

ARTICLE II.

REMARKS UPON SOME PASSAGES IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

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Chap. 9: 7.
Οἱ δὲ ἄνδρες οἱ συνοδ-
εύοντες αὐτῷ, εἰστήκει-
σαν ἐννεοί, ἀκούον-
τες μὲν τῆς φωνῆς,
μηδένα δὲ θεωροῦντες.

"And the men which journeyed with him, stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man."

22: 9.
Οἱ δὲ σὺν ἐμοὶ ὄντες τὸ
μὲν φῶς εἶδεδσαντο, καὶ
ἐμβροβοὶ ἐγένοντο· τὴν δὲ
φωνὴν οὐκ ἤκουσαν
τοῦ λαλοῦντός μοι.

"And they that were with me saw indeed the light and were afraid, but they knew not the voice of him that spake to me."

26: 14.
Πάντων δὲ καταπεσ-
όντων ἡμῶν εἰς τὴν
γῆν, ἤκουσα φωνὴν λαλοῦ-
σαν πρὸς με, καὶ λέγουσαν τῇ
Ἑβραϊῶν διαλέκτῳ· Σαῦλ,
Σαῦλ, τί με διώκεις; σκλη-
ρόν σοι πρὸς κέντρα λατρί-
ζειν.

"And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

THE circumstances which attended the conversion of the Apostle Paul, his journey to Damascus with authority and with the full purpose to persecute the new sect, which was everywhere springing up around him, the appearance of the Lord to him on the way, and its influence upon his subsequent course of life, are too familiar to all to require repetition or remark. They are three times repeated in the Acts: once by the Evangelist Luke, in the regular course of his narrative, ch. ix; and twice in the words of the Apostle himself—first, in defending himself before the people at Jerusalem, from the steps of the castle of Antonia, ch. 21: 40 and ch. xxii; and then before King Agrippa at Cæsarea, when he and Bernice had come, "with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains and principal men of the city," ch. 25: 22 seq. and ch. xxvi. But our present object is principally to speak of the *apparent* discrepancies which occur in these three different accounts, as exhibited in the verses above quoted in the original, accompanied by our common English Version.

There appears, at first view, to be two almost direct contradictions in these verses : first, in 9: 7 it is said : “the men which journeyed with him *stood* speechless,” and in 26: 14, “when *we were all fallen* to the earth;” so that the companions of Paul should seem to stand erect and fall to the earth at the same time. And then in 9: 7 we read, “*hearing* a voice,” and in 22: 9, “but they *heard not* the voice of him that spake to me ;” so that they are made both *to hear* and *not to hear* the same thing.

The first apparent discrepancy is frequently accounted for by supposing that Luke in his narrative, ch. 9: 7, had in mind a point of time subsequent to that indicated in ch. 26: 14; and that they had first fallen to the ground, and afterwards risen and stood on their feet. This is the interpretation of Valla, adopted by Kuinoel and others. Kuinoel says : *sed evanescit difficultas, si cum Valla ad 22: 9, statumimus comites Pauli ad primum pavorem prolapsos fuisse, continuo vero surgentes stetisse.* Others understand it in inverse order : that they first stood still, and afterwards fell to the ground. So Bishop Bloomfield says : “It should seem that the best solution will be to suppose that Paul’s companions at first *stood fixed* and mute with astonishment; and then, struck with awe at what they regarded as indicating the presence, however invisible, of a supernatural Being, fell with their faces to the ground, as Saul had done.” Either of these would be a sufficient explanation and reconciliation of the two passages, if no better one were at hand.

The whole difficulty seems, however, to result from the manner in which the Greek work *εἰστήκεισαν* is rendered in our English Version. It is made to designate the act of standing, as opposed to sitting, reclining, or prostrating one’s self upon the ground ; whereas *ἵστημι*, in the 2 Aor., Perf., *Pluperf.*, and fut. Perf., has the primary meaning *to place one’s self, to be placed*, and from this, *to stand*. Hence it is frequently used, even in classical Greek, as an emphatic *εἶναι*, *to be, exist*, as, to be in a certain state, condition. Cf. Soph., Ajax 1084 ; Tr. 1145. Homer’s Od. B. VII. l. 89 et al. So, in the N. Test. it is used to indicate a *standing still*,

stopping, as opposed to moving on. See Matt. 20: 32, *στὰς ὁ Ἰησοῦς*; and cf. also Mark 10: 49. Luke also uses it, in a similar signification, in his Gospel, 7: 14: *οἱ δὲ βασιάζοντες ἔστησαν*, and 19: 40, in the Passive. And in Acts 8: 38, *ἐκέλευσε στήναι τὸ ἄρμα*, "He commanded the chariot to stand still." In accordance with classical usage, it might be interpreted here with *έννεοί*, as only more emphatic, but yet parallel with the phrase *ἐμφοβοὶ ἐγένοντο*, 22: 9, *they were* or became *speechless* (from fear). But it is most probable that Luke, intended to indicate that they were arrested, stopped in their course, as well as rendered speechless. And this use is entirely in accordance with the passages quoted above from his Gospel and the Acts, and not at all at variance with the declaration in 26: 14, that they all fell to the ground, *πάντων καταπεσόντων ἡμῶν εἰς τὴν γῆν*.

The second discrepancy has also been variously explained. Some, as Vitranga, Rosenmueller, and others, suppose that *φωνήν*, in 9: 7, signifies *noise* or *sound*, while in 22: 9 it indicates *a voice, connected words*. Now there cannot be much doubt that the former is a legitimate meaning of *φωνή*. See Mem. I. 4, 6, *τὸ δὲ τὴν ἀκοὴν δέχεσθαι μὲν πάσας φωνάς*, where it is used of sound generally. So often in the LXX., as in Dan. 3: 5, 7, 10, of the sound of a musical instrument; and, in the N. Test., as of the wind, in John 3: 8; of thunder, Rev. 6: 1. 14: 2, et al. saep.; so that if this apparent discrepancy occurred in a classical writer, as in Plato or Xenophon, this would be a sufficient vindication of the consistency of the writer with himself, although the change of signification should occur in contiguous and nearly related passages. But we have no occasion, here, to rely upon this explanation. Neither would we place very much stress upon the use of the Genitive in 9: 7, which might have a partitive signification: they heard *of the voice*, i. e. had a partial perception of the utterance, but not a full comprehension of its import, although this is an authorized use of the Greek Genitive; for, in 22: 7 we have a similar construction of the Genitive, *ἤκουσα φωνῆς*, where it cannot have this meaning.

Beza, Er. Schmidt, and others, understand *φωνήν*, in 9: 7, of Paul replying to the invisible speaker; while in 22: 9 it is the voice of Christ; but this is so little in accordance with the context, as scarcely to require notice. So Kuinoel says: *si de voce Pauli Lucas intelligi voluisset vocabulum φωνή, adjecisset pronomen αὐτοῦ.*

The true explanation of the difficulty, it seems to us, is found in the different use of the word *ἀκούω* in the two passages. The author of the Acts uses *ἀκούοντες* in its most common acceptation of *hear*, perceive with the ears; while the Apostle, in his defence, employs *ἤκουσαν* to designate the actual understanding, perception by the mind; and, with the following clause, *τοῦ λαλοῦντός μοι*, the understanding the voice (*φωνήν*), as the words of some intelligent agent addressing Paul, and not as a confused noise, like a human utterance, indeed, but coming from they knew not whither, and signifying they knew not what. The addition of this last clause seems to be a natural occasion for this use of *ἀκούω*; and the two passages together give us the simple, natural information that the companions of Paul heard a sound as of a human voice, but did not understand it as the intelligent communication of some individual being.

This use of *ἀκούω* is not unknown to classical writers (see the Lexicons), and in the LXX. and N. Test. many plain instances may be referred to. In Mark 4: 33 we read: And with many such parables spake he the word unto them as they were able *to understand it*, *καθὼς ἠδύναντο ἀκούειν*. Paul himself plainly uses it in this sense in 1 Cor. 14: 2, For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue, speaketh not unto men but unto God; for no man *understands* him, *οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀκούει*. Other passages, as John 6: 60. Gal. 4: 21, are sometimes referred to. See also Hackett's Commentary on the Acts, 9: 7. In the LXX., instances are not rare where *ἀκούω* is employed in the translation of the Heb. *שמע* in the sense of *to hear distinctly*, *to understand*. Comp. Gen. 11: 7. 42: 23 et al., and see Robinson's Gr. and Heb. Lexx.

There seems, then, to be no impropriety in the use of the word *ἀκούω* in the sense of *to understand*; and this use is

rendered probable here by the connection, i. e. by the use of the phrase τοῦ λαλοῦντός μοι. And besides the probability that an author who has shown himself in other respects so accurate and trustworthy, should directly contradict himself, is not credible to one who is not wholly given over to scepticism. In a classical writer, we should accept a far less probable explanation than either of those usually adopted by commentators, or even suspect the genuineness of the text.

Two or three phrases in these verses deserve a passing remark : τῇ Ἑβραϊδι διαλέκτῳ, lit. "in the Hebrew dialect;" so the vernacular language of the Jews of Palestine, the Aramæan or Syro-Chaldaic, was called, though much changed from the ancient Hebrew. Cf. Acts 21: 40. 22: 2, and see Bib. Repos. Vol. I. Art. IV. esp. pp. 351 sq.

The general idea of the proverbial phrase, σκληρόν σοι πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζειν, "it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," is plain, as well as its application here, namely: Your opposition to my will, will be unavailing, and only end in your injury and ruin. The κέντρον, to which allusion is here made, was a stick with a sharp iron point or goad, used in urging forward beasts of burden or draught-animals. It is now often seen in use in the countries upon the Mediterranean and Levant; and the proverb would seem to have been in general use, especially among the Greeks and Romans. See Æschylus, Agamemnon, 1540: Πρὸς κέντρα μὴ λάκτιζε; and Prometheus, 323: πρὸς κέντρα κῶλον ἐκτενείς; Euripides, Bacch. l. 791; and Pind. Pyth. 2. 173, where the scholiast explains the origin of the expression: ἡ δὲ τροπή ἀπὸ τῶν βοῶν· τῶν γὰρ οἱ ἄτακτοι κατὰ τὴν γεωργίαν κεντριζόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀρούρητος, λακτίζουσι τὸ κέντρον καὶ μᾶλλον πλήττονται. So in Latin writers, as Terence, Phormio, l. 2. 27: "Num quæ inscitia est, Advorsum stimulum calcēs; see also Plautus 4. 2. 55: and Amm. Marc. 18. 5: contra acumina calcitrare. Cf. Hackett's Comm. and Robinson's Greek Lexicon.

Chap. xii. 1—3 and 21—23.

V. 1. Κατ' ἐκείνον δὲ τὸν καιρὸν ἐπέβαλεν Ἡρώδης ὁ βασιλεὺς τὰς χεῖρας κακῶσαι τινὰς τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας.

V. 2. Ἀνείλε δὲ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἰωάννου μαχαίρα.

V. 3. Καὶ ἰδὼν ὅτι ἀρεστόν ἐστι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, προσέθετο συλλαβεῖν καὶ Πέτρον. * * *

V. 21. Τακτῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ ὁ Ἡρώδης ἐνδυσάμενος ἐσθῆτα βασιλικήν, καὶ καθίσας, ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος, ἐδημηγόρει πρὸς αὐτούς.

V. 22. Ὁ δὲ δῆμος ἐπεφώνει· Θεοῦ φωνή, καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου.

V. 23. Παραχρῆμα δὲ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος κυρίου, ἀνθ' ὧν οὐκ ἔδωκε τὴν δόξαν τῷ Θεῷ· καὶ γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος, ἐξέψυξεν.

V. 1. "Now about that time Herod *the King* stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church."

V. 2. "And he killed James the brother of John with the sword."

V. 3. "And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also." * * *

V. 21. "And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne and made an oration unto them."

V. 22. "And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god and not of a man."

V. 23. "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten of worms and gave up the ghost."

Herod *the king*, here spoken of, was the elder Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, "the murderer of the innocents," and father of Herod Agrippa the younger, called by both Josephus and the author of the Acts only Agrippa. See Acts 25: 13, 22, 23, 24, 26; 26: 1, 2, etc.; and Josephus, Ant. 19. 9. 1. 2 et al. After the death of his father Aristobulus, his grandfather took charge of his rearing and education, and sent him to Rome to pay his court to Tiberius, then emperor. By his address he soon gained the

favor of that prince and of Antonia the empress, and was familiarly associated with Drusus their son, until his death, when all his friends were compelled to leave Rome, so that the emperor might the less be reminded of his son. But in consequence of his prodigality, Herod was obliged to leave Rome, with large debts unpaid, and was unable to return to Jerusalem in the state to which his birth entitled him. He accordingly retired to the castle of Massada, near the Dead Sea, where his uncle, Herod the tetrarch, assisted him with large sums of money and with authority, until, wearied with his profusion, he rebuked his extravagance. But this was more than the pride of the youth could brook, and he resolved to leave Judea and again return to Rome. Cordially received by Tiberius, whose grief for his son was assuaged by time, he had an apartment in the royal palace assigned him, and he succeeded in obtaining from the empress money to refund what he had borrowed from the royal treasury in Judea. Having thus appeased the temporary anger of the emperor, he had leisure and opportunity to ingratiate himself into the favor of the young Caius Caligula, grandson of Antonia, and son of Germanicus, whose future elevation he seems to have foreseen. He soon made himself necessary to the happiness of Caligula, and when Tiberius died four years after, A. D. 39, Caligula rewarded him with a crown and title of king, and the rule of the provinces which his uncle Philip and Lysanias had possessed. On the accession of Claudius, he received all of Judea and the kingdom of Chalcis, and thus held, perhaps, a wider sway than even his grandfather.

The accuracy of Luke as a historian is thought to be specially conspicuous in his allusions to this Herod. Archbishop Paley, in his "Evidences of Christianity" (Part II. ch. vi. § 4), says: "The accuracy of the sacred writer, in the expressions which he uses here, is remarkable. There is no portion of time, for thirty years before, or *ever* afterwards, in which there was a *king* at Jerusalem, a person exercising that authority in Judea, or to whom that title could be applied, except the three last years of Herod's life, within

which period the transactions in the Acts is stated to have taken place." The predecessor of Herod Agrippa — Herod Antipas — was never properly king, although sometimes so designated, simply as ruler; and his successor, Agrippa II., although king, was not king at Jerusalem or over Judea, but over the provinces which his father at first possessed, viz. Batanea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, etc. See Josephus 20. 7. 1 and 20. 8. 4. Neither could Herod Agrippa I. have been properly designated "king at Jerusalem," "until during the last three years of his life." Josephus says that Claudius, in the beginning of his reign (A. D. 41), in return for favors done him by Agrippa, not only confirmed him in his previous dominions, but "added to them the territory over which Herod his grandfather had reigned, namely, Judea and Samaria" (19. 5. 1). This happened three years previous to the transactions recorded in the last paragraph of the 12th chapter of Acts: Now when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city of Cæsarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower, and there exhibited shows in honor of Cæsar, etc. (Jos. Ant. 19. 8. 1, 2.) Sometime within these three years, and probably but a short time before the close of them, the death of James and the imprisonment of Peter must have taken place.

An incidental allusion, in verse 3d of ch. 12, shows plainly the author's knowledge of the character of Agrippa: "he killed James the brother of John with the sword; and *because he saw it pleased the Jews*, he proceeded further to take Peter also." Now according to profane history this Herod endeavored, unlike his uncle Herod Antipas (who was evidently "more friendly to the Greeks than to the Jews,"—Jos. 19. 7. 3.), in every way, to conciliate the Jews; he repaired and strengthened the walls of Jerusalem, appeared to love to dwell there, and was careful in conforming to all the Jewish laws and observances. Cf. Josephus 19. 7. 2, 3.

The occurrences recorded in verses 21—23 are fully substantiated and enlarged upon by Josephus. This "set day," τακτῆ ἡμέρᾳ (lit. *arranged, fixed*), was the second day

of the games instituted in honor of Cæsar, and probably on the 12th of Aug. (see Conybeare and Howson's *Life of Paul*), "when a great multitude were assembled, in Cæsarea, of the principal persons and such as were of dignity throughout this province." Early in the morning, as it was known that Herod was to appear in state, in the royal theatre built by Herod the Great (*Ant.* 15. 9. 6.), the people, all, as we may suppose, filled with excitement and expectation, were assembled and arranged upon the semicircular massive stone seats, rising one above another. Herod soon appeared in his royal robe, *ἐνδυσάμενος ἐσθῆτα βασιλικήν*, which, as Josephus tells us, was on this occasion made wholly of silver, and of a texture truly wonderful. "As the morning rays of the sun fell upon it, it shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him" (*Ant.* 19. 8. 2).

He proceeded to the raised platform (*βῆμα*, from *βαλνω*, to go; hence a *step*, and then a place which is reached by steps), or tribune, where the speaker was accustomed to address the assembled multitude, now doubtless fitted up as a throne; and, taking his seat, he made an address (*ἔδημηγόρει*, from *δῆμος* and *ἀγορεύω*) to the people, or, more probably, to the deputies. The words which had been here and there heard from his admirers and flatterers, now were upon the lips of the assembled multitudes: *ὁ δὲ δῆμος ἐπεφώνει*, and the people shouted: *Θεοῦ φωνὴ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου*, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. So Josephus says, more generally: "presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place and another from another (though not for his good), that 'he was a god,' and they added, 'Be thou merciful to us; for, although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.'"

In verse 22 Luke gives, in few words, the sequel to this occurrence, namely, a direct visitation of God in the infliction of disease; the occasion of it, his receiving, without rebuke, the reverence due to God only; and its result, the death of Herod.

First, the angel of God immediately smote (struck) him, *Παραχρήμα δὲ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος κυρίου*. The verb *πατάσσω*, which originally means *to strike, beat*, when designating the action of God directly or mediately by his angel, signifies "to afflict with disease or calamity," see Rev. 11: 6, and so often in the LXX. for the Heb. *נָפַח* Hiph. of *נָפַח*. Cf. Gen. 19: 11. Num. 14: 12 et al., and see Robinson's Hebr. and Gr. Lexicons, s. v. What is meant, in this verse, by *ἄγγελος κυρίου*? God is frequently represented as accomplishing his purposes by means of angels, messengers. The passages are too numerous, both in the Old and New Testaments, and too familiar to all, to need citation. In this same chapter, verse 7 sq., an angel is represented as appearing for the liberation of Peter. And in this case, without question, there was a visible appearance: Behold the angel of the Lord (came and) *stood* before him * * * and *touching* the side of Peter, he *roused* him from sleep, *saying*, etc. Here there was need of a visible agent for the easy and ready accomplishment of the result designed. But not so in the present instance. The disease was inflicted in the ordinary way of an attack of disease, yet so as to make it evident that it was a direct visitation of God, by means of his unseen messengers, who ever stand ready to do his will. See Stuart in Bib. Sacra, No. I. 1843, and cf. Gen. 19: 1—23. 2 Sam. 24: 16. 1 Chron. 21: 12, 15, et al. saep.

The next clause, *ἀνδ' ἂν οὐκ ἔδωκε τὴν δόξαν τῷ Θεῷ*, *because he gave not God the glory*, i. e. because he accepted the homage of the people, which belonged to God only. Josephus says, a little more at length: "Upon this [the homage that was paid him], the king did neither rebuke them nor reject their impious flattery. But as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope, over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was a messenger of ill tidings," etc. He adds: "A severe pain also arose in his bowels, and began in a most violent manner." Herod himself seems to have connected this visitation of God with the preceding transaction; for, according to Josephus, "he looked upon his friends and said:

‘I, whom you call a god, am commanded immediately to depart this life; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me; and I, who was by you called immortal, am immediately to be hurried away by death.’”

The result, as far as Herod is concerned, is naturally passed over by the author of the Acts, in few words, as he is not writing an account of the life of Herod, but of the treatment which Peter had received from him, and its results. The brief notice of his disease and death: *καὶ γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος ἐξέψυξεν*, and *being eaten of worms, he died*, seems at first almost to be at variance with the more detailed account of Josephus, who says that in consequence of the violence of his disease, “he was carried from the theatre into his palace, and the rumor went abroad everywhere, that he would certainly die in a little time.” * * * And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his bowels for five days, he departed this life, being in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and in the seventh of his reign.” 19. 8. 2.

It is plain that there is really no contradiction between the author of the Acts and Josephus in respect to the nature of the disease. Josephus says: “Pain arose in his bowels,” “his pain became violent,” and “when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his bowels,” all general declarations not at all inconsistent at least with the one more definite declaration in Luke of the nature of the disease that produced his death, but rather related as the effect: the severe pain; and the cause: eaten by worms. Josephus’s prejudice in favor of Herod might naturally lead him, without design even, not to mention any unnecessary details of an unpleasant nature connected with his death. When this is taken into view, the manifest divine interference through natural causes for the punishment of Herod is made very certain, since not even his adviser can help acknowledging the connection between the sudden attack of this most loathsome disease, and the arrogant assumptions of Herod. The account of the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in 2

Mac. 9: 5 sq. seems to give a just commentary upon this, reconciling the account of Luke and Josephus: 'Ο δὲ πανεπόπτης Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἀνιάτῳ καὶ ἀοράτῳ πληγῆ ἄρτι δε αὐτοῦ καταλήξαντος τὸν λόγον, ἔλαβεν αὐτὸν ἀνήκεστος τῶν σπλάγγων ἀλγηδῶν, καὶ πικραὶ τῶν ἔνδου βάσανοι,

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Ἵνα καὶ ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ δυσσεβοῦς σκώληκας ἀναξείν, καὶ ζῶντας ἐν ὀδύναϊ καὶ ἀλγηδόσι τὰς σάρκας αὐτοῦ διαπίπτει, ὑπὸ δὲ τῆς ὀσμῆς αὐτοῦ πᾶν τὸ στρατόπεδον βαρύνεσθαι τῇ σαπρίᾳ.

The disease of Herod the Great seems to have been the same, and according to Josephus was inflicted as a judgment for his sins. See the account which is too loathsome to repeat, in Antt. 17. 6. 5.

There is nothing in Acts 12: 23, at all inconsistent with the statement of Josephus that Herod lived five days after the attack of disease in the theatre. Luke merely commemorates the fact that he died, ἐξέψυξαν, *breathed out* (his life) as a consequence of his disease. This was all that his object required, merely to show the care that God exerted over his cause and his servants, by whom this cause was promoted. Whether Herod was instantly removed or continued in pain five or ten days, was not material for his purpose; since in either case, it was a manifest visitation of God. But we might gather from the Acts, that Herod's death was not instantaneous. Since in that case it would not be unnatural to look for a word, as *παραχρήμα*, to indicate the fact; and besides, the nature of the disease as designated by Luke, *σκωληκόβρωτος*, would naturally imply a considerable time before the strength of a man, in the vigor of life, would be exhausted, and his life's blood consumed.

The conclusion of the narrative concerning Herod is worthy of a passing notice. "But," i. e. in contrast with this fate of its opposer Herod, the word of God (here designating, says Hackett in his Comm. in h. l. "the complex idea of doctrine and disciples,") "*grew*" (*ἠύξαν*, the figure taken from the growth of plants) i. e. gained in power and

extent of influence, and applying specially to the instruction of the Apostles; and "multiplied" (*ἐπλαθύνετο*, lit. became many) naturally applying to those who embraced the gospel. This new doctrine not only in spite of the opposition of its opponents, but in contrast with their success, spread abroad and became daily more and more influential both among Jews and Gentiles.

Chap. xiii. verses 6, 7.

V. 6. Διελθόντες δὲ ἄλλην τὴν νῆσον ἄχρι Πάφου, εὗρον ἄνδρα τινα μάγον, ψευδοπροφήτην Ἰουδαῖον, ᾧ ὄνομα βαρῆσοῦς,

V. 7. Ὃς ἦν σὺν τῷ ἀνθυπάτῳ Σεργίῳ Παύλῳ, ἀνδρὶ συνετῷ. Οὗτος, προσκαλεσάμενος Βαρνάβαν καὶ Σαῦλον, ἐπεξήτησεν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ.

V. 6. "And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus."

V. 7. "Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man, who called for Barnabas and Saul and desired to hear the word of God."

In the beginning of the 13th chapter we read, that while certain prophets and teachers, the leading persons in the church at Antioch, were performing religious services (*Λειτουργούντων αὐτῶν τῷ Κυρίῳ*) and fasting, they were commanded by the Holy Spirit to set apart for the work "whereunto they were called," Barnabas and Saul. When they had been ordained by laying on of hands, accompanied by suitable devotional exercises, they went forth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and followed by the good wishes and prayers of the brethren, to the specific work of converting the Gentiles. They turned their steps, for what reason we need not now stop to inquire, towards the sea-coast, and embarked, for the island of Cyprus, at Seleucia. A few hours' sail brought them in sight of Salamis so familiar to Barnabas, a native of Cyprus. John, surnamed Mark, accompanied them; since we read, in the first account of their labors in the synagogues of the Jews, that "they had John also as their assistant." But it should seem that they

did not remain long in Salamis, a town filled with Jews and Jewish synagogues. They turned their faces to Paphos, at the opposite extremity of the island, the residence of the Roman governor, and hence an important post for exerting an influence as missionaries to the Gentiles. The hundred miles, or thereabouts, intervening between Salamis and Paphos, on a great public thoroughfare, we may suppose, in the first zeal of their important undertaking, was passed over with only the necessary delays for attention to physical wants, and for scattering seed by the wayside as opportunity might offer.

When they arrived at Paphos, their attention seems to have been specially arrested by a certain Magian, a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Barjesus, "which," according to our English Version, "was with the deputy of the country (the proconsul) Sergius Paulus, a prudent man, who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God." This Roman governor, it should seem, had been desirous of learning in respect to the great truths that pertain to divine influence and agency, and to the future state of existence; but not, as a discerning man (*συνετός*), being able to give his full confidence to the magician, gladly availed himself of this new opportunity of "hearing the word of God." It is plain that, from the first, Elymas perceived that Sergius Paulus was inclined to listen favorably to the apostles; for we read that "he withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith," i. e. he endeavored to prevent the mind of the ruler from falling under the influence of their divine teachings. Cf. Conybeare and Howson's *Life of St. Paul*, Vol. I. p. 148. This, as we should expect, roused the energies of the Apostle Paul; and, "filled with the Holy Ghost, he set his eyes upon him, and said: O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt become blind, not seeing the sun for a time." These words were no sooner spoken, than their truth was verified, and "forth-

with there fell upon him mist and darkness;" so that he who had so recently attempted to guide others, now looks about for those who will even direct his footsteps away from him whom he had, so lately, boldly withstood. But out of his darkness a light arose and shone upon the Proconsul; for, "when he saw what was done, he believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord," i. e. at this manner of teaching the word of God, as in Mark 1: 22. The influence exerted by the teaching of Paul, substantiated by this plain miracle, must have extended far beyond the Roman magistrate. The sacred historian has, however, given us no further particulars; but, in the next verse, speaks of "Paul and his company" as leaving Paphos for Perga in Pamphylia.

There are several things worthy of more extended notice in this narrative, particularly in the verses quoted above. Verse 6: *τινα μάγον*. The word *μάγος*, Plur. *μάγοι*, *magi*, from the Heb. *מָג* *mag* (Pers. *mogh*, fr. *mih*, Zend. *meh*, Sanscrit *mahat*, *mahá*, see Ges. Thesaur.), from which the Greek *μέγας* is derived, was the common name for the priests and wise men among the Medes, Persians, and Babylonians, i. e. the *great*, the *powerful*. And hence it is used as a general term for *magician*, *sorcerer*, *fortune-teller*, and corresponds to the Heb. and Chald. *מַשְׁכֵּס* (comp. the LXX. Tr., Dan. 1: 20. 2: 2, 27, etc.) and the Syr. *ܩܘܪܘܢܐܝܢܐ*. *ψευδοπροφήτην*, lit. a false (*ψευδής*) prophet (*προφήτης*); but as *προφήτης* is used in a more general sense, for one who speaks from a special divine impulse or inspiration; so this word may designate one who falsely pretends to have supernatural aid in speaking. This man, it seems, was a Jew by descent (*Ιουδαίου*), and was named Barjesus (*Βαρτήσους*, i. e. *Bar-* *בַּר*, son, *Ἰησοῦς* *Ἰησους* of Jeshua or Jesus). It may be proper to remark here, that, in verse 8, this man is called Elymas (*Ελύμας*), which signifies the magician (*μάγος*). This name is, doubtless, derived from the Arabic word meaning "the wise;" but whether this name had been given him as a testimony to his wisdom, or because he had previously been a resident in Arabia; or whether he had assumed it to give

consequence to his character as magician, we cannot decide. Nor is it of any serious importance.

Verse 7. Ὁς ἦν σὺν τῷ ἀνδραποδιστῷ, κ. τ. λ. Two things, here, are of consequence to discuss: the fact that such a man *was with* (ἦν σὺν,) i. e. was an attendant upon, attached to the court of the Roman magistrate; and the title here given to Sergius Paulus: ἀνδραποδιστῷ.

It might, at first, appear strange that a man of the station of the Roman magistrate, and moreover a cultivated and discriminating man (συνετός), should encourage such impostors, or give them place about his person. This however, is explained by inquiring a little into the customs and "intellectual and religious tendencies of the age." Mr. Howson, in his *Life of St. Paul*, says: "For many years before this time, and many years after, impostors from the East, pretending to magical powers, had great influence over the Roman mind. All the Greek and Roman literature of the Empire, from Horace to Lucian, abounds in proof of the prevalent credulity of this sceptical period. Unbelief, when it has become conscious of its weakness, is often glad to give its hand to superstition. The faith of educated Romans was utterly gone. We can hardly wonder, when the East was thrown open,—the land of mystery,—the fountain of the earliest migrations, the cradle of the earliest religions, that the imagination both of the populace and the aristocracy of Rome, became fanatically excited, and that they greedily welcomed the most absurd and degrading superstitions. Not only was the metropolis of the empire crowded with "hungry Greeks," but "Syrian fortune tellers" flocked into all the haunts of public amusements. Athens and Corinth did not now contribute the greatest or the worst part of the "dregs" of Rome, but (to adopt Juvenal's use of that river of Antioch we have lately been describing) the Orontes itself flowed into the Tiber."

Every part of the East had its representatives in the Roman capital. The Egyptian idolaters (Lucan's *Pharsal*. lib. viii. l. 830 sq.), the Chaldean, Syrian, and Jewish Astrologers were congregated where both ruler and people gave

credence to their impostures. Even Cicero bears witness to the fact that Pompey, Crassus, and Cæsar were accustomed to consult the lying astrologers of the East. See *De Divinatione*, lib. ii. 47: *Quam multa ego Pompeio, quam multa Crasso, quam multa huic Cæsari a Chaldæis dicta memini, neminem eorum nisi in senectute, nisi domi, nisi cum claritate esse moriturum? ut mihi permirum videatur, quemquam exstare, qui etiam nunc credat iis, quorum prædicta quotidie videat re et eventis refelli.* Tacitus, too, gives his testimony to the influence of astrologers, when he says of them: *Genus hominum potentibus infidum, sperantibus fallax, quod in civitate nostra et vitabitur semper et retinebitur, Hist.* Juvenal, in his *Satires*, has many passages showing that even Jews were not rarely employed in the same way at Rome, as vi. 426—431:

——— Cophino foenoque relicto,
 Arcanum Judæa tremens mendicat in aurem,
 Interpretes legum Solymarum, et magna sacerdos
 Arboris, ac summi fida internuntia coeli.
 Implet et illa manum, sed parcius; aere minuta
 Qualiacunque voles Judæi somnia vendunt.

Cf. also vi. 437 sq.; iii. 13 sq.; x. 93 etc.; Horace *Sat.* i. 2. 1; Lucian's *Life of Alexander of Abonoteichus*, et al.; and see Neander's *Ch. History*, Torrey's *Transl.* Vol. I. p. 30 sq. All along through the earlier ages of Christianity, as Socrates, in his age, was both an opponent of the sophists and confounded with them, so the Christians were both everywhere in conflict with and stigmatized as jugglers and artful deceivers. Cf. Neander's *Ch. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 92 et al. No one can be surprised, after knowing the influence of soothsayers and enchanters at the seat of Roman authority, to find that the magistrate of a distant eastern province had such an appendage to his court as Elymas the sorcerer.

We find that the title here given to Sergius Paulus, ἀνθύπατος, translated in our Eng. Vers. by the indefinite term *deputy*, and repeated in verses 8 and 12, is only found elsewhere in the N. Test. in Acts 19: 38, while the correspond-

ing verb *ἀνδρατεύω* is used in 18: 12. Other Roman magistrates never receive this title, but the more general one of *ἡγεμών*. See Acts 23: 24, 26, 33, 34. 24: 1, 10. 26: 30 et al. What is the ground of this distinction? A reference to Roman History will explain it. Augustus, in order to establish an imperial government with the semblance of a republic, deemed it best to retain the principal offices and titles already in use. Accordingly we find the name *Prætor* and *Consul* still employed as designations of office at Rome, and, with the modifying *pro*, instead of, in the place of, applied to the governors of provinces. So Dion Cassius, LIII. 13. says: *Τῶν δύο τούτων ὀνομάτων ἐπὶ πλείστον ἐν τῇ δημοκρατίᾳ ἀνδρατέων, τὸ μὲν τοῦ Στρατηγού, τοῖς αἰρετοῖς, ὡς καὶ τῷ πολέμῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ πάνυ ἀρκαίου προσήκον, ἔδωκεν, Ἀντιστρατήγου σφᾶς προσειπῶν· τὸ δὲ δὴ τῶν Ἑπάτων, τοῖς ἐτέροις, ὡς καὶ εἰρηνικωτέροις, ἀνδρατέους αὐτοὺς ἐπικαλέσας. Ἄντὰ μὲν γὰρ τὰ ὀνόματα, τὸ τε τοῦ Στρατηγού καὶ τὸ τοῦ Ἑπάτου, ἐν τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ· ἐτήρησε, τοὺς δὲ ἔξω πάντας, ὡς καὶ αὐτ' ἐκείνων ἄρχοντας προσηγόρευσε.* He granted, he said, the administration of those provinces where no military authority was necessary, to the senate and people, and retained the appointment of the others to himself. So Suetonius says: *Provincias validiores et quas annuis magistratum imperiis regi nec facile nec tutum erat, ipse suscepit; cætera Proconsulibus sortito permisit, et tamen nonnullas commutavit interdum.*—*Vita Aug.* 47. So Dion Cassius: *Τὰ μὲν ἀσθενέστερα, ὡς καὶ εἰρηναῖα καὶ ἀπόλεμα, ἐπέδωκε τῇ Βουλῇ· τὰ δὲ ἰσχυρότερα, ὡς καὶ σφαλὲρὰ καὶ ἐπικίνδυνα, καὶ ἦτοι πολεμίουσιν τινὰς προσοίκουσιν ἔχοντα, ἢ καὶ αὐτὰ καθ' ἑαυτὰ μέγα τι νεωτερίσαι δυνάμενα, κάτεσχε κ. τ. λ.* LIII. 12. Cf. also Strabo xvii. 3. 840 and Gibbon's *Rome*, Vol. I. p. 39, and Wenck's note, p. 481. Milman's Ed.

The Greek title found in our text, *ἀνδράπατος*, *ἀντι* and *ἵπατος* (ὁ ἵπατος = Lat. *consul*) corresponds to the Latin *Proconsul*. Does the use of this word in the Acts, correspond to the imperial regulations? In 19: 38 *ἀνδράπατοι* is used in the plural generically, merely meaning: we have the officer before which such cases are tried; let them bring the case

before him, ἀνθύπατοί εἰσιν. ἐγκαλείτωσαν ἀλλήλοις. Now we have double authority for this use of the title of *proconsul* at Ephesus. Strabo and Dion Cassius say that "Asia" as well as "Achaia" was given to the Senate. See Dion Cassius LIII. 12. Strabo xvii. 3. See also Robinson's Gr. Lex. art. ἡγεμών.

Coins of Ephesus also, of the time of Nero, have been found with the name and title, together with a representation of a temple of Diana on the obverse side to the head of the emperor: "(Money) of the Ephesians, Neocori, *Achmocles Aviola, Proconsul.*" See Hackett's Com. 19: 38. Chap. 18: 12 needs no remark, as the reference to Strabo and Dion Cassius above shows, that Achaia was a Senatorial province, and hence properly governed by a proconsul.

In the passage with which we are at present more immediately concerned, there seems at first to be more doubt, or Dion Cassius says that Cyprus was retained by the emperor: 'Ἡ Σύρια, ἡ κοίλη καλουμένη, ἢ τε Φοινίκη, καὶ Κιλικία, καὶ Κύπρος, καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι, ἐν τῇ τοῦ Καίσαρος μερῶν τότε ἐγένοντο. LIII. 12. From this declaration some have denied the accuracy of Luke as an historian (see Grotius and Hammond Ann. on Acts xiii.) ; but the very sentence following the one above cited in Dio Cassius, proves the entire correctness of the sacred narrative, where any one not accurately acquainted with the relation of the different provinces of the Roman Empire in the East, would have been especially exposed to err. It seems that Augustus subsequently gave up to the people Cyprus, in exchange for Dalmatia: "Ἐστέρων τὴν μὲν Κύπρον καὶ τὴν Γαλατίαν τὴν περὶ Νάρβωνα τῷ δήμῳ ἀπέδωκεν, αὐτὸς δὲ τὴν Δαλματίαν ἀντέλαβε. LIII. 12. Here also the ancient coins and inscriptions corroborate the testimony of the secular historian. The fac simile of a coin is given in Akerman's Numismatic Illustrations, p. 41, on one side of which is a head of Claudius Cæsar, accompanied by his name, and on the obverse a name with the title: *Proconsul of Cyprus.* Specimens of these coins may be seen in the Imperial Cabinet at Vienna, or the Bibliothéque Imperiale at Paris. Inscriptions of this age are

also found, in which the names of Proconsuls of Cyprus are preserved; as, for example, one found at Curium in Cyprus, in which is an allusion to the Emperor Claudius, and the names of Julius Cordus and Annius Bassus, Proconsuls, **ΑΝΘΙΠΑΤΟΙ** :

**ΚΛΑΥΔΙΩΙ ΚΑΙΣΑΡΙ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΩΙ
ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΚΩΙ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΙ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΩΙ
ΔΗΜΑΡΧΙΧΗΣ ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΣ ΔΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΙ
ΠΑΤΡΙ ΠΑΤΡΙΔΟΣ ΚΟΤΡΙΕΩΝ Η ΠΟΛΙΣ
ΑΠΟ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΚΕΚ[Ρ]ΙΜΕΝΩ[Ν Τ]ΠΟ ΙΟΥΔΙΟΥ
ΚΟΡΔΟΥ ΑΝΘΙΠΑΤΟΥ ΔΟΥΚΙΟΥ ΑΝΝΙΟΥ ΒΑΣ-
[ΣΟΣ ΑΝΘ]ΥΠΑΤΟΣ ΚΑΘΙΕΡΩΣΕΝ· Ι Β.**

See Engel's Work on Cyprus (quoted by Howson, *Life of St. Paul*, Vol. I. p. 154), I. § 459—463. Berlin, 1843.

Acts 26: 28. 'Ο δὲ Ἀγρίππας πρὸς τὸν Παῦλον ἔφη· '὘ν ὀλίγῳ με πείθεις Χριστιανὸν γενέσθαι.

V. 29. 'Ο δὲ Παῦλος εἶπεν· Εὐξαίμην ἂν τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ ἐν ὀλίγῳ, καὶ ἐν πολλῷ οὐ μόνον σέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀκούοντάς μου σήμερον, γενέσθαι τοιούτους ὅποιοι καὶ γὰρ εἰμι, παρεκτός τῶν δεσμῶν τούτων.

V. 28. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost [*in a short time*] thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

V. 29. "And Paul said, I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

These are the closing verses of the defence of Paul before Agrippa, in the audience-chamber of the Roman procurator at Cæsarea. He had previously addressed the infuriated populace from the stairs of the castle (22: 1 sq.) in order to show his innocence of the charges brought against him. He had likewise defended himself before Felix and before Festus; and when he found that he could not receive justice at their hands, since they were desirous of pleasing the Jews rather than of doing right, he had appealed to the higher tribunal of the Emperor himself; and this appeal had been accepted. There was no occasion for further defence on his part, as it was now fixed that he should go to Rome, and no change of this decision could be made. But when Fes-

tus desired the advice of Agrippa in reference to the communication to be sent with him, ch. 25: 14 sq., and Agrippa was desirous of hearing what Paul had to say for himself (ch. 25: 22), he nothing loath, entered with courtesy and yet with plainness and dignity, into a defence of his divine commission, as especially indicated by the manner of his conversion and total change of life, and the truth of the doctrines which he had inculcated throughout his ministry.

When the Apostle came to speak of the doctrine of a Messiah, who must be crucified and rise again, thus giving the assurance of the resurrection of others to a spiritual life, (*πρώτος ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν*, cf. Col. 1: 18 and 1 Cor. 15: 20,) as inculcated in the writings of the Prophets and Moses, the patience of the Roman ruler could no longer hold out; but, interrupting the speaker, he said with a loud voice: "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much study (or many books) has utterly perverted thy reason." This discourteous interruption, and somewhat grave accusation, did not in the least disturb the equanimity of the Apostle. But with perfect composure and the utmost respect of manner, he replied: "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and soundness of mind (v. 25). Having thus paid suitable respect to the Roman magistrate, and asserted his innocence of the charge made against him, as if it were not worth while to waste further arguments on a heathen, who was not familiar with the Jewish Scriptures, and who, like most of the Romans and Greeks, was not a believer in the doctrine of a resurrection, he turns to Agrippa and says: "The king is familiar with all the facts in reference to the death and resurrection of Christ, and knows that they are attested by such witnesses as cannot be gainsayed, since they have not been done in secret. I therefore speak with the utmost confidence to him." And not this only; but the Apostle appeals to his belief in the Scriptures which foretell not only a suffering, and dying, but a risen and triumphing Messiah. "Believest thou, King Agrippa, the Prophets? I know thou believest." The Apostle had previously appealed to the King's knowledge of the events attending the mission, suf-

fering, and death of Christ, and now appeals to his belief of the Old Testament, which foretold his coming. But Agrippa, it should seem, feeling that he could not deny either the facts, so well substantiated within his knowledge, or disclaim his belief in the predictions of the prophets, and yet having no sincere desire to yield obedience to the results that must follow from a comparison of the two, wards off conviction by the playful and perhaps a little contemptuous reply : You are very quickly bringing me over to your party, making me out to be a Christian.

The Apostle, with a tact which no one of inferior resources or less confidence in his position and cause, could have exhibited, instead of rebuking the trifling spirit of Agrippa, courteously replies : I could heartily pray to God that not only you, but all who are here present to-day, might become such as I am, i. e. a Christian (except these chains that you see upon me), in a short time, as you say, if it were possible ; but if not, in a long time. I should rejoice to see you becoming a Christian at any time, whether sooner or later. See Hackett's Commentary.

Several words and phrases in the verses require more particular remark. V. 28. 'Ο δέ. The particle δέ often, as here, denotes an interruption in discourse, and the introduction of an objection or explanation. See above, v. 24. ταῦτα δέ, and v. 28: 'Ο δέ, and in the following verse. When a directly contrary sentiment is introduced in the N. Test., as in Classical Greek, ἀλλὰ is generally used. See Winer's N. T. Idioms, § 57. 4. — ἐν ὀλίγῳ. These words are translated, in our English Version, *almost*, and also in some of the old commentators, as Chrysostom, Beza (prope-modum), and Grotius. But it is now generally acknowledged, that if that were the sense, παρ' ὀλίγον or ὀλίγου would have been used (see De Wette's Comm.) ; and besides, the contrasted phrase ἐν πολλῷ, which must in that case be rendered *entirely, wholly, admodum plane*, would suggest a different rendering. But whether we should consider this phrase as relating to time or quantity, there is a diversity of opinion among the commentators. Meyer refers it

to quantity: *with little*, i. e. effort or trouble. This is a natural meaning with the ellipsis of *πόνος*; and if with Meyer, following Tischendorf, Lachmann, and others, we read *ἐν μεγάλῳ* instead of *ἐν πολλῷ*, there would be little hesitation in so rendering it, especially as the general idea in the passage is much the same as when we refer it to time. But on the whole, *ἐν πολλῷ* seems the most approved reading (see De Wette and Neander), and *χρόνῳ* the most natural ellipsis. So Neander says, in his *Planting and Training* (Eng. Tr.), chap. vii, note: "I understand the words *ἐν ὀλίγῳ* in the only sense [i. e. "*in a short time*"] which they can have, according to the *usus loquendi*, in Paul's answer. The interpretation adopted by Meyer and some others, is indeed possible, but appears to us not so natural. If the reading of the Cod. Alex. and Vulg. which Lachmann approves, be adopted, *ἐν μεγάλῳ* in Paul's answer, the words of Agrippa must be thus explained: 'With a little or with few reasons (which will not cost you much trouble), you think of making me a Christian,' and the answer of Paul will be: 'Whether with great or with little, for many or few reasons, I pray God,' etc. — *με πείθεεις*, *you are persuading me*, i. e. going on as you now do, you will make me out to be a Christian. This idea of futurity is not an unusual one in the present. See Kühn. Gr. § 255. R. 3. and Winer's N. Test. Idioms, § 41. 2.

Verse 29. *εὐξάμην ἂν τῷ θεῷ*. This has been criticised as not good Greek, but without reason, as the idea is, as Hackett says: "*I could pray to God*, i. e. if I obeyed the impulse of my own heart, though it may be unavailing." On this use of *ἂν* with the Optative, see Winer § 43. 1. and Buttman § 139. R. 15. — *καὶ ἐν ὀλίγῳ καὶ ἐν πολλῷ*. The other reading, *μεγάλῳ*, has been spoken of above. The connection by *καὶ . . . καὶ* is used, according to Kühn. (Gr. § 321 (a)), where the single members are independent and forcible; and frequently the last member is emphatic. Here the last is in a sense emphatic, for it is indicated that Agrippa does not doubt that Paul wishes him to become a Christian some time, i. e. in a long time; but

Paul says that he desires it as well in a short as in a long time ; hence the implication is, that it cannot be too soon, and yet he could wish it might be at any time.

Ἄλλὰ καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀκούοντάς μου σήμερον. The persons assembled to listen to the present defence of Paul were, as it seems from 25: 23, in addition to Agrippa and Festus, Bernice with the royal retinue, the commanders of the Roman troops stationed at Cæsarea, and the chief men of the place. With emphasis might the Apostle say he could wish that all these persons of influence might be brought to a belief in Christ the Messiah. — τοιοῦτους ὁποῖος καὶ γὼ εἶμι, *such as I also am.* These words are, of course, limited by the context. Paul does not express a wish that all of his audience might become such as he himself is intellectually or even morally. But he does, in all confidence, wish them to be such as he is in reference to the points now in question, his belief in the truths of the gospel. All of the pomp and power, ostentation and pride, honor and respect, which surround this brilliant assemblage are as nothing and vanity in comparison with the treasure which the captive apostle felt that he possessed. There is a sublimity, in this last scene, of the Apostle's last public address before his departure for his trial before the Roman Emperor, which is worthy of the man and his cause. There is a delicacy, too, in the use of this phrase: "such as I am," instead of repeating the name "Christians," which would needlessly offend his hearers, as a term of reproach and odium, that is as indicative of his good sense as of his kind feeling. — παρεκτὸς τῶν δεσμῶν τούτων. The Roman manner of securing prisoners, was to have a chain attached to one or both hands, and fastened to one or two soldiers. Paul, when first arrested at Jerusalem, it should seem, had chains fastened to both hands (21: 33), and these were not removed when he was brought before this august assembly ; and the inconvenience of these in speaking, were sufficient to remind him that he was a captive, and to lead him to qualify his wish for his auditors by the phrase, "except these bonds."