι**, along with the assumed verb "to become", **γεγονεν**, gives the sense "How comes it that .....", Zerwick; "Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart?", ESV.

**αλλα** "**but [to God]**" - [YOU DID NOT LIE TO MEN] BUT [TO GOD]. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not ....., but ....." The datives "to men" and "to God" may be classified as datives of direct object after the verb **ψευδομαι**, which will sometimes take a dative when the sense is "to lie to / against", as here, or simply as a dative of interest, disadvantage.

## v5

When Ananias hears Peter's words, he drops dead (**εξεψυξεν**, "expires", cf., Judg.4:21). Luke makes the point that a **φοβος μεγας**, "great reverential fear", comes upon all who hear the account of what has happened. In a sense, Ananias touched the Ark of the Covenant, and all who hear of the consequence, freeze.

**ακουων** [ακουω] pres. part. "**when [Ananias] heard**" - [BUT/AND ANANIAS] HEARING [THESE WORDS]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

**πεσων** [πιπτω] aor. part. "**he fell down**" - HAVING FALLEN DOWN [HE DIED, EXPIRED]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to die"; "As soon as Ananias heard this he dropped dead", CEV.

**τους ακουοντας** [ακουω] pres. part. "[**all**] **who heard what had happened**" - [AND THERE CAME FEAR GREAT UPON ALL] THE ONES LISTENING. If the adjective "all" is treated as a substantive, "everyone", then the participle would be classified as adjectival, attributive, limiting "everyone"; "Everyone who was listening was terrified", Barclay.



## v6

Younger men in the congregation take Ananias out for burial, although possibly preparation for burial; it is unusual to bury someone without family involvement. None-the-less, as Bock notes, Luke's description probably reflects the treatment of someone "struck down 'by the hands of heaven'" - ie., a person not worthy of being mourned, cf., Lev.10:1-7. It is unclear why Luke chooses the word **νεωτεροι**, "young *men*." It is possible that he is alluding again to the story of Achan where the **νεανισκοι** take out the family of Rahab from the city of Jericho, although the allusion is rather tenuous, cf., Josh.6:23.

**ανασταντες [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "**came forward, [wrapped]**" - [BUT/AND, THE YOUNG MEN] HAVING RISEN UP [WRAPPED UP HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to wrap up." The action "to wrap up" implies "*with a shroud for burial*."

**εξενεγκαντες [εκφερω]** aor. part. "**carried him out**" - [AND] HAVING CARRIED OUT [THEY BURIED *him*]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to bury", "carried out and buried."

## v7

iii] Sapphira, the collaborator, v7-11. Sadly, Sapphira continues with the charade and suffers the consequences.

**εγενετο δε** "-" - BUT/AND THERE WAS. Transitional; for Luke, this verb, often with **δε** or **και**, and sometimes followed by a temporal **εν**, serves to indicate narrative transition / a paragraph marker. It can be used at the beginning of a narrative, or to indicate transition within a narrative, or even the climax of a narrative.

**ως** "**about**" - [AN INTERVAL] AS = ABOUT. When this particle is used with numbers it expresses approximation, as NIV.

**ωρων [α]** gen. "**[three] hours**" - [THREE] HOURS. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / temporal, limiting "interval"; "an interval of about three hours."

**ειδνια [οιδα]** perf. part. "**[not] knowing**" - [AND THE WIFE OF HIM ENTERED, NOT] HAVING KNOWN. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of her entry; "came in not knowing ...."; "quite unaware of what had happened", Barclay.

**το γεγονος [γινομαι]** perf. part. "**what had happened**" - THE THING HAVING HAPPENED. The participle serves as a substantive, accusative object of the participle "having known."

v8

**μοι** dat. pro. "[**tell**] **me**" - [BUT/AND, HAVING ANSWERED, PETER SAID TOWARD HER, SAY] TO ME. Dative of indirect object. The aorist verb **απεκριθη**, "having answered", "is often used, not in the sense of *answered*, but simply *spoke*, *said*, though Peter's words could not unreasonably be taken as a response to Sapphira's arrival", Barrett.

**ει** "-" - IF [YOU GOT BACK = SOLD]. Here the conjunction takes on an interrogative function, introducing a direct or indirect question; a direct question according to Zerwick.

**τοσουτου** gen. pro. "**the price you and Ananias got for [the land]**" - [THE LAND] OF SO MUCH. The pronoun serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / of price; "Tell me, were you given this price for your field?", Peterson.

**η δε** "**she [said]**" - BUT/AND THE [SHE SAID, YES, OF SO MUCH]. Transitional construction, **δε** + the feminine article, indicating a change in subject from Peter to Sapphira.

v9

**ο δε** "-" - BUT/AND THE [PETER *said* TOWARD HER]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Sapphira to Peter. Note again Luke's use of **προς** in the place of a dative of indirect object, here with the assumed verb "to say."

**τι οτι** "**How**" - BECAUSE WHY. A causal construction introducing an interrogative clause.

**υμιν** dat. pro. "[**could**] **you [conspire]**" - [WAS IT AGREED UPON] TO = BY / IN = AMONG YOU. Instrumental dative expressing agency, or local, expressing space; "Why did you collude together ....."?

**πειρασαι [πειραζω]** aor. inf. "**to test**" - TO TEMP, PUT TO THE TEST [THE SPIRIT OF *the* LORD]? Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they agreed / conspired to do, namely "to put the Lord to the test." The expression *putting the Lord to the test* alludes to Israel's disobedience during their Exodus wilderness journey, a disobedience which, because of their standing as children of God, they believed they could get away with, and this without any repercussions, Ex.17:2, 7; 20:20, Deut.33:8. "Why did you think that you could connive together to deceive God's people and not bring upon yourself divine repercussions?"

**των θανατων [θαπτω]** gen. aor. part. "**[the feet] of the men who buried**" - [BEHOLD, THE FEET] OF THE ONES HAVING BURIED [THE MAN = HUSBAND OF YOU *are* UPON THE DOOR AND THEY WILL CARRY OUT YOU]. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, possessive.

## v10

It is possible that Luke is making a point of Sapphira falling at the feet of Peter to indicate his authority, an authority indirectly challenged by the couple.

**παραχρημα** adv. "**at that moment**" - [BUT/AND] IMMEDIATELY [SHE FELL TOWARD THE FEET OF HIM AND DIED]. Temporal adverb.

**εισελθοντες [εισερχομαι]** aor. part. "**then [the young men] come in**" - [BUT/AND THE YOUNG MEN] HAVING ENTERED. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "When the young men came in", ESV.

**νεκραν** adj. "**dead**" - [THEY FOUND HER] DEAD. Accusative complement of the direct object "her" standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object; "they found her *lying there* dead"

**εξενεγκαντες [εκφερω]** aor. part "**carried her out**" - [AND] HAVING CARRIED OUT, [THEY BURIED *here* TOWARD = WITH THE HUSBAND OF HER.] Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to bury."

## v11

In this verse we have the first use in Luke / Acts of the word **εκκλησια**, "congregation, assembly, church", used to identify the assembly of believers. Luke tells us that **φοβος**, "fear, awe", gripped the whole church, and not just the church, but everyone who heard about the death of Ananias and Sapphira; "They knew that God was not to be trifled with", Peterson.

**τους ακουοντας [ακουω]** pres. part. "**[all] who heard about**" - [AND IT BECAME A GREAT FEAR UPON *the* WHOLE CHURCH, AND UPON ALL] THE ONES HEARING [THESE *things*]. The participle serves as a substantive, although if the adjective **παντας**, "all", is treated as a substantive, "everyone", then the articular participle would be classified as an attributive adjective limiting "everyone"; "everyone who heard about these things."

## 5:12-16

### The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### xiv] An overview of the apostles' ministry, 5:12-16

##### Synopsis

Luke tells us that the disciples continue to meet at Solomon's Portico in the temple. Although the general populous has a high regard for them, especially for Peter, they are wary of any close association. None-the-less, the gospel continues to prompt repentance and belief and so the Christian fellowship grows in numbers. Given the signs and wonders accompanying Peter, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and beyond, fill the streets with the infirm and possessed for healing. Luke tells us that "they were all cured."

##### Teaching

The realisation of the kingdom of God, a realisation evident in signs and wonders, brings with it fear, amazement and belief.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-22.

ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;
- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

iii] Structure: *An overview of the apostles' ministry*:

Signs and wonders, v12a;

They met regularly in Solomon's Portico, v12b;

Feared, but respected, v13;

Conversions continue, v14;

Peter's healing ministry, v15-16.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke's third overview of life in the Christian fellowship serves to provide a bridge from the first arrest of Peter and John to the arrest of the apostles recorded in 5:17ff. The death of Ananias and Sapphira, new converts to the sect, causes consternation among the populous, and this, with the continued and increasing numbers of believers, along with the performance of signs and wonders by Peter, will prompt the religious authorities to again seek to suppress the apostolic mission. None-the-less,

the gospel is achieving its intended purpose, and so "more than ever believers are added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women."

Unlike the first two overviews of life in the Christian fellowship, this overview "treats the relationship of the apostles to outsiders", Bock. Luke's realised eschatology is evident in his description of the numinous associated with the apostles; the kingdom of God is indeed "upon us", rather than "at hand", with the apostles the representative "rulers of the twelve tribes of Israel." The populous hold the apostles in high regard, but **εταλμα καλλασθαι**, "dare to join" them at their meetings in Solomon's Portico. They may well fear the religious authorities, but given the circumstances surrounding the death of Ananias and Sapphira, a fear of God's divine holiness is also probably gripping the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Haenchen regards the narrative as a Lukan creation, while Jeremias is of the view that at least v11-14 derives from original tradition. We can probably best describe it as a "Lucan composition; an idyllic, generalising description resembling the two earlier summaries", Fitzmyer. Luke's Acts of the Apostles presents as a well-researched account of the movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to the centre of the known world, Rome, an account based on first and second-hand testimonies of the time.

### **Text - 5:12a**

An overview of life in the Jerusalem church, 5:12-16. i] Signs and wonders, v12a. The passage, as a whole, is somewhat disjoined. Luke begins by making a point about the signs and wonders surrounding the apostolic mission, v12a, but then gives some background information about the mission, v12b-14, before describing how the signs and wonders play out with the general population in v15.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**δια** + gen. "-" - [MANY SIGNS AND WONDERS WERE BECOMING] BY MEANS OF [THE HANDS OF THE APOSTLES]. Instrumental, expressing means / intermediate agency. The phrase, "by the hands of the apostles", does not necessarily mean the laying on of hands. It simply means that the apostles themselves were doing the work of healing, or more particularly, acting as God's agent for healing. "Wonderful demonstrations of the power of God in action were publicly performed by the disciples", Barclay.

**εν** "**among [the people]**" - IN [THE PEOPLE]. Local, expressing space, "in among the people."

## v12b

ii] The apostles meet regularly in Solomon's Portico. It is unclear who the "all of one mind" are. It is often assumed that Luke is speaking of the Christian community, as NIV, CEV, etc., so Barrett, but then why would "no one associate with them", but at the same time "exalt them", v13, while "believing" and "being added" to their number? It seems likely that those meeting in Solomon's vestibule are the apostles.

**ὁμοθυμαδον** adv. "[**all the believers used to meet together**] - [AND ALL WERE] OF ONE ACCORD. The adverb of manner, "of one mind, accord", modifies the verb to-be, expressing that they were united, "they met regularly and in remarkable harmony", Peterson. Possibly used as a local adverb, "together", "they were all together in Solomon's Portico", ESV, as NIV.

**Σολομωντος [ων ωντος]** gen. "[**in Solomon's [Colonnade]**] - [IN THE PORTICO] OF SOLOMON. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / identification, "the Portico *which is known as* Solomon"; "on the temple porch named after Solomon", Peterson.

## v13

iii] Feared but respected, v13. As already noted, it seems likely that those who gather at Solomon's Portico are the apostles, rather than the Christian community. It is unclear why the populous keep their distance. There would certainly be a general fear of the religious authorities, given the arrest of Peter and John. Possibly they are afraid of the numinous that surrounds the apostles. "None dared to associate with them", but none-the-less, hold them in high regard. So, the scene is something like an open-air / street-corner evangelistic outreach where the general public stand off at a distance, but give an ear to what is said.

**των ... λοιπων** gen. adj. "-" - [BUT/AND NONE] OF THE REST. The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. Of course, those who hold the view that the Christian community is identified by the phrase **ὁμοθυμαδον απαντες**, the "everyone with one mind" who met at Solomon's Portico, divide on whether "none of the rest" refers to believers or non-believers.

**κολλασθαι [κολλαω]** pres. mid. inf. "[**dared**] **join**" - [WAS DARING] TO JOIN WITH. Complementary infinitive completing the sense of the verb "to dare." "None of the other worshippers at the temple dared to associate with the apostles."

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**them**" - THEM. Dative of direct object after the infinitive "to join with."

**αλλα** "-" - BUT [THE PEOPLE WERE EXALTING THEM]. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "not ....., but ....." The populous may have

kept their distance from the apostles, but none-the-less they held them in high regard / great respect.

#### v14

iv] Conversions continue, v14. The gospel does its work and large numbers of people commit their lives to Jesus; "Increasing numbers of converts were added to the Lord", Marshall. The sense is clear enough, but rather than "added to the Lord", ESV, RSV, JB, etc., we are best to follow the NIV, "believed in the Lord", so TEV, NEB, etc., "those believing in the Lord, multitudes of both men and women", Johnson. Irrespective of the fact that people were keeping their distance from the apostles, the gospel was achieving its intended end and people were committing their lives to Jesus.

**μαλλον** adv. "**more and more**" - [BUT/AND] MORE. The NIV assumes that this adverb modifies the verb **προσπειθεντο**, "were being added", but as Culy notes, it is likely that "it introduces a proposition that supplements and clarifies what has preceded"; "and, what is more, ...", Cassirer. If we take **δε** as contrastive, we get the sense, "but despite the fact that the populous kept their distance from the apostles, more than ever, those who believed were being added to the Christian community, large numbers of both men and women."

**πιστευοντες [πιστευω]** pres. part. "**believed**" - *the ones* BELIEVING IN [THE LORD WERE BEING ADDED]. Being anarthrous (without an article), the participle would normally be taken as adverbial, but it seems more than likely that it serves here as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to add", with the article assumed. The dative **τω κυριω**, "the Lord", serves as a dative of direct object after the participle "believing in."

**τε και "and"** - BOTH [OF MEN] AND [OF WOMEN]. Correlative construction. The genitives "of men" and "of women", are adjectival, partitive.

#### v15

v] Peter's healing ministry, v15-16. The signs and wonders evident in the ministry of the apostles, and in particular, Peter, exceed those of Jesus. We are reminded of Jesus' words to the disciples of the "greater things" they will do, Jn.14:12, and of their empowerment, Lk.10:17-20, Luke's realised eschatology, in the fulfilment of God's long-promised covenant, is evident in his description of Peter's miraculous powers - even his shadow heals.

**ωστε** + inf. "**as a result**" - SO THAT [*the people* AND = EVEN TO CARRY OUT THE SICK INTO THE STREET AND TO PLACE *them* UPON BEDS AND MATS]. This conjunction, plus an infinitive, here **εκφερειν**, "to carry out", and **τιθεναι**, "to place", technically forms a consecutive clause expressing result, as NIV. Yet, the clause does not logically go with v14, but certainly works with v12a. This implies that v12b-14 is intended as a parenthetical statement. Given the signs and

wonders associated with the apostles, the people take every opportunity to see their ill and infirm are healed by them. "As a result of what the the apostles were doing, the sick people were carried out in the streets and placed on beds and mats", TEV.

**ἵνα** + subj. "**so that**" - THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that ....."

**καὶ ἂν** + subj. "**at least**" - EVEN IF [THE SHADOW MIGHT FALL UPON]. Crasis, **καὶ ἂν**, "even if", supplying a modifying element, so Barrett, although the modification is unclear. Peterson D suggests that the people desire a closer contact with Peter, despite their apprehensions; "at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them." Given that the issue is the healing of the sick and possessed, as v16 indicates, then the point may well be that even if Peter's shadow falls on them, they are healed. So, the clause is possibly elliptical, and conditional, 3rd. class, rather than concessive; "They even used to bring the sick into the streets, laying them on beds and pallets, in order that *they may be healed* when Peter passed by, and even if (*as the case may be*) his shadow fell on some of them, (*then*) *they were healed*."

**αὐτῶν** gen. pro. "**[some] of them**" - [SOME] OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

**ερχομενου [ερχομαι]** pres. part. "**as [he] passed by**" - [PETER] COMING. The genitive participle, and its genitive subject "Peter", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

## v16

"They came from the villages surrounding Jerusalem, throngs of them, bringing the sick and bedeviled. And they all were healed", Peterson.

**τῶν πολεων [ις εως]** gen. "**from the towns [around Jerusalem]**" - [BUT AND AND = ALSO THE MULTITUDE WAS ASSEMBLING] OF THE [AROUND = SURROUNDING] CITIES, TOWNS [OF JERUSALEM]. Culy classifies the genitive as adjectival, partitive, while Kellum suggests source / origin, as NIV. The adverb of place **περιξ**, "around", virtually functions as an attributive adjective limiting "towns", "the surrounding towns" The genitive proper "Jerusalem" may be classified adverbial, reference / respect, so Culy, "the surrounding towns in relation to Jerusalem", = "the towns around Jerusalem", Barclay.

**φερωντες [φερω]** pres. part. "**bringing**" - CARRYING [SICK]. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the crowd's assembling.

**οχλουμενους [οχλω]** pres. mid. part. "**those tormented**" - [AND] *the ones* BEING DISTURBED. Although the participle is anarthrous (without an article) it most likely serves as a substantive, accusative direct object of the participle "carrying".



ὑπο + gen. "**by [impure spirits]**" - BY [UNCLEAN SPIRITS, WHO ALL WERE BEING HEALED]. Instrumental use of the preposition, expressing agency.

## 5:17-42

### 1. The early church in Jerusalem, 1:1-5:42

#### xv] The disciples before the Sanhedrin

##### Synopsis

Luke now records the apostle's second confrontation with Israel's religious authorities. We read of the apostles' arrest, their miraculous escape from prison, their rearrest, and Peter's defence of their actions before the Sanhedrin. Under the hand of the Lord, the apostles have no need to step back from their preaching mission.

##### Teaching

With the realisation of the kingdom of God, the gospel cannot be muffled. The powers of darkness may rant and rave, but they are left befuddled before God's mighty hand.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-22.

ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;
- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

iii] Structure: *The disciples before the Sanhedrin*:

The apostles are arrested for preaching in the temple, v17-18;  
The miraculous breakout from prison, v19-20;  
Back in the temple preaching again, v21-26;  
Their witness before the Sanhedrin, v27-32;  
An expedient solution for The Way, v33-42.

iii] Interpretation:

Luke's prime intent in Acts is to record the advance of the gospel from Jerusalem to the centre of the world, Rome, and the important part played in this advance by his hero, Paul, apostle to the Gentiles. This is certainly his overarching concern, but he has many other profound truths he wishes to communicate to God's assembled people, the church, in order to enable both nurture and outreach. In this passage, Luke tells us that the apostles, under the Lord, do not give ground on their preaching mission in the temple, and that although the authorities rant and rave, they are left

befuddled before God's mighty hand. Luke's message is simple enough, the gospel cannot be muffled by the powers of darkness - truth will out.

Both Dunn and Tannehill focus on the pointed critique of the Sadducees and their repression of the gospel, particularly as they represent the temple authorities who plotted Jesus' death and continue in their persecution of his flock. Tannehill notes the link between the Sadducees' opposition and the apostles' preaching on the resurrection; the Sadducees do not believe in the resurrection of the dead.

Johnson notes that this second trial before the Sanhedrin is filled with irony; pomp and circumstance is pitted against the powerful will of God revealed in the miraculous release of the apostles from prison. "God is at work in the apostles, and they will not be stopped."

Barrett agrees on "the uselessness of fighting against God", and adds that Luke is also intent on making a number of other points: the apostle's representative role; the independence of Christianity from Judaism; the authoritative foundation of the gospel as a message concerning "the God of our fathers"; and of the positive approach, at least at this point of time, of the Pharisees.

#### v] Homiletics: *Preaching Christ*

The apostles boldly preach the good news in the temple at Jerusalem, despite repeated threats of arrest and imprisonment from the authorities. For a second time they are brought before the rulers of the Sanhedrin, a body which had previously given strict orders that they not teach in the name of Jesus. Despite all this, the apostles are back at the temple spreading the good news all over Jerusalem - joyously telling the people all about "this new life" in Jesus.

This gospel of Christ, which they believed with all their heart, is something they felt compelled to share in order that others might experience this new life. The Easter event changed their lives, empowering them to preach, teach and heal in Jesus' name. The focus of our reading today is the irresistible communication of the gospel, yes, even in the face of those who would muzzle it.

In Western societies today, the tendency to pronounce the death of God, with the replacement of Jesus by Marx, is increasingly isolating the Christian church and its gospel. This is particularly evident in the left-leaning media where reporting is ideologically driven, such that facts are depreciated in favour of an ideological perspective, that of equality, equity.

An interesting example of this bias took place in the reporting of a "Let Women Speak" rally held in Melbourne, Australia, in 2023. In attendance was a minister of parliament, a believer, Moira Deeming, an outspoken

warrior for women's rights. The rally was set upon by trans-activists and a group of men dressed in black performing Nazi salutes. The media reported the rally as an anti-trans rally and linked it to the so called Nazis, who it was reported "attended" the rally. No one actually tried to find out who the



men were - Neo-Nazis, white supremacists, anarchists, ....

The main aim of the reporting seemed to be to nobble the women who organised the rally, silence them by tagging them with the slur of Nazi. The Victorian premier, a socialist, actually called them Nazis. Moira was

subsequently nobbled by her own party, a party espousing personal freedom.

The clash of rights in the pro-women, pro-transgender, debate is complex, and not one I'm seeking to address. Yet, what I have observed in this clash, is the determination of those imbibed in Marxian ideology to nobble those not conforming to their socialist shibboleths. And guess what, Jesus does not align well with Marx either. If we are willing to stay quietly in our church and not venture outside and engage with secular society, we may be left alone, but if we proclaim far and wide that Jesus is God's long-promised anointed one, then expect trouble. I mean, he actually taught that marriage is the union between a man and a woman, and I might add, to the embarrassment of some of us, "what God has joined together let not man put asunder."

There is a darkness seeking to muzzle the gospel, but know this, the gospel cannot be muzzled. The powers of darkness may rant and rave, but they will be left befuddled before God's mighty hand.

Image: AAP, James Ross. Used with appreciation.

### **Text - 5:17**

The disciples before the Sanhedrin, v17-42: i] Luke begins his account with the custodians of temple-worship taking action against the apostles for flouting their instruction to cease preaching in the temple precincts, v17-18.

**οἱ "associates"** - [BUT/AND THE HIGH PRIEST AND ALL] THE ONES [WITH HIM]. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase "with him" into a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to be filled [of = with jealousy]." The preposition **συν**, "with", gives the sense "associates".

**ουσα [ειμι]** "**who were [members]**" - [THE SECT, SCHOOL, PARTY] BEING. The participle of the verb to-be is adjectival, attributive, limiting the noun "the sect", usually translated as a relative clause, as NIV. Possibly a technical use meaning "current", so "local" as of "the local party (school) of the Sadducees", Barrett.

**των Σαδδουκαιων** gen. "**the Sadducees**" - OF THE SADDUCEES. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / identification; "members of the party *known as* the Sadducees."

**ζηλου [ος]** gen. "**[full] of jealousy**" - [THEY WERE FILLED] OF ZEAL, JEALOUSY. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content, what they were full of; "envy", Bruce, although a positive sense is possible, "a holy sense of the truth as they believed it to be", cf., Barrett.

**αναστας [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "- " - HAVING STOOD UP. The participle is probably adverbial, consecutive, expressing result, modifying the main verb "to be filled [of jealousy]." Sometimes the verb is used to indicate the initiation of an action, as here, so "the high priest and his supporters ..... were filled with envy and so (as a result) they decided to take action." Usually regarded as redundant and only serving to link the Sadducees' action with the preceding verse, so NIV. Possible variant, "Annas stood up." "Thereupon", Bruce.

## v18

**επεβαλον [επιβαλλω]** aor. "**they arrested [the apostles]**" - [AND] THEY LAID, THREW [THE HANDS UPON THE APOSTLES]. The use of "apostles" here may indicate a more extensive roundup and arrest than just Peter and John.

**δημοσια** adj. or adv. "**public [jail]**" - [AND PUT THEM IN] *the* PUBLIC [JAIL]. Bruce thinks the word is used as an adjective, as NIV, describing something about the prison, possibly just "city jail", CEV, or "public" in the sense of a jail for the riffraff; "the common jail", Williams. As an adverb, it means "put them in prison publicly", Barrett, that is, in such a way as to shame them.

## v19

ii] The breakout, v19-20. The religious authorities, particularly the Sadducees, were obviously planning some serious retribution, but the apostles are mysteriously freed and are again preaching "in the temple courts." Their mysterious escape at least implies that they had support in high places, so the authorities take care how they proceed. Luke tells us that the apostles were not freed because of a political conspiracy, but rather by the direct hand of God; a messenger (an "angel") from the Lord set them free and told them to continue preaching. Luke does not focus on the miracle, but on the apostles' continued proclamation of the gospel and, as a consequence, the Sadducees distress.

δια + gen. "**during**" - [AND] THROUGH. Temporal use of the preposition, through in time = "during".

νυκτος [υξ υκτος] gen. "**night**" - *the* NIGHT. A variant has the article, thus "the night in question."

αγγελος [ος] "**an angel**" - AN ANGEL. Nominative subject of the verb "to say." A messenger of the Lord, one who attends to God's divine will.

κυριου [ος] gen. "**of the Lord**" - OF LORD. The genitive may be adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "an angel *which is from* the Lord", although the lack of the article with both "angel" and "Lord" is typical of the LXX and usually indicates a possessive genitive, as of "belonging to the Lord." The actual identity of "the Lord" is not spelled out, either Jesus, or God the Father.

εξαγαγων [εξαγω] aor. part. "**brought [them] out**" - [HAVING OPENED THE DOORS OF THE JAIL AND] HAVING LED OUT, BROUGHT OUT [THEM, SAID]. As with ανοιξας, "having opened", attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "he said."

## v20

Continued proclamation is the order of the day.

σταθεντες [ιστημι] aor. pas. part. "**stand**" - [GO AND] HAVING STOOD [SPEAK IN THE TEMPLE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "to go". As usual, best translated by a finite verb joined by "and", here taking its imperatival force from the imperative "go"; "go and stand in the temple", Moffatt.

τω λαω [ος] dat. "**the people**" - TO [ALL] THE PEOPLE. Dative of indirect object.

τα ρηματα [α ατος] "**the [full] message**" - [ALL] THE WORDS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to say." They must proclaim all the words; hold nothing back.

της ζωης gen. "**of [this] new life**" - OF [THIS] LIFE. The genitive is probably adverbial, of reference / respect; "the full message with respect to / with reference to this life." Bruce notes that the words "life" and "salvation" are interchangeable when used of the Christian message (the gospel), cf., 13:26, "this salvation." So, probably a shorthand way of saying "this way of life" = the gospel, although most translators opt for "new life", as NIV. "Go, stand in the temple, and tell the crowds everything about this message of life (message of salvation)", Junkins.

## v21

iii) The apostles are back at preaching again; a story told with a definite touch of irony, v21-26. The Sanhedrin is doing its thing, but the Lord is doing his thing. This possibility is later acknowledged by the Pharisees, particularly Gamaliel

with his comment, "if it is from God, you will not be able to destroy them." For Luke, the focus is on "the impotence of human authorities to control the course of events", Tannehill, or more particularly, the impotence of human authorities to hinder the communication of the gospel; the message of God's grace in Christ cannot be hindered by any powers or authorities.

**ακουσαντες [ακουω]** aor. part. "-" - [BUT/AND] HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, temporal; "after receiving these instructions", Phillips.

**υπο** + acc. of time "**at [daybreak]**" - UNDER [THE EARLY MORNING THEY ENTERED INTO THE TEMPLE AND WERE TEACHING]. This preposition, followed by an accusative, would normally be translated "under", but it is rather awkward to describe the apostles entering the temple "under the dawning sun", although the construction is classical for "at daybreak", as NIV. Culy suggests the construction may imply stealth.

**παραγενομενος [παραγινομαι]** aor. part. "**when .... arrived**" - [AND THE HIGH PRIEST] HAVING COME [AND THE ONES WITH HIM]. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV. Obviously they didn't arrive where the apostles were preaching, but "arrived at the place where the Sanhedrin was to meet", Barrett.

**και** "-" - [THEY CALLED TOGETHER THE COUNCIL] AND [THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ELDERS]. Bruce suggests the conjunction here is expegetic, introducing an explanation of the makeup of the "Sanhedrin"; "the Sanhedrin, that is, the whole Jewish senate", Barclay.

**των υιων [ος]** gen. "**of the elders [of Israel]**" - OF THE SONS [OF ISRAEL]. The genitive is adjectival, possibly of material; "the full assembly consisting of the elders of Israel."

**αχθηναι [αγω]** aor. pas. inf. "**for**" - [AND THEY SENT TO THE JAIL *for the prisoners*] TO BE BROUGHT, LED, DRIVEN [TO THEM]. The infinitive expresses purpose, "the authorities sent word to the jail in order to have the apostles brought to them."

## v22

**παραγενομενοι [παραγινομαι]** aor. part. "**on arriving**" - [BUT/AND THE SERVANTS] HAVING COME, APPEARED [DID NOT FIND THEM IN THE JAIL]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, "the arriving servants" = "the servants who arrived", although a temporal sense makes better sense, "when the officers arrived at the prison", NJB. The "servants" are "probably Levities of the temple watch", Bruce.

**αναστρεψαντες [αναστρεφω]** aor. part. "**so they went back**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING RETURNED [THEY REPORTED]. The participle is possibly attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the verb "reported", so translated as a finite verb, "they returned and told their story", Barclay, but also possibly

temporal, "afterward, they went back and reported", or even consecutive expressing result, "with the result that they went back and reported", as NIV, NAB, REB, NJB .....

### v23

**λεγοντες** [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to report, announce", v22, pleonastic (redundant), introducing direct speech (although note the use here of **οτι** for that purpose), or adverbial, modal, expressing manner. See **λεγοντες**, 1:6.

**εν** + dat. "**securely**" - [WE FOUND] WITH/IN [ALL SAFETY/SECURITY]. Here adverbial, modal, introducing a phrase expressing the manner in which the jail was "having been closed", ie., it was locked "securely"; "locked tight", CEV.

**κεκλεισμενον** [κλειω] perf. pas. part. acc. "**locked**" - HAVING BEEN CLOSED, LOCKED, SHUT. The perfect tense expresses a completed action with ongoing consequences, so "incarcerated". The accusative participle serves as the complement of the object "jail", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object - "We found (verb) the prison (accusative object) securely locked (accusative complement)", cf., Wallace p182.

**εστωτας** [ιστημι] perf. part. acc. "**standing**" - [*and we found* THE GUARDS] HAVING STOOD [AT THE DOOR]. The participle serves as an object complement, as above; "*we found* (verb) the guards (accusative object) standing (accusative complement)."

**ανοιξαντες** [ανοιγω] aor. part. "**when we opened them**" - [AND] HAVING OPENED [*it, we found no one inside*]. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV. "When we unlocked the door we found no one inside", NJB.

### v24

**ως** "**on [hearing]**" - [BUT/AND] WHEN [THEY HEARD THESE WORDS]. Here serving as a temporal conjunction rather than as a comparative.

**τε ....και** "**and**" - BOTH [THE CAPTION OF THE TEMPLE] AND [THE CHIEF PRIESTS]. Correlative construction; "both ....., and ....."

**διηπορουν** [διαπορευω] imperf. "**were puzzled / were at a loss**" - WERE THOROUGHLY PERPLEXED, BAFFLED. Note again how the focus of this episode is not so much on the miraculous escape, but rather the confused response of the authorities as they are faced with their incapacity to muzzle the gospel. If the escape were all about escaping arrest then they wouldn't have been sent back to the temple to commence their preaching and so be arrested again. The story highlights the impotence of those who would muzzle the gospel. "Were quite at a loss", Moffatt.

**περι** "-" - ABOUT [THEM]. Reference; "concerning them."



τί ἄν + opt. "[wondering what this might lead to]" - IF [THIS MAY BE] WHAT? The interrogative predicate nominative τί with the indefinite ἄν + the optative verb "to become", is probably an example of an oblique optative construction, a construction used only by Luke in the NT., expressing what is merely thought in indirect discourse, much the same as a deliberative subjunctive, but stronger, BDF#386. Wallace, on the other hand, does not regard it as oblique because of the presence of the particle ἄν, and so in his view it is a potential optative functioning in an incomplete (always so in NT.) conditional clause 4th class where the stated condition, which must be supplied, has a vague possibility of occurring in the future. So, the authorities "were puzzled" in the terms of something like: "if [as seems to be the case] *these men have somehow vanished from a jail cell which was locked and properly guarded* (unstated protasis), [then] what could be happening? (apodosis). The "wondering", NIV, is not in the Gk., but is deduced from the use of the optative, and is akin to "being amazed", that is, troubled by a divine mystery; something unnatural has occurred. "They were completely mystified at the apostles' disappearance and wondered what further developments there would be", Phillips.

## v25

παραγενομενος [παραγινομαι] aor. part. "came [and said]" - [BUT/AND A CERTAIN *one*] HAVING COME, ARRIVED, APPEARED [REPORTED, ANNOUNCED]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to report", as NIV; "however, someone came and reported to them", Moffatt.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ὅτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of direct speech.

εισιν .. εστωτες + pres. part. "are standing [in the temple]" - [BEHOLD, THE MEN WHOM YOU PUT IN THE JAIL] ARE HAVING STOOD [AND *are* TEACHING THE PEOPLE IN THE TEMPLE]. The present tense of the verb to-be with the perfect participle forms a periphrastic perfect construction. The verb to-be also links to the present participle "teaching" forming a present periphrastic construction. The use of a periphrastic construction possibly serves to underline the durative nature of the action.

## v26

τοτε adv. "at that" - THEN, AT THAT MOMENT. Temporal adverb.

απελθων [απερχομαι] aor. part. "went" - [THE COMMANDER OF A MILITARY UNIT = TEMPLE GUARD] HAVING DEPARTED [WITH THE = HIS SERVANTS, WERE LEADING THEM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to lead", "the officers went and brought them", although with τοτε it may be classified as adverbial, temporal.

**μετα** + gen. "**they did [not] use [force]**" - NOT WITH FORCE. Here the preposition functions adverbially, modal, forming an adverbial phrase expressing the manner in which they were leading them, namely, "not with force." The sense here is that the officers led the apostles as if escorting them, rather than as if they had arrested them; "they dared not use any violence", Phillips.

**γαρ** "**for**" - BECAUSE [THEY FEARED THE PEOPLE]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the officers did not use force.

**μη** aor. pas. subj. "**that**" - LEST [THEY SHOULD BE STONED]. A shortened version of **ἵνα μη**, "in order that not" = "lest [they be stoned]", so introducing a negated purpose clause. Variants exist with **ἵνα μη**. Wallace suggests that we have here a particular use of **μη** + the subjunctive after the verbs expressing "warning, caution or anxiety", so Culy. As such it would introduce a dependent statement of perception expressing the fear the officers have for the people, namely, of being stoned, as NIV. The officers are anxious about their own safety, rather than the safety of the apostles.

## v27

iv] The apostles before the Sanhedrin again, v27-33. In the presence of the Sanhedrin, the apostles are reminded that they were given strict instructions not to teach the people about "that man." Of course, they have done the opposite. The Sadducees interpret the apostles' actions as an attempt to hold them responsible for the death of Jesus in the eyes of the populous. Peter, on behalf of the other apostles, answers the charge by resting his case on divine authority. The authority of the Sanhedrin is substantial, but the apostles must submit to God rather than the authority of man.

In v30-31, Peter goes on to restate the substance of the apostolic gospel. cf., 2:22-36, 3:13-26, 4:10-12.

*The time is fulfilled:*

"God raised Jesus up", in the sense of establishing him as messiah, in the same sense as God "raised up David", cf. 3:26, 13:33. So, God has anointed Jesus as Israel's long-awaited prophet, priest and king.

"You killed by hanging him on a tree." As prophesied, God's people set upon his suffering servant, cursing him with an ignominious death - "he that is hanged on a tree is cursed of God", Deut.21:23. As prophesied, the people of Israel have inflicted disgrace on their messiah, disgrace on the innocent one.

*The kingdom of God is at hand:*

"God exalted him." Here the reference is most likely to Jesus' resurrection and ascension. Jesus is now Lord and Saviour, possessing glory, authority and power.

*Repent and believe the gospel (for the forgiveness of sins):*

"To grant repentance and forgiveness of sins." Therefore, Jesus is authorized to provide for his people a time to repent, along with the blessing of forgiveness (peace with God).

Peter ends his address in v32 by making the point that the apostles are witnesses of these truths - they "beheld his glory"; they are witnesses to Christ's life, death, resurrection and ascension. This witness is confirmed by the Holy Spirit, whose power is active in the apostles' ministry.

αγαγοντες [αγω] aor. part. "**having brought**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING BROUGHT [THEM THEY STOOD IN THE COUNCIL]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to stand"; "they brought them in and placed them before", Barclay, but it could be treated as adverbial, temporal; "when they brought them in to face the Sanhedrin", NJB.

εν + dat. "**before [the Sanhedrin]**" - IN [THE COUNCIL]. Local, expressing space.

ὁ αρχιερευς - ιρευς "**the High Priest**" - [AND] THE HIGH PRIEST [QUESTIONED THEM]. Nominative subject of the verb "to question." Note the possible alternate reading "priest", or even "temple manager"

v28

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "- " - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to question", v27. A redundant Semitic construction introducing direct speech; "the high priest questioned them and said." For a classification adverbial, modal, expressing manner, see λεγοντες, 1:6.

ου "- " - *did we* NOT. Variant. This negation is used in a question where an affirmative answer is expected; "did we not strictly order you ..?", Barclay.

υμιν dat. pro. "[give] **you**" - [COMMAND] YOU. Dative of direct object after the παρα prefix verb "to command."

παραγγελια [α] dat. "**strict orders**" - WITH A COMMAND. This cognate dative is adverbial, modifying / strengthening the verb "to command"; "Did we not strictly command you ....." Barrett suggests that the construction imitates a Hebrew infinitive absolute. The apostles, having previously been commanded to be silent, are in a sense, now in contempt of court.

μη διδασκειν [διδασκω] pres. inf. "**not to teach**" - NOT TO TEACH. The infinitive is used to form a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the authorities originally told the apostles not to do, namely, to teach.

ἐπι "in [this name]" - UPON [THIS NAME]. Various prepositions are used to introduce this idiomatic phrase identifying the authority of the person upon which the action is based; "in the name of Jesus", cf., 4:18. The authorities don't want to mention Jesus' name, so for them it is "this name." Usually in the sense of "under the authority of Jesus." "We gave you strict orders not to go on teaching in that name", NCV.

πεπληρωκατε [πληρωω] perf. "**you have filled**" - [AND BEHOLD,] YOU HAVE FILLED [JERUSALEM]. The perfect tense (an aorist variant exists) is probably extensive (consummative), emphasizing the completed past action of filling Jerusalem with their teaching which has now produced ongoing consequences.

της διδαχης [η] gen. "**with [your] teaching**" - OF THE TEACHING [OF YOU]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content; "you have filled Jerusalem full of your teaching."

επαγαγειν [επαγω] aor. inf. "**[determined] to make**" - [AND YOU WILL, WANT] TO BRING [UPON US]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to will."

το αίμα [α ατος] "**blood**" - THE BLOOD [OF THIS MAN]. Referring to Jesus' execution. The authorities feel that they are being accused of playing a part in a sham trial and execution. The apostles certainly hold the Jewish authorities responsible, rather than the Roman authorities. "Whom you crucified", is fairly pointed, and Peter goes on to restate the charge in 5:30. It is unlikely that the authorities feel any shame for their actions, but they certainly would be concerned if the populous begin to hold them responsible for a miscarriage of justice. "The expression is disparaging", Barrett. "You are determined to fasten the guilt of that man's death upon us", Phillips.

## v29

Rather than defend the charge, Peter rests his argument on an overriding principle - it is necessary to obey God.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "-" - [BUT/AND] HAVING ANSWERED [PETER AND THE APOSTLES SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; redundant Aramaic construction. The order in the Gk. suggests that it was Peter who actually spoke and did so with the agreement of, and on behalf of, the other apostles; "So Peter answered on behalf of the apostles, 'Our duty is to obey God, not men.'"

πειθαρχειν [πειθαρχω] pres. inf. "**We [must] obey**" - TO OBEY [GOD IS NECESSARY, MORE = RATHER THAN MAN]. The infinitive serves as the subject of the impersonal verb "is necessary." For a complementary classification, see πληρωθηναι, 1:16. The sense is that where there is a conflict between the

authority of God and the authority of man (secular or religious powers), "we must obey the orders of God rather than the orders of men", Phillips.

**θεω [ος]** dat. "**God**" - GOD. Probably best classed as a dative of direct object after the verb "to obey", but it may also be treated as adverbial, reference / respect "to obey is necessary *with respects / reference to* God."

### v30

Peter, in v31-32, declared the kerygma / gospel: (In fulfilment of prophecy) God raised up Jesus as his anointed messiah, whom you then murdered, but God exalted him as Lord, so providing to Israel salvation / forgiveness of sins through repentance.

**των πατερων [ηρ ρος]** gen. "**of [our] fathers**" - [THE GOD] OF THE FATHERS [OF US]. Genitive of relationship where Peter ties the apostles and the authorities together under the same God, Yahweh. "The Christian faith is the fulfilment, not the contradiction of Judaism", Barrett.

**ηγειρεν [εγαυρω]** aor. "**raised [Jesus] from the dead**" - RAISED, LIFTED UP [JESUS]. The NIV, as do many commentators, assumes that Luke is referring to the resurrection of Jesus, but it seems more likely, at this point in Peter's address, that the establishment of Jesus as messiah is in mind - in the same sense as God "raised up (exalted) David", cf., 3:26, 13:33. So, it seems likely that Luke is using this verb here with the same sense as **ανιστημι**, "to raise up", the raising up of the prophet Jesus, 2:24, or Thaudas, 5:36, or Judas the Galilean, 5:37. God anointed Jesus as Israel's long-awaited prophet, priest and king, but his own people set upon him and murdered him. God raised up Jesus to be the messiah, you kill him, but God exalted him.

**κρεμασαντες [κρεννανυμι]** aor. part. "**by hanging him [on a tree]**" - [WHOM YOU KILLED = MURDERED] HAVING HUNG [UPON A TREE, POST = GALLOWS, CROSS]. The participle is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means; Jesus was murdered "by means of" crucifixion. The reference is to Deut.21:22-23.

### v31

**υψωσεν [υψωω]** aor. "**[God] exalted**" - [GOD] LIFTED UP, EXALTED. The exaltation of Christ involves his resurrection, ascension and enthronement as Lord. Of course, those who take "raised up" in v30 as a reference to Christ's resurrection, take "exalted" here to refer to his ascension and enthronement / glorification.

**τη δεξια** dat. "**to [his] right hand**" - TO THE RIGHT [OF HIM]. The dative is possibly local, as NIV, but instrumental seems better, "by/with his right hand."

αρχηγον και σωτηρα **"Prince and Saviour"** - [THIS *one*] A PRINCE AND SAVIOUR. Accusative complement of the direct object "this one", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "this one", so Culy, as NIV. Possibly as compound accusatives that are predicative, "exalted him to be Prince and Saviour", Barrett. The term "Prince" probably equates with "Lord" = the glorified messiah, Bruce. "Saviour", a not-so-common title for Jesus, but an obvious one in that he is the one who rescues us from sin and death.

του δουναι [διδωμι] aor. inf. **"that he might give / bring"** - TO GIVE, GRANT. The genitive article is a variant producing an articular infinitive expressing purpose. With, or without the article, the infinitive is obviously adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "in order to give", Williams.

μετανοιαν [α] **"repentance"** - REPENTANCE. Accusative direct object of the infinitive "to give." The gift of a time of repentance, an opportunity to repent, rather than repentance itself.

τω Ισραηλ dat. **"Israel"** - TO ISRAEL. Dative of indirect object.

αμαρτιων [α] gen. **"of sins / their sins"** - [AND FORGIVENESS] OF SINS. The genitive is usually treated as adjectival, verbal, objective.

### v32

A rather provocative concluding statement where Peter aligns his testimony with that of the Holy Spirit.

ημεις **"we"** - [AND] WE [WE ARE WITNESSES]. Emphatic by position and use.

των ρηματων [α ατος] gen. **"of these things"** - OF THESE WORDS, THINGS, EVENTS. The genitive is adjectival, verbal, objective, or possibly adverbial, of reference / respect; "we are witnesses with respect to these matters, that is, the glorification of the messiah / Jesus through his death, resurrection and ascension."

και **"and so is [the Holy Spirit]"** - AND = ALONG WITH [THE HOLY SPIRIT]. Here establishing a coordinate relationship; the apostles' witness "is only possible in the power and at the inspiration of the Holy Spirit", Dunn.

τοις πειθαρχουσιν [πειθαρχω] dat. pres. part. **"to those who obey"** - [WHICH GOD GAVE] TO THE ONES OBEYING. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object. An unusual word, obviously meaning something less mechanical than "practice obedience / obey his commands." "Commitment" is more likely; "full commitment to Christ's cause", Dunn. So, something akin to faith/ belief / trust in Jesus is intended.

αυτω dat. pro. **"him"** - HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to obey."

### v33

v] An expedient solution for dealing with the way, v33-42. Peter's words inflame the Sadducees, but a respected Pharisee, named Gamaliel, calms the

council, and offers an expedient solution to the problem caused by the sect of The Way. His solution certainly works for the believers, in that they can now go about the Lord's business unhindered, but "in the final analysis, his advice is fatalistic and flawed, because it does not take seriously the challenges presented by Peter", Barrett.

οἱ δὲ "-" - BUT/AND THEY. Transitional construction, serving to indicate a change in subject from Peter to the Council.

ακουσαντες [ακουω] aor. part. "**when they heard**" - HAVING HEARD [THEY WERE INFURIATED]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

ανελειν [ανααιρεω] aor. inf. "**[wanted] to put [them] to death**" - [AND WERE WANTING, WILLING] TO KILL, DESTROY [THEM]. This infinitive is normally classified as complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to want", but as is often the case with a cognitive verb, it can often be treated as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception, expressing what is desired, namely, that they might put them to death. "Immediately, they went into a consultation to find a way to have the special missionaries executed", Junkins.

### v34

There were a number of great Jewish teachers called Gamaliel, this particular teacher going by the name Rabban Galaliel I (the Elder). Presumably this is the same Gamaliel who was Paul's teacher, Act.22:3. He is a Pharisee, a puritan of his day, one "who kept aloof from those who were casual about keeping God's law", Peterson D. As noted above, Luke is not expressing a positive view of Pharisaism. Gamaliel may believe in the resurrection, but he doesn't believe in Jesus' resurrection,

τις pro. "-" - [BUT/AND] A CERTAIN [PHARISEE IN THE COUNCIL]. Presumably the pronoun functions as an adjective limiting the noun "Pharisee", but of course it may serve as a noun, "a certain one", with "Pharisee" standing in apposition, "a certain one, a Pharisee, ..."; "A certain member of the council", Cassirer.

ονοματι [α ατος] dat. "**named [Gamaliel]**" - IN / BY NAME [GAMALIEL]. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect, "with respect to his name, Gamaliel"; "A man by the name of Gamaliel", Cassirer.

νομοδιδασκαλος [ος] "**a teacher of the law**" - A PERSON SKILLED IN TEACHING AND INTERPRETING THE LAW. Standing in apposition to "Gamaliel".

τιμος adj. "**who was honoured**" - HONOURABLE. The adjective could be treated as a substantive, "a man held in honour by all the people", in which case it stands in apposition to "teacher of the law", but the NIV treats it as an adjective introducing an attributive modifier of "teacher of the law."

παντι dat. adj. "**by all [the people]**" - IN ALL [THE PEOPLE]. The dative may be classified as local, although Culy suggests that it is ethical, indicating those

whose perspective is in view. Either way, the sense is "in *the eyes of* all the people"; "universally honoured", Barclay.

**αναστας [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "**stood up**" - HAVING ARISEN, [COMMANDED]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to command"; "stood up and gave orders", ESV.

**ποιησαι [ποιεω]** aor. inf. "**that [the men] be put [outside]**" - TO PUT [THE MEN OUTSIDE BRIEFLY]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Gamaliel ordered. "He ordered the apostles to be taken out of the room for a little while", CEV.

### v35

**προς** + acc. "-" - [BUT/AND HE SAID] TOWARD [THEM]. Again Luke uses this preposition in place of a dative of direct object.

**Ισραηλιται [ης ου]** "**[men] of Israel**" - [MEN] ISRAELITES. Vocative, standing in apposition to "men".

**ἐαυτοις** dat. pro. "-" - [PAY ATTENTION TO] YOURSELVES. Dative of direct object after the **προς** prefix verb "to pay attention to."

**τι** pro. "**what**" - WHAT. Interrogative pronoun introducing an indirect question.

**πρασσειν [πρασσω]** aor. inf. "**[you intend] to do**" - [YOU ARE ABOUT] TO DO. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to be about to."

**επι** + dat. "**to [these men]**" - UPON [THESE MEN]. Adverbial use of the preposition, reference / respect, "Men of Israel, be circumspect about these men, as to what you are about to do."

### v36

Josephus records a minor revolt led by Theudas, although he has it during the time when Fadus was procreator of Judea, AD 45-46. Not only is this event after the speech delivered by Gamaliel (around AD 37), but it is well after the revolt led by Judas the Galilean, around AD 6, a revolt also recorded by Josephus. Either Luke or Josephus has their facts wrong, or as Peterson D suggests, Luke is referring to some other Theudas. Minor revolts were common at the time of Herod the Great's death, AD 4.

**γαρ** "-" - FOR. More reason than cause; here serving to introduce an example in support of the contention that the Council needs to consider carefully before acting against the apostles; "Consider this point, ....."

**προ** + acc. "**[some time ago]**" - BEFORE [THESE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition.



λεγων **"claiming"** - [THEUDAS AROSE] SAYING. The NIV treats the participle as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his rising up = appearance, but it may just be attendant on the verb "to rise up", "Theudas appeared *on the scene* and said = claimed that he was somebody."

εἶναι [εἰμι] pres. inf. **"to be [somebody]"** - TO BE [A CERTAIN *one* HIMSELF]. The infinitive serves to introduce an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Theudas claimed. "He claimed that he was someone to be reckoned with", Cassirer.

ὡς **"about"** - [A NUMBER OF MEN] AS [FOUR HUNDRED]. When used with numbers, this particle expresses approximation, as NIV; "about four hundred men joined him", CEV. The genitive "of men" is adjectival, partitive.

ᾧ dat. pro. **"[rallied] to him"** - [WERE JOINED TO] WHOM = HIM [WHO WAS KILLED = EXECUTED]. Dative of direct object after the *προς* prefix verb "to join to / associate with."

αὐτῷ dat. pro. **"-"** - [ALL WERE SCATTERED, AS MANY AS WERE PERSUADED BY] HIM [AND IT BECAME INTO NOTHING]. Dative of direct object after the verb "to persuade" / here passive, "be persuaded by." The phrase "it came to nothing" is an idiomatic expression meaning that something is ultimately futile and meaningless. "He was killed, his followers dispersed, and nothing came of it", Peterson.

### v37

Josephus, in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, also records the revolt led by Judas the Galilean in response to the census conducted by Quirinius in AD 6. Of course, the revolt was unsuccessful in preventing the census, but it did spur on the Zealots in their opposition to Roman rule.

μετα + acc. **"after [him]"** - AFTER [THIS, JUDAS THE GALILEAN AROSE IN]. As with *εν*, "in", the preposition is temporal; "Later, Judas the Galilean came on the scene during the days of the census."

της απογραφης [η] **"of the census"** - [THE DAYS] OF THE CENSUS. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / possibly temporal, "the days *when* the census *was held*."

απεστησεν [αφιστημι] aor. act. **"led [a band of people *in revolt*]"** - [AND] LED AWAY [A *group of* PEOPLE AFTER HIM]. The overall sense is "draw followers" = "lead a revolt", given that this verb, when passive, means "to revolt." The adverb *οπισω*, "after", is used as a preposition + gen.

αὐτῷ dat. pro. **"-"** - [AND THAT ONE PERISHED, AND ALL WERE SCATTERED, AS MANY AS WERE PERSUADED BY] HIM. Dative of direct object after the verb "to persuade" / here passive, "be persuaded by." "He perished, and those who followed him were scattered."

### v38

Gamaliel has in mind the defiling of his fellows when he makes the point "stay away from these men", with Codex D adding "without defiling your hands." His argument in v38-39 is likely a commonly used argument at the time. A similar argument is attributed to R. Johanan the Sandal-maker, "Any assembling together that is for the sake of heaven shall in the end be established, but any that is not for the sake of heaven shall not in the end be established."

**τα** "[in] the [present case]" - [AND] THE [NOW *things*]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the temporal adverb **νυν**, "now", into a nominal phrase, accusative of respect; "So, with respect / concerning / about the present circumstances, I say to you, keep away from these men."

**ὑμιν** dat. pro. "**[I advise] you**" - [I SAY] TO YOU [DEPART FROM THESE MEN AND PERMIT THEM]. Dative of indirect object after the verb "to say." The verb **αφιημι**, "to permit", in this context may mean "leave them *alone*", "let them alone", REB, or "release them", "let them go", Cassirer. The preposition **απο**, "from", expresses separation, "away from."

**ὅτι** "**for**" - BECAUSE. Serving to introduce a causal clause explaining why the Council should "leave these men alone."

**εαν** + subj. "**if**" - IF, *as the case may be*, [IT IS FROM MEN, *then* THIS COUNSEL = PLAN, OR THIS WORK, WILL BE DESTROYED = OVERTURNED]. Introducing a 3rd. class conditional clause where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true. The preposition **εξ**, "from", expresses source / origin.

### v39

**ει** + ind. "**[but] if**" - [BUT/AND] IF, *as is the case*, [IT IS FROM GOD, *then*]. Introducing a conditional clause 1st. class where the proposed conditions is assumed to be true.

**καταλυσαι** [**καταλυω**] aor. inf. "**to stop**" - [YOU ARE NOT ABLE] TO DESTROY = OVERTHROW [THEM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to be able."

**μηποτε** + subj. "-" - [AND] NOT = IN ORDER THAT NOT, LEST [YOU MAY BE FOUND]. Introducing a negated final clause expressing purpose, so modifying **αποστητε**, "depart from", v38, but possibly used here, in its own right, to express conjecture, "Perhaps you will be found", Barrett, possibly even "Do not be found ...", Bruce Gk.

**θεομαχοι** adj. "**fighting against God**" - GOD-OPPOSING. Being nominative, this adjective serves as the complement of the subject "you", standing in a double nominative construction and asserting a fact about the subject, "lest you as god-

opposing be found" = "lest you be found opposing God"; "You will be running the risk of finding yourselves making war against God", Cassirer.

#### v40

αυτω dat. pro. "**his [speech persuaded]**" - [BUT/AND THEY WERE PERSUADED BY] HIM. Dative of direct object after the passive use of the verb "to persuade."

προσκαλεσαμενοι [προσκαλεω] aor. mid. part. "**called [the apostles] in**" - [AND] HAVING CALLED [THE APOSTLES]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "When they had summoned the apostles."

δειραντες [δερω] aor. part. "**had them flogged**" - HAVING BEAT [*them* THEY WARNED *them*]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to warn"; "they beat them and charged them", ESV.

λαλειν [λαλεω] pres. inf. "**[not] to speak**" - [NOT] TO SPEAK. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they warned them not to do.

επι + dat. "**in [the name]**" - UPON [THE NAME OF JESUS, AND THEY RELEASED *them*]. See επι, v28.

#### v41

This verse presents us with an oxymoron, "to be disgracefully treated for Christ's sake is an honour", Barrett.

οἱ ... οὖν "**the apostles**" - THE = THEM THEREFORE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from the Council to the apostles. We may have expected a οἱ δε construction, but here with an inference drawn from previous actions, namely, being released; "And so, the apostles left the Council rejoicing."

μεν "-" - ON THE ONE HAND. This forward looking indicator is usually completed with δε, "but/and on the other hand." Here it is completed with a correlative τε ... και in v42, "on the one hand the apostles left the Council ....., and on the other hand, they attended the temple and private homes"

απο + gen. "-" - [THEY WERE GOING] FROM. Expressing separation, "away from."

του συνεδριου [ov] gen. "**[left] Sanhedrin**" - [THE FACE = PRESENCE] OF THE COUNCIL. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "presence". Culy gives it a technical classification of possessive, but as Semitic idiom, drawn from the LXX (cf., Num.20:6), it is best treated as idiomatic, "the personal presence of individuals together = the face *who make up the membership* of the Sanhedrin; "The apostles left the Council, full of joy that .....", TEV.

οτι "**because**" - THAT. It seems likely that the conjunction here introduces a causal clause explaining why they were rejoicing, ie., providing the grounds for

their rejoicing; "because they had been considered worthy", Culy. It could also be treated as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of their "rejoicing", even exegetical, specifying the "rejoicing"; "They left the Sanhedrin rejoicing that they had been reckoned worthy to be ill-treated for the Name", Barclay.

**αντιμασθηναι** [**αντιμαζω**] aor. pas. inf. "**of suffering disgrace**" - [THEY WERE CONSIDERED WORTHY] TO BE DISHONOURED. Usually classified as complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to consider worthy", but of course, as a cognitive verb, the infinitive may be viewed as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception, expressing what is considered as worthy, namely, that they were given the honour of suffering for the Name.

**ὑπερ** + gen. "**for**" - ON BEHALF OF [THE NAME]. Probably expressing representation, "on behalf of / for the sake of", but possibly advantage, "for the benefit of." "The Name" represents the person and their authority, in this case, of Jesus Christ.

#### v42

Luke draws out the fact that the opposition of the religious authorities has come to nothing and that the apostles are again free to proclaim the gospel to the inhabitants of Jerusalem - nothing can stand in the way of the gospel as it spreads to the ends of the earth. Even the persecution of Stephen and his Hellenistic associates, recorded in chapter 8, does not hinder the apostolic mission, rather, it serves to propel the gospel beyond Jerusalem into Samaria, leaving the apostles to continue their work in Jerusalem.

**τε .... και** "-" - AND *on the other hand*, [EVERY DAY IN THE TEMPLE] AND. See **μεν** v41.

**κατ** [**κατα**] + acc. "**from [house] to [house]**" - ACCORDING TO [HOUSE]. A distributive use of the preposition.

**διδασκοντες** [**διδασκω**] pres. part. "[**they never stopped**] **teaching**" - [THEY DID NOT CEASE, STOP] TEACHING [AND PREACHING]. As with "preaching", the participle serves as the complement of the negated verb "to cease." Barrett suggests that the construction is stronger than the use of the imperfect verbs, "were teaching", and "were preaching." It is possible to link "teaching" with going "from house to house", and "preaching" with "the Christ *is* Jesus / *concerning* Jesus the Christ."

**τον χριστον** [**ος**] acc. "**the good news that Jesus [is the Christ]**" - THE CHRIST, MESSIAH [JESUS]. Taking "Jesus Christ" as a combined nominal phrase (it certainly develops as such), it would serve as the direct object of the participles "teaching" and "preaching". Barrett suggests that the construction is elliptical, giving the sense "they proclaimed *the good news that* the Christ *was* Jesus." With

this approach we have an assumed direct object, "the gospel / good news", with an accusative complement "Jesus Christ", or "Jesus *is* (and assumed εἰμι) the Christ." As such, the complement specifies a fact about the object; "teaching and telling *the good news that Jesus was the Messiah*", Barclay.

## 6:1-7

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### i] The spirit of the gospel

##### Synopsis

Before relating the martyrdom of Stephen, Luke tells us something of the Hellenist believers and their status in the Jerusalem church. The church is increasing in numbers and there is tension in the community because the Hellenistic members feel that their widows are being overlooked by the Hebraic members in the daily distribution of food to the needy. To sort the problem, the apostles appoint a number of Hellenistic Jews, "full of the Spirit and wisdom", to share in ministry toward those in need. This enables the apostles to focus on their "word" ministry. In v7, Luke notes how the gospel is spreading throughout the wider community, with new converts swelling the ranks of the believing community; even priests are turning to Jesus.

##### Teaching

*The Way* prepares for a violent break with Jerusalem / the temple leading to the emergence of a wider missionary endeavour which will bring the gospel to the Gentile world.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-11.

In this section *The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25*, Luke reveals the growing gulf between Jerusalem / the temple and Rome, of the gulf between Jew and Gentile (ultimately the gulf between Law and grace), and how this gulf is not only bridged by the hand of God, but by the leading lights of the Jerusalem church. Luke will go on to show how Paul's Gentile ministry of grace is no heretical movement, but is the means by which *the way* becomes a universal religion rather than a Jewish sect.

In chapters 6-7 we learn that the preaching ministry of the apostles continues to anger the religious authorities, but that it is the preaching of converted Hellenist Jews which causes the greater problem. The evangelistic activities of these Hellenist believers, and particularly of Stephen, leads to the martyrdom of Stephen and to a general persecution of Hellenist members of *the Way*. Luke pointedly notes that this persecution is led by Saul and that it is not directed at Hebraic believers, notably the apostles. The driving out of Hellenist believers from Jerusalem leads to an outward thrust of the gospel and thus to an expansion of the Christian

church into Judea and Samaria - "the divine purpose overrules human malice to bring to effect the overarching divine plan", Dunn.

In chapter 8 Luke reveals how *the way* begins to include Samaritan and God-fearer members. We learn that through the preaching ministry of Phillip, a converted Hellenist Jew, the people of Samaria respond to the gospel, and how an Ethiopian God-fearer also believes. Luke makes a point of noting how even Samaritans receive the Spirit, and this at the hand of two prominent apostles, Peter and John. Saul is still not finished with these heretical Greek-speaking Jews and so we read in chapter 9 how he seeks them out. Confronted by the risen Christ, even Saul joins the Way and sets about proclaiming the gospel.

For Luke, his record of the conversion of Cornelius in chapter 10 is a key turning point in his Acts of the Apostles. Here we have a Gentile God-fearer joining *the Way*; he responds to the gospel and above all, he receives the Holy Spirit just as the apostles had received the Spirit on the day of Pentecost those few years before. His conversion is at the hand of that most trusted of apostles, Peter. To further reinforce the importance of this event, Luke records Peter's explanation to the Hebraic believers in Jerusalem, reinforcing to them that "even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life." The gospel's expansion into the Gentile world continues, again led by Hellenist believers who take the gospel North to Antioch. Again, the Jerusalem church aids this expansion, sending Barnabas, a man "full of the Holy Spirit and faith"; it is this trusted member of the Jerusalem church who asks Saul to aid him.

On concluding their mission in Antioch, Barnabas and Saul return to Jerusalem to report on their work for the gospel and to hand over funds collected for members of the Jerusalem church (a famine is presently inflicting Palestine). In chapter 11, Luke records the increasing difficulties faced by the Hebraic believers in Jerusalem. Herod has decided to turn on the believers, executing James, the brother of John, and arresting Peter. Peter is miraculously released, but before Herod refocuses on his persecution of the church, he is distracted by political affairs and inevitably comes to a well-deserved end - "he was eaten by worms and died." Having spent time with the believers in Jerusalem, Barnabas and Saul, along with "John, also called Mark", return to Antioch.

So, in this second major section of his Acts of the Apostles, Luke establishes the authority by which Gentiles are rightly included in *the Way* and the wholly appropriate position Saul, now called Paul, plays in the apostolic mission.

ii] Structure: *The spirit of the gospel*:

The appointment of deacons, v1-6:

Setting / situation, v1;

The overlooking of Hellenist widows, v1.

The apostles address the situation, v2-4;

The appointees, v5;

Their appointment, v6;

A brief summary of the expansion of *the Way*, v7.

iii] Interpretation:

The Jewish world was divided between Aramaic speaking Jews from Palestine (Hebrews), and Greek speaking Jews from outside Palestine (Hellenists). The Hellenists were either emigrants from Palestine or descendants of Jews of the dispersion. It is worth noting that large populations of Jews existed outside of Palestine, eg., a third of the population of Alexandria in Egypt were Jews. Racial tension, often focused on religious purity, existed in the Jewish community and likely found its way into the New Testament church. This racial tension is evident in Luke's account, a tension which was one of the factors leading up to the martyrdom of Stephen and the *evacuation* of the Hellenist believers from Jerusalem. It was these *evacuees* who were responsible for the initial spread of the gospel beyond Jerusalem.

The seven are Hellenist believers appointed to care for the poor, particularly within their own community, given that they felt that "their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food", v1. That all seven deacons have Greek names indicates that they are probably Hellenists, although it was not uncommon for a Palestinian Jew to have a Greek name at this time.

*The purpose behind Luke's record of a break in fellowship between the Hellenist and Hebraic believers.* Conzelmann doubts the historicity of Luke's account of the tension between the Hebrews and the Hellenists in the church. It may well be that Luke is doing nothing more than explaining the emergence of Hellenist leaders in the church who play an important role in the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to "the ends of the earth" / Rome, eg., Stephen, Philip. Having noted the incident, Luke moves on.

On the other hand, Luke may be underlining the inclusive nature of the kingdom now realised in Christ - Jew and Gentile. We may have here the first steps on that journey - Palestinian Jew and Hellenist Jew; "the first step in the equality of Jew and Gentile in the Church", Bruce, Gk. Note also



the inclusion of the proselyte Nicholas, but more particularly that of Stephen who heads the list.

It is possible that this incident serves no other purpose than to introduce the reader to Stephen, the first martyr for *the Way*, but this seems unlikely. Nor is it likely that Luke is recording the establishment of the order of deacons.

Luke selects his material to suit his overall purpose of revealing the divine plan of gospel extension from Jew to Gentile, Jerusalem to Rome / the ends of the earth. In the passage before us, Luke records another small step in that journey.

*The qualities required of the seven appointees.* It seems strange that the seven are required to possess a skill-set necessary for a preaching / teaching ministry. Luke often uses the term "full of the Spirit" to define a spiritual gifting for a word ministry - communicating (preaching / teaching) the gospel; "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly", 4:31. In the passage before us, the seven are chosen on the ground of their being "full of the Spirit", but also of their possessing "wisdom", a gift essential for a preaching / teaching ministry.

It is possible that "full of the Spirit" specifically relates to "wisdom" itself, i.e., they must be full of the Spirit / spiritually full when it comes to wisdom. We possibly even have a hendiadys where two words are joined by *καί* expressing a single thought; "spiritually wise / possessing a spiritually enriched good sense." There is then only one quality being sought after - the spiritual gift of wisdom. They must be spiritually gifted, able administrators, qualified to adeptly handle tensions in human relationships; "their lives are dedicated to God's Spirit so that they are spiritually sensitive, able to make good judgments", Bock.

Most commentators widen the sense of "full of the Spirit" and treat "wisdom" as a second qualification: "showing all the marks of the work of the Holy Spirit" along with the natural (so Barrett, but see below) attribute of wisdom, i.e., "the men appointed had to excel in spiritual and natural gifts", Barrett.

#### v] Homiletics: *Church growth*

Acts serves to illustrate the truth that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to those who believe, for the Jew first and then the Gentile. It records the gathering of the lost and the building of the people of God through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, beginning at Jerusalem and spreading outward to the ends of the earth (for Luke, this means Rome).

In an age when believers are overly focused on the need to secure the survival of the institutional church through presentation (relevance), marketing (people management, sales techniques), management (assertive leadership)..., it is good for us to see again the big picture. The church is built on the proclamation of the gospel. "The Word of God spread", or as we would put it, the good news of Jesus was increasingly made known to the wider society. The clear communication of the gospel was the means by which "disciples.... increased rapidly."

### Text - 6:1

The choosing of the seven deacons, v1-6: i] Situation, v1. The apostles confront a dispute, prompted by a claim from Hellenist members of the Jerusalem fellowship, that their widows were not getting a fair share of the church's welfare budget.

**δε** "-" BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative. The use of **δε** with the phrase "in these day" indicates a major transition, Culy, Kellum, ...

**εν** + dat. "**in [those days]**" - IN [THESE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition.

**πληθυνοντων [πληθυνω]** gen. pres. part. "**when the number [of disciples] was increasing**" - [THE DISCIPLES] MULTIPLYING, INCREASING. The genitive participle, with its genitive subject "disciples", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV; "In those days, as the number of disciples kept growing", Berkeley.

**των Ελληνιστων [ης ου]** gen. "**the Hellenistic Jews**" - [THERE BECAME A COMPLAINT, GRUMBLING] OF THE HELLENISTS. The genitive is usually treated as adverbial, instrumental, "by those who spoke Greek", Cassirer, or ablative, source / origin; "from the Hellenists." As noted above, this is likely to be a cultural designation, ie., non-Palestinian Jews, primarily Greek speaking. Cadbury argued that Luke is using the word to mean Gentile, but this seems unlikely. "There rose a complaint on the part of the Greek-speaking .... Jews", Berkeley.

**προς** + acc. "**against**" - TOWARD. Here expressing opposition, "against".

**τους Εβραιους [ος]** "**Hebraic Jews**" - HEBREWS. As above, a cultural designation, ie., Palestinian Jews, primarily Aramaic/Hebrew speaking.

**οτι** "**because**" - THAT. Either introducing a causal clause, as NIV, or a dependent statement, indirect speech, expressing the content of the complaint; "they alleged that their widows were being passed over", Barclay.

**αι χηραι [α]** "**[their] widows**" - THE WIDOWS [OF THEM WERE BEING NEGLECTED]. Nominative subject of the imperfect verb "to be neglected." Haenchen refers to the theory of Rengstorf that widows of the dispersion came to

Jerusalem to live-out their final years. The imperfect is probably being used here to establish aspect, here durative, an ongoing neglect.

εν "in" - IN [THE DAILY SUPPORT, SERVICE]. Local, expressing the sphere of activity, although Culy suggests reference / respect. When it came to the daily distribution of support (financial or material), the Hellenistic widows were being overlooked.

v2

ii] The apostles address the situation, v2-4. The apostles see their main function as administering the worship of the church ("give our attention to prayer") and the preaching and teaching of the Word of God ("ministry of the Word"). They don't want to be side-tracked into a social-welfare role. To this end, the apostles suggest that the congregation choose seven men who are gifted with wisdom, men who are capable and intelligent, able to perform a social-welfare role.

προσκαλεσαμενοι [προσκαλεομαι] aor. mid. part. "**gathered [all the disciples] together**" - [BUT/AND THE TWELVE] HAVING SUMMONED, CALLED TOGETHER. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said"; summoned ..... and said", but possibly adverbial, temporal, so Kellum.

των μαθητων [ης ου] "**[all] the disciples**" - [THE MULTITUDE] OF DISCIPLES [AND SAID]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative. "The twelve summoned the body of disciples, 'It is not right', they said .....", Barclay.

αρεστον adj. "**right**" - PLEASING / PROPER, RIGHT. Predicate adjective; "desirable", or "fitting", REB, is a bit soft, so "it is not right", Phillips, as NIV.

καταλειψαντας [καταλειπω] aor. part. "**to neglect**" - HAVING NEGLECTED, FORSAKEN, LEFT. The function of this participle is not overly clear. It is possibly adverbial, modal, expressing manner, so Culy (qualified), but it seems best to treat it as standing in the place of an infinitive, so introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what is not pleasing / desirable; "it is far from desirable that we should forsake the preaching of God's message", Cassirer.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**[the ministry of the word] of God**" - [THE WORD] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source; "the message / revelation *that derives from* God." Obviously "ministry of" is assumed, possibly "preaching of", Barclay, etc, "teaching of", Berkeley, etc.

διακονειν [διακονεω] pres. inf. "**in order to wait on**" - TO SERVE, WAIT ON. The infinitive may be adverbial, final, expressing purpose, as NIV, so Barrett, although, as with the participle *καταλειψαντα*, "having neglected", it more likely serves to introduce a dependent statement of perception expressing what "is not right, desirable", namely, "*that we should* devote our attention to ministrations at

table", Cassirer. As Culy notes, both the participial phrase, together with the infinitival phrase, serves as the subject of the impersonal use of the verb to-be; "for us to neglect (having neglected) *the ministry* of the word of God, and to wait on tables, is not right / desirable." The pronoun ἡμας, "we = us", serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive, but also of the participle serving as an infinitive. "It wouldn't be right for us to abandon our responsibilities for preaching and teaching the Word of God to help with the care of the poor", Peterson.

τραπεθαις [α] dat. "tables" - TABLES. Dative of direct object after the δια prefix verb "wait on / serve."

### v3

αδελφοι [ος] "brothers / brothers and sisters" - [BUT/AND] BROTHERS. Given the context, the term is inclusive, as NIV7. Today, "brothers" refers to a group of men; "my friends", CEV.

επισκεψασθε [επισκεπτομαι] aor. imp. "choose" - SELECT, CHOOSE (after careful investigation). The choice of seven men has Biblical precedence. At the time, it was also the number of people appointed to local councils. There is probably no real significance in the choice of seven. "You, our brothers, must look around and pick out from our number .....", Phillips.

εξ [εκ] + gen. "from among [you]" - [MEN] OUT OF, FROM [YOU, SEVEN]. Expressing source / origin, or serving instead of a partitive genitive. The adjective ἑπτα, "seven", stands in apposition to "men"

μαρτυρουμενους [μαρτυρω] pres. mid. / pas. part. "who are known" - BEING WELL REPORTED OF, TESTIFIED OF. Three adjectival modifiers follow, limiting "men"; they should be men who are well spoken of, who are full of the Spirit and who are full of wisdom. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "men"; "seven men who are of good repute."

πνευματος και σοφιας "of the Spirit" - [FULL] OF SPIRIT [AND OF WISDOM]. "Spirit", as in Holy Spirit, or "spirit", as in spiritual? The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / of content, as NIV. As noted above, it is somewhat unclear whether the second and third qualification, "full of the Spirit and wisdom", amount to two qualifications, or a single qualification, "of honest report", AV, "of honourable reputation", Bruce, "respected / attested ...." It is unclear whether we should understand "wisdom" here as a natural attribute such as "sensible", so Barrett, or as a spiritual gift, "a particular manifestation of the Spirit's presence in their lives", so Peterson D.

επι + gen. "over" - [WHOM WE WILL APPOINT, PUT IN CHARGE] OVER [THIS DUTY, NEED]. Here expressing subordination. "We will put them in charge of this duty (to help with the care of the poor)", Barclay.

#### v4

The ministry exercised by the apostles is one of prayer and preaching / teaching, cf., 5:42, a ministry of teaching from home to home and preaching (gospel proclamation) in the temple.

ἡμεῖς "we" - [BUT/AND] WE. Emphatic by use and position; "we ourselves", TEV.

προσκαρτερησομεν [προσκαρτερω] fut. "will give our attention to" - WE WILL PERSEVERE = DEVOTE OURSELVES TO. In the sense of giving priority to; "we can spend our time", CEV.

τη προσευχη [η] "prayer" - TO PRAYER. As with διακονια, "service", dative of direct object after the προς prefix verb "to be devoted to."

του λογου [ος] "[the ministry] of the word" - [AND TO THE SERVICE] OF THE WORD. The genitive is adjectival, usually classified as verbal, objective, where the genitive "word" receives the action of the verbal noun "ministry", although it may simply be treated as attributive, limiting "ministry"; "a word ministry." "Ministry" again in the sense of a teaching and preaching ministry.

#### v5

iii] The appointees, v5. The seven have Greek names, indicating that they are all Hellenists. One wasn't even a Jew, but rather a proselyte. Stephen heads the list, and is described as a man "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." He is a gifted person, the most evident spiritual gift being his strong faith. His appointment recognises this fact.

ὁ λογος "this proposal" - THE WORD [WAS PLEASING]. Nominative subject of the verb "to please"; "What they said found favour with all the assembled", Cassirer. What the apostles said obviously aligned with the assembly's understanding of the divine will, and so "they agreed" with it.

ενωπιον + gen. "-" - BEFORE, IN THE PRESENCE OF. Spatial. Not simply "all", which may imply the whole of Jerusalem, but rather this particular gathering; "the general body of the congregation", Barclay.

πληρης "full" - [AND THEY CHOSE STEPHEN, A MAN], A FULL *man*. Used here as an indeclinable nominative standing in apposition to "man".

πιστεως [ις εως] gen. "of faith" - OF FAITH. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "a full *man*", descriptive, idiomatic / content; "a filled man with faith" = "a man full of faith." "Faith" in the sense of "essential Christian belief and commitment", Fitzmyer, although Haenchen thinks Stephen's faith is the type that moves mountains, ie., miracle-working faith.

πνευματος ἁγιου gen. "of the Holy Spirit" - [AND] HOLY SPIRIT. As above, genitive of content. A title is usually implied, both words coming with or without

articles, so "the Holy Spirit". As noted above, "full of" seems to mean in Luke "spiritually gifted", particularly gifted in preaching / teaching the word of God, i.e., Luke is using the phrase in the Old Testament sense of "endowed with Spirit-giving force and eloquence", Fitzmyer. None-the-less, as with "full of the Spirit and wisdom", where "wisdom" can be understood as the spiritual endowment identified as necessary for serving the poor, here Luke may be identifying "faith" "as a particular manifestation of the Spirit's presence in his (Stephen's) life", Peterson, D. To avoid confusion, it is worth noting that phrases like "baptized with the Holy Spirit", or "received the Holy Spirit", seem to have a regenerative sense rather than that of spiritual endowment.

**Νικολαον [ος]** "**Nicolas**" - [AND PHILIP, AND PROCHORUS, AND NICANOR, AND TIMON, AND PARMENAS, AND] NICOLAS [A PROSELYTE *and* AN ANTIOCHEAN]. Only Stephen and Philip get another mention in Acts. It is unclear whether Philip is the apostle Philip - Marshall argues against the possibility. By noting that Nicolas is a proselyte, a convert to Judaism in training to become a full Jew, indicates that the other six are Jewish believers. The important point for Luke is that they are Hellenistic Jews (indicated by their Greek names), Jews of the dispersion, with one even a proselyte - the gospel is on its way from Jew to Gentile, Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

## v6

iv] The appointment of the seven, v6. The church (the assembly of believers) selects the seven, while the apostles appoint them to their office. The laying on of hands may serve to either express a prayer for blessing, or a commissioning for service. It is very unlikely that this act imparts spiritual power since they were already "full of the Spirit". The ministry function of deacon comes from this passage and its title is derived from the Greek word *diakonos*, "servant, minister." It is unlikely that a ministry classification is being established here; these men are just being set apart to serve the church community.

**ενωπιον** + gen. "**to [the apostles]**" - [WHOM THEY PLACED] BEFORE [THE APOSTLES]. Spatial

**προσευξαμενοι [προσευχομαι]** aor. mid. part. "**who prayed**" - [AND] HAVING PRAYED. The participle is attendant on the verb **επεθηκαν**, "they laid upon", so "they prayed and laid ...", but it may be treated as adverbial, temporal, "who, after prayer, laid their hands upon them", Moffatt.

**επεθηκαν [επιτιθημι]** aor. "**laid [their hands] on**" - THEY PLACED UPON, LAID ON [THE = THEIR HANDS]. The syntax does not identify the agent, so either **οὔς**, "whom" = "crowd = assembled congregation", or "the apostles." As indicated above, the laying on of hands is used as a visible expression of a prayer for blessing; it expresses personal identification. As also noted above, it is very

unlikely that it conveys spiritual endowment - "it did not, of course, impart the gift of the Spirit; the seven were already *full of the Spirit*", Bruce.

αὐτοῖς dat. "**them**" - ON THEM. The ἐπι prefix verb "to lay on, upon" may take an accusative or a dative. Here it takes the accusative "hands", with the dative "them" serving as a local dative of place.

v7

Luke now gives us a brief report on the state of the church, telling us that gospel-communication is progressing, both in Jerusalem and beyond, v7. As a result of the apostolic mission, the number of believers is increasing. This includes converts who are priests - an unlikely source. The phrase "obedient to the faith" may well reflect Romans 1:5, but may also simply mean that they "put their faith in the Lord", CEV. At any rate, many priests have committed their life to Jesus through the preaching of the gospel.

καὶ .... καὶ ..... τε "**So**" - AND .... AND ..... AND. Culy notes that this correlative construction introduces a series and so it is possible that the verse serves as the opening to the account of Stephen's death. Peterson D argues that the inclusion is backward looking to v1. It may just be best to treat it as a separate paragraph, as NIV. What we end up with is a list of three elements: the word "was growing"; disciples "were being multiplied"; and priests "were being obedient" - the verbs are imperfect. Kellum suggests that the first two are durative / progressive and the third inceptive / ingressive, "began to be obedient".

τοῦ θεοῦ [ος] gen. "**[the word] of God**" - [THE WORD] OF GOD [WAS GROWING, INCREASING]. The genitive is best viewed as adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*which is from God.*" It is more than likely that this "word / message from God" is the gospel, the announcement of the inauguration / realisation of the kingdom of God / the reign of God in Christ. "Was spreading widely", Barclay.

τῶν μαθητῶν [ης ου] gen. "**[the number] of the disciples**" - [AND THE NUMBER] OF DISCIPLES [IN JERUSALEM WAS BEING MULTIPLIED GREATLY, VERY MUCH]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. "Continued to be [greatly] increased", Barclay (theological passive - God is the agent).

τῶν ἱερέων [υς εων] "**of priests**" - [AND A GREAT CROWDS] OF PRIESTS. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative. Given that there were some 8,000 priests in Palestine at the time, it is not unreasonable for some to become believers. Luke seems to be noting the effectiveness of the gospel in Jerusalem - many people are being converted, even priests.

ὑπήκουον [ύπακουω] imperf. "**became obedient to**" - WERE HEARING / RESPONDING / OBEYING. The imperfect may be treated as: iterative, expressing repeated action, "kept joining", Knowing; or voluntative, expressing an

attempted action; or possibly inceptive, "began to", Barrett. The word "obedient" can be misleading since the sense is probably "commitment to / acceptance of"; "accepted the faith", TEV, "put their faith in the Lord", CEV - but see below.

τη πιστει [ις εως] **"the faith"** - THE FAITH. Dative of direct object after the verb "to obey." Luke may intend "the faith" in an objective sense, "that which Christians believe, .... the Christian religion", Fitzmyer, "Christian belief / doctrine / the creed / NT ethics ...." (= "the content of Christian belief and life", Barrett, so Peterson, D), or more specifically "the gospel", and so "faith in the gospel / Christ", "acceptance of the Christian message (and thus the object of the message, namely, Christ)", Longenecker; they "opened their hearts to the gospel", Haenchen, cf., Acts 13:8, 14:22, 16:5. There is always the possibility that Luke, due to his close association with the apostle Paul, is reflecting Pauline doctrine, so Dunn, Conzelmann. Is this an example of Paul's "obedience of faith", the state of obedience / covenant compliance realised through faith in the faithfulness of Christ, as opposed to obedience that is a fruit of faith, cf., Rom.1:5? So, Luke may be stating that many priests became obedient / covenant compliant "with / by means of" (instrumental dative) "faith = the faithfulness of Christ relied on by the instrument of faith / belief", so Bock, Bruce.



## 6:8-15

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### ii] Stephen is arrested

##### Synopsis

Stephen, one of the seven appointed to administer the distribution of food to those in need, is also an effective evangelist, both in word and sign. His preaching prompts opposition from the synagogue of the Freedmen, but Stephen is well able to handle their verbal assaults. In an attempt to silence him, members of the synagogue organise false witness to progress a charge of blasphemy against him, claiming that he speaks against Israel's traditions and the temple. Stephen is forcibly taken and brought before the Sanhedrin where a charge is laid and he is asked to defend himself.

##### Teaching

The gospel draws out the tension between law and grace.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-7.

ii] Structure: *Stephen is arrested*:

Stephen, a powerful proclaimer, v8-10;

The plot and trial, 11-14;

Stephen's persona, v15.

iii] Interpretation:

Up to this point, the apostolic mission was framed within Israel's traditions and was firmly focused on the temple. Luke has reminded us a number of times that the apostles met regularly in the temple courts to exercise a ministry of the word, presumably in the terms of the proclamation of the gospel. Now, with the Hellenist Jews, there is a shift from the temple and Israel's religious traditions. The reaction to this shift is possibly driven more by issues of culture, than theology - Palestinian Jews had a low opinion of the Jews of the dispersion and their syncretic ways. None-the-less, the charge is specific, namely that Stephen speaks, not just about Jesus, but he speaks against the temple (that Jesus will destroy it, v12) and Israel's customs / the Law.

Given that Stephen and his associates are entrusted with the social needs of the Christian community, it is quite unexpected to find him now proclaiming the gospel both in sign and word. None-the-less, it is Stephen's witness and arrest that will change the course of the apostolic mission,

while providing an "implied example to disciples .... to be faithful under trial, and trust the Spirit for a convincing testimony to Jesus", Peterson D. Witherington identifies ten parallels between Stephen and Jesus which serve to reinforce Stephen as a model of discipleship.

There is no evidence that Stephen actually spoke against Jewish traditions, nor the temple, but like Jesus, he was probably dismissive of their importance - his sermon in chapter seven evidences this perspective. Law / Moses is not the way a person stands right with God; it is by grace through faith in the faithfulness of Jesus. Nor is a knowledge of God found in the temple but in the "holy congregation." So, it is likely that the false testimony assembled by members of the synagogue of the Freedmen evidences Stephen's less than enthusiastic support for Israel's traditions. "Hellenists such as Stephen see the eschatological implications of Jesus' coming for the temple and the law more clearly than many other believers do initially", Bock.

Luke ends up contrasting Stephen with Jewish puritanism. He, a man "full of God's grace", stands as a member of "the holy congregation", while the members of the synagogue of the Freedmen, and later, the members of the Sanhedrin, stand as members of the temple, "this holy place", v13, so Dunn. The contrast reveals the inevitable transition from the one to the other, from temple to church, Jew to Gentile, Moses / Law to grace.

It is interesting to note that the fervent opposition generated against Stephen and his Hellenistic colleagues, comes from a Hellenistic synagogue(s). In psychological terms, not being quite *kosher* can prompt one to be somewhat puritanical, so proving how *kosher* one really is.

On the issue of source material, Barrett notes Luke's use of existing sources, and at the same time, his free composition of tradition, but he rejects the idea that it is possible to disentangle the two to form two separate stories. That it is possible to discern original source-material in the Acts of the Apostles simply indicates that Luke respects his sources. For more on this subject see Fitzmyer.

v] Homiletics: *Equity and the gospel*

Avi Silverberg, a weight lifter, recently tested the rules that allow a biological male, who identifies as a female, to compete in a female weight-lifting class. Of course, he won the competition, and sure made his point. Many people, asked to comment on the issue, didn't want to comment. Many



younger people willing to comment tended to see no problem. Only a few were willing to argue that it was unfair for a biological male to compete in women's sports. The equity of equality has imbibed the Western world and the Judaeo-Christian ethic which once guided us is now viewed as bigotry.

Stephen was a forthright promoter of the faith, stirring up opposition from his fellow citizens by promoting views they found offensive. It was not just that he spoke about Jesus, the risen Lord, but that he engaged with the shibboleths of the wider society, religious traditions expressed in respect for the temple and the traditions of Moses. He depreciated them, in much the same way as Jesus depreciated them - *salvation is by grace through faith, apart from works of the law*. Yet, by violating religious sensibilities, Stephen provoked a violent response.

Christian ethics reflect the purity of God, but at the same time, the grace of God. This is best illustrated in the story of a women caught in sin, Jn.8:1-11; "Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go home, but sin no more.'" Explaining to believers how divine holiness and love interrelate is a difficult task; explaining it to unbelievers is near impossible. The old adage, *condemn the sin, but love the sinner*, works within the fellowship of believers, but not in the secular world. All they hear is *condemn the sin*.

It's somewhat bold to suggest that we not follow the example of Stephen, but then, if you don't want to be set upon by the mob, it may be a good idea. Remember, a description is not necessarily a prescription! So, next time you get caught up in a debate over biology, remember, no one was ever saved by biology. If you are going to be mobbed, let it be for the gospel, not biology.

### Text - 6:8

Stephen is arrested, v8-15: i] Stephen, a powerful proclaimer, v8-10.

δε "now" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

χαριτος και δυναμεως gen. "grace and power" - [STEPHEN, FULL] OF GRACE AND POWER / AUTHORITY, [WAS PERFORMING WONDERS AND GREAT SIGNS IN = AMONG THE PEOPLE]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content, "Stephen, filled *full of* grace and power." In 6:3 the seven are "full of the Spirit and wisdom", and in v10 we are told that Stephen is imbibed with wisdom and the Spirit, so it is likely that being full of grace and power is much the same; they are the marks of a prophet who represents God in word and sign. "Grace" is used here as a general term describing divine favour which, for Stephen, shows itself in his words and wonders. "Power" refers to the outward manifestations of the Spirit's enabling, ie., signs and portents, so Barrett.

v9

Like the apostles, Stephen is into proclaiming the gospel both in word and sign, and his words inflame members of the synagogue of the Freedmen. The Greek is somewhat unclear, so we may have the synagogue of the Freedmen and another four (distributive genitives), or possibly another two, so Barrett, or we may just have one synagogue made up of Jews of the dispersion from Cyrene etc. (partitive genitives) - the last option seems best. The name "Freedmen" may indicate they are freed slaves, but it is more likely a title relating to liberation, either theological or social.

**των** gen. "-" - [CERTAIN *ones*] OF THE [FROM THE SYNAGOGUE]. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase, "from the synagogue of the Freedmen", into a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. The preposition **εκ**, "from", expresses source. Stephen's opponents are some members from the synagogue of the Freedmen.

**της λεγομενης [λεγω]** gen. pres. mid. part. "**as it is called**" - BEING CALLED [*the synagogue* OF *the FREEDMEN*]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "synagogue", "which is called *the synagogue of the Freedmen*." The genitive "of the Freedmen" is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / identification, "the synagogue *which goes by the name of Freedmen*"

**και** "-" - AND [OF *the* CYRENIANS AND *the* ALEXANDRIANS AND]. At this point, we have a series of coordinating particles, but this the first, is probably exegetical, specifying the membership of the synagogue; "the synagogue of Freedmen, comprising Cyrenaeans and Alexandrians, and people from Cilicia and Asia", Cassirer. The identified regions are genitive, adjectival, partitive, "a membership made up of Cyrenaeans ...."

**των** gen. "**as well as the provinces [of Cilicia]**" - OF THE [FROM CILICIA AND ASIA]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "from Cilicia and Asia" into a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. It is the repetition of this construction that prompts Barrett to argue for two groups; "There rose up some of those who belonged to the synagogue called the synagogue of the Libertines, both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and those who came from Cilicia and from Asia." As indicated above, one group is likely, as NIV.

**συζητουντες [συζητω]** pres. part. "**who began to argue [with Stephen]**" - [ROSE UP] ARGUING WITH, DEBATING WITH [STEPHEN]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to rise up"; "rose up and disputed with Stephen", ESV, but possibly adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "What they meant to do was to engage in argument", Cassirer. The present tense is often treated as inceptive, "started a dispute with Stephen", Moffatt, as NIV.

The **συν** prefix verb "to argue with" usually takes a dative, as with "Stephen" here.

#### v10

Jesus promised his disciples that, gifted with wisdom by the Holy Spirit, they would know what to say when confronting the secular world, Lk.12:12, 21:15. Luke sees this fulfilled in Stephen. The Western text draws out the inability of Stephen's opponents to counter him, so providing a reason for their malice; "who could not withstand the wisdom that was in him and the holy Spirit with which he spoke, because they were confused by him with all boldness. Being unable therefore to confront the truth .....", Metzger.

**αντιστηναι** [**αντιστημι**] aor. inf. "**stand up against**" - [AND THEY WERE NOT ABLE] TO RESIST, OPPOSE, CONTRADICT. Complementary infinitive completing the sense of the verb "to be able."

**την σοθια** [**α**] dat. "**the wisdom [the Spirit gave him]**" - THE WISDOM [AND THE SPIRIT]. Both "wisdom" and "Spirit" serve as the dative direct object of the **αντι** prefix verb "to oppose." As is said of the seven and Stephen, they are full of wisdom and the Spirit, i.e., they exhibit the marks of a prophet - the combination of divine revelation along with signs and wonders. The NIV treats the two nouns as a hendiadys, a single idea expressed by two words joined by **και**; "they were quite unable to put up any defence against the inspired wisdom with which he spoke", Barclay.

**ᾧ** dat. pro. "-" - IN = BY / WITH WHICH [HE WAS SPEAKING]. The dative is possibly instrumental, expressing the means by which he spoke, but both Culy and Kellum suggest manner is more likely; "with which he was speaking", ESV.

#### v11

ii] The plot and trial, v11-14. Stephen's opponents put up some of their number to improperly claim that he has blasphemed God. We probably have an example of *short-talk* here, given that "blasphemous words against Moses" is a rather strange charge. The sense probably is that Stephen has blasphemed God by his statements concerning Israel's religious cult, namely the Law / traditions of Moses and the temple, cf., v13-14.

**τοτε** adv. "**then**" - THEN. Temporal adverb, sequential time.

**λεγοντας** [**λεγω**] "**to say**" - [THEY SUBORNED = PUT UP, INDUCED, SECRETLY INSTIGATED, BRIBED MEN] SAYING. The sense is clear enough, but the syntactical function of the participle is not. The NIV treats it as if an infinitive, introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Stephen's opponents "put up", namely, "men to say ...." - "men" serving as

the accusative subject." The ESV treats it as adjectival, attributive, limiting "men"; "men who say."

**ὅτι** "-" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of direct speech expressing what the men say.

**λαλουντος** [**λαλεω**] gen. pres. part. "**speak**" - [WE HAVE HEARD HIM] SPEAKING [BLASPHEMOUS WORDS]. Genitive complement of the direct object "him", standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the genitive direct object of the verb "to say."

**εις** + acc. "**against**" - TO, INTO = AGAINST [MOSES AND GOD]. The preposition expresses movement toward, here an aggressive move toward, i.e., opposition; "against".

## v12

Using the false witnesses, Stephen's opponents stir up a *lynch-mob* who seize him and take him before the Sanhedrin.

**τε** "**so**" - AND. Correlative conjunction. Culy suggests that Luke has used **τε** here instead of **και** to closely link the events outlined in v11-13; **τοτε** .... **τε** ... **και** ..... **τε** ....., "then .... and ..... and ..... and ...."

**επισταντες** aor. part. "-" - [THEY AROUSED THE PEOPLE AND THE ELDERS AND THE SCRIBES AND] HAVING COME UPON [*him* THEY SEIZED HIM AND THEY BROUGHT *him* INTO THE COUNCIL]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to seize"; "they came upon him and seized him", ESV.

## v13

Although the Law of Moses viewed false testimony seriously (Ex.20:16, Deut.19:16-18), law of itself, does not curtail sin, it just makes sin more sinful. Luke specifically identifies the false accusation as speaking **κατα**, "against" "this holy place", namely the temple (2Chr.6:20-21), and the Law of Moses. Note that the charge against Stephen is very similar to the one against Paul, cf., 21:28. As already noted, Stephen's sermon in chapter 7 indicates that he obviously did, at least, depreciate the value of both the temple and the law.

**λεγοντας** [**λεγω**] pres. part. "**who testified**" - [AND THEY PLACED = SET UP FALSE WITNESSES] SAYING. The participle, being accusative, is best treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting "false witnesses", so Culy; "who said" None-the-less, as Kellum notes, it does still fulfil its Semitic idiomatic function of introducing direct speech. "They brought in some men to tell lies about him. 'This man', they said, .....", TEV.

**λαλων** [**λαλεω**] pres. part. "**[never stops] speaking**" - [THIS MAN IS NOT STOPPING] SPEAKING [WORDS]. The participle functions as if a complementary

infinitive, completing the sense of the verb "to cease, stop"; "this man never ceases to speak words ....", ESV.

**κατα** + gen. "**against**" - AGAINST [THIS HOLY PLACE AND THE LAW]. Here expressing opposition, as NIV.

#### v14

The charge against Stephen is made even more specific. The false witnesses claim that Stephen is out-and-about telling people that Jesus intends to destroy the temple and will "radically alter the customs which Moses handed down", Barclay. Stephen may have spoken of a relocation of the divine presence, the Shekinah Glory, from the temple to God's new-covenant people now gathered with the glorified Christ, a reality evident in the outpouring of the Spirit, but the specific charge of destroying the temple is simply a repetition of the false charge used against Jesus. It is unlikely that Stephen, along with his Hellenist associates, proclaimed a law-free gospel, but he may have addressed Christ's fulfilment of the law, identifying its power to expose sin in order to reinforce faith, rather than the notion that it has the power to make holy. Yet, the specific charge of "changing the customs (a euphemism for "laws"??) of Moses" is probably something more than depreciating the Mosaic Law; the slur probably implies that Stephen is disrespecting Mosaic law / tradition, even speaking against it, possibly teaching "the transitory character of the Mosaic ceremonial", Bruce Gk.

**γαρ** "**for**" - FOR. More reason than cause; explaining the charge in more detail.

**λεγοντος** [**λεγω**] gen. pres. part. "**say**" - [WE HAVE HEARD HIM] SAYING. The participle serves as the genitive complement of the direct object "him", standing in a double genitive construction and stating a fact about the object "him", the genitive of direct object after the verb "to hear."

**οτι** "**that**" - THAT [THIS JESUS]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they claim to have heard Stephen say.

**ο Ναζωραιος** [**ος**] "**of Nazareth**" - THE NAZARENE. Standing in apposition to "this Jesus."

**ημιν** dat. pro. "**to us**" - [WILL DESTROY THIS PLACE AND WILL CHANGE THE CUSTOMS WHICH MOSES DELIVERED OVER] TO US. Dative of indirect object.

#### v15

iii] Stephen's persona, v15. Luke tells us that the members of the Sanhedrin observe that Stephen exhibits an aura. The descriptive term "the face of an angel" is drawn from the OT, eg., the young men in the furnace, Dan.3:92. Probably describing the radiance exhibited in the face of a person who acts / speaks on

behalf of the divine, eg., Moses, Ex.34:30, Jesus, Lk.9:29. In medieval art, an aura is usually depicted as a halo.

**οἱ καθεζόμενοι** [καθεζομαι] pres. "**who were seated**" - [AND ALL] THE ONES SITTING [IN THE COUNCIL]. Taking **παντες**, "all", as an adjective, rather than a substantive, "everyone", the participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to see."

**ατενισαντες** [ατενιζω] aor. part. "**looked intently**" - HAVING LOOKED INTENTLY [INTO HIM, SAW *that* THE FACE OF HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "to see"; "fixed their eyes on him and saw that his face shone like the face of an angel", Moffatt.

**ᾧσει** "**was like**" - [*was*] AS, LIKE [THE FACE OF (belonging to) AN ANGEL]. The comparative particle is used here as a comparative adverb modifying an assumed verb to-be.



## 7:1-56

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### iii] Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin

##### Synopsis

With a charge of blasphemy laid against Stephen, the high priest asks him to give an answer. Stephen sets out to relate Israel's story in order to draw out the people's failure, both to hear God's prophets and to offer true worship. Stephen concludes by proclaiming the glorification of Christ, the Son of Man.

##### Teaching

The theological basis for the Gentile mission:

- The divine presence is not confined to a place, but is evident in his gathered people wherever they may be;
- Institutional Israel has rejected their messiah and therefore the promised blessings of the covenant may rightly be possessed by the Gentile world;

##### Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-7.

ii] Background:

- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;

iii] Structure: *Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin*:

Stephen's gospel sermon

*Introduction*

The promise to Abraham, v1-8;

The promise to Joseph, v9-16;

The promise to Moses, v17-43;

Tent and temple, v44-50;

*The time is fulfilled*

Rebellion and lawlessness, v51-53.

*The kingdom of God is at hand*

The Son of Man is glorified, v54-56

Stephen's martyrdom, v57-60

iv] Interpretation:

The nature of a community can be explained by their story, their history, and so it is that Stephen sets out to tell Israel's story, and in the telling, by his selection of events, he lays down a critique of Israel's

religious life. As Dunn explains, Stephen tells the story in such a way as to draw out two major points.

First, Israel has continually rejected God's messengers, culminating in the rejection of his Righteous One, namely Jesus - "you have betrayed and murdered him."

Second, Israel's worship of God is flawed:

Israel's focus on the temple in Jerusalem fails to recognise that God's presence in the midst of his people is not confined to a single place or a single building; "a promised land or sacred site is not necessary to ensure the presence of God with his people", Dunn.

Israel's worship of God from the golden calf to the heavenly host in Babylon has constantly been tainted with idolatry; "Israel's worship has always been flawed", Dunn. Israel's temple-worship "is a little short of idolatrous", Dunn

When it comes to the speech itself, Stephen does not directly defend the charge that he spoke "against the law." Nor is there a critique of Israel's graceless version of the Mosaic Law, nor any attempt to differentiate between moral law (*camel* law, Matt.23:24) and tradition / cultic law (*gnat* law). The transition from graceless-law to a Pauline law/grace dichotomy is nowhere to be seen. Stephen's point is simple; it is religious Israel who have disobeyed God's law.

As for Stephen himself, the use of the word **ἄ εθη**, "customs", when referring to **νόμος**, "law", may indicate that the criticism against Stephen is more related to his disrespect to Israel's religious traditions, rather than the Mosaic Law as such. Bruce argues that Stephen is criticising "the transitory character of the Mosaic ceremonial", Bruce Gk.

Stephen's speech certainly addresses the charge that he has spoken against the temple. He addresses the charge by clarifying his critique; he certainly is not calling for the literal destruction of the temple, but he is highly critical of the institution as such. For Stephen, God has always been present when his people gather, as was the case in their wilderness journey. The problem with Israel's temple-worship is that it is tainted, if not idolatrous.

None-the-less, Stephen's address is not primarily a defence of charges brought against him. "The main intention of this prophetic-type utterance is to *turn the tables* on his opponents by presenting an extensive indictment against them." "A terrible pattern of resisting God's prophets and disobeying his law has culminated in the betrayal and murder of the Righteous one", Peterson D.

In overall terms, Stephen's speech affirms the foundations of Israel's religious life, "he holds fast to the God of the Fathers; the new faith is the fulfilment of all that the old, represented by Abraham and Moses, rightly stood for, but it is a fulfilment so radical that it finally disintegrates the institutionalism that had for so long been the people's temptation", Barrett. As such "it places the new people of God in its true salvation-historical context", Secombe, *The New People of God*, and more importantly, it begins the process of covenant extension to the Gentiles which will involve a radical transition from temple to church.

Although not widely accepted, it does seem that this speech is formed on the structure of the gospel. Unlike other gospel presentations in Acts, this one has an expansive **introduction** where Stephen prosecutes the case for Israel's state of sin, v1-50. Stephen then announces that **the time is fulfilled** in the murder of the Righteous One in accord with prophetic expectation, an expectation ignored by Israel, so confirming her state of sin, v51-53. Finally, Stephen announces that **the kingdom of God is at hand**; Jesus the Righteous One, the Son of Man, now stands glorified at the right hand of God. The call to **repent and believe** is unstated, but certainly implied - the violent reaction of the members of the Sanhedrin begins Stephen's address to an abrupt end.

The source of this example of judicial rhetoric has prompted numerous theories. Weiser in his commentary, 1981, proposes three possible sources: a) it was taken directly from Hellenistic Judaism; b) it was taken from Hellenistic Judaism and then modified by Hellenistic Jewish Christians before Luke got to see it; c) it had its roots in Samaritan traditions. We should add that it may well represent an account of what Stephen actually said. We know that some members of the Sanhedrin were secretly of the new faith. If there is any consensus among commentators, it is that it likely existed as a documented speech which Luke has adapted. The subject matter, the method used to expound the OT, ....., indicate an original source. Its length indicates the importance it held for the early church as well as for Luke himself.

v] Homiletics: *The Great Southern Land*

Australia's story is like the story of every nation, a mixture of *the good, the bad and the ugly*. There is a tendency today to focus on *the ugly*, but the story of The Great Southern Land is a good story; it is the story of a people overcoming the brutality of a penal colony in a harsh environment, to create a stable and successful democracy favoured by immigrants from around the world. We are a people who ride together in the front seat of the

taxi and have little time for those who claim the privilege to ride in the back. Sadly, our forefathers had not acted kindly toward our native Aboriginals, so in 1976 we overwhelmingly decided to move our Koori friends from the boot into the front seat with the rest of us, and that's where we all sit.

On the first Sunday after reaching landfall in 1786, Admiral Arthur Phillip and the soldiers, sailors and convicts of the 11 ships of the first fleet, met under a large gum tree to hold a religious service led by the Rev. Richard Johnson, a service conducted from the English Prayer Book. So began Christian civilisation in Australia -



the civilising of a penal colony with the truth that every person, convict or free, rich or poor, is eternally loved by God. The church's association with the established order in the eighteenth and nineteenth century gave it an important part in the life of the new nation, but secularism has slowly had its way.

There have been no great revivals in Australia. A small one in the early 1900's on the South coast of New South Wales, and that's about it. Yet Australians are not an irreligious people. In the 1950's over 80% claimed to believe in God and over 70% said they believed in Jesus. Yet, the sexual revolution in the 1960's prompted an inevitable disengagement between Christianity and normal everyday Australians - the church and its message increasingly became irrelevant to the lives of ordinary Australians. Philosophically, Australians moved from Jesus to Marx, from freedom to equity.

Although we live in *the lucky country*, we have abandoned the faith of our forefathers, and in so doing, we have not only undermined the very building-blocks of our nation, we have undermined our place with the glorified Jesus, the one who now reigns at the right hand of God. We have become a people who no longer knows its creator, nor itself.

Image: Sydney Cove, Port Jackson 1788, State Library of NSW.

### **Text - 7:1**

Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin, v1-56: i] The promise to Abraham, v1-8. Stephen begins his account of Israel's dealings with God by outlining the life of Abraham. He draws out the fact that Abraham was a tent-dweller with no place

of his own and yet God related intimately with him. For Stephen, Abraham's homeland is ultimately a heavenly one, an inheritance in Christ, cf., Heb.11:13-16.

The speech presents us with some historical issues on Abraham. Genesis has Abraham leaving Ur with his father Terah and settling in Haran. It is there that the Lord instructs him to go "to the land I will show you." So he leaves Haran and moves to Canaan and it is there that the Lord appears to him. Stephen has God appearing to Abraham in Ur and it is there that he is instructed to go to the promised land. Stephen is probably providing us with little more than a precis of Abraham's early life, possibly from a contemporary Targum, ie., a translation from Hebrew into Aramaic of OT texts with commentary for local synagogue use.

δε **"then"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

ει "-" - [THE HIGH PRIEST SAID] IF. Here used to introduce a direct question.

οὕτως εἴξει **"are [these charges] true?"** - IT IS THUS [THESE *things*]? An idiomatic expression favoured by Luke in Acts, which is formed by the verb εχω, "to have", plus the demonstrative adverb οὕτως; on one occasion with πως. Paul uses the construction four times. Barrett regards it as an idiomatic affirmation of truth, and translates the construction as "Are the facts stated in the accusation true?", "Do you admit the charge?"

## v2

Abraham's story begins with a theophany, a manifestation of God's presence. Usually referred to as "the glory of Lord", evident, or otherwise, rather than "God of glory / the all-glorious one", as here.

αδελφοι [ος] voc. **"brothers"** - [AND HE SAID, MEN] BROTHERS [AND FATHERS, HEAR *me*]. As with "fathers", vocative, standing in apposition to "men".

της διξης [α] gen. **"[the God] of glory"** - [THE GOD] OF GLORY. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "God". The title is only found one other time in the scriptures, Ps.29:3. "The glorious God", "the God of all majesty", but possibly with the sense "a manifestation of God's glory ....."

τω πατρι [ηρ ρος] dat. **"[our] father"** - [APPEARED TO] THE FATHER [OF US, ABRAHAM]. Dative of direct object after the passive form of the verb "to see."

οντι [εμι] dat. pres. part. **"while he was"** - BEING [IN MESOPOTAMIA]. Although anarthrous, the participle is dative, limiting the dative "Abraham", so adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / temporal, "when he was still in Mesopotamia", Cassirer.

πριν η̇ + inf. **"before"** - BEFORE [HE LIVED IN HARAN]. This construction, πριν η̇ / πριν + inf., introduces a temporal clause, subsequent time.

### v3

Genesis 12:1, cf., Heb.11:8.

**προς** + acc. "-" - [AND HE SAID] TOWARD [HIM]. The preposition is used here instead of a dative of indirect object.

**εκ** + gen. "[leave]" - [DEPART] FROM [THE LAND OF YOU AND] FROM [THE KINDRED OF YOU AND COME INTO THE LAND]. Expressing source / origin.

**ἢν ἄν** + subj. "[I will show you]" - [AND COME INTO THE LAND] WHATEVER [I MAY SHOW YOU]. This construction introduces an indefinite relative clause, given that "the specific land is not yet indicated", Kellum, "whatever land I show you", Moffatt, although Culy suggests that it is "analogous to a future indicative verb", as NIV.

### v4

Building on Genesis 12:5.

**τοτε** adv. "so" - THEN. Temporal adverb.

**εξελθων [εξερχομαι]** aor. part. "**he left**" - HAVING DEPARTED. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to settle, dwell."

**Ξαλδαιων [ος]** gen. "**of the Chaldeans**" - [FROM *the* LAND] OF *the* CHALDEANS [HE SETTLED IN HARAN]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / identification, "the land *known as* the Chaldeans."

**κακειθεν** "-" - AND FROM THERE. Crasis **και** + the adverb of place **εκειθεν**.

**μετα το** + inf. "**after the [death]**" - AFTER THE [TO DIE THE FATHER OF HIM]. This construction, the preposition **μετα** + an articular infinitive, introduces a temporal clause, antecedent time.

**μετωκισεν [μετοικιζω]** aor. "**God sent [him]**" - HE MOVED, SENT = RESETTLED [HIM INTO THIS LAND INTO WHICH WE NOW ARE LIVING]. The subject of this verb is presumably "God", as NIV; "God removed him from there", Barclay.

### v5

Developing Genesis 15:7, Stephen notes that Abraham's promised-inheritance is unrealised; not even the length of one foot is possessed - the inheritance rests on a divine promise. The linkage between the noun **κατηρονομια**, "inheritance", and the verb **επαγγελομαι**, "to promise", is prominent in the NT, and central to the argument here. Interestingly, the linkage is not prominent in the LXX, other than in 2Macc.2:17-18.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "[**he gave**] **him**" - [HE GAVE] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

και ουκ ....., ουδε ....., και "no [inheritance here,] not even ..... but ..." - AND NOT [HE DID GIVE TO HIM AN INHERITANCE IN IT] NOR [A STEP OF A FOOT] AND = BUT. As Culy notes, we have here an unusual counterpoint construction, "not ....., but .....", where και is used instead of αλλα.

ποδος [ους οδος] gen. "[enough ground to set his] foot [on]" - [STEP] OF A FOOT. The genitive is adjectival, exegetical, specifying "the foot", "consisting of a step." The phrase "a step of a foot" is idiomatic for a very small space. "Not so much as a foothold", Peterson.

δουναι [διδωμι] aor. inf. "[promised him] that ..." - [BUT HE PROMISED] TO GIVE [IT]. Kellum suggests that the infinitive is complementary, but best treated as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what God promised, as NIV.

εις + acc. "[would possess]" - INTO = FOR, AS [A POSSESSION]. This construction, the preposition εις with the accusative noun "possession", is adjectival, predicative, limiting "it", ie., the land, Zerwick. A Semitic construction expressing equivalence, so Culy. "to give it to him as a permanent possession"

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - TO HIM. As also τω σπερματι, "to the seed [of him]", dative of indirect object after the infinitive "to give."

οντος [ειμι] gen. pres. part. "even though at that time [Abraham] had" - [AND TO THE SEED OF HIM AFTER HIM, A CHILD NOT] BEING. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "child" forms a genitive absolute construction, usually translated as concessive, as NIV; "though he had no child", ESV. Temporal is possible; "This promise was made at a time when he had no child."

αυτω dat. pro. "Abraham" - TO HIM. Dative of possession.

## v6

We have here a rough citation of Genesis 15:13-14, v6-7a, with 7b from 3:12. The quote refers to Israel's enslavement in Egypt, with the promise of deliverance and the opportunity to worship God. "The pilgrim character of the people of God is stressed again", Peterson D. Exodus 12:40 refers to the sojourn as 430 years, but rabbinic exegesis of Gen.15:13 has 400 from the birth of Isaac to the exodus.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating the next step in the speech.

ουτως adv "in this way" - [GOD SPOKE] THUS. Culy suggests that this demonstrative adverb is backward referencing and not forward referencing, as if introducing a direct quotation, as NIV. So rather than "God spoke as follows", Stephen probably intends "God spoke that way regarding the promised inheritance because ....."

ὅτι "-" - THAT / BECAUSE [THE SEED OF HIM WILL BE A STRANGER IN ANOTHER'S LAND AND THEY WILL ENSLAVE IT (the seed) AND THEY WILL MISTREAT *it* FOUR HUNDRED YEARS]. Possibly introducing a direct quote, but if οὕτως is backward referencing, then it is likely causal, explaining why God told Abraham that he would not possess the land.

v7

ὃ εἶεν + subj. / fut. "[serve as slaves]" - [AND I WILL JUDGE THE NATION] FOR WHICH [THEY MAY SERVE / WILL SERVE AS SLAVES, SAID GOD]. Here the relative pronoun with the indefinite particle serves to introduce an indefinite attributive modifier of the object "nation"; "I will judge the nation that they serve", ESV. The verb "to serve as a slave" takes a dative of direct object / dative of persons, as here. In this construction, the verb would properly be subjunctive, but the use of the future tense is a post-classical development.

μετά + acc. "[and] afterward" - [AND] AFTER [THESE THINGS THEY WILL COME OUT]. Adverbial use of the preposition, temporal.

μοι dat. pro. "[and worship] me" - [AND WILL GIVE SERVICE TO] ME [IN THIS PLACE]. Dative of direct object after the verb "to give service to." The verb λατρεύω is best understood as "to serve" rather than "to worship." The verb προσκυνεῖω is more often used to express the sense of doing adoration, ie., "to worship." "After that, they shall come forth and serve me in this place", Phillips.

v8

Stephen moves quickly from Abraham, through his descendants, to Joseph. He notes the sign of the covenant (God's agreement with Abraham - the promise of a land, people and blessing), namely circumcision. The rather strange expression, "covenant of circumcision", is nothing more than an example of short-talk (semantic density).

αὐτῷ dat. pro. "-" - [AND HE GAVE] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

περιτομῆς [η] gen. "of circumcision" - [A COVENANT] OF CIRCUMCISION. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic, limiting "circumcision", "a covenant *which is made evident by the sign of* circumcision." Barrett suggests that it is exegetical, but both Culy and Kellum opt for descriptive.

οὕτως adv. "-" - [AND] THUS [HE BECAME *the* FATHER OF ISAAC]. Here backward referencing, drawing a logical conclusion / inference from the establishment of the "covenant of circumcision."

τῇ ἡμέρᾳ [α] dat. "[eight] days after *his birth*" - [AND CIRCUMCISED HIM] ON THE [EIGHTH] DAY, [AND ISAAC *became the father of* JACOB, AND JACOB *became the father of* THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS]. The dative is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.



v9

ii] The promise to Joseph, v9-16. Stephen's speech continues to underline the idea that God was present and involved with his people long before they came to the promised land, and long before they built the temple. He was even with them in their time of slavery. Stephen also adds a new point to his argument, namely that Israel evidences a pattern of rejecting those whom God has raised up for deliverance. Joseph serves as an example of this rejection of God's deliverer, a rejection played-out throughout the history of Israel, culminating in the rejection of God's "Righteous One", Jesus.

**ζηλωσαντες [ζηλω]** aor. part. "**because [the patriarchs] were jealous**" - [AND] HAVING BEEN JEALOUS OF [JOSEPH, THE PATRIARCHS SOLD *him* INTO EGYPT AND (and yet) GOD WAS WITH HIM]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as causal, explaining why Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave. "But God was on his side", Cassirer.

v10

Stephen reduces the story somewhat, but draws out Joseph's deliverance at the hand of God; his "favour and wisdom" gifted by God - he is "prudent and understanding", Johnson, Gen.39:4, cf., Gen.41:33, 38-39; his authority and rule, Gen.41:40-41.

**εκ** + gen. "**from**" - [AND HE DELIVERED HIM] FROM [ALL THE TRIBULATIONS OF HIM]. Expressing source / origin.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "-" - [AND GAVE GRACE AND WISDOM] TO HIM [BEFORE, IN THE PRESENCE OF PHARAOH]. Dative of indirect object; "God made him so wise", CEV.

**Αιγυπτου [ος]** gen. "**[king] of Egypt**" - [KING] OF EGYPT. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / subordination, "king over Egypt."

**ηγουμενον [ηγεομαι]** pres. part. "**ruler**" - [AND HE APPOINTED HIM] *the one* RULING [UPON = OVER EGYPT AND UPON = OVER THE WHOLE HOUSE OF HIM]. The participle serves as a substantive, accusative complement of the direct object "him", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "him". "Pharaoh made Joseph governor over the whole country and the royal household", TEV.

v11

**ημων** gen. pro. "**our [ancestors]**" - [BUT/AND A FAMINE CAME UPON ALL EGYPT AND CANAAN AND GREAT TRIBULATION AND THE FATHERS] OF US [WERE NOT FINDING FOOD]. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

## v12

**ακουσας [ακουω]** aor. part. "**When [Jacob] heard**" - [BUT/AND JACOB] HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, possibly temporal, as NIV, so Kellum, or even causal, "because". Culy, following Rogers Gk. suggests either.

**οντα [ειμι]** pres. part. "**that there was [grain in Egypt]**" - [GRAIN] BEING [INTO EGYPT, HE SENT OUT FIRST THE FATHER OF US]. The NIV, as with most translations, treats the participle as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Jacob heard. Culy points out that technically it serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "grain", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object.

## v13

**εν** + dat. "**on [their second visit]**" - [AND] IN [THE SECOND *time they visited*]. Temporal use of the preposition, as NIV.

**τοις αδελφοις [ος]** dat. "**brothers**" - [JOSEPH WAS MADE KNOWN] TO THE BROTHERS [OF HIM]. Dative of indirect object.

**τω Φαραω** dat. "**Pharaoh**" - [AND THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH BECAME KNOWN] TO PHARAOH. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage.

## v14

Stephen increasingly condenses the patriarchal narrative.

**δε** "**after this**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the discourse to the next point.

**αποστειλας [αποστελλω]** aor. part. "**[Joseph] sent for**" - HAVING SENT [JOSEPH CALLED JACOB AND ALL THE FAMILY]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to call"; "Joseph sent and invited Jacob his father and the whole clan", Barclay.

**εν** + dat. "**[seventy-five] in [all]**" - IN [SOULS, SEVENTY FIVE]. Culy suggests that the preposition here is adverbial, reference / respect; "with reference to souls, seventy-five", although Barrett, Haenchen, etc., opt for a dative of measure, "in all, amounting to seventy-five persons." "About seventy-five people in all."

## v15

**ημων** gen. pro. "**our [ancestors]**" - [AND JACOB CAME DOWN INTO EGYPT AND HE DIED, AND (as well as) THE FATHERS] OF US. The genitive is adjectival, relational, as NIV.

## v16

Stephen's speech continues condensing the patriarchal narrative, so causing some factual difficulties. Both Abraham and Jacob purchased separate burial

plots in Canaan, but according to Genesis 50:13, Jacob requested to be buried in Abraham's plot at Hebron. Joshua 24:32 has Joseph buried in the plot (cave) Jacob purchased (not Abraham) at Shechem, although Jacob's bones had been moved to Abraham's plot. The confusion is caused by conflating the events. At any rate, the family's desire to be buried in the promised land says something of their faith in God's promises, but not necessarily a belief that God's presence is somehow more evident in Canaan.

ὧ dat. pro. "**that [Abraham had bought]**" - [AND THEY WERE REMOVED INTO SHECHEM AND WERE PLACED IN THE TOMB] WHICH [ABRAHAM BOUGHT]. The relative pronoun serves as the direct object of the verb "to buy", dative by attraction to "tomb"

παπα + gen. "**from**" - FROM [THE SONS OF HAMOR IN SHECHEM]. Here expressing source / origin.

τιμης [η] gen. "**for a certain sum**" - OF AN AMOUNT. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / price; "bought *for a certain* amount / price of silver."

αργυριου [ov] gen. "**of money**" - OF SILVER. The genitive is probably best treated as expegetic, specifying the amount / price paid, in this case, using silver; "for a certain amount / price *consisting of* silver." Of course, the sense of the two genitives is simply "bought with silver", Phillips.

## v17

iii] The promise to Moses, v17-43. Stephen was specifically charged with speaking against Moses, and he certainly addresses this charge in this section of his speech. He makes the point that Moses was a man "powerful in words and deeds", a man **αστειος τω θεω**, "beautiful to God", or as the NIV has it, "he was no ordinary child." Yet, defending himself is not Stephen's focus, rather, he sets out to expand on the two points he has made so far:

First, all the blessings that flowed to Moses and to the people of Israel, occurred outside the promised land; God was with his people in a foreign land and in the wilderness.

Second, the people of Israel constantly rejected Moses, their deliverer. Under Moses, the people had before them the covenant promises, a land, people and blessing, but being faithless to the core, the promise eluded them.

By the conclusion of the speech, Stephen will have applied these two points to the members of the Sanhedrin: first, their improper, if not idolatrous, confining of the divine presence to the temple, and second, their rejection of God's Righteous One, Jesus.

The speech proceeds by outlining the key moments in Moses' life:

First 40 years in Egypt, v17-29;  
Second 40 years in Midian, v30-34;  
Last 40 years in the wilderness, v35-43;

a) Moses' first 40 years in Egypt, v17-29. He grew to be a man "powerful in his words and deeds", blessed and protected by God. Note how Luke uses this description of Jesus, 24:19. Cf., Exodus 1:7. But then, his life as an Egyptian nobleman fell apart when he sought to intervene on behalf of the people of Israel.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**καθως** "as" - AS, LIKE. Usually treated here as temporal, although as Zerwick notes, this is a rare usage. Culy opts for its usual sense indicating similarity, the point being that "the increase in population was in accord with the imminent fulfilment of the promise."

**της επαγγελιας** [α] gen. "**to fulfil his promise**" - [THE TIME] OF THE PROMISE [WAS DRAWING NEAR]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / temporal, limiting "time"; "the time *when* the promise *will be fulfilled* was drawing near." Culy suggests that the genitive is ablative, reference / respect.

**ης** gen. pro. "-" - WHICH. Direct object of the verb "to promise", genitive by attraction.

**τω Αβρααμ** dat. "**to Abrham**" - [GOD PROMISED] TO ABRAHAM, [THE PEOPLE GREW AND WERE MULTIPLIED IN EGYPT]. Dative of indirect object.

## v18

Cf., Exodus 1:8-11.

**αχρι ου** "**then**" - UNTIL [ANOTHER KING AROSE UPON = OVER EGYPT WHO HAD NOT KNOWN JOSEPH]. The adverb **αχρι** + the gen. pro. **ου** serves as a temporal preposition expressing future time. This idiomatic phrase is drawn from something like, **αχρι του χρονου εν ω**, "until the time in which = when", so Culy.

## v19

Cf., Exodus 1:17, 22. Pharaoh instituted a pogrom of racial purification by forcing Jewish parents to "leave their babies outside, so they would die", CEV.

**κατασοφισαμενος** [**κατασοφιζομαι**] aor. part. "**he dealt treacherously with**" - [THIS ONE] HAVING TRICKED [THE NATION OF US, AFFLICTED THE FATHERS OF US]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to afflict, do harm to, do evil to"; "He dealt shrewdly with our race and forced our fathers to expose their infants", ESV.

**του** + inf. "**[by forcing them]**" - OF THE [TO MAKE THE INFANTS OF THEM]. The NIV, as with most translations, treats this genitive articular infinitive as expegetic; "He used craft against our people and dealt cruelly with our

forefathers, making them expose their children", Cassirer. Of course, it may be final, expressing purpose, "in order to make the infants of them exposed." Bruce Gk. calls it "an explanatory phrase with some idea of purpose."

**εκθετα** [ος] acc. "**to throw out**" - EXPOSED. Accusative complement of the direct object "infants", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "infants."

**εις το** + inf. "**so that**" - INTO THE [NOT TO KEEP ALIVE *the infants*]. This preposition + the accusative articular infinitive, introduces a final clause expressing purpose, "in order to ...."; "so that the children would never live to grow up", Barclay.

## v20

Cf., Exodus 2:2-4.

**εν** + dat. "**at [that time]**" - IN [WHICH TIME, MOSES WAS BORN]. Temporal use of the preposition. The relative phrase "in which time" is equivalent to the adverbial phrase "at that time", i.e., "at the time appointed by God", Kellum.

**οστειος** adj. "**no ordinary child**" - [AND HE WAS] BEAUTIFUL [TO GOD, WHO WAS RAISED THREE MONTHS IN THE HOUSE OF THE = HIS FATHER]. The sense of this predicate adjective is disputed. The word would be used of a mother for her child and it is interesting that it is used here of God toward the infant Moses - note the use of a dative of feeling (ethical dative) for **τω θεω**, "God". Some translations stay with "beautiful", ESV, TEV, ..., while others opt for a less emotional sense: "pleasing in the sight of God", Cassirer; "a child of quite exceptional beauty", Barclay; "very handsome", Bruce Gk.; "a divinely beautiful child", Moffatt; "finding favour with God", Knox; "well-bred", BDAG.

## v21

Cf., Exodus 2:5, 10. The Western text has "he was placed outside in/by the river."

**εκτεθεντος** [εκτιθημι] gen. aor. pas. part. "**when he was placed outside**" - [BUT/AND HIM] HAVING BEEN EXPOSED. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "him" forms a genitive absolute construction, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

**ανειλατο** [αναιρω] aor. "**took [him]**" - [THE DAUGHTER OF PHARAOH] CARRIED OFF, TOOK [HIM]. The sense of the verb here is disputed. The NIV is to be preferred, in line with Exodus 2:5, but Barrett and others argue strongly for "Pharaoh's daughter adopted him", ESV, so also TEV, REB, NRSV, Phillips, JB, ..... The following phrase, "raised him as her own son", carries the sense of adoption.

εις "as" - [AND SHE RAISED HIM] INTO [A SON]. The preposition here may serve to introduce a predicate nominative, as NIV, and most translations, cf., Wallace p.47. Barrett sides with Moulton who argued that the use of this preposition in such expressions is simply developing the idea of destination; "brought him up to be her own son", Berkeley.

ἑαυτη pro. "her own [son]" - TO = FOR HERSELF. Reflective pronoun, dative of interest, advantage.

## v22

Stephen presents a positive overview of Moses' character, but compare Exodus 4:10.

εν + dat. "in" - [AND MOSES WAS INSTRUCTED] IN [ALL WISDOM OF EGYPTIANS, AND HE WAS POWERFUL] IN [WORDS AND DEEDS OF HIM]. Culy suggests that both uses of this preposition are adverbial, reference / respect. The first use is a variant, although the dative "all wisdom" would carry the same sense. The genitive Αιγυπτίων, "Egyptians", is adjectival, possessive, expressing the possession of a derivative characteristic, or descriptive, idiomatic / source, so Culy. "Moses was educated in the best schools in Egypt. He was equally impressive as a thinker and an athlete", Peterson.

## v23

The turning point in Moses' life, v30-34. Moses seeks to επισκεπτομαι, "to visit, care for, intervene for", possibly extending to "deliver" (used of divine visitations, so also Luke 1:68) the people of Israel, but his intervention on their behalf is rejected. The two men, representatives of God's people Israel, ου συνηκαν, "did not understand", just like Joseph's brothers. They accuse Moses of making himself their self-appointed ruler and judge, ie., their God-appointed deliverer. The pattern of the people's rejection of God's appointed deliverer continues with Moses.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating the next step in the speech.

ὡς "when" - AS. This comparative conjunction is usually treated as temporal here, as NIV, although its particular function at this point is to identify the next 40-year unit in Moses' life. In v17 καθως identifies the first forty years, and in v30, και, "and then, after forty years had passed", identifies the third.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - [FORTY YEARS TIME WAS FULFILLED] IN = FOR HIM. Dative of interest, advantage.

επι + acc. "[he decided]" - [IT AROSE] UPON [THE HEART OF HIM]. Local, expressing space, metaphorical.

επισκεψασθαι [επισκεπτομαι] aor. inf. "to visit" - TO VISIT [THE BROTHERS OF HIM]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of

perception expressing what "arose in his heart"; "he wanted to help the Israelites", CEV.

τους υίους [ος] "[the Israelites]" - THE SONS [OF ISRAEL]. Accusative standing in apposition to "brothers." The proper genitive "Israel" is adjectival, relational.

#### v24

Cf., Exodus 2:11-12.

ιδων [όραω] aor. part. "he saw" - [AND] HAVING SEEN. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "And *it happened that when one day he saw* one of them being ill-treated, he came to the rescue", Cassirer.

αδικουμενον [αδικεω] pres. mid. part. "[one of them] being mistreated" - [A CERTAIN one] BEING HARMED. The NIV treats the participle as the accusative complement of the direct object "a certain one", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object. Of course, it may be treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting "a certain one", "He went to help one of them who was being unjustly treated."

ω καταπονουμενω [καταπονεω] dat. pres. mid. part. "[he went to] his [defence]" - [HE DEFENDED AND DID VENGEANCE = JUSTICE] TO = FOR THE ONE BEING OPPRESSED. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of interest, advantage.

παταξας [πατασσω] aor. part. "by killing" - HAVING STRUCK [THE EGYPTIAN]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as instrumental, expressing means; "by slaying the Egyptian", Berkeley.

#### v25

This statement is not drawn from the Exodus account, but serves as an interpretive comment. As with the Joseph story, there is a failure of recognition on the part of Israel; "they do not understand."

συνιεναι [συνιημι] pres. inf., "would realise" - [BUT/AND HE WAS THINKING THE BROTHERS OF HIM] TO UNDERSTAND. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Moses was thinking. The accusative subject of the infinitive is τους αδελφους, "the brothers."

ότι "that" - THAT [GOD]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what the brothers failed to understand, namely, "God is giving salvation to them by his hand"; that they would "see him as an instrument of God to deliver them", Peterson.

δια + gen. "[was using him]" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [the HAND OF HIM]. Instrumental, expressing means, "through him", Barclay. The phrase δια χειρος, "by the hand of", is probably a Semitism for "directly", but see Barrett 2:23.

αυτοις dat. pro. **"them"** - [IS GIVING SALVATION] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

οἱ δε **"but they"** - BUT/AND THEY [THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND]. Transitional construction, indicating a change in subject from Moses to "the brothers."

## v26

Cf., Exodus 2:13-14. Moses, the mediator, seeks to do justice. Here, the two men are fighting; in Exodus, one has set upon the other, as in v27.

τε "-" - AND. It is likely that Luke is again using this conjunction to correlate elements. So, rather than δε, he uses τε here to link this sentence with the next sentence introduced by δε, namely v27-28.

επιουση dat. pres. part. **"[the] next [day]"** - [IN = ON THE DAY] REMAINING = NEXT. The participle is adjectival, attributive, "on the day which is next"; the dative is temporal.

αυτοις dat. pro. **"[came upon] two Israelites"** - [HE APPEARED TO] THEM. Dative of direct object of the passive verb "to appear to."

μαχομενοις [μαχομαι] dat. pres. part. **"who were fighting"** - QUARRELLING, FIGHTING. The NIV treats the participle as adjectival, attributive. Other translations opt for adverbial, temporal, the subject "them" being dative in this case, "when two of them were quarrelling", Knox, "as they were fighting", ESV, NAB, ....., so Kellum. Others treat it as the dative complement of the dative of direct object "them" standing in a double dative construction and asserting a fact about the object, "Next day he came upon two of them fighting", Moffatt. Taking the participle as a substantive, Culy simply classifies it as standing in apposition to "them", "he unexpectedly came upon them - men who were fighting - and he tried to make peace."

συνηλασεν [συναλασσω] imperf. **"he tried to reconcile"** - [AND] HE WAS RECONCILING [THEM]. The NIV treats this imperfect verb as conative / tendential where the action is attempted; "he was attempting to reconcile them."

εις "-" - INTO [PEACE]. The preposition may carry its primary sense here by indicating the direction of the action and/or arrival at, so "he tried to get them to come to terms", Zerwick; "talk them into making peace", Cassirer. It may be best to follow Kellum who suggests that we have here an adverbial use of the preposition, so "he tried to reconcile them peacefully", NAB. Culy suggests purpose, "*and he tried to make peace between them*"

ειπων [λεγω] aor. part. **"by saying"** - HAVING SAID. The NIV treats this participle as adverbial, instrumental, expressing means. Rogers Gk. suggests manner.



**ίνατι** adv. "why" - [MEN, YOU ARE BROTHERS], WHY [ARE YOU HARMING ONE ANOTHER]? Interrogative adverb, a contraction of **ίνα τί**, "to / for what, why?" The question in the LXX is **δια τί**.

v27

**ὁ δε** "but the man" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional construction, indicating a change in subject from Moses to the aggressive "neighbour".

**ὁ ... αδικων [αδικεω]** pres. part. "the man who was mistreating [the other]" - THE ONE HARMING [THE = HIS NEIGHBOUR]. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to push back."

**ειπων [λεγω]** aor. part. "and said" - [PUSHED BACK HIM] HAVING SAID. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to push back"; "The man who started the fight pushed Moses aside and asked", CEV.

**αρχοντα [ων οντος]** acc. "ruler" - [WHO APPOINTED YOU] RULER [AND JUDGE]. As with "judge", "ruler" serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "you" standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "you". The question, introduced by the interrogative **τις**, is rhetorical, giving the sense, "no one appointed you .....", Kellum. The term "judge" is used of one exercising authority, so it takes much the same sense as "ruler", but of course, it carries weight due to its use in the OT. So the sense is, "Who put you in charge of us?", Peterson.

**εφ [επι]** gen. "over [us]?" - UPON [US]? Here expressing subordination.

v28

**μη** "[are you]" - NOT. This negation, when used in a question, expects the negative answer "no". The question is rhetorical, and threatening, cf., Ex.2:14.

**ανελειν [ανααιρεω]** aor. inf. "[thinking] of killing" - [WISH] TO KILL [ME]. The infinitive is usually classified as complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to wish, will." By modifying a cognitive verb, it may also be viewed as forming a dependent statement of perception expressing what is "willed, wished", namely "to kill."

**ὄν τροπον** "as" - WHICH WAY = IN THE SAME WAY AS [YOU KILLED THE EGYPTIAN YESTERDAY]? Idiomatic adverbial expression of manner / comparison, modifying the infinitive "to kill"; "Do you want to kill me in the same way you murdered the Egyptian yesterday?", Barclay.

v29

The rebuke causes Moses to fear that Pharaoh will get word of what has happened. When Pharaoh does get to hear what has happened, Moses is forced

"to flee to Midian, probably on the east coast of the Gulf of Aqaba, south of Edom", Bock.

**εν** + dat. "[**when Moses heard this**]" - [BUT/AND MOSES FLED] IN [THE WORD, AND BECAME A STRANGER IN LAND OF MIDIAN WHERE HE BECAME FATHER OF TWO SONS]. The preposition here is local, expressing context / circumstance / occasion, or possibly "cause", Zerwick, Bruce Gk. So, **εν λογω** = faced with the situation where the knowledge of his killing of the Egyptian is likely to get out, "Moses fled". The proper genitive **Μαδιαμ**, "Midian", is adjectival, idiomatic / identification, "the land *known as* Midian."

### v30

b) Moses' second 40 years in Midian, v30-34. The speech skips the intervening years and focuses on Moses' final year in Midian, and the appearance of God (**αγγελος**, "an angel") to him at the burning bush. In a wilderness place, apart from the promised land, Jerusalem, and the temple, the Lord speaks to Moses. Stephen's false witnesses may refer to the temple as "this holy place", but here in a foreign land there is a holy place, a place made holy by God's presence. And that, in the end, is what makes a place holy. Ultimately, it is the two or three who meet in Jesus' name who are honoured by God's presence, Matt.18:26. Buildings cannot confine the divine presence; Jerusalem and the temple will not be a perpetual religious centre for the people of the new covenant.

**πληρωθεντων [πληρω]** aor. pas. part. "**after [forty years] had passed**" - [AND FORTY YEARS] HAVING BEEN FULFILLED. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "forty years" forms a genitive absolute construction, best treated as temporal.

**αγγελος [ος]** "**an angel**" - AN ANGEL. The Western text adds "of the Lord." Referred to in Exodus 3:2, but then it is the Lord who actually speaks to Moses from the burning bush, 3:4. Given this fact, it is obvious that the word "angel" is used as a euphemism for the divine name. It is interesting to note that Stephen doesn't say "the Lord appeared to Moses", or more correctly "the Lord spoke to Moses ....." Stephen is possibly intent on maintaining a respectful avoidance of the divine name.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**to Moses**" - [APPEARED] TO HIM. Dative of direct object after the passive verb "to appear to."

**του ορους Σινα** gen. "**near Mount Sinai**" - [IN THE DESERT] OF MOUNTAIN OF SINAI. The genitive "mountain", and the genitive proper "Sinai", are adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic. "Mountain" is probably locative, "the desert *which is located near* the mountain", and "Sinai" is probably identification, "the mountain *which is known as / called* Sinai." "The desert close to Mount Sinai", Cassirer.

πυρος [ρ ρος] gen. "of a burning [bush]" - [IN FLAME OF THORN BUSH] OF FIRE. The NIV treats this genitive as adjectival, attributive, limiting "thorn bush"; "a burning thorn bush." The genitive "of thorn bush" is also adjectival, best treated as verbal, subjective, limiting "flames", "the flames *which are produced* by a burning bush", although Culy suggests source / origin; "from a burning bush."

### v31

Cf., Exodus 3:3, although, Moses' emotional response is not recorded.

ιδων [όρωω] aor. part. "**when he saw *this***" - [AND MOSES] HAVING SEEN, [WAS MARVELLING AT THE VISION]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "to marvel, wonder, be amazed, astonished"; "Moses saw *it* and was astonished at the sight", Knox. The NIV, as with most translations, treat it as adverbial, temporal.

προσερχομενου [προσερχομαι] gen. pres. part. "**as he went over**" - [BUT/AND HE] COMING TO, APPROACHING *the bush*. The genitive participle and its genitive subject αυτου, "he", forms a genitive absolute construction, best treated as temporal; "when he sought to draw near", Cassirer.

κατανοησαι [κατανοεω] aor. inf. "**to get a closer look**" - TO UNDERSTAND = OBSERVE. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to understand what was happening"; "for a closer look", Cassirer.

κυριου [ος] "**the Lord**" - [*he heard* THE VOICE] OF *the* LORD. The genitive is adjectival, expressing the possession of a dependent status, "*belonging to* the Lord."

### v32

The quote is a mixed citation, mainly from Exodus 3:6.

πατερων [ηρ ρος] gen. "**[your] fathers**" - [I AM THE GOD] OF THE FATHERS [OF YOU, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC AND JACOB]. As with "Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob", the genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / subordination; "God *over* your fathers."

γενομενος [γινομαι] aor. part. "**[Moses] trembled [with fear]**" - [BUT/AND, MOSES] HAVING BECOME [TREMBLING]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to dare." Rogers Gk., suggests it may be adverbial, causal; "because he was so terrified, he did not dare ....." The participle is limited / completed by the predicate adjective εντρομος, "trembling", "Moses became terrified"

κατανοησαι [κατανοεω] aor. inf. "**to look**" - [WAS NOT DARING] TO UNDERSTAND, CONSIDER. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to dare." "Moses shut his eyes and turned away", Peterson.

### v33

Cf., Genesis 3:5-6. In his selection of the patriarchal story, Stephen identifies a "holy place" beyond the temple, in a foreign land. A holy place is a place where God is present, and for Stephen and his fellow believers, God is present with them in the Spirit.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**to him**" - [BUT/AND THE LORD SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

**των ποδων [ους οδος]** gen. "-" - [LOOSEN THE SANDAL] OF THE FEET [OF YOU]. The genitive may be adjectival, limiting "sandal", possibly possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic, "the sandal *pertaining to* your feet", although probably better taken as ablative, expressing separation, "away from"; "Take off your sandals."

**γαρ** "**for**" - BECAUSE [THE PLACE UPON WHICH YOU HAVE STOOD]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Moses should take off his sandals.

**γη [η]** "**[holy] ground**" - [IS HOLY] GROUND. Predicate nominative of the verb to-be limited by the attributive adjective "holy".

### v34

Cf., Genesis 3:7, 8, 10.

**ιδων ειδον** "**I have indeed seen**" - HAVING SEEN I SAW. This rather strange construction, a participle with a finite verb, is a translation of the Hebrew of the absolute infinitive with the finite verb to express emphasis, so Bruce Gk. "I have certainly seen", Kellum.

**του λαου [ος]** gen. "**of [my] people**" - [THE HARM, HURT, INJURY] OF THE PEOPLE [OF ME IN EGYPT]. The genitive is adjectival, verbal, objective; "I have seen the injury *which is inflicted upon* my people in Egypt." "I have seen the oppression suffered by my people in Egypt", Cassirer.

**στεναγμου [ος]** gen. "**groaning**" - [AND I HEARD] THE GROANING [OF THEM]. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to hear, obey."

**εξελεσθαι [εξαιρεω]** aor. mid. inf. "**to set [them] free**" - [AND I CAME DOWN] TO DELIVER [THEM]. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to deliver them." The use of the middle voice may imply some self-interest, although Culy suggests it highlights "God's initiative."

**αποστειλω [αποστελλω]** aor. subj. "**I will send you back**" - [AND NOW COME,] I MAY / WILL SEND [YOU INTO EGYPT]. The subjunctive may be hortatory, "let me send you back to Egypt", so Hamilton, although Bruce Gk., says it is simply the futuristic use of the subjunctive, as NIV.

c) Moses' last 40 years in the wilderness, 35-43. In describing Moses' return to Egypt to set God's people free, Stephen describes the man in terms that can properly be applied to Jesus. By God's hand, Moses is not just "ruler and judge" of the people of Israel, but also their "redeemer" and "prophet" - he delivers God's people from their bondage, and at Mount Sinai, they receive God's "living oracles" from him. Yet, the response of Israel to Moses is one of rejection; they constantly reject their ruler, redeemer and prophet - they are "unwilling to be obedient" to him. Yet, the disobedience of the people runs far deeper than just rejecting Moses, for they end up rejecting their God. They reject their redemption by wanting to return to Egypt, and worse, they turn to gods of their own making. The divine response to this disobedience is judgment.

Stephen draws on Amos 5:25-27 to develop a stinging assessment of God's covenant people. Waters identifies four salient points:

- Israel may have performed their ritual requirements in the Tabernacle, but their offerings were not acceptable. "The Tabernacle (and Temple) systems were no guarantee *ex opere operato*, of divine blessing to all worshippers alike."
- Israel's sacrifices were not acceptable because they worshipped other gods.
- Israel's idolatry "stubbornly adhered to subsequent generations all the way down to Amos' day" and beyond.
- The punishment for Israel's idolatry is exile. So it was for Amos' generation, and so it will be for this generation.

**ειποντες [λεγω]** aor. part. "**with the words**" - THIS MOSES, WHOM YOU DENIED] HAVING SAID. The participle is adverbial, either temporal, "when they said", Moffatt, or modal, "saying", Williams, or instrumental, "by saying", Berkeley, or causal, "because they said."

**αρχοντα [ων οντος]** acc. "**[their] ruler**" - [WHO MADE YOU] RULER [AND JUDGE]? Along with **δικαστην**, "judge", this noun serves as the accusative complement of the direct object **σε**, "you", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object.

**τουτον** "-" - [GOD HAS SENT] THIS *one*. The demonstrative pronoun, accusative object of the verb "to send", is backward referencing to "this Moses."

**αρχοντα [ων οντος]** acc. "**to be their ruler [and deliverer]**" - RULER [AND REDEEMER]. Along with "redeemer", this noun serves as the accusative complement of the direct object **τουτον**, "this one", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object; "him God sent for both ruler and redeemer", Berkeley.

**συν** + dat. "**through [the angel]**" - WITH [HAND OF ANGEL]. Expressing association / accompaniment. The anthropomorphic use of "hand" expresses the expenditure of effort by the angel, "with the help of the angel that appeared to him in the bush", Berkeley. The genitive "angel" is adjectival, possessive.

**του οφθεντος [όραω]** gen. aor. pas. part. "**who appeared to [him]**" - THE ONE HAVING APPEARED TO [HIM IN THE THORN BUSH]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "angel", as NIV. The passive verb "to appear to" takes a dative of persons, as here with **αυτω**, "him", dative of direct object.

### v36

Moses exercised his prophetic ministry with signs and wonders throughout his time with the people of Israel.

**ποιησας [ποιεω]** aor. part. "**and performed**" - [THIS ONE LED OUT THEM] HAVING DONE [WONDERS AND SIGNS]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to lead out", as NIV, but possibly adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their being led out, "he it was who led them forth performing wonders and signs", Moffatt, or even instrumental, expressing means, "by performing wonders and signs."

**γη Αιγυπτω** dat. "**in [Egypt]**" - [IN] LAND EGYPT [AND IN RED SEA AND IN THE DESERT FORTY YEARS]. Hebraism, so Barrett. The dative **γη**, "land", is a variant, probably dropped given the dative "Egypt", none-the-less, the sense is as NIV, ESV, ..... "in Egypt." A genitive proper "[in land] of Egypt" would be adjectival, idiomatic / identification, "the land *known as* Egypt."

### v37

Stephen draws on Deuteronomy 18:15 to remind his hearers that Moses told the people of the raising up (appointment), by God, of a prophet like Moses. This is an obvious allusion to Jesus, although many of his hearers would have identified this person with Joshua, even though there are none who equal Moses, cf., Deut.34:10.

**οὗτος "this [is Moses]"** - THIS [IS THE MOSES]. This demonstrative pronoun is backward referencing, emphatic by use.

**ό ειπας [λεγω]** aor. part. "**who told**" - THE ONE HAVING SAID. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Moses."

**τοις υίοις [ος]** dat. "**the Israelites**" - TO THE SONS [OF ISRAEL]. Dative of indirect object after the participle "having said." The genitive "of Israel" is adjectival, relational.

**ὕμιν** dat. pro. "**for you**" - [GOD WILL RAISE UP] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage, as NIV.

ὡς "like [me]" - [A PROPHET] AS, LIKE [ME]. Comparative; presumably "a prophet like me", as NIV, but as Culy notes, possibly "like he raised up me."

ἐκ + gen. "from" - FROM [THE BROTHERS OF YOU]. Expressing source / origin.

### v38

Moses' prophetic function is to mediate God's word ("living words" = laws that give direction for life) to the **ἐκκλησία**, "assembly, congregation" (a word used of the Christian congregation in Acts, i.e., "church"). Stephen's description of Moses continues to be positive, while at the same time hinting that the "congregation" of believers is more inclined to honour Moses than his opponents, given that his opponents align with the generation that rejected Moses during the wilderness journey. Note again the respectful distancing of Moses from God with an angelic intermediary, an idea likely drawn from Jubilees 1:27, 2:1.

ὁ **γενομενος** [**γινομαι**] "-" - [THIS IS] THE ONE HAVING BEEN [IN THE CONGREGATION IN THE DESERT]. The participle serves as a substantive, predicate nominative of the verb to-be.

**μετα** + gen. "with [the angel]" - WITH [THE ANGEL]. Expressing association / accompaniment, although Zerwick draws out the sense "as mediator between the angel ..... and our fathers."

**του λαλουντος** [**λαλεω**] gen. pres. part. "who spoke" - SPEAKING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "angel", as NIV.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "to him" - TO HIM [IN = AT SINAI MOUNTAIN AND *in* = WITH THE FATHERS OF US]. Dative of indirect object.

**δουναι** [**διδωμι**] aor. inf. "to pass on" - [WHO RECEIVED LIVING WORDS] TO GIVE. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to give ...."

**ημιν** dat. pro. "to us" - TO US. Dative of indirect object. Variant **υμιν**, "to you" is strongly attested. "To us" is likely, given that Stephen would want to identify himself and his fellow believers with Moses at this point, although not with the generation that refused "to obey him", v39, even though "your father" there is not as strongly attested.

### v39

In v39-43 Stephen outlines Israel's pattern of rejection of their prophets, as evident in their treatment of Moses. In this verse, Stephen summarises the constant complaining of the people of Israel - life would be better back in Egypt, cf., Numbers 14:3 (although not that this event took place after the Golden Calf incident, v40-41).

**γενεσθαι** [**γινομαι**] aor. inf. "refused [to obey]" - [THE FATHERS OF US DID NOT WANT] TO BECOME [OBEDIENT TO WHOM (Moses)]. The infinitive is

complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to will, want." It functions as a verb with ὑπηκοοι, "obedient", its predicate adjective, giving the sense "to become obedient" = "to obey", with the dative relative pronoun ᾧ, "to whom", serving as its dative direct object.

ἀλλὰ **"instead"** - BUT [THEY REJECTED *him* AND TURNED IN THE HEARTS OF THEM INTO EGYPT]. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not ..... but ....." The sense of "turned in the hearts of them into Egypt" is disputed. "They wished they could go back to Egypt", TEV, is the most natural translation; "They hankered secretly after Egypt", Moffatt. A second possibility posited by Kellum is "they had made the decision to turn around and return to Egypt."

#### v40

The incident of the Golden Calf is found in Exodus 32. This verse draws on Exodus 32:1, 23.

ειποντες [λεγω] aor. part. **"they told [Aaron]"** - HAVING SAID [TO AARON]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to reject", v39. The dative τῷ Ααρων, "to Aaron", is a dative of indirect object.

ἡμιν dat. pro. **"[make] us [gods]"** - [MAKE] TO = FOR US [GODS WHO WILL GO BEFORE US]. Dative of interest, advantage.

ὁ ... Μωυσης [ης ου] **"as for [this fellow] Moses"** - [THIS] MOSES [WHO LED OUT US FROM]. This pendent nominative (hanging nominative) introduces a clause independent to the main clause "make for us Gods who will go before us, for we do not know what happened to him." It relates to the main clause through the dative pronoun "to him", ie., "this Moses who led us out of the land of Egypt."

Αιγυπτου [ος] **"of Egypt"** - [LAND] OF EGYPT. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / identification; "from the land *known as* Egypt."

γαρ "-" - FOR, BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the people want Aaron to lead them out of Egypt.

τί **"what"** - [WE DO NOT KNOW, WHAT BECAME = HAPPENED]. Interrogative pronoun, nominative subject of the verb "to become." Representing the form of the original question asked by the people.

αυτω dat. pro. **"to him"** - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object / interest, disadvantage (Kellum) / reference (Culy).

#### v41

Dunn notes that Stephen's critique would not be regarded as unjustified. For Israel, this act of idolatry was viewed as equivalent to the sin of Adam.

εν + dat. **"[that was the time]"** - [AND THEY MADE A CALF] IN [THOSE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition, as NIV.



τω ειδωλω [ον] dat. "[they brought sacrifices] to it" - [AND THEY BROUGHT AN OFFERING] TO THE IDOL. Dative of indirect object.

εν + dat. "[revelled] in" - [AND THEY REJOICED] IN [THE WORKS OF THE HANDS OF THEM]. Local, expressing the context or circumstance within which they rejoiced; "held high revelry to celebrate what their hands had made", Barclay.

## v42

Stephen now links Israel's apostasy under Moses with the apostasy referred to by Amos and Jeremiah, an apostasy which brought upon the nation divine judgment ending in exile, v42-43; cf., Amos 5:25-27.

εστρεψεν [στρεφω] aor. "**turned away from them**" - [BUT/AND, GOD] TURNED. The NIV treats the verb as transitive, but it can also be intransitive here, "then God turned", NAB, ie., "changed his attitude to the Israelites", Barrett.

λατρευειν [λατρευω] pres. inf. "**to the worship of**" - [AND DELIVERED OVER THEM] TO WORSHIP, TO DO OBEISANCE TO. The infinitive is verbal, final, expressing purpose, although a final sense very easily drifts toward a consecutive sense in the NT such that Israel's idolatry becomes a consequence of their sin - they turned from God and he turned from them such that he "delivered them over" to the consequence of their sin, namely, idolatry.

τη στρατια [α] dat. "[the sun, moon and stars]" - THE ARMY [OF HEAVEN]. Dative of direct object after the verb "to do obeisance to." The genitive του ουρανου, "of heaven", is adjectival, probably attributive, "the heavenly army." The *Host of Heaven* refers to heavenly bodies, as NIV, with the sin being their worship as deities.

καθως adv. "**this agrees with**" - AS, JUST AS [IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN]. This adverb expresses both manner and comparison, "in like manner to", but here with γεγραπται, "it has been written", it is used to introduce a Biblical citation.

των προφητων [ης ου] gen. "[the book] of the prophets" - [IN BOOK] OF THE PROPHETS. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic, limiting "book"; "in the book *which contains the words of the prophets*." "It stands written somewhere in the prophetic books", Cassirer.

μη "-" - NOT. This negation, when used in a question, as here, expects a negative answer.

μοι dat. pro. "**did you bring me**" - [DID YOU BRING SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS] TO ME. Dative of indirect object of the verb "to bring."

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE DESERT]. Local, but possibly temporal, "while in the desert forty years."

Ἰσραηλ gen. proper "[people] of Israel" - [HOUSE] ISRAEL. Treated as a proper genitive, adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / identification, limiting "house (family, people)", "the house *known as* Israel."

#### v43

Those who rejected the prophets and followed after other gods found themselves rejected and, as a consequence, exiled, cf., Amos 5:27.

ὁμων gen. pro. "your [god Rephan]" - [AND YOU TOOK UP THE TENT OF MOLOCH, AND THE STAR OF THE GOD] OF YOU, [REPHAN]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / subordination, "the god *over* you." The genitive proper Παιφαν, "Rephan", stands in apposition to the possessive genitive "[the tent] of (belonging to) god." "Did you bring offerings to me ..... Hardly. You were too busy building shrines to war gods and sex goddesses", Peterson.

προσκυνειν [προσκυνεω] pres. inf. "to worship" - [THE IMAGES WHICH YOU MADE] TO WORSHIP, TO DO OBEISANCE TO [THEM]. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to worship them." The dative pronoun αυτοις, "them", is a dative of direct object after the verb "to worship."

και "therefore" - AND [I WILL MOVE = DEPORT YOU BEYOND BABYLON]. The NIV takes και here as inferential, drawing a logical conclusion, "So I will banish you to a faraway place, well beyond Babylonia." The LXX has "Damascus", but Stephen is reflecting the historical experience of the people of Israel.

#### v44

iv] Tent and temple, v44-50. Stephen's speech now focuses on the tent of testimony and the temple. Stephen does not denounce the institutions, but he weighs the tent in the wilderness equally with the temple in the promised land, and goes on to make the point that God is not confined to these structures in the same way pagan gods are confined to their temples; "Heaven is my throne .....", Isaiah 66:1-2. As Bock notes, Stephen criticises the temple, "not for what it is; rather ..... with how it is viewed." Although Stephen doesn't go on to draw out the issue of fulfilment as he did with Moses (the raising up of prophet like Moses), the implication of Isaiah's prophecy that "the Most High does not dwell in structures made by hands" is that there is a greater temple to come, so Waters, Peterson D, Marshall .....

του μαρτυριου [ον] gen. "[the tabernacle] of the covenant law" - [THE TENT, TABERNACLE] OF THE WITNESS, TESTIMONY [WAS TO THE FATHERS OF US IN THE DESERT, WILDERNESS]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic, "the tent *in which is housed the arc containing the tablets giving testimony / witness to the agreement between God and his people.*" The dative τοις

πατρασιν, "the fathers, patriarchs", is best treated as possessive, as NIV, "our ancestors had."

καθως adv. "as" - JUST AS. Expressing both manner and comparison, "in like manner to."

ὁ λαλων [λαλεω] pres. part. "**God [directed]**" - THE ONE SPEAKING [COMMANDED, GAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO MOSES]. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to command." The dative Μωση, "Moses", is a dative of direct object after the verb "to give instructions to."

ποιησαι [ποιεω] aor. inf. "**it had been made**" - TO MAKE [IT]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what God commanded Moses, "He who spoke to Moses told him that he should make it after the pattern he had seen."

κατα + acc. "**according to**" - ACCORDING TO [THE PATTERN WHICH HE HAD SEEN]. Expressing a standard.

#### v45

Cf., Joshua 3:14.

διαδεξαμενοι [διαδεχομαι] aor. part. "**after receiving**" - [AND THE FATHERS OF US BROUGHT IN WHICH = IT (σκηνη, "the tent", v44)] HAVING RECEIVED *it* IN TURN [WITH JOSHUA]. Hapax legomenon (once only use in the NT). The sense is something like "to receive in turn", cf., Barrett. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, "when they received it in turn along with Joshua." "And having received it in their turn, our father brought it in ....", NASB.

εν + dat. "**when [they took]**" - IN [TAKING POSSESSION]. Temporal use of the preposition, as NIV.

των εθνων [ος] gen. "**the land from the nations**" - *the land* OF THE NATIONS, GENTILES. An example of short-talk / semantic density where a genitive of direct object "the land" after the κατα prefix verb "to take possession of" is assumed. The genitive "of the nations" adjectival, possessive, "of = *belonging to* the nations / Gentiles."

απο + gen. "-" - [GOD DROVE OUT WHOM] FROM. Expressing separation, "away from"; "whom God drove out from before our forefathers", Cassirer. Note that the pronoun ὧν, "whom", direct object of the verb "to drive out", is a genitive by attraction to "the nations."

των πατερων [ηρ ρος] gen. "**them**" - [*the* FACE, PRESENCE] OF THE FATHERS [OF US]. The phrase απο προσωπου των πατερων, "from the presence of the fathers" is a Semitism, taking the sense of "away from the fathers", or simply "from them", cf., 5:41. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "face, presence", probably best classified as idiomatic, "the face / presence *which represents* the fathers."

ἕως + gen. "*it remained in the land until [the time of David]*" - UNTIL [THE DAYS OF DAVID]. Temporal preposition expressing time up to a point. Given the compact nature of the account, Bruce Gk., suggests that the temporal construction better modifies διαδεξαμενοι, "having received in turn", rather than εξωσεν, "drove out", but technically it modifies the verb "to drive out." The point being made is that "successive generations received the tent until David's time, after which it was replaced by Solomon's temple", Bruce Gk.

#### v46

εὔρειν [εὔρισκω] aor. inf. "**that he might find**" - [WHO FOUND GRACE BEFORE GOD, AND HE ASKED] TO FIND. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what David asked of God.

τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰακωβ dat. "**for the God of Jacob**" - [A TENT, DWELLING PLACE] TO = FOR THE HOUSE OF JACOB. Dative of interest, advantage. Given Psalm 132:5, "until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling for the God of Jacob", we obviously have another example of short-talk, or more likely a textual problem. The variant θεος, "God", instead of οἶκος, "house", is not well attested, but the sense is surely "a dwelling place for the God of Jacob", ESV, given v47. The proper genitive "of Jacob" would then be classified as adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / subordination, limiting "God", "for the God *who exercises authority over* (the house of) Jacob."

#### v47

Cf., I Kings 5:1-7:51.

αὐτῷ dat. pro. "**for him**" - [BUT/AND SOLOMON BUILT A HOUSE] TO = FOR HIM. Dative of interest, advantage. Technically, the antecedent is "the house of Jacob", but surely Luke intends "*the God* (of the house) of Jacob."

#### v48

Stephen now brings a prophetic perspective to bear on this dwelling place for God, v48-50. As with Luke's record of Paul's address to a pagan audience in 17:24, "This Lord who is ruler of heaven and earth does not dwell in temples made by hands." Although the temple serves as a focus for the Lord's presence with his people, the prophets constantly reminded them that the temple cult, rather than obedience, would not secure their survival, cf., Isa.1:12-17, Jer.7:1-34, Amos 5:25-27.

ἐν + dat. "**in [houses]**" - [BUT THE MOST HIGH DOES NOT DWELL] IN [*a house HANDMADE*]. Local, expressing space. The attributive adjective "handmade" limits the assumed noun "house", "a handmade house"; "The Most High does not live in a man-made house", Barclay.

**καθως** adv. "as" - JUST AS, AS [THE PROPHET SAYS]. This adverb expresses both manner and comparison, "in like manner to", but here with **λεγει**, "says", to introduce a Biblical citation.

#### v49

Cf., Isaiah 66:1. The point of the citation is that "You cannot build a suitable house for me", Kellum.

**μοι** dat. pro. "**my [throne]**" - [HEAVEN *is* A THRONE] TO ME. The dative here is usually treated as possessive, as NIV.

**των ποδων [ους οδος]** gen. "**[earth is my footstool]**" - [AND THE EARTH *is* A FOOTSTOOL] OF THE FEET [OF ME]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic, "a footstool (*which is*) under my feet", Knox. Culy suggests that it is a genitive of reference / respect, "a footstool for my feet", Williams.

**μοι** dat. pro. "**for me**" - [WHAT KIND OF HOUSE WILL YOU BUILD] TO ME? Dative of interest, advantage, as NIV.

**μου** gen. pro. "**my [resting place]**" - [OR WHAT PLACE OF REST *is*] OF ME? The genitive is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic, "What is a place of rest *that pertains to* me"; "On what spot could I settle?", Moffatt. The genitive **της καταπαυσεως**, "of rest", is adjectival, attributive, limiting the noun "place", "What is my resting-place?", Berkeley, as NIV.

#### v50

**ουχι** "-" - NOT [THE HAND OF ME DO = MAKE ALL THESE THINGS]? This negation is used in a question expecting a positive answer; "Is it not my hand which has made everything?", Barclay.

#### v51

v] Rebellion and lawlessness, v51-53: From the point of view of a legal defence, Stephen draws a conclusion from his exegesis of scripture that charges his opponents with the same charge they laid against him. They, like their forefathers, are a "stiff-necked" people, "uncircumcised in heart." "They have disobeyed the Law they profess to uphold. They have not understood the very Temple that God instituted in Israel", Waters. Like their forefathers who resisted God's Spirit in Moses and the prophets, they have not only rejected God's "Righteous One", but they have murdered him.

As already noted, the frame for Stephen's defence is the gospel, and so, at this point, the application of his exegetical discourse serves as an announcement that **the time is fulfilled**. God's righteous servant has suffered and died at the hands of his own people, as prophesied, therefore **the kingdom of God is at hand**. Although the Sanhedrin erupts in violence, Stephen is still able to proclaim

the coming kingdom in the terms of Christ's enthronement as the coming Son of Man - Jesus is Lord, v54-56.

**καρδιαις [α]** dat. "[**your**] hearts" - [STUBBORN, STIFF-NECKED PEOPLE AND UNCIRCUMCISED] IN HEART [AND IN EARS]. As with "in ears", the dative is adverbial, reference / respect, "as for your heart and ears, you are ....."; "You obstinate people, heathen in your thinking", Phillips.

**ὡς [you are] just like** - LIKE, AS [THE FATHERS OF YOU *do*, AND = ALSO YOU *do*]. Comparative; "You are just like your ancestors", Peterson.

**ὁμεις** pro. "**you**" - YOU [ALWAYS YOU RESIST]. Emphatic by position and use. Strengthened by the adverb **αι**, "always", "YOU ALWAYS resist."

**τω πνευματι [α ατος]** dat. "**the [Holy] Spirit**" - THE [HOLY] SPIRIT. Dative of direct object after **αντι** prefix verb "to resist."

## v52

The generational guilt of "the fathers", in persecuting and murdering the prophets, is an issue similarly pursued by Jesus, cf., Lk.6:23, 26, 11:47-48.

**των προφητων [ης ου]** gen. "**a prophet**" - [THE FATHERS OF YOU DID NOT PERSECUTE WHICH] OF THE PROPHETS? = [WHICH] OF THE PROPHETS [DID NOT THE FATHERS OF YOU PERSECUTE]? The genitive is adjectival, partitive, limiting the interrogative pronoun **τινα**, "which", object of the verb "to persecute".

**και [they] even [killed]** - AND [THEY KILLED]. The NIV takes the conjunction here as ascensive, but, at this point, it could serve an exegetical function.

**τους προσκαταγγελαντας [προσκαταγγελλω]** aor. part. "**those who predicted**" - THE ONES HAVING ANNOUNCED BEFOREHAND. The participle serves as a substantive, accusative object of the verb "to kill."

**περι** + gen. "-" - ABOUT. Expressing reference / respect, "concerning, about, with reference to."

**του κιδαιου** gen. adj. "**the Righteous One**" - [THE COMING] OF THE RIGHTEOUS, JUST *one*. The adjective serves as a substantive, the genitive usually taken to be adjectival, verbal, subjective, where the genitive "of the righteous / just one" performs the action of the verbal noun "coming." Note how Cassirer opts for an assumed verbal genitive "of the one" with an attributive "of the righteous"; "the coming *of the one* who is truly righteous." Bruce Gk, 3:14, argues that it is likely that the term is a messianic title, "The Righteous / Just One", as NIV, etc.

**ὁμεις** pro. "**[and now] you**" - [NOW] YOU, [YOU HAVE BECOME]. Emphatic by position and use; "And now, as for YOU LOT, you have become his betrayers and murmurers."

οὗ pro. "[you have betrayed and murdered] him" - [BETRAYERS AND MURDERERS] OF WHOM. The genitive relative pronoun is adjectival, verbal, objective, limiting the nouns " betrayers" and "murderers". Modern translations often treat a verbal noun, whose action is received by an objective genitive, as if they were verbs, as NIV.

### v53

Again, we have a deferential reference to Angels acting on God's behalf, rather than God himself acting. The NT reflects this view, Gal.3:19, Heb.2:2, a point of view held in late Judaism, cf., The Book of Jubilees, 1:29.

οἵτινες pro. "**you who**" - WHOEVER = WHO [RECEIVED THE LAW]. This indefinite relative pronoun serves as the subject of the verb "to receive"; "You who received the law", ESV. As Kellum notes, it is used instead of the definite pronoun οἱ "who", which, due to the lack of accents at the time, would be easily confused with the article οἱ; "You are the very people who received the law .....", so Zerwick.

εἰς + acc. "**that [was given]**" - INTO [ORDINANCES, DECREES, DIRECTIONS]. The NIV treats the εἰς + acc. construction as a predicate modifier, here of **τοῦ νομοῦ**, "the law", so Culy (a Semitic construction). It is also possible that the preposition εἰς is being used instead of ἐν, "in", in which case, an instrumental sense may be intended, expressing means, so Zerwick, Haenchen, "You have received the law by the ordinances of angels", Bruce Gk.

αγγέλων [ος] gen. "**through angels**" - OF ANGELS [AND = BUT YOU DID NOT KEEP, GUARD it]. The genitive is adjectival, probably verbal, subjective; "who received the law, (that was) transmitted to you by angels", Barclay, as NIV.

### v54

vi] The stoning of Stephen, v54-60: a) The Sanhedrin reacts with anger, v54. Under Roman law, an affront to the Temple was one crime the Jews could settle themselves by summary execution, by stoning, although only by due process at law. It was the very charge they used against Jesus, but failed because the witnesses gave contradictory evidence. Stephen has just questioned the spiritual value of this building of stone, and so, as far as the Sanhedrin is concerned, he is showing contempt for the Shekinah glory of God (God's very presence).

ακουοντες [ακουω] pres. part. "**when they heard / when the members of the Sanhedrin heard**" - [BUT/AND] HEARING [THESE THINGS]. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, introducing a temporal clause, as NIV.

διεπριοντο [διαπρω] imperf. ind. pas. "**they were furious**" - THEY WERE CUT THROUGH. This, and the following verb, is imperfect, possibly durative,

expressing the extent of the rage, or inceptive, emphasizing its commencement, "they became enraged", Barrett. "They were angry", CEV.

ταις καρδιαις [α] "-" - IN THE HEARTS [OF THEM]. The dative is local, expressing space, metaphorical. The phrase "they were cut through in their hearts" expresses deep emotion.

εβρυχον [βρυχω] imperf. "**gnash [the teeth]**" - [AND] THEY WERE GRINDING [THE = THEIR TEETH]. A way of expressing violent rage. Some suggest it involved a kind of chattering of the teeth, gnashing. In a fit of rage, people tense their face and show their teeth, usually with numerous expletives. This is probably what was happening. They were "furious", CEV.

επ [επι] + acc. "**at**" - UPON [HIM]. Here expressing reference / respect; "with respect to him / concerning him / about him."

## v55

b) Stephen's final words, v55-56. In the midst of uproar, Stephen proclaims the central proposition of the gospel - **the kingdom of God is at hand**; Jesus is Lord. As far as Luke is concerned, Stephen does actually see a vision. It is the fulfillment of Jesus' words in Mark 14:62, where he says "you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of the Almighty, and coming with the clouds of heaven." The "one like unto the Son of Man" is prophesied by Daniel, Dan.7:13f. He comes to the Ancient of Days and receives an everlasting kingdom. He is also spoken of in the Psalms, Ps.110, where he approaches the throne of God and is invited to sit at his right hand - a position of rule and authority. This then is Stephen's vision. Jesus has entered the throne-room of the living God and received eternal rule and authority. Therefore, the new age of eternity has begun and "all peoples, nations and languages should serve him." By implication, the exclusive Temple-worship of the Jews is now redundant. Note how Luke has Jesus standing at God's right hand, rather than sitting. Is Jesus standing to welcome Stephen the martyr, or is he standing as advocate before God on Stephen's behalf? In the end, we don't know, but the image is an interesting one.

ὑπαρχων [ὑπαρχω] pres. part. "[**Stephen**]" - [BUT/AND] BEING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb ειδεν, "he saw." Possibly adverbial, causal, so Culy; "but since he was full of the Holy Spirit."

πνευματος [α ατος] gen. "**of the [Holy] Spirit**" - [FULL] OF THE [HOLY] SPIRIT. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content. This Lukan term often reflects Old Testament usage where a person is spiritually inspired by the divine to perform some action, often related to prophecy / revelation, here the proclamation of Christ's enthronement as Lord.



ατενισσας [ατενιζω] aor. part. "**looked up**" - HAVING FOCUSED STARE, GAZE. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "he saw", as NIV; "he gazed into heaven and saw."

εις "**to [heaven]**" - TO, INTO [HEAVEN]. Possibly just meaning that Stephen looked heavenward, up into the sky, "fixed his gaze on the sky", rather than actually "gazed up into heaven", Barclay.

θεου [ος] gen. "**[the glory] of God**" - [HE SAW *the* GLORY] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, but possibly attributive, "the glorious God", Culy. The divine presence, the shekinah glory, usually associated with the divine presence in the temple, but here in heaven.

ἑστῶτα [ἵστημι] perf. act. part. "**standing**" - [AND JESUS] HAVING STOOD. This accusative participle serves as the complement of the direct object "Jesus" standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object, namely that "Jesus" was "standing".

εκ + gen. "**at [the right hand]**" - FROM [THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD]. Here technically expressing separation, "away from", but expressed as a locative; "at". The genitive "of God" is adjectival, possessive.

## v56

ιδου "**Look**" - [AND HE SAID] BEHOLD, PAY ATTENTION, LOOK, TAKE NOTE OF THIS.

διήγοιμενους [διανοιγω] perf. pas. part. "**open**" - [I SEE THE HEAVENS] HAVING BEEN OPENED UP [AND THE SON OF MAN HAVING STOOD]. This participle, with the conjoined participle ἑστῶτα "standing", both serve as object complements, as with "standing" in v55; "I see (verb) the heavens (object) having been opened (object complement) and I see (verb) the Son of Man (object) having stood (object complement)". Stephen witnesses to the realization of Jesus' claim that he fulfills Daniel's prophecy concerning the eternal authority of the Son of Man, Dan.13:7. Jesus is the one who comes to the Ancient of Days in the clouds of heaven and takes up his throne beside him, Mk.14:62. So, Stephen proclaims the gospel, he proclaims the enthronement of Jesus, Lord of heaven and earth. Stephen's testimony is blasphemy if not true, but if it is true, then let every knee bow before the universal lordship of Christ. For "Son of Man" see the notes on ὁ υἱος του ανθρωπου, Luke 5:24a.

εκ + gen. "**at**" - FROM [RIGHT OF GOD]. The preposition εκ taking a locative sense here, "at"; as above. Describing a position of authority.

## 7:57-60

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### iv] Stephen's martyrdom

##### Synopsis

Luke has given us a detailed account of Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin. Stephen's speech has caused an uproar, but when he speaks of seeing the enthronement of the coming Son of Man, they grab him and stone him to death.

##### Teaching

Jerusalem / Temple / Law, dispossessed by the victorious Son of Man now seated at the right hand of the Ancient of Days, confirms its state of loss by striking out in violence at "the man who first saw the wider implications of the church's faith and who laid the foundation on which the mission to the Gentiles was built", Neil.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-7.

ii] Background:

- *Racism in Jerusalem*: There is a touch of racial bigotry in the actions of the lynch-mob. The Aramaic speaking Jews of Judea tended to dislike the Hellenistic Jews of the dispersion. In the development of the Christian church in Jerusalem, both racial groups were present, and as opposition grew against the developing Jewish sect of *the way*, it is the Hellenistic believers who take the brunt of the opposition, but it is they who progress the spread of the Christian faith.

- *Execution by stoning*: The stoning-place in Jerusalem was a pit some four meters deep. The criminal is pushed from behind by one of the witnesses against him and he falls into the pit face down. If he dies at this point, the execution is completed. If not, the second witness goes into the pit and drops a stone on his heart. If he still lives, the crowd sets to and stones him. Luke seems to imply that in the execution of Stephen the crowd doesn't wait for these niceties.

iii] Structure: *The martyrdom of Stephen*:

The arrest of Stephen, 6:8-15;

Stephen's *apologia*, 7:1-56;

The martyrdom of Stephen, 7:56-8:1a;

A lynch-mob takes over, v57-58;

Stephen is stoned to death, v59-60;

Saul approves of Stephen's death, 8:1a.

iv] Interpretation:

The gospel preaching of the apostles and other members of the Christian fellowship in Jerusalem had increasingly inflamed the authorities and there was now a concerted effort to put a stop to it. Charges had been brought against Stephen and false witnesses organised, so he was in a precarious position. Stephen sets out to answer the charges by exposing Israel's failure to understand God's intentions as revealed in scripture. By surveying Israel's history, Stephen reveals how Israel has failed to understand the function of the law and the temple, and how, by the nation's constant rejection of the prophets, Israel now stands condemned.

Stephen's claim that God does not dwell in buildings made by human hands is not well received, but when he finally announced that he could see God in his heavenly dwelling-place, and that he could see the Son of Man, Jesus, standing at the right hand of the Father, then, at that point, the crowd goes ballistic.

For the members of the Sanhedrin, the issue concerns the dwelling-place of God (in the heavenlies and in creation, but not in the temple) and the unique character of God (devalued by the status accorded to Jesus as the Son of Man standing beside God). Although Stephen's words prompt a charge of blasphemy, there is no legal process whereby this charge can be laid and answered. So, a lynch-mob takes over, obviously sponsored by the authorities, and this on the ground that Stephen has defamed the temple. In all this, "Saul approved of their killing him", 8:1a.

v] Homiletics: *Faith and forgiveness*

In Luke 11:51, Jesus mentions the death of the godly prophet Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, who was put to death in the temple court, "between the altar and the sanctuary", Lk.11:51. On his death he prayed, "May the Lord see this and call you to account", 2Chron.24:22.

Stephen, like Jesus, died the death of a true martyr. In his dying he displayed two essential qualities for Christian living:

**Faith**

In his mind's eye Stephen places Jesus at the right hand of the living God, ruling with power and authority. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is therefore well able to save. Yet of greater importance, Stephen sees Jesus standing, welcoming him, or possibly even pleading for him. He is therefore, able to say "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Stephen sees himself as a beneficiary of God's mercy.

## Forgiveness

Christ's cry to the Father from the cross for the forgiveness of his persecutors, seems well beyond the capacity of mere humanity, but Stephen utters the same prayer. He is a man bathed in the mercy of God, which mercy makes him merciful. Of course, his prayer doesn't save his persecutors, but it does serve to remind them that their crime will not be held against them if they repent.

### Text - 7:57

i] A lynch-mob takes over, v57-58: "The blasphemer is not culpable unless he pronounces the Name itself", Klousner. Stephen certainly did not declare the Name, and anyhow, the Sanhedrin did not have the authority to pronounce the death penalty for blasphemy. The best they could do with Jesus was pronounce him guilty and look to Pilate to pass judgement. Yet, the Sanhedrin could pronounce death on anyone who desecrated the Temple, and Stephen had certainly made a few negative comments in that direction, but in all likelihood, his crime did not warrant the death penalty. Whatever the legal points at law, the mob takes over.

δε **"at this"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

κραξαντες [κραζω] aor. part. **"yelling"** - HAVING CRIED OUT ALOUD, SCREAMED, YELLED. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "they covered"; "they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears", AV.

φωνη μεγαλη **"at the top of their voices"** - WITH A LOUD VOICE. The dative is best treated as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their "yelling", or instrumental, expressing means, "by means of ...."

ὁμοθυμαδον adv. **"all"** - [THEY CONSTRAINED = SHUT THE EARS OF THEM AND THEY RUSHED UPON HIM] OF ONE ACCORD. Adverb of manner. Used by Luke in Acts to express unity of purpose. The NIV takes the preposition **επι** as spatial, "at him", "rushed toward him", Cassirer, but as Culy notes, it possibly expresses opposition, "against him", "at once they all attacked Stephen", CEV.

### v58

εκβαλοντες [εκβαλλω] aor. part. **"dragged him"** - [AND] HAVING THROWN OUT, CAST OUT, DRIVEN OUT. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "they were stoning him"; "they dragged him out ... and stoned him."

εξω [εκ] + gen. **"out"** - OUTSIDE [OF THE CITY]. Local, expressing space, "outside", or possibly expressing separation, "away from."

ελιθοβολουν [λιθοβολεω] imperf. ind. act. "**began to stone him**" - THEY WERE STONING *him*. The NIV takes the imperfect as inceptive, emphasising the beginning of the action.

μαρτυρες [υς εως] "**the witnesses**" - [AND] THE WITNESSES [TOOK OFF THE GARMENTS OF THEM]. Possibly being used here in a legal sense. If so, Saul is functioning as a quasi-prosecutor on behalf of the Sanhedrin, which, as indicated above, is functioning beyond its jurisdiction.

καλουμενου [καλεω] gen. pres. pas. part. "**named**" - [BESIDE THE FEET OF A YOUNG MAN] BEING CALLED [OF SAUL]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "a young man", genitive by agreement, "who went by the name of Saul." The genitive "Saul" is adjectival, epexegetic, specifying the participle "being called" - typical naming convention.

## v59

ii] Stephen is stoned to death, v59-60: Like Jesus ("Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"), Stephen hands his psyche into the gentle arms of Jesus, and at the same time, he prays for mercy toward his executioners. Luke then describes his death in beautiful and peaceful terms. In 8:1a, Luke tells us that Saul approves of the execution.

και "**while**" - AND. Coordinating conjunction maintaining the flow of the narrative, "and so they stoned Stephen", Barclay.

ελιθοβολουν [λιθοβολεω] imperf. "**they were stoning him**" - THEY WERE STONING [STEPHEN]. The imperfect is durative expressing continued action, or possibly inceptive, indicating the beginning of the action, "they began to stone ...." Barrett argues that this imperfect verb is repeated from v58 indicating that v58b is a parenthetical note. So, it picks up on the account of Stephen's martyrdom; "they dragged him out of the city and stoned him ..... So, the crowd continued to stone Stephen ....."

επικαλουμενον [επικαλεω] pres. part. "**prayed**" - CALLING UPON *the Lord Jesus*. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Stephen"; "So, they stoned Stephen, who called on the Lord, saying", Moffatt. Sometimes treated as adverbial, temporal, "they kept stoning Stephen as he called out", Fitzmyer, although Culy argues that a genitive absolute construction would be used if a temporal sense was intended here.

λεγοντα [λεγω] pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Redundant participle introducing direct speech; see λεγοντες, 1:6. Possibly classified as attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the verbal aspect of Stephen's calling upon the Lord; "who called upon the Lord and said", or adjectival, as in the case of the participle "calling upon", "who called upon the Lord and who said ...."

κυριε Ιησου voc. "**Lord Jesus**" - LORD JESUS. Vocative of address. Prayer is now addressed to Jesus - a significant theological move; "the work in heaven is now shared between God ("the Ancient of Days") and the one at his right hand", Bock (of course, theologically we are bound to hold that both the Father and the Son have eternally shared in the reign of the godhead).

μου gen. pro. "**my**" - [RECEIVE THE SPIRIT, BREATH] OF ME. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "my spirit." The "spirit" is the being of a person; "Lord Jesus, please welcome me", CEV.

#### v60

θεις [τιθημι] aor. part. "**then he fell on [his knees]**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING FALLEN ON [THE KNEES]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to cry out", but possibly temporal, "when he fell on his knees he cried out ....".

φωνη μεγαλη dat. "-" - [HE CRIED OUT] IN/WITH A LOUD VOICE. The dative is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of Stephen's cry, or instrumental, expressing means, "by means of."

μη στησης [ιστημι] aor. subj. "**do not hold**" - [LORD] MAY YOU NOT PUT, PLACE [THIS SIN]. Subjunctive of prohibition. Note that Stephen shows the same concern toward his murderers as Jesus did. An interesting question arises as to whether or not the Lord hears Stephen's prayer. Are Stephen's murderers forgiven? Given that there can be no forgiveness without repentance, the answer is surely *Yes*, if they repent (like Saul / Paul).

αυτοις dat. pro. "**against them**" - TO THEM. Dative of interest, disadvantage, as NIV.

ειπων [λεγω] aor. part. "**when he had said**" - [AND] HAVING SAID [THIS]. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

εκοιμηθη [κοιμαομαι] aor. pas. "**he fell asleep**" - HE FELL ASLEEP. An interesting use of the word, given the brutality of Stephen's death. The word is used a number of times to describe the death of a believer. Rather than dead and gone, there is a sense where a believer is hid in Christ, asleep in him, ready to wake at His coming on the day of resurrection - *safe in the arms of Jesus*. This is a controversial area in Christian theology, and is reflected in the doctrine of "soul sleep", as taught by the Adventist church. The particular form of the doctrine taught by the Adventists, is rejected by mainline Christian denominations. "He fell asleep in death", Williams.

## 8:1-8

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### v] Samaria accepts the gospel

##### Synopsis

The murder of Stephen leads to a general persecution of Hellenistic Jewish believers led by Saul / Paul. The apostles are spared, probably along with Aramaic speaking believers from Judea and Galilee, but Greek speaking Jewish believers are either arrested and thrown into jail, or hounded out of Judea. One such member of the Jerusalem church, Philip, on reaching Samaria, begins proclaiming the gospel, both in word and sign. Many locals are converted, and are baptized.

##### Teaching

The good news of the coming kingdom is not just for Jews.

##### Issues

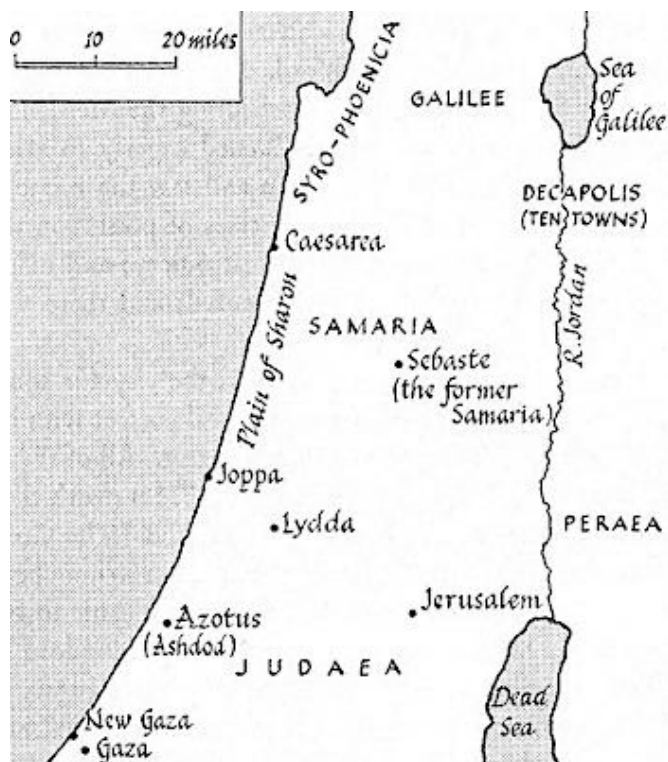
i] Context: See 6:1-7. It is unclear where Luke intends the beginning of his next section, 8:1a, 8:1b, or 8:4. 8:1b-40 is a popular division, so Bruce Gk. Yet, as Dunn notes, those who originally divided the chapters of Acts "had the right instinct." The focus of the story now switches to Saul. Luke's account of the gospel at work in Samaria, covering v1-40, introduces us to the Hellenist Philip. The unit summarises Saul's / Saul's pogrom in Jerusalem, v1-3; Philip's early mission work in Samaria, v4-8; Philip's encounter with Simon the magician / spiritualist, v9-13; the visit of Peter and John to confirm the validity of Stephen's gospel mission, v14-17, 25; Peter's confrontation with Simon the magician, v18-24; the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch through the testimony of Stephen, v26-39; Philip's continued gospel ministry, v40.

##### ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *The theological structure of the gospel message*; 3:11-26;
- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

##### Map:

Palestine at the time of Christ - *following page*



iii] Structure: *Samaria accepts the gospel:*

Persecution of believers in Jerusalem, v1-3;

Philip evangelises Samaria, v4-8;

iv] Interpretation:

Luke is only summarising the persecution of the church in Jerusalem, so it seems unlikely that the apostles are the only members of the church caught up in the troubles. In the church itself, there were tensions between the Hellenists and the "Hebrews", a tension magnified in the wider community. Antagonism soon developed between Stephen and his fellow Hellenists and the members of the synagogue of the Freedmen, all of whom are identified as Jews of the dispersion, Hellenists, and obviously intent on proving their Jewish credentials. It may well be that Saul / Paul was a member of this group, and with his associates, happily leads the pogrom



against the *blasphemers*, those who are threatening the purity of Israel's religious traditions.

So, in all likelihood, the pogrom is against Hellenist believers, rather "the Hebrews", Aramaic speaking Jewish believers. For the moment, *kosher* believers present as a sect of Judaism and are nowhere near as threatening as the Hellenists with their disregard for the distinctive nature of Judaism. This will become even more confronting when the Hellenists seek to pollute Judaism with Samaritan converts. Even the apostles themselves will have to face this issue.

Luke goes on to mark the first step in the movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth / Jew to Gentile, with an account of the evangelisation of Samaria. Luke's account focuses on Philip, one of the Hellenist believers driven from Jerusalem. The account makes an initial important point: the proclamation of the gospel, both in word ("Jesus", "the messiah", "the kingdom of God"), and sign (the casting out of unclean spirits and miraculous healings), achieves amazing results.

In the following section, v9-25, Luke develops a second important point, namely that pagan ideology is convincingly defeated when confronted with the gospel (Simon was baptized and "was amazed" at the signs and wonders) - hostile spiritual forces retreat in the presence of those who possess God's Spirit.

*Source theories.* Bock notes Schneider's theory that there were possibly three sources: a tradition of Philip's ministry, including the Simon incident and the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch; a Simon tradition; and a tradition about Peter and John's ministry in Samaria. Bock states that "it is hard to be certain about such details." Bock gives more weight to oral tradition than written accounts. So, Luke may have used written accounts of the Christian mission circulating at the time, but given the historical nature of his Acts of the Apostles, it is more likely that he interviewed the players themselves, or those who personally knew them, see Witherington, p280.

### **Text - 8:1**

Samaria accepts the gospel, v1-13: i] The persecution of believers in Jerusalem, v1-3. It seems likely that the persecution of believers, led by Saul / Paul, was aimed at the Hellenists, although not all commentators agree. Longenecker argues that the whole church is attacked, but only the Hellenists are dispersed, so also Bruce. The fact that *ανδρες ευλαβεις*, "devout men" (a term used of believers by Luke), buried Stephen, indicates that at least some members of the church are able to undertake normal activities. As to the persecution led by

Saul / Paul, he set out to **ελυμαινετο** the church, "to ravage, harass, ruin" it. The word is used both of physical and psychological harassment. Saul / Paul was driven by "a different kind of religious zeal", Marshall.

**δε "and"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**συνευδοκων [συνευδοκew]** pres. part. "**approved of**" - [SAUL] WAS APPROVING TO. With the verb to-be **ἦν**, the participle forms a periphrastic construction, possibly emphasising durative aspect, "an attitude of some duration", Haenchen, so also Bock, although as Culy notes, in terms of narrative discourse, "the periphrastic construction pushes the narrative forward, foreshadowing the importance of this new figure", Porter Gk., 1989.

**τη αναηρεσει [ις ewς]** dat. "**kill**ing" - THE MURDER. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix participle "giving approval to."

**αυτου** gen. pro. "**him**" - OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, verbal, objective, "the execution *which was carried out upon him.*"

**εγενετο δε εν "on [that day]"** - BUT/AND IT HAPPENED ON [THAT DAY]. Transitional; see 5:7.

**επι** + acc. "**against [the church]**" - [A GREAT PERSECUTION] UPON [THE CHURCH]. The preposition is local, expressing space, "upon, toward", or opposition, "against", as NIV.

**την "in"** - THE [IN JERUSALEM]. The article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase "in Jerusalem", into an attributive modifier of the noun "church".

**πλην** + gen. "**except**" - [BUT/AND ALL] EXCEPT [THE APOSTLES]. Used here to introduce an exception, as NIV, rather than as an adversative.

**κατα** + acc. "**throughout**" - [WAS SCATTERED] ACCORDING TO [THE REGIONS OF JUDEA AND SAMARIA]. Used here as a distributive; "throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria", ESV.

## v2

Barrett notes that loud lamentation for a criminal was not permitted, possibly indicating that Stephen's murder was at the hand of a lynch-mob rather than an officially sanctioned execution by the Sanhedrin.

**επ [επι]** + dat. "**for [him]**" - [AND DEVOUT, PIOUS MEN BURIED STEPHEN AND THEY MADE LOUD MOURNING = LAMENTATION] UPON [HIM]. Spatial, "upon" = "over him." As indicated above, "devout men" is probably used here for "believers"

## v3

It is likely that Saul / Paul is going after Christian house-churches rather than individuals. So, he is probably breaking up congregational meetings, arresting

those in attendance and incarcerating them. As Culy notes, the verb **λυμαινω**, "to harass, mistreat", may extend to "to destroy"; "he was trying to destroy the church."

**εισπορευομονος [εισπορευομαι]** aor. part. "**going**" - [BUT/AND SAUL WAS HARASSING THE CHURCH] ENTERING. Along with the participle **συρων**, "dragging", attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to deliver over"; "Saul began a merciless attack upon the church. He went from house to house, seizing both men and women, and committing them to prison", Barclay.

**κατα** + acc. "**[house] to [house]**" - ACCORDING TO [THE HOUSE]. Distributive use of the preposition, "house by house"; "entering house after house", ESV.

**τε .... και** "**both [men] and [women]**" - [DRAGGING OFF] BOTH [MEN] AND [WOMEN, DELIVERING OVER INTO JAIL]. Forming a correlative construction; "both .... and ...."

#### v4

ii] Philip evangelises Samaria, v4-8. Luke now describes the first step in the gospel's move to the ends of the earth / Jew to Gentile. There is open hostility between Jew and Samaritan, but Luke now records Philip, a Hellenist Jew, evangelising Samaritans (**κηρυσσω**, "to preach, proclaim", v5). We are not told the town where Philip is witnessing; what's important is that he is in Samaria preaching the gospel - the message concerning **τον Χριστον**, "the Christ, Messiah", v5, **περι της βασιλειας του θεου**, "about / concerning the kingdom of God", and **του ονοματος Ιησου Χριστου**, "about / concerning the name = person of Jesus Christ", v12. Philip's proclamation is not just in words, but also signs - exorcisms and healings. These signs are often viewed as if confirming the validity of the message, but they are actually the message in visible form; "If I drive out demons by the finger of God then the kingdom of God has come upon you", Lk.11:20. Just as the news concerning the coming kingdom was enthusiastically received by many Jews in Jerusalem, now also, in Samaria, "the city is full of rejoicing", v8.

**ουν** "-" - THEREFORE. Transitional, establishing a logical connection / conclusion, particularly with v1b, "a great persecution broke out ..... And so it was that ....."

**ουν .... δε** "-" - ON THE ONE HAND ..... (v5) BUT/AND ON THE OTHER HAND. This adversative comparative / coordinative construction is used here to related two elements of the narrative - the dispersed Hellenists who are preaching the gospel, and Philip in Samaria who is preaching the gospel.

οἱ .... διασπαρευτες [διασπειρω] aor. pas. part. "those who had been scattered" - THE ONES HAVING BEEN SCATTERED ABOUT. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to pass through."

ευαγγελιζομενοι [ευαγγελιζω] pres. mid. part. "PREACHED" - [PASSED THROUGH = WENT ABOUT] PREACHING [THE WORD *of god = the gospel*]. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their passing through, i.e., their moving from place to place.

## v5

A variant has "the city", but rather than identify any particular city, it is possible that Luke is making the point that Philip is focused on preaching in urban centres.

κατελθων [κατερχομαι] aor. part. "went down" - [BUT/AND PHILIP] HAVING GONE DOWN. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to preach"; "Philip went down ..... and proclaimed .....", ESV, or adverbial, temporal, "after going down to a city of Samaria, ...", Culy, even possibly adjectival (although, being anarthrous, adverbial is more likely), "Philip, who had gone down to one of the cities of Samaria, ....", Knox.

της Σαμαριας [α] gen. "[a city] in Samaria" - [TO, INTO A / THE CITY] OF SAMARIA. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / local, "a city located in Samaria", as NIV.

αυτοις dat. pro. "-" - [WAS PREACHING THE CHRIST, MESSIAH] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object; "told the people about the Messiah", TEV.

## v6

εν τω + inf. "when [the crowds heard]" - [BUT/AND,] IN THE [THEY TO HEAR AND in the TO SEE THE SIGNS WHICH HE WAS DOING]. This construction, the preposition εν + the articular infinitives, "to hear" and "to see", introduces a temporal clause, contemporaneous time, although it can sometimes be causal, "because of what they heard .....", Cassirer. The accusative subject of the infinitives is αυτους, "when they heard." The natural object of the infinitives is "signs", but given that hearing signs is somewhat unnatural, it is likely that the infinitive "to hear" carries an assumed object, "when they heard him, and saw the signs that he did", ESV.

τοις λεγομενοις [λεγω] dat. pres. mid. part. "to what he said" - [WERE PAYING ATTENTION, WITH ONE ACCORD,] TO THE THINGS BEING SAID. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of direct object after the προς prefix verb "to pay attention to." This verb is modified by the adverb of manner, "with one accord." The adverb is awkwardly placed in the text, but serves to identify "the uniformity and consistency of their response", Johnson; "Each member of the

crowd hung on every word that Philip said, because of the power of his words and the miracles he performed."

**ὑπο** + gen. "-" - BY [PHILIP]. Expressing agency.

v7

Along with the proclamation about the coming kingdom, there are the signs of its arrival, namely, exorcisms and healings.

Again, we have evidence that the received text of Acts is unedited, since we have a major solecism (grammatical mistake), namely, the subject of the main verb **εξηρχοντο**, "were coming out", is **πολλοι**, "many [of the ones having unclean spirits]." Obviously, it is the unclean spirits who are coming out of "the many", as NIV. Numerous textual variants exist which try to correct the problem.

**γαρ** "for" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why people are paying close attention to what Philip is saying.

**βοωντα** [**βοαω**] pres. part. "-" - CRYING OUT. Technically, attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the main verb "to come out"; "were shouting in a loud voice and coming out."

**φωνη** [**η**] "with shrieks" - IN A [LOUD] VOICE. The dative is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, "by means of", or modal, expressing manner, "shrieking", Barclay.

**των εχοντων** [**εχω**] gen. pres. part. "[came out of many]" - [MANY] OF THE ONES HAVING [UNCLEAN SPIRITS WERE COMING OUT]. The participle serves as a substantive, the genitive being adjectival, partitive. Barrett suggests that Luke begins to say, Many of those who had unclean spirits were relieved of them, but ends as if he has said, Many unclean spirits came out (of those who had been possessed by them). "With loud cries, evil spirits came out of those who had been possessed by them", Phillips.

**παραλελυμενοι** [**παραλυω**] perf. mid. part. "[many] who were paralysed" - [BUT/AND, MANY] HAVING BEEN DISABLED [AND CRIPPLED WERE HEALED]. If we take the adjective **πολλοι**, "many", as a substantive, then the participle + the adjective "crippled", serve as attributive modifiers. Of course, "many" may be treated as an adjective, in which case the participle serves as a substantive, subject of the verb "were healed."

v8

**εν** + dat. "in [that city]" - [BUT/AND THERE WAS GREAT JOY] IN [THAT CITY]. Local, expressing space.

## Notes

## 8:9-25

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### v] The Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit

##### Synopsis

Philip is preaching the gospel in Samaria, both in word and sign, and his ministry is widely accepted. Many people believe and are baptised, even a famous magician called Simon, the Great Wizard. The unusual feature of these conversions is that although they are "baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus", they don't "receive the Holy Spirit." This prompts a visit from Peter and John to sort out the problem.

##### Teaching

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, a gospel that is true to apostolic tradition.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 8:1-8.

ii] Background:

- *The baptism / infilling of the Spirit* - See Excursus;
- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *Water Baptism in Acts*, 2:37-41
- *The theological structure of the gospel message*; 3:11-26;
- *Contextualising the gospel*, 16:1-15.
- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

iii] Structure: *Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit*:

Philip's encounter with Simon Magus, v9-13;

The apostles' ministry in Samaria, v14-17:

*"they received the Holy Spirit."*

Peter corrects Simon Magus, 18-24;

The mission continues in Samaria, v25.

iv] Interpretation:

This episode further illustrates the movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Many Jews have accepted the good news and now we see half-cast Jews accept the gospel.

For Luke, this passage serves to provide an apostolic authorisation of the move of *The Way* from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth / Rome. The Samaritan's belief, along with their failure to receive the Holy Spirit,

provides an opportunity for apostolic involvement and thus, apostolic grounding and authorisation for this first outward move of *the way*, and this by none other than Peter and John. The gospel has touched Jews, advanced to Jews of the dispersion (Greek-speaking Jews), now to Samaritans (half-cast Jews), and soon to God-fearers and then Gentiles. The move to include Gentiles is marked by Cornelius' reception of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by his speaking in tongues, although it is interesting that there is no mention of tongue-speaking with the Samaritans. Still, given Simon's reaction in v18 to the reception of the Spirit, tongue-speaking is most likely evident.

Luke's record of the dubious conversion of Simon Magus is one of those events in the Acts of the Apostles that seem incongruous. The suggestion that it was set in the apostolic tradition of the gospel in Samaria, or the life of Philip the evangelist, implies that Luke is unwilling to differentiate between the strands of tradition available to him. This is very unlikely, so for Luke, Simon is an important player in the move of the gospel from Jew to Gentile.

Simon, the Great One, presents as a pagan wizard whose powers are dwarfed by the power of the gospel. He is "amazed when he sees the signs and great miracles that took place." He is amazed, even more so, when he sees people receive the Spirit through the laying on of hands. On offering money to receive the power to bestow the Spirit, he is condemned by Peter, and called on to repent.

But what is the point of the Simon story?

- Simon may serve as the classic example of Philip's defective gospel - faulty knowledge frustrates genuine repentance;
- Simon may serve as the first example of pagan spiritual power / ideology brought low by the power of the gospel - Simon, the Great Wizard, is no match for the Christ;
- The Samaritans may once have followed Simon, the man of power, a man of wonders, but now they follow Jesus, a man of words. Philip comes **ευαγγελιζομαι**, "proclaiming", important news about the kingdom and Jesus and the people believe, so Johnson.

It does seem that Simon's encounter with the gospel illustrates that signs and wonders, appropriate for Jews schooled in Old Testament prophecy, are not really appropriate for non-Jews. So-called miraculous healings in pagan culture are usually associated with the dark arts, and presumably, this was Simon's forte. For a Gentile, signs and wonders easily run counter to the gospel message. So, Luke may have taken the time to report the Simon incident because, when it comes to Gentiles, the word of the gospel is far more appropriate than the signs of the gospel.



It is also possible that Luke fails to mention the sign of tongue-speaking on reception of the Spirit, because it too is a sign more appropriate to Jews than Gentiles. It is interesting to note that ventriloquism was often associated with exponents of sorcery and black magic, as well as pagan cults. As Paul reminds his Corinthian readers, *πνευματικῶν*, "speaking in the spirit", is something they experienced in their former pagan life, 1Cor.12:1-2. Paul argues that prophecy should be given priority over tongue-speaking, given that *babble* is for an ungodly, unfaithful, stiff-necked people, 1Cor.14:22.

An argument from silence is always dangerous, but by not mentioning tongue-speaking Luke may be making the point that, like signs and wonders, for non-Jews it is confusing rather than informing. Anyway, whatever took place on the giving of the Spirit, Simon understood it in pagan terms, and was more than willing to pay for the ability to impart it. If it was tongue-speaking, this was a form of ventriloquism well beyond his own experience, and well worth a dollar or two.

*The failure of the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit.* The failure of the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit at the time of their baptism is a rather strange occurrence. Pentecostal commentators view the incident as further evidence of the two stages in a believer's walk with Christ: the reception of the Spirit for regeneration followed by the empowering of the Spirit for service, an empowering evidenced by tongues through the laying on of hands. Conservative commentators are inclined to the view that Phillip's preaching was faulty and required apostolic input, 8:25.

Luke tells us that the Samaritans were "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus", but what does this mean? A person's name represents their person / being / character, so "into a knowledge of / relationship with Jesus." The longer (trinitarian) version of the phrase "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" is found in Matthew 28:19. Read in context, it seems to refer to something more than water baptism performed under the designation of the triune God. Is it likely that Jesus, who did not perform water baptism, would command his disciples to "make disciples" (by means of?) water baptism?

The verb *βαπτίζω*, "to immerse = baptise", is often used figuratively in the NT., eg., immersed in suffering, immersed in the Spirit. It is more than likely that "immersing in the name" primarily involves preaching the gospel (= immersing into the person of Jesus = teaching about Jesus, Matt.28:20). It is, of course, more than likely that this immersing in the gospel is integrally linked to the practice of immersing in water (as a sign of repentance) in the New Testament church, and that it was later

institutionalised in pre-baptismal instruction. The unexplained use of this phrase in the NT. indicates its common usage - everyone knows what it means (everyone in the first century, that is!!!).

If this is correct, the point is that the Samaritan believers had heard the gospel, responded in repentance, which response was expressed outwardly in water baptism. Yet, for some reason "the Holy Spirit had not come on any of them." Presumably, this is evidenced by the fact that none of the Samaritans spoke in tongues in like manner to the believers in Jerusalem. It seems likely that it is this fact that has prompted the visit of the apostles.

Anyway, the apostles visit and sort out the problem. For Luke, their visit serves to ground and authorise the first step of the gospel from Jews to Samaritans - the gospel mission to the ends of the earth has apostolic authority. Yet, how do the apostles sort out the problem of the missing ingredient - the reception of the Holy Spirit? Was it just the laying on of hands? It seems likely that the Samaritans heard a defective gospel and needed sound apostolic teaching to enable a proper response of repentance and faith, and thus the reception of the Holy Spirit, cf., v25.

That Phillip's preaching was somehow defective is evidenced by Simon's warped understanding of the ministry of the Spirit, even though he had "believed", v13. Like Apollos, who "knew only the baptism of John", maybe Philip needed the apostles to explain "the way of God more adequately" to his converts. Certainly, as far as Luke is concerned, this is exactly what the apostles did; during their time in Samaria, they "had testified and spoken the word of the Lord", v25. The Samaritans were immersed (instructed defectively) into the person of Jesus, an immersion which included immersion (sprinkling or dunking) in water, but were not yet immersed in the Spirit. So, Peter and John make up what is lacking in the Samaritans' understanding of the gospel, just as Peter corrects the misunderstandings of Simon Magus, v18-24. Peter and John then pray for them, expressed in the sign of the laying on of hands, and "they received the Holy Spirit."

### **The Gospel in Acts**

In Acts, gospel sermons to Jews will often dwell on the fulfilment of prophecy in the sacrificial death of Jesus, but not so for a person devoid of a Biblical world-view. In fact, in his gospel, when Luke speaks of God's message to lost Israel, it is usually just "the important news of the kingdom of God", cf., 4:43, 8:1, 9:2, 60, ... At the centre of all the gospel sermons in Acts is the announcement that **The kingdom of God is at hand**, but Luke contextualises this announcement in the revelation of the person of Jesus, and in particular, his

resurrection. For Luke, the gospel (God's important news) entails the announcement that Jesus is risen from the dead, reigning on high at God's right hand, which news can be good or bad, depending on how a person responds to it, i.e., Luke contextualises the gospel for his Gentile readers.

When it comes to **repent and believe**, both words are so distorted in modern English that they are virtually useless. The word "repent" is used in the NT of turning to God, but in modern English it means to regret something, and apologise for it. "Belief" in the NT is synonymous with "hope" - a firm resting on a divine promise amidst out doubts and fears. Yet, in modern English, belief is more substantial, which is why people will often say, "I wish I had your faith!", as if it were quantitative. My own approach is to contextualise "repent and believe" with the action of asking God for his blessings, an action which requires both turning and resting - "Because Jesus lives, we can live also. All you have to do is ask him."

v] Homiletics: *It's as simple as that*



I'm always enthused when someone leaves a gospel tract in my letterbox. My local Baptist church is the usual suspect, and my response is: *Good on you!* And let me say, given the diverse nature of the media today, the letterbox is the last remaining contact-point with our local

population.

The latest contribution to my letterbox was a tract in the form of a banknote, illustrating Charles, our new king - it was very well produced. It began by pointing out that in his coronation, Charles honours the Bible, a book that "promises to destroy death." It then ran the usual line of telling the reader that they are a sinner facing Hell, but that God is willing to dismiss the case against them, and this through Jesus' death and resurrection, but only if they "repent and trust Jesus." True!

In our reading today we learn that when Philip preached the gospel in Samaria, he ended up with superficial converts; somehow his preaching was defective. In the end, the apostles had to come down from Jerusalem to sort things out - probably through teaching and prayer, although at first, Luke only mentions prayer.

Luke tells us that Philip's preaching concerned the important news about the kingdom of God. This is the message the Baptist and Jesus preached: "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and

believe the gospel." Now, can I just say, if someone asks you to tell them about Jesus, don't tell them that. You see, I wonder if that's Philip's problem. I mean, Jews would understand that message, but the Samaritans wouldn't have a clue what he was on about. Mind you, they sure did go for his exorcisms and miraculous healings. Luke goes on in v12 to give a short explanation of the message, a kind of "let me explain what this means: this message is about the person of Jesus ("name"), the Lord of the Universe (Christ)."

So, let's get back to the gospel tract. This tract, featuring King Charles, wasn't too bad, but I'm not sure we have to tell people they're sinners; it makes us out to be holier-than-thou goodie-two-shoes. Sure, Jesus told the religious crew back in his day (and our day!!!) that they were sinners, but he didn't run that line with normal folk. Remember the story of the woman taken with adultery; "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." The *Good News* is all about Jesus. Jesus has risen from the dead and reigns in eternity; He's the Lord of the Universe. So now, because he lives, you can live also, live eternally; all you have to do is ask him ("repent"). It's as simple as that!

### Text - 8:9

The Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit, v9-25: i] Philip's encounter with Simon Magus, v9-13. Simon, the Great Power / Authority / Force (= Wizard??) (later referred to as Magus, Latin for "magician", Gk., **μεγας**, "great") is a worker of **δυναμις**, "power", presumably "*demonic* power." Over a long period of time, he had attracted a large number of Samaritan admirers. Yet, these same people, on hearing Philip's message, believe in Jesus. Even Simon makes a commitment of belief, although his focus is more on "signs and great miracles" than words.

**δε "now"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**οναματι [α]** dat. "**named [Simon]**" - [A CERTAIN MAN] IN NAME [SIMON]. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect; "with respect to his name, Simon" = "by name Simon" = "named Simon."

**μαγευων [μαγευω]** pres. part. "**[had practised] sorcery**" - [WAS PREVIOUSLY IN THE CITY] PRACTICING MAGIC [AND AMAZING THE PEOPLE]. As with "amazing", the classification of this participle is contested, but we are best to follow Kellum who suggests that both participles together are complementary, completing the imperfect verb "to exist previously"; "who had previously practised magic .... and amazed the people", ESV.

**της Σαμαρειας [α]** gen. "**of Samaria**" - OF SAMARIA. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / local; "the people *who live in* Samaria."

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. "**he boasted**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to exist previously"; "Over some period of time a man named Simon had (previously) practised magic ....., and claimed ....."

ειναι [ειμι] pres. inf. "**that**" - [HIMSELF] TO BE [A GREAT CERTAIN ONE]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Simon said / claimed; "He claimed to be someone great." "Previous to Philip's arrival, a certain Simon had practised magic in the city, posing as a famous man and dazzling all the Samaritans with his wizardry", Peterson.

## v10

Simon is obviously a very proficient magician, employing not just trickery, but also the dark arts. In the eyes of many, his claim to be Great, to be a power from God, is supported by his wizardry. In the Acts of Peter 4, it is noted that "he says that he is the great power of God, and that without God he does nothing." His later identification with Gnosticism is more artful than fact.

ᾧ dat. pro. "-" - [ALL = EVERYONE WERE PAYING ATTENTION TO] WHOM. Dative of direct object after the προς prefix verb "to pay attention to."

ἕως "-" - [FROM SMALL] UNTIL [GREAT]. Serving to express extension up to, here of status; "He had them all, from little children to old men, eating out of his hand", Peterson.

λεγοντες [λεγω] "**and exclaimed**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to pay attention to", as NIV. Also serving to introduce direct speech; see λεγοντες, 1:6.

ἡ καλουμενη pres. mid. part. "**is rightly called**" - [THIS ONE IS THE POWER / AUTHORITY / FORCE OF GOD] THE ONE BEING CALLED [GREAT]. The participle, with its nominative complement "great", is adjectival, attributive, limiting power, "the power / authority / force which is Great." The genitive "of God" is probably adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*which is from* God"; "the Great Power / Authority / Force from God." "They all thought he had supernatural powers and called him 'the Great Wizard'", Peterson.

## v11

Simon's μαγειαις, "magic tricks, sorcery, dark arts", gained him devoted followers over a long period of time, but when Philip came preaching the important news about the kingdom of God and about Jesus, his followers moved their allegiance from Simon to Jesus, v11-12. It's likely that Philip's σημεια, "signs", were more convincing than Simon's magic, even though his magic was amazing.

αυτω dat. pro. "[they followed] him" - [BUT/AND THEY WERE PAYING ATTENTION TO] HIM. Dative of direct object after the προς prefix verb "to pay attention to."

δια το + inf. "because" - BECAUSE THE [TO AMAZE THEM]. This construction, the preposition δια + the articular infinitive, introduces a causal clause explaining why the people followed Simon, "because for some considerable time he had astonished them by his magical arts", Cassirer.

χρονω [ος] dat. "a [long] time" - TO TIME [SUFFICIENT = LONG]. The dative is adverbial, temporal; "for a considerable time", Moffatt.

τοις μαγειαις [α] dat. "with his sorcery" - IN = BY THE = HIS [MAGIC, SORCERY, DARK ARTS]; "they had been captivated by his magical art."

## v12

On seeing Philip's signs and hearing his message, people commit to *The Way* and are baptized. Baptising Samaritans is a radical act and prompts a reaction from the Jerusalem church, but it is inevitably authorised by two of the most important apostles, Peter and John.

As for Philip's message, it is identified in two forms. First, Luke reminds us of the traditional message proclaimed to Jews by the Baptist and Jesus: "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the gospel." Luke then explains the sense of the message, i.e., the adjoining και is exegetical: "that is, *he announced important news about the name of Jesus Christ*"; it was news about the person and authority of Jesus, the anointed one of God, the Lord. It is obvious that the technical nature of a message appropriate for Jews schooled in the prophets has to be exegeted for Samaritans / non-Jews. This contextualising shift is evident throughout Acts, even in the early apostolic preaching, cf., 2:38, 3:6, 4:10, 5:28, ..... So, Philip proclaims the ευαγγελιον, "important news, message / gospel", about God's anointed one, Jesus.

οτε "when" - [BUT/AND] WHEN. Temporal conjunction, introducing a temporal clause, contemporaneous time. A temporal clause often has a causal element. Here, the Gk. sentence takes a cause-and-effect form, so Kellum - because they believed Philip's message they were baptized.

τω πλιππω [ος] dat. "Philip" - [THEY BELIEVED] PHILIP. Dative of direct object after the verb "to believe in."

ευαγγελιζομενω [ευαγγελιζω] pres. mid. part. "as he proclaimed the good news" - ANNOUNCING IMPORTANT NEWS. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Philip"; "when they believed Philip, who preached the gospel of the reign of God", Moffatt.

τα "-" - THE THINGS [ABOUT]. The article is a variant. If read, it serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase introduced by περι, "about", into a

nominal phrase, object of the participle "announcing important news"; "the things ≡ news about the kingdom of God and the name (the person and authority) of Jesus Christ."

του θεου [ος] gen. "of God" - [THE KINGDOM] OF GOD. for the genitive, and for the meaning of "kingdom of God", see 1:6.

Χριστου [ος] "[Jesus] Christ" - [OF JESUS] CHRIST. Standing in apposition to "Jesus", genitive in agreement after the preposition περι.

τε και "both [men] and [women]" - BOTH [MEN] AND [WOMEN WERE BEING BAPTIZED]. Correlative construction.

### v13

Simon, the Great One, also makes a commitment, but Luke tells us that his response is driven by amazement. Throughout his gospel, Luke constantly reminds us that a response of amazement to Jesus' signs is not, in itself, a faith response; it may lead to faith, but it is often superficial, and sometimes leads to outright opposition.

και "-" - [BUT/AND SIMON] AND [HE = HIMSELF BELIEVED]. Here adverbial, ascensive, "even Simon himself believed", or adjunctive, "Simon himself also believed."

βαπτισθεις [βαπτιζω] aor. pas. part. "was baptized" - [AND] HAVING BEEN BAPTIZED. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "Simon himself believed, and after his baptism kept close to Philip", Moffatt.

ην προσκαρτερων [προσκαρτερω] pres. part. "he followed" - HE WAS CLOSE AT HAND TO. The imperfect verb to-be with the present participle forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, possibly emphasising durative aspect; "he continued with Philip", ESV.

τω Φιλιππω [ος] dat. "Philip" - PHILIP. Dative of direct object after the προς prefix verb "to be close at hand to."

θεωρων [θεωρω] pres. part. "he saw" - SEEING. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal or causal, "when / because he saw."

τε .... και "-" - BOTH [SIGNS] AND [GREAT MIRACLES]. Correlative construction.

γινομενας [γινομαι] pres. part. "-" - BEING DONE, [HE WAS AMAZED]. Although anarthrous, it is likely that the participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "great miracles"; "when he saw the wonders and miracles which were occurring, he was amazed."

### v14

ii] Peter and John correct the evangelistic ministry of Philip, v14-17. Luke doesn't give us a blow-by-blow description of the apostles' ministry in Samaria,

but he tells us that in the end, they pray for the Samaritan believers, asking that they receive the Holy Spirit, and this with the laying on of hands. The laying on of hands is probably not specifically for the gift of the Spirit, but rather, serves as an outward expression of prayer. Although the new believers receive the Holy Spirit, Luke does not mention the gift of tongues. As noted above, the proper grounding and authorisation of Philip's ministry to half-cast Jews is the issue at hand here.

**ακουσαντες [ακουω]** aor. part. "**when .... heard**" - [BUT/AND THE APOSTLES IN JERUSALEM] HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

**οτι "that"** - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of what the apostles heard; "the fact that ....."

**η Σαμαρεια [α]** "**Samaria**" - SAMARIA. "Samaria" is the subject of the verb "has received", and takes the sense "the people in the city of / in the district of Samaria"; "some people in Samaria", CEV.

**δεδεκται [δεχομαι]** perf. "**had accepted**" - HAS RECEIVED. The perfect tense indicates a past action with abiding results. They "received", in the sense of "accepted, believed."

**του θεου [ος]** "**of God**" - [THE WORD] OF GOD. See 4:31.

**προς** + acc. "-" - [THEY SENT] TOWARD [THEM PETER AND JOHN]. Expressing the direction of the action. Is this John, John the apostle or John Mark? John the apostle is most likely.

## v15

For Luke, the certification of Philip's mission by the apostles is the central point he wants to make, but of course, if the non-reception of the Spirit is down to Philip's preaching, then teaching would be the starting point of the apostles' mission. Given v25, expounding the word of God is certainly on the menu. As for the reception of the Spirit, we are not told that the Samaritan believers had resisted the Spirit, but that they had not, as yet, been given the Spirit. Given the Spirit in what sense? Is Luke referring to the regenerative coming / immersing of the Spirit, of the Samaritans being born anew, or is he speaking of the Spirit's ministry of gifting / empowering. Probably both together are in mind, ie., of the reception of the promised blessings of the new age, of life and all that it entails. Again, this would seem to imply that, initially, the converts were not believers in the fullest sense, and this probably due to defective preaching on the part of Philip.

**καταβαντες [καταβαινω]** aor. part. "**when they arrived**" - [WHO] HAVING COME DOWN. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV. Note how a person "comes down" from Jerusalem to Samaria, "comes down" in height



terms, although when used of say a large city like Jerusalem, it may refer to the journey, without any reference to height. In Australia, a person "goes down" South and "goes up" North, in direction terms.

**περι** + gen. "**for**" - [THEY PRAYED] ABOUT, CONCERNING [THEM]. Expressing reference / respect. As is typical of Jewish prayer, it is associated with the laying on of hands, an action which serves as an intimate expression of prayer for another. They prayed for whom? Obviously the Samaritan believers.

**ὅπως** + subj. "**that**" - This construction usually introduces a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that they might receive", but content is possible, ie., the construction may introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they prayed; "they prayed that the people would be given the Holy Spirit", CEV, as NIV.

## v16

At this point in time, the Samaritan converts had only been "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. The verb **βαπτίζω**, "to baptise", means "to immerse", a word often used in the NT figuratively; see "*Water Baptism in Acts*", Background above. Here, it is usually taken to refer to water baptism, but "immersed in the name" more likely refers to teaching, instruction about the gospel / Jesus. Luke normally uses the preposition **εν**, or **επι**, for "in the name", but here he uses **εις**, "to". The preposition **εις** is sometimes used for **εν**, but here Luke may be differentiating between the static sense of **εν** and **επι**, with the more dynamic sense of **εις**, expressing the progress / advancement of the action, ie., movement toward rather than arrival at - more "to, toward" than "into". So, the point may be that when it comes to their knowledge of the gospel, of their being **εν**, "in the name", they were only **εις**, "toward the name" - they hadn't arrived at a saving knowledge of Jesus.

**γαρ** "**because**" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Peter and John prayed that the Samaritans might receive the Holy Spirit.

**ἦν** ..... **επιπετωκος [επιπιτω]** perf. part. "**the Holy Spirit had [not yet] come**" - WAS [NOT YET] HAVING FALLEN = HAD [NOT YET] FALLEN. The perfect participle with the imperfect verb to-be forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction, translated as a simple past/perfect tense - used for emphasis, possibly stative aspect.

**επ [επι]** + dat. "**upon / on**" - UPON. Spatial; "on, upon."

**αυτων** gen. pro. "**[any] of them**" - [ANYONE] OF THEM. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

**βεβατισμενοι ὑπηρχον** "**they had [simply] been baptized**" - THEY WERE BEING IMMersed = THEY HAD BEEN IMMersed. Here again, a perfect participle, this time used with the imperfect verb **ὑπηρχον**, "to be, exist", used in place of

an imperfect verb to-be. This serves to form an unusual periphrastic pluperfect construction, again translated with a simple past/perfect tense. The construction is used for emphasis, probably stative aspect - a given state of affairs. The important point to note is that both periphrastic constructions, in this verse, take the same tense form. .

**μονον** adv. "**simply**" - ONLY. Adverb of limitation; "They had received nothing so far except", Knox.

**εις** "**into**" - INTO [THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS]. Spatial, probably here expressing direction toward. Bruce suggests "into the property of", but "heading toward" may well be the intended sense.

#### v17

**επειθεσαν** [**επιτιθημι**] imperf. "**Peter and John placed**" - [THEN] THEY WERE LAYING, PUTTING, PLACING [THE = THEIR HANDS UPON THEM AND]. The imperfect here possibly expresses repeated action, iterative, but more likely prolonged action, durative, progressive. The imperfect is often used to provide background information, or as Culy puts it, "to present a summary of subsequent events." As noted above, the laying on of hands, although possibly serving as a commissioning, or the bestowing of a blessing, is likely to be a cultural expression of prayer.

**ελαμβανον** [**λαμβανω**] imperf. "**they received**" - THEY WERE RECEIVING [*the* HOLY SPIRIT]. Although unstated, it is likely that the Samaritans' reception of the Holy Spirit is evidenced by their being filled and speaking "in other languages", tongues, as occurred with Cornelius, 10:44-46, another key moment in the extension of the gospel. As noted above, Luke's failure to mention tongues is tantalising! "They were given the Holy Spirit", CEV.

#### v18

iii] Peter rebukes Simon Magus, v18-24. Simon Magus, a practitioner of religious magic, and supposedly a convert of Philip, is so impressed by the spiritual phenomena he is witnessing that he offers to pay for Peter's power. By trying to buy the apostle's *trick*, Simon demonstrates the superficial nature of his conversion and by implication, the faulty nature of Philip's preaching. Simon shows he has no appreciation of the inward nature of the gospel; he is still stuck fast in his old unregenerate ways, "a captive to sin", and must "repent of this wickedness". Simon is terror struck and pleads with Peter to intercede with God on his behalf.

**ιδων** [**ειδον**] aor. part. "**when [Simon] saw**" - [BUT/AND SIMON] HAVING SEEN. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV. As noted above, for Luke, the reception of the Spirit is observable, probably in the form of

tongue-speaking (being in the form of ecstatic prophecy), as witnessed on the day of Pentecost. Thus, Simon "observed that the Spirit was bestowed", REB.

**ὅτι** "that" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Simon saw, "namely that ..."

**δίδοται** [διδωμι] pres. pas. "**was given**" - [THE SPIRIT] IS GIVEN. Probably an example of the divine passive, God being the agent.

**δια** + gen. "**at [the laying on]**" - THOUGH, BY MEANS OF. Instrumental, expressing means; "the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands", NRSV.

**των χειρων** [ειρ ειρος] gen. "**hands**" - [THE LAYING ON] OF THE HANDS [OF THE APOSTLES]. The genitive is adjectival, verbal, objective, limiting the verbal noun "laying on."

**προσηνεγεν** [προσφερω] aor. "**he offered**" - HE BROUGHT, OFFERED. Used of offering a sacrifice. Simon Magus, who is a magician and "someone great", sees the bestowal of the Spirit as achieved by the laying on of hands, rather than, as Peter points out, something that is a gift. As someone who is paid for his magic, he is willing to pay for this power. Simon's thinking is certainly corrupt, and worse, is potentially corrupting for the church, although it is not necessarily soul destroying. Simon can always "repent of this wickedness", v22.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**them [money]**" - [WEALTH] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

## v19

Luke now focuses on the apostle Peter and Simon the magician, a man who sought power apart from faith.

**λεγων** [λεγω] pres. part. "**and said**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "he offered"; "he offered ... and said." Somewhat redundant, serving to introduce direct speech; see **λεγοντες**, 1:3.

**δοτε** [διδωμι] aor. imp. "**give [me]**" - GIVE [ME ALSO]. The aorist possibly indicates urgency, immediacy; "Let me have this power too", CEV.

**εξουσιαν** [α] "**ability**" - [THIS] POWER, AUTHORITY. Simon is asking that he might channel the Spirit to others.

**ινα** + subj. "**so that .... [may receive]**" - THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that ..... may receive the Holy Spirit."

**ω̅̅̅ εαν** + subj. "**everyone**" - ON WHOMEVER [I MAY LAY THE = MY HANDS, HE MAY RECEIVE HOLY SPIRIT]. Introducing an indefinite headless relative clause, the dative being local, "upon / on whom ...." "So that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit", Moffatt.

## v20

δε "-" - BUT/AND [PETER]. Transitional; with the nominative subject "Peter", indicating a change in the subject from Simon to Peter; "Peter replied to him thus."

προς + acc. "-" - [SAID] TOWARD [HIM]. This preposition is used in place of a dative to introduce an indirect object.

ειη [ειμι] "may" - MAY [THE SILVER OF YOU]. The optative of the verb to-be; usually expresses a wish - here possibly as a curse. Probably a potential, or futuristic optative. See below.

εις "[perish]" - TO, INTO [DESTRUCTION]. Here taking a spatial sense of to / toward / into, and therefore "lead you to destruction", indicating "direction and thus destiny", Barrett. A desire for destruction is unlikely, since Peter's words are probably not a curse, as TEV, "may you and your money go to hell." Rather, it is more likely that Peter is underlining Simon's final destination if he stays on his present path; "you and your money will both end up in hell if you think you can buy God's gift", CEV. Note that the noun *απωλειαν*, "destruction", is often used of God's judgment upon a rebellious sinner.

συν + dat. "with [you]" - WITH [YOU]. Expressing association.

ὅτι "because" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why "you and your money will ...."

κατασθαι [καταομαι] pres. inf. "you could buy" - [YOU THOUGHT] TO ACQUIRE, OBTAIN. The infinitive forms an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what he thought; "for dreaming that you could buy the gift of God", Moffatt.

την δωρεαν [α] "the gift" - THE GIFT. Simon is trying to buy the ability to bestow the Spirit, but is this what Luke means by "gift" here, or is the Spirit the gift, the Spirit as the giver of power? The grammar suggests the first option, but theology the second.

του θεου [ος] gen. "of God" - OF GOD. The genitive may be treated as verbal, subjective, "the gift *which* God gives."

δια + gen. "with [money]" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [WEALTH]. Instrumental, expressing means.

## v21

σοι dat. "you" - [THERE IS NOT] TO YOU [A PART OR SHARE]. The dative is adverbial, probably expressing possession. "This is a matter in which you have no share or part", Barclay.

εν + dat. "in" - IN. Local, expressing sphere; sphere of influence, although Culy suggests reference / respect, "with respect to this ministry."

τω λογω [ος] dat. "**ministry**" - [THIS] WORD. Probably referring to participation in the gospel, presumably gospel ministry, as NIV. It is interesting that Luke defines the apostolic ministry as a "word ministry", not a "Spirit bestowing ministry", or a "water baptising ministry." The central business of an apostle is preaching ("baptising in the name"?). None-the-less, the word *logos* can mean "matter / business", but what matter / business? Is it the laying on of hands business, bestowing the Spirit business, teaching business, etc.?

γαρ "**because**" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Simon has no portion nor share in the apostolic ministry of the church.

ἡ καρδια "**heart**" - THE HEART [OF YOU]. The inner being, inner self / centre of rational thought.

ευθεια adj. "**right**" - [IS NOT] STRAIGHT = MORALLY AND RELIGIOUSLY UPRIGHT. Predicate adjective. Literally "straight / direct" as opposed to what is crooked, or figuratively "just / right / upright", or taking an ethical sense "frank / honest / straightforward." An ethical sense is favoured by many, although being right / straight in one's alignment with God, may be the intended sense, as NIV. "Your heart is all wrong in the sight of God", Moffatt.

εναντι + gen. "**before**" - BEFORE [GOD]. Spatial, metaphorical, "in the sight of God", ie., "as God sees you", TH.

## v22

Simon's conversion is not heartfelt; it is driven by ulterior motives (eg., *rice-bowl* Christianity in China in the nineteenth century - come to church and get a bowl of rice). So, Peter calls on Simon to repent so that he may receive forgiveness. Some translations of the construction ει αρα + fut. ind., are indefinite, implying that forgiveness, in Simon's case, is not necessarily assured, "Pray to the Lord, in the hope that the purpose which is in your heart may perhaps be forgiven you", Weymouth. This translation is unlikely; God's offer of forgiveness is for the asking, and is not uncertain: "Repent of this wickedness of yours and pray the Lord to forgive you for harbouring such a thought", REB, TEV, ..... See Gk. below.

ουν "-" - THEREFORE. Drawing a logical conclusion, inferential; given his "wickedness", therefore, Simon must repent.

μετανοησον [μετανοεω] aor. imp. "**repent**" - TURN, REPENT. In the sense of turn around and face. "Change your way."

απο + gen. "**of**" - FROM [THE EVIL = WICKEDNESS OF YOU]. Expressing separation; "away from." Most translators identify the "evil", so "wickedness"; "Get rid of these evil thoughts and ask God to forgive you", CEV.

του κυριου [ος] gen. "**[pray to] the Lord**" - [AND PRAY, REQUEST, BEG, ASK OF] THE LORD. Genitive of direct object after the verb δεηθητι, "to ask of."

Simon needs to ask for the grace of forgiveness. Note v24 where "ask" is followed by the preposition **προς** "to / toward", identifying the direction of the prayer. "Ask God", Moffatt.

**ει αρα** + fut. ind. "**in the hope that**" - IF THEN, IF INDEED / THAT PERHAPS. Technically introducing a 1st. class conditional clause where the proposed condition is assumed to be true; "if perhaps, *as is the case*, the intent of the heart will be forgiven, *then* repent of this wickedness of you and pray to the Lord." A 1st. class conditional clause implies that the condition is fulfilled, although a future tense can imply possible fulfilment. The likely point is, given that ("if") sin will be forgiven, repent = repent, given that sin will be forgiven. The presence of the inferential conjunction **αρα** is taken by many translators to increase uncertainty, "perhaps", but it may well be emphatic, "indeed", Bruce, Gk. Kellum suggests it indicates that the condition is hypothetical, "if, *as is the case for argument's sake*."

Yet, there is a good case to treat **ει αρα** as if used instead of **οτι**, "that", but expressing uncertainty, "a doubtful expectation", Zerwick, ie., ; "in the hope that perhaps", Moule IB, so also Barrett. As such, **ει αρα** introduces an object clause, object of the verb **δηθητι**, "to pray" / dependent statement of perception expressing the hope of the prayer, as NIV. So, the doubt relates to Peter; he is unsure whether Simon is even able to overcome the pagan influences that beset him, and so ask God for forgiveness, so Bock. Peter is not expressing doubt as to God's willingness to forgive.

**σοι** "[**forgive**] **you**" - [THE THOUGHT = INTENTION, PURPOSE, DESIGN OF THE HEART OF YOU WILL BE FORGIVEN] TO YOU. Dative of interest, advantage. The genitive **της καρδιας**, "of the heart" = "mind" = "corrupt mind", is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic, limiting the noun "thought", "Repent of this wickedness of yours, and ask God to forgive the evil plan ("thought") *which* your corrupt mind *has devised*." The noun **επινοια**, "thought", can take the sense of "wicked thought / intention", cf., Wis.9:14. "For thinking such things as this", TEV.

### v23

Peter's description / prophetic declaration of Simon's sinful condition reflects OT imagery, cf., Prov.5:4, Deut, 29:17. "I can see that you are jealous and bound by your evil ways", CEV.

**γαρ** "**for**" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Simon needs to repent.

**οντα** [**ειμι**] pres. part. "**that you are**" - [I SEE YOU] BEING. The participle technically serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "you", but at the same time it introduces a dependent statement of perception expressing what

is plain to Peter. "It is plain to me that you are no better than a slave to wickedness", as NIV.

εις "full of" - TO, INTO. Probably here equivalent to the preposition εν, "in", so "full of", as NIV, although the common spatial sense may be intended, expressing the direction of the action, so, "heading toward"; "I see you are destined for."

πικρίας [α] gen. "[full] of bitterness" - [GALL] OF BITTERNESS. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "gall / poison"; "full of bitter poison." It is possible that "gall" takes a figurative sense here, so "I see you are destined for bitter wrath", but it is generally accepted that Peter's words are an allusion to Deut.29:17b, describing heathen worship, so "on the way to tasting (either "destined for" or "full of it") the bitterness like gall which godless worship brings", Barclay.

αδικίας [α] "[captive to] sin" - AND [the CHAIN, BOND] OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, WRONGDOING, WICKEDNESS. Again, the genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "bond"; "an evil bond." "You are in the bonds of iniquity", NAB.

## v24

The Western text adds that "Simon kept on weeping all the time Peter was speaking", Bruce.

δε "-" - BUT/AND [SIMON]. Transitional; along with the subject ὁ Σιμων, "Simon", the conjunction indicates a change in subject.

αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι] aor. pas. part. "then [Simon] answered" - ANSWERING, REPLYING [SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; semi-redundant.

υμεις pl. "you [pray]" - YOU [PRAY]. Emphatic. The "you", plural, obviously means Peter and John. Is Simon the magician looking to a stronger magician to get him out of hot water?

προς + acc. "to [the Lord]" - TOWARD [THE LORD]. Spatial, usually expressing movement toward; "toward = to."

υπερ + gen. "for [me]" - ON BEHALF OF [ME]. Expressing representation, "on behalf of", or possibly advantage, "for the sake of / for the benefit of"

οπως + subj. "so that" - THAT [NOTHING]. This construction usually forms an adverbial clause, final, expressing purpose; "in order that." Indicating a fear of retribution, and this with the later tradition of Simon Magus and his evil ways, may indicate that his repentance was not genuine. Luke makes no comment on the matter, and so we are best to treat his repentance as genuine.

ων gen. rel. pro. "you have said" - [MAY COME UPON ME] OF WHICH [YOU HAVE SPOKEN]. The genitive is adverbial, reference / respect, so Culy; "nothing,

with respect to what you have said." This genitive phrase is often translated as if modifying / limiting "nothing", in which case the genitive would be partitive, as NIV, ESV, ....

## v25

iii] The preaching of the gospel in Samaria - transitional comment, v25. Having fully proclaimed the gospel and witnessed the outpouring of the Spirit on the Samaritan believers, Peter and John return to Jerusalem to report the news that the gospel is on its way to the ends of the earth.

**μεν ουν** "- - **therefore** - ON THE ONE HAND THEREFORE. Transitional; the conjunction **ουν** is inferential, expressing a logical conclusion, while **μεν** indicates the addition of a further linked element; See **μεν ουν** 1:6. Luke is simply telling us that the apostles "were returning", imperf. and "were preaching", imperf.; "Having testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, and *on their way home* they preached the gospel in many Samaritan' villages." While they are busy on the way to Jerusalem, Philip continues his evangelistic ministry, v26, introduced by the linked **δε** to **μεν**; "And on the other hand, an angel of the Lord ...."

**οί διαμαρτυραμενοι [διαμαρτυρομαι]** aor. part. "**they had testified**" - THE ONES HAVING TESTIFIED, DECLARED [AND HAVING SAID]. This participle, along with "*the one* having said", serves as a substantive, subject of the imperfect verb "were returning." Together the two substantive participles give the sense "those who had testified and spoken the word of the Lord returned to Jerusalem."

**του κυριου [ος]** gen. "**of the Lord**" - [THE WORD] OF THE LORD. Variant "word of God." The genitive is adjectival, either possessive, "the word *that belongs to* the Lord", or idiomatic / source, "the word *that comes from* the Lord."

**ευηγγελιζοντο [ευαγγελιζω]** imperf. "**preaching the gospel**" - [WERE RETURNING INTO, TO JERUSALEM AND] WERE COMMUNICATING, PROCLAIMING IMPORTANT NEWS [TO MANY VILLAGES]. The imperfect indicates durative action; "continued to tell the good news in many Samaritan villages", Williams. Note the correlative **τε** which links the actions of preaching and returning, ie., they returned to Jerusalem, preaching on the way.

**Σαμαριτων [ης ου]** gen. **Samaritan [villages]** - [MANY VILLAGES] OF THE SAMARITANS. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, as NIV.



## 8:26-40

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### vii] Philip and the Ethiopian

##### Synopsis

Following the stoning of Stephen, the Hellenist Jews escape the ensuing persecution in Jerusalem and begin the work of extending the gospel. In chapter 8, Luke focuses on Philip the evangelist, one of the deacons (not the apostle Philip). His ministry in Samaria has produced spectacular results, although there is a need for the apostles, Peter and John, to ground and authorise his ministry. In the passage before us Luke describes Philip's encounter with an Ethiopian eunuch, a man who is not a Jew, but who is interested in the Jewish faith. Confronted with the gospel, the eunuch believes, is baptized, and continues on his way.

##### Teaching

The gospel continues to extend its influence - from Jerusalem to the ends of the world, from Jew to Gentile. Even an excluded Ethiopian eunuch finds salvation in *the way*.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 8:1-8. Up to this point in Acts, Luke has recorded the conversion of large groups, but now, in the next three chapters, he records the conversion of individuals, the eunuch, Saul and Cornelius.

ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *Water Baptism in Acts*, 2:37-41.

iii] Structure: *Philip and the Ethiopian*:

Setting, v26;

Philip meets an Ethiopian eunuch, v27-29;

The Ethiopian is confused by the scriptures, v30-31;

The confusing text, v32-33;

Philip explains the text, v34-35;

Philip baptises the Ethiopian, v36-38;

Philip abruptly leaves, v39-40.

iv] Interpretation:

Although the passage reads like a simple conversion story, it is important to note the miraculous elements present in it, in particular,

Philip's arranged meeting with the Ethiopian by an angel, and his sudden removal from the scene by the Spirit, v39. The point Luke seems to make is "that all that was done was done by the will of God", so authorising the baptism of a eunuch from a foreign land, while illustrating "the power of the Gospel and the oversight of the mission by God", Barrett. So, for Luke, this is something more than just a conversion story.

The fulfilment of God's covenant-promise to Abraham, the promise of a blessing to the world, is realised in this story. As the Samaritans were barred from the worship of God at Jerusalem / the temple, so is an Ethiopian eunuch. He may have gone up "to Jerusalem to worship", but as a eunuch he could never enter the temple, never touch the promised covenant blessings. As the Queen of Sheba was once drawn to God's majesty evident in Solomon's kingdom, so the Ethiopian eunuch is drawn to worship God in Jerusalem / the temple, but access to the truth is denied him, and he is left confused. Yet, like the Samaritans, this Ethiopian is now able to experience the promised blessings of the covenant; he is now free to come into the presence of the Most High, free to enter the assembly of God's people.

So again, Luke demonstrates the divine authority by which the news of God's coming kingdom makes its move from Jerusalem / the temple / the law. The miraculous way Philip both meets and leaves the Ethiopian eunuch authorises this move.

In an organisational sense, the story is part of Philip's Samaritan ministry. So, what we have here in both this story, and the account of the Samaritans' conversion, is the first step in the gospel's movement from Jews to Gentiles. Here we have people estranged from God's grace by Israel's exclusive cult, standing on the fringe, as it were, of God's long-promised blessings to mankind, but now, through the gospel, they are included, and so are able to possess all of God's promised blessings.

v] Homiletics: *He who seeks finds*

The story of the Ethiopian eunuch reminds us that when it comes to the business of knowing God, "ask and it will be given you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you", Lk.11:9.

God is in the business of revealing truth of his kingdom to all those who seek it. The Holy



Spirit is the instrument of that revelation, and this is why he is called "the Spirit of truth". Although some Bible verses may imply that the revelation of truth through the Spirit supersedes both education and intellect, the Bible as a whole dispels this misunderstanding. The ministries of the Word serve to build us up, Eph.4:11-13, and we are bound always to test that truth, 1Cor.2:13. Yet, although human initiative is required in the truth business, it is God who expedites the truth to us.

So it was that an Ethiopian eunuch, confused by a prophecy concerning a Suffering Servant, discovered the truth through the initiative of the Spirit and the willing ability of Philip. Of this we can be sure, our Lord will not leave a person in the dark who seeks the truth that sets humanity free. As it was for the Ethiopian eunuch, those who seek will find.

This promise also applies to all believers who seek the truth. As we listen to the Word expounded, so the divine mystery is revealed to us. Not necessarily the totality of the mystery, but enough of the mystery to set us free from the reign of darkness. Our God does not leave us in the dark.

### **Text - 8:26**

The conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch, v26-40. i] Setting, v26: In Old Testament prophetic style, Philip is guided by an angel to minister to a *seeker* on the Gaza road. The divine management of this conversion further authorises the outward move of the gospel.

**δε "but"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**κυριου [ος]** gen. "**of the Lord**" - [AN ANGEL] OF THE LORD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "belonging to", or idiomatic / source, "which is from." Culy suggests that the phrase, in the OT, is a periphrasis for "the Lord" and that Luke may be using it here with the same connotation, eg., Gen.16:7-14, 21:14-19, etc.... It does seem likely that this type of descriptive language is simply making the point that Philip received divine guidance to undertake a particular task. The descriptive language used in v29 probably make a similar point.

**λεγων [λεγω]** pres. part. "**[said to Philip]**" - [SPOKE TO PHILIP] SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say." See **λεγοντες**, 1:6.

**κατα** + acc. "-" - [GET UP AND GO] ACCORDING TO [*the* SOUTH]. The preposition introduces an adverbial phrase which may either be temporal or local. So, the instruction is either, go south on the road that is in the desert, (the road known as) the desert road, or go at midday on the desert road. Either way, the instruction is making sure Philip gets to meet the Ethiopian. "Get yourself ready and go South", TEV.

ἐπι + acc. "to" - UPON [THE ROAD]. Spatial; "up to, to, on, ..."

αυτη εστιν ερημος "the desert road" - THIS IS *the* DESERT road. This may be a reference to "the road" or to "Gaza", so either the road through the desert, as NIV, or Gaza in the desert, the original town of Gaza which was destroyed in 93BC and then known as "Desert Gaza"; "from Jerusalem to Gaza, the town now deserted" / "out in the desert", Knox. The road known as "the Desert Road" was actually the road that ran from Gaza to Egypt.

καταβαινουσαν [καταβαινω] pres. part. "that goes down" - GOING DOWN. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "road", as NIV.

απο + gen. "from" - FROM [JERUSALEM]. Expressing separation; "away from."

v27

ii] Philip meets an Ethiopian eunuch, v27-29: The Ethiopian was an official from an ancient kingdom that stretched from the first cataract on the Nile at Aswan, south to Khartoum. It was viewed as the end of the known world, and beyond Roman rule. The rulers of this kingdom went by the title Candace. The Nubian kings were regarded as children of the sun, divine, and so secular duties were carried out by the queen mother who bore the title Candace. As a court official, he may have been a eunuch, or may just have carried the title. He was obviously a God-fearer of sorts, a Gentile follower of the Jewish faith, although as a eunuch, his participation in religious celebrations would have been very limited, cf., Deut.23:1 - this restriction may well have been lifted by now following the promise in Isaiah 56:3ff. From Luke's perspective, he fits somewhere between a Samaritan and a Gentile. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship God and was on his way home when he meets Philip along the way.

αναστας [ανιστημι] aor. part. "So [he started out]" - [AND] HAVING ARISEN [WE WENT]. The aorist indicating punctiliar action and participle is either attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the main verb "he went", or consecutive, expressing result, "so he got up and went on his way", Moffatt. Philip immediately responds to the angel's directive.

ἐπι + gen. "in charge of [all the treasury]" - [AND BEHOLD, AN ETHIOPIAN MAN, A EUNUCH] OVER [ALL THE TREASURY OF HER]. The preposition is used here to express subordination.

Κανθακης [η] gen. "of the Kandake" - [A COURT OFFICIAL] OF CANDACE. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic, limiting "court official", "a court official *who was in the pay of / ...* Candace"; "her chancellor of the exchequer", Barclay.

Αιθιοπων [ψ οπος] gen. "[*which means queen*] of the Ethiopians" - [QUEEN] OF *the* ETHIOPIANS. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / subordination, limiting "queen"; "queen *over* the Ethiopians."

προσκυνησων [προσκυνεω] fut. part. "**to worship**" - [WHO HAD COME] WORSHIPPING [INTO JERUSALEM]. The participle is adverbial, probably final, expressing purpose; "he had visited Jerusalem in order to worship the God of Israel." The use of the word here may imply a pilgrimage, cf. 24:11; "he had been to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage", REB.

## v28

The eunuch was sitting in his carriage reading aloud from the prophet Isaiah 53:7-8. In the ancient world, people read aloud.

τε "**and**" - AND. Again, the function of this correlating conjunction, commonly found in Acts, is not overly clear. With **και ... και**, it may coordinate "returning" and "sitting" and "reading", although Culy, following Levinsohn *Acts* Gk., suggests it "indicates that the previous clause is preliminary, whereas the subsequent clause introduces the primary events."

ην ύποστρεφων [ύποστρεφω] pres. part. "**on his way home**" - HE WAS RETURNING. This participle, along with the imperfect verb to-be ἦν, forms a periphrastic imperfect construction, "he was one his way home", although Barrett says it is best viewed as a descriptive; "who was now on his way home", Barclay.

καθημενος [καθημαι] pres. part. "**sitting**" - [AND] SITTING. The participle is technically another periphrastic imperfect, "he was returning and was sitting in his chariot", although treated adverbially makes better sense, modal, as NIV, or temporal, "he was on his way home and while reclining in his estate wagon he was reading ..."

επι + gen. "**in**" - UPON, ON. Spatial.

άρματος [άρμα] gen. "**chariot**" - THE WAGON [OF HIM]. Not necessarily a chariot, given that a chariot didn't have a seat, but rather a covered wheeled wagon of some sort with a seat / bed and supplies, useful for a trip that would actually take many weeks. "Carriage."

ανεγινωσκεν [αναγινωσκω] imperf. "**reading**" - [AND] HE WAS READING. The normal practice was to read aloud, which is why Philip heard him. The eunuch's wealth is evidenced by him owning a copy of Isaiah (or part of). The ownership of such a valuable text indicates his dedication to the faith of Israel.

τον προφητην Ησαϊαν "**the Book of Isaiah the prophet**" - THE PROPHET ISAIAH. A metonymy - the substitution of one term for another for which it is associated / idiomatic; "the book that the prophet Isaiah wrote", as NIV.

## v29

The initial message was from an angel, but now the Spirit instructs Philip to approach the cart carrying the eunuch. Some commentators draw a distinction between the two, but Luke seems to be using the terms interchangeably. Technically one might say, the Spirit speaks through the angel, but as already noted, whether an angel, or the Spirit, the sense is "the Lord directed Philip." A Jewish deference toward God is always evident in such language.

**τω Φιλιππου [ος]** dat. "[the Spirit told] Philip" - [AND SAID THE SPIRIT] TO PHILIP. Dative of indirect object.

**τω ἄρματι [α]** "[that] chariot" - [GO TOWARD = APPROACH AND JOIN THIS] CART. Dative of direct object after the **προς** prefix verb "to go toward"; "go and join the carriage", Barclay.

## v30

iii] The Ethiopian is confused by the scriptures, v30-31. Traveling in a covered carriage, the Ethiopian is reading from Isaiah 53. The ancient practice of reading aloud was due to the manuscripts of the time; they were not easy to read. Philip is prompted by the Spirit to run beside the wagon. Philip asks whether the Ethiopian understands what he is reading. He doesn't, so Philip is asked to interpret. As was typical of religious texts of the day, a person may understand the literal sense of the text, but it is the allegorical interpretation and ethical applications that required technical input. The Ethiopian is struggling with technical issues; "Who is the prophet speaking about; it is himself or someone else?"

**προσδραμων [προστρεχω]** aor. part. "then [Philip] ran up to the chariot" - [BUT/AND] HAVING RUN OUT, RUN TOWARD *the cart*. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "heard", "ran .... and heard", but possibly adverbial, temporal; "When Philip ran up, he heard him reading ....", Moffatt.

**ηκουσεν [ακουω]** aor. "heard" - [PHILIP] HEARD. As was the practice up until recent times, people read aloud, or at least mouthed the words.

**αναγινωσκοντος [αναγινωσκω]** gen. pres. part. "reading" - [HIM] READING [ISAIAH THE PROPHET, AND HE SAID]. The genitive participle serves as the complement of the genitive object **αυτου**, "him", genitive of direct object after the verb "heard", standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the object "him".

**ἄρα γε** "-"- THEN [DO YOU KNOW, UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE READING]? The particle **ἄρα** introduces a question which expects neither a positive nor

negative answer, the doubt of which is strengthened by γε, so Moule. "Do you really / do you indeed have any idea about what you are reading?"

### v31

The sentence opens with an irregular conditional clause.

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE [HE SAID]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Philip to the Ethiopian.

τως "how" - HOW. Introducing a rhetorical question.

γὰρ ἄν + opt. "[can I]" - FOR [INDEED/THEN MIGHT I BE ABLE]. The particle ἄν indicates that the sentence is contingent on the previous statement. This indicates that γὰρ, "for", is probably introducing a causal clause explaining why he cannot understand what he is reading; "do you understand what you are reading?" 'Of course I do not understand', he said, 'for how should I be able to do so .....", Barrett.

εἰν μὴ + fut. ind. "unless [someone explains]" - UNLESS [SOMEONE]. An aorist subjunctive would normally be required to follow this particle so as to form the protasis of conditional clause, 3rd class; "unless, *as the case may be*, someone will guide me, *then* how might I be able *to understand*." Barrett notes that the fut. ind. and aor. subj. sound the same. Although, following the optative, it is possible that it introduces the reasoning associated with the answer. "How can I unless I have someone to guide me", Phillips.

ὀδηγήσει [ὀδηγῶ] fut. ind. "explains" - WILL INSTRUCT, GUIDE, SHOW THE WAY. The Old Testament does speak of Jesus, but, of itself, it is not possible to understand how it speaks of Jesus and his fulfilment of Old Testament scripture without the New Testament / gospel serving as a guide to its exegesis. The best that Jewish exegetes could come up with, particularly of this passage from Isaiah's servant song, was that he was some mysterious person suffering for his righteousness, possibly the prophet himself, or the messiah, or even Israel. None of this is very helpful. Only in Jesus, and his sacrifice for sins, do we understand the role of the Suffering Servant.

τε .... καὶ "-" - [HE ASKED, EXHORTED, URGED PHILIP]. Introducing a correlative series; "both to come up *and* to sit with him."

ἀναβαντα [ἀναβαίνω] aor. part. "to come up" - HAVING COME UP. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the infinitive "to sit"; "to come up and to sit." "He invited Philip to ride along in the carriage with him."

καθισσαι [καθίζω] aor. inf. "to sit" - TO SIT. The infinitive serves to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the eunuch urged Philip to do.

σὺν + dat. "with [him]" - WITH [HIM]. Expressing association.

### v32

iv] A confusing text, v32-33: Neither the prophets, nor the teachers of the law, ever made the link between the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, the Davidic Messiah of Isaiah 11, and the glorious Son of Man of Daniel 7. Jesus certainly made the link, and it was not till after his death and resurrection that the disciples started to work on that link.

της γραφης [η] gen. "**of Scripture**" - [BUT/AND THIS WAS THE PASSAGE] OF THE SCRIPTURE [WHICH HE WAS READING]. The genitive is adjectival, either idiomatic / source, "*which is from Scripture*", or adjectival, partitive, "*the portion of Scripture*." The eunuch was obviously reading the LXX, the Greek Old Testament, as Luke's quote is from this version and not the Hebrew version of Isaiah 53:7-8. The eunuch's question concerns the one who suffers without complaint? The antecedent of the pronoun ἧν, "which", is unclear; it is either "*which passage he was reading*", or "*which scripture he was reading*." Barrett opts for the second option thus indicating that the text is but identifying the scripture under consideration, namely the Servant Song, Isaiah 52:13-53:12. This also indicates that the Servant Song may be summarised by these verses, namely, Christ's vicarious suffering.

ὡς "**like**" - [HE WAS LED AWAY] AS [A SHEEP UPON = TO *the* SLAUGHTER]" - Comparative. Culy notes the different possible ways to express this comparative: "like a sheep led to slaughter", or "he was led to slaughter like a sheep."

ἐναντιον + gen. "**before**" - [HE *was* SILENT, SPEECHLESS AS A LAMB] BEFORE. Spatial. "He was as silent as a lamb whose wool is being cut of, and he did not say a word", CEV.

του κειροντος [κειρω] gen. aor. part. "**[its] shearer**" - THE ONE HAVING CUT THE HAIR OFF, SHEARED. The participle serves as a substantive.

οὕτως "**so**" - THEREFORE [HE DOES NOT OPEN THE MOUTH OF HIM]. Inferential; here serving to restate, summarise the point being made; "he never opened his mouth", Cassirer.

### v33

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE HUMILIATION OF HIM]. Local, expressing context or circumstance - within the humiliating circumstance he experienced; "he was humiliated and received no justice", Barclay.

ἡ κρισις [ις εως] "**justice**" - THE JUDGMENT, DECISION [OF HIM WAS TAKEN AWAY]. Nominative subject of the verb "to take away." Both the MT and LXX expression "he was deprived of justice" is obscure. It could mean his condemnation was removed, but more likely that justice was removed, possibly, "he has no redress", REB, although the denial of justice, as NIV, seems best. "Fair



judgment was denied him", NJB. The genitive pronoun **αυτου**, "of him", is adjectival, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic, "justice pertaining to him was taken away", or adverbial, reference / respect, "justice was taken away *with respect* to him."

**την γενεαν [α]** "**his descendants**" - [WHO WILL TELL, RECITE, NARRATE] THE GENERATION [OF HIM]? Possibly referring to his contemporary generation, so AV, but most likely making the point that because of his untimely death he has no descendants, as NIV. "Who will be able to recount the story of his posterity?" Cassirer.

**οτι "for"** - THAT. Introducing a causal clause explaining why people are no longer able to describe his generation, namely because his life was taken from him. "How can he have children if his life is snatched away?", CEV.

**αιρεται )[αιρω]** pres. pas. "**was taken**" - [THE LIFE OF HIM] IS TAKEN UP. For some reason the LXX uses the verb, "to lift, take up" for the Hebrew "to cut off." There is little doubt that the prophet is telling us that the servant dies, rather than he is "lifted up from the earth"; an ascended / resurrected servant. So, best in the sense of his life being "taken away", ie., "killed", although "taken up to glory" is possible. "His life is being cut off from the earth", Knox.

**απο** + gen. "**from**" - FROM [THE EARTH]. Expressing separation, "away from."

### v34

v] Philip explains the text, v34-35: The Ethiopian's question allows Philip to explain the gospel. Starting with the Isaiah passage, Philip would be able to explain that "the time is fulfilled" in the person of Jesus, the Suffering Servant, who died for the sins of the many, and then go on to announce that "the kingdom of God is at hand", this time contextualised for an Ethiopian God-fearer.

**αποκριθεις [αποκρινομαι]** aor. pas. part. "-" - [BUT/AND THE EUNUCH] HAVING ANSWERED. Attendant circumstance participle, expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; redundant Semitic construction.

**τω Φιλιππω [ος]** dat. "**[asked] Philip**" - [SAID] TO PHILIP. Dative of indirect object.

**σου** gen. pro. "**please**" - [I BEG, ASK OF] YOU. Genitive of direct object after the verb **δεομαι**, "to ask", which takes a genitive of persons.

**περι** + gen. "**[who .....] about**" - ABOUT [WHOM THE PROPHET SAYS THIS,] ABOUT [HIMSELF, OR] ABOUT [CERTAIN OTHER]? Reference / respect; "about, concerning, with reference to." "Who is the prophet speaking about? *Is it about himself or about someone else*", Barclay.

### v35

**ανοιξας [ανοιγω]** aor. part. "-" - [BUT/AND PHILIP] HAVING OPENED [THE MOUTH OF HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to preach". This descriptive / idiomatic phrase / biblicism, is often used in the LXX when announcing important news / prophetic discourse; it can be left untranslated.

**αρξαμενος [αρχω]** aor. part. "**began**" - [AND] HAVING BEGUN [FROM THIS SCRIPTURE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "to preach". The action is supported by **απο**, "from", used here of a starting point rather than a source. Philip begins explaining the scripture of concern to the eunuch.

**ευηγγελισατο [ευαγγελιζω]** aor. "**told [him] the good news [about Jesus]**" - HE PREACHED, COMMUNICATED IMPORTANT NEWS. Meanings such as "bring good news", "preach good tidings" reads a meaning back into the word which it originally did not carry. The messenger from the battle-front announces important news, either good or bad, and this is what Philip is doing. "He told him important information about Jesus", or given the context, "explained how Jesus has fulfilled the Isaiah passage."

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**him**" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

**Ιησουν [ους ου]** acc. "**about Jesus**" - JESUS. Accusative of reference / respect. The content of the communication concerned Jesus, indicating that Philip, along with Christian exegetes ever since, view Jesus, in his life, death, resurrection and ascension, as the proper fulfilment of Isaiah's Servant Song.

### v36

vi] Although not recorded, Philip probably concluded his gospel presentation with a call to repent and be baptized. Following the practice of John the Baptist, repentance was usually expressed outwardly in water immersion, or splashing. The Ethiopian obviously felt that the time was right, for they were soon on the lookout for some water. The Western text adds Philip's reply to the Ethiopian, v37.

**ως "as"** - [BUT/AND] WHILE. Temporal use of the conjunction serving to introduce a temporal clause.

**επορευοντο [πορευομαι]** imperf. "**they traveled**" - THEY WERE GOING. "As they were going along the road", CEV.

**κατα** acc. "**along [the road]**" - ACCORDING TO [THE WAY]. Expressing a standard, "in conformity with", but a common idiomatic phrase for "along the road", Barrett. "As they travelled on", Moffatt.

**επι + acc. "to"** - [THEY CAME] UPON. Spatial; "upon, to, near."

ὕδωρ [ὡρ ατος] "water" - [CERTAIN] WATER. Unstated as to a pool, stream etc. So, is this the desert road? The Wadi el Hasi, north of Gaza, is often identified as the source of the water, but this is only a guess.

κωλυει [κωλυω] "[why] shouldn't / [what] can stand in the way of" - [WHAT] PREVENTS, DEBARS, HINDERS, FORBIDS. What objection can be raised. The word is used by Luke in his gospel, 18:16, of not preventing little children coming to him, cf., also 11:52. "Is there any reason why I shouldn't be baptized?", Barclay.

βαπτισθηναι [βαπτιζω] aor. pas. inf. "be baptized / being baptized" - [ME] TO BE IMMersed = BAPTISED. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to prevent", with the pronoun με, "me", serving as its accusative subject. Philip has seemingly covered the necessary response to the gospel, namely, "repent and be baptized" 2:38 - turn to Jesus and express this outwardly in water immersion / dipping, so Fitzmyer. It is also possible that the eunuch knew of the necessity for a God-fearer to undergo water baptism to become a Jewish proselyte and he has assumed a similar practice for a disciple of Jesus. Either way, "all the barriers are down, and so a eunuch, a black, God-fearing Gentile, is baptized", Bock, and this clearly by divine authority.

### v37

This verse is found in the Western text, but probably dates from the 2nd century. "He said to him, 'It is allowed if you believe with all your heart.' He answered, 'I believe Jesus is the Christ the son of God.'" It is interesting to note that Irenaeus, in *Against Heresies*, quotes the verse. This serves to support the theory that the Western text is the edited version of Luke's Acts.

### v38

The Ethiopian is baptised, but by what method? Jesus probably doesn't mind either dunking or splashing, especially as he never baptized anyone with water! As Barrett notes, "there is nothing in the passage to tell us how Luke understood baptism." Neil, for example, argues for full immersion and suggests that, where possible, it was performed in running water. His evidence is that this is how Jesus was baptized, but he forgets that *a description is not a prescription*.

στηναι [ιστημι] aor. inf. "to stop" - [AND HE COMMANDED THE CART, CHARIOT] TO STAND. Introducing an object clause / dependant statement of indirect speech / command; "he commanded that the chariot stop. The accusative "cart, chariot" serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive. "He ordered the carriage to halt", Barclay.

και "then" - AND. Coordinative, but with the sense *next in time*; "and then", as NIV.

εις **"into"** - [BOTH WENT DOWN] TO, INTO [THE WATER]. This preposition expresses the direction of the action and arrival at, so "to the water's edge", but possibly "into/in the body of the water." The verb **κατεβαινω**, "to come down", similarly makes no specific statement, other than that they left the road and went down to a body of water.

τε ..... και "-" - BOTH [PHILIP] AND [THE EUNUCH]. A correlative construction.

εβαπτισεν [βαπτίζω] aor. **"Philip baptized [him]"** - [AND] HE BAPTIZED [HIM]. The agent of the action, "Philip", is often added for clarity. It is interesting that Philip, who is not an apostle, happily performs the baptism.

### v39

vii] Philip abruptly leaves, v39-40: The Spirit now leads Philip toward further missionary opportunities, while the eunuch continues his journey, now filled with joy. There is a miraculous touch to Philip's exit, an exit which, under the hand of the Spirit, authorises his actions. Luke tells us that Philip moves north along the coast road, preaching in the old Philistine cities on the way. In church tradition it is believed that he settled down in Caesarea, a family man with four daughters renowned as prophets.

ότε **"when"** - [BUT/AND] WHEN. Temporal conjunction, introducing a temporal clause.

ανεβησαν [αναβαινω] aor. **"they came up"** - THEY CAME UP, ROSE UP, ADVANCED. Posing the same problem as above: "when they left the pool / wadi / well...", or "when they came up out of the pool / wadi / well..."

εκ + **"out of"** - FROM, OUT OF [THE WATER]. Expressing source / origin.

κυριου [ος] **"of the Lord"** - [*the* SPIRIT] OF LORD. Both nouns being anarthrous (without an article) does not negate a translation with definite articles, so Canon of Apollonius. The genitive **κυριου** is adjectival, either descriptive, idiomatic / source, or possessive, although the phrase is possibly just a respectful allusion to the Lord himself; see above. That Philip was whisked away by "the wind of the Lord" has been suggested, but rarely accepted.

ηρπασεν [αρπαζω] aor. **"suddenly took [Philip] away"** - SIZED, SNATCHED, CARRIED OFF BY FORCE [PHILIP]. The aorist's punctiliar action further emphasises the immediacy of "snatch away", so NIV. The Western text says an angel took him away, trying to explain the miraculous sense conveyed by the words. Of course, Philip's departure may not have been miraculous, but rather, immediate; "the Spirit of the Lord hurried Philip away", Goodspeed.

γαρ "-" - [AND THE EUNUCH DID NOT SEE HIM ANY LONGER] FOR [HE (the eunuch) WAS GOING THE WAY]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the eunuch didn't see Philip any more. Clearly there is an ellipsis here; "The eunuch

saw no more of Philip, because he, *unlike Philip who was snatched away*, went on his way rejoicing." He did so rejoicing", Barrett.

χαίρων [χαίρω] pres. part. "**rejoicing**" - REJOICING. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his going; "the eunuch continued his journey rejoicing", Barclay. Joy overtakes the eunuch, indicating the reception of the Spirit, although there is no record of the Spirit falling on him, and particularly no reference of him speaking in tongues. It is possible that the bestowal of the Spirit (the Spirit's outward manifestation in power evidenced in the gift of tongues????), is at this time, seen as an apostolic responsibility. Yet, it is more than likely that Luke does not want to disturb the theological movement of the gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles, which move finds its focus in the conversion of Cornelius and his reception of the Spirit with the outward evidence of tongues. Of course, Luke may be treating the Ethiopian as a proselyte, but this is unlikely. Whatever the case, it is an interesting omission on the part of Luke. It obviously disturbed the editors of the Western text, given their addition "the Holy Spirit fell on the eunuch, but the angel carried Philip away", instead of "the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away."

#### v40

Philip moves on, working his way up the coast toward Caesarea, which is where he will later catch up with Paul, 21:8.

δε "**however**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

εὑρεθη [εὕρισκω] aor. pas. "**appeared**" - [PHILIP] WAS FOUND. Sometimes with the meaning "surprise", and possibly a Semitism for "he came", although the evidence is limited. "Appeared" reflects the miraculous, but the point is, he was off preaching the gospel after the conversion of the eunuch, and so "was found in (not blown to!) Azotus." "Arrived at", Barclay, seems best.

Ἀζωτον "**Azotus**" - [INTO = IN] ASOTUS. The old Philistine city of Ashdod some 20 miles north of Gaza, with Caesarea a further 25 miles up the coast, the then seat of Roman power in Palestine.

διερχομενος [διερχομαι] pres. mid. part. "**travelled about**" - [AND] PASSING THROUGH. The participle is best treated as adverbial, temporal; "Philip arrived in Azotus and while touring that region he preached the gospel."

ευηγγελιζετο [ευαγγελιζω] imperf. "**preaching the gospel**" - HE WAS PREACHING, COMMUNICATING IMPORTANT NEWS TO [ALL THE CITIES]. The imperfect expressing continued action. He was obviously communicating the gospel, although what he communicated is not stated, but assumed.

ἕως του + inf. "**until [he reached Caesarea]**" - UNTIL [HE CAME TO CAESAREA]. This preposition, with the articular infinitive, introduces a temporal clause, future time, as NIV, with αυτον, "he", serving as the accusative subject

of the infinitive. A dynamic equivalent can make better sense, "he went from town to town, all the way to Caesarea, telling people about Jesus", CEV.

## 9:1-19a

### 3. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:8-9:31

#### vii] The conversion of Saul

##### Synopsis

Luke now moves to the central character of his story, namely Saul of Tarsus, later known as Paul the apostle. The life and ministry of the other apostles is left behind as Luke records the Gentile mission of Paul. In the passage before us, Luke recounts Saul's vision on the Damascus road, along with his healing at the hand of Ananias, and his commissioning by the Lord, a commissioning independent of the Jerusalem church.

##### Teaching

Paul's apostolic status, and his mission to the Gentiles, is of divine commission.

##### Issues

###### i] Context:

See 6:1-7. Luke continues his record of the conversion of individuals to *the Way*. Here, the conversion of Saul.

###### ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *The baptism / infilling of the Spirit* - See Excursus;
- *Water Baptism in Acts*, 2:37-41;
- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

###### iii] Structure: *The conversion of Saul*:

A miracle on the Damascus road, v1-9;

Ananias is instructed to minister to Saul, v10-16.

Saul moves from darkness to light, v17-19a.

###### iv] Interpretation:

Longenecker, referring to Haenchen, notes that for Luke, Saul's conversion is extremely important. This is evidenced by the three separate accounts of the event, here, and in chapters 22 and 26. Luke wants to underline the fact that Paul's mission to the Gentiles is divinely commissioned; he is commissioned to advance the cause of the gospel to the ends of the earth (to the Gentile world). Luke makes sure that the reader understands that the gospel's extension from Israel to the nations is not

thought up by Paul, rather it is part of a divine strategy for the redemption of the world.

Dunn, along with many other commentators, titles this section "The Conversion of Paul", and indeed it is. For Paul, his experience on the Damascus road involves a total turning around of his life; once an opponent of Jesus, now a follower of Jesus. Yet, Dunn also notes that it would be right to title the section "The Commissioning of Paul" since Paul, a member of the Jewish sect of the Pharisees opposed to contact with Gentiles is, in this story, divinely commissioned to serve in the Jewish sect of *the Way* as "a light to the nations."

Barrett suggests that the "the Call of Paul" parallels the story of the call of the prophets, cf. Isa.6:1-13, Jer.1:4-10. Paul, the Pharisee, the teacher of the law, is called to proclaim a new and radical way, "to put one's whole trust, not in one's own legal, moral and religious achievements, but solely in Jesus Christ." Even so, for Paul, his God is still the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

When it comes to Paul's conversion, Barrett makes the point that "what happened to Paul was not the resolution of an inward conflict in an unhappy, divided and unsatisfied man; it was the appearance of Christ to a self-satisfied and self-righteous man."

v] Homiletics: *A chosen instrument*

Some years ago, on an Australian TV programme called *True Stories*, an old bikie spoke of his conversion. He claimed that Jesus actually spoke to him. He was such a tough bloke, a petty criminal and drug dealer, and so probably a face-to-face meeting with Jesus was the only way he would find God. Most of us just drift into faith. We search for God, find our search realised in the Bible stories about Jesus, and so rest secure in him - "Blessed are those who believe without seeing." Such a conversion is no less real than Paul's, it's just not as realistic.

Following his conversion, Paul was given his apostolic appointment. "This man is my chosen instrument", says Jesus to Ananias; he is to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles. And his appointment was not without power. Paul was "filled with the Holy Spirit", that is, he was empowered for service. He was given a job to do and the wherewithal to do it.

We may feel a little less than adequate when we compare our own "filling" with that of Paul's. Yet, in the end, all service to the Lord is equal in his eyes; from the greatest to the least, we are all special to God. He equips us as he sees fit, and we but apply his "filling". And just in case we think our "filling" is somewhat meagre, remember, the bigger the



responsibility the greater the trouble; Paul "must suffer" for Christ. There's much to be said for a little "filling" with little pain!

All who turn to Christ are to serve as a "chosen instrument", and so our task is to discern our gifts and seek to apply them under our Lord's authority and power.

### Text - 9:1

The first account of Saul's conversion, v1-19a: i] Saul's vision on the Damascus road, v1-9. Josephus tells us that there was a large population of Jews living in Damascus at this time, and it seems that the Hellenist believers, fleeing from Jerusalem, have attached themselves to this community. Luke tells us that Saul is determined to stamp out the sect of *the Way*, and so he arms himself with the authority of the High Priest to enter local synagogues and arrest any members of the sect, both men and women. Saul's hatred is visceral; "a frenzy of murderous threats", Barclay.

**δε** "**meanwhile**" - BUT/AND. Transitional; introducing a new literary unit; "now, then, meanwhile, ..."

**ετι** adv. "**still**" - [SAUL] STILL. Temporal adverb introducing a temporal clause. Saul is still on his mission to suppress *the Way*. "Saul kept on threatening", CEV.

**εμπνεων [εμπνεω]** pres. part. "**breathing out**" - BREATHING. The participle is adjectival, limiting "Saul"; "Saul who was still breathing threats and murder." Possibly adverbial, temporal, "Saul, while still breathing threats ..." The word describes the hissing breath between clenched teeth and is used here metaphorically of Saul's visceral hatred; "breathing down the necks of the disciples", Peterson.

**απειλης [η]** gen. "[**murderous**] **threats**" - OF THREAT [AND MURDER]. Possibly a hendiadys where a single idea is expressed by two words joined by **και**, so "murderous threat", as NIV. These two genitive nouns serve as genitives of direct object of the participle "breathing out" (synonymous of verbs "to smell of", Bruce Gk.), although Zerwick suggests that they are partitive. "Murderous threats" is better than the CEV's "threatening to kill the Lord's followers", since execution was not on Saul's mind, but rather suppression.

**εις** + acc. "**against**" - INTO [THE DISCIPLES OF THE LORD]. Local, possibly expressing opposition, "against", so NIV, or spatial, expressing direction, "toward".

**προσελθων [προσερχομαι]** aor. part. "**he went to**" - HAVING COME TO. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "asked", v2; "He went to the High Priest and asked for letters", TEV.

τῷ ἀρχιερεὶ [εὐς εὼς] dat. "**the high priest**" - THE HIGH PRIEST. Dative of direct object after the *προς* prefix verb "to come to" / dative of persons.

## v2

Obviously, the Sanhedrin exercised authority over the Synagogues in Damascus, enabling Saul to apply disciplinary warrants against the believers there. One wonders to what extent the Sanhedrin had extradition rights under Roman law. Is this a first century example of *rendition*, or are we dealing with in-house discipline, limited to coercion, under the threat of excommunication?

παρ [παρά] + gen. "[**asked him**]" - [HE ASKED] BESIDE = FROM [HIM LETTERS INTO DAMASCUS TOWARD THE SYNAGOGUES]. Here spatial, expressing source, "from".

ὅπως "**so that**" - SO THAT, IN ORDER THAT. Serving to introduce a final clause expressing purpose, as NIV.

εἰ + subj. "**if**" - IF [HE MAY FIND CERTAIN]. Introducing a conditional clause, 3rd class, where the proposed condition has the possibility of coming true; "if, *as may be the case*, ....., *then* he might bring *them* bound into Jerusalem." Saul expects that he may find some of *the Way*.

ὄντας [εἶμι] pres. part. "**who belonged**" - BELONGING. The participle of the verb to-be is adjectival, attributive, limiting "certain"; "certain *persons* = anyone who belongs to the Way".

τῆς ὁδοῦ [ος] gen. "**to the Way**" - OF THE WAY. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. In Acts, the term serves as the title for the Christian movement. "The way of salvation", 16:7, is probably the sense carried by the term, reflecting the content of divine revelation which those "in the Way" commit themselves to. None-the-less, Luke is using the phrase here in an absolute sense of "the Way they call a sect", 24:14.

τε καὶ "**whether [men] or [women]**" - BOTH [MEN] AND [WOMEN]. Correlative construction

δέδεμενους [δew] perf. pas. part. acc. "[**he might take them**] as prisoners" - [*then* HE MAY LEAD *them*] HAVING BEEN BOUND [INTO JERUSALEM]. The NIV, ESV, NRSV, ... assume the pronoun *αυτους*, "them", so treating the participle as adjectival, attributive, limiting "them", although Culy suggests that it serves as the object complement of the direct object "men and women", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object; "he might bring both men and women bound to Jerusalem", Culy.

## v3

A manifestation of divine glory is sudden, and is often associated with a bright light, Isa.2:5, 60:19, *περιαστραπτω*, and "flashing", often of lightning,

Ex.19:16, 2Sam.22:15. Luke is making sure that the reader recognises Paul's divine authority.

**εν τω** + inf. "**as**" - [BUT/AND] IN [TO GO]. The articular infinitive, with the preposition **εν**, introduces a temporal clause, contemporaneous time, "while going / on the way"; "When Saul had almost reached Damascus", CEV.

**εγγιζειν [εγγιζω]** inf. "**he neared**" - [HE] TO COME NEAR TO [DAMASCUS ..... HAPPENED]. The infinitival clause running to the end of v4 serves as the subject of the verb **εγενετο**, "it happened." The accusative subject of the infinitive is **αυτον**, "he". Barrett suggests the construction is Hebraic, such that Luke has chosen to write in Biblical style for the purpose of describing a theophany.

**τη Δαμασκω [ος]** dat. "**Damascus**" - DAMASCUS. Dative of direct object after the infinitive "to draw near to."

**τε ... και** "-" - BOTH [A LIGHT FROM HEAVEN SUDDENLY SHONE AROUND HIM] AND. A correlating construction serving to coordinate the complex subject of the verb **εγενετο**, "it happened", covering v3b-4. The preposition **εκ**, "from", expresses source / origin; "a light from the sky flashed around him", TEV.

#### v4

Luke's construction of the story makes it quite clear that Saul is experiencing a theophany, a direct revelation from God - he lies prostrate before the shining glory of God's presence. Saul hears the divine message, but is confused because he is being told that he is persecuting the divine presence - to persecute the church, the body of Christ, is to persecute Christ. This idea is based on the theology of the body of Christ, but Saul's persecution *of the truth* may serve more as an affront to divine revelation. Saul was attacking the truth proclaimed by the disciples; to affront the truth, the Word, is to affront Christ.

**πεσων [πιπτω]** aor. part. "**he fell**" - [AND] HAVING FALLEN [UPON THE GROUND]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "heard", so translated as a finite verb joined to "heard" with "and", as NIV. "He prostrated himself and heard a voice speaking to him."

**φωνην [η]** "**a voice**" - [HE HEARD] A VOICE. The use of an accusative here, as compared with a genitive in v7, is interesting - see **ακουοντες**, v7. It is possible that the accusative is used to imply that Saul did not see the speaker, but this would be overly subtle.

**λεγουσων [λεγω]** pres. part. "**say**" - SAYING. A participle of the verb "to say" is often used to introduce direct speech, usually attendant on a verb, but here adjectival, attributive, limiting the noun "voice", "he heard a voice which said to him." Culy classifies it as the accusative complement of the direct object "voice". "He heard a voice addressing him in these words", Cassirer.

αυτω dat. pro. "to him" - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

τί pro. "why" - [SAUL, SAUL, WHY [ARE YOU PERSECUTING ME]?  
Interrogative pronoun serving to introduce a direct question.

## v5

The use of κυριε, "Lord", in its fullest sense, indicates that Saul is fully aware that he is in the presence of a divine personage, but is unsure who is actually doing the speaking - he doesn't yet know that Jesus is Lord. In his self-revelation, Jesus confirms his person, εγω ειμι Ιησους, "I am Jesus." The construction is certainly emphatic, but it is unclear whether the εγω ειμι, "The Great I Am", is implied - the unidentified name of God.

κυριε voc. "[who are you,] Lord?" - [BUT/AND HE SAID, WHO ARE YOU,] LORD. Vocative. A general "sir" would miss the point, "Lord", as of the divine, is better.

ὁ δε "he replied" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional construction, indicating a change in subject from Saul to Jesus.

εγω pro. "I" - I [AM JESUS]. Emphatic by position and use.

## v6

"Saul the persecutor with a letter from the high priest now is Saul the witness with a commission from Jesus. The heavenly calling has trumped the original earthly calling", Bock.

αλλα "now" - BUT [GET UP AND ENTER INTO THE CITY]. Strong adversative, "but this is now the end of your opposition to my word, get up ....."; "but get up", Barclay. Barrett suggests it is more likely being used as a connective here and best translated as an interjection, "well!", although adversative does seem better.

σοι dat. pro. "you" - [AND IT WILL BE TOLD] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

ὅ τί "what" - WHICH CERTAIN thing. An unusual construction since normally used in a direct question in NT., cf. BDF. 300. Culy suggests that although ὅ is accented as a personal pronoun, it is actually the nominative singular article ὁ, thus making the clause "the certain thing you must do" the subject of "it will be told to you", the "it" being "the certain thing you must do" = "instructions will be given to you." The instructions probably concern Saul's healing, rather than instructions on what to believe. None-the-less, throughout Acts Luke maintains Paul's theological independence, a position strongly argued by Paul in Galatians.

ποιειν [ποιεω] pres. inf. "[you must] do" - TO DO [YOU IS NECESSARY]. The infinitive serves as the subject of the verb "is necessary", with σε, "you", serving as its accusative subject. The impersonal verb "it is necessary" implies divine necessity.

v7

Saul's travelling companions hear noises, but don't see anyone. Although they saw **μηδεν**, "no one", they did see the light, cf., 22:9. Luke wants us to know that the theophany was public, but the divine communication private.

**οἱ δε** "the men" - BUT/AND THE [MEN]. Transitional construction, indicating a change of subject from Jesus to Saul's companions.

**οἱ συνοδευοντες** [**συνδευω**] pres. part. "travelling with" - THE ONES TRAVELLING WITH. The participle is adjectival, attributive, "the men who were traveling with him." Possibly Saul's assistants, or as was common at the time for security reasons, his travelling companions.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "with Saul" - HIM [HAD STOOD SPEECHLESS]. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb "to travel along with."

**μεν .... δε** "... but .." - BUT, *on the one hand*, [HEARING THE VOICE] BUT, *on the other hand*, [SEEING NO ONE]. Adversative comparative / coordinate construction.

**ακουοντες** [**ακουω**] part. "they heard" - HEARING [THE VOICE]. This participle, as with **θεωρουντες**, "seeing", is adverbial, possibly temporal; "they stood speechless when they heard the voice, but saw no one", or causal, "because they heard the voice but saw no one." Here the participle of the verb **ακουω**, "to hear", takes a genitive object, "heard *of* the sound (voice)". It is possible that when followed by a genitive it means to hear, but not understand, and when followed by an accusative it means to hear and understand. This is why the NIV translates "voice" with the word "sound" here. With this interpretation it is possible to deal with the conflict that exists in 22:9 where Paul says that the people with him did not hear the voice. Wallace 133, argues that the difference in case does not convey this distinction; so also Moule. Bruce suggests that the genitive should be read as Saul's voice, following an interpretation suggested by Chrysostom - the fellow travellers heard Saul speaking, but neither saw, nor heard, with whom he was speaking. Barrett suggests that although the language is unclear, Luke's point is clear enough; "all recognised a supernatural event, but only one understood its meaning."

v8

Luke now draws out the powerlessness of this once powerful man.

**ηγεθη** [**εγειρω**] aor. pas. "got up" - [BUT/AND SAUL] WAS RAISED [FROM THE GROUND]. The passive indicates that Saul "was helped up", Culy.

**ανεωγμενων** [**ανοιγω**] gen. perf. pas. part. "when he opened" - [BUT/AND THE EYES OF HIM] HAVING BEEN OPENED [HE WAS SEEING NOTHING]. The genitive participle with its genitive subject "the eyes", forms a genitive absolute

construction, temporal, as NIV, but possibly concessive, "although his eyes were opened", ESV. Either way, the construction serves to separate this subordinate clause from the main clause, "Saul rose ..... and they led him ....". Why is Saul now blind? Possibly punishment, although Conzelmann rejects this idea. Possibly simply shock, so Longenecker.

**χειραγωγουντες [χειραγωγω]** pres. part. "**they led [him] by the hand**" - [BUT/AND] BEING LED BY THE HAND [THEY BROUGHT HIM INTO DAMASCUS]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "brought"; "they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus", ESV. Possibly adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, so Culy, or modal, expressing manner, so Kellum.

#### v9

The implication seems to be that on his arrival in Damascus, Saul undertook a three-day fast.

**ην ... βλεπων [βλεπω]** pres. part. "**he was blind**" - [AND] HE WAS [THREE DAYS] NOT SEEING. The imperfect verb to-be with the present participle forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, but possibly predicative, modifying "he", the subject of the linking verb to-be, "he was not seeing" = "he was blind", BDF. 353.7.

**ουκ .... ουδεν** "**[did] not [eat] or [drink]**" - [AND] NEITHER [ATE] NOR [DRANK]. Coordinating construction.

#### v10

ii] Ananias, in a vision, is instructed to minister to Saul, v10-16. Ananias is somewhat hesitant to do the Lord's bidding; to go and visit Saul. But, Jesus reassures Ananias that Saul is now a vessel in the Lord's service, set apart to testify to the name of Jesus, both to secular authorities and people in general, and to the Jews, and this to "the end of the earth." Saul's commission is by divine authority ("it is necessary", **δει**, a divine appointment), and will bring with it suffering. Ananias is to go and lay hands (in prayer??) on Saul that he might be healed.

**οναματι [α ατος]** dat. "**named**" - [BUT/AND THERE WAS A CERTAIN DISCIPLE IN DAMASCUS] WITH / BY NAME [ANANIAS]. The dative is probably a dative of reference / respect; "with respect to his name, Ananias."

**εν** + dat. "**in [a vision]**" - [AND THE LORD SPOKE TO HIM] IN [A VISION. ANANIAS]. The preposition functions adverbially here, modal, expressing the manner in which the Lord spoke to Ananias. Presumably Ananias sees and hears the Lord (Jesus?). It is possible that Ananias is a local believer rather than a refugee from the persecution in Jerusalem.

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND HE [HE SAID, BEHOLD LORD]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from the Lord to Ananias.

#### v11

In this verse we have the mention of Saul's home town for the first time, and also a reference to his piety; he is praying. Judas is unknown.

ὁ δε "**the [lord]**" - BUT/AND THE [LORD *said*]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Ananias to the Lord.

προς + acc. "**him**" - TOWARD [HIM]. The preposition is used to introduce an indirect object instead of a dative.

αναστας [ανιστημι] aor. part. "-" - HAVING ARISEN, GOT UP [GO]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the imperative verb "to go"; "arise and go." Probably expressing haste in the going; "get going right now."

την καλουμενην [καλεω] pres. pas. part. "-" - [TO THE STREET] BEING CALLED [STRAIGHT]. The participle, with its accusative complement "straight", is adjectival, attributive, limiting the noun "street"; "the street which is called straight." It was an east-west street running through Damascus, a main thoroughfare named today Derb el-Mastaqim. "Go to the street called Straight", Barclay.

Ιουδα [ας α] gen. "**of Judas**" - [AND SEEK IN HOUSE] OF JUDAS. The genitive is adjectival, possessive; "the house *belonging to* Judas." "In/at the house of Judas ask for ...."

ονοματι [α ατος] dat. "**named [Saul]**" - BY NAME [SAUL, A MAN FROM TARSUS]. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect, as v10. The accusative Ταρσεα, "Tarsus" = "*a man from* Tarsus", stands in apposition to "Saul". Tarsus is the maritime capital of Cilicia during the Roman period.

γαρ "**for**" - FOR [HE IS AT PRAYER]. More reason than cause, introducing an explanation, possibly explaining that Ananias is the answer to Saul's prayer, so Kellum.

#### v12

In a vision, Saul sees Ananias doing what he actually does.

εν οραματι [α ατος] "**in a vision**" - [AND HE SAW A MAN] IN A VISION [ANANIAS BY NAME]. A variant which Metzger regards as original. Syntax, cf., v10. Note also the whole verse is missing from the Old Latin, although this is regarded as an accident of transcription.

εισελθοντα [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "**come [and place]**" - HAVING ENTERED [AND HAVING PLACED UPON]. This participle, together with "having placed upon", serve as the accusative complement of the direct object "man", standing in a

double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object; "In a vision, he has seen a man ..... come in and lay his hands on him", NAB. Saul is at this moment visualising Ananias laying hands upon him.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM [THE = HIS HANDS]. Dative of direct object after the **επι** prefix participle, "placing upon" / local, of place.

**οπως** + subj. "**to [restore his sight]**" - THAT [HE MAY SEE AGAIN]. This construction introduces a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that / so that ....". Surely the laying on of hands serves as a symbol of prayer, here a prayer for healing, rather than Barrett's blessing. The proper basis of prayer is always the will of God, and Ananias is, on this occasion, fully aware of that will. "So that he may recover his sight", Barrett

### v13

In this, and the following verse, Luke describes Ananias' internalised reticence as he addresses the Lord's will, a reticence we all know very well.

**περι** + gen. "**about [this man]**" - [BUT/AND ANANIAS ANSWERED, LORD, I HEARD FROM MANY] ABOUT [THIS MAN]. Expressing reference / respect; "about, concerning, with reference to ..."

**οσα** pro. "**and all**" - AS MANY AS, AS MUCH AS [EVIL THINGS HE DID]. Introducing a relative clause which serves as the direct object of the verb "to hear"; "I have heard .....how much he has caused your people to suffer", TH.

**τοις αγιοις** "**to the saints / to your holy people**" - TO THE HOLY ONES [OF YOU]. Dative of interest, disadvantage. This is the first reference in Acts where members of Christian community / believers are described as "the saints", the holy-ones set apart for the Lord.

**εν** + dat. "**in**" - IN [JERUSALEM]. Local, expressing space; "in / at Jerusalem."

### v14

**ωδε** adv. "**[he has come] here**" - [AND HE HAS AUTHORITY] HERE. Adverb of place; "here in this place / in Damascus ....."

**παρα** + gen. "**from**" - FROM [THE CHIEF PRIESTS]. Either expressing source, "from", as NIV, or agency, "by".

**δησαι** [**δεω**] aor. inf. "**to arrest**" - TO BIND. The infinitive is epexegetic, explaining the "authority" Saul has from the chief priests, namely, to arrest believers.

**τους επικαλουμενους** [**επικαλεω**] pres. part. "**[all] who call on**" - [ALL] THE ONES CALLING UPON [THE NAME OF YOU]. The participle serves as a substantive, object of the infinitive "to bind." Those calling on "the name", the person of Jesus / the Lord / God, is a common descriptor for the faithful; they are the saved ones,



cf., Joel 2:32, Act.2:21, Rom.10:13. "Those who address Jesus as Lord", Bruce, possibly "everyone who believes in you", NCV.

## v15

Saul is a **σκευος**, "an instrument, vessel", of election (ie., a divine instrument), **του βαστασαι**, "in order to carry", Jesus' "name" = his person = the gospel to "the Gentile / nations", kings / authorities / rulers, and the people of Israel.

**ὅτι** "-" - [BUT/AND THE LORD SAID TOWARD HIM, GO] FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Ananias should go and minister to Saul.

**μοι [εγω]** dat. "[is] my" - [THIS ONE IS A CHOSEN INSTRUMENT, VESSEL, IMPLEMENT] TO/FOR ME. The dative is possibly possessive, as NIV, or a dative of interest, advantage, "he is a chosen instrument for me", or even instrumental, "I have chosen him (as the instrument) to be the means of bringing my name ..", Moffatt. "He is a specially chosen instrument for me", Barrett.

**του βαστασαι** "to carry [my name]" - TO BEAR [THE NAME OF ME]. This genitive articular infinitive construction is sometimes consecutive, expressing here the result of Saul's calling, namely, he was chosen "with the result that he might take" the gospel to the Gentiles, but is usually final, so expressing the purpose of his calling, namely, "in order to take" the gospel to the Gentiles, BDF 400. The phrase "to carry the name of me" is idiomatic, taking the sense "to spread information extensively about a person."\*

**ενωπιον** + gen. "to" - BEFORE, IN FRONT OF. Spatial, metaphorical. "To tell heathen nations ..... about me", Barclay.

**τε .... και .... τε** ".... and .... and ..." - BOTH [*the* GENTILES] AND [KINGS] AND [*the* SONS OF ISRAEL]. Correlating construction. The placement of **τε** before "Israel" is rather strange. Barrett thinks it was an afterthought - "before Gentiles / nations, kings and sons, **τε** I mean the sons of Israel." Technically "sons" is properly linked to "kings" in the Gk., or more properly both "nations" and "kings", so Culy; "before Gentiles, kings and the people of Israel." Barrett notes Stahlin's view that Saul intends a combination of two familiar pairs, both pairs united by **τε**, giving **υιων**, "sons", the sense "sons of the Nations" = "Gentiles"; "before Nations and kings, Gentiles and Jews."

**εθνων** gen. "the Gentiles" - *the* GENTILES, NATIONS. Where the article **των** is read, the particular sense "the Gentiles", standing in contrast to "Israel", is intended, so Barrett.

## v16

Luke is giving a short-hand descriptive of Paul's life as apostle to the Gentiles, which life will be revealed to Saul by the Lord prior to Ananias' visit,

thus assuring Ananias' safety. Ananias is to heal Saul, not carry a message to him from the Lord.

**γάρ** "-" - FOR. Probably serving to introduce a causal clause, "because", although the intention is not overly clear. Barrett suggests: "you Ananias, need not hesitate to perform the task I am giving you, for I myself will be personally engaged in it."

**ἐγώ** "I" - I. Emphatic by position and use; "I myself."

**αὐτῷ** dat. pro. "[will show] **him**" - [WILL SHOW, INFORM] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

**ὅσα** pro. "**how much**" - HOW MUCH. Introducing a relative clause which serves as the object of the verb "to show." Here meaning "all"; "I will show him all that he must suffer", Barclay.

**παθεῖν** [**πασχῶ**] aor. inf. "**suffer**" - TO SUFFER [IS NECESSARY]. The infinitive serves as the subject of the impersonal verb "is necessary; "I will show to him that to suffer on behalf of the name is necessary for him" = "I myself shall let him know what great sufferings he will have to endure for the sake of the cause which bears my name", Cassirer. For the complementary classification, see **πληρωθῆναι**, 1:16.

**ὑπέρ** + gen. "**for**" - ON BEHALF OF. Here expressing representation, "on behalf of", or advantage, "for the sake of / benefit of."

**του ονοματος** [**α ατος**] gen. "**[my] name**" - THE NAME [OF ME]. "Name" is used here in the sense of "person", so rather than Cassirer above, better "for my sake", Barclay.

## v17

iii] Saul's healing and conversion, v17-19a. Ananias does as instructed, laying hands (in prayer??) on Saul. Consequently, Saul sees and is baptized. As for Saul's being "filled with the Holy Spirit", there is some debate as to whether this is associated with the laying on of hands, or with his baptism - Marshall and Williams opt for baptism. Of course, the function of baptism itself is long debated, and is certainly not resolved in this passage - a conduit for grace, or a symbol of grace (regeneration), or a symbol of covenant-inclusion, or an outward expression of repentance (and regeneration??).

When it comes to the endowment of the Spirit, "baptized" (immersed) and "filled" may have the same meaning for Luke. So, given that the NT. teaches that the gift of the Holy Spirit, as of the personal reception and indwelling of the Spirit of Christ, is a promise to all who believe, there is good grounds for understanding Luke's "filled" to represent that reception of the Spirit for regeneration. Yet, so often Luke's "filling" seems more like the spiritual equipping of a believer for some particular divine service, similar to the impermanent spiritual endowment

of the Old Testament prophets. Often we read of the apostles being filled with the Spirit and preaching - they are filled and then act. So, is Luke telling us that Saul, at this point in time independent of the Jerusalem church and the apostles, is divinely authorised and equipped as apostle to the Gentiles? This may be supported by the fact that Luke does not mention speaking in tongues, as if such is irrelevant to the issue at hand. So, the infilling of the Spirit, at this point, is likely to be an infilling for service - "the first of many endowments for apostolic witness", Briscoe, cf., 13:9.

δε **"then"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative; "So Ananias departed and entered the house", ESV.

ἐπιθεις [ἐπιτιθημι] aor. part. **"placing [his hands]"** - [ANANIAS WENT AWAY, DEPARTED AND WENT INTO, ENTERED INTO THE HOUSE AND] HAVING PLACED [UPON HIM THE = HIS HANDS, HE SAID]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the main verb "said"; "he placed his hands on Saul and said." The laying on of hands is usually a sign (a visible expression) of supplicatory prayer, here presumably for healing (but possibly also the filling/gift of the Holy Spirit).

αδελφε [ος] voc. **"brother"** - BROTHER, [SAUL, THE LORD HAS SENT ME]. Ananias addresses Saul as a fellow believer, although the greeting could be to a fellow Jew.

ὁ οφθεις [ὄραω] aor. pas. part. **"who appeared to"** - [JESUS,] THE ONE HAVING APPEARED TO. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Jesus", as NIV. Interestingly, the account doesn't tell us that Jesus actually visibly appeared to Saul, although later he does use the word "saw".

σοι dat. pro. **"you"** - YOU. Dative of direct object after the participle "having appeared to" of the verb ὄραω, "to see", which in the passive voice, "to appear to", takes a dative.

ἐν + dat. **"on [the road]"** - IN [THE WAY]. Here with its common local sense, located in the realm of, so "on the road", as NIV.

ἣ dat. pro. **"as"** - BY WHICH [YOU WERE COMING]. Zerwick suggests that the dative is instrumental, "by which", the NIV treats it as temporal, so Peterson D, while Culy opts for a dative of location, "on your way here", Cassirer.

ὅπως + subj. **"so that"** - THAT [YOU MAY SEE AGAIN AND MAY BE FILLED]. Serving to introduce a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that / so that you may see again."

πνευματος ἁγίου gen. **"with the Holy Spirit"** - OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Is the genitive adverbial, instrumental, "filled by / with the Holy Spirit, or is it adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content, "filled full of the Holy Spirit"? In 1:5,

εν + the dative produces "baptized with/in/by the Holy Spirit", with the NRSV offering an instrumental "by" as a possible translation.

## v18

Luke's description of the healing is more than likely figurative, but he could well be describing a physical occurrence. What fell from Saul's eyes was ὥς, "like", λεπιδες, "scales, skins, flakes." Luke is describing some substance, or something looking like a covering over the eyes, eg. a translucent skin. The sense is unclear, but he is possibly describing a situation which is "like" a skin being peeled from an onion, or where the substance covering the eyes came away "like" the skin of an onion comes away. On being healed, Saul is baptised and so is received as a full member of *the Way*.

εὐθεως adv. "immediately" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY. This temporal adverb is used in a narrative to heighten suspense.

ὥς "something like" - AS, LIKE [SCALES]. Comparative; "something like", Barrett.

ἀπο + gen. "[fell] from" - [FELL] FROM. Expressing separation, "away from." The subject of the verb is unstated, although NIV. etc. has "something;" "something peeled away from his eyes."

αὐτου gen. pro. "Saul's [eyes]" - [THE EYES] OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. The position of this personal pronoun in the Gk. is unusual. Some commentators suggest it was added, but if so, we would expect the word order, "from the eyes of him", rather than "of him from the eyes." Variants exist without this pronoun, but it is more likely that it was dropped because its position was viewed as unusual. Culy suggests it is a genitive complement of "fell", which together are in apposition to (standing beside and defining) the clause "from the eyes ...", so "they fell from him, that is, things fell from his eyes as peeled skins." "Something peeled away from his eyes, that is, translucent skins over his eyes peeled away, as it were, just like the skin of an onion peels away."

τε και "and" - AND [HE SAW AGAIN] AND. Correlating construction, coordinating Saul's seeing and his being baptized.

ἀναστας [ἀνίστημι] aor. part. "he got up" - [AND] HAVING ARISEN. Attendant circumstance participle, expressing action accompanying the verb "was baptized"; "he rose and was baptized."

ἐβαπτισθη [βαπτίζω] aor. pas. "was baptized" - HE WAS BAPTIZED. The passive indicating that Ananias probably does the honours, although in 22:16 the middle voice is used implying that Saul baptized himself; "received his baptism", Cassirer.

**v19a**

λαβων [λαμβανω] aor. part. "**after taking [some food]**" - [AND] HAVING RECEIVED, TAKEN [FOOD, HE WAS STRENGTHENED]. The participle is adverbial, introducing a temporal clause; "when he had taken some food, his strength returned", Barclay.

## 9:19b-31

### The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### ix] Saul preaches fearlessly in Jesus' name

##### Synopsis

Following his conversion, and without the approval of the apostles, Saul/Paul immediately begins proclaiming the gospel throughout the synagogues in Damascus. Inevitably, Saul stirs up a hornets-nest of opposition, and is forced to escape the city, lowered down the city wall in a basket. On reaching Jerusalem, Barnabas sponsors Saul and so, although initially wary of him, "the disciples" welcome him into the fellowship of believers. Saul then takes up Stephen's role of debating boldly with the Hellenist Jews. Trouble soon develops, and so the believers spirit him away to Caesarea and then on to Tarsus.

##### Teaching

- The apostle Paul is a divinely appointed evangelist, approved by the apostolic community, but independent of them.
- Through struggle and trial the gospel triumphs.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-7.

ii] Background:

- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;
- *Contextualising the gospel*, 16:1-15.

iii] Structure, *Saul preaches fearlessly in Jesus' name*:

- Saul evangelises Damascus, 19b-22;
- Growing opposition in Damascus, v23-25;
- Saul's visit to Jerusalem, v26-30;
- The Way flourishes peacefully in Palestine, v31.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke's purpose in Acts is to detail the movement of the gospel to the ends of the earth, and its centre, Rome, and this at the hand of the apostle Paul. Yet, before Paul's mission to the Gentiles properly gets underway, Luke has more to say of the gospel's spread into Palestine. So, we are given a shorthand description of Paul's ministry in Samaria and Jerusalem, and his move to take up residence in Tarsus. Luke will refocus again on Paul in chapter 11 when Barnabas seeks him out in Tarsus to help out in Antioch.

It is interesting to note the differences between Luke's account of Paul's early years in ministry, and his own account of those years in Galatians 1:11-24. Following his conversion, Paul mentions a time in Arabia, after which he returns to Damascus. It is very likely that Paul's three year retreat in Arabia (for study and prayer?!) is bookended by his times in Damascus. After these three years, he goes up Jerusalem for three weeks, during which time he gets to meet Peter, as well as James, the Lord's brother, and then off to Syria and Cilicia. As for the differences, Dunn makes the point that "Paul *is* emphasising his independence from the Jerusalem apostles; Luke *is* emphasising his acceptance by them."

It is also worth noting that in 2 Corinthians 11:32-33, Paul mentions his escape from Damascus, although the Jews are not the perpetrators, but rather Nabataean Arabs under king Aretas. Is Luke not across the details of Paul's escape from Damascus (so Barrett), or is he just identifying the prime instigators of the troubles (so Bock)? Fitzmyer sees no conflict in the historic details; it's all just a matter of perspective.

Barrett suggests the theme of "the victory of the word of God" has coloured Luke's account of the events. It certainly seems likely that Luke truncates the account of these early years, selecting material that reinforces his themes. It is important to note that this victory of the word is "defined, not by numbers but by faithfulness in giving out the gospel", Bock. The victory of the word of God also aligns with the victory of the church, which, although at times set upon, ultimately lives at peace in the wider community, so promoting gospel outreach, cf., v31.

"This whole section shows how quickly the Lord's words about Saul in 9:15-16 are fulfilled. The persecutor soon becomes the persecuted", Peterson D. Yet, in the midst of this fire, Luke sets out to reveal that "Paul was a great independent evangelist and formative influence in Christian theology", Barrett. Luke presents Paul as a great preacher, and independent thinker, affirmed by the founding apostles, but not dependent upon them.

In passing, it is worth noting that we can date Luke's account, given that king Aretas was given full power after the death of Tiberius, AD 37, and that he died in AD 39.

v] Homiletics:

*Verse 31 lends itself to an expository sermon, as outlined in the notes below. In a godless world, persecution of the church is inevitable, but Luke is making the point in this verse that the normal state of affairs is peace, a peace which enables the church to work for the upbuilding of God's people and outreach to the lost. It is for this reason that the church offers up prayers for the state so that peace, rather than anarchy, may prevail.*

### Text - 9:19b

Saul/Paul preaches fearlessly for Jesus: i] Saul evangelises Damascus, v19b-22. Following his conversion, Saul becomes an accepted member of the fellowship of believers in Damascus and sets about proclaiming the gospel. Luke summarises his message in the terms of a proclamation that Jesus is "the Son of God", v20. This is the first and only time Luke uses this shorthand version of the gospel in Acts, although Paul himself uses the phrase as a messianic equivalent of the glorious anointed one of God, mediator and Lord, cf., Gal.2:20, Eph.4:13, ...; Luke has already used this messianic title a number of times in his gospel, 1:35, .... Saul is preaching to Jews in Damascus and so a gospel message employing messianic terminology concerning "the Christ", v22, is appropriate for his audience. Saul "confounded" the Damascene Jews with his arguments.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**μετα** + gen. "**with [the disciples]**" - [HE BECAME = WAS] WITH [THE DISCIPLES IN DAMASCUS CERTAIN = SOME DAYS]

### v20

As noted above, Luke does not mention Saul's time in Arabia (for prayer, reflection and study??), so his initial time in Damascus may be limited and it is only after his return from Arabia that his evangelistic ministry in Damascus begins in earnest. None-the-less, Luke tells us that at the outset, Saul testifies that Jesus is the messiah, "the Son of God"

**ευθως** adv. "**at once**" - IMMEDIATELY, [IN THE SYNAGOGUES]. This temporal adverb is used for dramatic effect.

**εκηρυσσεν [κηρυσσω]** imperf. "**he began to preach**" - HE WAS PREACHING [JESUS]. The imperfect is probably inceptive, stressing the beginning of the action, as NIV.

**οτι** "**that**" - THAT. The NIV treats **οτι** as introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing what Saul is preaching; "preaching that Jesus was the Son of God", Moffatt. It seems likely that "Jesus" is the direct object of the verb "to preach", so the recitative element of the dependent statement is "this one = he is the Son of God"; "he proclaimed Jesus, namely that he is the Son of God." "Saul ... at once preached Jesus in the synagogues, saying that He is the Son of God", Berkeley, so also ESV, Barclay,

....

**του θεου** "[**Son**] of God" - [THIS ONE IS THE SON] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, relational. The phrase "Son of God" is a messianic title, as is **ο Χριστος**, "Christ / Messiah", v22, ie., both titles are synonymous. The title



identifies Jesus as the anointed one of Jewish messianic expectation. The phrase does not go so far as to imply a filial relationship with God the Father, but it may imply an association with divinity, or at least godlikeness.

## v21

Saul the persecutor (πορθησας, "destroyer, plunderer, violent oppressor") becomes Saul the proclaimer (ευαγγελιστης, a preacher of the gospel), and the people are amazed.

οἱ ακουντες [ακουω] pres. part. "[all] those who heard" - [BUT/AND ALL] THE ONES HEARING [WERE AMAZED. AND THEY WERE SAYING]. The participle, limited by the adjective "all", serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to amaze."

ουχ "[is]n't" - [IS] NOT [THIS one]. This negation is used in a question expecting a positive answer; "Isn't this the man," they said, 'who in Jerusalem carried out a merciless campaign against those who call on the name?', Barclay.

ὁ πορθησας [πορθω] aor. part. "who raised havoc" - THE ONE HAVING DESTROYED [INTO JERUSALEM]. The participle serves as a substantive, predicate nominative of the verb to-be.

τους επικαλουμενους [επικαλω] pres. mid. part. "those who call on" - THE ONES CALLING UPON [THE NAME]. The participle serves as a substantive, accusative object of the participle "having destroyed." As in 9:14, those calling on "the name", are those who call on the person of Jesus / the Lord / God. As such, it serves as a common descriptor for the faithful; they are the saved ones; "wreaked havoc in Jerusalem among the believers", Peterson.

εις + acc. "-" - [AND HAS COME HERE] INTO = FOR [THIS purpose]. Here expressing purpose / end-view.

ινα + subj. "to [take them]" - THAT [HE MIGHT TAKE THEM]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that ..."

δεδεμενους [δew] perf. mid. part. "as prisoners" - HAVING BEEN BOUND [UPON = BEFORE THE CHIEF PRIESTS]? The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object αυτους, "them", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "them"; "to bring them bound before the chief priests", ESV.

## v22

"Their suspicions didn't slow Saul down for even a minute. His momentum was up now and he ploughed straight into the opposition, disarming the Damascus Jews and trying to show them that this Jesus was the Messiah", Peterson.

**μαλλον** adv. "[grew] **more and more [powerful]**" - [BUT/AND, SAUL] MORE [WAS MADE STRONG AND WAS CONFUSING = CONFOUNDING THE JEWS]. Comparative adverb used to strengthen the imperfect verb "to be strong"; "he increased all the more in power", Cassirer.

**τους κατοικουντας** pres. part. "**living [in Damascus]**" - THE ONES DWELLING [IN DAMASCUS]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Jews"; "the Jews who lived in Damascus", ESV.

**συμβιβαζων [συμβιβαζω]** pres. part. "**by proving**" - ADVISING = DEMONSTRATING. The participle is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, as NIV; "by demonstrating", Cassirer, or better, "proving", ESV, Berkeley, .....

**οτι "that"** - THAT [THIS ONE IS THE CHRIST]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Saul was "demonstrating" to the Damascene Jews.

## v23

ii] Growing opposition in Damascus, v23-25. As the Lord promised, Paul's mission to take the gospel to the ends of the world, comes with suffering, 9:16. So, trouble ensues, but the spread of the gospel cannot be confined. In time terms, Luke's temporal phrase "when was fulfilled many days" = "after a considerable period of time", takes us past Saul's initial ministry in Damascus and his *sabbatical* in Arabia, to the end of his ministry in Damascus. As already noted, the exact sequence of events is somewhat unclear.

**ως "after"** - [BUT/AND] AS = WHEN, WHILE [MANY DAYS WERE FULFILLED]. Here the conjunction is temporal, introducing a temporal clause.

**ανελειν [αναρειω]** aor. inf. "**to kill**" - [THE JEWS ADVISED = PLOTTED] TO KILL [HIM]. The infinitive is best classified as complementary, so Culy and Kellum, but it may also be treated as recitative, introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech, where the infinitive serves to express what the Jews determined as they "counselled, advised = plotted" together; "they conspired together to murder / that they would murder him." "The Jews hatched a plot against his life", REB.

## 24

"It did not take Saul long to uncover the plot. They had put every gate in the city under twenty-four hour a day surveillance, in hopes of capturing and lynching him", Junkins.

**τω Σαυλω [ος]** dat. "**Saul**" - [BUT/AND, THE PLOT OF THEM WAS MADE KNOWN] TO SAUL. Dative of indirect object. The genitive **αυτων**, "of them", is adjectival, possessive, "their plot", or verbal, subjective, "the plot *hatched by* them."

τε και "[day] and [night]" - [BUT/AND THEY WERE WATCHING AND = ALSO THE GATES] BOTH [OF DAY] AND [OF NIGHT]. Correlative construction, coordinating "day" and "night". The genitives, "night" and "day", are temporal.

ὅπως + subj. "in order to kill [him]" - THAT [THEY MIGHT DESTROY, KILL = MURDER HIM]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose, as NIV.

## v25

Paul also speaks of his escape from Damascus in 2Corinthians 11:33, although he uses it as an example of his weakness.

αυτου gen. pro. "his [followers]" - [BUT/AND THE DISCIPLES] OF HIM. A variant αυτον, "him", exists, but it is not well supported, giving the sense "the disciples having taken him during the night." Even though the NT usually only refers to Jesus' disciples, Metzger still opts for αυτον, as do Packer, Haenchen, ...; "his converts", NEB.

λαβοντες [λαμβανω] aor. part. "took *him*" - HAVING TAKEN *him*. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to let down."

νυκτος [υξ υκτος] gen. "by night" - OF NIGHT. The genitive is adverbial, temporal, "during *the* night."

χαλασαντες [χαλαω] aor. part. "lowered [him]" - [THEY LET DOWN HIM] LOWERING [IN A BASKET]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as either instrumental, expressing means, "by lowering *him*", or modal, expressing manner.

δια + gen. "through [*an opening in the wall*]" - THROUGH [THE WALL]. Local, expressing space; "through" in spatial terms, although some translations opt for "over the wall", REB, Barclay, .... In 2Cor.11:33, Paul says he was lowered through (δια + gen.) a θυριδος, "opening = window" in the wall. Barrett argues that it is unlikely that Luke has used Paul's second letter to the Corinthians as his source for this story.

## v26

iii] Saul's visit to Jerusalem, v26-30: Given Saul's history, he is not warmly welcomed by the members of *the Way* when he arrives in Jerusalem. On the occasion Saul had gone after the church, he was arresting men and women alike. Barnabas intervenes and takes Saul to see the apostles. As Peterson D notes, if the apostles give Saul the seal of approval then the wider Christian community will follow. Accepted as a genuine believer, Saul then sets to work, preaching the gospel and συνεθηται, "debating, arguing, disputing" with his old friends, the Hellenists. Again, there is a violent reaction, and the αδελφοι, "brothers = believers", arrange a quick exit, back home in Tarsus, a town in Cilicia, southeast Asia Minor.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

παραγενομενος [παραγινομαι] aor. part. "**when he came**" - HAVING COME [INTO JERUSALEM]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

κολλασθαι [κολλω] pres. mid. inf. "[**he tried**] to join" - [HE WAS ATTEMPTING, TRYING] TO BE UNITED TO, JOINED TO, ASSOCIATED WITH. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to try."

τοις μαθηταις [ης ου] dat. "**the disciples**" - THE DISCIPLES [AND ALL WERE AFRAID OF HIM]. Dative of direct object after the infinitive, "to be joined to".

πιστευοντες [πιστευω] pres. part. "[**not**] believing" - [NOT] BELIEVING. The participle is adverbial, best treated as causal; "because they were unable to believe that he really was a disciple."

ὅτι "**that**" - THAT [HE IS A DISCIPLE]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they did not believe.

v27

As already noted, Luke's account does not fit exactly with Paul's account in Galatians 1:17-19. Paul tells us that the only apostle he met was Peter, but also the Lord's brother, James, and that it was three years after his conversion that he went up to Jerusalem.

επιλαβομενος [επιλαμβανω] aor. part. "**took hold**" - [BUT/AND BARNABAS] HAVING TAKEN HOLD OF [HIM AND BROUGHT *him* TOWARD THE APOSTLES]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to bring." We would expect an επι prefix participle like "having taken hold of" to take the genitive of direct object "him", but this verb often takes an accusative object, so αυτον rather than αυτου.

αυτοις dat. pro. "**[told] them**" - [AND TOLD] THEM. Dative of indirect object.

πως .... ὅτι "**how [.... and] that**" - HOW [IN = ON THE WAY = ROAD HE SAW THE LORD AND] THAT [HE SPOKE TO HIM]. Both conjunctions serve to introduce two conjoined object clauses for the verb "to tell" / dependent statements of indirect speech expressing what Barnabas is telling the apostles. Culy, quoting Porter G, *Idioms*, indicates that whereas ὅτι details content, πως provides general information about the content.

πως "**[and] how**" - [AND] HOW [IN DAMASCUS HE SPOKE BOLDLY]. As above.

εν "**in [the name of Jesus]**" - IN [THE NAME OF JESUS]. With respect to the action of preaching or baptising, more often than not, the phrase is introduced with a local εν, expressing sphere, metaphorical, "in *the sphere of* the name Jesus", or means, "by / with the name Jesus." Calvin was of the view that "the name" referred to the "the authority and power" of Jesus, adding that "We must not dream that there is magic virtue in the sound of the word." So, as Kellum puts it, speaking in " the name" of someone involves "speaking as an authorised

agent." Yet, when referring to "the name" of someone, we are primarily referring to their person - a person's name represents the person themselves. On many occasions, preaching "in the name of Jesus" (so also baptising / immersing; see *Water Baptism in Acts*, 2:37-41) virtually means preaching the gospel, preaching about Jesus, his person and works = he is Lord - "the name that is above every name", Phil.2:9. So, speaking "in the name of Jesus" primarily means speaking about Jesus, although Barrett argues for something stronger; "it is to speak on his behalf, almost in his person." Culy suggests that the sense here is that the person who opposed Jesus now speaks "in favour" of him.

## v28

Again, Paul's statement in Galatians that "he was not known by sight to the churches of Christ in Judea" does not quite fit with Luke's account here.

ἦν ..... εισπορευομενος [εισπορευομαι] aor. part. "**moved about freely**" - [AND] HE WAS ENTERING [AND GOING OUT WITH THEM INTO JERUSALEM]. Along with the participle, "going out", this participle, with the imperfect verb to-be, forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, probably emphasising aspect, i.e., ongoing movement about Jerusalem. The terminology is used to express free movement, so Zerwick; "Saul freely moved around Jerusalem, with no questions asked." Luke uses this terminology to describe Jesus' ministry, his getting-about, here-and-there, to preach the gospel. So, it's probably more about getting-about than moving-freely - Saul, like Jesus, is busy communicating the gospel, when and where he can.

παρησαιζομενος [παρησαιζομαι] pres. part. "**speaking boldly**" - SPEAKING BOLDLY [IN THE NAME OF THE LORD]. This participle may link with the verb to-be ἦν to form a third periphrastic construction, although it seems more likely to be adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of Saul's getting about, as NIV; he is getting about speaking boldly. As indicated in v27, "in the name of the Lord" may express the authority by which he is speaking boldly, but content seems more likely; Saul is boldly proclaiming the gospel.

## v29

Saul sets out to engage with the very people who led the attack on Stephen. Three years before, Saul was associated with the Hellenists, and was possibly even their leader, so, his speaking for the sect that he once persecuted is inevitably going to cause trouble.

τε και "[he talked] and [debated]" - AND [HE WAS] BOTH [SPEAKING] AND [DEBATING TOWARD = WITH THE HELLENISTS]. Correlating construction, coordinating "speaking" and "debating".

**ανελειν** [αναιρω] aor. inf. "to kill" - [BUT/AND THEY WERE ATTEMPTING] TO DESTROY, KILL [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to attempt."

### v30

Given that Saul is about to face violence from the Hellenists, some of the "brothers" (probably used here of believers, the brotherhood, cf., 1:15) whisk him off to Caesarea, and then (possibly by boat) to his home town in Tarsus. Stott says of Saul's early years, that "it was Christ-centred, driven by the Spirit, courageous and costly."

**επιγοντες** [επιγινωσκω] aor. part. "when [the believers] learned of this" - [BUT/AND] HAVING KNOWN, [THE BROTHERS LEAD DOWN HIM INTO CAESAREA AND SENT AWAY HIM INTO TARSUS]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV, although, as is often the case, a causal sense is also present. "When the friends learned of the plot, they got him out", Peterson.

### v31

iv] *The Way* flourishes peacefully in Palestine, v31. This verse serves as another key summary of the state of affairs for the Jewish sect known as *the Way*, cf., 2:41-47, 4:32-37, 5:12-16, 6:7.. The church, as it established itself in Jerusalem, and as it spread into Palestine, suffered persecution, but now it is at peace (because of Saul's removal!!!!). "The concluding words imply that the community continued to enjoy the sense of the Holy Spirit's protection when the persecution was over", Haenchen. "The overall impression is of a period of relative peace, consolidation and steady growth", Dunn.

Luke describes the state of affairs that existed in the church with five descriptors:

- **ειχεν ειρηνην**, "having peace = at peace." For Luke, the gospel brings with it peace (Lk.1:79, 2:14, 29, 7:50, .....), peace with God and with mankind. It seems that Luke is describing the natural state of affairs for the church.
- **επληθυνετο**, "it was increasing"; here referring to a growth in numbers, as in 6:1, 7, 7:17. "It greatly increased in the numbers of its followers", Cassirer. Although this verb sits at the end of the verse and is often translated that way, as NIV, it likely stands with **ειχεν**.
- **οικοδομουμενη**, "being built up". The church is going through a time of founding, formation, stabilisation, ..... in organisation, but spiritual development may be intended, so, "the church ..... was at peace and became established", Goodspeed, or the church is "being edified", "built itself up *in the faith*", Cassirer.

- **πορευομενη**, "going = walking = living" - used here in the sense of conducting one's life - as in "a way of life".
- **τω φοβω**/, "in fear" of the Lord = "in respect for the Lord / its piety."
- **τη παρακλησει**, "in encouragement, comfort, consoling" = "encouraged by, comforted by, upheld by, ....", possibly "under the influence of ....", so Barrett. Referring to a spiritual encouragement provided by the Holy Spirit; "The Holy Spirit was with them, strengthening them", Peterson.

The relationship between the two main verbs, the two coordinated participles, and the two coordinated dative / prepositional modifiers, in this sentence, is somewhat unclear. Numerous arrangements are proposed; the following is but one possibility, cf., Bock:

The church

was having peace and

was increasing (in numbers)

being built up = and as a result it was built up

(established, or edified)

walking / living = and as a result was walking / living

in (sphere of) fear of (toward) the Lord, ie., godliness

in (sphere of) encouragement of (by) the Spirit.

**μεν ουν** "-" - THEREFORE. Transitional. The conjunction **ουν** is inferential, expressing a logical conclusion, while **μεν** indicates the addition of a further linked element to the previous verses; See **μεν ουν** 1:6.

**καθ [κατα]** + gen. "**throughout**" - [THE CHURCH] THROUGHOUT [ALL OF JUDEA AND GALILEE AND SAMARIA HAD PEACE]. Spatial, distributive, as NIV.

**οικοδομουμενη [οικοδομω]** pres. mid. part. "**was strengthened**" - BEING BUILT UP [AND GOING ON, WALKING = LIVING]. Both participles, "being built up" and "going on", are adverbial, probably best treated as modifying the coordinated sense of the imperfect verbs "were having [peace]" and "were increasing"; "the church ..... was at peace and growing numerically". The modification is unclear. Bruce Gk suggests that they are modal, expressing manner. Culy and Kellum suggest that they are temporal. Yet, it seems more likely that they are consecutive, expressing result, so Bock; "The church ..... was at peace and growing numerically, and as a result was becoming established / was being built up *in the faith* and going forward in respect toward the Lord and the encouragement of / offered by the Holy Spirit."

**τω φοβω [ος]** "**in the fear**" - IN THE FEAR. Here with the sense "respect". As also for the dative "in the comfort", the dative may be adverbial, modal, expressing manner, so Culy, although it may be better to follow Kellum who

suggests that they are local, sphere, "in *the sphere of* a respect for the Lord and in *the sphere of* the encouragement given by the Holy Spirit."

του κυριου [ος] gen. "**of the Lord**" - OF THE LORD. The genitive is adjectival, probably objective; "respect for/ toward the Lord."

του ... πνευματος [α ατος] gen. "**by the [Holy] Spirit**" - [AND IN THE ENCOURAGEMENT] OF THE [HOLY] SPIRIT. The genitive is adjectival, probably subjective, "encouragement *offered by* the Holy Spirit", as NIV.



## 9:32-43

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### x] Aeneas and Dorcas

##### Synopsis

Luke's story swings back from Saul to Peter as he recounts Peter's travels from Samaria back to Jerusalem along the Judean plain. Luke records two significant healings undertaken by Peter: First, Aeneas, a paralysed man living in Lydda; Second, Dorcas, a woman living in Joppa and renowned for her "good works and charity", but who has "become ill and died."

##### Teaching

Peter's messianic miracles authenticate his apostolic ministry, and thus the authority by which he will include the Gentile Cornelius in *the way*, which inclusion, by implication, authenticates Paul's Gentile ministry.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-7.

ii] Background:

- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

iii] Structure: *Aeneas and Dorcas*:

The healing of Aeneas, v32-35;

Setting, v32;

The healing, v33-35;

The healing of Tabitha / Dorcas, v36-43:

Setting, v36-38;

The healing, v39-43.

iv] Interpretation:

Before the book of Acts begins to focus on the gospel's move beyond Palestine and Saul's part in that move, Luke outlines Peter's ministry among the Jews of Judea, and in particular, his part in the inclusion of Gentiles in *the way*, 10:1-11:18. Peter is visiting existing Jewish Christian communities and has yet to confront the issue of Gentile conversions.

In the passage before us, Luke records two significant healings by Peter. For Luke, the stories indirectly serve to authenticate Saul's / Paul's Gentile ministry, of the gospel's move from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. The miracles Peter performs are Christ-like / messianic, and as such, they authenticate his gospel ministry, and thus the authority by which he

includes the Gentile Cornelius in *the Way*. The radical inclusion of Gentiles in *the Way* is not down to Saul the interloper, but rather down to one of the most respected of apostles - a man whose miracles align with that of Jesus.

Luke gives us a detailed description of the two healings, probably to maintain continuity between messianic signs which are evident in the early church, and the signs evident in the ministry of Jesus, but also, signs which are evident in the prophetic ministry of Elijah and Elisha (note the parallels). Note also the resultant conversions, v35 and 42.

v] Homiletics: *Living and Loving*



The raising of Dorcas images the raising of the widow's son by Elijah in 1Kings 17:17-24, and the raising of the Shunemmite woman's son by Elisha in 2Kings 4:8-37. It is a significant sign heralding the new age of God's kingdom in the ministry of Peter and the early church, in much the same way as the raising of Jairus's daughter by Jesus heralded the

coming of the kingdom. The healing of Dorcas, as with Aeneas, signalled the realisation of Israel's messianic hope of a coming kingdom where the dead find new life and the poor and widowed can rejoice in plenty. Of course, the significance of the sign is only for Jewish eyes. The miracle "becomes known all over Joppa, and many people (most probably Jews) believed in the Lord." You may remember that with Jesus' signs, people tended to be "amazed", but now they believe. When the dead are raised and the widows rejoice, then is the kingdom in our midst.

Our heritage in the Western church derives more from the Gentile mission of Saul than the Jewish mission of Peter. Although messianic signs were for the children of Israel, the evidence of the kingdom for Gentiles is still to be found in the life of the living dead and in the joy of the broken and destitute. God's people are a people set free by the Lord's transforming power; only a living God can empower new life. Only God can transform death into life, sadness into joy, carelessness into compassion.

In the post-Christian era of the secular city, creeping Marxism is slowly whittling away at the remaining elements of Christian civilisation. In the engulfing darkness, the Christian fellowship is called to be a light set on a hill, a radiant transformation of death unto life, sadness unto joy and

carelessness unto compassion - a gospel proclaimed not just in word, but sign.

Image: [freebibleimages.org](http://freebibleimages.org)

### Text - 9:32

Peter performs two healings on his way to Caesarea, v32-43: i] The healing of Aeneas, v32-35. a) Setting, v32: Luke now records Peter's itinerant ministry in Judea. Lydda is the Old Testament town of Lod, and obviously there is a community of believers in the village, possibly converts of Philip's evangelistic preaching.

**εγενετο δε** "-" - BUT/AND IT HAPPENED, BECAME. Transitional, indicating a major step in the narrative; see **εγενετο δε**, 5:7. The rest of the sentence, an infinitival clause formed by the infinitive **κατελθειν**, "to come down", stands as the subject of the impersonal verb "it happened", with "Peter" serving as the accusative subject of the infinitive; "Peter, *who was* passing through all (travelling all over), to come down to (visit) the saints, those living in Lydda, happened." "It happened that Peter visited one place after another and eventually came to God's holy people living in Lydda", NJB.

**διερχομενον [διερχομαι]** pres. part. "as [Peter] travelled" - [PETER] PASSING THROUGH. Often treated as adverbial, temporal, as NIV, so Kellum; "During his travels among them all", Barclay. Culy argues that it is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Peter"; "Peter, who was travelling all over." Barrett suggests the word is used of a missionary journey.

**παντων** adj. "[about] the country" - [THROUGH] ALL. The sense is obscure, but either "through the whole region", or "amongst them all (ie., all the local Christian communities)", Barclay; "many villages in Samaria", TH..

**και προς** + acc. "-" - [TO COME DOWN] ALSO TOWARD. The construction is adverbial, adjunctive + spatial, direction. The sense is a little confusing.

**τους αγιους** "the Lord's people" - THE SAINTS. "Christians", but obviously "Jewish Christians" in particular.

**τους κατοικουντας [κατοικεω]** pres. part. "-" - THE ONES DWELLING [IN LYDDA]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "saints"; "the saints who were dwelling."

### v33

b) The healing, v33-35: When Peter arrived in Lydda, **ευρεν**, "he found" ("stumbled upon", Kellum), a paralysed man. Aeneas, paralysed for eight years (or possibly paralysed since he was eight years old), is healed with a word of authority and told to "take care of" his "mat" - in plain English, "get up and make your bed" - "get up, set your table and get yourself something to eat." Luke often

notes the need of nourishment for the sick. News of the healing spreads, opening the gospel to other scattered Jewish communities.

ονοματι [α ατος] dat. "**named**" - [BUT/AND HE FOUND THERE A CERTAIN MAN] BY NAME [AENEAS]. Dative of reference / respect; "with regard to his name, Aeneas." "There he met a man named Aeneas", CEV.

ην παραλελυμενος [παραλυω] perf. pas. part. "**a paralytic**" - [WHO] WAS HAD BEEN PARALYSED. The perfect participle, with the imperfect verb to-be, forms a periphrastic pluperfect construction, probably serving to emphasise durative aspect; "There he found a man, Aeneas by name, who, being paralysed, had been lying helpless on his bed for eight years", Cassirer.

κατακειμενον [κατακειμαι] pres. part. "**had been bedridden**" - LAYING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, modifying / limiting "a certain man / Aeneas"; "who was paralysed", ESV.

επι + gen. "-" - UPON, ON [A MAT, BED]. Spatial.

εξ [εκ] + gen. "**for [eight years]**" - FROM [YEARS EIGHT]. This preposition, when used of time, expresses duration, "for", as NIV, rather than "from the age of eight."

#### v34

αυτω dat. pro. "**to him**" - [AND PETER SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

ιαται [ιαομαι] pres. "**heals [you]**" - [AENEAS, JESUS CHRIST] HEALS [YOU]. A punctiliar present tense, although a variant pointing is perfect, "has healed you."

αναστηθι και στρωσον "**take care of / roll up [your] mat**" - [GET UP AND] SPREAD / ARRANGE / FURNISH. The object of the imperative verb "to spread" is not supplied and so we have to guess. The words could mean either "get up and make your bed", REB, in the sense that he will no longer need it, or "get up and set your table (for something to eat)."

σεαυτω dat. ref. pro. "**your [mat]**" - TO YOURSELF. Dative of interest, advantage; "for yourself."

ευθως adv. "**immediately**" - [AND] IMMEDIATELY [HE GOT UP]. A typical feature of miracle stories; the healing was immediate.

#### v35

The NIV shapes the verse with a focus on the pronoun οἱτινες, "who" = "these", the nominative subject of the verb "to turn"; those living in Lydda and the region of "the Sharon", namely, the coastal plain between Joppa and Caesarea.

οι κατοικουντες [κατοικεω] pres. part. "**[all] those who lived in**" - THE ONES DWELLING [IN LUDDA AND THE SHARON SAW HIM]. The participle, modified

/ limited by the adjective "all", serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to see."

**επεστρεψαν [επιστρεφω]** aor. "**turned to**" - [WHO = THESE] TURNED TOWARD [THE LORD]. A conversion word. Often, throughout the gospels, crowds react with amazement to miracles, but here we have them turning to the Lord - the new age is upon us and people are deciding for the kingdom.

**επι** + acc. "-" - UPON = TO [THE LORD]. Spatial; a stylistic use of the preposition, given the **επι** prefix of the verb "to turn."

### v36

ii] The healing of Tabitha / Dorcas, v36-43. a) Setting, v36-38: Joppa is on the Judean coast, a Hellenistic town. Tabitha, Aramaic, with the Greek translation, Dorcas, means an animal of the deer family, eg., a Gazelle. The Christian community at Joppa (modern Jaffa), north west of Lydda on the Mediterranean coast, hears about the healing of Aeneas and sends a delegation of two men (delegations tend to be made up of two men) to see whether Peter can come and visit them, given that a beloved member of the fellowship has fallen sick and died. She was a person greatly loved for her charitable works.

**εν** + dat. "**in [Joppa]**" - [BUT/AND] IN [JOPPA THERE WAS A CERTAIN DISCIPLE. Local, expressing space; "living in Joppa."

**ονοματι [α ατος]** dat. "**named**" - IN NAME [TABITHA]. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect; "with respect to her name."

**διερμηνευομενη [διερμηνευω]** pres. part. "**[which] when translated [is Dorcas] / in Greek her name [is Dorcas]**" - [WHICH] BEING TRANSLATED [MEANS DORCAS]. The participle is adverbial, best classified as temporal; "Her Greek name was Dorcas, which means 'deer'", CEV.

**πληρης** adj. "**always [doing]**" - [THIS one = SHE WAS] FULL. Predicate adjective. "Abounding in kindness."

**εργων [ον]** gen. "**doing [good]**" - OF [GOOD] WORKS. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / content, expressing what she was full of, namely, "voluntary acts of love", Calvin.

**ων** gen. pro, "-" - [SHE DID] WHICH. The pronoun is the direct object of the verb "to do", genitive by attraction to **εργων**, "works".

### v37

Note 1 Kings 17:19.

**δε εγενετο [γινομαι]** aor. "-" - BUT/AND IT HAPPENED. Transitional; here introducing the next scene as part of narrative development.

**εν** + dat. "**about [that time]**" - IN [THOSE DAYS]. Temporal use of the preposition; "during the time Peter was in the area", Peterson.

**ασθηνεσασαν [ασθενεω]** aor. part. "**[she] became sick [and died]**" - [SHE] HAVING BECOME SICK [TO DIE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the infinitive "to die"; "she to become sick and to die" = "she became ill and died", ESV. The infinitive **αποθανειν**, "to die", and its attendant participle "having become sick", and its accusative subject "she", serve as the subject of the impersonal verb "it happened"; "she becoming ill and died happened in those days" = "It so happened that she fell ill and died at that time", Cassirer.

**λουσαντες [λυω]** aor. part. "**her body was washed**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING WASHED *her body*. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "they put", as NIV, or adverbial, temporal; "after they washed her body ...", Moffatt. Anointing was usually also practised, although this is not mentioned.

**ὑπερῶφ [ον]** "**an upstairs room**" - [THEY PUT HER IN] AN UPPER ROOM. Possibly a Christian meeting place, or an appropriate place to store a dead body.

### v38

**ουσης [ειμι]** "**[Lydda] was .... so**" - [BUT/AND, LYDDA] BEING [NEAR TO JOPPA]. The genitive participle of the verb to-be and its genitive subject "Lydda" form a genitive absolute construction which is probably causal, "Since Lydda was near Joppa", Barclay. Often **εγγυς**, "near to", will take a genitive, but here with the dative, "near to Joppa", BAGD 1b.

**ακουσαντες [ακουω]** aor. part. "**when [the disciples] heard**" - [THE DISCIPLES] HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal; "the disciples, when they heard that Peter was near, sent two men."

**οτι "that"** - THAT [PETER IS IN IT]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they heard, namely "Peter is in it (Lydda)."

**παρακαλουντες [παρακαλεω]** pres. part. "**urged**" - [THEY SENT TWO MEN TOWARD HIM] CALLING, SUMMONING, ASKING, REQUESTING, EXHORTING. The participle is adverbial, probably expressing purpose, "in order to ask him." Possibly "urged", but this is reading a bit into it. Also, the "please come at once!" is a bit strong. The Greek reads "do not delay to come to us", but this is just a polite way of saying "please come to us."

**μη οκνησης [οκνεω]** aor. subj. "**please [come] at once!**" - DO NOT SHRINK FROM = HESITATE = DELAY. A negated hortatory subjunctive.

**διελθειν [διερχομαι]** aor. inf. "**come**" - TO COME. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the main verb "to hesitate".

**ἕως** "-" - UNTIL = TO [US]. Expressing extent up to, here spatial; "please come to us without delay", ESV.

v39

b) The healing, v39-43: Following the custom of the time, Dorcas is laid out in an upper room and ministered to by mourning friends and relatives. When Peter arrives, he finds that she is surrounded by many of the widows she had helped over the years. They proudly show off the clothing Dorcas has made for them, in fact, they are probably wearing some of the clothing. Peter asks them to leave and raises Dorcas from the dead, using much the same language that Jesus used when he raised Jairus' daughter - "Talitha qumi" for Peter's "Tabitha qumi." Her eyes open, and she sits up. Peter then presents her to the widows, along with the other Jewish believers ("the saints"). The miraculous sign prompts many citizens of Joppa to put their trust in Jesus. Peter stays on in the town, living with Simon the tanner. His religious scruples are obviously fading, given that tanning is by no means a ritually clean profession. It has been suggested that tanning is actually Peter's profession and that fishing is a sideline. Both healings are Christ-like and so authenticate Peter's apostolic ministry.

**αναστας [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "-" - [BUT/AND] HAVING ARISEN. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to go together with"; "Peter rose and went with them." Possibly expressing haste, "straight away, Peter went with them", CEV.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**them**" - [PETER WENT WITH] THEM. Dative of direct object after a **συν** prefix verb "to go together with."

**παραγενομενον [παραγινομαι]** aor. part. "**when he arrived**" - [THEY LED UP WHO] HAVING ARRIVED [INTO THE UPSTAIRS ROOM]. The participle is usually treated as adverbial, introducing a temporal clause, as NIV. None-the-less, the presence of the accusative relative pronoun **ὃν**, serving as the object of the verb **ανηγαγον**, "they brought up", may indicate that the participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting **ὃν**, "who" = the one taken to the upper room, i.e., Peter; "they brought up to the upper room, him (**ὃν**, "who", namely Peter) who had just arrived"; see Culy.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**[stood around] him**" - [AND ALL THE WIDOWS STOOD BY] HIM. Dative of direct object after the **παρα** prefix verb "to stand beside."

**κλαιουσαι [κλαιω]** pres. part. "**crying**" - CRYING, WEEPING [AND SHOWING TUNICS AND GARMENTS]. As with **επιδεικνυμεναι**, "showing", the participle is adverbial, best taken as modal, expressing the manner in which the action of the verb "stood around" is accomplished. The middle voice, used for "showing", possibly indicates that the widows are showing off the gifts by actually wearing them, or possibly the middle voice is expressing something like "showing with pride."

ουσα [ειμι] "**while she was still [with them]**" - [AS MANY AS DORCAS WAS MAKING] BEING [WITH THEM]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV. The preposition **μετα**, "with", expresses association, "with them."

#### v40

Parallels continue with Jesus' healing of the daughter of Jairus, Mark 5:40, 41 (note how the parallels are closer to Mark's account than Luke's account!), but also of Elisha's healing of the dead boy.

**εκβαλων [εκβαλλω]** aor. part. "**[Peter] sent them [all] out**" - [BUT/AND PETER] HAVING CAST OUT [OUTSIDE EVERYONE, AND HAVING PUT UPON = FALLEN UPON THE KNEES, HE PRAYED]. The two participles, "having put out" and "having put upon = fallen upon", may simply be taken as attendant on the verb "to pray", but often treated as adverbial, temporal; "Then Peter put them out of the room, knelt down and prayed", Williams. Barrett suggests that the use of the masculine **παντας**, "everyone", indicates that there were men in the room along with the women. .

**επιστρεψας [επιστρεφω]** aor. part. "**turning**" - [AND] HAVING TURNED [TOWARD THE BODY HE SAID, TABITHA, GET UP, AND SHE OPENED THE EYES OF HER]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "said", "he turned ..... and said", but often treated as adverbial, temporal, "Then he turned to the body of Dorcas and said", CEV.

**ιδουσα [ειδον]** aor. part. "**seeing**" - SEEING. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "when she saw Peter, she sat up", Williams.

#### v41

Helping her to her feet, Peter presents her to the believers with the same words used of Jesus' resurrection appearance in 1:3.

**δους [διδωμι]** aor. part. "**he took**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING GIVEN. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to raise up" (help her to her feet)", as NIV, but possibly adverbial, temporal, "On giving her his hand, he helped her to her feet."

**αυτη** dat. pro. "**her**" - [*the = his HAND*] TO HER. Dative of indirect object.

**φωνησας [φωνεω]** aor. part. "**[then] he called**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING CALLED [THE SAINTS AND THE WIDOWS]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, "After calling the widows and other believers *into the room* ...."

**ζωσαν [ζωω]** pres. part. "**alive**" - [HE PRESENTED HER] LIVING, ALIVE. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "her" standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "her"; "he presented (verb) her (object) living (complement)" - See Wallace 182.



#### v42

Again, rather than amazement, belief is the response of the general population to the miracle - a kingdom realised! Their belief is not in Peter the wonder-worker, but in the Lord, God's anointed risen-one.

**καθ** [**κατα**] + gen. "**all over [Joppa]**" - [BUT/AND IT BECAME KNOWN] DOWN FROM, THROUGHOUT [WHOLE, ALL JOPPA]. Here with a distributive sense, "throughout".

**επι** "**[believed] in [the Lord]**" - [AND MANY BELIEVED] UPON [THE LORD]. This preposition, followed by the accusative, takes the sense of movement onto something. Commonly translated as "believe in", but the sense is "came to rely on." Note the other common prepositions used of belief in Jesus: **εις**, movement toward, "believe into" and **εν**, static inclusion in, "belief in."

#### v43

It is unclear whether Luke is making a point here, or just relating tradition, given that tanning is regarded by the Pharisees as an unclean profession. The issue of ritual cleanliness sparks the conflict between Paul and Peter when Peter withdraws from his *unclean* Gentile brothers in Antioch, cf., Gal.2:11ff.

**εγενετο δε** "-" - BUT/AND IT HAPPENED. Transitional; see 5:7.

**μειναι** [**μενω**] aor. inf. "**he remained**" - [*Peter*] TO ABIDE, REMAIN, CONTINUE [IN JOPPA SUFFICIENT = MANY DAYS]. The accusative subject of the infinitive, namely "Peter", is assumed. The infinitive forms an infinitival clause which functions as the subject of the verb **εγενετο**, "it happened"; "abiding in Joppa with a certain Simon a tanner happened" = "so it came about that Peter stayed ...", Williams.

**παρα** + dat. "**with [a tanner named Simon]**" - WITH [A CERTAIN SIMON A TANNER]. Here expressing association; "with".

## 10:1-16

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### ix] Peter's inclusive vision of *the Way*

##### Synopsis

Cornelius, a Gentile centurion and God-fearer, receives a vision in answer to his prayers. He is to seek out a man named Peter staying with a certain person named Simon in the town of Joppa. In response to the vision, Cornelius sends two of his servants and a trusted officer. About noon the next day, Peter is at prayer when he receives a vision of unclean animals lowered before him, along with a divine command to kill and eat. Peter responds by saying that he has never eaten profane foods, but an angelic voice responds, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." This happens three times.

##### Teaching

- God plays no favourites, 10:34-35.
- Righteousness is apart from the law

##### Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-7. We now come to a major turning point in Acts where the gospel begins to break out of its Jewish / Palestinian frame. This section consists of two major parts: The conversion of Cornelius and his family, 10:1-48; Saul's report of the conversion to the church in Jerusalem, 11:1-18.

Gaventa offers an eight part structure in two parts for this major section:

##### The Visions:

- The Lord directs Cornelius to seek out Peter, 10:1-8;
- Peter's vision, 10:9-16;
- Peter meets with Cornelius' delegation, v17-23a;
- Peter's meeting with Cornelius, v23b-29;

##### The Speeches:

- Cornelius addresses Peter, v30-33;
- Peter preaches to Cornelius and friends, 10:34-43;
- The Holy Spirit came upon them, 10:44-48;
- Confirmation by the Jerusalem church, 11:1-18.

##### ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;

##### iii] Structure: *Peter's inclusive vision of the Way*:

- The Lord directs Cornelius to seek out Peter, v1-8;
- Peter's vision, v9-16.

iv] Interpretation:

The size and placement of 10:1-11:18 indicates its importance for Luke. It is, as Dunn puts it, "the second major insertion into the history of Hellenist Christian expansion which had begun with chapter 8." Luke's account serves to authenticate the extension of the gospel from Jew to Gentile. As with the conversion of Saul, both Cornelius and Peter are party to divine visions and apostolic confirmation by the church in Jerusalem. And significantly, with Cornelius and his family, "the Holy Spirit descended upon them, just as it did upon us (the disciples) at first", 11:14.

The first two elements of the account, v1-16, are a precursor to the main event. Two angelic visions set the stage for the pivotal elements of the narrative, namely, the proclamation of the gospel to a Gentile and his family, their reception of the gospel along with the infilling of the Spirit and baptism, and the confirmation of God's will in the matter by the leaders of the Christian church in Jerusalem. Luke's intention is simple, he sets out to establish that God has not only intended all along that Gentiles should be included as full members of the kingdom, but that he has initiated that inclusion. So, Luke records "the process of human decision-making as the church tries to catch up to God's initiative", Johnson.

*From Law to Grace:* In narrating the extension of the gospel from Jew to Gentile, Luke exposes the more significant theological shift of law to grace. Not only does Peter, and the church in Jerusalem, have to accept that God has always intended Gentile membership in the kingdom, with full participation in the covenant promises, but also that holiness (sanctified status) in the sight of God is ultimately not related to a person's righteousness under God's law (here in the terms of defilement due to birth, association, non-kosher foods, ie., being a Gentile).

Matters of outward defilement in the Law of Moses point to a righteousness that cannot be done, a righteousness given as a gift of God's grace, through faith, a faith like Abraham's. In fulfilment of the covenant / inauguration of the kingdom in Christ, the purity regulations of Israel's cult are fulfilled with an inward purity given as a gift of grace through faith. So, Levitical purity-laws no longer apply

"Luke demonstrates that the conversion of the first Gentile required the conversion of the church as well. Indeed, in Luke's account, Peter and company undergo a change that is more wrenching by far than the change experienced by Cornelius", Gaventa, *Overtures to Biblical Theology*, 20, p109, Fortress, 1986. To share a meal with a man like Cornelius, and through baptism, include him as a full member of *the Way*, Peter is going

to have to radically adjust his understanding, not just of defilement, but of God's law as a whole.

The issue of defilement in Mark 7:14-23 is very interesting, when compared with Peter's natural reluctance to associate with an unclean Gentile like Cornelius - only a powerful vision will overcome his prejudice. Jesus makes it very clear that externals do not make a person unclean, but rather, it is the internal machinations of the heart, "evil devisings which issue in degraded acts and vices", Taylor. Defilement resides in our very being, and it is only by an act of divine grace, apart from law-obedience, that can make a person clean / holy.

Peter is like all of us; sometimes it takes a long time for the penny to drop. As Paul tells us in Galatians 2:11-16, he has to confront Peter over the very issue of defilement when he withdrew fellowship from the *unclean* Gentile brethren in Antioch (probably over a pork spareribs barbecue with sweet and sour sauce!!). Of course, Peter was responding to the instructions promulgated by the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) which provided minimum requirements for Gentile believers in fellowship with Jews, eg., not eating food offered to idols, still containing blood, strangled, ..... Consideration for the *weaker* brother is the issue behind the instructions, but for Paul, they are a guide, and must not be treated as a rule that encourages a return to law-obedience for sanctification (ie., to restrain the sin of defilement), a rule which, in that case, inevitably destroyed fellowship rather than enhanced it - a bit like inclusion policies today that inevitably exclude people!

*Sources:* Little can be said on this subject, given the range of opinions from a historical source tradition preserved within the church in Jerusalem (Marshall, Fitzmyer, ...) to a creative idealising of an early Gentile convert (Hengel, ...). In fact, Dunn thinks that the first breakthrough of the gospel into the Gentile world is likely to have taken place in Antioch, but to authenticate this move, Luke has focused on Peter, a leading and respected representative of the twelve.

### **Text - 10:1**

Peter's inclusive vision of *the Way*, 10:1-16. i] The Lord directs Cornelius to seek out Peter, v1-8. The narrative begins with Cornelius, a Centurion in the Italian cohort (possibly one of six Centurions in the local unit, so Barrett), living in Caesarea, the capital of Judea and official seat of the Roman procurator (a mainly Gentile town); he is a God-fearer, a Gentile associated with the local synagogue, but not a full member, possibly retired and now a prominent Roman citizen. He is possibly Cornelius Sulla, a military leader who, it was noted in the

first century, freed thousands of slaves, so Longenecker. Luke tells us that he headed a family unit (inclusive of slaves / servants), regularly gave alms, and that he was a man of prayer. In a vision, Cornelius is instructed to seek out Peter.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

ονοματι [α ατος] dat. "**named [Cornelius]**" - [A CERTAIN MAN IN CAESAREA] BY NAME [CORNELIUS]. The dative is adverbial, expressing reference / respect; "with respect to his name, Cornelius."

εκ + gen. "**[a centurion] in**" - [A CENTURION, COMMANDER] FROM. Expressing source / origin, or serving as a partitive genitive, "a centurion of..."

της καλουμενης [καλεω] gen. pres. mid. part. "**what was known as**" - [COHORT, MILITARY UNIT] BEING CALLED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "cohort"; "the military unit which is called ..." "A captain in the Roman army regiment called 'The Italian Regiment', TEV.

ιταλικης [ος ης] gen. "**Italian**" - ITALIAN. Genitive complement of the genitive object "cohort" standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the object.

v2

When Luke says that Cornelius and his family were φοβουμενος τον θενον, "fearing God", he is probably (but not necessarily) referring to a class of Gentiles who, although not converted proselytes (circumcised and law-compliant), were still associated with the local synagogue, but without official status. The existence of an actual class of synagogue attenders known as God-fearers remains conjectural. Anyway, at least we can say that this Gentile was a man who, along with his extended family, respected God, and practised prayer and almsgiving.

φοβουμενος [φοβεω] pres. mid. part. "**[God-]fearing**" - [DEVOUT AND] FEARING [GOD]. Although without an article, it seems likely that the participle serves as a substantive and that along with "devout", stands in apposition to "a certain man", v1; "A certain man ..... devout and fearing God." "He was a devout man who, with his whole household, revered the true God, performed many a compassionate deed on behalf of the Jewish people, and was constantly offering prayer to God", Cassirer.

συν + dat. "-" - WITH [ALL THE HOUSE OF HIM]. Expressing association / accompaniment. The word οικος, "house", is used here of "household", a term which is used to cover Cornelius and his kinsmen, friends, and slaves / servants. Although reflecting a Hellenistic notion of extended family, Luke is primarily reflecting Biblical precedence, household inclusion that extends to the stranger within the gates. See *Salvation by households*, 10:44-48.

ποιων [ποιεω] pres. part. "he gave [generously]" - DOING [MUCH ALMS]. Again, although without an article, it seems likely that both participles "doing" and "praying" serve as substantives standing in apposition to "a certain man", v1.

τω λαω [ος] dat. "to those in need" - TO THE PEOPLE. Dative of interest, advantage.

του θεου [ος] gen. "to God" - [AND PRAYING TO] GOD. Genitive of direct object after the participle "praying to."

δια + gen. "regularly" - THROUGH [ALL]. Adverbial use of the preposition, temporal, taking the sense "always."

### v3

Cornelius receives an angelic visitor.

ὥσει περι "about" - ABOUT AROUND. Idiomatic construction expressing approximation, "just about", although there is no textual evidence to support this.

της ἡμερας [α] gen. "-" - [NINTH HOUR] OF THE DAY. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. This is an established time for prayer and aligns with the evening sacrifice at the Temple in Jerusalem. "About three o'clock one afternoon he saw perfectly clearly in a dream an angel of God", Phillips.

εν + dat. "-" - IN [A VISION, HE SAW OPENLY]. Probably instrumental, "by means of a vision", but Culy also suggests local, context / circumstance, "in the context of a vision." The adverb φανερωσ, "openly, plainly, manifestly", makes the point that "there was no possibility of mistake on Cornelius' part", Barrett.

του θεου [ος] gen. "of God" - [AN ANGEL] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, expressing a dependent status, but possibly source / origin.

εισελθοντα [εισερχομαι] aor. part. "who came [to him]" - HAVING COME [TOWARD HIM AND HAVING SAID]. This participle, along with "having said", serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "angel", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object.

αυτω dat. pro. "-" - TO HIM, [CORNELIUS]. Dative of indirect object.

### v4

Cornelius is fully focused on the angel, awestruck ("afraid") - a theophany always prompts reverential fear. The angel announces that "God has taken note of the genuineness of his faith, expressed in prayers and charitable gifts, and is about to lead him to enjoy the benefits of the messianic salvation promised in Scripture to believing Jews and Gentiles", Peterson D.

ὁ δε "Cornelius" - BUT/AND HE. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from the angel to Cornelius.

**ατενίσας [ατενίζω]** aor. part. "**stared at**" - HAVING LOOKED INTENTLY AT. This participle, along with "having become [afraid]", is attendant on the verb "to say"; "He fixed his eyes on him and overwhelmed with awe / fear he said."

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**him**" - HIM, [AND HAVING BECOME AFRAID HE SAID]. Dative of direct object after the verb "to look intently at." The adjective, **εμφοβος**, "frightened, terrified, very much afraid", serves as the nominative predicate of the participle "becoming", "he became afraid."

**τί** "**what [is it]**" - WHAT [IS IT, LORD]. Interrogative pronoun serving as the subject of the verb to-be and introducing a direct question.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "-" - [BUT/AND HE SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

**σου** gen. pro. "**your [prayers]**" - [THE PRAYERS] OF YOU [AND THE ALMS] OF YOU [WENT UP]. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic; "the prayers ... alms *pertaining to you*." Classified by Culy as verbal, subjective, "the prayers ..... alms *offered by you*."

**εις** "**as [a memorial offering]**" - INTO [A MEMORIAL, REMEMBRANCE BEFORE GOD]. Probably adverbial here, expressing purpose; "for *the purpose of* a memorial." The noun **μνημοσυνον**, "memorial", alludes to Israel's sacrificial cult, such that the prayers and alms given by Cornelius are viewed by God, and probably also by Cornelius, as an act of devotion to God. Such a *sacrifice* is a "remembrance, a memorial", in the sense that the devotee remembers God and God remembers the devotee. As Peterson D observes above, the acts of prayer and alms are but the fruit of faith, and it is the faith, not the deeds, that God will remember on the day of salvation.

## v5

**Πετρος [ος]** nom. "**[who is called] Peter**" - [AND NOW, SEND MEN TO JOPPA AND SEND FOR A CERTAIN SIMON WHO] PETER [IS NAMED]. The proper name "Peter" stands as the nominative complement of the pronoun **ὅς**, "who", nominative subject of the verb "to call", standing in a double nominative construction and asserting a fact about the subject; see Culy. "Send men to Joppa to get Simon, the one everyone calls Peter", Peterson.

## v6

**παρα** + dat. "**with [Simon]**" - [THIS ONE IS BEING ENTERTAINED AS A GUEST] BESIDE = WITH [A CERTAIN SIMON]. Spatial, "beside, close to."

**βυρσει [εως ου]** dat. "**the tanner**" - A TANNER. Dative in apposition to "Simon." The Pharisees viewed the tanning profession as unclean, so Peter is not all that kosher. Obviously, some of Jesus' teachings on defilement have sunk in.

**ᾧ** dat. pro. "**whose [house]**" - TO WHOM [IS A HOUSE BESIDE *the* SEA]. Dative of possession.

v7

Cornelius sends two of his servants to seek out Peter, along with a fellow officer from his staff who shares his religious values (ie., ευσεβη, "devout, religious"), someone who can properly represent him to Peter.

ὥς **"when"** - [BUT/AND] WHEN [THE ANGEL DEPARTED]. Here a temporal use of the conjunction rather than serving as a comparative.

ὁ λαλων [λαλεω] pres. part. **"who spoke"** - THE ONE SPEAKING. The NIV takes the participle as adjectival, attributive, limiting "angel"; "when the angel who had been speaking to him had left", Cassirer.

αυτω dat. pro. **"to him"** - TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

φωνησας [φωνεω] aor. part. **"[Cornelius] called"** - HAVING CALLED. The participle is probably intended as adverbial, temporal in relation to "when the angel .... departed"; it was at that moment, that Cornelius arranged for the sending of his servants - he immediately acted on the Lord's command.

των οικετων [ος] gen. **"of his servants"** - TWO [OF THE = HIS SERVANTS]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. Presumably household servants / slaves who were used for security purposes.

των προσκαρτερουντων [προσκαρτερω] gen. pres. part. **"who was one of [his] attendants"** - [AND A DEVOUT SOLDIER] OF THE ONES BEING CLOSE AT HAND TO [HIM]. This verb is used of serving in a close personal relationship\*, most likely a trusted fellow officer, or military aid, sharing similar values to Cornelius. The participle could be classified as adjectival, attributive, but given that the genitive is adjectival, relational, we are best to classify it as a substantive standing in apposition to "soldier". The dative personal pronoun αυτω, "him", serves as a dative of direct object after the προς prefix participle "being close at hand to." "He called two of his menservants and a religiously minded soldier who belonged to his personal retinue", Moffatt.

v8

εξηγησαμενος [εξηγεομαι] aor. part. **"he told them [.... and sent them]"** - [AND] HAVING EXPLAINED [EVERYTHING TO THEM, HE SENT THEM INTO JOPPA]. The participle may be taken as attendant on the verb "to send", as NIV, Barclay, ....., but it is often treated as adverbial, temporal; "after explaining everything to them he sent them off to Joppa."

v9

ii] Peter's vision, v9-16: With the delegation on its way, Luke swings the narrative onto Peter. It is twelve noon, and although hungry, he heads up onto the roof for a time of prayer, presumably for privacy, so Marshall. There is some debate as to whether noon is a recognised time of prayer for Jews - Peterson D



argues in favour, Longenecker against. Also, Peter's hunger is an unusual point to raise, given that midday is not normally a meal-time in first century culture (probably the reason for the variant "the ninth hour", ie., 3pm.). None-the-less, Peter is hungry, and at prayer when, like Cornelius, he receives a divine revelation. Luke calls Cornelius' vision a ὄραμα, and Peter's vision a ἐκστασις. Both are visions, but unlike Cornelius, Peter has fallen into a stupor (a hypo??). In the vision he sees a representative group of animals, "all the quadrupeds and reptiles of the earth and birds of heaven", Johnson. All these animals, "are not differentiated according to their cleanliness or uncleanness as designated by the Mosaic Law", Waters.

While with his disciples, Jesus had pointed to the radical fulfilment of the Law of Moses in the coming of the kingdom. In his death, resurrection and ascension to reign, a kingdom at hand becomes a kingdom come / realised. Distinctions between clean and unclean animals, Jew and Gentile, are divinely abolished in the cleansing of the seat of defilement, namely, a person's corrupted heart, soul, being, .... "The vision of the sheep provides divine warrant for Peter to enter into Cornelius' home and to enjoy unbroken fellowship with Gentiles with a clear conscience", Waters.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

περι + acc. "about [noon]" - ABOUT [*the* SIXTH HOUR]. Here expressing approximation.

τη dat. "the following day" - THE [TOMORROW]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the adverb "tomorrow" into a substantive; "the next day."

ὁδοιπορουντων [ὁδοιπορεω] gen. pres. part. "as [they] were on their journey" - [THESE ones] TRAVELLING [AND COMING NEAR TO]. The genitive participle, with its genitive subject "these ones" (variant αυτων, "they"), along with the genitive participle "drawing near to", forms a genitive absolute construction, probably temporal; "while they were on their journey and approaching the city."

τη πολει [ις εως] dat. "the city" - THE CITY. Dative of direct object after the verb "to draw near to."

προσευξασθαι [προσερχομα] aor. inf. "to pray" - [PETER WENT UP UPON THE ROOF] TO PRAY. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "in order to pray."

## v10

The word Luke uses for "vision", ἐκστασις, is used in the LXX of Adam's "deep sleep" in Genesis 2:21, so something like "trance" is obviously intended.

γευσασθαι [γενομαι] aor. inf. "to eat" - [BUT/AND HE BECAME HUNGRY AND WAS WANTING] TO EAT. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to want."

παρασκευαζοντων [παρασκευαζω] gen. pres. part. "while the meal was being prepared" - [BUT/AND THEY] MAKING PREPARATIONS [A VISION BECAME / FELL UPON HIM]. The genitive participle and its genitive subject αυτων, "them", forms a genitive absolute construction, probably temporal, as NIV; "while they were preparing the meal." Note the variant επεσεν, "fell", rather than εγενετο, "became."

## v11

The descriptive phrase, "the heavens opened", is used a number of times in the Scriptures as a prelude for a vision, cf., Isa.63:19, 3Mac.6:18, Jn.1:51, Act.7:56, Rev.4:1.

ανεωγμενον [ανοιγω] perf. mid. part. "opened" - [AND HE SEES HEAVEN] HAVING BEEN OPENED. The participle serves as the complement of the direct object "heaven", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object. Note the use of the historic present for the verb "to see"; "rare in Luke", Barrett, and probably used to colour the narrative.

καταβαινον [καταβαινω] "-" - [AND A CERTAIN CONTAINER = SOMETHING] COMING DOWN [LIKE A LARGE CLOTH = SHEET, HAVING BEEN LET DOWN]. This participle, as well as καθιεμενον, "having been let down", serves as the complement of the direct object "container", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object. What Peter sees is ως, "like" (comparative), "like a huge blanket lowered by ropes on its four corners", Peterson.

αρχαις [η] dat. "by [its four] corners" - IN = BY [FOUR] BEGINNINGS = CORNERS [UPON THE GROUND]. The dative is instrumental, expressing means; "by its four corners", ESV.

## v12

The list of animals is inclusive of clean animals, as well as unclean, those prescribed in Leviticus, "that may not be eaten", Lev.11:47.

εν + dat. "it contained" - IN [WHICH]. Local, expressing space.

τα "-" - [EXISTED ALL] THE [FOUR-FOOTED ones]. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the adjective "four-footed" into a substantive, object of the verb "to exist"; "it contained every kind of four-footed animal", Cassirer.

της γης [η] gen. "-" - [AND REPTILES] OF THE EARTH [AND BIRDS OF THE HEAVEN]. The genitive, as for "of the heaven", is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a characteristic quality; "pertaining to the earth ...

pertaining to heaven", but possibly descriptive, idiomatic / source, "from", so Culy.

### v13

The command of "the voice" (an angelic command on behalf of God??) may have cultic overtones; **θυω**, "to sacrifice", rather than "to kill, slay", although Bruce thinks not.

**αναστας [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "**get up**" - [AND A VOICE CAME TOWARD HIM, PETER,] HAVING ARISEN [SLAY AND EAT]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to eat."

### v14

Peter may not have defiled himself by eating unclean food, but he has defiled himself by associating with a tanner who regularly touches dead bodies. Righteousness by the law forces a reduction of its requirements to enable a semblance of obedience - a life of straining out gnats but swallowing camels, Matt.23:24. Peter is about to learn an important lesson on defilement.

**ὁ δε** "-" - BUT/AND THE [PETER SAID, BY NO MEANS, LORD]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from "the voice" to Peter.

**ὅτι** "-" - BECAUSE [I NEVER DID EAT ALL THINGS COMMON AND UNCLEAR]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Peter is unable to eat the offered food.

### v15

"Stop calling something unclean that God has made clean."

**εκ** + gen. "**a [second] time**" - [AND *the* VOICE CAME AGAIN] FROM [A SECOND TOWARD HIM]. The preposition is adverbial here, temporal, used to form the temporal phrase "a second time."

**μη κοινου [κοινωω]** pres. imp. "**do not call anything impure**" - [WHAT GOD MADE CLEAN, YOU] DO NOT MAKE COMMON, UNCLEAR, DEFILED. The negated present imperative possibly expresses a command to cease ongoing activity, "stop making unclean." Note the use of the personal pronoun **συ**, "you", emphatic by position and use.

### v16

The revelation is repeated three times, possibly to emphasise its significance, and this against human resistance, so Bock, Fitzmyer. As Johnson notes, it is of interest that on the issue of the Law and defilement, there are three major hurdles to overcome: first there is Peter, the preeminent apostle; second the leaders of the Jerusalem church, 11:1-18; and third, the judaizers / the circumcision party, cf., Galatians 2. There will be two wins, and one loss.

**επι** "three times" - [BUT/AND THIS BECAME = HAPPENED] UPON [THREE, AND IMMEDIATELY THE CONTAINER WAS TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN]. The preposition is adverbial here, often used with numbers for counting purposes, so "upon three" = "three times."

## 10:17-33

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### xiii] Peter's meeting with a Gentile centurion

##### Synopsis

Peter is just recovering from his vision when the delegation from Cornelius arrives at Simon's home. They tell Peter of Cornelius' vision and the divine instruction to seek out Peter. After spending the night at Simon's home, Peter, the delegation from Cornelius, along with some of the believers from Joppa, head off to Caesarea. On arriving they find that Cornelius has gathered his extended family and friends to hear what Peter has to say.

##### Teaching

- God plays no favourites, 10:34-35.
- Righteousness is apart from the law

##### Issues

i] Context: See 10:1-16.

ii] Background:

- *Righteousness before God apart from the Law*: It does seem likely that Luke, Paul's colleague and friend, reflects Pauline theology. Yet today, that theology is in a state of flux. New Perspective commentators (eg., Dunn) propose that Paul is not explaining how a person gets saved / appropriates the full blessings of the covenant / gains a righteous state/standing before God ..... apart from works of the Law, but how a Gentile is included in God's covenant community, and this by the removal of Jewish exclusivism / works of the Law.

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS - LAW = GENTILE INCLUSION.

Against the New Perspective synthesis, conservative commentators, those who hold to a Reformed view, argue that Paul's fundamental proposition is that "*The righteous out of faith will live*", Hab.2:4:

The grace of God

realised in his righteous reign

(his setting all things right)

in justification

(in judging right / setting right a people before him),

out of FAITH

(based on Christ's faithfulness + our faith response),

establishes the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God's children

(covenant compliance),

facilitating God's promised covenant BLESSINGS  
(full appropriation of promised new life through the Spirit),  
and its fruit, the WORKS of the law  
(the application of brotherly love).  
cf. Rom.1:16-17

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS = BLESSINGS = WORKS.

It seems very likely that this aligns with Luke's theological perspective. The only point to note is that whereas the Reformers were arguing against legalism (salvation by works), Paul was arguing against nomism (sanctification by works):

### **Legalism:**

FAITH + WORKS = RIGHTEOUSNESS = BLESSINGS.

### **Nomism:**

FAITH = RIGHTEOUSNESS + WORKS = BLESSINGS.

For Paul, justification is the divine gift of eternal right-standing in the sight of God, a state/status where a person is eternally acceptable to God through the instrument of faith in the faithfulness of Christ on our behalf, and this apart from works of the Law.

A second-temple Jew saw law-obedience as the mechanism, not for inclusion in the covenant, but for continued membership, with the full appropriation of the promised covenant blessings. It is only natural that early Jewish believers would tend toward a nomistic understanding of the Law, and this is reflected in the formation of the circumcision party / the Judaizers and their opposition to Paul's gospel of grace. For Paul, the full appropriation of the covenant blessings are found in Christ alone, apart from law-obedience.

This law / grace tension is evident in Acts, particularly in the Jerusalem conference, cf., chapter 15. Yet, even as early as Peter's encounter with Cornelius, 10:1-11:18, this tension is evident. Peter is not just discovering that God has always intended that Gentiles should have full standing in the kingdom, and this apart from the barrier of the law, but that in the present realisation of the kingdom, the Law has fulfilled its task of leading us to Christ, Gal.3:24, and so therefore, in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, Gal.3:28.

Early in the life of the Jerusalem the church, the apostles knew that a person "is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Christ Jesus", Gal.2:15. But it took time to grapple with their state/status of righteousness with respect to law-obedience. They had to discover that law-obedience, of itself, plays no part in a person's standing before God; it does not progress

holiness (sanctification) for the full appropriation of the promised covenant blessings. In Christ, a believer is already holy, and so is a rightful recipient of all God's promised blessings.

Paul will technically win this theological battle at the Jerusalem conference, but the heresy of law-obedience for blessing (sanctification by obedience) is never far from the surface, and will be a constant battle for Paul in the years to come, even with an apostle like Peter, cf., Gal.2:11-14 - "after beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?", Gal.3:3.

See *From Law to Grace*, 10:1-16.

iii] Structure: *Peter's meeting with a Gentile centurion*:

The Visions:

The Lord directs Cornelius to seek out Peter, v1-8;

Peter's vision, v9-16;

Peter meets with Cornelius' delegation, v17-23a;

Peter's meeting with Cornelius, v23b-29.

The Speeches

Cornelius explains the reason for the invitation, v30-33.

iv] Interpretation:

Peter is a man committed to Jesus, God's anointed one, the messiah, but everything he understands about righteousness, holiness, before God, is being swept away before his very eyes. First, there is his vision depreciating his understanding of defilement under the Mosaic Law. Then there is a direct word from the Spirit, instructing him to meet with a delegation which has just arrived at the home where he is staying. Finally, there is the report of the delegation that a man named Cornelius, a Gentile centurion, has had a complementary vision instructing him to meet with Peter. "The conclusion is obvious, Peter's vision of ancient uncleanness nullified by God himself must refer to this God-fearing Gentile who was calling for him at angelic command", Dunn.

Given the realisation of the kingdom, Peter can no longer call anyone impure or unclean, cf., v28. So, he willingly goes back to Caesarea with the delegation "to preach to the Gentiles and offer them salvation on the same basis as Jews, namely through faith in the crucified and risen Lord Jesus", Peterson D, cf., v34-43.

**Text - 10:17**

Peter's meeting with a Gentile centurion: i] Peter meets with Cornelius' delegation, v17-23a. The vision has left Peter **διηπορει**, "confused, perplexed",

but a direct word from the Lord to receive the delegation from Cornelius, along with their report, will explain everything.

**ὥς** "while" - AS [PETER WAS CONFUSED]. Temporal, rather than comparative, use of the conjunction.

**εν** dat. "-" - IN [HIMSELF]. The preposition is adverbial, modal, expressing manner; "Peter was inwardly confused."

**τί αν** + opt. "-" - WHAT [MIGHT BE THE VISION WHICH HE SAW]. This construction introduces an indefinite question reflecting Peter's confusion.

**οἱ απεσταλμενοι [αποστελλω]** perf. mid. part. "sent" - [BEHOLD, THE MEN] HAVING BEEN SENT. The participle is adjectival, attributive, "who were sent by Cornelius", ESV.

**ὑπο** + gen. "by [Cornelius]" - BY [CORNELIUS]. Expressing agency.

**διρωτησαντες [διρωτω]** aor. part. "found out where [Simon's house was]" - HAVING LEARNED BY ENQUIRY [THE HOUSE OF SIMON, THEY STOOD UPON = AT THE GATE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to set = stand"; "found out where Simon's house was and stood at the gate" - "asked the way to Simon's house and came and stood at the door."

## v18

**φωνησαντες [φωνεω]** aor. part. "they called out" - [AND] HAVING CALLED [THEY WERE ASKING]. It is unclear how this participle relates to the verb "to ask." Quite a few translations ride over the problem with "called out *in order* to ascertain .....", cf., Phillips, ESV, Berkeley, Barclay, Cassirer. Of course, it is the participle that would be adverbial, not the verb, so for example, a temporal "after calling out they inquired .....", or instrumental, "they inquired ..... by calling out." It could be a redundant attendant circumstance participle, "they called out and asked" = "They had found their way to Simon's house and were asking if Simon Peter was staying there", CEV.

**ει** "if" - IF [SIMON]. Introducing an indirect question, although given the use of **ενθαδε**, "here", rather than **εκει**, "there", the question is obviously direct; "Is there a guest here by the name of Simon Peter?", TEV.

**ὁ επικαλουμενος [επικαλεω]** pres. mid. part. "who was known as [Peter]" - THE ONE BEING CALLED [PETER, IS STAYING HERE]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Simon", as NIV.

## v19

The vision may be ambiguous, but the Lord's directions are clear.

**διενθυμουμενου** gen. pres. part. "while [Peter] was still thinking" - [BUT/AND PETER] THINKING ABOUT [ABOUT THE VISION]. The genitive participle



and its genitive subject "Peter", form a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV. The present tense is probably durative, so "while Peter was pondering the vision", ESV.

**αυτω** dat. pro. "**to him**" - [THE SPIRIT SAID] TO HIM. Dative of indirect object.

**ζητουντες [ζητεω]** pres. part. "**are looking for [you]**" - [BEHOLD, THREE MEN] **are** SEEKING [YOU]. The syntactical function of the participle is unclear, but it is probably part of a periphrastic construction with the verb to-be **εισιν** assumed, so Kellum, as NIV, ESV, etc. The variant, "two men", is rather strange, given v7. Is it referring to the two servants at this point?

## v20

Peter is about to be asked to enter the home of an *unclean* Gentile and so, in line with his vision, he should not be **διακρινόμενος**, "hesitating, being double-minded", because it is all part of God's plan.

**αλλα** "-" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "do not hesitate, but arise and go ...."

**αναστας [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "**get up**" - HAVING ARISEN [GO DOWN]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the imperative verb "to go down"; "Go down and don't hesitate to go with them", Barclay.

**συν** + dat. "**with [them]**" - [AND GO] WITH [THEM]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

**μηδεν διακρινόμενος [διακρινεω]** "**do not hesitate**" - NOT HESITATING, BEING DOUBLE-MINDED. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing manner, modifying the verb "to go", as NIV; "travel with them unhesitatingly", Berkeley.

**οτι** "**for**" - BECAUSE [I I HAVE SENT THEM]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Peter should not hesitate to go with the delegation. Note the emphatic use of **εγω**, "I".

## v21

"I think I'm the man you're looking for. What's up?", Peterson.

**καταβας [καταβαινω]** aor. part. "**[Peter] went down [and said]**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING COME DOWN [PETER SAID TOWARD THE MEN]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to say", as NIV. Note again Luke's use of **προς**, "toward", to introduce a dative of indirect object.

**δι [δια]** + acc. "-" - [BEHOLD, I AM *the one* WHOM YOU ARE SEEKING. WHAT IS CAUSE = REASON] BECAUSE OF [WHICH YOU ARE PRESENT]. Causal use of the preposition.

## v22

In announcing themselves, Luke has the delegation referring to Cornelius with a set of appositional descriptors: "a company commander (centurion), a good man (a man righteous), and a man who reveres God (and fearing = respecting God)", Barclay. The final appositional descriptor has Cornelius as a man of good-report with his Jewish neighbours. The delegation tells Peter that Cornelius was instructed in a vision to offer lodgings to Peter ("summon you into his house") **ακουσαι**, "in order to hear", what Peter has to say.

**οί δε** "**the men [replied]**" - BUT/AND THEY [SAID]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Peter to the delegation.

**φοβουμενος [φοβεω]** pres. mid. part. "[**God**]-fearing [**man**]" - [CORNELIUS, A CENTURION, A MAN RIGHTEOUS AND] FEARING [GOD]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "man"; "a man who reveres God", Barclay. See 10:2 on "God-fearer."

**τε** "-" - AND. Instead of **και**, this coordinating conjunction is probably used for emphasis, something like "morover"; "Moreover, he is a man who is held in high reputation by the Jewish people."

**μαρτυρουμενος** pres. mid. part. "**who is respected**" - *a man* BEING WITNESSED TO. The participle is probably adjectival, attributive, limiting an assumed "man"; "A man who ..... is liked by the Jewish people", CEV.

**υπο** + gen. "**by**" - BY [ALL THE NATION OF THE JEWS]. The preposition expresses agency. The genitive, **των Ιουδαιων**, "of the Jews", is adjectival, partitive / wholative.

**μεταπομψασθαι [μεταπεμψω]** aor. mid. inf. "**to ask**" - [WAS DIRECTED BY A HOLY ANGEL] TO SEND FOR = SUMMON [YOU INTO THE HOUSE OF HIM AND TO HEAR WORDS]. As with "to hear", the infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the angel instructed, but note the NIV "so that he could hear", which treats the infinitive **ακουσαι**, "to hear", as adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to hear."

**παρα** + gen. "-" - FROM [YOU]. With the genitive, this preposition expresses either source / origin, or means. Source is likely, "words from you" = "to hear your suggestions", Berkeley.

## v23a

**ουν** "**then**" - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion; "So he invited them in to be his guests", ESV.

**εισκαλεσαμενος [εισκαλεομαι]** aor. part. "**invited [the men into the house]**" - HAVING INVITED [THEM] IN, [HE ENTERTAINED *them* AS GUESTS]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to

entertain as guests"; "So Peter invited them into the house and received them as his guests", Cassirer.

### v23b

ii] Peter's meeting with Cornelius, v23b-29. Luke now records the journey to Caesarea and Cornelius' welcome. Six (cf., 10:45) Jewish members of the Christian fellowship in Joppa join Peter and the delegation; they will be able to bear authoritative witness to what is about to occur. On meeting Peter, Cornelius goes a bit overboard in his show of reverence and respect - "an immoderate token of reverence", Calvin. Peter reminds Cornelius that they are both men and that God is the only one deserving of such respect. On entering the home, Peter finds that Cornelius has gathered together his extended family and friends to receive from him some kind of divine blessing. In addressing the gathering, Peter notes that it is against Jewish custom to join in such a gathering of Gentiles (Longenecker suggests it is against Jewish law at that time). There is always the fear that there will be an unclean person in attendance, but as Peter makes clear, he now knows that he "should not call anyone impure and unclean" - Peter has made the connection between the situation he now faces and his recent vision. So, getting to the point, Peter asks Cornelius why he has sent for him.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**τη ... επαυριον** "the next day" - IN = ON THE TOMORROW. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the adverb "tomorrow" into a substantive, with the dative being adverbial, temporal; "on the following day", ESV.

**αναστας [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "started out" - HAVING GOT UP [HE WENT OUT]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to go out"; "he got up and went with them."

**συν** + dat. "with [them]" - WITH [THEM]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

**των αδελφων [ος]** gen. "of the believers" - [AND CERTAIN] OF THE BROTHERS. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

**των** gen. "-" - THE ONES [FROM JOPPA]. The article serves as an adjectivizer turning the prepositional phrase "from Joppa" into an attributive modifier of "the brothers"; "some of the brothers who were from Joppa."

**αυτω** dat. pro. "-" - [WENT TOGETHER WITH] HIM. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb "to go together with."

### v24

For the gathering, Cornelius has brought together his close friends and extended family, his kinsmen (**συγγενεις**), probably including the **οικηται**,

"household servants." It is unlikely that Cornelius has invited anyone who would offend a pious Jew.

τη .... επαυριον **"the following day"** - ON THE TOMORROW. See v23b.

προσδοκων [προσοκαω] pres. part. **"was expecting [them]"** - [HE ENTERED INTO CAESAREA BUT/AND CORNELIUS WAS] WAITING FOR [THEM]. The present participle with the imperfect verb to-be ἦν, forms a periphrastic imperfect construction, possibly emphasising durative aspect.

συγκαλεσαμενος [συνκαλεω] aor. mid. part. **"had called together"** - HAVING CALLED TOGETHER [THE RELATIVES OF HIM AND THE CLOSE FRIENDS]. Rogers Gk., and Kellum classify the participle as adverbial, temporal, modifying the periphrastic construction "was waiting", although causal is more likely; "Cornelius was waiting for them because he had invited in the kinsmen and close friends." None-the-less, it is usually translated as attendant on the periphrastic construction, as NIV, so Culy; "Cornelius was expecting them and had invited together all his relations and intimate friends", Phillips.

## v25

The Western text expands on the account somewhat; "As Peter was approaching Caesarea, one of his slaves ran on ahead and announced he had come. Cornelius got to his feet and met him." It also expands on Peter's response to Cornelius' obeisance - adoration is due only God.

ὡς **"as [Peter entered *the house*]"** - [BUT/AND] WHEN [IT HAPPENED PETER THE TO ENTER]. The conjunction is obviously temporal here, rather than comparative. It does not sit easily with the transitional δε εγενετο, "but/and it happened", a construction Luke uses to introduce a new scene, nor with the genitive articular infinitive, του εισελθειν, "the to enter", which is usually either final, expressing purpose, or exegetical. If we take the articular infinitive as exegetical, it serves to specify the temporal sense of "it happened"; "When it happened (as the events of the day unfolded), *that is*, as Peter entered (when Peter was set to enter *the home*), Cornelius met him ....." As with the NIV, most translations treat this construction as a simple temporal clause, "When Peter arrived, Cornelius ....", REB.

συναντησας [συνανταω] aor. part. **"met"** - [CORNELIUS] HAVING MET [HIM, HAVING FALLEN UPON THE FEET, WORSHIPED *him*]. Along with πεσων, "having fallen", we have two attendant circumstance participles expressing action accompanying the verb "to do obeisance to"; "Cornelius met him, fell at his feet and worshipped him." Note that the συν prefix verb "to meet, come upon" takes a dative of direct object, here αυτω, "him".

## v26

"This is no way to treat an apostle, who, though entrusted with a divine message, is in himself a human being and nothing more", Barrett.

ὁ δε **"but [Peter]"** - BUT/AND THE [PETER]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Cornelius to Peter.

λεγων [λεγω] pres. part. **"he said"** - [RAISED HIM] SAYING [ARISE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to raise, lift up", here serving also to introduce direct speech. For the classification adverbial, manner, see λεγοντες, 1:6.

εγω αυτος **"I [am]"** - I MYSELF [I AM]. The unnecessary use of the personal pronoun εγω is emphatic, while αυτος, "he", is intensive; "I, just like you, am nothing more than a man."

και "-" - AND = ALSO [A MAN]. Adverbial, ascensive; "I too am a man", ESV.

## v27

Peter εισηλθεν, "entered *the home*", συνομιλων, "talking, conversing", with Cornelius, and on entering, he discovers a large gathering awaiting him. Haenchen notes that Luke mentions the conversing "to show Peter's affability."

συνομιλων [συνομιλω] pres. part. **"while talking with"** - TALKING WITH. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV; "And as he talked with him", ESV.

αυτω dat. pro. **"him"** - HIM. Dative of direct object after the συv prefix verb "to talk with."

συνεληλυθοτας [συνερχομαι] perf. part. **"a [large] gathering of people"** - [HE ENTERED AND FINDS MANY *people*] HAVING ASSEMBLED. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the substantive adjective, "many *people*", direct object of the verb "to find", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object "many people."

## v28

The degree to which it was αθεμιτος, "lawless = unlawful", to associate with an αλλοφυλος, "Philistine = foreigner", depended on what Jewish sect a person belonged to, eg., the Essenes practised total separation, the Pharisees were moderate, and the common people just got on with life as best they could. Anyway, Peter has now made the connection between his vision and the situation he now finds himself in; God has now εδειξεν, "shown", him that no person is κοινον ἢ ακαθαρτον, "common or unclean", or more to the point, that, when it comes to purity before God, no person is better than another - "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

τε "-" - AND. Again used with και, "and", to form a correlative construction; "και talking with him he entered και finds many having assembled τε said to them ...." Culy suggests it signals that we have come to a culminating event.

προς "to [them]" - [HE SAID] TOWARD [THEM]. The preposition is used here instead of a dative to introduce the indirect object "them"

ὕμεις pro. "you [are well aware]" - YOU [YOU KNOW]. Emphatic by use and position.

ὥς "that" - THAT [IT IS UNLAWFUL]. Rather than either comparative, or temporal, the conjunction is used here to introduce an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what the guests would know, as NIV.

ανδρι [ηρ ρος] dat. "for a Jew" - FOR A [JEWISH] MAN. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect; "for a Jew."

καλλασθαι [καλλαω] pres. inf. "to associate" - TO JOIN TO, ASSOCIATE WITH [OR TO COME TO, APPROACH, VISIT]. This infinitive, along with the infinitive "to come to", serves as the subject of the impersonal verb "it is unlawful"; "to join to and come to a foreigner is unlawful for a Jewish man." "You know, I'm sure, that this is highly irregular. Jews just don't do this - visit and relax with people of another race", Peterson.

αλλοφυλω adj. "a Gentile" - FOREIGNER. The adjective serves as a substantive, dative of direct object after the infinitives "to join to" and "to come to."

καμοι dat. "me" - [GOD SHOWED] TO AND ME = TO EVEN ME. The crasis και μοι, with an ascensive και, "even", is a dative of indirect object. "God has just shown me, even me, that ..."

λεγειν [λεγω] pres. inf. "[I should not] call" - [NO ONE] TO CALL [A MAN COMMON OR UNCLEAN]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what God has revealed to Peter. The accusative subject of the infinitive is μηδενα, "no one", and the accusative object of the infinitive is ανθρωπον, "man".

## v29

διο και "so" - AND THEREFORE = CONSEQUENTLY. Inferential, introducing a self-evident inference, so Culy; "And that is why ....", Cassirer.

μεταπομφθεις [μεταπεμπω] aor. pas. part. "when I was sent for" - HAVING BEEN SUMMONED [I CAME WITHOUT OBJECTION]. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

ουν "-" - THEREFORE [I ASK]. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion.

τίτι λόγω "why" - FOR WHAT WORD = REASON. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect; "in respect to what reason did you send for me?" = "What purpose did you have in mind when you sent for me?"

### v30

iii] Cornelius explains the reason for the invitation, v30-33. Luke tells us that Cornelius' heavenly visitor is an angel from the Lord, but for Cornelius, he is a shining-man, a spiritual apparition. As to when Cornelius sees the vision, the received text is confusing. What we have before us is "from (temporal use of *απο*) the fourth day, up to / until (*μεχρι*, possibly "at") this hour, I was praying at the ninth hour." The use of *μεχρι* is awkward, given that Cornelius has not been praying up to / until the present time. So, it is usually taken to mean "at"; "Four days ago, exactly to this very hour", Barclay. It is generally accepted that what we have here is a temporal statement indicating the time when Cornelius saw the vision, namely, four days ago (three by inclusive reckoning), about the very same hour, he was at prayer during a ninth hour prayer-time / his afternoon prayer-time / "saying nones", Haenchen.

*εν* + dat. "[a man] in [shining clothing]" - [AND CORNELIUS SAID, FROM = ON FOURTH DAY, UNTIL = AT THIS HOUR, I WAS PRAYING THE NINTH HOUR IN THE HOUSE OF ME, AND BEHOLD A MAN STOOD BEFORE ME] IN [SHINING CLOTHING]. Local, here expressing a state or condition.

### v31

Cornelius reports the message given by his *shiny-man* - God has heard his prayers and remembered his benevolence. Often understood in the terms of God acting in response to human actions - human benevolence prompts divine benevolence. Yet, it is God who *μυνησκομαι*, "remembers" (he is a covenant keeping God who remembers his promises), and in response, we offer a *μνημοσυνον*, "remembrance, memorial offering" (v4) of loving service, cf., Lk.7:47.

*σου* gen. pro. "[God has heard] your [prayer]" - [AND HE SAYS, CORNELIUS, THE PRAYER] OF YOU [WAS HEARD AND THE ALMS] OF YOU [ARE REMEMBERED BEFORE GOD]. The genitive pronoun is adjectival, classified as either possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic, "your prayers", or verbal, subjective, "God has heard the prayers *offered by* you."

### v32

Repeating information found in v1-6.

*ουν* "-" - therefore. Inferential, establishing a logical connection to v31.

*Πετρος [ος]* "[who is called] Peter" - [SEND INTO JOPPA AND CALL = SUMMON SIMON WHO] PETER [IS CALLED]. This proper name is the nominative

complement of the subject ὅς, "who", standing in a double nominative construction and asserting a fact about the subject.

Σιμωνος [ος] gen. "of Simon" - [THIS ONE = HE IS LODGING, STAYING AS A GUEST, IN HOUSE] OF SIMON. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a dependent status, "a house *that belongs to* Simon."

βυρσεως [εως εως] gen. "the tanner" - TANNER, [BESIDE *the* SEA]. Standing in apposition to "Simon", genitive in agreement.

### v33

It is clear that, as far as Cornelius is concerned, he views Peter's visit as extremely important, so important that he has gathered together his friends and extended family so that they too can hear what ὁ κυριος, "the Lord", has put in Peter's heart to tell him.

ουν "so" - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion; given the instruction of the *shiny-man* ..... "I sent for you."

τε "and" - [I IMMEDIATELY SENT TOWARD YOU] AND [YOU DID GOOD]. The use of this particular coordinating conjunction here is unclear, possibly strengthening the link between the two elements; "I invited and you did good" = "you kindly obliged" = "you kindly accepted my invitation." Note the emphatic use of συ, "you", "you *dropped what you were doing* and accepted my invitation"

παραγενομενος [παραγινομαι] aor. part. "to come" - HAVING COME. The participle is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means; "by coming", so Culy.

ουν "-" - THEREFORE. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion; given the willingness of Peter to accept Cornelius' invitation, "we are all here in the presence of God."

ακουσαι [ακουω] aor. inf. "to listen to" - [WE ARE NOW ALL PRESENT] TO HEAR. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "in order to hear ...."

τα προσεταγμενα [προστασσω] perf. mid. part. "[everything the Lord] has commanded" - [ALL] THE THINGS HAVING BEEN COMMANDED. The participle serves as a substantive, direct object of the infinitive "to hear." Of course, if we read the adjective παντες, "all", as a substantive, "everything", then the participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the object "everything"; "to hear everything that has been commanded you by the Lord."

σοι dat. pro. "you" - TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

υπο + gen. "-" - BY [THE LORD]. Here expressing agency.



## 10:34-43

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### xiii] Peter's sermon to Cornelius and friends

##### Synopsis

On arriving at the home of Cornelius, Peter finds him gathered with his family and friends. Cornelius has just explained why he has invited Peter to his home, so Peter takes the opportunity to preach the gospel to those present.

##### Teaching

The important news about the forgiveness of sins for those who believe in Jesus, is news for all humanity.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 10:1. As already noted, 6:1-12:25 covers the beginning of Gentile Christianity and focuses mainly on the ministry of Peter. The story of Cornelius, 10:1-11:18, authenticates the movement of the gospel from Israel to the Gentiles. The gospel has already touched the Samaritans and a eunuch, those estranged from Israel, and now it moves to God-fearers (Gentiles associated with the Jewish faith), to Cornelius and his Gentile family and friends.

##### ii] Background:

- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;
- *Contextualising the gospel*, 16:1-15;

##### iii] Structure: *Peter's sermon to Cornelius and friends*:

###### The Visions:

The Lord directs Cornelius to seek out Peter, v1-8;  
Peter's vision, v9-16;  
Peter meets with Cornelius' delegation, v17-23a;  
Peter's meeting with Cornelius, v23b-29.

###### The Speeches

Cornelius explains the reason for the invitation, v30-33.

###### Peter's Sermon, v34-43:

Introduction - Peter explains himself, v34-35;  
An outline of the gospel, 36-41;  
A call to respond - repent and believe, v42-43.

Note again how Peter's presentation of the gospel follows a standard *kerygma* format:

Introduction, v34-35;

The time is fulfilled, v36-41;

*"Jesus Christ ... they killed him ... God raised him ...."*

The kingdom of God is at hand, v42-43;

*"everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness ..."*

iii] Interpretation:

In the New Testament, the gospel, the important news from God - "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the gospel" - is always shaped by the needs of the hearers, ie., it is contextualised. This doesn't mean that the message is adulterated to suit the audience, rather it is presented in a way that the audience can understand. So for example, when talking with someone today about the coming kingdom, someone who has never been churchied, we may stress the new relationship that is possible with God through the risen Christ - because he lives we can live also. When speaking with a *Churchie*, we may want to stress the perfect standing we have in the presence of God, a gift in Christ, both now and forever - *there is nothing we can do to make God love us more.*

In the passage before us, we see the gospel presented to a group of Gentiles, some being God-fearers. Such people may know a bit about the Bible, but it would be limited. Cornelius stands out in this group as a man of prayer, devout and moral, 10:2. Peter therefore presents the gospel in a form that Gentiles would understand, but still within a Biblical framework.

As already indicated, he uses a typical four-part structure:

Introduction

The time is fulfilled;

The kingdom of God is at hand;

Repent and believe the gospel.

In Peter's gospel presentation to Cornelius, and his family and friends, part four, the response, never quite eventuates because the "Holy Spirit fell on them that heard the word." All other elements are present:

The introduction. The introduction to Peter's gospel presentation comes in v34-35. Here Peter speaks of the character of God. Peter now realises that God shows no partiality; all humanity is acceptable to him. This truth is quite a revelation to Peter, and it has taken some fairly heavy visions for it to sink in, cf., v10-16.

"The time is fulfilled", v36-41. In this element of his gospel presentation, Peter outlines the life of Jesus, with particular emphasis upon his resurrection. Of course, Peter doesn't get into showing how Jesus has fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. When the gospel is

presented to Jews, the emphasis is always on fulfilled prophecy, but here Peter is dealing with a Gentile audience.

"The kingdom of God is at hand", v42-43. Addressing the issue of the coming kingdom, Peter outlines the implications of Christ's resurrection - because he lives we can live also, although here in the terms of forgiveness of sins. The dawning of the kingdom of God is both a blessing and a curse. The down side, the bad news, has to do with judgement. The up side, the good news, has to do with forgiveness.

v] Homiletics: *Bad news and good news*

Jesus' death was a declaration of failure. All that he had ever stood for, ever taught, ever claimed, was set aside in his death. The generation that heard his claims and saw his deeds, voted him out. He was treated as refuse by his own.

Yet, although Jesus was rejected by his own, he wasn't rejected by God. In fact, the opposite is so. Jesus' resurrection was a declaration by God that he is the long awaited ruler of the universe - the Lord of all. The whole of nature sensed the dawning of the new age in this mighty event. We have all experienced vindication; sweet as honey to the lips, isn't it? All those years ago Jesus was proved right in his resurrection.

As for the consequences of Jesus' resurrection, the news is both bad and good. The bad news has to do with judgement. In our reading today, Peter tells us that God has appointed Jesus "as judge of the living and the dead." So, we have to warn each other that we will all stand before the judge of the universe and give account of our lives. If we ignore the Lord of all, then we will stand condemned in the day of judgement, and in a sense, that day is now.

Thankfully, bad news is often followed by good news, and the good news has to do with forgiveness. The apostle Peter tells us that everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness of sins. Jesus lives, and because he lives we can live also, free from condemnation.

There is an old saying which goes this way: "a human is the only animal that can blush and the only one that needs to." Anyone from the caring professions can tell us that guilt is the most widespread negative force affecting the human psyche. It eats us up, and we're all guilty aren't



we? We often do a good job hiding it, but deep down within, gurgling away, there lies a stew of guilt. The one who broke the bonds of death all those years ago, has the right, power and authority to forgive us of everything we have ever, or will ever, think or do. There is now no condemnation for those who put their trust in the risen Christ. There is now no ground for guilt. When we put our trust in Jesus, it's just as if we had never sinned.

### Text - 10:34

Peter proclaims the gospel to Cornelius, his family and friends, v34-43. i] Introduction, v34-35. Peter's God is a sovereign God who acts as he chooses, cf., Rom.9-11. God chose Israel in an act of grace and now again, in an act of grace, his special love is extended to all. This is a revolutionary idea for a Jew like Peter, but one warmly accepted by Cornelius and friends.

**ανοιξας [ανοιγω]** aor. part. "[then Peter] began to speak" - [BUT/AND, PETER] HAVING OPENED [THE MOUTH, HE SAID]. Attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the verb "to say"; "Peter opened [his mouth] and said". The aorist is probably inceptive, pointing to the beginning of the action, "Peter began to speak", Barclay.

**επ [επι]** "how true it is" - UPON [TRUTH]. The preposition is adverbial, forming the expression, "truly, certainly"; "In truth I realise", TNT, = "I am now certain ....."

**οτι "that"** - [I UNDERSTAND] THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Peter understands; "I have come to understand that ...."

**προσωπολημπτης [ης ου]** "favouritism" - [GOD IS NOT] ONE WHO SHOWS FAVOURITISM, PARTIALITY, TREATS ONE PERSON BETTER THAN ANOTHER. Predicate nominative. A hapax legomenon, once only use in the NT. God, unlike us, does not respect persons. Here of Gentile and Jew.

### v35

**αλλα "but"** - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "not .... (v34), but ...."

**εν + dat. "from [every nation]"** - IN [EVERY NATION]. Local, expressing space; "those resident in every nation / throughout the world who respect him and do what is right (put their trust in him)."

**ο φοβουμενος [φοβειω]** pres. part. "**the one who fears [him]**" - THE ONE FEARING [HIM]. This participle, along with "the one working", serves as a substantive, subject of the verb to-be **εστιν**. Those who respect God, reverence him.

εργαζομενος [εργαζομαι] pres. part. "do [what is right]" - [AND] THE ONE WORKING [RIGHTEOUSNESS IS ACCEPTABLE TO HIM]. The participle serves as the second substantive of an associated pair, "the one fearing and the one working", cf., Granville Sharp's Rule. Possibly referring to ethics in a general sense, although we are incapable of doing what is right and therefore God's acceptance, on the basis of faithfulness, is but a theoretical possibility. So, best translated, "if you want God and are ready to do what he says (ie., believe on the Lord Jesus Christ)", Peterson. Peter is not into developing a salvation by works theology here, but is rather making the point that God is impartial. In Jewish piety, the word refers to almsgiving, a fruit of faith. As for the dative αυτω, "to him", it is probably adverbial, reference / respect; "anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable as far as He is concerned."

### v36

ii] The time is fulfilled, v36-41. C.H. Dodd says, that "the speech before Cornelius represents the form of kerygma (gospel presentation) used by the primitive church in its earliest approaches to a wider audience." Interestingly, it follows closely the scope of Mark's gospel. Also, it is filled with Aramaisms, that is, it looks very much like a message originally preached by a person whose native language is Aramaic, a person like Peter. Although Peter doesn't make the point explicitly, Jesus' anointing with the Holy Spirit at his baptism represents his appointment by God as the long awaited Messiah, Isa.61. It is most likely that the sermon is only a summary of what Peter said and so he may well have filled it out with stories of healings, etc.

Peter goes on in v39-41 to claim that he and the other apostles were witnesses of what happened to Jesus, both his death and resurrection. Although there is a tendency to stress the theology of the atonement when presenting the gospel, the emphasis in the New Testament is upon the resurrection of Christ. The reference to "hanged on a tree" comes from Deut.21:23. The point is simple enough, "he that is hanged (on a tree) is accursed of God." So, Jesus was condemned by his own people and made the lowest of the low, but God overturned this disgrace, and through his resurrection bestowed on him the greatest of honours, investing him with authority to rule. Jesus is Lord, and as Lord he has the authority to bless or curse. Note how Peter is able to bear witness to the bodily resurrection of Jesus because he not only saw him alive, but he ate and drank with him.

τον λογον "[You know] the message" - *you know* THE WORD. The difficulty we have in translating this verse often prompts an assumed verb "you know", so NIV. "The word" then serves as the accusative object of this assumed verb, "*you know* the word / message / report which God sent ..." Without the addition of "you know" it is necessary to classify the accusative "the word" as an example of

inverse relative attraction where the noun is attracted to the pronoun, here the accusative **τον λογον** to the accusative **ὄν**. The pronoun is missing in quite a few texts and may be a mistaken repetition of the ending of "word"; **τον λογον ὄν**. If we treat the pronoun as an addition to the original text and so leave it out, we get "He (God) sent the message to the children of Israel ...", so REB. Barrett suggests that the parenthesis, "who is Lord of all", has caused Luke to lose track of his syntax, ie. an anacoluthon. Fitzmyer feels that the sentence is in apposition to v34b, 35. This works quite well. Either way, Peter is certain that God shows no favouritism, namely that the important message conveyed to Israel through Jesus Christ was a message of peace; person to person, person to God.

**τοις υἱοις [ος]** dat. "**to the people [of Israel]**" - [WHICH HE SENT] TO THE SONS [OF ISRAEL]. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage; "for".

**ευαγγελιζομενος [ευαγγελιζω]** pres. part. "**telling the good news**" - PROCLAIMING, COMMUNICATING The participle is adverbial, temporal; "when he preached (communicated) the gospel of peace", Moffatt. Again, our love of the phrase "good news" prejudices the effect of the message. It is good news for those who believe, but bad news for those who don't.

**ειρηνην [η]** "**of peace**" - PEACE. Accusative object of the participle "proclaiming". Peter sees the message "communicating peace." Possibly an accusative of respect, "a message concerning peace."

**δια** + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH [JESUS CHRIST]. Instrumental, expressing means; "by means of Jesus Christ."

**ὁὔτος** "**who**" - THIS ONE [IS]. Nominative subject of the verb to-be.

**παντων** gen. adj. "**[Lord] of all**" - [LORD] OF ALL. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / subordination; "Lord over all."

### v37

We now come to the gospel proper, or better, the *kerygma*, the apostolic preaching-formula, a formula used by all four gospel writers, and based on the gospel message communicated by Jesus, namely, "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe." The fulfilment of scripture is detailed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, on which basis the nowness of the kingdom / of the reign of Christ is proclaimed, the consequences of which are either blessing or cursing / forgiveness or judgment.

**ὑμεις** "**you [know]**" - YOU [YOU KNOW]. Emphatic by use and position.

**γενομενον [γινομαι]** aor. part. "**[what] has happened**" - [THE THING, EVENT / WORD, REPORT] HAVING HAPPENED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "thing / word". The phrase may be read "the saying which was published" or "the thing which took place." "The message spread", NRSV.

καθ [κατα] + gen. "**throughout**" - THROUGHOUT. Distributive use of the preposition; "throughout".

της Ιουδαίας [α] gen. "**the province of Judea**" - [ALL] OF JUDEA. The genitive is adjectival, partitive / wholative. Probably Palestine is intended rather than just Judea.

αρχαμενος [αρχω] aor. part. nom. "**beginning**" - HAVING BEGUN. The participle may be adverbial, modal, "initially, to begin with", Zerwick, or as introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they know, namely, "that *the word* began in Galilee after the baptism which John preached." Moffatt opts to bring forward the conjunction ὥς, "how", from v38, to form a perception statement after the verb "to know". The participle may then be treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting the assumed τον λογον, "the word"; "you know .... how the word which began in Galilee after the preaching of John ...." The nominative case is interesting. Barrett suggests sloppy Greek, but Fitzmyer suggests "a frozen pre-Lukan formula" for the nominative, rather than accusative case, given that the participle should agree with the accusative τον λογον, "the word." What began in Galilee, after the baptism of John, was the preaching of the gospel, which fact "you know."

απο + gen. "**in [Galilee]**" - FROM [GALILEE]. Expressing source / origin; "events which took their rise in Galilee", Cassirer.

μετα + acc. "**after**" - AFTER. Temporal use of the preposition, as NIV.

το βαπτισμα [α ατος] "**the baptism**" - THE IMMERSION [WHICH JOHN PREACHED]. It is interesting to note that Codex B uses the word "proclamation", meaning "gospel", "the gospel that John preached", which gospel was the same as the one preached by Jesus, namely, "the kingdom of God is at hand." The idea of preaching water baptism is strange indeed, but preaching an "immersion of divine truth = teaching" certainly makes sense. The Gk. word βαπτισμα, "immersion", constantly leads us to think of water baptism, but the word is often used figuratively. It seems likely that the "immersion" that John preached, even if related to water dunking, concerns the teaching of truth, "the word / gospel."

### v38

Ιησουν [ος] acc. "**Jesus**" - [YOU KNOW THE WORD / THING HAVING HAPPENED ..... (v37)], JESUS [THE ONE FROM NAZARETH]. "Jesus" stands in apposition to ῥημα, "word / thing", v37, accusative of reference / respect; "you know about the message which spread ....., namely concerning Jesus who was from Nazareth." Note the adjectivizer τον turning the prepositional phrase "from Nazareth" into an attributive modifier of "Jesus".

ὥς "**how**" - HOW [GOD ANOINTED HIM]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they know. The use of ὥς,

rather than say **ὅτι**, brings an adverbial sense of manner to their knowing, possibly in a general, rather than specific sense, so Culy. "You know, well enough, how God anointed him ....." The verb **χρίω**, "to anoint", both cultic and prophetic in origin, is used in the sense of being set apart and resourced by God for a special task, here through the Spirit.

**δυναμει** [ις εως] dat. "**power**" - [WITH HOLY SPIRIT AND] POWER. Instrumental dative expressing means, or accompaniment / association. Probably power is being used in the sense of miraculous power. Probably not "with the power of the Holy Spirit", Phillips, but "with the Holy Spirit and with power", or means, "by the Holy Spirit and power." The point being that Jesus is set apart / appointed as an "inspired prophet", Dunn. Both "Spirit" and "power" go naturally together, cf., Lk.1:17, 4:14, 24:49.

**διηλθεν** [διερχομαι] aor. "**and how he went around**" - [WHO = *and how* HE] PASSED THROUGH. The aorist is interesting, given that the action of this verb seems to be durative. The sense of the word may be of coming to a point, moving to, so "he appeared on the scene and set about doing good."

**ευεργετων** [ευεργετω] pres. part. "**doing good**" - DOING GOOD [AND HEALING]. The verb means "to do good as a benefactor." This participle, as with **ἰωμενος**, "healing", is adverbial, modal, expressing manner; how the action "went about" is accomplished. Possibly attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the action "went about / arrived"; "he arrived and did good and healed all ....."

**τους καταδυναστευομενους** [καταδυναστευω] pres. part. "**[all] who were under the power**" - [ALL] THE ONES BEING OPPRESSED. The participle serves as a substantive. Probably not just exorcisms, but a general reference to sickness, death, possession ... all of which are seen to originate with the Devil. Possession is usually expressed as "possessed by an evil spirit."

**ὑπο** + gen. "**of [the devil]**" - BY [THE DEVIL]. Expressing agency, as NIV.

**ὅτι** "**because**" - BECAUSE [GOD WAS WITH HIM]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Jesus was able to heal those under the power of the evil-one; "because he had God by his side", Cassirer.

### v39

The core record of the *kerygma*, as born witness by the apostles, concerns Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

**παντων** gen. adj. "**of everything**" - [AND WE *are* WITNESSES] OF THESE *things*. The genitive is adverbial, reference / respect; "with reference to everything he did."

**ων** gen. pro. "-" - WHICH [HE DID]. Note case attraction to "everything"; it should be the accusative, **ᾧ**.



τε ..... και " ... and ..." - BOTH ..... AND ... Both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. A correlative construction.

εν + dat. "in" - IN. Local, expressing space.

των Ιουδαιων [ος] gen. "of the Jews" - [THE COUNTRY] OF THE JEWS. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "country", descriptive, idiomatic / local; "the country *where* the Jews *live*" = "the Jewish lands" = "Israel", CEV, or possibly in the narrower sense, "in Judea", Barclay.

ὄν pro. "[they killed] him" - WHOM [AND = ALSO THEY KILLED]. Introducing a headless relative clause. "In the end they put him to death", Cassirer.

κρεμασαντες [κρεμαννυμι] aor. part. "by hanging him [on a tree]" - HAVING HUNG [ON A TREE]. The participle is adverbial, usually read as instrumental, expressing means, as NIV. Possibly a piece of wood is intended, even a stake, to emphasise a humiliating death, a cursed death in the view of Deuteronomy 21:23. Of course, the phrase may be a colloquial way of describing crucifixion, "it became a way of referring to crucifixion in Judea", Fitzmyer. "By hanging him on a gibbet", Cassirer.

#### v40

εν + dat. "on [the third day]" - [THIS ONE GOD RAISED UP] ON [THE THIRD DAY]. Variant. Adverbial use of the preposition, temporal, point of time. By now, a common way of identifying the resurrection, even though the time period is not actually three days.

γενεσθαι [γίνομαι] aor. inf. "to be [seen]" - [AND GAVE = GRANTED HIM] TO BECOME [VISIBLE]. The infinitive serves as the direct object of the verb "to give" / dependent statement of cause expressing what is given, namely, "him to be seen." The accusative subject of the infinitive is αυτον, "him"; "he granted him to be seen" = "God ..... let him be clearly seen", Phillips. "God brought him back to life again, in such a way that he was plainly and unmistakably seen", Barclay.

#### v41

The fact of the resurrection is reinforced by the evidence of the "designated / appointed" witnesses who actually ate with Jesus after his resurrection, as recorded in the gospels.

παντι dat. adj. "[he was] not seen by all [the people]" - [NOT HIM to be visible] TO ALL = EVERYONE. Dative of indirect object. "Him to be visible" is assumed, carried over from v40. "He was plainly and unmistakably seen, not by the whole people, but ....", Barclay.

αλλα "but" - BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "not ....., but .....", as NIV.

μαρτυσιν [τυς τυρος] dat. "by witnesses" - TO WITNESSES. Dative of indirect object, as above.

τοις προκεχειροτονημενοις [προχειροτονω] dat. perf. pas. part. "whom [God] had already chosen" - THE ONES APPOINTED, DESIGNATED, CHOSEN BEFOREHAND. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "witnesses", as NIV. "Beforehand" indicates a divine plan to assemble witnesses for the resurrection. Obviously a larger group than the apostles is intended, but not just anyone; "he was not seen by all."

ὑπο + gen. "[God]" - BY [GOD]. Expressing agency.

ἡμιν dat. pro. "by us" - TO US. Dative, standing in apposition to "witnesses"; "was granted to be visible, not to all people, but to witnesses ..... namely, to us."

αυτω dat. pro. "with him" - [WHO ATE TOGETHER AND DRANK TOGETHER] WITH HIM. Dative of accompaniment / association.

μετα το + inf. "after [he rose]" - AFTER THE [TO RISE AGAIN]. This construction forms a temporal clause, antecedent time; "after his resurrection", Moffatt.

#### v42

ii] The kingdom of God is at hand, v42-43. We now come to the core of the gospel, namely, the announcement that the kingdom of God is upon us, which announcement the witnesses are παρηγγειλεν, "commanded, ordered", to communicate. The coming kingdom is realised in the person of Jesus, now risen from the dead and ascended on high, in that Jesus has taken up his throne beside the Ancient of Days in fulfilment of Daniel 7:13-14 - he is Lord. This news is both good and bad; good for those who believe it, for theirs is forgiveness and life, but bad for those who don't believe it, for theirs is judgment and death. Peter's audience is onside, so he leaves out the bad news - see 17:31 for the bad news.

παρηγγειλεν [παραγγελλω] aor. "He commanded" - [AND] HE COMMANDED. The subject is not identified, but probably God, although possibly Jesus.

ἡμιν dat. pro. "us" - US. Dative of direct object after the παρα prefix verb "to command."

κηρυσσαι [κηρυσσω] aor. inf. "to preach" - TO PREACH [TO THE PEOPLE AND TO TESTIFY]. This infinitive, along with "to testify", introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what is commanded, namely "to proclaim to the people and solemnly declare", TNT. The dative τω λαω, "to the people", serves as a dative of indirect object.

ὅτι "that" - THAT. Also serving to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of what is preached and testified.

ὁ ὄρισμενος [ὄριζω] pas. part. "**appointed**" - [THIS ONE IS] THE ONE HAVING BEEN APPOINTED [BY GOD]. The participle serves as a substantive, predicate nominative. The perfect tense indicates that at the point of speaking, Jesus has already been appointed as judge and is presently performing this role, cf. Dan.7:13. "Marked out", Barrett. The preposition ὑπο + dat. expresses agency, "by [God]"

ζωντων [ζωω] gen. pres. part. "**of the living**" - [JUDGE] OF *the ones* LIVING [AND DEAD]. The participle serves as a substantive, while the genitive is adjectival, probably verbal, objective, where "of the ones living and of the dead" receive the action of the "judge"; "God appointed to be judge over both the living and the dead", Cassirer.

#### v43

Now for the good news: those who rely on the person ("name") of Jesus, receive forgiveness of sins, and thus, the right to dwell eternally with God.

τουτω dat. "**about him**" - [ALL THE PROPHETS BEAR WITNESS] TO THIS ONE. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect; "All the prophets testify about this person." Barrett suggests that τουτω is best read as neuter, "this = this information", rather than masculine, "this = this man = Jesus"; "all the prophets bear witness to this, namely, that everybody who believes in him receives...."

τον πιστευοντα [πιστευω] pres. part. "**[everyone] who believes**" - [ALL] THE ONES BELIEVING. The participle serves as a substantive, forming a nominal phrase, accusative subject of the infinitive λαβειν, "to receive"; "all the ones believing into him receive ...."

εις + acc. "**in [him]**" - TO, INTO [HIM]. Spatial, of movement toward. When used of believing into / in Jesus, this preposition is interchangeable with εν, "in".

λαβειν [λαμβάνω] aor. inf. "**receives**" - TO RECEIVE. Kellum classifies the infinitive as adverbial, final, expressing purpose, and Culy treats it as introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the prophets testify. Of course, Luke may have an exegetical sense in mind where the infinitival clause explains / defines τουτω, "this (the information testified by the prophets), namely that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through him."

αφεσιν [ις εως] "**forgiveness**" - FORGIVENESS, RELEASE, REMISSION. Beside Christ's authority to judge, there is his authority to forgive, to apply God's mercy to all who put their trust in him.

αμαρτιων [α] gen. "**of sins**" - OF SINS. The genitive is usually treated as verbal, objective, i.e., the genitive noun "sins" receives the action of the verbal noun "forgiveness"; "all who have faith in Jesus will have their sins forgiven", CEV.

δια + gen. "**through [his name]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. Expressing agency, as NIV; Jesus "is the means to the forgiveness of sins", Peterson.

του ονοματος [α ατος] "**his name**" - THE NAME [OF HIM]. "The name" often means little more than "person", but may carry something of that person's authority such that forgiveness is authorised under Jesus' authority; "Everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through him", Barclay.

## 10:44-48

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### xiv] The Holy Spirit came upon them

##### Synopsis

Peter has just preached a gospel sermon to Cornelius, and his friends and family, and now Luke recounts the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the gathered assembly. This sign demonstrates, beyond all doubt, that the "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" are for Gentiles as well as Jews, 3:19.

##### Teaching

There can be no argument against Gentiles being included in *the way*, given that they too receive the Holy Spirit.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 10:28-43.

ii] Background:

- *Water Baptism in Acts*, 2:37-41;

- *Salvation by households*: Family / household (mum, dad, the kids, + +) is a divine construct, and so it is only to be expected that God works in family units. Salvation is family / household based, cf., 16:31, ie., God's sovereign grace operates within families, given that God designed family as the basis of human society, cf., 16:31.

In justifying the baptism of Cornelius to the Jerusalem church, Peter recounts God's promise to Cornelius: "You and all your household will be saved", 11:14. Often inclusive words like "all" in v44, "the Holy Spirit came on (παντας) all who heard the message", are used to express not all of the whole, but a large part of the whole; "No sooner were these words out of Peter's mouth than the Holy Spirit come on the listeners", Peterson. None-the-less, "all" is surely intended here because, as Peter reports to the "saints" in Jerusalem, the divine promise made to Cornelius was that through Peter's message "you and your entire household will be saved." Obviously this includes family, but in the home of a centurion there are servants and slaves, and what about the friends who were in attendance?

Throughout the scriptures a principle can be observed whereby God's grace extends to the family as a whole when an individual within the family responds in faith. This principle is enacted a number of times in Acts, eg., the Philippian gaoler. Given that the family, as the basic unit of society, is a divine construct, God deals with its members inclusively rather than

individually. This doesn't mean that the faith of one member covers the outright rejection / denial of God by another member, but the faith of one member does somehow include the other members in the bestowal of divine grace.

The apostle Paul himself gets into the issue when he discusses the matter of divorcing an unbelieving partner in chapter 7 of his first letter to the Corinthians. His use of the verb ἁγιάζω, "to sanctify", of an unbelieving partner, and ἅγιος, "holy", of their children, is interesting, to say the least. See the exegetical notes on 1Corinthians 7:10-16.

My own personal approach to this issue rests on the proposition that God's grace is beyond measure. For this reason, I always include the members of my immediate and extended family, including those loved-ones who have passed on, in the circle of my faith. I assume that as long as they haven't committed the unforgivable sin of rejecting Jesus as the Christ, then they will share with me in meeting our Lord on that far shore beyond the sunset. Of course, in the end, the Lord will ultimately be the judge of the matter, which is why the communication of the gospel must remain a priority.

- *Baptised in / into / upon the Name of Jesus Christ:* When Cornelius, along with his family and friends, respond to the gospel and receive the Holy Spirit, Peter commands that they be "baptized in the name of Jesus." The word βαπτίζω means "to immerse." We understand what "immerse in water" means, but what about "immerse in the name of Jesus"? Is this the same as "immerse in water"? It could be a shorthand way of saying "immerse in *water using* the name of Jesus", or "immerse in *water under* the authority of Jesus", ie., the name of Jesus, his divine character, is declared over the person to be baptized, or the authority by which the baptism is performed is declared to all and sundry.

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus sends his disciples out into the world for the purpose of "immersing them (the nations) in the name ....", v28, "teaching them .....", v29. It seems very unlikely that Jesus is talking about water baptism, given that he never immersed anyone in water as a sign of repentance - John was the baptiser. Given the context, "immersing them in the name" looks very much like immersing them in information about Jesus, or more particularly immersing them in the gospel, "the name" being representative of the person, namely Jesus. Surely Jesus is instructing his disciples to go into the world and preach the gospel, v28, and then to instruct those who respond, v29. There is no doubt that immersion in water is used as a sign of repentance in the early church, a sign taken over from

John the Baptist and certainly not discouraged by Jesus. Yet, it is also clear that the early church linked instruction with water baptism.

On the occasion of the conversion of Cornelius and company, those doing the baptising were probably "the circumcised believers who came with Peter", and it may well be that they spent a moment going over the ground of the converts' repentance by confirming gospel truth with them, restating the truth where necessary, prior to water baptism. In this way the converts were immersed into the truth about Jesus, into the "name", as well as immersed in water as an outward expression of their repentance - "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins".

In the end, the sense of "to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" remains speculative, and worth further consideration. See 18:24-19:7 for more notes on this subject, and see also Matthew 28:19.

iii] Structure: *The Holy Spirit came upon them:*

Peter's inclusive vision of *the way*, v1-16;

Peter's meeting with Cornelius, the Gentile centurion, v17-27;

Peter's gospel sermon to Cornelius and friends, v28-43:

The Holy Spirit came upon them, v44-48.

The outpouring of the Spirit, v44;

The confirmation of tongues, v45-46;

Peter baptises the new believers, v47-48.

iv] Interpretation:

Central to this chapter is Peter's gospel presentation, v34-43. This is the last recorded sermon by Peter. The sermon focuses on Christ, "the Lord", the "anointed" one, the one "with God", "raised to life" and "ordained to be the judge of the living and the dead", and the grace which he bestows, namely, "that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." Cornelius obviously responds positively to the message because he receives the Spirit in the same way as the apostles received the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Consequently, Peter baptises those who have believed.

Although it is always dangerous to argue from what is not present in the text, it is worth noting that Peter does not go on to impose law-obedience on Gentiles as a requirement for adherence to Christ. The church will face this issue at the Jerusalem Council. On this matter, Luke's account reflects Pauline theology.

The importance that Luke places on the conversion of Cornelius is demonstrated by the fact that he later restates the events in detail, cf., chapter 11. For Luke, the story serves as a highly significant theological

event demonstrating the fulfilment of God's promised blessings to the world, and not just to Israel. "Cornelius moves from being acceptable to be accepted, and the decisive breakthrough of God's blessing to the nations has taken place", Dunn.

The crucial element of this narrative is the reception of the Spirit by Cornelius and his family in the same way as the Spirit came upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. Such confirmed that *God shows no favourites*, and that *righteousness is apart from the law*. Given what had happened, there was no reason why Peter should not baptise this Gentile household and so include them in *the Way*.

For *Baptized with the Holy Spirit, Filled with the Holy Spirit; and Speaking in Tongues ("other tongues")*. See Excursus on *The Pentecostal Blessings*.

v] Homiletics: *The Little Extra*

Many years ago, when Billy Graham came to Australia for his second Crusade, I served as a counsellor. It was a wonderful privilege. At the Crusade, we were equipped with a gospel tract which illustrated the cross spanning the gulf of hell; it was designed to represent the way we can move from this world to heaven. It was a great little gospel tract for the time, but somewhat dated now.



During a down-time, the members of my team had a bit of fun with the tract. We coloured in a little segment at the end of the cross to represent the necessary extra that enables a complete crossing from this world to the next. Without that little extra, our Christian life will always be flawed, if not lost forever. We then listed the possible tags for *the little extra*: the Law for Puritans; Confirmation for Anglicans / Episcopalians; believers' baptism for Baptists and the Church of Christ; Spirit baptism and tongues for Charismatics / Pentecostals; Sabbath observance for Adventists; ..... It was all good fun, and served to remind us of the danger of *the little extra*.

There are still those who argue for *the little extra*, yet in the end, it's our identification with the truth of Jesus in the gospel that saves us. In the presence of someone who pushes *the little extra*, we can end up feeling like a second-grade Christian; missing out on that little extra benefit can fill us with fear. Of course, those who push *the little extra* fail to understand that



a person who believe in Jesus receives in full the promised blessing of new life in Christ.

The replay of the miracle of Pentecost for Cornelius, and his friends and family, doesn't teach that he was a special Christian, blessed above all others, but that all believers possess the fullness of new life in Christ.

### **Text - 10:44**

"The Gentile Pentecost", Dunn, v44-48. i] The outpouring of the Spirit, v44: Peter is still in the middle of his gospel presentation when the Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit. The reception is similar to that of the apostles - sudden and unexpected - and occurs even before the exhortation, "repent and be baptized in order to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." The event serves as a significant authentication of the Gentile mission.

λαλουντος [λαλεω] pres. gen. part. "**While [Peter] was**" - [PETER] SPEAKING [STILL THESE WORDS]. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "Peter", forms a genitive absolute construction, temporal, as NIV.

επ [επι] + acc. "**[came on]**" - [THE HOLY SPIRIT FELL DOWN UPON] UPON. Spatial. Typical repetition of a verbal prefix, here for επεπεσεν, "to fall upon." Luke describes the outpouring of the Spirit in the terms of his coming upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The importance of the event lies in the fact that Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit in exactly the same way as the apostles received the Spirit, thus completing the movement of the gospel from the Jews, to Samaritans, God-fearers/Gentiles ..... and thus, to all humanity. Note, we are not told whether those who received the Holy Spirit have believed. It is, of course, implied in v43 and in Peter's report in 11:17. "The Holy Spirit took control of everyone who was listening", CEV.

τους ακουοντας [ακουω] pres. part. "**who heard [the message]**" - THE ONES HEARING [THE WORD]. The participle serves as a substantive modified by the adjective "all"; "all those who were listening to the message", TEV.

### **v45**

ii] The confirmation of tongues, v45-46: The significance of the event is not wasted on the Jewish believers who have accompanied Peter to Caesarea. They were "astonished", for the Spirit came on the Gentiles in exactly the same way as He had come on the apostles at Pentecost; they "heard them speaking in tongues and praising God", cf., 2:11. The phrase "praising God" literally means "magnifying God", which probably aligns with the description given on the day of Pentecost, "speaking.... the mighty acts of God." The Spirit's coming on the Gentiles, in exactly the same way as on the apostles, removes any doubt that the doors of the kingdom are open for Gentiles as well as Jews. In fact, this sign further evidences the present realisation of the kingdom, cf., Zech.8:23. Again,

we are unsure what "speaking in tongues" actually involved on this occasion. The best we can say is that unlike *tongues* today, there is language content, given that the onlookers heard them "glorifying God."

ἐκ + gen. "**the circumcised**" - [AND THE FAITHFUL] OUT OF, FROM [CIRCUMCISION WERE AMAZED]. The preposition is being used in place of a partitive genitive; here denoting a member of a certain class, or party, or school of thought, Zerwick, #134. Possibly referring to the members of the circumcision party, although probably here just "the faithful of the circumcised" = "Jewish believers."

τῶ Πητρῷ [ὄς] dat. "[**who had come with**] **Peter**" - [AS MANY AS HAD COME WITH, ACCOMPANIED] PETER. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb "to come with."

ὅτι "**that**" - THAT [AND = ALSO UPON THE GENTILES]. Here introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they were astonished about, namely that the Spirit had fallen on the Gentiles, but possibly just causal, "they were astonished because the Holy Spirit ...", so Culy.

του ... πνεύματος [α ατος] gen. "**of the [holy] Spirit**" - [THE GIFT] OF THE [HOLY] SPIRIT. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic, specifying the gift; "the gift *which consists of* the Holy Spirit."

ἐκχευται [εκχω] perf. pas. "**had been poured out**" - HAS BEEN Poured OUT. The perfect tense indicating a past action with ongoing consequences. "The gift of the Spirit had been given so freely and generously to people who were not Jews", Barclay.

#### v46

γαρ "**for**" - FOR. Introducing a causal clause explaining why they were astonished; "because ....."

ἡκουον [ακουω] imperf. "**they heard**" - THEY WERE HEARING. The imperfect expresses continued action.

αυτων gen. pro. "**them**" - THEM. Genitive of direct object after the verb ηκουον, "to hear", a verb of perception.

λαλουντων [λαλεω] pres. gen. part. "**speaking**" - SPEAKING. The participle serves as the genitive complement of the direct object "them", standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the object "them", namely, that they are speaking in tongues.

γλωσσαις [α] "**in tongues**" - IN TONGUES, LANGUAGES. In the New Testament, in the plural, it refers to the utterance of those caught up in spiritual ecstasy. As at Pentecost, the utterance has language content such that it can be understood, although its ecstatic nature does confuse. The onlookers at least understand that Cornelius and his friends are "praising God", or as noted below,

"proclaimed the mighty works of God." The Western text adds "other" tongues, cf., 2:4. This is, in itself, an interesting phrase, drawn from the LXX, in that it may imply a possible difference in the Pentecost form of tongues from the form recorded by Paul in Corinthians. Do the editors of the Western text understand such a difference and want to make sure that we align Cornelius' experience with that of the apostles at Pentecost? "They heard them prophesying ecstatically."

**μεγαλυνοντων [μεγαλυνω]** gen. pres. part. "**praising [God]**" - [AND] ENLARGING, MAGNIFYING INCREASING, EXALTING [GOD]. The genitive participle serves as the complement of the direct object "them" standing in a double genitive construction and asserting a fact about the object "them", so further defining what they were saying. The word is probably too general to carry the specific meaning of "praising." The word "magnify" is far better, so "glorify". In 2:11, those speaking in tongues proclaimed the mighty works of God. They "enlarged" the information concerning God, albeit in an ecstatic form. So, the phrase here is likely to carry a similar meaning, rather than just "praising God." "Glorifying God", Phillips.

**τοτε** adv. "**then**" - THEN. Temporal adverb.

**απεκριθη [αποκρινομαι]** aor. pas. "**[Peter] said**" - [PETER] ANSWERED. Peter is "answering" the situation; "At this Peter asked", Moffatt.

#### v47

iii] Peter baptises the new believers, v47-48: Peter obviously senses the importance of the occasion, and that by baptising these Gentile believers, he is moving into new territory. Still, who can argue against baptism? Cornelius and his friends have just received the Spirit. The normal order of events usually involves the preaching of the gospel, a response of repentance and belief, water baptism for the remission of sins (a sign of repentance and its consequence, the washing of forgiveness), and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Laying on of hands (a sign of prayer) may precede the gift of the Spirit, but is obviously not an essential element. Clearly, repentance and belief are present, although not stated here, cf., 11:17, 15:7-9. Water baptism is the only event out of order, but it is still administered, even though the Gentiles have already received the Spirit.

**μητι** "- / **surely no [one]**" - NOT. Used in a question which expects a negative answer.

**κωλυσαι [κυλω]** aor. inf. "**[can] keep / [can] stand in the way**" - [IS ANYONE ABLE] TO FORBID, HINDER, REFUSE. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "is able"; "is able to refuse." It is unlikely that the believing Jews are unwilling to accept Gentiles into their fellowship, but they would expect normal procedure to be followed: instruction, circumcision, water baptism, followed by the gift of the Spirit through the laying on of hands (prayer).

All this is turned on its head. So Peter asks the question: who can refuse water baptism, the sign of repentance, for those already baptized with the Spirit?

**του μη βαπτισθῆναι [βαπτίζω]** inf. "**from being baptized / of [their] being baptized**" - [THE WATER] NOT TO DIP, IMMERSE. The negated genitive articular infinitive forms a final clause expressing purpose, but leaning toward consecutive, expressing result, or hypothetical result. "Can anyone refuse water for the baptism of these people", Moffatt.

**οἵτινες "they"** - [THOSE] WHO [RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT]. Nominative subject of the verb "to receive." "Men (people) such as have received", Moule.

**ὡς "just as"** - AS, JUST AS. Comparative. This is an important statement. The Gentiles' reception of the Spirit, in exactly the same way as the apostles' reception, authorises their full right of access into the new Israel. It is likely that Peter's desire to baptise these new believers serves as an apostolic confirmation of this divine initiative. It should be noted that the incident can't really be used to support the argument that water baptism is essential to salvation, or that it is a sign of the giving of the Holy Spirit (water baptism is a sign of repentance for the forgiveness of sins). "In the same way as we have", Cassirer.

**καὶ "[we have]"** - AND = ALSO [WE]. Adjunctive. "They received the Holy Spirit exactly as we also did."

#### v48

**προσετάξεν [προστασσω]** aor. "**[so] he ordered**" - [BUT/AND] HE COMMANDED. The action is punctiliar. "He gave orders for them to be baptized", Barclay.

**βαπτισθῆναι [βαπτίζω]** pas. inf. "**that [they] be baptized**" - [THEY] TO BE IMMERSED. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, commanding, as NIV, expressing the content of the order; "that they should be baptized", Barrett. The accusative subject of the infinitive is **αυτους**, "they". It seems that water baptism is intended here although the term "baptized in the name" can also carry the sense of being immersed in the gospel / teaching about the person of Jesus, eg., "he ordered that they be immersed into *the teachings of Jesus*."

**εν "in"** - IN [THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST]. The preposition may be instrumental, "by the authority of Jesus", or local, "on the authority of Jesus, Bruce, "under the authority of Jesus", Dunn (= **επι**, 2:38). Possibly, Peter "ordered them, in the name of Jesus Christ, that they be baptized", although the NIV / TNIV has the prepositional phrase modifying the infinitive **βαπτισθῆναι**, "to be baptized." The genitive **Ιησου Χριστου** is adjectival possessive. The **ονοματι**, "name" = the person, here particularly the authority of Jesus.

**τοτε** adv. "**then**" - THEN. Temporal adverb.

επιμειναι [επιμενω] aor. inf. "to stay" - [THEY ASKED HIM] TO REMAIN, STAY, CONTINUE [CERTAIN = SOME DAYS]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, entreating, expressing what they asked, "they asked that he remain some days". The accusative subject of the infinitive is αυτον, "he." "They asked that he stay on for a few days."

## 11:1-18

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### xv] Peter explains his actions

##### Synopsis

Peter has just baptised Cornelius and his family and friends, all of whom are Gentiles. When the leaders of the Jerusalem church get to hear the news, there is some criticism of Peter's actions. His baptising of the uncircumcised is somewhat of a shock for the church members, so Peter heads to Jerusalem to explain his actions.

##### Teaching

The good news of God's abundant grace in Christ is not the exclusive property of old Israel, but belongs to all humanity.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 10:1-16.

ii] Background:

- *Gentile inclusion in the Christian church*: The issue of the full inclusion of Gentiles into the Christian community, and this apart from compliance with Mosaic law, became a burning issue in the New Testament church. It is an issue that Paul had to contend with in his missionary churches due to the interference of the judaizers, the members of the circumcision party in the Jerusalem church. These law-bound believers followed up Paul's mission, seeking to correct his antinomian teachings. This struggle is evidenced in Paul's letters, particularly in his letters to the Galatians and Romans. In fact, the letter to the Romans, written in Corinth during Paul's third missionary journey, presents as a general treatise authored to deal specifically with the law / grace issue. The problem is even evidenced in the book of Revelation.

Luke, a colleague of Paul, goes out of his way in his Acts of the apostles, to establish the divine authority by which the promised blessings of the covenant apply, not just to circumcised Jews, but also to uncircumcised / *lawless* Gentiles; it is by grace through faith that we are saved, and not by race, cult, or works of the law. Luke's prime aim is to authenticate the Gentile ministry of Paul, and he does this by carefully revealing the authority by which the Gentile mission proceeds.

In his detailed recounting of the conversion of Cornelius, 10:1-48, and Peter's report to the Jerusalem church, 11:1-18, Luke establishes the

authority on which Gentiles are included in the way and thus the authority upon which Paul's Gentile mission rests, namely on the authority of God, which authority is confirmed by that most significant of apostles, Peter, and the Jerusalem church as a whole.

As to the extent to which Gentile converts are bound by Old Testament Law, this debate is yet to come, but Luke will again go to great lengths to support Paul's contention that salvation is by grace through faith apart from obedience to the Law. In detailing the Jerusalem Conference in chapter 15, Luke will establish Paul's contention that Gentiles should not be expected to comply with Mosaic Law, a proposition supported by none other than James, the apostles and elders, along with the whole Jerusalem church.

iii] Structure: *Peter explains his actions:*

The Visions:

The Lord directs Cornelius to seek out Peter, 10:1-8;

Peter's vision, v9-16;

Peter meets with Cornelius' delegation, v17-23a;

Peter's meeting with Cornelius, v23b-29.

The Speeches

Cornelius explains the reason for the invitation, v30-33.

Peter's Sermon, v34-43:

The Holy Spirit came upon them, v44-48;

Peter explains his actions, 11:1-18:

Setting, v1-3;

*"the circumcised believers criticised him."*

Peter testifies to his vision, v4-10;

*"don't call impure what God has made clean."*

Peter's meeting with Cornelius, v11-14;

Cornelius receives the Spirit and so is baptised, v15-17;

*"who was I to think that .....?"*

Conclusion, v18:

*"they had no further objections and praised God."*

iv] Interpretation:

In v1-3, Luke records how the news of Gentile conversions has spread among the believers in Judea. The news of the saving impact of the gospel on Gentiles is a great joy, but the full inclusion of the uncircumcised in the fellowship of circumcised believers causes some disquiet. Peter's actions have infringed the Law of Moses with respect to defilement - he "ate with them."

In v4-17, Luke records Peter's defence for his actions before the Jerusalem church, with respect to his behaviour in Caesarea. Peter's argument does not directly answer the criticism implied in the question recorded in v3. Peter simply recounts what happened in his dealings with Cornelius such that against his own better judgment, he complied with God's instruction that he preach the gospel to Cornelius and his household and that he stay in his home. Peter supports this contention with an account of his encounters with God, v4-14, with the evidence of Cornelius' conversion ("God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ"), v15-16, and with his own observation, "who was I that I could hinder God"? v17. The Jerusalem church accepts Peter's explanation and responds with praise to God, v18.

v] Homiletics: *God shows no favouritism*

In my early teens, on a Saturday afternoon, our *gang* would go to the pictures at the Hoyts Esquire in Chatswood, Sydney, to see a film, a movie, a flick. This was the usual kids show made up of cartoons, serials and a main feature such as a



cowboy film. All good fun, with lots of cheering and swapping of comics at interval. Of course, like so many theatres, it was killed off by TV in 1977.

After the pictures, our friend Tony Dixon would always have to call into the Roman Catholic church for confession before heading home. We would check out the inside and then sit on the front steps of the church and wait for him. His church seemed so different, but in the innocence of youth it didn't even register. Later, in my early *puritan* years, I did wonder whether his church was the real thing.

As the years went by, I was to have many pass a similar judgment on my church. There was the Adventist who told me I was outside of God's blessings because my church didn't keep the Sabbath. Then there was the Pentecostal who told me that I would never be fully in the Lord while I associated with a church that wasn't Spirit filled.

The truth is that God shows no partiality. When Peter defended his actions before the Jerusalem church he asked, "who was I to think that I could oppose God?" In the Lord's eyes there is "neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female." Our Lord is not bigoted. Full acceptance before Him



rests on grace through faith and has nothing to do with the privilege of association. If the children of Abraham were able to accept this truth and welcome despised Gentiles into their fellowship, how much easier should it be for us to welcome fellow believers, whose distinctions and differences are nothing to compare with the difference between a Jew and a Gentile?

Our passage reminds us to resist the temptation of breaking fellowship with those who are different to us, but with the same faith.

*Image: Cinema Treasures*

### **Text - 11:1**

Luke describes Peter's return to Jerusalem and his report concerning the admission of Cornelius, along with his household and friends, into the assembly of *The Way*, v1-18. This description serves to set the ground for the full admission of the uncircumcised / the *lawless* into the Christian church.

i] Disquiet in the Jerusalem church over the inclusion of Gentile believers in *The Way*, v1-3. We get the impression that the Jerusalem church is divided between liberals and conservatives. The liberals are mainly Jews of the dispersion, Greek speaking Jews, those who aligned with Stephen. The conservatives are primarily residents of Jerusalem and Judea who continue to participate in the temple cult. The conservatives see themselves as *kosher* believers, in varying degrees, sticklers for the law. After the pogrom against Stephen and his associates, the believers were initially left alone by the Jewish authorities. Saul will soon find himself in dispute with the hard-line members of the Jerusalem church, the Circumcision party, Judaizers. It is likely that it is these members of the church who challenge Peter over his open neglect of the Law by associating with *lawless* Gentiles.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**οἱ οντες** "-" - [HEARD THE APOSTLES AND THE BROTHERS] THE ONES BEING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "brothers" = "believers"; "the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea", ESV.

**κατα** + acc. "**throughout**" - ACCORDING TO [JUDEA]. A distributive use of the preposition, so "throughout", as NIV.

**οτι** "[heard] **that**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they heard.

**εδεξαντο** [**δεχομαι**] aor. "**received**" - [THE GENTILES AND = ALSO] RECEIVED. The verb of a neuter plural subject is usually singular (the subject is treated as a collective noun) although here it is plural. This is sometimes the case in the NT, especially with persons, cf., Bruce. "The Gentiles believed the gospel."

**του θεου** [**ος**] gen. "**of God**" - [THE WORD] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, possibly possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative

characteristic, "God's word", or verbal, subjective, "the word *proclaimed by God*", or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "the word *from God*."

v2

The Western text / Codex D expands this verse somewhat: "Now Peter wanted for a long time to journey to Jerusalem. He called the brothers and strengthened them. He spoke much and taught them throughout the region. He also met them and announced to them the grace of God. But the brothers from the circumcision (*party*) criticised him ....." It seems as if the author is making the point that the criticism directed at Peter is not from the whole church, but from the circumcision party.

δε "so" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative, as NIV.

ὅτε "when" - WHEN. Temporal conjunction used to introduce a temporal clause.

ἀνεβη [ἀναβαίνω] aor. "went up" - [PETER] WENT UP [INTO JERUSALEM]. It is interesting how different cultures use the "going up" or "going down" term. In Australia, "going up" means going North, while "going down" means going South. Jerusalem is on a highland plateau, up in height from say Jericho, so for a first-century Jew, "Peter went up to Jerusalem."

οἱ + gen. "[the circumcised believers]" - THE ONES [FROM *the CIRCUMCISION party*]. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase "from circumcision" into a substantive, subject of the verb "were divided" = were criticising." The preposition ἐκ is probably partitive / wholative; "those of the circumcision" = "members of the circumcision party." It is unlikely that they are unbelieving Jews. They are obviously believers of Jewish birth, but specifically Jewish believers who are unhappy with Peter's association with ritually impure Gentiles. Given the ongoing debate over the place of the law in the life of the early church and the degree to which it should be applied to Gentile believers, it is likely that Luke wants us to view "the ones of the circumcision" as nomist Christians, believers who will continue to be a thorn in Saul's side. Note the sharpening of this polemic against "the circumcision" in the Western textual variant above.

διεκρίνοντο [διακρίνω] imperf. "criticised" - WERE DIVIDED = WERE TAKING ISSUE, DISPUTING .... CRITICISING. The imperfect is durative and so ongoing criticism may be intended, although an imperfect is often used of speech as a matter of form. The word can mean entering into a controversy with someone (which is probably the meaning here), or can take a gentler tack, eg., "questioned his action", Barclay. Note how Luke uses the same verb for the Spirit's instruction to Peter in 10:20, μηδεν διακρινόμενος, used in the sense of self-criticism, "be not double-minded." This negative critique is now being applied to Peter's

opponents in the Jerusalem church. The implication is that their action is against the Spirit's instructions.

**προς** + acc. "-" - TO, TOWARD [HIM]. Here the preposition expresses association; "they disputed with him."

### v3

There are various degrees of association in Jewish society, and eating with a person involves a degree of intimacy which implies agreement with the values of the host. For a Jew to eat with a Gentile implies acceptance of their pagan values, idolatry etc., which, under the Law of Moses, produces defilement. It is not stated that Peter ate with Cornelius, but it may be assumed.

**λεγοντες** [**λεγω**] pres. part. "**and said**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, as NIV, "they criticised him and said", or adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his criticism, "they criticised him saying ....", ESV, but see **λεγοντες**, 1:6.

**οτι** "-" - THAT. Possibly recitative, introducing a dependent statement of direct speech, as NIV, although **λεγοντες**, "saying", probably serves this function. Possibly a causal / interrogative **τι**, "because why?" so Bruce; "why did you go ...?", so also NRSV. Barrett views an interrogative usage as unreliable, particularly if the 3rd person, instead of the 2nd person, is read for the verbs "to go" and "to eat".

**εχοντας** [**εχω**] pres. part. "-" - [YOU ENTERED TOWARD = INTO *a house*] HAVING [UNCIRCUMCISED MEN]. The participle is adjectival, limiting an assumed "house", "entered into *a house* which has uncircumcised *men in it*". "You went into the homes of uncircumcised heathens", Barclay.

**συνεφαγες** [**συνεσθew**] aor. "**ate with**" - [AND] YOU ATE WITH. A variant 3rd. person singular, **συνεφαγεν**, exists, as against the 2nd. person singular here. Entering the home of a Gentile is not an acceptable act for a law-abiding Jew, but eating with them is totally forbidden.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**them**" - THEM. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix verb "to eat with."

### v4

ii] Peter recounts his vision to the leaders of the Jerusalem church, v4-10. He begins with his vision on the roof of the Tanner's house in Joppa. The account is now personalised, with some extra details. There is a fourth group of unclean animals in his vision - "wild beasts". The quadrupeds seem to be clean animals, ie., animals that chew the cud and had cloven hooves, cf., Lev.11. Yet, clean animals, as well as unclean, seem to undermine the point of the vision and the command "kill and eat". Of course, not all four-footed animals are clean, so they

are probably the unclean ones. Note how Peter's response is similar to the response made by Ezekiel, Ezk.4:14.

**αρξάμενος [αρχω]** aor. part. "**[Peter] began**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING BEGUN. The participle is probably adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his explanation, "Peter explained starting from the beginning", or even instrumental, "by starting at the beginning." Peter's account starts with the very first things that had happened to him.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**[told] them**" - [PETER WAS EXPLAINING] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

**καθεξης** adv. "**precisely as it had happened / the whole story**" - IN ORDER, SEQUENCE. The adverb expresses sequence in time or space. Peter gave an account of what had happened "point by point"

**λεγων [λεγω]** pres. part. "-" - SAYING. Redundant attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "explained"; "explained .... and said"; Semitic construction serving to introduce direct speech, see **λεγοντες**, 1:6.

## v5

**εγω** pro. "**I**" - I. Emphatic by use and position.

**ημην ..... προσευξομενος [προσευχομαι]** pres. part. "**was ..... praying**" - WAS .. PRAYING [IN CITY, JOPPA]. The imperfect of the verb to-be with the present participle forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, possibly emphasising durative aspect; "I was in the city of Joppa engaged in prayer", Cassirer. "Joppa" stands in apposition to "city", dative in agreement.

**εν** + dat. "**in [a trance]**" - IN [A TRANCE I SAW A VISION]. The preposition **εν** is adverbial, possibly temporal, "and I saw, while in a trance, a vision."

**ως** "**like [a large sheet]**" - [A CERTAIN OBJECT] AS, LIKE [A LARGE CLOTH]. Comparative; marking a relationship, the something descending was like a sheet descending; "having fallen into a trace I saw a vision of something like a large sheet."

**καταβαινον [καταβαινω]** pres. part. "**being let down**" - COMING DOWN. This participle could be treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting the nominal phrase "something like a large sheet", "that was coming down, or predicative / object complement standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object, namely that it was coming down.

**εκ** + gen. "**from [heaven]**" - FROM [HEAVEN]. Expressing source / origin. Peter may simply mean the sky, but probably he is saying that "the heavens opened", ie.. the spiritual domain became visible to Peter's human senses by means of a visionary image.

**αρχαις** dat. "**by it's [four] corners**" - BY [FOUR] BEGINNINGS = CORNERS [AND IT CAME UNTIL = UP TO ME]. The dative is adverbial, instrumental.

**αχρι** + gen. "**down to where [I was]**" - [IT CAME] UP TO, NEAR [ME]. Here spatial, not temporal. The sheet was lowered into Peter's presence.

v6

**ατενισας [ατενιζω]** aor. part. "**I looked**" - HAVING LOOKED [INTO WHICH = AT IT]. The participle is probably adverbial, temporal, "As I looked steadily at it", although Culy and Kellum opt for attendant circumstance. The prepositional phrase **εις ην**, "into which", probably goes with the participle, rather than the imperfect verb "was observing."

**κατενοουν [κατανοεω]** imperf. "-" - I WAS OBSERVING [AND SAW]. The imperfect verb, being durative, is probably iterative, and is followed by a punctiliar aorist **ειδον** "I saw"; "I focused my gaze and saw."

**τα θηρια** "**wild beasts**" - FOUR-FOOTED *animals*. Accusative direct object of the verb "to see." An addition to the list in 11:6.

**του ουρανου [ος]** gen. "**[birds] of the air / birds**" - [OF THE EARTH, AND BEASTS AND REPTILES AND BIRDS] OF THE HEAVEN. As with "of the earth", the genitive is adjectival, possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic; "pertaining to the sky"; "Birds of the sky", Barclay, although better just "birds", TNIV. Culy suggests source / origin. "I saw four-footed creatures of the earth as well as wild beasts, and there were also reptiles and birds of the air", Cassirer.

v7

**φωνης [η]** gen. "**[I heard] a voice**" - [BUT/AND I HEARD] A VOICE. Genitive of direct object after the verb "to hear", a verb of perception.

**λεγουσης [λεγω]** gen. pres. part. "**telling**" - SAYING. The participle serves as the accusative complement of the direct object "a voice", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object.

**μοι** dat. pro. "**me**" - TO ME. Dative of indirect object.

**αναστας [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "**get up**" - HAVING ARISEN [PETER]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the imperatives, "kill" and "eat", so also imperative, as NIV. "Up Peter", Barclay.

**θυσον [θυω]** aor. imp. "**kill**" - SACRIFICE, KILL [AND EAT]. The word means to kill for the purpose of a sacrifice, but this is obviously not intended here. The spiritual significance of the occasion has probably prompted the use of this word.

## v8

**μηδαμως** adv. "**surely not**" - [BUT/AND I SAID] BY NO MEANS [LORD]. Certainly not. The adverb expresses strong negation.

**ὅτι** "-" - BECAUSE. Here introducing a causal clause explaining why Peter believes he should not eat unclean food; "For nothing common or unclean has ever ....."

**κοινων η ακαθαρτον** "**impure or unclean**" - DEFILED OR UNCLEAN [NEVER ENTERED INTO THE MOUTH OF ME]. Nominative subjects of the verb "to enter." The sense is of ritually defiled or unclean, impure.

## v9

**εκ** + gen. "**from [heaven]**" - [*the* VOICE] FROM [HEAVEN]. Expressing source / origin.

**εκ** + gen. "**[a second] time**" - FROM [SECOND]. The preposition **εκ** is virtually redundant here, other than to indicate a temporal expression is intended with the use of the adjective **δευτερου**, "second", so "a second time", as NIV.

**μη κοινωνου [κοινωνω]** pres. imp. "**do not call anything impure**" - [YOU] DO NOT CALL UNCLEAN. The "you", **συ**, is emphatic; "You must not call unholy ...." "Do not declare unclean that which God has cleansed", Cassirer.

**ὃ** pro. "**that**" - WHAT. Introducing a headless relative clause that serves as the object of the verb "to call unclean."

**εκαθαρισεν [καθαριζω]** aor. "**has made clean**" - [GOD] MADE CLEAN, CLEANSED. Made suitable to be eaten. What God has declared suitable is suitable.

## v10

**επι** "**[this happened three times]**" - [THIS HAPPENED] UPON [THREE]. Temporal use of the preposition, "three times." Did the vision repeat itself three times or did God tell Peter to eat three times? The second option is to be preferred.

## v11

iii] Peter recounts his meeting with Cornelius, v11-14. Peter continues his account of what happened in Caesarea: Right at this moment, Peter is visited by three men who invite him to journey with them to Caesarea, and to visit the home of Cornelius. Cornelius is not mentioned, but the invitation is obviously his. Peter sets off with six brothers who serve as Jewish Christian witnesses. On arriving, "he", obviously Cornelius, tells of an angelic visitation and the instruction to summon Peter so that he and his household may be saved.

**εξαυτης** adv. "**right then**" - [AND BEHOLD] AT ONCE, IMMEDIATELY, SUDDENLY. Also possibly just a transitional phrase "in the meantime". "At that very moment", ESV.

**απεσταλμενοι** [**αποστελλω**] perf. pas. part. "**who had been sent**" - [THREE MEN] HAVING BEEN SENT. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "men", as NIV.

**προς** + acc. "**to**" - TO, TOWARD [ME]. Spatial.

**απο** + gen. "**from**" - FROM [CAESAREA]. Expressing source/origin.

**επι** + acc. "**at [the house]**" - [STOOD] UPON = AT [THE HOUSE]. Spatial.

**εν** + dat. "**where**" - IN [WHICH]. Local, expressing space.

**ημεν** [**ειμι**] imperf. "**I was staying**" - I WAS. A plural variant, **ημην**, exists which is the more difficult reading; "three men arrived at the house in which were", ESV.

## v12

Peter now specifies those "from the circumcision", 10:45, as six brothers = believers. These men not only serve as witnesses of the unfolding events, they are also participants who, by their participation, give their tacit approval.

**το πνευμα** "**the Spirit**" - [BUT/AND] THE SPIRIT. Nominative subject of the verb "to say." Note that in v8 Peter addresses the voice with the title "Lord".

**μοι** dat. pro. "**to me**" - [SAID] TO ME. Dative of indirect object.

**διακριναντα** [**διακρινω**] aor. part. "**have no hesitation**" - [WITHOUT] MAKING A DISTINCTION. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of "going with them." A textual variant here causes a minor problem. The NIV, along with the NEB, opts for the middle **διακρινομενος** "without hesitation / doubting", while NRSV sides with the UBS Geek NT. reading "without making a distinction", so Barrett. See 10:20, 11:2

**συνελθειν** [**συνερχομαι**] aor. inf. "**about going**" - TO ACCOMPANY. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what the Spirit told Peter; "the Spirit said to me that I should accompany them without making a distinction *between Jews and Gentiles* / without doubting."

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**with them**" - THEM. Dative of direct object after a **συν** prefix verb "to accompany."

**συν** + dat. "**with**" - [AND THESE SIX BROTHERS CAME] WITH [ME]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

**του ανδρος** [**ηρ ρος**] gen. "**[the] man's [house]**" - [AND WE ENTERED INTO THE HOUSE] OF THE MAN. The genitive is adjectival, possessive; "the house *belonging to the man.*"

### v13

ἡμῖν dat. pro. "[he told] us" - [BUT/AND HE ANNOUNCED] TO US. Dative of indirect object.

πῶς "how" - HOW [HE SAW AN ANGEL IN THE HOUSE OF HIM]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech, expressing something about what is said, unlike a particle like ὅτι which states (directly or indirectly) what is said.

σταθεντα [ἰστημι] aor. pas. part. "appear [and say]" - HAVING STOOD [AND HAVING SAID]. As with "having said", the participle serves as the complement of the object "an angel", standing in a double accusative construction and asserting a fact about the object. "He related how he had seen an angel standing in his house and saying", Moffatt.

τον επικαλουμενον [επικαλω] pres. pas. part. "who is called [Peter]" - [SEND INTO JOPPA AND SUMMON SIMON] THE ONE BEING CALLED [PETER]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "Simon", as NIV. "Someone named Simon Peter", CEV.

### v14

προς + acc. "[he will bring you a message]" - [HE WILL SPEAK WORDS] TOWARD = TO [YOU]. The preposition is used to introduce an indirect object instead of a dative.

εν + dat. "through [which]" - IN = BY [WHICH] - The dative is instrumental, expressing means; "by which you will be saved."

σου gen. pro. "your [household]" - [YOU AND ALL THE HOUSE] OF YOU. The genitive is adjectival, possessive. The salvation of households is an interesting feature in Acts. This incorporation may involve salvation, but it may just mean that household members are brought under the sound of the gospel and therefore given a greater opportunity to find salvation in Christ. For *Salvation by households*, see Background, 10:44-48.

### v15

iv] The Spirit comes upon Cornelius and so Peter baptises him, v15-17. We now come to the centre of Peter's argument. He states that as he "began to speak the Holy Spirit came on them." Acts 10 records Peter's gospel presentation to Cornelius and his family. His sermon begins with the declaration that "God does not show favouritism", and goes on to outline the life of Jesus, his resurrection, the coming judgment and the forgiveness of sins to those who believe. Before Peter can finish his gospel message, the Spirit falls on his audience - they believe and receive the Holy Spirit. The evidence of this lay in their reception of the Holy Spirit "as he had come on us at the beginning", i.e., "they heard them speaking in



tongues and praising God", Act.10:46. Clearly, this is a Pentecost type experience where ecstatic prophecy serves to evidence a widening of membership in the kingdom of God. If the belief of these Gentiles prompts the gift of the Holy Spirit, who is Peter to think he "could oppose God" (ie. refuse baptism, Act.10:47-48). The visible fulfilment of Joel 2:28-32 on this occasion, serves to prove that the promise applies to all mankind, not just to Jews.

**εν ... τῷ ἀρξασθαι [αρχῶ]** aor. inf. "**As I began**" - [BUT/AND] IN TO BEGIN. This preposition, with the dative articular infinitive, usually forms a temporal clause, contemporaneous time, "while, during"; "as I began to speak", ESV.

**λαλεῖν [λαλεῶ]** pres. inf. "**to speak**" - TO SPEAK. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the infinitive "to begin".

**ἐπ [ἐπι]** + acc. "**[came] on**" - [THE HOLY SPIRIT FELL UPON] UPON [THEM]. An idiomatic repetition of the prepositional prefix of the verb **ἐπιπιπῶ**, "to fall upon." Always an interesting language problem for the modern mind. To a Jew, the Spirit obviously proceeds from an opening in the heavens and falls upon the recipient. To our mind, a spiritual confrontation involves our being surrounded and possessed.

**ὥσπερ "as"** - JUST AS, AS [AND = ALSO UPON US]. Comparative, expressing similarity.

**εν + dat. "at [the beginning]"** - IN [BEGINNING]. Temporal use of the preposition; when first the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles, namely, at the time of the feast of Pentecost following Jesus' crucifixion.

## v16

Here we have an example of the preservation of Jesus' teachings in the memory of the apostles. This saying is initially attributed to the Baptist, Luke 3:16, and later Jesus, Act 1:5.

**τοῦ κυρίου [ος] "[what] the Lord [had said]"** - [BUT/AND I REMEMBERED THE WORD] OF THE LORD. Possibly an objective genitive, "the words ascribed to our Lord", Bruce, or subjective, as NIV, or adjectival, possessive, "the words *that belong to Jesus*", or idiomatic / source, "the words *that are from the Lord*."

**ὥς "what"** - AS / WHILE / THAT [HE WAS SAYING]. Probably recitative, introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what Peter remembered, namely, that the Lord had spoken on the distinction between his baptism and that of John, as NIV. Possibly temporal, "I remembered when the Lord said ....", so Culy.

**μὲν ..... δε "... but ..."** - ON THE ONE HAND [JOHN IMMERSSED WITH WATER], BUT ON THE OTHER HAND [YOU WILL BE IMMERSSED]. Adversative comparative / correlative construction.

βαπτισεν [βαπτίζω] aor. "baptized" - IMMersed. As already noted, the word "baptized" can cause problems, given that the type of immersion intended is unclear. Here it is obviously referring to water baptism and Spirit baptism. A word such as "immerse" is better than "baptize" since it is not so powerfully tied to water christening / baptizing and therefore, easily includes a figurative sense, eg., "I am immersed in my work..." NT. figurative uses include: immersed in the Holy Spirit; immersed in suffering; immersed in the Name = the person of Jesus = his Word, teaching / authority of Jesus.

εν + dat. "with [the Holy Spirit]" - WITH [HOLY SPIRIT]. It is interesting that Luke has chosen to use the preposition here rather than the simple dative ὕδατι "in / with water"; either instrumental, or local. Barrett thinks it is just stylistic although Moule thinks that Luke is making a point, but then, what is the point? Is εν local, "in", or instrumental, "with"? In Eph.5:18 an instrumental use is likely, πληροσθε εν πνευματι, "be filled with *the* Spirit." Here, if we take "baptized" to mean "immersed", a local "immersed in the Holy Spirit" seems more likely, such that εν expresses incorporative union.

#### v17

οὕν "so" - THEREFORE. Drawing a logical conclusion.

ει + ind. "if" - IF. Introducing a conditional clause, 1st class, where the condition is assumed to be true; "if, *as is the case*, ..... *then* ...." The apodosis is in the form of a question, probably two questions, see below.

αὐτοῖς dat. pro. "[gave] them" - [GOD GAVE THE SAME GIFT] TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

ὥς "[he gave us]" - AS [AND = ALSO TO US]. Comparative.

πιστευσασιν [πιστεῦω] dat. aor. part. "who believed" - HAVING BELIEVED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the dative ἡμῖν, "to us", as NIV, although possibly descriptive, idiomatic, temporal, "*when / after* we believed." It is possible that the participle is modifying the dative αὐτοῖς, "to them", ie., Cornelius and friends - this is the logical sense, but syntactical separation makes this unlikely, so Barrett. "Belief" in the NT is a key word, meaning something like a firm resolve to take God at his word, to rest upon, firmly rely on.

επι "in" - UPON [THE LORD JESUS CHRIST]. This preposition, followed by the accusative, means movement onto. "I put the weight of my resolve onto/upon Jesus."

εγω τις ἦμην "who was I" - *then* WHO *am* I? Page in the old London commentary, as does Culy, suggests that the apodosis of the conditional clause is made up of two questions. The imperfect verb to-be ἦμην may cover both questions, or the first question may carry an assumed present tense of the verb to-

be.; "who *am* I?" The second question is then "Was I able to hinder God?" "Who was I - how could I try to thwart God?" Moffatt.

**κωλυσαι [κωλυω]** aor. inf. "[**to think that I could**] **oppose [God]?**" - [WAS ABLE] TO HINDER [GOD]? The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the periphrasis **ἤμην δυνατος**, "was able." Who was Peter to think that he was able to hinder God's will? Peter knew the answer to this question and it seems his opponents did as well.

## v18

v] Luke tells us that the leaders of the Jerusalem church warmly receive the news that God has given to the Gentiles the gift of salvation through repentance of sins, v18. The right of Gentiles to access the Christian church is therefore now established (by God), although the debate over the extent to which Gentiles were bound by Old Testament law is yet to come. The church then gave praise to God.

**ακουσαντες [ακουω]** aor. part. "**when they heard**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING HEARD [THESE THINGS]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

**ἠσυχασαν [ἠσυχάζω]** aor. "**they had no further objections**" - THEY REMAINED QUIET [AND GLORIFIED GOD]. A literal rendering is "they remained silent", NRSV, but the sense is that they dropped further criticism of Peter's actions.

**λεγοντες [λεγω]** "**saying**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "glorified / praised"; "praised God and said". For an adverbial classification see **λεγοντες**, 1:6.

**ἄρα** "**so then**" - THEREFORE. Drawing a logical conclusion / inferential, "but in drawing conclusions, more subjective than **ουν**", Barrett. "Why then, even to Gentiles ...."

**και** "**even**" - AND = EVEN / ALSO. Adverbial, ascensive, "even", or adjunctive, "also".

**τοις εθνεσιν [ος]** dat. "**to Gentiles**" - TO THE GENTILES. Dative of indirect object.

**εις** + acc. "**repentance unto life**" - [GOD GAVE] REPENTANCE [INTO LIFE]. Interestingly, the NRSV, which tends to be a more literal translation than the NIV, has "repentance that leads to life." The TEV certainly breaks open the meaning of this phrase with its rendering "the opportunity to repent and live." The preposition **εις** often expresses purpose and that sense is probably found here; "the repentance which is the way to life", Barclay. Given that today the word "repentance" means little more than to apologise for some indiscretion, the sense may be better expressed "conversion that leads to life", Johnson.

## 11:19-30

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### xvii] A good man

#### Synopsis

Luke continues his record of the spread of Christianity outward, now as far north as Antioch. The work of evangelism begins with Jewish believers witnessing to fellow Jews, but some believers from Cyprus and Cyrene join the evangelistic task and begin preaching to Gentiles. Conversions follow, "in great number." When the church in Jerusalem hears the news, they decide to send Barnabas, "a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith." Barnabas assesses the situation, and seeks out Saul in Tarsus to help build the new church in Antioch. During the first year of their ministry together, Agabus, a prophet from the Jerusalem church, prophesies that a famine is about to overtake the Roman empire. In response, the church in Antioch organised a relief package for the believers in Judea.

#### Teaching

The advance of the gospel cannot be halted.

#### Issues

i] Context: See 6:1-7. Part two of *The Jewish mission of the early church* concludes with a record of the advance of the gospel in Antioch under the guiding hand of Barnabas and Saul, along with Peter's arrest and release. Peter's arrest and release closes off the Jewish mission, and ushers in the Gentile mission of the Christian church. The Gentile mission, like the Jewish mission, will conclude with the arrest and release of its leader, namely Paul the apostle. The advance of the gospel cannot be halted.

#### ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;
- *The theological structure of the gospel*; 3:11-26;
- *Gentile inclusion in the Christian church*, 11:1-18.
- *Prophecy in the New Testament*. The role of a New Testament prophet remains unclear. We know that there are predictive types of prophets in the New Testament, eg., Agabus, Acts 11:27-30. Such prophets are similar to Old Testament prophets in that they can predict the future, but are dissimilar in that they don't seem to be involved in primary revelation.

Luke, at times, describes Jesus and the apostles functioning as prophets, although he doesn't use the term "prophet" for them. He does use

the title for John the Baptist, Lk.1:76. Luke often notes believers who are filled with the Spirit and who then speak. Luke doesn't use the title "prophet" for them, and given that there is no evidence that they were involved in primary revelation, they do not align with "the prophets of old." The primary role of a Biblical prophet is *forthtelling*, rather than *foretelling*, and this of divine revelation. For us today, this task was realised in the New Testament Canon, such that the authors of the various books can rightly be called prophets.

There is clear evidence of a secondary form of prophecy which Paul aligns with tongue-speaking; "inspired or gifted preachers", Fitzmyer. This presents as a word-ministry for edification, exhortation and consolation in the church, 1Cor.14:3. This form of prophecy is not like that of an Old Testament prophet entrusted with primary revelation; Paul's prophet is a minister of the Word. Such a prophet possesses gifts that enable them to upbuild, encourage and console within the frame of a Biblical Word ministry. Luke's references to *προφηται*, "prophets", in Acts 11:17, 13:1, 15:32, more than likely allude to this general form of prophecy. Obviously some of these prophets, like Agabus, were able to predict the future.

In passing, I well remember a colleague of mine arguing strongly for the cessation of prophecy in the first century. He argued this case in opposition to the ordination of women, given that the Scriptures speak of female prophets!



*Syrian Antioch*

iii] Structure: *A good man*:

The church of *the Way* comes to Antioch, v19-21;  
The ministry of Barnabas and Saul in Antioch, v22-27;  
The visit to Antioch of Agabus the prophet, v27-30.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke has already detailed the movement of the gospel into Samaria through the evangelistic work of Hellenist Jews - Greek speaking Jews of the dispersion. Luke now specifies other localities where they are at work, namely Phoenicia (the coastal region around the twin cities of Tyre and Sidon), as well as the island of Cyprus and the Syrian city of Antioch.

Luke tells us that some of the believers from Cyprus (Barnabas' birthplace), and Cyrene (modern day Libya), start to evangelise the **ἑλληνιστας**, "Hellenists" in Antioch (according to Josephus, "third among the cities of the Roman world"). It is unclear how Luke is using the word here. Some commentators think he is referring to Greek-speaking Jews, as in 6:1 and 9:29. In that context, the Greek-speakers are indeed Jews, but here a general sense is surely intended, namely, "Greek-speaking inhabitants of Antioch", Barrett, or even more to the point, "Greeks" = unbelieving Gentiles, as per the variant **Ἕλληνας**, so Peterson D.

Luke again gives us a short-hand version of the message, namely, they preached "the Lord Jesus", ie., they proclaimed / communicated the important news of peace now possible through Jesus, Lord over all powers, cf., 10:36. And again, Luke identifies the twin response of faith / belief and repentance - "a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord."

When the church in Jerusalem hears of the revival in Antioch, they send their most suitable member to handle the situation. Barnabas is a Cypriot, a Greek-speaker, and so culturally aligned to the local population. And more, he is a person "full of the Holy Spirit and faith", Luke 4:1, Acts 7:55, and a **αγαθος**, "a good man", a man like Joseph of Arimathea, Lk.23:50, cf., Acts 4:36-37 - an honourable and highly-regarded man. Barnabas takes on a pastoral role in the congregation, encouraging them to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts, v23; he is all about perseverance / fortitude - being firm in faith through thick and thin. As Matthew Henry puts it in his commentary, Barnabas promotes a "deliberate resolution founded upon good grounds and fixed upon that foundation."

Given the way the church in Antioch is growing, Barnabas seeks out Saul in Tarsus to assist in the ministry of the church. Together, they work for over a year, "teaching a great number of people." In passing, Luke makes the point that it is in Antioch where believers are tagged with the

name **Χριστιανους** (secular title, **Χριστιανοι**), "Christians", ie., followers of Christ - a title used in the same way as Herodians, followers / adherents of king Herod.

Luke goes on to mention an act of sharing which will soon become a hallmark of Paul's ministry, namely, the responsibility of Gentiles to respond to the generosity of the Jerusalem church, namely, their gift of the gospel to the world. In the context of Biblical theology, the responsive generosity of the Gentiles to the Jewish believers in Palestine aligns with the generosity of the Queen of Sheba toward Solomon - when Gentiles bear gifts to the New Israel, then know that the kingdom of God is upon you.

This act of sharing is prompted by the prophet Agabus who visited Antioch from Jerusalem. He predicted that a famine would soon engulf the Empire. Judea, being a poor province of the Empire, is bound to suffer. During the reign of Claudius, AD 41-54, the Empire faced a series of famines. Luke may be referring to one that hit Egypt, the Empire's main grain producer, in AD 45.

### **Text - 11:19**

A good man, v19-30: i] The church of *the Way* comes to Antioch, v19-21. Luke picks up on his account in 8:1-4, namely, the dispersion and evangelistic work of Jewish Hellenists. Their work in Southern Syria now extends into Phoenicia, even as far as Cyprus and Syrian Antioch. Their mission is still primarily Jewish, evangelising Jews of the dispersion, but this is all about to change.

**μεν ουν ..... δε** "now" - THEREFORE, ON THE ONE HAND ..... BUT ON THE OTHER HAND. Transitional correlative construction which moves the narrative forward while connecting it with the previous events. The connecting **δε** introduces v20. So, picking up on the scattering of the Hellenist Jews as far as Antioch and Cyprus, Luke tells us that "some of them, however, men from ....."; See **μεν ουν**, 1:6.

**οί .... διασπαρευτες [διασπειρω]** aor. pas. part. "**those who had been scattered**" - THE ONES HAVING BEEN SCATTERED. The participle serves as a substantive, subject of the verb "to pass through."

**απο** + gen. "**by**" - FROM = BECAUSE OF. Rather than separation, "away from", the sense here is more about source, and this with a causal sense, as NIV.

**της γενομενης [γινομαι]** "**that broke out**" - [THE TRIBULATION] HAVING BECOME. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the verb "to become"; "by the trouble which arose over Stephen", Moffatt.

**επι** + dat. "**when [Stephen was killed]**" - UPON = AGAINST [STEPHEN]. Spatial, possibly expressing opposition, "against", although both Culy and

Kellum suggest a causal sense, "because of Stephen's actions." The NIV opts for an adverbial use, temporal.

ἕως "as far as" - [PASSED THROUGH] UNTIL [PHOENICIA AND CYPRUS AND ANTIOCH]. Used here to express extension, that of distance.

λαλουντες [λαλεω] pres. part. "**spreading [the word]**" - SPEAKING [THE WORD]. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their coming.

μηδενι dat. adj. "-" - TO NO ONE. Dative of indirect object.

ει μη "-" - EXCEPT [ONLY]. Introducing an exceptive clause which establishes a contrast by designating an exception; "they were proclaiming God's message, but, in so doing, addressed themselves only to Jews", Cassirer.

Ιουδαιοις [ος] dat. "**Jews**" - TO JEWS. Dative of indirect object.

## v20

The implication is that the men from "Cyprus and Cyrene" are evangelising Gentiles (Ελληνιστας, "Greeks", here with the sense "Gentiles"). This is supported by the shorthand version of the gospel, "important news about the Lord Jesus", a version which makes no mention of Jesus' messiahship ("the Christ"), a fact relevant to Jews, but not to Gentiles.

εξ [εκ] + gen. "**[some] of [them]**" - [THERE WERE CERTAIN] FROM = OF [THEM]. The preposition is used here instead of a partitive genitive; "among them were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene", NRSV.

δε "**however**" - BUT/AND. See μεν ουν, v19.

κυπριοι [ος] "**[men from] Cyprus**" - [MEN] CYPRIOT [AND CYRENIAN]. Nominative standing in apposition to "men".

ελθοντες [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**went**" - [WHO] HAVING COME [INTO ANTIOCH]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "who, on coming to Antioch", ESV.

ευαγγελιζομενοι [ευαγγελιζω] pres. mid. part. "**telling [them]**" - [WERE SPEAKING AND = ALSO TOWARD THE GREEKS] COMMUNICATING, PROCLAIMING, PREACHING [THE LORD JESUS]. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their "speaking". The imperfect verb "to speak" is probably inceptive, "they began to speak", as NIV.

## v21

The preaching prompts belief and repentance: "they believed and turned to the Lord." Yet, it is interesting to note that Luke does not mention the reception of the Holy Spirit. Some argue that Barnabas sorts this out when he is sent by the Jerusalem church to guide the new church in Antioch, but an argument from silence carries little weight. Luke describes what happens as an act of divine



intervention; it occurred under "the hand of the Lord." This anthropomorphism from the LXX serves to express the exercise of divine power; "the power of the Lord was with them", REB, "the Lord was with them strongly", TH.

μετ [μετα] acc. "**with [them]**" - [AND HAND OF LORD WAS] WITH [THEM]. Expressing association / accompaniment.

τε "**and**" - AND. Coordinating conjunction. Culy notes Levinsohn Gk. who argues that "when τε introduces a response, the effect is to give prominence to the response, over against the event which produced it."

ὁ πιστευσας [πιστευω] aor. part. "**believed**" - [A LARGE NUMBER] HAVING BELIEVED [TURNED UPON = TO THE LORD]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "a large number."

## v22

ii] Saul/Paul and Barnabas in Antioch, v22-27. A first century example of team ministry.

της ελλκησιας [α] gen. "**[reached] the church**" - [BUT/AND THE WORD WAS HEARD INTO THE EARS] OF THE CHURCH. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "the ears *belonging to* the church - a euphemism "; "News of what was happening reached the church in Jerusalem", CEV.

της ουσης gen. pres. part. "-" - THE ONE BEING [IN JERUSALEM]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "church"; "the church which was in Jerusalem." A somewhat strange expression. Unlike Paul, it is unusual for Luke to use such a participial construction.

περι + gen. "-" - ABOUT [THEM]. Expressing reference / respect; "about, concerning."

διελθειν [διερχομαι] "-" - [AND THEY SENT FORTH BARNABAS] TO PASS THROUGH = GO. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to go."

ἕως "**to [Antioch]**" - UNTIL [ANTIOCH]. Here expressing extension in the terms of space; "up to Antioch"

## v23

When Barnabas arrives, he sees how God's divine favour / kind mercy (χαρις) is being played out in Antioch, and so he sets about encouraging the new believers to persevere in faith.

παραγενομενος [παραγινομαι] aor. mid. part. "**when he arrived**" - [WHO] HAVING COME [AND HAVING SEEN]. As with "having seen", the participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal with a causal edge.

τή "**what [the grace of God had done]**" - [THE GRACE] THE [OF GOD, REJOICED]. The article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the genitive construction

"of God", into an attributive modifier of the noun "grace"; "the grace which is of God." The genitive "of God" is adjectival, either possessive, identifying the possession of a derivative characteristic, "the grace *pertaining to* God", or idiomatic / source, "the grace *that is from* God."

προσμενειν [προσμενω] "**to remain**" - [AND WAS ENCOURAGING EVERYONE] TO REMAIN WITH, CONTINUE TOWARD [THE LORD]. Introducing an object clause, dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Barnabas was encouraging the new believers to do, namely, to abide with steadfast purpose in their commitment to the Lord; "to remain faithful to the Lord." "The Lord" serves as a dative of direct object after the προς prefix infinitive, "to continue toward."

τη προσθεσει [ις, εως] dat. "**with all their hearts**" - IN SETTING FORTH, IN PURPOSE = DEVOTION [OF HEART]. The dative is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the action of the infinitive "to continue toward [the Lord]." For this "resolve of the heart", Johnson, Kellum suggests the sense "to steadfastly remain true", so, when it comes to the Christian walk, what is required is fortitude, perseverance in faith, sticking with our belief in the Lord Jesus through thick-n-thin.

## v24

Barnabas was a Spirit-filled man, reliable and firm in his faith, as was Stephen, 6:5, and also, like Joseph of Arimathea, he is "a good and upright man", Lk.23:50.

οτι "-" - BECAUSE [HE WAS A GOOD MAN]. Introducing a causal clause explaining why Barnabas encouraged the new believers to persevere in faith.

πνευματος [α ατος] gen. "**of the [Holy] Spirit**" - [AND FULL] OF [HOLY] SPIRIT [AND FAITH]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / of content; "filled full of." For "filled with the Holy Spirit" see Excursus.

τω κυριω [ος] dat. "**[were brought] to the Lord**" - [AND A SUFFICIENT = GREAT CROWD WAS ADDED] TO THE LORD. Dative of indirect object.

## v25

Saul had been sent to his home town Tarsus by the leaders of the Jerusalem church, and it is there that Barnabas seeks him out, presumably because of his calling to be apostle to the Gentiles.

δε "**then**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

αναζητησαι [αναζητεω] aor. inf. "**to look for [Saul]**" - [HE WENT OUT INTO TARSUS] TO SEEK [SAUL]. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to seek out Saul."

## v26

The Western text handles the verse somewhat differently: "When he found him, he exhorted him to come to Antioch. When they came, for the whole year, a considerable crowd was stirred up, and then for the first time the disciples were called Christians." As Johnson notes, the Western text makes Saul / Paul out to be more an agitator rather than a solidifier.

The sentence is made up of three infinitival constructions serving as the subject of the verb **εγενετο**, "it happened, it became"; literally, "But/and, and = even a whole year, *Barnabas and Saul/Paul* to be brought together with = came together with them (the believers) in the church, and to teach a large crowd, and the disciples to title = were titled / called Christians first time in Antioch happened"

**εϋρων [εϋρισκω]** aor. part. "**when he found *him***" - [AND] HAVING FOUND *him* [HE BROUGHT *him* INTO ANTIOCH]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

**ενιαυτον ολον** "**for a whole year**" - [BUT/AND IT HAPPENED AND = EVEN] A WHOLE YEAR. The accusative here is adverbial, temporal; "they were there for a whole year."

**συναχθηναι [συναγω]** aor. pas. inf. "-" - [*barnabas and saul/paul*] TO BE BROUGHT TOGETHER WITH = CAME TOGETHER WITH. This infinitive serves with the infinitives "to teach" and "to title" to form the combined subject of the verb **εγενετο**, "it became, happened." The assumed accusative subject of the infinitive "to be brought together with" and "to teach" is "Barnabas and Saul/Paul."

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "-" - THEM. Dative of direct object after the **συν** prefix infinitive "to be brought together with."

**εν + dat.** "**with [the church]**" - IN [THE CHURCH]. The word is often used of the meeting / assembly itself, but here the preposition seems to be local, expressing place, so the place of the meeting is now being called "a church"; "they met with *the congregation* in the church and taught them."

**Χριστιανους [ος]** "**Christians**" - [AND TO TEACH A LARGE CROWD, AND *it happened* THE DISCIPLES TO TITLE = WERE TITLED, CALLED] CHRISTIANS [FIRST TIME IN ANTIOCH]. Either serving as the accusative subject of the infinitive, or the accusative complement of the direct object "disciples"; "It was at Antioch that the disciples first got the name Christians", REB.

## v27

iii] The visit to Antioch of Agabus the prophet, v27-30. The visit of the prophets from the Jerusalem church and in particular, the role played by the prophet Agabus in encouraging the new church in Antioch to offer sustenance to

the believers in Jerusalem, serves to firmly link the new church in Antioch with the mother church in Jerusalem, so Dunn.

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative; "Now in these days", ESV.

**εν** + dat. "**during [this time]**" - IN [THESE DAYS, PROPHETS CAME DOWN FROM JERUSALEM INTO ANTIOCH]. Adverbial use of the preposition, temporal.

## v28

The Western text introduces the verse with "There was much rejoicing. When we were gathered together, one of them ....."

**εξ [εκ]** gen. "**of [them]**" - [BUT/AND, ONE] FROM [THEM]. Possibly used here to express source / origin, but more likely used instead of a partitive genitive, as NIV.

**ονοματι [α]** dat. "**named**" - IN NAME [AGABUS]. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect, "with respect to his name" = "by name."

**αναστας [ανιστημι]** aor. part. "**stood up**" - HAVING STOOD UP. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to signify, indicate." Often used as a helper verb, but here probably making the point that Agabus actually stands up to deliver his prophecy.

**δια** + gen. "**through [the Spirit]**" - BY [THE SPIRIT]. Instrumental, expressing means, "by means of"; "prompted by the Spirit", Peterson.

**μελλειν [μελλω]** pres. inf. "**that**" - [SIGNIFIED, INDICATED = DECLARED] TO BE ABOUT. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Agabus "signified" = "prophesied"; "predicted that a terrible famine soon would spread over the whole known world during the (AD. 52-54) reign of Claudius Caesar", Junkins.

**εσεσθαι [ειμι]** fut. inf. "**would**" - TO BE [A GREAT FAMINE UPON ALL THE INHABITED WORLD (= the Roman Empire)]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the infinitive "to be about."

**επι** + gen. "**during [the reign of Claudius]**" - [WHICH BECAME] UPON [CLAUDIUS]. Adverbial use of the preposition, temporal; "in *the days of* Claudius", ESV.

## v29

The Greek sentence is somewhat complex: "Certain (**τις**) of the disciples (**μαθητων**), just as = in the measure that (**καθως**) each *one* of them (**εκαστος αυτων**) could afford (**ευπορειτο**), determined (**ωρισαν**) to send *a sum of money* (**πεμψαι**) as relief (**εις διακονιαν**) to the brethren who were living in Jerusalem"; adapted from Zerwick.

των ... μαθητων [ης ου] gen. "**the disciples**" - [BUT/AND CERTAIN = SOME] OF THE DISCIPLES. The genitive is adjectival, partitive, modifying τις, "certain"; "Those disciples who were able, decided to send relief to the brothers and sisters living in Judea."

καθως "**as**" - JUST AS = IN THE MEASURE THAT. Cf., Zerwick. Used here of measurement, of one's financial means; "in proportion as", Barrett = "as they prospered", BDAG.

αυτων gen. pro. "-" - [EACH *one*] OF THEM [HAVING FINANCIAL ABILITY = COULD AFFORD]. Partitive genitive.

πεμψαι [πεμπω] aor. inf. "**to provide**" - [DECIDED, RESOLVED, DETERMINED] TO SEND. Introducing an object clause, dependent statement of perception, expressing what they "decided" to do.

εις + acc. "[**help**]" - TO [SERVICE, MINISTRY = RELIEF]. This prepositional phrase, εις + an accusative noun, serves to modify the assumed object of the infinitive "to send", something like "a sum of money" = "to send *a sum of money* as relief." Culy classifies it as a predicate modifier.

τοις .... αδελφοις [ος] dat. "**for the brothers and sisters**" - TO THE BROTHERS [DWELLING IN JUDEA]. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage.

### v30

Barnabas and Saul/Paul (soon Paul will take the lead over Barnabas) send the collection to the πρεσβυτερους, "elders", church leaders throughout Judea.

και "[**this**]" - [WHICH] AND = ALSO [THEY DID]. Adverbial use of the conjunction, adjunctive; "also".

αποστειλαντες [αποστελλω] "**sending**" - HAVING SENT [TOWARD THE ELDERS]. The participle is adverbial, temporal / instrumental; "when they sent / by sending ....."

δια + gen. "**by [Barnabas]**" - BY [HAND OF BARNABAS AND SAUL]. Instrumental, expressing means. For the idiomatic use of "hand", see the introductory note v21; "with Paul and Barnabas in charge of the enterprise", Cassirer.

## 12:1-19a

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### xvii] Persecution in Jerusalem

##### Synopsis

While the gospel is daily gaining believers in Antioch, the church in Jerusalem is set upon by king Herod. In a fit of spite, Herod has James, the brother of John, arrested and executed. Given that the religious authorities are more than pleased, Herod sets out to arrest and execute another leading-light in the church, namely, Peter. During his incarceration, Peter is released from prison by an angel, and heads to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark. In Mary's home, believers are assembled, praying for Peter's safety. Amidst great joy, Peter relates how he was freed, telling the believers to report the events to James, the brother of Jesus, the present leader of the Jerusalem church. As for the soldiers who were guarding Peter, Herod, true to character, has them executed.

##### Teaching

Right will ultimately prevail, despite the rage of evil tyrants.

##### Issues

i] Context: See 11:19-30.

ii] Background:

- *Signs and Wonders in Acts*, 4:23-31.

iii] Structure: *Persecution in Jerusalem*:

Herod sets out to persecute *the Way*, v1-5;

Peter is arrested, but set free by an angel, v6-11;

A praying church experiences a joyous reunion, v12-17;

The execution of Peter's captors, v18-19a.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke now winds up the first half of his book on the founding and spread of the church of *the Way*. To do this, he takes the story back to Jerusalem to recount the end of an epoch. First, he tells us of the execution of the apostle James. Times have moved on and so there is no attempt to replace him; the church is now led by "apostles and elders", and soon, just *πρεσβυτερος*, "elders". Then we have the account of Peter's arrest and miraculous release. Peter is the central character in the first half of Acts, a key player in the Jerusalem church and its outward thrust into Palestine, but now Luke tells us that "he went off to another place." Finally, Luke

recounts the end of the Herodian line with the death of Herod Agrippa. His death is a classic example of "the Gentile folly of confusing the human with the divine", Dunn. The loss of his strong rule will pave the way for the Jewish rebellion and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Luke's account begins with Herod's move against the church of *the Way*. Herod Agrippa I (AD 41-44) was raised in Rome and was on good terms with the Emperor Claudius (AD 41-54). He was the grandson of Herod the Great, and a nephew of Herod Antipas, both of whom had persecuted Jesus. He ended up ruling much of the same area as that of Herod the Great. With Rome on his side, he aligned himself with Israel's religious authorities, and so, persecuting the church of *the Way* served as a politically expedient move. In executing James, he is not just murdering one of the twelve, but one of the inner circle of three - Peter, James and John. Given the positive response of the religious authorities, Herod has Peter arrested, and only delays the execution because it is the feast of Passover - an interesting alignment with Jesus' death, further reinforcing the sense that this moment is the end of an epoch.

Herod uses the instruments of his power to incarcerate Peter, but the church is using the instrument of prayer, such that this human-divine tussle can have only one end, so demonstrating "the futility of human effort in the face of divine power", Tannehill. Peter plays no part in his miraculous release; he just does what the angel tells him to do. Nothing will stop him walking free, not even the iron gates of the fortress Antonia; they freely open to release him into the city of Jerusalem.

At the home of Mary, the mother of John called Mark (he will join with Barnabas and Saul/Paul on their first missionary journey), the believers have gathered to pray for Peter. On reaching the home, the maid Rhoda, obviously a believer, enthusiastically greets him, but forgets to let him in. The gathered believers are not easily convinced that God has answered their prayers, but Peter soon sets them right. Getting the news out about the Lord's work is the first thing on Peter's mind - "Tell this to James (the brother of Jesus serving as the chief elder of the Jerusalem church), and the brothers (believers)."

v] Homiletics: *Karma*

Luke dramatically contrasts God's dealing with the righteous man, Peter, and the unrighteous man, Herod Agrippa. Peter is set upon by Herod with the intention to execute him. Yet, God sets the righteous man free, while the tyrant suffers a unimaginable death. Good trounces evil.

In August 2023, Brian Houston was found innocent of failing to notify police for his father's abuse of a seven years old boy. Brian was the founder and senior pastor of Hillsong, the largest Christian congregation in Australia, a congregation which not only planted replicas throughout



Australia, but internationally, especially in the USA. Over many years, Brian had faced a hostile Australian press for his father's actions, finally culminating in the charges against him. The law, of course, is designed to rescue a child in the clutches of a paedophile, but in Brian's case, the boy was an adult when Brian discovered his father's secret life. Brian acted to have his father defrocked, informing church elders and the congregation, while seeking compensation for his father's victim. As it turned out, the man in question, now in his thirties, along with hundreds of other people, could have informed the police if they so desired, but Brian was charged for what was nothing more than a technical breach of the law. Innocence was the only just conclusion, but the years of harassment by the press, and even the justice system, along with the pressure of his high-powered ministry, took their toll on him and played their part in his substance abuse and downfall.

In science fiction, good always overcomes evil; In murder mysteries, the murderer is always found; In a Western, the badies are always dun-in - good triumphs over evil, justice applies, Karma. Of course, even the Old Testament books of Job and Ecclesiastes remind us that good doesn't always prevail in a sinful world. In fact, as Jesus told his disciples, if the world is set to persecute the one righteous man, the disciples of that one righteous man must accept the same treatment.

In a world corrupted by sin, good men and women are often brought low by the vagaries of life, while the corrupt are often lifted high. Peter's miraculous release from prison, and Herod's gory end, is an example of Karma, but from a Biblical perspective it reminds us of a more fundamental principle. However things work out here, there will come a day when God sets everything right, a day when the scales are balanced. On that day make sure you are standing with the eternally innocent one - that bloke my uncle



used to call the only perfect Carpenter. Without Jesus on your side, the scales will be weighed against you.

### Text - 12:1

Persecution in Jerusalem, v1-19a: i] Herod sets out to persecute the church of *the Way*, v1-5. Herod's reign over Palestine is documented by Josephus in his *Antiquities*, books 18-19.

δε "- " - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

κατ [κατα] + acc. "**about [this time]**" - ACCORDING TO [THAT TIME]. Temporal use of the preposition expressing approximation.

των gen. "**[some] who belonged**" - [HEROD THE KING LAID UPON THE = HIS HANDS (arrested) SOME] OF THE ONES [FROM THE CHURCH]. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase "from the church" into a substantive, direct object of the verb "to lay upon = arrest". The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

κακωσαι [κακω] aor. inf. "**intending to persecute them**" - TO HARM, MISTREAT. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose.

### v2

According to tradition, while in prison awaiting execution, James led his jailer to the Lord, with both later executed together (ref. Eusebius). The implication of Luke's record is that there has been peace in the church from the Stephen pogrom up to this moment.

μαχαριη [α] dat. "**with the sword**" - [BUT/AND KILLED, DESTROYED = EXECUTED JAMES THE BROTHER OF JOHN] WITH A SWORD. The dative is adverbial, instrumental, expressing means.

### v3

Peter's arrest at the Passover festival aligns with the arrest of Jesus, a point of comparison which Luke obviously intends his readers to note. According to the Mishnah, only murderers and citizens of an apostate city should be put to the sword, so indicating that Herod's actions are political.

ιδων [όρω] aor. part. "**when he saw**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING SEEN. The participle is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

ότι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause, dependent statement of perception expressing what Herod "saw".

τοις Ιουδαιοις [ος] dat. "**[with approval] among the Jews**" - [IT IS PLEASING] TO THE JEWS. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect.

συλλαπειν [συλαμβαμω] aor. inf. "**to seize**" - [HE ADDED = PROCEEDED] TO ARREST [AND = ALSO PETER]. Complementary infinitive, completing the

sense of the verb "to add." The phrase "he added to do something" is a common Semitic construction found in the LXX.

των αζυμων [ος] gen. "[the Festival] of Unleavened Bread" - [THEY (these events) WERE occurring at the time of THE DAYS] OF THE UNLEAVENED bread. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic, "the days associated with unleavened bread", Culy. "It was during the days of unleavened bread that he actually made the arrest", Phillips

#### v4

It is not clear what Luke means when he says that after Peter's arrest, Herod intended "to bring him to the people." The NIV opts for a "public trial", but Barrett thinks it probably means a public execution of Peter.

πιασας [πιαζω] aor. part. "after arresting him" - [WHOM AND = ALSO] HAVING SEIZED [HE PUT INTO JAIL]. The participle is probably adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

παραδους [παραδιδωμι] aor. part. "handing him over" - DELIVERING OVER TO. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of his arrest; "handing him over to a guard of sixteen soldiers", Moffatt.

θυλασσειν [φυλασσω] pres. inf. "to be guarded by" - TO GUARD [HIM]. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose; "handed him over to four squads of four soldiers in order to keep him under military guard."

τετραδιοις [ον] dat. "squads of four" - [FOUR] SQUADS OF FOUR. Dative of direct object after the παρα prefix verb "to deliver over to."

στρατιωτων [ης ου] gen. "soldiers" - OF SOLDIERS. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / material, limiting "squads of four"; "four squads of four consisting of / made up of soldiers."

βουλομενος [βουλομαι] pres. part. "[Herod] intended" - WANTING = INTENDING. The participle is adverbial, best treated as causal; "because he wanted."

αναγαγειν [αναγω] aor. inf. "to bring" - TO OFFER UP, BRING OUT [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the participle "wanting".

τω λαω [ος] dat. "for public trial" - TO THE PEOPLE. Dative of indirect object.

μετα το "after the" - AFTER THE [PASSOVER]. The preposition is often used with an articular infinitive to express subsequent time. Although here without the infinitive, subsequent time is probably intended, as NIV.

## v5

The **μεν ... δε** construction gives us the sense that on the one hand Peter is powerless, locked up in jail, but on the other hand, the church is praying **εκτενως**, "earnestly, fervently, eagerly, intensely / constantly." The divine power possessed by the church transcends Peter's powerlessness.

**μεν ουν** "so" - THEREFORE ON THE ONE HAND. See **μεν ουν** 1:6 + above, **μεν .... δε**.

**εν** + dat. "**in [prison]**" - [PETER WAS BEING GUARDED] IN [THE JAIL]. Local, expressing space.

**γινομενη [γινομαι]** pres. part. "-" - [BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, PRAYER WAS EARNESTLY] BEING CREATED = OFFERED. The present participle with the imperfect verb to be **ἦν** forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, probably serving to emphasise durative aspect.

**ὑπο** + gen. "-" - BY [THE CHURCH TOWARD GOD]. Instrumental, expressing agency.

**περι** + gen. "**for him**" - CONCERNING [HIM]. Either expressing advantage, "for him", or representation, "on behalf of him."

## v6

ii] Peter is arrested, but set free by an angel, v6-11: Luke's background details serve to increase the wondrous nature of the miracle. The 4-by-4 six hour watch performed by the squad of sixteen soldiers is typical procedure for the time.

**ὅτε** "-" - [BUT/AND] WHEN. Temporal conjunction serving to introduce a temporal clause.

**προαγαγειν [προαγο]** aor. inf. "**to bring [him] to trial**" - [HEROD WAS ABOUT] TO GO BEFORE = TO LEAD OUT [HIM]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "to be about." Kellum suggests that the imperfect verb "to be about" is inceptive, so "was going to bring him out *to trial / to execution*."

**τη νυκτι [ξ τοξ]** dat. "-" - IN THE [THAT] NIGHT. The dative is adverbial, temporal; "during that night."

**ἦν ... κοιμωμενος [κοιμωω]** pres. mid. part. "[Peter] was sleeping" - [PETER] WAS SLEEPING [BETWEEN TWO SOLDIERS]. The present participle with the imperfect verb to-be form an imperfect periphrastic construction, possibly serving to emphasise durative action.

**δεδεμενος [δεω]** perf. mid. part. "**bound**" - HAVING BEEN BOUND. This participle is often taken with the previous verb to-be **ἦν** to form an imperfect periphrastic construction, "Peter was sleeping between two soldiers *and* bound with two chains", but Culy argues that a coordinating **και** would be used for such

a construction, so he classifies it as adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of Peter's "sleeping"; "Peter, fettered with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers", Barclay.

**αλυσεεις [ις εως]** dat. "**with [two] chains**" - IN [TWO] CHAINS, [AND GUARDS BEFORE THE DOOR WERE KEEPING = GUARDING THE PRISON]. The dative is instrumental, expressing means, "by means of two chains."

v7

The NIV translates **ιδου** as an adverb, "suddenly", rather than as an interjection, "behold, pay attention." Given the context, this seems likely. It is also interesting to note the use of the verb **πατασσω**, "to strike", for the participle "having struck [the side of Peter]." This is a rather strong physical word and is used later of the angel that "struck" Herod down, v23. The Western text changes it to **νυξας**, "nudged"; "a nudge in the ribs", Cassirer.

**κυριου [ος]** gen. "**of the Lord**" - [AND BEHOLD, AN ANGEL] OF LORD [APPROACHED, AND LIGHT SHONE IN THE ROOM]. The genitive is adjectival, limiting the noun "angel", either possessive, "belonging to the Lord", or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "an angel *who was sent from the Lord*"

**παταξας [πατασσω]** aor. part. "**he struck [Peter]**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING STRUCK [THE SIDE OF PETER, HE RAISED HIM]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to raise."

**λεγων [λεγω]** pres. part. "**and woke him up**" - SAYING. Attendant circumstance participle, redundant, serving to introduce direct speech; for a modal classification see **λεγοντες**, 1:6.

**εν "quick"** - [GET UP] IN [HASTE, QUICKNESS]. Adverbial use of the preposition, serving to form an adverb of manner, "quickly".

v8

The sentence is formed around two imperatives, "tighten you belt .... and come with me", TEV. These imperatives, "gird up your loins ..... and follow me", draw on discipleship terminology.

**προς** + acc. "**to [him]**"- [BUT/AND THE ANGEL SAID] TOWARD [HIM]. The preposition is used here to introduce an indirect object.

**ουτως** adv. "**[did] so**" - [BUT/AND HE DID] THUS, SO, IN THIS WAY. Modal adverb expressing the manner of Peters actions.

**μοι** dat. pro. "**[follow] me**" - [AND HE SAYS TO HIM, PUT ON THE CLOAK OF YOU AND FOLLOW AFTER] ME. Dative of direct object after the verb "to follow after." The dative pronoun, **αυτω**, "to him", serves as a dative of indirect object.

### v9

Obviously Peter thinks he has had another vision like the one he had at Joppa, but vision or otherwise, he responds as directed.

εξελθων [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "[followed him] out of" - [AND] HAVING COME OUT [HE WAS FOLLOWING]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to follow."

ὅτι "that" - [AND HE HAD NOT KNOWN] THAT [THE THING BECOMING IS TRUE = REAL]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Peter did not think was real.

δια + gen. "-" - THROUGH [THE ANGEL]. Instrumental, expressing means, "by means of ..."

βλεπειν [βλεπω] pres. inf. "he was seeing" - [BUT/AND WAS THINKING] WAS SEEING [A VISION]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Peter was thinking.

### v10

Peter is led past two guard-posts (the guards are obviously asleep), through the main gate of the fort, and into the city.

διελθοντες [διερχομαι] aor. part. "they passed" - [BUT/AND] HAVING PASSED THROUGH [FIRST AND SECOND]. The participle is best taken as adverbial, temporal; "When they had passed", ESV.

την φερουσαν [φερω] pres. part. "leading [to the city]" - [THEY CAME UPON THE IRON GATE] THE ONE LEADING [INTO THE CITY]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "gate".

αυτοις dat. pro. "for them" - [WHICH WAS OPENED] TO THEM [BY ITSELF]. Dative of interest, advantage, "it opened for them", ESV.

εξελθοντες [εξερχομαι] aor. part. "when they had walked" - [AND] HAVING GONE OUT [THEY WENT BEFORE = WENT ALONG ONE STREET]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to go before", "they went out and went along one street", although note how the NIV treats both the participle and the verb as a single temporal idea: "they passed out, and after they had gone through one street", Moffatt.

απ [απο] + gen. "-" - [AND IMMEDIATELY THE ANGEL WENT AWAY] FROM [HIM]. Expressing separation, "away from ..."

### v11

It is interesting to note how Luke now separates the Jewish people, rather than the religious authorities, from the people of *the Way*, and at the same time

links them with the evil intent of Herod. The Christian church is no longer just a Jewish sect, but is increasingly becoming a *heretical* sect apart from Israel.

**γενομενος [γίνομαι]** aor. part. "**then [Peter] came**" - [AND PETER] HAVING BECOME. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "When Peter came to himself", ESV.

**εν + dat. "to [himself]"** - IN [HIMSELF, HE SAID]. Introducing an idiomatic prepositional phrase with the sense, "[having come] to his senses"; "When he came to his right mind", Barrett.

**ὅτι "that"** - [NOW I KNOW TRULY] THAT [THE LORD SENT THE ANGEL OF HIM]. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what Peter now knows.

**εκ + gen. "from [Herod's clutches]"** - [AND DELIVERED ME] FROM [HAND OF HEROD]. Here expressing separation, "always from."

**του λαου [ος]** gen. "**[Jewish] people [were hoping]**" - [AND *from* ALL THE EXPECTATION] OF THE PEOPLE [OF THE JEWS]. The genitive is adjectival, usually treated as verbal, subjective, with the genitive "of the Jews" being attributive, limiting "the people"; "from all that the Jewish people were anticipating", Moffatt.

## v12

iii) A praying church experiences a joyous reunion, v12-17. Luke often describes the church at prayer and may well imply by this reference that their prayers are the activating instrument for the divine power which set Peter free. The John, known as Marcus, is mentioned a number of times in Acts and the Epistles (Col.4:10, other references are probably to the same person, although Mark is a common name). Paul had some issues with him and these caused a split between Paul and Barnabas, 15:37-39.

**τε "-"** - BUT/AND. Taken with **και** in v11, the conjunction serves to link this verse with v11.

**συνιδων [συναρω]** aor. part. "**when this had dawned on him**" - having seen, realised. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal; "When he grasped the situation", Moffatt.

**της μητρος [ηρ ρος]** gen. "**the mother [of John]**" - [HE CAME UPON THE HOUSE OF MARY] THE MOTHER [OF JOHN]. "The mother" stands in apposition to "Mary", while the genitive "of John" is adjectival, relational.

**του επικαλουμενου [επικαλω]** aor. mid. part. "**also called [Mark]**" - THE ONE BEING CALLED [MARK]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "John", "who was called Mark", Barclay.

**συνθηροισμενοι [συναθροιζω]** perf. mid. part. "**[many people had gathered]**" - [WHERE MANY THERE WERE] HAVING BEEN ASSEMBLED [AND

PRAYING]. Although Kellum treats this, and the participle "praying", as nominative complements of the adjective "sufficient = many", it is usually taken with the verb to-be ἦσαν to form a pluperfect periphrastic construction, "Many had gathered there and were praying", Barclay, so Culy.

### v13

The house may be a small walled villa with a single entrance gate. This, with a servant girl, implies that Mary is wealthy, although παιδισκη can just mean "young girl", maybe a family member.

κρουσαντος [κρουω] perf. part. "[Peter] knocked" - [BUT AND HE] HAVING KNOCKED. The genitive participle, with its genitive subject "he", forms a genitive absolute construction, probably temporal; "And when he knocked on the door of the gateway", ESV.

του πυλωνος [ων ωνος] gen. "the outer entrance" - [upon THE DOOR] OF THE GATEWAY. The participle is adjectival, partitive.

ονοματι [α ατος] dat. "named [Rhoda]" - BY NAME [RHODA]. The dative is adverbial, reference / respect.

ὑπακουσαι [ὑπακουω] aor. inf. "to answer" - [A YOUNG GIRL CAME] TO HEAR. The infinitive is adverbial, final, expressing purpose, "in order to"; "A slave girl named Rhoda came to answer the call", Cassirer.

### v14

Johnson notes that in Greek theatre highly charged and conflicting emotions often result in inappropriate action. See Luke 24:41 where the disciples απο της χαρας, "from the (their) joy", do not believe that it is the risen Christ standing before them - possibly a Semitism, so Barrett, with απο classical, expressing cause, means or occasion.

ἐπιγνουσα [ἐπιγινωσκω] aor. part. "when she recognised" - [AND] HAVING KNOWN [THE VOICE OF PETER]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

απο + gen. "-" - FROM [THE (her) JOY SHE DID NOT OPEN THE GATE]. The preposition is probably causal here; "because of her joy."

εισδραμουσα [ειστρεχω] aor. part. "she ran back" - [BUT/AND] HAVING RUN IN [SHE ANNOUNCED, REPORTED]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to announce."

εσταναι [ιστημι] perf. inf. "is [at the door]" - [PETER] TO STAND [BEFORE THE GATE]. The infinitive serves to introduce an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Peter is announcing; "announced that Peter was standing outside", REB. "Peter" serves as the accusative subject of the infinitive.

## v15

Those in the home who were praying respond to Rhoda, **μαινῆ**, "you are out of mind, raving mad, irrational"; "she must be out of her wits", Barrett.

**οἱ δε ..... ἡ δε** "**they [told her]**" - BUT/ AND THEY [SAID TOWARD HER, YOU ARE IRRATIONAL] BUT/AND SHE. This construction, used three times in this verse, is transitional, indicting a change in subject from the congregation to Rhoda, and back to the congregation again.

**εχειν [εχω]** pres. inf. "**that it was [so]**" - [SHE MAINTAINED FIRMLY] TO BE [THUS, BUT/AND THEY WERE SAYING, IT IS THE ANGEL OF HIM]. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what she maintained to be true. The adverb of manner **οὕτως**, "thus", with the verb **"εξω"**, "to have", serves as an affirmation of truth; see 7:1. "She insisted most strongly that she had been telling them the truth, their rejoinder being, 'It must be his angelic counterpart'", Cassirer.

## v16

**ὁ δε** "**but [Peter]**" - BUT/AND HE [PETER]. Again transitional, indicating a change in subject, here to Peter.

**κρουων [κρουω]** pres. part. "**[kept on] knocking**" - [WAS CONTINUING] KNOCKING. The participle is complementary, completing the sense of the durative imperfect verb "to continue"; "Peter went on knocking", Barrett. A comic flair on the part of Luke; "Peter continued knocking at the gate while the discussion was ensuing", Kellum

**ανοιξαντες [ανοιγω]** aor. part. "**when they opened the door**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING OPENED *the gate* [THEY SAW HIM AND WERE AMAZED]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal, as NIV.

## v17

The comic drama continues with Peter having to quieten the congregation so he can tell them what happened. Of historical interest we have the mention of James, the brother of Jesus, and Peter's "going to another place". Tradition has it that Peter had a long and successful ministry (presumably amongst Jewish expats) before his martyrdom, so his "going" is not an allusion to his death. As for James, Paul tells us that he is one of the three "pillars" of the Jerusalem church - Peter, John and James. He was a witness to the resurrection (1Cor.15:7), presumably it was this occasion that cemented his faith, and then went on to lead the Jerusalem church up to his martyrdom at the hands of the Ananus, the chief priest. He is probably the author of the book of James and may have aligned with the more conservative members of the Jerusalem church, the members of the circumcision party who questioned Paul's antinomian tendencies. Yet, how close he was to this



group depends on our understanding of Galatians 2:12. The neuter variant **τινα**, "certain things", rather than "certain men", is probably more likely, such that the problems that developed in the Galatian church are not caused by "certain men" sent from James, but "certain things", namely, the instructions to Gentile churches from the Jerusalem Council, Acts 15.

**κατασεισας [κατασειω]** aor. part. "**Peter motioned**" - [BUT/AND] HAVING MADE A SIGNAL. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to tell, describe", "he signalled .... and told [them to be silent]".

**τη χειρι [ρ. ρος]** dat. "**with his hand**" - IN = WITH THE HAND. The dative is instrumental, expressing means.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "-" - TO THEM. Dative of indirect object.

**αυτοις** dat. pro. "**for them**" - [TOLD] THEM. Dative of indirect object.

**σιγαν [σιγαω]** pres. inf. "**to be quiet**" - TO BE SILENT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Peter instructed them to do.

**πως "how"** - HOW [THE LORD LED OUT HIM FROM THE JAIL]. Here the particle serves to introduce an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Peter told the congregation, although referencing the manner in which Peter was released, so "how the Lord led him out of prison."

**τε** "-" - BUT/AND [SAID]. Transitional conjunction closely connecting a second but separate element of what Peter said; "and he also said, 'Report this to James and the *other* believers.'"

**Ιακωβω [ος]** dat. "**[tell] James**" - [ANNOUNCE, REPORT THESE THINGS] TO JAMES [AND TO THE BROTHERS]. As with "to the brothers", dative of indirect object of the verb "to report."

**εξελθων [εξερχομαι]** aor. part. "**[then] he left**" - [AND] HAVING GONE OUT [HE WENT, JOURNEYED, INTO ANOTHER PLACE]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to go."

## v18

iv] The execution of Peter's captors, v18-19a. The consequence of Peter's escape now falls on his guards. As Dunn notes, the brusque brutality for military inefficiency is typical of the times - they were probably executed. The brevity of Luke's account allows the focus to fall on Agrippa and the comparison between the righteous man and his fate, and the fate of a ruthless tyrant.

**γενομενης [γινομαι]** aor. part. "**in the morning**" - [BUT/AND DAY] HAVING BECOME. The genitive participle and its genitive subject "day" serve as a genitive absolute construction, best treated as temporal, as NIV; "When day broke", Moffatt.

ουκ ολιγος adj. "no small [commotion]" - [THERE WAS] NOT LITTLE CONFUSION. For rhetorical effect, Luke constructs a litotes (understatement); "there was a great commotion among the soldiers", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "among" - IN = AMONG [THE SOLDIERS]. Local, expressing space.

τί "what" - WHAT [THEREFORE BECAME = HAPPENED TO PETER]. Serving to introduce a rhetorical question; "What could have become of Peter?", REB.

#### v19a

επιζητησας [επιζητω] aor. part. "after [Herod] had a thorough search made for [him]" - [BUT/AND] HAVING SEARCHED AFTER [HIM AND HAVING NOT FOUND *him*]. The NIV takes the participle as adverbial, temporal. Rogers suggests concessive, "although", but that doesn't work with the participial phrase και μη εύρων, "and having not found", which obviously stands with "having searched."

ανακρινας [ανακρινω] aor. part. "he cross-examined [the guards]" - HAVING QUESTIONED [THE GUARDS, HE COMMANDED *them*]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to command."

απαχθηναι [απαγω] aor. pas. part. "that they be executed" - TO BE LED AWAY. The infinitive introduces an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Herod ordered. "Led away" may mean to incarceration, although execution is more likely. "Then he gave the order that they were to be led away to be executed", Cassirer.

## 12:19b-25

### 2. The gospel spreads into Palestine, 6:1-12:25

#### xviii] Herod gets his due

##### Synopsis

Herod has moved back to his seat of government in Caesarea and now finds himself in a dispute with the governors of Tyre and Sidon. They present themselves before Herod, but during a speech to them he is struck down and "eaten by worms." On the other hand, Barnabas and Saul, having returned to Jerusalem with famine-aid from the church in Syrian Antioch, after their yearlong ministry there, prepare to return to Antioch along with John Mark.

##### Teaching

Despite the machinations of secular powers, the gospel prospers

##### Issues

i] Context: See 11:19-30.

ii] Background:

- *The movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome*, 1:1-11;

iii] Structure: *Herod gets his due*:

Herod's sudden and gruesome death, v19a-23;

Barnabas and Saul return to Jerusalem, v24-25.

iv] Interpretation:

Luke now winds up his account of the evangelistic mission of the Jerusalem church among the Jews of the dispersion. It is the final moment when Barnabas takes the lead over Saul (v25) and where the Jerusalem church is responsible for planting the church of *the Way* throughout Palestine and beyond. From now on, Paul will take the lead, and Syrian Antioch will be the hub for gospel expansion among the Gentiles, and into the centre of the Empire, Rome.

Josephus, the Jewish historian of the time, tells us that the events Luke records were during a festival in honour of Caesar. Luke adds extra background information by telling us that a dispute had developed between Herod and the governing authorities in Tyre and Sidon, and that through Blastus, a trusted government official, they had sought reconciliation with Herod. Josephus tells us that on the day of the festival, Herod appeared at daybreak in a garment woven in silver, wondrously radiant, inspiring fear and awe. "Seeing an owl sitting above his head, he recognised it to be a

messenger of evil, in accordance with a prophecy once made to him, and, being immediately seized with violent internal pains, was carried home and died five days later", Bruce, Gk., ref. Josephus. Longenecker suggests that Luke's account of Herod's death by worms, probably describes "an infection of intestinal roundworms, which grow as long as ten to sixteen inches and feed on the nutrient fluids in the intestines. Bunches of roundworms can obstruct the intestines, causing severe pain, copious vomiting of worms, and death."

For Luke, the issue is simple enough, Herod accepted the worship of men that is owed to God alone; he failed to give glory to God, and so by accepting it for himself, he paid the ultimate price.

Although Herod goes the way of all secular powers and authorities, the gospel *ηυξανεν και επληθυνετο*, "grows and increases"; "The Lord's message continued to prosper, and those accepting it increased in number", Cassirer.

Luke concludes by referring to the visit of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem with much needed aid for the Jerusalem church. The Greek text is unclear at this point with its use of the phrase *υπεστρεψαν εις Ιερουσαλημ*, "returned into Jerusalem." The variants of *απο* and *εξ*, "from", replacing *εις*, "to, into", are not generally accepted as original. So, are Barnabas and Saul arriving at Jerusalem with John Mark, or are they leaving? See Metzger for a summary of the possible solutions, but the point probably is that Barnabas and Saul have arrived in Jerusalem with aid for the Jerusalem church, and having completed their business there, they now head back to Antioch with John Mark, ie., a comma is placed after *υπεστρεψαν*, and *εις* is read as *εν*, "in = at"; "Barnabas and Saul returned, after they had fulfilled at Jerusalem their mission, bringing with them John whose other name was Mark", Metzger ref., H.H. Wendt.

v] Homiletics: *The gospel will always flourish*

In our scripture reading today, Luke winds up the first part of his account of the expansion of the church of *the Way*. In this conclusion, he reminds us that, irrespective of the rage of secular powers, the gospel grows and increases. There are different ways of translating this statement, but we get the point.

Believe it or not - and there are times when even I find this hard to believe - I was born in 1942. I am at the tail end of the between-the-wars generation, just before the dawn of the baby boomers - *the spoilt generation!* Since hitting this world with noise and fluster, I have watched the slow eradication of Christian culture from the Western world.

Christianity, the very building blocks of Western civilisation, slowly chipped away, with little left today.

The revolution reached full steam in 1960's and 70's, the era of sex, drugs and rock-n-roll, an age of rebellion against Christian shibboleths. Freedom, even anarchy, was the cry of a generation casting off the constraints of Victorian mores.



The vacuum caused by the sidelining of Jesus, was filled by the disciples of Marx, or as they are often called in Australia, the children of Gough - "Gough" being Gough Whitlam, the highly respected reforming prime-minister who served in the 1970's. Today, the steady creep of socialist humanism has captured most of Australia's institutions, even to the point where Christianity is increasingly viewed as socially regressive.

Of course, along with the declining social status of the Christian church, nominal association has collapsed, severely impacting the mainline denominations which only ever survived on nominal patronage. So, it all looks very bleak, but is it?

Well! It wasn't bleak to Luke; it wasn't bleak to the early believers who had to live under the authority of godless violent tyrants. Herod was no friend of the Christian church, and he, like every godless tyrant, had his comeuppance. The gospel is God's saving message to humanity, and petty politicians, of whatever ilk, will never be able to suppress God's word. So, what does Luke tell us? He tells us that Barnabas and Saul, along with John Mark, get on with their evangelistic work; up they went to Antioch and got on with it.

And that my friends, is God's message to us.

### **Text - 12:19b**

Herod gets his due, v19a -25. i] Herod's sudden and gruesome death, v19a-23. Herod's seat of power is the coastal city of Caesarea. Herod the Great had undertaken many major building projects in the city, modernising it and the port, so his grandson was inclined to reside there rather than in Jerusalem. The population was mainly Gentile.

κατελθων [κατερχομαι] aor. part. "[then Herod] went" - [AND] HAVING COME DOWN [FROM JUDEA INTO CAESAREA, HE WAS REMAINING *there*]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to remain, stay."

## v20

Even as far back as the time of Solomon, the independent city states of Tyre and Sidon made treaties with neighbouring countries for the supply of food. Obviously, any dispute with Herod needs to be resolved.

**δε "then"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**ἦν ... θυμομαχῶν [θυμομαχέω]** pres. part. "**he had been quarrelling with**" - [BUT/AND] HE WAS VERY ANGRY, FURIOUS, IRATE AT [TYRIANS AND SIDONIANS]. The participle with the imperfect verb to be forms an imperfect periphrastic construction, possibly used to emphasise durative aspect. The verb **θυμομαχέω**, "to be angry at", takes a dative of direct object, as here; "Herod was enraged with the people of Tyre and Sidon", TNT.

**δε "now"** - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the narrative.

**ὁμοθυμαδόν** adv. "**joined together**" - WITH ONE ACCORD [THEY WERE COMING TOWARD HIM]. This adverb of manner may express the idea of single-mindedness, but as NIV, it probably expresses togetherness, so "some from both cities presented themselves together"; "they came to him in a body", Barclay, TNT.

**πείσαντες [πειθῶ]** aor. part. "**after securing the support of [Blastus]**" - [AND] HAVING PERSUADED [BLASTUS]. The NIV treats the participle as adverbial, temporal, but it could also be taken as causal; "when they had gained the support of Blastus", Barclay.

**τον** "- " - THE ONE [UPON = OVER THE BED-CHAMBER OF THE KING]. The article serves as an adjectivizer, turning the prepositional phrase "upon the bed-chamber" into an attributive modifier of "Blastus". In the ancient world, the Chamberlain functioned as the king's adviser, which position gave him influence and power.

**διὰ το** + inf. "**because [they depended]**" - BECAUSE THE [TO BE FED THE COUNTRY OF THEM]. The preposition **διὰ** with the articular infinitive serve to introduce a causal clause, as NIV; "They went to Herod and asked him for peace, because their country got their food supplies from the king's country", TEV.

**ἀπο** + gen. "**for**" - FROM [THE KING (king's country)]. The preposition expresses source / origin.

## v21

Luke tells us that the events culminate on a **τακτῆ ἡμέρᾳ**, "a set day." The Western text spells this out with "on the occasion of his reconciliation with the Tyrians (and Sidonians)." Josephus tells us the particular day was one held in honour of Caesar. Luke's use of "set, appointed", indicates it was indeed a special day, one attended by the great and mighty. Herod speaks from a **βῆμα**, "raised

platform", although according to Josephus he doesn't get to say much before he falls ill. His presence alone produced the adulation of "fear and awe" expressed by the audience.

ἡμερᾶ [α] dat. "**on the [appointed] day**" - IN [SET] DAY. The dative is adverbial, temporal, as NIV.

ενδυσαμενος [ενδυω] aor. mid. part. "**wearing [his royal robes]**" - [HEROD] HAVING PUT ON [ROYAL CLOTHING AND HAVING SAT DOWN UPON THE PLATFORM, WAS MAKING A SPEECH TOWARD THEM]. This participle, along with "having sat down", is often handled as attendant on the main verb "to make a speech"; "A day was fixed, and on it Herod put on his royal robes, and took his seat on the bench in his court, and made an oration to them", Barclay, so TNT. It is also possible to treat the participles as adverbial, temporal or modal, modifying the main verb "to make a speech"; "Herod addressed them after clothing himself ..... / having clothed himself ....."

## v22

ὁ δε "-" - BUT/AND THE [CROWD WAS CRYING OUT]. Transitional, indicating a change in subject from Herod to the audience.

θεου [ος] gen. "**[the voice] of a God**" - [VOICE, SPEECH, UTTERANCE] OF A GOD [AND NOT OF A MAN]. As for ανθεωπου, "of man", the genitive is adjectival, verbal, subjective, "a speech (*that is*) uttered by a god", or idiomatic / source, "a voice (*that is*) from a god."

## v23

Even Josephus agrees that Herod was *smitten* by God (πατασσω, "struck down") and this because "the king did not rebuke them nor did he reject their flattery as impious."

ανθ [αντι] ὧν "**because**" - [BUT/AND IMMEDIATELY] BECAUSE [HE DID NOT GIVE THE GLORY]. This preposition with a genitive pronoun forms an idiomatic causal construction serving to introduce a causal clause.

τω θεω [ος] dat. "**to God**" - TO GOD. Dative of indirect object.

κυριου [ος] gen. "**[an angel] of the Lord**" - [AN ANGEL] OF *the* LORD [STRUCK DOWN HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source; "an angel *from* the Lord."

γενομενος [γινομαι] aor. part. "**he was eaten [by worms]**" - [AND] HAVING BECOME [WORM-EATEN, HE DIED]. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "to die."

## v24

ii] Barnabas and Saul return to Jerusalem, v24-25. Evil tyrants may rage against God's people, but the gospel continues to spread, and those who accept it

increase in number. This reading assumes that the two verbs **ηύξανεν**, "was growing", and **επληθύνετο**, "was increasing", are not doublets, "used to emphasise the degree to which God's message spread", Culy; "The word of the Lord flourished increasingly", Barclay. A typical, but important summary statement for the progress of Luke's narrative, cf., 2:47, 4:4, .....

**του θεου [ος]** gen. "[**but the word**] of God" - [BUT/AND THE WORD] OF GOD [WAS GROWING AND WAS INCREASING]. The genitive is adjectival, either verbal, "the word *facilitated by* God", or idiomatic / source, "the word *from* God."

## v25

For the exegetical issue concerning the phrase **ὑπεστρεψαν εις Ιερουσαλημ**, "returned to Jerusalem", see Interpretation above. "Barnabas and Saul returned, after they had fulfilled at Jerusalem their mission, bringing with them John whose other name was Mark", Metzger ref., H.H. Wendt. This translation is followed below, rather than the NIV. Luke now leaves off his account of the mission of the Jerusalem church to the Jews of the dispersion, and concentrates on the mission to the Gentiles led by "Saul, known as Paul."

**δε** "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating the next step in the narrative.

**πληρωσαντες [πληρωω]** aor. part. "**after they had fulfilled**" - [BARNABAS AND SAUL] HAVING COMPLETED [INTO JERUSALEM THE MINISTRY *of distributing the funds raised in Antioch*]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as temporal.

**συμπαράλαβοντες [συμπαράλαμβανω]** aor. part. "**bringing with them**" - HAVING TAKEN ALONG [JOHN]. The participle is adverbial, best treated as modal, expressing the manner of their return.

**τον επικληθεντα [επικαλεω]** aor. pas. part. "**whose other name [was Mark]**" - THE ONE HAVING BEEN CALLED [MARK]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "John". The noun "Mark" serves as the nominative complement of the adjective "the one having been called", standing in a double nominative construction.



# Excursus

## The baptism / infilling of the Spirit

The gift of the Holy Spirit entails the new and dynamic ministry of the Spirit in the last age, in fulfilment of the promised blessings of the covenant given by God to Abraham, cf., Acts 3:25-26. It involves the coming of the Spirit in a believer's life, and the ministry which He exercises in that life, especially making real our sonship. We may describe it as the experience of both: coming into a close and beautiful relationship with Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, and knowing God as our Father, Rom. 8:14-15, 1Cor.12:1-3.

### 1. Baptised with the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1-13 describes the baptism of (with) the Holy Spirit. This baptism was prophesied by John the Baptist - "he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit." Jesus said, "do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit", Acts 1:2-5.

#### Bible usage

The phrase in the Bible is not "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit", rather it is verbal, ie., "Baptise(d) with (in) the (Holy) Spirit".

Jesus uses the phrase to remind his disciples of John's prophecy, "Before many days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit", Acts 1:5. Peter described this event in his sermon as the promise of the Holy Spirit which is "poured out". Some years later Cornelius too is "baptised with the Holy Spirit", Acts 11:16, ie., he receives the "gift of the Holy Spirit", Acts 11:17.

These phrases describe the one experience. To be baptised with, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, describes the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit upon believers. Every true believer is "baptised in the Spirit", receives "the gift of the Holy Spirit", for "anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him", Rom. 8:9.

#### a) Original use by John the Baptist

John the Baptist was the first to use the phrase when he said that the "one who comes after me will baptise with the Holy Spirit", Matt.3:11. Here he is referring to the coming Messiah who would do a great work in pouring out the Spirit of God, cf., Ezk.37, Joel 2:28-32.

## **b) Use by Jesus**

Jesus said that the "hour" has arrived. In Jesus, all the prophecies were fulfilled - the last days would soon be upon mankind, and the Spirit would be bestowed on all believers.

To the Samaritan woman, Jesus said, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water I shall give will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life", John 4:14.

To the crowd during the feast of Tabernacles Jesus said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink, he who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'. This he said of the Spirit, which those who believe in him were to receive: for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified", John 7:37-39.

So, Jesus promised the gift of the Holy Spirit, a life-giving Spirit who would quench our longing desires for communion with God. The Holy Spirit is none other than the Spirit of Christ. So, when Jesus promised that the disciples would be "baptised with the Holy Spirit", Acts 1:5, he meant nothing more than what he had already taught.

## **c) Use by Paul**

In 1 Corinthians 12:13 Paul wrote, "For by one Spirit we were all baptised (immersed) into one body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, and all were made to drink (watered, saturated or made to drink) of one Spirit." Paul is certainly not introducing a new theology of the Spirit here. 1 Corinthians 12 deals with different aspects of the Spirit's work:

- He converts us and we call him Lord, 12:3;
- He makes us part of the body of believers, 12:12-13;
- He gives spiritual gifts, 12:11.

In 1 Corinthians 12:13 Paul is speaking of a Spirit baptism which occurs when we believe in Jesus, ie. Jesus comes into our life.

## **When is a believer baptised with the Holy Spirit?**

Peter's words in Acts 2:38 are normative, "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." A person who believes immediately receives the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Paul verifies this truth. A person is forgiven their sins when they believe (Rom.10:14-17), and at the same time receive the Holy Spirit (Gal.3:1-5). Acts has some problem sections, but the norm remains:

- There is the account of the Samaritans who believe, but who did not receive the Holy Spirit. We are not told why, but it was certainly not the norm, Act.8:16. It seems they were short on information and thus had not come to truly put their faith in Jesus; see Commentary

- There is also the account of the twelve John the Baptist sectarians in Ephesus. "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" Acts 19:2. Their answer showed that they had neither heard of the Holy Spirit, nor of Jesus as Lord. They had only known the teaching of John the Baptist, i.e., they weren't yet Christians. On being baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus (immersed in sound teaching) the Spirit came upon them.

### **Spirit baptism as an aspect of conversion**

Every person, upon believing in Christ, is justified and baptised by (in) the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, cf., 1Cor.12:13, Eph.1:13. At the moment of conversion we enter into a full relationship with the Holy Spirit and possess in fullness all that God offers us in Christ, Col.2:10. This is our Christian standing. It doesn't mean that we are perfect, which must await the Parousia, 1John 3:2, or that we have no need to grow and live out our Christian fullness. We may see a parallel in Christian holiness, cf., Heb.10:14, 1Pet.1:2, 2:9. Just as we are Holy in Christ, so we are full, yet we must seek to express that fullness in our Christian life. By grace through faith we will begin to be what we are already in Christ.

### **The gift of the Spirit and assurance**

It is possible to speak of "baptised" as an experience of Jesus' intimate involvement in our lives through the indwelling Spirit. Such an experience can be a very moving and results in a firm assurance of God's love for us. It is something we may experience many times in our Christian life. Consider the following aspects of assurance:

#### **a) Assurance in conversion**

The Old Testament prophets spoke of the day when the Holy Spirit would be given, Joel 2:28. John the Baptist renewed that promise, Matt.3:11. Jesus pointed to it after his glorification, John 7, Acts 1:8. On the day of Pentecost the promise was fulfilled. The promise was for a personal confrontation with the living God. When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples they met Jesus and again experienced his gentle touch. The Holy Spirit was for them the "Spirit of Christ", cf., 2Cor.3:17-18.

In no way did the Spirit supersede Jesus, cf., Acts 1:1. Jesus is always Lord and Saviour. The Spirit gives all glory to the Son. From Pentecost on, everyone who gives their life to Jesus, who repent and believe, receive the gift of the Holy

Spirit, Acts 2:38, Eph. 1:13. In the simplest terms it means that Jesus becomes intimately involved in our lives for eternity.

Thus on becoming a Christian, by faith alone, a believer receives the Spirit in fullness, Gal.3:2,5. Forgiveness, Sonship, liberty and fullness are ours from the moment of believing. Gal.5:5, Col.2:6-10.

For many, the moment of conversion can be a powerful release, the removal of oppressive guilt, a gentle touch of the Master's hand. For some believers it is a powerful spiritual experience. Their meeting with Jesus (the infilling of the Holy Spirit) serves to assure them of His eternal love. Yet we all need to be reminded that for many, the conversion experience can be quite mundane.

### **b) Assurance in the Christian life**

The experience of the Spirit's presence prompts assurance in the Christian life:

- A new understanding of forgiveness. It is a powerful experience when we glimpse the mercy of God. It can touch us and bring us to our knees in gratitude, Mi.7:18. A mighty blessing indeed!

- A new repentance. No Christian lives up to their standing in Christ. We are infected with the problem of "carnality" ie., we opt for the "flesh" rather than the "Spirit". There are two possibilities before the Christian. We may choose to follow the flesh or the Spirit, Gal.5:13-25. So, there is always a gap between a Christian's standing and their performance. Thus the Bible encourages us to "walk by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh", Gal.5:16; "Live by the Spirit", Gal.5:25. "Be Holy", 1Pet.1:15-16. etc. An awareness of the gap between performance and standing, reminds us of God's amazing grace in Christ. Such moments can be very moving and powerful, a moment of great blessing.

- A new understanding of God's promises. The mind boggles when we focus on God's promises to us. When we rest on those promises we find ourselves greatly moved. Not only do we find their eternal verity touching our lives, but we also find ourselves encouraged by one of the most profound of theological truths - the perseverance of the saints. A faithful reliance upon the promises of Jesus promotes a sense of assurance, a very powerful experience indeed.

God's promise to us is Jesus' intimate involvement in our lives; "I am with you always even to the ends of the earth". His promise for us is that we will know him and experience him as a friend right here and now. Few Christians have experienced the potential of this relationship in their lives (it's release). The apostles certainly experienced the intimacy of Jesus' personal involvement in

their lives. Pentecost, for them, was a personal confrontation with the living Jesus.

## **2. Filled with the Holy Spirit**

Depending on the context, the term "filled with the Holy Spirit" may mean exactly the same as "baptised with the Holy Spirit", but at the same time, it is often used to describe the activity / filling of the Holy Spirit within the life of believer, so enabling the exercise of ministry - in particular, proclamation. Today a word like "the release of the Holy Spirit" is sometimes used to convey the Spirit's activity in a believer's life. It is likely that Acts 2:1-13 describes such an infilling of the Spirit within those who were baptised with the Spirit.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit of Christ came on the disciples, they were filled with the Spirit and prophesied. In the years before, the disciples had ministered with Jesus, and through him they had done wonderful things. When he left them, he promised he would not leave them comfortless, he would come again to them. Pentecost is the answer to this promise. When the Spirit of Jesus came again to the disciples, they found that, as before, they had unlimited power to proclaim, in sign and word, the wisdom of God. They experienced being filled with the Spirit, filled with Christ's power to prophesy.

The following can be said of the infilling of the Holy Spirit:

- Although the term "filled with the Spirit" sometimes means the same as "the baptism / gift of the Holy Spirit", it does often take on its Old Testament meaning of the application of, or release of, the Spirit's power in ministry, particularly in proclaiming God's word.
- A number of Old Testament personalities were filled with the Spirit, as well as John the Baptist, Zechariah and Elizabeth. This infilling is therefore not new.
- As part of the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, "I will pour out my Spirit on all people", the infilling of the Spirit is available to all followers of Jesus. For this reason Paul is able to say, "you have been given fullness in Christ", Col.2:10.
- Being filled with the Spirit is an ongoing occurrence in the Christian life, not a once only experience. Luke describes numerous fillings of the Spirit for the first disciples, eg., Acts 4:8, 4:31, 13:9.
- Paul says, "be filled with the Spirit", Eph.5:19. He prays, "that you might be filled to the measure of the fullness of God", Eph.3:19. Therefore, the filling of the Spirit is something that should be sought.
- The filling of the Holy Spirit expresses itself in the Christian life primarily in powerful proclamation:

At Pentecost the disciples were filled and "declared the wonders of God."

John the Baptist was filled for his prophetic work, Luke 1:15.

"Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and in a loud voice she proclaimed", Luke 1:41-42.

"His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied", Luke 1:67.

Peter before the Sanhedrin "filled with the Holy Spirit said...." Acts 4:8.

The gathered disciples "filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly" Acts 4:31.

Peter was filled and preached, Acts 9.

"Saul filled with the Holy Spirit.....said...." Acts 13:9.

- The scriptures promise the infilling of the Spirit. "Do not worry what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you." Matt.10:19-20.

The release of Jesus' power within the disciples is expressed in powerful proclamation. At Pentecost they received the Spirit and so were filled with the Spirit to speak boldly for their Lord.

### **3. Other Tongues**

The baptism of the Holy Spirit ensures our place within God's plans for this final closing age; the Spirit of the living God covers us and thus we are secure. Through the gift of the Spirit, we are empowered to serve our God, particularly in powerfully making known his Word. We are filled to overflowing.

Yet, where does tongue speaking fit in with all of this? In Acts 2:4 we are told "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." What can we make of this strange occurrence?

#### **Tongues present as a miraculous prophetic word**

The crowd that gathered to hear the disciples, heard them speaking in their "own native language" v8. The problem is, what did they actually hear? There are three possibilities, along with possible combinations of the three:

##### **a) Ecstatic prophecy**

This form of prophecy may range from the intelligible to the unintelligible. It is fairly clear that ecstatic prophecy developed within the Corinthian congregation and is addressed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12-14. Paul uses the same

word to describe the Corinthian experience as Luke uses in Acts, yet he does not seem to describe exactly the same experience. In Acts, tongues are understood by different language groups, although the content is mysterious. In Corinth, it doesn't seem to cross over between different language groups, but is clearly ecstatic (mysterious) and it is for this reason that Paul is critical of its use in church. In 1Cor.14:20-22 Paul actually describes it as a sign of judgment upon God's people. Using the prophecy of Isaiah 28:9-13 he points out that a people who have failed to listen to a clear word from the Lord will end up hearing meaningless sounds. *Sav lasav sav lasav, kav lakav kav lakav* is a word of judgment, not blessing. Jesus used parables in the same way with his own generation, Matt.13:11-17. Parables were a form of judgment upon a people who failed to respond to the clear word of the coming kingdom. So, Paul in 1 Corinthians gives instructions as to the proper exercise of the gift of tongues, and particularly with their replacement by a clear prophetic word.

### **b) Foreign languages**

It is possible that the disciples spoke in foreign languages enabling the gathered Jews of the dispersion to understand in their own dialects. The Cornelius episode is the same, but did anyone need to speak in different languages on that occasion? If the tongues at Pentecost were different languages, how would they have sounded? It would have been a cacophony of sound, a "Babel" indeed.

### **c) A miraculous word**

Luke seems to describe the event as a miraculous occurrence where there is a unity in what was said and heard. There may, or may not, be a language content in what was said - Luke gives us little to go on. What he does tell us is that the people heard as one, even though they came from different language groups. So, at Pentecost, we may have a miraculous word from God, clearly heard by all, although mysterious in content.

### **The tongues were a discernible prophetic word**

It is clear from Acts, that on the three occasions when tongues evidenced the outpouring of the Spirit upon an ever widening humanity, it was understood by those present.

"We hear them declare the wonders of God."

"We heard them speaking in tongues and praising God", Acts 10:46.

"They spoke in tongues and prophesied", Acts 19:6.

A knowledge of the content of what is said, even though mysterious, implies an understanding of what is said.

## **Tongues identified gospel extension**

As such it evidenced the outpouring of the Spirit on all mankind. cf., the Cornelius debate in Acts 11:1-18.

Jews at Pentecost.

Samaritans - although tongues are not specifically mentioned.

Gentiles - Cornelius.

The followers of John the Baptist.

Therefore, tongues seem to be a miraculous prophetic word unifying the hearers as one people.

The significance of the tongue-speaking events in Acts lies in their reversal of the judgment of God on mankind at the tower of Babel. At Babel the nations were scattered through their loss of a common language. Mankind was divided and broken through diverse language (culture). In time, the prophets spoke of a coming age when the nations would again be united, a time when the Gentiles would come into the kingdom with the remnant of Israel. Isaiah 11:10, 42:6, 49:6, 60:5-6, Mal.1:11.

When God calls in one voice to the nations to gather the lost from the four corners of the earth, know that the final age has dawned and that the day of judgment draws near. At Pentecost, the call went forth - the clear trumpet was sounded. It was the disciples' voice that sounded the closing age and the coming judgment upon the nations (depicted in the prophecy of Joel), Acts 2:19-21. In fact, in the gospel the judgment of the world is now. From Pentecost on, the unifying of the nations is a reality in the church, Rom.1:16, Col.3:11. The unifying of a new people unto God is also, in its fullest sense, a future glorious hope, Gal.2:4ff, Rev.22:2-3. The day will soon come when all people will be united under two banners, either Christ, or the Anti-Christ.

## **Conclusion**

We are complete, full in Jesus. He has given us everything, but we often fail to realise the potential we have as members of Christ's body. So, Paul prays that we might be "full" (Eph.3:14-19), and he exhorts us to "be full" (Eph.5:18), ie., to realise our potential as Spirit-filled Christians.

Sid 9/23

*Finis*

