

Acts 11:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

Analysis

After Stephen's martyrdom, scattered believers 'travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.' Persecution scattered the church, but they continued preaching despite danger. Initially they preached only to Jews, not yet grasping the full scope of the Gentile mission. From a Reformed perspective, God used persecution (intended by Satan to destroy the church) to spread the gospel geographically. Even the believers' initial limitation to Jewish audiences served God's purposes in progressive revelation of the Gentile mission.

Historical Context

This scattering (Acts 8:1) occurred circa AD 33-35. Believers reached Phoenicia (Lebanese coast), Cyprus (Barnabas's homeland), and Antioch (major Syrian city). This geographical expansion fulfilled Jesus' prediction (Acts 1:8) that persecution would push the gospel outward.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God use persecution and suffering to advance His gospel purposes?
2. Why did early believers initially preach only to Jews despite the Great Commission?
3. What does progressive revelation teach about God's patience with our limited understanding?

Interlinear Text

Oἱ	μὲν	οὗν	διασπαρέντες	ἀπὸ	τῆς	θλίψεως			
G3588	G3303	G3767	Now	they which were scattered abroad	G3588	the persecution			
			G1289	upon	G575	G2347			
τῆς	γενομένης	ἐπὶ	Στεφάνω	διῆλθον	ἔως	Φοινίκης			
G3588	that arose	G1096	about	G1909	Stephen	G4736	travelled	as far as	Phenice
					G1330	G2193	G5403		
καὶ	Κύπρου	καὶ	Ἀντιοχείας	μηδενὶ	λαλοῦντες	τὸν			
and	Cyprus	and	Antioch	to none	preaching	G3588			
G2532	G2954	G2532	G490	G3367	G2980				
λόγον	εἰ	μὴ	μόνον	Ἰουδαίοις					
the word	G1487	G3361	only	unto the Jews					
G3056			G3440	G2453					

Additional Cross-References

Acts 15:22 (Parallel theme): Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and

Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

Acts 15:3 (Parallel theme): And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

Acts 4:36 (Parallel theme): And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

Acts 21:2 (Parallel theme): And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth.

Acts 15:35 (Word): Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.