

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 158 – June 7th – Acts 5:1-42

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

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Acts 5

"The growing church had many painful discoveries to make: first the hatred of the world; then – and far more painful – the appearance of sin within, the discovery that as into Eden, so into the kingdom of the Messiah, sin could find an entrance." Rackham. And Stott comments, "Having failed to destroy the church from outside, [Satan] attempted through Ananias and Sapphira to insinuate evil into its interior life, and so ruin the Christian fellowship."

Verse 1

Ἄνηρ δέ τις Ἀνανίας ὀνόματι σὺν Σαπφίρῃ τῇ γυναίκεϊ αὐτοῦ ἐπόλησεν κτήμα

πωλεω sell, barter

κτῆμα, τος η possession, property, piece of land

Verse 2

καὶ ἐνοσφίσατο ἀπὸ τῆς τιμῆς, συνειδύης καὶ τῆς γυναίκος, καὶ ἐνέγκας μέρος τι παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τῶν ἀποστόλων ἔθηκεν.

νοσφιζομαι keep back for oneself, embezzle

τιμη, ης f price

Cf. Josh 7:1 of Achan's action LXX ἐνοσφισατο ἀπο του ἀναθεματος
Bruce comments, "The story of Ananias is to the book of Acts what the story of Achan is to the book of Joshua. In both narratives an act of deceit interrupts the victorious progress of the people of God."

συνειδύης Verb, perf act ptc, f gen s
συνοιδα (verb perf in form but pres in meaning) share knowledge with, be aware of

ἐνέγκας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s φερω bring

μερος, ους η part, piece, in part, partly
ἔθηκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s τιθημι

Verse 4 makes it clear that Ananias' sin was not in keeping back part of the money but in pretending that he had given it all. Noting the strong word ἐνοσφίσατο, Stott comments, "We have to assume, therefore, that before the sale Ananias and Sapphira had entered into some kind of contract to give the church the total amount raised. Because of this, when they brought only some instead of all, they were guilty of embezzlement."

Verse 3

εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Πέτρος· Ἀνανία, διὰ τί ἐπλήρωσεν ὁ Σατανᾶς τὴν καρδίαν σου, ψεύσασθαί σε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον καὶ νοσφίσασθαι ἀπὸ τῆς τιμῆς τοῦ χωρίου;

Stott comments, "Here the Holy Spirit and that evil spirit often called the devil stand in opposition to one another. According to outward appearance, two men faced each other, and one of them lied to the other, but Peter had the spiritual discernment to see behind the appearance to the unseen reality: Satan lied to God (5:3-4). Indeed, Satan had 'filled' Ananias' heart to induce him to do so – a kind of diabolical equivalent to Peter's being filled with the Spirit."

ἐπλήρωσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s πληρωω fill

Bruce includes the following note on the name 'Satan', "Originally a common noun, meaning 'adversary' (e.g., 1 Kings 11:14; Ps 109:6), appears as a personal name for the angel who in Job 1:6ff. and Zech 3:1ff. accuses men before God (cf. Rev 12:10) and who in 1 Chr 21:1 tempts them to evil (as here)... In NT he is identified with Baal-Zebul (lit. 'lord of the high place'), prince of the demons' (Mt 12:24ff.), and is referred to as 'the evil one' (cf. Mk 4:15 with Mt 13:19). He has his kingdom, angels, and children in opposition to the kingdom, angels, and children of God (Mt 12:26; 25:41; 1 Jn 3:10). He is the 'prince of this world' (Jn 16:11), the 'god of this age', who blinds the minds of the unbelieving (2 Cor 4:4), the 'prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience' (Eph 2:2). He is identified with the serpent which seduced Eve, and true to his pristine character, is still 'the deceiver of the whole world' (cf. Rom 16:20; 2 Cor 11:2f.; Rev 12:9; 20:2). The Gk equivalent of his name is διαβολος 'calumniator': see 10:38; 13:10."

ψεύσασθαι Verb, aor midd dep infin
ψευδομαι lie, speak untruth, deceive
νοσφίσασθαι Verb, aor midd infin
νοσφιζομαι
χωριον, ου n piece of land, field, place

"One must remember that the community was 'of one heart and mind' (4:32). This spiritual unity lay behind their not claiming their possessions as their own, their sharing everything they had. They were the community of the Holy Spirit, and in this community they placed all their trust, found their identity and security. But this was not so with Ananias. His heart was divided. He had one foot in the community and the other still groping for a toehold on the worldly security of earthly possessions. To lie with regard to the sharing was to belie the unity of the community, to belie the Spirit that undergirded that unity." Polhill. Stott comments, "Their motive in giving was not to relieve the poor, but to fatten their own ego."
The Holy Spirit is here clearly viewed as personal.

Verse 4

οὐχὶ μένον σοὶ ἔμενον καὶ παραθὲν ἐν τῇ σῆ
ἐξουσίᾳ ὑπῆρχεν; τί ὅτι ἔθου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου
τὸ πρᾶγμα τοῦτο; οὐκ ἐψεύσω ἄνθρωποις ἀλλὰ
τῷ θεῷ.

οὐχὶ (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no; used in
questions expecting an affirmative answer.
μένω trans remain, stay, abide

μένον neut pres ptc μένω, οὐχὶ μένον σοὶ
ἔμενον 'while you had it, did it not belong to
you?'

παραθὲν Verb, aor pass ptc, m acc & n
nom/acc s πιπρασκω sell
σος, σῆ, σου possessive adj. your, yours
ἐξουσία, ας f authority, right, power
ὑπαρχω be (equivalent to εἶμι), be at one's
disposal (τα ὑ. possessions).

ὑπαρχω can be little more than the equivalent
of εἶμι or it can have its proper sense of 'be at
one's disposal' (see 4:32). Here it is the former
with a flavour of the latter.

τί ὅτι the verb ἔστιν is implied, 'Why (is it)
that ...'

ἔθου Verb, aor midd indic, 2 s τιθημι τ. ἐν
καρδίᾳ think, decide
πρᾶγμα, τος n matter, thing, event, deed
ἐψεύσω Verb, aor midd dep indic ψευδομαι
lie

The parallelism with verse 3 indicates that the
Holy Spirit is God. "It was to God that the lie
was told because it was to Him that the gift
was offered." Bruce.

Verse 5

ἀκούων δὲ ὁ Ἀνανίας τοὺς λόγους τούτους
πεσὼν ἐξέψυξεν· καὶ ἐγένετο φόβος μέγας ἐπὶ
πάντας τοὺς ἀκούοντας.

πεσων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s πιπτω
fall, fall down
ἐκψυχω die

A medical term found in the NT only here and
in v.10 and 12:23.

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

Verse 6

ἀναστάντες δὲ οἱ νεώτεροι συνέστειλαν αὐτὸν
καὶ ἐξενέγκαντες ἔθαψαν.

νεωτερος, α, ον younger, young
συνέστειλαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl
συστελλω carry out or wrap up (of the
dead)
ἐξενέγκαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
ἐκφέρω carry or bring out
θαπτω bury

Verse 7

Ἐγένετο δὲ ὡς ὥρων τριῶν διάστημα καὶ ἡ
γυνὴ αὐτοῦ μὴ εἰδυῖα τὸ γεγονός εἰσήλθεν.

ώρα, ας f hour, period of time
τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
διάστημα, τος n interval

I.e. 'And there elapsed (lit. took place) an
interval of about three hours'

εἰδύια Verb, perf act ptc, f nom s οἶδα (verb
perf in form but with present meaning)
know, understand
γεγονός Verb, perf act ptc, n nom/acc s
γίνομαι

Verse 8

ἀπεκρίθη δὲ πρὸς αὐτὴν Πέτρος· εἶπέ μοι, εἰ
τοσοῦτου τὸ χωρίον ἀπέδοσθε; ἢ δὲ εἶπεν·
Ναί, τοσοῦτου.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀποκρίνομαι reply, say
τοσοῦτος, αὐτή, οὗτον correlative adj so
much, so great, so large

The genitive is a genitive of price.

χωρίον, οὐ n piece of land, field
ἀπέδοσθε Verb, aor midd indic, 2 pl
ἀποδίδωμι give, pay
ναί yes, yes indeed

Verse 9

ὁ δὲ Πέτρος πρὸς αὐτήν· τί ὅτι συνεφωνήθη
ὑμῖν πειράσαι τὸ πνεῦμα κυρίου; ἰδοὺ οἱ πόδες
τῶν θανάτων τὸν ἄνδρα σου ἐπὶ τῇ θύρᾳ καὶ
ἐξοίσουσίν σε.

τί ὅτι see v.4
συνεφωνήθη Verb, aor pass indic, 2 s
συμφωνεῶ agree with, be in agreement
with, agree
πειράζω put to the test, tempt

For testing/tempting the Lord, see Ex 17:2; Dt
6:16 quoted by Jesus when tempted by Satan.
The idea of testing is here perhaps 'seeing how
far you can go' (Lake and Cadbury).

πόδες Noun, nom pl πους, ποδος m foot
θανάτων aor ptc θαπῶ bury
θύρα, ας f door, gate
ἐξοίσουσίν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl ἐκφέρω
carry or bring out

She had joined her husband in his act of
deception, she would now join him in
judgment and the grave.

Verse 10

ἔπεσεν δὲ παραχρῆμα πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἐξέψυξεν· εἰσελθόντες δὲ οἱ νεανίσκοι
εὗρον αὐτὴν νεκράν, καὶ ἐξενέγκαντες ἔθαψαν
πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς.

ἔπεσεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s πιπῶ fall,
fall down

παραχρῆμα immediately, at once
πόδας Noun, acc pl πους, ποδος m
ἐκψυχῶ die

See v.5.

νεανίσκος, οὐ m young man
εὗρον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl εὕρισκω
νεκρός, α, ον dead

ἐξενέγκαντες see v.6

"Of all the Gospel writers [Luke] gave the
strongest treatment of money's dangers.
Ultimately the temptations of money ensnared
Judas (Luke 22:5; Acts 1:18), the rich young
man (Luke 18:18-23), and the rich fool (Luke
12:15-21). The same quest for material
security trapped Ananias and Sapphira. Not
only was it their undoing, but it also threatened
the church. Then, as now, the mark of any
Christian fellowship is the relationship of its
members to material matters. That is where its
real heart and mind are revealed." Polhill.

Verse 11

καὶ ἐγένετο φόβος μέγας ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν
ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀκούοντας
ταῦτα.

Cf. v.5; 2:43.

ἐκκλησία, ας f congregation, church

This is the first occurrence of this word in
Acts.
"The word ἐκκλησία has both a Gentile and a
Jewish background. In Attic Greek it was the
name of the citizen body in its legislative
capacity; this usage obtained in many other
Greek cities (e.g. Ephesus: cf. 19:32, 39, 41).
But it is against the Jewish background only
that we can understand the early Christian
usage. In LXX it is used for the 'congregation'
of Israel, the nation in its theocratic aspect,
organised as a religious community (cf. Dt
9:10; 18:16; 23:1f.; 31:30; Josh 8:35, where
ἐκκλησία represents Heb *qahal*, frequently
also rendered by συναγωγή." Bruce.
Stott comments, "If the hypocrisy of Ananias
and Sapphira had not been publicly exposed
and punished, the Christian ideal of an open
fellowship would not have been preserved, and
the modern cry 'there are so many hypocrites
in the church' would have been heard from the
beginning."

Verse 12

Διὰ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐγένετο
σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πολλὰ ἐν τῷ λαῷ· καὶ ἦσαν
ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἅπαντες ἐν τῇ Στοᾷ Σολομώντος·

χειρ, χειρός f hand, power
τερας, ατος n wonder, object of wonder

Cf 2:23.

ὁμοθυμαδὸν adv with one mind, by
common consent

Cf 2:44, 46.

ἅπας, ασα, αν (alternative form of πᾶς) all,
whole
στοα, ας f porch, portico

Cf. 3:11 This seems to have been their public meeting place.

Verse 13

τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα κολλᾶσθαι αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ' ἐμεγάλυνεν αὐτοὺς ὁ λαός,

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining

The reference here is to unbelievers in the city.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing
τολμαω dare, be brave
κολλᾶσθαι Verb, pres midd/pass infin
κολλαομαι unite oneself with

κολλαομαι means 'join oneself to' (Acts 8:29; 9:26). Blass suggests that it may here have the sense 'interfere with', but Bruce says that there is no evidence of the word bearing this sense. We should not lose the link between this verse and v. 11.

μεγαλυνω enlarge, magnify

Verse 14

μᾶλλον δὲ προσετίθεντο πιστεύοντες τῷ κυρίῳ πλήθῃ ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν·

μαλλον adv more; rather
προσετίθεντο Verb, imperf pass indic, 3 pl
προστιθημι add to, increase

Cf. 2:41, 47. Does τῷ κυρίῳ belong with προστίθεντο or with πιστεύοντες? "For the former cf. 11:24; for the latter cf. 18:8. Formally, it is probably to be taken with πιστεύοντες, but in sense it may go with either or both." Bruce.

πληθος, ους n crowd, multitude

Drawing attention to the contrast between vv. 13 and 14 Stott comments, "'On the one hand an awestruck reserve', as Haenchen puts it, and 'on the other great missionary success'. This paradoxical situation has often recurred since then. The presence of the living God, whether manifest through preaching or miracles or both, is alarming to some and appealing to others. Some are frightened away, while others are drawn to faith."

Verse 15

ὥστε καὶ εἰς τὰς πλατείας ἐκφέρειν τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς καὶ τιθέναι ἐπὶ κλιναρίων καὶ κραβάτων, ἵνα ἐρχομένου Πέτρου κἂν ἡ σκιά ἐπισκιάσῃ τινὶ αὐτῶν.

πλατεια wide street, main street
ἐκφερω carry or bring out
ἀσθενεῖς Adjective, m nom pl ἀσθενης, ες
sick, weak

τιθέναι Verb, pres act infin τιθημι place, set

κλιναριον, ου n small bed, cot
κραβαττος, ου m bed, cot, stretcher

καν (καὶ ἐαν) even if, and if, even
σκια, ας f shadow, shade, foreshadowing
overshadow, fall upon

Cf. the effect of Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons, 19:12 (see also Lk 8:44). Stott adds, "It may be significant that the verb ἐπισκιάζω, which Luke chooses, meaning to 'overshadow', he has used twice in his Gospel of the overshadowing of God's presence."

Verse 16

συνήρχετο δὲ καὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν περὶ ζὸν πόλεωσ Ἰερουσαλήμ, φέροντες ἀσθενεῖς καὶ ὀχλουμένους ὑπὸ πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων, οἵτινες ἐθεραπεύοντο ἅπαντες.

συνερχομαι come together, assemble
πληθος, ους n crowd, multitude
περιζ adv around, in the vicinity

The word occurs here only in the NT

ὀγλεομαι trouble, harrass
ἀκαθατος, ον unclean

Note that Luke clearly distinguishes between sickness and demon possession.

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἡτις, ὅ τι
who, which, whoever, whichever
θεραπευω heal, cure

"At this point the apostles were still confined to Jerusalem. The people came to them from the outlying villages. Only later would they go forth from Jerusalem and take their gospel and their healing ministry into the villages of Judea (cf. 9:32-43)." Polhill.

Verse 17

Ἀναστάς δὲ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ πάντες οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ, ἡ οὖσα αἵρεσις τῶν Σαδδουκαίων, ἐπλήσθησαν ζήλου

ἀνιστημι trans (in fut and 1 aor act) raise;
intrans (in 2 aor & all midd) rise, stand up

ἀρχιερευς, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family
αἵρεσις, εως f religious party, faction

ἡ οὖσα αἵρεσις 'the local party', cf. 11:22; 13:1; 14:13; 28:17.

ἐπλήσθησαν Verb, aor pas indic, 3 pl
πιμπλημι fill

ζηλος, ου m, and ους n zeal, jealousy

Verse 18

καὶ ἐπέβαλον τὰς χεῖρας ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀποστόλους καὶ ἔθεντο αὐτοὺς ἐν τηρήσει δημοσίᾳ.

ἐπιβαλλω lay (hands) on

Most, if not all of the apostles (cf. v.29).

ἔθεντο Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl τιθημι place
τηρησις, εως f custody, prison

δημοσιος, α, ον public

Verse 19

ἄγγελος δὲ κυρίου διὰ νυκτὸς ἤνοιξε τὰς θύρας τῆς φυλακῆς ἐξαγαγὼν τε αὐτοὺς εἶπεν·

νύξ, νυκτος f night

ἀνοίγω open

θύρα, ας f door, gate

φυλακη, ης f prison, imprisonment

ἐξαγαγὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἐξαγω
lead or bring out

"Perhaps there is irony in their deliverance by the angel. Sadducees did not believe in angels." Polhill.

Verse 20

Πορεύεσθε καὶ σταθέντες λαλεῖτε ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τῷ λαῷ πάντα τὰ ῥήματα τῆς ζωῆς ταύτης.

σταθέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl

ἴστημι and ἵστανω pass stand, stand
firm

Suggests steadfastness.

ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

ῥημα, ατος n word, thing, matter

ζωη, ης f life

'Life' is here equivalent to 'salvation'.

Verse 21

ἀκούσαντες δὲ εἰσῆλθον ὑπὸ τὸν ὄρθρον εἰς τὸ ἱερόν καὶ ἐδίδασκον.

Παραγενόμενος δὲ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ συνεκάλεσαν τὸ συνέδριον καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γερουσίαν τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἀπέστειλαν εἰς τὸ δεσμοτήριον ἀχθῆναι αὐτούς.

ὄρθρος, ου m early morning; ὑπο τον ὄρθρον at daybreak

διδασκω teach

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

συγκαλεω call together; midd call to oneself

συνεδριον, ου n Sanhedrin (the highest Jewish council in religious and civil matters); pl local city councils

γερουσια, ας f Council (i.e. the Sanhedrin)

The και is epexegetic, 'even the council of the sons of Israel'.

δεσμοτηριον, ου n prison

ἀχθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ἄγω

Verse 22

οἱ δὲ παραγενόμενοι ὑπηρέται οὐχ εὔρον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ, ἀναστρέψαντες δὲ ἀπήγγειλαν

παραγινομαι come, arrive

ὑπηρετης, ου m attendant, assistant, servant

Probably Levites of the Temple watch.

εὔρον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl εὕρισκω

φυλακη, ης f prison

ἀναστρεφω return

ἀπήγγειλαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl

ἀπαγγελλω announce, proclaim

Verse 23

λέγοντες ὅτι Τὸ δεσμοτήριον εὔρομεν κεκλεισμένον ἐν πάσῃ ἀσφαλείᾳ καὶ τοὺς φύλακας ἐστῶτας ἐπὶ τῶν θυρῶν, ἀνοιζαντες δὲ ἔσω οὐδένα εὔρομεν.

κεκλεισμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n nom/acc s κλειω shut, shut up, lock

ἀσφαλεια, ας f security, safety, certainty

φυλαξ, ακος m guard, sentry

ἐστῶτας Verb, perf act ptc, m acc pl ἴστημι and ἵστανω pf stand, stand firm

θύρα, ας f see v.19

ἀνοίγω see v.19

ἔσω adv inside, within

Verse 24

ὡς δὲ ἤκουσαν τοὺς λόγους τούτους ὁ τε στρατηγὸς τοῦ ἱεροῦ καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς, διηπόρουν περὶ αὐτῶν τί ἂν γένοιτο τοῦτο.

στρατηγος, ου m chief magistrate; σ. του ἱεροῦ captain of the temple guard

διαπορεω be very confused, wonder

γένοιτο Verb, aor opt, 3s γινομαι

Verse 25

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

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

ἀπαγγελλω announce, proclaim

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

φυλακη, ης f prison, imprisonment

ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

ἐστῶτες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl ἴστημι pf stand, stand firm

διδασκω teach

Verse 26

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

τοτε then, at that time

στρατηγος see v.24

ὑπηρετης see v.22

βια, ας f force, violence, use of force

φοβομαι fear, be afraid (of)

λιθασθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl λιθάζω
stone

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

Verse 27

Ἀγαρόντες δὲ αὐτοὺς ἔστησαν ἐν τῷ συνεδρίῳ.
καὶ ἐπρωτότησεν αὐτοὺς ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς

ἀγαρόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ἀγώ
ἔστησαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἵστημι
ἐπρωτάω ask, interrogate, question
ἀρχιερεὺς, εὼς m high priest, member of
high priestly family

Verse 28

λέγων· Παραγγελία παρηγγείλαμεν ὑμῖν μὴ
διδάσκειν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τούτου, καὶ ἰδοὺ
πεπληρώκατε τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ τῆς διδαχῆς
ὑμῶν, καὶ βούλεσθε ἐπαγαγεῖν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς τὸ
αἷμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου.

παραγγελία, ας order, command, instruction
παραγγελλῶ command, instruct

A Semitism.

πληρῶω fill, make full, fulfill
διδάχη, ης f teaching, what is taught
βουλομαι want, desire, wish, intend, plan
ἐπαγαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἐπαγῶ bring
upon

αἷμα, ατος f blood

Compare Matt 27:25.

Note the high priest avoids mention of the name Jesus.

Verse 29

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

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply, say

Peter's response is a mini-sermon!

πειθαρχῶ obey, listen to
δεῖ it is necessary, must, should, ought
μᾶλλον adv more; rather

Verse 30

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

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

διεχειρίσασθε Verb, aor midd indic, 2 pl
διαχειρίζομαι kill, murder

κρεμάσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
κρεμαννυμι hang
ξύλον, ου n wood, tree, cross

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

Verse 31

τοῦτον ὁ θεὸς ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα ὑψώσεν τῇ
δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ, τοῦ δοῦναι μετάνοιαν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ
καὶ ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν·

ἀρχηγος, ου m leader, founder, originator

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

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

Verse 32

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

μαρτυρ, μαρτυρος dat pl μαρτυρῶν m
witness

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

ῥῆμα, ατος n word, thing, matter

Here probably 'things' rather than 'words'.

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι
πειθαρχῶ obey, listen to

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

Verse 33

Οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες διεπρίοντο καὶ ἐβούλοντο
ἀνελεῖν αὐτούς.

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

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

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

Verse 34

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

Bruce provides the following summary concerning the Pharisees. "In Hellenistic times the pious members of the community, the *hasidim*, who spent their time in studying the Law (oral as well as written) and expounding its application to the circumstances of the day, opposed the popular Hellenizing tendencies. In the conflict precipitated by Antiochus Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.), they lent their support to the Maccabees in the struggle for religious freedom, but once this was gained they held aloof from the fight for political independence, strongly disapproving of the self-seeking policies of the later Hasmonians and their assumption of the High Priesthood. This is the most probable explanation of their nickname, 'the separated ones'. Till the nation came under Roman overlordship, which they regarded as a national punishment, they were regularly in opposition to the ruling party, except under Queen Salome Alexandra (76-67 B.C.). Under Herod (37-4 B.C.) their power increased, but in NT times they were in a minority in the Sanhedrin, though their popular support was such that their opponents could not disregard them. Cf. Jos. *Ant* 18.1.4, according to which the Sadducean magistrates professed Pharisaic principles in order to win popular goodwill... The expression ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ Φαρισαῖοι combines both elements in the Sanhedrin: cf. Mt 21:45; 27:62; Jn 7:32, 45; 11:47, 57; 18:3. The influence of the Pharisees was enhanced by the fact that the scribes (see on 4:5) belonged chiefly to their party: cf. the common collocation 'scribes and Pharisees' in the Gospels. They were accepted by the people as religious patriots and spiritual leaders. They consistently refused to countenance aspirations to political independence, and after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 it was they who preserved some measure of national continuity in Palestine, by reconstituting the Sanhedrin for certain limited purposes and by continuing the study of the Law at Jabneh. Unlike the Sadducees, they believed in the resurrection of the dead and in the existence of a spirit world." Γαμαλιήλ Teacher of Saul of Tarsus (22:3), belonged to the more liberal school of Hillel (his grandfather). A celebrated teacher of the law.

νομοδιδάσκαλος, ου m teacher of the law,
interpreter of the law

τίμιος, α, ον precious, held in honour

κέλευω order, command

ἕξω adv. out, outside

βραχὺς, εια, υ little, short, small

The neuter here meaning 'for a little while'.

ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιῶω

Verse 35

εἶπεν τε πρὸς αὐτούς· Ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλίται,
προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τούτοις
τί μέλλετε πράσσειν.

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

προσεχω pay close attention to, watch out

μέλλω be going, be about, intend

πρασσω practice, do

Verse 36

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

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

λέγων εἶναί τινα ἑαυτόν perhaps 'claiming to be Messiah'

προσεκλίθη Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 s

προσκλινομαι join

ἀριθμὸς, ου m number, total

τετρακοσιοι, αι, α four hundred

ἀνηρέθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s ἀναρεω

kill, destroy

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as;

pl. as many as, all

ἐπέιθοντο Verb, imperf pass indic, 3 pl πειθω

persuade, win; pass be a follower of

διελύθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl διαλυω

scatter, disperse

Verse 37

μετὰ τοῦτον ἀνέστη Ἰούδας ὁ Γαλιλαῖος ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς ἀπογραφῆς καὶ ἀπέστησε λαὸν ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ· κάκεινος ἀπόλετο καὶ πάντες ὅσοι ἐπέιθοντο αὐτῷ διεσκορπίσθησαν.

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

ἀπογραφή, ης f registration, census
ἀπέστησεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφισταμαι
trans incite to revolt

ὀπισω after, behind

κάκεινος, η, ο contraction of καὶ ἐκεῖνος
and that one, and, he also

ἀπόλετο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s ἀπολλυμι
midd be lost, perish, die

διεσκορπίσθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
διασκορπιζω scatter

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

Verse 38

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

καὶ τὰ νῦν 'and in the present case'

ἀπόστητε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl

ἀφισταμαι intrans leave, go away

ἀφίημι leave, let alone

ἧ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

βουλή, ης f purpose

καταλυθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s

καταλυω trans destroy, tear down; pass
come to naught

Verse 39

εἰ δὲ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐστίν, οὐ δυνήσεσθε καταλῦσαι αὐτούς·) μήποτε καὶ θεομάχοι εὐρεθῆτε. ἐπέισθησαν δὲ αὐτῷ,

μήποτε lest, otherwise

θεομαχος, ον opposing God

εὐρεθῆτε Verb, aor pass subj, 2 pl εὐρίσκω

ἐπέισθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl πειθω
convince, win over; pass obey, listen to

Gamaliel's words are telling, but must not be treated as if they were absolutely true. There are many forms of false religion, including some which bear the name Christian, which seem to stand the simplistic test of time.

However, it is true that a work of God's doing cannot successfully be opposed – though for a time it may seem to suffer eclipse. Stott writes, "In the shorter run evil plans sometimes succeed, while good ones conceived in accordance with the will of God sometimes fail. So the Gamaliel principle is not a reliable index to what is from God and what is not."

Verse 40

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

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

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

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

παραγγελλω command, instruct

ἀπολυω release, set free, send away

Verse 41

οἱ μὲν οὖν ἐπορεύοντο χαίροντες ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ συνεδρίου ὅτι κατηξιώθησαν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἀτιμασθῆναι·

χαίρω rejoice, be glad

κατηξιώθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl

καταξιοω count worthy, make worthy

ἀτιμασθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ἀτιμαζω
treat shamefully, dishonour

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

Verse 42

πᾶσάν τε ἡμέραν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ κατ' οἶκον
οὐκ ἐπαύοντο διδάσκοντες καὶ
εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν.

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

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

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