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THE ACTS  
OF  
THE APOSTLES

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THE ACTS  
OF  
THE APOSTLES

With Introduction and Notes

BY

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Cambridge  
at the University Press

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\* \* This little book is a reprint of the commentary by Professor Lumby. It has been largely rewritten, and much of what is new has been suggested by the works of Professors Ramsay and Harnack.

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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	3
Chronology . . . . .	5
Plan . . . . .	6
List of principal persons mentioned . . . . .	7
TEXT AND NOTES . . . . .	11
INDEX . . . . .	187

### MAP

St Paul's Travels . . . . . *at end*

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\* \* The Text adopted in this edition is that of Dr Scrivener's *Cambridge Paragraph Bible*. A few variations from the ordinary Text, chiefly in the spelling of certain words, and in the use of italics, will be noticed.

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### ABBREVIATIONS

A.V.	The Authorised Version.
R.V.	The Revised Version of 1885.
Heb.	The Original Hebrew.
LXX.	The Septuagint or Greek Version.
Targ.	The Targum or Rabbinic Version.
Vulg.	The Vulgate or Latin Version of St Jerome.
Lit.	Literally.

## INTRODUCTION

The title of this book is not strictly "the Acts of the Apostles." Only five of the Apostles are mentioned at all, and the book centres mainly round certain parts of the lives of two of them, St Peter and St Paul. One of the best MSS. gives the title simply as "Acts," and this may well have been original. But before long treatises came into circulation concerning the doings of individual Apostles and Bishops, and were known by such titles as "The Acts of Peter and Paul," "The Acts of Timothy," etc.; and to distinguish our book from these it received such titles as "Acts of the Apostles," "Acts of all the Apostles," and the like.

The name of the author is not given. But a minute investigation as to style, language and thought points conclusively to the fact that he is the same as the author of our third Gospel. This conclusion is further confirmed by the close similarity between the prologues of the two books, both dedicated to a certain Theophilus, and it has the unanimous support of tradition. Thus, for example, Eusebius, writing in the earlier part of the fourth century, says, "Luke, by race a native of Antioch, and by profession a physician, left us examples of that healing of souls which he acquired from them in two inspired books, the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles" (*Hist. Eccl.* II. 11). And Tertullian, writing a century or more before him, speaks (*De jejuniis* 10) of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, and of Peter going up to the housetop to pray, as facts mentioned in the commentary of Luke. Similar quotations could be drawn from Clement of Alexandria, a little anterior to Tertullian, and from Irenæus, who wrote about 190 A.D. Turning once more to the book itself, we find that the writer is a modest man who keeps himself throughout in the background, but the use of the first person plural in certain passages (xvi. 10-17, xx. 5-38, xxi. 1-18, xxvii., xxviii. 1-16) indicates that he was an eyewitness of what he describes. The passages referred to deal with certain portions of St Paul's journeys, beginning at Troas and ending at Rome. From St Paul's Epistles we can make out a list of his companions on these several occasions, and a consideration of them

leaves only two, Titus and Luke, who might conceivably have been the authors of Acts. Between them we need have no hesitation in choosing Luke. Various small coincidences go to confirm this conclusion. As a physician (Col. iv. 14) he might naturally be a travelling companion of St Paul, who suffered from some recurring disease (2 Cor. xii. 7; Gal. iv. 13), and at the same time he would be the more likely to notice such details as the scales falling from St Paul's eyes (ix. 18), the mist and darkness that fell upon Elymas (xiii. 11), and the fever and dysentery from which the father of Publius suffered (xxviii. 8). As a Greek and a traveller he shews peculiar interest in all things relating to the sea, and has a fair, though not a technical, acquaintance with nautical matters.

The date of the composition of Acts cannot be exactly determined. The question is closely bound up with the problem of the date of the third Gospel which is certainly the earlier work. If the Gospel be placed after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. then Acts would follow soon after. But it is by no means certain that both Gospel and Acts are not previous to 70 A.D., and there is a tendency now to place the date of Acts not long after the last event recorded in the book, in St Paul's two years' imprisonment in Rome, which ended probably in 62 A.D. or 63 A.D.

The purpose of the book is a twofold one (i) to shew how the Church developed from its earliest beginnings under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit, (ii) to trace the spread of Christianity from Jerusalem, the Jewish capital, to Rome, the metropolis of the world. With regard to the first the writer can only report what he has heard, and his narrative is not always free from difficulty. In the second subject he is more at home, and is in many cases an eyewitness of what he relates. His subject is, of course, a vast one and he does not undertake to give anything like a full history of the Church's Missions at the time. His peculiar interest in St Paul leads him to devote the greater part of his space to him, and he is justified in doing so, in that St Paul had, of all the Apostles, the grandest conception of what the Church of Christ should be.

For the sources of his history St Luke would rely partly on what he had himself witnessed, and partly on what he had heard from St Peter, St James, St Philip the Evangelist, St Paul and others. For the earlier chapters it is perhaps possible to distinguish strands of narratives connected with Jerusalem,

Cæsarea and Antioch respectively. As a historian he is generally painstaking and accurate: e.g. he is careful to give the correct titles to the Roman governor of Cyprus (xiii. 7), Achæa (xviii. 12) and Malta (xxviii. 7), and to the magistrates of Philippi (xvi. 20) and Thessalonica (xvii. 6). Above all he shews real historical genius in his selection of materials. The speeches, which are a special feature of the Acts, have, with the possible exception of that at Miletus (xx. 18-35), no claim to be considered as verbatim reports, but they may be relied upon to give the substance of the speaker's words.

## CHRONOLOGY

- A.D.
- 30 The Crucifixion.
- 30-33 Gradual growth of the Church. Institution of the Seven.
- 33 Death of Stephen. Outbreak of persecution.  
Preaching of Philip.
- 34 Conversion of Saul.
- 36 St Paul's first visit to Jerusalem.
- 37-43 Preaching of St Peter.
- 43 Herodian persecution. Death of St James.
- 44 Death of Herod Agrippa I.
- 48 St Paul and Barnabas set out from Antioch on the  
first missionary journey.
- 50 They return to Antioch.  
Council of Jerusalem.  
St Paul and Silas set out from Antioch on the second  
missionary journey.
- 51 Sojourn at Corinth.
- 52 Fourth visit to Jerusalem (Acts xviii. 22).  
Return to Antioch.
- 53 Third missionary journey begun<sup>1</sup>. Visit to the region  
of Galatia and Phrygia.
- 54-56 St Paul at Ephesus.
- 56 St Paul in Macedonia and Greece.
- 57 Fifth visit to Jerusalem and arrest.
- 57-59 Captivity in Cæsarea.
- 59-60 Voyage and shipwreck.
- 60 St Paul arrives in Rome.
- 60-62 The Roman captivity.

<sup>1</sup> It is to be noticed that St Luke gives no definite break between the so-called second and third missionary journeys.

## PLAN

- i. 1—5 Preface.
- i. 6—viii. 3 The story of the Church in Jerusalem.
- i. 6—11 The Ascension.
- 12—26 The choice of St Matthias.
- ii. The first day of Pentecost and its results.
- iii.—iv. 31 The healing of the lame man by St Peter and St John, and their subsequent arrest.
- iv. 32—v. 16 The daily life of the Christians. The story of Ananias and Sapphira.
- v. 17—42 Further imprisonment of the Apostles.
- vi. 1—7 Development of the Church. Appointment of the Seven.
- vi. 8—viii. 3 The preaching and death of St Stephen, and the subsequent persecution.
- viii. 4—xii. Extension of the Church as far as Antioch.
- viii. 4—25 Philip preaches in Samaria.
- 26—40 Philip baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch.
- ix. 1—30 Conversion of Saul and his reception at Jerusalem.
- 31 The Church enjoys general peace.
- 32—x. The acts of St Peter. Healing of Æneas, raising of Tabitha and baptism of Cornelius.
- xi. 1—18 St Peter justifies his preaching to the Gentiles.
- 19—30 The headquarters of the Church are moved to *Antioch*. Introduction of Barnabas and Saul.
- xii. 1—19 Herod's persecution. Death of St James. Imprisonment of St Peter.
- 20—23 Herod's death.
- 24—25 The Church's quiet progress.
- xiii.—xxviii. The story of St Paul.
- xiii.—xiv. The first missionary journey, beginning and ending at *Antioch*.
- xv. 1—35 The Council at Jerusalem.
- 36—41 The prelude to the second missionary journey.
- xvi.—xviii. 22 The second missionary journey, beginning and ending at *Antioch*.
- xviii. 23—xix. St Paul makes his way to *Ephesus*, and stays there nearly three years.

- xx.—xxi. 26 The third missionary journey, beginning at *Ephesus* and ending at *Jerusalem*.
- xxi. 27—xxiii. St Paul is arrested and despatched to *Cæsarea*.
- xxiv.—xxvi. St Paul spends two years at *Cæsarea* as a prisoner. He appeals from *Festus* to *Cæsar*.
- xxvii.—xxviii. The voyage to *Rome*, and his reception there.

#### A LIST OF THE MORE IMPORTANT PEOPLE MENTIONED IN THE ACTS

**Agabus**, a prophet living at *Jerusalem*. He predicted (i) a general famine throughout the world (xi. 28), (ii) by a symbolic act, St Paul's arrest at *Jerusalem* (xxi. 11).

**Ananias**, (i) the husband of *Sapphira*, punished by death for his deceit (v. 1-16), (ii) a disciple living at *Damascus*, commissioned by the Lord to find out *Saul* and restore his sight (ix. 10-19), (iii) high priest, c. 47-59 A.D., before whom St Paul was brought for judgment by *Lysias* the Roman commander (xxiii. 2-5). At the summons of *Felix* he came down later to *Cæsarea* to accuse St Paul formally (xxiv. 1). His later history may be briefly described. He was sent by the Roman governor of *Syria* to be tried at *Rome* before *Claudius* on a charge of complicity in acts of violence. Being acquitted he returned to *Jerusalem*, but was later murdered by mob-violence at the beginning of the great rebellion in 66 A.D.

**Apollos**, a Jew of *Alexandria* described as "an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures and fervent in spirit." He came to *Ephesus* and taught there some part of the Christian faith. Being taken in hand by *Priscilla* and *Aquila* and more fully instructed, he became a very able teacher in *Achæa* (xviii. 24-28). In *Corinth* indeed his authority seems to have been almost equal to that of St Paul (1 Cor. i. 12). Later on he appears to have visited *Crete* (Titus iii. 13).

**Aquila**, and **Priscilla** his wife, always mentioned together. *Aquila* was a native of *Pontus* in *Asia Minor*, who had settled at *Rome*, but had been banished from thence by the decree of the Emperor *Claudius* which ordered the expulsion of all Jews from the city. Thence he made his way to *Corinth* and entertained St Paul, both working together at their trade of making

tents (xviii. 2, 3). He accompanied St Paul to Ephesus (xviii. 18, 19), and with his wife instructed Apollos in the Christian faith (xviii. 26). Later we find him at Rome (Rom. xvi. 3) and still later again at Ephesus (2 Tim. iv. 19).

**Barnabas**, a Levite of Cyprus who sold a property and added the price to the common funds of the Church at Jerusalem (iv. 36, 37). He befriended St Paul after his conversion, and commended him to the Apostles (ix. 27). Sent by the Church at Jerusalem to Antioch he had a large share in the consolidation of the Church there, and went to Tarsus to fetch St Paul to help him in his work (xi. 22-26). He was St Paul's companion in the first missionary journey, and is always mentioned first (till xiii. 43) as the man of more importance: so at Lystra the people take him for Jupiter the highest of the gods (xiv. 12). He attended the Council at Jerusalem as a special delegate (xv. 2), and was one of those who brought back the decision of the Council to Antioch (xv. 22). He was to have accompanied St Paul on his second missionary journey, but a dispute arose about the question of taking Mark his nephew, so they parted and he and Mark sailed away to Cyprus (xv. 36-39).

**Drusilla**, sister of Herod Agrippa II. and wife of a certain Azizus, king of Emesa, whom she deserted in favour of Antonius Felix, procurator of Judæa (xxiv. 24).

**Felix (Antonius)**, procurator of Judæa, resident at Cæsarea. Lysias sent St Paul to him with a letter of explanation. He tried him but adjourned the case and kept him in prison, though under lenient conditions. He seems to have taken a special interest in St Paul, and sent for him more than once for a private interview. The character he gains from Roman writers is a very bad one (xxiv.).

**Festus (Porcius)** succeeded Felix, and after a brief visit to Jerusalem had St Paul brought before him at Cæsarea. His suggestion that the case should be adjourned to Jerusalem was answered by St Paul's appeal to Cæsar (Nero). Later he brought him before Agrippa and Bernice (xxv.-xxvi.).

**Gallo**, proconsul of Achæa, resident at Corinth on St Paul's first visit to that city (c. 51 A.D.). He refused to hear the charges brought by the Jews against St Paul on the ground that they were merely technical points of Jewish Law. Gallo derives some fame from his distinguished relatives, for Seneca was his brother and Lucan his nephew (xviii. 12-17).

**Gamaliel**, the grandson of the great Jewish teacher Hillel, and himself a Rabbi of very great fame. One of St Paul's teachers in the University of Jerusalem (xxii. 3). As a member of the Sanhedrin he gave his advice to take no further proceedings against Peter and John (v. 33-39).

**John Mark**, see Mark.

**Lysias (Claudius)**, commander of the Roman garrison in the fortress of Antonia in Jerusalem. Receiving news that a tumult was going on in the Temple courts he came down with his forces and rescued St Paul from the fury of the mob. He ordered St Paul to be scourged, but the latter appealed to his Roman citizenship. Hearing of the conspiracy against St Paul's life he sent him with a large escort to Felix at Casarea (xxi. 31-xxiii. 30).

**Mark (John)** accompanied his uncle Barnabas and St Paul from Jerusalem to Antioch in the capacity of minister (xii. 25). He was with them again at the beginning of the first missionary journey, but left them for some unexplained reason when they reached the mainland at Perga (xiii. 13). Possibly his courage failed him or his zeal waxed cold. At the beginning of the second missionary journey he was the cause of a breach between St Paul and Barnabas, for the former refused to take him any more. So Barnabas brought him with him to Cyprus (xv. 37-39). Later on the breach between St Paul and St Mark was healed, and we find them together in Rome (Col. iv. 10; Philemon 24).

**Philip the Evangelist**, one of the Seven (vi. 5). After the death of Stephen he seems to have taken the lead among them. His first sphere of activity was in Samaria, where he met with great success, baptizing among others Simon Magus (viii. 5-13). Afterwards he went southwards and was the instrument in the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch (v. 26-40). He was parted from him in a wonderful way, and conveyed by the Spirit to Azotus or Ashdod. Twenty years later he is found at Casarea with four daughters, virgins and prophetesses, who minister to St Paul (xxi. 9, 10).

**Sergius Paulus**, proconsul of Cyprus residing at Paphos, sent for Barnabas and Saul, desiring to hear the word of God. Elymas the sorcerer, seeking to turn him away from the faith, was struck with blindness, and it is said that the proconsul believed, but it is doubtful if he became a genuine Christian. From the fact that Saul is now for the first time called Paul

it has been thought by some that he took the name from this, his first distinguished convert (xiii. 6-12).

**Silas** or **Silvanus** (for the two are probably to be identified) appears first among those sent with St Paul and Barnabas to carry the decision of the Council of Jerusalem to Antioch and Syria (xv. 22). At Antioch, being a prophet, he preached with much success, remaining there for some time (xv. 32, 34). He was chosen as St Paul's companion in the second missionary journey and remained with him till the latter's departure from Berea. Silas was left there with Timothy, but seems to have rejoined St Paul at Corinth (xviii. 5). In 1 Peter v. 12 he is mentioned as the bearer of that epistle.

**Simon Magus**, a sorcerer who had great influence in Samaria, but was converted and baptized by Philip. St Peter and St John came later to confirm the work of Philip, and the converts received the Holy Spirit by the imposition of their hands. Simon offered St Peter money to have the same power conferred on him, but was sternly rebuked, and thoroughly frightened, he asked for the Apostle's prayers. He figures largely in the writings of the Fathers as the great adversary of Christianity and especially of St Peter.

**Timothy**, the son of a Greek father but a Jewish mother by name Eunice, a native of Lystra. St Paul on his arrival in that city on his second missionary journey took him for his companion and circumcised him (xvi. 1-3). He accompanied St Paul as far as Berea, being left there with Silas and joining the Apostle later at Corinth (xviii. 5). He appears as being sent with Erastus by St Paul from Ephesus to Macedonia (xix. 22), and then as forming one of the party who accompanied St Paul to Jerusalem (xx. 4). Later he was with St Paul in Rome (Col. i. 1; Philippians i. 1; Philemon 1) and still he seems to have been in charge of the Church at Ephesus (1 Tim. i. 2, 3).

**Tychicus** and **Trophimus** accompanied St Paul from Greece in his third missionary journey and awaited him at Troas (xx. 4). Trophimus was with him in Jerusalem (xxi. 29). Tychicus was sent as the bearer of the Epistle to the Ephesians (vi. 21), and Colossians (iv. 7). Both are mentioned in 2 Timothy (iv. 12 and 20).

# THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## i. 1-5. *Preface*

**1** The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, <sup>2</sup>until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the Apostles whom he had chosen: <sup>3</sup>to whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being

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### I. 1-5. *The Dedication and Prologue*

**1.** *The former treatise*] Lit. **the first**. Perhaps the superlative is only used for the comparative by a more or less common idiom; cp. Matt. xxi. 28. But it is possible that St Luke intended to write a third work. *treatise*] Rather too imposing a rendering: the word simply means *account*. *have I made*] Better **I made**. So R.V. *Theophilus*] Only found again in the dedication of St Luke's Gospel (i. 3). There he is addressed as 'most excellent,' an official title applied to men of rank, e.g. Felix (Acts xxiii. 26) and Festus (Acts xxvi. 25). The name Theophilus is Greek and means "lover of God." So some have taken it as a mere designation of Christians. *began*] St Luke modestly describes his Gospel as an account of the beginnings of the work and teaching of Jesus. In the same way the Acts is an account of the beginnings of the Christian Church. But he may have in his mind also the thought of the new era in the world's history marked by the life of Jesus.

**2.** *he was taken up*] R.V. **received up**: the same word is used of the Ascension in Mark xvi. 19; 1 Tim. iii. 16. The Gospel had ended with a very brief notice of the Ascension and it forms the starting-point of the history of the Acts. *through the Holy Ghost*] The Acts has been called the Gospel of the Spirit. Briefly, the Gospel itself deals with the life of Christ on earth, the Acts with His power working in the Church through the Holy Spirit.

**3.** *alive*] The living Christ was the substance of the Apostles' preaching. *after his passion*] Lit. **after he had suffered**. The verb is regularly used of the death of Christ; cp. Luke xxiv. 26, 46, etc. *infallible proofs*] The adjective is not represented

seen of them forty days, and speaking of the *things* pertaining to the kingdom of God: <sup>4</sup>and, being assembled together with them, commanded them that *they* should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. <sup>5</sup>For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

i. 6-viii. 3. *The story of the Church in Jerusalem*

<sup>6</sup>When they therefore were come together, they asked

in the Greek and is omitted in the R.V. The word translated "proof" implies an evident token calculated to remove all doubt. The proofs referred to would be those related in Mark xvi. 12-18; Luke xxiv. 13-53; John xx. 19-xxi. 22. *being seen of them forty days*] R.V. **appearing unto them by the space of forty days.** Christ was not continually with His disciples during the forty days which preceded the Ascension. This is the only place where forty days are specified as intervening between the Resurrection and the Ascension. *the kingdom of God*] The expression occurs again six times in Acts and is very common in Mark and Luke. Matthew has instead "the kingdom of heaven." Christ's work was to establish the kingdom of God upon earth: His Apostles were trained as instruments to carry on that work after His life on earth was done, and His last instructions to them before His Ascension would naturally refer to this aim; cp. Mark xvi. 15; Luke xxiv. 47; John xx. 21.

4. *being assembled together with them*] The Greek word is a very rare one and may possibly be rendered "eating with them." So it is translated in Vulg. See R.V. marg. *commanded them*] R.V. **charged them.** The word is used of solemn exhortation or warning; cp. Acts v. 28. *ye have heard*] R.V. **ye heard.** In Greek it is possible to drop at once into direct speech. In English we need a parenthesis, "said he." The promise is alluded to in Luke xxiv. 49 and found in John xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26.

5. *ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*] in fulfilment of the words of John the Baptist himself, Matt. iii. 11 "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire"; cp. Acts ii. 3.

6-14. *The Ascension*

6. *When they therefore were come together*] The place is not mentioned at present but from v. 12 we learn that it was the mount called Olivet. The words would seem to imply that Christ Himself had summoned them thither. *asked of him*] Better "were asking

of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? <sup>7</sup>And he said unto them, It is not for you to know *the times or the seasons*, which the Father hath put in his own power. <sup>8</sup>But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. <sup>9</sup>And when he had spoken these *things*, while they beheld, he was taken up; and

him," implying that the question was one among many. *wilt thou at this time restore*] Better, with R.V., **doest thou restore**, but the future meaning is not wholly absent. *the kingdom to Israel*] Christ had been speaking to them "the things concerning the kingdom of God" (v. 3) and the disciples could not yet understand that the kingdom He meant was a spiritual one (John xviii. 36).

<sup>7</sup>. *It is not for you, etc.*] Christ had before told His disciples that these were questions beyond the range of human knowledge (Matt. xxiv. 36). *the times or the seasons*] Omit the article (with R.V.). *which the Father hath put in his own power*] R.V. **which the Father hath set within his own authority**, marg. "appointed by."

<sup>8</sup>. *ye shall receive power*] Cp. Luke xxiv. 49 "tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high." The Day of Pentecost was the birthday of the Church, because on it the disciples received the power that sent them forth to their missionary work. *ye shall be witnesses unto me*] The Apostles had in the first place to bear witness to Christ's Resurrection; cp. v. 22. *in Jerusalem*] The work of the Apostles was confined to this city till the death of Stephen. *and in all Judea, and in Samaria*] R.V. **and in all Judea and Samaria**. The two names go closely together. Of the work in Judæa we have no definite information (cp. viii. 1), but the Samaritans heard the word first from Philip and were afterwards confirmed in the faith by Peter and John (viii. 5-25). *unto the uttermost part of the earth*] Cp. Mark xvi. 15 "go ye out into all the world." Acts xiii.—and relates the beginning of this wider mission, the story breaking off at Rome, the capital and centre of the world. Christ had said that the Gospel should be preached in the whole world before the end should come (Matt. xxiv. 14).

<sup>9</sup>. *while they beheld, he was taken up*] So that they might bear personal witness to His Ascension as well as to His Resurrection. Luke xxiv. 33 has "while he blessed them." Compare the account

a cloud received him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; <sup>11</sup> which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this *same* Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in* like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. <sup>12</sup> Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. <sup>13</sup> And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and

of the ascension of Elijah in 2 Kings ii. *a cloud received him out of their sight*] The Hebrews often thought of the clouds as the chariot of God, and so in Daniel's vision (vii. 13) the Son of Man is depicted as coming in the clouds.

**10.** *while they looked stedfastly*] The word is used again of the wondering gaze of the people at Peter and John (iii. 12) and at Stephen (vi. 15) and frequently in Acts. *toward heaven*] R.V. **into heaven.** *went up*] R.V., more correctly, **went.** *in white apparel*] The mark of angelic visitors. Mark xvi. 5; Luke xxiv. 4 ("in dazzling apparel"); Acts x. 30.

**11.** *Ye men of Galilee*] It is probable that all the disciples, except Judas Iscariot, were Galileans. Such were as a rule easily distinguished by their dialect or accent (cp. Matt. xxvi. 73). *shall so come*] i.e. on the clouds of heaven (Daniel vii. 13). The promise of Christ's return explains the "great joy" of Luke xxiv. 52.

**12.** *from the mount called Olivet*] Elsewhere (11 times) called the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, on the road to Bethany; cp. Luke xxiv. 50. *a sabbath day's journey*] About 2000 cubits or six furlongs, fixed by Rabbinic tradition (based on Exodus xvi. 29) as the limit of the journey that a man might make on the sabbath day.

**13.** *when they were come in*] i.e. into the city. *an upper room*] R.V. **the upper chamber.** Possibly the room where the Eucharist was instituted (Mark xiv. 15; Luke xxii. 12). *where abode*] R.V. **where they were abiding.** The eleven would sleep when they could and would use the room as their headquarters for meetings and prayers. It is noticeable that the names of the Apostles are given four times (Matt. x. 2-4; Mark iii. 16-19; Luke vi. 14-16), and their order varies slightly in each. The order here is most like that of St Mark. *both Peter, and James, and John*] R.V. **both Peter and John and James.** In the early

Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* of James. <sup>14</sup> These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

chapters Peter and John are often mentioned together. Bartholomew in all other lists comes before Thomas. Perhaps the latter had acquired special dignity from Christ's words to him (John xx. 27-29). Alpheus *may* be the same as Clopas (John xix. 25) and **Cleopas** (Luke xxiv. 18). Simon Zelotes called the Canaanite or Cananean (R.V.) Matt. x. 4, Mark iii. 18, from a corruption of an Aramaic word meaning the same as the Greek Zelotes, and applied to those who were most strict in the observance of the Mosaic ritual. *Judas the brother of James*] R.V. **Judas the son of James**. The noun is left out in the Greek, but it is probable that "son" is to be supplied rather than "brother," as in the case of James the **son** of Alpheus. "Brother" has come in because it has been assumed that this Judas is to be identified with the author of the Epistle of St Jude, who styles himself "brother of James." But the identification is doubtful.

**14.** *in prayer and supplication*] R.V., with good authority, omits the last two words. The Greek is "in the prayer," the article apparently denoting some definite kind of service; cp. ii. 42. *with the women*] The article is not in the Greek. R.V. marg. "with certain women." It has been noticed that St Luke says more than the other Evangelists about the women who ministered to Christ. *Mary the mother of Jesus*] She would be in the special care of St John (John xix. 26, 27). This is the last time she is mentioned in the New Testament. *and with his brethren*] Their names are given in Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3. Some have supposed that they were sons of Joseph and Mary, but most of the Greek Fathers think that they were Joseph's sons by a former wife. The former view is associated especially with Helvidius, a fourth century writer: the latter has the support of Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Eusebius. A third view, held by Jerome, Augustine and many Latin Fathers, supposes them to have been the children of Cleopas and the sister of the Virgin. The mention of the Lord's brethren among the early band of Christians is to be contrasted with John vii. 5. Perhaps it was only the Resurrection of Christ that finally convinced them; cp. 1 Cor. xv. 7.

<sup>15</sup>And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred *and* twenty,) <sup>16</sup>Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. <sup>17</sup>For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. (<sup>18</sup>Now this *man* purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. <sup>19</sup>And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is

15-26. *The choice of Matthias in place of Judas Iscariot*

15. *in the midst of the disciples*] R.V., with better MS. authority, **the brethren.** *the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty*] R.V. **and there was a multitude of persons** [Greek, *names*] **gathered together, about a hundred and twenty.** For *names = persons* cp. Rev. iii. 4 "thou hast a few names even in Sardis." To the Hebrews the name suggested personality. *about an hundred and twenty*] This would include only those living in Jerusalem. For the gradual increase in numbers cp. ii. 41, iv. 4, vi. 1.

16. *Men and brethren*] R.V. **Brethren.** *Men and*, which is inserted in accordance with Hebrew and Greek idiom, may be omitted in English. *which the Holy Ghost, etc.*] David was speaking of the events of his own day, but the Holy Ghost was through his mouth pointing to the things which should happen to Christ.

17. *had obtained part of this ministry*] R.V. **received his portion in this ministry.** The sacred writers are at pains to point out how Judas' guilt was aggravated by the fact of his being one of the chosen twelve; cp. Matt. xxvi. 47; Mark xiv. 43; Luke xxii. 47; John xii. 4.

18. *Now this man, etc.*] A parenthesis of St Luke's. *purchased*] R.V. **obtained.** He did not actually buy it himself, but it was bought by the chief priests with the money which he returned (Matt. xxvii. 5-8). *falling headlong, he burst asunder, etc.*] The account is different from that which St Matthew gives of the death of Judas (xxvii. 5). Perhaps St Matthew has in mind the story of the suicide of Ahithophel (2 Samuel xvii. 23).

19. *And it was known*] R.V. **And it became known.** *in*

called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.) <sup>20</sup>For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take. <sup>21</sup>Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, <sup>22</sup>beginning from the baptism of John, unto *that same* day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained *to be* a witness with us of his resurrection. <sup>23</sup>And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. <sup>24</sup>And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts

*their proper tongue*] R.V. **in their language**, i.e. Palestinian Aramaic. *Aceldama*] R.V. **Akeldama**. The first two *a*'s are short and strictly the word should begin with a hard guttural. The original name was "the Potter's Field" (Matt. xxvii. 7; cp. Zech. xi. 13).

<sup>20</sup>. *Let his habitation, etc.*] From Psalm lxix. 26 with the substitution of "his" for "their." The Psalm is directed against godless men of the writer's own race and seems to belong to the age of Jeremiah rather than of David. But the whole book of Psalms was collected under the name of David. *his bishoprick let another take*] From Psalm cix. (cviii. in LXX.) 8. R.V. **His** shews that the quotation is from a different Psalm. It is not certain who the author of this Psalm was, but probably he was not David. For "bishoprick" R.V. has **office**, and the more general word is the better.

<sup>21</sup>. *went in and out among us*] A Hebrew phrase for "lived his life"; cp. Acts ix. 28; Psalm cxxi. 8.

<sup>22</sup>. *beginning from the baptism of John*] i.e. the whole time of Christ's public ministry. It can hardly have been that Matthias had actually been with Christ all this time. It would be sufficient that he should have had intercourse with Christ and should have been a witness of the fact of the Resurrection.

<sup>23</sup>. *they appointed*] R.V. **they put forward**. *Joseph called Barsabas*] (R.V. **Barsabbas**) probably not to be identified with Joses surnamed Barnabas (iv. 36). It would appear that he was the one whom the Apostles expected to be chosen, or was, at any rate, the man of more mark.

<sup>24</sup>. *And they prayed and said, etc.*] Perhaps St Luke has merely given the substance of their prayers or else one prayed for all. For a similar instance cp. the prayer in iv. 24 ff. *Thou,*

of all *men*, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, <sup>25</sup>that *he* may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that *he* might go to his own place. <sup>26</sup>And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

**2** And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>And there appeared unto them

*Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men*] The same curious compound adjective is found in Acts xv. 8 applied to God the Father. *shew whether of these two*] "Whether" = which (of two). R.V. **shew of these two the one whom thou hast chosen.**

<sup>25.</sup> *by transgression fell*] R.V. **fell away.** The word used often means "transgress."

<sup>26.</sup> *And they gave forth their lots*] R.V. **And they gave lots for (or unto) them.** St Luke apparently has in mind Lev. xvi. 8, a passage dealing with the choice of the scapegoat by means of lots. It is not necessary to suppose that all the eleven gave their lots. St Peter might well act as their representative. See on v. 24 above. St Chrysostom on this passage remarks that these events took place before Pentecost. After the Holy Ghost had been given they used no more casting of lots.

## II. *The outpouring of the Spirit and its result*

**1.** *the day of Pentecost*] The second of the great Jewish festivals, so called from its coming seven weeks or fifty days ("Pentecost" = fiftieth) after the Passover sabbath; cp. Lev. xxiii. 15-21. It was in its origin a harvest festival and it would be marked by the presence of large crowds in Jerusalem. *was fully come*] R.V. **was now come.** The word literally means "was in process of complete fulfilment." The same expression in Luke ix. 51. *in one place*] Probably the upper room where the Apostles lived.

**2.** *a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind*] R.V. **from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind.** The wind and fire from heaven remind us of the story of the ascension of Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 11. *all the house*] Not only the actual room. It was probably the other people in the house who spread

cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup>And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. <sup>5</sup>And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup>Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. <sup>7</sup>And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? <sup>8</sup>And how hear we every man in our own

the news of what was happening. *cloven tongues like as of fire]* R.V. **tongues parting asunder like as of fire.** The appearance is symbolic of the effect of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Fire is the emblem of burning zeal and devotion: the tongue-like form signifies first the gift of languages which accompanied this miracle, and secondly the gathering in of all tribes and peoples and tongues before the Lamb's throne, which is the goal of the Christian Apostle's vision (Rev. vii. 9). *it sat]* i.e. each tongue in its several divisions.

<sup>4.</sup> *began to speak with other tongues]* A new and apparently unique miracle. We are not to suppose that each retained permanently the gift of speaking languages which he had never learned. Rather for the moment they were endued with this wonderful power. It was the reversal of the scattering of languages at the destruction of the tower of Babel, Genesis ix. 1-9. It is perhaps worth noting that a tradition preserved in the Sibylline Oracles connects the destruction of the tower of Babel with a mighty wind. The "speaking with tongues" of which St Paul speaks in 1 Cor. xii.-xiv. is a different phenomenon altogether.

<sup>5.</sup> *devout men]* The adjective is used of Simeon (Luke ii. 25) and of the men who carried Stephen to burial (Acts viii. 2). *out of every nation under heaven]* Strictly, of course, an exaggeration, but the Jews were very widely dispersed.

<sup>6.</sup> *Now when this was noised abroad]* R.V. **And when this sound was heard.** The word is the same as that translated "sound" in v. 2. But the rendering "was heard" goes too far: the verb simply means "happened" and we are not necessarily to suppose that the actual sound was heard all over the city. *were confounded]* The same word is used of the confusion in the mob at Ephesus (xix. 32) and at Jerusalem (xxi. 31).

tongue, wherein we were born? <sup>9</sup> Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup> Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. <sup>12</sup> And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? <sup>13</sup> Others mocking said, *These men are full of new wine.*

9-11. By the nationalities mentioned we are to understand the Jews living in those countries. Parthians occupied a wide stretch of country south of the Caspian Sea. They were a famous fighting race and not a century before had inflicted a disastrous defeat on the Romans. Medes lived in the country east of Assyria: formerly a great empire, united by Cyrus with Persia in 538 B.C. Darius is called the Median in Daniel v. 31. *Elamites*] Elam was the name of the country lying south of Assyria: its capitals were Susa and Anshan. *Mesopotamia*] "the land between the rivers," i.e. the Euphrates and Tigris. *in Judea*] This comes in somewhat awkwardly, as the list goes from E. to W. Tertullian suggests Armenia and Augustine Syria. *Cappadocia...Pamphylia*] All countries lying within Asia Minor. Pontus lies in the N.E., Cappadocia S. of it, Phrygia W. of Cappadocia and Pamphylia on the S. coast. By Asia is meant here and elsewhere in Acts the Roman province with its capital at Ephesus (xix. 27, etc.).

10. *Libya*] The country bordering on the Mediterranean, eastward of Egypt. Cyrene lay due south of Greece. Simon, who bore Christ's cross, came from here (Matt. xxvii. 32; Mark xv. 21; Luke xxiii. 26). *strangers of Rome*] R.V. **sojourners from Rome**. There was a large Jewish colony in Rome ever since Pompey had carried thousands away captive from Jerusalem in 63 B.C. *proselytes*] Lit. "one who has come over," i.e. a convert to Judaism; cp. Matt. xxiii. 15.

11. *Cretes*] R.V. **Cretans**: dwellers in the large island south of the Ægean Sea. *the wonderful works of God*] R.V. **the great works of God**. The subject of the speaking with tongues was a kind of Magnificat; cp. Luke i. 46, where for "great things" some MSS. have this same word.

13. *new wine*] Rather sweet wine made of the drippings from the clusters before the grapes were trodden, for Pentecost came before the vintage.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lift up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all *ye* that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15 for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. 16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out 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: 18 and on my servants and on my hand-

14-36. *St Peter's explanation of the wonderful event*

14. *standing up*] i.e. choosing a position where he could be seen and heard. Perhaps the twelve had been kneeling before. *said unto them*] R.V. **spake forth unto them**. The same word in ii. 4. It signifies bold and fearless speech. *Ye men of Judea, etc.*] Peter is apparently not aware of what a mixed audience he is addressing.

15. *are not drunken*] Wine was drunk by the Jews with flesh only, and, founding the custom on Exodus xvi. 8, they ate bread in the morning and flesh in the evening, and so took no wine till late in the day. Hence the special reproach in Isaiah v. 11 "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink." *the third hour of the day*] i.e. about 9 a.m. The Jews reckoned the hours from sunrise to sunset, so they were of different length at different times of the year.

16. *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel*] The quotation comes from Joel ii. 28-32. The occasion of Joel's prophecy was a disastrous plague of locusts, which to the prophet suggested a vision of the Last Day. But before that came he looked forward to an outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh. It is however doubtful whether his view extended beyond the Jews. But St Peter rightly interprets the inspired message of God in a wider sense.

17. *in the last days*] Hebr. and LXX. have "after this." St Peter uses a phrase which is common in the prophets for "the end of the world." *your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*] Filled with the Spirit of God they shall "tell forth His message," not "predict future events." *your young men, etc.*] The clauses about the young and old men are transposed in the Hebrew and LXX. It is said that the Jews from motives of reverence refrained from quoting quite correctly.

maidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: <sup>19</sup>and I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: <sup>20</sup>the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before *that* great and notable day of the Lord come: <sup>21</sup>and it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

<sup>22</sup>Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: <sup>23</sup>Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: <sup>24</sup>whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. <sup>25</sup>For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord

18. *and they shall prophesy*] Not in Hebr. or LXX.

19. The signs of the end are similar to those foretold by Christ in Matt. xxiv. 29, 30.

20. *notable*] St Peter, or at least St Luke in his account of St Peter, is quoting from the LXX. The Hebrew has a word similar in form but meaning "terrible."

22. *Jesus of Nazareth*] Perhaps some of those who listened had seen the superscription on the cross, John xix. 19. *a man*] St Peter begins with the manhood of Christ, which all would acknowledge; cp. St Paul's words in addressing the Athenians, xvii. 31. *approved of God*] Christ's mighty works were in a sense His credentials that He was acting in the power of God; cp. John ix. 32, 33. *miracles*] R.V. **mighty works**; lit. "powers."

23. *being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*] It was only after the Resurrection that the disciples realized fully that Christ's death was part of the eternal purpose of God; cp. Luke xxiv. 25-27. *ye have taken...slain*] Better, with R.V., **ye by the hands of lawless men did crucify and slay. the pains**] R.V. **the pangs**; lit. "the birth pangs."

25. *For David speaketh*] From Psalm xvi. (xv. in LXX.) 8-11, quoted from the LXX.; v. 10<sup>b</sup> of this Psalm is also quoted by St Paul at Antioch in Pisidia (xiii. 35). The writer has escaped a great peril and his whole soul is filled with the thought of the goodness of

always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: <sup>26</sup>therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: <sup>27</sup>because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. <sup>28</sup>Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. <sup>29</sup>Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. <sup>30</sup>Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; <sup>31</sup>he seeing *this* before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. <sup>32</sup>This Jesus hath

the Lord. There is some doubt whether in these verses he is looking forward to an actual resurrection from death: but at least his words apply exactly to the Resurrection of Christ. *I foresaw*] The Hebrew has "I set."

<sup>26.</sup> *my tongue*] A free rendering of the Hebrew "my glory" = "my soul" (Psalm lvii. 8).

<sup>27.</sup> *in hell*] The Greek word here and in v. 31 is Hades, which means the unseen world of spirits. So in the Apostles' Creed, "He descended into hell." *thine Holy One*] The word in Hebrew means one who by his godly life is the object of God's love. *corruption*] Heb. "the pit."

<sup>28.</sup> *thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance*] A paraphrase of the Hebrew "in thy presence is the fulness of joy."

**29-36.** *St Peter's explanation of the words of David*

<sup>29.</sup> *let me freely speak unto you*] R.V. **I may say unto you freely.** *his sepulchre*] David's burial in Jerusalem is related in 1 Kings ii. 10. His tomb is said to have been robbed by Herod.

<sup>30.</sup> *being a prophet*] Distinguish two meanings of "prophet" in the Bible, (i) a man with a message from God, (ii) a man who predicts the future. Here we must understand the latter meaning. *knowing that God had sworn with an oath*] The reference is to Psalm cxxxii. 11; cp. 2 Sam. vii. 12.

<sup>31.</sup> *Christ*] R.V. **the Christ**, i.e. the Messiah. *that his soul was not left in hell*] R.V., with better authority, **that neither was he left in Hades.**

God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. <sup>33</sup>Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

<sup>34</sup>For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my LORD, Sit thou on my right hand, <sup>35</sup>until I make thy foes thy footstool. <sup>36</sup>Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

<sup>37</sup>Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in *their* heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? <sup>38</sup>Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission

**33.** *he hath shed forth*] R.V. **he hath poured forth.** *see and hear*] Perhaps some afterglow of the Divine glory still rested on the Apostles, or St Peter is speaking of the transformation evident in their faces.

**34.** *The LORD said unto my Lord, etc.*] From Psalm cx. 1. The verse is quoted by Christ in His dispute with the Pharisees. It is possible that David, the writer of the Psalm, by "my Lord" meant the king. But the whole Psalm was early regarded as Messianic, and indeed, as Westcott (quoted by Kirkpatrick) says, "God through His Spirit so speaks in the Psalmist that words not directly addressed to Christ find their fulfilment in Him."

**35.** *until I make thy foes thy footstool*] "To put the foot on the neck of an enemy" is an expression for complete victory; cp. Joshua x. 24.

**36.** *God hath made, etc.*] R.V., with better emphasis, **God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.**

#### 37-47. *The effect of St Peter's sermon*

**37.** *they were pricked in their heart*] St Peter had not failed to point out their complicity in the crime of the Crucifixion, and his words brought home to them the sense of guilt. *what shall we do?*] Compare the similar question of the jailor at Philippi, xvi. 30.

**38.** *Repent, and be baptized...for the remission of sins*] This was in accordance with the directions of Christ in Luke xxiv. 47 "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name."

of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all *things* common; 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every *man* had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat *their* meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 praising God, and having favour

39. *to all that are afar off*] The Gentiles also are to inherit the promise; cp. Eph. ii. 17, quoted from Isaiah lvii. 19.

40. *untoward*] R.V. **crooked**; cp. Phil. ii. 15.

41. *that gladly received*] The best MSS. omit "gladly."

42. Notice the four points which characterized these early Christians. They listened carefully to the Apostles' teaching, they lived a life of common fellowship, they made their common meals some kind of remembrance of the Eucharist and they continued steadfast in prayer. *breaking of bread*] The same phrase occurs in Luke xxiv. 35. Later on it became a name for the Holy Eucharist. *prayers*] R.V. **the prayers** suggests that they had already some form of Christian service.

44. *had all things common*] We read more about this later on, iv. 34 f. These Christians thought that the return of Jesus was not far distant.

46. *continuing daily...in the temple*] Notice that they still attended, as good Jews, the daily services in the Temple. *from house to house*] R.V. **at home**, i.e. in their several houses. *their meat*] R.V. **their food**, i.e. their ordinary meals. *singleness of heart*] A very rare word is used to shew that all the Christians had but one aim, to spread the faith of Christ.

with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

**3** Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour. **2** And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; **3** who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms. **4** And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. **5** And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. **6** Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

**47.** *And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved]* R.V. **And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved**, i.e. those that had entered on the path "that leadeth unto life."

### III. 1-10. *The healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple*

**1.** *went up]* R.V. **were going up.** The Temple stood above the city on Mount Moriah. *at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour]* The pious Jews prayed three times in the day (Dan. vi. 10; Psalm lv. 17). We read of St Peter going up to the housetop to pray at the sixth hour (Acts x. 9).

**2.** *was carried]* The tense used implied that it happened day by day. In Italy at the present day nearly every church door has its own beggars outside. *the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful]* Probably the gate on the east of the Court of the Women, a magnificent gate made of Corinthian bronze, more precious than gold.

**3.** *asked an alms]* "Alms" is a singular word and used sometimes to be written "almesse."

**4.** St Peter seems to have wished to read from the man's face whether he was worthy of being healed.

**6.** *Jesus Christ of Nazareth]* The phrase is to be noticed as differing from that found in ii. 22. "Christ" is added because St Peter appeals to the Godhead as well as to the manhood of Our Lord. *rise up and walk]* The best MSS. have only "walk."

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lift *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength, 8 and he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God: 10 and they knew 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.

11 And as the lame *man* which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. 12 And

7. *lift him up*] Better "began to lift him up." The man felt the returning strength at once and was able to finish the action himself. *his feet and ankle bones received strength*] The words in the original are found nowhere else in the N.T. They are technical in character and are natural from the pen of one who was a physician (Col. iv. 14).

8. *leaping up*] The miracle was instantaneous. He had begun to rise painfully with the help of St Peter's hand: he finished without an effort in his own strength. *entered with them into the temple*] He shews his gratitude to St Peter and St John by accompanying them, and to God by entering into the Temple to return thanks; cp. Luke xvii. 15. With this miracle compare the account of St Paul's miracle at Lystra, xiv. 8-10.

9. *all the people saw him*] There was an abundance of testimony to the reality of the cure. This the Jewish authorities (iv. 16) admit.

10. *and they knew*] R.V. **and they took knowledge of him.** The same verb is used in iv. 13.

#### 11-26. *St Peter's discourse to the crowd*

[This is the fulfilment of the words spoken by Joel of old. The death and resurrection of Christ foretold in the O.T., especially by David in Ps. xvi.: the words could not refer to the Psalmist himself: it is the risen, ascended and glorified Christ who has thus fulfilled His promise by the gift of the Holy Ghost.]

11. *And as the lame man which was healed held Peter, etc.*] The oldest MSS. give "And as he held Peter," etc. *the porch that is called Solomon's*] There is no account of any such porch in Solomon's Temple, but Josephus tells us (*Antiquities* xx. 9. 7) that

when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this *man* to walk? <sup>13</sup> The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go. <sup>14</sup> But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; <sup>15</sup> and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. <sup>16</sup> And

there was an eastern porch in Herod's Temple called by this name.

**12.** *he answered*] Often used without any previous remark or question: a Hebrew idiom specially common in the New Testament. *Ye men of Israel*] A common introduction to a speech; cp. ii. 22 (St Peter), v. 35 (Gamaliel), xiii. 16 (St Paul). *why marvel ye at this?*] R.V. **why marvel ye at this man?** Probably right. So **made him to walk** instead of "made *this man* to walk." *holiness*] R.V. **godliness**. The power of healing is closely connected with godliness of life.

**13.** *hath glorified his Son Jesus*] R.V. **his Servant Jesus**. The Greek word might mean either, and in using it St Peter is undoubtedly thinking of the prophecies of Isaiah xlii. 1 (a passage applied to Jesus in Matt. xii. 18), lii. 13-14. But he may also have had in mind Christ's own words recorded in John xvii. 1, and on the whole it seems better to retain the translation "Son." *denied him in the presence of Pilate*] Referring to John xix. 15 "We have no king but Caesar." *when he was determined to let him go*] Perhaps "when he had given sentence to release him," Luke xxiii. 22; John xix. 12.

**14.** *the Holy One*] Compare the testimony of the demoniac, Mark i. 24. *the Just*] The adjective seems to have been specially applied to Christ; cp. vii. 52; James v. 6; 1 John ii. 1. *a murderer*] i.e. Barabbas, Mark xv. 7; Luke xxiii. 19. *to be granted unto you*] i.e. that his life might be spared. Contrast the use of the same word in Acts xv. 11, 16.

**15.** *the Prince of life*] The same word is translated "Prince" in v. 31, "Captain" in Hebrews ii. 10 and "Author" in Hebrews xii. 2. St Peter may have been thinking of Christ's words, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John xi. 25). *whereof we are witnesses*] i.e. of Christ's Resurrection; cp. i. 22.

his name through faith in his name hath made this *man* strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. <sup>17</sup>And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as *did* also your rulers. <sup>18</sup>But *those things*, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. <sup>19</sup>Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when *the* times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; <sup>20</sup>and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: <sup>21</sup>whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all *things*, which

**16.** *his name*] Includes the idea of His personality; see on v. 6. *through faith in his name*] It was a condition of Our Lord's miracles and of those of His Apostles that the person to be healed or his friends should have (i) a strong desire, (ii) faith to be healed, Mark vi. 5, 6; Acts xiv. 9. *the faith which is by him*] R.V. **through him.** The like expression occurs in 1 Pet. i. 21 "Ye who by him do believe in God."

**17.** *I wot*] Present tense of the antiquated word *wit*=know. *through ignorance ye did it*] St Paul twice uses the same plea to extenuate previous sins—in his speech at Antioch in Pisidia (xiii. 27) and at Athens (xvii. 30).

**18.** *by the mouth of all his prophets, etc.*] R.V. **by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ should suffer.** It was only after the Resurrection that the disciples understood the O.T. witness to the death of Christ (Luke xxiv. 26).

**19.** *be converted*] R.V. **turn again**, i.e. from your evil deeds, as "repent" means "turn away from your evil purposes." *when the times of refreshing shall come*] R.V. **that so there may come seasons of refreshing**, referring to the second coming of Christ. Cp. Luke ii. 25, where it is said that the aged Simeon was "looking for the consolation of Israel."

**20.** *and he shall send*] R.V. **and that he may send.** The repentance of man is to hasten the Advent of Christ. *Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you*] R.V. **the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus.**

**21.** *the times of restitution*] R.V. **the times of restoration:** the verb is used of the work of Elias in Matt. xvii. 11; Mark ix. 12.

God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. <sup>22</sup>For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all *things* whatsoever he shall say unto you. <sup>23</sup>And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. <sup>24</sup>Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. <sup>25</sup>Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. <sup>26</sup>Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from *his* iniquities.

*by the mouth of all his holy prophets, etc.]* The best MSS. omit "all." For the phrase cp. Luke i. 70.

<sup>22.</sup> *For Moses truly said]* R.V. **Moses indeed said.** The quotation comes from Deut. xviii. 15. The emphasis St Peter lays on *of your brethren*. The "prophet" whom God should raise up (i.e. Christ) was to be of the Jews. The title "prophet" is applied to Christ fairly often; cp. Matt. xxi. 11, 46; Luke xxiv. 19; John ix. 17, etc. *like unto me]* Moses was a type of Christ in many ways, and especially as having delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt.

<sup>23.</sup> *And it shall come to pass, etc.]* From Deut. xviii. 19. For "shall be destroyed from among the people" the LXX. has "I will require it of him."

<sup>24.</sup> *all the prophets from Samuel]* St Peter gives no definite quotations. Samuel is specially mentioned as the founder of a new order of prophets, i.e. schools of prophets where men underwent a definite training.

<sup>25.</sup> *the children of the prophets]* R.V. **sons**, and therefore heirs to what they foretold. *and of the covenant]* To be a "son of a covenant" is a Hebrew expression, signifying "partaker or inheritor of the promise of the covenant." *saying unto Abraham, etc.]* Genesis xxii. 18.

<sup>26.</sup> *Unto you first, etc.]* Christ's work was first of all to the Jews, Matt. x. 5; Luke ix. 52. *having raised up...Jesus]* Referring not to the Resurrection, but to the words quoted in v. 22. *his Son Jesus]* R.V. **his Servant**. See on v. 13. The best MSS. omit *Jesus*.

**4** And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, <sup>2</sup>being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. <sup>3</sup>And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. <sup>4</sup>Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand. <sup>5</sup>And

IV. 1-12. *First arrest of the Apostles: their hearing and defence*

**1.** *And as they spake unto the people*] It is not clear whether we have to allow any interval of time between this and the events of the last chapter. Probably not, for it is evident that they were still in the Temple precincts and the authorities may have objected to the assembly of a large crowd to hear St Peter. *the priests*] i.e. those whose duty it was to take charge of the Temple services and perform the sacrifices in regular rotation or courses (Luke i. 5). Some good MSS. read *high priests*. *the captain of the temple*] Probably the chief of the Levitical police. Corresponding to the O.T. title *ruler of the house of God* (1 Chron. ix. 11; 2 Chron. xxxi. 13; Neh. xi. 11). *the Sadducees*] One of the two main sects into which the Jews were divided. Their name may mean "followers of Zadok" (possibly the man who was high priest in the reign of Solomon, 1 Kings i. 26, etc.), or it may be derived from a Hebrew word meaning "righteous." They are chiefly mentioned in contrast to the Pharisees, and though fewer in number than these last, they seem to have included many men of rank and dignity. Their teaching, as summarized in Acts xxiii. 8, found no place for the resurrection, or for angels, or for spirit. Besides this they differed from the Pharisees in attaching little authority to the Oral Law of Moses, and in teaching the doctrine of the freedom of the will. *came upon them*] i.e. to arrest them.

**2.** *being grieved*] R.V. **being sore troubled**. *that they taught the people*] It seemed an unwarrantable licence that they, men of no special education, should usurp the office of a teacher. *and preached through Jesus*] R.V. **and proclaimed in Jesus**. The hope of the resurrection is "in Jesus" as resting on the testimony of His Resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 22.

**3.** *put them in hold*] R.V. **put them in ward**, i.e. in prison. The Jews were not allowed to give judgment in the night.

**4.** *Howbeit*] R.V. **But**, i.e. not being deterred by the Apostles' arrest. *the number of the men was about five thousand*] We

it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, <sup>6</sup>and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. <sup>7</sup>And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? <sup>8</sup>Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, <sup>9</sup>if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what *means* he is made whole; <sup>10</sup>be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this *man* stand here before

are not told whether all these conversions were directly due to St Peter's speech, or whether by this time some two thousand had been added to the roll of Christians since the Day of Pentecost (ii. 41). There seems to be some emphasis on **men** as not including women and children.

5. *scribes*] These were not only copiers, but interpreters and expounders of the Law, and any new teaching would naturally be disliked by them.

6. *Annas the high priest*] Annas was high priest 7-14 A.D. and was then deposed by the Roman governor. His son-in-law Caiaphas was high priest 25-37 A.D. But we see from the O.T. that there might be more than one high priest at once, and it is evident that in the popular estimation Annas was at least as important as Caiaphas (John xviii. 13). *John*] Possibly to be identified with a man who became famous after the destruction of Jerusalem. One MS. reads "Jonathan," who was a son of Annas and was high priest after Caiaphas. *as many as were of the kindred of the high priest*] These would probably all be of the party of the Sadducees.

7. *in the midst*] i.e. in the Judgment Hall. *By what power, or by what name*] R.V. **in what name**. The fact of the miracle was not disputed. The only question was as to the authority from which they derived their power; cp. Luke xi. 19, 20.

8. *Ye rulers of the people*] This was the highest tribunal which the Jews possessed.

9. *the good deed done to the impotent man*] Both nouns should have the indefinite article.

10. *Jesus Christ of Nazareth*] See on iii. 6.

you whole. <sup>11</sup>This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. <sup>12</sup>Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

<sup>13</sup>Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. <sup>14</sup>And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. <sup>15</sup>But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, <sup>16</sup>saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle

**11.** *This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders]* A loose quotation from Psalm cxviii. **22.** The council are fitly called the builders, for on them depended the whole religious and civil government of the people. The same verse is quoted in 1 Pet. ii. 7 and referred to in Eph. ii. 20-22. *the head of the corner]* The Dean of Westminster, in his note on the passage in Ephesians, points out that the simile is entirely Eastern, and that the corner stones were long stones so cut at top and bottom that another stone could be fitted into them.

**12.** *Neither is there salvation in any other]* Better *and our salvation is in none other.* *whereby we must be saved]* i.e. through whom we must seek our salvation if we would be saved.

**13-22.** *The Apostles are dismissed unpunished*

**13.** *the boldness]* The word means especially "boldness of speech." *of Peter and John]* St John in Acts appears only as a companion of St Peter, and no special deed or speech of his is recorded. *unlearned]* More literally *illiterate.* The noun is used in xxvi. 24, where R.V. has "thy much learning doth turn thee to madness." *ignorant]* The word means "without special training or education," and would refer to their lack of learning in Rabbinic lore. It is probable that St John was not an uneducated man. *they took knowledge of them, etc.]* They were already in a real sense witnesses of Jesus (i. 8).

**15.** *to go aside out of the council]* i.e. while the members held a private consultation.

hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it*. <sup>17</sup> But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that *they* speak henceforth to no man in this name. <sup>18</sup> And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. <sup>19</sup> But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. <sup>20</sup> For we cannot but speak *the things* which we have seen and heard. <sup>21</sup> So when they had further threatened *them*, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all *men* glorified God for that which was done. <sup>22</sup> For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

**16.** *to all them that dwell in Jerusalem*] It is evident that the miracle attracted very great attention in the city.

**17.** *that it spread no further*] i.e. preaching in the name of Jesus. The verb is properly used of the spreading of an infectious disease. *let us straitly threaten them*] "Straitly" (= strictly) is omitted in R.V. *in this name*] The preposition here is a different one, and the meaning seems to be "to base their preaching on this name."

**18.** *they called them*] i.e. back into the Judgment Hall. *commanded them*] The verb is frequently used of the injunctions which Our Lord gave that His miraculous deeds should not be spread abroad.

**19.** *Whether it be right, etc.*] They lift the question at once on to a higher plane. Compare the words of Socrates to his accusers, "Men of Athens, I greet you and esteem you, but I will obey God rather than you."

**21.** *when they had further threatened them*] This merely shewed their powerlessness in face of the antagonism of the people and the determination of the Apostles. *all men glorified God*] This is mentioned as the result of Our Lord's miracles in Luke v. 26, vii. 16, xiii. 13, etc.

**22.** *the man was above forty years old*] To the physician's eye this would be of special significance, for his bones would be the less likely to heal. *this miracle of healing was shewed*] R.V. **was wrought**. The rendering of A.V. tries to bring out the force of the word for "miracle," which strictly means "sign."

23 And being let go, they went to their own *company*, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard *that*, they lift up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain *things*? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with

23-31. *The Apostles' prayer and its answer*

23. *they went to their own company*] Perhaps still abiding in the upper room which they had occupied before Pentecost.

24. *they lift up their voice...with one accord, and said*] St Luke has allowed himself a certain editorial licence in representing this prayer as being uttered by all at once; cp. on i. 24. We are to understand that they joined in common prayer and this was the substance of their petitions. In this prayer notice (i) the ascription with which it begins, (ii) the use of the O.T. linking it with the life of Jesus, (iii) the place of the actual petition at the very end. *Lord, thou art God, etc.*] R.V. **O Lord, thou that didst make** (marg. *thou art he that did make*). The word translated *Lord* means rather *Master*, and is rarely used of God or Christ. But cp. Luke ii. 29; 2 Pet. ii. 1; Jude 4; Apoc. vi. 10. *heaven, and earth, etc.*] The words would be familiar to all as coming in the Fourth Commandment (Exod. xx. 11).

25. *who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said*] The reading is uncertain. R.V. **who by the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David thy servant, didst say.** *Why did the heathen rage*] From Psalm ii. 1, 2. The Psalm was probably composed with reference to some fruitless revolt against David or some Judæan king. For the ascription of the Psalter to David see on i. 20.

26. *against his Christ*] The king was the Lord's anointed (2 Sam. i. 14).

27. *of a truth*] Here the best MSS. insert **in this city**. So R.V. *child*] R.V. **Servant**. See on iii. 13. So below v. 30. *whom thou hast anointed*] i.e. by the descent of the Holy Ghost at Baptism. *Herod*] His surname was Antipas and he was the son of Herod the Great. St Luke calls him *tetrarch of Galilee*

the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, <sup>28</sup>for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. <sup>29</sup>And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness *they* may speak thy word, <sup>30</sup>by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. <sup>31</sup>And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

<sup>32</sup>And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of *them* that ought of the *things* which he possessed was his own; but they had all *things* common. <sup>33</sup>And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them

(iii. 1). *Pontius Pilate*] The Roman procurator or governor of Judæa 25-36 A.D. He would represent the Gentiles' share in the Crucifixion.

<sup>28.</sup> *for to do, etc.*] God made men's passions to be the instruments for working out His will; cp. ii. 23.

<sup>29.</sup> *with all boldness*] The same words as in v. 13.

<sup>30.</sup> *by stretching forth thine hand*] R.V. **while thou stretchest forth thine hand.** Notice how preaching and healing go hand in hand, as in missionary work of to-day.

<sup>31.</sup> *the place was shaken*] The outward signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit were more visible in those early days of the Church than now. *they spake the word of God with boldness*] i.e. whenever they found opportunity: the tense used is frequentative.

### 32-37. *The common life of the Christians*

<sup>32.</sup> *of one heart and of one soul*] An Hebraistic form of expression. *neither said any of them*] R.V. **and not one of them**

**said.** The Greek is very emphatic. *they had all things common*] This would only be practicable in a small community, and it may have been prompted by the expectation of a speedy coming of Christ.

<sup>33.</sup> *And with great power gave the apostles witness*] Better, with R.V., **their witness.** The Greek word translated "gave" conveys the idea of paying off an obligation. *great grace was upon them all*] St Luke has noted this characteristic before in ii. 47.

all. <sup>34</sup> Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the *things* that were sold, <sup>35</sup> and laid *them down* at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. <sup>36</sup> And Joses, who by the apostles was sur-named Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, *and* of the country of Cyprus, <sup>37</sup> having land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

**5** But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, <sup>2</sup> and kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy *to it*, and brought a

**34.** *Neither*] R.V. **For neither.** This verse partially explains the last.

**35.** *distribution was made unto every man according as he had need*] R.V. **distribution was made unto each according as any one had need.** There were no doubt many who were not in need, and these, of course, lived on their own funds.

**36.** *Joses*] R.V. **Joseph**, but the names are identical. This name of his is only mentioned here. *which is, being interpreted*] Added probably for the benefit of Theophilus, who would not know Aramaic. *The son of consolation*] The word for "consolation" is an abstract noun of the same root as *Paraclete*, and might perhaps be best rendered "encouragement." The characteristic of St Barnabas was that he never despaired of any one. So it is he who encourages St Paul after his conversion (ix. 27) and insists upon giving John Mark another chance (xv. 37). *a Levite*] The Levites in the Holy Land had no inheritance; the same regulation may not, however, have applied to Levites in other countries. *of the country of Cyprus*] So when we last read about him in the Acts he is on his way back to his home (xv. 39).

**37.** *having land*] R.V. **having a field.** It may have been in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. *brought the money*] The story, as St Chrysostom saw, leads up to the incident of Ananias and Sapphira.

#### V. 1-11. *The story of Ananias and Sapphira*

The last chapter concludes with a description of the unity of heart and soul which prevailed among the brethren, and expressly notices that all were filled with the Holy Ghost. But as among the twelve Apostles there was a Judas, so into the infant Church there had intruded two whose professions were not sincere. It is to be

certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. <sup>3</sup>But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? <sup>4</sup>Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto

noticed that the story of their punishment is told without comment, and this is, in itself, a testimony to the veracity of the narrator. The crime of Ananias and Sapphira lay in their dishonesty and duplicity, and it was immensely aggravated, as St Peter pointed out (v. 4), by the fact of its being directed against God and not against man. It meant the introduction of a canker which, if not rooted out, would have eaten away the heart of the Christian community, and therefore their punishment, terrible as it appears to us, cannot be said to have been undeserved.

1. *Ananias*] The name was a common one and means "he to whom Jehovah is gracious." Two other men of this name are mentioned in Acts (ix. 10-17, xxiii. 2). *Sapphira*] Probably derived from the precious stone "sapphire," which means in Aramaic "beautiful."

2. *kept back part of the price*] The verb translated "kept back" is rendered "purloin" in Titus ii. 10. *laid it at the apostles' feet*] They wished to pose before the other Christians as whole-hearted givers.

3. *why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost*] St Peter recognizes the act as due to the suggestion of the Evil One, who desired to sow distrust among the early Christians. To "fill the heart" means to cause to set one's whole heart on some resolve. The heinousness of the offence was that it was a direct lie to the Spirit who was to "guide them into all the truth" (John xvi. 13). While the others were filled with the Holy Spirit (iv. 31) these two were filled with Satan.

4. *Whiles it remained, was it not thine own?*] R.V. **Whiles it remained, did it not remain thine own?** The communism was evidently not compulsory. A man could be a Christian without selling all that he had for the benefit of the common funds. *thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God*] Ananias and Sapphira had perhaps deceived themselves into believing that their dishonesty consisted merely in taking in the Christian community. St Peter points out that this was so small a part of their offence as hardly to be mentioned in comparison with the dishonesty towards God.

God. <sup>5</sup>And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these *things*. <sup>6</sup>And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried *him* out, and buried *him*. <sup>7</sup>And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. <sup>8</sup>And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. <sup>9</sup>Then 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 shall carry thee out. <sup>10</sup>Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and,

5. *And Ananias hearing these words fell down*] It was actually while St Peter was speaking that he collapsed, being a manifest example of the awfulness of the just wrath of God (Hebr. x. 31). *that heard these things*] R.V. **that heard it.**

6. *And the young men arose*] It is unlikely that there should have been already in the Church a body of men whose special business it was to look after funerals, like the "Brothers of Mercy" in Florence, though we know that not very long after the Christians were registered as burying guilds. *wound him up*] i.e. in the clothes that he was wearing, for the Jews always buried in burying clothes (John xi. 44, xix. 40). *buried him*] Probably in a kind of cave. Funerals would regularly take place on the day of death.

7. *his wife...came in*] Perhaps seeking for her husband, or hoping for the respectful admiration of the community. If so St Peter's words would give her the opening she desired.

8. *answered unto her*] It was a question rather than an answer: but see on iii. 12. *for so much*] No doubt he mentioned the actual sum, but the writer does not know it and will not invent it.

9. Notice the genuine tragedy of the scene. She expects to receive commendation for her pious generosity and instead hears the sentence of death. *to tempt the Spirit of the Lord*] "The Lord" here is probably the Second Person in the Trinity. For the "Spirit of Christ" cp. Romans viii. 9; 2 Cor. iii. 17; 1 Pet. i. 11. *behold, the feet, etc.*] They were just returning from the burial. *and shall carry thee out*] R.V. **and they shall carry thee out,** making it clear that the young men are the subject.

carrying *her* forth, buried *her* by her husband. <sup>11</sup>And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these *things*.

<sup>12</sup>And 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. <sup>13</sup>And of the rest durst no *man* join himself to them: but the people magnified them. <sup>14</sup>And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) <sup>15</sup>Insomuch that *they* brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. <sup>16</sup>There came also a multitude *out* of

**10.** *buried her by her husband*] Probably all they would have to do would be to roll away the stone from the mouth of the cave and put her body in.

**11.** *And great fear came upon all the church*] The punishment was to serve as a deterrent to the rest. This is the first time "the church" is mentioned in the Acts. It was now a body of sincere Christians.

**12-16.** *Miraculous powers of the Apostles. Continued growth of the Church*

**12.** *by the hands of the apostles*] Perhaps by the actual laying on of their hands (cp. Mark xvi. 18): but the phrase may mean nothing more than "by the agency of the apostles." (*and they were all, etc.*) R.V. does not mark this as a parenthesis, but certainly v. 15 seems to pick up the sense of the first part of this verse. *they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch*] The scene of St Peter's sermon and its wonderful result (iii. 11). Probably the Christians made it their special meeting-place for prayer.

**13.** *And of the rest*] R.V. **But** and later on **howbeit** for *but*. The Christians assembled were left to themselves, but were regarded with awe and veneration, and many, embracing the faith, joined them.

**15.** *Insomuch, etc.*] Probably goes with v. 12. It is possible to take it with v. 14, and to suppose that it was the new converts who shewed their faith by bringing out their sick to be healed. *they brought forth*] R.V. **they even carried out.** *laid them on beds and couches*] The warm climate would make this possible. *that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them*] R.V. **that, as Peter came by, at the least**

the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and *them which were vexed with unclean spirits*: and they were healed every one.

<sup>17</sup>Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, <sup>18</sup>and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. <sup>19</sup>But *the angel of the Lord* by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, <sup>20</sup>Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. <sup>21</sup>And when they heard *that*, they entered into

**his shadow might overshadow some of them.** It is to be noticed that the miracle is more universal than any of those related of Christ. But Christ had given very wide powers to His Apostles (Matt. x. 8), and St Peter was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. At the same time it is not said that all those whom St Peter's shadow touched received healing.

**16.** *out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem*] R.V., with MS. authority, omits *unto*. *them which were vexed with unclean spirits*] i.e. those suffering from mental and spiritual, as well as from physical diseases. *they were healed every one*] Their faith was sufficiently shewn by their undertaking the journey to Jerusalem.

**17-32.** *Arrest of the Twelve. Their miraculous deliverance and their speech before the Sanhedrin*

**17.** *Then*] R.V. **But.** St Luke proceeds to draw a reverse side to the picture of the esteem and popularity of the Apostles. *which is the sect of the Sadducees*] These numbered most of those in authority: see on iv. 1. *indignation*] R.V. **jealousy.** This was at the bottom of their opposition.

**18.** *in the common prison*] R.V. **in public ward.** This would be intended as merely a temporary lodging. The arrest probably took place in the late afternoon or evening.

**19.** *the angel of the Lord*] R.V. **an angel of the Lord.** Compare the story of the release of St Peter xii. 7-10. God's power was more visible on earth in those days of trial and weakness.

**20.** *Go, stand and speak in the temple*] They were to make no secret of their preaching. *all the words of this life*] R.V. **Life**, as if it referred specially to Christ, who is the Life (John xi. 25). Probably the reference is to teaching about the Resurrection generally.

the temple early in the morning, 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 to have them brought. <sup>22</sup>But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, <sup>23</sup>saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no *man* within. <sup>24</sup>Now when the *high* priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow. <sup>25</sup>Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. <sup>26</sup>Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. <sup>27</sup>And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council: and the high priest asked them, <sup>28</sup>saying, Did not we straitly command you that *you* should not teach

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<sup>21.</sup> *early in the morning*] R.V. **about daybreak**, i.e. as early as possible. *But the high priest came*] i.e. into the council chamber. *all the senate of the children of Israel*] "Senate" here means council of old men (from Latin *senex*=old man), and refers to the great Sanhedrin of 71 elders, who were evidently assessors to the council.

<sup>22.</sup> *the officers*] Probably members of the Levitical police. The same word is used of the servants of the high priest in Matt. xxvi. 58; Mark xiv. 54.

<sup>23.</sup> *the keepers standing without before the doors*] R.V. **the keepers standing at the doors**; cp. xii. 6.

<sup>24.</sup> *Now when the high priest, etc.*] Some MSS. omit *the high priest and. they doubted of them*] R.V. **they were much perplexed concerning them.**

<sup>25.</sup> *standing in the temple*] This implies the absence of any attempt at concealment.

<sup>26.</sup> *they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned*] It was a dangerous thing to cross the enthusiasm of a Jerusalem crowd; cp. Mark xi. 32.

<sup>28.</sup> *Did not we straitly command you*] R.V. **We straitly charged you.** *teach in this name*] Lit. *upon*. See on iv. 17.

in this name? and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. <sup>29</sup> Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. <sup>30</sup> The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. <sup>31</sup> Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. <sup>32</sup> And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

<sup>33</sup> When they heard *that*, they were cut *to the heart*, and took counsel to slay them. <sup>34</sup> Then stood there up

*ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine*] A notable testimony from the mouth of enemies. *intend to bring this man's blood upon us*] St Luke is perhaps thinking as he writes of the cry of the people to Pilate, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" (Matt. xxvii. 25). The high priest seems to imagine that the Apostles were trying to incite the people to avenge the blood of Christ upon the priestly party.

<sup>29.</sup> *We ought to obey God*] R.V. **We must obey God**; cp. iv. 19. He is answering the charge of preaching contrary to orders.

<sup>30.</sup> *the God of our fathers*] Here, as in iii. 13, St Peter is at pains to point out that there is no severance of themselves from the worship of the covenant God of Israel. *whom ye slew and hanged*] R.V. **whom ye slew, hanging him**. The actual executioners were the Roman soldiers, but the responsibility rested on the Jews.

<sup>31.</sup> *to be a Prince and a Saviour*] Notice the close connexion between the exaltation of Christ and His work as Saviour of the world. *to Israel*] The repentance is first offered to the Jews who had most deeply sinned.

<sup>32.</sup> *these things*] i.e. the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension. *so is also the Holy Ghost*] Christ had said of the Holy Spirit "He shall testify of me" (John xv. 26). *whom God hath given to them that obey him*] Hence also those who had received the Holy Spirit were bound to obey God rather than men (v. 29).

**33-42.** *The effect of St Peter's words. Counsel of Gamaliel and subsequent release of the Apostles*

<sup>33.</sup> *they were cut to the heart*] St Stephen's speech produced the same effect (vii. 54). Here it was the contumacy of the Apostles that excited special wrath. *took counsel*] R.V. **were minded**.

one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; <sup>35</sup> and said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. <sup>36</sup> For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself 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 scattered, and brought to nought. <sup>37</sup> After this *man* rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, *even* as many as

**34.** *a Pharisee, named Gamaliel*] A Pharisee would naturally have little sympathy with the indignation of the Sadducees against the teaching of the resurrection. And this Gamaliel was, for a Pharisee, a broad-minded man, being the grandson of the great Rabbi Hillel and the instructor of St Paul (xxii. 3). *the apostles*] R.V. **the men**. This would be the word he used to describe them.

**36.** *For before these days rose up Theudas*] Gamaliel proceeds to give illustrations that mere pretenders will come to nought. Josephus mentions a Theudas (*Antiq.* xx. 5. 1), who about 45 or 46 A.D. persuaded a number to follow him to the Jordan, promising to give them a miraculous passage through it. The Roman governor Cuspius Fadus attacked them and scattered them with very great slaughter. It is obvious that Gamaliel cannot be referring to this event, which happened many years after. But, according to the testimony of Josephus himself, there were countless other insurrections at the time and, since Theudas is a contraction that may stand for several names, such as Theodotus or Theodorus, it is quite possible that Gamaliel's account is correct. *boasting himself to be somebody*] R.V. **giving himself out to be somebody**. Each of these men secured adherents by claiming to be the promised Messiah who should "restore the kingdom of Israel."

**37.** *Judas of Galilee*] With this account agrees the history of Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii. 1. 1), who says that in company with a Pharisee named Sadduc he headed a revolt against the taxation, made in the days of Cyrenius, governor of Syria (cp. Luke ii. 2). Josephus also mentions that he was founder of a fourth sect of Jewish philosophy, beside that of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. *in the days of the taxing*] R.V. **enrolment**. *much people*] R.V. **some of the people**. *he also perished*] Josephus gives no notice of the fate of Judas and his party.

obeyed him, were dispersed. <sup>38</sup>And 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 come to nought: <sup>39</sup>but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. <sup>40</sup>And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that *they* should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. <sup>41</sup>And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. <sup>42</sup>And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

**6** And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the

**39.** *ye cannot overthrow it*] R.V. **ye will not be able to overthrow them.** *lest haply...*] This depends on "take heed to yourselves" understood again from v. 35.

**40.** *when they had called the apostles*] R.V. adds **unto them**, i.e. into the Judgment Hall. *and beaten them*] i.e. as the guilty parties in the controversy; cp. Deut. xxv. 1-3. It was all they could do and they hoped it would serve to emphasize the repetition of their charge not to speak in the name of Jesus.

**41.** *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame*] Compare St Paul's words in Romans v. 3 "we rejoice in our tribulations."

**42.** *in the temple, and in every house*] R.V. **in the temple and at home**; cp. ii. 46. Their instruction was both public (probably in Solomon's porch) and private, in the houses of individual Christians.

#### VI. 1-7. *The appointment of the Seven to undertake the work of distributing alms*

**1.** *And in those days*] This kind of phrase is a favourite one with St Luke to introduce a new section of importance; cp. xi. 27, xv. 36, xxi. 15. *was multiplied*] R.V. **was multiplying.** We are to understand that a period of quiet and steady growth is passed over in silence. *the Grecians*] R.V. **the Grecian Jews**: the word "Hellenist" is used either of Jews whose mother tongue was Greek, or of proselytes to Judaism. They are here distinguished from the Hebrews or born Jews, who lived in the

Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. <sup>2</sup> Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto *them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. <sup>4</sup> But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. <sup>5</sup> And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: <sup>6</sup> whom

Holy Land. *their widows were neglected*] They would be handicapped by their defenceless condition and their ignorance of Aramaic. It is probable that not many of the Apostles at this time could speak Greek fluently.

2. *Then the twelve*] From the readiness with which the Apostles proceeded to take special measures there was apparently some justice in the complaint. *It is not reason*] R.V. **It is not fit.** The word means "*pleasing in the sight of God.*" *serve tables*] Perhaps *act as bankers*, for the word for "table" means also "bank." It refers to the duty of doling out daily portions of money for the support of the needy. From the fact that the word to *serve* is connected with our word *deacon*, the seven who were chosen to fulfil this duty are often spoken of as Deacons: but they are never so named in Acts.

3. *among you*] R.V. **from among you.** Notice that the Seven were chosen by the multitude and not by the Apostles themselves, though these lay their hands on them. Their qualifications were to be three: (i) a good reputation, (ii) spiritual force, (iii) sound common sense. The number seven is taken as the sacred number, but it was also the number of persons chosen to manage public business in Jewish towns. *full of the Holy Ghost*] R.V. **full of the Spirit.**

4. *But we will give ourselves continually*] R.V. **But we will continue stedfastly.** The same word is used in i. 14, ii. 42, 46. *the ministry of the word*] Contrast "to serve tables" in v. 2. The words for "ministry" and "to serve" are of the same root.

5. If we may judge from their names all the men were Greeks by birth or speech. We know nothing particular of any of them except Stephen and Philip. *Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch*].

they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid *their* hands on them. <sup>7</sup>And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

<sup>8</sup>And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. <sup>9</sup>Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called *the synagogue* of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with

This would be the Syrian Antioch, which afterwards became the headquarters of the Church. Perhaps Nicolas was the only proselyte.

6. *whom they set before the apostles*] i.e. to confirm the choice of the congregation. *when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them*] They held a solemn dedication service and set them apart by the laying on of hands. They would think of Christ laying his hands on the sick and healing them. Later the laying on of hands was reserved more especially for confirmation (viii. 17) and ordination (1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6).

7. *a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith*] These are specially mentioned as their sacrifice would be all the greater.

#### 8-15. Stephen's preaching, arrest and accusation

8. *full of faith and power*] R.V. **full of grace and power.** *Grace* would refer to his spiritual zeal and love, *power* to the power of the Holy Spirit within him (v. 5). *did great wonders and miracles*] We see from this that the work of the Seven was not confined to "serving tables."

9. *the synagogue of the Libertines*] There were in Jerusalem a great number of separate synagogues or congregations. The Libertines were probably the descendants of those Jews who had been carried captive to Rome by Pompey in 63 B.C. and had subsequently been made freedmen (*libertini*). Many of them or of their children would naturally have drifted back to Jerusalem. *the Cyrenians*] See on ii. 10. *the Alexandrians*] Alexandria, so called from its being founded by Alexander the Great, has always been a large and important town. It contained a large Jewish population and was famous as the place where the Septuagint translation was made. *Cilicia*] At the S.E. corner of Asia Minor. Its chief city was Tarsus, the birthplace of St Paul. *Asia*] The Roman province. See on ii. 9.

Stephen. <sup>10</sup> And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. <sup>11</sup> Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God. <sup>12</sup> And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon *him*, and caught him, and brought *him* to the council, <sup>13</sup> and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: <sup>14</sup> for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. <sup>15</sup> And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

**7** Then said the high priest, Are these *things* so?

<sup>2</sup> And he said,

**10.** *the wisdom and the spirit*] Two of the qualifications of the Seven (*v.* 3).

**11.** *suborned*] The English word means literally "provide," but is nearly always used of fraudulent practices.

**12.** *the people, and the elders, and the scribes*] The two latter classes were already exasperated with the Apostles, and the people were always ready to listen to a charge of blasphemy.

**13.** *set up false witnesses*] We cannot help comparing the account of the accusation of Christ, Mark xiv. 55-58. One of the charges at least was not dissimilar, namely, that of speaking against the Temple. In each case the falseness of the witnesses consisted in their giving a perverted meaning to what had been said.

**14.** It is important to mark exactly the charges made against Stephen in order to see how he defends himself against them. *this Jesus of Nazareth*] The name was by this time in everybody's mouth (*v.* 28).

**15.** *looking stedfastly on him*] R.V. **fastening their eyes on him.** We can readily picture the scene: the hatred and yet intense interest of the council, and the calm serenity of Stephen. *saw his face as it had been the face of an angel*] So full was he of the Spirit that a Divine light seemed shed upon his face.

#### VII. 1-VIII. 1<sup>a</sup>. *St Stephen's speech and death*

**1.** *Are these things so?*] The charge has already been heard, and with these words the high priest summons Stephen to make his defence.

St Stephen has to defend himself against two charges: (*a*) treason

Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, <sup>3</sup>and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew

against the Temple, (b) treason against the Mosaic Law. His speech may be thus analysed:

Rapid sketch of O.T. history: the call of Abraham: God's promise to him, the covenant and circumcision. Story of the patriarchs: the sojourning in Egypt: the work of Moses; his rejection by his own people, typical of the rejection of Him of Whom he prophesied. The rebellion and idolatry of the people who continually transgressed the Law of Moses (against charge b). God was at first thought to dwell in the tabernacle which was carried about in the wilderness and brought into Palestine with Joshua. Years later Solomon built the Temple for God's habitation. But no human building can contain the infinite God (against charge a). It is *you*, always *you*, who resist the purposes of God and transgress His Law.

2. *Men, brethren, and fathers*] Omit *men* (with R.V.). *The God of glory*] i.e. God Who reveals Himself in glory; cp. Psalm xxix. 3; John i. 14. The expression, which is not a common one, is probably chosen designedly as an introduction to this discourse, which deals with the several stages of God's manifestation of Himself. *our father Abraham*] Even if he were a proselyte Stephen could still speak of Abraham as "our father." *when he was in Mesopotamia*] The ancestral home of Abraham is called Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. xi. 31), and it is said (Josh. xxiv. 2, 3) to have been "on the other side of the flood," i.e. beyond the Euphrates. Hence the name "Hebrew," which means *the man from beyond* the river (i.e. the Euphrates). Ur is probably to be identified with the modern Mugheir, 125 miles N.W. of the Persian Gulf. *before he dwelt in Charran*] *Charran* is spelt in the O.T. *Haran* (so R.V.), and is 550 miles N.W. of Ur, on the river Belikh. Under its later name of Carrhæ, it became famous as the scene of a signal victory of the Parthians over the Romans in 53 B.C. The word "dwelt" implies a settled abode. For the migration to Haran cp. Gen. xi. 31.

3. *and said unto him*] It does not appear from the narrative in Genesis whether there had been some Divine communication which caused the first removal from Ur to Haran. We are only told (xi. 31) that Terah took his family and removed, but as it is there added "to go into the land of Canaan," we may perhaps conclude that the first removal had also been enjoined by God.

thee. <sup>4</sup>Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. <sup>5</sup>And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that *he* would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child. <sup>6</sup>And 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. <sup>7</sup>And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place. <sup>8</sup>And he gave him the

<sup>4.</sup> *the Chaldeans*] The capital of their land was Babylon. *when his father was dead*] Stephen places the departure of Abraham from Haran after Terah's death; so does Philo. This is inconsistent with the dates given in Genesis. For Terah was 70 years old when Abraham was born (xi. 26), Abraham was 75 years old when he departed out of Haran (xii. 4) and Terah lived 205 years. So he must have survived Abraham's departure by 60 years. *he removed him*] R.V. correctly explains by **God removed him**.

<sup>5.</sup> *he gave him none inheritance in it*] Abraham lived a wandering life at first, without settled abode (Gen. xii. 6-9). *not so much as to set his foot on*] Compare Deut. ii. 5. *yet he promised*] R.V. **and he promised**. *for a possession*] R.V. **in possession**. *when as yet he had no child*] Abraham was 75 years old when he left Haran (Gen. xii. 4) and 100 years old at the birth of Isaac (Gen. xxi. 5). So when he went down to Egypt Sarah was a fair woman in the prime of her beauty (Gen. xii. 14), and she had waxed old (Gen. xviii. 12) before her son was born.

<sup>6.</sup> *And God spake on this wise*] Gen. xv. 13, 14. *four hundred years*] This agrees with the number given in Genesis: but in Exodus xii. 40 and Gal. iii. 17 the time is said to have been four hundred and thirty years. Josephus, in different places (*Antiq.* ii. 9. 1 and 15. 2), gives both numbers, and perhaps four hundred is intended merely as a round number. It is to be noted that in Gal. iii. 17 the time is reckoned from the giving of the covenant to the giving of the Law at Sinai.

<sup>7.</sup> *serve me in this place*] These words are not in the promise given to Abraham, but are taken from Exod. iii. 12. Stephen combines the two that he may describe the promise in its fulness.

covenant of circumcision : and so *Abraham* begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day ; and Isaac *begat* Jacob ; and Jacob *begat* the twelve patriarchs. <sup>9</sup> And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt : but God was with him, <sup>10</sup> and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt ; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. <sup>11</sup> Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction : and our fathers found no sustenance. <sup>12</sup> But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. <sup>13</sup> And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren ; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh. <sup>14</sup> Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to *him*, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls. <sup>15</sup> So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, <sup>16</sup> and were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abra-

8. *the covenant of circumcision*] Given the year before Isaac was born (Gen. xvii. 12).

9. *moved with envy*] Cp. Gen. xxxvii. 11 "his brethren envied him," because of his father's special love for him, and because of his dreams. *God was with him*] From Gen. xxxix. 2, 21, 23. Stephen is here replying indirectly to the charge of speaking against the Temple by shewing that even in the heathen land of Egypt God was with Joseph.

10. *gave him favour and wisdom*] The word for *favour* is the same as that rendered *grace* in vi. 8 (R.V.). See also vi. 3.

11. *the land of Egypt and Canaan*] R.V. omits *the land of*.

13. *Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh*] R.V. **Joseph's race became manifest unto Pharaoh.** Gen. xlv. 16.

14. *threescore and fifteen souls*] The number is taken from the LXX. In the Hebrew (Gen. xlvi. 8-27) the number is but seventy, including Jacob himself. Stephen would naturally be acquainted with the Greek scriptures. If he was a proselyte he must have made a very careful study of them when of mature age.

16. *were carried over into Sychem*] R.V. **Shechem.** Of the transportation of the bodies of the patriarchs into Canaan the O.T. gives no account. Josephus (*Antiq.* ii. 8. 2) says "the posterity and

ham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the *father* of Sychem. <sup>17</sup>But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, <sup>18</sup>till another king arose, which knew not Joseph. <sup>19</sup>The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that *they* cast out their young children, to the end *they* might not live. <sup>20</sup>In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months: <sup>21</sup>and when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. <sup>22</sup>And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

sons of these men, after some time, carried their bodies and buried them in Hebron." *of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem*] R.V. **of the sons of Hamor in Shechem**. In Gen. xxiii. we read that Abraham bought the field and cave of Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite, and it was here that Jacob was buried (Gen. l. 13). It was Jacob who "bought a parcel of a field of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father" (Gen. xxxiii. 19), and we are not told that it was a burying-place. The two incidents seem to be confused in Stephen's speech. But it is possible that Abraham, when he first came into Canaan, bought a possession at Shechem, for he built an altar there: and the bones of Joseph were laid in Shechem (Josh. xxiv. 32). So there were two burial-places connected with the patriarchal families.

**18.** *till another king arose*] R.V. **till there arose another king over Egypt**.

**19.** *dealt subtilly with our kindred*] Cp. Exodus i. 10. *so that they cast out*] R.V. **that they should cast out**, i.e. he forced them to cast out their babes.

**20.** *exceeding fair*] R.V. marg. gives the literal meaning "fair unto God." It is a Hebrew way of suppressing a superlative; cp. 2 Cor. x. 4, and in the O.T. Gen. xiii. 10; Jonah iii. 3.

**21.** *nourished him for her own son*] Jewish tradition says that the king had no son.

**22.** *all the wisdom of the Egyptians*] This would consist largely in magic arts. *was mighty in words and in deeds*] Josephus says that the Egyptian troops under the leadership of Moses won a great victory over the Ethiopians.

23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of *them* suffer wrong, he defended *him*, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: 25 for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not. 26 And the next day he shewed himself 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? 27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday? 29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons. 30 And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilder-

23. *when he was full forty years old*] R.V. **when he was well nigh forty years old**, literally "when a space of forty years was being fulfilled to him." The O.T. gives no clue to his age at this time, but we learn from it that he was eighty years old when he was sent to speak before Pharaoh (Exod. vii. 7) and an hundred and twenty years old when he died (Deut. xxxiv. 7). So the turning-points of his life would have come in cycles of forty years. *to visit*] In the Old English sense of *look upon* generally with kindness.

25. *for he supposed, etc.*] R.V. **and he supposed that his brethren understood how that God by his hand was giving them deliverance.**

26. *unto them as they strove*] i.e. to "two men of the Hebrews," Exod. ii. 13.

28. *as thou didst the Egyptian*] For "didst" read **killedst** with R.V.

29. *Then fled Moses at this saying*] Josephus (*Antiq.* ii. 11. 1) says that the Egyptians were jealous of Moses and told the king "that he would raise a sedition and bring innovations." *in the land of Madian*] "Madian" = Midian. The Midianites were a nomad tribe and their principal home seems to have been on the other side of the eastern arm of the Red Sea, called the Gulf of Akabah. *he begat two sons*] i.e. Gershom and Eliezer, Exod. xviii. 3, 4.

30. *forty years*] See on v. 23. *mount Sina*] It is better

ness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. <sup>31</sup>When Moses saw *it*, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold *it*, the voice of the Lord came unto him, <sup>32</sup>*saying*, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. <sup>33</sup>Then said the Lord to him, Put off *thy* shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground. <sup>34</sup>I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt. <sup>35</sup>This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send *to be* a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. <sup>36</sup>He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in

to read **Sinal**. It is called "Horeb" in Exod. iii. 1. *an angel of the Lord*] Omit *of the Lord* (with R.V.). *in a bush*] Probably the wild acacia.

**32.** Omit *the God* before *of Isaac* and *of Jacob* (with R.V.).

**33.** *Put off thy shoes from thy feet*] An Oriental act of reverence: an invariable custom of the Mohammadians at the present day on entering a mosque. *the place where thou standest is holy ground*] The point is important in Stephen's argument, for he is anxious to shew how God is present everywhere on earth, and not merely in the Temple at Jerusalem.

**34.** *I have seen, I have seen*] R.V. correctly renders the Hebraistic phrase **I have surely seen**. *I will send thee into Egypt*] The mission was a very terrifying one to Moses and he tried hard to escape from it (Exod. iii. 11 ff.).

**35.** Stephen here begins to point out how in old time the people had rejected Moses, that he may shew his hearers how they are acting in the same way towards Jesus. *whom they refused*] The same word is used of the rejection of Christ in iii. 14. *did God send*] R.V. **hath God sent**.

**36.** *and in the Red sea*] The Jewish traditions make the plagues sent on the Egyptians at the Red Sea more than those which had been sent to them in Egypt.

the wilderness forty years. <sup>37</sup> This is *that* Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. <sup>38</sup> This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and *with* our fathers: who received *the* lively oracles to give unto us: <sup>39</sup> to whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust *him* from *them*, and in their hearts turned *back again* into Egypt, <sup>40</sup> saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for *as for* this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. <sup>41</sup> And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. <sup>42</sup> Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house

**37.** The prophecy comes from Deut. xviii. 15. It was quoted also by St Peter in iii. 22.

**38.** *in the church*] Better "in the congregation" (R.V. marg.). Stephen is using intentionally the same word as is used of the Christian Church (v. 11). *with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina*] There seems to be no real distinction between God and the angel. *the lively oracles*] R.V. **living oracles.** Moses is thus shewn to have been a mediator (see Gal. iii. 19) and so to have prefigured the "mediator of a better covenant" (Hebr. viii. 6). The ordinances of the Law are called "oracles" again in Romans iii. 2. They are called "living" as speaking with fresh authority to each generation; cp. Hebr. iv. 12 "the word of God is living."

**39.** *would not obey*] This was after the return of the spies, when the people became discontented with the leadership of Moses and Aaron (Numb. xiv. 4).

**40.** *Make us gods, etc.*] From Exod. xxxii. 1. The people were tired of waiting for Moses while he communed with God in the mount.

**41.** *and rejoiced*] Moses heard "the voice of them that sing," Exod. xxxii. 18.

**42.** *gave them up to worship the host of heaven*] i.e. the sun, moon and stars, a form of idolatry against which a special warning is given in Deut. iv. 19. *as it is written in the book of the prophets*] The Hebrews divided the O.T. into three sections, the

of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? <sup>43</sup> Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon. <sup>44</sup> Our fathers had the tabernacle of Witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. <sup>45</sup> Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto

Law (i.e. the Pentateuch), the Prophets (including the books from Joshua to 2 Kings), and the Writings or Hagiographa (called the Psalms, Luke xxiv. 44), and look on each of these sections as a separate book.

*O ye house of Israel]* In the Greek order these words come at the end of the sentence. So R.V. The quotation is from Amos v. 25-27. Amos is insisting that sacrifices and offerings in themselves are not necessary to the worship of God, and may even be abhorrent to Him if separated from judgment and righteousness. And he points out that they were not offered by the people in the wilderness.

<sup>43.</sup> *Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, etc.]* The passage in Amos, according to the R.V., runs "Yea, ye have borne Siccuth your king and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves." Here Siccuth and Chiun probably are names of stars or planets. "The tabernacle of Moloch" and "Siccuth your king" are very much alike in Hebrew, but it is quite uncertain where the name "Remphan" (R.V. **Rephan**) comes from. *and I will carry you away beyond Babylon]* In Amos the passage runs "Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus." But to the Hebrews Babylon was, *par excellence*, the land of captivity.

<sup>44.</sup> Stephen proceeds to point out that long before the Temple was built, the tabernacle which moved about from place to place was regarded as God's dwelling-place. *tabernacle of Witness]* R.V. **tabernacle of the testimony.** The name is first found in Exod. xxxviii. 21. *speaking unto Moses]* R.V. **who spake unto Moses.** See Exod. xxv. 9, 40, etc.

<sup>45.</sup> *with Jesus]* i.e. **Joshua** (R.V.); cp. Hebr. iv. 8. The two names both mean "Saviour." *into the possession of the Gentiles]* R.V. **when they entered on the possession of the nations.**

the days of David; <sup>46</sup> who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. <sup>47</sup> But Solomon built him a house. <sup>48</sup> Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, <sup>49</sup> Heaven *is* my throne, and earth *is* my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what *is* the place of my rest? <sup>50</sup> Hath not my hand made all these *things*? <sup>51</sup> Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye. <sup>52</sup> Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers

*unto the days of David*] Another landmark in the historical sketch, the intervening history being skipped.

<sup>46.</sup> *desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob*] R.V. **asked to find a habitation for the God of Jacob.** The reference is to Psalm cxxii. 5.

<sup>48.</sup> The lesson of the history. God is everywhere and almighty, and no human habitation can contain Him. The same thought is contained in Solomon's prayer of dedication, 1 Kings viii. 27. *the most High*] Better (with R.V.) **the Most High.** A solemn and archaic title of God found first in Gen. xiv. 18. *in temples made with hands*] There is no noun in the Greek. Supply **houses** (R.V.). *as saith the prophet*] Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2. The passage was written after the destruction of Solomon's Temple by Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>51.</sup> Stephen's warmth carries him into an outburst of feeling against the Jews. *Ye stiffnecked*] A charge often brought against the Jews in the O.T. The metaphor is that of an animal refusing to be trained. *uncircumcised in heart and ears*] i.e. ye who shut your heart and ears against the truth. "Uncircumcised" was with the Jews a synonym for one who obstinately resisted. *resist the Holy Ghost*] All through the O.T. the Spirit was trying to lead men "into all the truth" (John xvi. 13).

<sup>52.</sup> *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?*] R.V. **did not your fathers persecute?** Stephen would be thinking of such men as Micaiah, Amos, Jeremiah. *they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One*] e.g. Isaiah, who, according to Jewish tradition, was sawn asunder (Hebr. xi. 27). For "the Just One" as a Messianic title, see on iii. 14. *ye have been now*] R.V. **ye have now become.**

and murderers: <sup>53</sup> who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

<sup>54</sup> When they heard these *things*, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him *with their teeth*. <sup>55</sup> But 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, <sup>56</sup> and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. <sup>57</sup> Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, <sup>58</sup> and cast *him* out of the city, and stoned *him*: and the witnesses laid down their clothes

**53.** *who have received the law by the disposition of angels*] R.V. **ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels.** St Paul (Gal. iii. 19) has the same expression concerning the Law, that it was "ministered by angels." The reference is apparently to a poetical passage in Deut. xxxiii. 2. *and have not kept it*] Stephen here turns the tables on his accusers and provokes their frenzied hostility.

**54.** *they were cut to the heart*] The same expression used in a different sense in v. 33. *gnashed on him with their teeth*] More literally *gnashed their teeth against him*. In the Gospels the "gnashing of teeth" is applied frequently to the anguish of lost souls.

**55.** *saw the glory of God*] That which Moses had longed to see (Exod. xxxiii. 18): compare the account of the Transfiguration in Luke ix. 32. God is clothed with glory, but it was only the opening of the heavens that revealed this to Stephen.

**56.** *the Son of man*] An expression derived apparently from Dan. vii. 13, but used in the N.T. (except here and in the Apocalypse) only by Christ of Himself. Notice how the Three Persons of the Trinity are brought together in this verse and ep. ii. 23.

**57.** *stopped their ears*] i.e. so as not to hear the blasphemy which they imagined in Stephen's words (vi. 11).

**58.** *cast him out of the city*] Because no execution might take place within the walls of the city (cp. Lev. xxiv. 14). So Christ "suffered without the gate" (Hebr. xiii. 12). *the witnesses*] The presence of witnesses would give a more or less official character to the execution. *laid down their clothes*] i.e. the loose outer garment that would hamper their movements. The witnesses would probably cast the first stone,

at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul <sup>59</sup> And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. <sup>60</sup> And 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.

**8** And Saul was consenting unto his death.

And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of

John viii. 7. *at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul*] He was evidently in some official position. As a most zealous Pharisee he was soon afterwards entrusted with a mission to Damascus to root out the Christians there (ix. 2).

**59.** *calling upon God*] R.V. **calling upon the Lord.** The noun is not expressed, but must be supplied from "Lord Jesus." *receive my spirit*] Stephen was no doubt thinking of Christ's word from the cross (Luke xxiii. 46).

**60.** *he kneeled down*] i.e. in prayer. *and cried with a loud voice*] So Christ cried from the cross, Luke xxiii. 46. *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*] The prayer is founded on Christ's prayer for His murderers, Luke xxiii. 34. St Luke as he wrote this account was evidently thinking of the comparison of the death of Christ and of His first martyr. It is characteristic of him as an author to express the points of similarity rather by the choice of phrase than by any direct allusion. *he fell asleep*] The rhythm in the Greek expresses dropping off into peaceful repose. For *sleep* = *death* cp. John xi. 11 and frequently later.

**VIII. 1.** *And Saul was consenting unto his death*] St Luke seems to imply that Saul, had he willed, could have prevented the stoning of Stephen. But the writer has also a further purpose in mentioning Saul's name here, for he wishes to bring out the close connexion between the death of Stephen and the conversion of Saul.

**1<sup>b</sup>-4.** *The persecution consequent on the stoning of Stephen*

*And at that time there was a great persecution*] R.V. **And there arose on that day a great persecution.** There was no interval. As so often happens, a single act of violence led to an immediate outburst of fanaticism. *they were all scattered abroad*] The fury of their enemies defeated its own purpose, for these persecuted Christians were the first missionaries in those parts. *throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria*] According to the order of extension indicated by Jesus.

Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. <sup>2</sup>And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him. <sup>3</sup>As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison.

viii. 4-xii. *Extension of the Church as far as Antioch*

<sup>4</sup>Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

<sup>5</sup>Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. <sup>6</sup>And the people with one accord gave heed unto those *things* which Philip spake,

<sup>2</sup> *carried Stephen to his burial*] R.V. **buried Stephen**. The Greek word, which does not occur elsewhere in the N.T., includes both the preparation and the actual burial. *and made great lamentation over him*] Strictly *beating of the breast*, the outward sign of mourning (Luke viii. 52).

<sup>3</sup> *made havock of the church*] R.V. **laid waste the church**. The word is a strong one and does not occur elsewhere in the N.T.; cp. Saul's own words in xxii. 4 "I persecuted this way unto the death." *entering into every house*] Rather *from house to house*. Armed with the authority of the high priest, he would pay surprise visits to suspected houses. *haling men and women*] *Haling* means *hauling*, and the idea conveyed is that of forcible removal from their homes.

5-13. *Philip's preaching in Samaria*

<sup>5</sup> *Philip*] The second in the list of the Seven (vi. 5). He is only mentioned in this chapter and xxi. 8. *went down*] The verb is used literally. *the city of Samaria*] Built by Omri and made by him capital of the N. kingdom. It stands in a commanding position in a broad valley. After its capture in 722 B.C. by the Assyrians it was inhabited by a mixed multitude, on whom the Jews looked down with great contempt (John iv. 9). But they appear in a favourable light in the life of Christ, and Philip may have been influenced by this in going to preach to them. *Samaria* is generally used in the N.T. of the country, not the actual town: as perhaps here. *preached Christ unto them*] R.V. **proclaimed unto them the Christ**. They would share in the Jewish expectation of a Messiah.

<sup>6</sup> *the people*] R.V. **the multitudes**. The word conveys the

hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. <sup>7</sup>For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed *with them*: and many taken with palsies, and *that were lame*, were healed. <sup>8</sup>And there was great joy in that city. <sup>9</sup>But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the *same city* used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: <sup>10</sup>to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, *This man is the great power of God*. <sup>11</sup>And to him they had regard, because that of long time *he had bewitched them with sorceries*. <sup>12</sup>But when they believed Philip preach-

idea of crowds assembling to hear him. *seeing the miracles which he did*] The first disciples were all endowed with miraculous power, according to the promise of Christ (Mk. xvi. 17, 18).

**7.** *For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them*] R.V. **For from many of those which had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice.** Compare the account of the healing of the demoniac in Mark i. 26.

**9.** *a certain man, called Simon*] From the Greek word *magos* = sorcerer or magician, this man is usually spoken of as Simon Magus. According to Justin Martyr (*Apol.* i. 26, 56) he was born at Gitton, a village of Samaria, and came to Rome in the time of Claudius Cæsar. The history which is given of him after the events mentioned in this chapter describes him as persistently hostile to St Peter. *which beforetime in the same city used sorcery*] There is no word for "same" in the original. The sorcery was probably some general knowledge of the facts of chemistry applied in such a way as to astonish the people. *giving out that himself was some great one*] Justin says that he was honoured in Rome as a god but his evidence for this statement is unsatisfactory.

**10.** *This man is the great power of God*] R.V. **This man is that power of God which is called Great.** The Deity was supposed to have various emanations or "powers" of which the Samaritans regarded Simon as the greatest.

**11.** *he had bewitched them*] Better *they had been amazed*. The same root is used in Luke v. 26 "And amazement took hold on all."

**12.** *But when they believed Philip*] Notice how magic and sorcery hide away before the teaching of Christianity. *preaching*

ing the *things* concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. <sup>13</sup> Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding *the* miracles and signs *which were* done.

<sup>14</sup> Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: <sup>15</sup> who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: <sup>16</sup> (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) <sup>17</sup> Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. <sup>18</sup> And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, <sup>19</sup> saying, Give me

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*the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ*] We are here told in general terms the subject of Philip's teaching. His first message was concerning "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts i. 9), that is, to shew the place of Christianity in God's ordering of the world; then he went on more specially to explain "the name of Jesus Christ," i.e. His nature and attributes and work.

**13.** *Then Simon himself believed also*] The belief seems to have been genuine, though it failed to alter his character at all completely. He saw that Philip's miracles were not the result of sorcery.

**14-25.** *Peter and John sent down to Samaria. Conduct of Simon Magus*

**14.** *Now when the apostles, etc.*] It is evident that the Twelve who were left in Jerusalem kept up communication with the fugitives from the first. *they sent unto them Peter and John*] The two are constantly found together in the Acts (iii. 1, iv. 13, etc.). They were sent out by the whole body and not by any one man in authority.

**15.** *who, when they were come down, etc.*] It is clear that, ordinarily, the gift of the Holy Ghost was not bestowed except through the Apostles. The case of Ananias, sent by God's special command to Saul, differs from all others.

**18.** *he offered them money*] From his name all trafficking in sacred things has since been called *Simony*.

**19.** *Give me also this power*] He does not desire the Holy Ghost as a spiritual gift, but as a higher power than his own magic.

also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. <sup>20</sup> But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. <sup>21</sup> Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. <sup>22</sup> Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. <sup>23</sup> For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. <sup>24</sup> Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of *these things* which ye have spoken come upon me. <sup>25</sup> And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

<sup>20.</sup> *Thy money perish with thee*] R.V. **Thy silver.** The word is different from that used for "money" in the last verse. The words of St Peter were a direct curse, though, as the subsequent words prove, not an irrevocable one.

<sup>21.</sup> *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter (or word)*] The two Greek words are constantly found together in the LXX. For the use of "lot," compare the account of the election of Matthias in i. 26. *thy heart is not right in the sight of God*] Simon's request shewed a fundamentally wrong conception of the essence of religion.

<sup>22.</sup> *if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*] St Peter recognizes the almost hopeless depravity of his moral nature.

<sup>23.</sup> *For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*] R.V. marg. should be noticed, *will become gall (or, a gall root) of bitterness and a bond of iniquity.* The expression is taken from Deut. xxix. 18 and recurs in Hebr. xii. 15. Two similes seem combined, acrid humours undermining the constitution and toils enclosing a victim.

<sup>24.</sup> *Pray ye to the Lord for me*] Simon is genuinely frightened, but his only thought is how to escape the consequences of his sin.

<sup>25.</sup> *returned to Jerusalem*] As Chrysostom says, "like commanders they place themselves in the post of danger." *and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans*] Either on their journey back or on subsequent expeditions.

<sup>26</sup> And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. <sup>27</sup> And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, <sup>28</sup> was returning, and sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet. <sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. <sup>30</sup> And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? <sup>31</sup> And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. <sup>32</sup> The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: <sup>33</sup> in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who

26-40. *Philip baptizes an Ethiopian eunuch*

<sup>26.</sup> *spake unto Philip*] Probably in a vision as to Cornelius (x. 3) and to Peter (xi. 5). *Gaza*] One of the five cities of the Philistines, on the high road from Palestine to Egypt, and separated from the sea by two miles of sand hills. It was destroyed in 96 B.C. by Alexander Jannæus, but rebuilt by the Romans and was a place of some importance. *which is desert*] i.e. the road.

<sup>27.</sup> *a man of Ethiopia*] Ethiopia included Nubia and Abyssinia. In the N. was Meroe, which, as Pliny tells us, was ruled by a succession of queens called Candace. *had come to Jerusalem for to worship*] Evidently he was a proselyte to Judaism. *read*] It was usual to read aloud. So Philip *heard him* (v. 30).

<sup>29.</sup> *Go near, and join thyself to this chariot*] Probably the chariot had already passed him, but was going at so leisurely a rate that Philip was able to overtake it.

<sup>31.</sup> *How can I, except some man should guide me?*] The eunuch does not seem to have noticed Philip as he passed him, and would be surprised at the sudden question. But he eagerly welcomed such help as he could hardly expect to find at home.

<sup>32.</sup> *He was led, etc.*] The quotation (from Isaiah liii. 7, 8) is word for word like the LXX., but differs considerably from the Hebrew.

<sup>33.</sup> *in his humiliation his judgment was taken away*] Hebr.

shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. <sup>34</sup>And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other *man*? <sup>35</sup>Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. <sup>36</sup>And as they went on *their way*, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is water*; what doth hinder me to be baptized? <sup>37</sup>And Philip said, If thou believest with all *thine heart*, *thou mayest*. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. <sup>38</sup>And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. <sup>39</sup>And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the

has "Through oppression and through judgment he was taken away." *who shall declare his generation?*] i.e. his very family is forgotten. *for his life is taken from the earth*] Hebr. has "for he was cut off out of the land of the living."

<sup>34.</sup> *of whom speaketh the prophet this?*] Some of the Jews interpreted this passage of a suffering prophet, but most generally it was applied to the suffering nation.

<sup>35.</sup> *opened his mouth*] A phrase of St Luke's to call special attention to the importance of the words to follow; cp. x. 34, xviii. 14. *preached unto him Jesus*] He could hardly have had a better text than the passage which the eunuch was reading.

<sup>36.</sup> *they came unto a certain water*] Philip seems to have journeyed some way with the eunuch, and they would pass some small streams in the desert country. Jerome says that the actual place was by the village of Bethsoron. *what doth hinder me to be baptized?*] Evidently part of Philip's preaching referred to Christian baptism.

<sup>37.</sup> *And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*] The whole of this verse is omitted in the oldest MSS., and is probably to be regarded as a later gloss.

<sup>38.</sup> *they went down both into the water*] As was the custom among the Jews.

<sup>39.</sup> *And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip*] Compare the carrying away of Elijah

eunuch saw him no more: and he went *on his way* rejoicing. <sup>40</sup>But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea.

**9** And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, <sup>2</sup>and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of *this way*, whether they were men or women, he might bring *them* bound unto Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>And as *he* journeyed, he came

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after the passage of Jordan in 2 Kings i. The Spirit that descended upon the eunuch at his baptism manifested Himself also in the removal of Philip in a wonderful manner. *went on his way rejoicing*] To his home in Ethiopia, where he probably told others of his new found faith.

**40.** *But Philip was found at Azotus*] We are not told how he got there. As this narrative could hardly have come from any one but Philip himself we are to imagine that the Spirit of the Lord led him almost unconsciously to Azotus, or Ashdod, another of the five cities of the Philistines, lying about 20 miles N.E. of Gaza. *till he came to Cesarea*] Cesarea Sebaste, which lay at the extreme north of the plain of Sharon. Here he seems to have made his home, for we find him here in xxi. 8.

#### IX. 1-9. *Saul's mission to Damascus and his conversion*

**1.** *breathing out*] R.V. **breathing**. The metaphor seems to be that of some savage beast. *against the disciples of the Lord*] We are not told of any other death but Stephen's in which Saul participated, but he himself confessed to great persecution of the Christians (Acts xxvi. 10).

**2.** *desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues*] These would be papers giving him summary authority to arrest any Jews whom he might suspect of infringing the Mosaic Law. The authority of the high priest would be sufficient for this purpose, even so far off as Damascus. *that if he found any of this way*] "The Way" seems early to have become a term for the Christian religion; cp. Acts xix. 9, xxii. 4, xxiv. 22. In early Christian writings a favourite contrast is between "the two ways" of life and death. *he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem*] i.e. to be tried before the Sanhedrin itself. He would need a large escort to bring his prisoners in.

**3.** *he came near Damascus*] R.V. **it came to pass that he drew nigh to Damascus**. There were two roads by which Saul

near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: <sup>4</sup>and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? <sup>5</sup>And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.* <sup>6</sup>And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. <sup>7</sup>And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no *man*.

could make his journey. One led from Egypt to Damascus and kept near the coast-line of the Holy Land till it struck eastward to cross the Jordan at the north of the Lake of Tiberias. The other led through Neapolis and crossed the Jordan south of the Lake of Tiberias. *and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven*] In xxii. 6 we are told that the time of day was "about noon" when the vision was seen, and in xxvi. 13 Paul says that "at midday" the light was "above the brightness of the sun." We are to conceive of a sudden blaze of heavenly splendour, visible to all the company but having effect on Saul only.

<sup>4.</sup> *heard a voice*] "Voice" is here in the accusative case, in v. 7 in the genitive. The difference seems to be that Saul heard articulate words, while his companions were merely conscious of a sound. *Saul, Saul*] In all three accounts of the vision the Greek text of Saul's name is a transliteration of the Hebrew: the words were evidently branded very distinctly on Saul's memory. For the repetition of the name cp. Luke xxii. 31, and 1 Sam. iii. 10.

<sup>5.</sup> *Who art thou, Lord?*] It would seem that Saul recognized at once the Divine character of the speaker; cp. x. 4. *And the Lord said*] The best texts have only "and he," the verb being understood. *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*] There is an emphasis on "thou," as if to convey a gentle reproach.

<sup>5, 6.</sup> *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him*] These words have been inserted here in some MSS. for the sake of making in this place a complete narrative, by the combination and adaptation of the additional particulars given in xxvi. 14 and xxii. 10. R.V. omits. *Arise*] R.V. but **rise**.

<sup>7.</sup> *seeing no man*] Guided by the sound they would lift up their faces to the sky, but there was no form visible; cp. Dent. iv. 12.

<sup>8</sup>And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no *man*: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus. <sup>9</sup>And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

<sup>10</sup>And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. <sup>11</sup>And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth, <sup>12</sup>and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias

**8.** *when his eyes were opened*] At the first flash his eyes shut of themselves: and when they opened again his sight was gone.

**9.** *he was three days without sight*] During this time he would have nothing to distract his mind from the thought of what had occurred. The story of St Paul's conversion is given three times: (a) here, (b) xxii. 6-11, (c) xxvi. 12-18. The main differences are as follows: (i) In (a) the voice says only "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." In (b) we find "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest." In (c) there is added "it is hard for thee to kick," etc., and a long account of the commission which Saul receives. (ii) In (a) his companions "heard a voice, but saw no man": in (b) they "saw the light, but heard not the voice of him that spake." Again, (iii) in (a) "they stood speechless": in (c) "they fell to the earth." It will be noticed that none of these differences are of any vital importance.

**10-22.** *Saul at Damascus, and the mission of Ananias*

**10.** *And there was a certain disciple at Damascus*] We have no account as to how Christianity reached this city. *Ananias*] Of this disciple we have no further mention except in xxii. 12. Distinguish two other men of this name: (i) the husband of Sapphira, v. 1; (ii) a high priest, Acts xxiii. 2. *to him said the Lord in a vision*] The story of Ananias and Saul is very similar to that of Cornelius and Peter in chap. x.

**11.** *the street which is called Straight*] To this day there is a Straight Street in Damascus, and the traditional house of Judas is shewn.

**12.** *hath seen in a vision*] R.V. omits "in a vision." *a man named Ananias coming in*] We are not to suppose that the name was conveyed in the vision, but rather that a man came in, whom he was afterwards to recognize as Ananias. But the whole verse is difficult and it is omitted entirely in one MS.

coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight. <sup>13</sup>Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: <sup>14</sup>and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. <sup>15</sup>But 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: <sup>16</sup>for I will shew him how great *things* he must suffer for my name's sake. <sup>17</sup>And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even Jesus*, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. <sup>18</sup>And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received

**13.** *Then Ananias answered*] Ananias is so startled by the message that he ventures to remonstrate with God. Notice the gentle rebuke in the reply, "Go thy way." *Lord, I have heard by many of this man*] It would seem that sufficient time had elapsed after the death of Stephen for Saul to gain an unenviable reputation among the Christians, even in other lands, as a determined and relentless persecutor. So even his arrival at Damascus was looked forward to with great apprehension.

**15.** *he is a chosen vessel*] Literally "a vessel of election": a Hebraistic form of expression; cp. Romans ix. 22 "vessels of wrath." The simile is probably derived from the potter's trade. *to bear my name*] i.e. as a burden or charge. Or the idea may be of bearing the name of a master; cp. Gal. vi. 17. *before the Gentiles*] St Paul was pre-eminently the Apostle of the Gentiles, Gal. ii. 8. *and kings*] As before Agrippa (xxvi. 1-32) and at Rome.

**16.** *how great things he must suffer*] On St Paul was laid the ministry of suffering, and it became an actual joy to him, Col. i. 24.

**17.** *the Lord, even Jesus*] Combining the "Lord" and "Jesus" of v. 5. *be filled with the Holy Ghost*] This was without the laying on of the hands of one of the Twelve.

**18.** *there fell from his eyes as it had been scales*] Compare Tobit iii. 17, xi. 13. The word rendered "scales" is used by

sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized, <sup>19</sup> and when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. <sup>20</sup> And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. <sup>21</sup> But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that *intent*, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? <sup>22</sup> But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is *very* Christ.

<sup>23</sup> And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: <sup>24</sup> but their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. <sup>25</sup> Then the disciples took him by

Hippocrates for a disease of the eye. *forthwith*] This is omitted in the best MSS. and R.V.

<sup>19.</sup> *when he had received meat*] "Meat" means "food" of any kind. Saul had been fasting for three days (*v.* 9).

<sup>20.</sup> *And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God*] We can imagine the astonishment both among Jews and Christians at this kind of preaching from Saul the persecutor. Notice how he insisted at once on the cardinal point of Christianity, which had aroused his most bitter opposition before.

**23-31.** *The Jews plot against Saul, and he is sent to Tarsus*

<sup>23.</sup> *And after that many days were fulfilled*] In Gal. i. 17 St Paul says "I went away into Arabia and again I returned to Damascus." Arabia may possibly mean the country round Damascus, but anyhow the journey must be placed in the interval represented by "after many days." *the Jews took counsel to kill him*] Possibly some had been his friends before, but now they despaired of winning him back.

<sup>24.</sup> *And they watched the gates day and night to kill him*] In 2 Cor. xi. 32 St Paul says "In Damascus the governor, under Aretas, the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me." Hence it appears that the Jews had gained the support of the authorities.

<sup>25.</sup> *Then the disciples*] R.V. **But his disciples.** Saul had already remained long enough to gather round him a party of followers. *let him down by the wall in a basket*] In 2 Cor. xi.

night, and let *him* down by the wall in a basket. <sup>26</sup> And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. <sup>27</sup> But 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 he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. <sup>28</sup> And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. <sup>29</sup> And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him. <sup>30</sup> Which, when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus. <sup>31</sup> Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

<sup>33</sup> St Paul says "And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall and escaped." The basket was a big soft basket, such as was used for picking up the fragments left by the Four Thousand, Matt. xv. 37.

<sup>26.</sup> *And when Saul was come*] R.V. omits proper name.

<sup>27.</sup> *But Barnabas took him*] It was characteristic of Barnabas to see the best side of every man. So he would not give up John Mark, even after he had failed once, xv. 37. *and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord*] He had evidently won Saul's confidence and heard all his history.

<sup>29.</sup> *the Lord Jesus*] R.V. **Jesus.** *against the Grecians*] These were the Greek Jews at whose instigation Stephen had been put to death.

<sup>30.</sup> *they brought him down to Cesarea*] i.e. the seaport which, under the Romans, was a splendid city and the seat of government. Here, no doubt, he embarked on a ship. *to Tarsus*] His own Cilician home; cp. Gal. i. 21.

<sup>31.</sup> *Then had the churches rest*] R.V. **So the church...had peace.** Saul, their greatest foe, was now their friend, and, besides, the Jews were occupied by the attempt of the Emperor Caligula to have his statue erected in the Temple at Jerusalem; cp. Tac. *Hist.* v. 9. *were edified*] i.e. built up. The word expresses the quiet consolidation of the Church from day to day.

<sup>32</sup>And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all *quarters*, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda. <sup>33</sup>And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy. <sup>34</sup>And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. <sup>35</sup>And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

<sup>36</sup>Now 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. <sup>37</sup>And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in an upper chamber. <sup>38</sup>And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter

#### 32-35. *St Peter at Lydda*

<sup>32.</sup> *as Peter passed throughout all quarters*] The history now turns from Saul to Peter, to shew how the latter was taught by revelation that the time had come for the extension of the Church among all nations. It is evident that St Peter was making a missionary tour. *the saints which dwelt at Lydda*] "Saints" means members of the Christian Church, as in v. 13. Lydda is called Lod in 1 Chron. viii. 12. Its later name was Diospolis. It was not far from Joppa.

<sup>33.</sup> *Aeneas*] The second *e* is short, so the name must not be pronounced in the same way as Virgil's hero.

<sup>34.</sup> *Jesus Christ maketh thee whole*] St Peter is careful to explain that he is only the agent of the healing. *arise, and make thy bed*] Cp. Christ's words, Mark ii. 11.

<sup>35.</sup> *Saron*] R.V. **Sharon**. Either a village near Lydda, or the whole plain of Sharon.

#### 36-43. *St Peter at Joppa*

<sup>36.</sup> *Joppa*] Modern Jaffa, the seaport now connected by a railway with Jerusalem. Here, in the time of Solomon, the timber from Lebanon was beached for transport to Jerusalem (2 Chron. ii. 16). *Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas*] Tabitha is the Hebrew, and Dorcas the Greek name for a gazelle. *was full of good works*] A favourite form of expression with St Luke.

was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that *he* would not delay to come to them. <sup>39</sup> Then Peter arose and went with them. 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. <sup>40</sup> But Peter put *them* all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. <sup>41</sup> And he gave her *his* hand, and lift her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive. <sup>42</sup> And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord. <sup>43</sup> And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

**10** There was a certain man in Cesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian

**38.** *desiring him that he would not delay to come to them*] R.V. **intreating him, Delay not to come on unto us.** The burial could not be delayed more than a few hours.

**39.** *all the widows stood by him weeping*] Dorcas was probably a widow herself. *shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made*] Hence the term *Dorcas meetings*, for the making of garments for the poor.

**40.** *But Peter put them all forth*] As Christ had done at the raising of Jairus' daughter (Matt. ix. 25). *and kneeled down, and prayed*] It was by prayer that the miracles were wrought. *Tabitha, arise*] In Aramaic this would have sounded almost the same as our Lord's utterance, "Talitha cumi" (Mk. v. 41), of which St Peter was probably thinking.

**41.** *when he had called the saints and widows*] The petition sent to Peter had been the supplication of the whole Christian Church of Joppa.

**43.** *with one Simon a tanner*] The trade of a tanner was held as abominable by the Jews. In the mind of St Peter some prejudices of the Jews were already becoming of small account.

#### X. 1-48. *The baptism of Cornelius and his friends*

**1.** *in Cesarea*] The Roman procurator usually resided here, so there would naturally be Roman soldiers in the town. Cornelius

*band*, <sup>2</sup>a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. <sup>3</sup>He saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. <sup>4</sup>And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. <sup>5</sup>And now send men to Joppa, and call for *one* Simon, whose surname is Peter: <sup>6</sup>he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. <sup>7</sup>And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on

may have had his first instruction in Christianity from Philip. *Cornelius*] Probably he was a freedman attached to the great Cornelian family, to which the Scipios belonged. *a centurion*] i.e. commander of the sixth part of a cohort, about a hundred men. *the Italian band*] Probably a cohort recruited entirely from Italians; cp. xxvii. 1.

<sup>2.</sup> *a devout man*] Perhaps attracted by the Jews' religion though not actually a proselyte. *one that feared God with all his house*] He would be a man of some importance (Lk. vii. 8), and was able to influence a fairly wide circle. *which gave much alms to the people*] The duty of almsgiving was regarded as one of the most pressing of all duties.

<sup>3.</sup> *evidently*] R.V. **openly**. It was not a mere trance that he saw. *about the ninth hour*] About 3 p.m., one of the hours of prayer (v. 30).

<sup>4.</sup> *And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said*] R.V. **And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being affrighted, said**. The word expresses his careful scrutiny of the unexpected sight. *What is it, Lord?*] He recognizes his visitor as Divine; cp. ix. 5. *are come up for a memorial before God*] i.e. have ascended into the presence of God so as to be remembered.

<sup>5.</sup> *Simon, whose surname is Peter*] It would seem that in ordinary life he was still known as Simon rather than as Peter.

<sup>6.</sup> *he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do*] R.V. omits.

<sup>7.</sup> *a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually*] He would be Cornelius' orderly, and it would seem that he shared his spiritual life, for his master tells him all that had happened to him.

him continually; <sup>8</sup> and when he had declared all *these things* unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

<sup>9</sup> On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the house to pray about the sixth hour: <sup>10</sup> and he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, <sup>11</sup> and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as *it had been* a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: <sup>12</sup> wherein were all *manner of* fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. <sup>13</sup> And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. <sup>14</sup> But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any *thing that is* common or unclean.

**9.** *On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city]* Joppa was 28 miles from Cæsarea, so more than a single day's journey. *Peter went up upon the house to pray]* The flat roofs of Eastern houses formed a convenient place for retirement.

**10.** *he became very hungry]* He would have had nothing but a very slight repast in the early morning. *he fell into a trance]* The Greek word is used in the LXX. of the deep sleep that fell on Adam (Gen. ii. 21) and on Abraham (Gen. xv. 12).

**11.** *as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth]* R.V. **as it were a great sheet let down by four corners on the earth.** A hungry man dreams of food, and so St Peter sees in his trance a great sheet let down from heaven by its four corners and bulging out in the middle with all manner of animals good to eat. Notice how God uses even the purely animal instincts as means whereby to convey His great lessons.

**12.** *all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air]* R.V. **all manner of fourfooted beasts and creeping things of the earth and fowls of the heaven.** The text which A.V. follows has inserted words to correspond exactly with what St Peter says in xi. 6.

**14.** *Not so, Lord]* Peter recognizes the voice of the Master, but, with his old impetuosity, he ventures to rebuke Him again (cp. Matt. xvi. 22). For the care with which the devout Jews observed the ceremonial distinction between clean and unclean see Dan. i. 8-12; 2 Macc. vi. 18.

<sup>15</sup> And *the voice spake* unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common.

<sup>16</sup> This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

<sup>17</sup> Now while Peter doubted in himself what *this* vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, <sup>18</sup> and called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. <sup>19</sup> While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee: <sup>20</sup> arise therefore, and get *thee* down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. <sup>21</sup> Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come? <sup>22</sup> And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by a holy angel to send

**15.** *What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common*] The heaven-sent voice revokes what had been enjoined from heaven at the giving of the Law; cp. Mark vii. 19 (R.V.).

**16.** *This was done thrice*] The thrice would remind St Peter of his threefold denial of Christ, and his threefold commission, John xxi. 15-17.

**17, 18.** *Now while Peter doubted in himself*] R.V. **was much perplexed in himself.** The trance was over, and he was left to wonder what it meant. *stood before the gate, and called*] The outer gate would be kept locked and there were no bells. A person desiring admittance had to knock and shout out his name and business, before the porter or portress (John xviii. 16) opened to him (cp. Acts xii. 13-16).

**19.** *While Peter thought on the vision*] Peter was turning over the difficulty in his mind, and while he was thus pondering the explanation came.

**21.** *which were sent unto him from Cornelius*] R.V. omits.

**22.** *a just man, and one that feareth God*] The words, which would be the messengers' own, shew the esteem in which these men held the good centurion. *was warned from God*] The words

for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee. 23 Then called he them in, and lodged *them*. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. 24 And the morrow *after* they entered into Cesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at *his* feet, and worshipped *him*. 26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. 27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many *that were* come together. 28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful *thing* for a man *that is* a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that *I* should not call any man common or unclean. 29 Therefore came I *unto you* without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? 30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was

“from God” are strictly not in the original, but the verb is regularly used of Divine admonitions (Matt. ii. 12, 22; Luke ii. 26). *to hear words of thee*] i.e. to receive God’s message from thee.

23. *Then called he them in, and lodged them*] It would be too late to think of starting that day and the travellers would be tired. *certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him*] In xi. 12 we are told they were six in number, and in v. 45 of this chapter they are called “they of the circumcision which believed.”

24. *And Cornelius waited for them*] This shews how convinced he was of the reality of his vision. He would have calculated how soon St Peter could be expected to arrive.

25. *And as Peter was coming in*] R.V. **And when it came to pass that Peter entered.**

26. *But Peter took him up*] R.V. **raised him up**; cp. Rev. xix. 10.

28. *Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing*] St Peter seems to have had a qualm of conscience when he found himself in the presence of so many Gentiles. There is no such stringent prohibition in the Mosaic Law, but it appears in the exaggerated teaching of the Rabbis.

30. *Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the*

fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, <sup>31</sup>and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. <sup>32</sup>Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. <sup>33</sup>Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all *things* that are commanded thee of God.

<sup>34</sup>Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: <sup>35</sup>but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. <sup>36</sup>The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) <sup>37</sup>*that* word, *I say*, you know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John

*ninth hour I prayed in my house*] R.V. **Four days ago, until this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house.** *in bright clothing*] Cp. i. 10.

<sup>32.</sup> *who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee*] R.V. omits.

<sup>33.</sup> *thou hast well done that thou art come*] An idiomatic Greek way of expressing thanks; cp. Phil. iv. 14. *to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*] R.V. **of the Lord.** Cornelius regards Peter as the bearer of God's message.

<sup>34.</sup> *God is no respecter of persons*] It was, as it were, a revelation to St Peter that God should send a message to a Gentile. For the expression cp. Gal. ii. 6.

<sup>35.</sup> *he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness*] The words sum up shortly the whole duty of man in the matter of faith and practice. *is accepted with him*] R.V. **is acceptable to him.**

<sup>36.</sup> *The word which God sent*] Many ancient authorities omit the relative: so R.V. marg. *preaching peace by Jesus Christ*] Cp. Eph. ii. 17.

<sup>37.</sup> *that word, I say, you know*] R.V. **that saying**, for the word is a different one. St Peter assumes that Cornelius and his friends know the outlines of the story of Jesus Christ.

preached; <sup>38</sup>how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth 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. <sup>39</sup>And we are witnesses of all *things* which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: <sup>40</sup>him God raised up the third day; and shewed him openly; <sup>41</sup>not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup>And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. <sup>43</sup>To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

<sup>44</sup>While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. <sup>45</sup>And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as

**38.** *how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth]* R.V. **even Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed him.** Jesus of Nazareth is the name by which Christ is spoken about to those who do not know him. But the name Christ lies hidden in the word "anointed." *who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil]* A summary in the shortest terms of Our Lord's life on earth.

**39.** *and hanged on a tree]* R.V. **hanging him on a tree.**

**40.** *and shewed him openly]* R.V. **and gave him to be made manifest.**

**41.** *witnesses chosen before of God]* Christ Himself speaks (John xvii. 6) of the Apostles as given unto Him by God. *who did eat and drink with him]* Cp. Luke xxiv. 43. By this they understood finally that it was no spirit that they saw.

**42.** *to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead]* St Paul picks up this preaching in his sermon to the Athenians (xvii. 31).

**43.** *To him give all the prophets witness]* Cp. Isa. xlix. 6; Joel ii. 32. Throughout the sermons in Acts we find it explained how the O.T. writers were preparing the way for Christ.

**44-45.** *The sequel to St Peter's address*

**45.** *they of the circumcision]* The six Jewish Christians mentioned in xi. 12 as companions of St Peter.

many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. <sup>46</sup>For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, <sup>47</sup>Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? <sup>48</sup>And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

**11** And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. <sup>2</sup>And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, <sup>3</sup>saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. <sup>4</sup>But Peter *rehearsed the matter* from the beginning, *and expounded it by order* unto

**46.** *For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God*] As in Jerusalem at the Day of Pentecost (ii. 11).

**47.** *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?*] St Peter is apparently addressing these words specially to his Jewish friends. Though the gift of the Spirit has been made so apparent, yet he does not omit the outward sign.

**48.** *he commanded them to be baptized*] Possibly by Philip or one of his own six companions. He seems to have refrained from baptizing converts himself. So St Paul (cp. 1 Cor. i. 14). *of the Lord*] R.V. **of Jesus Christ**. The Trinitarian formula is later.

XI. **1-18.** *St Peter justifies before the Jews of Jerusalem his behaviour towards Cornelius and his friends*

**2.** *they...of the circumcision contended with him*] All the Christians in Jerusalem might be so described at this time, but St Luke is probably thinking of the later distinction between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Those who had been brought up to the strict observance of Jewish ritual would readily take offence at a Jew living as the guest of Gentiles.

**4.** *But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order*] R.V. **But Peter began, and expounded the matter unto them in order**. St Luke seems to lay special stress on the whole incident because, as the companion of St Paul, he must later have felt very deeply the cause of Gentile liberty.

them, saying, <sup>5</sup>I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came *even* to me: <sup>6</sup>upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. <sup>7</sup>And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. <sup>8</sup>But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. <sup>9</sup>But *the* voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common. <sup>10</sup>And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven. <sup>11</sup>And behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me. <sup>12</sup>And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house: <sup>13</sup>and he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; <sup>14</sup>who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. <sup>15</sup>And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup>Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. <sup>17</sup>Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I

11. *the house where I was*] R.V. **the house in which we were.**

12. *nothing doubting*] R.V. **making no distinction**, i.e. between Jew or Gentile.

13. *an angel*] R.V. **the angel.** The story of Cornelius must have been by now well known.

17. *Forasmuch then, etc.*] The argument is as follows. "Christ promised to us that we should be baptized with the Holy Ghost. He has shed on the Gentiles this same gift in exactly the same way as on us. Surely we should admit them also to the external rite."

could withstand God? <sup>18</sup> When they heard these *things*, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

<sup>19</sup> Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto *the Jews* only. <sup>20</sup> And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. <sup>21</sup> And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. <sup>22</sup> Then tidings of these *things* came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that *he* should go as far as Antioch. <sup>23</sup> Who,

19-26. *The spread of the Church as far as Antioch*

19. *Phenice*] R.V. **Phœnicia**: the maritime district of which the chief towns were Tyre and Sidon. *Cyprus*] The nearest large island, between which and Tyre there would be frequent communication. *Antioch*] The capital of Syria, about 16 miles from the sea on the river Orontes. St Luke mentions it here with some emphasis, as it became later the centre of the Christian Church. *unto the Jews only*] This was before St Peter's visit to Cornelius.

20. *Cyrene*] Men of this city were present at the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (ii. 10). *spake unto the Grecians*] R.V. **unto the Greeks also**. The N.T. uses Hellenists = Grecians, to mean those Jews who had been born abroad and spoke the Greek language, or else for proselytes, but Hellenes = Greeks when contrasted with other nations. These men from Cyprus and Cyrene were the first missionaries to the Gentiles.

21. *And the hand of the Lord was with them*] The expression is a common one in the O.T. to express the direct interposition of God.

22. *Then tidings of these things came*] R.V. **And the report concerning them came**. *they sent forth Barnabas*] As a Cypriot himself he would be in sympathy with the Cypriot missionaries.

when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted *them* all, that with purpose of heart *they* would cleave unto the Lord. <sup>24</sup> For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. <sup>25</sup> Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: <sup>26</sup> and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people, and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

<sup>27</sup> And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. <sup>28</sup> And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be

<sup>23.</sup> *had seen the grace of God*] i.e. transforming the lives of these converts. *that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord*] R.V. marg. gives an alternative reading, *that they would cleave unto the purpose of their heart in the Lord*. When so many were converted at once there would be special danger that, like the Galatians later, they would soon grow tired of the faith.

<sup>24.</sup> *full of the Holy Ghost and of faith*] The same is said of Stephen (vi. 5).

<sup>25.</sup> *Then departed Barnabas*] R.V. **And he went forth**. Barnabas had been attracted by Saul from the first, and being in Antioch he would naturally think of Saul preparing himself for his work in his native city of Tarsus.

<sup>26.</sup> *a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people*] It is probable that Saul owed much to this year of companionship and work with Barnabas. It gave him also a special affection for this Antioch, to which he frequently returned. *were called Christians first in Antioch*] The name, which only occurs twice again in the N.T. (Acts xxvi. 28; 1 Pet. iv. 16), is formed in the regular Greek way to denote "followers of Christ." It seems, in its origin, to have been used with some contempt.

<sup>27.</sup> *And in these days*] An introductory formula by which St Luke leads up to some point which he regards as specially important. *came prophets*] Joel ii. 28 (quoted in Acts ii. 17) had prophesied that there should be prophets in the Church, and one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost seems to have been a certain gift of foretelling.

<sup>28.</sup> *named Agabus*] He is mentioned in xxi. 11 as foretelling St Paul's arrest at Jerusalem. *that there should be great dearth*

great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar. <sup>29</sup>Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea: <sup>30</sup>which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

**12** Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth *his hands* to vex certain of the church. <sup>2</sup>And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. <sup>3</sup>And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the

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*throughout all the world*] A great famine is mentioned by Josephus (*Ant.* xx. 2. 5) as occurring in 45 A.D., but it was not quite universal, for it is said that wheat was fetched from Alexandria and dried figs from Cyprus. However *all the world* must not be rigorously pressed; cp. Luke ii. 1. *Claudius Cesar*] R.V. omits *Cesar*. He was Emperor 41-54 and during his reign there were constant famines.

<sup>29.</sup> *to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea*] These would be specially poor, because there was little wealth to be got out of the country, and they had suffered by persecution. These Antiochene Christians soon had occasion to prove their sincerity by personal sacrifices.

<sup>30.</sup> *sent it to the elders*] Evidently officials of the Church, though not with so definite an office as later. This is the first time they are mentioned; cp. xx. 17.

## XII. 1-19. *Herod's persecution of the Christians and the miraculous deliverance of St Peter*

**1.** *Herod the king*] This was Herod Agrippa I., son of Aristobulus and grandson of Herod the Great and Mariamne. He received the tetrarchies of his uncle Philip and Lysanias in 37 A.D., that of Herod Antipas in 39 A.D., and Judæa and Samaria in 41 A.D. *stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church*] Josephus (*Ant.* xix. 7. 3) says that he was anxious to be esteemed a devout Jew. It is possible that he vented on the Christians his wrath on account of the famine.

**2.** *And he killed James the brother of John with the sword*] This was one of the sons of Zebedee. Distinguish him from James, the Lord's brother, who occupied a foremost place among the Christians at Jerusalem. The death of James was foretold by Christ in Mark x. 38 ff. Clement of Alexandria has a story that his accuser, won over by his constancy, became a Christian and was executed with him.

days of unleavened bread.) <sup>4</sup>And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. <sup>5</sup>Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. <sup>6</sup>And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and *the* keepers before the door kept the prison. <sup>7</sup>And behold, *the* angel of the Lord came upon *him*, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And

3. *the days of unleavened bread*] These came after the Passover and lasted for seven days. The news of Peter's arrest would gratify the many Jewish visitors to Jerusalem.

4. *he put him in prison*] Because there would be no trial till the days of unleavened bread were over. *and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers*] A quaternion was a set of four men who formed the guard, two soldiers being chained to the prisoner and two keeping guard outside. These latter are called (v. 10) the first and second ward. Four such sets were appointed to have charge of Peter, one for each of the four watches by day and by night. *intending after Easter*] R.V. **after the Passover.** The term "Passover" is used here comprehensively, to include the days of unleavened bread as well. *to bring him forth to the people*] i.e. that he might be condemned by popular acclamation as Christ was.

5. *prayer was made without ceasing of the church*] With James slain and Peter in imminent danger, the Church was passing through a time of the gravest anxiety. For "without ceasing" R.V. has **earnestly.**

6. *would have brought him forth*] R.V. **was about to bring him forth.** The deliverance was wrought, as it were, at the last moment. *was sleeping between two soldiers*] Even on what seemed likely to be his last night on earth St Peter could sleep. *the keepers*] R.V. **guards.** These would be the two other soldiers of the quaternion.

7. *the angel of the Lord came upon him*] R.V. **an angel of the Lord stood by him.** The same Greek word is used in Luke ii. 9 of the angel appearing to the shepherds. *in the prison*] R.V. **in the cell.** *raised him up*] R.V. **awoke him.**

his chains fell off from *his* hands. <sup>8</sup> And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. <sup>9</sup> And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. <sup>10</sup> When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. <sup>11</sup> And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and *from* all the expectation of the people of the Jews. <sup>12</sup> And 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 praying.

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**8.** *Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals*] In order to sleep more comfortably St Peter would have taken off his outer cloak ("garment") and his sandals, and have undone his girdle, that his long inner garment might hang lightly on him.

**9.** *thought he saw a vision*] Perhaps he thought it was something like the vision which summoned him to the house of Cornelius.

**10.** *the first and the second ward*] i.e. the warders who were stationed, one nearer to the inner door of the prison, and another at some further distance away. *they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city*] St Luke is evidently very familiar with the spot, and he seems to be writing before all these landmarks were swept away in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. *of his own accord*] "His" is Old English for "its." R.V. has altered. *and they went out*] An ancient MS. here adds "and descended the seven steps."

**11.** *And when Peter was come to himself*] The account is singularly vivid and lifelike, and can only have come from St Peter himself. *from all the expectation of the people of the Jews*] It must have been a special pain to St Peter that his own countrymen should have so desired his death.

**12.** *Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark*] From Col. iv. 10 we learn that she was sister to Barnabas. Probably she was a widow and possessed of some means. Her house seems to have been a *rendezvous* for the Christians in these dangerous times.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. 14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. 15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was *even* so. Then said they, It is his angel. 16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened *the door*, and saw him, they were astonished. 17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these *things* unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place. 18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. 19 And when Herod had sought for him, and found *him* not, he examined the

13. *the door of the gate*] i.e. the outer wicket, which would be kept locked. *to hearken*] R.V. **to answer**. The Greek word is regularly used of "answering" a knock. *named Rhoda*] From this one incident the name of an obscure servant girl has been immortalized.

14. *when she knew Peter's voice*] A visitor had not only to knock but to shout, and the door was not opened till the voice was recognized or his business was made known. Cp. x. 17.

15. *It is his angel*] The belief in guardian angels was common among the Jews, and the Christians held it from the words of Christ Himself (Matt. xviii. 10).

16. *when they had opened the door*] We can imagine them all crowding to the door to see who was outside.

17. *beckoning...with the hand*] Cp. xiii. 16, xix. 33, xxi. 40. *unto James*] Later a President of the Council of Jerusalem. St Paul speaks of him in Gal. i. 19 as the Lord's brother. Afterwards he is said to have been cast from the pinnacle of the Temple, and slain with a blow from a club. *And he departed, and went into another place*] The risk of discovery was too great for him to stay.

18. *there was no small stir among the soldiers*] They would be responsible with their lives for producing their prisoner; cp. xxvii. 42.

keepers, and commanded that *they* should be put to death. And he went down from Judæa to Cesarea, and *there* abode.

<sup>20</sup> And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country. <sup>21</sup> And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. <sup>22</sup> And the people gave a shout, saying, *It is the voice of a god, and not of a*

19. *be put to death*] Lit. "led away," i.e. to execution. *from Judæa to Cesarea*] Herod Agrippa had had Judæa and Samaria added to his dominions in 41 A.D., and the latter would include Cæsarea.

20-25. *Death of Herod. Growth of the Church*

20. *And Herod*] R.V. omits the proper name. *was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon*] Probably about the question of harbour dues or the like. He interfered with the prosperity of these towns by favouring the neighbouring port of Berytus (= Beyrout). *Blastus the king's chamberlain*] Probably some Greek who had taken office under the Eastern king. *because their country was nourished by the king's country*] Herod might ruin their commercial prosperity by directing the trade of the interior from them.

21. *And upon a set day*] Josephus says that it was one appointed for holding a festival on which to make vows for Cæsar's safety.

22. *It is the voice of a god, and not of a man*] Josephus (*Ant.* XIX. 8. 2) gives further particulars of the event. "On the second day...he put on a garment made wholly of silver and of a texture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning: at which time the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner...: and presently his flatterers cried out... that he was a god: and they added 'Be thou merciful unto us: for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet we shall henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.' Upon this the king did neither rebuke them nor reject their impious flattery. But as he presently afterwards looked up he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this

man. <sup>23</sup> And immediately *the* angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. <sup>24</sup> But the word of God grew and multiplied. <sup>25</sup> And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and took with *them* John, whose surname was Mark.

xiii.-xxviii. *The Story of St Paul*

**13** Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and

bird was the messenger of evil tidings.... A severe pain arose in his belly.... And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life." (Whiston's Translation.)

<sup>23.</sup> *because he gave not God the glory*] i.e. he was flattered into believing himself equal to God. Compare the story of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel iv.

<sup>24.</sup> *But the word of God grew and multiplied*] St Luke is anxious to point out how in this way each incident contributed its share to the growth of the word. Cp. vi. 7, xix. 20.

<sup>25.</sup> *returned from Jerusalem*] i.e. to Antioch. *when they had fulfilled their ministry*] R.V. **ministration**. This refers to the carrying of alms to the poor. They would probably wait to be able to report as to how it was spent.

XIII. 1-12. *Beginning of Saul's first missionary journey: he visits Cyprus*

The scene now shifts and the interest of the history centres in the person of Saul for the rest of the book.

Chs. xiii., xiv. describe the First Missionary Journey. The course of it will be more intelligible if studied with a time-table. The following dates are taken from Ramsay, *Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 61 f., and *Pauline Studies*, p. 365. In the earlier work Ramsay's chronology is two years later.

46. April. Start from Antioch and cross to Cyprus.

May-June. In Cyprus.

Early in August. Reach Antioch in Pisidia.

Late in October. Reach Iconium and stay there for the winter.

47. June. Flee from Iconium to Lystra.

August, end. Arrive at Derbe and stay till end of November.

48. December-mid June. At Lystra, Iconium and Antioch.

June-early July. At Perga.

July, end. Return to Syrian Antioch.

Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. <sup>4</sup>So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

The whole journey would then have lasted two years and four months, but, as Ramsay says, it may well have taken more time.

1. *Now there were in the church that was at Antioch*] R.V. **Now there were at Antioch in the church that was there.** St Luke is emphasizing the fact that it was the Antiochene Church that sent St Paul away on his missionary campaign. *Simeon, that was called Niger*] It was not unusual for Jews to have a second name by which they might be known in their dealings with other nations. Cp. Saul and Paul. *Lucius of Cyrene*] Possibly the same person who is mentioned in Rom. xvi. 21. *Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch*] R.V. **Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch.** Manaen is the same name as Menahem (2 Kings xv. 14). He seems to have been a man of somewhat exalted birth. Herod the tetrarch is the same as Herod Antipas, younger brother of Archelaus: he is mentioned in Matt. xiv. 1; Luke xiii. 31, xxiii. 7 ff., etc.

2. *As they ministered to the Lord*] The verb is the one usually employed in the LXX. for the ministerial services of the Temple. The old order is giving place to the new, and the terminology is receiving a new sense. *Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*] The two had already had experience of work together, and now they were to be solemnly set apart to share in a new mission.

3. *And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away*] The whole body went through a special preparation, and then sent them away with the authority and blessing of them all.

4. *being sent forth by the Holy Ghost*] Conveyed by the solemn imposition of hands. *Seleucia*] The seaport of Antioch, about 16 miles away, at the mouth of the Orontes. The *is* is long. *they sailed to Cyprus*] Barnabas would be anxious to begin work in his native island, and, besides, it lay directly in their route.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to *their* minister. 6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus: 7 which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. 9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,)

5. *Salamis*] The Cypriot port nearest to Selencia. It is at the east end of the island, in the bay now called Famagousta. *they had also John to their minister*] R.V. as **their attendant**. This was John Mark, the Evangelist, nephew to Barnabas. He seems to have been quite a young man at the time, and was probably taken to make the necessary arrangements for the two Apostles.

6. *Paphos*] Lies on the W. coast of the island, and was the capital and residence of the Roman governor. *a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew*] We know from the Talmud that there were living among the Jews persons well known as pretenders to magic powers. *Bar-jesus*] "Son of Jesus." Jesus, or Joshua, was not an altogether uncommon name. This was his Jewish name. Elymas is Arabic and means "learned," and indeed the fact of his bearing this name would seem to point to his having come into possession of some of the traditional learning of the Arabian tribes.

7. *which was with the deputy of the country*] R.V. **the proconsul**; cp. xix. 38. Roman provinces were either governed by a proconsul appointed by the Senate, or by a *legatus* appointed by the Emperor. Cyprus had been an imperial province, but it was restored to the Senate by Augustus, in exchange for Dalmatia. *Sergius Paulus, a prudent man*] He has not yet been identified among the governors of Cyprus. By "a prudent man" (R.V. **man of understanding**) St Luke probably means that he took an interest in scientific and religious questions.

8. *seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith*] He had not embraced Christianity, but Elymas was afraid that the knowledge of Christ would cause him to lose his interest in sorcery. For the same result of the introduction of Christianity cp. xix. 19.

9. *Then Saul, (who also is called Paul)*] In this parenthetical way the name by which the great Apostle is now always known is first introduced. Some have thought that the name was adopted from

filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, <sup>10</sup>and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? <sup>11</sup>And 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. <sup>12</sup>Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

<sup>13</sup>Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>But when they

the proconsul's, as if he was Saul's first great prize. But it is not likely that the proconsul definitely accepted Christianity. More probably Saul felt the need of a Greek-sounding name in view of his intercourses with Greeks and Romans, and chose Paul both from its similarity of sound and also because its meaning "little" appealed to one who called himself "less than the least of all the apostles" (Eph. iii. 8).

**10.** *enemy of all righteousness*] St Paul recognized an earnest zeal for truth in the enquiries of the proconsul, and his wrath against Elymas was not only for what he was doing at the present time but for his long-continued leading astray of one anxious to know the truth.

**11.** *the hand of the Lord is upon thee*] Cp. Ex. ix. 2; Judg. ii. 15. *for a season*] St Paul himself had known what temporary blindness meant.

**12.** *Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed*] He was convinced of the reality of the Apostle's message, but if he had become a real Christian we should probably have heard more of this great event.

**13-15.** *The Apostles visit Pamphylia and Pisidia: John Mark returns to Jerusalem*

**13.** *Paul and his company*] Lit. "those around Paul." Notice how Barnabas is now quite outshone by Paul. *loosed*] R.V. **set sail.** The verb means "put to sea." *Perga in Pamphylia*] Pamphylia was about the middle part of the southern seaboard of Asia Minor and Perga was its capital. *John departing from them*] The reason for his departure is not given, but to St Paul at

departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. <sup>15</sup>And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, *Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.* <sup>16</sup>Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with *his hand* said,

Men of Israel, and *ye that fear God*, give audience. <sup>17</sup>The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and

any rate it was clearly not satisfactory (xv. 38). Perhaps he feared the somewhat perilous journey from Perga to Pisidian Antioch. Or, if he was devotedly attached to his uncle Barnabas, he may have resented the way in which St Paul was more and more occupying the first place. At any rate John Mark was afterwards an earnest labourer for Jesus Christ, and St Paul (Col. iv. 10) speaks of him with affection.

<sup>14.</sup> *But when they departed from Perga*] R.V. **But they passing through Perga.** Pisidia lay inland to the N. of Pamphylia, and Antioch was in its extreme N. part, so that the verb "passed through" is very correct.

<sup>15.</sup> *after the reading of the law and the prophets*] For a detailed account of the manner in which the Law and the Prophets are read by the Jews, see *Acts in Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools*, Excursus after chapter xiii. *the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them*] Any Jew among the congregation might be called upon for an address.

<sup>16.</sup> *stood up*] The preacher usually sat (Luke iv. 20). But St Paul was short of stature, and may have stood up to be seen. *beckoning with his hand*] i.e. to secure attention.

#### 16-41. St Paul's speech at Antioch

**Analysis.** He begins with a cursory glance at the early history of the race, the choice of the Patriarchs, the sojourn in Egypt, the 40 years in the desert, the entry into Canaan and possession of the land: then the monarchy under Saul and David. Of the seed of David God raised up Jesus, having sent John the Baptist to prepare His way. Then a glance at the life and death of Jesus, leading up to the cardinal fact of His Resurrection, whereby God fulfilled the promises made to the Jews of old, especially in Psalm xvi. Through this Jesus remission of sins is promised, such as no Mosaic Law could offer. "See therefore that ye become not like the mockers spoken of by Habakkuk."

<sup>16.</sup> *Men of Israel, and ye that fear God*] i.e. Jews and proselytes. So v. 20.

exalted the people when *they* dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought he them out of it. <sup>18</sup> And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. <sup>19</sup> And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot. <sup>20</sup> And after that he gave *unto them* judges about *the space of* four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. <sup>21</sup> And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, *by the space of* forty years. <sup>22</sup> And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. <sup>23</sup> Of this *man's* seed hath God according to *his* promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: <sup>24</sup> when John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. <sup>25</sup> And as John fulfilled *his* course, he said,

18. *suffered he their manners in the wilderness*] The change of one letter in the Greek verb would give the rendering in R.V. *marg. bare he them as a nursing-father in the wilderness*; cp. Deut. i. 21.

19. *seven nations*] Their names are given in Deut. vii. 1. In the latter part of this verse and in the next R.V. has **he gave them their land for an inheritance for about four hundred and fifty years: and after these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.**

21. *Saul the son of Cis*] To be pronounced as the R.V. has it, **Kish.** *a man of the tribe of Benjamin*] So was St Paul (Phil. ii. 8). *by the space of forty years*] The forty years' duration of Saul's reign is only to be gathered indirectly from the O.T., but Josephus (*Ant.* vi. 14. 9) expressly states that time as the length of his reign.

22. *I have found David, etc.*] This sentence is an adaptation from two separate verses "I have found David my servant" (Ps. lxxxix. 20) and "The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people" (1 Sam. xiii. 14).

23. *according to his promise*] R.V. omits "his." For the promise cp. Ps. cxxxii. 11.

Whom think ye that I am? I am not *he*. But behold, there cometh *one* after me, whose shoes of *his* feet I am not worthy to loose. <sup>26</sup> Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. <sup>27</sup> For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*. <sup>28</sup> And though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. <sup>29</sup> And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre. <sup>30</sup> But God raised him from the dead: <sup>31</sup> and he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. <sup>32</sup> And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, <sup>33</sup> God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm,

<sup>25.</sup> *Whom think ye that I am?*] R.V. **What suppose ye that I am?** cp. John i. 20-27, etc.

<sup>26.</sup> *Men and brethren*] R.V. more idiomatically omits *Men and the word of this salvation*] i.e. the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

<sup>27.</sup> *because they knew him not*] Like St Peter at the Temple gate (iii. 17) he ascribes the fury of the Jews, at least in part, to ignorance. *the voices of the prophets*] The latter chapters of Isaiah are full of the idea of a suffering Messiah.

<sup>28.</sup> *though they found no cause of death in him*] Cp. the declaration of Pilate (Luke xxiii. 22).

<sup>30.</sup> *But God raised him from the dead*] This is the point to which St Paul has been leading up. The rest of the address looks back to this.

<sup>32.</sup> *we declare unto you glad tidings*] While the first companions of Jesus are His witnesses, we are His evangelists, the bringers of good news.

<sup>33.</sup> *God hath fulfilled the same*] The glad tidings is to the effect that God had sent the promised Messiah and raised Him from the dead. *in the second psalm*] Several good MSS. read "the first psalm." Psalms i. and ii. were originally joined together.

Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. <sup>34</sup> And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. <sup>35</sup> Wherefore he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. <sup>36</sup> For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: <sup>37</sup> but he, whom God raised *again*, saw no corruption. <sup>38</sup> Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this *man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: <sup>39</sup> and by him all that believe are justified from all *things*, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. <sup>40</sup> Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;

**34.** *he said on this wise*] The words are from Isaiah lv. 3 "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." In this passage the meaning of "the sure mercies of David" is not quite clear, but "David" seems to be used for "the Messiah."

**35.** *Wherefore he saith*] R.V. **Because he saith.** These words of Ps. xvi. cannot refer to David, and this St Paul proceeds to shew. The passage has been quoted before in ii. 29-31.

**36.** *after he had served his own generation by the will of God*] R.V. **after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God.** But the A.V. seems better, for the Apostle's argument is that while David's services could benefit only those among whom he lived, Christ, by His Resurrection, is a Saviour for all generations.

**38.** *the forgiveness of sins*] Without the Resurrection this would be meaningless. Christ "rose again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25).

**39.** *are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*] Cp. St Paul's constant argument (e.g. in Gal. iii. 31) that no man can keep the Law or "be declared righteous" under it.

**40.** *Beware therefore, lest that come upon you*] viz. a moral and spiritual overthrow as great as the destruction which the Chaldeans and Nebuchadnezzar wrought at the time of the Babylonian captivity, to which the prophecy (Hab. i. 5) quoted in the next verse refers.

<sup>41</sup>Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

<sup>42</sup>And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. <sup>43</sup>Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. <sup>44</sup>And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. <sup>45</sup>But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. <sup>46</sup>Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. <sup>47</sup>For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have

**41.** *Behold ye despisers*] This is the rendering of the LXX. and some other versions. The Hebrew has "behold among the nations."

**42-52.** *The Gentiles also hear the good tidings. The Jews raise up persecution and expel Paul and Barnabas*

**42.** *And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought*] R.V. **And as they went out, they besought.** The Gentiles would not have been in the synagogue. *the next sabbath*] The words might possibly be rendered "during the intervening week." But A.V. is probably right.

**43.** *to continue in the grace of God*] i.e. as manifested by their desire to learn the Christian faith.

**44.** *almost the whole city*] The meeting must have been held in the open air.

**45.** *they were filled with envy*] The Jews have always been characterized by exclusiveness.

**46.** *waxed bold*] R.V. **spake out boldly.** *It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you*] It was Christ's command that the Jews should first hear the Gospel.

**47.** *For so hath the Lord commanded us*] "The Lord" is God the Father. The quotation comes from Isaiah xlix. 6.

set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. <sup>48</sup>And when the Gentiles heard *this*, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. <sup>49</sup>And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. <sup>50</sup>But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief *men* of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. <sup>51</sup>But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. <sup>52</sup>And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

**14** And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went *both* together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and *also* of the Greeks believed. <sup>2</sup>But the unbelieving Jews

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**48.** *as many as were ordained to eternal life believed*] There is evidently a contrast between them and the Jews who "judged themselves unworthy of eternal life." But in the salvation of these particular Gentiles there is no reason to doubt that St Luke saw a manifestation of the eternal purpose of God.

**50.** *the devout and honourable women*] R.V. **the devout women of honourable estate.** In Damascus and probably in other towns the wives of men in high position among the heathen were much inclined to the Jewish religion (cp. Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* II. 20. 2). These women would probably not have heard Paul and Barnabas themselves, and would be easily moved by their Jewish friends. *out of their coasts*] R.V. **out of their borders.** "Coast" is used in this sense in Old English.

**51.** *shook off the dust of their feet against them*] According to the command of Christ in Matt. x. 14. *Iconium*] A city in Pisidia to the east of Antioch. Its modern name is Konieh, and it is a town of considerable importance on the railway system of Asia Minor.

**52.** *were filled with joy*] In spite of, or perhaps because of, their persecutions (cp. Matt. v. 12).

XIV. 1-7. *The preaching at Iconium: the Apostles forced to flee*

**1.** *also of the Greeks*] The word is used of Gentile Greeks, who would probably have heard the Apostles not in the synagogue itself.

**2.** *the unbelieving Jews*] R.V. **the Jews that were disobedient.**

stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. <sup>3</sup>Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. <sup>4</sup>But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. <sup>5</sup>And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and *also* of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them, <sup>6</sup>they were ware of *it*, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and *unto* the region that lieth round about: <sup>7</sup>and there they preached the gospel.

<sup>8</sup>And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in *his* feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: <sup>9</sup>the same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had

**4.** *part held with the Jews*] As time went on it is evident that the Jews were more and more contrary to the Apostles. *part with the apostles*] Paul and Barnabas are so called here for the first time.

**5.** *an assault*] R.V. **an onset**. It refers to the hatching of the plot rather than to the actual carrying out of it. *and to stone them*] Stoning was the Jewish punishment for blasphemy, which was probably what the Jews charged the Apostles with.

**6.** *and fled*] In connexion with St Paul's stay at Iconium there exists a long story of the conversion of a lady named Thecla and of her adventures while trying to be with the Apostle.

**8-18.** *Cure of a cripple at Lystra: the heathen people regard the Apostles as gods*

**8.** *Lystra*] Almost due south of Iconium. It is probable that this was the home of Timothy, and that he was one of St Paul's converts on this first visit. For in the second visit (xvi. 1) he is called a disciple. *impotent in his feet, etc.*] Notice how carefully Luke the physician describes the nature of this and other maladies.

**9.** *stedfastly beholding him*] R.V. **fastening his eyes upon him**. For the verb cp. xiii. 9, etc. *perceiving that he had faith to be healed*] There must have been something in the man's face by which St Paul read his faith.

faith to be healed, <sup>10</sup> said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. <sup>11</sup> And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lift up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. <sup>12</sup> And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. <sup>13</sup> Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. <sup>14</sup> Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, <sup>15</sup> and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and

**10.** *with a loud voice*] i.e. so that the multitude could hear. *he leaped and walked*] Cp. St Peter's healing of the lame man in iii. 7, 8.

**11.** *in the speech of Lycaonia*] The people evidently were bilingual and spoke Lycaonian and Greek. St Paul had been speaking to them in the latter tongue. *The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men*] Greek mythology is full of such stories and there is a legend of this kind connected with this very district.

**12.** *And they called Barnabas, Jupiter*] Jupiter, or as the Greeks called him Zeus, was the chief of the gods. We can imagine Barnabas as a tall, quiet and striking looking man, towering above the somewhat short and insignificant figure of St Paul. In the Acts of Paul and Thecla the latter Apostle is called short of stature, bald and bow-legged. *and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker*] Mercury, or in Greek, Hermes, was the messenger of the gods. It is characteristic that these people looked on the speaker as the lesser god.

**13.** *the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city*] R.V. **whose temple was before the city.** He was the tutelary deity of the place. *brought oxen and garlands*] The latter were sometimes put on the heads of the victims, and sometimes used by the worshippers for their own decorations at religious rites. *unto the gates*] Perhaps the doors of the house in which the Apostles were staying.

**14.** *they rent their clothes*] It was the Jewish manner of expressing horror at blasphemy (Matt. xxvi. 65). *ran in among the people*] R.V. **sprang forth among the multitude.**

**15.** *of like passions with you*] i.e. subject to the ordinary

preach unto you that *ye* should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all *things* that are therein: <sup>16</sup> who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. <sup>17</sup> Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. <sup>18</sup> And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that *they* had not done sacrifice unto them.

<sup>19</sup> And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. <sup>20</sup> Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the

limitations of humanity. *and preach unto you]* R.V. **and bring you good tidings.** *from these vanities]* St Paul would point to the preparations for heathen sacrifice. "Vanity" is often used in the O.T. for "idol" in the Hebrew. *unto the living God]* Rather a *living God*. Notice how St Paul, when face to face with these ignorant heathen, uses the testimony of nature as the simplest and most intelligible method of teaching them about God. That is, he presents to them only the elements of all religion: nothing definitely Christian. But the introductory nature of the address is made clear by *v. 16*.

**16.** *in times past]* R.V. **in the generations gone by.** *suffered all nations]* i.e. all the heathen, for the Jews were being specially trained by God.

**17.** *he left not himself without witness]* Nature is a witness to God, of whom all, if they will, may understand something.

**19-20.** *Change of feeling in the multitude: stoning of Paul. The Apostles go on to Derbe and then retrace their steps to the Syrian Antioch*

**19.** *And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium]* It would seem that their hatred against him was so great that they had deliberately followed him. *persuaded the people]* Probably that they were in league with the Evil One. *having stoned Paul]* He tells us of this himself in 2 Cor. xi. 25. *drew him out of the city]* In a Jewish city the stoning could not have taken place inside; cp. vii. 58.

**20.** *he rose up]* St Luke seems to intend to convey the impres-

next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. <sup>21</sup>And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned *again* to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, <sup>22</sup>confirming the souls of the disciples, *and exhorting them* to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. <sup>23</sup>And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. <sup>24</sup>And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. <sup>25</sup>And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia: <sup>26</sup>and thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. <sup>27</sup>And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that

sion that his recovery was miraculous. *the next day he departed*] Shewing how slight were the effects left. *to Derbe*] It lay to the east of Lystra.

<sup>21.</sup> *and had taught many*] R.V. **and had made many disciples.** *they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium*] It seems at first strange that they should have ventured again into cities where they had met with such rude treatment. But they had not been formally banished from any of them, and by this time the yearly magistrates would have been changed.

<sup>22.</sup> *we must through much tribulation enter*] From the use of "we" some have inferred that St Luke was present here. This is unlikely.

<sup>23.</sup> *ordained*] R.V. **appointed.** The elders would hardly be a separate class specially ordained, but rather men of wisdom and position selected to govern each Church. At the same time they were dedicated to their work with some solemn preparation. *they commended them to the Lord*] Cp. St Paul's parting commendation of the elders of Ephesus who had come to meet him at Miletus (xx. 32).

<sup>25.</sup> *when they had preached the word in Perga*] They do not appear to have done this when they passed through before. *Attalia*] A seaport of Pamphylia, at the mouth of the river Catarrhactes.

<sup>26.</sup> *from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God*]

God had done with them, and how he had opened *the* door of faith unto the Gentiles. <sup>28</sup> And there they abode long time with the disciples.

**15** And certain *men* which came down from Judea taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. <sup>2</sup> When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. <sup>3</sup> And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. <sup>4</sup> And when

They return to the city which had sent them out with so solemn a dismissal.

**27.** *how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles*] This was the great result of the first missionary journey, that a real start had been made in the evangelization of the Gentile world. For the metaphor of the door, cp. 1 Cor. xvi. 9; 2 Cor. ii. 12.

XV. **1-5.** *Mission to Jerusalem concerning the question whether Gentile converts must be circumcised*

**1f.** We are here introduced to a question which occupied a very great part of St Paul's time in the earlier years of his ministry.

**1.** *which came down*] i.e. to Antioch. It would seem that they had come with this special purpose. They may be the men alluded to in Gal. ii. 4 as "false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty." *taught the brethren*] These would be a mixed body, composed of Jews, proselytes and Gentiles. *after the manner*] R.V. **after the custom.**

**2.** *no small dissension and disputation*] Better "debate and **questioning**" (R.V.). It does not necessarily imply angry dissension. *they determined*] R.V. **the brethren appointed.** Paul and Barnabas went as the representatives of the whole Church of Antioch. In Gal. ii. 2 St Paul says "I went up by revelation." *apostles and elders*] It would seem that Peter, John and James were the three Apostles who continued to live in Jerusalem.

**3.** *being brought on their way by the church*] This was a special mark of esteem; cp. xx. 38, xxi. 16. *through Phenice and Samaria*] Their route would take them along the coast through Berytus, Tyre and Sidon.

they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all *things* that God had done with them. <sup>5</sup> But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.

<sup>6</sup> And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. <sup>7</sup> And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. <sup>8</sup> And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us; <sup>9</sup> and put

4. *they were received of the church*] They came as the official guests of the whole Church. *and of the apostles and elders*] There would be elders at Jerusalem as in the other Churches, for the Apostles would not be occupied with local Church matters. *they declared all things that God had done with them*] In Gal. ii. 2 St Paul says that he held first a private conference with those who were of repute.

5. *certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed*] No doubt the men alluded to in v. 1 as "certain men which came down from Judea" were Christian Pharisees. But St Luke mentions the name here first to denote the formal raising of the question for which the conference was summoned.

#### 6-21. The Council at Jerusalem

6. *the apostles and elders came together*] The question could not be decided in an open meeting, but was relegated for discussion by the Church rulers.

7. *Peter rose up, and said*] He is mentioned here for the last time in Acts. *Men and brethren*] R.V. **Brethren**, as in xiii.

26. *a good while ago*] Lit. "from days of old." Peter is probably referring to the conversion of Cornelius, which took place probably about 10 years before. *among us*] R.V. **among you**.

8. *God, which knoweth the hearts*] The compound adjective is used only here and in i. 14, both times in the mouth of St Peter. *even as he did unto us*] St Peter's point is that the Holy Ghost was given in exactly the same way to them as to the Jewish converts; cp. x. 47, xi. 17.

no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. <sup>10</sup> Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? <sup>11</sup> But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *we shall be saved, even as they.* <sup>12</sup> Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

<sup>13</sup> And after they had held their peace, James answered,

**9.** *purifying their hearts by faith*] R.V. **cleansing**: the same word as that used in St Peter's vision (x. 15).

**10.** *why tempt ye God, to put a yoke*] If the reading is right, by "tempting God" is meant "putting an impossible burden on those who would follow Him." But it is possible that "God" has slipped in wrongly, and we should read "why do ye try to put...?" *a yoke*] So St Paul (Gal. v. 1) calls the ceremonial law "a yoke of bondage." *which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear*] St Peter recognizes that the minute observance of every detail of the Law was practically impossible.

**11.** *through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ*] R.V. omits "Christ." St Peter would point out that it is not by Law that any can be saved, but by grace. *we shall be saved, even as they*] The form of sentence must have surprised the hearers. They would have expected "they will be saved, even as we." But St Peter is thinking of the good Cornelius and his friends, and it seems to him that they are further on the road to salvation than he. It is an effective ending to the speech.

**12.** *Then all the multitude kept silence*] Before, it would seem, they had refused Paul and Barnabas a hearing (v. 7). But St Peter's interposition was effective and the clamour was silenced. So, humanly speaking, the result of the conference was in a large measure due to St Peter, and St Luke leaves him thus with the impression of his quiet dignity in our minds.

**13.** *James answered*] This was James, the Lord's brother, who occupied a position of pre-eminence in the Church at Jerusalem (see xii. 17). On this occasion he is apparently President of the Council, and besides summing up what has been said he gives a more or less authoritative sentence which is accepted by the great assembly. On the use of "answer," when no question has preceded, cp. iii. 12.

saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me: <sup>14</sup> Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. <sup>15</sup> And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, <sup>16</sup> After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: <sup>17</sup> that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these *things*. <sup>18</sup> Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. <sup>19</sup> Wherefore my sentence is, that *we* trouble not them, which from among

14. *Simeon*] St James was probably speaking in Aramaic, so he uses this form of St Peter's name instead of Simon. It is found also in many ancient authorities in 2 Pet. i. 1; cp. R.V. marg. Notice how St James bases his solution of the problem on St Peter's testimony. Paul and Barnabas did not yet carry so much weight as the first of the Apostles. *at the first*] i.e. "on the first occasion," referring to the incident of Cornelius.

15. *to this agree the words of the prophets*] It is noticeable how in all their difficulties these early Christians sought help in the O.T.

16. *After this, etc.*] The quotation comes from the LXX. of Amos ix. 11, 12, with considerable alterations. It differs materially from the Hebrew. If St James spoke in Aramaic we should have expected him to quote from the Hebrew, but in this case his argument would have been spoiled. It is possible that the LXX. version of this passage was so well known that it had more or less displaced the Hebrew. *build again the tabernacle of David*] The house of David is likened to one of the unsubstantial booths that were built for the Feast of Tabernacles.

17. *that the residue of men might seek after the Lord*] In the Hebrew this is "that they may possess the remnant of Edom." The prophet is looking forward to the time when the kingdom of Israel should absorb all its ancient foes. The alteration in the Hebrew text which would give the LXX. version is very small, and this fits in admirably with the position of affairs. *saith the Lord, who doeth all these things, etc.*] R.V. follows a better text in rendering **saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from the beginning of the world.**

19. *my sentence is*] R.V. **my judgement is.** Either St James is pronouncing sentence on his own responsibility, though in

the Gentiles are turned to God: <sup>20</sup> but that *we* write unto them, that *they* abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood. <sup>21</sup> For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

<sup>22</sup> Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company

accordance with the general sentiment of the assembly, or he is only making a suggestion which is ultimately accepted. The sense of the passage favours the first interpretation.

<sup>20.</sup> *that we write unto them*] The decision of the synod is to be carried back in a formal writing. *that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood*] The four prohibitions are to be specially noted. The first refers to the degradation of idolatry generally. The second to the moral pollutions which were so rife in the heathen world and often committed under the cloak of religion. The third and fourth to the specially Jewish restrictions as to the killing of animals whose flesh is to be eaten, which prevents strict Jews at the present day from eating any meat that has not been specially killed in accordance with Jewish regulations (see Lev. xvii.). It may be noticed however that a good MS. leaves out the mention of "things strangled," and adds "and not to do whatsoever they would not have done to them." From this Harnack argues with some probability that the prohibitions do not refer specially to the Mosaic Law at all, but are general commands to abstain from idolatry, uncleanness and murder.

<sup>21.</sup> *For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day*] The meaning seems to be that it is necessary to uphold these ancient restrictions of the Mosaic Law to avoid a seeming inconsistency of conduct when compared with the precepts read out in the synagogue lessons sabbath by sabbath. Moses = the Pentateuch, just as David = the Psalter (cp. ii. 25, iv. 25, etc.).

#### 22-29. *The decision of the Council sent to Asia Minor*

<sup>22.</sup> *Then pleased it*] R.V. **Then it seemed good to.** *to send chosen men of their own company*] R.V. **to choose men out of their company, and send them.** The decisions would be more official if transmitted by representatives of the Jerusalem Church as

to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief *men* among the brethren: <sup>23</sup>and they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: <sup>24</sup>Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment: <sup>25</sup>it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, <sup>26</sup>men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>27</sup>We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same *things* by mouth. <sup>28</sup>For it

well. *Judas surnamed Barsabas*] R.V. **Judas called Barsabbas.** Nothing is known of him beyond what is told us in this chapter. He may possibly have been the brother of "Joseph called Barsabbas" (i. 23). *Silas*] Afterwards St Paul's companion in his second missionary journey: probably to be identified with the Silvanus of the Epistles.

<sup>23.</sup> *they wrote letters by them*] R.V. omits "letters." This is the only synodical letter of Apostolic times that has come down to us. *The apostles and elders and brethren*] R.V. **The apostles and the elder brethren.** The expression "the elder brethren" is a strange one, but it seems to be chosen to mark distinctly the bond of brotherhood between these Jewish and Gentile Christians.

<sup>24.</sup> *Forasmuch as we have heard, etc.*] The authorities at Jerusalem are at pains to dissociate themselves from the "false brethren privily brought in" (Gal. ii. 4).

<sup>25.</sup> *being assembled with one accord*] R.V. **having come to one accord.**

<sup>26.</sup> *men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*] The words refer to Barnabas and Paul, and allude to the perils they encountered in their first missionary journey (esp. at Lystra, xiv. 19). The Church at Jerusalem thus publicly declare their esteem for the delegates of the Church at Antioch. Notice how the old order, Barnabas and Paul, recurs. Barnabas was still officially the leader.

<sup>27.</sup> *by mouth*] R.V. **by word of mouth.** Judas and Silas

seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary *things*; <sup>29</sup> that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

<sup>30</sup> So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle: <sup>31</sup> *which* when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation. <sup>32</sup> And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed *them*. <sup>33</sup> And after they had tarried *there* a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles. <sup>34</sup> Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide *there still*. <sup>35</sup> Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

were to supplement the letter by any explanations that might be necessary.

<sup>29.</sup> *meats offered to idols*] The question of such food is discussed by St Paul in 1 Cor. viii. But in *v.* 20 the term was a more general one, "pollutions of idols," and it is suggested that the word used here includes other features of idolatry than the mere eating of idol meat.

### 30-35. Reception of the letter at Antioch

<sup>30.</sup> *when they had gathered the multitude together*] There would seem to have been a solemn ceremony at the delivering of the letter.

<sup>32.</sup> *being prophets also themselves*] "Prophet" is used here not of "foretellers," but of those who speak out the word of God, men entrusted with a message from God like the prophets of the O.T. In so far as the message of God may refer to the future, those who deliver it may be prophets in our modern sense, as e.g. was Agabus (xi. 27, 28).

<sup>33.</sup> *they were let go in peace*] i.e. with the blessing of the Church.

<sup>34.</sup> *Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still*] The verse is omitted in R.V. and has poor authority. Possibly it is a gloss introduced to prepare for *v.* 40. But it is interesting as pointing to a growing attachment between Paul and Silas.

<sup>36</sup>And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they do. <sup>37</sup>And Barnabas determined to take with *them* John, whose surname was Mark. <sup>38</sup>But Paul thought not good to take him with *them*, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. <sup>39</sup>And the contention was so sharp *between them*, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; <sup>40</sup>and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. <sup>41</sup>And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

**36-41.** *Preparation for the second missionary journey. The separation of Paul and Barnabas*

**36.** *And some days after*] It is part of St Luke's style to introduce an important event after this manner.

**37.** *And Barnabas determined*] R.V. is less strong, **And Barnabas was minded.** *to take with them John*] St Mark had returned to Jerusalem (xiii. 13), but possibly he had rejoined his uncle at Antioch, and tried to atone for his former desertion.

**39.** *And the contention was so sharp between them, that...*] R.V. **And there arose a sharp contention so that....** The scene is the saddest in the book, and it is to the credit of St Luke's veracity that he does not attempt to glaze it over. It is impossible not to feel sympathy with St Barnabas, who was full of the love that "hopeth all things." But it would seem that the general sympathy of the Church was with St Paul (*v.* 40). *and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus*] It was his native place (*iv.* 36). Here St Luke leaves him, and for all we know from the Bible his missionary work ended now. He is mentioned in some of St Paul's Epistles (1 Cor. ix. 6; Col. iv. 10), but there is no evidence that they worked together again. St Mark was completely reconciled to St Paul (2 Tim. iv. 11).

**40.** *the grace of God*] R.V. **the grace of the Lord.**

**41.** *he went through Syria and Cilicia*] The second journey was begun by road. St Paul would cross the Amanus range by the Syrian gates, visit some of the Churches in Cilicia and then cross the Taurus range by the Cilician gates.

**16** Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, *which was a Jewess, and believed*; but his father *was a Greek*: <sup>2</sup>which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. <sup>3</sup>Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. <sup>4</sup>And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup>And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. <sup>6</sup>Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia,

XVI. 1-12. *The progress of the second missionary journey as far as Philippi*

**1.** *Then came he to Derbe and Lystra*] He thus visited again the cities which had formed the utmost limit in his first journey. *a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus*] It seems probable that St Paul had been specially interested in this young man during his previous visit to Lystra, and intended to secure him as a fellow-traveller. *the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed*] Her name was Eunice (2 Tim. i. 5), and we are told that both she and her mother Lois were women of deep religious feeling. Timothy himself would seem to have been an actual convert of St Paul's (1 Cor. iv. 17).

**2.** *the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium*] There was evidently considerable intercourse between the Christians in the two cities, and indeed the distance is only about 18 miles.

**3.** *took and circumcised him*] As his father was a Greek he would hardly be counted as a Jew. But in view of St Paul's further work among the Jews it was important that his companion should have conformed to this rite.

**4.** *And as they went through the cities*] These would probably include Iconium and Antioch. *they delivered them the decrees for to keep*] It would seem that official copies of the decrees of the Council of Jerusalem had been multiplied for distribution in the Churches.

**6.** *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia*] R.V. **And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia.** Professor Ramsay understands by this

and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, <sup>7</sup>after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. <sup>8</sup>And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. <sup>9</sup>And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. <sup>10</sup>And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into

phrase a general description of the country, which included Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, and supposes that this verse resumes verse 4. In this case "the region of Phrygia and Galatia" is one term meaning "the Phrygo-Galatic territory." Others, including Lightfoot, have supposed that St Paul and his companions turned north and traversed the desolate country of Galatia proper. *were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia*] "Asia" would mean the Roman proconsular province of this name, which began N. of Antioch and extended as far as the Ægean Sea. It was a fair field of labour, but God was taking him now further afield.

**7.** *after they were come to Mysia*] R.V. **over against Mysia.** This lay N.W. of Asia and bordered on the Propontis. *they assayed to go into Bithynia*] This was a province lying along the S. shore of the Pontus Euxinus or Black Sea. *the Spirit suffered them not*] R.V. **the Spirit of Jesus**; cp. Phil. i. 19. Notice how completely St Paul and his companions were under the guidance of the Spirit.

**8.** *passing by Mysia*] They must have traversed it to get to Troas, but they did not stay to preach there. Troas is on the coast, not far S. of the classical Troy.

**9.** *a vision appeared to Paul in the night*] This gives some hint as to the way in which the promptings of the Spirit were conveyed. *a man of Macedonia*] Macedonia was on the European coast opposite. There would very likely be Macedonians, distinguished by their dress or speech, in the maritime city of Troas, and St Paul may have dreamed of one day going over to preach Christ to them even before the actual summons came.

**10.** *we endeavoured*] R.V. **we sought.** Here the narrative is begun in the 1st person, as if the writer at this point became a sharer in St Paul's labours. If St Luke was by birth a Philippian, as some have supposed, and had been preaching at Troas at this time, it is possible that he may have turned St Paul's thoughts first to Macedonia. Some have supposed that St Luke himself was the "man of Macedonia."

Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. <sup>11</sup>Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next *day* to Neapolis; <sup>12</sup>and from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of *that* part of Macedonia, *and* a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

<sup>13</sup>And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*. <sup>14</sup>And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller

11. *Therefore loosing from Troas*] R.V. **Setting sail therefore from Troas.** They would get a passage in a cargo boat. *Samothracia*] An island in the Ægean, lying in the direct line between Troas and Neapolis, the port of Philippi.

12. *to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony*] R.V. **which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony.** Philippi was not strictly the capital of Macedonia, Amphipolis being of more consequence. But it was a flourishing city and possessed the coveted privileges of a Roman colony, which had been conferred on it by Augustus. It is to this that St Paul alludes when he says "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. iii. 20). From this proud description of Philippi some have guessed that it was St Luke's native town.

13-40. *The adventures of St Paul and his companions at Philippi*

13. *by a river side*] So R.V., but in English we should probably say "by the river side," the omission of the definite article marking that the writer was thoroughly at home in the topography of the place. The river was the Gangites. *where prayer was wont to be made*] R.V. **where we supposed there was a place of prayer.** But the A.V., though supported by inferior MSS., seems the better reading. A somewhat later MS. has "where there seemed to be a prayer place." There were so few Jews resident at Philippi that there was no synagogue. *spake unto the women which resorted thither*] The women are specially mentioned to form an introduction to the incident that is to follow.

14. *a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira*] Thyatira was a Lydian city on the Lycus, and it was famous for its guilds of dyers. No doubt Lydia, who was probably

of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that *she* attended unto the *things* which were spoken of Paul. <sup>15</sup> And 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*. <sup>16</sup> And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: <sup>17</sup> the same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. <sup>18</sup> And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the

a widow, kept up a regular connexion with her native city. *which worshipped God*] i.e. she had become a Jewish proselyte.

<sup>15.</sup> *when she was baptized, and her household*] It is not to be supposed that she was baptized in the first week after hearing St Paul. *And she constrained us*] In the N.T. the word is used again only in Luke xxiv. 29, of the two disciples at Emmanus.

<sup>16.</sup> *as we went to prayer*] R.V. **as we were going to the place of prayer**, referring to v. 13. *a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination*] The Greek literally means "having a spirit, a Python." The word Python is connected with the title Pythian, applied to Apollo as the god of divination. So the A.V. rendering is a fair one. Plutarch tells us that the term *Pythons* was applied to ventriloquist prophets. Compare the story in 1 Sam. xxviii. It is to be noticed that the damsel believed thoroughly in her own powers: see on v. 19. *her masters*] Either she was a slave girl or she had been handed over to a company to exploit her curious powers. People would come to her to gain advice in ordinary details of life, such as the loss of valuables, etc.

<sup>17.</sup> *the servants of the most high God*] R.V. **the Most High God**. The title Most High, as applied to God, occurs first in Gen. iv. 18 (the description of Melchizedek as "priest of God Most High"). In the N.T. it occurs in the mouth of the demoniac in Mark v. 7.

<sup>18.</sup> *said to the spirit*] So Christ had commanded the unclean spirit itself to come out of the man, Mark v. 8.

same hour. <sup>19</sup> And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the market-place unto the rulers, <sup>20</sup> and brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, <sup>21</sup> and teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. <sup>22</sup> And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*. <sup>23</sup> And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: <sup>24</sup> who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

**19.** *And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone*] The girl had lost the belief in a magic power working in her, and could no longer answer the questions put to her. Notice how the persecution of the Christians arose, as often, from pecuniary motives. *drew them into the market-place unto the rulers*] All official business would be transacted in the great square. It is curious to find the magistrates called by a Greek title in this verse and a Roman one in the next. The term rendered "magistrates" is applied specially to the two *prætors* who presided over judicial affairs in *Roman colonies*.

**20.** *These men, being Jews*] The Jews were not popular with the Romans (cp. xviii. 2), and the Roman feeling is faithfully reflected in this *colony*.

**22.** *the magistrates rent off their clothes*] i.e. to express their horror at the treason or, as it was called, *impiety* of Paul and Silas. Notice that St Luke was not arrested, and therefore the first person ceases here. He seems to have been left at Philippi, and to have rejoined St Paul there in xx. 6.

**23.** *when they had laid many stripes upon them*] It is curious that St Paul did not here claim his rights as a Roman citizen. Apparently he bore the indignity in order to make more use of his privileges later on.

**24.** *thrust them into the inner prison*] This would be a smaller room opening out of the larger prison and lighted and ventilated probably only by a connecting door. *made their feet fast in the stocks*] They would be chained to irons fastened in the wall.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all

*25-34. Paul and Silas miraculously released from prison*

25. *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed]* Perhaps they were thinking of, or using Psalm cxix. 62.

26. *And suddenly there was a great earthquake]* The means of the deliverance were miraculous, though the actual event did not contravene the laws of nature. The earthquake would have forced apart the posts of the doors so that the bar across them was displaced, and would have cracked the walls so that the rings or staples were dislodged.

27. *he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself]* He was responsible with his life for producing his prisoners; cp. xii. 19, xxvii. 42.

28. *Paul cried with a loud voice]* There would probably be no windows in the prison, so the jailor would not see that the prisoners were safe, but Paul would see him by the light that fell on him at the door preparing to kill himself.

29. *fell down before Paul and Silas]* He evidently recognized them as different from the other prisoners. Perhaps he had been struck by their prayers and praises at midnight. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?]* It may be that, like the possessed damsel, he had heard them "shewing the way of salvation" (v. 17).

31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ]* R.V. omits *Christ*. It is hardly possible that they would have said this, unless the man had already some knowledge of Christ.

32. *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house]* The fact that, in spite of the late hour, the

that were in his house. <sup>33</sup>And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. <sup>34</sup>And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before *them*, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

<sup>35</sup>And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let those men go. <sup>36</sup>And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. <sup>37</sup>But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. <sup>38</sup>And the sergeants told these words unto the

jailer summoned all his household to hear the preaching of the Apostles shews the impression made on him.

<sup>33.</sup> *was baptized, he and all his*] It is certainly strange to find so many new converts won in so short a time, and it is possible that there is some exaggeration here.

<sup>34.</sup> *when he had brought them into his house*] He might do what he liked with his prisoners so long as he produced them when required. He seems to have had no anxiety for his other prisoners, and no doubt, as one MS. inserts, he had first seen to their safe custody.

**35-40.** *The Apostles are sent away with honour from the city*

<sup>35.</sup> *the sergeants*] These were the lictors who had probably, on the previous day, scourged Paul and Silas. *Let those men go*] The change of sentiment from the day before is remarkable. Apparently they were conscious of having acted hastily and unadvisedly.

<sup>36.</sup> *depart, and go in peace*] Paul and Silas seem to have been on parole not to try to escape.

<sup>37.</sup> *They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans*] It was a crime to scourge a Roman citizen at all, whether condemned or not. This immunity was established by the Lex Valeria in 500 B.C. and the Lex Porcia 248 B.C. Fraudulent claims might be punished by death. *being Romans*] R.V. **men that are Romans.** The phrase is an emphatic one, and seems to be intended to contrast with v. 20, "These men, being Jews." If St Luke is writing accurately Silas must have also had the Roman citizenship.

magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans, <sup>39</sup>and they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, and desired *them* to depart out of the city. <sup>40</sup>And 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.

**17** Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: <sup>2</sup>and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, <sup>3</sup>opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. <sup>4</sup>And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. <sup>5</sup>But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy,

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**39.** *they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city*] One MS. makes them request their departure lest there should be a riot which they would be unable to suppress. Notice how Paul and Silas turn against them the Roman privileges of which the city was so proud. *entered into the house of Lydia*] They would need rest and refreshment before they journeyed further.

#### XVII. 1-9. *The Apostles at Thessalonica*

**1.** *Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica*] These towns were connected by the great Roman road, the Via Egnatia. Amphipolis was about 33 miles from Philippi, from thence it was 30 miles to Apollonia and 37 on to Thessalonica, the modern Saloniki, which still contains a large Jewish colony, who however came from Spain.

**3.** *that Christ must needs have suffered*] R.V. **that it behoved the Christ to suffer**; cp. Luke xxiv. 26. He would quote especially the passages about the Suffering Servant in Isaiah.

**4.** *believed*] R.V. **were persuaded.** *consorted with*] i.e. threw in their lot with. *of the chief women not a few*] It has been noticed that St Luke pays special attention to the part played by women in the early days of Christianity; cp. xiii. 50, xvii. 34.

**5.** *But the Jews which believed not*] R.V. omits the last three words. St Luke, as a Greek, shews little sympathy with the Jews.

took unto *them* certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. <sup>6</sup>And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; <sup>7</sup>whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar, saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus. <sup>8</sup>And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these *things*. <sup>9</sup>And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

<sup>10</sup>And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews. <sup>11</sup>These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received

*certain lewd fellows of the baser sort*] R.V. **certain vile fellows of the rabble.** The word translated "rabble" means literally "men who hang about the market-place." *Jason*] Possibly a Greek form of Joshua; cp. Paul and Saul. He was evidently the host of the Apostles.

<sup>5.</sup> *sought to bring them out to the people*] i.e. so that the excited mob might inflict summary vengeance on them.

<sup>6.</sup> *unto the rulers of the city*] Or "burgomasters." The word is unknown in Classical Greek, but it has been found in an inscription on an arch of Thessalonica, dating from the first century A.D.

<sup>7.</sup> *these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar*] Notice that the charge was based not on religious grounds, but on treason, and therefore it was the more dangerous. Compare the speech of Tertullus in xxiv. 5, and the words of the Jews to Pilate in John xix. 12.

<sup>9.</sup> *And when they had taken security of Jason and of the other, they let them go*] "Other" is an Old English plural. Professor Ramsay suggests that the magistrates took security from Jason that Paul and Silas would not return, and that it is this to which St Paul alludes in 1 Thess. ii. 18.

#### 10-15. At Berea

<sup>11.</sup> *more noble*] i.e. broader-minded and less bigoted. *searched the scriptures daily*] The word is used of sifting evidence.

the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those *things* were so. <sup>12</sup> Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. <sup>13</sup> But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people. <sup>14</sup> And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as *it were* to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still. <sup>15</sup> And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

<sup>16</sup> Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. <sup>17</sup> Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and

**13.** *and stirred up the people]* R.V. **stirring up and troubling the multitudes.** They would probably use the same arguments as at Thessalonica.

**14.** *sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea]* R.V. **as far as to the sea.** It is noticeable that St Luke omits his usual habit of naming the port. It is probable that St Paul on leaving Berea had no fixed plans, but wished to return to Thessalonica as soon as he could. *Silas and Timotheus abode there still]* i.e. so as to give St Paul news of the Churches of Thessalonica and Berea. *brought him unto Athens]* Notice how his visit to this city seems to have formed no definite part of a plan. He went to Athens to wait for tidings which should enable him to return to Thessalonica. One MS. has an interesting addition here "and he neglected Thessalia, for he was prevented from preaching the word unto them."

**15.** *receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed]* From xviii. 5 it would seem that these two rejoined St Paul at Corinth. But from 1 Thess. iii. 1 we learn that Timothy was sent back from Athens to Thessalonica.

#### 16-34. St Paul at Athens

**16.** *wholly given to idolatry]* R.V. **full of idols.**

**17.** *Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons]* R.V. **So he reasoned.** Wherever there was a Jewish congregation he turned his attention first to them.

in the market daily with them that met with *him*.  
 18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other *some*, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. 19 And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know

*and in the market daily with them that met with him*] So Socrates had expounded his theories of old, and the Socratic method had never quite died out in Athens. There may well have been others disputing at the same time as St Paul. Notice how he adapts himself to his locality.

18. *Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him*] These were the most prominent of the philosophical sects of the time. The Epicureans took their name from Epicurus (343-270 B.C.), a philosopher who taught at Athens. The central point of his teaching was that pleasure is the highest good of life. Yet it is unfair to describe his doctrines, as some have done, as sensual, for the pleasure of which he spoke was no haphazard indulgence of passions, but a carefully systematized whole, in which each part stood in its due relation. Epicurus taught that the gods lived apart from the world and took but little interest in its affairs, but he was not an atheist. His most notable follower was the Roman poet Lucretius. The Stoicks, so called from the Stoa or porch in which their founder, Zeno of Citium in Crete (fl. about 278 B.C.), used to teach, were pantheists, believing in a divine spirit immanent in every phase of the natural world, and fatalists, holding that everything is predestined for man. The teaching of some of the greatest Stoicks, such as Seneca and Epictetus, bears a striking resemblance to that of Christ, and indeed it has been pointed out that in its origin Stoicism was at least partially Semitic. St Paul was probably well acquainted with the Stoic tenets, for Tarsus was one of the strongholds of their teaching. *What will this babbler say?*] The word translated "babblers" means literally "a small bird which picks up seeds," but the Athenians applied it to a "loafer." *He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods*] It was on this charge that Socrates was put to death. *because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection*] Perhaps they thought that Anastasis (the resurrection) was a female deity.

19. *And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus*] R.V. **the Areopagus**. There was a hill in Athens called Areopagus, or

what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? 20 For thou bringest certain strange *things* to our ears: we would know therefore what these *things* mean. 21 (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but *either* to tell, or to hear some new *thing*.) 22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said,

Mars Hill, which was associated with the most hallowed scenes of the city's history. But it is not likely that the actual hill is referred to here. Rather the Areopagus was a Council which, among their other powers, exercised a certain authority over public lecturers, and might summon any new teacher to give a satisfactory account of his teaching.

21. *strangers which were there*] R.V. **strangers sojourning there**, i.e. probably the young men studying at the University. *spent their time in nothing else, etc.*] More literally "had leisure for nothing else." The word brings out well the gentle irony of St Luke who, though a Greek himself, was a very practical man and had little sympathy with this perpetual craze for novelty which characterized Athenian life. The same trait is referred to in Thucydides and Demosthenes.

22-31. *St Paul's speech in the midst of the Council of the Areopagus*

[Taking as his text an inscription that he had noticed on an altar, "To an unknown God," he boldly claims Him as the God about Whom he wishes to speak to them. This God, he says, is the Creator and Father of all, removed far beyond the need of human service. He has made man and appointed him his dwelling-place upon earth, and has implanted in his mind an instinct that bids him grope after God, Who is, after all, very near to him. This God is not to be conceived of as anything like an idol of human device. As such He was worshipped in the ignorant days of old, but now He has sent to men a message to repentance, in view of the fact that He has appointed a day on which the whole world will be judged by a Man whom He has appointed for this purpose, giving Him His credentials in the fact that He has raised Him from the dead.] In this speech notice how St Paul adapts himself to his audience. The tone is philosophical and there are many sentiments which the Stoics would specially appropriate, e.g. the conception of God as immanent in all, not to be represented by idols and not confined to temples built by man, and also His ordering of the bounds of men's habitation. The Epicureans would sympathize with the

Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all *things* ye are too superstitious. <sup>23</sup>For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, **TO THE UNKNOWN GOD**. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. <sup>24</sup>God that made the world and all *things* therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; <sup>25</sup>neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any *thing*, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all *things*; <sup>26</sup>and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before

thought that God needs not to be ministered to by human hands. The introductory character of the speech is strongly marked. Christ is only hinted at, and that as a man who is to be God's agent in judging the world. But St Paul is careful to lead up to the central point of his teaching, the Gospel of the Resurrection.

<sup>23.</sup> *in the midst of Mars' hill*] R.V. **in the midst of the Areopagus**. The assembly is referred to, not the locality. See on v. 19. *too superstitious*] R.V. **somewhat superstitious**. But St Paul would hardly begin by applying such a term to the Areopagus. Ramsay renders "more than others respectful of what is divine."

<sup>23.</sup> *beheld your devotions*] R.V. **observed the objects of your worship**. The word is used three times in this sense in the LXX. **TO THE UNKNOWN GOD**] R.V. **To an unknown God**. Possibly the altar was erected in the case of a pestilence that could not be ascribed to any of the existing deities. Or it may have been set up to arrest the wrath of some god who might have been accidentally omitted. Such an altar has been found on the Palatine Hill at Rome. *Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you*] Better, with R.V., read the neuter in each case, **What...this**.

<sup>24.</sup> *dwelleth not in temples made with hands*] To his audience this might recall a fragment of Euripides, to the effect "what manner of house fitted by mason's hands could hold the divine form within its encircling walls?" but St Paul was probably thinking of St Stephen's words in Acts vii. 48.

<sup>26.</sup> *and hath made of one blood*] Omit "blood," with R.V. Here is the germ of the teaching of the oneness of man in the common Fatherhood of God, which is developed specially in the Ep. to the Ephesians. *hath determined...the bounds of their*

appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; <sup>27</sup>that *they* should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find *him*, though he be not far from every one of us: <sup>28</sup>for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. <sup>29</sup>Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. <sup>30</sup>And the times of *this* ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: <sup>31</sup>because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

<sup>32</sup>And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee

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*habitation*] Cp. Deut. xxxii. 8 "he set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel."

<sup>27.</sup> *if haply they might feel after him, and find him*] Mankind is represented as blindly groping about after One Who is, after all, quite close, guided by the witness of nature to Him.

<sup>28.</sup> *in him we live, and move, and have our being*] i.e. God is the Cause of our life, of our actions and emotions, of our very being. Stoic philosophy is full of the same thought. *as certain also of your own poets have said*] The half line quoted occurs in the writings of Aratus, a poet of Cilicia, and in Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus. It is uncertain how far St Paul was acquainted with Classical literature, but he might well know about Aratus, who was a fellow-countryman of his.

<sup>29.</sup> *we ought not to think, etc.*] A similar thought is quoted from Xenophanes, but indeed educated Athenian sentiment would readily endorse it.

<sup>30.</sup> *And the times of this ignorance God winked at*] R.V. **overlooked**. The idea that the old pagan days were days of ignorance recurs in Eph. iv. 18; 1 Peter i. 14.

<sup>31.</sup> *by that man whom he hath ordained*] Cp. St Peter's description of Christ in Acts ii. 22.

<sup>32.</sup> *when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked*] It is probable that St Paul was interrupted at this point by a difference of opinion among his hearers.

again of this matter. <sup>33</sup> So Paul departed from among them. <sup>34</sup> Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which *was* Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

**18** After these *things* Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; <sup>2</sup> and found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. <sup>3</sup> And because *he* was of the same craft, he

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**34.** *Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed*] It is evident, nevertheless, that St Paul was disappointed at the result of his preaching at Athens: for in writing to the Corinthians, whom he visited next, he lays particular stress on the fact that "not many wise after the flesh...are called" (1 Cor. i. 26). *Dionysius the Areopagite*] i.e. one of the members of the Council whom he addressed. *a woman named Damaris*] She was probably not of good birth, for at Athens it would have been nearly impossible for such to have heard St Paul.

#### XVIII. 1-17. *St Paul at Corinth*

**1.** *Paul departed*] R.V. **he departed**. As there was no immediate prospect of his being able to return to Thessalonica, he was led on to Corinth, the principal mercantile town of Greece.

**2.** *and found a certain Jew named Aquila*] His name is a Latin one, and may have been assumed to facilitate his intercourse with Romans. *born in Pontus*] R.V. **a man of Pontus by race**. Pontus extended along the S. shore of the Black Sea. *lately come from Italy*] It may be that St Luke has a special purpose in inserting this detail, in that it is possible that from Aquila St Paul conceived the determination to visit Rome. *because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome*] Claudius was Emperor 41-54 A.D., and the date of this edict was probably 49 or 50 A.D. Suetonius says that it was caused by disturbances "due to the action of Chrestus." Dio Cassius says that Claudius found their expulsion impracticable and contented himself with forbidding their assemblies.

**3.** *because he was of the same craft*] Every Jew, of whatever station in life, was taught a trade. St Paul was taught to make tent-cloth by weaving the fine hair of the goat, for which Cilicia was famous.

abode with them, and wrought: for *by* their occupation they were tentmakers. <sup>4</sup>And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded *the* Jews and *the* Greeks. <sup>5</sup>And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* Christ. <sup>6</sup>And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. <sup>7</sup>And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. <sup>8</sup>And Crispus, the *chief* ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. <sup>9</sup>Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision,

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5. *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia*] Timothy, at least, seems to have been sent back thither from Athens. See on xvii. 15. This is the last mention of Silas in Acts. *Paul was pressed in spirit*] R.V. **Paul was constrained by the word.** The meaning seems to be "gave himself wholly to preaching the word," i.e. giving up his manual employment. Probably Silas and Timothy brought with them from the Churches of Macedonia funds sufficient for him to live on.

6. *he shook his raiment*] R.V. **shook out**, figurative of entire renunciation of them. *Your blood be upon your own heads*] A similar expression is often found in the O.T.; cp. Lev. xx. 11, etc.; Josh. ii. 19; 1 Kings ii. 37.

7. *one that worshipped God*] i.e. a proselyte. *whose house joined hard to the synagogue*] It was hardly a conciliatory act to the Jews to choose this house for his next enterprise. But he may have wished to give them a further chance of believing, and if so he was amply justified by the conversion of Crispus.

8. *Crispus*] Alluded to in 1 Cor. i. 14 as one of the few whom St Paul himself baptized. He was succeeded in his office by Sosthenes (v. 17).

9. *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision*] It would seem that for some reason or another his heart was beginning to wax faint. Possibly he was again troubled by his recurring malady, "the thorn in the flesh"; or he may have been sickened by the vice which he saw rampant in the city.

Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: <sup>10</sup>for I am with thee, and no *man* shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. <sup>11</sup>And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

<sup>12</sup>And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, <sup>13</sup>saying, This *fellow* persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. <sup>14</sup>And when Paul was *now* about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O *ye* Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: <sup>15</sup>but if it be a question of words and names, and *of* your law, look *ye to it*; for I will be no judge of such *matters*. <sup>16</sup>And he drave them

10. *I have much people in this city*] To St Paul the Christians in Corinth might seem but the smallest fringe of the community. But their importance is attested by the two letters which he wrote to them and by the length of his stay among them.

11. *a year and six months*] It was during this time that he wrote the two Epistles to the Thessalonians.

12. *And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia*] R.V. **pro-consul of Achaia**. Achaia was, after 44 A.D., a senatorial province governed by a proconsul; cp. xiii. 7. This Gallio was brother of the famous philosopher Seneca who bears witness to his lovable character. *made insurrection*] R.V. **rose up**. There was evidently a large Jewish community in Corinth.

13. *This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law*] The charge is a vague one, but apparently the Jews, whose religion was recognized and allowed in the Roman Empire, sought to incite the civil power against the Christians, whose religion had not yet received official recognition.

14. *Gallio said unto the Jews*] The Jews were not over popular in the Empire, and apparently Gallio had soon satisfied himself of the inadequacy of their charge. *wicked lewdness*] R.V. **wicked villany**.

15. *if it be a question*] R.V. **if there are questions**. *look ye to it*] R.V. **look to it yourselves**. *for I will be no judge of such matters*] R.V. **I am not minded to be a judge of these matters**.

from the judgment seat. <sup>17</sup>Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the *chief* ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those *things*.

<sup>18</sup>And Paul *after this* tarried *there* yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila: having shorn *his* head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. <sup>19</sup>And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. <sup>20</sup>When they desired *him* to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; <sup>21</sup>but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep *this* feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. <sup>22</sup>And when he had landed at Cesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went

17. *Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, etc.*] Apparently the snub administered by the proconsul roused the mob to an act of violence against the Jews, which Gallio did not interfere to prevent. St Luke seems to recount the story with some satisfaction.

18-23. *Return to Jerusalem and the Phrygo-Galatian district*

18. *tarried there yet a good while*] R.V. **many days**. *sailed thence into Syria*] R.V. **for Syria**. His objective was Jerusalem (v. 21). *having shorn his head in Cenchrea*] Cenchrea (R.V. **Cenchræe**) was the port of Corinth on the E. of the Isthmus. St Paul seems to have taken upon him a vow of the nature of the Nazirite's vow: so here he cuts his hair and takes it to Jerusalem to offer it in the Temple.

19. *And he came to Ephesus*] The capital and largest town of Roman Asia. Here St Paul afterwards spent more than two years. Acts xix. 7, 10. *and left them there*] Aquila and Priscilla seem to have travelled widely, probably on business. Later we find them at Rome (Rom. xvi. 3), and still later again at Ephesus (2 Tim. iv. 19).

21. *but bade them farewell, etc.*] R.V. **but taking his leave of them, and saying, I will return again unto you, if God will, he set sail from Ephesus**. If the text of A.V. is right the feast is no doubt the Passover, which would fall in March.

22. *when he had landed at Cesarea*] This would be the regular port for Jerusalem. *and gone up*] i.e. to Jerusalem. **This**

down to Antioch. <sup>23</sup>And after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

<sup>24</sup>And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. <sup>25</sup>This *man* was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the *things* of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. <sup>26</sup>And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and

was his fourth visit to the city. Possibly he was bringing alms from Greece. *he went down to Antioch*] This marked the end of his second missionary journey. He returned to the city from whence he set out. But it is to be noticed that St Luke draws no fast line between what we call the second and third missionary journeys.

<sup>23.</sup> *And after he had spent some time there*] Some months would probably be occupied in seeing old friends, etc. Ramsay suggests that Timothy came to him here, bringing the serious reports of the state of the churches of Galatia, which gave rise to his epistle to them. After an interval he set out himself to see the result of it. *went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order*] He would go through the Cilician gates and revisit Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia. See note on xvi. 6.

**24-28.** *The work of Apollos at Ephesus and in Achaia*

**24-28.** The section is a digression and breaks the continuity of the narrative. Ramsay suggests that it is inserted to render the opening of 1 Cor. intelligible.

<sup>24.</sup> *an eloquent man*] R.V. **a learned man.** The Greek word includes both ideas. *and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus*] R.V. **came to Ephesus, and he was mighty in the scriptures.**

<sup>25.</sup> *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord*] The word implies a course of instruction distinct from his own study of the Scriptures. *the things of the Lord*] R.V. **the things concerning Jesus.** *knowing only the baptism of John*] It would seem that one of John's disciples had taught in Alexandria, and that Apollos had been specially struck with his preaching.

<sup>26.</sup> *whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard*] R.V. **But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him.** Priscilla is mentioned

Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. <sup>27</sup>And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: <sup>28</sup>for he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

**19** And it came to pass that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, <sup>2</sup>he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have

first more than once. Possibly she was of higher social standing than her husband. Notice that the two still attended the synagogue worship. *expounded unto him the way of God*] "The way of God" seems to mean God's purpose leading up to Christianity, which is itself called sometimes simply "the Way"; cp. Acts ix. 2, xix. 23. *more perfectly*] R.V. **more carefully**.

<sup>27</sup>. *the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him*] R.V. **the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him**. Perhaps St Paul is referring to this when he speaks of "letters of commendation" (2 Cor. iii. 1). *helped them much which had believed through grace*] The *grace* may be the gifts of Apollos.

<sup>28</sup>. *he mightily convinced*] R.V. **he powerfully confuted**. His knowledge of the O.T. stood him in good stead in his arguments with the Jews.

#### XIX. *St Paul's sojourn at Ephesus*

##### 1-12. *A general survey of his stay.*

**1**. *having passed through the upper coasts*] R.V. **the upper country**, i.e. the interior of Asia Minor. He would proceed N.W. from the parts about Antioch, Iconium, etc. (xviii. 23). *came to Ephesus*] In fulfilment of his conditional promise (xviii. 21). *finding certain disciples*] They would be in the same condition as Apollos before he was further instructed by Aquila and Priscilla (xviii. 25).

**2**. *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?*] R.V. **Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?** St Paul is apparently referring to a special outpouring of spiritual

not so much as heard whether there be *any* Holy Ghost. <sup>3</sup>And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. <sup>4</sup>Then said Paul, John verily baptized *with* the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. <sup>5</sup>When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. <sup>7</sup>And all the men were about twelve. <sup>8</sup>And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for

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power. *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost]* R.V. Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given. The difference is instructive, and the R.V. is right. In the Greek the omission of the definite article with "Holy Ghost" shews that not the Person is referred to, but the manifestation of His power in operation. St John Baptist had spoken of the Holy Ghost, with which He Who should come after him should baptize, and his disciples would not have been ignorant of the Person of the Holy Spirit. An interesting parallel is found in John vii. 39.

<sup>3.</sup> *Unto what then were ye baptized?]* When we say "baptize in the name," the Greek is literally "into the name," implying incorporation into a society. So "to be baptized into, or unto, John's baptism" means to be enrolled as a member of the society founded by John Baptist.

<sup>4.</sup> *John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance]* Such was St John's description of his own baptism (Matt. iii. 11). *on Christ Jesus]* R.V. omits *Christ*.

<sup>5.</sup> *When they heard this]* St Luke evidently gives only the barest summary of St Paul's address.

<sup>6.</sup> *when Paul had laid his hands upon them]* This represents a further ceremony beyond baptism which may not have been performed by St Paul himself; cp. viii. 18; 2 Tim. i. 6. It corresponds rather to "confirmation." *and prophesied]* Not necessarily "predicted the future," but "gave vent to inspired utterances."

<sup>7.</sup> *about twelve]* They formed, as it were, a new band of Apostles. The exact number is of no consequence to the writer.

<sup>8.</sup> *And he went into the synagogue]* After relating this particular incident, St Luke goes on to give a general account of St Paul's life.

the space of three months, disputing and persuading the *things* concerning the kingdom of God. <sup>9</sup>But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of *that way* before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup>And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. <sup>11</sup>And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: <sup>12</sup>so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

<sup>13</sup>Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took

**9.** *when divers were hardened, and believed not*] R.V. **were disobedient**. The words imply deliberate resistance to the Apostle's message. *of that way*] R.V. **of the Way**, i.e. Christianity; cp. on xviii. 26. *disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus*] R.V. **reasoning**, as in the last verse. One MS. adds that it was from the fifth to the tenth hour. This would probably be from 11 a.m., by which time the day's lectures would be over, to 4 p.m. St Paul may have employed the early morning in the pursuit of his trade.

**10.** *by the space of two years*] Speaking to the Ephesian elders at Miletus the Apostle says that he ceased not to admonish the church there for three years (xx. 31). But 2 years and 3 months would be spoken of in round figures as 3 years. *so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus*] Apparently St Paul did not confine his work to Ephesus itself.

**11.** *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul*] The writer seems to imply that this was the zenith of St Paul's miraculous powers. Compare the account of St Peter's miracles in ch. v. 15. It may be that God performed special miracles in Ephesus, a city given over to magic and curious arts (v. 19).

**12.** *were brought*] R.V. **were carried away**. We are to understand that the handkerchiefs and aprons or girdles were actually used by St Paul.

### 13-20. *The overcoming of magic at Ephesus*

**13.** *the vagabond Jews*] R.V. **the strolling Jews**. *exorcists*] These were men who, in the language of the time, possessed special powers for the casting out of devils. For the practice among the Jews, cp. Matt. xii. 27. Seeing the miraculous powers which St Paul

upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. <sup>14</sup> And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. <sup>15</sup> And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? <sup>16</sup> And the man in whom the evil spirit was leapt on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that *they* fled out of that house naked and wounded. <sup>17</sup> And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. <sup>18</sup> And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. <sup>19</sup> Many also of them which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned *them* before all *men*: and they

exercised they tried to use his name and that of Jesus as a kind of magic spell. Such a spell, consisting of a string of unintelligible syllables "in the name of Jesus the God of the Hebrews," has been found on a papyrus now in Paris. *We adjure you*] R.V. **I adjure you.**

<sup>14.</sup> *seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests*] R.V. **a chief priest**: possibly head of one of the twenty-four courses of the Levitical priesthood. But the incident is difficult to understand and there are variations in the reading. There is also an apparent discrepancy in the mention of seven sons here, and **mastered both of them** (so R.V., implying there were only two) in v. 16. It may be that these men only pretended to be sons of the chief priest Sceva.

<sup>15.</sup> *Jesus I know, and Paul I know*] The verbs are different, but perhaps synonymous. Or the first may be more correctly rendered (with R.V. marg.) **I recognise.**

<sup>17.</sup> *this was known*] R.V. **this became known.** *fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified*] Compare the result of the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, ch. v. 11 ff.

<sup>18.</sup> *their deeds*] i.e. their dealings with the magicians.

<sup>19.</sup> *which used curious arts*] i.e. magic, especially connected with the use of spells and magic formulas. *brought their books together*] These were technically known as "Ephesian writings," and consisted of scrolls of parchment inscribed with magic forms and worn as amulets. Such have been discovered at Ephesus.

counted the price of them, and found *it* fifty thousand pieces of silver. <sup>20</sup> So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

<sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season. <sup>23</sup> And the same time there arose no small stir about *that way*. <sup>24</sup> For a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought

*fifty thousand pieces of silver*] About £2,000. The scene could be paralleled by many an episode in later missionary work.

#### 21, 22. *St Paul's plans for the future*

<sup>21</sup>. *After these things were ended*] The phrase seems merely an introductory one, to mark a section which the historian considers of special importance. *when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia*] He was fond of revisiting the churches which he had founded; cp. xv. 36. *to go to Jerusalem*] Possibly to bring alms, but more probably to lay before the heads of the Christian Church his schemes for its further development. Apparently he intended to shift his headquarters after this to the West. *I must also see Rome*] In the scheme of the book this marks the beginning of a new stage. From henceforth the objective is not Jerusalem or Antioch, but Rome, and the history is concerned to relate how St Paul got there. He had now grasped fully the idea that Christianity was to be commensurate with the civilized world as represented by the Roman Empire. For his wish to visit Rome, cp. Romans i. 13.

<sup>22</sup>. *Timotheus*] He had laboured in Macedonia and Greece. *Erastus*] Probably to be identified with the man mentioned in 2 Tim. iv. 20, but not with the Erastus of Rom. xvi. 23. *stayed in Asia*] Perhaps not confining his work to Ephesus itself.

#### 23-41. *The tumult at Ephesus*

<sup>23</sup>. *about that way*] R.V. **concerning the Way**, i.e. Christianity; cp. ix. 2.

<sup>24</sup>. *which made silver shrines for Diana*] These would be silver models of the temple or shrine of Artemis (Diana), which visitors would buy to take away as souvenirs. The temple of Artemis at

no small gain unto the craftsmen; <sup>25</sup> whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. <sup>26</sup> Moreover 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: <sup>27</sup> so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. <sup>28</sup> And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. <sup>29</sup> And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one

Ephesus, built in the 6th cent. B.C., was burned down on the night of the birth of Alexander the Great in 356 B.C., but was restored, and reckoned as one of the wonders of the world. *no small gain*] R.V. **no little business**. As at Philippi the cause of the opposition to the Apostles was a financial one.

<sup>26.</sup> *almost throughout all Asia*] This would imply considerable missionary activity of St Paul's in the country lying round Ephesus, for *Asia*, of course, refers only to the Roman province. Possibly some of the seven churches mentioned in the Apocalypse were founded by him. *saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands*] Compare his words at Athens, xvii. 29. But the words do not seem very apt here, because the shrines were not worshipped, and the figure of Artemis was supposed to have dropped from heaven (cp. v. 35).

<sup>27.</sup> *her magnificence should be destroyed*] R.V. **she should be deposed from her magnificence**. *whom all Asia and the world worshippeth*] The words are of course an exaggeration, but visitors came from many distant parts to see the shrine.

<sup>28.</sup> *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*] According to one MS. the cry was "Great Diana of the Ephesians"; and this seems a more probable form.

<sup>29.</sup> *having caught Gaius and Aristarchus*] These have not been mentioned before, but we read of Aristarchus again in xx. 4, xxvii. 2. Evidently the mob could not for the moment find St Paul. It has been suggested that Gaius and Aristarchus were St Luke's

accord into the theatre. <sup>30</sup> And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. <sup>31</sup> And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring *him* that *he* would not adventure himself into the theatre. <sup>32</sup> Some therefore cried one *thing*, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. <sup>33</sup> And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made *his* defence unto the people. <sup>34</sup> But when *they* knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*. <sup>35</sup> And when the townclerk had appeased

authorities for this part of the narrative. It is probably this tumultuous scene to which St Paul alludes when he says (1 Cor. xv. 32) "if after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus." *into the theatre*] This would be chosen as the most convenient place for a crowd. It was, of course, entirely open and could accommodate 56,000 spectators.

<sup>30.</sup> *would have entered in*] R.V. **was minded to enter in.**

<sup>31.</sup> *the chief of Asia*] R.V. **the chief officers of Asia.** But it is better to render, with R.V. marg., **the Asiarchs.** These were definite officers, whose functions were both civil and religious: they appear to have existed in other cities of Asia besides Ephesus. They were associated with the Roman policy, and their attitude towards St Paul shews that they did not share the prejudice of the uneducated mob towards his preaching.

<sup>33.</sup> *And they drew Alexander out of the multitude*] R.V. marg. gives an alternative that may be correct, **And some of the multitude instructed Alexander.** The idea seems to have been that he should endeavour to allay the excitement of the crowd, and the Jews were prominent in bringing him forward because they might expect to share any ill-treatment of Christians inflicted by an angry and thoughtless mob. This Alexander is perhaps to be identified with the coppersmith mentioned in 2 Tim. iv. 14. *his defence*] R.V. **a defence.** He was not personally attacked.

<sup>35.</sup> *the townclerk*] He was probably the chief of the municipal authorities and would correspond more nearly with our title "mayor." His speech is entirely favourable to Christianity, and refutes directly some of the charges frequently brought against it both then and later. *is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana*]

the people, he said, *Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?* <sup>36</sup> Seeing then that these *things* cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. <sup>37</sup> For ye have brought *hither* these men, *which are* neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. <sup>38</sup> Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. <sup>39</sup> But if ye inquire any *thing* concerning other *matters*, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. <sup>40</sup> For we are in danger to be called

**R.V. is temple-keeper of the great Diana.** The word translated "temple-keeper" means more literally "temple-sweeper." It has been found on the coins of various cities, mostly in Asia Minor, as a title of honour, referring to the worship of some special god or goddess. *the image which fell down from Jupiter*] R.V. marg. **heaven.** This refers to an ancient wooden image of the goddess. Various towns, such as Taurus, Troy, Athens and Pessinus, had an image with a similar legendary history.

**37. robbers of churches**] R.V. **robbers of temples.** The temple at Ephesus had a great treasure chamber. But the word may be used generally of men who upset political and religious conditions. *nor yet blasphemers of your goddess*] R.V. **our goddess.** St Paul and his companions had spoken not so much against the goddess as against her worship.

**38. Wherefore if Demetrius, etc.**] In these words the town-clerk seems to hint that he recognizes that the uproar was manufactured for pecuniary motives. *the law is open*] R.V. **the courts are open.** More literally "assize days are held." *and there are deputies*] R.V. **proconsuls**; cp. xiii. 7, 8, 12. There would, of course, be only one proconsul for *Asia*, but the town-clerk means perhaps to include the inferior magistrates. *implead*] An antiquated word for which R.V. substitutes **accuse.**

**39. if ye inquire**] R.V. **seek.** But the word refers to legal action. *in a lawful assembly*] R.V. **in the regular assembly.** The townclerk's point is that the present proceedings are all irregular. Besides the proconsul's court there were sittings of a public assembly to decide certain cases.

**40. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's**

in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse. <sup>41</sup>And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

**20** And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them*, and departed for to go into Macedonia. <sup>2</sup>And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, <sup>3</sup>and *there* abode three months: and when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail

*uproar*] R.V. **For indeed we are in danger to be accused concerning this day's riot.** The Roman authorities were wont to put down riots in provincial towns with a strong hand. *there being no cause whereby, etc.*] There is some uncertainty in the reading, but the best MSS. give two negatives. So R.V. **there being no cause for it: and as touching it we shall not be able to give account of this concourse.**

<sup>41</sup>. *he dismissed the assembly*] i.e. he induced the crowd to disperse, though perhaps with the official formula which was used for terminating public meetings.

**XX. 1-6.** *St Paul journeys through Macedonia and Greece, and returns as far as Troas*

**1.** *Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed*] R.V. **Paul having sent for the disciples and exhorted them, took leave of them, and departed.** The depth of their affection for him is seen in the account of their next meeting in v. 37. *departed for to go into Macedonia*] We see from 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13 that he went first to Troas, expecting to meet Titus there; but did not find him till he reached Macedonia, from which country 2 Cor. was written.

**2.** *when he had gone over those parts*] The historian passes over this tour almost in silence, because St Paul was not here breaking new ground and there was nothing special to record. He only becomes explicit again on the return journey. Possibly St Paul may have picked him up again in Macedonia. *he came into Greece*] Probably he spent his time, as before, between Athens and Corinth.

**3.** *and there abode three months*] R.V. connects this with the next sentence, **And when he had spent three months there.** The Ep. to the Romans was composed at this time; cp. Rom. xv. 25. *the Jews laid wait for him*] R.V. **a plot was laid against him**

into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. <sup>4</sup>And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. <sup>5</sup>These going before tarried for us at Troas. <sup>6</sup>And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. <sup>7</sup>And upon the first day of the week, when the

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**by the Jews.** If he was at Corinth at the time, the Jews of that city would have learned by experience not to raise an open tumult against him (cp. xviii. 17). *as he was about to sail into Syria*] Ramsay suggests that he intended to take a pilgrim ship carrying Jews to the Passover at Jerusalem, and it was on that that they proposed to murder him. *he purposed to return through Macedonia*] **R.V. he determined.** He would go by land as far as Neapolis and then sail to Troas.

<sup>4.</sup> *there accompanied him into Asia*] **R.V. as far as Asia,** but the margin points out that many ancient authorities omit these words. The men whose names follow were apparently delegates from the various churches entrusted with alms to carry to Jerusalem. Nothing further is known of Secundus and Gaius. *Sopater of Berea*] The oldest MSS. add *the son of Pyrrhus.* This is the only instance in Acts in which this proper Greek way of mentioning a man is used, and it would seem to point to Sopater being one of the "more noble" men of Berea (xvii. 11). *Aristarchus*] See xix. 29. *Tychicus*] Mentioned Eph. vi. 21; Col. iv. 7; Tit. iii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 12. *Trophimus*] Mentioned in xxi. 29 (where he is called an Ephesian) and 2 Tim. iv. 20.

<sup>5.</sup> *These going before tarried for us at Troas*] **R.V. But these had gone before, and were waiting for us at Troas.** They probably went straight by sea. The word "us" shews that the writer had now rejoined St Paul.

<sup>6.</sup> *after the days of unleavened bread*] Ramsay calculates that in 57 A.D. this would fall on Thursday, April 7. From this point the writer is careful to give accurate dates for the rest of the voyage, and it is evident that he looked back upon it with special interest. *came unto them to Troas*] The town was memorable not only as the appointed meeting-place, but also as being the place where St Paul and St Luke probably became first acquainted.

**7-12. St Paul's address at Troas**

<sup>7.</sup> *upon the first day of the week*] This had now, for the Christians, superseded the Jewish sabbath. *when the disciples*

disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued *his* speech until midnight. <sup>8</sup>And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. <sup>9</sup>And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. <sup>10</sup>And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing *him* said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. <sup>11</sup>When he therefore was come up *again*, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, *even* till break of day, so he departed. <sup>12</sup>And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

<sup>13</sup>And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. <sup>14</sup>And when he met with

*came together*] R.V. **when we were gathered together.** *to break bread*] This would refer rather to the Agape or Love-feast than to the actual Eucharist. *preached unto them*] R.V. **discoursed with them.**

<sup>9.</sup> *And there sat in a window*] The window would be merely an opening in the wall. *being fallen into a deep sleep*] R.V. **borne down with deep sleep.** *fell down from the third loft*] R.V. **the third story.** We should call it the second storey.

<sup>10.</sup> *And Paul went down*] The staircase would be outside the house. *and fell on him*] Perhaps thinking of the raising of the Shunammite's son, 2 Kings iv. 34. *Trouble not yourselves*] R.V. **Make ye no ado.** The words remind us of Matt. ix. 24.

<sup>11.</sup> *had broken bread*] R.V. **the bread,** i.e. of the Eucharist. The service was bound up with the Agape, to which the next words, *and eaten,* refer.

<sup>12.</sup> *And they brought the young man alive*] R.V. **the lad.** He had awaked as it were from a swoon. One MS. has "and while they were bidding farewell they brought the young man living; and they were comforted."

**13-17.** *The journey continued from Troas to Miletus*

<sup>13.</sup> *sailed unto Assos*] This was in Mysia, on the north side of the Gulf of Adramyttium. *minding himself to go afoot*] R.V.

us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. <sup>15</sup>And we sailed thence, and came the next *day* over against Chios; and the next *day* we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next *day* we came to Miletus. <sup>16</sup>For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. <sup>17</sup>And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. <sup>18</sup>And when they were come to him, he said unto them,

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**intending himself to go by land.** But A.V. may be right, for it would only be a walk of about 20 miles.

**14. and came to Mitylene]** Mitylene was the capital of Lesbos. The ship seems to have anchored each night in some harbour.

**15. came the next day over against Chios]** The island is about five miles distant from the mainland. The ship stopped at some point over against it on the mainland. *the next day we arrived*

*at Samos]* An island a little south of Ephesus. The vessel did not stop here, but ran straight to Trogyllium, which lay on the mainland directly opposite. So R.V. **touchèd** for *arrived*. *and tarried*

*at Trogyllium]* R.V., following the best MSS., omits these words, but they are probably historically true. *the next day we came*

*to Miletus]* In Caria, just south of the river Mæander. It had been a great port, but was at this time eclipsed by Ephesus.

**16. had determined to sail by Ephesus]** Apparently the vessel omitted Ephesus, which lay some miles east of the direct route down the coast. *for he hasted...to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost]* There would be a gathering of the leaders of the Church on this day. Ramsay calculates that St Paul arrived at Miletus on April 28, and that Pentecost fell exactly a month later.

**17. from Miletus he sent to Ephesus]** The vessel must have stopped at Miletus at least three days. *called the elders of the church]* The word for "elders" is strictly "presbyters." In v. 28 they are called by a name which is usually translated "bishops."

**18-33. St Paul's speech to the elders of Ephesus and his leave taking**

This is the only speech of St Paul's which we can be fairly sure that St Luke heard. He reminds them of his unceasing labours among them for three years, preaching to Jews and Gentiles alike in the synagogue and from house to house. His call to Jerusalem, where bonds and afflictions await him. His one desire to finish his

Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, <sup>19</sup> serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and *with* many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: <sup>20</sup> *and* how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, <sup>21</sup> testifying both to the Jews, and *also* to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>22</sup> And now behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the *things* that shall befall me there: <sup>23</sup> save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. <sup>24</sup> But none of these *things* move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that *I* might finish my course

course. His final farewell. Like Samuel of old he challenges them to come forward and accuse him. Solemnly he adjures them to tend the flock of Christ, warning them that enemies would arise even from their own fold. Finally he impresses on them the duty of working to support the weak.

**18.** *I came into Asia*] R.V. **I set foot in Asia.** The Apostle appeals not only to his work in Ephesus, but in the surrounding country as well.

**19.** *temptations*] R.V. **trials.** We are not told of any specific plots of the Jews against St Paul in Asia Minor.

**20.** *how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you*] R.V. **how I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable.** He would have been tempted sometimes to declare unto them something less than the whole Gospel. *publickly, and from house to house*] The word "publickly" may refer to preaching either in the synagogue or in the open air.

**22.** *I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem*] St Paul felt an imperative call to go to Jerusalem. His life was in a special way ordered by the Spirit of God.

**23.** *the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city...*] R.V. **testifieth unto me.** He had left Greece in imminent peril of his life, and at each stage of his journey he seems to have had a premonition of trouble to come when he reached Jerusalem. It is to be noticed, however, that the premonitions which St Luke records all occur after this.

**24.** *none of these things move me*] Cp. his words in xxi. 13.

with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. 25 And now behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. 26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*. 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. 28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse *things*, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that *by the space of three years* I ceased not to warn

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*so that I might finish my course with joy*] At the end of his life he could feel confident that he had done so (cp. 2 Tim. iv. 7).

25. *I know that ye all...shall see my face no more*] We cannot be sure that St Paul did not revisit Ephesus after the end of his first imprisonment at Rome.

26. *that I am pure from the blood of all men*] The phrase is to be understood metaphorically. Perhaps he has in mind Ezekiel xxxiii. 1-9.

28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, etc.*] Compare his words to Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. 16. He is resigning into their hands a charge that had been his. *to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*] The text as it stands asserts very distinctly the Divinity of Christ. But there is some doubt as to the reading, for many ancient authorities read "the Lord" for "God." It has been suggested that a word has fallen out at the end which would alter the meaning to "with the blood of his own Son." Whatever be the correct reading, we must remember that the Divinity of Christ, as attested in the N.T., does not depend on any one verse. The word rendered "purchased" means more literally "made his own."

29. *shall grievous wolves enter in*] The simile is suggested by the use of the word "flock"; cp. John x. 12. For the fulfilment of St Paul's words, cp. 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; Rev. ii. 2.

31. *by the space of three years*] It was more accurately two years and three months, xix. 8, 10.

every one night and day with tears. <sup>32</sup>And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build *you* up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. <sup>33</sup>I have coveted no *man's* silver, or gold, or apparel. <sup>34</sup>Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. <sup>35</sup>I have shewed you all *things*, how that so labouring *ye* ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

<sup>36</sup>And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. <sup>37</sup>And *they* all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, <sup>38</sup>sorrowing most of *all* for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

**21** And it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a

**32.** *the word of his grace*] The phrase occurs again in xiv. 3, and refers to the preaching of the Gospel as a message of grace. *which is able to build you up*] The metaphor of building up, or edifying, is specially common in St Paul's epistles. *and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified*] Cp. Eph. i. 18, v. 5.

**34.** *these hands have ministered unto my necessities*] Cp. on xix. 9.

**35.** *to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said*] This is the one saying of Christ's in the N.T. not recorded in the Gospels. St Paul appeals to it as well known.

**36.** *he kneeled down*] A rare attitude for prayer, which was usually said standing. But cp. Eph. iii. 14.

**37.** *they all wept sore, etc.*] From this passage more than any other we get an idea of the lovable nature of St Paul. The scene evidently made a deep impression on St Luke.

**38.** *they accompanied him unto the ship*] R.V. **brought him on his way unto the ship.** The harbour was some distance away.

XXI. 1-17. *The completion of the journey to Jerusalem*

**1.** *after we were gotten from them*] R.V. **parted**, but the word means rather "torn ourselves from them," and brings out the

straight course unto Cos, and the *day* following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara: <sup>2</sup>and finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth. <sup>3</sup>Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade *her* burden. <sup>4</sup>And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that *he* should not go up to Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup>And when we had accomplished *those* days, we departed and went *our way*; and *they* all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till *we* were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. <sup>6</sup>And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home *again*.

clinging affection with which they held the Apostle back. The boat in which he travelled to Patara seems to have been at his own disposal.

*Cos*] Modern Stanchio, opposite to Halicarnassus. *Patara*] A port of Lycia. One MS. adds "and Myra." This was a more important port than Patara, and he would have been more likely here to find another vessel.

<sup>3.</sup> *when we had discovered Cyprus*] R.V. **come in sight of. left it on the left hand**] The straight course from Patara or Myra to Tyre would bring them within sight of the S.W. corner of Cyprus. *landed at Tyre*] The city was built partly on the mainland and partly on an island.

<sup>4.</sup> *finding disciples*] R.V. **having found the disciples**, i.e. members of the Church at Tyre. *we tarried there seven days*] The ship might take this time to unload, and apparently St Paul found that he had plenty of time to get to Jerusalem for Pentecost. *who said to Paul through the Spirit, etc.*] The Apostle received many warnings of trouble to come on him in Jerusalem; cp. xx. 23, xxi. 11.

<sup>5.</sup> *And when we had accomplished those days*] R.V. **And when it came to pass that we had accomplished the days**. St Luke's style shews that he is working up to a climax, the arrest of St Paul at Jerusalem. *they all brought us on our way...*] The prophecies of evil to come seem to have led these kindly Christians, like those at Miletus, to regard the Apostle as a hero going to his doom. *we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed*] R.V. **kneeling down on the beach, we prayed, and bade each other farewell**.

7 And when we had finished *our* course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day. 8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was *one* of the seven; and abode with him. 9 And the same *man* had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. 10 And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. 11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that oweth this girdle, and shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles. 12 And when we heard these *things*, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem

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7. *we came to Ptolemais*] The voyage would be quite a short one. Ptolemais is the ancient Accho (Judges i. 31), and modern S. Jean d'Acre or Acre.

8. *we that were of Paul's company*] Omitted in R.V. *came unto Cesarea*] They would take the coast road past Mt Carmel. *the house of Philip the evangelist*] He is left at Cæsarea in viii. 40 and seems to have settled down there.

9. *the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy*] "Prophesy" apparently means here much the same as "preach," and we can imagine these four daughters as helping their father in his evangelistic work. Philip and his daughters are said by Eusebius to have lived later at Hierapolis, where their tombs were shewn. Papias heard from them the story of a man being raised from the dead.

10. *there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus*] In xi. 28 we read of him predicting a famine throughout the world.

11. *he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet*] This figurative action was common among the Jews; cp. 1 Kings xi. 30; Jeremiah xiii. 1-7.

13. *What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?*] R.V. **What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart?** By "breaking the heart" he means "undermining the courage."

for the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>14</sup> And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. <sup>15</sup> And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem. <sup>16</sup> There went with us also *certain* of the disciples of Cesarea, and brought *with them* one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

<sup>17</sup> And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. <sup>18</sup> And the *day* following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. <sup>19</sup> And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what *things* God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. <sup>20</sup> And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: <sup>21</sup> and they are informed

**15.** *we took up our carriages*] R.V. **baggage**. The word means literally "pack up," or "saddle a beast." It may be that the first part of the journey, at any rate, was performed driving.

**16.** *one Mnason of Cyprus*] He was apparently living in Jerusalem, and it would save the Apostle and his party the difficult labour of finding lodgings at a very crowded time if they went to his house. But some MSS. have "they brought us to those with whom we were to lodge: and when we arrived in a certain village we came to the house of Mnason."

**17-40.** *St Paul's reception at Jerusalem and the riot which led to his arrest*

**18.** *Paul went in with us unto James*] This was an official reception. James was the recognized head of the Church at Jerusalem.

**19.** *he declared particularly*] R.V. **he rehearsed one by one**. St Paul came as specially the Apostle of the Gentiles, and it was his work among them that formed the subject of his address.

**20.** *they glorified the Lord, and said unto him...*] We can imagine that they were awaiting his account with some anxiety, and though they recognized at once the importance of his work, yet it is evident that they had still some misgivings. *they are all zealous of the law*] So St Paul in his pre-Christian days could describe himself as being "more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. i. 14).

of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they *ought* not to circumcise *their* children, neither to walk after the customs. <sup>22</sup>What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. <sup>23</sup>Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; <sup>24</sup>them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave *their* heads: and all may know that *those things*, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but *that* thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. <sup>25</sup>As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such *thing*, save only that

<sup>21.</sup> *that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses*] St Paul had been misrepresented. The point on which he laid special stress was that Gentiles need not conform to Jewish customs as a necessary preliminary to becoming Christians. But his enemies would fix on such passages as Gal. v. 6. *to walk after the customs*] i.e. to conform to the ceremonial law; cp. vi. 14.

<sup>22.</sup> *the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come*] R.V. omits the first clause. The words shew the importance that was attached to St Paul.

<sup>23.</sup> *We have four men which have a vow on them*] The vow was evidently that of a Nazirite (see Numb. vi. 1-21). St Paul was apparently under the same vow (xviii. 18), which could be taken for any length of time above the minimum of 30 days. The completion of such a vow was a matter of some expense, and it was a common act of charity to pay these expenses for those who were poor. St Paul was evidently at this time, and for the rest of the book, a man of considerable private means, and it is suggested that he had by now inherited a good deal of money. See note on xxiv. 26.

<sup>24.</sup> *be at charges with them*] R.V. **for them**. The expression means "pay their expenses." *and all may know*] This would be an evident sign that St Paul still adhered to the Jewish Law.

<sup>25.</sup> *As touching the Gentiles which believe*] The leaders of the Church are at pains to point out that the action they recommend for St Paul would not in any way compromise his position as defender of the Gentile liberty. *we have written*] Referring to the decision of the Apostolic council, xv. 20.

they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. 26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them. 27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, 28 crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all *men* every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. 29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul

26. *purifying himself with them*] It was enjoined that the Nazirite should avoid all persons and things that could produce ceremonial defilement. It would seem from this passage that, to make this easier, St Paul and his companions passed the last few days of the vow in the actual precincts of the Temple. *to signify the accomplishment*] R.V. **declaring the fulfilment.** St Paul would have to inform the Temple authorities as to the exact day on which his vow came to an end, that he might bring the offering on the right day, as it is enjoined in Numb. vi. It may be that he incurred some defilement just before his vow was to end and therefore had to wait seven extra days (Numb. vi. 9). It can hardly be that St Paul took the vow for only seven days, for the Mishna mentions 30 days as the least period for which it could be taken.

27. *the Jews which were of Asia*] R.V. **the Jews from Asia.** They may have been old opponents of his at Ephesus or possibly his companions in the boat which brought him from Patara or Myra.

28. *and further brought Greeks also into the temple*] No Gentile might penetrate beyond a low stone wall in the outer court of the Temple, called the Court of the Gentiles. On this wall was an inscription in Greek letters threatening death to the intruder. If his opponents here were Ephesians St Paul may have been thinking of this incident when he wrote later Eph. ii. 14. The supposition that they were Ephesians receives some slight confirmation from their knowledge of Trophimus.

had brought into the temple.) <sup>30</sup>And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut. <sup>31</sup>And as *they* went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. <sup>32</sup>Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. <sup>33</sup>Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded *him* to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. <sup>34</sup>And some cried one *thing*, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle. <sup>35</sup>And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. <sup>36</sup>For the multitude of the people followed *after*, crying, Away with him.

<sup>37</sup>And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek? <sup>38</sup>Art not thou *that*

<sup>30.</sup> *all the city was moved*] The cry for help would very soon draw an excited crowd. *forthwith the doors were shut*] i.e. by the Levites to prevent the pollution of the Temple by St Paul's murder.

<sup>31.</sup> *tidings came unto the chief captain of the band*] A Roman garrison under a Chiliarch or Colonel was stationed, and during festivals kept under arms, in the Turrus Antonia. This was a castle situated on the hill Acra, N. of the Temple, and communicating with it by steps. *that all Jerusalem was in an uproar*] Such disturbances were not uncommon when the city was filled with pilgrims.

<sup>33.</sup> *took him*] This would be a formal arrest.

<sup>34.</sup> *some cried one thing, some another*] St Luke evidently was reminded of the Ephesian tumult as he wrote these words, xix. 32. *into the castle*] Strictly the barracks or soldiers' quarters.

<sup>36.</sup> *Away with him*] The same cry which the Jews raised before Pilate (Luke xxiii. 18).

<sup>37.</sup> *Canst thou speak Greek?*] R.V. **Dost thou know Greek?**

Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? <sup>39</sup>But Paul said, I am a man *which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city*: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people. <sup>40</sup>And when he had given *him* licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them* in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

**22** Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence *which I make now unto you.* <sup>2</sup>(And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) <sup>3</sup>I am verily a man *which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught*

The chief captain marvels that he knows Greek, the mob that he can speak Aramaic (xxii. 2).

**38.** *Art not thou that Egyptian...*] Josephus tells us that this man collected 30,000 people on the Mount of Olives to see the walls of Jerusalem fall down before him, that he was attacked by Felix and routed with great loss, but escaped himself. *four thousand men that were murderers*] R.V. **the four thousand men of the Assassins.** Josephus tells us of numbers of banditti in Jerusalem, who were responsible for constant murders.

**39.** *I am a man...*] **I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city**] Tarsus was the capital of Cilicia, and a town of considerable eminence, and St Paul was a free-born citizen of it.

**40.** *beckoned with the hand*] A favourite gesture of his, xiii. 16. So St Peter (xii. 17) and Alexander (xix. 33). One hand at least must have been set free. *a great silence*] Standing as he did at the top of the stairs his gesture could be seen by all the multitude. *in the Hebrew tongue*] i.e. in Aramaic.

#### XXII. 1-21. *St Paul's defence*

**1ff.** He lays emphasis on his Jewish birth and education and his zeal for the law, and tells the story of his conversion and commission.

**3.** *I am verily a man which am a Jew*] R.V. **I am a Jew, brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel**] The fame of Gamaliel as the most learned Rabbi of the day would have attracted St Paul to go and study at Jerusalem.

according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous towards God, as ye all are this day. <sup>4</sup>And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. <sup>5</sup>As 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 went to Damascus, to bring them which were there, bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. <sup>6</sup>And it came to pass that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. <sup>7</sup>And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? <sup>8</sup>And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. <sup>9</sup>And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. <sup>10</sup>And 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. <sup>11</sup>And 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. <sup>12</sup>And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law,

4. *this way*] R.V. **Way**, i.e. Christianity; cp. ix. 2.

5. *As also the high priest doth bear me witness*] St Paul refers to the high priest who held office when he desired his commission, not to Ananias who was high priest at this time, xxiii. 2.] *all the estate of the elders*] i.e. the Sanhedrin.

6. For the different accounts of St Paul's conversion see on ix. 9.

9. *and were afraid*] R.V. omits.

11. *when I could not see for the glory of that light*] Here only is this explanation of the Apostle's blindness given. The word for "glory" is specially used of the brightness of the presence of God.

12. *Ananias, a devout man according to the law*] Notice how careful St Paul is to conciliate his hearers as far as may be.

having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*,  
 13 came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother  
 Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up  
 upon him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath  
 chosen thee, that *thou* shouldest know his will, and see  
*that* Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his  
 mouth. 15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of  
 what thou hast seen and heard. 16 And now why  
 tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away  
 thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. 17 And it  
 came to pass that, when I was come again to Jerusalem,  
 even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;  
 18 and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get *thee*  
 quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy  
 testimony concerning me. 19 And I said, Lord, they  
 know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue  
 them that believed on thee: 20 and when the blood of  
 thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by,  
 and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of

13. *the same hour I looked up upon him*] "The same hour" in Aramaic would mean "immediately." For "I looked up upon him" R.V. marg. suggests "I received my sight and looked upon him."

14. *see that Just One*] R.V. **the Righteous One**, a name specially applied to Jesus; cp. iii. 14; James v. 6.

16. *arise, and be baptized*] St Paul is not permitted to dispense with the ceremony of baptism as the outward means of grace. *wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*] Notice how the two parts of baptism are here given: (a) the washing away of sin, (b) the entering into a new covenant-relation with God.

17, 18. *when I was come again to Jerusalem*] This refers to the visit recorded in Acts ix. 26 ff. *even while I prayed in the temple*] Another attempt to conciliate his hearers. *I was in a trance, etc.*] In Acts ix. 29, 30 it is only said that the disciples sent him away.

19. *Lord, they know, etc.*] St Paul ventures to suggest to God that his past history would make him a preacher with a special appeal.

20. *thy martyr Stephen*] R.V. **Stephen thy witness**. This is the only passage in which St Paul refers to him by name. *consenting unto his death*] R.V. omits the last three words.

them that slew him. <sup>21</sup>And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

<sup>22</sup>And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lift up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. <sup>23</sup>And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, <sup>24</sup>the chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. <sup>25</sup>And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? <sup>26</sup>When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. <sup>27</sup>Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. <sup>28</sup>And the

**21.** *unto the Gentiles]* It is only by great tact that St Paul has held his audience for so long. Now at the mention of the Gentiles as the recipients of God's word, their fanatical fury bursts forth and effectually cuts short his speech.

**22-29.** *The Jews break into an outburst of fury. St Paul escapes flogging by appealing to his Roman citizenship*

**22.** *it is not fit]* Lit. "it was not fit," implying that he ought to have been put to death long ago.

**23.** *cast off their clothes]* i.e. the loose upper garments. Apparently they were preparing to storm the steps. *threw dust into the air]* Compare the action of Shimei, 2 Sam. xvi. 13.

**24.** *the chief captain commanded]* He would probably not understand Aramaic, and would be at a loss to understand the fury of the mob. *that he should be examined by scourging]* This was only allowed by Roman law in the case of foreigners and slaves.

**25.** *as they bound him with thongs]* He was stretched on his chest with arms and legs apart to receive the scourging. *a Roman, and uncondemned]* No Roman might be scourged whether condemned or not; cp. on xvi. 37.

**27.** *art thou a Roman?]* There is an emphasis on "thou." The chief captain, proud of his expensive liberty, cannot bring himself

chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was *free* born. <sup>29</sup>Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

<sup>30</sup>On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from *his* bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set *him* before them.

**23** And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men *and* brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day. <sup>2</sup>And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite

to believe that one whom he had supposed to be a vulgar agitator and criminal should be a Roman citizen. Fraudulent claims could be punished by death.

**23.** *With a great sum obtained I this freedom*] R.V. **this citizenship.** The Emperors sold the Roman citizenship to enrich their exchequers, but at this time it fetched a high price. *I was freeborn*] It is not known how St Paul, or rather his forefathers, acquired this freedom, but it is probable that they bought it.

XXII. 30-XXIII. 10. *St Paul's defence before the Sanhedrin*

**30.** *he loosed him from his bands*] A Roman citizen must not appear as a criminal before a Jewish court. *commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear*] i.e. summoned a meeting of the Sanhedrin. *brought Paul down*] He brought him down, protected by an escort of soldiers, from the Castle of Antonia.

XXIII. 1. *earnestly beholding the council*] For the verb cp. xiv. 9. *I have lived in all good conscience before God*] The word translated "lived" means literally "behaved as a citizen," and in using it St Paul may have been thinking of his successful vindication of his Roman citizenship; cp. also Phil. i. 27, iii. 20.

**2.** *the high priest Ananias*] This was Ananias, the son of Nebedæus, nominated high priest by Herod in 48 A.D., sent to Rome four years later to stand his trial on a charge of rapine and acquitted, but murdered in Jerusalem in 62 A.D. *them that stood by him*] Perhaps he was handed over to the Levitical police,

him on the mouth. <sup>3</sup>Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, *thou whited wall*: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? <sup>4</sup>And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? <sup>5</sup>Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people. <sup>6</sup>But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men *and* brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. <sup>7</sup>And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. <sup>8</sup>For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither

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but the Roman guard was not far off. *to smite him on the mouth*] i.e. as a punishment for impudent bragging. The beginning of St Paul's speech seems to shew that for once he was at a loss what line to take.

3. *God shall smite thee, thou whited wall*] The patience of the Apostle, worn out as he was by the events of the last day, gives way and he curses the high priest. "Whited wall" seems to be used in the same sense as "whited sepulchres" in Matt. xxiii. 27. *contrary to the law*] Because his case had not yet been heard.

5. *I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest*] This remark of St Paul's has caused difficulties. Some have supposed it to be meant ironically, as though the action ill became a high priest. Others have thought that St Paul was short-sighted and could not see distinctly, or that he heard the voice and did not know whence it came. But it seems not impossible that St Paul did not actually recognize the high priest in the indignation of the moment. *it is written*] Quotation from Exod. xxii. 28.

6. *when Paul perceived*] Apparently St Paul saw no hope of a successful defence except in an appeal to the sympathy of the Pharisees as against the Sadducees, the sect to which most of the priestly party belonged. *the son of a Pharisee*] R.V. **a son of Pharisees**. Apparently St Paul's ancestors for generations back had been learned in the law; cp. 2 Tim. i. 3. *of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question*] Put briefly, the essence of Christianity to St Paul was the Resurrection.

8. *the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection*] Cp. Luke

angel nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. <sup>9</sup> And there arose a great cry: and the scribes *that were* of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. <sup>10</sup> And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring *him* into the castle.

<sup>11</sup> And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome. <sup>12</sup> And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that *they* would neither eat nor drink till they had killed

xx. 27; Acts iv. 2. It is said that their teaching had its rise in the thought that "God's servants should not do service with the hope of reward." *neither angel nor spirit*] The two almost go together, hence "both" covers all three; cp. Hebr. i. 14 "Are they not all ministering spirits?" (of the angels).

9. *the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part*] R.V. **some of the scribes of the Pharisees' part.** *We find no evil in this man*] Cp. Luke xxiii. 4. *but if a spirit...against God*] R.V. **and what if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel?**

10. *fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces*] There was nearly a pitched battle for the possession of his person. *commanded the soldiers to go down*] They were in readiness for action in the castle.

11. *the Lord stood by him*] As He did on two other occasions of great anxiety, xviii. 9, xxvii. 23. *so must thou bear witness also at Rome*] St Paul is led to see somewhat of the Divine purpose that led to his being a prisoner in charge of Roman soldiers.

12-13. *Owing to the discovery of a plot of the Jews to kill him, St Paul is sent away secretly with a strong escort to Casarea*

13. *certain of the Jews*] R.V. omits "certain of." *saying that they would neither eat nor drink till...*] They had determined on his immediate assassination

Paul. <sup>13</sup>And they were more *than* forty which had made this conspiracy. <sup>14</sup>And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that *we* will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. <sup>15</sup>Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow, as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him. <sup>16</sup>And when Paul's sister's son heard of *their* lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul. <sup>17</sup>Then Paul called one of the centurions unto *him*, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain *thing* to tell him. <sup>18</sup>So he took him, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him*, and prayed *me* to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. <sup>19</sup>Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and asked *him*, What is that thou hast to tell me? <sup>20</sup>And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to morrow into the council, as though they would inquire

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15. *as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him*] R.V. **as though ye would judge of his case more exactly.** The former trial had been interrupted by the dissensions of the council.

16. *when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait*] This is the only mention of the family of St Paul. It has been suggested that the fact of this young man's hearing of the plot would seem to point to a deep resentment of the family against St Paul. But when so many as 40 were in the secret it would not be surprising if it leaked out. *entered into the castle, and told Paul*] Evidently St Paul was not kept in very strict custody.

18. *Paul the prisoner*] A title often used by the Apostle of himself.

19. *took him by the hand*] This shews a certain kindness and interest in the Roman official towards St Paul, which St Luke is always careful to point out.

20. *as though they would inquire*] R.V. **as though thou wouldest inquire.**

somewhat of him more perfectly. <sup>21</sup>But do not thou yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more *than* forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that *they* will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee. <sup>22</sup>So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged *him*, See thou tell no *man* that thou hast shewed these *things* to me. <sup>23</sup>And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cesarea, and horsemen threescore *and* ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night; <sup>24</sup>and provide *them* beasts, that *they* may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix the governor. <sup>25</sup>And he wrote a letter after this manner:

<sup>26</sup>Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix *sendeth* greeting. <sup>27</sup>This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that

**23.** *Make ready two hundred soldiers*] The size of the escort shews the largeness of the force stationed at Jerusalem, the unsettled state of the roads and the apprehension aroused by the conspiracy of the Jews. The chief captain felt in honour bound to prevent a Roman citizen falling a victim to Jewish fanaticism. *Cesarea*] The residence of the Roman governor, 64 miles from Jerusalem; cp. viii. 40. *at the third hour of the night*] About 9 p.m.

**24.** *and provide them beasts*] R.V. **and he bade them provide beasts.** *unto Felix the governor*] See the list of names on p. 8.

**25.** *after this manner*] R.V. **form.** St Luke could hardly have seen this letter, but he would be acquainted with the official style in which such letters were regularly written.

**26.** *the most excellent governor*] "Most excellent" was apparently an official title; cp. on i. 1.

**27.** *having understood that he was a Roman*] Either this is a deliberate misrepresentation of Lysias to gain credit for himself, or St Luke is guilty, as he sometimes is, of a certain inaccuracy of writing.

he was a Roman. <sup>28</sup> And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council: <sup>29</sup> whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. <sup>30</sup> And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to *his* accusers also to say before thee what *they had* against him. Farewell.

<sup>31</sup> Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought *him* by night to Antipatris. <sup>32</sup> On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle: <sup>33</sup> who, when they came to Cesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him. <sup>34</sup> And when the governor had read *the letter*, he asked of what province he was: and when he understood that *he was* of Cilicia; <sup>35</sup> I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgement hall.

<sup>29.</sup> *whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law...*] So much he could gather even without a knowledge of Aramaic. His attitude reflects that of Gallio (xviii. 14, 15).

<sup>30.</sup> *And when it was told me...the man*] R.V. **And when it was shewn to me that there would be a plot against the man.** *Farewell*] R.V. omits.

<sup>31.</sup> *Antipatris*] The town, which lay about 42 miles from Jerusalem, was rebuilt by Herod the Great and named after his father.

<sup>32.</sup> *they left the horsemen to go with him*] The danger was now over, and apparently they had to return to Jerusalem as quickly as possible.

<sup>34.</sup> *of Cilicia*] This had been, and perhaps still was, attached to the province of Syria.

<sup>35.</sup> *I will hear thee*] Better "I will give thee a full hearing." *in Herod's judgement hall*] The word translated "judgement hall" is used for the tent of a general, the barracks of soldiers (Phil. i. 13), or the palace of a prince (so here).

**24** And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and *with* a certain orator *named* Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. <sup>2</sup>And when he was called *forth*, Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying,

Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, <sup>3</sup>we accept *it* always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. <sup>4</sup>Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray *thee* that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words. <sup>5</sup>For we have found this man a pestilent *fellow*, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the

XXIV. 1-27. *St Paul's trial before Felix, and two years of easy captivity*

**1.** *after five days*] i.e. from St Paul's arrival at Cæsarea. *descended*] R.V. **came down**. The verb is regularly used of a journey from Jerusalem; cp. viii. 26. *with the elders*] R.V. **with certain elders**. *with a certain orator named Tertullus*] It was customary for provincials, ignorant as they were of Roman law, to employ a Roman advocate. *who informed*] R.V. **and they informed**. The word is used of laying a formal information before a judge; cp. xxv. 2, 15.

**2.** *when he was called forth*] i.e. when the case was called. *Tertullus began to accuse him, saying*] St Luke has given only a summary of his speech, but he is careful to reproduce the prologue intended to win the favour of the judge, with which such speeches regularly began. *Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness*] The orator seizes on almost the only point in the government of Felix which merited any praise. By severity he had put down false Messiahs and the partizans of an Egyptian magician, as well as riots at Cæsarea and Jerusalem. *very worthy deeds are done*] R.V. **evils are corrected**.

**3.** *always*] R.V. **in all ways**. *most noble Felix*] R.V. **most excellent Felix**. The title is that used in i. 1, xxiii. 26.

**5.** *a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition*] R.V. **insurrections**. The general charge of depravity is followed by an imputation of actually disturbing the public peace wherever he went. To

world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: <sup>6</sup>who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law. <sup>7</sup>But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands, <sup>8</sup>commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him. <sup>9</sup>And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.

<sup>10</sup>Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto

such offences Felix was known to be specially severe. *a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes*] The name is used with some contempt; cp. John i. 46. It is still the term used of Christians by Jews and Mohammadans.

**6.** *hath gone about*] R.V. **assayed.** *to profane the temple*] i.e. by taking Trophimus into it (xxi. 29). *and would have judged, etc.*] This, and all verse 7, and half verse 8 (to "come unto thee") are omitted in R.V. *according to our law*] Tertullus identifies himself with his employers.

**7.** *the chief captain Lysias came upon us*] Tertullus represents the conduct of Lysias as an unjustifiable interference with the rights of the Jews.

**8.** *by examining of whom thyself, etc.*] R.V. **from whom thou wilt be able by examining him thyself.** If the supposed interpolation be accepted as text, "whom" may refer to Lysias.

**9.** *assented*] R.V. **joined in the charge.**

#### 10-21. St Paul's defence

St Paul challenges his accusers to prove their charges against him, explains how he came to be at Jerusalem, professes his allegiance to the Jewish law, and declares that the real point of their quarrel with him lies in his belief in a future resurrection.

**10.** *Forasmuch as I know, etc.*] St Paul will not flatter his judge by complimenting him on his government. He only expresses his conviction that several years' acquaintance with Jewish customs will have put him into the position to form a right judgment. *of many years*] The date was probably 57 A.D., and Felix had entered into office in 52 A.D.

this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself: <sup>11</sup>because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. <sup>12</sup>And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any *man*, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: <sup>13</sup>neither can they prove *the things* whereof they now accuse me. <sup>14</sup>But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all *things* which are written in the law and the prophets: <sup>15</sup>and have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. <sup>16</sup>And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. <sup>17</sup>Now after

**11.** *there are yet but twelve days*] The day after he arrived he would have prepared to accomplish his vow and perhaps moved into the precincts of the Temple, five days later came the riot and his arrest, one night he spent in the Castle of Antonia, in the course of the next day but one he arrived at Caesarea, and it is now four days (or, reckoning inclusively, five days, xxiv. 1) after this. He mentions the exact time to shew that he could not anyhow have had time to make a great disturbance.

**13.** *neither can they prove the things, etc.*] This refers specially to the charge of having brought Trophimus into the Temple.

**14.** *after the way which they call heresy*] R.V. **after the Way which they call a sect.** According to R.V. St Paul by "the Way" refers directly to Christianity (cp. ix. 2). But it seems better to write "way" with a small *w*. "Sect" is certainly preferable to "heresy." It is the word used in v. 5. *the God of my fathers*] R.V. **the God of our fathers.** St Paul is careful to speak as a loyal Jew.

**15.** *have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow*] R.V. **look for.** He is speaking now only of the Pharisees. *both of the just and unjust*] The belief occurs in Dan. xii. 2, and is implied in Our Lord's parable of the sheep and goats, Matt. xxv. 31-46. Side by side with this is an idea that only the just will finally arise. This seems to be implied in Luke xx. 35, and in such passages as Romans viii. 11.

**16.** *to have always a conscience void of offence*] Cp. his first words before the Sanhedrin, xxiii. 1.

many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings. <sup>18</sup> Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. <sup>19</sup> Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me. <sup>20</sup> Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, <sup>21</sup> except *it be* for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

<sup>22</sup> And when Felix heard these *things*, having more perfect knowledge of *that way*, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. <sup>23</sup> And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that *he* should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him. <sup>24</sup> And after

17. *I came to bring alms to my nation*] This special object is only mentioned directly here; but cp. note on xx. 4.

18. *Whereupon*] R.V. **amidst which**, i.e. while offering the alms. *certain Jews from Asia found me*] R.V. **they found me**. Then after "tumult" insert **but there were certain Jews from Asia**. *purified in the temple*] i.e. keeping the law of the Nazirite. Such an one would hardly be likely to "profane the temple" (v. 6).

19. *Who ought to have been here*] Evidently the original accusers had not come down from Jerusalem. Perhaps they were among the members of the conspiracy to assassinate the Apostle and did not venture to accuse him again.

20. *if they have found any evil doing in me*] He alludes to the words of the Pharisees in xxiii. 9.

22-27. *Adjournment of the case. Felix's treatment of St Paul*

22. *having more perfect knowledge of that way*] R.V. **the Way**. In Cæsarea he could hardly fail to have been brought into contact with Christianity. *I will know the uttermost of your matter*] R.V. **I will determine your matter**.

23. *liberty*] R.V. **indulgence**. The word means literally "relaxation." *none of his acquaintance*] R.V. **friends**. There would be many Christians besides Philip the Evangelist in Cæsarea.

certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. <sup>25</sup> And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, *Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.* <sup>26</sup> He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. <sup>27</sup> But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

**25** Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cesarea to

**24.** *when Felix came with his wife Drusilla*] i.e. into the palace of Herod, where he did not himself reside. Or it may mean he had been absent from Cesarea altogether. For Drusilla see list of names, p. 8.

**25.** *Felix trembled*] R.V. **was terrified.** Righteousness and temperance were not characteristic virtues of Felix, and St Paul may have noticed apprehension in his face before, when he had spoken of the resurrection "both of the just and unjust" (v. 15). *when I have a convenient season*] Felix is the type of man who always puts off what is unpleasant to himself.

**26.** *He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul*] Evidently St Paul was a man of some wealth, for Felix would not trouble about a small sum.

**27.** *after two years*] R.V. **when two years were fulfilled.** This counts from the beginning of St Paul's imprisonment at Cesarea. *Porcius Festus came into Felix' room*] R.V. **Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus.** See the list of names, p. 8. *willing to shew the Jews a pleasure*] R.V. **desiring to gain favour with the Jews.** Very soon after this, however, the Jews brought an accusation against him before Nero. *left Paul bound*] This seems to refer to a more rigorous imprisonment.

**XXV. 1-12.** *St Paul, brought before Festus, appeals to Cæsar, to avoid being sent back to Jerusalem*

**1.** *when Festus was come into the province*] It may mean "arrived at Cæsarea" or "assumed the government of his province."

Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him, <sup>3</sup>and desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him. <sup>4</sup>But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*. <sup>5</sup>Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with *me*, and accuse this man, if there be any *wickedness* in him. <sup>6</sup>And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Cesarea; and the next day sitting in the judgment seat, commanded Paul to be brought. <sup>7</sup>And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove. <sup>8</sup>While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor *yet* against Cesar, have I offended any *thing at all*. <sup>9</sup>But

**2.** *Then the high priest...against Paul*] It shews the depth of their animosity against him that they had not forgotten him during these two years, but took the first opportunity of influencing the new governor against him. He might be reasonably expected to be anxious at this time to keep in favour with the high-priestly party.

**4.** *that Paul should be kept at Cesarea*] R.V. **that Paul was kept in charge at Cesarea.** Perhaps he had heard of the former conspiracy to assassinate the Apostle.

**5.** *which among you are able*] R.V. **which are of power among you.** *if there be any wickedness in him*] R.V. **if there is anything amiss in the man.** The same word is used in Luke xxiii. 41.

**6.** *more than ten days*] R.V. **not more than ten days.** Another reading is "not more than eight days."

**7.** *laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove*] St Luke, as he writes these words, seems to be reminded of the trial of Jesus, Mark xiii. 55-60; Luke xxii. 13-25. From St Paul's answer it would seem that their complaints covered charges of breaking the Jewish law, profaning the Temple and stirring up insurrection.

Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these *things* before me? <sup>10</sup>Then said Paul, I stand at Cesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. <sup>11</sup>For if I be an offender, or have committed any *thing* worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of *these things* whereof these accuse me, no *man* may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cesar. <sup>12</sup>Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cesar? unto Cesar shalt thou go.

<sup>13</sup>And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice

9. *willing to do the Jews a pleasure*] R.V. **desiring to gain favour with the Jews**; cp. xxiv. 27. Festus was apparently moved by the animosity of the Jews; and thought it an easy way to gain their favour by acceding to their request. It is noticeable that elsewhere St Luke generally represents the Roman officials in a favourable light. Festus appears to have compared favourably as to moral character with both his predecessor Felix and his successor Albinus.

10. *I stand at Cesar's judgment seat*] Festus' question seems to have convinced St Paul that he could not hope for justice in the provincial court. For Festus to have sent him to Jerusalem would mean nothing less than to "make a present of him" (v. 11 *deliver*) to the Jews. The Emperor was Nero (54-68 A.D.). *where I ought to be judged*] Every Roman citizen had this right of appeal.

12. *with the council*] i.e. the officers and personal retinue of the procurator.

13-22. *Festus consults Agrippa, who expresses a wish to hear St Paul*

13. *king Agrippa and Bernice*] Herod Agrippa II., son of the Herod whose death is recorded in xii. 20-23. He was but 17 at that time and therefore did not receive his father's kingdom: but four years later he became tetrarch of Chalcis, which territory he gave up in 53 A.D. for the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias (Luke iii. 1). All his life he was a staunch friend of the Romans, whose side he took in the Jewish War. Bernice was sister of Agrippa and one year younger than he. She was married to her uncle Herod of Chalcis, but after his death lived with her brother. Later on she

came unto Cesarea to salute Festus. <sup>14</sup> And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix: <sup>15</sup> about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him. <sup>16</sup> To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay, on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth. <sup>18</sup> Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: <sup>19</sup> but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. <sup>20</sup> And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these

attracted the attention of the Emperor Titus. *to salute Festus]* R.V. and saluted Festus. But the word means strictly "after saluting." Formal greetings had taken place before the actual visit was paid to the representative of Rome.

<sup>15.</sup> *desiring to have judgment against him]* R.V. asking for sentence against him.

<sup>16.</sup> *It is not the manner of the Romans]* Festus is anxious to uphold the dignity of Rome before his Jewish visitors. *to deliver any man to die]* R.V. to give up any man. *have licence to answer for himself]* R.V. have had opportunity to make his defence.

<sup>19.</sup> *of their own superstition]* R.V. religion; cp. xvii. 22. *of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive]* Festus put the preaching of St Paul about the Resurrection in this bald way in order to pose before Agrippa as one who took very little interest in the question at issue. Contrast xxiv. 22, 25, 26.

<sup>20.</sup> *because I doubted of such manner of questions]* R.V. And I being perplexed how to inquire concerning these things. Again totally misrepresenting the matter, if we are to believe St

*matters.* <sup>21</sup>But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cesar. <sup>22</sup>Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

<sup>23</sup>And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and were entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth. <sup>24</sup>And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this *man*, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and *also* here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. <sup>25</sup>But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and *that* he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. <sup>26</sup>Of whom I have no certain *thing* to write unto *my* lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. <sup>27</sup>For it

Luke's account. Contrast xxv. 9. *to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus*] R.V. **to be kept for the decision of the emperor.** By this Agrippa would understand that St Paul possessed the Roman citizenship.

XXV. 23-XXVI. 32. *St Paul before Agrippa*

<sup>23.</sup> *with great pomp*] They would wish to appear in full pomp before the Roman governor. St Paul had addressed many audiences, but none so magnificent as this.

<sup>24.</sup> *have dealt with me*] R.V. **made suit to me.**

<sup>25.</sup> *But when I found, etc.*] R.V. **But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death; and as he himself appealed to the emperor, I determined to send him.**

<sup>26.</sup> *unto my lord*] Augustus had forbidden this title, but later emperors revived it. *I might have somewhat to write*] The magistrate who allowed an appeal to Cesar had to send with the prisoner a statement of his case.

seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes *laid* against him.

**26** Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

**2**I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all *the things* whereof I am accused of the Jews: **3**especially *because I know* thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. **4**My manner of life from *my* youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; **5**which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. **6**And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto *our* fathers: **7**unto which *promise* our twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. **8**Why ~~should~~ it be thought *a thing* incredible with you, that God should

XXVI. 1. *stretched forth the hand*] St Luke frequently notices actions of this kind; cp. xiii. 16, xxi. 40.

2-23. St Paul's speech. He gives a sketch of his life and relates at length his conversion. He insists that nothing he has done has been disloyal to the Jewish Scriptures.

2. *I think myself happy*] He begins with the usual compliment to the President; cp. xxiv. 2-4.

4. *which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem*] R.V. and at Jerusalem. His boyhood was apparently spent at Tarsus, and it was only later that he came to study at Jerusalem.

5. *which knew me from the beginning*] Evidently in the old days at Jerusalem he was a man of some mark.

6. *for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers*] St Paul is referring specially to the promise of a future life that appears here and there in the O.T.

7. *instantly*] Old English for earnestly (R.V.).

8. *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?*] R.V. **Why is it judged incredible**

raise the dead? <sup>9</sup>I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many *things* contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>10</sup>Which *thing* I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*. <sup>11</sup>And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities. <sup>12</sup>Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, <sup>13</sup>at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. <sup>14</sup>And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *it is hard* for thee to kick against the pricks. <sup>15</sup>And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. <sup>16</sup>But

**with you, if God doth raise the dead?** The plural "you" marks that he here turns round to the audience.

**9.** *I verily thought with myself, etc.*] The connexion of thought is not quite obvious. It seems to be that the fact of the Resurrection turned for St Paul what had been merely Jesus of Nazareth into the Messiah.

**10.** *many of the saints*] It is curious to find this name used of the Christians before such an audience. *I gave my voice*] R.V. **my vote**. Possibly he means as a member of the Sanhedrin.

**11.** *compelled them to blaspheme*] R.V. **strove to make them blaspheme**. Pliny, in his letter to Trajan, notes that this was what real Christians could not be persuaded to do.

**13.** *at midday*] There could be no question about the supernatural character of a light which overpowered the midday glare of an Eastern sun.

**14.** *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks*] The figure is of an ox being driven on in his work. The phrase is genuine here, but has been inserted in ix. 5.

**16.** *But rise, and stand upon thy feet*] St Paul seems to insert here words from a subsequent communication, and from the

rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this *purpose*, to make thee a minister and a witness both of *these things* which thou hast seen, and of *those things* in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 delivering thee from the people, and *from the Gentiles*, unto whom now I send thee, 18 to open their eyes, and to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from the power of Satan* unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. 19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that *they* should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. 21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill

message brought by Ananias to him. *both of these things which thou hast seen*] R.V. **both of the things wherein thou hast seen me.** For the stress which St Paul lays on having seen the Lord, cp. 1 Cor. ix. 1. *of those things in the which I will appear unto thee*] St Paul was more than once encouraged by visions of the Lord; cp. 2 Cor. xii. 1.

17. *from the people, and from the Gentiles*] The word used for "people" is specially applied to the Jewish people as distinguished from the Gentiles; cp. v. 23. For the message compare the call of Jeremiah (Jer. i. 4-10).

18. *to turn them from darkness to light*] Cp. Eph. v. 8. It is noticeable how many affinities this commission has with the Epistle to the Ephesians. *from the power of Satan*] Cp. Eph. ii. 2. *inheritance*] Cp. Eph. i. 18.

19. *I was not disobedient*] His point is that any other course of action would have been direct disobedience to God.

20. *but shewed first, etc.*] He is careful to point out that all his earliest energies were directed towards the Jews. *throughout all the coasts of Judea*] R.V. **country.** Of this ministrations we have no account unless it is alluded to in ix. 30. But of the Apostle's early ministry very little is narrated. *and do works meet for repentance*] R.V. **doing works worthy of repentance.** Compare the message of John the Baptist, Matt. iii. 8; Luke iii. 8.

*me.* <sup>22</sup> Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other *things* than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: <sup>23</sup> that Christ should suffer, *and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.*

<sup>24</sup> And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. <sup>25</sup> But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth *the* words of truth and soberness. <sup>26</sup> For the king knoweth of these *things*, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these *things* are hidden from him; for this

<sup>22.</sup> *Having therefore obtained help of God*] St Paul regards the Roman soldiers as sent by God to his assistance. *I continue unto this day*] His imprisonment at Cæsarea had evidently not stopped his missionary labours altogether.

<sup>23.</sup> *that Christ should suffer*] R.V. **how that the Christ must suffer**; cp. Luke xxiv. 26. The expression, however, literally means "whether the Christ is capable of suffering." *and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, etc.*] R.V. **and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim**, etc. The light of the Gospel both for Jews and Greeks is only made possible by the Resurrection. For "first," cp. 1 Cor. xv. 20. For "people," cp. on v. 17.

#### 24-32. *The effect of St Paul's speech*

<sup>24.</sup> *Festus said with a loud voice*] It is often supposed that Festus interrupted St Paul here. But the Apostle had probably finished his sermon, for so it was rather than a defence, and we may imagine that it was the strange light of exultation in his eyes which made Festus say he was beside himself, and the impression that he had produced upon the listeners which caused the governor to lift up his voice aloud to break the spell. *much learning*] R.V. **thy much learning**. Festus marvels at the fluency and accuracy of his speech, and the general impression he had produced.

<sup>25.</sup> *most noble Festus*] St Paul greets Festus respectfully with his proper title, but it is evidently at Agrippa that his speech is primarily aimed.

*thing* was not done in a corner. <sup>27</sup>King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. <sup>28</sup>Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. <sup>29</sup>And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds. <sup>30</sup>And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them: <sup>31</sup>and when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. <sup>32</sup>Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cesar.

**27** And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto *one* named Julius, a centurion of

**26.** *this thing was not done in a corner*] A Greek expression. The main points of Christianity were by this time known nearly all over the Roman world.

**28.** *Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian*] R.V. **With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian.** The reading is a little doubtful, but R.V. gives the right sense. The words are not spoken offensively, but Agrippa puts the question aside.

**29.** *both almost, and altogether*] R.V. **whether with little or with much.** St Paul takes up the king's words in all seriousness. *except these bonds*] Festus had found him in bonds (xxiv. 27) though probably before he had been more leniently treated.

**31.** *This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds*] St Luke has given a very full account of this enquiry because the verdict arrived at both by the Roman governor and the Jewish king is, to all intents and purposes, an acquittal of Christianity as a whole.

XXVII. 1-XXVIII. 16. *The voyage to Rome and the shipwreck*

**1.** *when it was determined that we should sail into Italy*] St Luke's presence on the voyage is also attested by the minute detail in which it is described. *a centurion of Augustus' band*] The term is perhaps used loosely, for the cohorts of the Roman legions, who alone would do such police work, did not bear surnames.

Augustus' band. <sup>2</sup>And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; *one* Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. <sup>3</sup>And the next *day* we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave *him* liberty to go unto *his* friends to refresh himself. <sup>4</sup>And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. <sup>5</sup>And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia. <sup>6</sup>And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein. <sup>7</sup>And when we had

But such a cohort might well be called in Palestine "the Emperor's troop."

<sup>2.</sup> *entering into a ship of Adramyttium*] There were no government vessels available at Cæsarea for the conveyance of prisoners, but the centurion in charge had to make the best arrangements he could with such trading vessels as were going in the right direction. Adramyttium is on the coast of Mysia. Ramsay calculates that the voyage began about August 17. *meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia*]

R.V. takes this as applying to the ship: **a ship of A., which was about to sail unto the places on the coast of Asia.** *one Aristarchus...being with us*]

Ramsay suggests that Aristarchus and Luke must have gone as the slaves of St Paul, since he would hardly be permitted to take friends with him. For Aristarchus cp. xix. 29, xx. 4; Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24.

<sup>3.</sup> *courteously entreated Paul*] R.V. **treated Paul kindly.** Evidently St Paul was on an entirely different footing from the other prisoners, who may have been condemned criminals going to Rome to die in the amphitheatre.

<sup>4.</sup> *under Cyprus*] i.e. between the island and the mainland. This was the course usually taken because, owing to the persistent westerly winds, the direct route, which would leave Cyprus on the right, was practically impossible.

<sup>5.</sup> *the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia*] R.V. **the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia.** An ancient gloss says that they took 15 days over this part of the journey. *Myra*] An important harbour; cp. on xxi. 1.

<sup>6.</sup> *a ship of Alexandria*] No doubt one of the fleet of corn ships which plied between Egypt and Italy. Myra was a regular stopping place for such, though on the map it seems out of the way.

sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone; <sup>8</sup>and hardly passing it, came unto a place *which is* called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea. <sup>9</sup>Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished *them*, <sup>10</sup>and said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that *this* voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. <sup>11</sup>Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those *things* which were spoken by Paul. <sup>12</sup>And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, *and there* to winter; *which is* a haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west. <sup>13</sup>And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that *they* had obtained *their*

7. *scarce were come over against Cnidus*] A town on the westernmost promontory of Lycia. *we sailed under Crete*] i.e. to the S.E. coast of Crete, rounding the promontory of Salmone.

8. *The fair havens*] A small port on the S. coast of Crete still called by the same name.

9. *when sailing was now dangerous*] The season of navigation ended in the middle of November, and for two months before this sailing was regarded as specially dangerous. *because the fast was now already past*] The Day of Atonement fell about the time of the autumn equinox. *Paul admonished them*] He was evidently regarded as a person of importance in the ship.

11. *the centurion believed*] Evidently the centurion 'was in supreme command and this suggests that the corn ship was a government vessel. The men called "master and owner of the ship" were probably the captain and sailing master.

12. *not commodious to winter in*] Wintering would mean a stay of some five months, and the centurion would need safe accommodation for his prisoners. *Phenice*] R.V. **Phoenix**, modern Lutro, a secure harbour several miles W. *lieth toward the south west and north west*] The harbour faces E., but St Luke never saw it and may have mistaken the direction given.

purpose, loosing *thence*, they sailed close by Crete. <sup>14</sup>But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. <sup>15</sup>And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let *her* drive. <sup>16</sup>And running under a certain island *which is* called Claudia, we had much work to come by the boat: <sup>17</sup>which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven. <sup>18</sup>And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next *day* they lightened the ship; <sup>19</sup>and the third *day* we cast *out* with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

13. *they sailed close by Crete*] R.V. **they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close in shore.** Ramsay explains the last three words by supposing that they had a specially anxious time in rounding Cape Matala.

14. *there arose against it*] R.V. **there beat down from it,** i.e. from the mountainous coast of Crete. *a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon*] From the word for tempestuous, "typhoon" is derived. Euroclydon is probably a corruption for **Euraquillo** (R.V.), which would mean N.E. wind.

15. *we let her drive*] R.V. **we gave way to it and were driven.**

16. *Clauda*] R.V. **Cauda,** modern Gozzo, a small island almost due S. of Phoenix. *we had much work to come by the boat*] R.V. **we were able, with difficulty, to secure the boat.** In an ancient vessel the boat was towed behind.

17. *they used helps, undergirding the ship*] They put ropes round the hull of the ship and secured them tightly on the deck to prevent the timbers from starting. *fearing lest they should*

*fall into the quicksands*] R.V. **be cast upon the Syrtis.** The Syrtis Major and Syrtis Minor are two quicksands on the N. coast of Africa. They were still far distant, but the ship was making towards them. *strake sail*] R.V. **they lowered the gear.**

Apparently they slackened the mainsail, leaving only a little sail up, and then close-hauled the ship, putting its head within a few points of the wind.

18. *they lightened the ship*] R.V. **they began to throw the freight overboard.**

19. *we cast out*] R.V. **they cast out.** The tackling would include all the furniture of the ship which was not absolutely necessary.

20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. 21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. 22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cesar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. 26 Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

27 And when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the

20. *in many days appeared*] R.V. **shone upon us for many days.**

21. *after long abstinence*] R.V. **when they had been long without food.** In the momentary danger no one had thought of preparing proper food. *Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me*] Apparently the officers had all abandoned hope, and St Paul stands out as the one man capable of inspiring confidence. *to have gained this harm and loss*] i.e. prevented the loss by avoiding the danger.

23. *the angel of God*] The sailors and soldiers would be fairly familiar with the idea of a god sending a messenger. *whose I am, and whom I serve*] Perhaps St Paul is thinking of Elijah's description of himself, 1 Kings xvii. 1, etc.

24. *God hath given thee*] The word implies that it was in answer to prayer.

26. *we must be cast upon a certain island*] Apparently the vision had suggested to the Apostle something of the way in which they were to be saved.

27. *the fourteenth night*] i.e. after they had sailed from the Fair Havens. *in Adria*] R.V. **in the sea of Adria.** Not the modern nor, strictly speaking, the ancient Adriatic Sea, but the name was used loosely for all the part of the Mediterranean between

shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country: 28 and sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found *it* fifteen fathoms. 29 Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. 30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, 31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. 32 Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off. 33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. 34 Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you. 35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of *them* all: and when he had broken *it*, he began

Sicily and Greece. *the shipmen deemed*] R.V. **the sailors surmised**. Probably they heard the breakers roaring.

29. *lest we should have fallen upon rocks*] R.V. **lest haply we should be cast ashore on rocky ground**. *they cast four anchors out of the stern*] i.e. so as to keep the ship's head still towards the land.

30. *under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship*] The boat would be used for carrying the anchors some distance away from the prow before they were dropped.

31. *Paul said to the centurion*] Here, as in v. 11, the centurion appears as in command of the ship.

33. *to take meat*] R.V. **to take some food**. *having taken nothing*] Not to be understood quite literally.

34. *for your health*] R.V. **safety**. After a good meal the men would be better able to look after themselves. *there shall not a hair fall*] R.V. **perish**. A proverbial expression; cp. Luke xxi. 18; 1 Kings i. 52.

35. *gave thanks to God*] The sailors would feel that the meal was in some sense a sacred one, but to Luke and Aristarchus St Paul's action would make it a kind of Eucharist. This idea is

to eat. <sup>36</sup>Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat. <sup>37</sup>And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore *and* sixteen souls. <sup>38</sup>And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea. <sup>39</sup>And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship. <sup>40</sup>And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore. <sup>41</sup>And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves. <sup>42</sup>And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any

further brought out by the addition in one MS. of the words "giving it also to us" at the end of the verse.

<sup>37.</sup> *two hundred threescore and sixteen souls*] Some MSS. omit "two hundred" and add "about." But the larger number is not impossible.

<sup>39.</sup> *a certain creek with a shore*] R.V. **a certain bay with a beach.** The word translated "shore" means especially a "sandy shore" and this is better brought out by R.V. *into the which they were minded, etc.*] R.V. **and they took counsel whether they could drive the ship upon it.** Another reading instead of "drive the ship upon it" has "bring the ship safely to it."

<sup>40.</sup> *when they had taken up the anchors*] R.V. **casting off the anchors.** They simply cut the ropes which held the anchors. *they committed themselves unto the sea*] R.V. **they left them** (i.e. the anchors) **in the sea.** *loosed the rudder bands*] While the ship had been anchored the rudder lines had been made fast. Now an attempt was to be made to steer the ship to shore. *hoised up the mainsail*] R.V. **hoisting up the foresail.**

<sup>41.</sup> *falling into a place where two seas met*] Possibly the channel, about 100 yards wide, which separates the little island of Salmonetta from the mainland. *the hinder part was broken*] R.V. **the stern began to break up.**

<sup>42.</sup> *the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners*] They were responsible for them with their lives.

*of them* should swim out, and escape. <sup>43</sup>But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast *themselves* first into *the sea*, and get to land: <sup>44</sup>and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that *they* escaped all safe to land.

**28** And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita. <sup>2</sup>And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. <sup>3</sup>And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid *them* on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his

**43.** *willing to save Paul*] So God had "given to St Paul the lives of all that were with him" (v. 24). The centurion would recognize that, under God, the safety of all was due to St Paul. *should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land*] R.V. **should cast themselves overboard, and get first to the land.** Here they would be able to help the more helpless ones to land.

**XXVIII. 1.** *they were escaped*] R.V. **we.** *Melita*] Modern Malta. It was by no means uncivilized at this time, and was famous for its linen manufacture. But St Paul's Bay was somewhat remote from the principal town.

**2.** *the barbarous people*] R.V. **the barbarians.** But no term of reproach is intended. St Luke writes as a Greek, to whom the world was divided into two main classes, Greeks and barbarians (cp. Rom. i. 14). *no little kindness*] R.V. **no common kindness.** The same Greek expression for the adjective is used in xix. 11 of St Paul's miracles. *because of the present rain*] Better "persistent rain."

**3.** *when Paul had gathered*] As on the ship, he is still the moving character. *there came a viper out of the heat*] R.V. **came out by reason of the heat.** The creature had been stiff and numb with cold and looked exactly like a stick. There are no vipers now in Malta. *fastened on his hand*] The verb might be translated "bit" for it is used in medical language of poison entering the system. This passage is full of medical terms that can properly only be recognized in the Greek, e.g. the words for "heat," "beast," "swollen," "fallen down dead."

hand. <sup>4</sup>And when the barbarians saw the *venomous* beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet Vengeance suffereth not to live. <sup>5</sup>And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. <sup>6</sup>Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed *their minds*, and said that he was a god. <sup>7</sup>In the same quarters were possessions of the chief *man* of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously. <sup>8</sup>And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody fluxe: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid *his* hands on him, and healed him. <sup>9</sup>So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed: <sup>10</sup>who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they laded us with such *things* as were necessary.

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4. *saw the venomous beast*] R.V. omits "venomous." *Vengeance suffereth not to live*] The natives look on Vengeance (or rather **Justice**, R.V.) as a goddess who tracks down criminals. It is not quite clear how St Luke understood what the natives said, as they would talk a kind of Punic.

6. *after they had looked a great while*] R.V. **when they were long in expectation.** *said that he was a god*] Compare the conduct of the Lystrans, xiv. 11 ff.

7. *the chief man of the island*] The title (lit. "first man") has been found in an inscription referring to the governor of the island. He was a deputy of the governor of Sicily. *Publius*] Tradition makes him become bishop of Malta.

8. *of a fever and of a bloody fluxe*] R.V. **of fever and dysentery.** The terms come naturally from a physician. "Fluxe" is an archaic spelling for "flux" (A.V.), and it is rightly interpreted in R.V.

10. *who also honoured us with many honours*] The use of the first person seems to suggest that St Luke also had taken part in the healings, and this is rendered more probable by the use of another word for "were healed," which means strictly "were medically attended."

<sup>11</sup>And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, *whose sign was Castor and Pollux.* <sup>12</sup>And landing at Syracuse, we tarried *there* three days. <sup>13</sup>And from thence we fet a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli: <sup>14</sup>where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome. <sup>15</sup>And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. <sup>16</sup>And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but

11-16. *The end of the journey to Rome*

11. *after three months*] i.e. some time in February. *a ship of Alexandria*] Another corn ship. *whose sign was Castor and Pollux*] R.V. **The Twin Brothers.** They were sons of Jupiter and were regarded as special guardians of sailors, like St Nicholas in later times.

12. *Syracuse*] At the S.E. extremity of Sicily.

13. *we fet a compass*] R.V. **we made a circuit.** The whole expression in A.V. is archaic for R.V. *Fet* is an archaic perfect. *came to Rhegium*] Modern Reggio on the Straits of Messina. Here Caligula designed to make a harbour for the corn fleet. *the south wind blew*] R.V. **a south wind sprang up.** *Puteoli*] Modern Pozzuoli, near Naples.

14. *where we found brethren*] Puteoli was the chief port of Rome, and already contained a band of Christians to whom St Paul's story was known. *were desired to tarry with them seven days*] Apparently the centurion allowed St Paul everything he wished. *and so we went toward Rome*] R.V. **and so we came to Rome.** In the next verse St Luke adds certain particulars which should strictly have come before.

15. *Appii forum*] R.V. **The Market of Appius.** A town about 40 miles from Rome on the Appian Way. *The three taverns*] A place some 10 miles further on. "Tavern" means "shop."

16. *the centurion...captain of the guard*] R.V. omits. But the detail is probably correct. The "captain of the guard" was in command of a special force employed in various government duties. *Paul was suffered to dwell by himself*] He was allowed to hire

Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

<sup>17</sup>And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men *and* brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, *yet* was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. <sup>18</sup>Who, when they had examined me, would have let *me* go, because there was no cause of death in me. <sup>19</sup>But when the Jews spake against *it*, I was constrained to appeal unto Cesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. <sup>20</sup>For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you*: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. <sup>21</sup>And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came

a lodging near the camp, but had always a soldier with him, to whom he was chained by one hand.

17-31. *St Paul at Rome*

17. *called the chief of the Jews together*] Even after the treatment he had received at Jerusalem St Paul goes first to the Jews. That he was able to summon the chief Jews to his house shews that he was regarded as a man of authority.

18. *would have let me go*] R.V. **desired to set me at liberty**; cp. xxvi. 32.

19. *when the Jews spake against it*] This account does not quite follow the narrative. St Paul's appeal to Cesar is there represented as following immediately Festus' question whether he would go to Jerusalem and be tried there. But Festus was no doubt influenced by the Jews in asking this question.

20. *for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain*] The "hope of Israel" is the expectation of the Messiah. It was the preaching of Christ that had brought St Paul to his chain.

21. *We neither received letters, etc.*] The Jews profess an entirely open mind and desire information as to the new sect, against which so many evil rumours were current. *neither any of the brethren that came*] There would be frequent arrivals of Jews from the East to Rome, and they formed a society of their own in that city.

shewed or spake any harm of thee. <sup>22</sup>But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against. <sup>23</sup>And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening. <sup>24</sup>And some believed the *things* which were spoken, and some believed not. <sup>25</sup>And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, <sup>26</sup>saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: <sup>27</sup>for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. <sup>28</sup>Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it. <sup>29</sup>And when he had said

<sup>22.</sup> *as concerning this sect*] For the term "sect" as applied to the Christians cp. xxiv. 5, 14.

<sup>23.</sup> *to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God*] R.V. **to whom he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God.** The "kingdom of God" would be the Divine scheme which runs through the O.T. and culminates in the life and death of Christ. *from morning till evening*] The subject was a very vast one. St Luke is perhaps thinking of the great exposition of the Scriptures by Christ on the way to Emmaus.

<sup>24.</sup> *some believed not*] It would seem that these were the larger number.

<sup>25.</sup> *Well spake the Holy Ghost, etc.*] The passage quoted is Isaiah vi. 9, 10. It is recorded as quoted by Our Lord at length in Matt. xiii. 14, 15 and partially in Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10. St Paul likens himself to Isaiah in that he was sent to preach to a people who persistently refused to take in his plain message.

<sup>28.</sup> *and that they will hear it*] R.V. **they will also hear.**

these *words*, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

<sup>30</sup> And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, <sup>31</sup> preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those *things* which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

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St Paul does not mean to taunt the Jews with the greater receptiveness of the Gentiles. But he does proclaim that the Gospel, intended first for the Jews, should be published to the Gentiles as well.

**29.** *And when, etc.*] This verse is omitted in the oldest MSS. and in R.V.

**30.** *two whole years*] Evidently St Luke is dating up to a definite point, probably the Apostle's release. During this period were written the Epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon. *with all confidence*] R.V. **boldness.** *no man forbidding him*] The one Greek word which is thus rendered, expresses by its rhythm quietness and repose. It is like the last still notes of an organ.

## INDEX

- Aceldama, 17  
Adria, 178  
Æneas, 72  
Agabus, 83, 146  
Alexander, 136  
Ananias (husband of Sapphira),  
37-40  
Ananias (disciple), 68 f., 152  
Ananias (high priest), 155, 161  
Annas, 32  
Antioch (Pisidian), 93, 101  
Antioch (Syrian), 82, 83, 102,  
108, 109  
Apollon, 129, 130  
Aquila, 125, 128, 129  
Areopagus, 121  
Aristarchus, 135, 139, 175  
Ascension, 11, 13  
Athens, 120  
Attalia, 102  
  
Barnabas, 37, 71, 83, 84, 89 f.,  
110  
Beautiful Gate, 26  
Berea, 119  
  
Candace, 64  
Cesarea, 71, 73, 128, 146, 159,  
166  
Claudius Cesar, 84, 125  
Corinth, 125  
Cornelius, 74  
Crispus, 126  
Cyprus, 82, 90, 110, 145, 147,  
175  
Cyrene, 20, 47, 82  
  
Damaris, 125  
Damascus, 66 f., 152, 171  
David, 23, 24, 35, 57  
Demetrius, 134 f.  
  
Derbe, 99, 102, 111  
Dionysius, 125  
Dorcus, 72  
  
Egyptian, 151  
Elymas, 91  
Ephesus, 128, 130 f., 141  
Epicureans, 121  
Ethiopia, 64  
Euroclydon, 177  
Eutychus, 140  
  
Felix, 159, 164, 165  
Festus, 165, 168 f.  
  
Galatia, 111, 129  
Gallio, 127  
Gamaliel, 44, 151  
Gaza, 64  
  
Hades, 23  
Hellenists, 45  
Herod Agrippa I., 84, 88  
Herod Agrippa II., 167 f.  
Herod Antipas, 35  
  
Iconium, 98, 104  
  
James, brother of John, 84  
James, Lord's brother, 105, 147  
Jason, 119  
Jerusalem (Council at), 104  
Joel, 21  
John, Apostle, 26, 33, 62  
John Baptist, 12, 17, 78, 81,  
94, 129, 131  
John Mark, 91, 92, 110  
Joppa, 72  
Joseph, 51  
Joseph Barsabas, 17  
Judas, 16

- Judas of Galilee, 44  
 Julius, 174  
 Just One, The, 28, 57, 153
- Kingdom of God, 12, 62
- Libertines, 47  
 Lydda, 72  
 Lydia, 113, 118  
 Lysias, 159, 162, 164  
 Lystra, 99, 102, 110
- Mary, Virgin, 15  
 Mary, mother of Mark, 86  
 Matthias, 17  
 Melita, 181  
 Miletus, 141  
 Moses, 48, 52 f.  
 Mysia, 112
- Olivet, 14
- Paphos, 91  
 Pentecost, 13, 141  
 Perga, 92  
 Pharisees, 104, 156, 170  
 Phenice, 176  
 Phenicia, 82, 103  
 Philip, 46, 60 f.  
 Philippi, 113, 139  
 Priscilla, 125, 128, 130  
 Publius, 182
- Resurrection, 17, 22, 24, 28,  
 31, 41, 43, 79, 95, 121, 124,  
 163, 171  
 Rhoda, 87  
 Roman citizenship, 117, 154, 169  
 Rome, 125, 134, 157, 183
- Sadducees, 31, 41, 156  
 Salamis, 91  
 Samaria, 13, 60 f., 103  
 Sanhedrin, 42, 155  
 Sceva, 133  
 Sergius Paulus, 91  
 Seven, The, 48  
 Silas, 108-110, 118, 126  
 Simon Magus, 61-63  
 Simon the Tanner, 73, 78  
 Solomon's Porch, 28  
 Stephen, 46, 47-60, 82, 153  
 Stoics, 121
- Tabitha, 72  
 Tarsus, 71, 83  
 Tertullus, 161  
 Theophilus, 11  
 Thessalonica, 118, 120  
 Theudas, 44  
 Timothy, 111, 126, 134  
 Tongues (speaking with), 19, 80  
 Troas, 112, 139  
 Trophimus, 139, 149  
 Tychicus, 139

