

INTRODUCTION

“Acts”

I. AUTHOR: Luke

1. Same author as the Gospel of Luke
 - Luke 1:1-4
 - Acts 1:1,2
2. The author was a traveling companion to Paul
 - A. Acts 16:10 -- “we”
 - B. Acts 20:6-16 -- “we”
 - C. Acts 21:1 -- “we”
 - D. Acts 27:1 -- “we”
3. Familiar with medicine
 - A. Acts 28:3, ”Kathapto” -- Fastened -- Medical term
 - B. Acts 28:6, ”Primpromai” -- Swell Up -- Medical term
 - C. Acts 28:8, “Recurrent fever and dysentery” -- Medical term
4. Luke is known as the beloved physician
 - Col. 4:14

II. DATE OF WRITING: Somewhere around 63 A.D.

1. The ending of the Acts supports this date.
 - A. Paul is in Rome, 28:16
 - B. The author notes he stayed there two full years in his own rented quarters. This would be after his release, due to the fact that he had no trial. It was Roman law that if you were not tried within two years you were set free.
 - C. The writing, in all probability, would fall after that date.
2. The writing would fall between the reign of “Claudius Lysias, (Acts 23:26), which was 41-54 A.D. and before Nero’s persecution which was in 64 A.D.

III. TIME FRAME OF THE BOOK: Spans approximately 30 years.

1. 40 days after Jesus’ death (Acts 1:3), A.D. 33
2. To the time of Paul's Roman imprisonment, A.D. 63

IV. PURPOSE:

1. A continuance of what was written in the Gospel of Luke

Luke 1:1-4

Acts 1:1-4

2. If we follow Luke 1:1 through Acts 28:31, we have an accurate account of Jesus' life and work through the founding and early existence of His kingdom (church).
3. This would be the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose.

A. Eph. 3:8-12

B. Die for our sins

1Cor. 15:3

Gal. 1:3-4

C. Establish His Kingdom for the saved

Dan. 2:44-45

Mark 9:1

John 3:3

Acts 2:47

V. THEME: Acts 1:8

“but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

1. A fulfilling of what Jesus had promised.

John 14:26

2. This was needed to complete the work of Jesus.

Matt. 28:19,20

a.) Mark 16:20

b.) Hebr. 2:1-4

OUTLINE

“Acts ”

(Adapted from an outline by C.J. Sodergren)

I. Introduction: (1:1 - 2:13)

1. Forty Days with Jesus, 1:1-8
 - A. Teachings on the kingdom, 1:1-3
 - B. Final command and promise of the Holy Spirit, 1:4-8
2. The Ascension, 1:9-11
3. Ten days of waiting, 1:12-26
 - A. The gathering, 1:12-14
 - B. Appointment of Matthias, 1:15-26
4. The day of Pentecost, 2:1-13
 - A. The gift of the Holy Spirit, 2:1-4
 - B. Immediate effects of the gift, 2:5-13

II. Acts of Peter (and others): (2:14 - 12:25)

1. In Jerusalem, 2:14-8:4

- A. Peter's Sermon, 2:14-47
 1. The address, 2:14-36
 2. Its effects, 2:37-41
 3. The life of the converts, 2:42-47
- B. The lame man healed, 3:1-26
 1. The miracle, 3:1-10
 2. Peter's second sermon at the portico of Solomon, 3:11-26
- C. Arrest of Peter and John, 4:1-37
 1. Their apprehension and proclamation, 4:1-4
 2. The trial, 4:5-12
 3. Their release, 4:13-22
 4. Their report to the brethren, 4:23-31
 5. The resulting fellowship, 4:32-37

- D. Ananias and Sapphira, 5:1-11
 - 1. Ananias, 5:1-6
 - 2. Sapphira, 5:7-11
- E. Signs and wonders, 5:12-16
- F. The arrest of the twelve, 5:17-42
 - 1. The first arrest, 5:17-21
 - 2. The second arrest, 5:21-26
 - 3. The trial, 5:27-32
 - 4. Gamaliel's advice, 5:33-42
- G. Choosing of the seven, 6:1-7
- H. Stephen, 6:8-7:60
 - 1. His arrest, 6:8-15
 - 2. His address, 7:1-53
 - 3. His Martyrdom, 7:54-60

2. *In Palestine and Syria*, 8:1-12:25

- A. Persecution begins, 8:1-4
- B. Philip in Samaria, 8:5-25
 - 1. Philip, 8:5-8
 - 2. Simon, 8:9-13
 - 3. Peter and John sent, 8:14-17
 - 4. Simon's wickedness, 8:18-25
- C. The Ethiopian, 8:26-40
- D. Saul's conversion and first preaching of Christ, 9:1-31
 - 1. The vision, 9:1-7
 - 2. His obedience, 9:8-9
 - 3. Ananias sent, 9:10-17
 - 4. His baptism, 9:18-19
 - 5. He preaches Christ, 9:20-22
 - 6. His escape from Damascus, 9:23-25
 - 7. In Jerusalem, 9:26-31

- E. Aeneas, 9:32-35
- F. Dorcas, 9:36-43
- G. Cornelius, 10:1-11:18
 - 1. Cornelius' Vision, 10:1-8
 - 2. Peter's Vision, 10:9-16
 - 3. Peter Summoned. 10:17-23
 - 4. Peter's reception, 10:24-33
 - 5. Peter's sermon to Cornelius' household, 10:34-43
 - 6. The Holy Spirit received by the Gentiles, 10:44-46
 - 7. The command to be baptized, 10:47,48
 - 8. Peter's defense to the Jews, 11:1-18
- H. The Church in Antioch, 11:19-26
- I. Prophets from Jerusalem, 11:27-30
- J. Herod's persecution of the church, 12:1-24
 - 1. James killed, 12:1-2a
 - 2. Peter imprisoned, 12:2b-5
 - 3. Peter delivered from Herod, 12:6-11
 - 4. Peter at Mary's house, 12:12-19
 - 5. Herod's death, 12:20-24

III. Acts of Paul (and others): (12:25-28:31)

1. In Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece, 12:25-21:17

- A. First missionary journey, 12:25-14:28
 - 1. The call at Antioch, 12:25-13:3
 - 2. Preaching in Cyprus, 13:4-12
 - 3. Galatia region, 13:13-14:28
 - a. Antioch in Pisidia, 13:13-52
 - (1) In the Synagogue, 13:13-15
 - (2) Paul's sermon, 13:16-41
 - (3) Its effect, 13:42-52

- b. Iconium, 14:1-7
 - c. Lystra and Derbe, 14:8-20
 - d. Return, 14:21-28
- B. Jerusalem council, 15:1-35
 - 1. The controversy, 15:1-5
 - 2. The conference, 15:6-21
 - a. The gathering, 15:6,7
 - b. Peter's address, 15:7-11
 - c. Account of Paul and Barnabas, 15:12
 - d. Summary of James, 15:13-21
 - e. The sending of the letter, 15:22-29
 - f. The delivering the letter, 15:30-35
- C. Paul's second missionary journey, 15:36-18:22
 - 1. The disagreement, 15:36-41
 - 2. The churches revisited, 16:1-6
 - 3. The Macedonian call, 16:7-10
 - 4. Onto Macedonia, 16:11-17:15
 - a. Philippi, 16:11-40
 - (1) Lydia, 16:11-15
 - (2) The soothsaying maid, 16:16-18
 - (3) Paul and Silas in prison, 16:19-26
 - (4) The jailer, 16:27-34
 - (5) Paul claims Roman citizenship, 16:35-40
 - b. Thessalonica, 17:1-9
 - c. Berea, 17:10-15
 - 5. Paul in Greece, 17:16-18:22
 - a. Athens, 17:16-34
 - (1) The Areopagus, 17:16-21
 - (2) Paul's address, 17:22-31
 - (3) The response, 17:32-34

- b. Corinth, 18:1-17
 - (1) Aquila and Priscilla, 18:1-4
 - (2) A vision to work, 18:5-11
 - (3) Gallio, 18:12-17
 - 6. Paul's departure, 18:18-22
- D. Paul's third missionary journey, 18:23-21:17
 - 1. The departure, 18:23
 - 2. Apollos, 18:24-28
 - 3. Ephesus, 19:1-20:1
 - a. The twelve and John's baptism, 19:1-7
 - b. Two years in Asia, 19:8-10
 - c. The sons of Sceva, 19:11-17
 - d. The departure from magic, 19:18-20
 - e. Demetrius the silversmith, 19:21-20:1
 - 4. Macedonia and Greece, 20:1-6
 - 5. Eutychus, 20:7-12
 - 6. The coast of Asia Minor, 20:13-16
 - 7. The elders of Ephesus, 20:17-38
 - 8. Tyre, 21:1-6
 - 9. Caesarea, 21:7-14
 - 10. Jerusalem, 21:15-17
- 2. In Jerusalem, Caesarea and Rome, 21:17-28:31**
 - A. In Jerusalem, 21:17-23:22
 - 1. The advice of James, 21:17-26
 - 2. Paul's arrest, 21:27-23:22
 - a. The occasion, 21:27-36
 - b. Paul's defense, 21:37-22:21
 - c. Saved from scourging, 22:22-29
 - d. Paul's trial before the Sanhedrin, 22:30-23:11
 - e. The plot to kill Paul, 23:12-22

B. In Caesarea, 23:23-26:32

1. Delivery of Paul to Felix, 23:23-35
2. Trial before Felix, 24:1-23
 - a. Tertullus the lawyer, 24:1-9
 - b. Paul's defense, 24:10-23
3. Paul's converses with Felix for two years, 24:24-27
4. Before Festus, 25:1-22
 - a. The plot of the Jews, 25:1-5
 - b. The Appeal to Caesar, 25:5-12
 - c. Paul's case presented to Agrippa, 25:13-22
5. Before Agrippa, 25:23-26:32
 - a. Festus introduces Paul, 25:23-27
 - b. Paul's address, 26:1-29
 - c. The end of the audience with the King, 26:30-32

C. To Rome, 27:1-28:31

1. The voyage, 27:1-8
2. The storm, 27:9-26
3. The shipwreck, 27:27-44
4. At Melita, 28:1-6
5. Publius, 28:7-10
6. Arrival at Rome, 28:11-16
 - a. Paul appeals to the Jews, 28:17-24
 - b. Paul turns to the Gentiles, 28:25-29
7. Paul preaches Christ in Rome, 28:30-31

Approximate Chronology of the “Acts”

Regarding the Chronology of Acts, Henry Halley writes in his book, *Halley’s Bible Handbook*,

“There are not enough data given to form an exact Chronology, but sufficient to approximate most of the dates. It is known that Herod’s death (Acts 12:23), was in A.D. 44. Mention of Paul’s arrival in Jerusalem about the time that Herod killed James (11:30-12:2; and Paul’s departure from Jerusalem right after the death of Herod, (12:23,25), makes it look like this was the visit referred to in Galatians 2:1, “14 years” after Paul’s conversion.

If so considering Hebrew usage of counting parts of years at th beginning and end of a period as years, the “14 years” may actually have been only about 13 years, or even less; which would place Paul’s conversion about A.D. 31 or 32.

This, with A.D. 30 as a starting point, and A.D. 60 as the known date of Festus’ appointment as Governor at Caesarea (24:27), the following dates may be regarded as probably approximately correct.

OCCURRENCES	Chapter/s	YEAR ⁱ	Alternate Years ⁱⁱ	TIME FRAME
Acts 1:1-15:35		30-50 A.D.		20 years
Church established	2	30 A.D.	33 A.D. ¹	
Saul Converted	9	32-37 A.D.	31-32 A.D.	
Conversion of Cornelius	10	34-38 A.D.	35-40 A.D.	
Paul’s 1 st Missionary Journey	12	45-47 A.D.		
Jerusalem Conference	15	48-50 A.D.		
Letter to the Galatians	15	50 A.D.	53-58 A.D. ²	
				1 Year
Acts 15:36-18:11 (18:22)	15-18	50-51 A.D.	50-53 ³	3 years
Paul’s 2 nd Missionary Journey		51 A.D.		
First Thessalonians		51 A.D.		
Second Thessalonians				
Acts 18:23-21:16				4 years
Paul’s 3 rd Missionary Journey		53 A.D.	54-57 A.D. ⁴	

¹ This is the common date based upon the Gregorian calendar. In 525 A.D Dionysius Exiguus miscalculated the death of Herod, under whom Jesus was born, placing it 4 years too late. Jesus’ birth was actually in 05 or 04 B.C. (the Roman year would be 750 YOR).

² F. LeGard Smith puts the letter to the Galatians at 50 A.D. following the Jerusalem conference. Others, such as Barnes, believe Galatians was written on Paul’s third missionary journey, between 53 and 58 A.D.

³ *Halley’s Bible Handbook*. Halley probably included the “year and six months” mentioned in Acts 18:11 as part of Paul’s 2nd journey, thus the 50-53 A.D. date.

First Corinthians	18	55 A.D.		
Second Corinthians	19	56-57 A.D.		
Romans	20	56-58 A.D.		
Acts 21:17-28:31				5 years
Paul's arrest in Jerusalem	21-26	58 A.D.		
Paul's voyage to Rome	27,28	60 A.D.		
House arrest in Rome	28	61-63 A.D.		
Colossians		61-63 A.D.		
Philemon		61-63 A.D.		
Ephesians		61-63 A.D.		
Philippians		61-63 A.D.		

ⁱ These dates follow those given by F LaGard Smith in his book *The Narrated Bible, In Chronological Order*.

ⁱⁱ The "Alternate Years" are dates given by other authors.

⁴ *Halley's Bible Handbook*,

ACTS - Key Chapter Facts & Verses

Chapter 1
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Ascension of Jesus
Meeting of 120+ in the upper room in Jerusalem
Judas replaced by Matthias
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 1:8
Chapter 2
<i>Key Facts:</i>
HS comes with power upon the Apostles
Peter proclaims the prophecy of Joel as fulfilled
First gospel sermon preached - 3000 baptized
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 2:22-24
Acts 2:38,38
Chapter 3
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Healing of lame beggar
Peter preaches the gospel a second time in the portico of Solomon
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 3:6-8
Acts 3:26
Chapter 4
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Peter and John arrested brought before the Sanhedrin
Peter and John Commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus
Barnabas sells his land and gives the money to the apostle
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 4:8-12
Acts 4:19
Chapter 5
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Ananias and Sapphira lie to God
Ananias and Sapphira fall dead - the church grows
Apostles brought before Sanhedrin, beat and released rejoicing
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 5:3,4,12-14
Acts 5:29

Chapter 6
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Hellenistic widows overlooked
7 chosen to be put in charge of overseeing the daily feeding
Stephen brought before the Sanhedrin
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 6:2
Chapter 7
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Stephen preaches Christ to the Sanhedrin
Stephen is stoned to death
Paul watches over the cloaks of those stoning Stephen
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 7:51-53
Acts 7:59-60
Chapter 8
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Saul persecutes the church in Jerusalem – the church is scattered
Philip preaches Christ in Samaria performing miracles
Simon the sorcerer is converted
Gifts of the HS passed on through the Apostles hands in Samaria
Philip preaches to the Ethiopian eunuch
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 8:3
Acts 8:4-6
Acts 8:34-38
Chapter 9
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Paul continues his persecution of the church
The Lord appears to Paul as he travels to Damascus
Paul converted to Christ – preaches Christ
Barnabas introduces Paul to the Apostles in Jerusalem
Peter heals Tabitha (Dorcas)
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 9:4
Acts 9:15
Acts 9:31
Chapter 10
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Cornelius visited by an angel
Peter falls into a trance – receives a vision of clean and unclean animals

Peter preaches the gospel to the Gentiles (Cornelius' house)
HS falls upon the Gentiles - they are baptized in the name of Jesus
Key Verse(s):
Acts 10:1,2
Acts 10:15
Acts 10:34,35
Acts 10:47,48
Chapter 11
Key Facts:
News spreads of the Gentiles receiving the word – some Jews take issue
Peter explains his vision- Gentiles accepted
The church in Antioch is established
Barnabas and Saul work with the brethren in Antioch
Disciples first called Christians in Antioch
Agabus foretells of a coming famine – contribution taken
Key Verse(s):
Acts 11:16-18
Acts 11:26
Chapter 12
Key Facts:
James brother of John put to death by Herod
Peter arrested by Herod – released from prison by an angel of the Lord
Angel of the Lord strikes Herod - Herod Dies
Key Verse(s):
Acts 12:11
Acts 12:24
Chapter 13
Key Facts:
**Paul's first missionary journey begins at Antioch
Paul confronts Bar-Jesus the magician - Bar-Jesus blinded for a time
Paul preaches in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch
Paul preaches to the Gentiles at Pisidian Antioch
Key Verse(s):
Acts 13:2,3
Acts 13:8-12
Acts 13:46
Chapter 14
Key Facts:
Gospel preached in Iconium – the city is divided
Paul & Barnabas at Lystra – lame man healed – are called Zeus and Hermes
Return to Antioch report on the work done

<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 14:3
Acts 14:15
Acts 14:27
Chapter 15
<i>Key Facts:</i>
The Jerusalem Council
Letter from James and the elders sent to the Gentiles
**Paul begins his second Missionary journey
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 15:1,2
Acts 15:10,11
Acts 15:36
Chapter 16
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Paul revisits the churches – Timothy introduced
The call to go to Macedonia
Lydia Baptized in Philippi
Slave girl healed of Demon possession
Paul and Silas imprisoned – great earthquake occurs
Philippian the jailer and household converted
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 16:4,5
Acts 16:9,10
Acts 16:30-33
Chapter 17
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Paul preaches in Thessalonica, Berea and Athens
Paul addresses the Areopagus
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 17:2-3
Acts 17:10,11
Acts 17:23
Acts 17:30,31
Chapter 18
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Paul travels to Corinth meets Aquila and Priscilla
Crispus, the leader of the synagogue converted
Paul receives a vision to stay and preach in Corinth without fear
Jews bring Paul before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, but he is released
**Paul begins his third Missionary journey

Priscilla and Aquila correct the teachings of Apollos
Key Verse(s):
Acts 18:4-6
Acts 18:9,10
Acts 18:25,26
Chapter 19
Key Facts:
Paul travels to Ephesus - baptizes the twelve disciples of Johns baptism
People healed with handkerchiefs and aprons from Paul
Sevens sons of Sceva attacked by man possessed with an evil spirit
Believers who practiced magic burn their books
Demetrius the silversmith stirs up trouble.
Key Verse(s):
Acts 19:2-5
Acts 19:11,12
Acts 19:15,16
Chapter 20
Key Facts:
Paul travels to Troas stays seven days, breaks bread on first day of the week
Paul preaches until midnight - Eutychus falls out of the window
Paul meets with the elders of Ephesus as he heads to Jerusalem
Admonition to the elders to shepherd the flock – warning of false teachers
Key Verse(s):
Acts 20:6,7
Acts 20:28-32
Chapter 21
Key Facts:
Paul continues his journey back to Jerusalem
In Caesarea, at Philips house, Agabus warns of Paul's imprisonment
Paul arrives in Jerusalem
James and the elders instruct Paul about the Jews zeal for the Law
Paul purifies himself and pays the expenses for the four men under a vow.
Paul seized in the temple by the Jews from Asia
Key Verse(s):
Acts 21:10-14
Chapter 22
Key Facts:
Paul gives his defense before the Jews in Jerusalem
Paul declares his Roman citizenship - saved from scourging
Key Verse(s):

Acts 22:3,4
Acts 22:14-16
Chapter 23
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Paul's trial before the Sanhedrin – Paul slapped
Plot by the forty-plus to kill Paul
Paul is delivered to Felix (the governor)
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 23:1
Acts 23:6-9
Chapter 24
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Trial before Felix
Tertullus' argument against Paul
Paul's defense
Paul kept in custody for two years
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 24:14-15
Acts 24:25
Chapter 25
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Trial before Festus (the governor)
Paul appeals to Caesar
Paul brought before King Agrippa
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 25:10-12
Chapter 26
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Paul's defense before King Agrippa
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 26:9-11
Acts 26:14
Acts 26:28,29
Chapter 27
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Paul sails to Rome to stand trial
Journey disrupted by a severe northeastern storm
Shipwrecked on the Island of Malta (Melita)
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 27:21-25

Acts 27:31
Chapter 28
<i>Key Facts:</i>
Viper from the fire attaches to Paul's hand – no harm befalls him
Paul heals those with diseases on Malta
Paul arrives in Rome proclaims the Gospel to the Jews - turns to the Gentiles
<i>Key Verse(s):</i>
Acts 28:23-28
Acts 28:30,31

Acts Chapter 1

I. Introduction: (1:1- 2:13)

1. Forty Days with Jesus. 1:1-8

A. Teachings on the kingdom. 1:1-3

Date: A.D. 33

Acts 1:1 The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach.

“The first account”

The gospel of Luke, Luke 1:1-4

“Theophilus”

“One who loves God” No reason to believe this is not an acquaintance of Luke’s

The doing would be in reference to the miracles of Jesus.

The teaching would be in reference to repentance (doing God’s will), and the Kingdom.

“Doing and teaching”

Though not always in that order is a theme throughout the book of Acts. The performing of miracles often times accompanied teaching on the Kingdom.

(Do) Luke 4:38-41, (Teach) 4:42-44

(Do) Luke 5:12-14, (Teach) 5:15ff

(Do) Acts 2:6-13, (Teach) 2:14ff

(Do) Acts 3:7-10, (Teach) 3:11ff

(Do) Acts 8:4-8, (Teach) 8:12ff

Acts 1:2 until the day when He was taken up, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

“until the day when He was taken up”

The ascension of Jesus, Luke 24:46-51, Acts 1:9-11

“by the Holy Spirit given orders,”

As we are going to see the Holy Spirit is mentioned some 40 times throughout the book of Acts. This is one of the keys to understanding the book.

1. The Holy Spirit was promised, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7, Acts 1:5,8
2. The Holy Spirit was received, Acts 2:1-4

“whom He had chosen”

1. Specifically mentioned are the apostles Jesus chose.
2. We see this group mentioned both in the Gospel of Luke and Acts, Luke 6:13-16, Acts 1:13
3. Notice a special qualification of an apostle of Christ - *he had to be chosen by Christ.*
None can meet that qualification today!
4. Cf. 1:21,22.

Acts 1:3 -- To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over {a period of} forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

“To these” -

The twelve He had chosen, The Apostles.

“Presented Himself alive”

Luke 24:33-36 , 1Cor. 15:3-7

“After His suffering”

His crucifixion, Luke 23:33-46

“Many convincing proofs”

1. "Convincing" here means that which could not deceive and that which could not be mistaken. (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:26,27; John 21:1-7)

2. The convincing proofs:

A. First, the apostles did not expect the resurrection (Jn 20:25; Lk 24:1-4,19-24).

Therefore, there was no delusion which resulted from their expectation of seeing Him. In other words, they were not looking forward to His resurrection so much that they imagined it!

B. Second, they were intimately familiar with Jesus after living with Him for over three years. Thus, they could not be deceived concerning His identity.

C. Third, He appeared to *all eleven* of the apostles. This is significant because it might have been possible to deceive one or several of them, but *not* eleven for this period of time.

D. Fourth, Jesus lived with them for forty days after His resurrection. There was plenty of time to prove His identity, or to disprove it if this was a deception.

E. And fifth, the apostles saw Jesus at various places and at times which there could be no deception.

3. It was Jesus' resurrection that explains the change in behavior of the apostles after His death?!

A. Mk 16:9-16.

B. Acts 5:40-42.

“Speaking of the Kingdom”

It is not made clear what Jesus spoke about concerning God’s kingdom. But it is clear that the apostles still had much to learn about the kingdom, Acts 1:6

b. Final command and promise of the Holy Spirit. 1:4-8

Acts 1:4 *And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” {He said,} “you heard of from Me;*

“He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem”

1. Jesus told His apostles to wait in a specific place - Jerusalem.

2. Why Jerusalem?

A. This is where the message was to be spread from, Isa. 2:3

B. There was a great gathering on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:8-11

“but to wait for what the Father had promised”

In Jerusalem they would receive the promise of the Father which Jesus had given them previously, John 15:26.

“Which,” {He said,} “you heard of from Me”

Jesus had spoken of this before.

Acts 1:5 for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

“for John baptized with water”

1. It is significant that Jesus mentions John’s baptism.
2. There is a comparison of the baptism in water to that of the HS baptism.
 - A. The baptism of the HS did not take place in water baptism.
 - B. John’s water baptism served a different purpose than the HS baptism.
 - (1) It was part of the preparation for the coming of the Messiah (Jn 1:31; Lk 3:3-6).
 - (2) At the time of the HS baptism Jesus had already ascended, Acts 1:9

“but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit”

This promise was for the apostles to receive divine guidance to reveal the New Testament through the Holy Spirit.

1. Lk 24:49.
2. In Jn 13-16 we see some more specific details concerning this promise.
3. It is very important to establish from the scriptures *to whom* Jesus promised these things.
4. The following verses show clearly that Jesus promised these powers to *His apostles* and *only* to His apostles:
 - A. Mt 26:20,21 - (The Twelve Apostles Mentioned)

B. Jn 13:1-4 - (Judas Iscariot)

C. Jn 13:6,23,14:5,8,22 - (Peter, v.6; John, v.23; Thomas,14:5; Philip, 14:8; Judas, 14:22)

D. Jhn. 15:26,27; 17:12 - (Only the twelve from the beginning)

E. John 17:20 - (It is not until here that Jesus includes all those who will believe).

F. Jhn 14:31; 18:1 - (The first mention of a departure from the supper).

5. Some details of Jesus' promises to His apostles concerning the Holy Spirit:

A. Jn 14:16,17,26.

B. Jn 15:26,27.

C. Jn 16:7-14.

Acts 1:6 And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

“when they had come together”

These are the apostles.

“is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”

1. The apostles still did not understand that Christ's kingdom would be *spiritual* in nature.

A. They still expected the kingdom to be a physical or political kingdom (cf. Mt 20:20,21; Jn 6:15).

B. Jesus did not correct their misunderstanding on this occasion.

2. The second thing implied by the apostles' question is that the kingdom had not yet been established - this is a *very* important fact!

- A. Isaiah had predicted its establishment in the last days (Isa 2:2-4).
- B. Daniel had predicted its establishment in the time of the Roman rulers (Dan 2:31-45). **(See charts on the Kingdom)**
- C. John the Immerser said it was "at hand", or near in the first century (Mt 3:2).
- D. Jesus said the same thing, (Mt 4:17).
- E. Some believed the Kingdom was coming soon, (Lk. 19:11).
- F. It was still in the future when Jesus spoke the words recorded in (Mt 16:18,19).
- G. Joseph of Arimethea was still waiting for it **after Jesus' death** (Mk 15:43).

Acts 1:7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

"It is not for you to know times or epochs"

It was not important for them to know the exact time of the coming of the kingdom.

"the Father has fixed by His own authority"

The time of the kingdoms coming is under God's control.

Acts 1:8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

These notes in verse 8 are adapted from Charlie Depalama's Acts notes WVBS.

1. Jesus tells the Apostles four important facts.

A. They would receive power.

- B. That power would be received when the Holy Spirit came upon them.
- C. They would then be His witnesses.
- D. They would start in Jerusalem and then move to the region of Judea, then Samaria, and then to the end of the earth.

2. Details concerning these four things:

A. First, the apostles would receive *power*.

- (1) **δυναμιν** - the enabling power or ability to perform something.
- (2) In this context, this is the power for the apostles to work miracles to carry out the great commission which Jesus had given to them.
- (3). This included the ability to reveal God's word through inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16,26; 16:7-13).
- (4). Included is the ability to confirm that word by miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit (Mk 16:17-20; Heb 2:3,4).

B. Second, Jesus said this power would be received when the *Holy Spirit* came upon His specially chosen apostles.

- (1). This would be the fulfillment of the promise of the Father and the baptism with the Holy Spirit mentioned by Jesus earlier (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4,5).
- (2). This coming of power was also a key indicator of the time of establishment of Jesus' kingdom as seen in Mk 9:1.
- (3). In Mt 16:18,19 Jesus used the words "church" and "kingdom" to refer to the same spiritual institution.
- (4). With that thought in mind, let us read and analyze what Jesus said in

Mk 9:1. which is a critically important verse on the subject of the kingdom (church).

(a). First, Jesus said there were some people in His audience that day who would not die until they saw the kingdom come.

1. This tells us without a doubt that it would *not* be hundreds or thousands of years before His kingdom (church) was established, as some teach today!

2. And it tells us it *would* certainly be established within 70 or 80 years of the time when Jesus spoke, or possibly before then.

(b). Second, Jesus said the kingdom (church) would come with *power*.

1. The word translated "power" in Mk 9:1 is the very same word translated "power" in Acts 1:8!

2. And that *power* is the key link which connects, or draws together, the kingdom (church) in Mk 9:1 and the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles of Christ in Acts 1:8.

(c). Now let us summarize with what we have studied concerning this power and the kingdom in Mt 16:18,19; Mk 9:1; and Acts 1:8.

1. The terms "kingdom" and "church" are used interchangeably (Mt 16:18,19).

2. The kingdom would be established with power (Mk 9:1).

3. The power would come with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

4. Therefore, we know that the kingdom would be established when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles of Christ. (church)

C. The third thing Jesus told His apostles in 1:8 was that they would be His witnesses.

(1). A witness is a person who sees something and, on that basis, seeks to confirm a truth by his testimony.

(2). This was another one of the qualifications of an apostle of Christ, i.e., to have seen Jesus and to be willing to give testimony of what they actually saw.

(3). In :22 even more specific emphasis will be placed on the need for an apostle to be a witness of Jesus' *resurrection from the dead*.

(4). Again, it is quite obvious no one who is alive today can meet these qualifications!

(5). Christ had worked with His apostles for over three years to prepare them for this unique work.

(6). And He was going to complete their special preparation for this unique work through the *power* of the *Holy Spirit* which He promised them in this verse:

(a). Jn 14:26.

(b). Jn 15:26,27.

(7). The apostles began to serve as witnesses for Christ in Acts 2:14ff.

(8). In that section, they began to testify on the basis of personal observation what Jesus did and taught.

(9). It is interesting to notice the original word translated "witnesses" (**μαρτυρες**).

(a). We get the English word "martyr" from this word.

(b). A martyr is one who chooses to suffer or die rather than give up his faith!

(c). That is just what the apostles of Christ did and it is also what many since that time have done.

(d). They chose to teach and preach Jesus, even if it meant suffering or dying for Him!

(e). Acts 4:1-22; 5:17-42; Rev 2:10.

d. The fourth thing Jesus told His apostles in 1:8, was the *geographical order* with which they were to carry out Christ's great commandment. They were to begin in *Jerusalem*, then go to the region of *Judea*, then to *Samaria*, then to the *end of the earth*.

(1). Jesus had given them the *general* realm of their work in verses like Mk 16:15 and Mt 28:19.

(2). Now He gives them more *specific* guidance on where to begin and continue their work for Him.

(3). Also, as we have seen in our background information, this geographical order serves as an outline for the book of Acts:

I. Part One: (1-7) The church established in *Jerusalem*.

II. Part Two: (8-12) The church scattered to *Judea* and *Samaria*.

III. Part Three: (13-28) The church spread to *the uttermost parts*.

(4). But, *why* did the Lord charge His apostles to proceed in this order?
Brother J. W. McGarvey in his *Original Commentary on Acts* gives the following logical answer:

" It is not to be imagined that this arrangement of their labors was dictated by partiality for the Jews, or was merely designed to fulfill prophecy. It was rather foretold through the prophets, because there were good reasons why it should be so. One reason, suggested by commentators generally, for beginning in Jerusalem, was the propriety of first vindicating the claims of Jesus in the same city in which he was condemned. But the controlling reason was doubtless this: the most devout portion of the Jewish people, that portion who had been most influenced by the preparatory preaching of John and Jesus, was always collected at the great annual festivals, and hence the most *successful* beginning could there be made. Next to these, the inhabitants of the rural districts of Judea were best prepared, by the same influences, for the gospel; then the Samaritans, who had seen some of the miracles of Jesus; and last of all, the Gentiles. Thus the rule of *success* was made their guide from place to place, and it became the custom of the apostles, even in heathen lands, to preach the gospel first to the Jew and then to the Gentile.' The result fully justified the rule; for the most signal triumph of the gospel was in Judea, and the most successful approach to the Gentiles of every region was through the Jewish synagogue."

2. The Ascension. 1:9-11

Acts 1:9 *And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.*

He was lifted up while they were looking on,

It is specifically mentioned here that the Apostles were eye witnesses of Jesus' ascension.

and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

This does not seem to be a special cloud just one that was in the air, although clouds are referred to in regards to the appearance of Deity. This will be discussed more in vs.11.

Acts 1:10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them;

“behold” = idou, (idou),

Used to enliven a narrative, introduces something quite extraordinary, used to emphasize the size or importance of something.

“two men in white clothing,”

1. No doubt these are angels, messengers of God.
2. White is the conventional apparel of angels, signifying their purity
3. Matt. 28:3; John 20:12
4. Luke describes two angels as being in, “dazzling apparel,” (Luke 24:4)

“stood beside them” = paristemi, (paristemi),

1. Literally, “had taken a stand by them.”
2. This would indicate a sudden appearance.
3. The Apostles were unaware of their presence.

Acts 1:11 and they also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

“Men of Galilee”

1. Here a recognition of who Jesus had just appeared to and spoken to is given.
2. (Cf. Overhead, “The Apostles of Jesus”)
3. All the Apostles standing there were Galileans.
4. This is of special interest considering what will take place in acts 2:7

Of Interest:

1. Judas Iscariot might have been the exception to this.
2. He might have been from the region of southern Judah
3. His “last name” has been said to mean “man of Kerioth” from the city / cities of Kerioth-hezron.
4. Kerioth-hezron was also known as Hazor.
5. There are five possible locations for this city.
 - a. One of which is mentioned in Josh 15:23 and is found in southern Judah
 - b. A second is found in the region of Galilee, Josh. 11:1-5.
6. Either way it makes no difference.
 - a. Judas might have been from the Hazor of Galilee, thus a Galilean.
 - b. But since he is dead at the time of Christ ascension he is not part of the group mentioned. All these men are still Galileans.

why do you stand looking into the sky?

They have just been given “*the great commission*” (Acts 1:4; Matt 28:19,20). Standing there gazing into the sky will not accomplish that work.

“This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven”

1. We have confirmation of who ascended, “This Jesus”
2. We know He has gone into heaven.
3. Brother Leon Stancliff states, “I do believe we see the other end of this journey by Christ as we read from the fifth chapter of the book of Revelation where Jesus came to the throne of God and took the sealed book from the right hand of the Father. (God’s Messages Bible commentary Series, Acts, Sain Publications, Pulaski Tn, 2000, vol 3. pg. 18).
4. Revelation 5:6 also speaks of the Holy Spirit sent into the earth, which is to follow Jesus’ ascension, (The number 7 represents that which is perfect).

“will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven”

1. This is the confirmation that Jesus will return someday , Hebrews 9:28
2. Appearing in like manner will involve several things.
 - A. There will be clouds, Matt. 24:30, 26:64; Mark 13:26, 14:62; Luke 21:27
 - B. Clouds have been a part of the presence of Deity.
 - (1). In the Old Testament,
 - Exod. 13:21, 33:9-10
 - Num. 12:5
 - Deut. 31:15

(2). In the New Testament

Matt. 17:1-5

Mark 9:2 -7

Luke 9:28-36

Rev. 14:14

C. His return will be visible as was His ascension. There will be no secret or invisible return as some teach, (Rev.1:7).

D. Angels will once again be present at His second coming, Mt. 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7-9

3. There is an importance to Christ's ascension back into heaven.

A. He was to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles (Jn 16:7),

B. He must reign as King over His eternal kingdom (Dan 7:13,14; Acts 2:32-36),

C. He must present His atoning blood as the once for all sacrifice for sins (Heb 9:12-14, 24-26)

D. He is to be the Christian's mediator, advocate, and intercessor, giving us boldness to approach God's throne of grace (Heb 4:14-16; 1 Tim 2:5; 1 Jn 2:1,2).

3. Ten days of waiting, 1:12-26

a. The gathering, 1:12-14

Acts 1:12 . . . Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

“a Sabbath day's journey”

1. This is about 1000 yards, 3/4th's of a mile.

2. This phrase is only found here.
3. Based upon their interpretation of Ex.16:27-30, the Rabbi's came up with this to allow a Jew to travel this distance on the Sabbath without breaking the Law.
4. It was a weak man made law and was altered frequently.

Acts 1:13 And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying: that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James {the son} of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas {the} {son} of James.

“And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room,”

1. The Apostles chosen by Jesus.
2. We know this to be true because Luke lists them.

Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James {the son} of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas {the} {son} of James.

3. (CF. Overhead, “These Chosen Apostles”)

In support of the argument that the Baptism of the HS was only promised to a special group of Apostles and not all believers, note those specifically listed in the last 13 verses.

1. The apostles whom He had chosen, v.1
2. To these chosen Apostles He presented Himself alive and gathered them together, v.2,3
3. These chosen Apostles were told to wait in Jerusalem and wait for the promise from the Father, the baptism of the HS, v.4,5.
4. These chosen Apostles were to receive power “when the HS come upon you,” v.8
5. These chosen Apostles were the men who watched Jesus ascend, v.10

6. These chosen Apostles were the men of Galilee the two angels spoke to, v.11
7. These chosen Apostles were the men who returned to Jerusalem, v.12
8. These chosen Apostles are the men listed in v.13.
9. These chosen Apostles are the eleven mentioned in v.26
10. These chosen Apostles are the same Galileans speaking in different tongues after receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised them, Acts 2:8.
11. These chosen Apostles are the **(οὗτοι)** mentioned by Peter in Acts 2:15.
 - A. **(οὗτοι)**, (outoi) = these
 - B. We know this cannot refer to women because **(οὗτοι)** is masculine.
 - C. So we have “these (masc) men.
 - D. This is referring to the chosen Apostles if Jesus,
 1. Men of Galilee, 1:11
 2. All these speaking Galileans, 2:7

Acts 1:14 ... These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with {the} women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

“These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer”

Luke list what the chosen apostles of Jesus were doing while waiting for the promise of the HS.

1. They were with one mind - **(ομοθυμαδον)**, (Homothumauden) Oneness of mind and spirit
2. They were continually devoted to prayer,- **(Προσκατερουντες)**, (Proskarterountes) to be strong, to be steadfast, to adhere firmly, Acts 2:42, 9:11; Rom. 12:10-12

“along with”

This important phrase separates the Apostles from the rest listed, but refers back to them.

“and Mary the mother of Jesus”

1. Mary is seen as another follower of Jesus.
2. She is not being worshiped but she herself is worshiping in prayer.
3. This is the last mention we have of Mary in the NT

“and with His brothers”

1. Undoubtedly referring to Jesus’ blood relatives. Especially after the mention of His mother.
2. In Luke 2:7 “she gave birth to her **first-born** son,” leaves room for other children,
3. The Gospels speak of His blood relatives. There is also a mention of sisters.

Matt. 13:55,56; Mk. 6:3

4. Before His death Jesus’ brothers had not acknowledged Him as the Messiah.
5. On the contrary they seemed to believe he was unstable and even ridiculed Him,

Mk. 3:21 John 7:3-5,

b. Appointment of Matthias. 1:15-26

Acts 1:15 And at this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said,

“And at this time Peter stood up”

1. Peter take the initiative to speak to the disciples, see also Acts 2:14.

2. Why Peter?

A. There is no indication of authority here

B. Possibly because of his denial of Jesus, Matt. 6:69-75

“in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said,”

This is not the entire group of Jesus’ followers. There were others, 1 Cor. 15:6.

Acts 1:16 “Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.

“Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled,”

Jesus had said before that the things prophesied about His life would come true.

John 10:35

Luke 24:25-27, 44-46

“which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David”

1. Here we have confirmation that what David spoke was not His own words. The HS foretold these things using the mouth of David.

2. This also confirms inspiration of the Scriptures.

2Pet. 1:20,21

“concerning Judas,”

1. The things that had to be fulfilled concerns Judas Iscariot.

2. There are several prophecies concerning Judas.

Ps. 41:9 —————▶ Mk. 14:10; John 13:18; John 17:12

Ps. 69:25; 109:8 —————▶ Acts 1:21,22

“who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.”

Matt. 26:47-50

Mk. 14:43-46

Acts 1:17 “For he was counted among us, and received his portion in this ministry.”

“For he was counted among us,”

Judas was equal to other Apostles himself being a chosen Apostle of Jesus.

Matt. 10:2-4

Luke 6:13-16

“and received his portion in this ministry.”

1. This affirms that Judas was not a “lesser” Apostle selected only for the purpose of becoming a traitor.

2. Portion - (κληρον), (kleron) = Something given rather than won. Given by God.

Something which is assigned. (Compare Acts 8:21)

Acts 1:18 (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out.

The parenthesis indicate that this is not part of Peter’s address, but rather that which is to clarify some unknown things to the reader (s), Theophilus.

“(Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness;”

1. The price of Judas’ wickedness was 30 pieces of silver.
2. Judas did not personally purchase the field, Matt. 27:6,7, but through his wickedness the field was purchased so in one sense he did purchase it.

“and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out.”

1. Judas, after considering what he had done went and hung himself.
2. Both Luke and Matthew provide a complete picture of what Judas did.

Acts 1:18 = He fell headlong, and burst open in the middle...

Matt. 27:4,5 = He went away and hanged himself.

Acts 1:19 -- And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

“so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)”

1. This section further clarifies that this was written for those other than the Hebrews.
2. Luke explains the meaning of this Aramaic word. There is no need to explain what Hakeldama means to a Jew, since Aramaic is so similar.

“that is, Field of Blood.)”

1. There are possibly two reasons it is called this.
 - A. Judas’ gruesome death, with his entrails gushing out.
 - B. The field was purchased with blood money, Matt. 27:4
2. Matthew refers to this field as the Potters field.

- A. By using the definite article (the), we understand that this field was well known.
- B. The name probably comes from the fact that the field was used for clay.
- C. (κεραμεωσ) , (kerameos) = Potters clay, earthenware, a tile, tiling

Acts 1:20 . . . “For it is written in the book of Psalms, LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO MAN DWELL IN IT”; and, HIS OFFICE LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE.’

“For it is written in the book of Psalms,”

Peter is going to quote two of the psalms of David, the first is Psalm 69:25, the second is 109:8.

“LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO MAN DWELL IN IT”

This is a prayer of David asking that his enemies dwelling place be mad desolate.

“HIS OFFICE LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE”

This is a prayer of David requesting that a certain leader die and another replace him

Of Interest:

It is often asked why Peter used these two Psalms when they do not directly refer to Judas. That is to say, these are not necessarily prophetic utterances concerning Judas. James Coffman in his commentary on Acts offers some adequate insight,

“Peter’s reason for applying these words to Judas appears to be this: since the enemies of David, who was only a type of Christ, were thus denounced, then

certainly an enemy and betrayer of the greater Son of David would be the proper object of the same denunciation.” (Commentary on Acts, James Burton Coffman, pg.27).

Heads Up!:

In these next several verses Peter is going to list the criteria for being an Apostle.

1. An apostle had to be a man.
2. He had to be in the company of the Apostles during Christ’ stay here on earth.
 - a. From the Baptism of John
 - b. To His ascension
3. He had to be a witness of Jesus’ resurrection.

Acts 1:21 — “It is therefore necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us —

“It is therefore necessary”

Since Jesus originally chose 12 apostles this number had to continue to comply with Lk. 22:30, and Matt. 19:28. It is believed twelve were chosen to correspond with the twelve tribes of Israel.

“of the men who have accompanied us”

Two things here concerning the new apostle

1. The new apostle was to be a man.
 - a. Men = (**ανδρος**), andros.

b. From the root word (**ανηρ**) =A male person of full age, as compared to a woman.

2. Whomever was going to fill the place of Judas had to have known of the work of Jesus. He had to be a follower who was there from “the beginning.”

Acts 1:22 beginning with the baptism of John, until the day that He was taken up from us —one of these should become a witness with us of His resurrection.”

“beginning with the baptism of John”

1. John 1:35ff

2. This new apostle must be aware that Jesus was the Lamb of God spoken of by John.

“until the day that He was taken up from us”

This is in reference to Jesus ascension. It is not stated that the new apostle be a witness of the ascension.

“one of these should become a witness with us of His resurrection”

The new apostle would be following the guidelines of a witness, Acts 1:8.

The importance of being a witness of Jesus’ resurrection cannot be overlooked.

Note what Charlie Depalama says concerning this.

1. It was to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, Jn 1:41

A. Lk 24:44-48.

B. Rom 1:4.

2. Notice, it was only the apostles who served as witnesses and notice the eyewitness testimony that they gave to Jesus' resurrection:

- A. 2:32.
- B. 3:15.
- C. 5:29-32.
- D. 10:39-41.
- E. 13:30,31.
- F. 4:33.

3. The overwhelming force of their testimony is seen in three major areas:

- A. Their number: there were twelve witnesses, not just one or two.
- B. Their agreement: the apostles were in total agreement.
- C. Their lives: they were fearless in the face of persecution - even to the point of being beaten and dying for the Lord Jesus.

Acts 1:23 And they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias.

“And they put forward two men”

They, is referring to the apostles. This supported by the conversation of qualifications.

This entire conversation is referring to the apostles. They are speaking and spoken about.

Acts 1:24 And they prayed, and said, “Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which one of these two Thou hast chosen

“And they prayed, and said”

1. This is the second time we see prayer mentioned, Acts 1;14.
2. In every matter guidance from the Lord was sought out.

“Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men”

1. It is not certain whether they are speaking to Jesus or God.
2. Cf. 1 Chron. 28:9; Jer. 17:10
3. Since Jesus is God it would seem to matter not, John 1:1.
4. Still, we must consider NT examples of prayer,
 - A. Acts - 4:24,29; 12:5; 16:25; 27:35.
 - B. Mt 6:6,9.
 - C. Jn 16:23,24 (cf. 14:13,14; 15:16).
 - D. Eph 5:20.
 - E. Heb 7:25.

Heads Up!:

Knowing that God knows our hearts and that we cannot fool Him how should we live ?

1. Prov 4:23
2. Mt 5:8
3. 2 Cor 10:5
4. Phil 4:8

“show which one of these two Thou hast chosen”

1. This too possibly supports the apostles speaking to the Lord Jesus, Acts 1:2
2. Note that they are not seeking to choose an apostle themselves but they are leaving this to decision to the Lord. He is the only one qualified choose an apostle. Especially having the ability to know one’s heart.
3. This is not a job for mere man.

Acts 1:25 to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”

“to occupy this ministry and apostleship”

Here we have a specific mention of an apostles work, Acts 6:2

“from which Judas turned aside”

1. Judas was not replaced because of his death but because of his transgression.
2. When an apostle was killed we have no mention of another taking his place, Acts 12:1,2
3. (Cf. **“Judas, An example of falling away”**)

“to go to his own place”

Every man has a place to go. It is a place of our own choosing.

Josh. 24:15

Rom. 6:23

Acts 1:26 And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

“And they drew lots for them”

1. Drawing of lots was an OT practice.
 - A. Lev. 16:2 -9
 - B. Josh. 18:10
 - C. Jonah 1:7
2. The answer given was credited to God, Prov. 16:33

3. There is no other mention of this practice through the rest of the NT

“and he was numbered with the eleven apostles”

This affirms Matthias as an apostle of the Lord. He met the qualifications.

Acts Chapter 2

4. The day of Pentecost, 2:1-13

A. The gift of the Holy Spirit, 2:1-4

Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

“And when the day of Pentecost had come”

1. Pentecost = (Πεντηκοστ) means fiftieth and came to designate the fiftieth day after Passover.
2. The OT does not use the term, but instead refers to the festival as the “feast of weeks” (Ex. 34:22; Lev. 23:15)

“They were all together ”

1. This refers to the Apostles, **Acts 1:26**
2. A good rule of thumb in grammar is that the pronoun looks back to the closest noun to determine the subject. In this case the closest noun is the 12 apostles seen in verse 26.
3. There is no indication that the 120 is included in this group.
 - a. When they day of Pentecost had fully come. This indicates a different day than in v.15
 - b. 2:7 refers to those speaking in tongues as Galileans, (cf. 1:11)

“in one place”

1. It is uncertain what the one place was. Some believe the upper room of 1:13. Others say it was a large room in the temple, possibly Solomons Porch.

2. Since this is a separate day than 1:13, it does not seem likely this is the upper room. As well, consider that the upper room was mentioned specifically as the place where they were staying, yet the phrase “upper room” is not mentioned here. In v.2 it is called a house.

Acts 2:2 *And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.*

“And suddenly there came from heaven ”

This is an event with no warning and indicates where this was coming from.

“a noise like a violent, rushing wind”

1. Not that it was a violent rushing wind but that it possessed the noise.
2. Possibly an attention getter.

“and it filled the whole house where they were sitting”

1. This was supernatural in form by the fact that it filled the whole house.
2. House has several different usages,
 - A. The temple (Matt. 21:13)
 - B. A normal dwelling place, (Lk 12:39)

Acts 2:3 *And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.*

“And there appeared to them tongues as of fire”

1. Most scholars envision this as a flame resting on top of the Apostles.

2. Like the rushing wind, not literally fire but “as of fire.”

“and they rested on each one of them.”

All twelve apostles had these “tongues” resting on them.

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit”

At the appearing of the tongues of fire, the Apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit.

“and began to speak with other tongues”

1. The result of was the ability to immediately speak in other languages.
2. There is no question that this is different languages, v.6
3. Other tongues

a. **ετεραισ** = another of a *different* kind.

b. **γλωσσαισ** = language.

(1). Vine's *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* - "the super-natural gift of speaking in another language without its having been learnt."

(2). Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon* - "a tongue, i.e., the language used by a particular people in distinction from that of other nations; to speak with other than their native, i.e., in foreign tongues, Acts 2:4 cf. 6-11; to speak with new tongues which the speaker has not learned previously, Mk. 16:17."

c. Thus, it is clear from the meaning of the Greek words used that this miraculous ability to speak in "other tongues" was the ability to speak in languages which the apostles had never learned before.

“as the Spirit was giving them utterance”

1. It is clear that this was not something they did but what was done through the Holy Spirit.
2. 1 Corinthians 12:11

B. Immediate effects of the gift, 2:5-13

Acts 2:5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

“Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem”

1. They had come for the Feast of Weeks
2. It is significant to note that as Jesus was crucified on a Jewish Holy day, before many witnesses His church came on a Holy day, before many witnesses.

“devout men”

These were men careful to observe God’s commandments. They were “religious”

“from every nation under heaven”

These will be listed in verses 9-11

Acts 2:6 *And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language.*

“And when this sound occurred”

The sound would seem to be the apostles speaking in tongues.

“the multitude came together, and were bewildered”

1. The crowd was drawn to the noise and were bewildered because they did not expect this to happen.
2. The next phrase and v.7 explains in more detail why they were bewildered.

because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language.

The Apostles spoke the languages and the dialects of those mentioned in v.9-11.

Acts 2:7 *And they were amazed and marveled, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?”*

“And they were amazed and marveled”

This was so not only because the apostles spoke in other languages, but because they were Galileans.

“saying, Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?”

1. Galileans were looked upon as ignorant, rude, and uncivilized (Jn 1:46; 7:52).
2. Their own dialect was looked upon as crude and corrupt, therefore it would be amazing that they would know other dialects and languages (Mk 14:70; Mt 26:73).

Acts 2:8 “And how is it that we each hear {them} in our own language to which we were born?”

“And how is it that we each hear {them} in our own language”

This passage once more testifies to the fact that the Apostles spoke a known language.

“to which we were born?”

1. This is a confirmation of the nature of what was taking place.
2. Those in Jerusalem spoke their language because they were born to it and learned it overtime. This was not so for the Galileans yet they spoke the different languages of those in Jerusalem.

Acts 2:9 . . . “Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

Acts 2:10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

“proselytes”

These are those from a foreign country who changed to the Jewish religion, (Matt. 23:15).

Acts 2:11 Cretans and Arabs —we hear them in our {own} tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.”

“we hear them in our {own} tongues”

Another passage which supports the teaching that the Apostles spoke in known

languages not some jibberish as many do today.

“speaking of the mighty deeds of God”

With this ability the Apostles began to proclaim the works of God. This is a fitting result of God’s power.

Acts 2:12 -- And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”

“And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity,”

They were giving attention to what was taking place and were both amazed and confused at what was taking place.

saying to one another, “What does this mean?”

Those hearing this knew that this was not happening without some purpose.

Acts 2:13 But others were mocking and saying, “They are full of sweet wine.”

“But others were mocking”

1. Some refused to believe that this was a special event and chose to mock what was happening.
2. Their reasoning is that the apostles must be drunk.

“They are full of sweet wine”

1. The Greek word for wine in this passage is “gleukos”

2. Some translations have “new wine” but this is not accurate.
 - A. New wine would not cause one to become intoxicated.
 - B. It had been about eight months since the grape harvest.
3. New wine is that which is the purest coming from the grape before it was squashed.
4. As indicated in v. 15 sweet wine was fermented and could intoxicate you.

Heads Up!

Is it not amazing that one would even suggest that becoming intoxicated with wine would ever cause someone to speak in a language they had never learned? It seems reasonable to conclude that some of these men were also there to support the crucifixion of Jesus and again were seeking to discount His claims.

II. Acts of Peter (and others): (2:14 - 12:25)

I. In Jerusalem, 2:14-8:4

A. Peter’s Sermon, 2:14-47

1. The address, 2:14-36

Acts 2:14 . . . But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words.

But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven,

(with the eleven) Here is another indicator that it was only the Apostles who received this baptism with the Holy Spirit.

give heed to my words.

The means by which these individuals will be converted, Acts 2:22,37,40; Eph. 6:17

Acts 2:15 ... “For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is {only} the third hour of the day:

For these men are not drunk, as you suppose,

(these men) Another indicator that it was only the Apostles who received this baptism with the Holy Spirit.

for it is {only} the third hour of the day;

1. The third hour of the day would have been 9:00 in the morning.
2. There are several reasons why Peter offered the time of day as a reason why these men would not have been drunk:
 - A. It was the time of the morning worship or sacrifice.
 - B. It was unusual for even drunkards to become drunk in the daytime (1 Thess 5:7).
 - C. According to Albert Barnes in his commentary on Acts, it was customary for the Jews not to eat or drink *anything* until after the third hour of the day, Exodus 16:8
 - D. And this was especially true on the Sabbath and all festival occasions (such as Pentecost).

Acts 2:16 but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

These were the last days Joel spoke of, **Refers to Acts 2:17**

Acts 2:17 -- 'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;

This is a quote from Joel 2:28-32

'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,

This refers to the Christian dispensation

Micah 4:1

Heb 1:2

Acts 2:18 -- EVEN UPON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT And they shall prophesy.

Acts 2:19 -- 'AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE, AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BENEATH, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE.

Apocalyptic prophesy, Matt 24:30-31

Acts 2:20 -- 'THE SUN SHALL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS, AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME.

Acts 2:21 . . . 'AND IT SHALL BE, THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.'

Acts 2:22 . . . "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know —

Jesus of Nazareth

Commonly known designation, Luke 4:16.

a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him.

John 20:30-31

Heb 2:4

Acts 2:23 . . . this {Man} , delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put {Him} to death.

this {Man} , delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God.

The death of Jesus was that which was planned by God, Isa 53:1-12

by the hands of godless men and put {Him} to death.

Romans, Gentiles.

Acts 2:24 -- "And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

God raised Him up again

Resurrection, Romans 10:9.

putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

He was not held to the power of death. The corruption of the flesh.

Acts 2:25 -- "For David says of Him, I WAS ALWAYS BEHOLDING THE LORD IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, THAT I MAY NOT BE SHAKEN.

For David says of Him

Pslm. 16:8-11, Pslm. 23:4

Acts 2:26 -- 'THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL ABIDE IN HOPE;

Acts 2:27 -- BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.

BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES,

Psalm 16:10

The word for Hades (**αδησ**) correspondes to Sheol in the OT. It never denotes the grave, nor is it the permanent region of the lost; in point of time it is, for such, intermediate between decease and the doom of Gehenna, Luke 16:23-31. (Vines)

Throughout the NT Hades serves only an interim purpose. It receives souls after death, and delievers them up again ath the resurrection (Rev. 20:13). (TDNT)

The King James translates this word Hell. But this is an in accurate translation. The word used for Hell is **γεεννα**. Gehenna is the place of punishment in the last judgement. Mark 9:43. Matt. 10:28

NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.

God would not allow Jesus to face bodily decay. This would be in reference to the resurrection.

Acts 2:28 *'THOU HAST MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; THOU WILT MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH THY PRESENCE.'*

Acts 2:29 *“Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.*

“Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David

Peter refers to the Jews as brethren. You know that David saw corruption in his death.

Acts 2:30 -- "And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT {one} OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE,

{one} OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE,

He would come from Davids loins, Matt. 1:1

Acts 2:31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.

Acts 2:32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

Acts 2:33 -- "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

They (Jews) saw and heard what was poured forth. Possibly tongues of fire, they did see them speak with the dialect.

Acts 2:34 -- "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND.

"For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:

Quote from Psalm 110:1 Peter uses this quote from David as a testimony to the validity of his message.

THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

OT - The Lord (*Yahweh*) unto David's Lord (*Adon*). Since David was King he had no other earthly Lord above Him. David's Lord must be Jesus.

Acts 2:35 UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET."

In the OT this was a show of a conquering kingship.

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."

Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain

The word "know" is in the present durative and thus "be realizing." This is more than mere knowing, it is a knowing that is realization and complete conviction that grows deeper the longer it continues.

2. Its effects, 2:37-41

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard {this}, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

Now when they heard {this}

They heard they had crucified Christ.

they were pierced to the heart,

Heart, Kardia, The emotional part, center of personality, mind, and will.

Acts 2:38 And Peter {said} to them, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And Peter {said} to them, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized

Repent

1. Repentance literally means a change of will or mind. It is to turn around and go in the opposite direction.
2. Repentance stems from our sorrow that we have sinned against God and caused the death of His Son, 2Cor. 7:9,10

Be baptized everyone

1. The common original Greek word for baptism is baptizo.
2. The meaning is to immerse, dip or submerge
3. Some today practice a baptism of sprinkling or pouring.
 - a. But the word for sprinkle is, rhantizo
 - b. And the word for pour is, cheo
 - c. To use these words for baptism would be like me saying I'm going to immerse the submarine by sprinkling some water on it.
 - d. Or to say I sprinkled water on myself when I plunged into the pool.
4. Baptism involves water,
 - a. Acts 8:35,36
 - b. 1Pet. 3:20,21
5. Baptism is a burial,
 - a. Rom. 6:3,4
 - b. Col. 2:12
 - c. The analogy of baptism to a burial corresponds to both the dying of the sinner to his sins in a watery grave and to the fact that baptism, which is immersion, is indeed a burial in water.
6. The Scriptures are clear about it's purpose
 - a. To become the Lords possession, Matt. 28:19,20
 1. eis to onoma - “in the name of” a common phrase for transfer of ownership
 2. ev onomati - in the name of" at the command of, Col. 3:17
 - b. To receive a clear conscience
 1. 1 Peter 3:21
 2. Heb. 9:14, 10:22
 - c. To wash away sins, Acts 22:16
 - d. To be united with Christ, and freed from sin, Rom. 6:3-7
 - e. To be clothed with Christ, Gal. 3:26,27
 - f. To be sanctified, Eph. 5:25,26

g. It sets you apart for God's work, Rom. 6:12,13

c) For remission of sins, Romans 3:25, 6:3-7 (Cf. Handout on "EIS")

Acts 2:39 *"For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."*

"For the promise is for you and your children"

The promise of salvation and sonship, Gal. 3:16ff; Rom 8:28-30.

"and for all who are far off"

This is in reference to the Gentiles, Eph. 2:17, Rom. 9:25,

"as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."

1. God calls all through the gospel of Jesus, 2Ths. 2:14
2. We call back, Rom. 10:12,13, 1Cor. 1:2, Acts 22:16
3. The promise is for everyone but not all will heed God's call, Matt. 7:13 ,14

Acts 2:40 *And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!"*

"And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them"

The Spirit did not miraculously move them to obey, but through the word which Peter preached the people responded,

1. The word is the sword of the Spirit, Eph 6:17
2. It is that word which cuts to the heart, Hebr. 4:12

“Be saved”

sothate (σοθητε), 2 pers. pl. aor. 1, imper. pass

“Let yourselves be saved” and in some instances”Save yourselves”

“from this perverse generation!”

Skolias = crooked, mentally, morally, and spiritually. Those Jews which had denied

Jesus and His works, Matthew 12:31,32

Acts 2:41 ... So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

“So then”

Peter’s words arrive at their intended destination, the heart of the people, and they obey.

“those who had received his word were baptized”

Received = believing they obeyed the command given in 2:38.

“and there were added that day”

1. They were not added until they were baptized.
2. They were baptized that very day, no delay.
3. Added, is the fulfillment of the promise. Added to the church, Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18

3. The life of the converts, 2:42-47

Acts 2:42 -- And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

“And they were continually devoting themselves”

These first Christians moved forward with their faith.

“to the apostles’ teaching”

The Apostles taught the word of God, John 13:20; Luke 10:16

No doubt this was tied to the working of the HS, John 14:26

“to fellowship”

1. Fellowship can be translated in two ways:

A. First, its broadest meaning involves a relationship between individuals which includes common interests, joys, desires, hopes, values, etc.

1.) This includes a mutual, active participation and sharing in those common interests, joys, desires, hopes, values, etc.

2.) And it includes the idea of close friendship, community, unity, togetherness.

3.) Jn 1:3,7.

4.) Col 2:2.

5. Thus, these early Christians were a united, close-knit community of individuals who actively participated in the common privileges and obligations of the Christian life!

2. The second meaning of the word translated "fellowship" is the contribution or giving of goods, money, or other help.

A. This contribution or giving comes out of the desire for others to share in the blessings of the Christian life.

B. Cf. Rom 15:26.

“to the breaking of bread”

This is in reference to the Lord’s supper, Matt. 26:26; 1 Cor 10:16.

There is a difference between this and the regular meal mentioned in Acts 2:46.

“to prayer”

A common practice of the early church and for Christians today, Acts 1:14, Acts 6:4, Acts 12:5

Acts 2:43 And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

“many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles”

It is only mentioned that the Apostles are performing the signs and wonders, not all Christians.

Acts 2:44 And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common;

“And all those who had believed were together”

They were united in thought and action, Rom. 15:6.

“and had all things in common”

not consider their earthly possessions as just their own.

2. They were willing to share those possessions with their brethren, 4:32

Acts 2:45 and they {began} selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

“and they {began} selling their property and possessions”

They were willing to sell what they had and to distribute the proceeds to those who were in need, 1 Jn 3:17.

1. "possessions" - property such as land, houses, vineyards, etc.
2. "goods" - probably refers to their personal, movable property.

Acts 2:46 And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.

HERE WE HAVE A PICTURE OF THE EARLY LIFE OF THE CHRIST.

“and day by day continuing with one mind in the temple”

They were in the Temple worshiping God in one accord, Heb 10:25.

“breaking bread from house to house they were taking their meals together ”

They spent time together as a family

“with gladness and sincerity of heart”

Their attitude in doing these things is commendable

1. "gladness" means exultation; extreme, abundant joy or delight.

A. Thus, for these people, it was an abundant joy to be a Christian and to live as a Christian!

B. Rather than being grumbly hateful, they were humbly grateful!

Phil 4:4.

Gal 5:22,23.

2. "simplicity of heart" (NKJV); "singleness of heart" (KJV) (ASV) - means unworldly simplicity and plainness.

3. They were not in love with the material things of this world, 1 Jn 2:15-17.

Acts 2:47 *praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

“praising God”

1 Pet 2:9,10.

Heb 2:12.

“and having favor with all the people”

1. Mt 5:16.

2. Phil 2:15,16.

‘And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved’

This clearly teaches that one cannot join the Lord’s church.

The Lord adds you to the church through your obedience to His will.

You are only added when you are saved, Peter gave the means of being saved in Acts

2:38.

Acts Chapter 3

B. The lame man healed, 3:1-26

1. The miracle, 3:1-10

Acts 3:1 *Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth {hour,} the hour of prayer.*

“Peter and John were going up to the temple”

1. The Apostles went where the crowd was--synagogues.
2. Nowhere does the NT state that this was required of them as Christians. They did not have to go. They were no longer under the old law.

Col. 2:13-17

Eph. 2:13-16

Acts 3:2 *And a certain man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple.*

“And a certain man”

Notice some things about this man

1. He had never walked. He was from his mothers womb.
2. People knew this about him. Every day he was set at the gate.

Acts 3:3 *And when he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he {began} asking to receive alms.*

“he {began} asking to receive alms”

Many will want to say that it takes faith for someone to be healed. But notice what the lame man was seeking. It wasn't to be healed. He was not even aware of the power that Peter and John had. He simply wanted money

Acts 3:4 *And Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze upon him and said, “Look at us!”*

Acts 3:5 And he {began} to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

“expecting to receive something from them”

The beggar assumed he was going to get what he had asked for.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, “I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene —walk!”

“I do not possess silver and gold”

Peter makes it clear that he did not have what the man was seeking.

“In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene”

At the giving of this healing Peter makes the claim that it is by the authority of Jesus.

Acts 3:7 And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.

“And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up”

1. It is very possible that the lame man still did not believe.
2. Peter seized him by the arm and raised him up.

“and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened”

1. It is here that the healing takes place.
2. When Peter touches the lame man his feet and ankles are strengthened.

Acts 3:8 And with a leap, he stood upright and {began} to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

“And with a leap, he stood upright and {began} to walk”

It must have been at this point that the lame man realized what had happened.

1. At first Peter seized him and raised him up
2. But here the lame man takes control and with a leap stood upright and began to walk.

“and he entered the temple with them”

1. Here the purpose of the healing is revealed.
2. It wasn't just so he could walk, but to confirm Jesus as Lord, John 20:30,31

“walking and leaping and praising God”

1. Also notice that this was a complete healing.
2. It was not something that took place over time.
3. He did not need to be trained in how to walk.

Acts 3:9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God;

“And all the people saw him walking”

Again, a physical act seen by the people to create belief, Acts 8:6,7

Acts 3:10 and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to {beg} alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

The people understood who this man was. Because they understood what had happened to him they were filled with wonder and amazement.

2. Peter's second sermon at the portico of Solomon, 3:11-26

Acts 3:11 And while he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement.

“all the people ran together to them”

This shows their amazement and desire to know what had happened.

“at the so-called portico of Solomon”

Where people gathered after prayer and shelter. East side of the Temple

Acts 3:12 . . . But when Peter saw {this} , he replied to the people, “Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?”

“Men of Israel”

Honorable title, respectful address

“why do you marvel at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?”

Peter makes certain the glory goes to whom it is due.

Heads Up! Peter is going to make three points in this section of His sermon.

1. The Miracle was the work of God to glorify Jesus.
2. The Jews denied Jesus from ignorance but he fulfilled the prophecy.
3. They should repent and be saved by the gospel.

Acts 3:13 . . . “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, {the one} whom you delivered up, and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.

“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers”

1. Peter begins by using a phrase that the people will reverence.
2. This is the same phrase God spoke to Moses, Ex. 3:6.
3. If we consider that God raised Jesus from the dead this ties with Matt. 22:31-32

“has glorified His servant Jesus”

1. Glorified, John 17:5
2. His Servant, Isa. 42:1; 52:13 (Phil. 2:6-8)

“and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him”

Jesus had a fair trial he was acquitted. The Jews refused to accept this. They became a

“Lynch Mob,” Matt. 27:11-26; Mk. 15:1-14.

Acts 3:14 . . . “But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

“But you disowned”

1. ἠρνησασθε from ἀρνεομαι, to say no, to reject, to deny

2. The Jews rejected Jesus like they did Moses, Acts 7:35

“ the Holy and Righteous One”

1. The Holy One,
 - a. This phrase is in reference to the Messiah, Psalm 16:10
 - b. Mk. 1:24; Lk. 4:34; 1John 2:20; Rev. 3:7

2. Righteous one, Acts 7:52; 22:14

“and asked for a murderer to be granted to you”

Luke. 23:18-25

Acts 3:15 . . . but put to death the Prince of life, {the one} whom God raised from the dead, {a fact} to which we are witnesses.

“but put to death the Prince of life, {the one} whom God raised from the dead”

Heads Up! Notice the contrast that Peter gives the Jews.

1. 3:13, You disowned Jesus, God glorified (You said no, God said yes).

2. 3:15, You killed Jesus, God raised Him up.

3. Jesus is the son of God. he is the one sent to save us, John 3:16. It didn't matter what plan the Jews had God's plan was going to succeed.

“{a fact} to which we are witnesses”

Acts 1:3; 1Cor. 15:3-8

Acts 3:16 . . . “And on the basis of faith in His name, {it is} the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which {comes} through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.

“And on the basis of faith in His name”

This has two possible interpretations.

1. The faith of Peter, Mk. 16:17
2. The faith of the lame man. This is based upon 3:6 would be consistent with other passages similar to this, Matt. 8:8-10; Matt. 9:20-22.

Note: It leaves us with no problem if we agree with the later, because of what Paul write in 1Cor. 13:8-13.

“{it is} the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man”

By His authority, His power

“has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all”

This is a medical term and is only found here in the NT.

It means perfect soundness

Acts 3:17 “And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also.

“And now, brethren”

Peter again approaches them in a respectful manner.

“I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also”

This is a way of getting the people to heed the message without ruffling feathers.

They just followed the path of their rulers.

Luke 23:34; Acts 17:30; Hebrew 9:7; 1 Peter 1:14

Note: Paul spoke of his actions in this way, 1 Tim. 1:13

Acts 3:18 ...“But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled.”

“But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets”

Here is there second way out. It was God’s plan and these things had to happen.

Their crime, though real, was carrying out God’ purpose.

“that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled”

Luke 24:44

Note: As we are going to see in the next verse, their ignorance and God’s plan did not excuse them from what they had done. They still need to repent. Ignorance might make the situation more bearable but it is no excuse for what was done. It’s still wrong.

Acts 3:19 “Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;”

“Repent therefore and return”

Repent, They need to turn from rejecting God’s chosen one, their Messiah.

Return, Be converted.

“that your sins may be wiped away”

Rubbed off, erased, smeared out

“in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”

1. Some believe this can be referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit.
2. Others believe that this is referring to Christ’ second coming based on vs. 20,21
 - v. 20, “that He may send Jesus”
 - v.21, “whom heaven must receive until {the} period of restoration of all things about”

Acts 3:20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you,

1John 3:1-3

Heads Up! Many see a parallel to Acts 2:38

Repent = Repent

Return (be converted) = Be baptized

Sins wiped away = Forgiveness of sins

Times of refreshing = Gift of the Holy Spirit

Acts 3:21 .whom heaven must receive until {the} period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

“whom heaven must receive”

This is where God’s Servant now resides, Luke 24:51. A testimony to His resurrection and Gods approval of him as His servant.

“until {the} period of restoration of all things”

1. Restoration / αποκατασταση / apokatastaseos. Used only here in the NT and seems to be a medical term, and means complete restoration to health.

2. This is an interesting phrase to use considering the lame man was just healed. There is yet another complete healing that is to come, Matt 19:28-30.

“which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time”

1. Here Peter again affirms that Jesus was the Christ whom God appointed, this being attested to by the prophets of old.

2. The scope of the prophecies included both the first and second coming of the Christ and therefore the period known as the “restoration” of all things covers all of this, Luke 1:67-80.

3. In Luke 1:67ff, Zacharias quotes from numerous prophets.
Psalm 111:9; Jer. 25:5,6; 30:10; Daniel 9:24-26.

Acts 3:22 *“Moses said, ‘THE LORD GOD SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED in everything He says to you.’*

“Moses said”

1. This is a quote from Deut 18:15-19
2. The Jews were well aware of a coming prophet like unto Moses, John 1:19-21. Thus they were to give heed to him when he came.

“TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED in everything He says to you.”

Just as the children of Israel were to obey Moses, their deliverer, lawgiver, ruler, their leader, so the people now are to obey Christ as He is their Deliverer from sin, their lawgiver, their leader, their king, and prophet, because God raised Him up. He is God’s prophet.

Acts 3:23 *.. ‘And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’*

“And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet”

Since Jesus is the prophet raised up by God as foretold by Moses, the Jews could not obey Moses without obeying Christ, John 5:46.

“shall be utterly destroyed from among the people”

1. There was a penalty to be paid by a Jew who would not follow Moses.
Ex. 12:15,19; 22:20; Num. 19:13.
2. Likewise there is a penalty to be paid for those who will not follow God’s prophet, Jesus.

3. In the NT the utterly destroyed face a similar but greater fate.

John 3:18; Matt. 8:12; 2Thess. 1:9

Acts 3:24 *“And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and {his} successors onward, also announced these days.”*

“And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken”

1. The Jews were well aware the coming of God’s prophet.

2. If the people Peter is speaking to rejects Jesus as the Christ then they reject the prophets that spoke these things concerning Him.

Acts 3:25 *“It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.’”*

“It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers”

Not that they are literal sons, but that they share in the inheritance spoken of by the prophets.

‘AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.’

1. This is in reference to the promise first made to Abraham; Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18

2. And later to Isaac and Jacob; Gen. 26:4; 28:14

3. The prophet spoken of had arisen and now the blessings were now theirs.

Acts 3:26 *“For you first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one {of you} from your wicked ways.”*

“For you first”

As stated earlier the promise was to all nations, but here we see that it was sent to the Jews first. Acts 1:8; Luke 24:47; Rom 1:16, 2:10

“God raised up His Servant”

1. We have seen this expression “raised up” several times. It must be noted that this is not always in reference to Jesus’ resurrection.
2. Here, as in 3:22, it is in reference to one who is appointed, i.e. Jesus the appointed prophet of God.
3. Peter again states that Jesus is the Servant of God, 3:13. He was the prophet sent to do God’s will this is in line with, Isa. 42:1; Matt. 12:48

“and sent Him to bless you by turning every one {of you} from your wicked ways.”

1. God’s servant would bless the people.
2. This would be done through their turning from their wicked ways, repentance
Acts 5:31

Note: In this section Peter presented a three fold testimony concerning the Christ

1. He is the power by which all miracles are worked, vs. 12-17
2. He is the redeemer of all souls vs. 18-21
3. He is the fulfillment of all the prophecies vs. 22-26

Acts Chapter 4

C. Arrest of Peter and John, 4:1-37

1. Their apprehension and proclamation, 4:1-4

Acts 4:1 *And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple {guard,} and the Sadducees, came upon them,*

“And as they were speaking to the people”

As Peter and John continue to proclaim the message of Christ they are interrupted.

“the priests and the captain of the temple {guard,} and the Sadducees, came upon them”

1. The Priest were divided into twenty-four courses, each of which served a week in the temple; The ones mentioned here are probably the ones on duty for that week.

2. The captain of the temple was the ruler of the house of God, (1 Chron. 9:11; 2 Chron. 31:13; Neh. 11:11); he was the priest whose duty was to command the guard of the Levites stationed in the temple, Acts 5:24,26; Lk. 22:4,52

3. The Sadducees were a sect of the Jews that did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, Matt 22:23-32, Acts 23:6-8. They were in power at this time, Acts 5:17.

Acts 4:2 *being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.*

“they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead”

Peter and John were proving the resurrection from the dead by using conclusive evidence of Jesus being raised from the dead. The Sadducees were disturbed because of this.

Acts 4:3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening.

“And they laid hands on them, and put them in jail until the next day”

1. The Sadducees were more severe and cruel in their administration of justice than any other Jew. This stems from the belief of no resurrection.

2. It is possible they put not only Peter and John in jail but also the man healed, 4:7-9

“for it was already evening”

1. They went in at the 9th hour and it was now the 12th hour or sunset, 3 hours later.

2. It was illegal to have a trial at night so they had to wait until the next day, Jer. 21:12

Acts 4:4 But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

“But many of those who had heard the message believed”

Here we can see the power of Gods word as it is preached, taught, and lived by Christians. The Church grew even when some were being persecuted.

“and the number of the men came to be about five thousand”

The text does not seem to indicate that there were 5000 more men added at this time but that the total number of male believers came to be about 5000 + women.

2. The trial, 4:5-12

Acts 4:5 . . . And it came about on the next day, that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;

“And it came about on the next day”

At the proper time they come together

“that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem”

This was a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

- a. This was the highest court of justice for enforcing the Law of Moses among the Jews.
- b. There were 71 members, including the high priest, who served as president.
- c. The Sanhedrin had the power of life and death (Mt 26:3,4).
- d. However, they could not execute the death sentence. That was the responsibility of the Roman government (Jn 18:31).
- e. Jesus was tried before the Sanhedrin (Mt 26:59).
- f. So were Peter and John (this chapter).
- g. Stephen was (Acts 6:12).
- h. And so was Paul (Acts 22:30).

Acts 4:6 . . . and Annas the high priest {was there,} and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent.

“and Annas the high priest {was there,} and Caiaphas”

1. Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, John 18:13; Luke 3:2
2. Anna was high priest from 6-15 A.D.

3. Caiaphas was high priest from 18-36 A.D.

Acts 4:7 And when they had placed them in the center, they {began to} inquire, “By what power, or in what name, have you done this?”

“And when they had placed them in the center, they {began to} inquire”

They would generally gather in a semicircle in the room and place the accused in the middle

“By what power, or in what name, have you done this?”

1. The Sanhedrin wanted to know by whose authority they healed the lame man.
2. In the Greek there is an emphasis on the word “you” which is placed last, equal to “such as you,” unlearned and contemptible men.
3. This was the question Peter wanted to hear. Since they asked it gives him the chance to teach of Jesus as Savior and His resurrection from the dead proving Him to be the Christ.

Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of the people,

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them”

1. **Filled** = **πιμπλημι**, 2 pers. sing. aor1, subj. pass. The 1st aorist shows this filling of the HS was something that happened in the past. The idea of, **“under full influence.”**

2. What is happening here is part of what Jesus had promised would happen, Mk. 13:11; Luke 12:12; 21:14,15

“Rulers and elders of the people’

This is a respectful way of addressing the Sanhedrin, Matt. 23:2.

Application: This is a lesson for us to learn. Thus far we have seen several occasions where the Apostles were given the opportunity to address an audience and in each case they did it in a respectful manner. We must be willing to approach all we speak to about Jesus in a respectful manner, Col. 4:3-6

Acts 4:9 if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well.

“If we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man”

1. Peter asks, “are we on trial on the merits of doing something good?”
2. “We” is emphatic, probably in response to the “you” in verse 7.

“as to how this man has been made well”

If you want to know how this man was healed I will tell you.

Acts 4:10 let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this {name} this man stands here before you in good health.

“let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel”

1. Peter is going to reveal five facts concerning Jesus (Which means Savior)
 1. He is the Christ, (Means the anointed)
 2. He was from Nazarene, (To clarify which Jesus) Acts 13:6
 3. They had crucified Him.
 4. God had raised Him from the dead.
 5. It is by Jesus’ authority that the lame man was healed.
2. In stead of Peter and John being on trial the Sanhedrin were.

“this man stands here before you in good health”

The lame man stands before them now completely healed as proof of what they are saying. These men cannot deny what they see with their own eyes!!

Acts 4:11 “He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, {but} WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER {stone.}”

“He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED”

1. This is a quote from Psalm 118:22. (See also Isa 28:16; Matt. 21:42; Eph. 2:20)
2. Their rejection proved Him to be the true stone of whom the prophets spoke.

“by you, THE BUILDERS”

The Sanhedrin as the rulers of the people had rejected Christ and refused to build upon him.

“{but} WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER {stone.}”

Although they rejected Him he is the chief cornerstone. The very support and foundation of God's called out.

Acts 4:12 *“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”*

“And there is salvation in no one else”

The Jews hoped to be saved because they were Abraham's offspring, John 8:33-39 or because they claimed to trust in Moses, John 5:45,46. But both Abraham and Moses pointed to the Christ which they crucified.

“for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”

1. Peter is not holding anything back. The Leaders must know that although they rejected and crucified Jesus, there is in fact salvation nowhere else. There is no need looking for another Savior.

2. The the Greek the word “we” **ἡμας**. is at the end of the sentence “us” which means, “we” - priests, elders, scribes, fishermen, all of us here.

3. Their release, 4:13-22

Acts 4:13 *Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John, and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling, and {began} to recognize them as having been with Jesus.*

“Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John”

1. The word confidence means to be outspoken, 2:29; 4:29,31.

2. The confidence of Peter and John is observed from several statements.
 - A. They accuse this court of putting Jesus to death, 4:10
 - B. They tell these Sadducees that God resurrected Jesus from the dead, 4:10
 - C. They claim that He is the one prophesied of in, Ps. 118:22, vs. 4:11
 - D. They claim that salvation is only found in Him, 4:12

“and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men”

1. These men had not attended the religious schools of the Hebrew either Hillel or Shammai.

2. This is similar to what the Jews had said concerning Jesus, John 7:15-18

3. Uneducated = **αγραμματοι**, unlettered, unable to write, illiterate. No knowledge of the Jewish culture beyond the scriptures.

4. Untrained = **ιδιωται**, amateur, laymen, unskilled as compared to a professional. A technical term for those who had not studied in the rabbinic schools.

they were marveling, and {began} to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

1. It is unclear as to what caused them to recognize them as having been with Jesus, but possibly it was their manner of teaching as compared to Jesus' John7:15.

2. It is also possible that Annas or some of their people had seen them at the trial of Jesus the night he was betrayed, John 18:12-18.

3. In regards to that what a contrast we have here compared to what Peter did the night Jesus was betrayed.

Acts 4:14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply.

“And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them”

The man once lame is now standing. Not only this but he is before them. They are witnesses to his being healed. He had been placed in front of the the Beautiful gates every day and without doubt those in this court knew him.

“they had nothing to say in reply”

What could they say? The proof was overwhelming and indisputable!!

Acts 4:15 But when they had ordered them to go aside out of the Council, they {began} to confer with one another,

Acts 4:16 saying, “What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

“saying, “What shall we do with these men?”

1. Sadly the Sanhedrin asks the wrong question. The question wasn't as those in Acts 2:37, but instead they sought a way to silence what Peter and John were teaching.

2. Here we can see the true heart of these rulers, Isa. 29:13.

“For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem”

1. Noteworthy = **γνωστον**, known

2. Miracle = **σημειον**, literally a sign. A distinguishing mark by which something is known.

3. An event that is contrary to the usual course of nature. A miracle of divine origin, performed by God himself, by Christ, or by men of God, (Bauer, p. 747), Matt. 16:1; Acts 8:6; 1Cor. 1:22,23.

“and we cannot deny it”

They got this one right, but if they had a choice, no doubt they would have denied it, Matt. 12:22-29.

Acts 4:17 “But in order that it may not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to any man in this name.”

“But in order that it may not spread any further among the people,

1. Spread = **διανεμηθη**, “To be distributed”, 2Tim. 2:17 carries the same idea.

2. They could not deny the sign so they tried to keep the news of it from being spread among the people.

‘let us warn them to speak no more to any man in this name’

This is the answer to their dilemma: Threaten them so they won't speak about this.

Acts 4:18 And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

“they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus”

1. Commanded = **παρηγγειλαν**, “A rigid command or charge.” The command that was given was a severe warning.
2. By the fact that they the words speak or teach are used together they are being told not to let the name of Jesus pass from their lips again.

Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge:

“Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge”

1. Peter and John understood what brought about this sin, so they are not asking if it is right before the Sanhedrin, but God. He is the ultimate authority in these matters.
2. The Sanhedrin had authority but it never superseded God's.

Acts 4:20 for we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard.”

“for we cannot stop speaking”

Peter and John’s have no choice but to keep speaking because they know all that which has been done is by the authority of God. They have seen it and heard it. The evidence is overwhelming, Jer. 20:8,9; Rom. 1:14,15;1Cor. 9:16;

“what we have seen and heard”

The evidence is overwhelming. They have both seen and heard and this testifies to the validity of Jesus as the Christ, Acts 1:8-10; 2:1-4; Heb. 2:1-4; 1John 1:1-3

Heads up!: What a difference in the hearts of men. The Sanhedrin knew the sign to be true but wanted to silence it for their own personal reasons. Peter and John also knew the sign was true and they wanted to tell everybody about it for the sake of the people.

Acts 4:21 And when they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which they might punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened;

“And when they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which they might punish them) on account of the people”

Regardless of what Peter and John said, the Sanhedrin continued to threaten them.

“because they were all glorifying God for what had happened”

They had no reason to punish then because it what had happened was a noteworthy sign, v.16. As well the Apostles had the support of the people.

Acts 4:22 for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

1. The ages of the man is important because it gives credibility to the sign.
2. He was a very well known man, 3:2.
3. He was lame since his birth, some 40 years. There is no disputing this sign and by whom it was done. To deny it is to simply deny the authority of Christ and seal your own doom, Matt. 10:33.

4. Their report to the brethren, 4:23-31

Acts 4:23 And when they had been released, they went to their own {companions,} and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

“And when they had been released”

Peter and John were triumphant in their defense.

“they went to their own {companions,}”

Seems likely that this is in reference to the apostles and not all of the disciples.

Acts 4:24 And when they heard {this,} they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, “O Lord, it is Thou who DIDST MAKE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM,

“And when they heard {this,} they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said”

Because the apostles hear of Peter’s and John’s deliverance they offer a prayer of praise to God.

O Lord, it is Thou who DIDST MAKE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM,

1. Notice what is involved in their prayer
 - A. They are united
 - B. They approach God in reverence
 1. Lord = **δεσποτης**, a ruler who has supreme power and authority over his servants
 2. They speak of His supreme power as Creator
2. 2 Kings 19:15

Acts 4:25 ... who by the Holy Spirit, {through} the mouth of our father David Thy servant, didst say, WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS?

“who by the Holy Spirit, {through} the mouth of our father David Thy servant”

This was given by the Holy Spirit through David and would indicate it as prophecy

didst say, WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS?

1. This is a quote from Ps. 2:1,2

2. What begins here is a list of those who stood against God's Christ. No one is left out.
 - a. Gentiles, they rage, Literally to neigh like a horse, to prance or stomp the ground, to put on lofty airs.
 - b. Peoples (Jews)
 - c. Kings of the earth, (Those in authority, Herod and Pontius Pilate)
 - d. Then rulers (Sanhedrin court)

Acts 4:26 -- 'THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD, AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST.'

Acts 4:27 -- "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

"For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus"

Luke is declaring just where this stand took place, In Jerusalem

whom Thou didst anoint,

1. Anoint means Christ.
2. Jesus is the Christ of God, Isa. 42:1; 52:13; Zech 3:8

both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

This is a complete summary of those mention in 25,26. Again all groups are mentioned

Acts 4:28 to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur.

Although the people did this of their own free will and with their own purpose in mind, they did the work of God, Acts 3:18; 1Pet. 1:20

Acts 4:29 ...“And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence.

“And now, Lord, take note of their threats”

Peter and John were told not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus or they would be severely punished. But, they hand over this problem to the Lord and ask for His assistance

“and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence”

In turning this problem over to the Lord they did not ask for protection of that their enemies be destroyed. What they do ask for is the ability to speak with confidence.

They had a job to do and they desired this to continue, Eph. 6:18-20; 2Thess. 3:1

Acts 4:30 while Thou dost extend Thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Thy holy servant Jesus.”

1. We have a coupling of preaching and miracles together. This was done to confirm the word, Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3,4.
2. The disciples recognized that this is the working of God and that it is through the name of Jesus that this will take place.

Acts 4:31 *And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and {began} to speak the word of God with boldness.*

“And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken”

In response to their prayer God provides a very visible answer.

“and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit” and {began} to speak the word of God with boldness”

1. This is an outpouring of the Spirit with the purpose of creating boldness in the apostles.
2. This is not another baptism of the HS, Acts 11: 15-17

5. The resulting fellowship, 4:32-37

Acts 4:32 *And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one {of them} claimed that anything belonging to him was his own; but all things were common property to them.*

“And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul”

This group numbered 5000+ and yet they were of one heart and soul

“and not one {of them} claimed that anything belonging to him was his own; but all things were common property to them.”

1. The rights and ownership of possessions were not relinquished, but their attitude was one of willingness to share when a need arose.

2. Like selling one of your possessions to pay another bill you have. (Tax time)

Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.

“And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus”

Because of the boldness granted to them they began to do what they were order not to.

But as we know this was the commission given by Jesus, Acts 1:8.

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It is very possible that the grace spoken of here is in reference to the way the people looked at them. This would be similar to Acts 2:47

Acts 4:34 For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales,

“For there was not a needy person among them”

Here is one of the reasons they were giving favor among the people. The people saw how they treated each other, Acts 2:45

“for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales”

Many had traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover, and had remained for the Pentecost feast. They brought possessions enough to last until the feast had passed. Upon being converted they stayed on.

Their need is not due to laziness or because they squandered their possessions, but because their means had been exhausted.

Acts 4:35 and lay them at the apostles' feet; and they would be distributed to each, as any had need.

Their faith of the people can be seen in these actions. They now had a higher calling and their earthly possession took a back seat to that, 1John 3:17; James 2:15,16

Acts 4:36 And Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means, Son of Encouragement),

1. Barnabas received his name from the apostles and it fits him very well, Acts 9:27; 11:19-30
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Acts 4:37 and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

1. This was not something he was commanded to do, but did it of his own free will.
2. Also note that Barnabas presented the money to the Apostles. He was giving it to those whom he believed had the responsibility of taking care of God's church.

‘let us warn them to speak no more to any man in this name’

This is the answer to their dilemma: Threaten them so they won't speak about this.

Acts 4:18 And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

“they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus”

1. Commanded = **παρηγγειλαν**, “A rigid command or charge.” The command that was given was a severe warning.
2. By the fact that they the words speak or teach are used together they are being told not to let the name of Jesus pass from their lips again.

Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge:

“Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge”

1. Peter and John understood what brought about this sin, so they are not asking if it is right before the Sanhedrin, but God. He is the ultimate authority in these matters.
2. The Sanhedrin had authority but it never superseded God's.

Acts 4:20 for we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard.”

“for we cannot stop speaking”

Peter and John’s have no choice but to keep speaking because they know all that which has been done is by the authority of God. They have seen it and heard it. The evidence is overwhelming, Jer. 20:8,9; Rom. 1:14,15;1Cor. 9:16;

“what we have seen and heard”

The evidence is overwhelming. They have both seen and heard and this testifies to the validity of Jesus as the Christ, Acts 1:8-10; 2:1-4; Heb. 2:1-4; 1John 1:1-3

Heads up!: What a difference in the hearts of men. The Sanhedrin knew the sign to be true but wanted to silence it for their own personal reasons. Peter and John also knew the sign was true and they wanted to tell everybody about it for the sake of the people.

Acts 4:21 And when they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which they might punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened;

“And when they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which they might punish them) on account of the people”

Regardless of what Peter and John said, the Sanhedrin continued to threaten them.

“because they were all glorifying God for what had happened”

They had no reason to punish then because it what had happened was a noteworthy sign, v.16. As well the Apostles had the support of the people.

Acts 4:22 for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

1. The ages of the man is important because it gives credibility to the sign.
2. He was a very well known man, 3:2.
3. He was lame since his birth, some 40 years. There is no disputing this sign and by whom it was done. To deny it is to simply deny the authority of Christ and seal your own doom, Matt. 10:33.

4. Their report to the brethren, 4:23-31

Acts 4:23 And when they had been released, they went to their own {companions,} and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

“And when they had been released”

Peter and John were triumphant in their defense.

“they went to their own {companions,}”

Seems likely that this is in reference to the apostles and not all of the disciples.

Acts 4:24 And when they heard {this,} they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, “O Lord, it is Thou who DIDST MAKE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM,

“And when they heard {this,} they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said”

Because the apostles hear of Peter’s and John’s deliverance they offer a prayer of praise to God.

O Lord, it is Thou who DIDST MAKE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM,

1. Notice what is involved in their prayer
 - A. They are united
 - B. They approach God in reverence
 1. Lord = **δεσποτης**, a ruler who has supreme power and authority over his servants
 2. They speak of His supreme power as Creator
2. 2 Kings 19:15

Acts 4:25 ... who by the Holy Spirit, {through} the mouth of our father David Thy servant, didst say, WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS?

“who by the Holy Spirit, {through} the mouth of our father David Thy servant”

This was given by the Holy Spirit through David and would indicate it as prophecy

didst say, WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS?

1. This is a quote from Ps. 2:1,2

2. What begins here is a list of those who stood against God's Christ. No one is left out.
 - a. Gentiles, they rage, Literally to neigh like a horse, to prance or stomp the ground, to put on lofty airs.
 - b. Peoples (Jews)
 - c. Kings of the earth, (Those in authority, Herod and Pontius Pilate)
 - d. Then rulers (Sanhedrin court)

Acts 4:26 -- 'THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD, AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST.'

Acts 4:27 -- "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

"For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus"

Luke is declaring just where this stand took place, In Jerusalem

whom Thou didst anoint,

1. Anoint means Christ.
2. Jesus is the Christ of God, Isa. 42:1; 52:13; Zech 3:8

both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

This is a complete summary of those mention in 25,26. Again all groups are mentioned

Acts 4:28 to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur.

Although the people did this of their own free will and with their own purpose in mind, they did the work of God, Acts 3:18; 1Pet. 1:20

Acts 4:29 ...“And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence.

“And now, Lord, take note of their threats”

Peter and John were told not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus or they would be severely punished. But, they hand over this problem to the Lord and ask for His assistance

“and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence”

In turning this problem over to the Lord they did not ask for protection of that their enemies be destroyed. What they do ask for is the ability to speak with confidence.

They had a job to do and they desired this to continue, Eph. 6:18-20; 2Thess. 3:1

Acts 4:30 while Thou dost extend Thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Thy holy servant Jesus.”

1. We have a coupling of preaching and miracles together. This was done to confirm the word, Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3,4.
2. The disciples recognized that this is the working of God and that it is through the name of Jesus that this will take place.

Acts 4:31 *And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and {began} to speak the word of God with boldness.*

“And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken”

In response to their prayer God provides a very visible answer.

“and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit” and {began} to speak the word of God with boldness”

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Acts Chapter 5

D. Ananias and Sapphira, 5:1-11

1. Ananias, 5:1-6

Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property,

But a certain man named Ananias,

The word “**But**” is used to contrast this situation with what had just transpired with Barnabas, Acts 4:36,37

Acts 5:2 . . . and kept back {some} of the price for himself, with his wife’s full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles’ feet.

and kept back {some} of the price for himself, with his wife’s full knowledge,

Ananias and Sapphira are an example of how Satan attacks the church from within. We are unsure as to why they did this but, they were in full agreement in this Hypocrisy.

Heads Up: There are some in the church who have a problem with the announcement of the names of those caught in sin. Yet the Holy Spirit did not see fit to withhold these names.

It’s not that we want to go around telling others of someone's sins, but at times the severity and nature of a sin mandates this, **2Tim. 4:9, 3John 9,10.**

Acts 5:3 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back {some} of the price of the land?”

But Peter said “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart”

Peter knew that Ananias had held back some of the price of the land through the work of the Holy Spirit, **1 Cor. 12:10**.

to lie to the Holy Spirit.

The lie was a lie of omission. It's not that Ananias had said he was going to give the full price which he received for the land, but his actions indicated that this is what he wanted everybody to believe.

Although it might seem that Ananias was lying to all those present, he in fact was lying (sinning) against the Holy Spirit. The apostles stood as representatives of God and through the Holy Spirit were guided to speak and act on God's behalf. (**John 16:12-15 Acts 2:42, Eph. 2:19,20**). Ananias then was not acting against the apostles but God Himself.

Note: This also shows that the Holy Spirit is not some impersonal force, but an actual being. He can be lied to.

Acts 5:4 “While it remained {unsold,} did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God.”

“While it remained {unsold,} did it not remain your own?”

Remained is in the present participle, meaning “remaining as it was, unsold and in your possession.”

Remain is imperfect, “was it not remaining for you?”

And after it was sold, was it not under your control?”

Was it not under, is imperfect and expresses continuance. As it was before it was sold so it continued to be after it was sold, in your control. There was no obligation to do anything with the money other than that which was acceptable.

“Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart?”

Although in v 3 Peter states that Satan entered Ananias’ heart, here he makes it clear that he had a choice.

Because his heart was ready to give way to sin, Ananias simply gave Satan an opportunity to use him, **1Pet. 5:8,9; Eph. 4:26,27**

“You have not lied to men, but to God.”

It was the mistake of Ananias to think that by holding back some of the money he was simply deceiving man. If it was just man he might have gotten away with it. But, as a Christian, his responsibility was to serve God in an appropriate manner, **Rom. 6:12,13.**

In v.3 Peter stated that Ananias had lied to the Holy Spirit, here he says Ananias lied to God. To lie to the Holy Spirit is to Lie to God. For this to be the case God and the Holy Spirit must be one and the same, **Matt. 28:19, 2Cor. 13:14**

Note: At times people will reject the instructions of an elder or preacher because they see it as simply rejecting a man. But if the instruction offered is the word of God then those who reject that instruction reject God, **1 Sam. 8:6-8**

Acts 5:5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came upon all who heard of it.

And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last

εκ-πυχηε (out soul). The idea of “giving up the ghost” also translated “expired” and “died”. Used only here, **v.10** and **Acts 12:23**

We are not given why God chose to strike down Ananias, but it is not ours to question God’s judgment. **Job 42:1-6, Rom. 9:19-24**

It should be enough for us to recognize that a sin had been committed and God pronounced judgment, at His time, in His way and for His purpose.

and great fear came upon all who heard of it.

The result of Ananias’ death has a profound affect, as does all church discipline.

Matt. 18: 15-17; 1Cor. 5:9-13; 1Tim. 5:17-20; 2Thess. 3:14

Acts 5:6 And the young men arose and covered him up, and after carrying him out, they buried him.

And the young men arose and covered him up,

There were witnesses to this event.

and after carrying him out, they buried him.

There was not great ceremony for Ananias. He was simply carried away and buried.

This was not like the death of a faithful servant of God, **Acts 20:36-38**

2. Sapphira, 5:7-11

Acts 5:7 *Now there elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.*

Now there elapsed an interval of about three hours

In regards to why Sapphira showing up three hours later, Lenski in his commentary on Acts says....,

“Was it all planned with a view that Ananias should precede her and receive the plaudits of the congregation, and that Sapphira was later to furnish the occasion for a second congratulation? It almost seems so.”

Although this is speculation, if true we have greater insight into the hearts of this couple and the reason for doing what they did. They were looking for the praise of man and not God.

Acts 5:8 *And Peter responded to her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for such and such a price?” And she said, “Yes, that was the price.”*

And Peter responded to her, “

As she enters, (possibly to receive her praise), Peter immediately asks her about the offering.

Tell me whether you sold the land for such and such a price?”

The fact that he doesn't mention any amount indicates that he is directing her attention to the “bag” of money Ananias had laid at his feet.

Also consider that he is giving her an opportunity to repent; an opportunity her husband wasn't given. Why? It's possible that the spiritual leadership role has something to do with this.

Rom. 5:12; Gen. 3:1-6

1Tim. 2:12-14; 1Peter 3:1-7

And she said, “Yes, that was the price.”

Not knowing that her husband had died because of his lie, Sapphira continues on with the deception.

Was she thinking that Peter's question was a good one? A question which was to be followed up with praise, once answered?

If she had known what had happened to Ananias more than likely she would have changed her answer, but it would not have been because she was ready to confess her error out of a remorseful heart, but fear of the same happening to her. **2Cor. 7:10**

Acts 5:9 Then Peter {said} to her, “Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they shall carry you out {as well} .”

“Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test?”

They put the spirit of the Lord to the test by sinning and expecting to get away with it, with His full knowledge, **Ps. 95:8,9; Ex. 17:2-7; Num. 20:13**

Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they shall carry you out {as well} .”

You cannot sin against God and expect to get away with it. Judgment may not come today but it will come, **2Cor. 5:10,11**

Acts 5:10 And she fell immediately at his feet, and breathed her last; and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

As they had decided to lie to the Holy Spirit together, lie to God together, test the Spirit together, they were buried together.

Acts 5:11 And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard of these things.

And great fear came upon the whole church

There was already fear amongst those that witnessed this event, **Acts 5:5**, The phrase “all who heard it” is a present participle and refers to those present at the time. It came upon the entire church, “ecclesia,” those called out.

and upon all who heard of these things.

Those outside the church were also aware of this and fear came upon them as well.

Church discipline will affect even outsiders.

E. Signs and wonders, 5:12-16

Acts 5:12 And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.

And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people

It is clear that the apostles were the ones performing the signs and miracles. This would be in accordance with what took place in **Acts 2:1-4**, with the out pouring of the Holy Spirit, see also **Acts 2:16-21**.

The mention of Hands in the plural may not simply be a designation of who was doing these miracles, but also how they actually took place, **2Tim.1:6**

and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.

This is where Peter and John had first been arrested after healing the lame beggar, **Act 3:11; 4:1-3**. Now they are back again and they were finding favor with the people, see verse 13.

The one accord is in reference to the church, (see verse 13 and "the rest"). They would gather together without disturbance.

Note: Considering those in **Acts 2:41** and the 120 mentioned in **Acts 1:15**, we find they were not, up to this point, working miracles. This is because only the apostles had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and had this ability.

Acts 5:13 *But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, the people held them in high esteem.*

But none of the rest dared to associate with them;

As for the “rest” Barnes believes, it is probable that this refers to rich men or the men of authority and influence among the Jews, of whom Ananias was one.

This would seem most likely because of the contrast between the “rest” and the “people” who held them in high esteem. The word *however* shows the contrast. The rest would also appear to be a smaller group because of what follows in v.14. There seems to be three groups involved,

The church, v.11

The rest, v.13

The people, those who became believers, v.13,14

Acts 5:14 *And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to {their number} :*

Following the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, there was a surge in conversions to the Lord. The words “more” (*Prosetithento*) and “added” (*mallon*) literally means “kept being added.” We would suppose that following this discipline growth might have slowed, yet with the working of miracles following this discipline it was clear to the people that what happened was indeed from God, **Mark 16:19,20**

Two other facts to consider concerning these believers

1. They were men and women. This eliminates infants and children unable to believe. They were “believers” **Rom. 10:13-17**
2. They were added to their number. There is a point where one who is a believer is added. To be a believer does not automatically make one added. **Acts 2:41**

Note: It is clear that the discipline of Ananias and Sapphira had its intended affect. Those who were like them, “the rest” did not seek to join themselves to the church. This discipline then kept the church pure of hypocrites. Secondly, those who truly sought after God recognized His will and working through the Apostles and committed their lives to Him through obedience, baptism. Thus they were added to the church. Is this concept of discipling not something we should be adhering to today? (Deut. 21:21 - Remove Evil)

Acts 5:15 *to such an extent that they even carried the sick out into the streets, and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on any one of them.*

to such an extent

This phrase points back to v.14. The numbers added were to such and extant that the result was as follows.

that they even carried the sick out into the streets, and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on any one of them.

Because so many were being added, the people brought out their sick in awe of what they saw?

Lenski says; “This, as Luke states it, was a result of the attitude of the people, of their tremendous confidence.” (Lenski, Commentary on Acts, pg. 209)

The “type” of healing of the people we hear of here has been seen before, **Mark 6:56**, and will be seen again, **Acts 19:14**. Some see this as a superstition of the people but v.16 makes it clear this is not the case.

Acts 5:16 *And also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits; and they were all being healed.*

and they were all being healed.

It is clear that the people were in fact healed through coming in contact with Peter’s shadow. The word “all” is (*apantes*) and is a stronger form of “all.” It means, “all altogether” without a single exception.

F. The arrest of the twelve, 5:17-42

1. The first arrest, 5:17-21

Acts 5:17 *But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy;*

But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees),

The last encounter the Apostles had with the the high priest and the Sadducees was in **Acts 4:1-22**. Here they were warned not to speak in Jesus’ name. Up to this point the Sanhedrian have been silent, but no longer.

and they were filled with jealousy;

In contrast to what the people were doing the high priest chose a different path. This attitude was common for them, **Matt. 27:17,18**

The word jealousy does not really convey how these Sadducees felt. Indignation is more appropriate. Lenski states that the noun means “hot steam” and is derived from a word which means “to boil.” **Acts 5:28**

Acts 5:18 and they laid hands on the apostles, and put them in a public jail.

Because of their indignation they once again take the apostles into custody. This time they are all put into a public jail. They were being treated as common criminals

Acts 5:19 But an angel of the Lord during the night opened the gates of the prison, and taking them out he said,

This appearance of angel of the Lord was not seen by the guards.

Acts 5:20 “Go your way, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life.”

Although the Sadducees had their plans God had his. The message could not be jailed They were told to return to the temple and speak to the people the whole message of this life. This life would seem to refer to that which the Sadducees objected to which is the resurrection from the dead in the name of Jesus, **Acts 4:1-3**

Acts 5:21 And upon hearing {this,} they entered into the temple about daybreak, and {began} to teach. Now when the high priest and his associates had come, they called the Council together, even all the Senate of the sons of Israel, and sent {orders} to the prison house for them to be brought.

And upon hearing {this,} they entered into the temple about daybreak, and {began} to teach.

The apostles do as they were instructed. They had prayed for confidence when they spoke, Acts 4:29-31, and now they display this. This also demonstrates their faith in God.

Now when the high priest and his associates had come, they called the Council together, even all the Senate of the sons of Israel, and sent {orders} to the prison house for them to be brought.

The Council and Senate are in reference to the Sanhedrin. The word Senate literally means “old men.” So although the High priest had his power, what they were attempting to do in this trial required the whole religious ruling body. See Mark 15:1 for a similar two fold designation of the Sanhedrian.

2. The second arrest, 5:22-26

Acts 5:22 But the officers who came did not find them in the prison; and they returned, and reported back.

Acts 5:23 saying, “We found the prison house locked quite securely and the guards standing at the doors; but when we had opened up, we found no one inside.”

Their report truly shows the power of God.

1. The prison house was locked quite securely. The perfect participle brings out the thought that once the gate was locked it had remained locked until they opened it.
2. The guards were standing at the doors. Whatever had transpired the guards were unaware of how and when, Acts 5:19.

Acts 5:24 Now when the captain of the temple {guard} and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them as to what would come of this.

Acts 5:25 But someone came and reported to them, “Behold, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!”

Acts 5:26 Then the captain went along with the officers and {proceeded} to bring them {back} without violence (for they were afraid of the people, lest they should be stoned).

What was the reason for the fear? There had to be something taking place in the presence of the people lead to this fear.

As well, the captain was well aware of what kind of violence a mob could inflict upon him and his people. There should be no doubt that he was present when Jesus was brought to trial and led to His death.

3. The trial, 5:27-32

Acts 5:27 ... And when they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. And the high priest questioned them.

Acts 5:28 ... saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

"We gave you strict orders"

This phrase has the idea of "With an order we gave orders"

not to continue teaching in this name,

This is the second time they have given this type of order, Acts 4:17

Notice two things not mentioned, Jesus' name nor any question about how they got out of jail.

and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching,

In speaking of Jesus they would speak of the shedding of His blood. This is tied directly to their forgiveness, 1Pet. 1:18,19.

and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

Lenski writes, "Why should he say, "you intend (the verb expressing purpose) to bring on us the blood of this man" if no quilt attached to the shedding of his blood and to the part the Sanhedrin had played in the shedding? (Matt. 25:19-26)

Acts 5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men.

"We must obey God rather than men.

The apostles recognized that it was God who had gave them this responsibility. It was an angel of the Lord who brought them out of the prison and told them to go and speak.

Acts 5:30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross.

"The God of our fathers

The father Peter speaks of is the father of the Sanhedrin as well. This pronoun "our" then could be a call to repentance.

raised up Jesus,

Peter contrasts what they had done and what God did, **Acts 2:22-24**

whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross.

What Peter is saying is true. They did have Jesus put to death. They cannot run from what they did. Jesus' blood is upon them because they insisted that an innocent man be killed.

The phrase "put to death" or "slew" means "to take in hand, manage, to lay hands on, manhandle, kill." This expresses what the Sanhedrists did although they used others hands. They did betray innocent blood.

Acts 5:31 “He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

“He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior,

The connection is made between Jesus and God. Jesus went from being the sacrifice for sins to being exalted to God’s right hand, having fulfilled the Father’s will. As such He is both Prince, indicative of His royal place and ruler ship - and Savior- indicative of the fulfillment of His work here on earth, Acts 2:36.

to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

It is through this Jesus whom they crucified that they have an opportunity to repent and have forgiveness, **Acts 4:12, Luke 5:20-21.**

Acts 5:32 “And we are witnesses of these things; and {so is} the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

“And we are witnesses of these things;

All that the apostle speak comes from first hand experience. They witnessed His crucifixion, His resurrection and His ascension.

and {so is} the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

Not only are they witnesses but their witness is approved by God in that He has given them the Holy Spirit.

4. Gamaliel's advice, 5:33-42

Acts 5:33 But when they heard this, they were cut to the quick and were intending to slay them.

But when they heard this

What was it that they heard? Two things.

1. The Apostles make it clear that they are not going to stop speaking
2. The reason they can't is because God is with them.

they were cut to the quick and were intending to slay them.

The high priest had just stated that the apostles were intending to bring Jesus' blood upon them, and now they intend to do what they were saying they were not guilty of?

This really shows the evil heart of these rulers.

Acts 5:34 -- But a certain Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time.

But a certain Pharisee named Gamaliel

Gamaliel was the grandson of Hillel (37-4 B.C) He was also Paul's teacher, Acts 22:3

Acts 5:35 And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men.

Acts 5:36 "For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody; and a group of about four hundred men joined up with him. And he was slain; and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing.

Acts 5:37 -- “After this man Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away {some} people after him, he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered.

After this man Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census,

This census is spoken of in Luke 2:1,2

Acts 5:38 -- “And so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown;

Acts 5:39 -- but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God.”

This advice from Gamaliel was really no advice at all, but rather indecision. They had already decided that this plan was not from God when they crucified Jesus. They had already been fighting against God and had all proof to show it was from God.

Acts 9:1-5

Acts 5:40 -- And they took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus, and {then} released them.

they flogged them

Apparently they believed God wouldn't mind them flogging those who were working for Him. This is the usual 39 blows, 2 Cor. 11:24, (see also Matt. 10:17)

and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus, and {then} released them.

Here they show that they do not believe that what the apostles are doing is from God.

Acts 5:41 *..So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for {His} name.*

rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for {His} name.

The stripes from this lashing became a badge of honor for the apostles. What was intended to be disgraceful to them - displayed their loyalty to their Lord, **2 Cor 4:7-10.**

Acts 5:42 *And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus {as} the Christ.*

And every day, in the temple and from house to house,

It amazes and encourages to see that the apostles went right back to work in the place where they had been arrested. Not only this but they took the message out to the people of Jerusalem by going to their houses and they did it every day.

they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus {as} the Christ.

The phrase “Kept right on” emphasizes the fact that they were not ceasing or were ever continuing.

This word “Preaching” is where we get our word evangelizing. They were doing this through teaching that Jesus was the Christ. 1Thess. 3:6; Rom. 1:15; 1Cor. 15:1

Acts Chapter 6

G. Choosing of the seven, 6:1-7

Act 6:1 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food.

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number,

Despite the persecution the Apostles faced the church continued grow.

a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews,

The Hellenistic or Grecians Jews, “refers to those Jews who spoke Greek or otherwise followed Greek usages” (Pulpit Commentary). They were likely from the dispersion who lived in countries where Greek was spoken, and who themselves spoke Greek.

The native Hebrews would be Palestinian and other Jews. They spoke Aramean.

because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food.

Here we have an example of the church providing for its own as in the past, **Acts 2:45**; but in this case it is the widows, **1Tim. 5:3-16**.

Act 6:2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples

The twelve refers to the apostles, **Acts 6:6**. This shows that the people were looking to them for guidance and following their lead, **Acts 2:42, Eph. 2:19,20**

and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

The way this is worded it is possible that the twelve were helping to serve the meals to these widows.

“Not desirable” is literally “not pleasing.” It’s not pleasing to serve tables when they have more important things to do. They must tend to the word.

NOTE: This gives us some insights into the different works of the church, (ie... Elders, Evangelists, Deacons, **Eph. 4:11**) and the importance of each being allowed to do theirs. The apostles show that although serving tables was needed, it was not good for them to neglect the word, **Acts 6:4**. This is where they needed to focus their attention. Others could handle the work of feeding the widows.

Act 6:3 "Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.

"Therefore, brethren,

Brethren - ἀδελφοσ (adelphos) – This is a masculine noun, making reference to men.

select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.

Some believe seven were chosen because it is the number of completeness, but this is purely conjecture.

There were certain qualifications that must be met by those chosen.

1. *Must be a man*
2. *Good reputation*, literally “borne witness to” **Heb. 11:4,5; Acts 10:22; 16:1,2**
3. *Full of the Spirit*, could be Holy Spirit or some gift, **Acts 2:4; 4:8**. It seems just as likely the indwelling of the HS is referred to, **Acts 6:8**, or even attitude, **Rom. 8:15**
4. *And of wisdom*, Clarke writes...”Prudence, discretion, and economy; for mere piety and uprightness could not be sufficient, where so many must be pleased, and where frugality, impartiality, and liberality, must ever walk hand in hand.”

NOTE: The word “congregation” in v.2 is noun neuter and the word “disciples” is noun masculine. In v.3 the word “brethren” is noun masculine. The seven that were chosen were men (aner), noun masculine. Lenski writes, “...likewise, he (Luke) need not mention the fact that only men voted in accord with the Jewish practice which is based on Gen. 2:18-23; 3:16.”

From the Greek it would seem that the apostles called together the men of the congregation to choose seven men from themselves to take charge of this work. This, along with **1Tim. 3:8-12** would eliminate the practice of some who put women in as “deacons,” using **Rom. 16:1** as their platform.

Act 6:4 "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

But we will devote,

Clarke writes, “We will steadfastly and invariably attend, we will carefully keep our hearts to this work. The word is very emphatic.

ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

These two always go hand in hand, **Col. 4:2-6**, and is needed if the work is to get done.

Act 6:5 The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch.

and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit

The qualifications required that they be full of the spirit. Here he's referred to as having the Holy Spirit as per **Acts 2:38**

and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch.

These are all Greek names. Maybe chosen because they were more closely related to those overlooked, but not necessarily so.

Act 6:6 And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.

The purpose of laying their hands on them this seems twofold.

First, to show that the apostles gave approval of these men, **Num 27:18**,

Acts 13:3.

Second, to pass on the miraculous gifts, **Acts 6:8; 8:16-20; 1Tim. 4:14**,

2Tim. 1:6

Act 6:7 The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

This is the result of the apostles being devoted to prayer and the ministry of the word.

The word was being put out for people to hear and souls were being won even the priests. It wasn't just a few souls, the disciples **increased greatly** and a **great number** of priests were becoming obedient.

Note: If we allow things to be done Gods way the result will be positive.

H. Stephen, 6:8-7:60

1. His arrest, 6:8-15

Act 6:8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.

Some have debated whether Stephen's power to work signs and wonders is related to the laying on of the Apostles hands. I see a connection for two reason.

1. The terminology is different from Acts 6:5
2. The laying on of hands to pass on the miracles is supported in the Scriptures as discussed in v.6.

Note: Charlie DiPalma, Jr of the WVBS writes in his syllabus. It is clear that Stephen received this miraculous power from the apostles of Christ when they laid their hands on him (:6).

- a. Before the apostles laid hands on him and the other six, there is no record of anyone other than an apostle of Christ working miracles.
- b. Then the apostles laid hands on the seven (:6).
- c. Then, right after that, we are told Stephen worked miracles.
- d. Later, there is a record of Philip working miracles also (8:6,7).
- e. The conclusion: Stephen and the other six men received the power to work miracles though the laying on of the apostles' hands.
- f. The validity of this conclusion will be reinforced when we study the case of Simon the sorcerer in 8:14-19.

Act 6:9 But some men from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen.

the Synagogue of the Freedmen

One of many Synagogues found in Jerusalem along with other Jews, the Cyrenians, Alexandrians and some from Cilicia and Asia.

rose up and argued with Stephen.

The cause of this arguing was the teaching of Stephen. Although there is no mention of teaching it should be concluded without saying, **Acts 8:5,6**

Act 6:10 But they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

But they were unable to cope

Cope = (αντιστηναι) = to set in opposition. They were unable to oppose what Stephen was teaching.

with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

In all likelihood the wisdom spoken of here is of the miraculous kind, **1Cor. 12:7,8**

The Spirit is either the Holy Spirit Stephen possessed or his attitude. The context would indicate whether this is the Holy Spirit or not. But here it is not clearly defined. It could just as easily be the boldness (attitude or spirit) with which Stephen was speaking. In other words they were not able to silence him. He stood his ground and kept on preaching.

Act 6:11 Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God."

Then they secretly induced men to say

It never ceases to amaze us of the corruptness of the hearts of the people. They did what they did in **secret**.

These men were secretly induced (suborned (KJV)) others to make this claim of blasphemy. Induced is from "hupoballo", which originally meant "*to put under like a carpet, to bring men under one's control by suggestion or money.*" (H. Leo Boles).

These men were bribed so that false accusations might be offered.

"We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God."

To say something against Moses was to say something against God,

Numbers 15:22,23; 30-31

Act 6:12 And they stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes, and they came up to him and dragged him away and brought him before the Council.

The council is referring to the Sanhedrin. Probably the same court that tried Jesus or at least a large portion of it is.

Act 6:13 They put forward false witnesses who said, "This man incessantly speaks against this holy place and the Law;

"This man incessantly speaks against this holy place and the Law;

Their claim is similar to that made against Jesus, **Matt. 26:59-61; Mark 14:55-59**

Act 6:14 for we have heard him say that this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us."

Jesus, will destroy this place and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us."

The claim of what Stephen speaks against the temple is that Jesus would destroy it. The claim of what Stephen spoke against the law is that Jesus would alter it in some way.

These claims were never made by Jesus nor would Stephen make them.

Concerning what Jesus said about the Temple, **John 2:19-21**

Concerning what Jesus said about the Law, **Matt 5:17**

Note: Since they are making the claim that Stephen said these things and we know he didn't because we know Jesus didn't say them; Stephen was probably making reference to the resurrection of Jesus, which is what Jesus was speaking of when he referred to the destruction of the temple. As for altering the law or customs, **Matt. 12:6.**

Through Jesus not only came the end of the old Law, but a church universal which excluded the Jerusalem Temple and all its practices.

Col. 2:10-14; Eph. 2:13-16; Gal. 3:15-29; Heb. 8:6-13

Act 6:15 And fixing their gaze on him, all who were sitting in the Council saw his face like the face of an angel.

And fixing their gaze on him,

The accusation has been made and the council now turns its attention to the accused.

all who were sitting in the Council saw his face like the face of an angel.

There are two primary theories as to what the “face of an angel” refers to.

1. Some believe that Stephen's face was illuminated like unto Moses when he came down from Sinai, **Ex. 34:30; 2Cor. 3:7**. See also **Dan. 10:6, Rev. 10:1**
2. Others see this as simply being a manifestation of Stephen's sincerity.

As Barnes writes, *“This expression is one evidently denoting that he manifested evidence of sincerity, gravity, fearlessness, confidence in God.”*

Whatever it was it got the attention of the Council. It was something they saw yet as typical they did not connect to what Stephen was about to say. Why? **Act 7:51**

Acts Chapter 7

2. His address, 7:1-53

Act 7:1 The high priest said, "Are these things so?"

Stephen is now given the chance to defend himself.

Act 7:2 And he said, "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,

"Hear me, brethren and fathers!"

What Stephen is about to say is of the utmost importance, they need to listen!

Stephen begins by addressing these men in a respectful, dignified manner. One that shows he is not their enemy. They are of the same nation (brethren) and he respects their authority (fathers).

Note: Lenski sums up Luke's address in this manner:¹

“God’s Grace Is Met By Israel’s Disobedience.”

1. *God’s grace manifested in Abraham and the disobedience of the patriarch’s.* The emphasis is on God.
 2. *God’s grace manifested in Moses and the disobedience of Israel.* The emphasis on Moses.
 3. *God’s grace manifested in David and in Solomon.* The emphasis is on the Temple.
- Conclusion: The present disobedience.

¹ Lenski, Commentary on the New Testament, Acts, pg. 260

The God of glory

Stephen was accused of speaking blasphemous words against God, Acts 7:11, but here he refers to God's divine attribute.

appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,

Stephen wants them to know they have one and the same father. They are all bound to this message.

We don't have a record of God appearing to Abraham, but it is implied in the OT.

Gen. 11:31; 15:7; Neh. 9:7

Act 7:3 and said to him, 'LEAVE YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR RELATIVES, AND COME INTO THE LAND THAT I WILL SHOW YOU.'

Act 7:4 "Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. From there, after his father died, God had him move to this country in which you are now living.

See Genesis 11:31,32; 12:1-5

It is important to note that Stephen clearly shows that Abraham was willing to listen and obey the God of glory. It was through Abraham's obedience that they eventually receive the reward of *"this country in which you are now living."* **(Implications?)**

Note: The quote in v.3 is from Gen. 12:1 which refers to Abraham leaving Haran, Gen. 12:4.

Verse 4 places this quote before Abraham had ever entered Haran.

All this means is that the words said to Abraham to get him out of the land of the Ur (Chaldeans) are the same words used to get him out of the land of Haran.

Act 7:5 "But He gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot of ground, and yet, even when he had no child, He promised that HE WOULD GIVE IT TO HIM AS A POSSESSION, AND TO HIS DESCENDANTS AFTER HIM.

Although Abraham did as God had instructed, the land was not his to possess. It was promised to his descendants, Gen. 12:7; 13:15,16.

Act 7:6 "But God spoke to this effect, that his DESCENDANTS WOULD BE ALIENS IN A FOREIGN LAND, AND THAT THEY WOULD BE ENSLAVED AND MISTREATED FOR FOUR HUNDRED YEARS.

Act 7:7 " 'AND WHATEVER NATION TO WHICH THEY WILL BE IN BONDAGE I MYSELF WILL JUDGE,' said God, 'AND AFTER THAT THEY WILL COME OUT AND SERVE ME IN THIS PLACE.'

These passages infer the need for Abraham to have faith in God, Heb. 11:8,9. What Abraham was doing, he was doing for future generations, he never even had a foot of ground.

Note: The field purchased by Abraham in Gen. 23:9-17, was a burial place and not an inheritance

Act 7:8 "And He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

And He gave him the covenant of circumcision;

Circumcision was practiced by most of the nations with which Israel had dealings with in the patriarchal age; but to Abraham it was given as a sign of the covenant, Gen. 17:9ff

and so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

The covenant passed from generation to generation as each “father” was circumcised accordingly.

Act 7:9 "The patriarchs became jealous of Joseph and sold him into Egypt. Yet God was with him,

Acts 7:9-18 cover Gen. 37:1-Ex. 1:22

Following Lenski’s train of thought we see, pg. 111

1. *God’s grace manifested in Abraham and the disobedience of the patriarch’s.*

The emphasis is on God.

God had a plan yet the patriarchs rebelled against God in that they sold Joseph into Egyptian bondage.

There is a message here for the Jews Stephen is speaking to. Are they not following this same path?

Act 7:10 and rescued him from all his afflictions, and granted him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he made him governor over Egypt and all his household.

Although Joseph's brothers had their plans, God had His and in carrying out that plan He demonstrates His mercy.

Act 7:11 "Now a famine came over all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction with it, and our fathers could find no food.

Gen. 41:50ff

Act 7:12 "But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers there the first time.

Act 7:13 "On the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family was disclosed to Pharaoh.

Act 7:14 "Then Joseph sent word and invited Jacob his father and all his relatives to come to him, seventy-five persons in all.

What God did for Joseph after his brothers sold him into slavery proves to be a benefit to them.

Can the same be said about what these Jews did to Jesus in having Him put to death?

God uses their rebellion to bring about good for them in that Jesus death, the shedding of His blood, provides forgiveness of sins, **Rom. 5:10; Rom. 8:1-4**. The point being what God did for them even in their rebellion.

Act 7:15 "And Jacob went down to Egypt and there he and our fathers died.

Act 7:16 "From there they were removed to Shechem and laid in the tomb which Abraham had purchased for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

Act 7:17 "But as the time of the promise was approaching which God had assured to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt,

Act 7:18 until THERE AROSE ANOTHER KING OVER EGYPT WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT JOSEPH.

Act 7:19 "It was he who took shrewd advantage of our race and mistreated our fathers so that they would expose their infants and they would not survive.

Act 7:20 "It was at this time that Moses was born; and he was lovely in the sight of God, and he was nurtured three months in his father's home.

Acts 7:20-43 covers Ex. 2:1 and comes to a head in Amos 5:25-27

Here begins Lenski's second point.

2. *God's grace manifested in Moses and the disobedience of Israel.* The emphasis on Moses.

Act 7:21 "And after he had been set outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and nurtured him as her own son.

Act 7:22 "Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.

Act 7:23 "But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel.

Act 7:24 "And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian.

Act 7:25 "And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand.

Act 7:26 "On the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, 'Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another?'

Act 7:27 "But the one who was injuring his neighbor pushed him away, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND JUDGE OVER US?'

Act 7:28 'YOU DO NOT MEAN TO KILL ME AS YOU KILLED THE EGYPTIAN YESTERDAY, DO YOU?'

Stephen continues to lay out a pattern of behavior that matches that of those who he is standing before. Jesus came to save them and they rejected Him.

Act 7:29 "At this remark, MOSES FLED AND BECAME AN ALIEN IN THE LAND OF MIDIAN, where he became the father of two sons.

Act 7:30 "After forty years had passed, AN ANGEL APPEARED TO HIM IN THE WILDERNESS OF MOUNT Sinai, IN THE FLAME OF A BURNING THORN BUSH.

Act 7:31 "When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look more closely, there came the voice of the Lord:

Act 7:32 'I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHERS, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC AND JACOB.' Moses shook with fear and would not venture to look.

Act 7:33 "BUT THE LORD SAID TO HIM, 'TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND.

Act 7:34 'I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANS, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO RESCUE THEM; COME NOW, AND I WILL SEND YOU TO EGYPT.'

Act 7:35 "This Moses whom they disowned, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE?' is the one whom God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush.

WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE?'

Acts 2:36

Act 7:36 "This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years.

Act 7:37 "This is the Moses who said to the sons of Israel, 'GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN.'

Consider some points Stephen makes here about Moses, and note the comparison to Jesus.

1. He respected the will of God, **Heb. 5:7-8; John 4:32-34**
2. God sent him to rescue those in bondage, **Rom. 7:14, Gal. 4:3-5**
3. He led them out not on his own will , but with the power of God in performing wonders and signs, **Acts 2:22; John 20:30,31**
4. He was rejected (disowned) by his own people, **Acts 2:23; 5:29-32**

Act 7:38 "This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you.

Act 7:39 "Our fathers were unwilling to be obedient to him, but repudiated him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt,

Act 7:40 SAYING TO AARON, 'MAKE FOR US GODS WHO WILL GO BEFORE US; FOR THIS MOSES WHO LED US OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT--WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM.'

Act 7:41 "At that time they made a calf and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and were rejoicing in the works of their hands.

Act 7:42 "But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, 'IT WAS NOT TO ME THAT YOU OFFERED VICTIMS AND SACRIFICES FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS, WAS IT, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL?

Act 7:43 'YOU ALSO TOOK ALONG THE TABERNACLE OF MOLOCH AND THE STAR OF THE GOD ROMPHA, THE IMAGES WHICH YOU MADE TO WORSHIP. I ALSO WILL REMOVE YOU BEYOND BABYLON.'

As Stephen concludes speaking about Moses he emphasizes the continual rebellion the Israelites demonstrated.

Even though Moses had been before the presence of God, led them out of bondage through the mercy of God, performed miracles by the hand of God, brought to them the law of God, they still rejected God.

This pattern of disobedience didn't die in the wilderness, it was in full swing even in the time of Amos and the Babylonian exile. This pattern of rebellion was carried from generation to generation no matter what God did.

That same rebellion was being carried out even in the days of Jesus and now Stephen.

Act 7:44 "Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern which he had seen.

One of the accusations against Stephen was that he **“incessantly spoke against this holy place.”** Acts 6:13. Beginning here Stephen addresses that accusation.

Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness

Stephen turns their attention to the “tabernacle or testimony.” This is referring to the tabernacle in the wilderness, Ex. 25:22; 38:21.

This tabernacle represents the presence of God amongst His people. The tabernacle contained the Ten Commandments which were placed in the ark of the covenant, and this ark was kept in the most holy place.

just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern which he had seen.

It was this tabernacle which God instructed Moses to build according to the pattern he had seen, **Ex. 25:9** This tabernacle is the one God requested.

Act 7:45 "And having received it in their turn, our fathers brought it in with Joshua upon dispossessing the nations whom God drove out before our fathers, until the time of David.

The tabernacle which God had instructed Moses to build was passed on to their fathers even to the time of David. Gods approval of this is seen in Him driving out the nations.

This is similar to the covenant of circumcision being passed on, **Acts 7:8.**

Act 7:46 "David found favor in God's sight, and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob.

Following Lenski's, pg. 111 of our notes

3. *God's grace manifested in David and in Solomon.* The emphasis is on the Temple. Conclusion: The present disobedience.

and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob.

David determined on his own to build God a dwelling place. This was not something God asked for. **1Chron. 17:1-6**

Act 7:47 "But it was Solomon who built a house for Him.

Although God did not ask for a house he allowed Solomon to build one for Him, **1Chron. 22:6ff**

Act 7:48 "However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands; as the prophet says:

This is similar to what God told David, **1Chron. 17:5,6**

Act 7:49 'HEAVEN IS MY THRONE, AND EARTH IS THE FOOTSTOOL OF MY FEET; WHAT KIND OF HOUSE WILL YOU BUILD FOR ME?' says the Lord, 'OR WHAT PLACE IS THERE FOR MY REPOSE?

Act 7:50 'WAS IT NOT MY HAND WHICH MADE ALL THESE THINGS?'

This is a quote from Isaiah 66:1,2 and is the culmination of Stephen's statements on the holy place he was accused of speaking against.

The point being they have placed far too much emphasis on a Temple God never requested. Their devotion was more to the temple than it ever was to God and His will.

There is no merit to their accusation of Stephen speaking against the temple in the view of God. This blasphemy exists only in conjunction with their twisted view of the importance of the temple. But it is not God's dwelling place.

Act 7:51 "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did."

You men who are stiff-necked

To be stiff-necked is to be inflexible, stubborn, obstinate. They were unwilling to bend to the will of God. Moses used this same expression, **Ex. 33:3,5**

and uncircumcised in heart and ears

Circumcision was a sign that they had submitted to the will of God, (Boles). To be uncircumcised of the heart and the ears shows a complete lack of willingness to submit to God. They refused to hear his words with their ears and obey it with their heart.

That which they held to as the sign of their relationship with God only existed outwardly in the flesh, and not inwardly.

are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.

The word resisting comes from a word which means “to fall against” or “to rush against.” They opposed the Holy Spirit through their unwillingness to hear and act upon the words which He sent forth. They fell against Him as if He were an enemy.

And this is what their fathers did as noted in the next verse.

Act 7:52 "Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become;

whose betrayers and murderers you have now become;

Although their fathers persecuted the prophets who announced the coming of the Righteous One, they are the ones who are His betrayers and murderers. They all share in this rebellion.

Act 7:53 you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it."

Stephen concludes his arguments by showing the real guilty party here. It was them. They had the law yet they were the ones who did not keep it.

3. His Martyrdom, 7:54-60

Act 7:54 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the quick, and they began gnashing their teeth at him.

Ironic as it is, they demonstrate exactly what Stephen was just talking about, RAGE!

Act 7:55 But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;

It would seem that it was the Holy Spirit who led Stephen to gaze into heaven, since “being full of the Holy Spirit” comes before him looking heavenward, and the word “but” establishes the contrast between what those who heard his words were doing and what he did.

Act 7:56 and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

Stephen utters a simple Gospel message here. The Son of Man which they had killed was resurrected and lives!

Not only does He live, but He is standing at the right hand of God. This statement establishes that He is the Righteous One, whom they murdered.

The fact that Jesus was standing seems to me to indicate Jesus is there at the ready. He is there to comfort and receive His servant Stephen. See handout **“Why did Stephen see Jesus standing, when Peter said He was seated in Heaven?”**

Act 7:57 But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse.

As far as they are concerned the verdict is “guilty!” There is no more need to hear his blasphemous words. His statements are condemning them and so they rush upon him.

Act 7:58 When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him;

Those who did not keep the law in their heart are sure to live by the letter here as they seek to kill Stephen., Lev. 24:10-16

and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Those so called “witnesses,” the ones who were secretly induced to lie, were ready to cast the first stone, Acts 6:11,13, Deut. 17:7. Here is our first mention of Saul

Act 7:59 They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

Here Stepehn calls upon his Lord in his final moments

It’s interesting to note that the Sanhedrin could sentence someone to death but had no authority to carry out that sentence, John 18:31. What would make them do this then? Some see this as a contextual problem, but I believe it really shows just how much hate these people had in their hearts. They allowed their hate to escalate to rage and this rage controlled their actions.

Act 7:60 Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep.

Like Jesus, Stephens love for this people shines forth. In his last moments of his life he prays that they be forgiven.

Acts Chapter 8

2. *In Palestine and Syria, 8:1-12:25*

A. Persecution begins, 8:1-4

Act 8:1 Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death.

hearty agreement (συνενδοκῆω) = to take pleasure with others, to approve or agree.

cf. **Acts 22:20**, This word is also found in Rom. 1:32 and is used in reference to those who approve of sin. It's not just approval but one that encourages and agrees with. This is why NASB translates it "*Hearty Agreement*"

And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem,

The word "day" can also refer to a longer or shorter period, so the AV translates it "at that time" The persecution began here and continued.

This was something Saul spearheaded, 1Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13,14,23

and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

The Apostles still had a job to do, **Acts 6:2.**

Fleeing might have showed a lack of faith. We are not told what they dealt with while they stayed in Jerusalem, but because of their continuance there it would seem that God was protecting them and fear was not a problem. Compare **Acts 20:10-14**.

Also consider it was from here that the Gospel was to be sent forth. The Apostles stayed to teach, so others would be sent out, **Isa. 2:1-3**

Act 8:2 Some devout men buried Stephen, and made loud lamentation over him.

These were religious men. No indication if they were Christians or not.

Barnes suggests the word “buried” involves being carried away and involves all the rightful preparations for burial. Include the loud lamentations and we have what appears to be a group that cared greatly for Stephen. Because of the manner of his death it would seem unlikely that this is a Christian group.

Act 8:3 But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.

But Saul began ravaging the church

The word “but” provides some insights into Saul’s heart at this time. He was not concerned the least bit about what had happened to Stephen or how he was treated after his death.

Saul (Paul) was determined to destroy the church through intense persecution. The word ravage was used to describe the destruction of victims committed by wild and savage beasts, (Charles DiPalma) **Acts 9:1-2**

entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.

He hunted down all, both men and women who were disciples of Jesus.

Act 8:4 Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.

It might be concluded that God used the martyrdom of Stephen to cause the disciples to scatter. Not that He caused Stephen's death, but used it to carry out the great commission, **Matt. 28:19,20; Acts 1:8** “Go therefore” literally means “as you are going” and this is what they did.

This is similar to **Mark 14:1-11**, where God used the evil heart of Judas to bring about the death of Jesus.

NOTE: That which was intended to end the spread of the gospel actually furthered it. Persecution does not stop disciples who are dedicated to the Lord, **Acts 5:40-42**

B. Philip in Samaria, 8:5-25

1. Philip, 8:5-8

Act 8:5 Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them.

Remember that Philip was one of the Seven chosen with Stephen, **Acts 6:5**. He did not allow what happened to Stephen deter him from carrying out his work. Paul gives Timothy similar advice. **2Tim. 2:7-13; 2Tim. 3:1-15**.

Samaria would be a place of relief, to some degree, for the disciples. The Sanhedrin have no power here and so he freely proclaimed Christ.

Philip would still have to contend with the fact that he was a Jew and there was no love loss between the Jews and Samaritans. But Jesus' earlier work would have paved the way for what Philip was doing, **John 4:7-45, 1Cor. 3:6**

Act 8:6 The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing.

The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip,

H. Leo Boles states that giving attention means they kept holding the mind on the things which were spoken by Philip; it carried the meaning of spellbound.

as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing.

This would explain why they were "spellbound" and one of the purposes for miracles is once again revealed, **Mark 16:20**

Act 8:7 For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed.

For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice;

The miracles performed by Philip were very visible. The demons came out shouting with a loud voice, **Mark 3:11; Luke 4:41**

What happens here shows that demon possession was not just some disease or illness as some have suggested.

and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed.

Those with physical infirmities were also addressed and healed.

Act 8:8 So there was much rejoicing in that city.

2. Simon, 8:9-13

Act 8:9 Now there was a man named Simon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city and astonishing the people of Samaria, claiming to be someone great;

Simon was a man of great ability based on four facts.

1. He was not only able to fool the people in the city but also those of Samaria.
2. He was willing to boast that he was someone great.
3. The people viewed him as "The Great Power of God," v.10
4. He had astonished the people for a long time, v.11

Lenski notes, “This Simon belonged to a class of charlatans that were rather common at this period, who practiced occult arts in order to impress the people and to gain a following. Much was plain sorcery which was at times combined with a shrewd use of natural laws that were otherwise unknown. The range of their arts extended from conjuring of demons, dealing with the dead, influencing gods, to charms of healing divination, stargazing, and the likes.”

Act 8:10 and they all, from smallest to greatest, were giving attention to him, saying, "This man is what is called the Great Power of God."

Act 8:11 And they were giving him attention because he had for a long time astonished them with his magic arts.

This actually plays a big part in showing just how truly great the miracles Philip performed really were as seen in the next verse.

Act 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.

But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ

It wasn't just the miracles that convinced the people. They believed the Philips preaching about Jesus.

they were being baptized,

As always preaching Christ, v.5 or preaching the kingdom of God involves preaching baptism. How did these people come to know about baptism? Philip preached it to them. You cannot preach Christ or the Kingdom absent of baptism, **Acts 8:35, 36**

men and women alike.

There is no mention of infant baptism here, as there never is in the New Testament.

Those baptized were adults who heard and believed the message preached.

Act 8:13 Even Simon himself believed; and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip, and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed.

Even Simon himself believed;

The one who claimed himself to be someone great; who the people called the “Great Power of God” understood the difference between what he was able to do and what God did through Philip.

and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip, and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed.

Simon repented of his ways and followed the path to salvation. He was baptized for the forgiveness of sins, **Acts 2:38.**

Having repented, Simon left his former life and began to follow Philip around being amazed at what he saw.

3. Peter and John sent, 8:14-17

Act 8:14 Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John,

The receiving of the word of God is demonstrated in those of Samaria being baptized.
One does not truly receive the word until obedience to that word is demonstrated

Act 8:15 who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles seek guidance in bestowing the Holy Spirit, **1Cor. 12:4-11**

Act 8:16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Don DeWalt noted, “Luke used the term ‘fallen upon’ to describe the reception of the special powers.” (see **Acts 10:44; 11:15**)

Act 8:17 Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

This account of the receiving the Holy Spirit is not to be confused with the baptism of the Holy Spirit in **Acts 2:1-4** and **Acts 10:4**. Namely this act takes place through the laying on of the Apostles hands, this was not the case in the accounts of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

This account of receiving the Holy Spirit is not to be confused with what takes place upon being baptized, Acts 2:38. These had already been baptized, v.12,13, so they would have received the promise Peter mentioned. Remember, this is a promise to all who believe, Acts 2:39. If what happens in Acts 8:17 is what Peter spoke of in Acts 2:39 we would need the Apostles around to bestow the Holy Spirit upon each of us.

What takes place here can be seen in **Acts 6:6-8** and **Acts 19:1-7**.

Note: This passage clearly shows that the passing on of miraculous gifts could only take place through the Apostles hands. Philip had the ability to perform gifts but not the ability to pass them on. Also consider that passing on miraculous gifts is not listed in **1Cor. 12:4-10** as one of the gifts.

The Scriptures also show that passing on gifts only took place through the Apostles hands. Acts 6:6-8; Acts; 8:17; 19:1-7. Some might see an exception in 1Tim. 4:14 and 2Tim. 1:6. But consider that Paul uses two different words in relation to the *laying on* of hands in both passages. In 1Tim. 4:14 he uses the phrase “**with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.**” In 2Tim. 1:6 Paul uses the phrase “**through the laying on of my hands.**”

1. The word **with** is **μετα** and when accompanied by a word in the genitive case it means “with or together with.”
2. The word **through** is **δια** and when accompanied by a word in the genitive case it means “of immediate agency, causation, instrumentality, by means of.”
3. The words “**laying on**” is one word in the Greek and is used in both 1Tim. 4:14 and 2Tim. 1:6. It is in the genitive case.

The word **with** indicates that the presbytery laid their hands on Timothy and the receiving of his gift accompanied this, but it was **through** Paul’s hands that the gift was actually bestowed.

Heads Up!

What was the reason for this occurrence, we see nothing else like it other than Acts 19? FF. Bruce, quoting a Professor Lampe writes, “The preaching of the Gospel in Samaria represented a crucial moment in the first advance of Christianity. Hence, after the Baptism of the first Samaritan converts, the leaders of the Church’s mission come down from Jerusalem and, by sign of fellowship and contact incorporate them into the apostolic church....”

This seems to be an appropriate conclusion if we also consider that John, one of the Apostles sent, had at one time desired to call fire down upon the Samaritans, **Lk. 9:51-56**. Here we have a visible sign of their acceptance into the church, **Acts 10:44; 11:15-18**

4. Simon's wickedness, 8:18-25

Act 8:18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money,

Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed

We are not told how the Spirit was being manifested, (ie... **Acts 2:1-4; Acts 10:44-46**) but whatever it was Simon saw (recognized) that the Spirit was bestowed.

through the laying on of the apostles' hands,

This is specific, it was only through the apostles

he offered them money,

Simon thinks he can buy this power

Act 8:19 saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

"Give this authority to me as well,

The authority he wants is seen in the second part of this verse

so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

There is a recognition that this manifestation of the Holy Spirit was only given through the laying on of the Apostles hands.

Act 8:20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!"

"May your silver perish with you,

This is a sharp rebuke indicating what will happen if he continues on this path.

Act 8:21 "You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God."

Peter makes it clear that Simon's actions indicate a heart problem.

Act 8:22 "Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.

"Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours

Peter gives Simon an opportunity to turn from his wicked ways.

and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.

This phrase indicates that Simon was indeed a Christian. If he were not repentance and prayer would not resolve his sin problem, Acts 2:38

As well Peter is focusing on a single act of sin, "this wickedness of yours."

Heads Up! Here we have a clear indicator of what Christians are to do if they sin.

1. We know Simon is a Christian, **Acts 8:12,13**
2. His sins were forgiven, **Acts 2:38**
3. Now he finds himself once again caught in sin
4. He is told to do two things to resolve the issue

Repent, **2Cor. 7:8-10**

Pray to the Lord, **James 5:16**

This is how Christians are to deal with sin in their lives.

Act 8:23 "For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity."

These are very strong expressions of just how serious his heart condition is.

Act 8:24 But Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me yourselves, so that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

Simon is asking for intervention on behalf of Peter and John. This would indicate his desire to repent. In directly asking for the apostles help he seems to be seeking a higher authority to come to his aid, as if his asking for forgiveness would not be enough, but if the Apostles ask this is much better.

This reaction seems to show true repentance, compare **Matt. 19:16-22**

Act 8:25 So, when they had solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they started back to Jerusalem, and were preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

Following the command in the great commission, as they head back to Jerusalem they continued to preach to those who would listen.

C. The Ethiopian, 8:26-40

Act 8:26 But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert road.)

Although Philip was doing a good work where he was God had other plans for him.

Act 8:27 So he got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship,

So he got up and went;

Philip did not question what God called him to do. When God said go Philip went.

and there was an Ethiopian eunuch,

This man was from a part of Africa known as Nubia. He was a black man as indicated by the word Ethiopian. **Αιθιοφ** = Aithiops; from **αιθω** – aitho (to burn) and **οφ** ops (an eye, face).

He was also a eunuch, an emasculated man. One who had been castrated.

a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians,

The term Candace is not the name of the queen, but references her position. This is similar to Pharaoh and Caesar.

who was in charge of all her treasure;

He was a man of great importance, being in charge of her treasury. A eunuch was usually a bed keeper, bed guard, superintendent of the bedchamber, chamberlain.

and he had come to Jerusalem to worship,

This eunuch was also a man devoted to God. The distance he would have traveled could have been as much as 200 miles. He had come to Jerusalem, the center of Jewish worship, to worship. The use of the word worship implies Jewish worship.

This eunuch in all likelihood was not a Jew by birth, but a Gentile proselyte. One who had gone to Jerusalem to worship, **Acts 2:10**. He would be referred to as a proselyte of the gate being a eunuch, **Deut 23:1**.

Act 8:28 and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.

Act 8:29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot."

Philip is now given the reason he was sent to this place.

Act 8:30 Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet,

Here we begin to see some practical applications we can use in reaching out to the lost. First, Philip shows a sense of urgency, by running up to the chariot. It is possible that it was moving and that is why he was running. Nevertheless, it is obvious he did not want to miss this opportunity God had given him.

Philip also paid attention to what was being read aloud. He heard him reading Isaiah.

and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

Secondly Philip takes the initiative by asking a very simple question, "Do you understand?"

Act 8:31 And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

The eunuch's response is one that conveys the need for help, **Rom. 10:13-15**

Act 8:32 Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: "HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH.

Act 8:33 "IN HUMILIATION HIS JUDGMENT WAS TAKEN AWAY; WHO WILL RELATE HIS GENERATION? FOR HIS LIFE IS REMOVED FROM THE EARTH."

The passages he was reading are from Isaiah 53:7,8. We also know that he is reading from the LXX because of the variation from the old Hebrew text. But as Lenski writes, "A glance at the text shows that even these are but variations in form and not thought."²

Act 8:34 The eunuch answered Philip and said, "Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?"

Act 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him.

Philip takes the third step in evangelism, he preached (evangelized) Jesus to the eunuch. Jesus fulfilled the prophecies spoken of Him and Philip was able to take the mind of the eunuch to the man Jesus who had died on the cross for the sins of the world.

*Act 8:36 As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch *said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?"*

Apparently Philip had taken the fourth step in evangelism, he instructed the eunuch on the necessity of baptism, as we see in the eunuch's response when they come upon some water.

This passage also clearly indicates that you cannot preach Jesus without preaching baptism. The reason is found in the forgiveness of sins, **Matt. 26:28, Acts 2:38**

Note: There has been much debate on where the water came from, some insisting that no water was to be found on this road. But the passage is clear, they came across some water on this journey, and it was enough for both of them to go down into, **vs. 38,39**

² Lenski, Commentary on the New Testament, Acts, pg.342

Act 8:37 [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."]

The textual evidence does not support the addition of this passage, although the concept related is not incorrect, **Rom. 10:9,10.**

Act 8:38 And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him.

Philip now demonstrates the fifth step in evangelism, taking care of the sin problem as soon as possible. Once the eunuch understood what he needed to do, there was no need to delay. As soon as water was available he was baptized for the remission of his sins.

Notice too, that both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water. The word into is **εἰς**. They did not go by the side of the water but literally into the water. This is also clear by the fact that the eunuch was baptized. The word baptism literally means immersion. This in itself necessitates going down **into** the water. If sprinkling or pouring were intended this act then was foolish and unnecessary.

Act 8:39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing.

When they came up out of the water,

“they came”, is to arise or ascend

“up out of” is the word **ἐκ** in the Greek and is “A primary preposition denoting origin (the point whence motion or action proceeds), from, out (of place, time or cause; literally or figuratively; direct or remote).”

Again we have further support that Philip and the eunuch went down into the water. Because they came up out of water.

Note: First Gentle convert?

the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him,

Some see this as a miraculous event. The Greek for “snatched away” can have a miraculous sense to it, **1Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:11; 2Cor. 12:2,4.** (was caught)

Thayers Definition:

- 1) to seize, carry off by force
- 2) to seize on, claim for one’s self eagerly
- 3) to snatch out or away

Also consider v.40 and the phrase “Philip found himself”

but went on his way rejoicing.

The rejoicing takes place after he has been baptized, compare, **Acts 16:31-34.**

Note: Below I have include an argument used by Lenski to prove that baptism does not have to be immersion. The reason I do this is so we might see the fallacies in how people interpret Scriptures. This is from his commentary on Acts.

Eusebius reports about a small pool that was formed by a spring near the road, Robinson speaks of a small temporary stream. Neither here nor elsewhere do we read that a robe or garment was laid aside before baptism. We are left to suppose that the two men went to this water, and that the baptismal act was an application of water by pouring or by sprinkling. Those who make the words "they both went down εἰς, into, the water" a part of the baptismal act in order to obtain immersion by means of εἰς τὸ ἰδωρ, "into the water," prove too much: Philip went down under the water as well as the eunuch. This is true also in regard to the following words.

39) But when they came up from the water, the Lord's Spirit snatched Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, for he proceeded to go his way rejoicing. Philip, however, was found at Azotus; and, passing through, he proclaimed the good news to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

We may translate, "they went *down into the water*" (v. 38), and now, "they came *up out of the water*," and may with R., *W. P.* even emphasize: "Not from the edge of the water, but up out of the water"! The difficulty lies in *αμφοτεροι* "both," Luke even adding: "both Philip and the eunuch." To be sure, *εις* and *εκ* are correlatives: as far as the one takes "into," so far the other takes "out of." But these prepositions apply to "both Philip and the eunuch." Take your choice: *to* the water, *from* the water; or stepping *into* and again stepping *out of* the water; or *down under* the water and again *up from under* the water. Total immersion if you prefer, but for *both*. Not we but Luke combined them.

One of the problems I see is that he has justed bypassed what was clearly stated by Luke so he can justify his point. The Scriptures are clear, Lenski muddies the water.

They both went down into the water, *not under*, only one went under, the eunuch in baptism.

Act 8:40 But Philip found himself at Azotus,

According to Dr. Lightfoot, this is about 34 miles from Gaza on the way to Joppa It is a seaport town of the Mediterranean.

and as he passed through he kept preaching the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

Philip continued to preach wherever he went. He finally settled in Caesarea. This is probably where he stayed for the rest of his life, **Acts 21:8.**

Acts Chapter 9

D. Saul's conversion and first preaching of Christ, 9:1-31

1. The vision, 9:1-7

Acts 9:1 Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest,

Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord

From the time Paul began to persecute the church, Acts 8:1, has not ceased, Phil. 3:6

His persecution was extreme, even to the point of murder,

went to the high priest,

This is probably Caiaphas, who was high priest until 36 A.D. Some view Saul's conversion taking place around 37 A.D. during the time that Theophilus was high priest.

Either way we are only some 3 to 5 years from the death of Jesus when Saul was converted. Matt. 26:57

Acts 9:2 and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, Acts 22:5; 26:10

so that if he found any belonging to the Way,

The word "way" *ὁδός* is use metaphorically to refer to "a way or course of life." It further suggest being marked out to be followed and as being followed, Matt 3:3. This way is also connected to Jesus, John 14:6.

both men and women,

Men and women belonged to the way, not children

Acts 9:3 As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him;

As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus,

Damascus is a very old city, dating back to the time of Abraham, it also had a large population of Jews

and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him;

As Luke reveals the story of Saul's conversion he makes it clear that what he saw was not of natural origin. The light appeared suddenly, it was from heaven and it flashed around him.

Saul, (Paul) sheds more light on this as he describes in his own words what happened,

In Acts 22:6, Paul says it was about noontime, so the sun was already high in the sky.

In Acts 26:13, Paul says the light was brighter than the sun.

So as not to confuse what he saw with the natural light of the sun, Paul explains what he saw was much different.

Acts 9:4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

and he fell to the ground

The appearance of the light was enough to send Saul to the ground

and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

While on the ground the cause and purpose of the light are revealed in one of the most profound statements in all the Bible.

From the light came a voice which stated that Saul was persecuting him and he wanted to know why.

Acts 9:5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,

And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Paul is aware that whoever is speaking to him is one of great power for he refers to him as "lord."

And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,

From 1Cor. 9:1; 15:8 and Acts 22:14 Saul speaks of seeing Jesus when the light appeared around him, yet he either did not know or did not recognize him, Luke 24:13-16.

What is so profound about what Jesus says is the connection or relationship he makes between Him and his disciples. To persecute the disciples is to persecute Jesus. This gives clearer meaning to Heb 13:5,6.

Acts 9:6 but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do."

Jesus is no longer speaking about what Saul did but is telling him what he now must do.

Note: It is worthy to note that Jesus did not share the gospel with Saul, Lenski says he did this so as to honor His ministry. He fulfilled the law, it was up to others to spread the gospel. Also note that Saul was not given instructions concerning the law, as to "what he must do."

Acts 9:7 The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.

What happened to Paul took place in the presence of witnesses, although the vision was his alone.

2. His obedience, 9:8-9

Acts 9:8 Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus.

Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing;

The light Saul saw was literally blinding and serves a further purpose, Acts 9:17

Acts 9:9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

It seems that Saul was so zealous in his persecution of the church that some work had to be done on him. Why else was he without sight for three days? It certainly wasn't because Ananias had to travel a great distance to get to him, v.10 (see 1Tim. 1:12-16)

3. Ananias sent, 9:10-17

Acts 9:10 Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

The use of the word Lord by Ananias seems to be different from how Saul used it, in that Ananias was already a disciple.

Acts 9:11 And the Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying,

for he is praying,

It is interesting to note that Jesus speaks of Saul praying, it would seem he was doing this for three days. Why was he not yet forgiven of his sins? Acts 22:16

Acts 9:12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight."

and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias

Paul was given an other vision while he was praying, it was one of comfort.

Acts 9:13 But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem;

harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem

Disciples are those set apart for Jesus

Acts 9:14 and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."

How great was Sauls persecution?, enough that Ananias was reluctant to heed the Lords will.

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;

"Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine

Saul was chosen for this work as he described himself later, Rom. 1:1ff; Gal 1:15f

to bear My name before the Gentiles

Although Saul preached to the Jews, Acts 9:19,20 Gal. 2:7,8; Eph. 3:6-12

and kings and the sons of Israel;

Saul appeared before King Agrippa, Acts 26:1-32

Acts 9:16 for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."

It would seem that since Saul caused so much suffering, he was going to have to do likewise, 2Cor. 6:4-10; 2Cor. 11:23-28; Phil. 4:10-13

Acts 9:17 So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

So Ananias departed and entered the house,

Although Ananias was reluctant before he now heeds Gods command. In doing so he was to become a witness to Jesus' selection of Saul as an Apostle, Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:1

and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul,

Ananias calls Saul brother because he is a fellow Jew, not a fellow Christian, Acts 22:16

the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming,

Ananias makes it clear that it was Jesus who appeared to Saul on the road.

has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Ananias laid his hands on Saul so he might receive his sight; being filled with the Holy Spirit took place upon his baptism, Acts 2:38, Acts 9:18

To conclude that Ananias bestowed some charismatic gifts upon Saul is without merit.

None of the accounts of his conversion show him working miracles after being filled with the Holy Spirit, Acts 9:19-30; Acts 22:6-21; Acts 26:12-20.

4. His baptism, 9:18-19

Acts 9:18 And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized;

And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales,

It is not scales, but like scales. The word for scales means “to peel,” so this is what it felt like as Saul’s sight came back. *This healing was immediate!!*

and he regained his sight,

This show Ananias to be a true messenger of God, Saul was healed.

and he got up and was baptized;

Why was Saul baptized? Acts 22:16, This was an immediate response.

How was he baptized? Paul explains this in Rom. 6:3-7, indicating immersion.

Acts 9:19 and he took food and was strengthened.

He had been fasting and praying for three days, Acts 9:8-11, now it was time to eat.

Now for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus,

Paul shows fruit of repentance, Matt. 3:7,8. No longer was he persecuting the Christians he was now one of them.

5. He preaches Christ, 9:20-22

Acts 9:20 and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues

Here is a life of repentance being lived out. Saul had asked for letters from the High Priest to take to the synagogues to bring those belonging to the Way bound to Jerusalem, Acts 9:1,2. Now he is in the synagogues proclaiming Jesus. This is a 180 degree turnabout, or repentance.

saying, "He is the Son of God."

Paul did not simply say Jesus was a prophet, but that "He is the Son of God." He is proclaiming what Jesus had said about Himself, Luke 22:66-71

This phrase also reflects the Messiahship of Jesus, Mark 14:60-61

Note: So convicted was Saul that Jesus was the Son of God, the Christ, he is willing to stand before those whom he was seeking to assist in persecuting Jesus' disciples and possibly face what he had dished out.

Acts 9:21 All those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, "Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?"

All those hearing him continued to be amazed

They were amazed because of his zeal in destroying those who called on Jesus' name.

"Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name

Acts 8:1

and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?"

This probably reflects how rapidly the priesthood changed hands, from Caiaphas, Annas, Jonathan and Theophilus would be in this group.

Acts 9:22 But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ.

confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ.

For a second time Luke mentions Jesus' name in conjunction with the one who was to be the Savior. In v.20 he uses "Son of God" and here "the Christ."

Note: F.F. Bruce writes, "The word rendered "proving" means literally "putting together"; here it implies that the prophetic Scriptures were put alongside their fulfillment, in order to prove that Jesus was the Messiah of whom they spoke, (Cf. Acts 17:2,3; 18:27,28; 26:22,23)

6. His escape from Damascus, 9:23-25

Acts 9:23 When many days had elapsed, the Jews plotted together to do away with him,

When many days had elapsed,

If we consider Gal. 1:15-18 with this passage, some have concluded this includes the three years Saul speaks of.

H Leo Boles gives the order of events as this;

- (1) Saul struck down on the road to Damascus near the city (Acts 9:3-8)
- (2) Three days of blindness and prayer to God (Acts 9:9)
- (3) Sight restored, baptized, and received some measure of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:10-19)
- (4) Preached that Jesus is the Christ in the synagogues (Acts 9:19-22)
- (5) Sudden departure to Arabia (Gal 1:17,18)
- (6) Back to Damascus
- (7) Conspiracy to slay him (Acts 9:23)

- (8) Escape to Jerusalem (Acts 9:25)
- (9) Disciples afraid of him (Acts 9:26)
- (10) Barnabas vouches for his conversion (Acts 9:27)
- (11) Takes the place of Stephen and preaches to the Hellenists (Acts 9:29)
- (12) Conspiracy to slay him (Acts 9:29)
- (13) Sent to Caesarea, and to Tarsus (Acts 9:30)

the Jews plotted together to do away with him,

2Cor. 11:32,33

Acts 9:24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were also watching the gates day and night so that they might put him to death;

The Jews had enough power to get the governor of Damascus to place guards at the gates to keep Saul from escaping.

Acts 9:25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a large basket.

but his disciples took him by night

The work Saul was doing was productive. Luke mentions “his” disciples.

7. In Jerusalem, 9:26-31

Acts 9:26 When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.

The time of Saul's trip to Jerusalem comes three years after his conversion, Gal. 1:15-18. Even at this point the disciples were still afraid of him. It seems that Jerusalem had not yet heard of Saul's conversion and so his previous zeal proceeds him.

Acts 9:27 But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus.

Acts 9:28 And he was with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord.

Because of the testimony of Barnabas Saul is accepted and continues to do his work for the Lord.

During this time Saul is staying with Peter, Gal. 1:18

Acts 9:29 And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews; but they were attempting to put him to death.

Saul tells us that Jesus warned him this would happen, Acts 22:16-21

Acts 9:30 But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

Saul's account of this is found in Gal. 1:21. Tarsus is the chief city of Cilicia, Acts 21:39 Tarsus was a leading center of learning and could be called a university city. FF Bruce says its schools were devoted to philosophy, rhetoric and law.

Here we leave Saul for some years and he doesn't return until Acts 11:25. (Lenski in his commentary on Acts states that this is a time-period of eight years).

Acts 9:31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.

E. Aeneas, 9:32-35

Acts 9:32 Now as Peter was traveling through all those regions, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda.

Acts 9:33 There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years, for he was paralyzed.

That Aeneas was paralyzed is established in the fact that he has been bed ridden for eight years.

Acts 9:34 Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; get up and make your bed." Immediately he got up.

The healing that takes place is immediate and no indication of hands being laid upon is provided.

Acts 9:35 And all who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

As with miracles they are not to be hidden and kept from man. People hear and see what has happened and they choose to follow the Lord.

F. Dorcas, 9:36-43

Acts 9:36 Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did.

Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas);

Tabitha is the Aramaic form of a Hebrew proper name which means "a gazelle." She was also a Christian.

this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did.

Kindness and charity leave the impression that she took care of those who were poor and this she did on a regular basis

Acts 9:37 And it happened at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room.

and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room.

This was the custom of purification for the dead. It is clear that she is dead.

Acts 9:38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, imploring him, "Do not delay in coming to us."

The need for Peter to come without delay seems to indicate that they believed Peter's presence would be of benefit. Is it possible they believed he could bring her back to life? The only reason for him hurrying was because of her impending burial, which could happen that same day. He would need to arrive before then, again, why?

Acts 9:39 So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them.

Dorcas was a well loved woman and was greatly missed by the people. This should be the commentary of our lives.

Acts 9:40 But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

This was a complete healing and Peter had no doubt the Lord had granted his request, he turned to the body and said "Tabitha arise."

Acts 9:41 And he gave her his hand and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

Acts 9:42 It became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

Acts 3:1ff; Acts 8:12

Acts 9:43 And Peter stayed many days in Joppa with a tanner named Simon.

Acts Chapter 10

G. Cornelius, 10:1-11:18

1. Cornelius' Vision, 10:1-8

Act 10:1 Now there was a man at Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort,

Now there was a man at Caesarea named Cornelius

Caesarea is about 30 miles from Joppa, where Peter is, Acts 10:5

Cornelius is a Roman name, belonging to a Roman citizen, thus he is a Gentile.

a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort,

He was a centurion of between 100 and 1000 men depending on how the word is used and since he mentions the "Italian cohort" it seems to take on a large sense.

In Cyera there is an inscription found that dates back to 69 A.D. That states "The second Italian Cohort of Rome." This could refer to Cornelius.

Heads UP! Polybius (History vi.24) sums up the necessary qualifications thus: "*Centurions are required not to be bold and adventurous so much as good leaders, of steady and prudent mind, not prone to take the offensive or start fighting wantonly, but able when overwhelmed and hard-pressed to stand fast and die at their post.*" (F.F. Bruce, The Book of Acts, pg. 215)

This explains some things about why Cornelius responds the way he does to God's will.

Act 10:2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, and gave many alms to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually.

a devout man

He displayed his devotedness in three ways.

He feared God

Gave many alms

Prayed continually

and one who feared God with all his household

He had apparently guided his entire household in being devoted to God.

He and his household might be considered “proselytes of the gate” and at the least they were God Fearers, one who was not a full proselyte, Acts 2:10, 8:27

and gave many alms to the Jewish people

Cornelius was a generous man. Remember he is a Roman soldier yet from his own means he is helping those Jews that had need.

and prayed to God continually.

He was one who continued to seek God’s will and blessings.

Note: It’s important to note that to the Jews Cornelius would still be considered a Gentile. As a proselyte of the gate he has yet to come to Christ and is in a lost state.

Act 10:3 About the ninth hour of the day he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come in and said to him, "Cornelius!"

About the ninth hour of the day

This is three O'Clock in the afternoon, and the hour of prayer, Acts 3:1. Thus it would seem he is praying at this time.

he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come in and said to him, "Cornelius!"

Luke notes that this vision was not something that could be mistaken. Cornelius clearly saw this, as seen in the following verse "*he fixed his gaze on him.*"

Act 10:4 And fixing his gaze on him and being much alarmed, he said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him,

And fixing his gaze on him and being much alarmed, he said, "What is it, Lord?"

The term is not in reference to Jesus, but suggests Cornelius understands the one he is speaking to is one of authority.

"Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God.

Both his words and deeds are seen as a pleasing aroma (ascended) to God. They were in fact a memorial, a remembrance (Matt. 26:13), acts which were remembered by God.

Act 10:5 "Now dispatch some men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon, who is also called Peter;

What Cornelius is to receive will come through human agency.

Note: The angel refers to Cornelius, Peter and Simon v.6, by name and refers to Peter's location. Here we see God's omnipresence; He is all places at all times. He knows what is going in the world.

Act 10:6 he is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the sea."

Act 10:7 When the angel who was speaking to him had left, he summoned two of his servants and a devout soldier of those who were his personal attendants,

he summoned two of his servants and a devout soldier of those who were his personal attendants,

As was stated earlier, the centurion was "*of steady and prudent mind,*" (pg. 156).

When Cornelius is told what to do he doesn't hesitate, he knows that what has taken place is in fact from God. He also chooses those most trustworthy to carry out this task.

Act 10:8 and after he had explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

From what we see in verse 9 they probably left that night, rested at some point and started fresh the next day.

2. Peter's Vision, 10:9-16

Act 10:9 On the next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.

Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.

The house top was a common place of worship and prayer, Mark 2:1-4, Jer. 19:13

The sixth hour was about noon time. Many Jews followed the pattern of praying three times a day, Psalm 55:16,17; Dan. 6:10. The fact that Peter is praying reveals something about the Jewish traditions he still followed even as a Christian.

Act 10:10 But he became hungry and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance;

But he became hungry and was desiring to eat;

Hungry comes from the Greek *prospeinos* (προσπεινός) and means very hungry.

This wasn't just an empty stomach, but an intense desire to be fed. There might be greater significance in this when we consider the vision Peter has, vs.11,12.

but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance;

The word trance comes from the word *ekstasis* (εκστασις), Gen. 2:21

Boles states that a trance is different from a vision in that in a trance the bodily senses are dormant or inactive, while in a vision the bodily senses are active and awake.

*Act 10:11 and he *saw the sky opened up, and an object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground,*

and he *saw the sky opened up

Luke doesn't say "he saw the clouds part." It was the sky which opened, lending to this event a heavenly view. Clearly Peter is receiving a message from God.

Act 10:12 and there were in it all kinds of four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air.

These creatures were clean and unclean, v.14

Act 10:13 A voice came to him, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat!"

Here we find a connection between Peters hunger and what he sees. Not that it was a temptation to eat unclean things, but it is a time of great hunger for him, it would be natural for him to kill and eat.

Act 10:14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean."

Once again Peters Jewish convictions hold strong and his strong personality overflows, Mark 8:31-33, John 13:8, he refuses the Lords command. Apparently he had missed Jesus' lesson on what defiles a man, Mark 7:14-19

Unclean and unholy foods were also one of the distinctions between the Jew and Gentile.

Act 10:15 Again a voice came to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy."

God had released the Jews from the ceremonial food laws when Christ died on the cross, Eph. 2:14-16. But there was greater significance than being freed from the food laws.

Act 10:16 This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into the sky.

The voice came to him three times and then the object ascended, (John 21:15, 2Cor. 12:8)

3. Peter Summoned. 10:17-23

Act 10:17 Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might be, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions for Simon's house, appeared at the gate;

Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might be.

Peter seems to come out of his trance. He knows what he saw, but does not know what it is in reference to. What was God telling him? Is it ok to eat foods that are unclean?

This would be the most sensible answer. It is not until Peter arrives at Cornelius' household that he begins to grasp what God was saying, Acts 10:28,34

behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions for Simon's house, appeared at the gate;

God's plans are perfect. The message has come to Peter and while he is trying to figure it out, the ones with the answer he is seeking show up.

Act 10:18 and calling out, they were asking whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there.

Simon who was also called Peter, to distinguish him from Simon the tanner, whose house they were now at, Acts 10:5,6

Act 10:19 While Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you.

While Peter was reflecting on the vision,

Peter is seriously considering the vision. He wants to know God's will,

the Spirit said to him "Behold, three men are looking for you.

The Spirit, refers to the Holy Spirit, see verse 20

God has work for him to do so the Spirit calls him out of his time of reflection.

Act 10:20 "But get up, go downstairs and accompany them without misgivings, for I have sent them Myself."

Peter must not hesitate in going with these people. He doesn't know them, but they have been sent by God and Peter must do as he is told. He is to walk by faith and not by sight.

We can also see God's providence at work here. As one writer puts it, *'Here, too, we may notice the working of God's providence, under whose direction Peter's thoughts and Cornelius' message meet at the same point, like men working from opposite ends of a tunnel and meeting at the same spot'* (Pulpit Commentary) - Acts 16:7-13

Act 10:21 Peter went down to the men and said, "Behold, I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for which you have come?"

It is unclear why Peter asked the reason for their coming, the Holy Spirit told him to go.

Act 10:22 They said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was divinely directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you."

Their description of Cornelius is brief and to the point. It is enough to alleviate any fears and doubts Peter might have. Although, a Jew having an association with a Gentile, even a God-fearer, is not common place. Certainly, a Jew entering the house of a Gentile would be beyond the Jew - Gentile Proselyte relationship.

Act 10:23 So he invited them in and gave them lodging. And on the next day he got up and went away with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

So he invited them in and gave them lodging.

Peter is opening himself up to the will of God. He has invited these Gentiles into the house. This is a big step in the right direction.

And on the next day he got up and went away with them,

Because it was midday Peter invites them in and they wait until the next day to leave.

and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

This seems to be something that Peter decided on his own. This is a wise decision on his part. He would have witnesses if needed, Acts 10:44,45, 11:12,13

4. Peter's reception, 10:24-33

Act 10:24 On the following day he entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends.

Cornelius understood how important Peter's message was. He wanted all who were willing to hear what was to be said, so he invites not only his family but his friends.

Act 10:25 When Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet and worshiped him.

The word for worship here is προσεκύνησεν (prosekunesen), and means a high degree of reverence and not actual worship. Cornelius understood Peter to be merely a man, but he was a man sent from God to bring a great message. Cornelius respects Peter and his work.

Act 10:26 But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am just a man."

It would seem that Peter got the wrong idea about what Cornelius was doing. Yet, at the same time he makes it clear that he is just a man not deserving of this kind of attention, Acts 14:11-15

*Act 10:27 As he talked with him, he entered and *found many people assembled.*

Act 10:28 And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean.

Even though Cornelius was a righteous man Peter understood what the traditions of his people were. It was unlawful to associate with this group.

and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean.

Peter understood the will of God was of first importance. He was not to consider the Gentiles as unclean.

Act 10:29 "That is why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for. So I ask for what reason you have sent for me."

Although Peter seems to understand that it was all right for him to be there, he did not know why he was there.

Act 10:30 Cornelius said, "Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house during the ninth hour; and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments,

*Act 10:31 and he *said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.*

Act 10:32 'Therefore send to Joppa and invite Simon, who is also called Peter, to come to you; he is staying at the house of Simon the tanner by the sea.'

Act 10:33 "So I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. Now then, we are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

Cornelius brings together all that has happened and he is now ready to receive whatever message Peter brings.

Now then, we are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

Cornelius understands that the message Peter is bringing is from God. He also believes what Peter is going to speak is by the authority of God.

5. Peter's sermon to Cornelius' household, 10:34-43

Act 10:34 Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality,

He understands this based upon two facts.

1. Even though Cornelius was a Gentile what he had been doing had been accepted by God.
2. It was the Lord who appeared to him and an angel of the Lord who appeared to Cornelius.

Note: Consider Paul's words in **Rom. 2:3-16**

Act 10:35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

Cornelius showed himself to be this kind of man, v.2,31

Notice man must **DO** what is right to be welcome to Him. Our relationship with God is not simply a matter of an acknowledgment of His existence. Belief is seen in the "man who fears Him" and the one who **DOES** what is right. God welcomes us to Him because our belief leads us to do what is right, **James 2:14-26**

Act 10:36 "The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)--

"The word which He sent to the sons of Israel

Time and again we see that the message first went to the "sons of Israel"

1. Luke 19:9,10
2. Matt. 10:5-7
3. Rom. 1:16

preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)--

The peace Peter refers to is the peace which comes through reconciliation between man and God, Rom. 5:1,8-10, Eph. 2:14-18

(He is Lord of all)-- Acts 2:36-38 - Jew and Gentile

Act 10:37 you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed.

It would seem that Cornelius and those who are with him know what had taken place with Jesus, from the beginning of His ministry.

Act 10:38 "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

"You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power

First, Peter makes clear it is Jesus of Nazareth he speaks of.

Second, Peter points out God's approval of Jesus as His anointed as seen in this act.

and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Peters mention of Jesus healing those oppressed by the devil would certainly instill in their minds that Jesus had power over the devil. His work did not just affect the physical but the spiritual as well, Heb. 2:14,15

The work of Jesus was a testimony that God was with Him, John 10:32-38

Act 10:39 "We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.

As one who came to Cornelius through the orders of an angel, Peters testimony as a witness to what Jesus did has great weight.

They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.

In proclaiming Christ one must acknowledge His death, Acts 2:22-24, 1Pet. 1:17-21

Act 10:40 "God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible,

Again there is an appeal to Gods approval of Jesus as His anointed. He is the one who raised Him up. That fact itself is the greatest testimony of who Jesus was, Rom. 1:4

Act 10:41 not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God,

Not just anyone would be trusted with being a witness to the accounts of Jesus' life and resurrection. There are those who would lie about it, Matt. 28:11-15. There were those who professed belief in Jesus but out of fear refused to fully acknowledge that belief, John 12:42

Those chosen to be witnesses were hand chosen by God and were those who were trusted to stand in defense of Jesus as the Christ, 2Pet. 1:16-19, 1Cor. 15:1-8

that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

The resurrected body of Jesus was not His glorified spiritual body, 1Cor. 15:42-44, 48-54 1John 3:2; Phil 3:20,21, but His actual physical body risen from the dead, as seen in His activities, Luke 24:36-43; John 21:1-17 (**Specifically note 12-14**).

The purpose of this was to show the power of God over life and death. Even though one die he can live, 1Cor. 15:22, as seen in the resurrected physical body of Jesus.

Act 10:42 "And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.

"And He ordered us to preach to the people,

The commanded was for Jesus' disciples to preach, (as a herald, without changing the message) to **ALL** the world, Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 1:7,8

and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.

The message consisted of Jesus' death and resurrection and the work He was appointed to do - (judge) because of who He was - (the One) and the life He lived.

In the sinless life of Jesus we see what God desires of each of us. This sinless life also established Jesus as the One able to judge, John 5:25-27; Heb. 2:14-18;

Act 10:43 "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

"Of Him all the prophets bear witness

Jesus spoke of this very thing, Luke 24:44-48

This is one of the directions Paul took when he proclaimed the message of Jesus,

Acts 13:16-41

that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

The Prophets bore witness of two things

1. The message of Jesus was offered to everyone, Jew and Gentile
2. Through His name Jew and Gentile could have forgiveness of sins, Gal. 3:26-29

All the good works of Cornelius, all the alms and prayers could not achieve forgiveness. It is only in the name of Jesus do we find forgiveness, Acts 4:12; 19:1-7. There is no other avenue, John 6:44-45; John 14:6.

6. The Holy Spirit received by the Gentiles, 10:44-46

Act 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.

the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.

The Holy spirit falling upon Cornelius and those with him is not the same as we see in Acts 2:38, but like unto Acts 2:1-4. We can say this with confidence for three reasons.

1. In Acts 2:38 the promise of the receiving of the Holy Spirit was to take place after baptism.
2. When Peter makes reference to this event he points back to Acts 2:1-4 and not to Acts 2:38 which is the first gospel sermon he preached after the day of Pentecost. (cf. Acts 10:47; 11:15; 15:8)
3. The affect of the Holy Spirit falling upon them was Speaking in tongues. This follows Acts 2:1-4, but not Acts 2:38 where it is never indicated that any miracles were being performed by those who had been baptized, Acts 2:43.

This event does fulfill the prophecy of Joel, as seen in Acts 2:17-21

1. In v.17 Joel stated that God would send His Spirit upon all mankind.
2. This had been fulfilled through the Gentiles in Acts 2:1-4 and now through the Gentiles (nations) in Acts 10:44, (Acts 11:17,18)

Act 10:45 All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

This clearly shows that this event only happened to the Gentiles.

Act 10:46 For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered,

This is how they knew that the Holy Spirit had been poured out. The result was the same as in Acts 2:1-4, but the event was slightly different, no sound of a violent rushing wind. It was this sound that drew the Jews to the apostles in the first place.

This was not needed here. All that was needed was for the Jews to know that God's plan of salvation was for the Gentiles (all mankind). Speaking in tongues accomplished that because it showed God's acceptance of them.

7. The command to be baptized, 10:47,48

Act 10:47 "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?"

Peter is making the argument that there is no reason to refuse water for these to be baptized, because they have received a divine sign testifying to God's approval and will. These people were now speaking in another language as directed by the Holy Spirit. What further proof was needed to accept these Gentiles as part of God's family?

Act 10:48 And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.

It was not suggested that they be baptized, it was commanded. They were baptized in the name of Jesus, Acts 2:38, Col. 3:17, "by the authority."

Acts Chapter 11

8. Peter's defense to the Jews, 11:1-1

Act 11:1 Now the apostles and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

Notice there is no mention of the Holy Spirit here. There should be no question that the these others heard about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but the emphasis is on the Gentiles receiving the WORD.

The conformation that the Gentiles were also to be part of God's kingdom, through the outpouring of Holy Spirit, was not as important as receiving the word, which leads to obedience.

Act 11:2 And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those who were circumcised took issue with him, those who were circumcised took issue with him,

It doesn't say these are Jewish Christians. They are referred to as simply be circumcised. But by reading further into Peters account of what happened, the indication is that they are Christians, Acts 11:18

Act 11:3 saying, "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them."

Peter is now confronted with the very issue he had brought up earlier, Acts 10:28

Note: The question might be asked, "If the apostles and brethren who were throughout Judea heard of this, why not these in Jerusalem? By the response it seems that they are not fully aware of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

These jews seem to be in a similar boat as Peter prior to his vision on the rooftop. He was still holding to many of the Jewish traditions. Those Jewish Christians in Jerusalem are refereed to as the circumcised, and this seems to establish a group still holding on to the Jewish traditions as well. There vision is still clouded as to what Jesus meant in Matt. 28:19,20.

Act 11:4 But Peter began speaking and proceeded to explain to them in orderly sequence, saying,

Act 11:5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object coming down like a great sheet lowered by four corners from the sky; and it came right down to me,

Act 11:6 and when I had fixed my gaze on it and was observing it I saw the four-footed animals of the earth and the wild beasts and the crawling creatures and the birds of the air.

Here Peter adds the phrase "wild beast," which was not in Lukes first account, Acts 10:12. Peter is just elaborating more fully on what he saw.

Act 11:7 "I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.'

Act 11:8 "But I said, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'

Again Peter elaborates beyond what Luke originally wrote, but this might be because of the audience he is speaking to.

This is reminiscent of Ezek. 4:14

Act 11:9 "But a voice from heaven answered a second time, 'What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.'

Act 11:10 "This happened three times, and everything was drawn back up into the sky.

Act 11:11 "And behold, at that moment three men appeared at the house in which we were staying, having been sent to me from Caesarea.

Act 11:12 "The Spirit told me to go with them without misgivings. These six brethren also went with me and we entered the man's house.

Peter clarifies he was not alone in this, there are other witnesses

Act 11:13 "And he reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, 'Send to Joppa and have Simon, who is also called Peter, brought here;

Act 11:14 and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.'

Peters work was simple and straight forward, go and preach the gospel. It is through the word of God that salvation has come to man, Heb. 11:1

Without these words faith cannot develop, Rom. 10:17

Without faith developing obedience will not take place, Acts 2:37,38

Act 11:15 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning.

This is in reference to Acts 2:1-4. We know this for two reasons

1. This is the only other time something like this has happened.
2. Peters comments in the next verse are connected to Acts 1:5, which points to Acts 2:1-4

Act 11:16 "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

Act 11:17 "Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"

Act 11:18 When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

The Jewish Christians make the connection between the work of the Holy Spirit in Acts 10:44-46 and this being a confirmation of God's will.

H. The Church in Antioch, 11:19-26

Act 11:19 So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.

This is pointing backwards in time, Acts 8:4, to when Paul had persecuted the church.

These went about preaching the gospel but only to the Jews. The baptism of Cornelius and his household had yet to take place.

It seems Luke does this to bring us up to speed on what takes place next.

Act 11:20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.

Those who were scattered because of Stephen's persecution made their way to Cyprus and Cyrene. It is men from these cities that who go to Antioch and preach to the Gentile population.

We know this takes place after Peter returned to Jerusalem following his visit to Cornelius because of what we read in Acts 11:22.

Remember, the circumcised in Jerusalem took issue with Peter because of he went to the Gentiles. Their view only changed after Peter's explanation. Since they send Barnabas to Antioch, Acts 11:22, it would make sense to place this after the baptism of Cornelius.

Act 11:21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.

Act 11:22 The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch.

Act 11:23 Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord;

Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God,

God's grace is witnessed in the fact that so many were living the Christian life. Antioch was a very immoral city, with prostitution worship etc.

he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord;

Becoming a Christian is just the beginning. There was a need for continued growth. This is the work of Barnabas.

Act 11:24 for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord.

Act 11:25 And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul;

Sometimes the work is too much for one man. This seems to be the case with Barnabas. With new converts come new struggles and it seems even Barnabas needed help.

Who better to get than the one who was called to be an evangelist to the Gentiles, Acts 9:15; 22:21

As well Barnabas already had a history with Saul. It was Barnabas who stood up in his defense, Acts 9:27

Act 11:26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Note: William Barclay states that about nine years had passed since Saul went to Tarsus, Acts 9:30., Lenski says it was seven or eight years.

It seems from Paul's own words that he was busy preaching the gospel during this time, Gal 1:21, Acts 15:41

Barnabas had a difficult time finding him as seen in the verb translated "to look for" in v.25. According to Moulton it means,, "is specially used of searching for human beings, with an implication of difficulty, as in the NT passages."

It is believed that Saul's statement in Phil 3:8, and that some of the suffering he endured as recorded in 2Cor. 12:2ff had taken place prior to Barnabas coming to find him, and during this absence.

I. Prophets from Jerusalem, 11:27-30

Act 11:27 Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

Act 11:28 One of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius.

One of them named Agabus

There is a possibility that this is the same man mentioned in Acts 22:10. Once again he is referred to as a prophet.

stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit

Agabus was one who had the gift of prophecy,
Eph. 4:11; 1Cor. 12:8-11

As such he had the ability to deliver the will of God, 2Pet. 2:20,21

that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius.

Four famines occurred during the time of Claudius. The second four years into his reign.

The third was in A.D. 48. The fourth took place in the eleventh year of Claudius. Many believe this famine came at the time of the fourth famine, around A.D. 47.

Josephus states; "This" says he, "is the famine foretold by Agabus."

Act 11:29 And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.

Notice, that as the people give they do so according to the proportion they have. 2Cor. 9:7; 1Cor. 16:1,2

Act 11:30 And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.

And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul

After a year of meeting with the brethren a level maturity had been reached which allowed Barnabas and Saul to leave.

to the elders.

They sent the money to those who would be in charge of how it was to be used, 1Pet. 5:1-3. (Charles Depalma notes this is the first time "elders" are mentioned in the book of Acts).

Acts Chapter 12

J. Herod's persecution of the church, 12:1-24

1. James killed, 12:1-2a

Act 12:1 Now about that time Herod the king put forth his hands to afflict certain of the church.

Herod is the grandson of Herod the Great and son of Aristobulus. He was the nephew of Herod Antipas, who beheaded John. He was also known as Agrippa.

History records that for thirty years before this there was no king in Jerusalem exercising authority over Judea, and there wasn't one afterward, except during the last three years of Herod's life. Some see this as happening about 44 A.D. (A.D. 33 is when the church was established)

This supports the historical accuracy of the text.

Act 12:2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

And he killed James the brother of John

The one of the son's of Zebedee, Matt. 20:20-23. James did drink the cup Jesus spoke of.

James is the first apostle martyred. Except for Judas, (Acts 1:16-26) the Apostles were never replaced upon their death.

with the sword.

By killing with the sword we are to understand beheading. Among the Jews there were four kinds of deaths:

1. Stoning;
2. burning;
3. killing with the sword, or beheading; and,
4. strangling.

The third was a Roman as well as a Jewish mode of punishment. Killing with the sword was the punishment which, according to the Talmud, was inflicted on those who drew away the people to any strange worship, Sanhedr. fol. iii. James was probably accused of this, and hence the punishment mentioned in the text. (Clarke)

2. Peter imprisoned, 12:2b-5

Act 12:3 And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. And those were the days of unleavened bread.

And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also.

Either Herod liked the fact that what he did calmed the Jews or he was a man with an ego. Either way he goes after an apostle who has stood out in the crowd.

And those were the days of unleavened bread.

Somewhere in March or April

Act 12:4 And when he had taken him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to guard him; intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people.

And when he had taken him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to guard him;

Four quaternions is four companies of four. This is sixteen soldiers. This corresponds with the four watches assigned to the soldiers.

So, Peter was taken to prison, when no crime was committed.

intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people.

For those who use the KJV” The term Easter, inserted here by our translators, they borrowed from the ancient Anglo-Saxon service-books, or from the version of the Gospels, which always translates the Greek by this term; e.g. Matt. 26:2.

This is a very poor translation of this word.

Act 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in the prison: but prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him.

While Peter is taken to a place where little good exists, the church went to God on his behalf. (1Thess. 5:17; James 5:16; 1Pet. 3:11,12; 1John 3:11, 5:14)

3. Peter delivered from Herod, 12:6-11

Act 12:6 And when Herod was about to bring him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and guards before the door kept the prison.

Herod wanted to make sure that no trick was going to be played. This was also the common way of guarding a prisoner.

Act 12:7 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the cell: and he smote Peter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

Although Herod took precautions, God had other plans.

Act 12:8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

Act 12:9 And he went out, and followed; and he knew not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision.

Peter thinks that what he is following is a vision or a dream.

Act 12:10 And when they were past the first and the second guard, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city; which opened to them of its own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him.

And when they were past the first and the second guard

Clarke writes: It is supposed that ancient Jerusalem was surrounded by three walls: if so, then passing through the gates of these three walls successively is possibly what is meant by the expression in the text. The prison in which he was confined might have been that which was at the outer wall.

But as Jamieson, Fausset suggest, *We can only conjecture the precise meaning of all this, not knowing the position of the prison.*

they came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city; which opened to them of its own accord:

This is the gate to the inner city and as such would have been bolted securely. But this gate opens on it's own.

and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him.

The work of the angel was limited. The angel was to get Peter out of prison and to safety. Once this was accomplished he was no longer needed.

Act 12:11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a truth, that the Lord hath sent forth his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

Peter finally comes to his senses and proclaims the work of God in his life. He acknowledged that God not only delivered him from Herod, but the Jewish people as well.

4. Peter at Mary's house, 12:12-19

Act 12:12 And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark,

It's possible that Mary is spoken of as the mother of Mark, to help identify who this is.

where many were gathered together and were praying.

Acts 12:5 - Here is the group praying for Peter.

Act 12:13 When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer.

Act 12:14 When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate.

When she recognized Peter's voice,

It is clear that Rhoda knew Peter.

because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate.

Act 12:15 They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, "It is his angel."

They said to her, "You are out of your mind!"

As far as they are concerned, there is no way Peter could have escaped his imprisonment.

But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, "It is his angel."

The Jews believed that each individual had their own guardian angel. It is likely this is what they are referring to, Matt. 18:10, Heb. 1:14

Act 12:16 But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed.

We are not told what the brethren had been praying for in regards to Peter, but if it was for his delivery they seem to have not really believed it would happen.

Act 12:17 But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had led him out of the prison. And he said, "Report these things to James and the brethren." Then he left and went to another place.

James here is the Lord's brother, who is a leading figure of the church in Jerusalem, Gal. 1:19

Act 12:18 Now when day came, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers as to what could have become of Peter.

All that had happened the night before went undiscovered until the next day.

Act 12:19 When Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away to execution. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and was spending time there.

When Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away to execution.

The word examined means “to sift up and down, to question thoroughly.” No stone was left unturned, and as according to Roman law punishment was handed out to those who had charge over the escaped prisoner, Acts 16:22-30; Acts 27:41-44.

5. Herod’s death, 12:20-24

Act 12:20 Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; and with one accord they came to him, and having won over Blastus the king's chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by the king's country.

Whatever the cause of Herod's anger we are not told, but it led him to cut off the delivery of food goods to these people. They, having befriended the Kings chamberlain, or one over his bedchamber, came asking for peace.

Act 12:21 On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them.

What this refers to, we learn from Josephus. “Herod, having reigned three years over All Judea, (he had reigned over the tetrarchy of his brother Philip four years before this), went down to Caesarea, and there exhibited shows and games in honor of Claudius, and made vows for his health. On the second day of these shows, he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture most truly wonderful, and came into the theater early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the first reflection of the sun’s rays, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those who looked intently upon him; and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another, ‘He is a god:’ and they added, ‘Be thou merciful to us, for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.’ Nor did the king rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But, looking up, he saw an owl on a certain rope over his head, and immediately conceived that this bird was to him a messenger of ill tidings; and he fell into the deepest sorrow; a severe pain also arose in his bowels, and he died after five days’ severe illness.” This is the sum of the account given by Josephus, Ant. lib. xix. cap. 8, sect. 2.

Act 12:22 The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!"

Those that he was angry with now offered him the praise offered to God. It seems Herod, in his arrogance, was more than willing to receive this praise.

Act 12:23 And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory,

Because Herod took for himself the glory which belonged to God he was struck by the Lord.

and he was eaten by worms and died.

Boles writes: "Worm is from the Greek "skolex" and was used of "intestinal worms."

The use of this word is in agreement with what Josephus wrote about the death of Herod. "a severe pain also arose in his bowels, and he died after five days' severe illness."

It has been recorded that Herod died in 44 A.D.

Act 12:24 But the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied.

Even though Herod had tried to stop the work of the Lord by beheading James and imprisoning Peter, His work not only continued it increased. In the Greek language this is the idea of a very rapid increase.

III. Acts of Paul (and others): (12:25-28:31)

1. In Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece, 12:25-21:17

A. First missionary journey, 12:25-14:28

1. The call at Antioch, 12:25-13:3

Act 12:25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their mission, taking along with them John, who was also called Mark.

And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their mission,

When we last saw Barnabas and Saul they were in Antioch where they were assisting in the growth and maturity of the church, Acts 11:25,26

Agabus had come from Jerusalem and prophesied about the coming famine and the brethren in Antioch sent them to Jerusalem with the funds contributed by, Acts 11:27-30

taking along with them John, who was also called Mark.

It now appears they have returned to Antioch, Acts 13:1, having carried out the work they were sent to do. On their return trip they bring with them John who is also called Mark. This is the son of Mary, Acts 12:12, into whose house Peter had gone after he had escaped from prison. Mark was also a cousin of Barnabas, Col. 4:10.

Acts Chapter 13

Act 13:1 Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers:

There is a distinction between these two groups. Prophets involve the work of the Holy Spirit, while teacher is simply one who is fitted to teach. All prophets are teachers but not all teachers are prophets. (All judges are lawyers, but not all lawyers are judges)

Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Luke mentions five men. Two are Barnabas and Saul who have returned from their ministry in Jerusalem, Acts 11:27-30; 12:25.

The other three are fellow workers for the Lord. It is possible that Lucius was one of the men who first went to Antioch to preach the gospel, being from Cyrene, Acts 11:20.

Manaen was from the upper class. The phrase “brought up with” literally means “nourished with.” H. Leo Boles claims it refers to one who was a “foster-brother.” Regardless, Manaen was brought up with Herod the tetrarch, ((Herod Antipas, the one who had John beheaded, Matt. 14:1) a governor of the fourth part of a region). (See handout “The Herodian Dynasty”)

Act 13:2 While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting,

They were doing the work of the Lord as they ministered. Coupled with this was the act of fasting. This was something done when elders were appointed, Acts 14:23. Fasting, for the Christian, is a voluntary act, and done as an act of reverent dependence.

the Holy Spirit said,

A key verse indicating the personage of the Holy Spirit.

"Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

The phrase "set apart" indicates both urgency and specific purpose.

Also note the Holy Spirit speaks of the work He has called them to. Considering John 16:12-15 does this indicate anything about the Holy Spirit being part of the Godhead?

Act 13:3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

They once again fast and pray seeking Gods favor in what they are doing. The purpose for laying hands on Barnabas and Saul is not given. There are many views as to why this happened, all speculative since there is no clear pattern or command for the church to continue this practice.

2. Preaching in Cyprus, 13:4-12

Act 13:4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit,

Luke makes it clear that Barnabas and Saul were not sent out by those in Antioch. The Holy Spirit had a work for them and it was He who sent them.

they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus

It would seem that the Holy Spirit guided them in this direction since He called them to this specific work. Seleucia is about 16 miles from Antioch From here they go to the island of Cyprus about one hundred miles southwest.

It is possible that they were sent here first because this field had already been prepared for further evangelism, Acts 11:19.

Act 13:5 When they reached Salamis, they began to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John as their helper.

When they reached Salamis,

Salamis is on the eastern side of Cyprus and was the nearest port to Antioch.

they began to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews;

Upon their arrival they began they work they were sent to do, proclaim the word of God.

Although Saul was called to work with the Gentiles, Acts 9:15, he was first sent to the Jews by the Holy Spirit. The reason for this is seen in Rom. 1:16; Acts 13:46; 3:25,26.

and they also had John as their helper.

This is John Mark, Barnabas' cousin, Acts 12:25.

Act 13:6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a magician, a Jewish false prophet whose name was Bar-Jesus,

When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos,

Paphos is the capital of Cyprus and is southwest of Salamis on the other end the island, which is about one hundred fifty miles long and sixty miles wide. It seems there was a large population of Jews on this island and thus several synagogues (plural).

they found a magician,

A magus: the name given by the Babylonians (Chaldeans), Medes, Persians, and others, to the wise men, teachers, priests, physicians, astrologers, seers, interpreters of dreams, augers, soothsayers, sorcerers etc. (Thayer).

Same word used for the “magi” mentioned in Matt. 2:1,7

a Jewish false prophet whose name was Bar-Jesus,

This man, whose name is Elymas, v.8, (which is Arabic and means “wise man”) was a Jew who apparently made claims about being a prophet of God. Here Luke clarifies that he was a false prophet. In some ways he appears to be like Simon in Acts 8:9,10.

Act 13:7 who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence.

Elymas had some influence or working relationship with Sergius Paulus who was a Roman official, a senatorial governor.

This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

His intelligence resulted in him summoning Barnabas and Saul so he might hear the word of God.

Act 13:8 But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

Luke reveals something important about what Elymas was doing in opposing Saul. On the surface it would appear that he was just trying to keep from losing his position with Sergius Paulus. But Luke clarifies that his actions were actually an attempt to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith.

Act 13:9 But Saul, who was also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze on him,
But Saul, who was also known as Paul,

Here we have the first and only time Saul's Hebrew name and Latin name (Paul) are used together. From this point on Luke will refer to him as Paul, unless as Boles states, he is referring to Saul's work prior to this point, 22:7; 23:13; 26:14.

filled with the Holy Spirit,

To be filled with the Holy Spirit, here, involves miraculous ability, Acts 13:11. (cf. Acts 2:4; 4:8; 4:31; 9:17).

fixed his gaze on him,

From the context this seems to be a glaring look of indignation from Paul. Consider the words which follow.

Act 13:10 and said, "You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord?"

and said, "You who are full of all deceit and fraud,

Paul makes it clear that whatever Elymas was doing, there was no truth in it at all.

Deceit = to catch with bait.

Fraud = ease in doing

Elymas had no problem being the kind of deceitful person he was.

you son of the devil,

His actions are like unto his fathers, the devil, John 8:44. He is certainly not a son of God.

you enemy of all righteousness,

All his actions, including his attempt to turn the proconsul away from the faith he showed he was an enemy of righteous.

will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord?

To make crooked is to distort, turn aside, to oppose, plot against the saving purposes and plans of God (Thayer).

NOTE: This is one of the strongest rebukes we have in the Bible. Paul pulls no punches when it comes to silencing the evil work of Elymas.

Act 13:11 "Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time." And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand.

Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time."

Paul makes sure that all recognize that what is about to happen is from the hand of the Lord.

And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand.

There is no delay in Paul's curse taking affect. Considering that a soul was on the verge of being turned away from the truth something had to take place immediately. The blindness might be something that happened to give Elymas time to think and repent. (Remember Saul's blindness - Acts 9:8,9)

Act 13:12 Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened, being amazed at the teaching of the Lord.

The word is preached and confirmed by this miracle, as a result Sergius Paulus believes.

3. Galatia region, 13:13-14:28

a. Antioch in Pisidia, 13:13-52

(1) In the Synagogue, 13:13-15

Act 13:13 Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia;

In the past Luke had mentioned Barnabas' name before Saul, (Acts 11:30; 12:25; 13:1,7). From this point on, and now referring to Saul as Paul - he also places his name first, (Acts 13:42,43,46,50; 15:2,22,35) This might be because it was Paul who worked the miracle on Elymas.

but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

John Mark returns to the city of his mother, but we are not told why left. We do know his actions did not sit well with Paul, Acts 15:36-39.

The reason for his leaving upset Paul enough that he was willing to part with Barnabas over the issue, and Barnabas and Paul were fellow workers in the Lord, Acts 9:26,27; 11:22-26, 30; 12:25

Act 13:14 But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.

But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch,

They landed in Perga and proceeded through the rough mountainous region to Pisidian Antioch. Antioch is mentioned this way to distinguish it from Antioch in Syria, from which Paul began his journey. It is a Roman colony with a large population of Jews.

and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.

As we have seen, although Paul's work was to the Gentiles, when he found a place to preach the Gospel, he did.

Act 13:15 After the reading of the Law and the Prophets the synagogue officials sent to them, saying, "Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it."

After the reading of the Law and the Prophets the synagogue officials sent to them,

The synagogue officials had the responsibility of selecting those who would be doing the reading and speaking, Luke 13:14.

saying, "Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it."

It seems that they knew of Saul's past, being a student of Gamaliel. They would not call upon someone they knew nothing about.

(2) Paul's sermon, 13:16-41

Act 13:16 Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen:

This is natural born Jews and religious proselytes

Act 13:17 "The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it.

Paul begins his sermon like Stephen did in Acts 7:2-53, with a history of how God has dealt with His people.

Act 13:18 "For a period of about forty years He put up with them in the wilderness.

"For a period of about forty years

The period before they entered into the promised land.

He put up with them in the wilderness.

To bear one's manner, endure one's character- (Thayer)

Clarke - He dealt indulgently with them: howsoever they behaved towards him, he mercifully bore with, and kindly treated them.

Paul is saying God took care of His people as one would nurse their child, (Ex. 16:35; Deut 8:16)

Act 13:19 "When He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land as an inheritance--all of which took about four hundred and fifty years.

"When He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan,

This is after the death of Moses when Joshua led the children of Israel into the land of Canaan.

The seven nations were the, Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jubsites.

He distributed their land as an inheritance--all of which took about four hundred and fifty years.

"For about four hundred and fifty years" is an expression that has caused much trouble with commentators. It is difficult to harmonize the chronological dates. It is not clear when the four hundred fifty years begin or when they end; this complicates the interpretation of the "four hundred and fifty years." In 1 Kings 6: 1 it is stated that Solomon began building the temple in the four hundred eightieth year after the exodus from Egypt. Paul here reckons the time as follows: wanderings in the wilderness (verse 18), forty years; under the judges (verse 20), four hundred fifty years;

reign of Saul (verse 21), forty years; total, five hundred fifty years. To this total we must add the entire reign of David (forty years) and the first three years of the reign of Solomon to get to the time when the building of the temple was begun. Therefore, adding these forty-three years, the entire period of time amounts to five hundred seventy-three years. There is a discrepancy between the five hundred seventy-three years based on Paul's reckoning and the four hundred eighty years referred to in Kings - a difference of ninety-three years. However, this is accounted for by the fact that ninety-three years must be subtracted, as there are ninety-three blank years as recorded in the book of Judges. In Num. 6: 12 the Nazirite lost time if he did not comply with the law, so Israel when not ruled by the judges was ruled by foreign nations. (*Judges 3: 8, 14; 4: 3; 6: 1; 13:1.*) This amounts to ninety-three years, which makes the calculation correspond to the figures as given by other writers. (H. Leo Boles, Commentary on Acts of the Apostles)

NOTE: Judges 3: 8 (8yrs), 14 (18yrs); 4: 3 (20yrs); 6: 1 (7yrs); 13:1 (40yrs) = 93yrs

Act 13:20 "After these things He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.

Act 13:21 "Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.

This was an act of rebellion on their part - 1Sam. 8:4-9

Act 13:22 "After He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.'

Act 13:23 "From the descendants of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus,

Paul brings the promises of the past to rest upon Jesus

This was according to the promise given by God, 2Sam. 7:12-17 (Acts 13:36; Heb. 1:5); Psalm 132:11; Isa 11:1,10; Jer. 23:5,6.

Act 13:24 after John had proclaimed before His coming a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

The promises given by God in the OT find their fulfillment in the NT, John being the forerunner of Christ proclaiming those promises.

Mark 1:4 - looking forward to forgiveness (Heb. 9:13-17)

John was proclaiming this because the kingdom was at hand, Matt. 3:1-3

Forgiveness of sins came with that kingdom, Matt. 1:21

Act 13:25 "And while John was completing his course, he kept saying, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not He. But behold, one is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.'

John's work was to point the people in the direction of the Christ, Jesus. He does so by showing that Jesus is much greater than he,

Act 13:26 "Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.

Paul makes clear what John was preaching - it was a message of salvation.

Act 13:27 "For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him.

The problem was not the message but the fact that the people did not recognize that message, even though the Christ was read about every Sabbath.

Why did they not recognize this? Mark 7:3-8

fulfilled these by condemning Him.

Their inability to recognize Jesus and the utterances of the prophets led to the fulfilling of God's will, Acts 2:22-24

Act 13:28 "And though they found no ground for putting Him to death, they asked Pilate that He be executed.

Paul testifies to the guiltless condition of Jesus, 1Pet. 1:18,19 and the hardened hearts of the Jews, Matt. 26:59,60

Act 13:29 "When they had carried out all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb.

Paul moves very quickly from the Jews carrying out what was prophesied - to Jesus' death on the cross, burial and resurrection from the dead. He does not go into specific detail about what Jesus went through, although the things written concerning Him, which they carried out covers that, Isa. 53:1ff

Act 13:30 "But God raised Him from the dead;

In this one act is the fullest proof of who Jesus is, Rom. 1:1-4

Act 13:31 and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people.

Jesus resurrection from the dead was not something that was hidden and hearsay. He made it very clear that he had risen from the dead, 1Cor. 15:4-8; John 20:19-21ff

Act 13:32 "And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers,

The good news is the gospel of Jesus, Rom. 1:16,17. God promised that He would bless all families of the earth through the seed of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:18).

Jesus is the seed who fulfilled this promise (Gal 3:16,19).

This blessing involves all mankind turning from sin, Acts 3:25,26.

Act 13:33 that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'YOU ARE MY SON; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU.'

This is a quote from Psalm 2:7 which predicted the resurrection of Jesus.

Act 13:34 "As for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: 'I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY and SURE blessings OF DAVID.'

Isa. 55:3; 2Sam. 7:15,17

Act 13:35 "Therefore He also says in another Psalm, 'YOU WILL NOT ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.'

Act 13:36 "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay;

Act 13:37 but He whom God raised did not undergo decay.

This is very similar to Peters words in Acts 2:25-36

Paul is focusing on the fact that Jesus was raised never to die again according to Gods promises.

Act 13:38 "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,

Because of these things forgiveness of sins is proclaimed

1. A sinless Christ was nailed to the cross
2. God raised Him from the dead
3. In this act was the proof that Jesus was Gods son.
4. In Him was the fulfillment that all nations would be blessed

Act 13:39 and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.

Moving beyond Abraham and David, Paul moves to the law of Moses. Here he is laying the ground work for moving mankind away from a law which could not free him from sin,

Heb. 10:1-10

Act 13:40 "Therefore take heed, so that the thing spoken of in the Prophets may not come upon you:

Act 13:41 'BEHOLD, YOU SCOFFERS, AND MARVEL, AND PERISH; FOR I AM ACCOMPLISHING A WORK IN YOUR DAYS, A WORK WHICH YOU WILL NEVER BELIEVE, THOUGH SOMEONE SHOULD DESCRIBE IT TO YOU.'"

This a quote from Hab. 1:5. Just like there was a blessing in believing in Jesus there is punishment in rejecting Him, just like there was for those who rejected God in the past.

(3) Its effect, 13:42-52

Act 13:42 As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath.

Act 13:43 Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God.

Act 13:44 The next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of the Lord.

Act 13:45 But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming.

As with Jesus, the Jews do not like what they see and what it means to them, Matt. 27:18.

Act 13:46 Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.

They are unworthy because they reject the Christ as the means of salvation, yet the message was to them first, Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16,17.

Act 13:47 "For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.'"

In quoting Isa. 49:6 Paul shows that God's plan of salvation was meant for all mankind, not just the Jews. This was a command of the Lord.

Act 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord;

To the Gentiles God will for them was accepted and it brought joy.

and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

Some have used this to promote the Calvinistic doctrine of unconditional salvation, but consider the following...

This text has been most pitifully misunderstood. Many suppose that it simply means that those in that assembly who were fore-ordained; or predestinated by God's decree, to eternal life, believed under the influence of that decree. Now, we should be careful to examine what a word means, before we attempt to fix its meaning. Whatever τεταγμενοι tetagmenoi, may mean, which is the word we translate ordained, it is neither προτεταγμενοι protetagmenoi, nor, προορισμενοι proorismenoi which the apostle uses, but simply τεταγμενοι tetagmenoi, which includes no idea of pre-ordination or pre-destination of any kind. And if it even did, it would be rather hazardous to say that all those who believed at this time were such as actually persevered unto the end, and were saved unto eternal life. But, leaving all these precarious matters, what does the word τεταγμενος mean? The verb ταττω or τασσω signifies to place, set, order, appoint, dispose; hence it has been considered here as implying the disposition or readiness of mind of several persons in the congregation, such as the religious proselytes mentioned Act_13:43, who possessed the reverse of the disposition of those Jews who spake against those things, contradicting and blaspheming, Act_13:45. Though the word in this place has been variously translated, yet, of all the meanings ever put on it, none agrees worse with its nature and known signification than that which represents it as intending those who were predestinated to eternal life: this is no meaning of the term, and should

never be applied to it. Let us, without prejudice, consider the scope of the place: the Jews contradicted and blasphemed; the religious proselytes heard attentively, and received the word of life: the one party were utterly indisposed, through their own stubbornness, to receive the Gospel; the others, destitute of prejudice and prepossession, were glad to hear that, in the order of God, the Gentiles were included in the covenant of salvation through Christ Jesus; they, therefore, in this good state and order of mind, believed.

Those who seek for the plain meaning of the word will find it here: those who wish to make out a sense, not from the Greek word, its use among the best Greek writers, and the obvious sense of the evangelist, but from their own creed, may continue to puzzle themselves and others; kindle their own fire, compass themselves with sparks, and walk in the light of their own fire, and of the sparks which they have kindled; and, in consequence, lie down in sorrow, having bidden adieu to the true meaning of a passage so very simple, taken in its connection, that one must wonder how it ever came to be misunderstood and misapplied. (Clarke)

From Charlie DePalmma (WVBS)

First, let us notice the immediate context.

a. In :46 Paul rebuked the Jews and said that they were guilty of rejecting the word of God.

(1). In other words, the Jews were responsible for their own guilt in rejecting the word of God.

(2). That is true because the Jews had a choice to accept or to reject the word of the Lord (Cf. 1 Kgs 18:21; Josh 24:15).

(3). When they chose on their own to reject the word of God, they "judged themselves unworthy of eternal life".

(4). Thus, we can see clearly that God did not arbitrarily and unconditionally choose those Jews for eternal punishment.

(5). Instead, they made the choice themselves and God through Paul held them responsible for their unfortunate choice.

b. In just the same manner the Gentiles in :48 had a choice to make when they heard the word of God.

- (1). They also could have chosen to accept or reject it.
- (2). Fortunately, they were glad to hear that word and chose to believe it, and glorify it.
- (3). They even begged to hear more of the word of God!
- (4). Thus, in contrast with the Jews in :46, these Gentiles accepted God's word rather than rejecting it!
- (5). And, as we have seen in earlier studies, accepting God's word includes obeying it (cf. Heb 5:9).
- (6). When the Gentiles made that choice, they were appointed to eternal life, as long as they remained faithful to the Lord unto death (Rev 2:10)!

c. From these two verses in this context, it can be seen clearly that God did not arbitrarily and unconditionally choose the Gentiles to receive eternal life.

- (1). Rather, the Gentiles freely chose to accept God's word.
- (2). The result of their obedience was eternal life, with the condition that they remained faithful unto death.

d. On the other hand, the Jews described in :46 freely chose to reject God's word.

- (1). The result of their disobedience was eternal damnation, unless they repented and obeyed the Lord before they died.

Act 13:49 And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region.

Act 13:50 But the Jews incited the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district.

Act 13:51 But they shook off the dust of their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium.

Mark 6:11 - A testimony against them.

Act 13:52 And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

In spite of persecution, the church was still filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

Acts Chapter 14

b. Iconium, 14:1-7

Act 14:1 In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks.

In Iconium

After departing Antioch Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas travel South East to Iconium

they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks.

It is important to note that those who believed did so because of the message spoken, and by some direct operation of the Holy Spirit. See Acts 2:37, Rom. 10:17, John 20:30,31. The emphasis is upon the “manner” in which they spoke.

Act 14:2 But the Jews who disbelieved stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and embittered them against the brethren.

We are not told what was said, but it was powerful enough to get the Gentiles on the side of the Jews.

Act 14:3 Therefore they spent a long time there speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who was testifying to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands.

Therefore they spent a long time there speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord,

Although the work was difficult they did not give up. There were souls who wanted to hear the truth. Their strength to continue came from the Lord, Phil. 4:13.

who was testifying to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands.

This is a key passage in understanding the purpose of the miracles. The Lord was testifying to the word of His grace through the signs and wonders being done.

In other words, it was the word, which was intended to bring about obedience. The miracles followed the word as a way of establishing what was being taught. We see this many times within the Scriptures, Mark 16:20; Acts 2:22, 8:4-6; Heb. 2:1-4;

Act 14:4 But the people of the city were divided; and some sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles.

Even with signs and wonders taking place there were some who simply would not believe and so is the case today, Matt. 10:34-42.

Note: In this passage Barnabas is referred to as an apostle, but we have no record of him being an apostle as Paul. What is the answer?

1. The word translated "apostle" (αποστολοις) in the New Testament was used in several different ways.
2. The word literally means: *a messenger, one sent on a mission, an apostle*
3. In Luke 6:13 it refers to those chosen by Jesus to do a specific work, the twelve.
4. The word is also used in a general sense in reference to those sent out to do some work for the church, Phil. 2:25;
5. In 2Cor. 11:13 it even refers to false apostles.

Because we have no record of Barnabas being appointed as an Apostle in the specific sense, Acts 1:21-26 and by considering the context of Acts 14:4, this word is used in the general sense.

Act 14:5 And when an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and the Jews with their rulers, to mistreat and to stone them,

It wasn't enough to disagree with them they wanted to harm them for what they were teaching.

Act 14:6 they became aware of it and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the surrounding region;

Act 14:7 and there they continued to preach the gospel.

Whatever problems they faced, they did not stop preaching the gospel. They were dedicated to the cause of Christ, Acts 4:17-20; 5:27-29.

c. Lystra and Derbe, 14:8-20

Act 14:8 At Lystra a man was sitting who had no strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked.

At Lystra a man was sitting who had no strength in his feet,

The phrase “no strength” means without strength, unable to do, powerless.

lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked.

To further establish the condition of this man we are told he was “lame” from his mother’s womb and that he had never walked. He had no muscular strength in his feet.

Act 14:9 This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who, when he had fixed his gaze on him and had seen that he had faith to be made well,

This man was listening to Paul as he spoke,

The lame man was sitting close enough to Paul that heard the message being spoken.

who, when he had fixed his gaze on him and had seen that he had faith to be made well,

Some have seen in the passage the means to prove that miracles only take place when one has faith. But, as we have seen in Acts 3:9-11 the lame man there showed no faith and was healed. The same can be said about Lazarus, John 11

Some believe this is probably mentioned here to show that Paul's healing was a reward for his faith, not that he needed faith to be healed, Matt. 8:5-13.

Act 14:10 said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and began to walk.

Speaking in a loud voice was probably used to gather attention for what was about to take place. Upon His command the man immediately leaped up. There was no delay in the healing, Acts 3:2,7-9

Act 14:11 When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us."

This passage is clear; the people knew that the lame man was now healed through Paul.

The people there believed in a legend by Publius Ovidius Naso (20 March 43 BC – AD 17 or 18, known as Ovid in the English-speaking world that the gods had once visited their district. By AD 8, he had completed *Metamorphoses*, an epic poem derived from Greek mythology. The subject is "forms changed into new bodies". From the emergence of the cosmos from formless mass to the organized, material world, to the deification of Julius Caesar, the poem tells of transformation. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ovid>)

Act 14:12 And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.

The problem was, they saw Paul and Barnabas as Greek gods. Zeus is the King of the gods. Hermes was the son of Zeus. His position was one of a messenger or herald of the gods.

Act 14:13 The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.

The sacrifice of animals to the Greek gods was a common practice. In Olympia Greece there was an alter to Zeus made of ash from the accumulated remains of many centuries' worth of animals sacrificed there.

Act 14:14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out

Although the people have accepted the miracle they have misplaced their admiration, and devotion, and Paul and Barnabas seek to stop this.

Act 14:15 and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM.

Act 14:16 "In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways;

Act 14:17 and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."

Brother Charlie DePalmma list the arguments presented by Paul to persuade the people of Lystra from worshipping them as gods.

a. :15 Paul and Barnabas were just men who had the same nature as those in Lystra, i.e., they were not gods.

b. :15 Their message to the people of Lystra was that they should turn from the worship of such vain things as idols and men and turn to the one true and living God (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9).

c. :15 They described that one true and living God as the creator of heaven, earth, the sea, and all things in them (cf. Rom 1:18-25).

d. :16 God allowed men the freedom to choose how they lived and whom they worshiped.

e. :17 However, God left plenty of evidence that He was the one true and living God whom men were (and are) obligated to worship!

f. :17 That evidence included the following:

- (1). He did good.
- (2). He gave men rain from heaven and fruitful seasons.
- (3). With such wonderful blessings He filled men's hearts with food and gladness!

Act 14:18 Even saying these things, with difficulty they restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them.

Regardless of the truth taught or evidences given people believe what they want

Act 14:19 But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium,

These are the same groups that persuaded them to attack Paul and Barnabas before, Acts 13:14,50,51; 14:1,4,5

and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

How quickly a crowd is turned. They went from wanting to worship Paul to trying to kill him. If people don't get what they want they can react in the worst of ways. This also shows the influence the Jews had over the people. The work of the Christians was not easy. Paul speaks of this event later in life, 2Tim. 3:10,11

Note: It is possible they attacked Paul because he "attacked" their gods as "frauds". Do not people do this when they are told their beliefs are not in line with the Scriptures?

Act 14:20 But while the disciples stood around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day he went away with Barnabas to Derbe.

There is a miraculous flavor to Paul's healing. They had stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, but he got up and went back into the city! He stayed there a full night and then left for Derbe. Both Paul and Barnabas loved the Lord dearly and were dedicated to His work, no matter what, 2Cor. 11:23-33.

Note: It's very possible Timothy witnessed this event, Acts 16:1. Timothy was one Paul had converted, 1Cor. 4:17; 2Tim. 1:2

d. Return, 14:21-28

Act 14:21 After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,

The reception in Derbe is different from Lystra. We see no confrontation and many disciples were made. Also note that Paul and Barnabas did not stop the work they were sent to do because of the persecution they faced. They went back through their previous destinations where they had been persecuted and encouraged the disciples.

Act 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

Paul and Barnabas are fully aware of the tribulations they face as they preach the kingdom. What happened to them is an example of what all Christians face in one form or another, 1Pet. 2:21; 4:1,13 – This is why we see the strengthening and encouraging of the disciples. A Christian will enter that eternal kingdom after much struggle because they are hated by the world.

Since they are already in the kingdom, Col. 1:13, what is Paul speaking of? He is referring to the kingdom after judgment, 1Cor. 15:23,24,50. As Lenski states, "*here the cross, yonder the crown.*"

Act 14:23 When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

When they had appointed elders for them in every church,

The word appoint – χειροτονεω – cheirotoneo – originally meant to “stretch out the hand,” and was used in reference to a vote taking place, 2Cor. 8:19. The oldest sense of the word was simply a selection. This may be the case here since, “*they had appointed elders **for** them.*”

However it was done they would have met the requirements in 1Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 as given by the Holy Spirit, Acts 20:28

It is clear that more than one man was appointed as an elder, because they appointed elders (plural) and that every church had its own set of elders.

having prayed with fasting,

The seriousness of what they were doing is seen in their actions of prayer and fasting. A serious time of contemplation regarding the ones appointed.

they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Once the men were appointed they were commended to the Lord. The word commended means, “to give into the hands (of another). Thayer. They were not given into the hands of the people but of the Lord. He rules over them and uses them as He see’s fit.

Act 14:24 They passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia.

Act 14:25 When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

Paul and Barnabas are moving in a southerly direction, moving away from where they had been. They are backtracking and hitting some places they had not previously been, ie.. Attalia, while encouraging those places they had been.

Act 14:26 From there they sailed to Antioch, from which they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had accomplished.

They have come full circle and returned from whence they had left, Acts 13:2

Act 14:27 When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they began to report all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

When they had arrived and gathered the church together,

They group that had sent them out by orders of the Holy Spirit was now called together to hear about the work He had accomplished through them.

they began to report all things that God had done with them.

Paul and Barnabas would have spoken of both the success and struggles they faced and how God saw them through it all.

and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

This open door was not closed because of the persecutions they faced. It remained open because disciples were made. Now more souls could be won for the Lord. Can the same thing be said about individuals who have come to the Lord? Do they become an open door to others?

Act 14:28 And they spent a long time with the disciples.

As to the conclusion of their first missionary journey consider the words of brother H. Leo Boles,

“Of the six hundred four miles from Antioch in Syria to Derbe two hundred forty miles were made by water. The return journey was about the same distance, which would make twelve hundred eight miles; this was a long journey at that time with the ancient modes of travel. Paul and Barnabas had traveled the twelve hundred eight miles and had established more than half a dozen churches within the two or three years that they were gone on this journey.”

Acts Chapter 15

B. Jerusalem council, 15:1-35

1. The controversy, 15:1-5

Act 15:1 Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren,

There is no clear indication that these men are Christians, but the situation and subsequent letter states they are, v.24. Yet, Paul refers to them as false brethren, in Gal. 2:4.

"Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

This is the first part of the controversy. The Gentiles were being told that they needed to be circumcised or they could not be saved. Thus circumcision becomes a requirement of salvation. But those in Antioch had already been saved, Acts 11:20-21, and the message of salvation they received never included circumcision, Matt. 28:19,20, Acts 2:38. When the Gentiles were brought into the faith they were never commanded too be circumcised, Acts 10:44-48, Acts 11:15-18.

Act 15:2 And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.

Paul and Barnabas understood that circumcision and other aspects of the Law of Moses were no longer valid. As an inspired apostle what Paul taught in conversion was inspired of God and God never included circumcision, 1Cor. 14:37. They opposed these brethren vehemently because they had no authority to require circumcision as a requirement for salvation. As well, at this point we are now at least 17 years from the time of Paul's conversion, Gal. 1:18, 2:1, and he never taught circumcision as a part of salvation.

NOTE: Why did the brethren seek out additional council to settle this dispute? Was not Paul an inspired apostle? Gal. 2:1-3

Act 15:3 Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren.

It is interesting to consider that they were “describing in detail” the conversion of the Gentiles. While they were headed to Jerusalem they were speaking to the brethren in Phoenicia and Samaria about what God had done. In their description they never would have included circumcision.

Act 15:4 When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.

Act 15:5 But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses."

Even though the church, the apostles, and the elders received them, there were those Pharisees who not only held the same view as those from Judea, they believed complete obedience to the Law of Moses was required.

2. The conference, 15:6-21

a. The gathering, 15:6,7a

Act 15:6 The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.

It seems that a private discussion took place over this matter. Might this give us some insights into how we conduct certain matters?

Act 15:7 After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them,

It is interesting to note that although Paul went to Jerusalem by revelation, no revelation was given as a solution to the problem. There is no indication that the word's of Peter, which follow, and provide a solution come through revelation.

Although, what is written in the book of Acts is inspired, that doesn't mean the events were. For example, Peter often said things that although recorded by inspiration, were not spoken by revelation, Matt. 26:30-35

The point is; we shouldn't expect God to give us some divine revelation of understanding as we study His word. This was not even the case with the Apostles when they had the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, 1Cor. 12:8-10. This also teaches us that God wants us to reason through what He has given us and come to the right conclusion based upon that reasoning, as Peter did, (cf. Acts 17:10-12). This means we can understand the will of God without Divine intervention. This is even indicated in the example Peter uses.

b. Peter's address, 15:7b-11

"Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.

Peter turns to his own experience with the Gentiles, referring to the household of Cornelius, Acts 10:1-11:18.

They came to an understanding of God's plan of salvation, by Peter's words, not by some direct operation of the Holy Spirit, Rom. 10:17.

Act 15:8 "And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us;

"And God, who knows the heart,

God poured out His Holy Spirit upon Cornelius' household, before they were baptized, because he knew their heart, Acts 1:24.

testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit,

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit was a sign to Peter and the rest of the Jews that God had accepted the Gentiles.

just as He also did to us;

God did not restrict the receiving of the Holy Spirit in this fashion, only to the Jews. This act emphasis's that God is no respecter of men, Rom. 2:9-11.

Act 15:9 and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.

In describing their conversion, Peter makes clear a cleansing took place and it was **by faith** and not circumcision or a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. This was just like the Jews, no difference, 1Pet.1:22.

Act 15:10 "Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?"

"Now therefore why do you put God to the test

They are bringing Gods wrath upon themselves by commanding what God has not.

Does this not indicate something about how God views what we teach and practice as His followers?

by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?

Peter understood the difficulties of living under the old Law. Such were these difficulties that they failed at keeping what God required, Gal. 5:1-6

NOTE: The difficulties were not Gods' fault, but man's, Heb. 8:7-9; Rom. 8:2-4

Act 15:11 "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are."

Salvation is not through the Law, it never was, Rom. 4:1-12; Heb 10:1-18. It wasn't that way for the Jew and it is not that way for the Gentiles.

Salvation is **by grace** through faith, Eph. 2:4-10. God provided the means of salvation through grace, demonstrated in the sacrifice of His Son. Mankind receives God's grace through their faith in what He has done.

c. Account of Paul and Barnabas, 15:12

Act 15:12 All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

Here we have another argument in favor of circumcision and Law keeping, not being required for salvation.

As Paul and Barnabas carried out their first missionary journey, as commanded by the Holy Spirit, Acts 13:2,3, God worked through them as they performed signs and wonders amongst the Gentiles, Acts 13:1-10. The testimony of Paul and Barnabas, that neither circumcision nor keeping the Law of Moses are required as a means to salvation, is supported by the work God did through them. They never taught these as a means of salvation, yet God supported what they did teach through the signs and wonders, Mark 16:20

d. Summary of James, 15:13-21

Act 15:13 After they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, "Brethren, listen to me.

This James is the brother of Jesus. James, the apostle, the brother of John had been put to death by Herod, Acts 12:1,2. Paul also noted that it was Jesus' brother James who he met in Jerusalem on a previous visit, Gal. 1:18,19. When he returns to Jerusalem fourteen years later he mentions this James again, Gal. 2:9. He would have to be James the brother of Jesus, because by this time James the brother of John is dead.

Act 15:14 "Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.

Act 15:15 "With this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,

"With this the words of the Prophets agree

The word agree (συμφωνεω –sumphoneo) is where we get our word symphony. It means “to be harmonious – to accord, be suitable – agree.” (Strongs).

James is providing corroboration with the Scriptures. There might be a dispute as to whether what Paul and Barnabas say or what Peter says. But, when you add what the Scriptures say to their comments, you have a fully supported, and convincing argument.

Act 15:16 'AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT,

Act 15:17 SO THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK THE LORD, AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,'

Act 15:18 SAYS THE LORD, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM LONG AGO.

James takes this quote from Amos 9:11,12. (the LXX version, (Septuagint) of the Old Testament).

This prophecy was made during the time of the divided kingdoms, about 751 B.C. The discussion is on the destruction of Israel, Northern Kingdom, because of their sin during this time, Amos 8:1,2; 9:7-10. The destruction of the temple was in 587 B.C., while the Temple remained part of the Southern Kingdom. It was rebuilt under the guidance of Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest in 520 B.C.

Foreigners “Gentiles” were not called by God’s name after the temple was built. Foreigners were not even allowed to help build it, Ezra 3:8, 4:1-4. The point is, Amos must be looking beyond this rebuilding. This is also supported by the fact that James uses this passage in reference to what took place when Peter preached to Cornelius, Acts 10:1-11:17

Act 15:19 "Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles,

James recognizes from the prophets that the “nations” or Gentiles were to be part of God’s kingdom as were the Jews. He also recognized there was no authority to demand OT Law keeping when he said, “*we do not trouble those.*”

Act 15:20 but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood.

but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols

Why these requirements? Are these required today? As for the first, the answer is no. There is no New Testament teaching that forbids us partaking of things “contaminated” by idols. On the contrary, Paul speaks of this issue in 1Cor. 8:4-13; 1Cor. 10:14-33.

and from fornication

As for the second, fornication is forbidden under the New Covenant, 1Cor. 6:9

and from what is strangled and from blood.

Under the Old Law this was forbidden, Lev. 7:26,27; 17:10,11; Deut. 12:15,16,23
A strangled animal does not have its blood poured out on the ground.

The answer as to why James instructed this can be found in 1Cor. 8:9-13, 1Cor. 10:28-33. Although the Jewish Christians understood that they were no longer under the Law of Moses, or they would have commanded Law keeping,

circumcision, they had struggles with these acts. The Gentiles were prone to these kind of activities.

Act 15:21 "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

For the Jews who seek to live by the Law of Moses there are those who still proclaim him every Sabbath, but for the Christian this is not the case.

Some have seen this as James showing there is no disrespect of Moses taking place by commanding these things of the Gentiles. Moses is still preached.

What we do know with certainty is that this cannot be in reference to the Christian Jews living under the Law of Moses, while the Gentile Christians lived by some watered down version of the Law, Gal. 5:1-4.

e. The sending of the letter, 15:22-29

Act 15:22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren,

Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church,

The decision to send these men with a letter concerning this matter was agreed upon by the leaders of the church, and the church as a whole.

to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren,

This is the wise course. Just as in Acts 15:2, others accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, so others would accompany them back to Antioch with the answer to their question.

Act 15:23 and they sent this letter by them, "The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings.

and they sent this letter by them, "The apostles and the brethren who are elders,

A decision by the leadership had been made and it as passed on to the Gentiles.

to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings.

H. Leo Boles states, "The importance of this letter is enhanced in value by the fact that the Jerusalem church was the center of Christianity in Jerusalem, and the church at Antioch was the center among Gentiles; this will help to bring together the Jewish and Gentile Christians."¹

This letter circulated beyond these regions, Acts 16:4

Act 15:24 "Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with their words, unsettling your souls,

Since we have heard that some of our number

This number is not in reference to Christians, Gal. 2:4, but to Jews, Acts 15:1

to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with their words,

This phrase establishes apostolic authority in commanding anything to be done.

unsettling your souls,

What was being taught was no minor issue. The word unsettling, ἀνασκευάζω – anaskeuazo means "to pack up baggage in order to carry it away to another place." – to plunder, (Thayer). This teaching was taking away what these Gentile Christians had, their faith in their salvation, Gal. 1:6; Col. 2:8,13-23.

¹ Acts of the Apostles, H Leo Boles, 1941, pg. 242

Act 15:25 it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

A united decision was made. They were of one mind in this matter, Phil. 1:27

Act 15:26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This statement adds credibility to Barnabas and Paul. They were men who risked their lives in serving Christ. They had established their credentials in these acts.

Act 15:27 "Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word of mouth.

Act 15:28 "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials:

The Holy Spirit has not been mentioned throughout this whole discussion and yet the letter states that the decision made was in accordance with the Holy Spirit.

It is possible the answer to their problem was divinely revealed and we are simply not told that this occurred, John 16:13.

It is also likely that what the Holy Spirit revealed in the past too Paul, and Peter concerning the conversion of the Gentiles is the "approval" spoken of, Acts 10:19; 11:12-17

Act 15:29 that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell."

The letter is short and direct. What is given is the same as was earlier discussed. The only difference is the order. This path is the proper one for these Christians to take at this time.

f. The delivering the letter, 15:30-35

Act 15:30 So when they were sent away, they went down to Antioch; and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter.

Act 15:31 When they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement.

They did not rejoice simply because they were not required to be circumcised or keep other aspects of the Law of Moses, but because they were made sure of their salvation.

Act 15:32 Judas and Silas, also being prophets themselves, encouraged and strengthened the brethren with a lengthy message.

It is possible that since Judas and Silas were prophets, the lengthy message given, which is more than the letter, did something similar to what James did in Acts 15:15-18.

The message further encouraged and strengthened the brethren.

Act 15:33 After they had spent time there, they were sent away from the brethren in peace to those who had sent them out.

Act 15:34 [But it seemed good to Silas to remain there.]

This verse should not be in the text. It seems to have been added by a scribe based upon Acts 15:40. Yet it is clear that Judas and Silas both returned to Jerusalem, vs. 32,33,35.

1. "They" in verse 33 refers to Judas and Silas in verse 32.
2. In verse 35 the word "but" indicates a different action.
3. There were two groups of two men involved in this event, Barnabas and Paul, and Judas and Silas. One stayed the other left.
4. Acts 15:36 explains how Silas was on hand when Paul left Antioch, as indicated in v. 40. Silas must have returned to Antioch "after some days".

Act 15:35 But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching with many others also, the word of the Lord.

C. Paul's second missionary journey, 15:36-18:22

1. The disagreement, 15:36-41

Act 15:36 After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."

After some days Paul said to Barnabas,

It has been commonly accepted that the time period between the Jerusalem council and the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey is a little more than a year.

"Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."

This is indicating that no report had been returned to Antioch on how the other congregations were fairing.

Act 15:37 Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also.

The last time we heard of Mark was when he left Paul and Barnabas in Pamphylia, and went back to Jerusalem, Acts 13:13.

Act 15:38 But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

Whatever the reason for Marks departure, Paul did not see the validity in it. He saw it as a desertion and he was adamant about not taking Mark this time.

Act 15:39 And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

This disagreement was not because Paul was holding a grudge. It would seem that Paul did not trust Mark to stay the course.

As mentioned in v.38, Mark “had not gone with them to the work.” If he could not handle the work the first time, was he going to be able to handle it now?

For some reason Barnabas was willing to give Mark another chance. It’s possible he had seen some change in him or accepted his reason for leaving the first time.

Also, consider that Mark had returned to Jerusalem and that’s where Paul and Barnabas had gone for the “Jerusalem council.” Had Barnabas rectified his relationship with his cousin Mark?

The disagreement was such that they went their separate ways.

Act 15:40 But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

Paul saw Silas as an adequate replacement to Barnabas. Silas was also a Roman citizen, Acts 16:37, which could be helpful.

It is interesting to note that Luke only mentions that Paul and Silas were sent away, being committed by the brethren. Did the brethren in Antioch agree with Paul’s assessment of Mark?

Act 15:41 And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

As Paul begins his second missionary journey, he takes a route overland. Barnabas and Mark went back to Cyprus. This is the route of 1st missionary journey. This might explain Paul’s route.

Acts Chapter 16

2. The churches revisited, 16:1-6

Special Note: We are now about 20 years from the founding of the church. Paul's second missionary journey took place from about A.D. 49-52. It is around this time Paul writes the letter to the Galatians, A.D. 50.

Acts 16:1 Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek,

Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra

Paul is moving in a northern direction. This route would bring him through his hometown of Tarsus, (Acts 9:11). When Barnabas was working in Antioch, he went to Tarsus to find Saul and brought him back to help in the work. (Acts 11:25)

These are also cities he had visited on his first missionary journey, excluding Tarsus.

And a disciple was there, named Timothy,

It is possible that Timothy is a convert of Paul's, 1Tim. 1:2, 1Cor. 4:17. If Timothy is a convert of Paul he probably converted him on his first missionary journey, 2Tim. 10,11.

Note: It is believed that Timothy was at least 21 at this time (Lenski). Paul refers to Timothy as young in 1Tim. 4:12. The word of the Lord came to Lystra and Derbe on Paul's first missionary journey. He was on that trip for approximately two or three years, (see notes chap 14:28). It is also believed that time frame of the trip to Jerusalem and just before Paul leaves on the second missionary journey is about 1 year (see notes chap 15:36). Subtracting these from the assumed age of Timothy on Paul's second missionary journey and Timothy was around 17 when he was converted. (But this is just an assumption).

the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek,

Timothy's mother is Eunice, 2Tim. 1:5.

Acts 16:2 and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium.

and he was well spoken of

From the Greek "emartureito" meaning "a continuous witness"

by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium.

Timothy's reputation was widespread. His Christian life was a great example.

Acts 16:3 Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

Paul wanted this man to go with him;

Paul had a desire to train Timothy, being a young Christian, 2 Tim 2:2

and he took him and circumcised him

Although Eunice had raised Timothy according to the OT scriptures, he was not compelled to be circumcised, 2Tim. 3:14,15.

because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

As we know from chapter 15 circumcision was not required for salvation. The only reason to circumcise him now was to prevent any obstacle from getting in the way of the work Paul was going to do amongst non-believing Jews. They knew Timothy's father was a Greek, (Gentile). (see 1Cor. 9:20)

Acts 16:4 Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe.

Acts 16:5 So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily.

So the churches were being strengthened in the faith

Strengthened “estereounto” - The churches were made firm and solid

Acts 16:6 They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;

They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region,

This is where we find Pisidian Antioch of Acts 13:14ff, where Paul had been on his first missionary journey.

having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;

The area of Asia represents the provinces of Lydia, Mysia. Here we find such cities as Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea.

How they were forbidden is not indicated. We only know that the Holy Spirit intervened to keep them moving in a direction He wanted.

3. The Macedonian call, 16:7-10

Acts 16:7 and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them;

and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia,

Mysia is a province northwest of Pisidian Antioch. Bithynia is a province north of Pisidian Antioch.

and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them;

Here Luke writes it was the Spirit of Jesus that would not allow Paul to go to Bithynia.

Acts 16:8 and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

The only direction left for Paul was west and he ends up at the coast of the Aegan Sea in Troas. They have traveled some 300 miles from Antioch Pisidia. No church was established along this route during this time.

Acts 16:9 A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

Once in Troas Paul has a vision. Vision is from the Greek "horama" which includes something that is seen. The call is for Paul to go into Europe and help. This is of course a call for the gospel.

Acts 16:10 When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

There was no delay in going to Macedonia. The vision was at night and the very next day they sought passage on a ship, v. 11.

This is the first time we see the mention of Luke in the book of Acts. We see this in the word "we." (Review Introduction - point 1 - Author)

The question that arises is where did Luke come from. He has never mentioned himself in past chapters, but is now on the scene and is a companion of Paul. He also refers to himself as one called to preach. Did God direct Paul to Troas to meet up with Luke? The answer is never given.

4. Onto Macedonia, 16:11-17:15

a. Philippi, 16:11-40

(1) Lydia, 16:11-15

Acts 16:11 So putting out to sea from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and on the day following to Neapolis;

They wasted no time in getting to where God was sending them.

we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and on the day following to Neapolis;

The term “straight course” is a nautical term, which refers to sailing straight before a favorable wind without having to tack. In Acts 20:6 it took Paul five days to get from Philippi to Troas. The fact that they made this first journey so quickly might indicate God's hand at work.

Acts 16:12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a Roman colony; and we were staying in this city for some days.

and from there to Philippi,

Philippi is about 12 miles from Neapolis

Acts 16:13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled.

And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer;

Philippi did not have a synagogue and apparently the riverside was a place of worship. It is possible they were informed of this while in town. The lack of a synagogue also indicates a low Jewish population, (Acts 18:2). Philippi might have followed this decree of Claudius. At least ten men were required to organize a synagogue according to the rule of the rabbis.

and we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled.

Not only were there very few Jews, the ones who met were women.

Acts 16:14 A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira,

Thyatira is in Asia in the province of Lydia. Lydia is a common Roman name.

a seller of purple fabrics,

Thyatira was famous for its purple dyes. It was used for the Roman togas and other purple cloth. The dye came from a shellfish and it is said that only one drop at a time was produced. This made it very valuable. Thus Lydia was probably a very wealthy woman. Luke 16:19

a worshiper of God,

The word worshiper here is “sebomene” and means “a God-fearer, or proselyte of the gate.”

was listening;

In the Greek this is prosechin and means to hold the mind on, or to keep the mind centered on.”

and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

As she listened to the words of Paul her mind was enlightened by the words spoken. She believed because she understood fully the message Paul preached, Acts 2:36-38. This is not some direct operation of the Holy Spirit. As a proselyte of the gate she would have had some understanding of Jewish Law and traditions and thus Paul could guide her to the truth.

Acts 16:15 And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

Notice that her response is the same as all others who believe the gospel, she, and her household were baptized. This indicates that Paul preached baptism, contrary to what some say about 1 Cor. 1:17.

The first convert in Europe is a woman of gentile ancestry.

(2) The soothsaying maid, 16:16-18

Acts 16:16 It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer,

Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke were staying with Lydia in her house, 16:15. They must have stayed for some time and were returning to the place of prayer by the river looking for others to speak to.

a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us,

The term spirit of divination means the spirit of python. This is in reference to “Python” the spirit that traditionally guarded the oracle of Delphi until it was slain by the god Apollo. The word was then used for people who professed to reveal the future. Later it came to mean ventriloquist. (Lanski)

who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

In this case the girl was possessed by a demon, v.18, which caused the girl to act in ways that people believed to be helpful to them. They saw her as one who is able to speak from the gods. They believed she could tell the future. Yet no demon has that power. Did the demon not know it would be cast out in a few days?

Her owners (plural) had bought her and used her to make MUCH profit

Acts 16:17 Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation."

The fact that she they met her as they were going to the place of prayer might indicate how she knew what they were doing. Yet it was not uncommon for demons to bear testimony of the Divine, Matt. 8:29; Mark 1:24; 3:11

Acts 16:18 She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment.

Paul did not want the testimony of the spirit of divination. He did not see it as having a positive affect on his work. It is possible he believed they would see what he was doing as something coming from their Greek gods rather than from God.

Paul cast out the spirit by the authority of Jesus, Mark 16:17, the evil spirit obeyed immediately.

(3) Paul and Silas in prison, 16:19-26

Acts 16:19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities,

But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone,

The removal of the evil spirit must have been noticeable.

they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities,

What takes place is the reaction of those who do not care for the truth. They are upset because they have lost their means of profit.

Acts 16:20 and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, "These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews,

and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates,

The magistrate is literally the leader of an army or general. In civic life it meant governor. They commonly referred to themselves as "praetors." The Roman praetors were accompanied by "lictors." Who bore rods with which to punish people.

they said, "These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews,

This statement is probably in response to the fact that the Jews had been expelled from Rome. They are using as a means of punishing Paul and Silas

Acts 16:21 and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans."

Roman law forbade Romans to introduce or practice any new religion. When Paul and Silas proclaimed Jesus, they were preaching a new religion and subject to persecution.

Note: Paul and his companions did not violate Rom 13:1ff or 1Pet. 2:13 in what they did, although contrary to Roman law, because of Acts 4:12-20; 5:27-29

Acts 16:22 The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods.

The crowd rose up together against them,

There was not time for Paul to defend himself. As a Roman citizen he should have had opportunity, but the crowd was already riled up and any protest of Paul went unheard.

and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods.

There robes were removed and they were beaten with rods. Paul speaks of this beating in 2Cor. 11:25.

Acts 16:23 When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely;

When they had struck them with many blows,

The Jewish law required 39 stripes, 2Cor. 11:24. The Romans had no such custom, so at the whim of the judge Paul and Silas were beaten with many blows

they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely;

The requirement to guard them securely means the jailer was to held responsible for them at the cost of his own life, Acts 12:4. This is why he put them into the inner prison

Acts 16:24 and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison

Roman prisons had three chambers or compartments; (1) the communiora, or where prisoners had light and fresh air; (2) the interiora, shut off by strong iron gates with bars and locks; (3) the tullianum, or dungeon. This was the place that those who were condemned to die were kept.

and fastened their feet in the stocks.

To make sure they could not escape even their feet were put in stocks. These stocks kept the feet spread wide apart causing great pain and inhibited blood circulation.

Acts 16:25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them;

But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God,

What a great show of faith by Paul and Silas. In the midst of their suffering at this late hour they choose to praise God rather than to complain.

and the prisoners were listening to them;

This imprisonment became an opportunity to evangelize as the others listened.

Note: What about our lives. When people see us in our times of despair do they see us praising God or complaining about our sorry condition?

Acts 16:26 and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.

and suddenly there came a great earthquake,

It seems that the prayers of Paul and Silas are answered. God chooses to free His servants in a most noticeable way. Compare this to Peter, **Acts 12:5-11; 18,19**

so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken;

The strength of this earthquake was such that it was felt even in the depths of the prison.

and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.

So powerful was this earthquake it caused the doors to be opened. The came unhinged and their locks and bars fell away. The chains anchored to the wall fell free and they were unfastened. This is a very controlled earthquake, not a person is hurt.

(4) The jailer, 16:27-34

Acts 16:27 When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

Their singing had not awoken him, but the earthquake did. The first thing he noticed was the open doors. This could only mean one thing the prisoners had escaped. His life was now forfeited so he drew his sword to kill himself. This would have been better than allowing the Romans to kill him.

Acts 16:28 But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!"

Apparently the other prisoners did not have time to escape or were too frightened to escape. Either way they were all there a Paul called out to the jailer to stop him from committing suicide.

Acts 16:29 And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas,

And he called for lights and rushed in,

Apparently Paul could see the jailer in some light and was able to stop him, the jailer on the other hand saw only darkness in the cells. Not until he had called for lights and rushed in did he find all the prisoners.

and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas,

This fear seems to come from the fact that he connects Paul and Silas' God with the earthquake. There was no need to fear his superiors, no prisoners had escaped.

Acts 16:30 and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

and after he brought them out,

He did not keep them in the prison, the earthquake proved he could not anyway. It is possible he took them to his house, v.31

he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

This statement indicates that the guard had heard of what Paul and Silas were teaching. He must have been aware of the events that had transpired with the demon-possessed maiden. Remember her proclamation, Acts 16:17

Acts 16:31 They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

For the jailer to be saved he had to have faith in Jesus. He had to trust in Jesus over all else, Acts 4:12, Rom. 5:1, Eph. 2:8. This was a direct simple answer to his question and it extended to his household and each would have to do the same.

Acts 16:32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house.

Though it is by faith that he could be saved, Paul explains what faith entails. The jailer could not believe in the Lord Jesus until had to be taught what to believe in. It was then imperative that the word of the Lord had to be preached, Rom 10:17.

Acts 16:33 And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household.

And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds,

When the jailer had thrown Paul and Silas in prison, he could care less of their physical condition. But now he is a changed man as demonstrated in this act of repentance. He heard of God's mercy for him and so he shows mercy to them.

and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household

In the very same water in which he washed Paul and Silas he and his household obeyed the gospel call of salvation. He and his household were baptized just as Lydia had done, Acts 16:14,15. This baptism was for the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38. And since this was an urgent matter it was done immediately.

Acts 16:34 And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

Now is the time to rejoice. After he heard of Christ. After he repented of his sins. After he was baptized. After he was saved.

Note: Belief in Jesus is consummated in what he did. He heard the word of the Lord, then he was baptized, then he rejoiced, *having believed in God with his whole household*. Belief is not belief until full trust is placed in God and His will. This means trusting in what He says is needed for salvation, 1Pet. 3:21

(5) Paul claims Roman citizenship, 16:35-40

Acts 16:35 Now when day came, the chief magistrates sent their policemen, saying, "Release those men."

The magistrates have no idea of what has taken place. There is no reason given as to why they are going to release them after such harsh punishment, but this is what they do. According to v.37 it seems that they might have become uneasy about what they had done because they wanted to send them away secretly.

Acts 16:36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The chief magistrates have sent to release you. Therefore come out now and go in peace."

It seems as if the jailer, although now a Christian had returned Paul and Silas to jail. It is unlikely that they would be coming out of his house. If this is the case they did this willingly to keep him out of trouble. With joy he can tell them to go in peace.

Acts 16:37 But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us in public without trial, men who are Romans, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they sending us away secretly? No indeed! But let them come themselves and bring us out."

But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us in public without trial, men who are Romans, and have thrown us into prison;

Paul levels four serious charges against the magistrates, (1) publicly beating them; (2) beating without a trial; (3) beating Roman citizens; (4) throwing them into prison.

and now are they sending us away secretly? No indeed! But let them come themselves and bring us out."

The magistrates had done this publicly and now wanted to secretly send them away. Paul was not going to stand for this. To allow this to go unchecked is would have tarnished their reputation. They would have been seen as they were treated, criminals. Vindication is needed to further their work for the Lord.

Acts 16:38 The policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates. They were afraid when they heard that they were Romans,

The policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates.

The policemen were the ones who had done the beating and the chief magistrates were the ones who ordered it.

They were afraid when they heard that they were Romans,

They were afraid because of the penalty that accompanied this kind of treatment of a Roman citizen. To wrongfully accuse a Roman citizen was a grave offense. Ultimately, if found guilty, they would be put to death and their possessions confiscated. They did not question Paul's claim to Roman citizenship because such a claim, if false, was death. It was seldom that one would make such a claim knowing the severe penalty that awaited them if caught.

Acts 16:39 and they came and appealed to them, and when they had brought them out, they kept begging them to leave the city.

What Paul had been demanding, he got. They come to them publicly and begged them to leave. They did not want any more trouble and figured if Paul and Silas left all would be forgotten.

Acts 16:40 They went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia, and when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.

Paul and Silas go back to where they were staying and probably recount what took place at the prison. This would encourage the brethren; knowing that God was with them in their trials. They would also be encouraged to continue teaching knowing that the magistrates would no longer bother them.

It also seems that Paul and Silas were willing to leave Philippi. Luke says that after going to Lydia's they departed.

Acts Chapter 17

b. Thessalonica, 17:1-9

Acts 17:1 Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia,

Amphipolis is about thirty-two miles southwest of Philippi and was a Roman military station. Apollonia was another thirty miles further. From here it was approximately thirty-seven miles to Thessalonica

Luke changes from using the second person pronouns “we” and “us” to the third person pronoun “they”. This indicates that Luke did not depart with Paul and Silas, but stayed in Philippi. Paul does not reconnect with Luke until Acts 20:6 where they sail from Philippi to Troas.

It also appears likely that Timothy stayed in Philippi with Luke, at least until Paul and Silas go to Berea. In Acts 17:14 we find that Timothy in Berea, but in Acts 17:4 we find that it was Paul and Silas in Thessalonica and in Acts 17:10 the brethren only send Paul and Silas away from Thessalonica. Timothy must have joined Paul and Silas after this.

they came to Thessalonica,

Thessalonica was the largest city in Macedonia as such it became a perfect place to spread the gospel into the Gentile world, 1Thess. 1:8

where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

This seems to indicate that there were no synagogues in the other two cities they had passed through.

Acts 17:2 And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

And according to Paul's custom, he went to them,

Although Paul was given the work of taking the gospel to the gentiles, Gal. 2:7,8, it was his custom to visit the Jews first, Rom. 1:16,17.

Acts 17:3 explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."

explaining and giving evidence

Paul did not use flowery speeches or crafty words to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ, he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, the OT.

that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying,

Paul was seeking to convince the Jews that their Messiah was not to be an earthly king as they supposed. He was not coming to reign on the earth, but to reign in heaven. No doubt he reasoned from Isaiah 53 as proof of this claim. As well, this would remove any question of reproach that accompanied the crucifixion.

"This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."

His next step was to tie what had happened with Jesus to what the Scriptures had said would happen to the Christ.

Acts 17:4 And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women.

The work of Paul was having its successes. He was able to persuade **some** Jews, and a **large** number of God-fearing proselytes. It is unclear whether the leading women were proselytes or simply gentile women who were converted. But, by the fact that Paul was preaching in the synagogues, it is possible they are wealthy proselyte women.

The word join indicates an allotment – *proskleroo* – they were given to Paul and Silas by God's grace, Acts 2:47. A new congregation was established.

Acts 17:5 But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people.

But the Jews, becoming jealous

They were jealous because of the followers Paul had acquired. This is reflective of what happened to Jesus, Matt. 27:17,18.

and taking along some wicked men from the market place,

These wicked men were individuals who had no profession, but could be found in the market place hoping to pick up some work, good or bad.

formed a mob and set the city in an uproar;

It is unlikely these wicked men had any real concern over what was taking place, but they were easily convinced to create a riot.

and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people.

This would indicate that Paul and Silas were probably staying with Jason. We have no other information about him that what is here, although Rom. 16:21, lists Jason as a kinsmen of Paul, but this could be a different person altogether.

Acts 17:6 When they did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have upset the world have come here also;

Either Jason and the other brethren had been evangelizing or this is guilt by association. This also indicates what lengths a mob will go to get what they want.

Acts 17:7 and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus."

This was the same type of charge leveled against Jesus, Mark 12:14; Luke 23:2. Although the Jews do not realize it they are renouncing their Messiah, John 19:15

Acts 17:8 They stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things.

Once again they seek to silence the word of God through intimidation

Acts 17:9 And when they had received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them.

We are uncertain what the pledge is. It might be that they agreed not to house Paul and Silas, because according to the next verse Paul and Silas leave Thessalonica. It is even possible that they requested they stop teaching the gospel. Although it would seem unlikely that Christians would agree to this. It could even be a financial bond. The word pledge means “sufficient” or “enough”

Still, the charge was that they were acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar. Which in fact they were not, so they could have agreed to not act in ways contrary to Caesar, which they were already doing. This seems possible, since if they were doing what they were accused of the punishment would have been greater.

c. Berea, 17:10-15

Acts 17:10 The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Paul was persistent in his actions. He understood that the Jews were to receive the gospel first, Rom. 1:16,17; 2:9,10

Acts 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica,

The word noble-minded means “well born” and literally “high in rank.” This seems to be the meaning here. They were “high minded” in that they were willing to consider Paul’s words.

for they received the word with great eagerness,

What a contrast to those in Thessalonica. The Bereans, with zeal, were ready to hear what Paul had to say. They did not close their ears to the word, but received it.

examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

They did not simply accept what Paul had to say, they wanted to see it for themselves. They investigated the Scriptures (Old Testament) to see if what Paul was teaching was correct.

This also establishes that the Bereans believed in the authority of God's word. They saw it as the final judge in things being taught. If what was said did not agree with what was already written in God's word it would have been rejected. 2Pet. 1:20,21

Acts 17:12 Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men.

When one examines the Scriptures with an honest open-heart conversion will take place. In this case both Jews and Greeks were being converted. Paul and Silas' work extended beyond the local synagogue.

These conversions did not just extend to the illiterate, but to men and women of prominence. Even the educated believed.

Acts 17:13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they came there as well, agitating and stirring up the crowds.

Berea is fifty miles from Thessalonica yet the Jews heard of what had happened. When they did they went there as well to cause more trouble.

To agitate is like the motion produced by winds, storms and waves, even like an earthquake. "Stirring up" is the idea of taking away calmness of mind. These Jews were nothing but troublemakers.

Acts 17:14 Then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea; and Silas and Timothy remained there.

Just like in Thessalonica Paul is sent away to safety. When they arrive at the Aegean Sea Paul departs and goes on to Athens. Silas and Timothy stay in Berea. We have not heard of Timothy's whereabouts since Paul and Silas left Philippi but now he is united with them once again. It is likely that Timothy has been with Luke in Philippi.

Acts 17:15 Now those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.

Now those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens;

Paul is escorted to Athens. By land this is about a 250 miles and would take almost two weeks to complete. If he went by sea this would have been about a three-day journey.

and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.

Paul desired to have his coworkers with him. Because Athens was such a large religious city it seems extra help is needed.

We find out later that Silas and Timothy don't make it to Athens. They eventually meet up with Paul in Corinth, Acts 18:5, having come from Macedonia. Some believe that 1Thess. 3:1-6 indicates that Timothy was in Athens, but the text says that Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica. It doesn't say from where he sent him.

5. Paul in Greece, 17:16-18:22

a. Athens, 17:16-34

(1) The Areopagus, 17:16-21

Acts 17:16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols.

his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols.

Paul understood the condition of these people. It is obvious they are very religious. They were seeking spiritual things. But, their beliefs were misguided. They worshipped idols, man made religion and not the One true God. The reason for the provoking of Paul's spirit is two-fold, (1) the people of Athens were not bringing glory to God, Rom. 1:21-25, (2) these people were lost and they needed to hear the truth.

as he was observing the city full of idols.

It has been said that Athens had more idols than the rest of Greece. The phrase "full of idols" is literally - utterly idolatrous: - wholly given to idolatry

Acts 17:17 So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present.

Paul was reaching out wherever he could. Wherever there was an audience he spoke, even to the extent that he just went to the marketplace and spoke to whoever showed up.

Acts 17:18 And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, "What would this idle babbler wish to say?" Others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,"--because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him.

These were the two prominent systems of philosophy in the Roman world. The Epicurean school of thought founded by Epicurus 342-270 B.C., and was atheistic at its core. Life was not regulated by the spiritual or morality. The Epicureans focused on pleasure as the highest end of human existence. (Boles) Man simply lived the way he was inclined – good or bad. Epicureans saw gods as phantoms, with no real influence. (Lenski)

The Stoics were pantheists. They taught that God was the soul of the world, or the world was God. (Boles) They believed reason was their guide and decided what was good and what was evil. He who followed reason was perfect and sufficient in himself. This is similar to what we refer to as humanism. For the Stoics, when reason saw no more in life, it dictated suicide as the most reasonable thing, (Lenski).

Both of these groups were diametrically opposed to an after life, sin or redemption. Christianity would have been utterly strange to them.

were conversing with him.

Their attitude was not hostile. Philosophers of the time had developed a way to converse with each other in a civilized manner.

Some were saying, "What would this idle babbler wish to say?" Others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,"--because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

The word babbler means a “seed picker.” It refers to a bird that picks up seed. So they liken Paul to a man who has picked up some seeds of knowledge.

Acts 17:19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is which you are proclaiming?"

They do not take Paul by force, but rather guide him to the council.

The word Areopagus refers to the Hill of Ares or Mars hill. Named after this place is the supreme Council of Athens, the Areopagus. This council most commonly met on Mars hill, but they carried the name Areopagus with them wherever they met. Thus they became known as the Areopagus.

It is uncertain whether Paul was taken to a meeting with the Areopagus or stood on it (Mars Hill), and gave his speech, (see v.22)

Acts 17:20 "For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; so we want to know what these things mean."

They are very polite to Paul and really want to know what it is he is speaking about.

Acts 17:21 (Now all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new.)

(2) Paul's address, 17:22-31

Acts 17:22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.

A crowd has gathered to listen and so Paul speaks. He begins by referring to them as "very religious." This has a good and bad sense. In the good sense they are pious and reverence the gods. In a bad sense they are superstitious. So, they either wanted to show piety towards the gods or they were worried they might offend one.

Acts 17:23 "For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

This is what Paul basis his "very religious" statement off of. It is a great opening. By your own admittance you don't know him, so let me speak of Him to you.

Acts 17:24 "The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;

"The God

Paul speaks of a single God as compared to their multiple gods.

who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;

The God Paul speaks of is a living and active God. Being the creator he rules over his creation as Lord. The God Paul speaks of does not live in man-made structures. He is much bigger than that.

Acts 17:25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;

The God Paul speaks of does not need mans assistance. Nothing man does or offers adds to who He is. Our worship is to God, but it adds nothing to Him. It simply acknowledges His deity and demonstrates gratitude.

Their Gods needed mans invention and attention even to exist. But the God Paul speaks of causes all things to exist. He is the sole life giver.

Acts 17:26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,

Paul takes them back to the creation. This is where we first encounter God when He brings man into existence. This God created the brotherhood of man. For the Greeks this was a different way of thinking. They saw man as coming from different origins, with different gods, different religions for different nations.

Here the lines of separation between all men are torn down. All men are the same because they come from one man, Adam. This came from God.

Acts 17:27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

God being the One source of the creation, including the brotherhood of man, did this so man would seek Him and find Him, Acts 14:14-17

Acts 17:28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

for in Him we live and move and exist,

Paul makes it clear that our existence was no accident; it was planned and ordained by God. *As He exists so do we, or we could not exist if He did not.*

This also shows how near God is to each of us. Our very existence depends upon Him and is found in Him.

as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

Here Paul appeals to them through some of their own writers. This statement was originally made by Aratus, 320-240 B.C. He was a student of Zeno the founder of Stoicism.

Paul used the plural “poets” which means others have said similar if not the same thing. Cleanthes, another Stoic in his hymn to Zeus, saying, “From him we are offspring.”

Acts 17:29 "Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

"Being then the children of God,

We are children of God because He created us, as their own poets have said.

we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

Paul uses tact when he includes himself with them. They have set a low standard for God, their Father, when they form Him according to their own desires and craft. They should see God as much more than this. His Divine Nature – “Godhead” is not like what they have made.

Acts 17:30 "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance,

God has “winked at” their past ignorance, but this will no longer be the case.

God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

Now God is expecting all mankind to turn from their sinful ways. A declaration has been made and man cannot simply ignore it. He must make a decision on what He will do with God.

Acts 17:31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness

Mankind needs to make a decision because a day of judgment is coming. It is a day that was appointed long ago. It has been set and there is not escaping it. Ignoring the existence of God or persisting in worshipping multiple gods will not save you.

When this judgment comes it will be in righteousness. God created all man to seek and find Him. He provided the means and the messenger. To ignore this will only result in condemnation. All mankind will know that their "sentence" is just because God will judge in righteousness. Did you accept His will or not?

John 5:25-32

through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

He will judge through Jesus. As God has appointed the times and boundaries of mans habitation, he has also appointed a day of judgment. Things will not go on forever. God has also appointed a judge.

The proof of all of this is the resurrection of Jesus. One look at the resurrection and man should acknowledge that all other things God has said are true, Rom. 1:1-4

God does exist and He created us and He will judge us through His Son, we can count on it, because He raised Him from the dead

A day of judgment is coming; mankind needs to prepare itself by repenting of living apart from God.

(3) The response, 17:32-34

Acts 17:32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this."

The Epicurean did not believe in life after death, and the Stoic believed that all life would be absorbed in the Godhead. Neither schools of thought believed in a resurrection.

Some quickly turned against him by mocking (Acts 2:13), but others were willing to listen to more of what Paul had to say. (Acts 24:25)

Acts 17:33 So Paul went out of their midst.

Acts 17:34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

The work he did in Athens was not fruitless. There were some who believed. Dionysius the Areopagite was a member of the Athenian Council. He would have some influence on people.

Also consider that since, *"the Athenians and the strangers visiting there used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new."* Acts 17:21, a seed had been planted.

Acts Chapter 18

b. Corinth, 18:1-17

(1) Aquila and Priscilla, 18:1-4

Act 18:1 After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth.

Corinth was 50 miles west of Athens and was a trade city between Asia and Rome. It was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, the chief commercial city of Greece. Within the city was a temple dedicated to Aphrodite and this temple had 1000 religious prostitutes. The city was a scandal of ancient times. The Greek language even made a verb out of the city's name, 'Corinthianize,' meaning to practice whoredom."

Latter Paul makes mention of the immorality that was known in Corinth, 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9,11 In verse 9 those mentioned refer to sexual practices. Including idolatry. Prostitute worship.

Act 18:2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them,

And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla,

He probably found him through his trade, v.3. He is from Pontus, which lay between Bithynia and Armenia, 1Pet. 1:1.

It is doubtful that Aquila and Priscilla are Christians when Paul met them. Paul has yet to go to Rome and we have no mention of any other Christians going to Rome. Paul probably converted them while working with them.

because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them,

This expulsion from Rome was around 49 A.D. This was due to the constant problems the Jews were causing. At the time there were about 20,000 Jews in Rome.

Act 18:3 and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working; for by trade they were tent-makers.

The Jews had trade guilds, which stuck together. It would be common for this type of working together to take place. Paul connected with Aquila because of this.

Here is the first time we hear of Paul's trade. Lenski states the reason Paul's trade is mentioned is because of the length of time he stayed in Corinth, eighteen months, v.11

Act 18:4 And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

As was Paul's practice he entered the synagogues and preached the gospel to them, Rom. 1:16,17; 2:9,10

The Greeks are proselytes being mentioned in conjunction with the Jews.

(2) A vision to work, 18:5-11

Act 18:5 But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ

But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia,

Paul had left Silas and Timothy in Berea (Acts 17:14), and had given instructions that they come to him quickly in Athens. (Acts 17:15). It appears they never made it but left Macedonia and met up with Paul in Corinth.

Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ..

Silas and Barnabas brought a financial gift to Paul (2Cor. 11:9; Phil. 4:15; 1Thess. 3:6), which enabled him to stop making tents and focus on the full time working of reaching out to the lost through preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Act 18:6 And when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads! I am clean. From now on I shall go to the Gentiles."

And when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments

This is similar to shaking the dust from your feet, Acts 13:51, Matt. 10:14. He would have nothing more to do with them.

and said to them, "Your blood {be} upon your own heads!"

By the fact that they resisted they brought their own sentence upon themselves. They are committing spiritual suicide, Matt. 23:35, Matt. 27:24,25.

Act 18:7 And he departed from there and went to the house of a certain man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue.

This might have been someone he met at the synagogue. This man was a worshiper of God, which probably makes him a proselyte.

Act 18:8 And Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized.

Crispus is mentioned by Paul in 1Cor. 1:14, as one he had baptized. He is a prominent Jew being the leader of the synagogue. It was this position, which helped lead others to Christ. These people were baptized.

Act 18:9 And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent;

The pressures must have been great for Paul. The Lord provides a clear message of comfort for him, "Don't be afraid any longer"

Act 18:10 for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city."

for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you,

Paul received a clear message of God's divine intervention. The Lord would not allow anyone to harm Paul.

for I have many people in this city."

This is the reason Paul should not be afraid. There were many more souls to win for the Lord. Here we also see the Omniscience of God.

Act 18:11 And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Paul allowed the providence of God to work in his life and continued to preach so souls might be won. He did what needed to be done; he preached the word of God amongst them.

(3) Gallio, 18:12-17

Act 18:12 But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat,

Gallia is a Roman government official.

Act 18:13 saying, "This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law."

Act 18:14 But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallia said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrong or of vicious crime, O Jews, it would be reasonable for me to put up with you;

Act 18:15 but if there are questions about words and names and your own law, look after it yourselves; I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters."

What the Jews accused Paul of was no concern to Gallia. Paul had not broken any Roman laws.

Act 18:16 And he drove them away from the judgment seat.

Act 18:17 And they all took hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat. And Gallia was not concerned about any of these things.

6. Paul's departure, 18:18-22

Act 18:18 And Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow.

See handout "PAUL'S ACTIONS IN ACTS 18"

Act 18:19 And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

Ephesus is on the western shore of Asia minor and under favorable sea conditions is about a three-day journey from Cenchrea.

Act 18:20 And when they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent,

Act 18:21 but taking leave of them and saying, "I will return to you again if God wills," he set sail from Ephesus.

Typically Paul was run out of the synagogues, but this time he was asked to stay. Paul did not deem it necessary at that time to stay but stated that he would return, "If God wills."

"If God (the Lord) wills is a common expression us by the Christians of this time. James 4:13-15; Rom. 1:10; 15:32; 1Cor. 4:19; 16:7; Heb 6:3

Act 18:22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch.

And when he had landed at Caesarea,

Caesarea was the Roman capital of Judea. It lies on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

he went up and greeted the church,

The Greek word for greeted is *aspazomai* and means to salute, greet, bid welcome. By the fact that Paul "went up" we conclude that he went to the church at Jerusalem which was at this time still considered the "mother church," Acts 1:8

and went down to Antioch.

Although Antioch is North of Jerusalem it is considered "down" because Jerusalem sits at a higher elevation.

Paul returns to the place of his departure in Acts 15:36, where he began his second missionary journey.

D. Paul's third missionary journey, 18:23-21:17

1. The departure, 18:23

Act 18:23 And having spent some time there, he departed and passed successively through the Galatians region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

And having spent some time there,

We are not sure how long Paul stayed in Antioch, but it is now probably around 54 A.D.

he departed and passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

Paul heads back the way he began his second missionary journey, revisiting congregations he had already established, Acts 16:4-6

In the Galatian region we find Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, Acts 16:1-3

In the Phrygian region we find Laodicea and Colosse (Paul did not visit these cities on his second missionary journey.) When he crossed through Phrygia he had left Antioch Pisidia and had headed to Mysia and then on to Troas. This was the three hundred mile journey with no mention of a church being planted, (see notes on Acts 16:7-10

2. Apollos, 18:24-28

Act 18:24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures.

Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth,

Alexandria was a seaport city on Egypt on the Mediterranean. It was a place of learning. The Alexandria library was considered the greatest in the world.

an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures.

The word eloquent, in the Greek is *logos* and means learned, a man of letters, skilled in literature also skilled in speech. Apollos was both knowledgeable and skilled in speech. As a Jew he knew very well what the Old Testament taught.

Act 18:25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John;

Somewhere along the way Apollos had learned of the Lord Jesus. He was probably a direct disciple of John the Baptist seeing that he is not “re-baptized.” See Acts 19:1-7

He did not know all things about Jesus, but had some understanding and what he knew he taught accurately (Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3,4). His lack of knowledge seems to be in the area of what Jesus had fulfilled, “being acquainted only with the baptism of John.”

Act 18:26 and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue.

Like Paul, Apollos was not afraid to proclaim what he knew.

But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

Lenski states, “What Apollos thus knew was correct enough as far as it went; the problem was that it did not go far enough.” Priscilla and Aquila, knowing the way, take this learned man aside and explain what he is missing.

Note the work Priscilla and Aquila did absent of Paul.

Act 18:27 And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him; and when he had arrived, he helped greatly those who had believed through grace;

Achaia is south of the Macedonian region, and both composed Greece. Achaia is where we find Athens, Corinth and Cenchrea.

Apollos was given a letter of ‘recommendation,’ and when he arrived went to work assisting the brethren in their work.

Act 18:28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Know the way of the Lord more accurately Apollos now publicly debated the Jews and proved he was the Christ based upon the Scriptures he was so mighty in.

Acts Chapter 19

3. Ephesus, 19:1-20:1

a. The twelve and John's baptism, 19:1-7

Acts 19:1 It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples.

It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth,

Cf. 1Cor. 3:4-6; 1Cor. 16:12

Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus,

The upper country refers to Asia Minor, where Paul had been on his second journey. (See notes Acts 16:6, 18:23)

and found some disciples.

Being that these men are called "disciples" they were aware of the coming of the Christ. Their situation is similar to Apollos, in that they were only familiar with John's baptism, (19:3).

Acts 19:2 He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

"Believed" cannot be taken as merely an acknowledgment of something, because of what Paul says in v.3. Here he includes baptism with belief.

The question about the Holy Spirit either refers to the indwelling (Acts 2:38) or the miraculous manifestation (Acts 8:14-17). This writer supports the indwelling, since this always followed Christian baptism, while the miraculous manifestation did not, (Acts 8:14-17). Paul's response about baptism and the Holy Spirit clearly indicates that they should have received Him upon baptism, 19:3.

And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

Their answer clarifies that their baptism was not in accordance with the great commission (Matt. 28:19,20) or Peter's sermon on the first Pentecost after Jesus' death, (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit is mentioned in both. Thus they were not baptized in a post Pentecost baptism.

As well, the fact that they had not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit indicates that they were not baptized by John directly, because John spoke of Holy Spirit baptism, Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8

These disciples must have been baptized by some of John's disciples.

Acts 19:3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism."

And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?"

Because they were unaware of the Holy Spirit Paul wanted to know into what had they been baptized. If baptized by John before Jesus' death they would have been aware of the Holy Spirit. If baptized by a disciple after Jesus' death they would have been aware of the Holy Spirit, Acts 2:38.

So "into" what had they been baptized? Baptism was to transfer you "into" something, spiritually speaking. Proper Christian baptism would have put them in Christ, Gal. 3:26,27.

And they said, "Into John's baptism."

John's baptism was one of repentance, confession and forgiveness of sins, and water immersion was involved, Mark 1:4-5, Matt. 3:6,11; John 1:30-34, 3:23

Acts 19:4 Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

All who submitted to John's baptism had acknowledged that their allegiance was to the Christ who was to come. It is clear that these disciples did not know Christ by their own admission of being baptized into John's baptism. Apparently they had been baptized after Jesus' death at a time when John's baptism was no longer valid.

Acts 19:5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

This response also indicates that they were not baptized properly, for now they are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

NOTE: John's baptism was also only for the Jews, Luke 7:30. The great commission Matthew 28:18-20 was unto every creature.

Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.

Here we see the passing on of the miraculous gifts through the laying on of an Apostles hands, Acts 8:18; Rom. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:6.

The gifts given were specific and involved the ability to spread the Gospel message.

The reason for the passing on of the miraculous gifts was to substantiate that they had now been baptized in the way prescribed by Jesus Himself. Consider that this was not done to everyone whom Paul taught. As a matter of fact in Paul's three missionary journeys this is the first time we have recorded that he did this.

(Cf. Acts 13:48; 14:21; 16:4-5; 16:14-15, 31-33; 17:4,12,34; 18:8)

Acts 19:7 There were in all about twelve men.

b. Two years in Asia, 19:8-10

Acts 19:8 And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.

And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them

Paul's approach the evangelizing was to reason and persuade, 2Cor. 5:11. He does not argue or quarrel with them, 2Tim. 2:24. He uses their common knowledge of the Scriptures and leads them in the truth. (Act 13:15-41).

He goes to the synagogue as usual but this time it seems that the Christians begin meeting there as well. He was there for three months.

about the kingdom of God.

Paul stuck to the task at hand. These people needed to hear about the kingdom and so that is what he preached. Paul made no distinction between the church and the kingdom, **Acts 20:25,28**; 1Tim. 14,15; Col. 1:13,18; Eph. 1:22. What Paul taught about the kingdom was that it had come, Mark 9:1, and that the keys to it had been given, Matt. 16:13-20. This is what we should be doing today.

Acts 19:9 But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people,

Paul had a good run in the synagogue, 19:8, but sooner or later there are going to be those who do not want to hear the message. As Paul preached the grace of God through Christ some became hardened and would not obey. But not only that, they escalated in their hardness and began speaking evil of the way, Matt. 23:37.

he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

Paul was not a coward when it came to preaching the gospel, but he knew when it was time to move on, Acts 13:48-51. (See Acts 20:17-21)

Paul stays in Ephesus and moves to the school of Tyrannus. Here Paul reasons daily with all who were willing. We know little of Tyrannus. The word school originally meant “leisure” and came to mean a “place of leisure.” This is the only time this word is used in the New Testament.

Tyrannus is a common name and meant “tyrant.”

This is another example of how we should be teaching the lost; if they do not want to hear go with those who do.

Acts 19:10 This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

Having left the synagogue Paul now had opportunity to preach to the Gentile world and to the Jews who wanted to hear. He did this for two years. His total time in Ephesus was three years, Acts 20:31

c. The sons of Sceva, 19:11-17

Acts 19:11 God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul,

This took place to confirm the word being preached by Paul, Mark 16:20.

Acts 19:12 so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

Miracles were being used to reach the lost and the power was so great that just a piece of garment from Paul would do. The people are without excuse, Heb. 2:1-4

Acts 19:13 But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches."

But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place,

These exorcists were frauds and practiced sorcery as a means of financial gain. They are similar to Simon in Acts 8:21, and Elymas Acts 13:8, and Jesus mentioned men like them in Matt. 12:27.

The word exorcist meant “to exact an oath” and so they used an oath as a spell. According to Josephus, (*Ant.* 8,2,5), they are connected with the name of Solomon and would invoke his name in their spells.

attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches."

Seeing how successful the work was, they attempt to follow suit by using the name of Jesus to cast out demons. They must have believed Paul was one of their kind and had found a better way of practicing sorcery.

Their command was not based upon their belief in Jesus but upon Paul’s. That is why they say, “whom Paul preaches.”

It is interesting to note that they will use the method but not follow the Lord from whom it originates. Many today who do not command baptism would if they knew it would draw in the numbers, even if they did not believe it to be right or practice it themselves. It has been said that Billy Graham once stated that he could not preach baptism, because if he did he would lose his followers.

Acts 19:14 Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this.

We are not sure who Sceva is. We have no record beyond this.

Acts 19:15 And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"

And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul,

We can see that the spirit world is active. The evil spirit recognized Jesus and even knew about Paul. The two verbs used here are different and have different meanings. The word used in reference to Jesus is "genosko" and means "I realize." The word used in reference to Paul is "epistomai" and means "acquainted with."

It is extraordinary to think that there is some type of communication between the evil spirits.

but who are you?"

The demon is asking, "by what authority do you call me out?" The demon knows they are connected to Jesus or Paul.

Acts 19:16 And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Not only did the demon not listen to them, he also brutally attacked **all** of them. It is possible they tried to resist, but in the end the demons super human strength was too much, Mark 5:1-4. They fled from the house naked and wounded.

The demon gave testimony Jesus' Lordship and Paul's work through this attack.

Acts 19:17 This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified.

Jesus was magnified because of the work he was doing through Paul. What Paul did was real and the people knew it. The miracles Paul performed confirmed the message he taught.

d. The departure from magic, 19:18-20

Acts 19:18 Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices.

Many also of those who had believed kept coming,

Continual conversions were taking place and people were confessing Jesus as Lord, the Son of God.

confessing and disclosing their practices.

Note that they were also disclosing their practices. This refers to the magic they practiced, v.19. This ties back to the seven sons of Sceva.

Acts 19:19 And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone;

These people did not mess around with that which was evil. They understood that it was against God and did something about it. They removed this sin from their lives.

and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Two different dollar amounts can be given, \$10,000 Greek coins (the most likely) or \$35,000 Jewish shekels. This is a great amount of money for the time.

Acts 19:20 So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.

With willing hearts the word prevailed. The prevailing is the fact that these individuals are turning from their wicked ways to following Jesus as Lord. They are being converted.

e. Demetrius the silversmith, 19:21-20:1

Acts 19:21 Now after these things were finished, Paul purposed in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Acts 19:22 And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus,

He sent two co-workers Timothy and Erastus to prepare the way. Timothy had already been here, Acts 16:1ff

he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

Paul did not leave immediately. He stayed in Asia. (Consider - 1Cor. 16:1-10)

Acts 19:23 About that time there occurred no small disturbance concerning the Way.

The Way refers to the disciples of Christ. They probably got this name because of Jesus' statement in John 14:6 (Acts 9:2, Acts 22:4, Acts 24:14)

Acts 19:24 For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsmen;

Artemis is a Greek goddess the Roman equivalent is Diana. The shrines were probably small replicas of the temple of Diana which contained the image of Diana. This was a profitable business to many people.

Acts 19:25 these he gathered together with the workmen of similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business."

Acts 19:26 "You see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are no gods at all.

Unwittingly Demetrius proclaims the success of the work of Paul.

Acts 19:27 "Not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship will even be dethroned from her magnificence."

Demetrius attacked Paul on two fronts. First was financial, which he was more concerned about than anything. Paul had preached against idolatry and the new Christians had gotten rid of all the idols they had previously purchased. They would not be buying any more. (Acts 16:19-21). Second was the people's religious dedication. If Paul were allowed to continue what would happen to their religion?

Acts 19:28 When they heard this and were filled with rage, they began crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

Cf. 1 Kings 18:26-28

Acts 19:29 The city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia.

The people responded with typical mob mentality.

Gaius was a convert of Paul's – 1Cor. 1:14 and a host to him, Rom. 16:23.

Aristarchus was a Macedonian from Thessalonica, Acts 20:4. He accompanied Paul to Rome Acts 27:2. Of his own accord he became a sharer of Paul's exile and captivity, Col. 4:10. He was Paul's fellow worker, Philemon 24.

Acts 19:30 And when Paul wanted to go into the assembly, the disciples would not let him.

Apparently Paul had not been around when this happened, but when he found out he was ready and willing to lay down his life for the Lord and his friends.

Acts 19:31 Also some of the Asiarchs who were friends of his sent to him and repeatedly urged him not to venture into the theater.

The Asiarchs were chief officials who were chosen to supervise the games in honor of the emperor and the gods in Ephesus. They were high priests of sorts and thus not Christians, but Paul had befriended them.

Acts 19:32 So then, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion and the majority did not know for what reason they had come together.

In a heated rage people began to join in with Demetrius, but apparently did not understand why.

Acts 19:33 Some of the crowd concluded it was Alexander, since the Jews had put him forward; and having motioned with his hand, Alexander was intending to make a defense to the assembly.

Some believe Alexander is the one spoken of by Paul in 2 Tim 4:14. Apparently he wanted to deflect any rage away from the Jews.

Acts 19:34 But when they recognized that he was a Jew, a single outcry arose from them all as they shouted for about two hours, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

*Acts 19:35 After quieting the crowd, the town clerk *said, "Men of Ephesus, what man is there after all who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of the image which fell down from heaven?"*

He is trying to get the city under control by appealing to their superstition. This is seen in the following verse.

Acts 19:36 "So, since these are undeniable facts, you ought to keep calm and to do nothing rash.

Acts 19:37 "For you have brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess.

He is telling the people they have acted rashly in participating in this riot. No punishable crime had been committed by Gaius or Aristarchus.

Acts 19:38 "So then, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a complaint against any man, the courts are in session and proconsuls are available; let them bring charges against one another.

Acts 19:39 "But if you want anything beyond this, it shall be settled in the lawful assembly.

This was not a lawful assembly and should not be taking place.

Acts 19:40 "For indeed we are in danger of being accused of a riot in connection with today's events, since there is no real cause for it, and in this connection we will be unable to account for this disorderly gathering."

There was a Roman law, which made it a capital offence to start a riot.

Acts 19:41 After saying this he dismissed the assembly.

Apparently the town clerk had great weight and the crowd listened to him.

He dismissed the mob in a noble way so that it might appear to be a proper assembly. He was protecting his fellow citizens.

Acts Chapter 20

4. Macedonia and Greece, 20:1-6

Acts 20:1 After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had exhorted them and taken his leave of them, he left to go to Macedonia.

Acts 20:2 When he had gone through those districts and had given them much exhortation, he came to Greece.

Paul's trip is mentioned in 2 Cor. 2:12-13. He went to Troas and Macedonia

Acts 20:3 And there he spent three months, and when a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.

This is probably when Paul wrote the letter to the Romans, (Rom. 15:22-25)

We are not told what the plot is but it was enough to get Paul to move on to Macedonia.

Acts 20:4 And he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus, and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.

Acts 20:5 But these had gone on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas.

Acts 20:6 We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days.

We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread,

This is the Passover. This does not say that Paul partook of the feast but it is probably interjected to give a time frame of this journey.

and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days.

Staying seven days is significant because it indicates that Paul was waiting for something.

5. Eutychus, 20:7-12

Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread,

The first day of the week was the day of worship for first century Christian, 1Cor. 16:1,2

The breaking of bread is in reference to the Lords Supper, Acts 2:42-47; 1Cor. 10:16; 11:20-29

Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

This was another act of worship which the early church participated in – preaching, Acts 2:42

Acts 20:8 There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together.

Acts 20:9 And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead.

Some question whether Eutychus was actually dead based upon Paul's words in the next verse. But this passage makes it clear he was picked up **DEAD**. The physician Luke knew what dead was.

Acts 20:10 But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him."

His life "in him" simply means he is now alive. This is similar to what Elijah (1 Kings 17:21) and Elisha (2 Kings 4:34) did.

Acts 20:11 When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left.

The breaking bread here is a common meal. Paul had waited at Troas to partake of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. They had already done this earlier, v.7. It is now past midnight and they eat a common meal.

The word used here for "eaten" is actually "tasted." This separates the Lord's Supper, vs. 7, from a common meal or fellowship meal vs. 11

Note: Can one eat a common meal in the same building where the Lord's Supper is taken? This passage clearly indicates that Paul did.

Acts 20:12 They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted.

6. The coast of Asia Minor, 20:13-16

Acts 20:13 But we, going ahead to the ship, set sail for Assos, intending from there to take Paul on board; for so he had arranged it, intending himself to go by land.

Acts 20:14 And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene.

Acts 20:15 Sailing from there, we arrived the following day opposite Chios; and the next day we crossed over to Samos; and the day following we came to Miletus.

Acts 20:16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

This passage also sheds some light on verse 6. Why wait seven days if he was in such a hurry to get to Jerusalem? It seems he wanted to partake of the Lord's Supper with his fellow Christian brethren.

7. The elders of Ephesus, 20:17-38

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.

Miletus is about 30 miles South of Ephesus. The elders, if they made hurried, could reach Paul by the end of the next day. Also note that there the word elders is plural. Never did a congregation in the Lords church have a single elder or “pastor” – to shepherd the flock. Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:5 (See handout – “Elders Name and Number”)

Acts 20:18 And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time,

Here Paul begins a brief explanation of his work.

Acts 20:19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews;

Acts 20:20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,

Acts 20:21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul’s work can be broken down in this manner.

- a. Paul served with all humility, tears and trials
- b. He did not shrink from preaching, he taught publicly and house to house
- c. He testified to all who would listen that repentance and faith in Christ was what God required.

Acts 20:22 "And now, behold, bound by the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there,

Acts 20:23 except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.

Paul is aware that his journey to Jerusalem was to be “in chains” Acts 21:10-12

Acts 20:24 "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

Paul saw his life as a sacrifice in service to Christ, Gal. 2:20-21; Phil. 2:12-21; 2Cor. 11:18-28

Acts 20:25 "And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face.

Some believe this to be a premonition or prophetic utterance on Paul’s part, but it seems more likely that Paul simply sensed that his life was about to end. Paul did return to Miletus, 2 Tim 4:20, but it is uncertain if he ever went back to Ephesus.

Acts 20:26 "Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men.

Paul is saying that those who perish cannot place the blame upon him. He took the opportunity to teach. If they did not listen and obey it was their own fault, Ezek. 3:16-21

Acts 20:27 "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

Here we see the proclamation of Paul’s innocence of blood. He proclaimed the whole purpose of God not just part. They had full knowledge.

Acts 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers,

It was through the Holy Spirit that the word was given and thus the instruction for the qualifications of an overseer or “bishop,” 1Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

to shepherd the church of God

This is the work the overseer is called to do. He is called to shepherd (to feed, tend to, to govern) the church (those called out).

which He purchased with His own blood.

This section of scripture reveals two important facts.

1. The church belongs to God. He purchased it at the price of His blood. This being the case all who are “called out” belong to Him, 1Cor. 6:19-20; 2Cor. 6:14-18. This purchasing takes place as we in faith are baptized, Matt. 28:19,20; where we are united with God, Rom. 6:3-7.
2. Here we also see the true statement of Jesus’ deity. It was Jesus who died and shed his blood. Thus Jesus is God, Heb 9:16,17; Col. 2:8,9

Acts 20:29 "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;

Acts 20:30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Here we see a prophetic reference to the coming apostasy. This rising up would include the elders as well as others in the assembly. Note that the heretics would come up from among them. Consider other passages on apostasy. (Matt 7:15-23; 2 Cor. 11:3; 2Thess. 2:1-12; 1Tim 4:1-5; 2 Tim. 3:1-8)

Acts 20:31 "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

"Therefore be on the alert,

Because savage wolves will enter in the elders must be always be on alert.

1. This is the same ministry given in, **Heb. 13:17**
2. Heb. 13:17 tells us what they watch over, **Your Souls**
3. Inherent in this term “watch or alert” is the ancient responsibility of the watchmen of the city.
 - a. The cities were protected by walls, and if an enemy were detected, the watchman would warn the city to prepare for defense.
 - b. The security of the city was placed in the hands of the watchman.
4. This term watchman can also be applied in a spiritual sense.
5. A good illustration of this is found in **Ezek. 3:16-21**
 - a. Notice their job is to warn the people with the word of God.
 - b. If he fails to warn them it will be at the expense of his own soul
 - c. We have a similar warning the elders of the church, **Heb. 13:17**

remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

Paul leaves himself as an example worthy of being followed. He never stopped defending the faith day and night. He showed that example for three years.

Acts 20:32 "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

It is through the knowledge of Gods word that we will come to receive grace, 2Pet. 3:17,18.

Through His word we are built up, Eph, 4:11-16. Through being built up by His word we are assured of our inheritance, 1Cor. 1:1-8

Acts 20:33 "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes.

As Paul closes out his admonition to the elders at Ephesus, he turns his attention to the example he has left them. The work Paul did was not done for money. Although at times he had an abundance, there were times when he had little, Phil. 4:10-13. He did what he did because he belonged to Christ, Gal 2:20.

Acts 20:34 "You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me.

As proof that he coveted not, he reminds the brethren of the work he had done with his own hands, Acts 18:1-4.

Acts 20:35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Nowhere in the gospels do we find this quote. It must be something Jesus said to Paul or it is simply a quote not recorded in the gospels.

Acts 20:36 When he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

Acts 20:37 And they began to weep aloud and embraced Paul, and repeatedly kissed him,

Acts 20:38 grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

The love the elders and brethren at Ephesus had for Paul is clearly expressed here. His departure was something they did not wish to see, especially knowing that they would never see him again.

Acts Chapter 21

8. Tyre, 21:1-6

Acts 21:1 When we had parted from them and had set sail, we ran a straight course to Cos and the next day to Rhodes and from there to Patara;

Acts 21:2 and having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail.

Acts 21:3 When we came in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left, we kept sailing to Syria and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload its cargo.

Acts 21:4 After looking up the disciples, we stayed there seven days; and they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.

After looking up the disciples

There was a congregation of the Lord's people in Tyre. In Acts 11:19 and 15:3 we see a possible connection as to how this congregation came into existence.

It was probably a smaller group as seen in the phrase "After looking up" which implies some searching took place.

we stayed there seven days;

There is no explanation as to why Paul waited seven days, but we do know that the brethren were aware of the danger Paul was in.

and they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.

As with Agabus, Acts 21:10-14, these must have received some prophetic word about Paul's situation.

This cannot mean that the Holy Spirit did not want Paul to go into Jerusalem. If this were the case He would have listened, Acts 16:6-10. It seems that they knew through the Holy Spirit that Paul was headed into danger and they wanted to stop him.

Acts 21:5 When our days there were ended, we left and started on our journey, while they all, with wives and children, escorted us until we were out of the city. After kneeling down on the beach and praying, we said farewell to one another.

Here we find the fellowship that existed amongst the Christians. The whole congregation saw Paul off and they prayed together.

Acts 21:6 Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home again.

9. Caesarea, 21:7-14

Acts 21:7 When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais, and after greeting the brethren, we stayed with them for a day.

Again we find a congregation of the Lord's people. As with Tyre, it is possible this congregation was started some twenty years prior following the persecution of Acts 11:19. It is also possible that Philip founded this work.

Acts 21:8 On the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him.

Luke clearly shows that Philip is the man mentioned in Acts 6:1-5. He is also the one who went to Samaria in and proclaimed the gospel, Acts 8:4-24 and studied with the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:25-40.

In referring to Philip as "the evangelist" and "one of the seven" Luke also establishes that this Philip is not the Apostle Philip, Acts 1:13.

Acts 21:9 Now this man had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses.

Philip's daughters had followed his example and were faithful Christians. They were also blessed with the gift of prophecy, Acts 2:17.

The fact that they were virgins might indicate their level of devotion to God, 1Cor. 7:25-35

Acts 21:10 As we were staying there for some days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

Agabus is not a common name and so some believe that this is the same Agabus from Acts 11:27-30 who foretold of the coming famine in Jerusalem.

Acts 21:11 And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, "This is what the Holy Spirit says: 'In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

Agabus establishes that what he says is by the authority of the Holy Spirit. What he does follows the pattern of Old Testament prophets, Ahijah rent his new cloak, (1Kings 11:29ff), Isaiah walked naked and barefoot, (Isa. 20:2ff).

Also note that Agabus does not tell Paul not to go to Jerusalem. He tells him what will happen when gets there.

Acts 21:12 When we had heard this, we as well as the local residents began begging him not to go up to Jerusalem.

Acts 21:13 Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart?"

Paul's heart is breaking because of his deep love for the brethren. He hurt because they hurt, Phil 1:21-26.

For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Paul was not about to let earthly sorrow get in the way of His service to Christ. He was ready to die if need be.

Acts 21:14 And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, "The will of the Lord be done!"

This is the third time we have seen the brethren begging Paul not to go to Jerusalem. But, Paul never saw the prophetic word from the Holy Spirit as meaning he should keep away from Jerusalem.

It seems that the Holy Spirit was simply preparing Paul for what he must face. That is why the conclusion is "The will of the Lord be done!"

10. Jerusalem, 21:15-17

Acts 21:15 After these days we got ready and started on our way up to Jerusalem.

Acts 21:16 Some of the disciples from Caesarea also came with us, taking us to Mnason of Cyprus, a disciple of long standing with whom we were to lodge.

The phrase "a disciple of long standing" indicates that Mnason was an early convert, probably one from the beginning.

Acts 21:17 After we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

All during Paul's journey back to Jerusalem he has been comforted by the brethren, when he arrives in Jerusalem the brethren once again are there for him.

What great comfort to know that your brethren are there for you, to help strengthen, support and encourage you.

2. In Jerusalem, Caesarea and Rome, 21:17-28:31

A. In Jerusalem, 21:17-23:22

1. The advice of James, 21:17-26

Acts 21:18 And the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

Acts 21:19 After he had greeted them, he began to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

This is a common practice of Paul. He wanted the brethren to know of the work which was being accomplished in the name of Jesus and that it was God through him who was doing the work.

Acts 21:20 And when they heard it they began glorifying God; and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law;

Acts 21:21 and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.

We do not have mention of Paul telling the Jews not to circumcise their children. Paul had Timothy circumcised, Acts 16:1-3. Yet he would not have done it as an act of keeping the Old Law, Gal. 5:1-6. Paul would have taught what was agreed upon in Jerusalem in Acts 15.

The fact that he had told them to forsake Moses would have been true. He was turning them to Jesus, Gal. 3:1ff. F. LaGard Smith in his "Narrated Bible" places Galatians right after the Jerusalem counsel of Acts 15. This is around 50 A.D., just before his second missionary journey. Chuck Horner in his WVBS syllabus on Galatians states that Galatians was written after Acts 18:23, and maybe as early as 48 A.D. The point is Galatians was in all likelihood written before Acts 21 and would have already been in circulation by the time Paul arrives in Jerusalem. Indeed Paul was teaching that the Law of Moses was no longer binding, Gal. 3:15-25

The instigators of these things is probably the Jews from Asia, Acts 21:27.

Acts 21:22 "What, then, is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come.

Acts 21:23 "Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow;

Acts 21:24 take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law.

Acts 21:25 "But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having decided that they should abstain from meat sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication."

This is in reference to Acts 15

Acts 21:26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself along with them, went into the temple giving notice of the completion of the days of purification, until the sacrifice was offered for each one of them.

This appears to be a Nazarite Vow, Num. 6:9-15. Paul's part was to pay for the four men. The purpose was to possibly show Paul's reverence for the Law. He knew it had been finished in Christ, yet he still respected it coming from God and its purpose, Rom 10:4

It seems that Paul did keep these Jewish ceremonial rites for the sake of peace and harmony. He would not have violated a Christian principle, not teaching this as commanded for salvation, but only in assisting in the fulfilling of a vow to God, 1 Cor. 9:19-23.

2. Paul's arrest, 21:27-23:22

a. The occasion, 21:27-36

Acts 21:27 When the seven days were almost over, the Jews from Asia, upon seeing him in the temple, began to stir up all the crowd and laid hands on him,

Acts 21:28 crying out, "Men of Israel, come to our aid! This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people and the Law and this place; and besides he has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."

Acts 21:29 For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

Acts 21:30 Then all the city was provoked, and the people rushed together, and taking hold of Paul they dragged him out of the temple, and immediately the doors were shut.

Acts 21:31 While they were seeking to kill him, a report came up to the commander of the Roman cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion.

This demonstrates the anger of those who do not want to hear the truth. They were so angry they wanted to kill Paul. This also shows the hardness of heart these people had towards God's word, Rom. 10:21

Acts 21:32 At once he took along some soldiers and centurions and ran down to them; and when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

Acts 21:33 Then the commander came up and took hold of him, and ordered him to be bound with two chains; and he began asking who he was and what he had done.

We cannot fault the commander for putting Paul in chains. The level of anger displayed by the crowd would have led him to believe Paul had done something terribly wrong. Once Paul was chained he could then find out what was going on.

Acts 21:34 But among the crowd some were shouting one thing and some another, and when he could not find out the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks.

This is your typical out-of-control crowd, mob mentality. Most didn't even know what was going on. They didn't even stop to see if the accusation was true.

Acts 21:35 When he got to the stairs, he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob;

Acts 21:36 for the multitude of the people kept following them, shouting, "Away with him!"

The Jews were not about to let Paul slip through their hands. They continued to press even the soldiers. In the Greek, the phrase "away with him" indicates the crowd is hysterical.

b. Paul's defense, 21:37-22:21

*Acts 21:37 As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the commander, "May I say something to you?" And he *said, "Do you know Greek?"*

Acts 21:38 "Then you are not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?"

The commander must have thought that Paul was this Egyptian.

Paul speaking the Greek language shows he is not an ignorant rebel and that he respects the commander

Acts 21:39 But Paul said, "I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city; and I beg you, allow me to speak to the people."

This would be an honorable distinction and would seem to give some weight to his character and ability to speak to the mob.

Acts 21:40 When he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned to the people with his hand; and when there was a great hush, he spoke to them in the Hebrew dialect, saying,

Speaking in the Hebrew dialect is an act of respect for the people and let's them know he is one of them.

Acts Chapter 22

Acts 22:1 "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense which I now offer to you."

Paul uses terms that are a show of respect and will get the attention of the people.

*Acts 22:2 And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew dialect, they became even more quiet; and he *said,*

Because Paul spoke to the people as one of them, they were willing to quiet down and listen.

Acts 22:3 "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today."

Paul establishes some important things about himself, Phil. 3:3-6.

1. He is a Jew
2. He was foreign born, Tarsus of Cilicia
3. he was brought up in Jerusalem, from the time he was 13 and no later.
4. He is an educated Jew – He knows the Law
5. His teacher is Gamaliel, highly respected Jew and grandson of Hillel.
This is probably the same Gamaliel mentioned in Acts 5:34.
6. he lived strictly according to the Law, Acts 26:5
7. He was zealous for God, just like them.

Acts 22:4 "I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons,

Paul's zeal for God was demonstrated in his persecution of this Way, Christians. This was not something he was proud of, 1Cor. 15:7-10; 1Tim. 1:12-17. Paul held the cloaks of those who stoned Stephen to death, Acts 7:1-60. He ravaged the church following Stephens death, Acts 8:1-3.

Acts 22:5 as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.

as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify.

If they question his zeal, he has the best of witnesses.

From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.

This material is covered in Acts 9 and we will only touch on whatever differences we might find.

Acts 22:6 "But it happened that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me,

Acts 22:7 and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?'

Acts 22:8 "And I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'

Acts 22:9 "And those who were with me saw the light, to be sure, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me.

Some will argue that Acts 9:7 and Acts 22:9 contradict each other. Did they hear what was spoken or not? Clearly they heard the voice as indicated in Acts 9:7, but they did not understand what was being spoken, Acts 22:9. Also consider Acts 22:14, it was appointed that Paul hear an utterance from the Lord.

Bottom line, those with Paul did not hear, **την φωνην** (Acts 22:9), what the speaker said, but they did hear, **τησ φωνησ** (Acts 9:7), that someone was speaking to Paul.

Acts 22:10 "And I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Get up and go on into Damascus, and there you will be told of all that has been appointed for you to do.'

Acts 22:11 "But since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus.

Acts 22:12 "A certain Ananias, a man who was devout by the standard of the Law, and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there,

Just like the witnesses Paul had concerning his zeal for God, he also had a faithful witness in Ananias.

1. He was a man devout by the standard of the Law. He was faithful in his religious observance.
2. He is well spoken of by all the Jews who lived in Damascus.

Paul's witness was not some fly by night, paid for witness, like the Jews often used. He was a true trustworthy Jew.

Acts 22:13 came to me, and standing near said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very time I looked up at him.

Acts 22:14 "And he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will and to see the Righteous One and to hear an utterance from His mouth.

Acts 22:15 'For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard.

In part Paul was to be a witness of Jesus' resurrection, having seen Him alive after He had been crucified. There was also going to be a message for Paul to preach, Acts 9:15. He probably doesn't mention the Gentiles here because of the Jewish audience.

Acts 22:16 'Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'

'Now why do you delay?

Ananias understood the need for Paul to follow through with the Lords will. What he needed to do needed to be done immediately.

Get up and be baptized,

Βαπτισαι, Baptisai, is in the first aorist middle voice of the verb. Literally Paul is to cause himself to be baptized or allow someone to do it.

and wash away your sins,

This is the purpose of baptism, to wash away his sins. This is the same word used in 1Cor. 6:11 and literally signifies a washing off.

calling on His name.'

It was in this act that Paul would call upon the Lord.

NOTE: Before Paul was ready to be a witness Acts 22:16 had to be carried out. One who is unwilling to obey the commands of Jesus is not fit to “witness” for Him. It is only after being baptized for the forgiveness of sins is one prepared to serve in Christ’ kingdom. Until then they are still in darkness, Col. 1:13.

Acts 22:17 "It happened when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance,

This seems to take place after Paul’s three year absence, Gal. 1:18, Acts 9:23-30

Acts 22:18 and I saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.'

Acts 22:19 "And I said, 'Lord, they themselves understand that in one synagogue after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in You.

Acts 22:20 'And when the blood of Your witness Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by approving, and watching out for the coats of those who were slaying him.'

Acts 22:21 "And He said to me, 'Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'"

Paul continues to establish how he persecuted the church and the people knew it. Paul believed this would give him an open door to the Jews, but Jesus makes it clear that will not be the case.

At the end of his vision Jesus tells Paul he is to go to the Gentiles. Paul finally mentions the Gentiles, but he does it in conjunction with being in the Temple and seeing Jesus. It is possible that he is now making His argument for going to the Gentiles now because he believes the Jews would have to accept his work and teachings knowing the Messiah gave him this command in the Temple. It must be right.

c. Saved from scourging, 22:22-29

Acts 22:22 They listened to him up to this statement, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he should not be allowed to live!"

It did not take much to set the crowd off again. There was no way they would believe the Messiah would make such an announcement.

Acts 22:23 And as they were crying out and throwing off their cloaks and tossing dust into the air,

These three acts demonstrate the great anger of the crowd. If they could take hold of Paul they would surely kill him.

Acts 22:24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, stating that he should be examined by scourging so that he might find out the reason why they were shouting against him that way.

The commander still did not know why the crowd was so angry and getting worse. He determined that Paul should be tortured until he confessed to whatever crime it was he had committed.

Acts 22:25 But when they stretched him out with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and uncondemned?"

Paul had already been tied up when he makes this statement.

According to Roman law, a Roman citizen could not be scourged first, as a means of examination.

Acts 22:26 When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and told him, saying, "What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman."

Acts 22:27 The commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" And he said, "Yes."

Acts 22:28 The commander answered, "I acquired this citizenship with a large sum of money." And Paul said, "But I was actually born a citizen."

There were three ways of becoming a Roman citizen,

1. You could purchase citizenship with a large sum of money.
2. Citizenship could be conferred upon you because of some great service to the Roman government.
3. Be born a citizen, this was more honorable than purchasing your citizenship.

Acts 22:29 Therefore those who were about to examine him immediately let go of him; and the commander also was afraid when he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had put him in chains.

The commander could have been accused of siding with the Jews because of what he had done to a Roman citizen, so he was afraid.

d. Paul's trial before the Sanhedrin, 22:30-23:11

Acts 22:30 But on the next day, wishing to know for certain why he had been accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the Council to assemble, and brought Paul down and set him before them.

The commander did not want to let Paul go before he could find out what the accusation against him was. Paul is placed before the chief priests and the Sanhedrin. They were to find out what had happened.

Acts Chapter 23

Acts 23:1 Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, "Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day."

Paul, looking intently at the Council, said,

The council would be the Sanhedrin and this consisted of 70 to 72 men.

Paul was not afraid to stand up for the truth as he looked intently at both the Pharisees and Sadducees who made up this council.

"Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day."

Paul had done nothing wrong in His teaching. The Jews were looking for a Messiah and Paul was telling them of Him. The Pharisees were looking for the resurrection and Paul was telling them about this as well, 1 Cor. 4:4; Phil. 3:6

Acts 23:2 The high priest Ananias commanded those standing beside him to strike him on the mouth.

Ananias jumped the gun in doing this. He had not even given Paul an opportunity to defend himself and there was nothing inappropriate done when Paul spoke.

Ananias, as history records, was an evil high priest. He stole money and treated his office corruptly. He was killed by other Jews in about 66 A.D., during the Jewish Uprising. Paul's statement in the next verse seems to come true.

Act 23:3 Then Paul said to him, "God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit to try me according to the Law, and in violation of the Law order me to be struck?"

Why did Paul call them "whitewashed walls?"

1. It was improper to render any sentence until the case was heard. To strike Paul as was done was a violation of this. This is similar to what Jesus said in Matt. 23:27

2. They spoke the Law but they themselves did not keep it. They looked like one thing but under the whitewash was filth.
3. Their actions demonstrated he would not get a fair trial. He turns his attention to another matter as seen in vs. 6

Act 23:4 But the bystanders said, "Do you revile God's high priest?"

It was wrong for anyone to speak badly about a high priest, Ex. 22:28

Act 23:5 And Paul said, "I was not aware, brethren, that he was high priest; for it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT SPEAK EVIL OF A RULER OF YOUR PEOPLE.'"

Paul makes his statement about the high priest being a whitewashed wall after he was struck. This is what is referred to as the reviling. Paul states that he would not have made the statement if he had known this man to be the high priest.

Why did Paul not know this man was the high priest?

It seems that this is going back to the fact that he was slapped. The high priest would have known the law and would not have commanded the striking of Paul. Thus Paul in essence is saying, "I was not aware, brethren that he was high priest, for if he was he would not have commanded me to be struck"

Act 23:6 But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul began crying out in the Council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!"

Here Paul appeals to those who believe as he does. He was not only a Pharisee, but a son of a Pharisee. He had history. His hope is to get some of the council on his side.

Act 23:7 As he said this, there occurred a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.

Act 23:8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

Acts 23:9 And there occurred a great uproar; and some of the scribes of the Pharisaic party stood up and began to argue heatedly, saying, "We find nothing wrong with this man; suppose a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?"

As long as what Paul taught agreed with their beliefs they were willing to stand up for him. They had not even heard the whole story. This shows their bias and prejudice. This also served his purpose knowing he would not get a fair trial he had to create a distraction.

Acts 23:10 And as a great dissension was developing, the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them and ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force, and bring him into the barracks.

Once again a riot was developing among the Jews. This would be the third riot in two days. The first in 21:27-40, the second in 22:22-23.

It was so bad the commander thought Paul would be torn to pieces. Being that Paul is a Roman citizen the commander was in charge of his safety.

Acts 23:11 But on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, "Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also."

Paul at this time was possibly confused and down trodden. But the Lord appears to him, at his side and gives him hope. He would live yet another day. And Paul's desire to go to Rome would take place, Acts 19:21. Paul still had work to do.

e. The plot to kill Paul, 23:12-22

Acts 23:12 When it was day, the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.

Acts 23:13 There were more than forty who formed this plot.

Acts 23:14 They came to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have bound ourselves under a solemn oath to taste nothing until we have killed Paul.

Acts 23:15 "Now therefore, you and the Council notify the commander to bring him down to you, as though you were going to determine his case by a more thorough investigation; and we for our part are ready to slay him before he comes near the place."

The Lord had called the temple a den of thieves and robbers; and here is the most amazing proof.

Here we see the total breakdown of the Jewish faith. They were willing to lie to kill Paul.

Acts 23:16 But the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, and he came and entered the barracks and told Paul.

Acts 23:17 Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, "Lead this young man to the commander, for he has something to report to him."

Paul did not trust anyone with this news except the one in charge of his life. The commander would be accountable if something happened to Paul.

*Acts 23:18 So he took him and led him to the commander and *said, "Paul the prisoner called me to him and asked me to lead this young man to you since he has something to tell you."*

Acts 23:19 The commander took him by the hand and stepping aside, began to inquire of him privately, "What is it that you have to report to me?"

Acts 23:20 And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down tomorrow to the Council, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more thoroughly about him.

Acts 23:21 "So do not listen to them, for more than forty of them are lying in wait for him who have bound themselves under a curse not to eat or drink until they slay him; and now they are ready and waiting for the promise from you."

Acts 23:22 So the commander let the young man go, instructing him, "Tell no one that you have notified me of these things."

B. In Caesarea, 23:23-26:32

1. Delivery of Paul to Felix, 23:23-35

Acts 23:23 And he called to him two of the centurions and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready by the third hour of the night to proceed to Caesarea, with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen."

This shows how serious it was to let something happen to a Roman citizen in your charge. The whole force is 470 men and they would be leaving at in the night at 9 p.m.

Acts 23:24 They were also to provide mounts to put Paul on and bring him safely to Felix the governor.

Felix was the procurator of Judaea one of the successors of Pontius Pilate. He was appointed in about 52 A.D. and held office until 59 A.D. He was succeeded by Festus. This would put this happening at about 57 A.D. 24 years after the church had been established

Acts 23:25 And he wrote a letter having this form:

Acts 23:26 "Claudius Lysias, to the most excellent governor Felix, greetings.

Here we have the first mention of the chief captain's name.

Acts 23:27 "When this man was arrested by the Jews and was about to be slain by them, I came up to them with the troops and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman.

There is a distortion of the truth in this letter. He did not come and save him after he had learned he was a Roman. This man was protecting himself.

Acts 23:28 "And wanting to ascertain the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their Council;

Acts 23:29 and I found him to be accused over questions about their Law, but under no accusation deserving death or imprisonment.

Acts 23:30 "When I was informed that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, also instructing his accusers to bring charges against him before you."

Paul is not going to Felix as a prisoner but as a Roman citizen.

Acts 23:31 So the soldiers, in accordance with their orders, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris.

Acts 23:32 But the next day, leaving the horsemen to go on with him, they returned to the barracks.

Acts 23:33 When these had come to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him.

Acts 23:34 When he had read it, he asked from what province he was, and when he learned that he was from Cilicia,

This was important so that he could determine if Paul was under his jurisdiction.

Luke 23:7

Acts 23:35 he said, "I will give you a hearing after your accusers arrive also," giving orders for him to be kept in Herod's Praetorium.

This was to be Paul's home for the next two years. It is the governor's official residence. After such a long time of mistreatment he was given somewhat of a safe haven. This was not the holding place of a hardened criminal but of a Roman citizen.

Acts Chapter 24

2. Trial before Felix, 24:1-23

a. Tertullus the lawyer, 24:1-9

Acts 24:1 After five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders, with an attorney named Tertullus, and they brought charges to the governor against Paul.

As we have seen in the past any charges will be false. Paul has done nothing wrong. Matter are now serious and Ananias is accompanied by a lawyer.

Acts 24:2 After Paul had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying to the governor, "Since we have through you attained much peace, and since by your providence reforms are being carried out for this nation,

Acts 24:3 we acknowledge this in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness.

Acts 24:4 "But, that I may not weary you any further, I beg you to grant us, by your kindness, a brief hearing.

We see here how Tertullus is trying to get on the good side of Felix with exaggerated flattery

Acts 24:5 "For we have found this man a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.

Acts 24:6 "And he even tried to desecrate the temple; and then we arrested him. [We wanted to judge him according to our own Law.

Tertullus levels four accusations against Paul.

1. He was a Pest
2. Stirs up dissension
3. Ringleader of the Nazarene
4. Desecrated the temple

All of these except number three are very general. Tertullus has no proof of any of them.

As for judging according to their own Law, the reaction of the crowd showed they believed he was already guilty. There wasn't going to be any trial, Acts 21:30,31

Acts 24:7 "But Lysias the commander came along, and with much violence took him out of our hands,

Acts 24:8 ordering his accusers to come before you.] By examining him yourself concerning all these matters you will be able to ascertain the things of which we accuse him."

Acts 24:9 The Jews also joined in the attack, asserting that these things were so.

Again we see the accusations but no proof of what was said.

b. Paul's defense, 24:10-23

Acts 24:10 When the governor had nodded for him to speak, Paul responded: "Knowing that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, I cheerfully make my defense,

Paul's approach with Felix is much different than Tertullus. He does not try flattery but simple fact. Felix had been governor for about six years up to this point. Paul knowing he had done nothing wrong and that the Jews had no evidence for their accusations is able to make a defense cheerfully.

This is the only real concern of Felix. Paul being a pest or follower of the Nazarene or desecrating the temple was no concern of Felix's

Acts 24:11 since you can take note of the fact that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship.

First Paul notes he would not have had time to bring a group together. Of the twelve days in Jerusalem five were in prison. His reason for going was to worship.

Acts 24:12 "Neither in the temple, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city itself did they find me carrying on a discussion with anyone or causing a riot.

Secondly Paul notes that he never once did anything that caused a riot. As a matter of fact it was the Jews that started these riots, Acts 21:27

Acts 24:13 "Nor can they prove to you the charges of which they now accuse me.

Paul puts an end to their accusations by saying they cannot prove any of their charges.

This might have been a good place to stop, if he wasn't looking for an opportunity to preach Christ.

Acts 24:14 "But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets;

Paul makes his defense to the only accusation that is true. He is a follower of the Nazarene or Way

Paul does not call the church a sect. This is what Tertullus called it. The word Sect means a division and a divergence, also mean "heresy." Tertullus was claiming that Christianity was an offshoot of the Jewish faith. But as we will see Paul makes the claim that Christianity is the real, whole of Judaism and not a sect of it. He does this by making three points.

I do serve the God of our fathers,

1. Paul says he serves the same God the Jews serve. He is saying that Christianity is from God.

believing everything that is in accordance with the Law, and that is written in the Prophets;

2. Paul believed the scriptures and what they said about the coming of a Messiah, as did the Jews.

Acts 24:15 having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

3. Paul had hope in God as did the Jews. The problem was the Jews were still looking for a Messiah but Paul had accepted Jesus as the Messiah.

Acts 24:16 "In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men.

Paul has a clear conscience before God because he was a believer and follower of what the Law and Scriptures said. Because of this he lived a life faithful to God. He maintained a blameless life.

Acts 24:17 "Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings;

Paul makes this point to show his intentions were purely good. He was not doing evil as the Sadducees had said.

Acts 24:18 in which they found me occupied in the temple, having been purified, without any crowd or uproar. But there were some Jews from Asia—

Here Paul is referring back to when he first came to Jerusalem, Acts 21:23-26. He had done what was right, purified himself, and there was no riot taking place.

But there were some Jews from Asia—

Acts 24:19 who ought to have been present before you and to make accusation, if they should have anything against me.

Paul now notes that the ones bringing accusations were not even present in the temple while he was doing what he did. The ones who were present and would know the truth are not to be found at his present hearing. They originally accused him, they should be there to testify to the wrong doing they witnessed.

Acts 24:20 "Or else let these men themselves tell what misdeed they found when I stood before the Council,

Those present at this time heard the arguments in the Sanhedrian court and found nothing to count against him.

Acts 24:21 other than for this one statement which I shouted out while standing among them, 'For the resurrection of the dead I am on trial before you today.'"

The only charge the Sadducees would have against him is his belief in the resurrection. This would not be a matter for Felix to deal with.

Acts 24:22 But Felix, having a more exact knowledge about the Way, put them off, saying, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case."

Felix knew more about Jesus than the Jews would have suspected. After hearing Paul's case it seems he knew Paul was innocent but he puts them all off waiting to hear from Lysias.

3. Paul's converses with Felix for two years, 24:24-27

Acts 24:23 Then he gave orders to the centurion for him to be kept in custody and yet have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from ministering to him.

Since Paul could not be found guilty at this time he was provided some freedoms.

Acts 24:24 But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus.

Acts 24:25 But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you."

Here we see an example of those who hear the word but because they are living a life not according to Gods teaching they send the preacher away.

Acts 24:26 At the same time too, he was hoping that money would be given him by Paul; therefore he also used to send for him quite often and converse with him.

It was a common practice to pay off an official to be granted a favor. Felix expected Paul to pay him something and so he kept sending for him, but the money never came.

Acts 24:27 But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and wishing to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned.

It is time for Felix to depart from his work as governor and instead of releasing Paul he left him imprisoned seeking to do the Jews a favor. Maybe they had given him some money.

Acts Chapter 25

4. Before Festus, 25:1-22

a. The plot of the Jews, 25:1-5

Acts 25:1 Festus then, having arrived in the province, three days later went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.

Festus was made governor in A.D. 60 and died two years later. This gives us a good date for when this takes place

three days later went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.

That is, he arrived in Jerusalem on the third day. This is similar to the resurrection of Jesus, after three days or on the third day.

Acts 25:2 And the chief priests and the leading men of the Jews brought charges against Paul, and they were urging him,

The hatred of the Jews had not ceased in this two-year time span. Paul would still be converting souls while in prison and so his presence would still be felt.

and they were urging him,

Acts 25:3 requesting a concession against Paul, that he might have him brought to Jerusalem (at the same time, setting an ambush to kill him on the way).

The Jews were back to their old tricks. They wanted to kill Paul. This reminds us of the plot made two years earlier, Acts 23:12

Acts 25:4 Festus then answered that Paul was being kept in custody at Caesarea and that he himself was about to leave shortly.

*Acts 25:5 "Therefore," he *said, "let the influential men among you go there with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them prosecute him."*

Festus shows the strong character he had over Felix. He would not let the Jews sway the judicial system. He tells them to bring the Sanhedrin court and meet him in Caesarea where they will have a chance to prosecute him.

b. The Appeal to Caesar, 25:5-12

Acts 25:6 After he had spent not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought.

Acts 25:7 After Paul arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him which they could not prove,

The Jews are good about pointing the finger yet they never have proof for their accusations.

Acts 25:8 while Paul said in his own defense, "I have committed no offense either against the Law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar."

We do not have the discourse of the Jews, but Paul seems to answer the charges they brought against him. Apparently these charges were three-fold.

1. Crimes against the Law of the Jews
2. Crime against the temple
3. Crime against Caesar – (This is Nero, became a very cruel leader)

These are similar to the charges first brought against him before Felix, 24:5-6

Acts 25:9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me on these charges?"

Festus shows that Paul had done nothing wrong against the Roman government. If he had Festus would not be sending him before the Sanhedrin. Any trial would be for things done against the Jewish law.

Acts 25:10 But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know.

As a Roman citizen, if he had done anything wrong, he should be tried before Caesar's tribunal. Paul also understood that if he went to Jerusalem he would not live long, so he stood his ground and appealed to Caesar.

Acts 25:11 "If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar."

Here Paul clarifies why he does not wish to go before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. He was willing to die for wrong-doing, if in fact he had done anything wrong. But, he would not allow himself to be tried by those who have lied about what he did.

I appeal to Caesar

Paul took the final step in securing that he would receive a fair trial.

Acts 25:12 Then when Festus had conferred with his council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go."

Festus either had to let Paul go, or grant his request to appear before Caesar.

c. Paul's case presented to Agrippa, 25:13-22

Acts 25:13 Now when several days had elapsed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and paid their respects to Festus.

This is Herod Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa I, (12:1; 21-23) and great grandson of Herod the Great (Matt. 2:1). He ruled under the emperor over the provinces of the Sea of Galilee.

and Bernice

Bernice is his sister and was in an illicit relationship with him. She had once been married to her uncle, Herod King of Chalcis

arrived at Caesarea, and paid their respects to Festus.

They would be paying their respects because of the new position he had just taken over.

Acts 25:14 While they were spending many days there, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a man who was left as a prisoner by Felix;

Acts 25:15 and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.

The Sanhedrin wanted a guilty verdict against Paul without a real trial taking place. We know they wanted a guilty verdict by what is said in verse 16

Acts 25:16 "I answered them that it is not the custom of the Romans to hand over any man before the accused meets his accusers face to face and has an opportunity to make his defense against the charges.

Acts 25:17 "So after they had assembled here, I did not delay, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought before me.

Acts 25:18 "When the accusers stood up, they began bringing charges against him not of such crimes as I was expecting,

Here Festus is making the claim of Paul's innocence that he was afraid to make before the Sanhedrin

Acts 25:19 but they simply had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive.

Acts 25:20 "Being at a loss how to investigate such matters, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there stand trial on these matters.

Acts 25:21 "But when Paul appealed to be held in custody for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him to be kept in custody until I send him to Caesar."

*Acts 25:22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he *said, "you shall hear him."*

It would be natural for Agrippa to want to hear Paul. Agrippa's family had a long time connection with what Paul was preaching about, the certain dead Jesus whom, Paul claimed to be alive.

It was Agrippa's great-grandfather who had slaughtered the innocent children in a vain attempt to kill the infant Lord, Matthew 3. It was his father who seized James and had him executed with the sword, and imprisoned Peter whom was delivered by an angel, Acts 12 This is the same man that the Lord slew at Caesarea in A.D. 44, Acts 12:20-23 It was an uncle who had John the Baptist murdered, Matthew 14

Acts 25:23 So, on the next day when Agrippa came together with Bernice amid great pomp, and entered the auditorium accompanied by the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.

5. Before Agrippa, 25:23-26:32

a. Festus introduces Paul, 25:23-27

*Acts 25:24 Festus *said, "King Agrippa, and all you gentlemen here present with us, you see this man about whom all the people of the Jews appealed to me, both at Jerusalem and here, loudly declaring that he ought not to live any longer.*

Acts 25:25 "But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death; and since he himself appealed to the Emperor, I decided to send him.

Acts 25:26 "Yet I have nothing definite about him to write to my lord. Therefore I have brought him before you all and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the investigation has taken place, I may have something to write.

Acts 25:27 "For it seems absurd to me in sending a prisoner, not to indicate also the charges against him."

Acts Chapter 26

b. Paul's address, 26:1-29

Acts 26:1 Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and proceeded to make his defense:

Acts 26:2 "In regard to all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, I consider myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that I am about to make my defense before you today;

Acts 26:3 especially because you are an expert in all customs and questions among the Jews; therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

Paul finally has an opportunity to make a defense of his actions to one who is not biased and knows the customs of the Jews. The Jews knew their own customs but because of their stubbornness they refused to listen. It is said that Agrippa was a Jew in profession and his father Agrippa I followed the customs strictly.

Paul divides his defense into two areas.

1. His early life which was well known as a Pharisee
2. His life as a prisoner

1. His early life which was well known as a Pharisee

Acts 26:4 "So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem;

Acts 26:5 since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.

Paul lived by the strictest rules of the Pharisee's. His life was open to all and they knew him as this type of man. Paul shows his dedication in following God.

Cf. Phil. 3:4-6

Acts 26:6 "And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers;

Acts 26:7 the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews.

Paul has made this statement several times, 23:6; 24:14-16 Here Paul states that he was only teaching what all the Jews had been hoping for, the promise made 430 years before the law, Gal 3:15-18.

Acts 26:8 "Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead?

This would be referring specifically to those Jews, who denied the resurrection.
(The Sadducees)

Acts 26:9 "So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Here Paul refers back to his early upbringing, vs. 4,5. Because of his training in the Jewish customs he was lead to be hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Acts 26:10 "And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.

Acts 26:11 "And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities.

1. Paul truly proclaims his zeal for God.
2. Note how Paul refers to those he persecuted. He calls them saints, v.10

3. He also states that he tried to force them to blaspheme, to Apostate, but he did not succeed they faced death rather than denounce Christ. This is possibly the reason he became enraged

Acts 26:12 "While so engaged as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests,

Acts 26:13 at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me.

Paul enters into the account of his conversion. Note that here we have a little more insight to what actually took place. The other two accounts are found in Acts 9 and 22

Acts 26:14 "And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

"And when we had all fallen to the ground,

This reminds us of what took place on the night of Jesus' betrayal, John 18:4-6

I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

The goad was a stick six or eight feet long. The plow had but one handle and the plowman held the plow with one hand and the goad in the other; it is carried horizontally and used to prod the ox to make him go faster or obey the plowman. If the ox kicked when pricked with the goad he received a severer prod.

This statement throws some light on the state of Paul's mind before his conversion. It is possible that Paul was stifling conscientious doubts and scruples, and he is being warned against rebelling against God's will, lest he wound his conscientious more deeply.

Acts 26:15 "And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.

This statement tells us that one who is persecuting Christians is really persecuting Jesus. We use a similar statement when evangelizing, "They are not rejecting you, but rejecting Jesus."

Acts 26:16 'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you;

'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen,

Here we can see the authority of Paul's apostleship, Gal 1:1

but also to the things in which I will appear to you;

Jesus came to Paul in other visions, Acts 18:9; 23:11; 2 Cor. 12:2

Acts 26:17 rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you,

Paul states that in his service to the Lord he would be protected. He was challenged by both sides yet he was delivered.

Acts 26:18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

Paul states what his mission was among the Gentiles.

Acts 26:19 "So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision,

Paul is saying. "You could not expect me to avoid the voice from heaven could you?"

Acts 26:20 but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God

Cf. 3:19; 2:38;

performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

This is the life of one who has repented or lives as a man who has repented should.

Acts 26:21 "For this reason some Jews seized me in the temple and tried to put me to death.

Paul is referring back to what took place in Jerusalem, Acts 21:27ff

Acts 26:22 "So, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place;

"So, having obtained help from God,

Paul understood that from the beginning of his work the Lord would protect him.

This message was revealed to Paul several times, Acts 18:9,10; 26:17

I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place;

Again Paul was only proclaiming what he has always been proclaiming, Acts 13:26-41; 17:2,3, and what the Jews had been waiting for. This is seen in the next verse.

Acts 26:23 that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles."

that the Christ was to suffer,

To the Jews this did not fit their idea of a prophet and would have concluded Isaiah 53 to not be Messianic. This could be one of the reasons they rejected the Christ.

and that by reason of {His} resurrection from the dead

Because Jesus was resurrected from the dead, by reason, He is able to proclaim light, Rom 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:18

He should be the first to proclaim light both to the {Jewish} people and to the Gentiles."

The light proclaimed is eternal life, John 8:12. Jesus was the first to proclaim this light in the fact that was the first to die and to rise never to die again, Heb. 1:5-6, Rev. 1:5. He proclaimed this light in His death and resurrection.

*Acts 26:24 While Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus *said in a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad."*

In this statement Festus shows forth his inability to understand the simple things Paul was teaching, 1 Cor. 1:18-31. We see this same type of attitude today in the world. Many of the wise men see Christians as foolish.

*Acts 26:25 But Paul *said, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth.*

Paul counters Festus' comment about him being mad by saying he speaks words of sober truth. Note how this sane man addressed his accuser. This is not the characteristic of a mad man.

Acts 26:26 "For the king knows about these matters, and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner.

"For the king knows about these matters,

We did not see Agrippa shouting with a loud voice. His listening is intent and he understands what Paul is saying as seen in his own statement, vs.28

and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner.

All that had taken place concerning Christ was not kept a secret. His trial and crucifixion were public. The proclaiming of His resurrection was made public by His disciples. Paul's work was public. All the facts were on the table, nothing was left wanting.

Acts 26:27 "King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you do."

Agrippa had heard the arguments offered by Paul, and being a proclaimed Jew he also knew about the prophets whom Paul referred. It was now up to Agrippa to make the decision. Was Paul doing as he had proclaimed in vs.22.

In the world today we have similar situations. Once we have studied with someone and have shown them the simple truths it is time to ask them if they believe. At that time it is up to them to make a decision.

Acts 26:28 Agrippa replied to Paul, "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian."

This passage in the Greek is a difficult one to translate. It is uncertain if Agrippa is saying that he is pondering the fact of becoming a Christian or not.

But the point cannot be missed that Paul has taken this opportunity to teach all present the saving Gospel of Christ.

Acts 26:29 And Paul said, "I would wish to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains."

And Paul said, "I would wish to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am,

Paul's reply appears to show that he believed Agrippa to be making a statement of a half-converted individual. We have this same response today, "I understand what you are saying, but..."

except for these chains."

Paul was in the customary position of a Roman prisoner, chained to a guard.

c. The end of the audience with the King, 26:30-32

Acts 26:30 The king stood up and the governor and Bernice, and those who were sitting with them,

Acts 26:31 and when they had gone aside, they began talking to one another, saying, "This man is not doing anything worthy of death or imprisonment."

Acts 26:32 And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Compare this to Acts 26:30-32. The only reason Paul had appealed to Caesar was because of what Festus had tried to do, 25:9-12

Here we see once again that those with an open mind saw that Paul had done nothing wrong against the Roman government, but because of Paul's appeal he had to be sent to Rome.

Once again we can see the working of God in Paul's life, Paul wanted to go to Rome and the Lord said He must go.

Acts 19:21

Acts 23:11

Acts Chapter 27

C. To Rome, 27:1-28:31

1. The voyage, 27:1-8

Acts 27:1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, they proceeded to deliver Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan cohort named Julius.

Acts 27:2 And embarking in an Adramyttian ship, which was about to sail to the regions along the coast of Asia, we put out to sea accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica.

Acts 27:3 The next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius treated Paul with consideration and allowed him to go to his friends and receive care.

The next day we put in at Sidon;

Probably in August or September A.D. 59-60

and Julius treated Paul with consideration and allowed him to go to his friends and receive care.

This is a possible order from Agrippa because of Paul's case. He would be treated differently than the other prisoners.

Acts 27:4 From there we put out to sea and sailed under the shelter of Cyprus because the winds were contrary.

They are sailing northward along the coast and by the east side of Cyprus past the northeast point of that island.

Acts 27:5 When we had sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia.

Acts 27:6 There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy, and he put us aboard it.

This was a very large ship as indicated in vs. 37

Acts 27:7 When we had sailed slowly for a good many days, and with difficulty had arrived off Cnidus, since the wind did not permit us to go farther, we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone;

Acts 27:8 and with difficulty sailing past it we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

2. The storm, 27:9-26

Acts 27:9 When considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous, since even the fast was already over, Paul began to admonish them,
since even the fast was already over,

The fast occurred around the end of September or October, depending upon the year, October 5 for A.D. 59 and Sept 23 for A.D. 60; and it was usually considered unsafe to sail from September to March, with the most dangerous time being from the middle of September to the middle of November.

Acts 27:10 and said to them, "Men, I perceive that the voyage will certainly be with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."

Acts 27:11 But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the captain of the ship than by what was being said by Paul.

Acts 27:12 Because the harbor was not suitable for wintering, the majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there.

This harbor was only forty miles away. With a good wind it would normally take them two hours to reach the port. But as we are about to see sometimes when they leave Fair Havens they hit some difficult storms.

Acts 27:13 When a moderate south wind came up, supposing that they had attained their purpose, they weighed anchor and began sailing along Crete, close inshore.

What happens when we leave Fair Haven?

1. Conditions looked good for them to leave, not great but good.

Acts 27:14 But before very long there rushed down from the land a violent wind, called Euraquilo;

2. It was very long until their little jaunt turned into a catastrophe. The Greek here reads more literally, “a typhoon wind”

called Euraquilo;

This was a wind coming from the E-N-E, very cold and strong they were headed North -West

Acts 27:15 and when the ship was caught in it and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and let ourselves be driven along.

3. Once they were caught in the storm they gave way to the pressure and just followed along. They could not stand up to the situation they had gotten themselves into.

Acts 27:16 Running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were scarcely able to get the ship's boat under control.

4. With no real hope they began to turn back to the protection of the land. The solid ground.

Acts 27:17 After they had hoisted it up, they used supporting cables in undergirding the ship; and fearing that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis, they let down the sea anchor and in this way let themselves be driven along.

5. They realized that they could not hold together on their own so they strengthened their vessel, Eph. 6:10-18

They had taken chains / cables and ran them under the ship in hopes of keeping it from falling apart, like a Girdle.

Acts 27:18 The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they began to jettison the cargo;

Acts 27:19 and on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.

6. They could not carry excess baggage that might cause them to sink, Heb. 12:1-3

Acts 27:20 Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing us, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

7. They realized their situation was hopeless, since they left Fair Haven.

Acts 27:21 When they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in their midst and said, "Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete and incurred this damage and loss.

Acts 27:22 "Yet now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.

Acts 27:23 "For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me,

"For this very night an angel of the God

Some translate this "The Angle" (Phillips Modern English; But the Greek does not have the definite article "the." It should be translated "an angel."

to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me,

8. Hope was found in a message from God.

Acts 27:24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.'

Here we once again see the providence of God working in Paul's life, cf. 23:11

Acts 27:25 "Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.

Acts 27:26 "But we must run aground on a certain island."

3. The shipwreck, 27:27-44

Acts 27:27 But when the fourteenth night came, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors began to surmise that they were approaching some land.

Acts 27:28 They took soundings and found it to be twenty fathoms; and a little farther on they took another sounding and found it to be fifteen fathoms.

Acts 27:29 Fearing that we might run aground somewhere on the rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern and wished for daybreak.

9. Some felt it better to escape this storm their own way rather than follow God's way

Acts 27:30 But as the sailors were trying to escape from the ship and had let down the ship's boat into the sea, on the pretense of intending to lay out anchors from the bow,

Acts 27:31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved."

10. Paul's response is "unless you obey God's will you will not be saved."

Acts 27:32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it fall away.

11. There are those who heed this message and turn to God.

Acts 27:33 Until the day was about to dawn, Paul was encouraging them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have been constantly watching and going without eating, having taken nothing.

Acts 27:34 "Therefore I encourage you to take some food, for this is for your preservation, for not a hair from the head of any of you will perish."

Acts 27:35 Having said this, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of all, and he broke it and began to eat.

Acts 27:36 All of them were encouraged and they themselves also took food.

Even in times of peril Paul's faith was such that he took time to praise God.

Acts 27:37 All of us in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six persons.

Acts 27:38 When they had eaten enough, they began to lighten the ship by throwing out the wheat into the sea.

12. There was still necessary removal of further baggage

Acts 27:39 When day came, they could not recognize the land; but they did observe a bay with a beach, and they resolved to drive the ship onto it if they could.

Acts 27:40 And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea while at the same time they were loosening the ropes of the rudders; and hoisting the foresail to the wind, they were heading for the beach.

Acts 27:41 But striking a reef where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern began to be broken up by the force of the waves.

Acts 27:42 The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, so that none of them would swim away and escape;

Acts 27:43 but the centurion, wanting to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their intention, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land,

Acts 27:44 and the rest should follow, some on planks, and others on various things from the ship. And so it happened that they all were brought safely to land.

13. Because of obedience to God's will and turning back to Fair Haven all these souls were saved.

Acts Chapter 28

4. At Melita, 28:1-6

Acts 28:1 When they had been brought safely through, then we found out that the island was called Malta.

Acts 28:2 The natives showed us extraordinary kindness; for because of the rain that had set in and because of the cold, they kindled a fire and received us all.

Acts 28:3 But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand.

Acts 28:4 When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another, "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and though he has been saved from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live."

This is a common superstition among people. We even see this today.

Acts 28:5 However he shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm.

Paul showed no fear at what had just happened. Perhaps he remembered Jesus' promises.

1. Mark 16:18; Luke 10:19 - The promise concerning serpents
2. The Gospel was to reach Rome - Acts 23:11

Acts 28:6 But they were expecting that he was about to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had waited a long time and had seen nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and began to say that he was a god.

The natives would be familiar with the wildlife on the island and understood this snake to be deadly poisonous. We know this to be true for three reasons

1. They expected him to swell up
2. They expected him to fall down dead
3. Since these did not happen he must be a god, only a god could live

Acts 28:7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius, who welcomed us and entertained us courteously three days.

Publius means chief man. This was a title given to an official of the island

Acts 28:8 And it happened that the father of Publius was lying in bed afflicted with recurrent fever and dysentery; and Paul went in to see him and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and healed him.

This is consistent with Peters healing of Tabitha, Acts 9:36-43

Acts 28:9 After this had happened, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases were coming to him and getting cured.

Because of what The Lord had done through Paul all were blessed in receiving what was needed. They had lost all at sea.

Acts 28:10 They also honored us with many marks of respect; and when we were setting sail, they supplied us with all we needed.

Acts 28:11 At the end of three months we set sail on an Alexandrian ship which had wintered at the island, and which had the Twin Brothers for its figurehead.

Acts 28:12 After we put in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days.

Acts 28:13 From there we sailed around and arrived at Rhegium, and a day later a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli.

Acts 28:14 There we found some brethren, and were invited to stay with them for seven days; and thus we came to Rome.

It is possible that they stayed seven days to partake of the Lords supper with the brethren as in Acts 20:6,7

Acts 28:15 And the brethren, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us; and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

And the brethren, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us;

These people were excited about seeing Paul. Note the great distance they traveled to see him. The Market of Appius was 43 miles from Rome and the Three Inns was 33 miles from Rome. How far will we travel to see a brother?

and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

Note how Paul is refreshed from meeting with the brethren. We too can have this refreshing when we go on trips and meet with brethren from other areas. Another reason for his courage would be because the gospel had already arrived in Rome.

Acts 28:16 When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

Paul was left to himself with a soldier because of his great character. Festus reported kind terms concerning Paul. Paul had helped save those on the ship and his work on Malta provided provisions.

There might be a time in our lives that we find ourselves in a situation of being wrongly accused what should be our manner of conduct?

Acts 28:17 After three days Paul called together those who were the leading men of the Jews, and when they came together, he began saying to them, "Brethren, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

History shows that there were seven synagogues in Rome at this time. The populace of Jews was great.

Acts 28:18 "And when they had examined me, they were willing to release me because there was no ground for putting me to death.

Acts 28:19 "But when the Jews objected, I was forced to appeal to Caesar, not that I had any accusation against my nation.

Acts 28:20 "For this reason, therefore, I requested to see you and to speak with you, for I am wearing this chain for the sake of the hope of Israel."

This hope Paul speaks of is twofold

1. The expectation of the Messiah and the coming of the heavenly kingdom
2. The hope of the resurrection from the dead. Which is proven in the resurrection of Jesus, proving He was the Christ, the Son of God, Rom. 1:1-4

Acts 28:21 They said to him, "We have neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren come here and reported or spoken anything bad about you.

They had not received any official letters from Jerusalem. The Greek word for letters means an official document.

Acts 28:22 "But we desire to hear from you what your views are; for concerning this sect, it is known to us that it is spoken against everywhere."

The word sect means heresy. Paul did not regard Christianity as a sect. It was a fulfillment of the old.

Acts 28:23 When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.

Acts 28:24 Some were being persuaded by the things spoken, but others would not believe.

Acts 28:25 And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers,

Acts 28:26 saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, "YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;

Acts 28:27 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES; OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM."

Acts 28:28 "Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen."

Acts 28:29 [When he had spoken these words, the Jews departed, having a great dispute among themselves.]

This is similar today. Not everybody we confront will believe.

Acts 28:30 And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him,

Acts 28:31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.

Again we see Paul doing what he was sent to do. Spread the gospel in any and every situation.

NOTE: While Paul was in prison in Rome he wrote four Epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

Acts 2:38 and Holy Spirit Baptism

Acts 2:38 And Peter {said} to them, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Many believe Acts 2:38 teaches that when we are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ the gift of the Holy Spirit we receive is the ability to perform miracles.

That this is not the case can be supported on different fronts.

1. The Greek Language / Text does not support this doctrine.

- A. “hagion pneuma” = Holy Spirit; “to hagion pneuma” = The Holy Spirit
- B. Without the article: The article is not used when the reference is to the gifts, operations, or manifestations of the Spirit in men.
- C. With the article: “to hagion pneuma, the Holy Spirit, spoken of as Himself, or regarded objectively.

2. Examples of conversions do not support this.

- A. Acts 2:41-43
 - 1. About 3000 are baptized, v.41
 - 2. Yet signs and wonders were taking place only through the apostles hands, v.43.
- B. Acts 6:1-8
 - 1. Seven men are chosen to serve the Hellenistic widows, v.3
 - 2. It is obvious these are Christians (those baptized).
 - 3. Stephen is one of the seven chosen, v.5
 - a. He is full of faith and of the Holy Spirit
 - 4. These men are brought before the Apostles and they lay their hands on them, v.6
 - 5. Following this incident we have Stephen performing miracles, v.8

C. Acts 8:4-24

1. Philip went down to Samaria, v.5
2. Here he was preaching and performing miracles, v.6,7
3. Those he preached to believed and were baptized, v.12
4. Simon a magician was also converted, v.13
5. After his baptism he continued on with Philip and observed signs and miracles taking place, v.13.
6. It is not until the Apostles arrive and begin to lay their hands on these Christians that they are able to perform miracles, vs.14-20
 - a. Simon sees this taking place, v.17,18
 - b. He desires this authority, v.19

3. The gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased but baptism is still commanded.

A. There was a reason for Jesus sending the Holy Spirit and miraculous powers to His apostles and other inspired men in the first century.

1. Jn 16:13.
2. Heb 2:3,4.

B. Through that God-given power, these men revealed in the first century:

1. 2 Pet 1:3.
2. Jude 3.
3. Jas 1:25.
4. Gal 1:6-9; Rev 22:18,19.

C. These and other scriptures tell us that the word of God was both revealed and confirmed in the first century.

D. Thus, God's purpose for the miraculous gifts had been fulfilled.

E. And it would be quite logical that when God's purpose had been fulfilled, the miraculous gifts would be done away.

F. God said would happen, as we studied earlier in 1 Cor 13:8-10!

G. And since God chose to eliminate miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit in the first century, those miraculous gifts do not exist today!

H. Therefore, no matter what the "gift of the Holy Spirit" is in verse 38, we know it does not include the ability to work miracles today!

The Kingdoms Preceding Christ' Kingdom **(Daniel 2:31-44)**

1. Golden Head - **Babylonian Empire** - v.38 -(625 - 539 B.C.).
2. Silver breast and arms - **Medo-Persian Empire**-(539-331 B.C.).
3. Bronze belly and thighs - **Greek Empire** -(331-63 B.C.).
4. Iron legs and feet with clay - **Roman Empire** - (63 -476 A.D.)

The Roman Empire Before and During Christ' Kingdom **(Daniel 7:7-27)** **(Revelation 13:1-10; 17:3-18)**

I. Those of the Julian household

1. Augustus 27 B.C.-14 A.D.
2. Tiberius 14-37 A.D.
3. Caligula 37-41 A.D.
4. Claudius 41-54 A.D.
5. Nero 54-68 A.D.

II. Three short lived kings.

6. Galba 68-69 A.D.
7. Otho 69 A.D.
8. Vitellius 69 A.D.

III. Three kings of the Flavian Household

9. Vespasian 69-79 A.D.
10. Titus 79-81 A.D.
11. Domitian 81-96 A.D.

APPENDIX L-2

A Series On Demonology: Part One Demons—Spirit Entities

Demonology is a term which refers to a systematic study of demons. The word "demoniac" is used to refer to one who was demon possessed or to one who was considered to be demon possessed.

When all of the "demon" passages are collected a considerable body of material emerges on this subject. Careful Bible students will notice the meager mention of demons in the Old Testament—usually only two verses are cited: Deuteronomy 32:17 and Psalm 106:37. Sometimes 1 Samuel 36:34-23 is also included but this passage is questionable. The bulk of references comes from the New Testament. However, it is significant that demon possession is rarely mentioned outside the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. And it seems to fade the farther one travels into the New Testament. For example, note the conspicuous absence of "demon problems" among Christians in the early church. There is no record of any child of God being "demon possessed." If there is, we have overlooked it. And, note further, the epistles remain silent relative to demon possession. Does this not raise some interesting questions?

Why was demon possession so active, concentrated and potent during part of the first century A.D.? Why did such occur during that one short period of time in history? Was it not for the express purpose of affording Christ, and a few others whom he authorized, the opportunity to exhibit miraculous displays of power over Satan and demons in order to confirm the gospel, the preached word? We think so (Matt. 12:28, 29).

Demons Were Spirits

The New Testament clearly reveals that demons were real. Demons were spirits, not physical beings (Matt 8:16; Luke 24:39). These spirit entities had the capacity to enter into a live human body, to inhabit it, to possess it, and to afflict human beings in the first century A.D. In Luke 10:1 we have the account of Jesus' commissioning the seventy (under the "limited commission") to go out two by two. On their return they reported to him how the "DEMONS" were subject to them through his name (Luke 10:17). Jesus, in reply, told the seventy not to rejoice that the "SPIRITS" were subject to them but to rejoice that their names were written in heaven (Luke 10:20). On another occasion Matthew wrote, "And when even was come, they brought unto him many possessed with "DEMONS": and he cast out the "SPIRITS" with a word, and healed all that were sick" (Matt 8:16). Thus, we see that demons were spirits.

Demons Were Unclean and Evil Spirits

Demoniacs (those who were demon possessed) had "unclean" or "wicked" spirits.

This is evident from the following: "And when Jesus saw that a multitude came running together, he rebuked the UNCLEAN spirit (the KJV has "foul" spirit), saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him" (Mark 9:25). On another occasion, when the Lord came to Capernaum, he found a man "that had a spirit of an UNCLEAN demon." Jesus rebuked this unclean spirit charging him to "come out" of his victim. Those who witnessed this great display of power were amazed that Christ had such authority (Luke 4:31-36). Our Lord taught:

But the UNCLEAN spirit, when he is gone out of the man, passeth through waterless places, seeking rest, and findeth it not. Then he saith, I will return into my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this evil generation (Matt. 12:43-45, Luke 33:24-26; 7:21; 8:2; Acts 19:12-17).

Demons Actually Possessed People

Demons were real and they actually and literally possessed people. They were not mere physical diseases, vapors, a mist, an influence, an it, or a thing! Demons were immaterial, evil, spirit entities. These evil, unclean, "foul" spirits (KJV, Mark 9:25), did not have "flesh and bones" of their own (Luke 24:39), but rather they entered into and lived in live men, women, boys, girls, and on one occasion HOGS! (Matt. 9:32; Luke 8:2; 9:38-42; Mark 7:30; 5:1-19). An individual could be possessed by "a" demon or "many" demons. Mary Magdalene had "seven" (Mark 16:9). One man was so infested with demons that he was called "Legion" (Matt. 8:28-33; Mark 5:1-19; Luke 8:26-40).

Demons did not produce any good in an individual (John 10:19-21). They had the power to injure people both mentally and physically. Their torment was both painful and pitiful. Evidently they caused such things as dumbness (Matt. 9:32), blindness (Matt. 12:22), insanity (Luke 8:27-36), and personal injuries (Luke 9:38-42). Demons caused a certain maiden to "divine" (Acts 16:16,18) and gave superhuman strength to others (Matt. 8:28; Mark 5:2-5; Luke 8:29). Individuals could be "vexed" with unclean spirits (Luke 6:18; Acts 5:16).

Consider this account of a pitiful demoniac:

And one of the multitude answered him, Teacher, I brought unto thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever it TAKETH HIM, it DASHETH HIM DOWN: and he FOAMETH, and GRINDETH HIS TEETH, and PINETH AWAY: and I spoke to thy disciples that they should cast it out: and they were not able. And he answereth them and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit TARE HIM GRIEVOUSLY; and he FELL ON THE GROUND, and WALLOWED

FOAMING. And he asked his father, How long time is it since this hath come unto him: And he said, From a child. And oft-times it hath CAST HIM BOTH INTO THE FIRE AND INTO THE WATERS, TO DESTROY HIM: but if thou canst do anything have compassion on us, and help us...He (Jesus) rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And having cried out, and TORN HIM MUCH, he came out: and the boy became AS ONE DEAD: insomuch that the more part said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him up; and he arose (Mark 9:17-27).

Conclusion

Demons ("devils" KJV), were real spirit beings who had the capacity to enter into live bodies. These spirits were unclean, evil (foul) entities. They are definitely distinguished from mere physical ailments or diseases. Their torment was both painful and pitiful—they "vexed" their poor victims. Jesus cast them out "with a word" (Matt. 8:16) and "by the Spirit of God" (Matt. 12:28).

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APPENDIX L-3
A Series On Demonology: Part Two
Were Demons Diseases?

Demons were "spirits," not mere ailments, diseases or sickness (Matt. 8:16; Luke 24:39). Furthermore, they are revealed in scripture as malevolent entities. They were evil, unclean, foul spirits who served under him who was called "the prince of demons," that is, Beelzebub or Satan (Matt. 12:24,43,45). The New Testament very definitely distinguishes between diseases and demons (or demon possession). This fact is easily seen from the following verses.

Clear Distinction Between Demons and Diseases in the New Testament

"And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. And the report of him went forth into all Syria: and they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, POSSESSED WITH DEMONS, and epileptic, and palsied; and he healed them" (Matt. 4: 23,24).

"And when even was come, they brought unto him many POSSESSED with DEMONS: and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all that were sick" (Matt. 8:16).

"Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, CAST OUT DEMONS: freely ye received, freely give" (Matt.10:8).

"Then was brought unto him one POSSESSED with A DEMON, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the dumb man spake and saw" (Matt. 12:22).

"And behold, a Canaanitish woman came out from those borders, and cried, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with A DEMON And there came unto him great multitudes, having with them the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and they cast them down at his feet; and he healed them: insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing: and they glorified the God of Israel" (Matt. 15:22,30,31).

"And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were POSSESSED WITH DEMONS. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, AND CAST OUT MANY DEMONS; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him" (Mark 1:32-34).

"And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and he gave them authority over the UNCLEAN SPIRITS And they CAST OUT many DEMONS, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them (Mark 6: 7,13).

"And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they CAST OUT DEMONS; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark. 16:37,18).

"And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. And DEMONS also came out from many, crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, he suffered them not to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ" (Luke 4:40,41).

"And he called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all DEMONS, and to cure diseases" (Luke 9:1).

"In that very hour there came certain Pharisees, saying to him, Get thee out, and go hence: for Herod would fain kill thee. And he said unto them, Go and say to that fox, Behold, I CAST OUT DEMONS and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I am perfected" (Luke 13:31,32).

"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the EVIL SPIRITS went out" (Acts 19:11,32).

Conclusion

From the above scriptures, we note that demon possession is mentioned alongside the following (and not standing for the following): the palsied, lepers, epileptics, the lame, the blind, the dumb, the maimed, and those who were afflicted with various other sicknesses or diseases. Demons are clearly distinguished in scripture from mere physical ailments, sickness, diseases or afflictions.

Demons were real, spirit beings. They knew and recognized Jesus as deity and carried on intelligent conversation with him. Jesus rebuked them and cast them out of people and charged them not to re-enter their poor victims.

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Taken from: *The Restorer*, Gary Workman, Editor, July 1987.

The Roman Empire Before and During Christ' Kingdom
Dan. 7:7-27
By: James Dale

I. The Julio/Claudian Household

1. Augustus: (27 B.C. - 14 A.D.)

- A. Original name was Gaius Octavius
- B. Born in 63 B.C.
- C. He was the grandnephew of Julius Caesar.
- D. His mother, Atia, was the daughter of Julia, Julius Caesar's younger sister.
- E. He was 19 when Julius was murdered in the Senate.
- F. Came to power in 27 B.C.
- G.became the founder of the Roman empire, which formally began in Jan. 16, 27 B.C.
- H. Mentioned in Luke 2:1

2. Tiberius Claudius Caesar: (14 - 37 A.D.)

- A. His father had the same name and was married to Livia Drusilla
- B. Livia divorced Tiberius' father and married Augustus in 38 B.C.
- C. Because of no direct successor for Augustus, Tiberius and Agrippa Postumus were adopted by Augustus on June 26, A.D. 4. His name was changed to Tiberius Julius Caesar.
- D. Named emperor September 17, A.D. 14, one month after the death of Augustus.
- E. The silver denarius coin mentioned in the NT (cf. Matt 22:15-21; Mk. 12:13-17) bore the image of Tiberius, accompanied by the inscription, "Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus, Augustus"
- F. He is mentioned in Luke 3:1.
- G. Appointed Pontius Pilate to Judea in A.D. 26 and removed him from office ten years later.

3. Gaius (Caligula) Caesar Augustus Germanic: (37- 41 A.D.)

- A. Gaius was born on 31 August, A.D. 12,
- B. The third of six children born to Augustus's adopted grandson, Germanicus, and Augustus's granddaughter, Agrippina.
- C. Tiberius was his grand-uncle
- D. Assassinated by the Praetorian Guard on Jan 24, A.D. 41

4. Tiberius (Claudius) Caesar Augustus Germanicus: (41-54 A.D.)

- A. The fourth Roman Emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.
- B. Caligula was his nephew.
- C. His maternal grandparents were Mark Antony and Octavia Minor, Caesar Augustus' sister. His paternal grandparents were Livia, Augustus' third wife, and Tiberius Claudius Nero.
- D. Mentioned in Acts 11:28; 18:2

5. (Nero) Claudius Caesar Germanicus: 54-68 A.D.

- A. Fifth Roman emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty
- B. His mother Agrippina, was the daughter of Germanicus and the older Agrippina, was a sister of the emperor Caligula.
- C. Through her mother she was the great-granddaughter of the emperor Augustus.
- D. Was adopted by Claudius.
- E. On July 18, A.D. 64 a fire began in Rome which lasted 6 days. Of the fourteen regions of the city seven were destroyed totally and four partially. Nero was blamed for this fire and set out to shift blame from himself.

F. Tacitus, one of the important historians of Roman Antiquity, recounted Nero's scheme to avert suspicion from himself. "He put forward as guilty, and afflicted with the most exquisite punishment, those who were hated for their abominations, and called 'Christians' by the populace.

G. Nero's persecution of Christians was not for religious reasons. He falsely accused them of starting the fire in Rome and persecuted them to take attention away from himself. There is no reason to suppose that the Neronian persecution of 64 extended throughout the empire.

H. Nero is in all likelihood the Caesar Paul appealed to in Acts 25:11

I. Nero committed suicide in 68 A.D. bringing an end to the line of Julius Caesar.

Note: Although these five emperors represent the Julian household (Julius Caesar), Julius is not to be considered as the one responsible for starting the Roman empire and as a result he would not be considered as part of this list of Roman Emperors. Reasons follow.

1. Julius Caesar was never an emperor, he was given the position of dictator.
2. He was a Roman military and political leader.
3. He played an important part in the transformation of the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire.
4. Caesar fought in a civil war which left him undisputed master of the Roman world, and began extensive reforms of Roman society and government. He was proclaimed dictator for life, and he heavily centralized the government of the Republic.
5. The assassination of Julius Caesar, on the Ides of March (March 15th) in 44 BC sparked a new civil war between the Caesarians, including Octavian, Mark Antony, and Lepidus, and the Republicans, including Brutus, Cassius, Cicero and the sons of many men who were killed by Caesar in the civil war. This conflict ended with a Caesarian victory at the Battle of Philippi, and the formal establishment of the Second Triumvirate (The First Triumvirate having been established c. 60 BC between Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, Marcus Licinius Crassus, and Caesar himself) in which Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus shared control of Rome. Tensions between Octavian and Antony soon plunged Rome into further civil war, culminating in Antony's defeat at the Battle of Actium, and leaving Octavian as the undisputed leader of the Roman world.
6. This period of civil wars transformed the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire with Caesar's great nephew and adopted son Octavian (later known as Caesar Augustus) installed as the first emperor.
7. See, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Caesar, for more information.

II. Three short lived kings

6. Servius (Galba): 68-69 A.D

- A. Galba is noteworthy because he was neither related to nor adopted by his predecessor **Nero**.
- B. Because of this, his accession marked the end of the nearly century-long control of the Principate by the Julio-Claudians.
- C. Emperor for 7 months before being murdered by the praetorians on order of Otho.

7. Marcus Salvius (Otho): 69 A.D.

- A. April 25, 69 - April 16, 69
- B. Was Roman Emperor from January 15 to April 16, in 69.
- C. The second emperor of the Year of the four emperors.
- D. Committed Suicide, He was just thirty-seven at the time of his death, and had reigned just three month.

8. Aulus (Vitellius) Germanicus: 69 A.D.

- A. September 24, 15–December 22, 69
- B. Was Roman Emperor from April 17 69 to December 22 of the same year
- C. One of the emperors in the "Year of the Four Emperors"
- D. He was never acknowledged as emperor by the entire Roman world, though at Rome the Senate accepted him and decreed to him the usual imperial honours.
- E. On the entrance of Vespasian's troops into Rome **Vitellius** was dragged out of some miserable hiding-place (according to Tacitus a door-keeper's lodge), driven to the fatal Gemonian stairs, and there struck down. His body was thrown into the Tiber.

Note: The **Year of the Four Emperors** refers to the year 69, the four emperors being Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian. The forced suicide of emperor Nero, in 68, was followed by a brief period of civil war, the first Roman civil war since Marc Antony's death in 30 BC. Between June of 68 and December of 69, Rome witnessed the successive rise and fall of Galba, Otho and Vitellius until the final accession of Vespasian, first ruler of the Flavian dynasty. This period of civil war has become emblematic of the cyclic political disturbances in the history of the Roman Empire. The military and political anarchy created by this civil war had serious implications, such as the outbreak of the Batavian rebellion. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Year_of_the_Four_Emperors)

III. Three kings of the Flavian Household

9. Caesar Vespasianus Augustus (aka) Titus Flavius (Vespasianus): 69-79A.D.

- A. A.D. 9 - A.D. 79
- B. Restored peace and stability to an empire in disarray following the death of Nero in A.D. 68. In the process he established the Flavian dynasty as the legitimate successor to the Imperial throne.
- C. In response to rioting in Caesarea and Jerusalem that had led to the slaughter in the latter city of Jewish leaders and Roman soldiers, Nero granted to Vespasian in A.D. 66 a special command in the East with the objective of settling the revolt in Judaea. By spring A.D. 67, with 60,000 legionaries, auxiliaries, and allies under his control, Vespasian set out to subdue Galilee and then to cut off Jerusalem. Success was quick and decisive. By October all of Galilee had been pacified and plans for the strategic encirclement of Jerusalem were soon formed.
- D. Tacitus records that by December 22, A.D. 69, Vespasian had been given all the honors and privileges usually granted to emperors.
- E. Vespasian died peacefully - at Aquae Cutiliae near his birthplace in Sabine country on 23 June, A.D. 79, after contracting a brief illness.

10. Titus Flavius Vespasianus: 79-81 A.D.

- A. December 30, 39–September 13, 81
- B. Son of Vespasianus
- C. Ruled the Roman Empire from 79 to 81.

- D. Titus accompanied Vespasian to the east in 67 to put down the Jewish Rebellion, in which he served as commander of Legio XV Apollinaris.
- E. Titus succeeded his father as Emperor in 79.
- F. After just two years, Titus died of a fever, possibly poisoned by his physician Valens on behalf of Domitian.

11. Titus Flavius Domitianus: 81-96 A.D.

- A. 24 October 51 – 18 September 96, commonly known as **Domitian**,
- B. Was a Roman emperor of the gens Flavia.
- C. Domitianus was the son of Vespasian, by his wife Domitilla, and brother of Titus, whom he succeeded in 81.
- D. Towards the end of his reign, which had started with moderation, Domitian revealed a cruel personality. According to several sources, despite some arguments in the academic community, Jews and Christians were heavily persecuted during his reign.
- E. For scholars, it is difficult to uncover Domitian's exact policy towards the developing Christian community. Many people believe that he was the Emperor during the time that the Revelation to John was authored (95 or 96).
- F. Although it is unclear that Domitian officially enforced adherence to the cult, scholars generally agree that Roman governors forced citizens to participate in order to prove their loyalty and patriotism.
- G. Domitian was murdered in September 96, in a plot organized by his enemies in the Senate, Stephanus (the steward of the deceased Julia Flavia), members of the Praetorian Guard and empress Domitia Longina.

1. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1988, Vol 1, pg. 364
2. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1988, Vol 4, pg. 847,48
3. <http://www.roman-emperors.org/gaius.htm> (Garrett G. Fagan, Pennsylvania State University)
4. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claudius>
4. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1988, Vol 1, pg. 716-17
5. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1988, Vol 3, pg. 521-23
6. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galba>
7. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otho>
8. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitellius>

APPENDIX J

WHY DID STEPHEN SEE JESUS STANDING, WHEN PETER SAID HE WAS SEATED IN HEAVEN? (7:55-56; 2:34)

Byron Denman

The two passages under consideration are as follows:

But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God (7:55-56).

For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand (2:34; note also verses 29-36).

The failure to understand the wonderful lessons learned from these passages has caused the "unlearned and unstable" to "wrest" them "as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16). Remember that the word "wrest" is from the Greek word *strebloo* meaning to twist, wrench, distort something, so that a false meaning results.¹⁷ Thayer adds that the word signifies an instrument of torture, to twist to turn away, to torture, put on the rack; metaphorically to pervert, of one who wrests or tortures language to a false sense.¹⁸

For example, we are told,

Dispensational commentators have taken Stephen's reference to Jesus' "standing" as supporting their view that the distinctive redemptive message for this age was not proclaimed till the Pauline gospel (either at its inauguration, its close, or somewhere in between); and, therefore, in the transitional period between Israel and the church, Jesus is represented as not yet having taken his seat at God's hand. Others speak of Jesus as "standing" in order to enter his messianic office on earth or depict him as "standing" in line with the common representation of angels standing in the presence of God.¹⁹

Let us make an in-depth examination of the context of these passages and remove the cloud left hanging by such false charges and abuses of the majestic scene revealed to Stephen.

First, it is important to remember that Peter's words recorded in Acts 2 are a quotation from Psalms 110:1. This Old Testament declaration, we are informed, was made by David: "And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Luke 20:42- 43). David made the statement by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Mark 12:36). Matthew

informs us that our Lord used this context to bring to an end the efforts of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and lawyers to deceive him with their questions when he asked them, "If David then called him Lord, how is he his son?" (Matt. 22:45; note vv. 15-46). The chapter closes with the statement, "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." Another reference to this prophetic passage is found in the opening words of the Hebrews letter (1:13), and the apostle Paul gives the complete picture of the significance of this point in his first epistle to the church in Corinth:

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

The fact that Jesus is presently seated on his throne at the right hand of God (and was long before the apostle Paul became a Christian) is well documented upon the pages of inspiration: "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19); "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34); "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:20); "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1); "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3); "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12); "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pet. 3:22).

From these passages it is clearly seen that the picture drawn in the Scriptures of Jesus on the right hand of God is to declare that he is the victorious Son of God, the resurrected Christ, the king reigning over the kingdom which is his church. The very position or place designated for Jesus indicates his preeminence (Col. 1:18). Clarke says it is an indication that Christ was to "take the place of the greatest eminence and authority."²⁰

The position of being on the right hand of one in authority has always indicated in the Bible another position of authority, but inferior to the one by whom another is standing or seated. The phrase "right hand" is used symbolically to denote authority in the following examples: (1) Joseph thought his father had made a mistake when he placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim instead of Manasseh, for Manasseh was his firstborn, but Israel informed Joseph that he knew what he was doing and had done correctly:

And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father; for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations (Gen. 48:18-19).

(2) Solomon placed a seat at the right hand of his throne for his mother, Bathsheba (1 Kings 2:19). (3) Numerous times this symbolism appears in the Psalms, such as, "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly" (Psa. 118:15-16). (4) In addition to the New Testament examples already given, the seven stars in the right hand of the one like unto the Son of man (Rev. 1: 16, 20; 2: 1), and the book with the seven seals in the right hand of the one sitting on the throne in heaven (4:3; 5: 1), further show that authority or power is often represented by the "right hand" in Scripture.

Reese states, "The right hand is mentioned because that was the place of dignity and honor. Jesus has a place of exalted dignity at the right hand of the Father. . . . The Father (Jehovah) invited Jesus to a place at his right hand, a place of favor, trust, and power."²¹

Our question points our attention not only to the position our Lord occupies as seen by Stephen, but also his posture; he is standing. Several writers state that our Lord was in a standing position because of his desire to honor, reward, encourage, or assist Stephen; these views are supported by Reese,²² Boles,²³ Coffman,²⁴ Pulpit Commentary,²⁵ Cook's Commentary,²⁶ Ellicott 's,²⁷ and others.

We are in agreement with the idea that this heavenly vision was shown to Stephen for the purpose of reassuring him, and recorded by inspiration for the purpose of reassuring all Christians who die in the Lord (Rev. 14:13), of the promises made to those who are faithful unto death. Remember these comforting promises: ". . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10c); "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jam. 1:12).

For I am now already to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

We believe one of the most eloquent presentations of this position is found in the 1928 edition of Elam's Notes,

By the power of the Holy Spirit, Stephen saw these things. The Spirit revealed them to him as he "looked up steadfastly into heaven." They were not

addressed to the natural eye or senses. Being in the room in the temple where the Sanhedrin met did not interfere with this vision. He saw "into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." God revealed these things to Stephen to encourage him. We cannot fully conceive the full import of "the glory of God" until, like Stephen, we see it for ourselves and realize "what it is to be there." As the morning star fades out in the light of the sun, so the sun itself, in all its splendor, is lost in the greater effulgence of the glory of God. Others did not see these things; Stephen told what he saw: "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." While none of these saw Jesus on this occasion, did not some of them remember the declaration of Jesus when on trial before this court: "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64)?²⁸

It has also been suggested that Jesus was standing, as Stephen was being stoned to death, fulfilling another of his promises to the faithful, serving as the one and only Mediator between God and men, as he is described in 1 Timothy 2:5²⁹ and confessing his faithful ones before his Father as he had stated, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32). Longenecker quotes F. F. Bruce,

Stephen has been confessing Christ before men, and now he sees Christ confessing His servant before God. The proper posture for a witness is the standing posture. Stephen, condemned by an earthly court, appeals for vindication to a heavenly court, and his vindicator in the supreme court is Jesus, who stands at God's right hand as Stephen's advocate, his "paraclete" (Book of the Acts, p. 168).³⁰

Since this is the only time Jesus is described as standing on the right hand of God, it must have the significance as suggested above. It is certainly not grounds for claiming that the inspired recorder of the book of Acts contradicts himself.

ENDNOTES

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19. Richard N. Longenecker, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1981), v. 9, p. 350. (Also note the Introduction section where Longenecker discusses the criticism of the book of Acts for more evidence of the false charges questioning the reliability of the book, pp. 207-212).
20. Clarke, v. 5, p. 216.
21. Reese, pp. 55, 59.
22. Reese, p. 244.
23. Boles, p. 118.

24. Coffman, p. 145.
25. A. C. Hervey, *The Pulpit Commentary*, H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, eds., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1962), v. 18, p. 221.
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27. E. H. Plumptre, *Ellicott's Commentary On The Whole Bible*, Charles John Ellicott, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1959), v. 7, p. 45.
28. E. A. Elam, *Elam's Notes On Bible School Lesson* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Co., 1928), pp. 191-192.
29. Clarke, v. 5, p. 735.
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Taken From: McClish, Dub, Ed., *Studies In Acts*, Valid Publications, Denton: 1985, pp. 411-415.

Judas and Repentance

Acts 1:16-20 / Matt 27:3

Inquiry: Does Matt. 27:3 teach that Judas “repented.”

Need: Since repentance is required for one to be saved (Acts 2:38, 3:19, 17:30, 26:20); a clear understanding of its meaning is necessary to assure that we have complied with God’s will.

Matt. 27:3-5

Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” But they said, “What is that to us? See {to that} yourself!” 5 And he threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. (NASB)

Discussion: The word we wish to focus on is found in verse 3. It is the word remorse.

1. This word has been translated in various ways.
 - a. Remorse (NASB 77)
 - b. Remorse (NASB 95 Updated)
 - c. Remorse (New International Version)
 - d. Remorseful (New King James)
 - e. Repented (King James)
 - f. Repented (Revised Standard Version)
 - g. Remorse (New English Bible)
 - h. Remorse (Jerusalem Bible)
 - i. Remorse (Phillips Modern English)
 - j. Repented himself (ASV)
 - k. Changed his mind and deeply regretted (Living Bible Paraphrase)
2. The Greek word used in the original language is **μεταμεληθεις** the root word being **μεταμελομαι**
3. Defining **μεταμεληθεις**
 - a. Moultons: To change one’s judgment on past points of conduct, to change one’s mind and purpose (regret, remorse)
 - b. Vines: To regret, to repent oneself
 - c. TDNT (Kittels): **μετανοειν** (*repent*) and **μεταμεληθεις** (*remorse*) are distinct in class. **μετανοειν** means a change of heart either generally or in respect of a specific sin, whereas **μεταμεληθεις** means “to experience remorse”

μετανοειν implies that one has later arrived at a different view of something (**νοου**, the mind, intellect, opinion, judgment). **μεταμεληθεις** that one has a

different feeling about it (**μελει**, there is a care, to bestow careful thought upon, to give painful attention to, be earnest in).

The only NT instances for **μεταμεληθεις** are:

Matt. 21:30 “And he came to the second and said the same thing. But he answered and said, ‘I will not’; {yet} he afterward **regretted** {it} and went.

Matt. 21:32 “For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax-gatherers and harlots did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel **remorse** afterward so as to believe him.

Matt. 27:3 Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

2Cor. 7:8 For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not **regret** it; though I did **regret** it — {for} I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while —

Hebr. 7:21 (for they indeed became priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One who said to Him, **THE LORD HAS SWORN AND WILL NOT CHANGE HIS MIND, THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER**”);

When Judas saw that Jesus was condemned, he was filled with remorse and brought back the thirty thirty pieces of silver. The reference here is remorse, not repentance. Judas sees that his action was guilty, and he gives way under the burden. The remorse of Judas (Matt. 27:3) does not have the power to overcome the destructive operation of sin.

In 2Cor. 7:8-10 there is again a plain distinction between **μετανοειν** (*repent*) and **μεταμεληθεις** (*remorse*). Paul is not sorry that he sent the letter. Even if it caused pain, this was according to God’s will. It might be that he vacillated earlier, 7:8 **μεταμελεσθαι**, but it is now clear to him that the pain was necessary to bring the Corinthians to a change of heart, 7:9, **μετανοιαν**.

Suffering which corresponds to God’s will brings about a change of heart which is to salvation and which will not be rued. What is of God causes no remorse. Human repentance is here natural reconsideration with to content of faith (**μεταμελεσθαι**, 7:8), whereas real change of heart (**μετανοιαν**, 7:9) is a divine operation in spite of and precisely in suffering. In this repentance is new salvation (7:10) and new life (7:11).

Con: Biblical repentance is not simply changing your mind about something or feeling remorse over something.

Biblical repentance requires remorse (godly sorrow) and a change of mind which moves in a godly direction.

One can change their mind about something yet change it in such a way that they still continue in sin. Biblical repentance requires a turning from sin and a turning to God.

As for remorse not being repentance, I can feel remorse over hurting your feelings when I said your haircut was ugly, but that doesn't mean I have changed my mind and now think otherwise.

From the above definitions it would seem that Judas did not repent in a biblical way. He felt remorse for what he had done, yet that remorse did not lead him to turn to God. Judas took matters into his own hands and hung himself.

True godly sorrow which leads to repentance would have lead Judas to turn to God asking for forgiveness and then live a life in service to Him. Godly sorrow which leads to repentance does not lead one to kill themselves. This is a contradiction in terms.

“Judas, An Example of falling away”

(Adapted: Charlie Depalama)

1. He was an apostle in every sense that the other eleven were (:17).
2. Yet, he guided the enemies of Christ to arrest Him (:16).
3. He fell from his work as an apostle of Christ (this verse).
4. He fell by transgression, i.e., by sin, which is violation of God's will (this verse; 1 Jn 3:4).
5. He came to a horrible end as he hanged himself and fell, tearing his body open (:18; Mt 27:5).
6. The field purchased with his betrayal money was called the Field of Blood as a memorial to his horrible crime (:19).
7. He was described by inspiration as a traitor (Lk 6:16).
8. He was a thief (Jn 12:6).
9. Jesus called him the son of perdition (meaning utter ruin, complete loss of well-being) (Jn 17:12).
10. Jesus said it would have been better for him not to have been born (Mt 26:24).
11. And, he went to his own place (this verse).

Can there be any doubt that one of God's people can fall from grace to such an extent as to lose eternal salvation (cf. Gal 5:4; 1 Cor 9:27; 2 Pet 2:20-22)?

PAUL'S ACTIONS IN ACTS 18:18; 21:21-26

F. C. DiPalma, Jr.

1. Before these incidents recorded in Acts 18 and 21 occurred, the Holy Spirit had moved Paul to reveal the epistles to the Galatians and Romans, in which God said that people were no longer under the “tutor” (the Old Law), they were delivered from it, and they were dead to it (Gal. 3:24,25; Rom. 7:4-6).
2. Thus, there is no doubt to anyone who believes the Bible that the Old Testament was no longer binding as law when Paul did what is recorded in these two chapters in Acts.
3. Yet, James and the elders advised Paul to do, and Paul did, things that were part of that Old Law.
4. Thus, it certainly appears that James, the elders, and Paul sinned by advising and doing these things.
5. Yet, there is no condemnation given by God through Luke or any other inspired prophet.
6. Why did God not expose as sinful what Paul, James, and the elders did?
7. Peter was rebuked to his face by Paul when his behavior was sinful (Gal. 2:11ff). Similarly, God exposed the sins of other key Bible characters on the pages of His word.
8. Why was there no rebuke of Paul, James, and the elders by God, Peter, or other apostles and prophets?
9. Could it be that, although the Law had indeed been nailed to the cross and taken out of the way, the INFLUENCE of that Law continued until the destruction of Jerusalem?
10. Is that not what God meant by what He said in 2 Cor. 3:11 and Heb. 8:13, that is, the Old Law was “passing away”, “becoming obsolete”, “growing old”, and “ready to vanish away”?
11. Certainly, people were bound by the New Testament and had to obey it in order to be saved from their sins.
12. They had to worship God in accordance with that New Testament rather than the Old Law.
13. However, during that transition time, some of the requirements of the Old Law were still being kept by some Christians with Jewish backgrounds.
14. Yet it is clear that these actions were taken as matters of liberty, expediency, or indifference that were NOT required for salvation.

15. That was true because no one could be justified or saved by keeping that Old Law(Rom. 3:20,28).

16. Thus, Paul and others took those actions not because they HAD to, and not to be SAVED, but to avoid being a stumbling block to Christians with Jewish back-grounds and others during this transition period.

17. The Holy Spirit moved Paul to say, “and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;” (1 Cor. 9:20).

18. This is how Paul could circumcise Timothy as an indifferent matter (Acts 16:3), but refuse to allow Titus to be circumcised as a matter required for salvation (Gal. 2:1-5).

19. We also need to keep in mind that during this transition period, they did not have the complete New Testament. Indeed, even Paul and other inspired apostles and prophets only knew and prophesied “in part” until the “perfect” (completed New Testament) came (1 Cor. 13:9,10).

20. Summarizing these Scriptures then, we draw the following conclusions:

a. The Old Law was nailed to the cross, taken away, taken out of the way, made obsolete, and replaced by the New Testament of Jesus.

b. From the time of the cross on, people were no longer under that Old Testament. They were dead to it, and they were delivered from it.

c. However, there appears to have been a transition period from the time of the cross until the destruction of Jerusalem.

d. During that time, God described that Old Law as “passing away”, “becoming obsolete”, “growing old”, and “ready to vanish away”.

e. Apparently, these phrases refer to the fact that the INFLUENCE of that Old Law was gradually diminishing.

f. During this transitional period, Paul and other Christians with Jewish back-grounds kept some of the requirements of that Old Law.

g. They did not take those actions to be saved or because they were obligated to do so.

h. Instead, those actions were taken as matters of liberty, expediency, or indifference to avoid being a stumbling block to others, with the ultimate goal of winning their soul for Christ.

i. This was while the New Testament was being completed, part-by-part.

“The Assembly”

I. If you were to study the word “worship” you would come to see that this word means to “show reverence,” or to “welcome respectfully.” It also means “to kiss” or “to kiss towards”.

II. For us today we must realize that our worship of God must be of the utmost importance. This should be the case for three reasons.

1. God deserves our Worship because of who He is.

1Chr. 16:23-31

Psalm 2:1-12

2. God demands worship because of who He is.

Lev. 10:1-3

3. Because we love our God and want to worship Him

Psalm 122:1

III. Not only should our worship to God be of the utmost importance but it should also be in accordance to His will, **John 4:24** -- **“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”**

IV. The worship assembly is an important part of the life of those who follow God. It is so important that we are commanded to not forsake it, **Hebrews 10:23-25.**

V. If we are to worship God in spirit and truth then we must assemble together each Lord’s day and we must have the proper spirit.

Intro: As with all that we do in regards to worship we must first address the question, Is it authorized?

I. Is it Biblical to command assembling to worship?

1. As mentioned before we are commanded not to forsake the assembling together.

Hebrews 10:25

2. We also see that the first century church followed this practice of assembling.

Acts 20:7

1 Corinthians 16:2

3. As further evidence, the Apostle John mentions a specific day, Rev. 1:10

4. We would conclude then that assembling on the first day of the week, the Lord’s day, was a practice of the early church, and that it was commanded by God.

Appl: Today we can be assured that we are doing as God desires by assembling on the first day of the week for worship because it is authorized within the Scriptures.

If we are to worship God in spirit and truth then we must assemble together each Lord's day and we must have the proper spirit.

Trans: We have looked at the truth side of worship, that is we do come together for worship not forsaking it. But we must look at the other aspect of attending worship and that is it must be in spirit. This is our second point.

II. Our attitude in assembling for worship

1. There must be a spirit of eagerness.
 - a. Not just a habit but an overwhelming urge.
 - b. Heb. 10:25 but encouraging {one another} ; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.
 - c. Acts 2:46
 - d. Acts 5:42

2. There must be a spirit of reverence.
 - Ps. 2:11
 - Ps. 5:7
 - Hebr. 12:28

3. There must be a spirit of desiring to do God's will. By assembling we obey God in other areas. This is the proper spirit of worship.
 - a. We partake of the Lord's supper.
 - b. We give as we have prospered.
 - c. We offer him the fruit of our lips in song.
 - d. We listen to and meditate on His word.
 - e. We pray together as a body

4. There must be a spirit of desire.
 - a. A desire to be made stronger
Hebrews 5:12-14

 - b. A desire to put the kingdom first
Matt 6:33

 - c. A desire to abound in the Lord's work.
1 Cor 15:58

d. A desire to help others to grow in Christ.

Heb 10:24

Appl: As important as it is to come together to worship it is just as important that we do so with the right spirit.

If we are attending because we feel we have to and not because we want to we are missing something.

If we are to worship God in spirit and truth then we must assemble together each Lord's day and we must have the proper spirit.

Con: It can be very easy to become lax in our assembling for worship.

I am not saying that there are not legitimate reasons for missing.

1. Serious illness
2. Injury
3. Mishap

But these are often the exceptions not the norm.

We must be careful not to allow our assembling to become just habit. If it is we will find other habits more important.

1. I could go fishing, hunting, shopping.
2. I could stay home and watch T.V.
3. I can do things that will consume my time so much so It will be as if I don't have time for worship.

As well we must avoid the excuses that keep us from assembling.

1. I go almost all the time. Isn't that enough?
2. It won't matter if I miss a few times.
3. I can worship God by myself. I don't need to be around others. I can go into the woods etc..That is true but that still does not negate assembling.
4. Our friends and family sometimes become excuses for not assembling.
 - a. My friend just came into town
 - b. My husband or wife didn't want to come so I didn't

Our assembling together is that which is commanded of God and we should desire to fulfill His command.

If we are seeking to worship God in spirit and truth we must make every effort to assemble together on the Lord's day and do so with the proper spirit.

THE HERODIAN DYNASTY

Herod = "heroic"

1) the name of a royal family that flourished among the Jews in the times of Christ and the Apostles. Herod the Great was the son of Antipater of Idumaea. Appointed king of Judaea B.C. 40 by the Roman Senate at the suggestion of Antony and with the consent of Octavian, he at length overcame the great opposition which the country made to him and took possession of the kingdom B.C. 37; and after the battle of Actium, he was confirmed by Octavian, whose favour he ever enjoyed. He was brave and skilled in war, learned and sagacious; but also extremely suspicious and cruel. Hence he destroyed the entire royal family of Hasmonaeans, put to death many of the Jews that opposed his government, and proceeded to kill even his dearly beloved wife Mariamne of the Hasmonaeian line and his two sons she had borne him. By these acts of bloodshed, and especially by his love and imitation of Roman customs and institutions and by the burdensome taxes imposed upon his subjects, he so alienated the Jews that he was unable to regain their favour by his splendid restoration of the temple and other acts of munificence. He died in the 70th year of his age, the 37th year of his reign, the 4th before the Dionysian era. In his closing years John the Baptist and Christ were born; ***Matthew narrates that he commanded all the male children under two years old in Bethlehem to be slain: Matt. 2:ff.***

2) Herod surnamed "Antipas", was the son of Herod the Great and Malthace, a Samaritan woman. After the death of his father he was appointed by the Romans tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea. His first wife was the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia; but he subsequently repudiated her and took to himself Herodias, the wife of his brother Herod Philip; and in consequence Aretas, his father-in-law, made war against him and conquered him. ***He cast John the Baptist into prison because John had rebuked him for this unlawful connection; and afterwards, at the instigation of Herodias, he ordered him to be beheaded: Matt. 14:1-12.*** Induced by her, too, he went to Rome to obtain from the emperor the title of king. But in consequence of the accusations brought against him by Herod Agrippa I, Caligula banished him (A.D. 39) to Lugdunum in Gaul, where he seems to have died. He was light minded, sensual and vicious.

3) Herod Agrippa I was the son of Aristobulus and Berenice, and grandson of Herod the Great. After various changes in fortune, he gained the favour of Caligula and Claudius to such a degree that he gradually obtained the government of all of Palestine, with the title of king. He died at Caesarea, A.D. 44, at the age of 54, in the seventh [or the 4th, reckoning from the extension of his dominions by Claudius] year of his reign, ***just after having ordered James the apostle, son of Zebedee, to be slain, and Peter to be cast into prison: Acts 12:21.***

4) (Herod) Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa I. When his father died he was a youth of seventeen. In A.D. 48 he received from Claudius Caesar the government of Chalcis, with the right of appointing the Jewish high priests, together with the care and oversight of the temple at Jerusalem. Four years later Claudius took from him Chalcis and gave him instead a larger domain, of Batanaea, Trachonitis, and Gaulanitis, with the title of king. To those reigns Nero, in A.D. 53, added Tiberias and Taricheae and Peraean Julias, with fourteen neighbouring villages. **He is mentioned in Acts 25 and 26.** In the Jewish war, although he strove in vain to restrain the fury of the seditious and bellicose populace, he did not desert to the Roman side. After the fall of Jerusalem, he was vested with praetorian rank and kept the kingdom entire until his death, which took place in the third year of the emperor Trajan [the 73rd year of his life, and the 52nd of his reign]. He was the last representative of the Herodian dynasty.

- Thayers

The Preposition "Eis" in Acts 2:38

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For several generations God's people have conducted debates with our denominational neighbors as to the meaning of the word "for" (Greek, *eis*) in Acts 2:38. Peter commanded on that occasion: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for [unto ASV] the remission of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

The English term "for" is very flexible; it may indicate a goal that is yet not reached, e.g., "Go to the pharmacy **for** [to obtain] medicine." Or it may be used to refer to a circumstance that has transpired already, e.g., "He went to prison for [on account of] burglary."

Because of this flexibility with reference to "for," some have assumed that the **Greek** word *eis* has the same flexibility, and therefore baptism is not **to obtain** the forgiveness of one's sins; rather, it is engaged **because** of pardon received already (presumably at the point of faith). There are several things to be said in response to this ploy.

1. Just because the English "for" has some elasticity, and thus may point to a precedent circumstance, such does not mean that the Greek preposition *eis* has similar properties.

The Greek term *eis* is found about 1,750 times in the New Testament. While it has a variety of meaning shades, it **always** is prospective (forward looking), and is **never** retrospective (backward looking) in its direction.

It is "an indicator of direction toward a goal, not as an indicator of location without direction" (Balz & Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978, Vol. I, p. 398). The preposition is used with the accusative case, meaning it points to the object of verbal action. Thus *eis* generally is translated by such terms as *in*, *into*, *unto*, *to*, *toward*, etc. It is a goal-oriented term.

2. Theologically speaking, the construction of the compound verbs - "repent and be baptized" connected with the prepositional phrase - "for the forgiveness of sins" - demonstrates that the sense of *eis* cannot possibly be "because of," thus conveying the sense, "**on account of** the forgiveness of your sins." And why is that?

Because it would equally affirm that one is required to **repent** "because of the forgiveness of his sins. Who in the world subscribes to the notion that one repents of sin because his transgressions are forgiven already? That makes no sense at all.

3. In Matthew 26:28 there is an identical construction of *eis*, conjoined with the terms "forgiveness of sins," just as in Acts 2:38.

In the Matthew text, as he institutes the communion supper, Jesus said: "... this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many **unto remission of sins.**" Even the renowned Baptist scholar, A.T. Robertson, who attempted to twist Acts 2:38 into conformity with his personal theological agenda, was forced to surrender his position when discussing Matthew 26:28.

Of the controversial phrase he stated: "The **purpose** of the shedding of his blood of the New Covenant was precisely **to remove (forgive) sins**" (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Nashville: Broadman, 1930, Vol. I, p. 210; emp. WJ).

In his massive *Historical Grammar*, Robertson suggested that sometimes "grammar" has to give way to "theology" (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919, p. 389). Is that any way to treat the verbally inspired word of God? Yet that is how Robertson sought to dispose of Acts 2:38. For shame!

Conclusion

It is a sad day in the history of the church of Jesus Christ when men - formerly sound, gospel preachers - begin to deny, both by pen and via pulpit, that baptism is required "for the remission of sins." But this is occurring with frequency. Some are rising up with a desire to "debate" the proposition. Bring them on! There are well-informed, honorable men willing to accept the challenge.

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THESE CHOSEN APOSTLES

In support of the argument that the Baptism of the HS was only promised to a special group of Apostles and not all believers, note those specifically listed in chapters one and two.

(CHAP 1)

1. Acts 1:2 The apostles, **whom He had chosen.**
2. Acts 1:3 To these chosen Apostles He presented Himself alive and gathered them together.
3. Acts 1:4,5 These chosen Apostles were told to wait in Jerusalem and wait for the promise from the Father, the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
4. Acts 1:8 These chosen Apostles were to receive power “when the HS come upon you.”
5. Acts 1:10 These chosen Apostles were the men who watched Jesus ascend.
6. Acts 1:11 These chosen Apostles were the men of Galilee the two angels spoke to.
7. Acts 1:12 These chosen Apostles were the men who returned to Jerusalem.
8. Acts 1:13 These chosen Apostles are the men listed.
9. Acts 1:26 These chosen Apostles are the eleven mentioned.

(Chap 2)

10. Acts 2:1 These chosen Apostles were gathered together when the day of Pentecost had fully come.
 - A. We know “they” refers to the apostles based on a simple rule of grammar.
 - B. To find the subject of a pronoun we look back to the closest noun that agrees in number.
 - C. The closest noun that agrees in number are those mentioned in 1:26.

11. Acts 2:7 Those who were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in other tongues were called Galileans.
12. Acts 2:14 Peter stood up with the eleven
13. Acts 2:15 These chosen Apostles are the (**οὗτοι**) mentioned by Peter.
 - A. (**οὗτοι**) outoi = these
 - B. We know this cannot refer to women because (**οὗτοι**) is masculine here.
 - C. So we have “**these** (masc.) **men.**” (NASB)
 - D. This is referring to the chosen Apostles of Jesus,
 1. Men of Galilee, 1:11
 2. All these speaking Galileans, 2:7
14. Acts 2:37 An appeal was made to the apostles after Peter’s sermon.
15. Acts 2:42 The early Christians continued steadfastly in the Apostle’s teaching.
16. Acts 2:43 Many signs and wonders were done through the Apostles hands.

(Other passages to consider)

17. Acts 3:6,7 Peter miraculously healed the lame man.
18. Acts 4:33 The Apostles gave witness to the resurrection of Jesus with great power.
19. Acts 5:12 Through the hands of the Apostles, many signs and wonders were done.

"Unconditional Election" (or Calvinistic Predestination)

I. As defined by these official denominational creeds

1. "God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass ... By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished." (The Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., from chapter 111, entitled "Of God's Eternal Decree")
2. "Unconditional Election" is a fancy phrase that refers to what is commonly known as "Predestination."
3. "Predestinate" comes from the Greek word "PROORIZO." This word was translated three different ways in the King James Version - predestinated, ordained, and determined before. The American Standard Version is more consistent and translates the word in every case as foreordained.

II. Proof Text of "Calvinistic Predestination"

1. Acts 4:28

What was "determined before?" The death of Jesus! This death had been prophesied as a part of God's plan (Lk. 22:21-22; Acts 2:22-23). The Jews did not realize that they were fulfilling God's plan and He did not force them to kill His Son; they were accountable for their own actions.

2. 1 Corinthians 2:7

1. The context shows clearly that it is God's plan of redemption that was foreordained. In verse 5, the power of God is in the gospel (Rom. 1:16).
2. In times past, it had been a mystery, not fully revealed.
3. Even the prophets did not understand completely about Christ.
4. But now this plan is revealed as the wisdom of God (Eph. 3:3-5; 1 Pet. 1:10-12).
5. This sacrifice was "for our glory" or salvation. It was a part of God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:8-11).

3. Romans 8:28-30

1. Who is under consideration here?
2. "those who love God" - not a few whom God loves

3. "the called according to His purpose" - we are not called by a still, mysterious voice or by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit or by God Himself, but by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14).
4. Those who hear, believe and respond in obedience are referred to as "the called" (Gal. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:9).
5. In Romans 8:29-30, we can see the unfolding of God's plan. God determined to send mankind a Savior to die for all men.
6. He foreordained all of the events before they actually took place.
7. In that sense, God predestinated our salvation. It was not that He selected us individually to be saved or lost, but that those who accepted the gospel call would be saved.
8. Those who answer that call are justified and glorified.

4. Ephesians 1:4-5,11

1. God has had an eternal plan in mind - a scheme of redemption for those who will accept it.
2. Those who are chosen are those who are "in Him" (Christ) vs. 3-4
3. We become God's children by our faith in and obedience to Christ's gospel (v. 5). God adopts us into His family upon our obedience (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:4-6).
4. The counsel of God's will (v. 11) refers to His decision to send Jesus to redeem the obedient.

III. Scriptural refutation of "Calvinistic Predestination"

1. The Bible teaches predestination, but not Calvinistic Predestination:

- A. Bible predestination is where God pre-determined, not the identity of the saved, but the character of the saved
- B. We are not opposed to predestination, for the Bible teaches it. However, Calvin's view of predestination is entirely unbiblical and therefore false doctrine.

What is foreknown by God in these Bible Verses?

Text	Personal Identity?	Character, purpose & plan?
Eph 1:3-4		
1 Cor. 2:7		
Rom 8:29-30		

2. God is not a respecter of persons: Acts 10:34; Rom 2:11-12; 1 Pe 1:17
3. God does not will that any perish but all be saved: Tit 2:11; 1 Ti 2:3-4; 2 Pe 3:9
4. Makes the Devil no enemy for the saved to worry about, if predestined 1 Pe 5:8 Why beware?
5. Our eternal destiny (heaven or hell) is based entirely upon personal choices we make based upon our own freewill. If we end up in hell, we can only blame ourselves!

Conclusion:

1. The Bible does teach predestination, but not the kind that Calvinists teach. The Bible does not teach that God has decided ahead of time who will be saved and who will be lost. We are free, moral agents with the capacity to accept or reject God's commandments.
2. Predestination or fore ordination is what God did before the world began, as He determined to save man from sin through the sacrifice of His own Son. Those who answer His call through the gospel experience the blessings of that plan now in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 2:3-11)

1

¹ Adapted from WWW.BIBLE.CA