

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 164 – June 13th – Acts 9:1-25

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 9:1

Ὁ δὲ Σαῦλος ἔτι ἐμπνέων ἀπειλῆς καὶ φόνου εἰς τοὺς μαθητὰς τοῦ κυρίου, προσελθὼν τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ

Of Saul's conversion, recorded in this chapter, Calvin writes, "God's wonderful hand was openly shown, not only in such a cruel wolf being turned into a sheep, but also in his assuming the character of a shepherd."

ἔτι still, yet

ἐμπνέω breathe (threats)

ἀπειλή, ης f threat, threatening

Cf. Ps 108:15

φόνος, ου m murder, killing

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

Verse 2

ἠτήσατο παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐπιστολάς εἰς Δαμασκὸν πρὸς τὰς συναγωγάς, ὅπως ἐάν τις εὔρη τῆς ὁδοῦ ὄντας, ἀνδρας τε καὶ γυναῖκας, δεδεμένους ἀγάγῃ εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ.

αἰτέω ask; midd ask for oneself, request
ἐπιστολή, ης f letter

The decrees of the Sanhedrin were regarded as valid throughout Judaism.

There was a large and strict Jewish community at Damascus. Some of the Jewish Christians must have sought refuge in that city.

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἂν) that, in order that

εὔρη Verb, aor act subj, 3 s εὔρισκω

ὁδος, ου f way

"This name is applied to the Christian movement in 19:9,23; 22:4; 24:14,22; cf. also 16:17; 18:25f. It probably corresponds to Heb. *halakhah* ('walk', 'rule of life')." Bruce

δεδεμένους Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc pl δεω
bind, tie

ἀγάγῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἀγω

Verse 3

ἐν δὲ τῷ πορεύεσθαι ἐγένετο αὐτὸν ἐγγίξειν τῇ Δαμασκῷ, ἐξαίφνης τε αὐτὸν περιήστραψεν φῶς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ,

ἐν δε τω πορευεσθαι – ἐν τω with infinitive to express time, 'As he was going ...'

ἐγγίζω approach, draw near

ἐξαίφνης suddenly, unexpectedly

περιαστραπτω flash around

φως, φωτος n light

"Paul no doubt had this light in mind in later years in many of his references to light and glory, e.g., 2 Cor 3:18; 4:4,6." Bruce

Verse 4

καὶ πεσὼν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ἤκουσεν φωνὴν λέγουσαν αὐτῷ Σαοὺλ Σαοὺλ, τί με διώκεις; πεσὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s πιπτω
fall, fall down

Cf. Ezek 1:28; Dan 8:17.

διώκω persecute, seek after, pursue

Verse 5

εἶπεν δέ· Τίς εἶ, κύριε; ὁ δέ· Ἐγώ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς ὃν σὺ διώκεις·

κύριε may here mean 'Sir', 'my Lord', a title of respect. Polhill thinks that Paul uses the word 'Lord' in the sense of Exodus 3:13, only finding out in response that the Lord whom he addresses is Jesus.

Verse 6

ἀλλὰ ἀνάστηθι καὶ εἰσελθε εἰς τὴν πόλιν, καὶ λαληθήσεται σοι ὃ τί σε δεῖ ποιεῖν.

ἀνάστηθι Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s ἀνίστημι
rise, stand up

εἰσελθε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s εἰσερχομαι
enter, go in

λαληθησεται fut pass 3s λαλεω speak, talk

σε Pronoun, acc s συ

δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must

Verse 7

οἱ δὲ ἄνδρες οἱ συνοδεύοντες αὐτῷ
εἰστήκεισαν ἔνεοί, ἀκούοντες μὲν τῆς φωνῆς
μηδένα δὲ θεωροῦντες.

συνοδεύω travel with

εἰστήκεισαν Verb, pluperfect act indic, 3 pl
ἵστημι stand, stand still

ἔνεος, α, ον speechless

The only NT occurrence of the classical word.

Maybe they heard the sound but did not distinguish the words, but Bruce says more probably ἀκούοντες μὲν τῆς φωνῆς should be referred to the sound of Paul's voice; i.e. they heard Paul speaking but they could not see anyone to whom he might be talking (compare 22:9)

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν no one, nothing
θεωρεω see, watch, observe, notice

Verse 8

ἠγέρθη δὲ Ἰσαῦλος ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, ἀνεωγμένων
δὲ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ οὐδὲν ἔβλεπεν·
χειραγωγοῦντες δὲ αὐτὸν εἰσήγαγον εἰς
Δαμασκόν.

ἠγέρθη Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἔγειρω
raise

ἀνεωγμένων Verb, perf pass ptc, gen pl
ἀνοίγω open

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing;
οὐδεν not at all

βλεπω see, look, be able to see

The picture is one of utter helplessness.

χειραγωγέω lead by the hand

Only here and 22:11; cf. χειραγωγους 13:11.

εἰσήγαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl
εἰσαγω bring into, lead into

Verse 9

καὶ ἦν ἡμέρας τρεῖς μὴ βλέπων, καὶ οὐκ
ἔφαγεν οὐδὲ ἔπιεν.

τρεῖς, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

ἔφαγεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἔσθω and
ἔσθω eat, consume

ἔπιεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s πίνω drink

"Probably from shock. There is no need to understand his abstinence as penance or as fasting before baptism." Bruce.

Verse 10

Ἦν δὲ τις μαθητῆς ἐν Δαμασκῷ ὀνόματι
Ἀνανίας, καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐν ὁράματι ὁ
κύριος· Ἀνανία. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· Ἴδου ἐγώ, κύριε.

ὄραμα, τος n vision

Ἀνανία Proper name, voc s Ἀνανίας

See his character described in 22:22. Ananias seems to have been a disciple in Damascus before the exodus of persecuted Christians from Jerusalem. "The evidence of Acts itself would indicate the early spread of the Christian witness to places like Damascus and Rome, perhaps through normal social routes such as trade, military service and the like." Polhill

Verse 11

ὁ δὲ κύριος πρὸς αὐτόν· Ἀναστάς πορεύθητι
ἐπὶ τὴν ῥύμην τὴν καλουμένην Εὐθεΐαν καὶ
ζήτησον ἐν οἰκίᾳ Ἰούδα Σαῦλον ὀνόματι
Ταρσέα, ἰδοὺ γὰρ προσεύχεται,

ἀναστάς 2 aor ptc ἀνίστημι rise

πορεύθητι Verb, aor pass dep imperat, 2 s

πορευομαι go

ῥύμη, ης f street, alley

εὐθως, εια, υ straight

ζήτησον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s ζητεω
seek, search for

Ταρσεύς, εως m man of Tarsus

Verse 12

καὶ εἶδεν ἄνδρα ἐν ὁράματι Ἀνανίαν ὀνόματι
εἰσελθόντα καὶ ἐπιθέντα αὐτῷ χεῖρας ὅπως
ἀναβλέψη.

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὁραω see

ὄραμα, τος n vision

"We can distinguish three early visions of Saul, i) vv. 4ff., on the way to Damascus, ii) ver 12, presumably in Damascus, iii) 22:17ff., after returning to Jerusalem." Bruce.

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in

ἐπιθέντα Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s ἐπιτιθεμι
place on, place

χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἂν) that, in order that

ἀναβλεψη aor subj ἀναβλεπω regain one's
sight, be able to see

Verse 13

ἀπεκρίθη δὲ Ἀνανίας· Κύριε, ἤκουσα ἀπὸ
πολλῶν περὶ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς τούτου, ὅσα κακὰ
τοῖς ἀγίοις σου ἐποίησεν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ·

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply

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

κακος, η, ον evil, wrong, harm

The term Ananias uses for Christians – τοῖς ἀγίοις – was to become a favourite term of Paul in his epistles.

Verse 14

καὶ ὧδε ἔχει ἐξουσίαν παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων
δησαὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους τὸ ὄνομά
σου.

ὧδε adv here, in this place

ἐξουσία, ας f authority

δησαὶ aor infin δεω bind, tie

ἐπικαλεω call, name; midd call upon

Another name for Christians (cf. 2:21, 38; 22:16), meaning those who address Jesus as Lord.

Verse 15

εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος· Πορεύου, ὅτι
σκευὸς ἐκλογῆς ἐστὶν μοι οὗτος τοῦ βαστάσαι
τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐνώπιον ἐθνῶν τε καὶ βασιλέων
υἱῶν τε Ἰσραήλ,

σκευος, ους n object, thing, vessel

ἐκλογή, ης f election, choosing, what is chosen

σκευος ἐκλογης A Semitic use of the genitive – 'chosen instrument'. Cf. Gal 1:15; Rom 1:1.

βασταζω carry, bear

ἐνώπιον prep with gen before

ἔθνος, ους n nation, people; τα ἔ. Gentiles
βασιλευς, εως m king

Including at least Agrippa II (25:23ff.) and Nero (27:24).

Verse 16

ἐγὼ γὰρ ὑποδείξω αὐτῷ ὅσα δεῖ αὐτὸν ὑπὲρ
τοῦ ὀνόματός μου παθεῖν.

ὑποδείξω fut ὑποδεικνυμι show, make known, warn

ὅσος, η, ον see v.13

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary

παθεῖν Verb, aor act infin πασχω suffer

"He was to endure many times over (cf. 2 Cor 11:23ff.) what he had made others suffer, and that for the sake of the same name. But in the kingdom of Heaven suffering for the King is a sure sign of His favour and an earnest of His reward (Mt 5:11f.; Rom 8:17; 2 Tim 2:12)." Bruce.

Verse 17

ἀπῆλθεν δὲ Ἀνανίας καὶ εἰσηλθεν εἰς τὴν
οἰκίαν, καὶ ἐπιθεὶς ἐπ' αὐτὸν τὰς χεῖρας εἶπεν·
Σαοὺλ ἀδελφέ, ὁ κύριος ἀπέσταλκέν με,
Ἰησοῦς ὁ ὀφθαλμοὶ σοι ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἧ ἤρχου, ὅπως
ἀναβλέψῃς καὶ πλησθῆς πνεύματος ἁγίου.

ἀδελφε acknowledging him not only as a brother Israelite but also as a brother in the Lord.

ἀπέσταλκέν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s

ἀποστελλω send

ὀφθαλμοὶ Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s ὄραω

trans see; pass. appear

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἂν) that, in order that

ἀναβλεπω regain one's sight

The regular word used of recovery of sight in the gospels.

πλησθῆς aor pass subj, 2 s πιμπλημι fill

πλησθης πνευματος ἁγίου "Such filling was necessary for the prophetic service indicated in verse 15 (cf Mk 13:11)." Bruce

Verse 18

καὶ εὐθέως ἀπέπεσαν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν
ὀφθαλμῶν ὡς λεπίδες, ἀνέβλεψέν τε καὶ
ἀναστὰς ἐβαπτίσθη,

ἀπέπεσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἀποπιπτω
fall from

λεπις, ιδος f flake, (fish)scale

Verse 19

καὶ λαβὼν τροφὴν ἐνίσχυσεν. Ἐγένετο δὲ μετὰ
τῶν ἐν Δαμασκῷ μαθητῶν ἡμέρας τινὰς,

λαβων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s λαμβανω

τροφη, ης f food, nourishment

μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower

Verse 20

καὶ εὐθέως ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς ἐκήρυσσεν τὸν
Ἰησοῦν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

Gal 1:15ff suggests that Paul went to Arabia after his conversion. This was probably after the activity recorded in vv.19-22. Paul's point in Galatians is that he received no instruction or commission from the other apostles.

κηρυσσω preach, proclaim

υἱος του θεου "It is significant that the only occurrence of this title in Ac. should be in a report of Paul's first preaching (cf. Gal 1:16, τον υιον αυτου). The title 'Son of God' or its equivalent is used in the OT

i) of the nation of Israel (e.g., Ex 4:22; Dt 32:6; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1),

ii) of the anointed king of Israel (e.g. 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7; 89:26ff.); this use, especially in the passages in Pss. (see on 4:25f.; 13:33), merges into its application

iii) to the ideal King, the Messiah (cf. 1 Enoch 105:2; 4 Ezra 7:28f.; 13:32, 37, 52; 14:9).

That our Lord's contemporaries believed that the Messiah was God's Son is evident from the High Priest's question *συ εἰ ὁ χριστος, ο υἱος του εὐλογητου;* (Mk 14:61). As applied to Christ, the title 'Son of God' denotes Him as the true representative of the Israel of God (cf. the True Vine, Jn 15:1ff.; and the development of the conception of the Servant of Jehovah), and as God's anointed King, as well as expressing that unique relationship to the Father which is His in the Triune Godhead. Here probably the Messianic sense of the title is uppermost (cf. ver.22)." Bruce.

Verse 21

ἐξίσταντο δὲ πάντες οἱ ἀκούοντες καὶ ἔλεγον· Οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πορθήσας ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους τὸ ὄνομα τοῦτο, καὶ ὧδε εἰς τοῦτο ἐληλύθει ἵνα δεδεμένους αὐτοῦ ἀγάγῃ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς;

ἐξίσταντο imperf midd, 3pl *ἐξίστημι* intrans
be amazed, be surprised
πορθέω destroy, try to destroy, kill

Cf. Paul's use of the same verb in Gal 1:13,23.

ἐπικαλέω call; midd call upon
ὧδε adv here, in this place
ἐληλύθει Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 s *έρχομαι*

The pluperfect is used to signify Saul's original purpose in coming to Damascus. The perfect would not have conveyed this sense since this was Saul's purpose no longer.

δεδεμένους αὐτοῦ ἀγαγῃ see v.2

Verse 22

Σαῦλος δὲ μᾶλλον ἐνεδυναμοῦτο καὶ συνέχυνεν τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐν Δαμασκῷ, συμβιβάζων ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός.

μᾶλλον adv more
ἐνδυναμοῦ strengthen, make strong
συνέχυνεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s
συγχεω and *συγχυννω* confound or
bewilder
κατοικέω live, settle, inhabit
συμβιβάζω bring together, prove

The sense here is that of bringing together the evidence: putting together both the prophecies in Scripture and the evidence of their fulfilment in Jesus. Paul would have been acquainted with these arguments from the OT but had previously fought against them.

Verse 23

Ὡς δὲ ἐπληροῦντο ἡμέραι ἱκαναί, συνεβουλεύσαντο οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀνελεῖν αὐτόν· ἱκανος, η, ον sufficient, many

ὡς δὲ ἐπληροῦντο ἡμέραι ἱκανοί 'as many days were drawing to an end'
"Actually two full years at least elapsed from his conversion to his return to Jerusalem (Gal 1:18 where 'three years' may be reckoned inclusively, as in 20:31). During this time he visited Arabia, the country east of Damascus (Gal 1:17). By Arabia we should understand the Nabataean kingdom. His activity in this region seems to have excited the annoyance of Aretas, the Nabataean king [whose help the Damascus Jews then sought in their attempt to destroy Saul, cf. 2 Cor 11:32f.]" Bruce

συμβουλεύω advise, counsel; midd
confer, consult, plot
ἀνελεῖν Verb, aor act infin *ἀναιρεῶ* do
away with, kill, destroy

Verse 24

ἐγνώσθη δὲ τῷ Σαύλῳ ἡ ἐπιβουλὴ αὐτῶν. παρατηροῦντο δὲ καὶ τὰς πύλας ἡμέρας τε καὶ νυκτός ὅπως αὐτὸν ἀνέλωσιν·

ἐγνώσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s *γινώσκω*
ἐπιβουλή, ης f plot
παρατηρέω (act & midd) watch, watch
closely

πύλη, ης f gate, door
νύξ, νυκτός f night
ὅπως (or *ὅπως ἂν*) that, in order that
ἀνέλωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl *ἀναιρεῶ*

Verse 25

λαβόντες δὲ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ νυκτός διὰ τοῦ τείχους καθῆκαν αὐτὸν χαλάσαντες ἐν σπυρίδι.

'his disciples' mentioned here are probably those who had responded to his preaching in the synagogues.

τείχος, οὗς n wall

I.e. through a window in the wall.

καθῆκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl *καθίημι*
let down, lower
χαλαῶ lower, let down
σπυρίς, ἰδος f basket (larger than the
κοφινός)

In 2 Cor 11:33 the term used is *σαργανή*, 'a large woven or network bag or basket suitable for hay, straw or bales of wool.'