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THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

*TEXT OF THE REVISED VERSION
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES*

BY

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PREFACE

JUDGING by the very favourable reception accorded to the author's recent work, *The Life and Teaching of Christ*, it would seem that there exists a desire amongst those responsible for the religious teaching in our schools for an edition of the books of the Bible of this character. Most of us are agreed that the text is the all-important matter, and that annotation should be reduced to a minimum, and confined to those passages which have been found by experience to require elucidation. This plan has been pursued in the present work, the notes being largely concerned with historical and geographical difficulties and the light thrown upon them by recent researches and discoveries.

The Acts is of unique interest to us as the source of our knowledge of primitive Church history, and the latter part contains a record of the travels of the first and greatest of foreign missionaries. It is essential therefore that the student should attempt to visualise the historical and geographical setting of the narrative, and the local conditions obtaining during the period. The notes are intended to help in this endeavour, and for the same reason approximate dates have been given for the various stages of development of the Christian Church. On the other hand, it is of the utmost importance for the student to realise that the Acts is something far more than a mere historical narrative or travel story, and with this end in view the inner and deeper pur-

pose of the book as a defence of Christianity against the attacks of Judaism, and an exposition of the spiritual and universal nature of Christ's Kingdom, is discussed at some length in the Introduction.

Wherever controversial points have arisen, e.g. in discussing the date of composition of the Acts, the author has preferred, as in his former work, to put forward a brief summary of present-day opinion without dogmatic assertion ; his attitude remains (in the words of a reviewer) " moderately conservative, but not old-fashioned."

The book covers the requirements of most examinations in this subject, and will be found specially suitable for General Certificate purposes, but it has not been " written up " for any examination, and it is hoped that it will be found helpful by many outside the schools who are interested in the early history of the Church to which they belong.

E. A. G.

LOUTH.

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INTRODUCTION

THE BOOK AND ITS AUTHOR

FROM the opening verse of the Acts we learn that the book was intended as a sequel to a former (lit. "first," as in the margin) treatise. It is quite possible that a third volume was contemplated, which would account in some measure for the abrupt conclusion of the Acts, but so far as we know this was never compiled.

The "first treatise" was without doubt our third Gospel (St. Luke). We have only to read the opening and concluding verses of the Gospel to obtain conclusive evidence on this point. In the Preface with which the Gospel opens, the book is dedicated to Theophilus, who is there given the title "most excellent," and who is also mentioned in the first verse of the Acts. The epithet, which may be compared with the modern form of address "your excellency," is applied in the Acts to the two procurators of Judæa, Felix (23³⁶) and Festus (26²⁵), and indicates that Theophilus must have been a man of high rank, or a distinguished public servant. No doubt he was a Gentile convert, but nothing further is known of him, and the name (meaning "lover of God") was probably not his official Roman (or Greek) name, but the title by which he was known among his Christian friends.

Turning to the close of the Gospel, and comparing its conclusion with the opening verses of the Acts, we cannot fail to see the close connecting link between the two volumes. Our Lord's prophecy of a universal Church emanating from Jerusalem of Lk. 24⁴⁷ is repeated in almost identical words

in Acts 1⁸, and is accompanied in each case by the injunction to wait in Jerusalem for the "promise of the Father" (Lk. 24⁴⁹, Acts 1⁴). The main *motif* of the second volume is the story of how this "promise of the Father" (i.e. the gift of the Holy Spirit) enabled the Apostles to expand the original conception of Christianity as merely a sect or branch of Judaism, into that of a universal Church in which there should be neither Jew nor Gentile. For this purpose the plan of the book follows closely the sequence given in 1⁸, "both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth," and with the arrival of St. Paul at Rome (the hub of the universe), the climax of the Gospel story is reached, and the biography of St. Paul (which is not the main object of the book) closes with startling abruptness.

Apart from the close connexion shown above, the common authorship of the two books is clearly indicated by the high standard of literary expression which obtains in both works. The style of the writer of the third Gospel is easily distinguished from that of other New Testament writers by his high command of the Greek language; his compressed yet lucid expression, and his rich vocabulary containing many rare poetical and classical words. Taking the two works together they contain about 700 words (the majority in the Acts) which are not found elsewhere in the New Testament, and of these some 50 occur in both books.

What has been said of the literary style of the author applies equally to his method of arranging the subject-matter at his disposal, which is very similar in the two works. In the Preface to the Gospel, the author states that he has "traced the course of all things accurately from the first" and that it is his intention to write "in order." His claim to historical accuracy and orderly chronological development of narrative is certainly substantiated both in the Gospel and the Acts. In each he connects his story with contemporary events in

world history, either by chronological notes as in the Gospel (Lk. 2¹, 3¹), or by reference to prominent actors on the stage of world history as in the Acts. He is the only New Testament writer who even mentions the name of a Roman Emperor, and his numerous references in the Acts to various Imperial officials and their systems of administration have almost invariably been confirmed by the later knowledge gained from the discovery of inscriptions and from other sources. Numerous examples of the author's accuracy in these matters are noted in the commentary; let it suffice to mention here his correct description of the priest of Zeus at Lystra (14¹⁸); the prætors and lictors at Philippi (16³⁵); the politarchs of Thessalonica (17⁶); the Asiarchs of Ephesus (19³¹); and the title "chief man" or "first man," for the ruler of the Island of Malta (28⁷).

As to the identity of the writer of this two-volume treatise, early tradition is unanimous in attributing the authorship to St. Luke. Clement of Alexandria, Irenæus and Tertullian, all writing in the late second, or early third century, accept the Lukan authorship without question, and similar evidence is borne by the Muratorian Canon.¹ Eusebius, writing about A.D. 325, speaks of the author as "Luke, by race a native of Antioch, by profession a physician." This universal tradition is confirmed by the contents of the Acts, portions of which are written in the first person. Wherever these "we passages" occur we are justified in assuming that the author was present as a companion of St. Paul and eye-witness of the events described.² We learn from them that

Identity of
the Author.

"We
passages."

¹ The Muratorian Fragment is a passage of about eighty lines of very ancient Christian literature discovered by Muratori of Milan (1740), incorporated in an eighth-century manuscript. It was probably compiled in Rome about A.D. 190, and contains the earliest list of the New Testament books (the Muratorian Canon) which agrees very closely with those of Tertullian and Irenæus.

² St. Luke may have been present also on other occasions (see p. xi).

the writer crossed from Troas to Philippi with St. Paul after the vision of the man of Macedonia on the second journey (16¹⁰); rejoined him here on the third journey some five years later (20⁵); accompanied him to Jerusalem and Cæsarea (21¹⁵); and finally travelled with him to Rome (27¹). Among the companions of St. Paul during this period St. Luke is the only one whose claim to the authorship of the narrative can be considered satisfactory. The only serious rival is Titus, who is never mentioned by name in the Acts, though St. Paul speaks of him frequently in his Epistles, and addresses one to him. This has given rise to the suggestion that he and St. Luke were one and the same person whose full name was Titus Lucas, but this view cannot be held in face of 2 Tim. 4¹⁰, "Titus [has gone] to Dalmatia; only Luke is with me." We are therefore thrown back upon the traditional belief of Lukan authorship—a belief never seriously threatened.

St. Luke's name appears three times in the Pauline letters. Writing from Rome to the Colossians (4¹⁴), St. Paul sends salutations from "Luke the beloved physician"; in his letter to Philemon (v. 24) St. Luke's name is mentioned as a "fellow-worker"; and finally in the closing scene of the great Apostle's life, when he writes his pathetic appeal to Timothy telling him that "the time of my departure is come, I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith," St. Luke appears as the sole companion who had remained to see the end—"only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. 4¹¹).

In the first of these passages St. Luke's name appears apart from "those of the circumcision," from which it is evident that he was a Gentile, a fact borne out by the Greek form of his name, and by his choice of Theophilus as a patron. The statements of Eusebius and Jerome that he was a convert of Syrian Antioch are generally accepted, and this would account for his intimate knowledge of the foundation and early history of the Antiochene Church

Life of
St. Luke.

Connexion
with
Antioch.

(11¹⁹, 13¹). It is possible that he first met St. Paul there after the return of the latter from Tarsus with Barnabas (11²⁵), and was amongst his first converts. On the other hand, from consideration of the "we passages," it has been argued that St. Luke was in some way connected with the man of Macedonia, and was perhaps a native of Philippi. This would explain his vivid account of the events in that city, and his accurate knowledge of local conditions, e.g. the status of Philippi as a Roman colony, and the somewhat exaggerated description of it as "a city of Macedonia, the first of the district" (16¹²)—a pardonable touch of civic patriotism. The fact that he remained behind when St. Paul continued his journey favours this view, and it has been suggested that St. Luke was a descendant of one of the Macedonian families which had settled in Antioch during the time of Alexander's conquests in the East.

But the same argument of his accurate knowledge of local conditions has been used to connect St. Luke with S. Galatia, and to support the theory that he belonged not to Syrian, but to Pisidian, Antioch. Certainly his full report of St. Paul's first missionary sermon at Antioch and of the subsequent turning to the Gentiles (13⁴⁶) seems to indicate the actual presence of the writer on this occasion. The detailed account of events at Lystra (14⁸⁻²⁰) also reads like the work of an eye-witness, and the presence of St. Luke as a companion of St. Paul in his S. Galatian mission receives some slight support from the use of "we" in 14²². Whether the author was present or not, the contents of the two chapters afford a further example of the historical accuracy which characterises the whole of St. Luke's work, but they cannot be accepted as very strong evidence that he was a native of the district.

It seems better to retain the traditional view of Syrian Antioch as his home, a view which receives some confirmation

from the words in some MSS. (including the Codex Bezae¹), added at the end of 11²⁷, "and there was much exultant joy. And when we were assembled together one from among them spake, by name Agabus . . ." The use of the first person implies the presence of St. Luke at Antioch about A.D. 45, and even if the words are not part of the original narrative, but added later as a gloss, they may be taken as a confirmation of the Antiochene origin of St. Luke.

It seems probable that St. Luke was a proselyte or semi-proselyte before his conversion to Christianity. We have evidence of this in the special interest shown in the proselytes proper (e.g. Nicolas of Antioch 6⁵), and his repeated references to the semi-proselytes or "God-fearers" (e.g. the Ethiopian eunuch, 8²⁷, Cornelius, 10², etc.). He also shows a wide knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures and of the Jewish interpretation of them, as also of such Jewish rites as the Nazirite vow, and the law of Clean and Unclean Meats. We may note, too, his reference to the Sabbath day's journey in 11² and his frequent use of the Jewish calendar to date events (2¹, 12³, 4, 20¹⁶, 27⁹).

Of the medical knowledge of "the beloved physician" we have numerous examples throughout the Gospel and the Acts.

Evidence on this point may have been exaggerated "Luke the Physician." by some commentators; nevertheless there are many passages in which the technical character of the language used clearly indicates the professional knowledge of the writer. Of those in the Acts the following may be cited as the most striking: "wrapped him round" (5⁶)—the verb, here meaning "to enshroud," is a medical term for "to bandage"; "there fell . . . scales" (9¹⁸) is a technical expression denoting the "peeling" of scaly substances from

¹ The Codex Bezae is so called because it was presented to Cambridge University in 1581 by Theodore Beza of Geneva, who is supposed to have obtained it from a monastery in Lyons. It is a sixth-century uncial manuscript of the four Gospels and the Acts written on vellum, containing the Greek text and a Latin version in parallel columns.

the skin ; the word translated " mist " in 13¹¹ is the scientific name for an eye-disease ; in the viper incident (28³⁻⁶) the words for " the heat " (v. 3) and " swollen " (v. 6) are both medical terms, and the toxic results which might be expected from the bite are correctly stated ; verses 8 and 9 of the same chapter abound in technical terms, the description of the disease of Publius' father, the words for " healed " (instantaneously), and " cured " (by medical attention) all bearing witness that the writer was well versed in medical lore.

As a doctor St. Luke would naturally be interested in (though not sympathetic towards) the pseudo-scientific practices of magic, sorcery and exorcism, and we can discern touches of professional *hauteur* (quite foreign to his kindly-disposed nature), in the manner in which he deals with the charlatans Simon of Samaria (8⁹) and Elymas (13⁶), the would-be exorcising sons of Sceva (19¹⁴), and the maid with the Python at Philippi (16¹⁶).

It is generally conjectured that St. Luke accompanied St. Paul as his medical attendant. In Gal. 4¹³ St. Paul speaks of an " infirmity of the flesh," which in 2 Cor. 12⁷ he calls a " thorn (or stake) in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me." Whatever may have been the nature of his complaint, there is no doubt that it left the sufferer constitutionally weak and probably affected his eyesight (see note on 13¹⁴), so that the constant care and attention of a medical adviser was necessary in order to preserve his health.

The suggestion that St. Luke was a freed man who had once been a slave in a Roman family has much to be said for it. He bore a Roman name (Lucanus), and it was customary for a freed slave to adopt his master's name after release. Moreover, amongst the Romans the profession of medicine was not regarded with great favour, the medical

duties of the household being usually carried out by a slave or freed man. The Greeks, on the contrary, ranked medicine along with philosophy as one of the highest studies, and medical schools were attached to most of their universities. If we accept the suggestion that St. Luke had spent a portion of his life in servitude, we can well understand the atmosphere

Character- of sympathy and kindness which pervades the
istics of whole of his writings. This is more particularly
his Works. true perhaps of his Gospel, where his sympathy
for the outcast and poor, as shown especially by his record
of the parables of Divine mercy, is one of the outstanding
features of his work. But the prominence there given to the
ministry of women, whose status among the Jews was any-
thing but an honourable one, is also noticeable in the Acts.
We think at once of the charitable works of Dorcas (9³⁶);
of the enthusiasm and hospitality of Lydia (16¹⁴); and of
the missionary work of Priscilla (18^{2, 26}); while even the
humble domestic Rhoda (12¹⁴) is thought worthy of mention
by name.

Tradition is very uncertain as to the latter days of the evangelist. Eusebius, in the passage already mentioned (p. ix), states that "having neither wife nor child he died in Bithynia at the age of seventy-four," but another tradition regards Greece as the scene of his end. The former is more likely, but we have no reliable evidence that he suffered martyrdom. The legend that he was a painter seems to have arisen in Constantinople in the sixth century.

DATE OF COMPOSITION OF THE ACTS

This cannot be fixed with any certainty; three suggestions have been made as to the period at which St. Luke wrote, and between two of them, at any rate, it is very difficult to decide.

1. It is held by many scholars that the book was written very shortly after the close of the narrative, somewhere between A.D. 61 and 64.
2. According to another view the Acts must be dated some ten years later after the fall of Jerusalem, about A.D. 73-76.
3. Finally, there are others who express the opinion that the book was not completed till near the end of the century, about A.D. 95.

To take the last theory first, it is based mainly on the argument that St. Luke was acquainted with the "Jewish Antiquities" of Josephus, which was not written till about A.D. 93. It is suggested that he made use of this source in his account of Agrippa's death (12²¹), and the rebellion of "the Egyptian" (21³⁸), and that the well-known historical inaccuracy with regard to Theudas and Judas (5³⁶) is best explained on the assumption that St. Luke had read (or rather *mis*-read) the parallel passage in the "Antiquities." The evidence of his dependence upon Josephus, however, is far from convincing, and there is another (and a better) explanation of the historical difficulty (see note there). For this reason the late date which would require strong evidence to support it has not met with general acceptance.

Use of
Josephus.

There is much to be said for the theory that the Acts was written during (or very shortly after) St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. The main argument in its favour is the strange silence of the writer as to what happened at the end of the "two whole years" (28³⁰, where the note should also be read). If St. Paul was released owing to the non-appearance of his Jewish accusers, as is generally believed, it seems almost incredible that St. Luke could have failed to mention this final confirmation of the sympathetic (or, at any rate, tolerant) attitude of Rome towards the new sect, which he has been at such pains to

Abrupt
Conclusion
of the Acts.

show in the latter part of his work. The explanation offered is that the Acts was composed before the result of the appeal was known. Again, assuming St. Paul's release and a subsequent visit to Asia, which seems to be implied in the Pastoral Epistles,¹ it is argued that St. Paul's statement to the Ephesian elders, "ye . . . shall see my face no more" (20²⁵), repeated by St. Luke in *v.* 38, would not have been allowed to stand if the course of later events had been known to the author. Other minor points which favour this view are: that the writer makes no mention of the Neronic persecution of A.D. 64-68, nor of the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70); shows no knowledge of the Pauline Epistles; and betrays no sign of the bitterness between Jew and Gentile, characteristic of the period following the fall of the city. Further, such details as the names of Rhoda, Jason (17⁵), Alexander (19³³), and the ship boarded at Malta (28¹¹) would not be likely to remain in the author's memory after any considerable lapse of time.

This is indeed a formidable array of evidence, and if we had only the Acts itself to consider, we should probably accept it. But we cannot detach the Acts from the third Gospel when considering its date, and it is extremely difficult to reconcile this early date with the usually accepted date of St. Luke's Gospel. It is true that some scholars have held the view that the Gospel may have been written as early as A.D. 54 during St. Luke's stay at Philippi, or a few years later when with St. Paul at Cæsarea. It is quite likely that he collected much of his material at Cæsarea and Jerusalem during this period, but the view is now generally held that the Gospel was not compiled till some twenty years later, after the fall of Jerusalem. In St. Luke's account of our Lord's prophetic discourse on the destruction of the city there are such marked differences from those of the other Evangelists (e.g. 19⁴³,

¹ This is a composite title for the three Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus) addressed by St. Paul to these "pastors" or overseers of the churches.

21²⁰, 24), that they afford strong evidence that the author was writing after the catastrophe. Moreover, there is little doubt that St. Luke knew, and made use of, St. Mark's narrative, and the usual opinion (supported by the statement of Irenæus) is that the latter was not compiled before the deaths of St. Peter and St. Paul about A.D. 64. To throw it back before A.D. 60 would be unsatisfactory.

On account of this difficulty the later date seems more probable, about A.D. 73 for the third Gospel and A.D. 75 for the Acts, though the question must be regarded as an open one. The main argument for the early date, viz. the absence of any mention of the result of St. Paul's trial at Rome, may be explained by the fact that St. Luke does not profess to be writing a biography of St. Paul; his chief object as already stated is to show the fulfilment of our Lord's prophecy of the expansion of the Christian Church from Jerusalem to the "uttermost part of the earth." With the arrival of St. Paul at Rome, the author considers this object to be attained, and lays down his pen.

AIM AND SCOPE OF THE BOOK

The chief purpose of the author in writing the Acts has already been briefly stated (p. viii). A little closer analysis enables us to distinguish three main ideas running through the narrative, which the author evidently wishes to impress upon his readers; these will now be considered more fully.

A. The Divine inspiration which directed the work of the Christian Church.

In his Gospel St. Luke narrates what Jesus in person "began both to do and to teach"; the Acts describes how He continued this work through the agency of His Spirit.

The "Spirit of Jesus" is manifest in operation throughout the work, so much so that the suggestion has been made that a more accurate title for it would be the "Acts of the Holy Spirit." At the very outset St. Luke describes in detail the fulfilment of the "promise of the Father" in the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the effects of which were made manifest to the "devout men from every nation under heaven" (2⁵), and led to the ingathering of about 3000 souls. This baptism of the Spirit, conferred first upon the nucleus of the Church at Jerusalem, we soon see extended to men of all nationalities—to the Samaritans (8¹⁷); to the Roman centurion, Cornelius, and the whole of his Gentile household (10⁴⁴); and to the twelve disciples of St. John at Ephesus (19⁶). The plans for the extension of the Christian Church were directed very largely by the influence of the Holy Spirit, which guided the steps of Philip (8³⁹, 39) and St. Peter (10¹⁹); altered the course of St. Paul's journeys on several occasions (16⁶, 19²¹); and warned him of the "bonds and afflictions" which awaited him at Jerusalem (20³³).

In the inner councils of the Church, too, the influence of the Holy Spirit is shown on numerous occasions, e.g. in the choice of the deacons (6³) and the "separation" of Barnabas and Saul for missionary work (13²); at the Christian Council of Jerusalem (15²⁸), and in the appointment of bishops or overseers (20²⁸). Apart from the Apostles, the chief missionaries, e.g. Stephen (7⁵⁵) and Barnabas (11²⁴) are described as being "full of the Holy Ghost," even as Jesus Himself was "anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power" (10³⁸). Thus was the presence of Jesus through His Holy Spirit made manifest in the foundation of His Church on earth; so we are promised will He be present "always, even unto the end."

The Pentecostal Gift.

Influence within the Church.

B. *The Universal Nature of the Christian Kingdom.*

The second aim of the author is to show the fulfilment of the Divine promise of 1⁸ by tracing the steps in the expansion of the Christian Church from a small nucleus of 120 souls at Jerusalem till it embraces practically the whole of the Roman Empire, and becomes firmly rooted in the Imperial city itself. In the first part of the Acts we see the growth of the Church brought about by the Christian dispersion, which resulted from the persecution following the martyrdom of Stephen. We read of its extension to Samaria (8⁴); to all Judæa and Galilee (9³¹); to Cæsarea (10¹); and to Phœnicia, Cyprus and Syrian Antioch (11¹⁹). The last-named becomes the northern metropolis of the Christian movement, and the centre of the missionary work. Thence, as we see from the second part of the book, the Gospel message spreads through the provinces of Asia (where the third great Christian centre of Ephesus is established), Macedonia and Achaia, and finally to the heart of the Empire, Rome herself.

Side by side with this external growth of the Church we see the development of Christianity from a Jewish sect into a universal Church of Christ. Beginning "first at Jerusalem" it soon spreads to the colonial Jews or Hellenists and proselytes; to the Samaritans and the outer fringe of semi-proselytes or "God-fearers" (see p. 8); and finally through them to the whole of the Gentile world. This rapid spread of the Gospel message by early missionaries was only made possible by the extremely favourable world conditions which obtained at this period. Rome was mistress of the world, and the reign of Augustus had given peace to the nations. There were no national barriers or restrictions, and the great Roman roads which ran throughout the Empire afforded excellent means of communication. There was no language difficulty, for Greek was the universally

spoken dialect of educated men throughout the Empire ; the " gift of tongues " was not necessary for this purpose. The Hellenists missionary work was helped, too, by the dispersed and Jews who founded colonies in all the chief cities of the Empire, always carrying their religion with them, and establishing the synagogue worship. These Hellenists acted as intermediaries between Christianity and the heathen peoples, and many of them, like Philip, Barnabas and Apollos, played a very important part in handing on the Gospel message to the Gentile world. Moreover, the Jewish religion, based upon monotheism, everywhere proved attractive to outsiders, who attached themselves in large numbers to the Jewish synagogues, either as full proselytes or as " God-fearers." Thus the Christian missionaries always had a starting-point in the synagogues, and even when rejected by their countrymen (as at Pisidian Antioch and Corinth), they were able through the proselytes to obtain a footing among the Gentile population.

Another important point which greatly favoured the growth of Christianity during this period was the tolerant attitude of Rome towards the new religion. From her provincial Attitude of Rome. governors Christian teachers had nothing to fear ; Judaism was recognised as *religio licita*, and Christianity as yet was only regarded as a sect of Judaism. These governors indeed, whether proconsuls like Sergius Paulus and Gallio in charge of a senatorial province, or procurators appointed directly by the Emperor like Felix and Festus, are always portrayed by St. Luke as favourably disposed to the new sect. Thus we see that the time was indeed ripe for the extension of Christ's Kingdom ; His missionaries had such opportunities as did not recur till the eighteenth century, and the Acts tells the story of how they were used by St. Paul, the Roman citizen, to found a Christian Empire which within the next few centuries was to replace the great Empire of Rome.

C. *The opposition of Judaism¹ to Christianity.*

In the preceding section it has been shown that St. Luke lays great stress on the tolerant attitude of Rome towards Christianity as a sect of Judaism ; he is equally emphatic in his denunciation of the Jews as the chief opponents of the Christian movement in its early stages. He has already narrated in his Gospel how the Jews, through their leaders, rejected the Messiahship of Jesus, and put Him to death as a blasphemer. In the first speech recorded in the Acts, St. Peter accuses the Jews of having "killed the Prince (or author) of life" (3¹⁴), and argues that His Passion and Resurrection were the complete fulfilment of what had been predicted concerning the Messiah "by the mouth of all the prophets," thus vindicating the claim of Jesus of Nazareth to be that Messiah. It was only natural that this stern denunciation should arouse further hostility, especially among the priestly Sadducean party, to whom the idea of *any* resurrection was *anathema*, with the result that the speech was interrupted and the two Apostles were thrown into prison. Though discharged with a caution, they were soon rearrested along with the other Apostles, and only the intervention of Gamaliel with his policy of temporisation saved their lives. Gamaliel's advice seems to have been followed for a while, but the persecution breaks out afresh against Stephen on account of his more liberal views as to the true basis of Judaism, resulting in his martyrdom and the first Christian dispersion.

Persecution
of the
Apostles.

In the next persecution, some ten years later, we see the Jewish nation represented in the person of its king (Agrippa I.),

¹ It may be well to point out that we are here speaking of the national religion of Judaism, as represented by the Jewish authorities at Jerusalem, who were still bound by subservience to the Mosaic Law in all its fulness. The opposition of the strictly Judaic party *within the Christian Church* to the unconditional admission of Gentile converts is another question which is discussed in the note on 15¹.

who, in order to "please the people." put St. James the Zebedean to death, and was only prevented by Divine intervention from meting out the same treatment to St. Peter (12³).

At a later period St. Paul was specially singled out as the object of Jewish hatred, owing to the recognition that his successful missionary work was rapidly expanding Christianity into a world-wide force, and thus sounding the death-knell of Judaism. Hence the desperate expedients of the home Jews, even at a time when St. Paul was doing his utmost to conciliate them by taking part in the Nazirite vow (21²⁶); the riot in the Temple area which, but for the interference of the Roman soldiers, would have ended in his death at the hands of the mob; the plot of the forty men (23¹²), foiled by the vigilance (or curiosity) of his nephew; and the repeated attempts to secure his condemnation by the Roman procurators.

In the closing verses of the narrative we read of St. Paul's final appeal to the Jews of Rome; it meets with only partial success, and by rejecting it the Jews are judged to have brought about their own rejection; "this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles" (28²⁸). Thus the theme reaches its climax; the chosen people of God have refused his Gospel message, which is now passed on to the Gentiles. Christianity is no longer to be regarded as an offshoot of Judaism, but as a new growth, springing indeed from its ancient roots, but replacing with its living verdure the decaying trunk of Judaism.

JEWISH PARTIES AND INSTITUTIONS MENTIONED IN THE ACTS

The period immediately following the return of the Babylonish exiles under Zerubbabel (537 B.C.) was naturally a time of great religious revival and enthusiasm, and many institutions sprang up which frequently come into pro-

minence in the history of the early Church. Three of these in particular, the synagogues, Sanhedrin, and Scribes, deserve special mention here.

The synagogues originated during the captivity. Disciplined by the great national disaster which had befallen them, the Jews abandoned their idolatrous practices, and returned to the worship of Jehovah and reverent study of the law. Now that the sacrificial system of the Temple no longer existed, they endeavoured to maintain its influence in an inward spiritual sense by establishing meeting-places for prayer, and for reading and expounding the law. This form of worship continued after the return, and synagogues sprang up in large numbers. In our Lord's time they appear in every town and village, and it is said that at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus there were 480 such buildings in the city.

The synagogue was used not only as the place of worship on the Sabbaths and feast-days, but also during the week as a school for the instruction of the young, and as a local tribunal in which the Court of Elders administered justice and dealt with petty offences, inflicting punishment in the form of fines, scourging, imprisonment, and excommunication. The chief official was the "ruler of the synagogue" (see 18^s), who was responsible for the appointment of readers, and for the general conduct of the services.

During this time the Sanhedrin (council) also became a well-established institution. It probably had its origin in the council of "seventy men of the elders of Israel," appointed by Divine command to assist Moses to "bear the burden of the people" in the wilderness (Num. 11¹⁶). We hear of a similar court of "Levites and priests, and heads of the fathers' houses of Israel," in the days of King Jehoshaphat, under the presidency of Amariah, the Chief Priest (2 Chron. 19⁸). This constitution seems to have been retained, for we find the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem

The
Synagogues.

The
Sanhedrin.

similarly constituted at the time of the arrest of the Apostles (Acts 4^b). The High Priest was president, and the seventy members consisted of representatives from the three ruling classes, chief priests, Scribes, and elders, the last-named being men chosen for their wide experience and integrity of life. No moneylender or proselyte was eligible for the position. The duty of the Sanhedrin was to administer the law in all its fulness, and it formed a final court of appeal in matters criminal, civil and religious. All the more serious cases from the local councils were committed to the supreme court, which alone could impose a capital sentence; of this prerogative, however, it was deprived by the Romans in 30 B.C. The court met daily, except on the Sabbath and feast-days, usually in the Temple, but on some special occasions in the house of the High Priest.

The Scribes mentioned above were the interpreters and teachers of the very complex Jewish law. Originally the word was used in its literal sense of "a writer," and applied to those men who acted as secretaries of state, or assisted the prophets in writing the law, e.g. Shebna in the reign of Hezekiah, and Baruch who "wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord" (Jer. 36^d). But from the time of Ezra onwards, the word had a wider significance, denoting one expert in interpreting and expounding the law. By this time the Jews had begun to use the Syrian dialect, Aramaic, as a spoken tongue, and the Hebrew of the law was rapidly becoming a dead language. It was therefore necessary to have the law translated, and though this was at first done by the priests (as in the case of Ezra), there gradually grew up the profession of Scribes or Lawyers, upon whom the duty devolved. They were not a religious sect, but mostly drawn from the sect of the Pharisees. As we have seen, they were well represented in the Sanhedrin, where their legal knowledge would be of great service, and their commentaries on the judicial decrees

of the Sanhedrin, like our "case-law," gradually developed into a standard consensus of legal opinion known as "the tradition of the elders."

Following the successful resistance of the heroic family of the Maccabees against their Syrian Greek oppressors (168-165 B.C.), the Jewish nation enjoyed a period of semi-independence, and for over a century the Maccabean or Hasmonæan dynasty ruled as priest-monarchs in Judæa, the best-known being Simon, whose independence was recognised by the Syrians, and who allied himself with Rome. The Hellenising party, as such, ceased its activities, but during this period there arose two opposing parties, the one insisting on strict adherence to the law and all its attached ritual; the other holding the more "modern" view that the law was not too sacrosanct for modification to suit the needs of different ages. The great moral principles of the law they held to be true and abiding, but the mass of ceremonial detail contained in the oral tradition they regarded as of little importance. The two parties became known as the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and their rivalry continued until the final destruction of the Temple put an end to the priesthood, and also the Sadducean party. A striking example of this rivalry is given in the account of St. Paul's trial before the Jewish Sanhedrin (Acts 23').

The Pharisees ("separate") were probably so called because they advocated a policy of separation and independence, both in national affairs and in matters of ceremonial "cleanness." Another explanation is that the name was given to them after the separation or expulsion of their representatives at one period from the Sanhedrin. As we have said, their guiding principle was strict obedience of the letter of the law, and of the tradition of the elders which had accumulated round it. During the early years of their history they effected a great reform of the religious life of their countrymen, making the synagogue a real centre of prayer and instruction in the law.

They also evolved a system of elementary religious education. But in the time of our Lord the extremists of the party, followers of Shammai, seem to have held the reins, and Phariseeism degenerated into a mere outward observance of prescribed rules and formulæ. This led them to adopt an attitude of intolerance and hypocrisy, which brought upon them our Lord's condemnation as "whited sepulchres."

Politically they were strongly nationalistic, and opposed submission to Rome or any other foreign power. An extreme wing of the party, the Zealots, went so far as to advocate a policy of armed resistance to Roman rule, which they put into practice whenever a suitable occasion arose (see p. 5).

The Sadducees probably derived their name from Zadok, the High Priest of David's reign. Like the Pharisees, they accepted the written law (Torah), but denied the authority of the prophetic books, and rejected the whole of the oral tradition. No doctrine or practice was regarded as binding unless based on the written law, and for this reason they could not accept the prophetic idea of the Messiah as "the son of David." Their outlook became mean and unspiritual, and ultimately led to a complete denial of a resurrection and future life, and of the existence of angels and spirits implied thereby (Acts 23⁸). They were the aristocratic, wealthy party who held the High Priesthood and most of the priestly offices. Politically, as might be expected from their origin, they were not opposed to foreign rule, and being in possession of the best financial positions, they readily acquiesced in the Roman domination of Palestine.

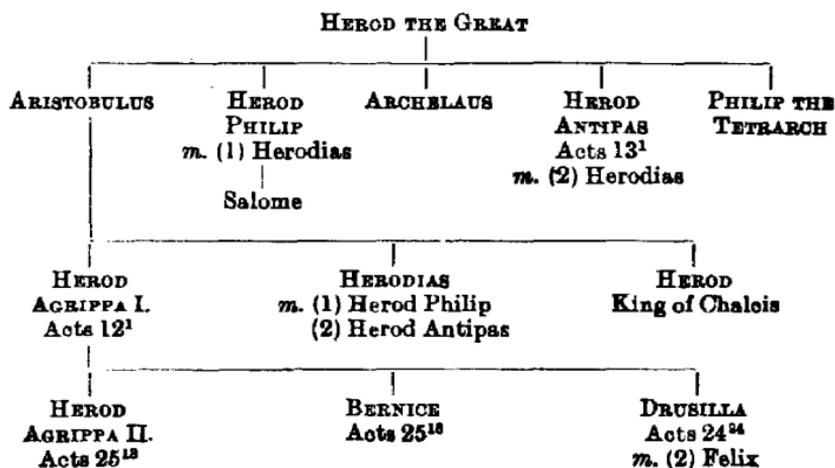
CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS

It is no easy matter to reconstruct the chronological scheme of the events recorded in the early chapters of the book. For them St. Luke relies upon eye-witnesses, who did not attach the same importance as he himself does to chronological exactitude; indeed to the early Christians, with their expectation of an immediate *Parousia*, chronology was a matter of supreme indifference. In the latter part of the narrative, however, we have three or four well-established dates, e.g. the death of Herod Agrippa I., A.D. 44 (12²³); the famine in Judæa, A.D. 46 (11²⁸); the arrival of Gallio at Corinth, A.D. 52 (18¹²); and the beginning of Felix's procuratorship in the same year.

The following chronological chart is based on these data, though it should be understood that the early dates can only be accepted as approximate:—

<i>Roman Emperor.</i>	<i>Procurator of Judæa.</i>	<i>Leading Events of the Acts.</i>
A.D.	A.D.	A.D.
14. Tiberius.	26. Pontius Pilate.	29. The Ascension.
		33. Martyrdom of Stephen. Mission in Samaria.
	36. Marcellus.	34. Conversion of Saul.
37. Caligula.	37. Marullus.	37. First visit to Jerusalem.
41. Claudius.	41. Herod Agrippa I. (King of Palestine).	44. Martyrdom of St. James. Death of Agrippa.
	44. Cuspius Fadus.	
	46. Tiberius Alexander.	46. Second visit to Jerusalem.
	48. Cumanus.	47-48. First missionary journey.
		49. Council of Jerusalem.
		49-52. Second missionary journey.
	52. Felix.	52-56. Third missionary journey.
54. Nero.		56. Arrest of St. Paul.
		56-58. Imprisonment at Cæsarea.
	58. Porcius Festus.	58-59. Journey to Rome.
	61. Albinus.	59-61. Imprisonment at Rome.

THE FAMILY OF HEROD THE GREAT



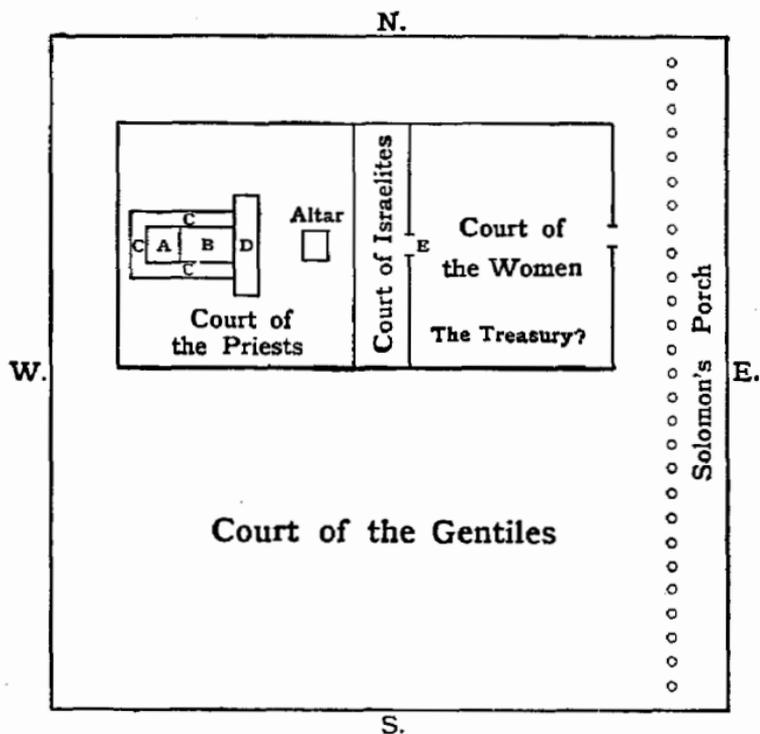
PART I

CHAPTERS 1 TO 8¹⁰

**FOUNDATION AND EARLY HISTORY OF THE
CHURCH AT JERUSALEM**

Circa A.D. 29-33

"Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem . . ."—ACTS 1⁸.



A. Holy of Holies B. Holy Place C. Chambers D. Porch E. Beautiful Gate

GROUND-PLAN OF HEROD'S TEMPLE

PART I

CHAPTERS 1 TO 8^{1a}

FOUNDATION AND EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM

Circa A.D. 29-33

Introduction and Connexion with the Third Gospel.

¹The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all ¹ that Jesus began both to do and to teach, ²until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Holy Ghost unto the apostles whom he had chosen : ³to whom he also shewed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God : ⁴and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart

1 The former treatise (St. Luke's Gospel) also opens with a preface addressed to the same Greek convert, Theophilus. He is there given the title "most excellent," a title applied in the Acts to the Roman Governors, Felix (23²⁶) and Festus (26^{2a}), from which it is evident that he was an eminent public official (see p. vii).

3 This passage is our sole authority for the **forty days** interval between the Resurrection and the Ascension. St. Luke must have had later information on this point since writing his Gospel, in the closing verses of which he sketches very briefly the events of this period. No divisions of time are there given, and the impression is conveyed that the incidents recorded (including the Ascension) took place on the day of the Resurrection.

Probably the forty days are meant only as an approximate estimate. It was a favourite period of time, found in connexion with the lives of Moses and Elijah, and the Temptation of our Lord.

4 The charge **not to depart from Jerusalem** is mentioned by St. Luke at the close of his Gospel (24⁴⁹), and the **promise of the Father** to send the Comforter or Advocate (Greek, Paraclete) is referred to by St. John (14¹⁶).

from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me: ⁵for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

The Ascension.

⁶They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? ⁷And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. ⁸But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. ⁹And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. ¹⁰And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; ¹¹which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.

⁶ It seems almost incredible that the disciples, after all their instruction in the "things concerning the kingdom of God" (v. 3), should still cherish the hope of an earthly Messianic kingdom, in which foreign aggression should be destroyed, and the golden age of Jewish national supremacy at length begin. The teaching of the later prophets (e.g. Is. 53³) and of our Lord Himself (Lk. 24^{26, 44}), that the Kingdom of the Messiah was to be a spiritual Kingdom, made possible by His Passion and Crucifixion, had proved a stumbling-block to the Jewish leaders and led to His rejection. Only after the Pentecostal manifestation did the disciples fully realise the spiritual and universal nature of Christ's Kingdom.

⁸ Note the ever-widening circles of Christian witness starting from Jerusalem. The plan and scope of the Acts is to show the fulfilment of this promise (see p. viii).

⁹ In his Gospel St. Luke says (24⁵⁰), "he led them out until they were over against Bethany"; away from the ill-omened city of rejection to the Mount of Olives, within sight of Bethany, a spot hallowed by sacred memories.

¹⁰ Both in his Gospel and in the Acts St. Luke gives great prominence to the ministry of angels. For other examples see 5¹⁸, 7³⁰, etc.

¹²Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is nigh unto Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey off. ¹³And when they were come in, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were abiding; both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphæus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas *the son* of James. ¹⁴These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

12 a sabbath day's journey was 2000 cubits, about five furlongs, the maximum distance allowed to be covered on the Sabbath. This is the distance given in Num. 35⁵ as the limit of the "suburbs" (pasture lands) of the cities of the Levites in Canaan. The mention of the Sabbath day's journey has given rise to the suggestion that the Ascension took place on the Sabbath, which would agree with the "forty days" from the Resurrection, reckoning exclusively. The commemoration of the Ascension on Thursday dates back to the fourth century.

13 the upper chamber was no doubt the "large upper room" of Lk. 22¹² where the Last Supper was held. It was probably in the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, which afterwards became the headquarters of the Christian community (cf. 12¹²).

The list of the Apostles is also found in the three Synoptic Gospels, Mt. 10², Mk. 3¹⁶, Lk. 6¹⁴. For **Simon the Zealot**, St. Matthew and St. Mark have the Aramaic form Cananæan. The Zealots were an extreme wing of the patriotic party, ever ready to take up arms against the foreign over-lord. They came into prominence under Judas of Galilee in his revolt against the Romans in A.D. 6, when Judæa was annexed as an Imperial province, and during the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 a small band of them held the fortress of Masada for nearly three years after the rest of the city had capitulated.

14 the women were no doubt those who "followed with him from Galilee" mentioned by St. Luke in his Gospel (23⁴⁹), which gives special prominence to the ministry of women, as does also the Acts (see p. xiv).

his brethren were either cousins or, more probably, sons of Joseph by a former wife. St. John tells us (7⁵) that they "did not believe on him," but they had evidently now accepted Christianity; we meet later with one of them, James, as leader of the Church at Jerusalem (15¹⁸). He is mentioned by St. Paul (1 Cor. 15⁷) as one of those to whom our Lord appeared after the Resurrection.

Election of a Successor to Judas.

¹⁵And in these days Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren, and said (and there was a multitude of persons *gathered* together, about a hundred and twenty), ¹⁶Brethren, it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost spake before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was guide to them that took Jesus. ¹⁷For he was numbered among us, and received his portion in this ministry. ¹⁸(Now this man obtained a field with the reward of his iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. ¹⁹And it became known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch that in their language that field was called Akeldama, that is, The field of blood.) ²⁰For it is written in the book of Psalms,

Let his habitation be made desolate,

And let no man dwell therein :

and,

His office let another take.

²¹Of the men therefore which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection. ²³And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the

15 St. Peter now appears as the leader of the Church, in accordance with the commission given to him as the rock upon which the Church should be built (Mt. 16¹⁸). In his address he accounts for the apostasy of Judas by showing that it is in accordance with prophecy (Ps. 69²⁵). It now remains for them to fulfil the second prophecy (Ps. 109⁸) by electing a successor to fill the vacancy.

18 It is difficult to reconcile this account of the violent (out accidental) end of Judas with the deliberate suicide recorded in Mt. 27⁵. Evidently the two writers are making use of different traditions as to the origin of the name Akeldama. A third tradition quoted by St. Augustine combines the two New Testament versions in the statement that the rope with which the traitor hanged himself broke, and he was killed by the fall.

21-22 St. Peter here gives in very concise form (i) the necessary qualifications of candidates nominated for the office, and (ii) the duty to be carried out by the person elected.

hearts of all men, shew of these two the one whom thou hast chosen, ²⁵to take the place in this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas fell away, that he might go to his own place. ²⁶And they gave lots for them; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

¹And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

²⁶ It must not be supposed that there was anything haphazard about this method of election by lots. Two well-qualified candidates were put forward, and prayer offered to "the Lord" that He would make final choice of the one to join those whom He had originally chosen. The casting of lots was merely the human means by which the Divine will was revealed. Neither before nor after does the New Testament tell us anything of the two candidates.

¹ The feast of **Pentecost** was so called because it fell on the fiftieth (*pentecostē*) day after the waving of the sheaf of the first-fruits of corn by the priest during Passover week. It was established on Mount Sinai as one of the three feasts (the others being Passover and Tabernacles) on which every male was to "appear before the Lord God" (Ex. 23¹⁷). It was also called the Feast of Weeks, since it was kept seven weeks (i.e. a "week of weeks") after Passover. It took place in the month Sivan (May-June), and marked the end of the harvest, thanks being given by offering two "wave-loaves" made from the new flour (Lev. 23¹⁷).

³ **parting asunder**; better, as in the margin, "distributing themselves," so that each individual received the gift of the Spirit.

⁴ The phrase **speak with other tongues** seems to differ somewhat from the "speaking with tongues" of 10⁴⁶ and 19⁶. The latter (*glossolalia*) is included by St. Paul amongst the "gifts of the spirit" (1 Cor. 12¹⁰) and discussed very fully by him in the two succeeding chapters. From his words we gather that *glossolalia* was a kind of ecstatic utterance of praise and glory to God resulting from deep religious emotion, and spoken by the Spirit through the instrumentality of the human tongue. The speech was often unintelligible to speaker and hearer alike, and needed to be interpreted. St. Paul himself sets no high value on this

⁵ Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language. ⁷ And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilæans? ⁸ And how hear we, every man in our own language, wherein we were born? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judæa and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretans and Arabians, we do hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God. ¹² And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this? ¹³ But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine.

St. Peter's First Speech and its Effect.

¹⁴ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, *saying*, Ye men of Judæa, and all

form of spiritual manifestation; "I had rather speak five words with my understanding . . . than ten thousand words in a tongue" (1 Cor. 14¹⁸). According to St. Luke, the Pentecostal gift was a special and unique manifestation, in which the *glossolalia* included the use of foreign words and phrases hitherto unknown to the speakers, but recognised by the "devout men from every nation under heaven."

10 The name *proselyte* is first used in the Septuagint to designate the "stranger within thy gate," i.e. the foreign settler who had adopted the Jewish nationality. The proselytes of the Acts may be divided into two classes: (i) full proselytes, who shared fully in the responsibilities and privileges of Jewish nationals, and were therefore bound by complete obedience to Judaism, including the rite of circumcision, e.g. Nicolas of Antioch (5^b); (ii) the outer fringe of "God-fearers," attached to the synagogues, e.g. Cornelius (10²), who obeyed the moral code of Judaism and certain rules as to the Sabbath, Feasts, and Unclean Meats, but declined to become fully nationalised by undergoing circumcision (cf. Ps. 115¹⁰⁻¹³).

14-36 St. Peter's speech affords a good example of the Apostolic method of teaching from "proof-texts," i.e. passages collected from the Old Testament and used as evidence that the Messiah had indeed appeared in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and had founded His Kingdom on earth. He introduces three such quotations to show

ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. ¹⁵For these are not drunken, as ye suppose ; seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day ; ¹⁶but this is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel ;

¹⁷And it shall be in the last days, saith God,

I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh :

And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

And your young men shall see visions,

And your old men shall dream dreams :

¹⁸Yea and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days

Will I pour forth of my Spirit ; and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹And I will shew wonders in the heaven above,

And signs on the earth beneath ;

Blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke :

²⁰The sun shall be turned into darkness,

And the moon into blood,

Before the day of the Lord come,

That great and notable *day* :

²¹And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

²²Ye men of Israel, hear these words : Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know ; ²³him, being delivered up by the determinate

(i) that the remarkable scene they had witnessed was not the result of intoxication but the outpouring of God's spirit as prophesied by Joel (2²⁸) ; (ii) that the Resurrection of Jesus was in accordance with the prophecy of Ps. 16⁸ ; that it reversed the verdict of the Cross, and vindicated His claim to be the Messiah ; (iii) that the dominion of the Messiah as Lord of all is recognised by their great national hero David, who admits His superiority by addressing Him as " my Lord " (Ps. 110¹).

He concludes with an appeal to them as the chosen race to fit themselves by repentance and baptism for the remission of their sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

15 the third hour of the day would be approximately 9 A.M. The Jews divided the day from sunrise to sunset into the twelve hours of the day, and similarly for the night hours, so that the length of the " hour " varied with the sun. The new day began at sunset, and there were three regular hours of prayer: the third, sixth (cf. 10⁸) and ninth (cf. 10⁹).

counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay : ²⁴whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death : because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. ²⁵For David saith concerning him,

I beheld the Lord always before my face ;

For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved :

²⁶Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced ;

Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope :

²⁷Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades,

Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption.

²⁸Thou madest known unto me the ways of life ;

Thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance.

²⁹Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. ³⁰Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set *one* upon his throne ; ³¹he foreseeing *this* spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. ³²This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. ³³Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. ³⁴For David ascended not into the heavens : but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

³⁵Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

³⁶Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

³⁷Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do ? ³⁸And Peter *said* unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the

²⁷ Hades here corresponds to the Old Testament Sheol, the abode of departed spirits ; the unseen world.

³⁸ Baptism was well known to the Jews as a symbol of cleansing from past offences and consecration for future service. As such it was used for the admission of proselytes. The Baptist had "preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins" and had foretold a fuller baptism with the Holy Ghost (Lk. 3¹⁶). The prophecy was now

remission of your sins ; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. ³⁹For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him. ⁴⁰And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation. ⁴¹They then that received his word were baptized ; and there were added *unto them* in that day about three thousand souls.

The Early Christian Life.

⁴²And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³And fear came upon every soul : and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴And all that believed were together, and had all things common ; ⁴⁵and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. ⁴⁶And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they did

fulfilled, and Christian baptism in the name of Jesus Christ instituted. It was usually accompanied by the gift of the Holy Spirit, though not the sole channel by which that gift was conveyed (cf. 8¹⁷, 10⁴⁴, 19⁶).

42 Here we have a succinct account of the mode of life of Christian converts (1) They received instruction from the Apostles concerning the life and teaching of their new Master, and the evidence of proof-texts (2) They lived a life of fellowship, not only in spiritual matters, but (as we see from v. 44) in the use of their goods and possessions. (3) They joined in the breaking of bread, literally *the* bread, which refers probably not merely to the common meal (*agapè* or Love-feast), but more particularly to the commemoration of the Lord's Supper which was instituted in connexion with it. (4) They took part in the regular services of prayer and thanksgiving, which we know were already in use (1¹⁴).

44 This communism, as we see from 5⁴, was entirely voluntary and probably did not extend beyond Jerusalem. Doubtless the immediate expectation of the Parousia (Second Advent) led the early Christians to disregard any thought of provision for the future. The system soon led to abuses (cf. 5¹, 6¹), and from the poverty of the Christian community at Jerusalem (Gal. 2¹⁰) we gather that it was not an economic success, though it must be remembered that the work was hindered by persecution and famine.

46 breaking bread (not *the* bread as in v. 42) probably refers here to the common meal or *agapè*. The daily life of Christians, both in public

take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, ⁴⁷praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved.

The Miracle at the Beautiful Gate.

3 ¹Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour. ²And a certain man that was lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; ³who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked to receive an alms. ⁴And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us. ⁵And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk. ⁷And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and his ankle-bones received strength. ⁸And leaping up, he stood, and began to walk; and he entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. ⁹And all the people saw him walking and praising God: ¹⁰and they took knowledge of him, that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

worship in the Temple and in private devotions at home, was characterised by close fellowship and exultant joy which made a strong appeal to the masses.

1 the ninth hour, roughly 3 P.M., the time of the evening sacrifice; one of the regular hours of prayer (cf. 2¹⁵).

2 the door . . . called Beautiful was probably Nicanor's gate at the east end of the inner court leading to the Court of the Women (see plan, p. 2). According to Josephus it was made of Corinthian bronze and much surpassed the others in worth.

7 The Greek words for feet and ankle-bones are technical terms not found elsewhere in the New Testament, and are evidence of the work of St. Luke the physician. The cure is described with much graphic detail, evidently from the report of an eye-witness, and should be compared with the similar miracle at Lystra (14⁸).

St. Peter's Second Speech.

¹¹And as he held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. ¹²And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this man ? or why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him to walk ? ¹³The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus ; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. ¹⁴But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you, ¹⁵and killed the Prince of life ; whom God raised from the dead ; whereof we are witnesses. ¹⁶And by faith in his name hath his name made this man strong, whom ye behold and know : yea, the faith which is through him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. ¹⁷And now, brethren, I wot that

11 The porch . . . called Solomon's was a cloister or colonnade running along the east side of the Temple area, so-called probably because its foundations were laid on the ruins of Solomon's Temple. It seems to have been used as a regular meeting-place of the early Christians (cf. 5¹²).

The use of the present tense, "is called Solomon's," has been cited as evidence that it was still standing at the time of writing, and therefore as an argument that the Acts was written before A.D. 70 (see p. xiv).

12 St. Peter's argument is much the same as in his former speech, though he does not make such frequent use of Old Testament quotation. The miracle has been wrought through faith in the name of Jesus, the Author of life, whom the Jews had put to death, though the Gentile, Pilate, wished to release Him. His Resurrection had reversed this judgment, and proved Him to be the Messiah, the great Prophet whose coming had been foretold by Moses and all the prophets from Samuel onwards. He makes allowance for the fact that the crime must have been committed in ignorance, but urges them to repent and seek forgiveness. Further elaboration of his theme is cut short by the arrival of the priests and Sadducees.

13 Servant, lit. "child" (Gk. *pais*), as in the margin, and so in 4²⁷ It was the title frequently used in the Old Testament for the Messiah, found, for example, in the Septuagint Version of Is. 52¹³, quoted by St. Matthew (12¹⁸) : "Behold my servant whom I have chosen."

15 Prince of life ; rather "author," as in the margin, or "originator," the exact antonym of murderer in the previous verse.

in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸But the thing^s which God foreshewed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled. ¹⁹Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; ²⁰and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, *even* Jesus: ²¹whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began. ²²Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. ²³And it shall be, that every soul, which shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. ²⁴Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days. ²⁵Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. ²⁶Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.

First Arrest and Trial of the Apostles.

4 ¹And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ²being sore

¹⁹ seasons of refreshing, or revival, refers to the period of national peace and Divine blessing brought about by repentance, and leading up to the "restoration of all things" (v. 21) at the Parousia, the "regeneration" of Mt. 19²⁸.

²² Deut. 18¹⁸ applied here to the Messiah (cf. Jo. 1²¹, 6¹⁴).

1 For priests the margin has chief priests as in v. 23. We may note here the successive degrees of the priesthood:

(1) The High Priest, whom the Jews looked upon as holding a life appointment, though in practice he was appointed or deposed by the Romans at will.

(2) The chief priests, consisting of ex-High Priests and their families, and the heads of the twenty-four courses.

(3) The priests, numbering about 20,000, of whom 50 were on duty daily in the Temple.

One of the duties of those members of the tribe of Levi, who did

troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it was now eventide. ⁴But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

⁵And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; ⁶and Annas the high priest *was there*, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest. ⁷And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power, or in what name, have ye done this? ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders, ⁹if we this day are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means this man is made whole; ¹⁰be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* in him doth this man stand here before you whole. ¹¹He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. ¹²And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.

not belong to the priestly family of Aaron, was to form a Temple guard for its protection. The officers of this guard were called **captains of the temple** (cf. Lk. 22⁵²).

The officer mentioned here would be the commandant of the troops—a high official, second only in authority to the High Priest.

For the Sadducees see p. xxv.

4 Note the author's other references to the growth of the Church at Jerusalem, 1¹⁵, 2⁴¹, 4⁷, 6⁷.

5 This would be an official meeting of the Sanhedrin (see p. xxiii). For **elders and scribes** see p. xxiv.

6 **Annas** had been High Priest, A.D. 7-14, when he was deposed by the Romans. His son-in-law, **Joseph Caiaphas**, was the official High Priest at this time, and remained in office till A.D. 37, when he also was deposed. As the Jews held the office to be a life appointment, they still regarded Annas as the lawful High Priest (cf. Lk. 3²).

11 The reference is to Ps. 118²², the festal Psalm of Messianic salutation. The same passage was quoted by our Lord (Mt. 21⁴²) when His authority was questioned, and was a favourite proof-text (Eph. 2²⁰, 1 Pet. 2⁷).

¹³Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. ¹⁴And seeing the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. ¹⁵But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, ¹⁶saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been wrought through them, is manifest to all that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷But that it spread no further among the people, let us threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. ¹⁸And they called them, and charged them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: ²⁰for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard. ²¹And they, when they had further threatened them, let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done. ²²For the man was more than forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was wrought.

United Prayer and Communism in the Early Church.

²³And being let go, they came to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said unto them. ²⁴And they, when they heard it, lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, O Lord, thou that didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is:

13 The unlearned and ignorant men owed their boldness and power to their fellowship with Jesus. His promise (Lk. 12¹¹) had been amply fulfilled.

24 Another example of the united prayer of the early Church. Note the plan of the prayer: (i) praise to God the maker of all things; (ii) the quotation from Ps. 2¹ showing that their persecution was in accordance with prophecy; and (iii) petitions to be preserved from threats, to be granted boldness of speech and power to perform miracles of healing.

²⁵who by the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David thy servant, didst say,

Why did the Gentiles rage,
And the peoples imagine vain things ?

²⁶The kings of the earth set themselves in array,

And the rulers were gathered together,

Against the Lord, and against his Anointed :

²⁷for of a truth in this city against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together, ²⁸to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel foreordained to come to pass. ²⁹And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings : and grant unto thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, ³⁰while thou stretchest forth thy hand to heal ; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of thy holy Servant Jesus. ³¹And when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together ; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

³²And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul : and not one of *them* said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own ; but they had all things common.

³³And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus : and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴For neither was there among them any that lacked : for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, ³⁵and laid them at the apostles' feet : and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need.

³⁶And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas

³⁰ As in 3¹³, the margin has "child" for "Servant" (Gk. *pais*), whilst a different word (*doulos*) is used for the disciples as "servants" in v. 29, where the marginal reading is "bond-servants."

³¹ A second definite manifestation of the gift of the Holy Spirit, though not marked by the same outward effects as at Pentecost.

³⁶ The name Barnabas is probably derived from Bar-nabi=son of a prophet, hence the R.V. interpretation "son of exhortation." We read in 11²³ that "he exhorted them all that . . . they would cleave unto the Lord," and he is mentioned in 13¹ as one of the "prophets and teachers" at Antioch. On the other hand, the Greek word

(which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, ³⁷having a field, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

The Sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

- 5 ¹But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, ²and kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? ⁴Whiles it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. ⁵And Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost: and great fear came upon all that heard it. ⁶And the young men arose and wrapped him round, and they carried him out and buried him.

paraklesis used here for "exhortation" is closely allied to *parakletos*, the Comforter or Advocate (Jo. 14¹⁶), from which we derive our title Paraclete, and in 15³¹ is translated "consolation." There is much to be said from the character of Barnabas for retaining the reading of the A.V., "son of consolation." He was a Hellenistic Jew, born in Cyprus of the priestly tribe of Levi, and a cousin or uncle of John Mark.

1 Here we see the reverse side of the picture of Christian self-effacement. Struck by the generosity of Barnabas, Ananias and Sapphira emulate his example, but in an entirely different spirit, viz. with the object of attaining notoriety by a public display of charity, "that they may be seen of men." Their sin is described in v. 3 as "lying to" (or "cheating") the Holy Ghost; by his hypocrisy and duplicity Ananias sins against his own conscience by trying to "serve two masters." No punishment is called down by St. Peter—it comes direct from the hand of God; but in v. 9 he pronounces judgment upon Sapphira which duly falls. The name Ananias is the same as Hananiah of Daniel 1⁶ (cf. the Benedicite "Ananias, Azarias and Misael"), and means (like John) "Jehovah has been gracious." Sapphira is derived from the jewel sapphire, which is so called in both Hebrew and Greek, or from the Aramaic word for "beautiful."

5 The Greek word used here and in 12²⁸ for gave up the ghost (expired) is rarely found outside medical works; its use affords further evidence of the authorship of St. Luke, the physician, as does also the expression wrapped him round in v. 6 (see p. xii)

⁷And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. ⁸And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much. And she said, Yea, for so much. ⁹But Peter *said* unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out. ¹⁰And she fell down immediately at his feet, and gave up the ghost: and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her by her husband. ¹¹And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all that heard these things.

Second Arrest of the Apostles.

¹²And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. ¹³But of the rest durst no man join himself to them: howbeit the people magnified them; ¹⁴and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women; ¹⁵insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some one of them. ¹⁶And there also came together the multitude from the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and

¹¹ Here for the first time in the Acts the word church (*ecclesia*) is used for the Christian community. It is the word used by St. Matthew (16¹⁸) of the great promise to St. Peter, "upon this rock I will build my church."

¹²⁻¹⁵ The sense of these verses is somewhat obscured by the parenthesis from **and they were all to both of men and women**, which interrupts the main thought of signs and wonders wrought among the people . . . insomuch that they even carried out the sick. . . . It seems probable that "they" in v. 12 refers to the Apostles, and that "the rest" of the Christians had no wish to claim equality with them by "joining" (lit. "fastening") themselves to the Twelve; they definitely accepted the superior authority carried by the Apostleship. On the other hand, it is held by some commentators that "they" includes the whole Christian community, and "the rest" denotes those outside the Church who hesitated to identify themselves openly with the movement in the publicity of Solomon's porch, but many of whom "magnified them," i.e. were filled with a secret admiration.

them that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

¹⁷But the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy, ¹⁸and laid hands on the apostles, and put them in public ward. ¹⁹But an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them out, and said, ²⁰Go ye, and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this Life. ²¹And when they heard *this*, they entered into the temple about daybreak, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison-house to have them brought. ²²But the officers that came found them not in the prison; and they returned, and told, ²³saying, The prison-house we found shut in all safety, and the keepers standing at the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within. ²⁴Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were much perplexed concerning them whereunto this would grow. ²⁵And there came one and told them, Behold, the men whom ye put in the prison are in the temple standing and teaching the people. ²⁶Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them, *but* without violence; for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned. ²⁷And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, ²⁸saying, We straitly charged you

17 The second clash with priestly authority was a much more serious affair, for the injunctions of the court (4¹⁸) had been completely disregarded, and the movement was undoubtedly making headway (v. 24). This time apparently all the Apostles are arrested; they are put in the "public ward," and arraigned before the full "senate," who are "minded to slay them." Only the intervention of Gamaliel saved their lives, though it did not save their skins (v. 40).

21 The word used for *senate* (*gerousia*) is generally used of a city-council (e.g. the Roman Senate). Here the Sanhedrin is evidently intended, the second title being added to emphasise the fact that the full body was convened for such an important occasion.

28 "His blood be on us, and on our children" was their cry before Pilate. They now feared that the Apostles' teaching, with which they had "filled Jerusalem," was likely to bring about a popular recognition of their responsibility for the death of Jesus (v. 30) and cause the literal fulfilment of their prophecy.

not to teach in this name : and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. ²⁹But Peter and the apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. ³¹Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. ³²And we are witnesses of these things ; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

³³But they, when they heard this, were cut to the heart, and were minded to slay them. ³⁴But there stood up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honour of all the people, and commanded to put the men forth a little while. ³⁵And he said unto them, Ye men of Israel take heed to yourselves as touching these men, what ye are about to do. ³⁶For before these days rose up Theudas, giving himself out to be somebody ; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves : who was slain ; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed, and came to nought. ³⁷After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrol-

³⁴ Gamaliel was the grandson of Rabbi Hillel, and tutor of Saul (22^a). He would belong to the more liberal branch of the Pharisees who followed the lead of Hillel rather than the more bigoted policy of his rival Shammai. He was a famous expounder of the Law, one of the seven judged worthy of the superior title Rabban. There is no evidence that he had any leanings towards Christianity ; he merely advocates a policy of prudence and *laissez-faire*.

³⁶⁻³⁷ The historical allusion in these verses presents a notorious difficulty. The rising of the Zealots under Judas of Galilee is a well-known historical event, and took place at the second census of Quirinius, when Judæa became a Roman province, in A.D. 6. A similar revolt is mentioned by Josephus as taking place in A.D. 44-45 under a certain Theudas, who perished in the rebellion. This is some twelve years later than the occasion of Gamaliel's speech, so that if this is the same Theudas we are faced by a double difficulty : (i) the mention of his revolt is an anachronism ; (ii) the statement, " after this man rose up Judas," is chronologically incorrect.

Two attempts have been made to explain the apparent contradiction. It is suggested : (i) that St. Luke has made use of Josephus (or his source), and has confused the order of events ; (ii) that he is referring to another Theudas. The latter is generally regarded as the more likely explanation. Theudas was not an uncommon name and Josephus himself relates that there were many false Messiahs,

ment, and drew away *some of the* people after him: he also perished; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered abroad. ³⁸And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown: ³⁹but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God. ⁴⁰And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles unto them, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹They therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the Name. ⁴²And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ.

The Appointment of "the Seven."

8 ¹Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. ²And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. ³Look ye out there-

deceivers and rebels during this period. Moreover, the Theudas of whom Josephus writes (in his *Antiquities*) seems to have been a very influential leader followed by "a very great multitude," hardly consistent with the "four hundred" mentioned here. Finally, the *Antiquities* was not written before about A.D. 93, which would give a very late date for the Acts (see p. xv).

1 The Grecian Jews, or Hellenists (margin), were Jews of the Dispersion, born or settled abroad, who adopted the Greek language and a certain measure of Greek customs and ideals, in contradistinction to the Hebrews of Palestinian origin, who spoke the Aramaic (Syrian) dialect. They would be resident in Jerusalem for business purposes, or as "retired colonials" returned to the homeland. They were looked down upon by the home Jews, and apparently even in the Christian community were not treated with exact equality in the communistic system of distributing alms whether in money or in kind.

2 to serve tables means to distribute the daily relief from tables or counters. Probably it was in the form of provisions and clothing, though sometimes actual money may have been given.

3-6 Although the Apostles regarded the relief work as of minor importance as far as they were concerned, we note the great care with

fore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. ⁴But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. ⁵And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: ⁶whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

⁷And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Stephen's Arrest and Martyrdom.

⁸And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹But there arose certain of them

which the appointment of "the seven" was carried out. Men of high spiritual qualifications and business capacity, selected by the "whole multitude," were solemnly ordained by the Apostles with prayer and laying on of hands. Nowhere are they called "deacons," a name which arose later in connexion with the Gentile churches founded by St. Paul, e.g. at Philippi (Phil. 1⁴).

5 The names are practically all of Greek origin, which shows that the Hellenists were given very liberal representation. It has been suggested, however, that the diaconate was composed of three Hebrews, three Hellenists, and the proselyte **Nicolas**, the first Gentile Christian mentioned by name. The fact that the last five are never mentioned subsequently shows the detailed nature of the author's information, probably obtained direct from **Philip** during his stay at Cæsarea circa A.D. 56-58 (see 21⁹).

7 A great step forward is implied here. Even the priests, previously arch-enemies, now rank themselves definitely on the side of Christianity.

8 **Stephen** in his brief career appears as the forerunner of St. Paul, and his teaching leads up to a definite breach between Christianity and Judaism, which can no longer be reconciled. A Hellenist himself, he is possessed of a more liberal outlook, and for him the Mosaic Law and the Temple, though important externals of religion, are no longer indispensable, and must now give way to a higher spiritual conception of a God "who dwelleth not in houses made with hands," whose throne is the heaven, and the earth the footstool of His feet (7⁴⁹).

It is interesting to note that, as in the case of St. Paul at Jerusalem (21²⁷), the arrest is engineered by Hellenists.

that were of the synagogue called *the synagogue* of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen. ¹⁰And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake. ¹¹Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God. ¹²And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and seized him, and brought him into the council, ¹³and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law: ¹⁴for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us. ¹⁵And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

7 ¹And the high priest said, Are these things so? ²And he said, Brethren and fathers, hearken. The God of glory appeared

9 The Libertines, or "freed men" (of Rome), were probably descendants of the Jews carried into captivity by Pompey when he sacked Jerusalem in 63 B.C. Many of them had now returned to their own capital and formed a synagogue there. The other synagogues would be similar congregations of Hellenists. It is said that at one time there were 480 such synagogues in Jerusalem. Probably only three separate bodies are intended here: (i) men of Rome and Italy, (ii) North-East Africans (Cyrenians and Alexandrians), (iii) Asiatics. Possibly Saul of Tarsus (in Cilicia) may have been amongst the last-named.

10 A literal fulfilment of our Lord's promise, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand" (Lk. 21¹⁵).

11 **Suborn** is a legal phrase for procuring a person to commit perjury by bringing false evidence; it occurred also in connexion with the trial of Jesus (Mt. 26⁶⁹). To attempt to obtain such evidence was itself a flagrant breach of Jewish law punishable by death.

14 Note the double charge of blasphemy: (i) against the Temple, as in the case of our Lord; (ii) against the Law of Moses, which was to be changed.

2 Stephen's speech, which on the surface appears merely an interesting historical outline, is in reality a skilful defence of his attitude towards the Law and the Temple. His main points may be summarised as follows:—

(1) The Jewish race was founded in accordance with a direct command of Jehovah, and his covenant was made not with Moses, but with Abraham; not in Palestine, but in a foreign land; and con-

unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, ³and said unto him, Get thee out of thy land, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. ⁴Then came he out of the land of the Chaldæans, and dwelt in Haran: and from thence, when his father was dead, *God* removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell: ⁵and he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: and he promised that he would give it to him in possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child. ⁶And *God* spake on this wise, that his seed should sojourn in a strange land, and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil, four hundred years. ⁷And the nation to which they shall be in bondage will I judge, said *God*: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place. ⁸And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so *Abraham* begat *Isaac*, and circumcised him the eighth day; and *Isaac* begat *Jacob*, and *Jacob* the twelve patriarchs. ⁹And the patriarchs, moved with jealousy against *Joseph*, sold him into *Egypt*: and *God* was with him, ¹⁰and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom before *Pharaoh* king of *Egypt*; and he made him governor over *Egypt* and all his house. ¹¹Now there came a famine over all *Egypt* and *Canaan*, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. ¹²But when *Jacob* heard that there was corn in *Egypt*, he sent forth our fathers the first time. ¹³And at the second time *Joseph* was made known to his brethren; and *Joseph's* race became manifest unto *Pharaoh*. ¹⁴And *Joseph* sent, and called to him *Jacob* his father, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls. ¹⁵And

tinued during the captivity in *Egypt*. The covenant of promise preceded the covenant of circumcision (2-37).

(2) The Law was indeed God-given ("living oracles"), but the fathers, so far from obeying it, had rejected *Moses*, to whom it was given, and lapsed into idolatry (38-43).

(3) The tabernacle, too, was of Divine origin and plan, but the same could not be said of the Temple, the idea of which originated with man (*David*). Indeed, it was not essential for the worship of *Jehovah*, whose presence was not limited to any building, as the quotation from *Isaiah* shows (44-50).

(4) Throughout their history the Jewish people had repeatedly persecuted and slain the prophets, and the present generation were the "betrayers and murderers" of the "Righteous One," a crowning act of disobedience against the Divinely ordained Law (51-53).

Jacob went down into Egypt; and he died, himself, and our fathers; ¹⁶and they were carried over unto Shechem, and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a price in silver of the sons of Hamor in Shechem. ¹⁷But as the time of the promise drew nigh, which God vouchsafed unto Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, ¹⁸till there arose another king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. ¹⁹The same dealt subtilly with our race, and evil entreated our fathers, that they should cast out their babes to the end they might not live. ²⁰At which season Moses was born, and was exceeding fair; and he was nourished three months in his father's house: ²¹and when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. ²²And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works. ²³But when he was well-nigh forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. ²⁴And seeing one of *them* suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, smiting the Egyptian: ²⁵and he supposed that his brethren understood how that God by his hand was giving them deliverance; but they understood not. ²⁶And the day following he appeared unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? ²⁷But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? ²⁸Wouldest thou kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian yesterday? ²⁹And Moses fled at this saying, and became a sojourner in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons. ³⁰And when forty years were fulfilled, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. ³¹And when Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold, there came a voice of the Lord, ³²I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. And Moses trembled, and durst not behold. ³³And the Lord said unto him, Loose the shoes from thy feet: for the place whereon thou

18 another king, i.e. of a different dynasty. The settlement of the family of Jacob in Egypt took place under the usurping dynasty of the Hyksos or shepherd kings, probably in the reign of Apepi. Five centuries later the ancient dynasty was restored by Amasis, and the new king who knew not Joseph belonged to this line—perhaps Rameses II. (Sesostris).

standest is holy ground. ³⁴I have surely seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I am come down to deliver them: and now come, I will send thee into Egypt. ³⁵This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? him hath God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. ³⁶This man led them forth, having wrought wonders and signs in Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years. ³⁷This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me. ³⁸This is he that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received living oracles to give unto us: ³⁹to whom our fathers would not be obedient, but thrust him from them, and turned back in their hearts unto Egypt, ⁴⁰saying unto Aaron, Make us gods which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, which led us forth out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. ⁴¹And they made a calf in those days, and brought a sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hands. ⁴²But God turned, and gave them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets,

Did ye offer unto me slain beasts and sacrifices

Forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel!

⁴³And ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch,

And the star of the god Rephan,

The figures which ye made to worship them:

And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

⁴⁴Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, even as he appointed who spake unto Moses, that he should make it according to the figure that he had seen. ⁴⁵Which also

³⁷ The same prophecy (Deut. 18¹⁶) is quoted by St. Peter in his speech in Solomon's porch (3²³).

⁴² A difficult passage quoted from Amos 5²⁵, following the Septuagint, with the substitution of Rephan (an entirely unknown deity) for Chiun (the Assyrian name for Saturn, god of war), and Babylon for Damascus. Amos is speaking prophetically of their future idolatry after being carried away by the Assyrians; Stephen uses the prophecy as evidence of star-worship in the wilderness. The insertion of Babylon, the typical later oppressor, in place of Damascus, is easily understandable.

our fathers, in their turn, brought in with Joshua when they entered on the possession of the nations, which God thrust out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; ⁴⁶who found favour in the sight of God, and asked to find a habitation for the God of Jacob. ⁴⁷But Solomon built him a house. ⁴⁸Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in *houses* made with hands; as saith the prophet,

⁴⁹The heaven is my throne,

And the earth the footstool of my feet :

What manner of house will ye build me ? saith the Lord :

Or what is the place of my rest ?

⁵⁰Did not my hand make all these things ?

⁵¹Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

⁵²Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute ? and they killed them which shewed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers; ⁵³ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not.

⁵⁴Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. ⁵⁵But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, ⁵⁶and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. ⁵⁷But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord; ⁵⁸and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *the Lord*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

47 Note the contrast with v. 44. bringing out Stephen's main argument that the Temple had not the same Divine authority as the tabernacle.

58 The mob loses all self-control and defies the Roman law by stoning Stephen, though the judicial form of taking him "outside the camp" (Lev. 24¹⁴) is maintained. Presumably the deed was carried out with such haste that there was no time for the Romans to interfere, but in any case Pontius Pilate was still procurator (*circa* A.D. 33), and from what we know of his character we can well imagine that he would hesitate to take action against the fanatical fury of the mob

⁶⁰And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. ¹And Saul was consenting unto his death. 8

1 Cf. 22²⁰, where St. Paul admits his complicity. He is described as a young man (7⁵⁸), and was probably thirty to thirty-five years old, receiving instruction from Gamaliel, and attached to one of the Hellenist synagogues. We have no evidence that he was a member of the Sanhedrin, but his great piety and zeal for the Law caused him to be held in high regard by the Jewish leaders, as we see from the prominent part he was given in the subsequent persecution of the Christians.

QUESTIONS ON PART I

**General*

1. On what grounds is it generally agreed that the Acts and the third Gospel are the work of a common author? Why are they attributed to St. Luke?
2. "Before these days rose up Theudas." Discuss the historical difficulty connected with this statement of Gamaliel.
3. "But the high priest . . . called the council together." Write what you know of the origin and constitution of this council.

Narrative

4. How does St. Peter describe (i) the necessary qualification, (ii) the future work, of a successor to Judas? How was the appointment made?
5. Describe the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and its effects.
6. Give a summary of St. Peter's speech on the day of Pentecost, noting particularly his use of Old Testament quotation.
7. What do we learn from these chapters of the mode of life of the early Christians?
8. Give an account of the healing of the cripple at the Beautiful Gate. What results (fortunate and unfortunate) followed the miracle?
9. Trace the growth in severity of the treatment of the early Christian teachers by the Jewish authorities.

* The Answers to the General Questions will be found mainly in the Introduction.

10. What abuse led up to the appointment of "the seven" ? How were they appointed ?

11. What were the charges brought against Stephen before the Sanhedrin ? How far did his speech of defence answer these charges ?

12. Explain the following phrases, and say in what connexion they occur :—Dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel ?—a sabbath day's journey—to speak with other tongues—the breaking of bread—the door . . . called Beautiful—the porch . . . called Solomon's—a prophet shall the Lord God raise up . . . like unto me.

13. Write short notes on :—Simon the Zealot ; the brethren of our Lord ; Akeldama ; captain of the Temple ; Caiaphas ; Gamaliel ; the Libertines.

PART II

CHAPTERS 8 TO 12

**THE EXTENSION OF THE CHURCH
TO JUDÆA, SAMARIA AND SYRIA**

Circa A.D. 33-47

"Ye shall be my witnesses . . . in all Judæa and Samaria."

ACTS 1⁸.

PALESTINE.

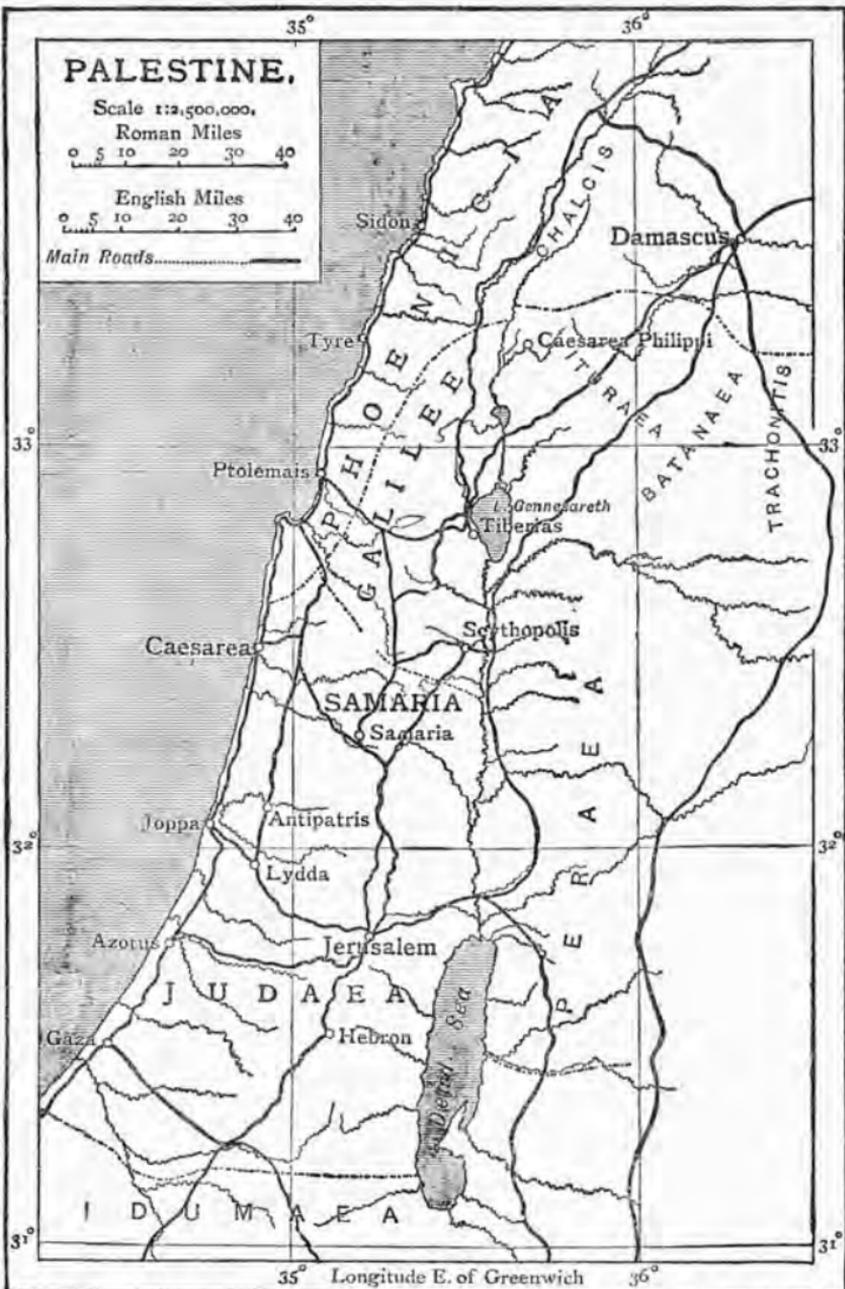
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PART II

CHAPTERS 8 TO 12

THE EXTENSION OF THE CHURCH TO JUDÆA, SAMARIA AND SYRIA

Circa A.D. 33-47

The Christian Dispersion. Philip's Mission to Samaria.

^{1b}And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. ²And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him. ³But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

⁴They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word. ⁵And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ. ⁶And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did. ⁷For from many of those which had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice: and many that were palsied, and

1 The first Christian dispersion marks an important step in the development of the Church. The Gospel teaching now spreads to "all Judæa and Samaria," and the second part of our Lord's prophecy (1^b) is fulfilled. Judæa is here used in the Roman sense of all Palestine except Samaria.

The attitude of the alien population of Samaria towards Christian teaching was a strange mixture of enthusiasm and disbelief. We read in St. John's Gospel (ch. 4) of our Lord's visit when "many . . . believed on him," and "he abode there two days." Two years later the Samaritan village refused to receive Him, "because his face was as though he were going to Jerusalem" (Lk. 9⁵³). The work of Philip described in this chapter seems to have been highly successful.

that were lame, were healed. ⁸And there was much joy in that city.

⁹But there was a certain man, Simon by name, which before-time in the city used sorcery, and amazed the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: ¹⁰to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is that power of God which is called Great. ¹¹And they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed them with his sorceries. ¹²But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³And Simon also himself believed: and being baptized, he continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great miracles wrought, he was amazed.

¹⁴Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: ¹⁵who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: ¹⁶for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. ¹⁸Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy

9 In this incident we have the first encounter of Christianity with sorcery and superstition (cf. 13⁸). Magicians of the type of Simon were common at this time; they sought by the use of jugglery and the "black arts" to establish a reputation as supernatural beings, and the Samaritans evidently regarded Simon as the incarnation of supreme divine power. Though converted and baptized (v. 13), it is doubtful if he became a sincere Christian disciple; he was struck with amazement at the "signs and great miracles" wrought by Philip (v. 13), and desired to add new powers to his repertoire of magic (v. 18). According to tradition he became hostile to St. Peter, followed him to Rome to oppose his teaching, and originated the Gnostic heresy.

14 The two senior Apostles are sent to investigate the report of Philip's wonderful success and to confirm the converts by the laying on of hands. No doubt this was the custom whenever possible, though it was not essential for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which might even precede baptism, as we see from 10⁴⁴. The rite of Confirmation as a special ceremony for the conferment of the Holy Spirit was a later development of this Apostolic custom.

18 From the conduct of Simon originates the word "simony," for the attempt to secure office or preferment in the Church by mercenary means.

Ghost was given, he offered them money, ¹⁹saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. ²⁰But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. ²¹Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter : for thy heart is not right before God. ²²Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. ²³For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. ²⁴And Simon answered and said, Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me.

²⁵They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

The Ethiopian Eunuch.

²⁶But an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza : the same is desert. ²⁷And he arose and went : and behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem for to worship ; ²⁸and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the

²³ The reading of the margin is preferable, ". . . wilt become a gall (or a gall root) of bitterness, and a bond of iniquity." St. Peter prophesies that he will become a bitter opponent of Christianity and a leader of heretical factions, a prophecy which seems to have been fulfilled later.

²⁶ the same is desert refers probably not to the road, but to the city of Gaza. The old city was two miles from the sea on the highway to Egypt ; the southernmost of the five cities of the Philistines. It was destroyed by Alexander Jannæus in 96 B.C., and still lay in ruins, though a new city had been built by Gabinus on the coast.

²⁷ Ethiopia was a district in the south of Egypt corresponding roughly to the modern Nubia and Abyssinia. It embraced several kingdoms, one of which (Meroë), according to Pliny, was at this time governed by a dynasty of queens under the title of Candace (cf. the Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, etc.).

The eunuch was no doubt of African nationality, but seems to have been a semi-proselyte.

prophet Isaiah. ²⁹And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. ³⁰And Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest ? ³¹And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me ? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. ³²Now the place of the scripture which he was reading was this,

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter ;
And as a lamb before his shearer is dumb.

So he openeth not his mouth :

³³In his humiliation his judgement was taken away :

His generation who shall declare ?

For his life is taken from the earth.

³⁴And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this ? of himself, or of some other ?

³⁵And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus. ³⁶And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water ; and the eunuch saith, Behold, *here is water* ; what doth hinder me to be baptized ? ³⁸And he commanded the chariot to stand still : and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch ; and he baptized him. ³⁹And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip ; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip was found at Azotus : and passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea.

³² The quotation is from the Septuagint version of Is. 53⁷ (the work of the second Isaiah). This picture of the suffering servant "despised and rejected" had probably not been recognised by the Jews as applicable to the Messiah ; but it was a favourite proof-text amongst the early Christians, who used it as evidence that the sufferings of Jesus were the fulfilment of Old Testament Messianic prophecy.

³⁷ This verse of the A.V. is omitted in the R.V. It is not found in the best MSS. and was probably interpolated during the second century.

⁴⁰ Azotus, about twenty miles N.E. of Gaza, is the Old Testament Ashdod, another of the five Philistine cities.

to all the cities, probably including Lydda and Joppa, where St. Peter later (9³²) found "saints" and disciples. Thence he came to Cæsarea, where he seems to have remained as an "evangelist," for he entertained St. Paul there some twenty years later (21⁸).

The Conversion of Saul.

¹But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against ²the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven: ⁴and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? ⁵And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: ⁶but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. ⁷And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man. ⁸And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. ⁹And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

¹⁰Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. ¹¹And the Lord said

² Damascus, the ancient capital of Syria, was intimately bound up with the history of the Jews. Under the Greek dynasty of the Seleucidae in the second century B.C. it had to take second place to Antioch, the new capital, but soon regained its prestige, and is at the present time a city containing nearly 200,000 inhabitants, while Antioch has barely one-seventh of that population. It always had a strong Jewish colony, and Josephus tells us that 10,000 Jews were massacred there during the Jewish war. Evidently Christianity had now obtained a firm footing there, the Christians being still attached to the synagogues.

³ On two occasions (22⁴ and 26¹²) St. Paul himself relates the full story of his conversion; the narratives should be compared with that given here (see also Gal. 1¹⁶).

⁷ The details of the three narratives differ here; probably the whole party heard the voice, but the actual words spoken were meant only for Saul, and were not distinguished by the rest of the company. Similarly it is probable that all saw the "light" (v. 3), but to Saul alone was vouchsafed the vision of Jesus which he includes amongst the appearances of the risen Lord (1 Cor. 15⁸).

¹¹ the street is still so called, and can be clearly distinguished in modern photographs of the city.

unto him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth; ¹²and he hath seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight. ¹³But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem: ¹⁴and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name. ¹⁵But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: ¹⁶for I will shew him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake. ¹⁷And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. ¹⁸And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; ¹⁹and he took food and was strengthened.

And he was certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. ²⁰And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God. ²¹And all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havock of them which called on this name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests. ²²But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.

15 chosen vessel: lit. as in the margin, "vessel of election." Saul's mission is to Jews as well as Gentiles, and we are hardly justified in attaching any special significance to the order in which they are placed. The corresponding passage in 26¹⁷ reads "the people . . . and the Gentiles."

17 Here the gift of the Holy Spirit accompanies the laying on of hands and precedes baptism, as in the case of Cornelius and his household (10⁴⁴).

19 From St. Paul's own account of his movements during this period (Gal. 1¹⁶⁻²⁴) we learn that the **certain days** covered a period of three years (perhaps one year and parts of two others), a portion of which was spent in retirement in Arabia, i.e. Arabia Petræa, the district S.E. of Damascus.

Saul's First Visit to the Church at Jerusalem.

²³And when many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him: ²⁴but their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates also day and night that they might kill him: ²⁵but his disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

²⁶And when he was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. ²⁷But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸And he was with them going in and going out at Jerusalem, ²⁹preaching boldly in the name of the Lord: and he spake and disputed against the Grecian Jews; but they went about to kill him. ³⁰And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

³¹So the church throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied.

St. Peter's Mission in Judæa.

³²And it came to pass, as Peter went throughout all parts, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda. ³³And there

²⁵ In 2 Cor. 11³² St. Paul tells us that "the governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes, in order to take me." Aretas was the Arab king of Petra, to whom the Romans seem to have deputed some measure of jurisdiction over Damascus, and the Jews of Damascus probably enlisted his help to prevent Saul's escape.

²⁷ Another variation from Gal. 1, in which St. Paul states that he saw only St. Peter and "James the Lord's brother." No mention is there made of the "disputing" with the Hellenists and the subsequent plot against his life (v. 29).

³¹ The only reference in the Acts to the "building up" (edification) of the Christian Church in Galilee.

³² *Lydda* (the Lod of the Old Testament) was a large village ten miles S.E. of Joppa on the Jerusalem road, on the border of the plain of *Sharon* (v. 35), which extended along the coast from Mt. Carmel to Joppa, and was noted for the beauty of its flowers, especially the rose (narcissus or crocus) of Sharon (cf. Song of Solomon 2¹).

he found a certain man named Æneas, which had kept his bed eight years; for he was palsied. ³⁴And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee: arise, and make thy bed. And straightway he arose. ³⁵And all that dwelt at Lydda and in Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

³⁶Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. ³⁷And it came to pass in those days, that she fell sick, and died: and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber. ³⁸And as Lydda was nigh unto Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men unto him, intreating him, Delay not to come on unto us. ³⁹And Peter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. ⁴⁰But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹And he gave her his hand, and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. ⁴²And it became known throughout all Joppa: and many believed on the Lord. ⁴³And it came to pass, that he abode many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

Conversion of the Gentile Cornelius.

10 ¹Now there was a certain man in Cæsarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man,

³⁶ Joppa (modern Jaffa) was the seaport of Jerusalem, the only seaport of which the Jews had complete possession.

Tabitha is the Aramaic, Dorcas the Greek, for a gazelle. The latter name is perpetuated in the modern charitable organisations known as "Dorcas Societies."

⁴⁰ In performing the miracle St. Peter seems to have followed very closely the method of his Master in the similar circumstances of the raising of Jairus' daughter, of which he was one of the few witnesses.

¹ The incident of Cornelius is related at such length and with so many indications of Divine guidance, that St. Luke evidently intends it to be regarded as marking a new epoch in the history of Christian

²and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. ³He saw in a vision openly, as it were about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him, Cornelius. ⁴And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being affrighted, said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God. ⁵And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter: ⁶he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side. ⁷And when the angel that spake unto him was departed, he called two of his household-servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; ⁸and having rehearsed all things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

development by the recognition of the right of Gentiles to a place in the Kingdom. Nicolas of Antioch (6^s) was a full proselyte; the Ethiopian eunuch (8st) was doubtless regarded as an exceptional case, but here the Divine will is made abundantly clear, as St. Peter himself claims when defending his action (11th, 15th).

Cæsarea on the coast, some sixty miles north of Joppa, was originally a small town known as Strato's Tower, but was developed by Herod the Great into a magnificent city. He constructed a harbour, the remains of which may still be seen, and erected many splendid buildings including a palace for himself (23rd). At the annexation of Judæa in A.D. 6, it was made the capital of the new Roman province, with the official residence of the procurator, and after the death of Agrippa I. in A.D. 44 it became a garrison town with five cohorts of infantry and a squadron of cavalry. A cohort was a tenth part of a Roman regiment or legion of 6000 men commanded by a tribune or *chiliarch* (e.g. Claudius Lysias, 21st), each cohort of six hundred men being divided into six centuries with a centurion in command.

The exact significance of the title *Italian band* (margin "cohort") has always presented a difficulty. It could not have been part of the regular Roman legions, for they were not distinguished by such titles, nor did they as a rule serve in the smaller provinces. Probably it was one of the auxiliary cohorts, composed of volunteers from the Roman citizens of Italy (not provincials). This explanation is supported by the recent discovery in Austria of an inscription which shows the presence of such a cohort ("the second Italian cohort of Roman citizens") in Syria in A.D. 69.

² a devout man and one that feared God; the usual description of a "God-fearer," or semi-proselyte (see note on 2¹⁰).

³ ninth hour. One of the three hours of prayer (see note on 2¹⁶).

⁷ a devout soldier; probably also a "God-fearer."

⁹Now on the morrow, as they were on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour: ¹⁰and he became hungry, and desired to eat: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance; ¹¹and he beholdeth the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth: ¹²wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and fowls of the heaven. ¹³And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. ¹⁴But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common and unclean. ¹⁵And a voice *came* unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common. ¹⁶And this was done thrice: and straightway the vessel was received up into heaven.

¹⁷Now while Peter was much perplexed in himself what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men that were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood before the gate, ¹⁸and called and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodging there. ¹⁹And while Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. ²⁰But arise, and get thee down, and go with them, nothing doubting: for I have sent them. ²¹And Peter went down to the men, and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come? ²²And they said, Cornelius a centurion, a righteous man and one that feareth God, and well reported of by all the nation of the Jews, was warned *of God* by a holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words from thee. ²³So he called them in and lodged them.

9 the housetop or flat roof of the oriental house, reached by an outside staircase, was a favourite resort for prayer and meditation.

14-15 The law of Clean and Unclean Meats is laid down with minute detail in Lev. 11. In spite of our Lord's words which made all meats clean (Mk. 7¹⁹), the restrictions were still held to be rigidly binding. Here the Jewish ceremonial law is definitely repudiated, representing symbolically that the Gentiles were no longer to be regarded as "common or unclean"—all creation had been cleansed by the redeeming work of the Saviour.

20 nothing doubting, i.e. without hesitation. St. Peter in his own version (11¹²) uses the more definite phrase, "making no distinction," i.e. between Jew and Gentile.

And on the morrow he arose and went forth with them, and certain of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴And on the morrow they entered into Cæsarea. And Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his kinsmen and his near friends. ²⁵And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. ²⁶But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. ²⁷And as he talked with him, he went in, and findeth many come together: ²⁸and he said unto them, Ye yourselves know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come unto one of another nation; and yet unto me hath God shewed that I should not call any man common or unclean: ²⁹wherefore also I came without gainsaying, when I was sent for. I ask therefore with what intent ye sent for me. ³⁰And Cornelius said, Four days ago, until this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house; and behold, a man stood before me in bright apparel, ³¹and saith, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. ³²Send therefore to Joppa, and call unto thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodgeth in the house of Simon a tanner, by the sea side. ³³Forthwith therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord. ³⁴And Peter opened his mouth, and said,

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: ³⁵but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him. ³⁶The word which he sent unto the

25 Probably nothing more than an expression of deep homage to a heaven-sent messenger, and not to be compared with the idolatry at Lystra (14¹¹). St. Peter, however, rejects this excessive reverence.

28 According to St. Paul (Gal. 2¹²) the same generous attitude was not adopted by St. Peter towards the Gentiles of Antioch.

34-43 The speech, addressed to Gentiles only, naturally differs considerably from St. Peter's earlier speeches in Jerusalem, being much more catholic in outlook. Thus Jesus is spoken of as Lord of all (v. 36); as Judge of the quick and the dead (42), and the Saviour of all that believe on Him (43). In the remarkable summary of His life and work He is portrayed as the great healer and conqueror of evil after the manner of the Petrine Gospel of St. Mark.

children of Israel, preaching good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)—³⁷that saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judæa, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; ³⁸*even* Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. ³⁹And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. ⁴⁰Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, ⁴¹not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he which is ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. ⁴³To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.

⁴⁴While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. ⁴⁵And they of the circumcision which believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. ⁴⁶For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, ⁴⁷Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? ⁴⁸And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Controversy regarding St. Peter's Attitude to the Gentiles.

- 11 ¹Now the apostles and the brethren that were in Judæa heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ²And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circum-

44 Here the Holy Spirit is given without any preliminary rite, and its presence is made evident by the gift of tongues; baptism follows later (v. 48).

2 St. Peter's action in consorting and eating with Gentiles is called in question by the strictly Judaic Christians, though probably not by the Apostles themselves. The incident marks the opening of the

cision contended with him, saying, ³Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. ⁴But Peter began, and expounded *the matter* unto them in order, saying, ⁵I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even unto me: ⁶upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw the four-footed beasts of the earth and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the heaven. ⁷And I heard also a voice saying unto me, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. ⁸But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath ever entered into my mouth. ⁹But a voice answered the second time out of heaven, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common. ¹⁰And this was done thrice: and all were drawn up again into heaven. ¹¹And behold, forthwith three men stood before the house in which we were, having been sent from Cæsarea unto me. ¹²And the Spirit bade me go with them, making no distinction. And these six brethren also accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house: ¹³and he told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, Send to Joppa, and fetch Simon, whose surname is Peter; ¹⁴who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house. ¹⁵And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. ¹⁶And I remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. ¹⁷If then God gave unto them the like gift as *he did* also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God? ¹⁸And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.

controversy with regard to the status of the Gentiles in the Church, and though St. Peter's action was ratified in this particular case, the principle involved did not meet with general acceptance as we see later (c. 15).

12 Apparently St. Peter, realising the critical nature of his visit to Cornelius, had brought the six brethren with him to Jerusalem as witnesses.

16 the word of the Lord, spoken to the Apostles before the Ascension (1⁵).

Foundation of the Church at Antioch.

¹⁹They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews. ²⁰But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. ²¹And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord. ²²And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch: ²³who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord: ²⁴for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. ²⁵And he went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul: ²⁶and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year

19 The brief summary given here of the stages by which Christianity was spread after the dispersion may be filled in as follows: From Jerusalem to the seaport Cæsarea, thence along the route of coasting vessels to Ptolemais, Tyre and Sidon (**Phœnicia**), where St. Paul finds Christian communities later (21⁴, 7, 27²). From these ports it travelled westward to **Cyprus** (perhaps through the influence of Barnabas), and still farther north to Seleucia, the port of **Antioch**, and thence to Antioch itself.

Antioch on the Orontes, fifteen miles from Seleucia, was at this time (c. A.D. 36) the chief city of the East, ranking after Alexandria as the third city of the Empire. Situated in the extreme north of Syria, almost on the Cilician border, it was the capital of the province of Syria-Cilicia, and the headquarters of the Roman procurator. It was one of the most cosmopolitan cities, with a mixed population of Syrians, Greeks, Romans and Jews. It now became the provincial metropolis of Christianity, and the chief centre of its missionary work.

20 **Greeks** here probably means Greek nationals, not Hellenists; the missionaries themselves were Hellenists. This is a further forward step in the spread of Christianity, anticipating to some extent the work of St. Paul.

22 **Barnabas**, the Cypriote Hellenist, is sent to further the work of his own countrymen, just as the senior Apostles visited Samaria during Philip's mission (8¹⁴).

26 The people of Antioch were famous for their wit and use of epigram. For the new sect they coined the name **Christians**, followers

they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

The Relief Mission to Jerusalem.

²⁷Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. ²⁸And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. ²⁹And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa: ³⁰which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

of Christ, on the analogy of Pompeians, Herodians, etc. It often took the form Chrestians among heathen people, who confused the title Christ with a very similar, and better-known word Chrestus (sometimes used as a proper name), signifying "a good worthy fellow." Like many another nickname it was adopted later as an honourable title, though in the two passages in which it appears in the New Testament (Acts 26²⁸, 1 Pet. 4¹⁶) it seems to be used as a term of contempt.

27 The prophets as successors of their Old Testament prototypes seem to have had some measure of Divine inspiration, which enabled them (as here) to foretell events, and reveal the wishes of God. No doubt they also took part in the work of teaching, and they rank next to the Apostles as witnesses of the life and work of Jesus. They are mentioned in connexion with teachers in 13¹, and Agabus reappears in 21¹⁰ at the house of Philip, whose four daughters are described as prophetesses.

28 According to Tacitus there were many famines in the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41-54). Josephus records one which reached its climax in A.D. 46, the probable date of the relief deputation.

30 The elders (presbyters) here mentioned for the first time were the leaders appointed to take charge of church organisation on the model of Jewish administration, not only in Jerusalem, but in the newly-founded Churches. In this passage they appear as responsible for the administration of relief in succession to "the Seven" who were now scattered. Probably about this time, owing to Herod's persecution, the Apostles had to leave Jerusalem, and the Church would then be in charge of the elders with St. James at their head. In provincial and foreign cities, where Christian worship was largely carried on in the form of household meetings, the masters of large houses would tend to take the lead in organisation, and thus perform the duties of elders.

Persecution of the Apostles by Herod Agrippa.

12 ¹Now about that time Herod the king put forth his hands to afflict certain of the church. ²And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. ³And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. And *those* were the days of unleavened bread. ⁴And when he had taken him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to guard him; intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people. ⁵Peter therefore was kept in the prison: but prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him. ⁶And when Herod was about to bring him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and

1 The events of this chapter are important as marking the conclusion of the "Acts of Peter" and preparing the way for the "Acts of Paul." Moreover, it records the final rejection by the Jews (this time through their king) of the Gospel message, and changes the scene to Antioch, which now becomes the chief centre of the missionary movement.

Herod, i.e. Herod Agrippa I., grandson of Herod the Great and nephew of the tetrarch Antipas. Educated at Rome, he found favour with the Emperors Caligula and Claudius; the former on his accession in A.D. 37 made him ruler of the united tetrarchies of his uncles, Antipas and Philip, with the title of King, and the latter, in A.D. 41, added the Roman province of Judæa to his domains. After his death in A.D. 44, the whole of Palestine again became a Roman province till A.D. 53, when his son, Agrippa II., regained the territory as a Jewish kingdom. He and his two sisters, Bernice and Drusilla, are mentioned in connexion with St. Paul's trials (24²⁴, 25¹³).

2 James the brother of John was the first Apostle to suffer martyrdom. There may have been other victims, but the statement of Philippos of Side (A.D. 430), who quotes Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in the early second century, as saying that "John the theologian" perished with his brother, is difficult to reconcile with the well-founded tradition of his long life at Ephesus.

3 The days of unleavened bread were the seven days following the Passover feast on Nisan 14 (March-April). The city would be thronged with Jews zealous for the Law, and Herod seized the opportunity to gain popularity by an exhibition of hatred against the "Nazarenes." He had, however, to conform to Jewish custom by deferring judgment till the Passover week was ended (v. 4).

4 four quaternions, i.e. four guards of four men, one for each watch. Two were in the cell chained to the prisoner (v. 6), the other two being on guard at the doors. The utmost precautions were taken to prevent a repetition of his former escape (5¹⁹).

guards before the door kept the prison. ⁷And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the cell: and he smote Peter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. ⁸And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. ⁹And he went out, and followed; and he wist not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. ¹⁰And when they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city; which opened to them of its own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him. ¹¹And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a truth, that the Lord hath sent forth his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. ¹²And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together and were praying. ¹³And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a maid came to answer, named Rhoda. ¹⁴And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for joy, but ran in, and told that Peter stood before the gate. ¹⁵And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she confidently affirmed that it was even so. And they said, It is his angel. ¹⁶But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened, they saw him, and were amazed. ¹⁷But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold

⁷ an angel of the Lord appears as in 5¹⁹. It has been suggested that the passages may be doublets.

¹² the house of Mary was probably a recognised meeting-place for the early Christians (see note on 1¹³). The early friendship of St. Peter and St. Mark was renewed later at Rome, where the Petrine Gospel of St. Mark was written.

¹⁵ It was a common belief among the Jews at this time that every person had his or her own guardian angel (the Roman *genius*), and our Lord seems to countenance the belief in His beautiful description of the heavenly guardians of "these little ones" (Mt. 18¹⁰). Sometimes, as here, the guardian angel was assumed to take the form of his *protégé*.

¹⁷ James, the brother of our Lord, henceforward appears as the head of the Jerusalem Church, as we see from 15¹³ and 21¹⁸. The departure of St. Peter recorded here probably marks the end of Apostolic work in the capital.

their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him forth out of the prison. And he said, Tell these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went to another place. ¹⁶Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. ¹⁹And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the guards, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judæa to Cæsarea, and tarried there.

Death of Herod.

²⁰Now he was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon : and they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, they asked for peace, because their country was fed from the king's country. ²¹And upon a set day Herod arrayed himself in royal apparel, and sat on the throne, and made an oration unto them. ²²And the people shouted, *saying*, The voice of a god, and not of a man. ²³And immediately an angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory : and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

Return of the Relief Mission.

²⁴But the word of God grew and multiplied.

²⁵And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministration, taking with them John whose surname was Mark.

²⁰ Why Herod was displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon is not known, but he retaliated by cutting off their corn supplies, which were largely imported from Galilee. As famine was threatened at the time this would be a very serious matter.

²¹ The *set day* according to Josephus was a magnificent festival given in honour of Claudius on his safe return from Britain. Clad in a gorgeous silver robe, he made his oration to the Phœnician deputation from his official seat in the amphitheatre, and accepted without demur his deification by the flattering populace. He was suddenly seized with internal pains and died after five days of terrible suffering.

²⁵ their ministration, i.e. the relief mission of 11³⁰.

John Mark was the son of Mary (12¹²) and cousin or nephew of Barnabas (Col. 4¹⁰); probably a Hellenist, and therefore a suitable companion for their future Gentile missions.

QUESTIONS ON PART II

General

1. Trace the steps by which Christianity was extended beyond the limits of the Jewish nation during the period covered by these chapters.

2. From what sources do you think it likely that the author obtained his materials for the early narrative of the Acts?

3. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Show how this statement was fulfilled in the case of Stephen.

4. Chapters 1 to 12 of the Acts are frequently spoken of as "the acts of Peter." Justify the title.

Narrative

5. Give an account of the evangelisation of Samaria. What do you know of the former attitude of its inhabitants towards Christian teaching?

6. Summarise briefly the events of Saul's life from the time that he was led into Damascus till the start of his first missionary journey.

7. Describe the miracles performed by St. Peter during his mission in Judæa.

8. Narrate the events leading up to the visit of St. Peter to Cornelius. How were they used by St. Peter to justify his action?

9. Show how St. Peter's speech in the house of Cornelius was adapted to suit his audience. What results attended its conclusion?

10. Relate the circumstances attending the death of Herod, and write what you know of this Herod.

11. Explain the following phrases, stating the connexion in which they occur:—thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity—He was led as a sheep to the slaughter—a devout man, and one that feared God—the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch—Tell these things unto James, and to the brethren.

12. Write short notes on:—Candace; the street . . . called Straight; the Italian band; Agabus; Rhoda; Blastus.

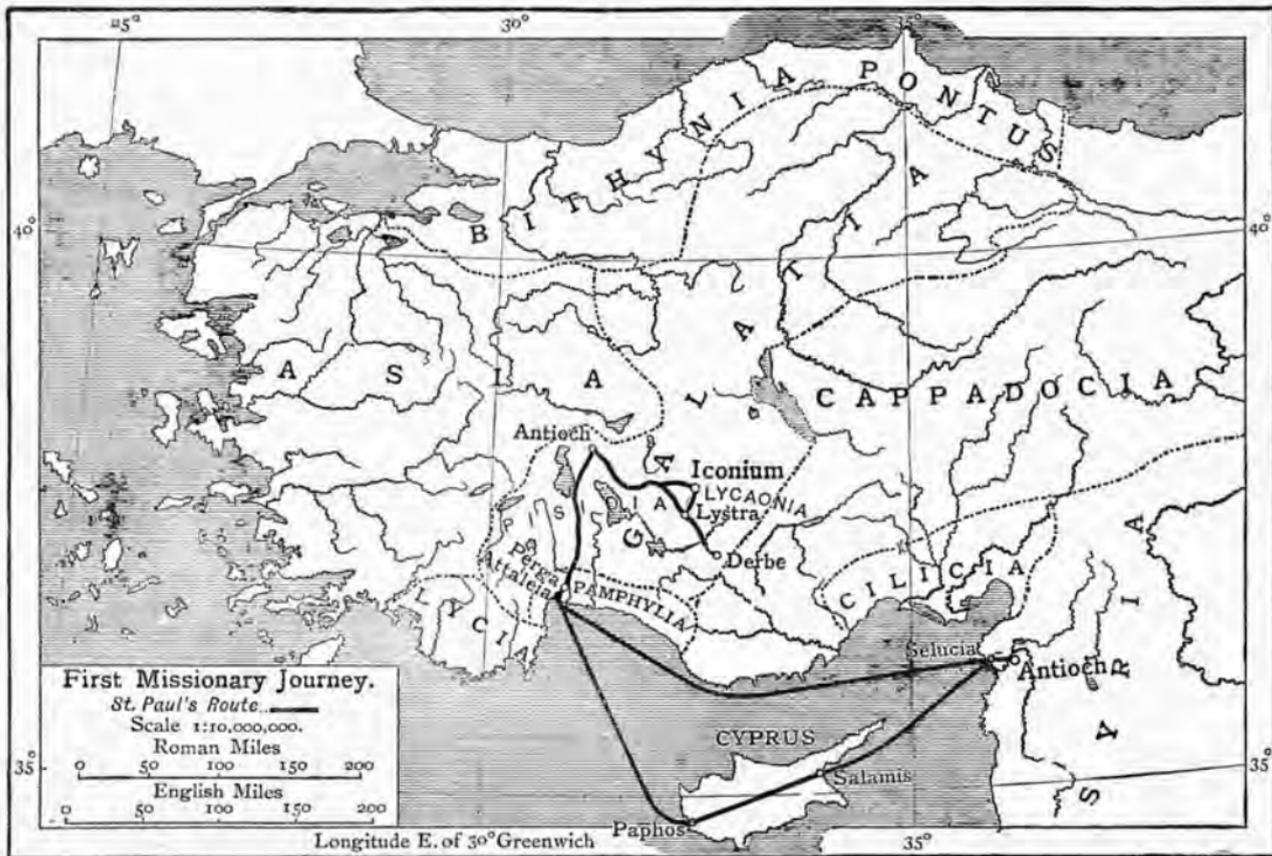
PART III

CHAPTERS 13 TO 15⁵⁶

ST. PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY AND
THE CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM

Circa A.D. 47-49

"Lo, we turn to the Gentiles."—ACTS 13⁴⁶.



PART III

CHAPTERS 13 TO 15³⁶

ST. PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY AND THE CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM

Circa A.D. 47-49

Consecration of the Missionaries for their Work.

¹Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was *there*, **13** prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ²And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ³Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Visit to Cyprus. Elymas the Sorcerer.

⁴So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, went down to

1 The detailed enumeration of the prophets and teachers, including three not mentioned elsewhere, favours the view that St. Luke was directly connected with Antioch and that the Acts was probably written there. Note that Barnabas and Saul are separated, and the latter placed at the end of the list.

St. Luke's knowledge of the household of Herod Antipas is shown on many occasions in his Gospel, e.g. the mention of Joanna. Here he describes **Manaen** (Hebrew, Menahem) as **foster-brother** (better, "playmate") of the tetrarch.

2 Note the extremely solemn nature of the commission for the new work: (i) the ministrations and fasting of the Church, (ii) the selection of Barnabas and Saul by the Holy Spirit, (iii) prayer and fasting accompanied by the laying on of hands, and finally (iv) the sending forth by the Holy Spirit.

4 **Seleucia** was the port of Antioch, fifteen miles distant at the mouth of the Orontes.

Cyprus was no doubt chosen as being the native-place of Barnabas

Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant. ⁶And when they had gone through the whole island unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus; ⁷which was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding. The same called unto him Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God. ⁸But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith. ⁹But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, fastened his eyes on him, ¹⁰and said, O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? ¹¹And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. ¹²Then the proconsul,

We know from 11¹⁹ that dispersed Christians had visited the island, but had confined their preaching to the Jews. Mnason of Cyprus is described in 21¹⁸ as "an early disciple."

5 The word for attendant is the same as that used for the synagogue attendant (*chazzan*) in Lk. 4³⁰, and it is in connexion with the preaching in the synagogue that it is used here. Probably one of his chief duties would be the baptizing of converts.

6 Paphos (modern Baffo), at the extreme west of the island, was celebrated for its temple of Aphrodite.

Bar-Jesus (son of Jesus) was the Jewish name; Elymas, an additional Greek title, perhaps connected with an Arabic word meaning "wise." He was another *magus* of the type of Simon of Samaria (8¹⁸).

7 St. Luke uses the accurate title proconsul. Cyprus had been constituted a Senatorial province by Augustus in 22 B.C. Such provinces were governed by a proconsul acting for the senate, in contradistinction to the Imperial provinces (like Judæa), where the Emperor's direct representative had the title of procurator. Cyprus had previously belonged to this class. The name of a proconsul called Paulus has been found on an inscription discovered at Soloi in Northern Cyprus.

9 Saul the Jew now becomes Paul the Roman citizen, and the Jewish name is dropped. Probably it is a mere coincidence that his Roman name was the same as that of the proconsul. Henceforward, too (except in 15¹² in Jewish surroundings), the order of precedence changes to "Paul and Barnabas."

when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Antioch of Pisidia.

¹³Now Paul and his company set sail from Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem. ¹⁴But they, passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. ¹⁵And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. ¹⁶And Paul stood up, and beckoning with the hand said,

Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, hearken. ¹⁷The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when

¹³ Perga, the capital of Pamphylia, was on the Cestrus, eight miles inland from the port of Attalia. The reason for John Mark's departure can only be surmised; that St. Paul considered it a serious matter is obvious from the "sharp contention" to which it gave rise (15³⁸). Perhaps he was unable to keep pace with the rapid development of St. Paul's plans for Gentile evangelisation, involving an extension of his journey into the interior of Asia Minor.

¹⁴ There is no mention of preaching in Pamphylia. A suggested explanation is based on St. Paul's statement in his letter to the Galatians (4¹³) that it was "because of an infirmity of the flesh" that he first preached to them, and on his mention in 2 Cor. 12⁷ of "a thorn (or stake) in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me." It is supposed that in the low-lying, enervating district of Pamphylia he was attacked (or threatened) by illness, perhaps malaria, to escape which he made for the higher ground and more bracing climate of Antioch. The "infirmity of the flesh" may have affected his eyesight, for there are many references in his letters and in the Acts which are best explained by the supposition that his sight was weak, e.g. Acts 23⁵, Gal. 4¹⁵, 6¹¹.

Antioch of Pisidia was actually in the S.E. corner of Phrygia on the Pisidian border. It was the chief city of the *regio* or district of Phrygia, capital of the province of South Galatia, and (like Philippi) had the status of a Roman colony.

¹⁷ The speech, addressed to a mixed audience of Jews, proselytes and "God-fearers," opens, like Stephen's defence, with an historical introduction showing the guiding hand of Jehovah in the early history of Israel up to the time of David. Of David's line came the Saviour, Jesus, recognised by St. John the Baptist as the Messiah; He was

they sojourned in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm led he them forth out of it. ¹⁸And for about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. ¹⁹And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave *them* their land for an inheritance, for about four hundred and fifty years: ²⁰and after these things he gave *them* judges until Samuel the prophet. ²¹And afterward they asked for a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for the space of forty years. ²²And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king; to whom also he bare witness, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who shall do all my will. ²³Of this man's seed hath God according to promise brought unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus; ²⁴when John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. ²⁵And as John was fulfilling his course, he said, What suppose ye that I am? I am not *he*. But behold, there cometh one after me, the shoes of whose feet I am not worthy to unloose.

not received as such by the Jews, but rejected and slain; God raised Him from the dead, as the Apostles bear witness, like the prophets of old: through Him rather than the Law of Moses may be obtained justification and remission of sins. The address closes with a warning of the danger of rejecting the message now delivered to them.

For the origin of the *synagogues* see p. xxiii. They were plain rectangular buildings so sited that one end pointed to Jerusalem. The chief furniture was an ark or chest containing the copy of the Torah (or Pentateuch) and rolls of the Prophets; the "bema" (pulpit) for the reader and preacher; and a number of "chief seats" for the elders. The women were separated from the men, and sat behind a lattice. The service began with prayers, followed by the reading and translation into Aramaic (the spoken language) of a lesson from the Hebrew Torah. A passage was then read from the Prophets and an address given on it. Any distinguished visitor might be asked to take this part of the service, and it was at this point that St. Paul was invited to address the congregation.

The attendant (*chazzan*) was a kind of verger, who had charge of the ark and the building generally. He sometimes acted as teacher during the week in the synagogue school for children.

¹⁸ suffered he their manners. Better "treated them considerately." The margin has "bare he them as a nursing-father," with a reference to Deut. 1³¹.

²¹ St. Paul, like his royal namesake, belonged to the tribe of Benjamin.

²⁶Brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and those among you that fear God, to us is the word of this salvation sent forth. ²⁷For they that dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath, fulfilled *them* by condemning *him*. ²⁸And though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet asked they of Pilate that he should be slain. ²⁹And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰But God raised him from the dead: ³¹and he was seen for many days of them that came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses unto the people. ³²And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers, ³³how that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children, in that he raised up Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. ³⁴And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure *blessings* of David. ³⁵Because he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption. ³⁶For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: ³⁷but he whom God raised up saw no corruption. ³⁸Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: ³⁹and by him every one that believeth is justified from all things,

26 to us (A.V. "to you") probably refers to the Jews of the Dispersion, as opposed to the Palestinian Jews, who are denounced in the next verse for their ignorance and neglect of the prophetic scriptures.

29 Either St. Paul was unacquainted at this time with the details of our Lord's burial by Joseph and Nicodemus, or the source from which the speech is derived made a mistake, which St. Luke has not corrected. The burial is fully described in his Gospel (23⁵³).

33 raised up may refer here either to the Incarnation or the Resurrection. The former seems more appropriate in view of the quotation from Ps. 2. In the following verse we have the Resurrection mentioned, again with an appropriate quotation (Is. 55³).

39 justified—"set right"; "put on the right basis." We have here the germ of St. Paul's teaching on justification by faith and not by the Law, which he brings out fully in the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians (see Gal. 2¹⁶).

from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. ⁴⁰Beware therefore, lest that come upon *you*, which is spoken in the prophets ;

⁴¹Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish ;

For I work a work in your days,

A work which ye shall in no wise believe, if one declare it unto you.

⁴²And as they went out, they besought that these words might be spoken to them the next sabbath. ⁴³Now when the synagogue broke up, many of the Jews and of the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas : who, speaking to them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

Inclusion of the Gentiles in the Missionary Work.

⁴⁴And the next sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. ⁴⁵But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed. ⁴⁶And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*,

⁴³ devout proselytes—proselytes of the devout or God-fearing class, i.e. "God-fearers."

⁴⁵ the multitudes were doubtless largely composed of Gentiles, and perhaps the second address (not recorded here) dealt specially with the offer of salvation to Gentile as well as Jew. As a result, the exclusiveness of the stricter Jews shows itself in a jealous opposition to the teaching of St. Paul, who now definitely announces his intention to "turn to the Gentiles." Here it may have only local significance (it is repeated at Corinth, 18⁶), but the incident is clearly intended by St. Luke to mark the opening of "a door of faith unto the Gentiles" (14²⁷).

⁴⁷ Quoted from Is. 49⁶, where it is used of the "servant of the Lord" who was to restore the "preserved of Israel" and become "a light to the Gentiles." Later it came to be taken as prophetic of the Messiah, in which sense it is used by Simeon in the Nunc Dimittis (Lk. 2³²). Here it is used by the Apostles themselves as authority for the important step they are taking.

I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles,

That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.

⁴⁸And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. ⁴⁹And the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region. ⁵⁰But the Jews urged on the devout women of honourable estate, and the chief men of the city, and stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their borders. ⁵¹But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. ⁵²And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost.

Iconium.

¹And it came to pass in Iconium, that they entered together **14** into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. ²But the Jews that were disobedient stirred up the souls of the Gentiles, and made them evil affected against the brethren. ³Long time therefore they tarried *there* speaking boldly in the Lord, which bare witness unto the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ⁴But the multitude of the city was divided;

⁴⁸ ordained to—"disposed to"; "prepared for by their own human endeavour." There is no suggestion of predestination by Divine decree as opposed to the free-will of man.

⁵⁰ The mention of the devout women is another example of St. Luke's accurate knowledge of local conditions. Unlike other parts of the Roman Empire, Asia Minor was noted for the high esteem in which its women were held, many of them holding high office in the cities.

⁵¹ They act in accordance with our Lord's injunction to the Twelve (Mt. 10¹⁴), and the Seventy (Lk. 10¹¹).

1 Iconium (modern Konieh) was 90 miles S.E. of Antioch, but in the same *regio* of the province of Galatia; formerly the chief city of a group of Lycaonian towns, it had at this time been separated from them, and was governed by its own city magistrates. It is now a town of 60,000 inhabitants and the seat of a Greek Archbishopric.

entered . . . into the synagogue. In spite of St. Paul's declaration at Antioch, he begins his work among the Jews. The Greeks here mentioned would probably be proselytes.

and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. ⁵And when there was made an onset both of the Gentiles and of the Jews with their rulers, to entreat them shamefully, and to stone them, ⁶they became aware of it, and fled unto the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the region round about: ⁷and there they preached the gospel.

Lystra ; the Attempt on St. Paul's Life.

⁸And at Lystra there sat a certain man, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. ⁹The same heard Paul speaking: who, fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, ¹⁰said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked. ¹¹And when the multitudes saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. ¹²And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³And the priest of Jupiter whose *temple* was before the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would

6 They pass from Phrygian Galatia into the next *regio* of Lycaonia. Lystra was about 20 miles S.W. of Iconium, and, like Antioch, a Roman colony with strong Roman influence; it was probably the home of Timothy (16¹). Derbe was fifteen miles further S.E., the frontier city of Galatia on the Cilician border, about 150 miles from St. Paul's native city, Tarsus. Both Lystra and Derbe were military centres; there is no mention of a synagogue in either place. According to the "South Galatian theory" the three cities mentioned here formed, with Antioch, the Galatian church to which St. Paul addresses his Epistle.

9 fastening his eyes, A.V. "stedfastly beholding," is also used of St. Paul in 13⁹ and 23¹, and has been taken as evidence of defective eyesight resulting from his temporary blindness at Damascus, or from his illness in Pamphylia (see note on 13¹⁴).

11 The bi-lingual natives in their excitement break out into their mother tongue. Ovid, in his *Metamorphoses*, relates a legend of the neighbourhood in which Zeus and Hermes (Jupiter and Mercury) visited two old peasants Philemon and Baucis in the likeness of men. Hermes was the messenger of the gods; hence the name is given to St. Paul as the younger and more eloquent.

13 Better, "the priest of Jupiter before-the-city," so called because of the position of the temple outside the city. An inscription bearing this title has been found in the district

have done sacrifice with the multitudes. ¹⁴But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they rent their garments, and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out and saying, ¹⁵Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: ¹⁶who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness. ¹⁸And with these sayings scarce restrained they the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them.

¹⁹But there came Jews thither from Antioch and Iconium: and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. ²⁰But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city: and on the morrow he went forth with Barnabas to Derbe.

Return to Syrian Antioch.

²¹And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, ²²confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. ²³And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed. ²⁴And they passed through Pisidia, and came to Pamphylia. ²⁵And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia; ²⁶and thence they sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been committed to the grace of God for

15-17 This speech should be compared with that at Athens (17²²), where St. Paul also addresses a pagan audience, though one of much higher culture and education. Here St. Paul preaches a "natural religion," and appeals to them to abandon idolatry, and turn to the living God, the maker of all things and the giver of all the material blessings of nature.

25 This time they undertake missionary work in Perga before proceeding to the port of Attalia (see note on 13¹⁴).

the work which they had fulfilled. ²⁷And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and how that he had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles. ²⁸And they tarried no little time with the disciples.

Controversy regarding Circumcision.

15 ¹And certain men came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, *saying*, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of

1 In this chapter we have St. Luke's account of the Christian council called together to discuss the critical question of the attitude of Gentile converts to the Jewish law. The whole of the first part of the Acts leads up to this crisis. The charge against Stephen was that he had spoken disparagingly of the Temple and the Law; St. Paul, with his still more liberal ideals, had aroused the opposition of the Galatian Jews, which had resulted in his expulsion from their cities and the attempt upon his life at Lystra; now the whole question rises in an acute form at home.

It seems probable that since the dispersion after Stephen's death the Church had been recruited from, and largely influenced by, the strictly orthodox Jews, and we hear for the first time in v. 5 of the "Pharisees who believed." The isolated case of Cornelius, backed by the authority of St. Peter, had been condoned, but the steady influx of Gentiles, many of them non-(or only semi-)proselytes, threatened to swamp orthodox Judaism, and could not be tolerated. A bold attack is made on the new movement in its own stronghold, Antioch, with the uncompromising assertion that only through circumcision and obedience of the Mosaic Law can salvation be attained. The only entrance to the Way of Christianity is by the gate of Judaism. St. Paul could not accept complete obedience to Jewish law as a *sine qua non*. Not by circumcision and meticulous observance of the Law could the Gentile world be evangelised, but by repentance and faith, which alone could bring remission of sins (13³⁹). Only on these lines could there be any hope of a universal Church of Christ.

The result, according to the Acts, seems to be the complete admission of St. Paul's claim, qualified by the admonition that the simple observances generally required of proselytes should be kept, and safeguarded by the recognition (v. 21) that the Law of Moses would continue to be the basis of the synagogue worship. We learn, however, from St. Paul's Epistles that a considerable minority of his countrymen were not satisfied with the decision, and continued to oppose his idea of a Universal Church.

The certain men were probably Christian Pharisees who claimed the authority of the Jerusalem Church for their teaching. This is denied by St. James (v. 24).

Moses, ye cannot be saved. ²And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, *the brethren* appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. ³They therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phœnicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. ⁴And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them. ⁵But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.

Meeting of the Christian Council.

⁶And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter. ⁷And when there had been much questioning, Peter rose up, and said unto them,

Brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. ⁸And God, which knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; ⁹and he made no distinction between us and them,

² certain other of them may have included Titus, whose name figures largely in St. Paul's account of the controversy (Gal. 2¹) though his name is never mentioned in the Acts (see note on 16³).

³ Phœnicia and Samaria shared in the great joy at the conversion of the Gentiles, but there is no mention of Judæa. The omission seems deliberate.

⁴ they were received, i.e. publicly by the Jerusalem Church, and St. Paul and Barnabas gave a summary of their missionary work. The Pharisaic Christians, however, maintain their ground, and thus a formal meeting becomes necessary (v. 6) to debate the matter. In Gal. 2 St. Paul mentions only a private discussion with "them who were of repute."

⁷ Probably St. Peter refers to the conversion of Cornelius and the subsequent ratification of his action by the Apostles at Jerusalem (11²). a good while ago, lit. "in the days of the beginning." This seems to point to a very early date for the conversion of Cornelius, but is hardly a justification for referring back St. Peter's words to the Divine commission given to the Apostles (Lk. 24⁴⁷, Mt. 28¹⁸).

cleansing their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Now therefore why tempt ye God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they.

¹²And all the multitude kept silence; and they hearkened unto Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. ¹³And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying,

Brethren, hearken unto me: ¹⁴Symeon hath rehearsed how first God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. ¹⁵And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

¹⁶After these things I will return,

And I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen;

And I will build again the ruins thereof,

And I will set it up:

¹⁷That the residue of men may seek after the Lord,

And all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called,

¹⁸Saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from the beginning of the world.

¹⁹Wherefore my judgement is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles turn to God; ²⁰but that we write unto them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood. ²¹For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath.

19 Evidently the summing up of the president, St. James, now head of the Church at Jerusalem.

20 **pollutions of idols**, i.e. things sacrificed to idols, as in v. 29 and 21²⁶. They were to abstain from eating meat which had been polluted by having been offered in sacrifice to idols.

what is strangled and blood may be taken together. This was a prohibition from eating any form of meat from which the blood had not been drained, as enjoined in Lev. 17¹¹, on the ground that "the life (margin, "soul") of the flesh is in the blood." These restrictions as to eating, if followed, would remove the chief difficulty in the way of intercourse between Jew and Gentile in the Christian community.

21 Added by St. James to show the reasonableness of the decision. The Law of Moses was well known even to Gentiles through the synagogue worship, and they would not consider it a hardship to be

The Decree and its Promulgation.

²²Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: ²³and they wrote *thus* by them, The apostles and the elder brethren unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting: ²⁴Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment; ²⁵it seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things by word of mouth. ²⁸For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; ²⁹that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.

³⁰So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle. ³¹And when they had read it, they rejoiced for the consolation. ³²And Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. ³³And after they had spent some time *there*, they

asked to carry out these simple regulations. On the other hand the stricter Judaic party might rest assured that there was no fear of the Mosaic Law falling into disuse as long as the synagogue services continued.

22 Judas called Barsabbas may have been the brother of Joseph Barsabbas (1²³), and probably represented the Hebrew section. Silas on the other hand was probably a Hellenist; he appears later as St. Paul's missionary companion (v. 40).

23 The letter is sent only to Syria and Cilicia. St. Paul delivers the decree to South Galatia (16⁴), and in 21²⁵ St. James regards it as applicable to all "the Gentiles who have believed."

were dismissed in peace from the brethren unto those that had sent them forth. ³⁵But Paul and Barnabas tarried in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

34 This verse, omitted from the R.V., is added in the margin, "but it seemed good unto Silas to abide there." It is not found in the best MSS., and is doubtless an interpolation explaining the presence of Silas at Antioch for the start of the second missionary journey (v. 40).

QUESTIONS ON PART III

General

1. "But they, passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia." Assuming the Epistle to the Galatians to be addressed to the south Galatian churches, what light does it throw upon St. Paul's movements at this period ?

2. Write what you know of the origin of the synagogues and of their use. What form did the synagogue worship take ?

3. What evidence has been adduced from these chapters as to the native place of the author ?

Narrative

4. Compare the attitude of Elymas towards Christianity with that of Simon of Samaria.

5. Summarise St. Paul's speech at Pisidian Antioch. In what respects does it (a) resemble, (b) differ from, Stephen's defence ?

6. Give an account of the events at Lystra during St. Paul's first visit. What do you know of the character of its inhabitants ?

7. Relate the events which led up to the meeting of the Council of Jerusalem. How far may its decision be regarded as a compromise ?

8. Mention any passages quoted from the Old Testament in these chapters, stating by whom, and for what purpose, they were used.

9. Explain the following phrases, giving the connexion in which they occur :—after the reading of the law and the prophets—lo, we turn to the Gentiles—the devout women of honourable estate—they rehearsed . . . how that he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles—For Moses . . . hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath.

10. Write short notes on :—Manaen ; proconsul ; Antioch of Pisidia ; elders ; Silas.

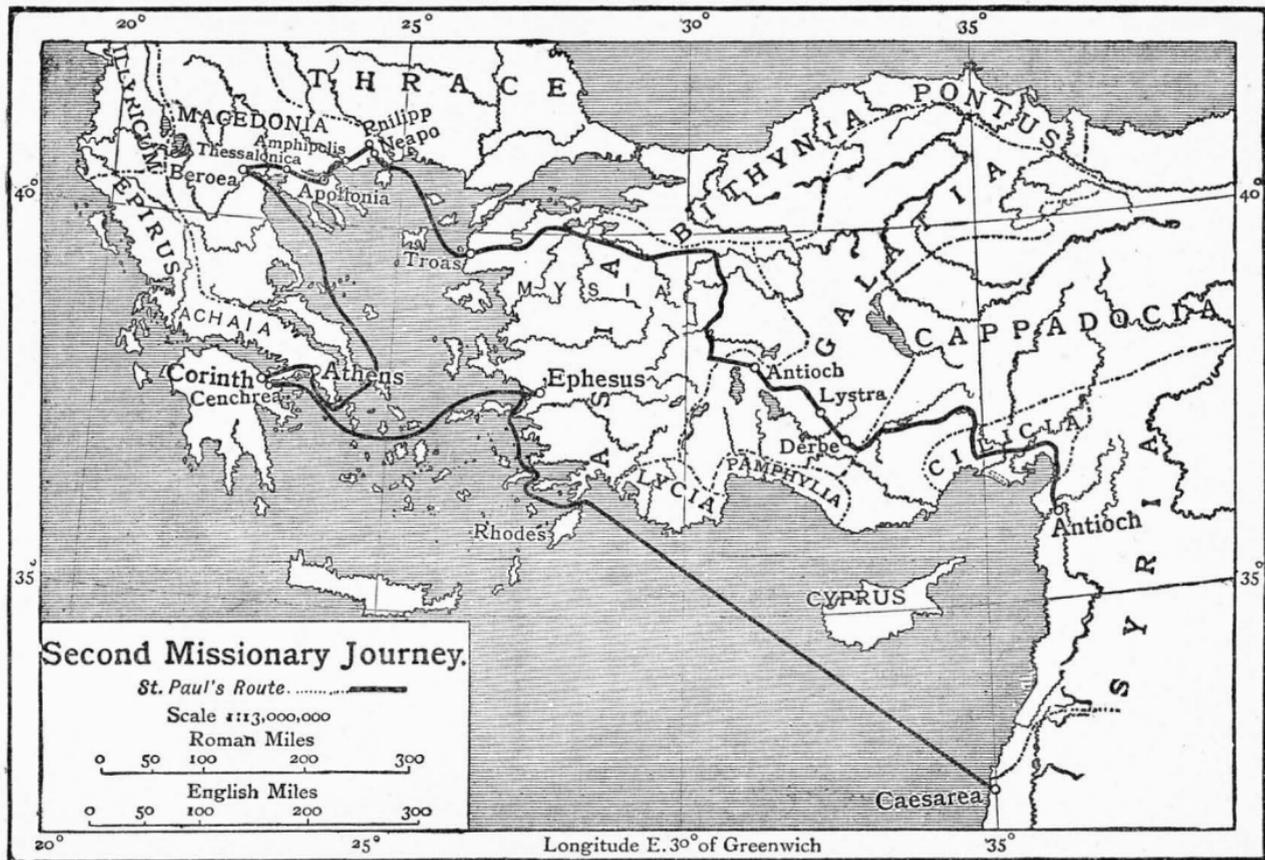
PART IV

CHAPTERS 15²⁶ TO 18²²

ST. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY
EXTENSION OF CHRISTIANITY TO EUROPE

Circa A.D. 49-52

"Come over into Macedonia and help us."—ACTS 16⁹.



PART IV

CHAPTERS 15³⁶ TO 18³⁸

ST. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY EXTENSION OF CHRISTIANITY TO EUROPE

Circa A.D. 49-52

The Rupture between St. Paul and Barnabas.

³⁶And after some days Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see* how they fare. ³⁷And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark. ³⁸But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. ³⁹And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus; ⁴⁰but Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace

38-39 The reason for which Mark withdrew from them is discussed in the note on 13¹⁸. The sharp contention may have been heightened by the behaviour of Barnabas at Syrian Antioch of which St. Paul speaks in Gal. 2¹³. Both Barnabas and Mark here disappear from the pages of the Acts; the former probably remained at Cyprus, and there is only one further (not unfriendly) reference to him by St. Paul in his letters (1 Cor. 9⁶). Mark, on the other hand, is frequently mentioned, and in the closing words of St. Paul's letter to Philemon (v. 24) is described as a fellow-worker at Rome, from which it is evident that there was a complete reconciliation.

40 Silas now takes the place of Barnabas as companion of St. Paul. He was probably a Hellenist, and his name is given the Greek form Silvanus in St. Paul's Epistles. Like John Mark he attached himself later to St. Peter (probably after St. Paul's death), who writes of him as "Silvanus our faithful brother" (1 Pet. 5¹³). It appears from 16³⁷ that, like St. Paul, he was a Roman citizen.

of the Lord. ⁴¹And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

Visits to Derbe, Lystra and Troas.

- 16 ¹And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess which believed; but his father was a Greek. ²The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. ³Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem. ⁵So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily. ⁶And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in Asia; ⁷and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered

1 Timothy probably lived at Lystra, and may have become a convert on the first missionary journey. From St. Paul's letters to him we learn that his grandmother was called Lois and his mother Eunice, and that he had been instructed in the scriptures "from a babe." He now took the place of Mark, and was St. Paul's companion for the greater part of his life, acting as his messenger to the churches in Macedonia and Greece, and later as the head of the Church at Ephesus. He joined St. Paul at Rome, and seems also to have been under arrest at one time, for Heb. 13²³ speaks of his being "set at liberty."

3 St. Paul thought it well to comply with the Law in this case, as Timothy was partly of Jewish parentage. This did not hold in the case of Titus, a man of entirely Gentile birth, whom St. Paul seems to have refused to circumcise (Gal. 2³).

6 Phrygia and Galatia. Better "the Phrygian and Galatian region," i.e. Phrygo-Galatia or southern Galatia, which includes the four cities previously visited. Possibly the Epistle to the Galatians had already been written and was followed up by a personal visit.

7 the spirit of Jesus; an expression not found elsewhere, although Gal. 4⁶ has "God sent forth the Spirit of his Son," and there are parallels in Rom. 8⁹, 2 Cor. 3¹⁷ and Phil 1¹⁹. It signifies some definite revelation of God's will, perhaps by a vision of Jesus. We note how St. Paul's movements were Divinely guided at this period, (i) by the Holy Ghost (v. 6), (ii) by the Spirit of Jesus, (iii) by the vision of the man of Macedonia (v. 9).

them not; ⁸and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. ⁹And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. ¹⁰And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Extension of the Mission to Europe. Crossing to Philippi.

¹¹Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis; ¹²and from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony: and we were in this city tarrying

⁸ Troas, on the coast opposite Tenedos, and S.W. of ancient Troy, was the chief port on the main route connecting Rome with the East; a busy city and a Roman colony.

⁹ The interesting suggestion that the man of Macedonia was in some way connected with St. Luke is discussed elsewhere (see p. xi).

¹⁰ Here the "we passages" begin, though it must not be taken as positive evidence of the author's first companionship with St. Paul (see p. ix).

The Roman province of Macedonia embraced northern Greece to the southern limit of Thessaly. Its capital was Thessalonica, Amphipolis being the chief city of the *regio* in which Philippi was situated.

¹¹ Samothrace, an island about half-way between the two ports, was a well-known landmark by reason of its elevation. Neapolis was the port of Philippi, eight miles from it, on the Strymonian gulf. The wind must have been favourable, for the crossing of one hundred and forty miles was completed in two days. The return journey of ²⁰ took five days.

¹² Philippi (so called after its founder Philip, father of Alexander the Great) was the scene of the triumph of Octavian (the future Augustus) over Brutus and Cassius in 42 B.C. It was now a Roman colony of the highest status, and it is perhaps for this reason that St. Luke calls it the first of the district, though officially Amphipolis was the chief city of the *regio*. If, as some think, St. Luke was a native of Philippi, local patriotism may have led him to exaggerate somewhat the importance of his own city. The suggested explanation that the phrase means "the first one comes to" seems to make it an unlikely and unnecessary geographical detail. Though typically Roman in government and customs, it was a cosmopolitan city and an important meeting-place of East and West: as such it would be a fertile seed-plot for Christian teaching.

certain days. ¹³And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which were come together. ¹⁴And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul. ¹⁵And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

¹⁶And it came to pass, as we were going to the place of prayer, that a certain maid having a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. ¹⁷The same following after Paul and us cried out, saying, These men are servants of the Most High God, which proclaim unto you the way of salvation. ¹⁸And this she did for many days. But Paul, being sore troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

Arrest and Imprisonment.

¹⁹But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into

¹³ Evidently there were not enough Jews to form a synagogue, only a *proseuché* or "prayer-place," situated by the river side for the sake of ceremonial washings; merely a walled enclosure without any building. Apparently they found only women there; in Macedonia, as in South Galatia, the women enjoyed a much larger measure of freedom than in other parts of the Empire.

¹⁴ Lydia is evidently a place-name, for Thyatira was a city of Lydia in Asia Minor. It was famous as the centre of the Lydian purple-dyeing industry, and an inscription found there bears the words "the Dyers' guild." Lydia would be an agent for the purple-dyed goods, and a person of considerable means; probably a widow (as *v.* 15 speaks of her household), and a "God-fearer."

¹⁵ Her influence is sufficient, as in the case of the gaoler (*v.* 33), to bring about the conversion of her whole household.

¹⁶ spirit of divination, literally, as in the margin, "a spirit, a python." Python was the name of a monster serpent slain by Apollo at Delphi, and the priestess of his temple there was called Pythia; hence the word python came to be connected with the power of divine prediction.

the marketplace before the rulers, ²⁰and when they had brought them unto the magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, ²¹and set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans. ²²And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods. ²³And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: ²⁴who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. ²⁵But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them; ²⁶and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed. ²⁷And the jailor being roused out of sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword, and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. ²⁹And he called for lights, and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? ³¹And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. ³²And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. ³³And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. ³⁴And he brought them up into his house, and set meat before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.

³⁵But when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants,

In the time of Plutarch a python apparently was a ventriloquist, and the girl may have been possessed of such powers.

20 magistrates; better, as in the margin, "prætors" (Greek *stratēgoi*), a much more dignified title than the ordinary *duoviri* for the two rulers of a Roman colony. Probably it is here used merely as a courtesy title.

22 An extraordinary miscarriage of justice. The high-handed action of these self-important local officials receives its just rebuke in v. 37, which quickly brings them to their senses (v. 38).

35 the serjeants were the "rod bearers" or *lictors* (margin) who attended the *prætors*, bearing the *fascas* or rods.

saying, Let those men go. ³⁶And the jailor reported the words to Paul, *saying*, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore come forth, and go in peace. ³⁷But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and bring us out. ³⁸And the serjeants reported these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans; ³⁹and they came and besought them; and when they had brought them out, they asked them to go away from the city. ⁴⁰And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of Lydia*: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

The Riot at Thessalonica.

- 17 ¹Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews; ²and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures, ³opening

³⁷ Here for the first time St. Paul makes use of his Roman citizenship, and, as in the similar circumstances of 22²⁸, demands his privileges as a citizen. The treatment of the missionaries had been doubly illegal, for (i) they had not been condemned or even tried, (ii) the scourging of a Roman citizen was strictly forbidden.

1 Apparently St. Luke remained behind at Philippi, for the "we passage" concludes, to be resumed at the same place about six years later (20⁶). St. Paul and Silas now travel along the great *Via Egnatia* linking up the Hellespont and Adriatic; through Amphipolis and Apollonia, where there was no stay (probably because there were no synagogues) to Thessalonica, each stage being about thirty miles. The last-named (modern Saloniki) was the capital of the province of Macedonia and seat of the proconsul, thus ranking with Caesarea, Syrian Antioch, Corinth and Ephesus. In addition, owing to its position on the coast and great trade route, it was a flourishing commercial city. The Romans had allowed it to remain a "free city" (a fact mentioned on its coins), with its own constitution which took the form of an assembly elected by popular franchise and ruled by five *politarchs* (the "rulers of the city" of v. 8). This title has been discovered on an arch-stone which is now in the British Museum. There was apparently only one synagogue, so that the Jewish colony cannot have been a very strong one.

- 3 A concise summary of St. Paul's teaching, showing that the true

and alleging, that it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, *said he*, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ. ⁴And some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. ⁵But the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the city on an uproar; and assaulting the house of Jason, they sought to bring them forth to the people. ⁶And when they found them not, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; ⁷whom Jason hath received: and these all act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus. ⁸And they troubled the multitude and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. ⁹And when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

Berœa.

¹⁰And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berœa: who when they were come thither went into

Old Testament picture of the Messiah was of one who should suffer and be raised from the dead, and affirming that the prophecy had been fulfilled in Jesus.

⁴ The converts included a few Jews, a large number of "God-fearers," and many women of influence. Probably the stay lasted a good deal longer than the three weeks mentioned in *v. 2*, the preaching being mainly confined to Gentiles. We know from St. Paul's two letters to the Thessalonians that he thanked God for their "work of faith and labour of love" (1 Thess. 1³).

⁵ being moved with jealousy; probably on account of the large influx of Gentile Christians. The most depraved of the idlers of the marketplace are incited to riot, and an attempt is made to rush the house of Jason, and bring the missionaries, to whom he had given hospitality, before the popular assembly.

⁶ The same charge as at Philippi—the very serious one of subverting Roman authority.

⁹ Jason was made responsible for their appearance if called up again for trial, or perhaps for their departure from the city. Their expulsion is described by St. Paul as the work of Satan ("Satan hindered us," 1 Thess. 2¹⁸).

¹⁰ Berœa was about forty-five miles S.W. of Thessalonica. One

the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. ¹²Many of them therefore believed; also of the Greek women of honourable estate, and of men, not a few. ¹³But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was proclaimed of Paul at Berea also, they came thither likewise, stirring up and troubling the multitudes. ¹⁴And then immediately the brethren sent forth Paul to go as far as to the sea: and Silas and Timothy abode there still. ¹⁵But they that conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timothy that they should come to him with all speed, they departed.

of the converts, Sopater, accompanied St. Paul on the third missionary journey (20⁴); the name, in the form Sosipater, is found on the arch-stone mentioned in the note on 17¹.

11-12 more noble, i.e. "fair-minded"; "open to conviction." The converts are drawn from the same classes as at Thessalonica, the influential women receiving special mention. The opposition came, not from them, but from the old enemies of Thessalonica.

14 To escape the tumult St. Paul makes for the coast some twenty-five miles distant, intending perhaps to return by sea to Thessalonica (1 Thess. 2¹⁷). He is persuaded, however, to leave Macedonia for Athens, whence he sends news of his whereabouts to Silas and Timothy. According to the Acts they rejoined him at Corinth (18⁵), but 1 Thess. 3² states that Timothy (at any rate) was with him at Athens, and was sent from there to Thessalonica.

15 Athens had at this time passed her golden age in which she had attained world-wide prominence as a centre of learning and culture; but the fame of her schools of philosophy remained, and many of the Roman youth visited the city to complete their education. The spirit of the age is well shown by the parenthesis of v. 21, written perhaps with a little extra sting by St. Luke, who seems to have had an admiration for (if he was not actually a native of) the rival province of Macedonia. The Athenians would have every opportunity "to hear or tell some new thing" in the *Agora* or marketplace (v. 17), whither they resorted to hear the news of the day, forming an audience to which the philosophers could hold forth to their hearts' content. Here (and before the Areopagus) St. Paul makes use of his university training at Tarsus to engage in discussions with the Athenian philosophers.

Athens.

¹⁶Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him, as he beheld the city full of idols. ¹⁷So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with them that met with him. ¹⁸And certain also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, What would this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹And they took hold of him, and brought him unto the Areopagus,

¹⁸ The Epicureans were so-called after their founder Epicurus (342-270 B.C.), a contemporary of Euclid. Their philosophy was atheistic in the sense that they regarded the gods as living in a blissful state far removed from the concerns of men, who were left to work out their own destiny. Their supreme aim was the pursuit of happiness through sensible pleasure; not indeed ease-loving sensuality (our modern use of the name does them an injustice), but the pleasure which comes from the tranquillity of mind and freedom from want and pain brought about by self-control and avoidance of excess. This doctrine was valuable as an antidote to the fatalistic beliefs so prevalent during the period.

The Stoics, founded by Zeno of Citium, derived their name from the *stoa* (porch or colonnade) in which he taught at Athens. Their views tended more towards theism, though their god was not a personal deity, but a living principle manifested in nature, and in the soul of man as a part of nature; thus they were able to affirm "we are also his offspring" (v. 28). They held that true virtue was to be found in a return to the simplicity of nature and complete indifference to pain and pleasure, which were subordinated to the desire of freedom for the soul. Their philosophy has been called "the noblest creed devised by man without the aid of special revelation," and to some of the Stoic philosophers like Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius and Seneca, we owe lessons of the highest moral value.

babblers, lit. "seed-picker"; Athenian slang for one who picked up odds and ends which fell from a cart, from which it came to mean one who had picked up a crude smattering of second-hand knowledge.

strange gods; they seem to have understood St. Paul to refer to two gods, Jesus and Anastasis (the Resurrection).

¹⁹ brought him unto the Areopagus. A.V., Mars' Hill, an eminence north of the *Agora*. The name was also used for the council which sometimes met there and had a certain measure of control over matters of education and religion. This body determined to examine St. Paul's credentials as a lecturer, and summoned him to appear before the council (not necessarily on Mars' Hill) to give a discourse on this new doctrine.

saying, May we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by thee? ²⁰For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. ²¹(Now all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)

Address to the Areopagites.

²² And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said,

Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are somewhat superstitious. ²³For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I forth unto you. ²⁴The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; ²⁵neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; ²⁶and he made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; ²⁷that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: ²⁸for in him we live, and move, and have our being;

22-31 St. Paul's speech to educated pagans should be compared with the address to the rude heathen of Lystra (14¹⁵). After a complimentary reference to the "religiosity" of the Athenians, he proceeds to attack their system of ignorant idolatry, and expands their own Stoic idea of a "natural religion," but bases it upon an omnipotent and omnipresent God in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." Ignorance can no longer be pleaded; all must be judged one day, and the Judge has been specially ordained and given power and authority by His Resurrection from the dead.

²² somewhat superstitious, lit. "given to deity-worship"; the margin has "religious"; a courteous phrase, though there may be a touch of irony in the use of it here.

²³ to an (margin, the) unknown god; quite a common dedication among the Greeks, though usually in the plural. The inscription has been found on an altar of the second century at Pergamum.

²⁸ The quotation is from Aratus, a Stoic poet of Soli in Cilicia in

as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. ²⁹Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man. ³⁰The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: ³¹inasmuch as he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

³²Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again. ³³Thus Paul went out from among them. ³⁴But certain men clave unto him, and believed: among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Establishment of the Church at Corinth.

¹After these things he departed from Athens, and came to **18** Corinth. ²And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome: and he came unto them; ³and because he was of the

the third century B.C. Another contemporary Stoic (Cleanthes) uses the phrase "for we are his (Zeus's) race."

³⁴ A few converts were made, and St. Luke specially mentions the woman **Damaris** (no doubt a foreigner), but the appeal did not on the whole make much impression on the frivolous Athenians, and the idea of a resurrection from the dead met with derision.

1 Corinth was founded as a Roman colony in 46 B.C. on the site of the city destroyed one hundred years earlier by Mummius. It was the capital of the province of Achaia and seat of the proconsul, and by reason of its position on the direct route from Asia Minor to Italy, a busy commercial and cosmopolitan city. Its inhabitants were noted for their profligacy and luxury, though they exhibited the usual Greek curiosity in the search after wisdom (1 Cor. 1²⁰).

2 Aquila and Priscilla were probably already Christians. The edict referred to was issued by Claudius A.D. 49-50 in consequence of disorders about one Chrestus (see note on 11²⁶), i.e. probably disturbances between the Jews and Christians of Rome. It applied to all Jews but was not very strictly enforced.

3 Like every Jewish youth St. Paul had been taught a trade; in

same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tent-makers. ⁴And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks.

⁵But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. ⁶And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. ⁷And he departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. ⁸And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. ⁹And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: ¹⁰for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city. ¹¹And he dwelt *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

¹²But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one

this case the making from goat's hair of a material used for tents, an industry much practised in Cilicia.

4-5 For **persuaded** the margin has "tried to persuade." We learn from 1 Cor. 2³ that St. Paul was not in good health at the time, and apparently he did not throw his usual energy into the work. The arrival of his companions, however (v. 5), bringing good news of the Thessalonian Church, caused him to be **constrained by**, i.e. "absorbed in," the word.

6-8 As at Antioch (13⁴⁶), St. Paul determines to give the Gentiles prior claim to the Gospel message, and moves to the house of a Gentile hard by the synagogue. **Titus Justus** was probably a Roman *colonus*, and may also have had the name Gaius which occurs in 1 Cor. 1¹⁴ where **Crispus** is also mentioned.

8 with **all his house**, just as in the case of Lydia (16¹⁸) and the Philippian gaoler (16³⁴).

11 a year and six months, probably A.D. 50-52, during which time the two letters to the Thessalonians, the earliest Pauline Epistles (except perhaps Galatians), were written.

12 **Gallio**, proconsul of Achaia *circa* A.D. 51-54, was a man of high learning and amiable character; brother of Seneca the Stoic philosopher, and uncle of the poet Lucan. He fell a victim (by compulsory suicide) to the savagery of Nero, and his name has been found on an inscription at Delphi.

accord rose up against Paul, and brought him before the judgement-seat, ¹³saying, This man persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. ¹⁴But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If indeed it were a matter of wrong or wicked villany, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: ¹⁵but if they are questions about words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; I am not minded to be a judge of these matters. ¹⁶And he drave them from the judgement-seat. ¹⁷And they all laid hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgement-seat. And Gallio cared for none of these things.

The Return Journey calling at Ephesus.

¹⁸And Paul, having tarried after this yet many days, took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchreæ: for he had a vow. ¹⁹And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰And when they asked him to abide a longer

¹³ contrary to the law; once more the Jews raise the cry that Christianity (as opposed to Judaism), is *religio illicita*. Gallio, however, refuses to be drawn into what he regards merely as a controversy about "words and names," and dismisses the charge. His attitude towards Christianity is one of sympathy rather than indifference.

¹⁷ they all probably refers to the Gentile bystanders (some MSS. have "all the Greeks"). Pleased at the rebuff of the Jews, and relying on the connivance of Gallio, they proceeded to wreak their vengeance on the leader Sosthenes, who had succeeded Crispus as ruler of the synagogue.

¹⁸ having shorn his head, i.e. undertaken the vow of a Nazirite (one separated or consecrated). The conditions of the vow are explicitly laid down in Num. 6, where it is enjoined (i) that no wine or strong drink was to be taken, (ii) that the hair was not to be cut, and (iii) that no dead body (not even that of a near relative) was to be approached. Usually the vow lasted a month, at the end of which the hair was cut off and sacrificially burnt at the Temple, but we have examples of lifelong Nazirites in Samson, Samuel and St. John the Baptist. Probably St. Paul had undertaken the vow in gratitude for his escape from his enemies, and considering that he was now within thirty days of its completion at the Temple, had his head shorn for the last time.

time, he consented not; ²¹but taking his leave of them, and saying, I will return again unto you, if God will, he set sail from Ephesus. ²²And when he had landed at Cæsarea, he went up and saluted the church, and went down to Antioch.

19 For Ephesus see note on 19¹. His haste is accounted for by the necessity of redeeming his vow at Jerusalem.

22 saluted the church, i.e. the Mother Church at Jerusalem.

QUESTIONS ON PART IV

General

1. "Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus." Write what you know of the subsequent history of these two men.

2. Discuss the reasons for connecting St. Luke with the "man of Macedonia."

3. What do you know of the origin and tenets of (a) the Stoics, (b) the Epicureans?

Narrative

4. State the cause of the dissension between St. Paul and Barnabas. How did it affect their subsequent missionary work?

5. Summarise concisely the events which took place at Philippi during St. Paul's first visit.

6. On what occasions do we read in the Acts of the conversion of a whole household? Briefly narrate the circumstances in each case.

7. Give an account of the riot at Thessalonica.

8. Give a summary of St. Paul's address before the Areopagus, and compare it with that given to the uneducated pagans of Lystra.

9. Trace the stages of St. Paul's missionary work in Corinth. From whom, and with what result, did he meet with opposition?

10. What examples are recorded in these chapters of the Divine help or guidance of the missionaries? Give the circumstances in each case.

11. Explain the following phrases, giving the connexion in which they occur:—they delivered them the decrees for to keep—where we supposed there was a place of prayer—these were more noble than those in Thessalonica—For we are also his offspring—having shorn his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow.

12. Write short notes on:—Timothy; a Roman colony; a spirit of divination; magistrates; serjeants; Areopagus; Damaris; Sosthenes.

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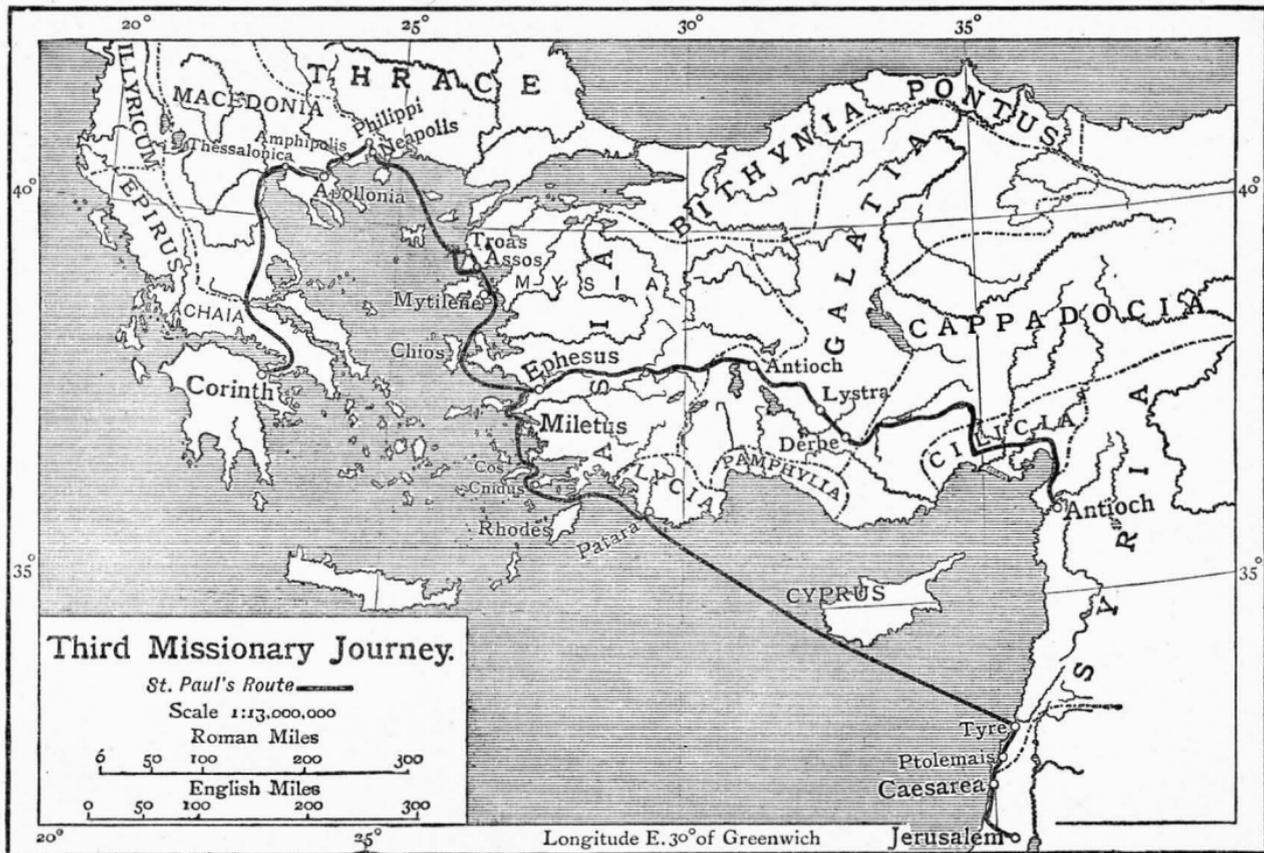
PART V

CHAPTERS 18²³ TO 21¹⁶.

ST. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Circa A.D. 52-56

*"All they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both
Jews and Greeks."—ACTS 19¹⁰.*



Emery-Walker sc.

NOTE.—On this journey St. Paul's route from Antioch to Ephesus and his route in Macedonia and Achaia cannot be determined with certainty. See xviii. 23. xix. 1, xx. 1-6.

PART V

CHAPTERS 18²³ TO 21¹⁶

ST. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Circa A.D. 52-56

Galatian Churches Revisited.

²³And having spent some time *there*, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, establishing all the disciples.

Apollos Instructed by Priscilla and Aquila.

²⁴Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by race, a learned man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the scriptures. ²⁵This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spake and taught carefully the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John:

23 For the region of Galatia and Phrygia see note on 16⁶.

24 Apollos belonged to the dispersed Jews of Alexandria, where the old Judaism had been considerably affected by the influence of Greek philosophy, tending to emphasise the Divinely revealed nature of the Jewish religion rather than its dependence on the Law of Moses, and making much use of allegory. Philo (circa 20 B.C.—A.D. 50) was the chief exponent of this cult, in which Apollos would probably be brought up. Like the twelve men of 19¹ he knew only "the baptism of John," so that disciples of John evidently still existed among the dispersed Jews. They would no doubt accept the Baptist's statement of the Messiah to come, and perhaps recognise the Messiahship of Jesus, but they knew nothing of His gift of salvation through the Holy Spirit (cf. 19³), nor of the newly-founded Christian community. St. John's baptism of water was symbolic of repentance and preparation for One mightier to come. Christian baptism was the baptism of faith and fellowship with the Messiah, who had come in person, and whose Spirit had been ever present since the great Pentecostal outpouring.

²⁶and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more carefully. ²⁷And when he was minded to pass over into Achaia, the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him: and when he was come, he helped them much which had believed through grace: ²⁸for he powerfully confuted the Jews, *and that* publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

St. Paul at Ephesus.

19 ¹And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples: ²and he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they *said* unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was *given*. ³And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism. ⁴And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus. ⁵And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. ⁷And they were in all about twelve men.

⁸And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading *as to* the things concerning the kingdom of God. ⁹But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude,

1 **Ephesus** was the chief city of the important senatorial province of Asia, whose proconsul was a personage of the highest rank, usually chosen from the ex-consuls of Rome. It was a "free city" with its own assembly, thoroughly cosmopolitan in character. Its temple of Diana (Artemis) was one of the sights of the world, and some of its relics are now in the British Museum.

3 For John's baptism see note on 18²⁴.

6 The Holy Ghost came on them, not at baptism, but with the laying on of hands (see note on 2³⁸). It was accompanied also by the gift of *glossolalia* (cf. 2⁴).

9 the school of Tyrannus would be a lecture-room in one of the

he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. ¹⁰And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. ¹¹And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: ¹²insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out. ¹³But certain also of the strolling Jews, exorcists, took upon them to name over them which had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. ¹⁴And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, a chief priest, which did this. ¹⁵And the evil spirit answered and said unto them, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? ¹⁶And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and mastered both of them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, that dwelt at Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. ¹⁸Many also of them that had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds. ¹⁹And not a few of them that practised curious arts brought their books together, and burned them in the sight of all: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. ²⁰So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed.

gymnasia. Some MSS. add "from the fifth to the tenth hour," i.e. after business hours, during which St. Paul probably worked at his own trade (see 20³⁴).

10 two years, during which 1 Corinthians was written, and perhaps a visit paid to Corinth. No doubt the neighbouring churches of Colossæ, Laodicea and Hierapolis were founded at this time, though not by St. Paul himself (Col. 2¹), and probably also the "seven churches of Asia" (Rev. 1⁴).

13 Exorcism was a recognised profession among the Jews, and we know from the Gospels (Lk. 11¹⁹) that it was practised by the "sons of the Pharisees." These travelling exorcists must have been men of high standing, for they numbered amongst them the seven sons of Sceva who belonged to the select band of chief priests.

19 The curious (i.e. "magical," as in the margin) arts flourished at Ephesus, and certain forms of incantation were known as "Ephesian letters." Their books (valued at about £1800) would be records of the magical incantations and formulæ.

²¹Now after these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. ²²And having sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

Demetrius' Riot.

²³And about that time there arose no small stir concerning the Way. ²⁴For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines of Diana, brought no little business unto the craftsmen; ²⁵whom he gathered together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this business we have our wealth. ²⁶And ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: ²⁷and not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana be made of no account, and that she should even be deposed from her magnificence, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. ²⁸And when they heard this, they were filled with wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. ²⁹And the city was filled with the confusion: and they rushed with one accord into the theatre,

21 St. Paul's plans were again affected by Divine guidance. We learn from 2 Cor. 1¹³ that his stay at Ephesus was prolonged, and his plans changed accordingly. Here is mentioned for the first time his intended mission to Rome, though doubtless the idea of a visit to Italy (and even to Spain) had been maturing for some time (Rom. 15²⁴). But before this he wished to collect the contributions from the Churches of Achaia and Macedonia and deliver them at Jerusalem.

22 An Erastus is mentioned in Rom. 16²³ as treasurer of Corinth, and in 2 Tim. 4²⁰ we read "Erastus abode at Corinth." Probably the latter is the Erastus mentioned here; it is doubtful about the former.

24 As in 16¹⁹, Christianity is opposed by reason of its interference with the livelihood of the citizens.

The shrines were small replicas of the statue of the goddess, representing her sitting in state beneath a canopy.

This Diana was not the virgin huntress, but the "Great Mother," worshipped throughout Asia Minor as the nature-deity of fertility.

29 The theatre was a huge amphitheatre excavated in the hillside,

having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel. ³⁰And when Paul was minded to enter in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. ³¹And certain also of the chief officers of Asia, being his friends, sent unto him, and besought him not to adventure himself into the theatre. ³²Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was in confusion; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. ³³And they brought Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made a defence unto the people. ³⁴But when they perceived that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. ³⁵And when the townclerk had quieted the multitude, he saith, Ye men of Ephesus, what

capable of holding 20,000 people, and used as a meeting-place for the assembly. Its outlines have been laid bare by modern excavation.

31 chief officers of Asia, lit. "Asiarchs," as in the margin. Each province had a common council composed of representatives from the different cities, which organised the public games and festivals, and supervised the public worship of Rome and the Emperor. The president of this council had the title of "ruler of the province" (Asiarch, Galatarch, etc.). It is not clear why we have the word used here in the plural; Asia had several wealthy cities, and each of these may have provided an Asiarch; if so, they seem to have assembled at Ephesus on this occasion for the great quinquennial festival of Diana. A more probable explanation is that the ex-Asiarchs retained the title after retirement, and formed some kind of college. Whoever they were, they befriended St. Paul, thus showing that on this occasion (as generally) Rome was on the side of the Gospel.

35 The townclerk ("recorder" or "chancellor") would be a high official of the city council in close touch with the proconsul. He denies that there had been any sacrilegious designs upon the goddess or her temple; refers the accusers to the law courts as the regular tribunal for their charge of rioting; and emphasises the danger of trouble with the Roman authorities on account of the irregularity of the proceedings. His few well-chosen words are sufficient to quell the mob, doubtless somewhat weary after their two hours' monotonous acclamation of Diana.

temple-keeper: lit. "temple-sweeper," "sacristan," but here used as a much more dignified title, "guardian" or "warden." Ephesus could claim the same title (*nabcoros*) in connexion with her Emperor worship in the Imperial temple. Ephesian coins show that the city possessed the wardenship of three Emperors as well as the goddess Diana.

man is there who knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is temple-keeper of the great Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter? ³⁶Seeing then that these things cannot be gainsaid, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rash. ³⁷For ye have brought *hither* these men, which are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess. ³⁸If therefore Demetrius, and the craftsmen that are with him, have a matter against any man, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls: let them accuse one another. ³⁹But if ye seek any thing about other matters, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. ⁴⁰For indeed we are in danger to be accused concerning this day's riot, there being no cause *for it*: and as touching it we shall not be able to give account of this concourse. ⁴¹And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

Movements in Macedonia and Greece.

20 ¹And after the uproar was ceased, Paul having sent for the disciples and exhorted them, took leave of them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. ²And when he had gone through those

38-39 the courts are open, and any charge of infringing the law should be brought before them; but if other principles are at stake the matter should be settled in the regular assembly. The local assembly met on fixed days, and extraordinary meetings could only be held by permission (rarely granted) of the proconsul. The case must be brought forward, as we should say, through the usual channels, due notice being given.

It is worthy of note that the proconsul took no part in the proceedings; we know from Tacitus' *Annals* that the holder of the office had been poisoned in the latter part of A.D. 54, and there was some delay in appointing his successor.

1-2 In these two verses St. Luke (who does not profess to be writing a biography) dismisses very briefly a period of great distress and perplexity in St. Paul's life. This was caused not only by his treatment at Ephesus, but by news of serious dissension and immorality in the Corinthian Church. As a consequence he writes his first letter to them and sends it probably by Titus (whose name is not mentioned in the Acts). From it (16⁹) we gather that St. Paul remained at Ephesus until Pentecost (probably A.D. 55 or 56), and then proceeded to Troas to hear the result. Failing to find Titus here, and "having no relief for the spirit," he reluctantly left, although "a door was opened unto me in the Lord" (2 Cor. 2¹²), and hastened across into Macedonia. Here at last (probably at Thessalonica) he met Titus

parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece. ³And when he had spent three months *there*, and a plot was laid against him by the Jews, as he was about to set sail for Syria, he determined to return through Macedonia. ⁴And there accompanied him as far as Asia Sopater of Berea, *the son* of Pyrrhus; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. ⁵But these had gone before, and were waiting for us at Troas. ⁶And we sailed away from Philippi after the days

with cheering news which gave rise to the Second Epistle (or part of it). This he followed up with the personal visit mentioned here (v. 2), and during his three months' stay wrote the Epistle to the Romans, in the closing chapters of which he makes special mention of the contributions of the Church in Achaia for "the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem" (15²⁶), a subject dear to his heart but scarcely referred to in the Acts.

3 Probably St. Paul's intention was to sail in a pilgrim ship carrying passengers to Jerusalem for the Passover. His "disappearance" from such a throng might easily escape notice. To escape the plot he returned secretly by land through Macedonia, keeping the Passover at Philippi.

4 as far as Asia should probably be omitted as in the margin. The companions mentioned were probably the "messengers of the churches" (2 Cor. 8²³) who accompanied St. Paul to Jerusalem with the alms contributed by their districts. Alternatively we may take the words to apply only to Sopater, who, not being a delegate, left them at Troas and returned home. He was probably a Gentile convert and therefore not the same as the Sosipater of Rom. 16²¹ (also at Corinth about this time), whom St. Paul describes as a kinsman, i.e. fellow-Jew.

Aristarchus has already been mentioned in connexion with the riot (19²⁹). He accompanied St. Paul to Rome (27²), and is described in the Epistles as "fellow-worker" (Philem. v. 24) and "fellow-prisoner" (Col. 4¹⁰).

Gaius and Timothy would be delegates of the South Galatian Churches.

Tychicus was probably an Ephesian. We learn from Eph. 6²¹ that he was with St. Paul during his first imprisonment, and was sent as a messenger to his native city. He again acted as a messenger to Ephesus during the second imprisonment (2 Tim. 4¹³).

Trophimus played an important part in St. Paul's arrest at Jerusalem (21²⁹). He was a companion of St. Paul in his later days, but fell sick and had to remain at Miletus (2 Tim. 4²⁰).

6 we sailed. Here the "we passages" re-open; probably the author was with St. Paul throughout the rest of the events recorded in the

of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days ; where we tarried seven days.

Troas ; the Raising of Eutychus.

⁷And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow ; and prolonged his speech until midnight. ⁸And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where we were gathered together. ⁹And there sat in the window a certain young man named Eutychus, borne down with deep sleep ; and as Paul discoursed yet longer, being borne down by his sleep he fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead. ¹⁰And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Make ye no ado ; for his life is in him. ¹¹And when he was gone up, and had broken the bread, and eaten, and had talked with them a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. ¹²And they brought the lad alive, and were not a little comforted. ¹³But we, going before to the ship, set sail for Assos, there intending to take in Paul : for so had he appointed, intending himself to go by land. ¹⁴And when he met us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. ¹⁵And sailing from thence, we came the following day over against Chios ; and the next day we touched at Samos ; and the day after we came to Miletus.

Acts. Note that v. 5 excludes the possibility of Timothy's authorship of the Acts.

days of unleavened bread, i.e. the week following the Passover (see note on 12³), probably A.D. 56 or 57.

7 the first day of the week, which had now been adopted as the Lord's Day in commemoration of the Resurrection. 1 Cor. 16² (already written) mentions the first day of the week as a suitable time for presenting alms. In this case the Christians had assembled on the previous evening in the upper room of a private house for worship and for breaking of the bread (see note on 2⁴²).

9 Eutychus means "fortunate"; there may be a touch of irony in the mention of his name here.

10 fell on him after the manner of Elijah (1 Kings 17²¹), and Elisha (2 Kings 4³⁴).

13 by land; margin, "on foot." Desiring solitude after the strain of the previous night, St. Paul travels alone across the peninsula from north to south over twelve miles of hilly country.

¹⁶For Paul had determined to sail past Ephesus, that he might not have to spend time in Asia ; for he was hastening, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

Farewell Address to the Ephesian Elders at Miletus.

¹⁷And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church. ¹⁸And when they were come to him, he said unto them,

Ye yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after what manner I was with you all the time, ¹⁹servicing the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews : ²⁰how that I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house, ²¹testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. ²²And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there : ²³save that the Holy Ghost testifieth unto me

¹⁷ In view of his treatment on the last visit, perhaps St. Paul wished to avoid Ephesus this time, but more probably the omission was due to the ship's calls. The elders are therefore asked to make the journey to Miletus—twenty-five miles by land over mountainous country to Priene, followed by a sea journey of twelve miles.

¹⁸⁻³⁵ The address is interesting as being the only one given solely to officials of the Church. St. Paul opens with a pathetic justification of his conduct and ministry among them ; speaks of his plans for the immediate future of " bonds and afflictions," and the more distant future when his course shall be accomplished. In bidding them farewell he urges them to carry out their Christian duties with zeal and sincerity, regardless of the ravages of " grievous wolves." Throughout the speech St. Paul seems to be answering two charges which had apparently been brought against him : (i) preaching " another Gospel " differing from that of the original Apostles, and (ii) using the contributions of the churches for his own benefit.

²² bound in the spirit, i.e. constrained by his own spirit, though the following verse shows that the Holy Spirit gave warning of danger ahead at Jerusalem ; the warning is repeated more emphatically in ²¹ and ²¹¹¹. There is no question of acting *contrary* to Divine guidance. On each occasion the Holy Spirit warns him (through his friends) of peril awaiting him at Jerusalem. His own spirit constrains him to face the consequences ; perhaps he already saw that this might be the appointed method of reaching Rome, the goal of his missionary work.

in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. ²⁴But I hold not my life of any account, as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, shall see my face no more. ²⁶Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. ²⁷For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God. ²⁸Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, to feed the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. ²⁹I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears. ³²And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified. ³³I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. ³⁴Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. ³⁵In all things I gave you an example, how that so labouring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

³⁶And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. ³⁷And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, ³⁸sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more. And they brought him on his way unto the ship.

25 Whether this prediction was fulfilled or whether he revisited Asia after his release from imprisonment is a highly controversial question (see note on 28³⁰).

28 with his own blood, lit. "through the blood which was his own," i.e. the blood of Jesus his son.

29 grievous wolves, cf. Mt. 7¹⁶, Jo. 10¹². Doubtless St. Paul is thinking of his Judaistic opponents in Galatia, Corinth, etc.

35 These words of the Lord Jesus are not found in our canonical Gospels, but they may be an authentic saying found elsewhere. Probably St. Paul is summing up our Lord's undoubted attitude on the subject (cf. Mt. 10⁸).

The Return via Tyre and Ptolemais.

¹And when it came to pass that we were parted from them, **21** and had set sail, we came with a straight course unto Cos, and the next day unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara : ²and having found a ship crossing over unto Phœnicia, we went aboard, and set sail. ³And when we had come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left hand, we sailed unto Syria, and landed at Tyre : for there the ship was to unlade her burden. ⁴And having found the disciples, we tarried there seven days : and these said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not set foot in Jerusalem. ⁵And when it came to pass that we had accomplished the days, we departed and went on our journey ; and they all, with wives and children, brought us on our way, till we were out of the city : and kneeling down on the beach, we prayed, ⁶and bade each other farewell ; and we went on board the ship, but they returned home again.

⁷And when we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais ; and we saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

Visit to Philip at Cæsarea.

⁸And on the morrow we departed, and came unto Cæsarea : and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was

1 They begin the final stage of their journey in a small coasting vessel, but at Patara it is necessary to tranship to a larger vessel for the open sea voyage.

Cos was a small island (now Stanchio) at the entrance to the Archipelago ; it had a temple of Æsculapius with a medical school attached.

Rhodes, an island at the S.W. extremity of Asia Minor, was famous for its temple of the sun, and for its huge statue of Apollo called the Colossus—one of the wonders of the world.

Patara was a seaport on the Lycian coast ; its inhabitants were devoted to the worship of Apollo.

3 Tyre, a Phœnician city of great antiquity, figures largely in Old Testament history and was still an important mercantile centre and a "free city." Evidently the Christian community was a small one, for the disciples had to be sought out.

7 Ptolemais, modern Acre, the great city of the crusades, about thirty miles south of Tyre.

8 Philip, now that the duties of "the Seven" were no longer

one of the seven, we abode with him. ⁹Now this man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. ¹⁰And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judæa a certain prophet, named Agabus. ¹¹And coming to us, and taking Paul's girdle, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. ¹²And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³Then Paul answered, What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁴And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. ¹⁵And after these days we took up our baggage, and went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶And there went with us also *certain* of the disciples from Cæsarea, bringing *with them* one Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we should lodge.

necessary, had settled at Cæsarea as an "evangelist," i.e. missionary teacher. In the Epistles the evangelists are ranked along with apostles and prophets (Eph. 4¹¹).

9 St. Luke again shows his interest in the ministry of women (cf. 1¹⁴, 18²⁶, etc.) and in the gift of prophecy (cf. 11²⁸).

10 During the *many days* St. Luke doubtless obtained from Philip much of his information for the early part of the Acts (especially chap. 8), and perhaps for his Gospel.

11 The symbolic action of Agabus is strongly reminiscent of the Old Testament prophets, e.g. Abijah (1 Kings 11²⁹), Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah (1 Kings 22¹¹), etc. The warning is very definite this time; St. Paul is to be delivered bound to the Gentiles.

16 *bringing with them*, better "bringing us to him with whom we might lodge, one Mnason . . ." The distance to Jerusalem was sixty-four miles, and it would be necessary to spend a night *en route*; they were entertained (perhaps at Lydda) by Mnason, who, like Barnabas, was a Cypriote convert of early days. He may have been one of those dispersed after Stephen's death, some twenty-five years previously.

QUESTIONS ON PART V

General

1. Account for the uncertainty of St. Paul's movements during the period following the riot at Ephesus.
2. Write what you know of the "we passages," and explain their significance.
3. What are we told in the Acts of the conflict between Christianity and superstition, magic and exorcism. Why would you expect the author to be specially interested in such matters?

Narrative

4. Summarise the events of St. Paul's stay at Ephesus up to the outbreak of the riot.
5. State the two occasions on which Christianity was opposed because it interfered with the livelihood of certain sections of the community, and relate briefly the circumstances in each case.
6. By what arguments and threats did the townclerk of Ephesus quell the mob?
7. Give an account of St. Paul's second visit to Troas.
8. Give a summary of the address to the Ephesian elders at Miletus.
9. What warnings were given to St. Paul during this period of the "bonds and afflictions" which awaited him?
10. Explain the following phrases, stating the connexion in which they occur:—knowing only the baptism of John—I must also see Rome—temple-keeper of the great Diana—It is more blessed to give than to receive.
11. Write short notes on:—Apollus; school of Tyrannus; Sceva; chief officers of Asia; townclerk; Mnason.

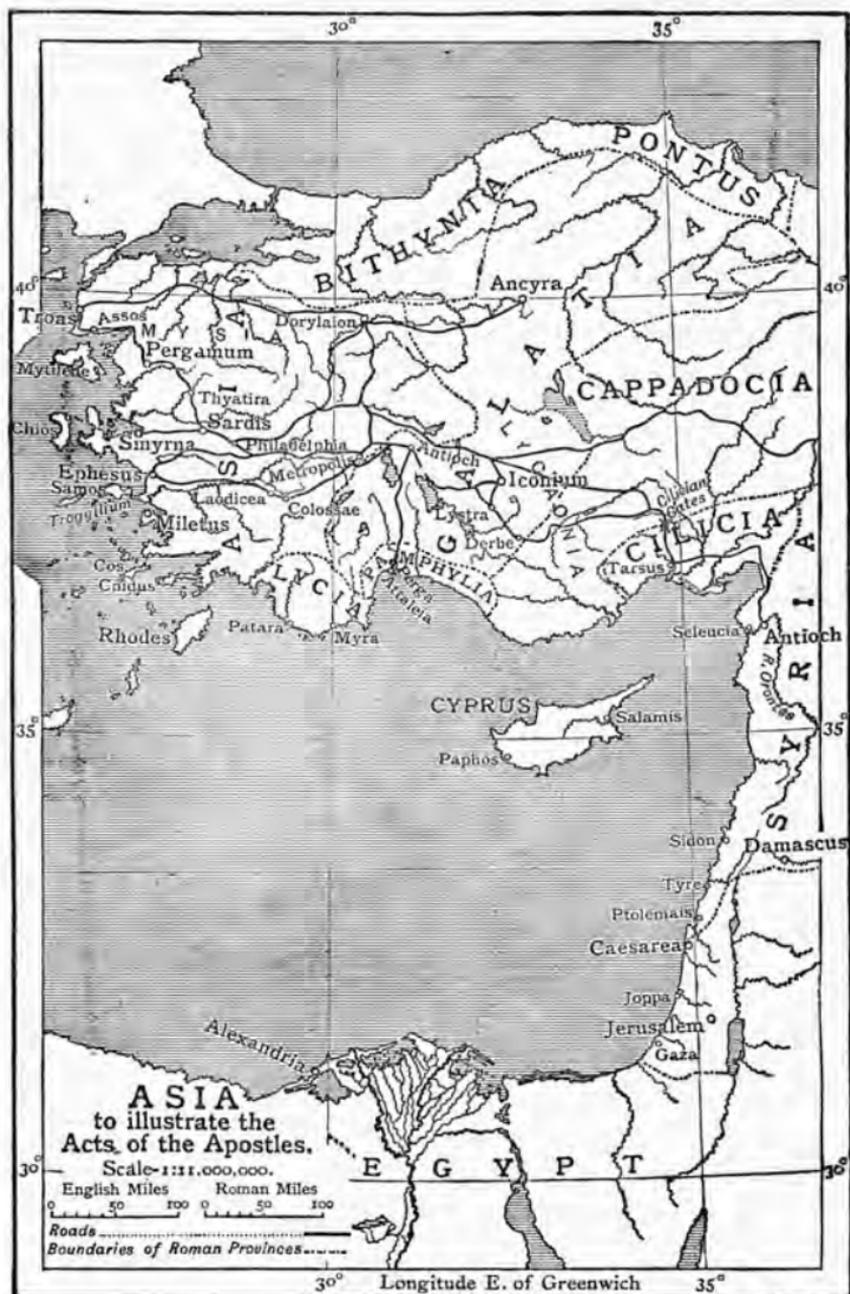
PART VI

CHAPTERS 21¹⁷ TO 26²²

THE ARREST AND TRIALS OF ST. PAUL

Circa A.D. 56-58

"Touching the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."—ACTS 23⁶.



PART VI

CHAPTERS 21¹⁷ TO 26³²

THE ARREST AND TRIALS OF ST. PAUL

Circa A.D. 56-58

Interview with the Elders at Jerusalem.

¹⁷And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. ¹⁸And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. ¹⁹And when he had saluted them, he rehearsed one by one the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. ²⁰And they, when they heard it, glorified God; and they said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them which have believed; and they are all zealous for the law: ²¹and they have been informed concerning thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children,

17-18 These verses record (i) the kindly reception by the Church as a whole, and (ii) the formal meeting with St. James and the elders on the following day. There is no mention of the Twelve, who were probably engaged in missionary work elsewhere. St. Paul no doubt presented the contributions from the Gentile churches in the presence of their delegates.

20 thousands, lit. "tens of thousands" or "myriads"; not meant to be taken literally, but it affords sufficient evidence of a large body of Jewish converts.

21 informed is much stronger in the Greek, "systematically taught," implying a regular campaign against St. Paul by his Judaic opponents, who put forward the slander that the Jews abroad had been taught that circumcision and the Mosaic Law were unnecessary for them. His action in the case of Timothy (16³) was sufficient disproof of any such conduct. Amongst the Gentiles no doubt he had, in accordance with the decision of the Council of Jerusalem, explained that such restrictions did not apply to them.

neither to walk after the customs. ²²What is it therefore? they will certainly hear that thou art come. ²³Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; ²⁴these take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges for them, that they may shave their heads: and all shall know that there is no truth in the things whereof they have been informed concerning thee; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, keeping the law. ²⁵But as touching the Gentiles which have believed, we wrote, giving judgement that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what is strangled, and from fornication.

The Riot in the Temple Area. Rescue by the Roman Soldiers.

²⁶Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them went into the temple, declaring the fulfilment of the days of purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them.

²⁷And when the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude, and laid hands on him, ²⁸crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men everywhere against

²³ The four men were probably in process of completing a Nazirite vow (see 18¹⁸). St. Paul is not asked to undertake the vow, but to join in the rite of purification in the Temple, and to bear the considerable expense of the final offerings on the completion of the vow. This was a recognised method of helping needy Jewish votaries; Agrippa I., when he came to Jerusalem in A.D. 41, is said to have earned a reputation for piety in this way.

Evidently St. Paul now had means of his own, and was no longer dependent on the labours of his hands and the gifts of converts as formerly (Phil. 4¹⁰, 1 Thess. 2⁹). We have further evidence of this in the attitude shown to him by Felix (24²⁶); in his appeal to Rome (a costly proceeding); and in his occupation of a hired house at Rome (28³⁰). Perhaps he had been reconciled to his family, or he may have been supported by wealthy friends.

²⁵ St. Paul's action is ratified, and the decree of 15¹⁹ definitely made applicable to all Gentiles.

²⁷ the Jews from Asia were no doubt St. Paul's old opponents from Ephesus, who would recognise him and also Trophimus (v. 29).

the people, and the law, and this place : and moreover he brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place. ²⁹For they had before seen with him in the city Trophimus the Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. ³⁰And all the city was moved, and the people ran together : and they laid hold on Paul, and dragged him out of the temple : and straightway the doors were shut. ³¹And as they were seeking to kill him, tidings came up to the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion. ³²And forthwith he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down upon them : and they, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, left off beating Paul. ³³Then the chief captain came near, and laid hold on him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains ; and inquired who he was, and what he had done. ³⁴And some shouted one thing, some another, among the crowd : and when he could not know the certainty for the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the castle. ³⁵And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the crowd ; ³⁶for the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

³⁷And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he saith unto the chief captain, May I say something unto thee ? And he

²⁸ hath defiled this holy place ; spoken of here as an accomplished fact. Before Felix (²⁴) the charge is amended to one of attempted profanation ; the accusers had had time to modify their preconceived notions. The crime of polluting the Temple was a very serious one, for which the Romans allowed the death sentence.

³⁰ St. Paul would be in the House of the Nazirites in the inner Temple court, which was surrounded by the court of the Gentiles open to all, the two courts being separated by " the middle wall of partition " (Eph. 2¹⁴). There were notices on this wall (one of which has been discovered), forbidding the entrance of Gentiles on pain of death. St. Paul is dragged into the outer court, and falls into the hands of the infuriated mob.

³¹ the chief captain or military tribune, Greek *chiliarch* (margin), was in charge of the Roman cohort (see 10¹) stationed in the Tower of Antonia. This was on the hill Accra in the N.W. corner of the Temple area, connected with the outer court by a flight of stairs. The garrison was thus prepared to deal with any disturbances during the Jewish feasts, and as this was the season of Pentecost the riot in the court below would not be entirely unexpected.

said, Dost thou know Greek? ³⁸Art thou not then the Egyptian, which before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins? ³⁹But Paul said, I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, give me leave to speak unto the people. ⁴⁰And when he had given him leave, Paul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with the hand unto the people; and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, saying,

The Speech from the "Stairs."

22 ¹Brethren and fathers, hear ye the defence which I now make unto you.

²And when they heard that he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, they were the more quiet: and he saith,

³I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day: ⁴and I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. ⁵As

³⁸ the Egyptian is probably the impostor mentioned by Josephus, who led a large multitude of followers to the Mount of Olives with promises of supernatural assistance. They were defeated by Felix, the Roman procurator, with great slaughter, but the leader escaped.

the Assassins were the Sicarii or "dagger-men," a party of fanatics who founded a secret society ostensibly for patriotic purposes, and removed by the use of the dagger (*sica*) those who showed themselves in sympathy with Roman rule. About this time they seem to have indulged in murder and pillage indiscriminately.

³⁹ St. Paul is justified in his use of the rhetorical figure of litotes, for Tarsus was the chief city of Cilicia, famous for its university and for the general culture of its citizens.

⁴⁰ in the Hebrew language; not the classical Hebrew of the Old Testament, but Aramaic, the Syrian dialect adopted as the spoken dialect after the return from Babylon (see p. xxiv).

3-21 The speech is a straightforward attempt to conciliate his countrymen, and for that reason is spoken in their own dialect. He meets the charge of disloyalty to Judaism and the Temple by a recital of his early life and training as a strictly orthodox Jew. Nothing short of a direct vision of Jesus could have converted him, and only because of his rejection by his own nation had he been commissioned

also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders : from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and journeyed to Damascus, to bring them also which were there unto Jerusalem in bonds, for to be punished. ⁶And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. ⁷And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ? ⁸And I answered, Who art thou, Lord ? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. ⁹And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. ¹⁰And I said, What shall I do, Lord ? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus ; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. ¹¹And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. ¹²And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there, ¹³came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him. ¹⁴And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. ¹⁵For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. ¹⁶And now why tarriest thou ? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name. ¹⁷And it came to pass, that, when I had returned to

by a second vision in the Temple to "depart . . . unto the Gentiles." The speech fails in its object, and at the mention of the despised Gentiles the fury of the mob breaks out afresh.

It is interesting to compare this account of his conversion with the later one of 26¹², and also with St. Luke's version in chap. 9, e.g. 9⁵, 22⁸ and 26¹⁴ ; 9⁷ and 22⁹, etc.

5 estate of the elders, i.e. the Sanhedrin ; their records would bear out his statement.

12 In his attempt at conciliation St. Paul emphasises the zeal of Ananias for the Law, and his instrumentality in carrying out the will of God, though strangely enough he does not mention the vision of Ananias, in which God instructs him to go to Saul (9¹⁰).

17 The second vision at Jerusalem (three years later) is not mentioned either in Acts 9 or in Gal. 1. Perhaps it is introduced here by

Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance, ¹⁸and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem : because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me. ¹⁹And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee : ²⁰and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him. ²¹And he said unto me, Depart : for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles.

Imprisonment in the "Castle."

²²And they gave him audience unto this word ; and they lifted up their voice, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth : for it is not fit that he should live. ²³And as they cried out, and threw off their garments, and cast dust into the air, ²⁴the chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, bidding that he should be examined by scourging, that he might know for what cause they so shouted against him. ²⁵And when they had tied him up with the thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned ? ²⁶And when the centurion heard it, he went to the chief captain, and told him, saying, What art thou about to do ? for this man is a Roman. ²⁷And the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman ?

St. Paul as evidence that, so far from any wish to profane the Temple, he had been accustomed to use it for prayer.

18 A strong plea, showing that his mission to the Gentiles was a direct command of God as his testimony would not be received by the Jews.

24 examined by scourging. Apparently Lysias, baffled as to the true cause of the disturbance, determines to get at the truth by torturing the captive into confession, a method frequently adopted in these (and in later) days.

25 The prisoner is tied up with the thongs in position for scourging, but the margin has " for the thongs," i.e. the scourge.

St. Paul, as at Philippi, claims his Roman citizenship with immediate effect. The punishment would have been doubly illegal (see note on 16³⁷).

And he said, Yea. ²⁸And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this citizenship. And Paul said, But I am a Roman born. ²⁹They then which were about to examine him straightway departed from him: and the chief captain also was afraid, when he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

The Trial before the Sanhedrin.

³⁰But on the morrow, desiring to know the certainty, wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him, and commanded the chief priests and all the council to come together, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

¹And Paul, looking stedfastly on the council, said, Brethren, **23** I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day. ²And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. ³Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: and sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? ⁴And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? ⁵And Paul said, I wist not, brethren, that he was high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak

28 The *chiliarch* was probably a Greek (Lysias), who had taken the name Claudius after purchasing his franchise, a frequent occurrence in the reign of Claudius; evidently he had paid dearly for it. St. Paul, on the other hand, inherited the freedom from his father, who either bought it, or had it conferred upon him for services rendered to the Empire.

¹ Probably this was not an official meeting of the Sanhedrin, and St. Luke's account of the proceedings is very incomplete.

lived, lit. "lived the citizen life." St. Paul claims to be a loyal, God-fearing, Jewish patriot.

2 Ananias, son of Nebedæus, was appointed on the nomination of Herod Agrippa in A.D. 47. Unscrupulous and tyrannical, he was deposed in A.D. 58 or 59, and was later murdered by Zealots.

3 Cf. "whited sepulchres," Mt. 23²⁷. It was the custom to white-wash the walls of sepulchres to prevent contact and consequent defilement. Hence the expression came to be used for a hypocrite—a man of fair exterior, but false within.

5 St. Paul did not recognise the High Priest; the trial was more or less informal, and perhaps he was not presiding, or not wearing his official robes. More probably the failure to identify Ananias was due

evil of a ruler of thy people. ⁶But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees: touching the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. ⁷And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees: and the assembly was divided. ⁸For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. ⁹And there arose a great clamour: and some of the scribes of the Pharisees' part stood up, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: and what if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel? ¹⁰And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should be torn in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the castle.

¹¹And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

to St. Paul's weak eyesight (see note on 14⁹). His quotation from Ex. 22²⁸ shows his knowledge of, and respect for, the Law.

6-7 Probably the trial was already in progress, and a difference of opinion had arisen between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but St. Paul's action must not be regarded merely as a clever ruse. The Resurrection was indeed the basis on which his whole teaching was founded, and he was still hopeful that he might persuade at least one section of the Jews to accept Jesus as the risen Messiah; the Sadducees seemed beyond hope. St. Paul's argument is brought out more clearly in 26⁵⁻⁸. He there speaks of the resurrection (in general) as part of the Messianic hope—the expectation of a golden age in which all true Israelites would rise again to enjoy the new life. So far the Pharisees would be with him, though they could not accept his doctrine that the Resurrection of Jesus was an accomplished fact, and therefore proclaimed Him Messiah. So far from undermining the influence of orthodox Jewish teaching, he was only applying the principle of the Messianic hope which was an essential part of Pharisaic belief. On this occasion his words had considerable effect on the Pharisees, but to the Sadducees they were *anathema*, hence the clamour which arose.

11 bear witness also at Rome. This promise may have influenced St. Paul in his decision to appeal to Cæsar. As we have already seen (19²¹), a visit to Rome had long been in his thoughts. The *motif* of the rest of the Acts is the fulfilment of this promise, and with the arrival of St. Paul at Rome—the climax of the Apostolic mission—the narrative closes.

The Plot against St. Paul's Life. Removal to Cæsarea.

¹²And when it was day, the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. ¹³And they were more than forty which made this conspiracy. ¹⁴And they came to the chief priests and the elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵Now therefore do ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you, as though ye would judge of his case more exactly: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to slay him. ¹⁶But Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, and he came and entered into the castle, and told Paul. ¹⁷And Paul called unto him one of the centurions, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath something to tell him. ¹⁸So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and saith, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and asked me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say to thee. ¹⁹And the chief captain took him by the hand, and going aside asked him privately, What is that thou hast to tell me? ²⁰And he said, The Jews have agreed to ask thee to bring down Paul to-morrow unto the council, as though thou wouldest inquire somewhat more exactly concerning him. ²¹Do not thou therefore yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves under a curse, neither to eat nor to drink till they have slain him: and now are they ready, looking for the promise from thee. ²²So the chief captain let the young man go, charging him, Tell no man that thou hast signified these things to me. ²³And he called unto him two of the centurions, and said, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go as far as Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third

¹⁶ and he came; the margin has "having come in upon them," i.e. the youth had overheard the plot being arranged. This is the only mention of St. Paul's family; judging by the deferential treatment of the youth, his mother must have been a person of considerable influence—perhaps she had married into the priestly circle.

²³ The size of the escort (470 men) shows the importance attached to the safety of the prisoner, and the serious view taken of the plot. The spearmen would be native lancers. No doubt Felix feared that

hour of the night: ²⁴and he bade them provide beasts, that they might set Paul thereon, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor.

²⁵And he wrote a letter after this form:

²⁶Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix, greeting. ²⁷This man was seized by the Jews, and was about to be slain of them, when I came upon them with the soldiers, and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. ²⁸And desiring to know the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him down unto their council: ²⁹whom I found to be accused about questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. ³⁰And when it was shewn to me that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to thee forthwith, charging his accusers also to speak against him before thee.

³¹So the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris. ³²But on the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle: ³³and they, when they came to Cæsarea, and delivered the letter to the governor, presented Paul also before him. ³⁴And when he had read it, he asked of what province he was; and when he

if harm happened to the prisoner he would be accused of accepting bribes, a charge actually brought against his predecessor Cumanus on a similar occasion.

²⁴ Felix was appointed procurator of Judæa by the Emperor Claudius A.D. 52 or 53. He was the brother of the freed-man Pallas, who enjoyed great favour with Claudius and his successor Nero. His wife was the Jewess Drusilla (^{24²⁴}), daughter of Herod Agrippa I. Owing to his cruelty and misgovernment he was recalled by Nero A.D. 58 or 59, and only escaped punishment through the influence of his brother.

²⁶ most excellent; the usual title of address for a high official; used of Theophilus (^{1¹}) and Festus (^{26²⁵}). The letter opens with the correct form of address, but curiously enough has no formal conclusion; it gives the writer a little more credit than he deserves (*v.* 27), but is otherwise a fair statement of the case. Such a letter of official information to a superior was known as an *elogium*.

³¹ Antipatris, about forty miles from Jerusalem, had been refounded by Herod the Great and named in honour of his father Antipater. The danger from enemies in Jerusalem was now over, and the infantry could safely be dispensed with.

³⁴ Cilicia formed part of the province of Syria whose procurator was superior to Felix, so that Felix would try the case as his deputy.

understood that he was of Cilicia, ³⁵I will hear thy cause, said he, when thine accusers also are come: and he commanded him to be kept in Herod's palace.

The Trial before Felix.

¹And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with certain elders, and *with* an orator, one Tertullus; and they informed the governor against Paul. ²And when he was called, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, 24

Seeing that by thee we enjoy much peace, and that by thy providence evils are corrected for this nation, ³we accept it in

Under Vespasian (A.D. 73-74) Cilicia became a separate province with its own procurator. St. Luke shows his usual historical accuracy.

³⁵ Herod's palace (margin "Prætorium") was probably the palace built by Herod the Great, now used as the official residence of the procurator, part of which was used as soldiers' barracks; evidently it was also used as a prison (cf. Mk. 15¹⁶).

¹ Tertullus was a public pleader or advocate; a Roman practising in the provinces, who would be well qualified to present the charge in a form which would convince the Roman governor of the serious nature of the alleged offence.

certain elders; no doubt chiefly Sadducees. Ananias would not have forgotten the rebuff recently received from St. Paul (23³).

2-8 Tertullus opens with a clever speech for the prosecution. He begins with the usual flattery of the judge (*captatio benevolentia*), quite undeserved in this case, though Felix, it is true, had done something to suppress brigandage by his merciless cruelty. He accuses St. Paul of being an habitual organiser of revolts throughout the Empire, treating the "sect of the Nazarenes" as a seditious party like the Zealots and Sicarii. The original charge of subverting the Jewish Law no longer appears, and the profanation of the Temple is watered down to an "attempt," and added almost as an afterthought (11-21). St. Paul, too, opens with a compliment to the procurator, though it is expressed in milder language. His defence is a plain denial of the charge of sedition. As for profaning the Temple, the reverse was the case; he was there undergoing the rite of purification in accordance with the Law. He admits he is a follower of "the Way," which is only serving "the God of our fathers"; but challenges his opponents, either those of Asia (who by the way had not put in an appearance), or members of the Sanhedrin at home, to adduce any evidence of his causing a breach of the peace; the one question at issue was his teaching of the resurrection of the dead, which he has already shown to be in accordance with the Law and the prophets.

all ways and in all places, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness. ⁴But, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I intreat thee to hear us of thy clemency a few words. ⁵For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: ⁶who moreover assayed to profane the temple: on whom also we laid hold: ⁸from whom thou wilt be able, by examining him thyself, to take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him. ⁹And the Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that these things were so.

¹⁰And when the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, Paul answered,

Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do cheerfully make my defence: ¹¹seeing that thou canst take knowledge, that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship at Jerusalem: ¹²and neither in the temple did they find me disputing with any man or stirring up a crowd, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city. ¹³Neither can they prove to thee the things whereof they now accuse me. ¹⁴But this I confess unto thee, that after the Way which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers, believing all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets: ¹⁵having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust. ¹⁶Herein do I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men alway. ¹⁷Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings: ¹⁸amidst which they found me purified in the temple, with no crowd, nor yet with tumult: but *there were* certain Jews from Asia—¹⁹who ought to have been here before thee, and to make accusation, if they had aught against me. ²⁰Or else let these men themselves say what wrong-doing they found, when I stood before the council, ²¹except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question before you this day.

¹⁷ bring alms, i.e. the collections made by the Gentile churches for the poor Saints at Jerusalem (see note on 21¹⁷). The offerings would be personal thankofferings for his safe return, or perhaps he refers to the completion of the vow undertaken by the four men (21²³).

²²But Felix, having more exact knowledge concerning the Way, deferred them, saying, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will determine your matter. ²³And he gave order to the centurion that he should be kept in charge, and should have indulgence; and not to forbid any of his friends to minister unto him.

²⁴But after certain days, Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, which was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵And as he reasoned of righteousness, and temperance, and the judgement to come, Felix was terrified, and answered, Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me. ²⁶He hoped withal that money would be given him of Paul: wherefore also he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. ²⁷But when two years were fulfilled, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and desiring to gain favour with the Jews, Felix left Paul in bonds.

The Trial before Festus. The Appeal to Cæsar.

¹Festus therefore, having come into the province, after three **25** days went up to Jerusalem from Cæsarea. ²And the chief priests

²² Doubtless Felix's knowledge concerning the Way was derived from his wife, Drusilla. The waiting for Lysias was a mere pretext to gain time, as the whole facts (with a little fiction) had been stated in his letter. He never appears, and Felix, like Pilate, was too weak to run the risk of incurring the enmity of the Jews, though, like Gallio at Corinth, he could see no case for Roman intervention.

²⁴ came; better "arrived," implying that he had been away—perhaps for his marriage with Drusilla, whom he had practically stolen from her former husband, Azizus, King of Emesa, a small Syrian state. Felix's private life was notoriously corrupt, and it is not surprising that he was "terrified" at St. Paul's warning of the "judgement to come." Nevertheless he was not above angling for a bribe; knowing that St. Paul had considerable funds at his disposal, he concluded that a ransom could easily be arranged.

²⁷ Porcius Festus was appointed by Nero, probably in A.D. 58, and died in office A.D. 61 or 62. Although a much better type of ruler than his predecessor, he was unable to stem the rising tide of Jewish revolt against Roman authority. Felix, disappointed of his hope of a bribe, removed the indulgence previously granted (v. 23), and left Paul in bonds.

2-4 The attempt of the Jewish leaders to impose upon Festus as

and the principal men of the Jews informed him against Paul ; and they besought him, ³asking favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem ; laying wait to kill him on the way. ⁴Howbeit Festus answered, that Paul was kept in charge at Cæsarea, and that he himself was about to depart *thither* shortly. ⁵Let them therefore, saith he, which are of power among you, go down with me, and if there is anything amiss in the man, let them accuse him.

⁶And when he had tarried among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down unto Cæsarea ; and on the morrow he sat on the judgement-seat, and commanded Paul to be brought. ⁷And when he was come, the Jews which had come down from Jerusalem stood round about him, bringing against him many and grievous charges, which they could not prove ; ⁸while Paul said in his defence, Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Cæsar, have I sinned at all. ⁹But Festus, desiring to gain favour with the Jews, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me ? ¹⁰But Paul said, I am standing before Cæsar's judgement-seat, where I ought to be judged : to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou also very well knowest. ¹¹If then I am a wrongdoer, and have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die : but if none of those things is *true*, whereof these accuse me, no man can give me up unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar. ¹²Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar : unto Cæsar shalt thou go.

a newcomer meets with a well-deserved snub ; he points out that it is for them to come to him at Cæsarea. Later, however (*v.* 9), his attitude changes considerably ; like his predecessor, he finds it politic to curry favour with the Jews.

8 St. Paul defends himself against the usual charge of offences against his nation, the Temple and the Emperor, though we see from *v.* 18 that the last charge is not taken seriously by Festus.

9 go up to Jerusalem. Knowing only too well that such a proceeding would mean almost certain death, St. Paul seizes the opportunity to appeal to the Emperor, and thus attain his long-cherished ambition of reaching the Imperial city.

12 the council, i.e. Festus' council of advisers or " assessors " ; members of his staff, including legal experts.

The Examination by Herod Agrippa.

¹³Now when certain days were passed, Agrippa the king and Bernice arrived at Cæsarea, and saluted Festus. ¹⁴And as they tarried there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix : ¹⁵about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed *me*, asking for sentence against him. ¹⁶To whom I answered, that it is not the custom of the Romans to give up any man, before that the accused have the accusers face to face, and have had opportunity to make his defence concerning the matter laid against him. ¹⁷When therefore they were come together here, I made no delay, but on the next day sat down on the judgement-seat, and commanded the man to be brought. ¹⁸Concerning whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought no charge of such evil things as I supposed ; ¹⁹but had certain questions against him of their own religion, and of one Jesus, who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. ²⁰And I, being perplexed how to inquire concerning these things, asked whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters. ²¹But when Paul had appealed to be kept for the decision of the emperor, I commanded him to be kept till I should send him to Cæsar. ²²And Agrippa *said* unto Festus, I also could wish to hear the man myself. To-morrow, saith he, thou shalt hear him. ²³So on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and they were entered into the place of hearing,

13 Agrippa (Herod Agrippa II.) and Bernice were children of Herod Agrippa I., brother and sister of Drusilla. Agrippa, the last of the Herods, had gradually regained from Claudius the dominions of his father with the courtesy title of King. He had also been appointed Patron of the Temple, with the right of nominating the High Priest, and had recently deposed Ananias. (See table, p. xxviii.)

19 Festus here expresses the usual attitude held by Roman officials towards "the Way" (cf. Gallio), and St. Luke, as in 26³¹, makes it clear that Christianity *qua* Christianity was not regarded as *religio illicita*.

20 being perplexed ; a poor excuse for sending the prisoner to Jerusalem, and not quite consistent with his words in *v.* 9.

23 Not an official trial (the appeal to Cæsar cut short all further proceedings), but a semi-official examination to obtain further data for his report (*littera dimissoria*) to the supreme court.

with the chief captains, and the principal men of the city, at the command of Festus Paul was brought in. ²⁴And Festus saith, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye behold this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews made suit to me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. ²⁵But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death: and as he himself appealed to the emperor I determined to send him. ²⁶Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I may have somewhat to write. ²⁷For it seemeth to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not withal to signify the charges against him.

St. Paul's Speech and its Effect.

26 ¹And Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth his hand, and made his defence:

²I think myself happy, king Agrippa, that I am to make my defence before thee this day touching all the things whereof I am accused by the Jews: ³especially because thou art expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. ⁴My manner of life then from my youth up, which was from the beginning among mine own nation, and at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; ⁵having knowledge

²⁶ *my lord*; better "the lord," i.e. our lord the Emperor. Augustus and Tiberius had refused the title of *dominus* as being too arrogant, but it was adopted by Caligula and his successors.

2-23 The speech is an elegant piece of Greek rhetoric, and reads like a prepared oration, perhaps composed by St. Luke. St. Paul is defending himself before an orthodox Jew, and discusses at length the relation of his Christian teaching to Judaism. The charge of sedition against the Empire is conspicuous by its absence. As in his speech from the castle stairs, he lays particular emphasis on his strictly Jewish upbringing and the Divine intervention, which alone could alter his firm conviction that he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Both at the beginning and end of his speech he reaffirms his contention that in teaching the Resurrection he was "saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come."

of me from the first, if they be willing to testify, how that after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. ⁶And now I stand *here* to be judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; ⁷unto which *promise* our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. And concerning this hope I am accused by the Jews, O king! ⁸Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead? ⁹I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death, I gave my vote against them. ¹¹And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities. ¹²Whereupon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, ¹³at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. ¹⁴And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad. ¹⁵And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. ¹⁶But arise, and

6 Cf. note on 23⁷. The charge against him was that he had taught contrary to the Law of Moses; his answer is that the be-all and end-all of his teaching is the Resurrection, which he holds to be the fulfilment of the promise made of God unto our fathers.

10 my vote (A.V. "voice") is probably only used figuratively. There is no evidence that he (young as he was then) was a member of the Sanhedrin.

12 Whereupon, i.e. "on which errand," as in the margin.

14 it is hard for thee . . . goad; these words are not mentioned in the two other accounts. The saying was proverbial, the metaphor being taken from an ox, which kicks back at the guiding goad and thus inflicts upon itself a severer wound. The proverb is found in both Greek and Latin literature (*Æschylus*, *Plautus*, *Terence*, etc.), but not in Hebrew. Hence it is probably not to be taken literally as the words spoken, but as St. Paul's method of expressing for Gentile hearers the spirit of the message, implying that the Divine will had already been guiding him, and that his excessive zeal for persecution was his reaction against the restraint.

16-18 St. Paul condenses the narrative here by combining the

stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; ¹⁷delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, ¹⁸to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me. ¹⁹Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: ²⁰but declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance. ²¹For this cause the Jews seized me in the temple, and assayed to kill me. ²²Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; ²³how that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.

²⁴And as he thus made his defence, Festus saith with a loud

revelations received by him on later occasions, viz. Ananias' visit, and the trance in the Temple (22¹⁴⁻¹⁷).

20 throughout all . . . Judæa. It is difficult to reconcile these words with the statement of Gal. 1²²—"I was still unknown by face to the churches of Judæa." It may refer to visits to *unevangelised* parts of the province during his "going in and going out" at Jerusalem (9²⁸), though that could hardly be described as "all Judæa." The Greek construction is unusual, and a suggested amendment gives the meaning "in every country both to Jews and Gentiles."

21 for this cause, i.e. for putting the Gentiles on the same footing as the Jews as regards ultimate salvation.

22-23 Here St. Paul puts clearly and finally his view of Christianity as the fulfilment and perfection of Judaism. He could do so with conviction, for he had the authority of his risen Master, who used almost the same words in His last message to the Apostles (Lk. 24⁴⁶⁻⁴⁷).

23 how that he first . . . should proclaim . . .; lit. "how he, as first from among the resurrection of the dead, should proclaim . . .", i.e. by virtue of His own Resurrection He is qualified to proclaim light concerning the future beyond the grave.

24 "A man of great intellectual power and high culture but a deluded fanatic," was Festus' estimate of the Divinely inspired Christian teacher.

voice, Paul, thou art mad ; thy much learning doth turn thee to madness. ²⁵But Paul saith, I am not mad, most excellent Festus ; but speak forth words of truth and soberness. ²⁶For the king knoweth of these things, unto whom also I speak freely : for I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him ; for this hath not been done in a corner. ²⁷King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets ? I know that thou believest. ²⁸And Agrippa *said* unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian. ²⁹And Paul *said*, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds. ³⁰And the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them : ³¹and when they had withdrawn, they spake one to another, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. ³²And Agrippa said unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar.

26-28 St. Paul turns from the Roman governor, who had evidently found his speech quite unintelligible, to his own countryman, who could not fail to have heard of the mighty works of Jesus, and to whom the idea of a resurrection (in general) would not appear incredible. Agrippa as a man of the world parries the thrust by scoffing at St. Paul's presumption in imagining that a single speech of his would be likely to make him a " Christian," a word only used as a contemptuous nickname (11²⁶).

31-32 Both the Roman and Jewish judge acquit St. Paul of any serious crime. He might be a deluded enthusiast, but there was no evidence of any attempt to undermine Roman authority. The appeal to Cæsar of course prevented them from exercising any judicial powers. There is no need to read into Agrippa's final remark the implication that the Emperor would take a less lenient view of the case.

QUESTIONS ON PART VI

General

1. Write what you know of the origin of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and explain their difference of attitude in political and religious matters.
2. What information is afforded by these chapters as to the efficiency and justice of Roman rule ?
3. What were the original charges brought by the Hellenistic Jews against St. Paul, and how were they subsequently modified ? How far were they answered in his speeches ?
4. Give the names of *either* (a) the Herods, *or* (b) the procurators of Judæa mentioned in the Acts, and write briefly what you know of their history.

Narrative

5. Relate the circumstances leading up to St. Paul's arrest by the Roman soldiers.
6. Compare the speech from the castle steps with the defence before Agrippa. Why are they so similar ?
7. Give an account of St. Paul's two interviews with Claudius Lysias.
8. Describe the proceedings at St. Paul's appearance before the Sanhedrin. How do you account for their apparent irregularity ?
9. What was the nature of the plot against St. Paul's life, and how was it frustrated ? What action followed the discovery ?

10. Summarise, without details of the speeches, the trial before Felix. What was Felix's attitude towards the prisoner ?

11. State the reasons which led St. Paul to make his appeal to Cæsar.

12. Narrate the circumstances which led up to St. Paul's examination by Agrippa, and describe the effect produced by his address.

13. Explain the following phrases, and give the connexion in which they occur:—Depart, for I will send thee forth . . . unto the Gentiles—With a great sum obtained I this citizenship—what if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel?—it is hard for thee to kick against the goad—With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian.

14. Write short notes on:—Trophimus; chief captain; Ananias; Antipatris; Herod's palace; Drusilla; Bernice.

PART VII

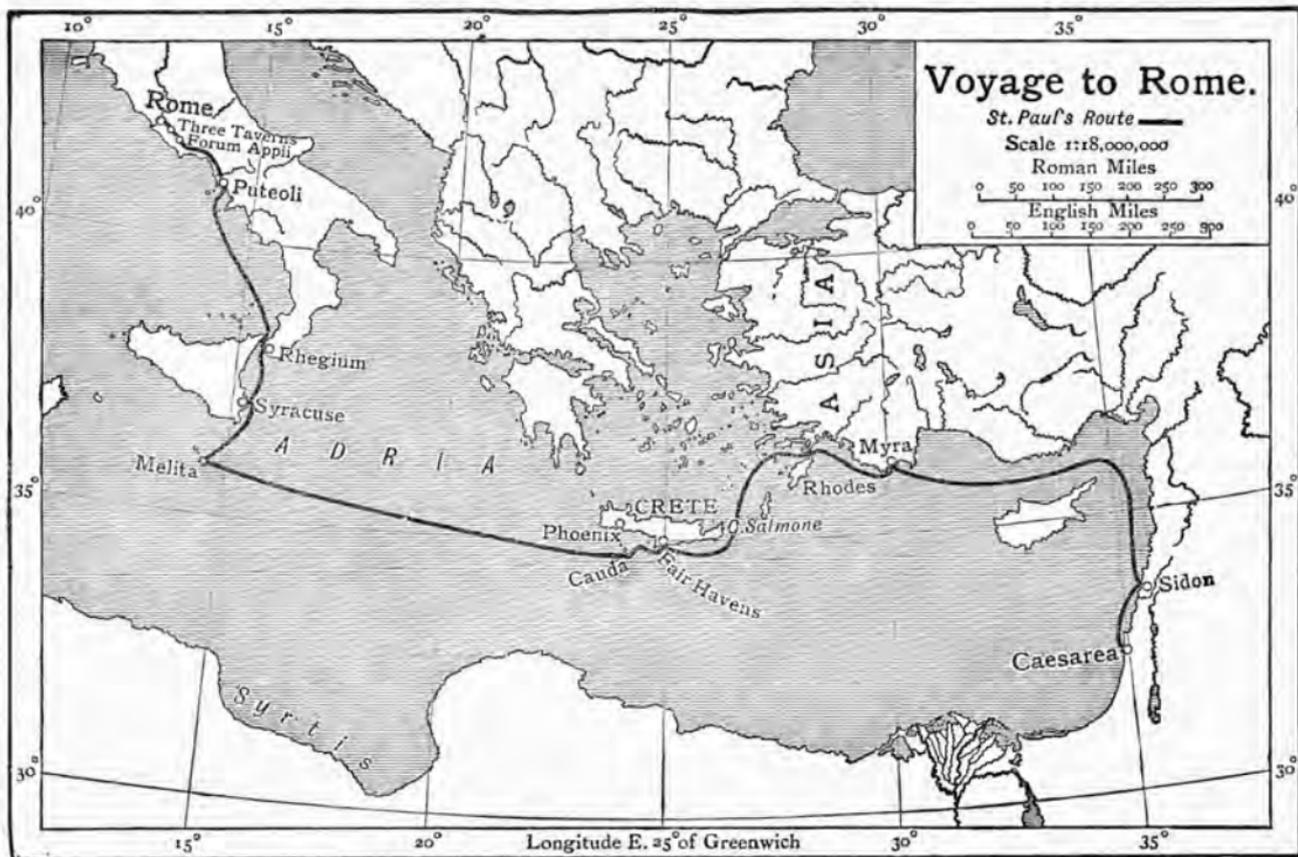
CHAPTERS 27 AND 28

THE JOURNEY TO ROME AND FIRST
IMPRISONMENT

Circa A.D. 58-61

"Ye shall be my witnesses . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth."

ACTS 1⁸.



PART VII

CHAPTERS 27 AND 28

THE JOURNEY TO ROME AND FIRST IMPRISONMENT

Circa A.D. 58-61

Cæsarea to Myra in the Ship of Adramyttium.

And when it was determined that we should sail for Italy, 27
they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion

I From this point to the end of the Acts we have an uninterrupted "we narrative." In this chapter St. Luke writes with the true Greek love of the sea, and nowhere in classical literature have we a more detailed or more interesting account of the navigation of an ancient ship through perilous seas. There is scarcely a detail which will not pass the criticism of nautical experts, though they are agreed that it is not the work of a sailor, but of a landsman—a landsman thoroughly acquainted with the sea (perhaps as a ship's doctor)—who has described the scene of the shipwreck in some thirty words with such minute accuracy that the exact spot can be identified almost with certainty.

It is not proposed to discuss details of St. Luke's seamanship, which may be studied in the standard work on the subject, James Smith's monograph, *The Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*, and it is hardly necessary to call attention to the way in which St. Paul takes the lead at the most critical junctures; Paul the prisoner becomes the leader and hero of the voyage—a strange anomaly.

It is difficult to say exactly what is meant by the **Augustan band** or cohort (margin). It is hardly likely that an officer of the local auxiliary troops would be entrusted with such an important mission, but the regular cohorts of Roman legions had no such names. It was probably not an official title, but a local name ("Emperor's troops") for an Imperial Corps of officers detailed for work as couriers between the Imperial legions and their headquarters. One of their duties was to attend to the commissariat, whence they were called *frumentarii* ("corn-men"), or sometimes *peregrini* (foreigners), as they were mostly recruited from legions on foreign service. In Hadrian's time they were stationed in a camp on the Cœlian Hill known as *Castra Peregrinorum* (see note on 28¹⁸).

named Julius, of the Augustan band. ²And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail unto the places on the coast of Asia, we put to sea, Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. ³And the next day we touched at Sidon : and Julius treated Paul kindly, and gave him leave to go unto his friends and refresh himself. ⁴And putting to sea from thence, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. ⁵And when we had sailed across the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia.

Myra to Crete in the Ship of Alexandria.

⁶And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy ; and he put us therein. ⁷And when we had sailed slowly many days, and were come with difficulty over against Cnidus, the wind not further suffering us, we sailed under the

2 The ship of Adramyttium (in Mysia, N.E. Asia Minor) would be a coasting vessel on its way home for the winter, and Julius would reckon on falling in with an Italian-bound vessel, which actually happened at Myra. St. Luke was probably allowed to accompany St. Paul as his medical adviser (Julius would wish to take every care of his prisoner), but it is difficult to define the position of Aristarchus. He may also have been in bonds. He is twice mentioned in St. Paul's Epistles written from Rome ; in one (Col. 4¹⁰) he is described as a "fellow prisoner," but in Philem. (v. 23) he is distinctly separated from "Epaphras my fellow prisoner." It is held by some scholars that St. Luke and Aristarchus travelled as personal attendants, i.e. slaves (a man of means was allowed to take two) ; others suggest that both went as prisoners (or, at any rate, as appellants) ; but the mention of Aristarchus at the end, quite apart from "Paul and certain other prisoners," hardly bears this out, and it is probable that Aristarchus was merely on his way home to Thessalonica *via* Philippi. An objection to this view is that Julius would not accept passengers promiscuously, but after all the vessel was only an Adramyttium coaster, not (like the ship of Myra) a government vessel, and Julius would hardly have the right to censor the passenger list.

6 The ship of Alexandria, judging from her company of 276 (v. 37) and her four anchors (v. 29), must have been a large vessel, probably carrying corn to Rome from Egypt, the granary of the Empire ; a government ship, so that Julius had considerable authority (v. 11). Myra was an important port of this commerce.

7-8 From Cnidus, the extreme S.W. corner of Asia Minor, the ship would normally proceed north of Crete direct to the island of Cythera, but the prevailing west wind made it necessary to travel along the

lee of Crete, over against Salmone ; ⁹and with difficulty coasting along it we came unto a certain place called Fair Havens ; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

⁹And when much time was spent, and the voyage was now dangerous, because the Fast was now already gone by, Paul admonished them, ¹⁰and said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the lading and the ship, but also of our lives. ¹¹But the centurion gave more heed to the master and to the owner of the ship, than to those things which were spoken by Paul. ¹²And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to put to sea from thence, if by any means they could reach Phœnix, and winter *there* ; *which* is a haven of Crete, looking north-east and south-east. ¹³And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close in shore.

south side of the island, rounding its eastern promontory of **Salmone**. **Fair Havens** was midway along the south coast ; it is so called to this day, and four miles east of it the ruins of **Lasea** may still be seen. Perhaps it was evangelised by St. Paul during his lengthy stay ; we know that Titus later ministered in Crete (Titus 1⁵).

⁹ the **Fast** was the Day of Atonement, the 10th day of Tisri (September–October). From mid-September to mid-November was considered a dangerous season for navigation, and from November to March all open sea voyages were discontinued ; this gives about mid-November as the time of the shipwreck, A.D. 58 or 59.

10–12 This seems to record a meeting at which the serious situation was discussed. St. Paul as an experienced traveller (2 Cor. 11²⁵ tells us he had three times suffered shipwreck, as well as spending a night and a day “in the deep”), is invited to attend, though his advice is not taken.

11 If it was a government ship, **master and owner** should read “navigator and captain.”

12 **Phœnix** is generally identified with Lutro, forty miles along the coast from Fair Havens, but the harbour there faces east, and it has therefore been necessary to alter the A.V. reading “toward the south west and north west” which seems to be the correct meaning of the Greek. To avoid the contradiction another site has been suggested for Phœnix, viz. Phineka, a few miles farther west, where the harbour does face west. But it must be remembered that St. Luke never reached the harbour, and may have mistaken the bearings given to him.

The Storm caused by Euraquilo.

¹⁴But after no long time there beat down from it a tempestuous wind, which is called Euraquilo : ¹⁵and when the ship was caught, and could not face the wind, we gave way to it, and were driven. ¹⁶And running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were able, with difficulty, to secure the boat : ¹⁷and when they had hoisted it up, they used helps, undergirding the ship ; and, fearing lest they should be cast upon the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and so were driven. ¹⁸And as we laboured exceedingly with the storm, the next day they began to throw *the freight* overboard ; ¹⁹and the third day they cast out with their own hands the tackling of the ship. ²⁰And when neither sun nor stars shone upon us for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was now taken away.

St. Paul's Comfort and Advice.

²¹And when they had been long without food, then Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have set sail from Crete, and have gotten this injury and loss. ²²And now I exhort you to be of good cheer : for there shall be no loss of life among you, but *only* of the ship.

14 Euraquilo, a tempestuous east-north-east wind. The name was probably coined by Latin sailors from "Eurus," the east wind, and "Aquila," the "North-by-one-third-East wind." It still blows with typhonic force from the Cretan mountains.

16 The shelter of the island enabled them to bring aboard the small boat which was being dragged astern and was in danger of breaking adrift ; also to pass girder ropes under the ship to hold the timbers together. Technically known as "frapping," this operation continued well into the nineteenth century.

17 the Syrtis ; a long stretch of quicksand off the African coast to the west of Cyrene, i.e. S.W. of Cauda, the direction in which they were being driven by Euraquilo.

19 Tackling, lit. "furniture," i.e. all loose fittings of the ship, and all the tackle not immediately required.

20 With neither sun nor stars to steer by, it was impossible to keep their bearings, and there was nothing for it but to drift helplessly before the wind.

²⁸For there stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, ²⁴saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Cæsar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee. ²⁵Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me. ²⁶Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

²⁷But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven to and fro in the *sea of Adria*, about midnight the sailors surmised that they were drawing near to some country; ²⁸and they sounded, and found twenty fathoms: and after a little space, they sounded again, and found fifteen fathoms. ²⁹And fearing lest haply we should be cast ashore on rocky ground, they let go four anchors from the stern, and wished for the day. ³⁰And as the sailors were seeking to flee out of the ship, and had lowered the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would lay out anchors from the foreship, ³¹Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. ³²Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off. ³³And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take some food, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye wait and continue fasting, having taken nothing. ³⁴Wherefore I beseech you to take some food: for this is for your safety: for there shall not a hair perish from the head of any of you. ³⁵And when he had said this, and had taken bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all: and he brake it, and began to eat. ³⁶Then were they all of good cheer, and themselves also took food. ³⁷And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls. ³⁸And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

The Shipwreck and Escape.

³⁹And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they perceived a certain bay with a beach, and they took counsel

23 Another supernatural appearance to St. Paul (cf. 18⁹, 23¹¹) and again the promise of safe arrival at Rome.

27 *Adria*; here used as a general name for the eastern end of the Mediterranean round Greece, Italy and Malta. The sailors probably heard the breakers on the Maltese coast; their suspicions that land was near were confirmed by sounding.

whether they could drive the ship upon it. ⁴⁰And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea, at the same time loosing the bands of the rudders; and hoisting up the foresail to the wind, they made for the beach. ⁴¹But lighting upon a place where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the foreship struck and remained unmoveable, but the stern began to break up by the violence of the waves. ⁴²And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. ⁴³But the centurion, desiring to save Paul, stayed them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves overboard, and get first to the land: ⁴⁴and the rest, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. And so it came to pass, that they all escaped safe to the land.

Events on the Island of Malta.

28 ¹And when we were escaped, then we knew that the island was called Melita. ²And the barbarians shewed us no common kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us all, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. ³But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, a viper came out by reason of the heat, and fastened on his hand. ⁴And when the barbarians saw the beast hanging from his hand, they said one to another, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom,

⁴⁰ **the rudders** were two large paddles, one each side of the stern. They had been lashed clear of the water when anchoring (v. 29); they are now released for steering and the small foresail hoisted.

⁴¹ The beach has been identified almost to a certainty in what is now called St. Paul's Bay, between the mainland and the small island of Salmonetta.

¹ **Malta** at this time belonged to the province of Sicily. Its inhabitants were of Phœnician origin, hence described by St. Luke the Greek as barbarians, i.e. non-Greeks; rude natives outside the influence of Greek and Roman culture.

² **the present rain**, i.e. the rain which had suddenly come on.

³ There are now no poisonous snakes in Malta, but this is hardly a justification for assuming (as has been done) that the scene of the wreck was some other island than Malta. The natives certainly expected the bite to prove fatal (v. 4), and St. Paul's immunity caused them (like the semi-barbarians of Lystra, 14¹¹) to deify him.

though he hath escaped from the sea, yet Justice hath not suffered to live. ⁵Howbeit he shook off the beast into the fire, and took no harm. ⁶But they expected that he would have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly : but when they were long in expectation, and beheld nothing amiss come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

⁷Now in the neighbourhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius ; who received us, and entertained us three days courteously. ⁸And it was so, that the father of Publius lay sick of fever and dysentery : unto whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laying his hands on him healed him. ⁹And when this was done, the rest also which had diseases in the island came, and were cured : ¹⁰who also honoured us with many honours ; and when we sailed, they put on board such things as we needed.

Arrival at Rome.

¹¹And after three months we set sail in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the island, whose sign was The Twin Brothers. ¹²And touching at Syracuse, we tarried there three days. ¹³And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at

⁷ chief man ; lit. " first man," which has been found on inscriptions as the exact title of the governor of the island. He was probably a *legate* of the Sicilian prætor, though the title may be simply a courtesy one equivalent to our " laird."

⁸ The technical terms used here, as well as in the description of the viper incident, are further evidence of the medical knowledge of the writer (see p. xii).

¹¹ after three months. As the wreck probably occurred in early November, it would now be February, an early date for navigation, but the journey was not a long one, and they probably took advantage of favourable conditions. They set sail in another ship of Alexandria, no doubt one of the corn-bearing fleet which had been held up for the winter ; the only ship of which the name (or sign) is given.

The *Twin Brothers* (Gk. *dioscuri*), or Castor and Pollux (A.V.), were sons of Zeus, and tutelar deities of navigation ; the ship would bear their images as a sign.

¹² *Syracuse* was the capital of Sicily at the S.E. corner, the scene of many engagements during the Peloponnesian War.

¹³ made a circuit ; this must have been on account of contrary winds ; ordinarily it is a straight run along the coast. *Rhegium*

Rhegium : and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli : ¹⁴where we found brethren, and were intreated to tarry with them seven days : and so we came to Rome. ¹⁵And from thence the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius, and The Three Taverns : whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

¹⁶And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him.

Interview with "the Chief of the Jews."

¹⁷And it came to pass, that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews : and when they were come together, he said unto them, I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans : ¹⁸who, when they had examined me, desired to set me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me. ¹⁹But when the Jews

(modern Reggio) was the southernmost point of Italy on the Straits of Messina in the ill-omened neighbourhood of Scylla and Charybdis. Puteoli (modern Puzzoli on the Bay of Naples) was an important port of the corn trade with Egypt ; it is worthy of note that there were Christians there.

14 and so we came to Rome ; an anticipatory remark, as the city was still some one hundred miles distant ; "Rome in sight at last !" But it may refer to the entry into the *ager Romanus*, or state of Rome.

15 The Market of Appius was a small town, forty-three miles from Rome, on the great Appian Way connecting Greece and Rome *via* Brindisi. The Three Taverns (*Tres tabernæ*) was ten miles nearer Rome. *Taberna* means a "booth" or "shop," not necessarily an inn, though probably "rest-house" is the meaning here. Both were well-known halting places so that the Christians were not likely to miss the party. St. Luke seems to assume the reader's knowledge of local topography, which has been used as an argument that the Acts emanated from Rome.

16 Here the A.V. and the R.V. margin insert "the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard." The Greek word used is *stratopedarch*, literally "captain of the camp" ; he may have been the prefect of the prætorian guard, but it is more probable that he was the *princeps peregrinorum* referred to in the note on 27¹.

17 the chief of the Jews ; not an official title, simply the principal men of the Jewish colony, many of them no doubt Libertines (see 6²).

spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had aught to accuse my nation of. ²⁰For this cause therefore did I intreat you to see and to speak with *me*: for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. ²¹And they said unto him, We neither received letters from Judæa concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee. ²²But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against.

²³And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded *the matter*, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening.

Denunciation of the Jews, and Appeal to the Gentiles.

²⁴And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. ²⁵And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers,²⁶ saying:

Go thou unto this people, and say,
By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand;
And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive:

21 It is difficult to understand their ignorance. The Jews of Rome might not have heard of St. Paul's appeal to the Emperor nine months previously, but they must have had some knowledge of the riot leading up to his arrest two years earlier. The view has been taken that they exaggerated their ignorance and were unwilling to commit themselves until they had heard St. Paul's explanation. But the passage merely states (i) that no official report had been forwarded from Judæa, and (ii) that none of the Jews returning from Jerusalem had reported adversely on St. Paul's conduct. What they *did* know, as every one else knew, was that the Gospel had encountered opposition everywhere. As far as Rome was concerned, they knew it from their own bitter experience (see note on 18²). Perhaps this trouble had led to a complete rupture with the Christians, so that they were no longer interested in their doings.

26 Is. 6⁹ quoted from the Septuagint. It was not the first time that this stern denunciation had been applied to present-day Jews. Our Lord quotes the passage in connexion with His parabolic teaching (Mt. 13¹⁴).

²⁷For this people's heart is waxed gross,
 And their ears are dull of hearing,
 And their eyes they have closed ;
 Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes,
 And hear with their ears,
 And understand with their heart,
 And should turn again,
 And I should heal them.

²⁸Be it known therefore unto you, that this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles : they will also hear.

The Witness of St. Paul at Rome.

³⁰And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, ³¹preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.

29 The A.V. here adds : " And when he had said these words the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves." The words are not found, however, in the best MSS., and the verse is omitted from the R.V.

30 Two whole years, during which he probably wrote his Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. From them we learn that St. Luke, St. Mark, Aristarchus and Timothy were with him for various periods during his captivity. It is reasonable to suppose that at the end of the two years St. Paul was acquitted as he himself anticipated (Philem. v. 22, Phil. 1²⁵) ; the Pastoral Epistles afford evidence of this, and indeed it is extremely difficult to fix dates for them at any earlier period of St. Paul's life. Rome had shown through her provincial governors that there was no case against the prisoner, and we have no reason to think that Nero (who as yet showed no antipathy to Christianity) would reverse that decision. It is possible indeed that the Jewish accusers, realising the weakness of their case, failed to put in an appearance as prosecutors, and after the legal period of detention of one and a half or two years, the prisoner was liberated. After his release it would seem from the Pastoral Epistles that the Apostle visited Asia, Macedonia and Crete. The Muratorian Fragment speaks of a visit to Spain (cf. Rom. 15²⁸), and Clement of Rome says that his journey "reached the boundary of the West." When the Neronian persecution of A.D. 64 spread to the provinces, St. Paul was once more arrested as a ringleader, probably in Asia (2 Tim. 1¹⁵), and put to death at Rome between A.D. 64 and 68. According to tradition he was beheaded on the Ostian Way three miles from the gates of the city, and his body laid to rest where the church of St. Paolo Fuori le Mura (without-the-walls) now stands.

QUESTIONS ON PART VII

General

1. What evidence have we in these chapters of the author's knowledge of (a) medicine, (b) navigation? Can you suggest any explanation of how the latter was acquired?

2. What do we know of St. Paul's activities during the "two whole years" of his imprisonment at Rome, and whence do we derive our information? What views have been held as to the course of events at the end of this period?

3. Mention any events recorded in the later chapters of the Acts which throw light on St. Paul's financial circumstances at this time.

Narrative

4. How are the various ships designated in which St. Paul travelled to Italy? What portion of the journey was covered in each vessel?

5. It has been said that "Paul the prisoner stands out as the leader and hero of the voyage." Illustrate this from his conduct during the storm and wreck.

6. Give an account of the stay on the island of Malta.

7. Describe the treatment received by St. Paul from (a) Christians, (b) Jews, and (c) Gentiles, after reaching Italy.

8. On what occasions did St. Paul receive Divine guidance or comfort from a direct vision? Briefly relate the circumstances in each case.

9. Explain the following phrases, and state the connexion in which they occur:—because the Fast was now already gone by—thou must stand before Cæsar—they perceived a certain bay with a beach—By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand.

10. Write short notes on:—the Augustan band; Phœnix; Euraquilo; Syrtis; chief man of the island; The Twin Brothers; The Market of Appius.

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