



Handout for week of 5/27/19 Jn. 17: 20-26 & Acts 7: 55-60

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Stone, Naomi. [Thou Preparest a Table Before Us](#)

Rolheiser, Fr. Ron. [Priestly Prayer –Prayer for the World Mass on the World:](#) Teilhard de Chardin

Acts 7: ⁵⁵ But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸ Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

COMMENTARY: Seven men were chosen to be deacons to tend to the needs of the early church and among them was Stephen. We find Stephen out preaching and making many converts, which enrages the Sanhedrin. False testimony was presented. Stephen forcedly recounts his and their salvation story at which the Sanhedrin becomes enraged. This provokes an angry backlash and they proceed to lay their clothes at Saul's feet and stone Stephen to death.

The title "Acts of the Apostles" (Greek Πράξεις ἀποστόλων Praxeis Apostolon) was not part of the original text. It was first used by Irenaeus late in the 2nd century. Some have suggested that the title "Acts" be interpreted as "The Acts of the Holy Spirit" or even "The Acts of Jesus," since 1:1 gives the impression that these acts were set forth as an account of what Jesus continued to do and teach, Jesus himself being the principal actor.

The author of Acts likely relied upon oral tradition, as well as other sources, in constructing his account of the early church and Paul's ministry. Evidence for this is found in the prologue to the Gospel of Luke, wherein the author alludes to his sources by writing, "Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word." Some scholars theorize that the "we" passages in Acts are just such "handed down" quotations from some earlier source who accompanied Paul on his travels.

Historians believe that the author of Acts did not have access to a collection of Paul's letters. One piece of evidence suggesting this is that, although half of Acts centers on Paul, Acts never directly quotes from the Pauline epistles nor does it even mention Paul writing letters. Discrepancies between the Pauline epistles and Acts would further support the conclusion that the author of Acts did not have access to those epistles when composing Acts

7: 55: Right hand, position of power, as of a judge (cf. Ps 110.1). 56: Son of Man, see Lk 22.69. Outside the gospels, the term (often denoting Jesus as judge) appears only here and in Rev 1.13; 14.14. 58: Stoning was the main method of execution in the Tanakh (e.g., Lev 20.2); here, however, it seems to be a spontaneous mob action, like a lynching; as noted in John 18.31. Saul, the first appearance of Paul. 58–59: Stephen's final words echo those of Jesus (Lk 23.34,46). 60: Do not hold, Stephen intercedes on behalf of his killers, possibly modeled on the image of the servant in Isa 53.12. Pg. 213. [The Jewish Annotated New Testament](#)