

Acts 5:33—42

- When Peter once again accused the Jewish leadership of killing their Messiah, they wanted to kill Peter and John.
- The Sanhedrin is the ruling council composed of Pharisees and Sadducees lead by the High Priest.
 - The Pharisees seemed to take the lead for Jesus' death and the Sadducees taking the lead for the death of anyone claiming Jesus was alive.
- Gamaliel was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin.
 - He was a highly respected and well-known teacher of his day.
 - Paul sat under his teaching.
 - 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.
 - He died in 52 A.D.
- This Theudas is not to be confused with a more famous Theudas between 44 and 46 AD, seemingly claiming to be the Messiah, according to Josephus went to the Jordan river with his 400 followers and was going to part the waters. The Theudas mentioned by Gamaliel was probably alive just before Jesus as lead a much smaller revolt although nothing is really known about him.
 - F.F. Bruce, in his commentary on Acts, wrote, "Some are prepared to make Luke guilty of a double blunder -- (a) making Gamaliel refer to a rising which did not take place until ten or more years later, and (b) making an event of A.D. 44 take place *before* the rising of Judas in A.D. 6" (p. 125). Some have even accused Luke of *making up* the speech of Gamaliel; putting words in his mouth that he never uttered. The solution, however, is that Gamaliel was apparently referring to a previous revolt led by a man named Theudas (one *not* mentioned by Josephus). "We know that many insurgent leaders arose in Palestine when Herod the Great died in 4 B.C., and Theudas may have been one of them" (F.F. Bruce, p. 125). "Theudas" was a fairly common name at that time, thus "the Theudas Gamaliel referred to may have been one of the many insurgent leaders who arose in Palestine at the time of Herod the Great's death in 4 B.C., and not the Theudas who led the Jewish uprising of A.D. 44" (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 9, p. 323). Brother H. Leo Boles observed, "The times were full of revolts and rebellions, and as not less than three insurrectionary leaders were called Judas, and four Simon, there may have been two of the name of Theudas" (*A Commentary on Acts of the Apostles*, p. 91).
- Judas of Galilee lead a revolt against Rome's census for tax purposes around 6 A.D. He was soundly defeated by Rome. It's possible that he also presented himself as a Messiah figure, saving Israel from Roman rule.
- Gamaliel's council to leave Peter and John alone saved their lives.
- Tradition has Gamaliel become a believer, however, never ever trust tradition!
- They were flogged and told not to teach in the name of Jesus then sent out.
- The Apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus.
- They continued teaching and preaching that Jesus was the Messiah.
- In this passage we are seeing the rise of the little flock of and the continued downward spiral of the Jewish leadership.
 - Jesus predicted that some in Israel would inherit the Kingdom and others would lose it.
 - Luke 2:34** And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel..."
 - Matt. 21:43** "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you (the chief priests and the Pharisees) and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.
 - Luke 12:32** "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

Acts 6:1—6

Hellenistic Jews vs. Hebraic (Hebrew) Jews

- The Hellenistic Jews lived in Greece, spoke Greek and lived as a Greek.
 - The Diaspora Jews (Jews scattered by the Assyrians and Babylonians) were conquered by Alexander the Great (334 B.C.)
- The Hebraic Jews lived in and around Jerusalem, spoke Aramaic and were the more traditional.
- The Hellenistic Jews were, in general, looked down upon by the Hebraic Jews.
- There arose a dispute among the two groups. The Hellenistic Jew's widows were being overlooked when it came to serving them meals.
 - Notice it does not seem to be a deliberate act, just an oversight.
- To solve the problem, seven servers and overseers were selected to make sure everyone was treated fairly.
 - They needed to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.
 - These would be godly men who were well respected.
- It's very interesting to note that all seven had Greek names so the assumption is that they were all Hellenistic Jews.
 - This indicates that the Hebraic Jews really wanted to make everything right. There was no animosity between the two groups.
 - The "agape" love for each other was evident. This was evidence of being fully controlled by the Holy Spirit.
- This event does not show a breakdown in the Kingdom program, instead it shows how things will be handled in the Millennial Kingdom.
 - The Millennial Kingdom will not yet be a perfect place because sin has not been completely dealt with.
 - We see that what could have been a point of contention turned into a demonstration of love between the brethren.
- Sin will finally be done away with in the eternal state. (**Revelation 20, 21**)

Originally taught at Bethesda Sunday School January 11, 2009