

Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 37 – Acts 5:25-7:8

Day 181: Acts 5:25-32

Verse 25

παραγενόμενος δέ τις ἀπήγγειλεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι Ἴδου οἱ ἄνδρες οὓς ἔθεσθε ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ εἰσὶν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἐστῶτες καὶ διδάσκοντες τὸν λαόν.

παραγενόμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom s παραγινομαι come, arrive, appear

ἀπαγγελλω announce, proclaim

ἔθεσθε Verb, aor midd indic, 2 pl τιθημι midd put, place

φυλακη, ης f prison, imprisonment

ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

ἐστῶτες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl

ἰστημι pf stand, stand firm

διδασκω teach

Verse 26

τότε ἀπελθὼν ὁ στρατηγὸς σὺν τοῖς ὑπηρέταις ἦγεν αὐτούς, οὐ μετὰ βίας, ἐφοβοῦντο γὰρ τὸν λαόν, μὴ λιθασθῶσιν.

τοτε then, at that time

στρατηγος see v.24

ὑπηρετης see v.22

βια, ας f force, violence, use of force

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

λιθασθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl

λιθαζω stone

"The only reason the apostles finally appeared before the Council was their own willingness to do so. And they were willing to do so because the events of the night had convinced them once more that they were very much in God's hands." Polhill.

Verse 27

Ἀγαγόντες δὲ αὐτούς ἔστησαν ἐν τῷ συνεδρίῳ. καὶ ἐπηρωτησεν αὐτούς ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς

ἀγαγόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ἄγω

ἔστησαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἰστημι

ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question

ἀρχιερευς, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family

Verse 28

λέγων, [Οὐ] παραγγελία παρηγγείλαμεν ὑμῖν μὴ διδάσκειν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τούτου; καὶ ἰδοὺ πεπληρωκατε τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ τῆς διδαχῆς ὑμῶν, καὶ βούλεσθε ἐπαγαγεῖν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου.

οὐ is omitted from p⁷⁴ s* A B *et al.* Metzger writes, "A majority of the Committee interpreted the absence of οὐ from several witnesses as due to their desire to transform thereby the high priest's question into a rebuke. In view, however, of the weight of the external evidence supporting the shorter reading, it was decided to print οὐ within square brackets." However, Metzger himself favours the shorter reading.

παραγγελια, ας order, command, instruction

παραγγελλω command, instruct

A Semitism.

πληρωω fill, make full, fulfill

διδαχη, ης f teaching, what is taught

βουλομαι want, desire, wish, intend, plan

ἐπαγαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐπαγω

bring upon

αἷμα, ατος f blood

Compare Matt 27:25.

Note the high priest avoids mention of the name Jesus.

Verse 29

ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ Πέτρος καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι εἶπαν, Πειθαρχεῖν δεῖ θεῷ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀνθρώποις.

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s

ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply, say

Peter's response is a mini-sermon!

πειθαρχεω obey, listen to

δει it is necessary, must, should, ought

μαλλον adv more; rather

Verse 30

ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν ἠγειρεν Ἰησοῦν, ὃν ὑμεῖς διεχειρίσασθε κρεμάσαντες ἐπὶ ξύλου·

ἠγειρεν Bruce thinks here is probably a reference to the inauguration of Jesus' ministry rather than his resurrection, cf. 3:26, but this is questionable.

διεχειρίσασθε Verb, aor midd indic, 2 pl
 διαχειριζομαι kill, murder
 κρεμάσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
 κρεμαννυμι hang
 ξυλον, ου n wood, tree, cross

An allusion here to Dt 21:22f., cf. 10:39; Gal 3:13.

Verse 31

τούτον ὁ θεὸς ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτήρα
 ὑψωσεν τῇ δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ, [τοῦ] δοῦναι
 μετάνοιαν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἄφεσιν
 ἁμαρτιῶν.

ἀρχηγος, ου m leader, founder,
 originator

Bruce sees allusions to Judges – God raising
 up leaders and saviours for his people.

σωτηρ, ηρος m saviour
 ὑψωω exalt, lift up, raise
 δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξια right hand
 δοῦναι verb, aor act infin διδωμι
 μετάνοια, ας f repentance, change of
 heart
 ἄφεσις, εως f forgiveness, cancellation
 (of sins)

Verse 32

καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν μάρτυρες τῶν ῥημάτων
 τούτων, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ὃ ἔδωκεν
 ὁ θεὸς τοῖς πειθαρχοῦσιν αὐτῷ.

μαρτυς, μαρτυρος dat pl μαρτυσιν m
 witness

Cf. 1:8; 2:32f.; 3:15.

ῥημα, ατος n word, thing, matter

Here probably 'things' rather than 'words'.

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s διδωμι
 πειθαρχεω obey, listen to

Perhaps an allusion to the words of v.29. Stott
 comments, "Thus the sermon began and ended
 with a reference to obeying God. God's people
 are under obligation to obey him, and if they
 do so, even though they may suffer when they
 have to disobey human authorities, they will
 be richly rewarded by the ministry of the Holy
 Spirit."

Day 182: Acts 5:33-42

Verse 33

Οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες διεπρίοντο καὶ
 ἐβούλοντο ἀνελεῖν αὐτούς.

διεπρίοντο Verb, imperf pass indic, 3 pl
 διαπριομαι be furious or enraged

Literally, 'sawn in two', i.e. to be torn apart
 with anger.

βουλομαι desire, wish, intend
 ἀνελεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἀναιρεω do
 away with, kill, destroy

Verse 34

ἀναστὰς δὲ τις ἐν τῷ συνεδρίῳ Φαρισαῖος
 ὀνόματι Γαμαλιήλ, νομοδιδάσκαλος
 τίμιος παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, ἐκέλευσεν ἕξω
 βραχὺ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ποιῆσαι,

Bruce provides the following summary
 concerning the Pharisees. "In Hellenistic times
 the pious members of the community, the
hasidim, who spent their time in studying the
 Law (oral as well as written) and expounding
 its application to the circumstances of the day,
 opposed the popular Hellenizing tendencies. In
 the conflict precipitated by Antiochus
 Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.), they lent their
 support to the Maccabees in the struggle for
 religious freedom, but once this was gained
 they held aloof from the fight for political
 independence, strongly disapproving of the
 self-seeking policies of the later Hasmoneans
 and their assumption of the High Priesthood.
 This is the most probable explanation of their
 nickname, 'the separated ones'. Till the nation
 came under Roman overlordship, which they
 regarded as a national punishment, they were
 regularly in opposition to the ruling party,
 except under Queen Salome Alexandra (76-67
 B.C.). Under Herod (37-4 B.C.) their power
 increased, but in NT times they were in a
 minority on the Sanhedrin, though their
 popular support was such that their opponents
 could not disregard them. Cf. Jos. *Ant* 18.1.4,
 according to which the Sadducean magistrates
 professed Pharisaic principles in order to win
 popular goodwill... The expression ἀρχιερεῖς
 καὶ Φαρισαῖοι combines both elements in the
 Sanhedrin: cf. Mt 21:45; 27:62; Jn 7:32, 45;
 11:47, 57; 18:3. The influence of the
 Pharisees was enhanced by the fact that the
 scribes (see on 4:5) belonged chiefly to their
 party: cf. the common collocation 'scribes and
 Pharisees' in the Gospels. They were accepted
 by the people as religious patriots and spiritual
 leaders. They consistently refused to
 countenance aspirations to political
 independence, and after the fall of Jerusalem
 in A.D. 70 it was they who preserved some
 measure of national continuity in Palestine, by
 reconstituting the Sanhedrin for certain limited
 purposes and by continuing the study of the
 Law at Jabneh. Unlike the Sadducees, they
 believed in the resurrection of the dead and in
 the existence of a spirit world."

Γαμαλιηλ Teacher of Saul of Tarsus (22:3), belonged to the more liberal school of Hillel (his grandfather). A celebrated teacher of the law.

νομοδιδασκαλος, ου m teacher of the law, interpreter of the law
τιμιος, α, ον precious, held in honour
κελευω order, command
ἐξω adv. out, outside
βραχυς, εια, υ little, short, small

The neuter here meaning 'for a little while'.

ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω

Verse 35

εἶπέν τε πρὸς αὐτούς, ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλίται, προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τούτοις τί μέλλετε πράσσειν.

Luke's knowledge of what happened may have come from Gamaliel via Paul.

προσεχω pay close attention to, watch out
μελλω be going, be about, intend
πρασσω practice, do

Verse 36

πρὸ γὰρ τούτων τῶν ἡμερῶν ἀνέστη Θευδάς, λέγων εἶναι τινα ἑαυτόν, ᾧ προσεκλίθη ἀνδρῶν ἀριθμὸς ὡς τετρακοσίων· ὃς ἀνηρέθη, καὶ πάντες ὅσοι ἐπέιθοντο αὐτῷ διελύθησαν καὶ ἐγένοντο εἰς οὐδέν.

According to Josephus, a magician called Theudas led a large company to the Jordan, promising that at a word of command he would divide the river, that they might cross it dryshod. Cuspius Fadus, who was procurator at the time (c. 44-46), sent a body of cavalry against them, who routed the multitude, and brought the head of Theudas to Jerusalem. However, this event would have occurred *after* this speech of Gamaliel. Bruce suggests that this is another Theudas who flourished before AD 6 (see the following verse).

λέγων εἶναι τινα ἑαυτόν perhaps 'claiming to be Messiah'

προσεκλίθη Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 s
προσκληνομαι join
ἀριθμος, ου m number, total
τετρακοσιοι, αι, α four hundred
ἀνηρέθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ἀναιρεω
kill, destroy
ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as; pl. as many as, all
ἐπέιθοντο Verb, imperf pass indic, 3 pl
πειθω persuade, win; pass be a follower of

διελύθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
διαλυω scatter, disperse

Verse 37

μετὰ τοῦτον ἀνέστη Ἰουδᾶς ὁ Γαλιλαῖος ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς ἀπογραφῆς καὶ ἀπέστησεν λαὸν ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ· κἀκεῖνος ἀπώλετο, καὶ πάντες ὅσοι ἐπέιθοντο αὐτῷ διεσκορπίσθησαν.

Ἰουδᾶς ὁ Γαλιλαῖος Spoken of by Josephus as one who opposed the census carried out by Quirinius in AD6. His unsuccessful revolution gave rise to the Zealots.

ἀπογραφή, ης f registration, census
ἀπέστησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
ἀφισταμαι trans incite to revolt
ὀπίσω after, behind
κἀκεῖνος, η, ο contraction of καὶ ἐκεῖνος
and that one, and, he also
ἀπώλετο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s
ἀπολλυμι midd be lost, perish, die
διεσκορπίσθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
διασκορπιζω scatter

Gamaliel was perhaps optimistic in thinking that this revolt (which gave rise to the Zealots) had come to nothing.

Verse 38

καὶ τὰ νῦν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπόστητε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τούτων καὶ ἄφετε αὐτούς· ὅτι ἐὰν ἢ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἢ βουλή αὕτη ἢ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο, καταλυθήσεται·

καὶ τα νυν 'and in the present case'
ἀπόστητε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl
ἀφισταμαι intrans leave, go away
ἀφιημι leave, let alone
ἢ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἰμι
βουλή, ης f purpose
καταλυθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s
καταλυω trans destroy, tear down; pass come to naught

Verse 39

εἰ δὲ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐστίν, οὐ δυνήσεσθε καταλύσαι αὐτούς - μήποτε καὶ θεομάχοι εὗρεθῆτε. ἐπέισθησαν δὲ αὐτῷ,
μηποτε lest, otherwise
θεομαχος, ον opposing God
εὗρεθῆτε Verb, aor pass subj, 2 pl εὕρισκω
ἐπέισθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
πειθω convince, win over; pass obey, listen to

Gamaliel's words are telling, but must not be treated as if they were absolutely true. There are many forms of false religion, including some which bear the name Christian, which seem to stand the simplistic test of time. However, it is true that a work of God's doing cannot successfully be opposed – though for a time it may seem to suffer eclipse. Stott writes, "In the shorter run evil plans sometimes succeed, while good ones conceived in accordance with the will of God sometimes fail. So the Gamaliel principle is not a reliable index to what is from God and what is not."

Verse 40

καὶ προσκαλεσάμενοι τοὺς ἀποστόλους δείραντες παρήγγειλαν μὴ λαλεῖν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἀπέλυσαν.

προσκαλεσάμενοι Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom pl προσκαλεομαι call to oneself, summon

δείραντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl δερω beat

"The flogging referred to was the customary punishment used as a warning not to persist in an offence. It consisted of thirty-nine lashes, often referred to as the forty less one (cf. 2 Cor 11:24). Based on the provision for forty stripes given in Deut 25:3, the practice had developed of only giving thirty-nine in the event of miscounting, preferring to err on the side of clemency rather than severity. It was still a cruel punishment. With bared chest and in a kneeling position, one was beaten with a tripled strap of calf hide across both chest and back, two on the back for each stripe across the chest. Men were known to have died from the ordeal." Polhill.

παραγγελλω command, instruct
ἀπολυω release, set free, send away

Verse 41

Οἱ μὲν οὖν ἐπορεύοντο χαίροντες ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ συνεδρίου ὅτι κατηξιωθησαν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἀτιμασθῆναι·

χαίρω rejoice, be glad
κατηξιωθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl καταξιοω count worthy, make worthy
ἀτιμασθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ἀτιμαζω treat shamefully, dishonour

There is a supernatural quality about the lives of these disciples. They act in ways which are quite 'unnatural'.

Verse 42

πάσαν τε ἡμέραν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ κατ' οἶκον οὐκ ἐπαύοντο διδάσκοντες καὶ εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν Χριστόν, Ἰησοῦν.

πάσαν τε ἡμέραν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ κατ' οἶκον ... 'every day in the temple and from house to house ...'

παύω stop, keep from; midd stop, cease
εὐαγγελίζω act. and midd proclaim the good news

τὸν Χριστόν, Ἰησοῦν 'of Jesus, the Christ', i.e. they proclaimed the good news that Jesus was (and is) the Messiah. The 'teaching' probably took place in homes and 'preaching' in the temple.

Day 183: Acts 6:1-7

Chapters 6-8

"Chapters 6-8 may be described as transitional. They show Christianity breaking out of the bounds of its Jewish heritage, taking a first step towards its mission to the wider world. This is more than a story of the geographical spread of Christianity. It is much more the story of the gospel becoming a truly universal gospel, breaking the racial, national and religious barriers in which it was born and carrying out a genuinely worldwide witness. It is the triumphant story of the inclusive gospel." Polhill.

Verse 1

Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις πληθυνόντων τῶν μαθητῶν ἐγένετο γογγυσμὸς τῶν Ἑλληνιστῶν πρὸς τοὺς Ἑβραίους, ὅτι παρεθεωροῦντο ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ τῇ καθημερινῇ αἱ χῆραι αὐτῶν.

δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις introduces a new section. Maybe five years after Pentecost.

πληθυνω increase, multiply
μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower
γογγυσμος, ου m complaining, quarreling

The cognate verb is used in the LXX to denote the 'murmuring' of the Israelites against Moses (cf. Ex 16:7; Num 14:27; 1 Cor 10:10).

Ἑλληνιστης, ου m Hellenist (one who uses the Greek language and customs)

The word here refers to Greek speaking Christian Jews, though in 11:20 it is used of Gentiles. The Greek speaking Jews would have had separate synagogues from the Aramaic speakers (cf. v.9), and so tended to form a separate community.

Ἑβραῖος, οὐ m Hebrew person

Here used of Hebrew or Aramaic speaking Jews

παρεθεωροῦντο Verb, imperf pass indic, 3 pl παραθεωρεω overlook, neglect
 διακονία, ας f ministry, contribution
 καθημερινός, η, ον daily

"We gather that a daily distribution was made out of the common funds provided by the voluntary pooling of resources (2:44f; 4:34f)." Bruce.

χήρα, ας f widow

Widows would have been in special need, cf. Jas 1:27; 1 Tim 5:9ff.

Verse 2

προσκαλεσάμενοι δὲ οἱ δώδεκα τὸ πλῆθος τῶν μαθητῶν εἶπαν, Οὐκ ἄρεστόν ἐστιν ἡμῶς καταλείψαντας τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ διακονεῖν τραπέζαις·

προσκαλεσάμενοι Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m nom pl προσκαλεομαι call to oneself, summon

πληθος, οὐς n crowd, multitude

Note that the larger congregation were involved in the matter of addressing this problem. The apostles did not merely had down a decision or command.

ἄρεστος, η, ον pleasing; οὐκ ἄρεστον ἐστιν it is not right
 καταλείπω leave, neglect, abandon
 διακονεω serve, wait on

Having noted that the verb διακονεω is used here, Bruce says, "These words are not used here in any restricted or technical sense. Nor are the Seven called διακονοι, though of course they were διακονοι in the ordinary sense of 'servants'. It is an anachronism to apply to to NT persons and conditions names which have acquired a stereotyped ecclesiastical sense. The NT has, generally speaking, no *technical* vocabulary for functions in the churches and for those who discharge them but uses ordinary Greek words, which had best be rendered by ordinary English words."

τραπέζα, ης f table, food, meal

The apostles refused to wait on tables, not because it was beneath their dignity, but because they had other pressing work to do which it would have been wrong of them to neglect. Stott writes, "The issue was more ... than one of cultural tension. The apostles discerned a deeper problem, namely that social administration (both organising the distribution and settling the complaint) was threatening to occupy their time and so inhibit them from the work which Christ had specifically entrusted to them, namely preaching and teaching."

Verse 3

ἐπισκέψασθε δὲ, ἀδελφοί, ἄνδρας ἐξ ὑμῶν μαρτυρουμένους ἐπὶ πλήρεις πνεύματος καὶ σοφίας, οὓς καταστήσομεν ἐπὶ τῆς χρείας ταύτης·

ἐπισκέψασθε Verb, aor midd dep imperat, 2 pl ἐπισκεπτομαι look upon or after, visit, look out for
 μαρτυρεω bear witness, testify; pass be well spoken of

'of whom good witness is borne' i.e. of good repute, cf. 10:22; 16:2; 22:12.

ἐπτα seven

πληρης, ες (sometimes not declined) full, complete, full-grown

σοφία, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence
 καταστήσομεν Verb, fut act indic, 1 pl καθιστημι put in charge, appoint
 χρεία, ας f need, want

"They were not, however, restricted to this service: Stephen and Philip, for example, shone as public speakers. The NT force of χρεία is usually 'need', but in Hellenistic Gk. it generally means 'office', as here." Bruce.

Verse 4

ἡμεῖς δὲ τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ λόγου προσκαρτερήσομεν.

προσκαρτερεω devote oneself to, continue in

I.e. in the regular worship of the church. Stott comments, "It is noteworthy that now the Twelve have added prayer to preaching (probably meaning public as well as private intercession) in specifying the essence of the apostles' ministry. They form a natural couple, since the ministry of the word, without prayer that the Spirit will water the seed, is unlikely to bear fruit."

Verse 5

καὶ ἤρρεσεν ὁ λόγος ἐνώπιον παντὸς τοῦ πλήθους, καὶ ἐξελέξαντο Στέφανον, ἄνδρα πλήρης πίστεως καὶ πνεύματος ἁγίου, καὶ Φίλιππον καὶ Πρόχορον καὶ Νικάνορα καὶ Τίμωνα καὶ Παρμενᾶν καὶ Νικόλαον προσήλυτον Ἀντιοχέα,

ἤρρεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἄρρεσκω
please
ἐνώπιον prep with gen before, in the presence of

Again, note the involvement of the entire congregation.

ἐκλεγομαι choose, select
πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief
προσηλυτος, ου m proselyte (a convert to Judaism)

Note that all have Greek names. "They were probably regarded as the leaders of the Hellenists in the church. Their appointment, therefore, was a step forward towards the equality of Jew and Gentile in the church, although there was as yet no question of admitting Gentiles who were not already proselytes." Bruce.

Verse 6

οὓς ἔστησαν ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ προσευξάμενοι ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας.

ἔστησαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἵστημι
προσευχομαι pray
ἐπέθηκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl
ἐπιτιθημι place on
χειρ, χειρος f hand

"The ceremony in this case indicated the conferring of authority by the twelve on the seven whom the people had chosen. See further on 8:17; 9:17; 13:3; 19:6 for various circumstances in which a similar ceremony took place. The root idea seems to have been the transference of something already possessed by the person performing the ceremony; so in Lev 4:4; 16:21 ... [it] is used in connection with the sin-offering for the symbolical transference of sin." Bruce.

Stott comments, "A vital principle is illustrated in this incident, which is of urgent importance to the church today. It is that God calls all his people to ministry, that he calls different people to different ministries, and that those called to 'prayer and the ministry of the word' must on no account allow themselves to be distracted from their priorities."

Verse 7

Καὶ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἠύξανεν, καὶ ἐπληθύνετο ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν μαθητῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ σφόδρα, πολὺς τε ὄχλος τῶν ἱερέων ὑπήκουον τῇ πίστει.

"This verse is one of several reports of progress which serve to punctuate the sections of the narrative of Ac.: cf. 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:31.

αὕξανω and αὕξω grow, spread, increase

Note the imperfect tenses denoting continuous action.

πληθυνω increase, multiply, spread
ἀριθμος, ου m number, total
σφοδρα very much, greatly
ἱερευς, εως m priest
ὑπακουω obey, be subject to

For a similar phrase relating obedience to faith, see Rom 1:5.

Day 184: Acts 6:8-15**Verse 8**

Στέφανος δὲ πλήρης χάριτος καὶ δυνάμεως ἐποίει τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα μεγάλα ἐν τῷ λαῷ.

πληρης see v.5
χαρις, ιτος f grace

Of the phrase 'grace and power' Campbell Morgan comments, "sweetness and strength ... merged into one personality."

τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα see 2:22,43; 4:30; 5:12

See also 7:36; 8:13; 14:3.

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great
λαος, ου m people, a people

I.e. the Jewish people.

Verse 9

ἀνέστησαν δὲ τινες τῶν ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς τῆς λεγομένης Λιβερτίνων καὶ Κυρηναίων καὶ Ἀλεξανδρέων καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ Κιλικίας καὶ Ἀσίας συζητοῦντες τῷ Στεφάνῳ,

Λιβερτινος, ου m Freedman (either a former slave or a descendant of former slaves)

Κυρηναιος, ου m a Cyrenian
Ἀλεξανδρευς, εως m an Alexandrian
Κιλικια, ας f Cilicia

Some argue that there are 5 synagogues mentioned here but Bruce thinks that the reference is to only one, made up of Jewish freedmen from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia and Asia. This, suggests Bruce, is the synagogue Paul would have attended – he was a Cilician Jew.

συζητω argue, discuss, question

Verse 10

καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυον ἀντιστῆναι τῇ σοφίᾳ καὶ τῷ πνεύματι ᾧ ἐλάλει.

ἴσχυω be strong, be able, be sufficient
ἀντιστημι resist, oppose, withstand

Lit. 'stand against' ἀντι + ἴστημι

σοφία, ας f wisdom, insight, intelligence
λαλεω speak, talk

Cf. Lk 21:15.

Verse 11

τότε ὑπέβαλον ἄνδρας λέγοντας ὅτι Ἄκηκόαμεν αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος ῥήματα βλάσφημα εἰς Μωϋσῆν καὶ τὸν θεόν·

τοτε then, at that time

ὑποβαλλω put (someone) up to
(something), bribe

Not being able to defeat his arguments they resort to bribes and slander.

ἀκηκόαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl ἀκουω
ῥήμα, ατος n word, thing, matter
βλασφημος, ον speaking against God,
blasphemous, slanderous

Cf. Num 15:30.

Verse 12

συνεκίνησάν τε τὸν λαὸν καὶ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους καὶ τοὺς γραμματεῖς, καὶ ἐπιστάντες συνήρπασαν αὐτὸν καὶ ἤγαγον εἰς τὸ συνέδριον,

συγκινεω stir up, arouse

πρεσβυτερος, α, ον elder

γραμματευσ, εως m scribe, expert in
Jewish law

ἐφιστημι come up to, approach, appear

συναρπαζω seize, drag

ἤγαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl ἄγω

Verse 13

ἔστησάν τε μάρτυρας ψευδεῖς λέγοντας, Ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος οὐ πάύεται λαλῶν ῥήματα κατὰ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἁγίου [τούτου] καὶ τοῦ νόμου·

μαρτυς, μαρτυρος dat pl μαρτυσιν m
witness

ψευδης, ες false, lying

παυω stop, keep from
ῥήμα, ατος n see v.11.
κατα with gen, against
τοπος, ου m place

"With the terms of Stephen's accusation we may compare the charges brought against Christ (Mk 14:56ff, 64) and against Paul (Acts 21:28). As in our Lord's accusation, so in Stephen's the charges were perversions of what had actually been said. What Stephen had said may be judged from the tenor of his reply. His declaration (7:48) that the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands might easily be interpreted as blasphemy 'against this holy place'. It is clear that Stephen advanced beyond the apostles' earlier position in relation to official Judaism, and saw more clearly the inevitability of a break. In more ways than one he was a forerunner of Paul and of the writer to the Hebrews." Bruce.

Verse 14

ἀκηκόαμεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος οὗτος καταλύσει τὸν τόπον τοῦτον καὶ ἀλλάξει τὰ ἔθνη ἃ παρέδωκεν ἡμῖν Μωϋσῆς.

ἀκηκόαμεν see v.11

καταλυω destroy, tear down, do away
with

Compare Mk 14:58, also Jn 2:19-22.

ἀλλάσσω change, alter, exchange

ἔθος, ουσ n custom, practice

παρέδωκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s

παραδιδωμι hand or give over

"Out of the mouths of his accusers we have here a tribute to Stephen's far-sighted comprehension of what was involved in the Gospel. No wonder his teaching was anathema to orthodox Jews!" Bruce. Stott comments, "So far as we can tell, Stephen was teaching much the same as Jesus taught. The false witnesses accused him of saying that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy the temple and change the law. That is, they portrayed the work of Christ in negative, destructive terms. But what Stephen was really doing was preaching Christ, positively and constructively, as the One in whom all that the Old Testament foretold and foreshadowed is fulfilled, including the temple and the law."

Verse 15

καὶ ἀτενίσαντες εἰς αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ καθεζόμενοι ἐν τῷ συνεδρίῳ εἶδον τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ πρόσωπον ἀγγέλου.

ἀτενίζω fix eyes on, look intently at

καθεζομαι sit down, seat oneself, sit
 εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὄραω
 see, observe
 προσωπον, ου n face, appearance
 ὡσει like, as

Compare the face of Moses which shone on his return from Sinai (Ex 34:29ff) and Christ at his transfiguration (Mt 17:2). Stott comments, "Was it not God's deliberate purpose to give the same radiant face to Stephen when he was accused of opposing the law as he had given to Moses when he received the law? In this way God was showing that both Moses' ministry of the law and Stephen's interpretation of it had his approval."

Day 185: Acts 7:1-8

Verse 1

Εἶπεν δὲ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς, Εἰ ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχει;

ἀρχιερευς, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family

Εἰ ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχει 'are these things so?'

Verses 2ff. – Stephen's Speech

The themes of Stephen's speech are:

- i) God cannot be tied down to any particular land or place. His people are closest to him when they are a 'pilgrim people'.
- ii) The OT portrays God's people constantly turning away from him. This rebellion has reached its climax in the rejection of Christ, both in his crucifixion and now in the continuing opposition of the Jewish leaders to the gospel.
- iii) God fulfils his word and promises despite the failures of his people.

Verse 2

ὁ δὲ ἔφη, Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατέρες, ἀκούσατε. Ὁ θεὸς τῆς δόξης ὤφθη τῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ ὄντι ἐν τῇ Μεσοποταμίᾳ πρὶν ἢ κατοικῆσαι αὐτὸν ἐν Χαρράν,

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say
 δοξα, ης f glory

ὁ θεος της δοξης see Ps 29:3 (LXX 28).

ὡφθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ὄραω trans
 see; pass. appear

πρὶν and πρὶν ἢ before

κατοικεω live, settle, inhabit

Χαρραν f Haran

Compare Gen 15:7 with Gen 11:31-12:5.

Verse 3

καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν, Ἔξελθε ἐκ τῆς γῆς σου καὶ [ἐκ] τῆς συγγενείας σου, καὶ δεῦρο εἰς τὴν γῆν ἣν ἄν σοι δείξω.

Quotation from Gen 12:1.

συγγενεια, ας f kindred, relatives
 δευρο adv. come, come here

The adverb δευρο is commonly used as a verb, cf. v.34 and the plural formation δευτε Mt 11:28 etc.

δείξω Verb, fut act indic, 3 s δεικνυμι
 show, reveal

Verse 4

τότε ἐξελθὼν ἐκ γῆς Χαλδαίων κατώκησεν ἐν Χαρράν. κάκειθεν μετὰ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ μετόικισεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν γῆν ταύτην εἰς ἣν ὑμεῖς νῦν κατοικεῖτε,

τοτε then, at that time

ἐξελθων Verb, aor act ptc, nom m s
 ἐξερχομαι

"In Gen 11:27-12:5 Terah is represented as the leader of the expedition from Ur to Haran. Terah would be the recognised leader while he lived, even though Abraham was the moving spirit." Bruce.

κάκειθεν and from there – formed from
 και ἐκειθεν

ἀποθανειν aor infin ἀποθνησκω die
 μετοικιζω make to move, send off

Understand ὁ θεος as subject.

Verse 5

καὶ οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κληρονομίαν ἐν αὐτῇ οὐδὲ βῆμα ποδός, καὶ ἐπηγγέλατο δοῦναι αὐτῷ εἰς κατάσχεσιν αὐτὴν καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ μετ' αὐτόν, οὐκ ὄντος αὐτῷ τέκνου.

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s διδωμι
 κληρονομα, ας f inheritance, what is promised

βημα, τος n judicial bench; β. ποδος
 space enough for a foot

The wording here reflects Dt 2:5

ἐπηγγέλατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
 ἐπαγγελλομαι promise, profess, claim

δοῦναι verb, aor act infin διδωμι
 κατασχεσις, εως f possession, taking possession

σπερμα, τος n seed, offspring

τεκνον, ου n child; pl descendants

The quotation here is from Gen 17:8, cf. Gen 48:4; Dt 32:49.

Verse 6

ἐλάλησεν δὲ οὕτως ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ πάροικον ἐν γῆ ἀλλοτρία, καὶ δουλωσουσιν αὐτὸ καὶ κακωσουσιν ἔτη τετρακόσια·

οὕτως adv. thus

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

Quotation from Gen 15:13,14.

παροικος, ου m stranger, exile

ἀλλοτριος, α, ον belonging to another

δουλωσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl

δουλωω enslave, make (someone) a slave

κακωσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl κακωω

treat badly, be cruel to,

ἔτη Noun, nom & acc pl ἔτος, ους n year

τετρακοσιοι, αι, α four hundred

Verse 7

καὶ τὸ ἔθνος ᾧ ἐὰν δουλεύουσιν κρινῶ ἐγώ, ὁ θεὸς εἶπεν, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐξελεύσονται καὶ λατρεύουσίν μοι ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ.

ἔθνος, ους n nation, people

κρινῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s κρινω judge

ἐξελεύσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl

ἐξερχομαι

λατρευω serve, worship

See Ex 3:12. The place referred to in Exodus was Sinai. Here Stephen applies it to Jerusalem as the place of God's dwelling with his people.

Verse 8

καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ διαθήκην περιτομῆς· καὶ οὕτως ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰσαὰκ καὶ περιέτεμεν αὐτὸν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ὀγδόῃ, καὶ Ἰσαὰκ τὸν Ἰακωβ, καὶ Ἰακωβ τοὺς δωδεκα πατριάρχας.

διαθηκη, ης covenant, will, testament

περιτομη, ης f circumcision

See Gen 17:10.

οὕτως Bruce suggests here means 'in this situation' i.e. "thus, while there was still no holy place, all the essential conditions for the religion of Israel were fulfilled."

γενναω be father of, bear, give birth to;

pass be born, cause

περιέτεμεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

περιτεμνω circumcise

ὀγδοος, η, ον eighth

Cf. Gen 21:4.

δωδεκα twelve

πατριαρχης, ου m patriarch (one of the noted ancestors of the Jewish nation)