

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 154 – June 3rd – Acts 1:1-26

Introduction to Acts

The Author

As was indicated in the introduction to Luke's Gospel, the transition from the narrative in the third person to first person plural in Acts 16:10 suggests that the author was a travelling companion of Paul who joined him at Troas. Other than this, there is no direct evidence concerning who may be the author of the book.

However, from very early times (from at least 160 AD) there was a clear tradition within the church that identified the author as Luke the physician (cf. Col 4:14). This tradition is corroborated by the use of what appears to be medical language in Luke and Acts (cf. Col 4:14).

Stott writes, "Luke arrived in Jerusalem with Paul (21:17) and left with him on their voyage to Rome (27:1). In between was a period of more than two years, during which Paul was held a prisoner in Caesarea (24:27), while Luke was a free man. How did he use this time? It would be reasonable to guess that he travelled the length and breadth of Palestine, gathering material for his Gospel and for the early Jerusalem-based chapters of the Acts. He will have familiarised himself as a Gentile with Jewish history, customs and festivals, and he will have visited the places made sacred by the ministry of Jesus and the birth of the Christian community."

Date

Bruce argues that the abrupt ending of Acts, giving no details of Paul's fate, along with no references to the Jewish War of 66-70 AD suggests an early date for the book. "There is, indeed, adequate evidence for the view that Luke gathered or set in order much of the material for both parts of his history in Palestine between 57 and 59, and that other material was added in Rome, the complete Gospel (= Book I) sent to Theophilus c. A.D. 61, and Ac. (= Book II) not very long afterwards."

The Speeches of Acts

The speeches in Acts occupy about one third of the book. Bruce follows Rendel Harris in asserting that Luke has not created the speeches found in Acts, but faithfully records in summary what was actually said. In the first half of Acts we encounter the preaching of Peter: "When we consider that from these speeches we can reconstruct an outline of the Gospel story starting from the baptism of John, when we consider that this corresponds to the scope of Mk., which itself is constructed on the framework of just such an outline and which is traditionally considered to rest on the authority of Peter, we have good reason for confidence that we are face to face with the Christian *kerygma* in its primitive form." Luke may well have been indebted to Mark for much of the early material in Acts as he was for the material in his Gospel.

The Style and Language of Acts

Bruce writes, "In general, we may describe Luke's style as good Hellenistic Greek, somewhat more literary than the Greek of most NT writers." Some of the distinctives of this style are:

- Luke's use of the optative, which was very rare in the Koine vernacular and in the NT (e.g. 8:20; 17:11,27; 21:33; 25:16,20; 27:12,39).
- The future infinitive (11:28; 23:30; 24:15; 26:7; 27:10), and future participle expressing purpose (8:27; 20:22; 22:5; 24:11,17).

- An accurate distinction between tenses (see 7:26; 15:37; 16:11), especially in the imperative (contrast 10:15; 28:9; 20:10, with 7:60; 9:38; 16:28; 23:21).
- The use of litotes (e.g. οὐκ ὀλιγός, 12:18 etc.), double prepositions (e.g. ἐως ἐπι, 17:14), δε και in an adversative sense (e.g. 22:28), the use of τοῦ with the infinitive to express purpose (e.g. 3:2,12; 7:19; 10:25...), and the indefinite use of τις (e.g. 3:2; 5:1f.; very characteristic of Luke-Acts).

Luke has a larger vocabulary than the other NT writers. According to Hawkins he uses 732 words which do not occur elsewhere in the NT: 261 in Lk only, 413 in Acts only and 58 common to both Luke and Acts. Of these 732, about 475 are found in the LXX. "Luke's characteristic words and phrases are so evenly distributed between all parts of Lk-Ac, including the 'we' sections, as to give the strongest support to the belief in unity of authorship throughout." Bruce.

The Purpose of Acts

Acts is the second volume of Luke's two part work and as such tells of what Jesus *continued* to do after his ascension. It provides a most valuable account of the expansion of the primitive Christian church and is written to defend both Christianity and Paul against the accusations of various opponents.

- Luke presents a clear view of 'Salvation History' – the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Samaria and to the ends of the earth in fulfilment of God's plan and by the working of his Spirit;
- This is also reflected in his outline of Paul's missionary strategy – he preaches first to Jews and only when they reject the message does he turn to the Gentiles;
- Acts shows that both Jewish and Gentile believers belong to the one church – that Christ, the Jewish Messiah, is Saviour of the world;
- It shows also that the Gentiles are not to be burdened with Jewish tradition – that Christ brings freedom to *all* who believe in him;
- It demonstrates that the Christian message is no threat to the civil power – it is not a new religion but rather the purist form of Judaism which had long been recognised by Rome as a *religio licita*;
- The chief cause of unrest is shown to be Jewish opposition to the Gospel, particularly opposition by the Jews of the Dispersion;
- The claim of Paul to be an apostle is defended.

The Text of Acts

The Greek text of Acts has attracted much study due, in part, to distinctive differences between two major groups of ancient manuscripts, the Alexandrian and the Western. A discussion of the development of family histories regarding the text of Acts is to be found in the introduction to Bruce's commentary. The monumental work on this subject is JH Ropes, *The Text of Acts* which forms volume 3 of the five volume work by Foakes Jackson and Kirsop Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity* Part I.

In particular, the Western text of Acts is approximately ten percent longer than the Alexandrian. The longer readings of the Western manuscripts are generally considered as additions or interpolations to the text. The nature of these readings and the arguments surrounding their significance are beyond the scope of these notes.

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Acts

Bruce, FF, *The Acts of the Apostles*, London, 2nd ed. 1952

Polhill, John B, *Acts: The New American Commentary*, Nashville, 1992

Stott, John R W, *The Message of Acts*, IVP (The Bible Speaks Today), Leicester, 1990

Acts 1:1-5

Luke 1:1-4 can be regarded as the introduction to the entire two volume work of Luke-Acts. What Luke writes there about the purpose of his writing and the research he has undertaken applies to Acts as well as to the Gospel. As with the beginning of Luke's Gospel, the opening verses are a formal address and are written in a more formal style than the remainder of the work. They reflect a classical form of introduction to the second volume of a work.

Verse 1

Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον ἐποιησάμην περὶ πάντων, ᾧ Θεόφιλε, ὃν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν

μὲν conjunction expressing a contrast, usually with δε ...

The δε here is omitted: the contrast is implied.

πρῶτος first

Here in the sense of 'former'.

λογος was used for a division of a work which covered more than one papyrus roll. NIV, "... former book..."

Θεοφιλε cf. Luke 1:3

ἤρξατο aor midd ἀρχω midd begin

Against all other witnesses, B and D omit ὁ before Ἰησοῦς, a reading adopted by Westcott-Hort and a few others.

τε enclitic particle and, and so; τε και and also

διδασκω teach

The implication is that *Acts* contains the account of the continuing work and teaching of Jesus. In other words, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church is the means by which Christ continues his work and teaching among his people.

Verse 2

ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας ἐντειλάμενος τοῖς ἀποστόλοις διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου οὓς ἐξελέξατο ἀνελήμφθη·

ἄχρι (and ἀχρις) until

ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας is an abbreviation more common in formal Greek for the phrase ἀχρι της ἡμερας ἢ, cf. v.22. The ἀνελήμφθη at the end of the verse concludes this phrase: 'Until the day when he was taken up, having given commandments ...'

ἐντειλάμενος Verb, aor midd/pass dep ptc, m nom s ἐντελλομαι command, order

Particularly the command to preach the gospel which Luke records in Lk 24:47, cf. Acts 1:8.

ἐξελέξατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἐκλεγομαι choose, select

Luke uses this verb of Jesus choice of the twelve, (Lk 6:13), of the one who will replace Judas (Acts 1:24) and later of Paul (Acts 9:15; 22:14-15). "It is thus emphasised that all of the apostles (the Twelve, Matthias and Paul) were neither self-appointed, nor appointed by any human being, committee, synod or church, but were directly and personally chosen and appointed by Jesus Christ himself." Stott.

ἀνελήμφθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s
ἀναλαμβάνω take up, carry

δια πνεύματος ἁγίου emphasises that Jesus' teaching of his disciples while he was with them was empowered by the Holy Spirit ("During Jesus' ministry there is no reference to the Holy Spirit being upon anyone except Jesus." Polhill). Now that he is no longer with them, he continues to teach them (compare v.1) δια πνεύματος ἁγίου.

Stott writes concerning *Acts*, "The most accurate (though cumbersome) title, then, which does justice to Luke's own statement in verses 1 and 2, would be something like 'The Continuing Words and Deeds of Jesus by his Spirit through his Apostles'."

Metzger (*Textual Commentary*) includes a lengthy note on the longer text found in codex Bezae (D).

Verse 3

οἷς καὶ παρέστησεν ἑαυτὸν ζῶντα μετὰ τὸ παθεῖν αὐτὸν ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις, δι' ἡμερῶν τεσσαράκοντα ὀπτανόμενος αὐτοῖς καὶ λέγων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ·

παριστημι and παριστανω present, stand before

The apostles were witnesses to Jesus' resurrection, cf. 1:22; 10:41.

ζωω live, be alive

Cf. 1 Cor 15:5-7. From this and the Gospels we can assemble nine or ten such appearances, some in Judaea and some in Galilee.

παθεῖν Verb, aor act infin πασχω suffer

Used absolutely of Christ's death, cf. 17:3; 26:23.

τεκμηριον, ου n (decisive) proof

A technical term from logic meaning 'demonstrative proof, evidence'.

τεσσαρακοντα forty

Not continuously, but in intervals.

ὄπτανομαι appear, be seen

Here only in the NT.

βασιλειᾶς τοῦ θεοῦ "Developing the teaching he had given them before the crucifixion. We should understand βασιλεία not in a territorial sense but in the sense of Kingship, royal rule, sovereignty." FF Bruce.

"The Kingdom of God is conceived as coming in the events of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and to proclaim these facts, in their proper setting, is to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God." CH Dodd.

Acts begins and ends with this theme, cf. 28:31.

Stott comments, "It appears ... that Jesus' two main topics of conversation between his resurrection and his ascension were the kingdom of God and the Spirit of God. It seems probable that he also related them to each other, for certainly the prophets had often associated them."

Verse 4

καὶ συναλιζόμενος παρήγγειλεν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων μὴ χωρίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ περιμένειν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πατρὸς ἣν ἠκούσατέ μου· συναλιζομαι eat with, assemble

Cadbury suggests the verb should read συναλιζομενος, 'while staying with them.' This reading has little mss support, though it is attested in some patristic witnesses. Its only virtue is that it reads better in context since συναλιζομαι in the sense 'gather together' is rather awkward when used of one person and in the sense 'to eat with' is unknown before the second century.

παραγγελλω command, instruct
χωρίζω separate; pass. separate oneself, leave

περιμενω wait for

ἐπαγγελια, ας f promise, what is promised

Cf. Lk 24:49 also Eph 1:13; Jn 14:16f.,26; 15:26; 16:7-13.

Verse 5

ὅτι Ἰωάννης μὲν ἐβάπτισεν ὕδατι, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐν πνεύματι βαπτισθήσεσθε ἀγίῳ οὐ μετὰ πολλὰς ταύτας ἡμέρας.

βαπτίζω baptise, wash

ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

Cf. Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; Jn 1:33.

βαπτισθήσεσθε Verb, fut pass indic, 2 pl
βαπτίζω

"Throughout Acts new converts experienced repentance, baptism and the gift of the Spirit. All three are essential elements of the conversion experience. The succeeding narrative of Acts shows no set pattern in which these various elements appear. The Spirit can come before baptism (10:47), in conjunction with baptism (2:38), or some time after baptism (8:16). The Spirit's presence in the lives of believers is also evidenced in less dramatic ways such as the Ethiopian's joy (8:39), Lydia's hospitality (16:15), and the Philippian jailer's offer of first-aid (16:33). Although the Spirit cannot be tied to a mechanistic pattern, these patterns show that repentance and the gift of the Spirit are essential to the conversion experience." Polhill.

Verse 6

Οἱ μὲν οὖν συνελθόντες ἡρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες· Κύριε, εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραήλ;

Their question must have been prompted by Jesus' words about the kingdom of God, but it betrays a misunderstanding similar to that of the couple on the Emmaus road who had hoped that Jesus was the one who would redeem Israel (cf. Lk 24:21).

μεν οὖν can be translated 'so then'

οἱ μὲν οὖν is a common phrase in Acts for beginning a new section of the narrative. It acts as a link with the preceding section, cf. 1:18; 2:41; 5:41 ...

συνελθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
συνερχομαι come together, assemble, meet

ἔρωταω ask, request, beg, urge

εἰ introduces a direct question εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ "are you now going to ..."

ἀποκαθιστημι reestablish, restore

They are still thinking of an earthly and national kingdom, cf. Mk 10:35ff.

Verse 7

εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτούς· Οὐχ ὑμῶν ἐστὶν γινῶναι χρόνους ἢ καιροὺς οὓς ὁ πατὴρ ἔθετο ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ,

γινῶναι Verb, aor act infin γινωσκω

χρονος ἢ καιρους χρονος refers to passage of time. καιρος is time viewed as occasion rather than extent, i.e. 'season', 'age'. Hence A.V., 'times and seasons'. Bruce says, "χρονους refers to the time that must elapse before the final establishment of the Kingdom; καιρους to the critical events accompanying its establishment."

ἔθετο Verb, 2 aor midd indic, 3 s τιθημι set,
appoint

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own

ἐξουσια, ας f authority, power

Cf. Mk 13:32.

Verse 8

ἀλλὰ λήμψεσθε δύναμιν ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου
πνεύματος ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, καὶ ἔσεσθέ μου μάρτυρες
ἐν τῇ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ
Σαμαρεία καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς.

λήμψεσθε Verb, fut midd dep indic, 2 pl
λαμβάνω

"It is important to remember that his promise that they would *receive power* was part of his reply to their question about the kingdom. For the exercise of power is inherent in the concept of a kingdom. But power in God's kingdom is different from power in human kingdoms. The reference to the Holy Spirit defines its nature. The kingdom of God is his rule set up in the lives of his people by the Holy Spirit. It is spread by witnesses, not by soldiers, through a gospel of peace, not a declaration of war, and by the work of the Spirit, not by force of arms, political intrigue or revolutionary violence." Stott.

ἐπελθόντος Verb, aor act ptc, m & n gen s
ἐπερχομαι come, come upon

"Just as the Spirit came upon Jesus to equip him for his public ministry [Lk 3:21-22; 4:14, 18], so now the Spirit was to come upon his people to equip them for theirs." Stott.

μαρτυς, μαρτυρος dat pl μαρτυσιν m
witness

For OT background, cf. Is 43:10; 44:8 also Lk 24:48. For use in Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39,41.

τε enclitic particle and, both
ἕως up to (of time or distance); as far as
ἐσχάτος, η, ον adj last, final
γῆ, γῆς f earth

"The disciples were to be the true, 'restored' Israel, fulfilling its mission to be a 'light to the Gentiles' so that God's salvation might reach 'to the ends of the earth' (Isa 49:6)." Polhill.
"The Church is the pilgrim people of God. It is on the move – hastening to the ends of the earth to beseech all men to be reconciled to God, and hastening to the end of time to meet its Lord who will gather all into one... It cannot be understood rightly except in a perspective which is at once missionary and eschatological." Lesslie Nebigin, *The Household of God* (quoted in Stott).

Jesus' answer breaks the small compass of their imagination which was limited to Israel. In his book *The Missionary Nature of the Church*, Johannes Blauw argues that the 'centripetal missionary consciousness' of the OT, the hope of the nations streaming to Zion, is, with Jesus' resurrection, ascension and the outpouring of the Spirit, replaced by 'centrifugal missionary activity'.

"The whole verse, including the promise of the Spirit, the gift of power, and the geographical instructions, forms a summary of the narrative of Ac.; chs 1-7 are placed in Jerusalem, 8-9 in Judaea and Samaria, and 10-28 take us step by step from Caesarea to Rome." Bruce.

Verse 9

καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν βλέπόντων αὐτῶν ἐπήρθη καὶ
νεφέλῃ ὑπέλαβεν αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν
αὐτῶν.

The account of Jesus' ascension here at the beginning of Luke's second volume complements (rather than contradicts) and is complemented by his account at the end of his first volume (Lk 24:50ff.).

βλεπω see, look

βλεπόντων αὐτῶν 'while they were looking',
'as they looked', NIV, "before their very eyes"

ἐπήρθη aor pass ἐπαίρω raise, lift up

νεφέλη, ης f cloud

ὑπολαμβάνω take away, remove

"The ascension narrative evokes rich biblical reminiscences – the translations of Enoch and Elijah, the cloud that enveloped Mt Sinai. Indeed, clouds are often associated with theophanies. One particularly thinks of the transfiguration narrative of Luke 9:28-36. The picture in Acts 1:9 is that of a cloud enveloping Jesus as he disappeared from sight, just as in Luke 9:34-36 the appearance of the cloud led to the disappearance of Moses and Elijah. The vivid pictorial depiction of Jesus' ascension into heaven serves to give tangible form to the apostles' testimony to the exaltation of Christ." Polhill.

Verse 10

καὶ ὡς ἀτενίζοντες ἦσαν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν
πορευομένου αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες δύο
παρειστήκεισαν αὐτοῖς ἐν ἐσθήσει λευκαῖς,
ἀτενίζω fix eyes on, look intently at

A Lukan verb – 12 out of 14 NT occurrences are in Lk-Acts.

παρειστήκεισαν Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 pl
παριστημι and παριστανω present,
stand before

ἑσθήσῃσι Noun, dat pl ἑσθης, ητος f
clothing

λευκος, η, ον white, shining

"Luke has recorded the ministry of angels at several crucial moments in his story. They announced and attended the birth of Jesus [Lk 1:26ff.; 2:9-10, 13-15]. According to some manuscripts an angel appeared in the garden of Gethsemane to strengthen him [Lk 22:43]. And 'two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning', later identified as angels, proclaimed his resurrection to the women [Lk 24:4ff., 23]. So it entirely appropriate that angels should now appear to interpret his ascension." Stott.

Verse 11

οἱ καὶ εἶπαν· Ἄνδρες Γαλιλαῖοι, τί ἐστήκατε βλέποντες εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; οὗτος ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὁ ἀναλημφθεὶς ἀφ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν οὕτως ἐλεύσεται ὃν τρόπον ἐθεάσασθε αὐτὸν πορευόμενον εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν.

ἐστήκατε Verb, perf act indic, 2 pl ἰστημι pf
stand, stand firm

ἐμβλεπω look straight at, consider, see

"The apostles' gaze into the sky is understandable after witnessing such a miracle. The angelic rebuke, however, is necessary. Moments of high spiritual experience are never ends in themselves. It was time to come down from the mountain and witness to what they had seen." Polhill.

Stott comments, "There was something fundamentally anomalous about their gazing up into the *sky* when they had been commissioned to go to the ends of the *earth*. It was the earth not the sky which was to be their preoccupation... It is the same for us. Curiosity about heaven and its occupants, speculation about prophecy and its fulfilment, an obsession with 'times and seasons' – these are aberrations which distract us from our God-given mission."

ἀναλημφθεὶς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s

ἀναλαμβάνω take up

οὕτως adv. thus, in this way

ἐλεύσεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s

έρχομαι

τρόπος, ου m way, manner; ὁν τ. in the same way as, as, like

θεαομαι see, look at, observe

"He was taken up in a cloud (v.9) and in glory (1 Tim 3:16); the Son of man is pictured as coming in the clouds (Dan 7:13; Mk 13:26; 14:62; Rev 1:7 etc.) and in great glory (Mk 13:26; Mt 25:31 etc.)." Bruce.

Stott adds, "Yet there will also be important differences between his going and his coming. Although his coming will be personal, it will not be private like his ascension. Only the eleven apostles saw him go, but when he comes 'every eye will see him'."

Verse 12

Τότε ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἀπὸ ὄρους τοῦ καλουμένου Ἐλαιῶνος, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐγγὺς Ἱερουσαλὴμ σαββάτου ἔχον ὁδόν.

τοτε then, at that time

ὑποστρεφω return, turn back

ὄρος, ους n mountain, hill

ἐλαιων, ωνος m olive orchard

ἐγγυς adv near

ὁδος, ου f way, path, road, journey

σαββατου ἔχον ὁδον literally, 'having a sabbath's day's journey', i.e. there was about a kilometre between Jerusalem and the mount of Olives.

Verse 13

καὶ ὅτε εἰσηλθον, εἰς τὸ ὑπερῶν ἀνέβησαν οὗ ἦσαν καταμένοντες, ὃ τε Πέτρος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἀνδρέας, Φίλιππος καὶ Θωμᾶς, Βαρθολομαῖος καὶ Μαθθαῖος, Ἰάκωβος Ἀλφαίου καὶ Σίμων ὁ ζηλωτῆς καὶ Ἰούδας Ἰακώβου.

ὅτε conj when, at which time

ὑπερῶν, ου n upstairs room

Maybe the room where the Last Supper was held.

ἀναβαινω go up, come up

καταμενω stay, live

Comparing the list of names in Mt 10:2ff, Mk 3:16ff and Lk 6:14ff it would seem that 'Ιουδας Ἰακωβου of Luke/Acts ('Judas not Iscariot' of Jn 14:22) is the same as Thaddeus of Mt and Mk.

Verse 14

οὗτοι πάντες ἦσαν προσκαρτεροῦντες ὁμοθυμαδὸν τῇ προσευχῇ σὺν γυναιξίν καὶ Μαρὶάμ τῇ μητρὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ σὺν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ.

πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας

προσκαρτερεω devote oneself to, continue in

Suggests an element of perseverance or continuance (cf. 2:42).

ὁμοθυμαδον adv with one mind, by common consent, together

"A favourite adverb of Luke, who uses it 10 times (all in Acts). The only other NT occurrence is in Rom 15:6." Bruce.

προσευχη prayer

"Prayer was the hallmark of the church in its early days (cf. 1:24; 2:42; 3:1; 4:24; 6:6)." Polhill.

They also spent these ten days in the temple, praising God (cf. Lk 24:53). Stott comments, "It was a healthy combination: continuous praise in the temple, and continuous prayer in the home."

γυνή, αἰκός f woman, wife

"Including no doubt those who accompanied Jesus from Galilee (Lk 8:2) and those who were present at the Cross and at the grave (Mt 27:55f.; Mk 15:40; 16:1; Lk 24:10; Jn 19:25)." Bruce.

Μαριαμ τῆ μητρὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ the last recorded appearance of Jesus' mother. She plays no part in the development of the church.

τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτοῦ cf Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3. They did not believe in Jesus before his death (Jn 7:5) but were convinced by his resurrection: Jesus appeared particularly to his brother, James (1 Cor 15:7). Two of the four named brothers, James and Jude, subsequently wrote NT letters.

Verse 15

Καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις ἀναστὰς Πέτρος ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν εἶπεν (ἦν τε ὄχλος ὀνομάτων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὡς ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι).

ἀναστὰς 2nd aor ptc ἀνίστημι intrans (in 2 aor & all midd) rise, stand up
μέσος, η, ον middle; ἐν μ., εἰς μ. in the middle, among

τῶν ἀδελφῶν used here of the Christian community – including the women.

ὄχλος, ον m crowd, multitude
ὄνομα, τος n name, person

Here in the sense 'person', cf. Rev 3:4; 11:13.

ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ 'altogether'. Bruce suggests that this is used in a quasi technical sense, meaning 'in church fellowship', cf. 2:1,47; 1 Cor 11:18,20; 14:23.

ὡσεὶ like, as, about, approximately
ἑκατὸν one hundred
εἴκοσι twenty

Polhill suggests that the number is significant since in rabbinic tradition 120 was the minimum required for the formation of a local Sanhedrin which would consist of 12 men, one member of council for each ten males. The parallel here is not perfect since the 120 include the women.

Verse 16

Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, ἔδει πληρωθῆναι τὴν γραφὴν ἣν προεἶπε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον διὰ στόματος Δαυὶδ περὶ Ἰούδα τοῦ γενομένου ὁδηγοῦ τοῖς συλλαβοῦσιν Ἰησοῦν,

ἔδει Verb, imperf indic, 3 s (impers) δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary
πληρωθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin πληρω fill, fulfill

προλεγω say beforehand

στόμα, τος n mouth, utterance, testimony

I.e. Ps 69:25 cited in v.20a.

Ἰούδα Noun, gen s Ἰουδας
ὁδηγός, ον m guide, leader

συλλαβοῦσιν Verb, aor act ptc, m dat pl
συλλαμβανῶ seize, arrest

Verse 17

ὅτι καθιριθμημένος ἦν ἔν ἡμῖν καὶ ἔλαχεν τὸν κλῆρον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης. –

καθιριθμημένος Verb, perf pass part, m nom s καθιριθμεῶ number; pass with ἐν be numbered among, be one of

ἔλαχεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαγχανῶ fall to one by lot

κλήρος, ον m lot (of something thrown or drawn to reach a decision), share, part

ἔλαχεν τὸν κλῆρον τῆς ... 'he had a part in ...', 'he shared in ...'

διακονία, ας f ministry, service

Cf. Ps 41:9.

Verse 18

Οὗτος μὲν οὖν ἐκτήσατο χωρίον ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδικίας, καὶ πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησεν μέσος, καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ.

It is argued by many (Calvin, Westcott & Hort, Bruce, Polhill, Stott etc.) that verses 18 & 19 are not a continuation of Peter's words but are an explanation added by Luke for the benefit of those who would not otherwise have known the history.

ἐκτήσατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
κταομαι acquire, gain

χωρίον, ον n piece of land, field

"In Mt 27:7, it was the priests who bought the Potter's Field with the thirty pieces of silver. A common explanation (favoured, e.g., by Jacquier) is that, considering the money as legally belonging to Judas, they bought the field in his name." Bruce.

μισθός, ον m pay, wages, reward

ἀδικία, ας f wrongdoing, evil, sin

πρηνής, ες gen ους headfirst or perhaps swollen

γενόμενος Verb, aor ptc, m nom s γινομαι

Bruce (along with others who view this as a medical term), argues that πρηνης could mean 'swell up'. The unusual and difficult phrase has given rise to a number of variants.

ἐλάκησεν Verb, aor act indic λακαω burst
open

μεσος, η, ον middle

ἐξεχύθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ἐκχεω and
ἐκχυννω pour out, shed (blood)

σπλαγγνον, ου η one's inmost self; τα σ.
entrails

Verse 19

καὶ γνωστὸν ἐγένετο πᾶσι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν
Ἱερουσαλὴμ, ὥστε κληθῆναι τὸ χωρίον ἐκεῖνο
τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν Ἀκελδαμάχ, τοῦτ'
ἔστιν Χωρίον Αἵματος. –

γνωστος, η, ον known, acquaintance

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

κατοικεω live, settle, inhabit

ὥστε so that, with the result that

κληθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin καλεω

ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, those

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own

διαλεκτος, ου f language

Ἀκελδαμαχ Akeldama (Aramaic, meaning
field of blood)

αἷμα, ατος f blood

Verse 20

γέγραπται γὰρ ἐν βίβλῳ ψαλμῶν· Γενηθήτω ἡ
ἐπαυλις αὐτοῦ ἔρημος καὶ μὴ ἔστω ὁ κατοικῶν
ἐν αὐτῇ, καί· Τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ λαβέτω
ἕτερος.

"It is not suggested that the primary reference of these two passages is to Judas. In so far, however, as the character of Judas corresponds to the description in Pss 69 and 109, these passages could be applied to him." Bruce.

Longenecker says that these verses are applied to Judas on 'the commonly accepted exegetical principle of analogous subject'.

Note the way in which this psalm is used by Jesus in Jn 15:25 (cf. also Jn 2:17; Rom 11:9-10; 15:3).

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

ψαλμος, ου m psalm, song

γενηθήτω Verb, aor pass dep imperat, 3 s

γινομαι

ἐπαυλις, εως f house, home

ἐρημος, ου f deserted place; also ἐρνημος,

ον adj uninhabited, desolate

ἔστω Verb, pres act imperat, 3s εἶμι

κατοικεω live, settle, inhabit

Ps 69:25 (LXX 68:26).

ἐπισκοπη, ης f office, place of service

The meaning here is the same as διακονια in verses 17 and 25.

λαβέτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s λαμβανω
ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

Ps 109:8 (LXX 108).

Verse 21

δεῖ οὖν τῶν συνελθόντων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν ἐν
παντὶ χρόνῳ ᾧ εἰσηλθεν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς
ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς,

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must
συνερχομαι come together; here =

accompany

χρονος, ου m time, period of time

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

Verse 22

ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος Ἰωάννου ἕως
τῆς ἡμέρας ἧς ἀνελήμφθη ἀφ' ἡμῶν, μάρτυρα
τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ σὺν ἡμῖν γενέσθαι ἕνα
τούτων.

ἀρξάμενος Verb, aor midd ptc, m nom s

ἀρχω midd begin

ἀνελήμφθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s

ἀναλαμβάνω take up

μάρτυρα Noun, acc s μαρτυς, μαρτυρος m

witness

ἀναστασις, εως f resurrection, raising up

εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

On personal witness (especially of the resurrection) as an essential for qualification as an apostle, see 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8f.

"As such, the role of apostle was limited to the Twelve. It was a unique, irreplaceable office (Eph 2:20; Rev 21:14). There could be no apostolic succession, since there were no further eyewitnesses to succeed them." Polhill.

Verse 23

καὶ ἔστησαν δύο, Ἰωσήφ τὸν καλούμενον

Βαρσαββᾶν, ὃς ἐπεκλήθη Ἰουδτος, καὶ

Μαθθίαν.

ἔστησαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἵστημι set,

place

Metzger highlights the fact that the Western reading ἔστησεν (D it^{sig} Augustine)

emphasises the role of Peter. He says, "Here and elsewhere in the Western text, one recognises clearly the later point of view, according to which Peter rules the church with the authority of the monarchical episcopate."

δύο gen & acc δύο dat δυσιν two

ἐπεκλήθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ἐπικαλεω

call, name, surname

Verse 24

καὶ προσευζάμενοι εἶπαν Σὺ κύριε
καρδιογνώστα πάντων, ἀνάδειξον ὃν ἐξελέξω,
ἐκ τούτων τῶν δύο ἕνα,

προσευχομαι pray

The aorist participle here introduces the prayer, "they prayed saying ...", not, "after they had prayed they said ..."

Κυριε The prayer is probably addressed to Jesus. He is the one who chooses and appoints apostles.

καρδιογνωστης, ου m knower of hearts

Cf. 15:8. ...τα is the vocative ending for 1st declension nouns ending in ...ης

ἀνάδειξον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s

ἀναδεικνυμι show clearly

ἐξελέξω Verb, aor midd dep indic, 2 s

ἐκλεγομαι choose, select

Verse 25

λαβεῖν τὸν τόπον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης καὶ
ἀποστολῆς, ἀφ' ἧς παρέβη Ἰούδας πορευθῆναι
εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον.

λαβεῖν Verb, aor act infin λαμβανω

τοπος, ου m place

διακονια, ας f ministry, service

ἀποστολη, ης f apostleship, mission

παρέβη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s παραβαινω
turn away, leave

πορευθῆναι aor infin πορευομαι go,
proceed

εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον i.e. 'to the place he
deserves/fitting for him' NIV "... to go
where he belongs"

Verse 26

καὶ ἔδωκαν κλήρους αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἔπεσεν ὁ
κλήρος ἐπὶ Μαθθίαν, καὶ συγκατανηφίσθη
μετὰ τῶν ἑνδεκα ἀποστόλων.

ἔδωκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3pl διδομι

κληρος, ου m lot (of something thrown or
drawn to reach a decision)

"We should have expected ἐβαλον rather than ἔδωκαν, but 'to give a lot' is the Hebrew idiom... In the OT the casting of lots was a recognised way of ascertaining the divine will (Prov. 16:33). For the employment of Urim and Thummim for this purpose, see 1 Sam 14:41 LXX. There is no record of the disciples resorting to this procedure after Pentecost." Bruce.

Drawing attention to the procedure used in selecting Matthias, Stott comments, "Leaving aside this fourth factor [the casting of lots], because the Spirit has now been given us, the remaining three (Scripture, common sense [in deducing the necessary qualifications] and prayer) constitute a wholesome combination through which God may be trusted to guide us today."

ἔπεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s πιπτω fall
συγκατανηφίσθη Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 s

συγκατανηφιζομαι be enrolled with, be
included among

ἑνδεκα eleven

The suggestion of Campbell Morgan that the appointment of Matthias was wrong and that Paul was the twelfth apostle of God's appointment is misguided and fails to do justice to the witness of this chapter.

Postscript

"The stage is now set for the Day of Pentecost. The apostles have received Christ's commission and have seen his ascension. The apostolic team is complete again, ready to be his chosen witnesses. Only one thing is missing: the Spirit has not yet come. Though the place left vacant by Judas has been filled by Matthias, the place left vacant by Jesus has not yet been filled by the Spirit. So we leave Luke's first chapter of the Acts with the 120 waiting in Jerusalem, persevering in prayer with one heart and mind, poised ready to fulfil Christ's command just as soon as he has fulfilled his promise." Stott.