

7/10/19

Acts 6-9

NT#27 What Wilt Thou Have Me to Do?

GT

Acts 6

Appointment of the seven

- Likened to 7 presidents of 70, but in function closer to the presiding bishopric.
- v.7 a great company of priests were obedient to the faith
- v.8 Stephen does great miracles and wonders among them
- v. 9-11 they couldn't resist the wisdom & spirit in him, so they suborned perjury
- * false witness* → they receive the penalty that they thought to inflict

Ch.7 Testimony of Stephen

- Abrahamic Covenant - all kindreds through his seed should be blessed
- circumcision - sacrifice/pain, marked to be of God token of the Abrahamic Covenant
- Prophets vs. people → Joseph/brethren, Moses/Pharaoh, Moses/People (v. 35 "who made you a judge over us," v. 39 "but our ancestors refused to obey him," 40-43 idolatry in the wilderness,) 43/44 Tabernacle/heathen shrines they carried in the desert. Solomon built a temple, but God built the earth. The attitude that God needs our temple is the problem. The temple is for man not God. (1 Kings 8:27, 2 Chr. 6:18)
- | Isaiah 66:1 ^{Follows 65:25} They will do no harm in my holy mountain

v. 51 hearts & ears still uncircumcised → you are heathens at heart you hear with the ears of someone who doesn't worship Jehovah. - will not receive the blessing of Abraham

conflict: ^{Sanhedrin} your ancestors / those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One
you / Christ (Jesus of Nazareth)

parallels Christ/Stephen
- miracles to make the Sanhedrin afraid
- illegal trial & execution
- testimony of how the Jews were in an apostate condition

hereafter you will see the Son of Man
v. 56 I see God in Heaven and the Son of Man at his right hand

(father forgive them
→ lay not this sin to their charge
(into thy hands I commend my spirit
(Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit

reason for parallels:
the authority continues
inspiration

Ch. 8 Saul (hebrew) Paul (greek) = device by Luke
persecution approved of his death → ~~Acts~~ Acts 22:20 Romans 1:32 not only do evil but approve of others doing it too
1 Cor. 15:8 ; persecuted the Church of God

Philip in Samaria → baptizing, healing, casting out devils
- why didn't Philip confer the gift of the Holy Ghost? (Had not yet been delegated)
Peter & John meet Simon Magus in Samaria

- tries to buy priesthood
- Peter lets him know what a big deal it is to feel this way about the priesthood

★ WHY is this a big deal?

- My wealth is enough

- Use it for profit rather than for service - he is important

v. 10

v. 23 Peter again has the gift of discerning another's thoughts

v. 24 Simon appears to repent → when the story doesn't end, I like to put myself in that place - that is Luke inviting us to finish the story

Philip & the Ethiopian → led by the Spirit

he's reading Isaiah 53:7-8

- lamb to the slaughter, yet he opened not his mouth
- in his humiliation, justice was taken from him

Philip tells him - this is the story of God himself suffering innocently

★ WHY is this an important message

Why would the Jews have scorned this Ethiopian?

- eunuch
- foreigner

Isaiah 56, 66 eunuchs & strangers will have a better place & name than sons & daughters

quote Ulises Coares "How Can I Understand?" Apr. 2019 about the Ethiopian

Ch. 9 Paul's vision on the road -

hard to kick against the pricks → the beast ~~that~~ fights his master only hurts itself.

this is possible harmonization with Acts 26:14 → "kick against the pricks" not originally here?

i.e. I've been trying to reach you for some time

- Stephen told them they were denying/resisting the spirit

26:14-18 read more words of Christ → Paul/Luke tells a more complete account
Joseph Smith 4 accounts of first vision

Paul is blinded, healed, immediately preaches
snuck out of Damascus in a basket

Luke mentioned in Colossians 4:14
Acts 16:10 (we)

Luke mentions Gamaliel in the trial of Stephen because he's heard about him from Paul. Luke tells Paul's story lovingly, giving credit to God for the transformation

Peter w/ Tobitha: even the raising from the dead continued

GT NT#27 (cont.)

Paul's profile

- studied under Gamaliel → usually associated with violent action (i.e. Simon Zealotes, a revolutionary apostle, or King Saul)
- zealous toward God (Phinehas → Num. 25:13) Midianites & son of Israel
Balaam counseled Midianites to seduce Israelites

Gamaliel was earlier mentioned by name in the trial of Peter & John (refrain from these men). If it's of man, it will come to nothing, if it's of God, you can't resist it. Luke made Gamaliel into a named character to give insight into the mind of Saul. Saul sees killing those perverting the faith as a service to God that God will reward, but has also been trained to doubt his conclusions.

- it is hard "for" you (hard on you) to kick against the pricks → It hurts you to resist God's will.

Paul is open about his former sins, and Luke affects the technique of changing his name (Abraham, Israel, Joshua)

Stoning

- two witnesses
- first pushes the convicted from twice his height
- second attempts to finish the job with a stone
- then the rest can join in
- highlights the "violence" or destructive nature of certain sins toward the community

Irony in Stephen's pronouncement:

Stephen has a "throne theophany" similar to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Amos, Jer., Zech. You ~~have the~~ ^{speaks poetically} ~~ste: structure~~ ^{life = hebrew prophet}

Abraham, Israel, Moses
6
Lehi

- ① uncircumcised of heart (not children of Abraham inside)
- ② uncircumcised of ear (not willing to hear the word of the Lord)
- ③ in the tradition of wicked Israelites who persecuted the prophets

Then they: ④ you are resisting the spirit
④ later confirmed in Saul's vision

- ① convict him in an illegal trial by unanimity & act immediately

- ② hold their hands over their ears

- ③ kill Stephen through false witness

Luke follows this account with a foreigner reading Is. 53:7-8 → Christ is humiliated by being denied justice.

this is a lynch mob. The reason for the rules around cap. punishment was to counter these tendencies that could lead a council to commit murder when they were ostensibly after justice

parallels between Saul/Paul & Alma the Younger:

Why persecutest thou me?

it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks

(on)

You are destroying yourself by resisting My will

Acts 22:4-6

persecuted this way unto the death, binding, and deliv. into prisons
as I made my Journey both men and women

Mos. 27:16

if thou wilt of thyself be destroyed ^{cast off}
seek no more to destroy the church

Alma 36:6

I went about ~~to~~ with the
sons of Mosiah, seeking to
destroy the church of God
murder (spiritually in Alma's case)
cloud

voice of thunder

shake earth

unconsciousness

dumb & weak (not unconscious)

brought back by
prayers of the righteous

Admiring missionary success
bound in prison | Freed



Mormon

witnesses the
persecution of his
converts

threatened
with death
put on trial
convert
companions

Luke

Saul was consenting to his (Stephen's) death.

Luke puts these accounts together to show the profound
change that can come upon us because of Christ

ie. even > murderer