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THE SCHOOL AND COLLEGE EDITION.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

(REVISED VERSION)

(CHAPTERS I.—XVI.)

WITH

Introduction and Notes.

BY THE

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MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES .



PREFACE.

THIS EDITION of the first Sixteen Chapters of the Acts of the Apostles is intended for the use of Students preparing for the Local Examinations of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and similar examinations.

The Syndicates of the Oxford and Cambridge Universities often select these chapters as the subject for examination in a particular year. The Editor has accordingly drawn up the present Edition for the use of Candidates preparing for such Examinations.

The Edition is an abridgement of the Editor's *Acts of the Apostles*, published by Messrs. Gill and Sons.

The Introduction treats fully of the several subjects with which the Student should be acquainted. These are set forth in the Table of Contents.

The Biographical and Geographical Notes, with the complete series of Maps, will be found to give the Student all necessary information, thus dispensing with the need for Atlas, Biblical Dictionary, and other aids.

The text used in this volume is that of the Revised Version and is printed by permission of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, but all editorial responsibility rests with the editor of the present volume.

The Appendix contains (1) a Commentary on the more important changes of the Revised Version, (2) Critical Notes, pointing out the chief changes in the Greek Text, with their bearing on the meaning of the several passages.

The Editor has also prepared a series of Examination papers on the Acts of the Apostles for use with the present Edition. The series consists of seventy-two papers, viz., sixteen General papers, and fifty six (Junior and Senior) on the separate chapters. These will be found useful, not only for revision of work, but as a guide to the preparation of classes. The papers are on separate sheets and can be obtained in packets from the publishers.

F. M.

Milham,

1*RV

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES—

	PAGE
Title	v.
Apostles mentioned in the Book as performing distinct acts ...	v.
Other Apostles mentioned in the Book who are not of the Twelve	vii.
The Author	viii.
The Life of Luke	x.
Suggested Authors	xi.
Design of the Author	xii.
The Sources of the Narrative	xiii.
Date	xvi.
Place of Writing	xvii.
Dispersions of the Jews	xviii.
Influence of the Dispersions on the Promulgation of Christianity	xxi.
Geographical Notes (Chapters i. to xii.)	xxii.
Biographical Notes (Chapters i. to xii.)	xxvi.
Kings and Governors	xxxvi.
Miracles in the Acts	xxxix.
Addresses in the Acts	xxxix.
Appearances of our Lord ; of Angels and other Visions ...	xli.
The Synagogue	xlii.
The Sanhedrim	xliv.
The Temple	xlv.
The Officers of the Temple	xlviii.
The Daily Services of the Temple	xlviii.
The Jewish Festivals	xlix.
Sects and Orders of Men	l.
The Nazarite Vow	lii.
Passages from the Old Testament quoted in the Acts of the Apostles	liii.
Explanation of the Words	lviii.
Table representing the Descent of Christianity	lix.
The Early Days of Paul	lx.
Chronology of the Acts (Chapters i. to xii.)	lxii.
Analysis of the Acts of the Apostles (Chapters i. to xii.) ...	lxiv.
THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES (CHAPTERS I. TO XVI.) with	
MARGINAL NOTES	1-84
ANALYTICAL COMMENTS ON THE TEXT	151
CRITICAL NOTES	159
GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES (CHAPTERS XIII. TO XVI.)... ..	167
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES (CHAPTERS XIII. TO XVI.)	168
FIRST AND SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF ST. PAUL (WITH MAPS)	171
CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS (CHAPTERS XIII. TO XXVIII.)... ..	175
ANALYSIS OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES (CHAPTERS XIII. TO XVI.)	175

INTRODUCTION

TO THE STUDY OF THE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

TITLE.

By the author it is termed a *Treatise* (Gk. λόγος, logos).

"The former *treatise* I made, O Theophilus," i. 1.

It is first called "Acts" in the Codex Siniaticus.

Possibly this was the original appellation, but as other treatises were published under such titles as "*Acts of Peter and Paul*," "*Acts of Timothy*," etc., it became necessary to further define the original treatise of "Acts," and thus we find in various MSS. such titles as "*Acts of the Apostles*," "*Acts of the Holy Apostles*," "*Acting of the Apostles*," etc.

The work is now universally known as the "*The Acts of the Apostles*,"

But such title is misleading, for the work cannot in any sense be regarded as a record of the *doings* of the *Apostles*, inasmuch as it contains no detailed account of the work of any of the Apostles except St. Peter and St. Paul. In fact, it is but the record of *some* acts of *certain* Apostles, and of *some who were not Apostles*, for the author in carrying out his design finds it necessary to notice the preaching of St. Stephen and St. Philip, the Evangelists.

APOSTLES MENTIONED IN THE BOOK AS PERFORMING DISTINCT ACTS.

1. Peter.

- (1.) At the election of Matthias to fill the place of Judas Iscariot (i. 15).
- (2.) On the day of Pentecost (ii. 14).
- (3.) As healing the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (iii. 1).
- (4.) In the subsequent proceedings before the Sanhedrim (iv. 8).
- (5.) At the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira (v. 1).
- (6.) The sick are healed by his shadow as he passes by (v. 15).

- (7.) Speaks in defence of the Apostles before the Sanhedrim (v. 29).
- (8.) After the preaching of Philip, the Evangelist, at Samaria, he goes down with John to that city, and confirms the disciples there. Rebukes Simon Magus (viii. 14).
- (9.) Heals Æneas at Lydda (ix. 33).
- (10.) Raises Dorcas to life at Joppa (ix. 40).
- (11.) Is sent for by Cornelius, whom he baptizes and receives into the Church (x.).
- (12.) Is put in prison by Herod Agrippa I., and is miraculously released by an angel (xii. 3).
- (13.) Takes part in the first Christian Council at Jerusalem (xv. 7).

2. **John** is mentioned on three occasions, but rather as the companion of Peter than as the doer of any special act himself.

- (1.) At the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (iii. 1).
- (2.) In the subsequent proceedings before the Sanhedrim (iv. 8).
- (3.) After the preaching of Philip, the Evangelist, at Samaria, he goes down with Peter to that city, and confirms the disciples there (viii. 14).

3. **James**, the son of Zebedee, brother of John. The only notice of him is that he was executed by Herod Agrippa I. "And he (Herod) killed James, the brother of John, with the sword" (xii. 2).

4. **James**, the son of Alphæus. The President of the first Christian Council at Jerusalem (xv.), and first Bishop of Jerusalem is *James*, who may have been either,

- (a) The *Brother of our Lord*; or,
- (b) The *Son of Alphæus*.

Most probably the Brother of our Lord, for Paul styles the James, whom he saw on his visit to Jerusalem, as "the Lord's Brother" (Gal. i. 19). He also alludes to the same James as "a pillar of the Church" (Gal. ii. 9).

OTHER APOSTLES MENTIONED IN THE BOOK WHO ARE NOT OF THE TWELVE.

1. Barnabas.

- (1.) As selling a piece of land, and giving the price to the common fund (iv. 36, 37).
- (2.) As receiving Paul on his coming to Jerusalem after his conversion (ix. 27).
- (3.) As being sent to Antioch by the Church at Jerusalem (xi. 22).
- (4.) As going to Tarsus to seek Paul (xi. 25).
- (5.) As along with Paul taking relief from the disciples at Antioch to the brethren in Judæa, during the famine (xi. 30).
- (6.) As accompanying Paul on his first missionary journey (xiii., xiv.).
- (7.) As going with Paul from Antioch to Jerusalem to obtain the decision of the Apostles and Elders on the subject of the circumcision of the Gentiles (xv. 2).
- (8.) As contending with Paul previous to the second missionary journey on the subject of taking John Mark Barnabas separated from Paul, and with John Mark visited Cyprus, whilst Paul, taking Silas with him, visited the Churches of Asia Minor (xv. 39, 40).

2. **Paul.** From the twelfth chapter the Acts is practically an account of the Missionary Work of Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Apostles: Lists of.

Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	Acts of the Apostles.
Simon.	Simon.	Simon.	Peter.
Andrew.	James.	Andrew.	James.
James.	John.	James.	John.
John.	Andrew.	John.	Andrew.
Phil p.	Philip.	Philip.	Philip.
Bartholomew.	Bartholomew.	Bartholomew	Thomas.
Thomas.	Matthew.	Matthew.	Bartholomew.
Matthew, the publican.	Thomas.	Thomas.	Matthew.
James, the son of Alphaeus.	James, the son of Alphaeus.	James, the son of Alphaeus.	James, the son of Alphaeus.
Lebbæus, whose surname is Thaddeus.	Thaddeus.	Simon, called Zelotes.	Simon Zelotes.
Simon, the Canaanite.	Simon, the Canaanite.	Judas, the brother of James.	Judas, the brother of James.
Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	

Simon the Canaanite. The word "Canaanite" does not signify a descendant of Canaan nor a native of Cana, but is derived from the Syriac word Kannean, by which the Jewish or faction of "the Zealots" was designated.

Zelotes = a zealot, is the Greek equivalent of the Syriac Canaanites. The Zealots were conspicuous for their fierce advocacy of the Mosaic ritual.

The epithet Canaanite or Zealot is applied to Simon to distinguish him from Simon Peter.

THE AUTHOR.

I. Tradition.

The authorship of the Acts is assigned to Luke by the constant tradition of the church.

Eusebius (A.D. 325) writes, "Luke, by race a native of Antioch, and by profession a physician . . . has left us examples . . . in two inspired books, the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles.

II. Internal Evidence.

1. The introduction to the Acts shows that it was written by the author of the Third Gospel, for,

(a) Mention is made of the "*former treatise*," i.e. the Third Gospel.

(b) The Acts is also dedicated to "*Theophilus*."

(c) The Acts is evidently a continuation of the "*former treatise*," for it takes up the narrative precisely where the Third Gospel leaves off.

2. A comparison of the phraseology of the Gospel and the Acts leads to the conclusion that the two books are from the same hand. *There are more than fifty words used in the Gospel and also in the Acts, which are not found elsewhere in the New Testament.*

3. The writer was a companion of Paul; from the Acts we learn that

(a) He was present with the Apostle from Troas to Philippi on the second missionary journey.

(b) He was absent from the Apostle after his departure from Philippi till his call at that city on his third missionary journey.

(c) He then accompanied Paul to Jerusalem; was with him during his imprisonment at Cæsarea, accompanied him on his voyage to Rome, and was with him during his imprisonment at that city.

Luke is the only one of Paul's companions who fulfils all the above conditions. (See Note on p. 9.)

4. The author of the Gospel and the Acts makes use of technical medical terms in his description of diseases; thus,

In the Gospel.

- (1.) The account of Simon's wife's mother cured of a fever (Luke iv. 38).
- (2.) The healing of the woman with an issue of blood (Luke viii. 43, 44).
- (5.) The narrative of the agony of our Lord (Luke xxii. 44).

In the Acts.

- (1.) The description of the cripple at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (Acts iii. 7).
- (2.) The notice of the death of Herod Agrippa I. (Acts xii. 23).
- (3.) The blindness of Elymas at Paphos (Acts xiii. 11).
- (4.) The cripple at Lystra (Acts xiv. 8).
- (5.) The sickness of the father of Publius at Melita (Acts xviii. 8).

This agrees with the description of Luke as "The beloved physician."

Note.—1. Paul wrote six Epistles during the period between his first and second visits to Philippi, *i.e.* during the interval of the absence of the writer of the Acts.

Luke's name is not mentioned in any of these Epistles.

2. Paul wrote four Epistles (*viz.* to the Ephesians, the Colossians, Philemon, and the Philippians) during his first imprisonment at Rome.

Luke's name is mentioned in the Epistles to the Colossians, Philemon, and the Philippians.

3. The companions of Paul mentioned in the Epistles written from Rome are, Tychicus, Timothy, Epaphroditus, Epaphras, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Marcus, Jesus Justus, Luke, and Demas, and all but Luke fail to comply with the conditions required for the writer of the Acts. Thus

Timothy, Tychicus, Aristarchus, are referred to by the writer of the Acts as follows: "These going before tarried for us at Troas" (xx. 5).

Onesimus is excluded, for he was converted by Paul during his imprisonment at Rome (Philemon, 10).

Mark is excluded, for he was rejected by Paul as a companion on the very journey in which the writer joined him at Troas.

Epaphroditus and Epaphras were not with the Apostle when the imprisonment began. The writer was.

Jesus Justus was of the circumcision, or a Jew by birth, whereas several indications in the Acts lead us to suppose the writer was a Greek, and only a proselyte, not a native Jew.

Demas, forsook the Apostle, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world . . . only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. iv. 10, 11).

Therefore, of all Paul's companions, Luke is the only one who fulfils the conditions required for the writer of the Acts (Birk's "Horæ Apostolicæ").

It has been suggested that Luke, the physician, was taken with him by Paul because of the bodily infirmities under which the Apostle laboured, and that Luke was with Paul as an attendant rather than as a fellow-preacher.

THE LIFE OF LUKE.

There is no mention of him by name in the Gospels or the Acts. He is mentioned three times in different Epistles.

1. "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you" (Col. iv. 14).

From this we infer—

- (1) That Luke was a physician.
 - (2) That he was the companion of Paul in his first Roman imprisonment.
 - (3) From the context (v. 11) we learn that "he was not of the circumcision," and therefore a Gentile.
2. "Only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. iv. 11).
Therefore Luke was with Paul in his second Roman imprisonment, when friend after friend had deserted him, "ashamed of his chain."
 3. "Lucas, my fellow-labourer" (Philemon 24)

Tradition. From statements of Eusebius and Jerome we learn that Luke was a Syrian of Antioch. This accounts for the intimate knowledge which he shows of the Church at that city and its teachers.

Connection with Paul. The writer of the Acts appears to have joined Paul at Troas, on his second missionary journey, for the narrative changes from the *third* to the *first* person, "we endeavoured to go into Macedonia" (Acts xvi. 10).

He was left behind at Philippi when St. Paul and Silas departed, as the narrative proceeds in the third person (Acts xvii. 1).

He appears to have remained at Philippi for some seven years, for, by the return of the narrative to the first person, we infer that he rejoined the Apostle at that place on his last missionary journey. From Philippi he accompanied Paul to Jerusalem; was with him at Cæsarea during his imprisonment; accompanied him in his voyage to Rome, and was his companion during his first and second imprisonments at that city.

He was not (1) Lucius of Cyrene, for Lucas is an abbreviation of Lucanus, not Lucius.

Nor (2) one of the seventy disciples (Luke x. 1—24).

Nor (3) one of the Greeks who desired to see Jesus (John xii. 20).

Nor (4) one of the two disciples at Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13).

According to tradition he fell a victim to persecution, and was hanged on an olive-tree in the eighty-fourth year of his age.

SUGGESTED AUTHORS.

Timothy, Silas, and Titus have severally been suggested as the writer of the Acts.

Timothy, because his name is alluded to by Paul with great affection in the Epistles to the Corinthians, Thessalonians, and Philippians, and from the Acts we know that Timothy was with Paul when he visited Corinth, Thessalonica, and Philippi.

Reply.—The writer of the Acts distinctly states (xx. 4, 5) that Timothy and others “going before tarried for us at Troas.”

Silas is suggested on two grounds:—

1. That the author of the Acts was well acquainted with the acts and sayings of Peter as with those of Paul. Silvanus (or Silas) and Mark (1 Pet. v. 12, 13) are the only persons whom this description would fit. Now Mark did not, after Acts xv., travel with Paul, but Silas did, and from that time we find greater precision in the narrative as regards the history of Paul.

2. As Luke and Silas are never mentioned together, and as the names (Lucas, or Lucanus, derived from *lucus*, a grove, and Silas, or Silvanus, from *silva*, a wood) are cognate, it may well be that Silas and Lucas are the appellations of one and the same person.

Reply.—1. The writer describes Silas “as a chief man among the brethren” (xv. 22). It is hardly probable that Silas would be the writer of such a notice concerning himself.

2 (a). From the account of the preaching and imprisonment of Paul and Silas at Philippi, it is clear that the writer, who speaks there in the first person plural, was not Silas.

(b). When double appellations are given to the same person they are not derived from the same language: thus, **Peter** is derived from the Greek language, while **Cephas** is Aramaic. But **Silvanus** and **Lucanus** both have a Latin origin.

Titus is suggested as the author of the personal sections of the Acts, but though Titus was with Paul in his missionary journeys there is absolutely no ground beyond fanciful suggestion for assigning to him the Authorship of the Acts.

DESIGN OF THE AUTHOR.

The Acts of the Apostles is the continuation of the Gospel according to Luke for—

1. In the Introduction the author refers to the Gospel as the former treatise.
2. The Book is dedicated to the same person, viz., Theophilus.
3. It resumes the subject at the point where the Gospel had left it, viz., the ascension of Jesus into heaven.

As the Acts, therefore, is dedicated to the same person as the Gospel, it is clear that it must be intended for the same class of readers, viz., *Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles.*

“*The former treatise*” is an account of all that Jesus “began to do and to teach.”

Accordingly the Acts is a continuation and extension of Christ's working, through the fulfilment “of the promise of the Father,” by the descent of the Holy Ghost.

The same idea of “*beginnings of work*” is continued in the Acts. The writer simply records the manner in which the teaching of the Apostles was *begun* in different places; he describes the *foundation* of Churches, and he *does no more.* (Lumby.)

The scheme of the book is contained in the command of our Lord (i. 8)—“Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Jerusalem.—The Apostles preached in Jerusalem until, by the admission of their adversaries, “they had filled Jerusalem with their doctrine” (v. 28).

Judæa.—The persecution following the death of Stephen scattered the disciples throughout Judæa and Samaria (viii. 1). Peter is recorded as visiting Lydda, Joppa, and Cæsarea.

Samaria.—During the same persecution Philip, the deacon, visits Samaria, and Peter and John are sent down from Jerusalem.

Uttermost part of the Earth.—Philip, the deacon, baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch, who is returning to Africa.

Peter having baptized Cornelius, and thus admitted the Gentiles, the author now takes up the work of Paul in Asia, Greece, and finally at Rome, *the metropolis of the civilized world.*

In the fulfilment of this scheme the author clearly points out the hand of Christ as guiding the Apostles ; thus,

1. The angel of the Lord sent Philip to meet the Ethiopian eunuch (viii. 26—29).

2. It was a shock and scandal to Peter to find himself called to eat bread with a Roman soldier (x. 14 ; xi. 3).

3. It was with fear and alarm that the Apostles received Saul of Tarsus into their number (ix. 26).

4. It was with surprise that they heard that "the hand of the Lord" was gathering a Gentile church at Antioch (xi. 21, 22).

5. It was the vision of the man of Macedonia that induced Paul to cross over into Europe (xvi. 9).

6. Paul stayed in Corinth at the express command of the Lord, who appeared to him in a vision (xviii. 9, 10).

7. It was by the hand of the Lord that Paul was sent to Rome, as indicated by the vision vouchsafed him (xxiii. 11).

So not only was the design pointed out by Christ, but carried out by His manifest guiding of the Apostles.

THE SOURCES OF THE NARRATIVE.

How and when did Luke obtain his information ? To answer this question we will divide the Acts of the Apostles into three portions, based on our Lord's answer (i. 8): "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

Following this geographical expansion, which is also the order of time, we have :—

I. The beginning of the Christian Church by Peter unto Stephen's death (i.—vii.).

II. Its spread into Samaria and Judæa by Philip and Peter (viii.—xii.).

III. Its further advance "unto the ends of the earth" by Paul (xiii.—xxviii.).

Sect. I. (a.) The Work of Peter at Jerusalem (i.—v.). :—

The first five chapters bear the impress of Peter. His speeches correspond in thought, and occasionally even in words, with both his Epistles. The healing of the lame man (chap. iii.) is marked by the same graphic touches as the Gospel of St. Mark, who is said to have been aided and directed by the Apostle. There is a similar resemblance in chaps. x., xi., xii., which record the admission of

Cornelius by Peter, and the escape of the Apostle from prison. *Therefore information on these events must have been obtained directly or indirectly from the Apostle himself.*

Had Luke any opportunity of gaining this information? Yes; for:—

1. He stayed with or near Philip the Evangelist during Paul's two years' imprisonment at Cæsarea.

2. This two years' residence at Cæsarea would enable him to visit Jerusalem, and so from living witnesses and written documents to obtain an account of the planting of the church at Jerusalem.

N.B.—Possibly the letter of the Council (chap. xv.), and the letter of the captain, Claudius Lysias, to Felix (chap. xxiii.), were thus obtained.

3. Luke's association with Mark at Rome during Paul's captivity would account for his knowledge of Peter's acts and speeches.

(b.) **The Work, Defence, and Death of Stephen** (vi., vii.).

On this two sources were open to Luke.

1. Philip the Evangelist, who was a fellow-deacon with Stephen.

2. Paul of Tarsus, who was (1) probably an antagonist when "certain of them of Cilicia disputed with Stephen" (vi. 9).

(2). A member of the Sanhedrim and had, as we know, heard the defence of Stephen, and witnessed his death (Acts vii. 58; viii. 1; xxii. 20).

Could Luke have derived his information from sources more unimpeachable?

Sect. II. The spread of the Christian Church into Samaria and Judæa (viii.—xii.).—When (Acts xxi. 8) Luke entered into the house of Philip the Evangelist ("who was one of the seven") at Cæsarea, he was at the fountain head of knowledge concerning the planting of the Church in Samaria and of the admission of Cornelius by Peter.

Of the former no man could speak with such authority as Philip, the chief actor; and **of the latter** no place could supply such particulars as Cæsarea, the residence of "Cornelius and his kinsmen and friends upon whom the Holy Ghost fell." Some of these Gentiles, and of the six Jews who accompanied Peter from Joppa, would answer the inquiries of the future historian of the Acts. Thus by his own diligence Luke could obtain his facts concerning the first preaching

of the Gospel in Samaria and its villages, and in the region round Joppa. Besides, Jerusalem was near enough to Luke during his two years' stay with the prisoner Paul, to ascertain from James and the Christians there all the circumstances necessary to make his narrative accurate and perfectly trustworthy.

Section III.—The Spread of the Christian Church “unto the ends of the earth”—The missionary work of Paul (xiii.—xxviii.).

On this portion Luke's chief informant would be Paul himself. His lips would recount his conversion, and those visions which he alone could know, and none but he could impart. Nor, as his revelations were so frank and so outspoken before the multitude at Jerusalem, the Sanhedrim, the Governor Festus, and King Agrippa, would he be reserved to his constant companion, Luke, the beloved physician.

Furthermore if, as is generally believed, the Book of the Acts was completed at Rome during the two years of Paul's first imprisonment, Luke had resources at hand whence he could draw many minute particulars. Thus—

1. *On the First Missionary Journey.*

(a) Mark was the attendant on Paul and Barnabas as far as Antioch, in Pisidia.

(b) Timothy was cognisant of the persecutions endured at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, for (2 Tim. iii. 10—11) Paul recalls to Timothy his sufferings undergone at those places.

2. *On the Second Missionary Journey.*

(a) Timothy was with Paul almost throughout this journey.

(b) At Troas Luke joined them, but was left behind at Philippi.

3. *On the Third Missionary Journey.*

(a) Aristarchus was with Paul during his stay at Ephesus.

(b) Luke joined Paul at Philippi, and with Aristarchus, Timothy, Tychicus and others, accompanied him on his return to Jerusalem.

(c) Luke accompanied Paul to Jerusalem and Cæsarea.

4. *On the Voyage to Rome.*

Luke and Aristarchus were the companions of Paul during his voyage to Rome, and shared the shipwreck, and imprisonment at Rome.

Now, in the Epistles written during the Roman captivity, all these—Timothy, Mark, Luke, Aristarchus, and Tychicus—are mentioned as fellow-workers with Paul at Rome.

Therefore they were always at hand for Luke to consult in any difficulty; and thus, as eye-witnesses, they could add such minute evidence as to time, place, and circumstances, as would perfect Luke's narrative of the Acts of the Apostles,

Summary.

	Source.	Opportunity.
<i>Chaps. I.—V.</i> The foundation of the Church at Jerusalem; the work of Peter.	Peter, either directly or indirectly.	The residence with Paul for two years during his imprisonment at Cæsarea.
<i>Chaps. VI., VII.</i> The appointment of the deacons. The work, accusation, and death of Stephen.	Philip the Evangelist and Paul himself.	The residence at Cæsarea, where Philip dwelt, and Luke's companionship with Paul.
<i>Chap. VIII.</i> The preaching of Philip the Evangelist.	Philip the Evangelist.	The residence at Cæsarea, where Philip dwelt.
<i>Chap. IX.</i> The conversion of Paul.	Paul himself.	Luke's companionship with Paul.
<i>Chaps. IX., X., XI., XII.</i> The miracles of Peter at Lydda and Joppa. The conversion of Cornelius. The imprisonment and escape of Peter. The death of Herod at Cæsarea.	The brethren at Cæsarea.	All these events as occurring near Cæsarea, and connected with that place, could be communicated to Luke during his two years' residence at Cæsarea.
<i>Chap. XV.</i> The Council at Jerusalem.	Paul, and the records at Jerusalem.	Luke's companionship with Paul. And he could obtain access to the records at Jerusalem during his residence at Cæsarea.
<i>Chap. XIII. to end.</i> —The work of Paul.	Paul himself. Luke's own observation. Paul's fellow-workers.	Luke, as a companion of Paul in part of his second and third missionary journeys, during his residence at Cæsarea, on the voyage to Rome, and during the imprisonment there, could, by personal observation, and from Paul himself, gain information on the work of Paul. Timothy, Mark, Aristarchus, and Tychicus, companions of Paul in his missionary work, and fellow workers at Rome, could add details.

DATE.

But little difficulty is experienced in assigning a date approximately for the Acts of the Apostles.

The following considerations guide us—

- I. The writer took part in several of the events mentioned, therefore must have been contemporaneous with the circumstances he describes.
- II. The concluding verses of the book record, "and Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house." Therefore the work must have been finished after the Apostle's first imprisonment at Rome, *i.e.* the date of the work *cannot be earlier than 63 A.D.*

- III. Had Luke known of Paul's release after the imprisonment, as mentioned, 2 Tim. iv. 16, it seems most probable that he would have stated it. This is an additional reason for concluding that the book was published at the end of the imprisonment mentioned, Acts xxviii.
- IV. In the book Jerusalem is always referred to as being still in its grandeur; the Temple services, the sacrifices, and the great feasts are still observed; such places as Solomon's Porch, Aceldama, the Castle of Antonia are spoken of as though still existing, and as well-marked spots. No allusion whatever is made to the destruction of the city. Therefore the work *cannot have been completed later than 70 A.D.*, the date of the destruction of Jerusalem.
- V. An additional reason for an early date may be deduced from the absence of all reference to the Gnostics, the earliest and most prominent of the heretical teachers. The writer records the opposition of the Judaizing Christians, and the assaults made upon the Apostles by the Jews and certain sections of the heathen population, but of Gnosticism in any form there is no mention, though that kind of teaching was widely spread before the end of the first century.
- VI. There is no mention of the martyrdom of Paul. This event took place about 66—68 A.D. It is very improbable that the writer would have omitted to mention this event if he had known of it.

Conclusion.—The Acts could not have been completed *earlier than 63 A.D.* It *must* have been published *before 70 A.D.*, and most probably before 66 A.D. We may therefore infer that it was published shortly after 63 A.D. and before 66—68 A.D., the date of the martyrdom of Paul.

PLACE OF WRITING.

Luke was left behind at Philippi by Paul on his second missionary journey. He remained in that city some seven years and joined Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 5, 6). Luke accompanied Paul to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 5, 6—xxi. 17), and recorded minutely every circumstance of the voyage.

We infer that already had the evangelist *conceived* the idea of writing an account of Paul's travels and work.

Luke was with Paul at Cæsarea, where the Apostle was imprisoned for

two years. This imprisonment may have afforded Paul leisure during which he could give Luke information and correct what he had written.

We also notice that Luke was with Paul for at least two years at Rome.

Conclusion.—Very probably the design of writing the Acts was conceived at *Philippi*, and carried into execution at *Cæsarea* and at *Rome*.

DISPERSIONS OF THE JEWS.

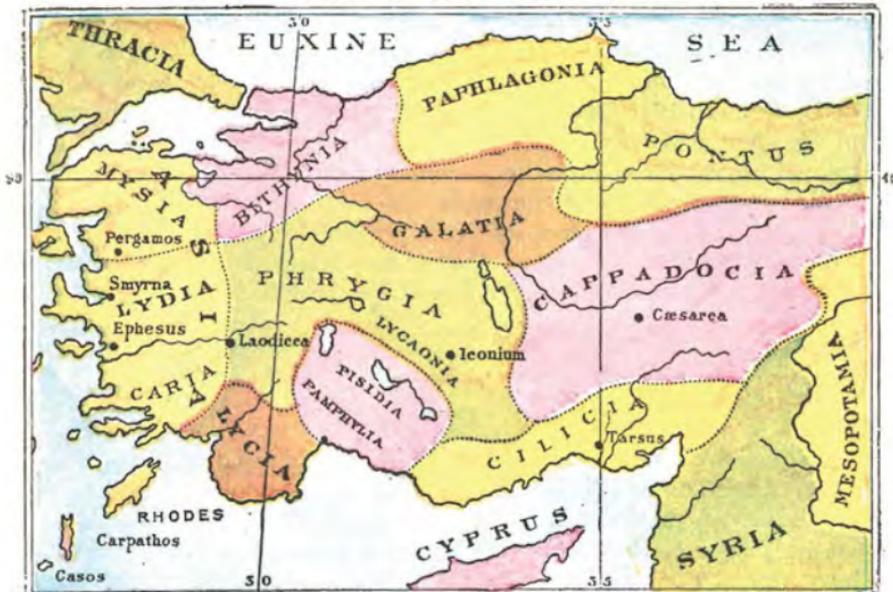
FIRST DISPERSION.



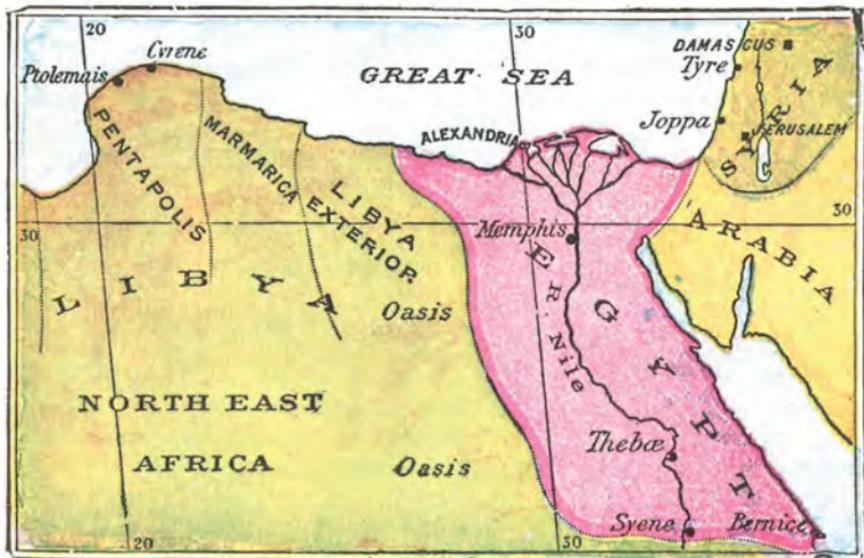
Parthians, Acts ii. 9, designates the Jews settled in Parthia. In apostolic times Parthia was a wide extent of country south of the Caspian Sea, extending from India to the Tigris. It was a power almost rivalling Rome, in fact the only existing power that had tried its strength against Rome and not been worsted in the encounter. Crassus (who, with Cæsar and Pompey, formed the first Triumvirate at Rome) was defeated by the Parthians, and slain.

Medes, inhabitants of Media, a country lying south and south-west of the Caspian Sea, east of Assyria, and north-west of Persia. They are prominently mentioned in the Book of Daniel.

SECOND DISPERSION.



THIRD DISPERSION.



Elamites took their name from Elam, the son of Shem (Gen. x. 22). They inhabited the country called Elam, south of Assyria, and east of Persia. In Elam was Susa, or Shushan, afterwards the residence of the Persian Court and the capital of the empire. "In Shushan the palace, which is in the province of Elam" (Dan. viii. 2).

Mesopotamia.—The country between the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates. The seat both of the Assyrian Empire, of which the capital was Nineveh on the Tigris; and of the Babylonian Empire, of which the capital was Babylon on the Euphrates.

N.B.—These are the Jews of the first or earliest Dispersion, viz. of the Ten Tribes in Media and Assyria by Shalmaneser (2 Kings, xvii.) and the Two Tribes in the neighbourhood of Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chron. xxxvi. 20).

SECOND DISPERSION.

Cappadocia.—A province of Asia Minor, south of Pontus, and north of the Taurus range.

Pontus.—A province in the north-east of Asia Minor, bordering on the Euxine on the north, and having Cappadocia as its southern boundary.

Asia.—The Roman province known as Pro-consular Asia, comprising the western coast of Asia Minor. It must not be confounded with the modern Asia Minor.

Phrygia.—It is very difficult to assign an exact geographical definition to Phrygia. It denoted in a vague manner the western part of the central region of Asia Minor.

Pamphylia.—A district on the south coast of Asia Minor, having Cilicia on the east, and Lycia on the west. Paul first entered Asia Minor at Perga, in Pamphylia (xiii. 13).

N.B.—These are the Jews of the Dispersion under the Syrian kings, notably Antiochus the Great, who planted large bodies of Jewish colonists in the capitals of his western provinces, and Antiochus Epiphanes, whose persecutions drove the Jews to the remote districts of his empire.

THIRD DISPERSION.

Libya.—A name applied by Greek and Roman writers to the African continent, generally, however, excluding Egypt. "The parts of Libya about Cyrene" means the Cyrenica, a district in northern Africa corresponding to the modern Tripoli.

Cyrene.—The chief of the five cities forming the district of Cyrenica.

Simon who bore our Saviour's cross was a native of Cyrene.

The Jews in Cyrene gave their name to one of the synagogues in Jerusalem (vi. 9).

Christian converts from Cyrene took an active part in the foundation of the first Gentile Church at Antioch (xi. 20).

Lucius of Cyrene is mentioned as one of those at Antioch who took a leading part in the sending forth of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (xiii. 1).

N.B.—These are the Jews of the African or Egyptian Dispersion. The Jewish settlements in Egypt and Africa were established by Alexander the Great and Ptolemy I.

Strangers (or sojourners) of Rome.

N.B.—The Jewish settlements in Rome were consequent upon the occupation of Jerusalem by Pompey, B.C. 63.

Cretes, dwellers in the island of Crete, now called Candia.

Arabians, inhabitants of the peninsula of Arabia.

N.B.—These are added as finding no place in the above classification.

Bishop Wordsworth points out that Peter, the Apostle of the Circumcision, provided instruction for all these Dispersions.

1. He went in person to the *Parthians*, for he wrote his first Epistle from Babylon (1 Pet. v. 13).
2. He wrote his epistles to "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1 Pet. i. 1), *i.e.* the Jews of the Syrian or second Dispersion.
3. He sent "Marcus his son" to the Egyptian Dispersion.
4. He himself visited Rome.

INFLUENCE OF THE DISPERSIONS ON THE PROMULGATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

I.—In consequence of the wide dispersion of the Jews a general persuasion prevailed over the whole East of the near approach of a Great Deliverer.

II.—This belief was in consequence of the reading and exposition of the Septuagint (or Greek) version of the Hebrew Scriptures.

III.—The Jews dispersed abroad in many cities freely admitted the Gentiles to the reading and expounding of their Scripture in their synagogues.

IV.—Thus numbers of the Gentiles were familiar with the Old Testament, especially with the prophetic portions, and so pre-disposed to listen to Paul's account of the fulfilment of those prophecies. Example may be found in the conduct of the Gentiles

at Antioch in Pisidia. Paul's argument there is drawn entirely from the Old Testament; and yet we find the Gentiles, after listening to it, crowd round him and eagerly desire that these words may again be preached to them the next Sabbath.

V.—The Jews of the Dispersions present on the day of Pentecost naturally prepared the way for the Apostles in the interval which preceded the beginning of separate apostolic missions.

VI.—The course of the apostolic preaching followed in a regular progress the line of Jewish settlements.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Cilicia.—A maritime province in the south-east of Asia Minor. Many Jews had settled there at the time of the Syrian dispersion under Antiochus Epiphanes.

Notices in Acts.

1. Jews from Cilicia were among the opposers of Stephen (vi. 9).
2. Cilicia was the native country of Paul, who was born at Tarsus.

Charran, or Haran.—The name of the place whither Abraham migrated with his family from Ur of the Chaldees, and where the descendants of his brother Nahor established themselves. It is said to be situate in Mesopotamia (Gen. xxiv. 10), or in Padan-aram (xxv. 20). A village named Harran, situated on the Belith, a tributary of the Euphrates, is in all probability identical with the ancient Haran.

Sychem.—The ancient Shechem.

Lying between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal.

Stephen makes reference to Sychem in his defence before the Sanhedrim.

The events occurring at Shechem in patriarchal times, and as connected with Acts, are:—

1. It was the first resting-place of Abraham on his migration from Mesopotamia (Gen. xii. 6).
2. Jacob, on his return from his sojourn with Laban at Padan-aram, settled at Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 18).
3. Here he bought a "parcel of a field" from the children of Hamor, the father of Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 19).
4. Jacob subsequently bequeathed this piece of land as a special bequest to his son Joseph (Gen. xlviii. 22).

Olivet.—The Mount of Olives, styled by Luke the "mount called Olivet." An eminence on the east of Jerusalem, and separated from the city by the narrow ravine of the Kidron.

It is prominent in Gospel history as the scene of our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and of His weeping over the city

(Luke xix. 29). At the foot of the mount was the Garden of Gethsemane, the scene of our Lord's agony and betrayal (John xviii. 1).

It is mentioned in the Acts as the scene of our Lord's Ascension.

Cyprus.—An island situated in the extreme eastern corner of the Mediterranean, due east of Syria, and south of Cilicia.

Notices in Acts.

1. Barnabas, the Apostle, was a native of Cyprus (iv. 36).
2. Men of Cyprus and Cyrene preached the Gospel first to Gentiles at Antioch (xi. 20).
3. Paul and Barnabas visited Cyprus on the first missionary journey, landing at Salamis, and going through the island to Paphos, where the deputy Sergius Paulus was converted, and Elymas, the sorcerer, smitten with blindness.
4. Barnabas, when he separated from Paul, took Mark with him, and visited Cyprus.

Antioch in Syria.—The capital city of Syria, situated on the river Orontes, about sixteen miles from the sea-coast. It was founded 300 B.C., by Seleucus Nicator. It became a city of great extent and remarkable beauty. It was the residence of the Roman proconsul of Asia.

Notices in Acts.

1. Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, was a proselyte of Antioch (vi. 5).
2. The first Gentile Church was founded at Antioch (xi. 20, 21).
3. At Antioch Agabus prophesied the famine (xi. 27, 28), and from Antioch were sent contributions to the brethren at Jerusalem (xi. 30).
4. At Antioch the disciples were first called Christians (xi. 26).
5. It was to Antioch that the Judaizers came, who disturbed the Church there, and were the cause of the holding the first Christian Council (xv. 1).
6. It was the centre and starting point of Paul's missionary work for—
 - (a) At Antioch Paul and Barnabas were ordained for missionary work (xiii. 1, 3).
 - (b) From Antioch they started on the first missionary journey (xiii. 1, 3), and hither they returned (xiv. 26).
 - (c) Paul began and ended his second missionary journey at Antioch (xv. 36; xviii. 22).
 - (d) Antioch was also the starting-point of the third missionary journey (xviii. 23), which was brought to an end by the imprisonment at Jerusalem and Cæsarea.

Alexandria.—The capital of Egypt, founded by Alexander the Great, B.C. 332. Ptolemy I. removed a great number of Jews to Alexandria, and so numerous did the Jewish residents become that Philo estimates their number at nearly 1,000,000, and adds that two of the five districts of Alexandria were called "Jewish districts." The Septuagint version of the Old Testament was made by Jews at Alexandria.

Notices in Acts.

1. The synagogue of the Alexandrians was among those who disputed with Stephen (vi. 9).
2. Apollus was a native of Alexandria (xviii. 24).
3. Paul sailed from Myra on the voyage to Rome, in a ship of Alexandria (xxvii. 6).

Madian = Midian.—Midian was a son of Abraham and Keturah, and gave his name to the land and the people. "The land of Midian" referred to (Acts vii. 29) was probably the peninsula of Sinai. Hither Moses fled, after killing the Egyptian, and was a sojourner there forty years. He married Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, priest of Midian, and had two sons, Gershom and Eliezer.

Gaza was the southernmost of the five great cities of the Philistines. It is the last town in the south-west of Palestine, on the frontier of Egypt, and is on the route which a traveller from Jerusalem to Egypt would follow. There were two routes from Jerusalem to Gaza, the more northern one passing through Ascalon and then by the coast to Gaza, the other farther to the south passing through Hebron. The latter was more favourable for carriages, and passed through a district comparatively without towns. To this route reference is made when Philip the Evangelist is bidden to "go towards the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." On this road Philip met and baptized the Ethiopian eunuch (viii. 27 and foll.)

Azotus.—One of the five chief cities of the Philistines, about three miles from the Mediterranean Sea, and nearly midway between Gaza and Joppa.

Here Philip appeared after leaving the Ethiopian eunuch (viii. 40).

Cæsarea.—The Cæsarea of the Acts is the Cæsarea on the sea-coast, known also as Cæsarea Sebaste, so called in honour of Augustus (Gk. Sebastos) Cæsar. It was on the coast of Palestine, on the great road from Tyre to Egypt, and about seventy miles from Jerusalem. It was built by Herod the Great. It was the official residence of the Herodian kings and of the Roman Governors of Judæa.

Notices in Acts.

1. Philip, passing from Azotus, preached through all cities till he came to Cæsarea (viii. 40).

2. Cæsarea was the scene of the conversion and baptism of the centurion, Cornelius, the first fruits of the Gentiles.

3. After the miraculous release of Peter from prison, Herod went down to Cæsarea, where he died, eaten of worms (xii. 23).

4. At the close of his second missionary journey Paul sailed from Ephesus, landed at Cæsarea, thence went up to Jerusalem (xviii. 22).

5. At the close of his third missionary journey Paul stayed at Cæsarea. Here dwelt Philip the Evangelist, and here also Agabus prophesied the persecutions Paul would suffer at the hands of the Jews.

6. Claudius Lysias, the chief captain, sent Paul from Jerusalem to Felix, the governor at Cæsarea.

7. Cæsarea was the scene of Paul's two years' imprisonment, his accusation by the Jews through Tertullus, his trials before Felix, Festus, and finally Agrippa II. On Paul appealing to Cæsar he was sent to Rome, sailing from Cæsarea in the charge of the centurion Julius.

Damascus.—One of the most ancient and one of the most important of the cities of Syria. It is situated in an extensive and fertile plain east of the chain of Anti-Lebanus. The fertility of the plain is due to streams flowing from Lebanon and Hermon. These streams are called Abana and Pharpar in Scripture.

Notices in the Acts.

1. Saul of Tarsus was journeying to Damascus, commissioned to arrest the Christians there, when, near the city, he met with the vision which converted him (ix. 1-8).
2. At Damascus Ananias restored Paul's sight, and baptized him (ix. 9-18).
3. Saul preached at Damascus, and the Jews laid a plot to kill him. Saul was saved by being let down from the wall in a basket (ix. 20-25).
4. From 2 Cor. xi. 32, we learn that King Aretas was the ruler over Damascus at this time.

Tarsus.—The capital of Cilicia, situated in a mild and fertile plain on the banks of the Cydnus. Augustus made it a "free city," but that did not constitute its inhabitants Roman citizens. The schools of Tarsus were held in high reputation.

Notices in the Acts.

1. It was the birth-place of Paul, who styles himself "a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city" (xxi. 39).
2. When Paul went up from Damascus to Jerusalem, the Grecian Jews sought to slay him, so the brethren sent him down to Cæsarea, and thence to Tarsus (ix. 30).
3. Paul remained at Tarsus until Barnabas came to Tarsus to seek him, after the Gospel had been preached to the Gentiles at Antioch (xi. 25).

Lydda.—A town in the plain of Sharon, about nine miles from Joppa. The ancient name was Lod. It was afterwards called Diospolis.

At Lydda Peter healed the paralytic Æneas, bedridden for eight years (ix. 33, 34).

Saron, or Sharon.—The plain of Sharon, a broad, rich tract of land extending along the coast from Joppa to Cæsarea.

The inhabitants of Sharon were converted by the miracle of the healing of the paralytic Æneas, by Peter (ix. 35).

Joppa.—The modern Jaffa, a port on the south-western coast of Palestine. The port of Jerusalem in the days of Solomon, as it has been ever since.

Notices in the Acts.

1. Here Peter raised Tabitha to life (ix. 36-43).
2. Here Peter stayed at the house of Simon, the tanner, and on the house-top had the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, filled with creatures clean and unclean (x. 9-16).

Phœnice = Phœnicia, a tract of country of which Tyre and Sidon were the principal cities, in the north of Palestine, along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, bounded by that sea on the west, and by the mountain range of Lebanon on the east. The native name of Phœnicia was Kenaan (Canaan), signifying lowland. Thus "the woman of Canaan" (Matt. xv. 22), whose daughter was vexed with a devil, is termed by Mark "a Greek, a Syro-Phœnician by nation" (Mark vii. 26).

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Theophilus.—The person to whom St. Luke ascribes his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. There are two conjectures concerning him, viz. :

1. Since the name = lover of God, many have been disposed to doubt the personality of Theophilus, regarding the name either as that of a fictitious personage, or as applicable to every Christian reader.

2. From the honourable epithet (*κρίσιστε* = most excellent) applied to him in Luke i. 3, it has been argued that he was a person in high official position.

The epithet "most excellent" is a sufficient evidence of his historical existence, and proves that he was a person of high rank. He was a Gentile, and had come under the influence of St. Luke or under that of St. Paul, probably at Rome, and had been converted to the Christian faith.

Notices in Scripture.

1. "It seemed good to me . . . to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus" (Luke i. 3).
2. "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus" (Acts i. 1).

John the Baptist.

Notices in Acts.

1. "For John truly baptized with water" (Acts i. 5).
2. Of Apollos it is said that before he was instructed by Aquila and Priscilla, he knew only "the baptism of John" (Acts xviii. 25).
3. Of the twelve men at Ephesus it is recorded that they had been baptized "unto John's baptism" (Acts xix. 3).
4. Paul, in baptizing these converts describes the baptism of John thus:—"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" (Acts xix. 4).
5. Historical allusions to the baptism of John are made—
 - (a) by Peter in his address to Cornelius, x. 37.
 - (b) by Paul in his sermon at Antioch in Pisadia, xiii. 24, 25.

Mary, The Virgin, Mother of our Lord.

Notice in Acts.

As being with the Apostles in the upper room when Matthias was chosen as an Apostle to fill the place of Judas Iscariot (Acts i. 14).

Joseph, called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus.*Notice in Acts.*

One of the two persons chosen by the assembled Church as worthy to fill the place in the apostolic company from which Judas fell (Acts i. 23). The choice fell on Matthias.

He had been a constant attendant upon Jesus during the whole of His ministry.

Eusebius states that Joseph Barsabas was one of the seventy disciples.

Matthias.*Notice in Acts.*

He was the Apostle elected to fill the place of Judas (Acts i. 23).

He had been a constant attendant upon Jesus during the whole of His ministry.

It is said that he preached the Gospel, and suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia.

Annas, a high priest of the Jews. He was the son of Seth, and was high priest from A.D. 7—14, when he was deposed by the Romans, and his son-in-law, Caiaphas, appointed high priest A.D. 24. In Luke iii. 2, both Annas and Caiaphas are called high priests, and Annas is mentioned first. Of this three explanations are given, viz. :

1. That by the Mosaic law the high priesthood was held for life (Num. xxxv. 25), and since Annas had only been deposed by the arbitrary caprice of the Romans, he would legally and religiously be regarded as high priest by the Jews.

2. That he was president of the Sanhedrim.

3. That the high priesthood was at this time in the hands of a clique of Sadducean families. According to Josephus, there had been 28 high priests in 107 years.

Our Lord, on His capture in the garden of Gethsemane, was taken first to Annas (John xviii. 13), who then sent him bound to Caiaphas (xviii. 24). Annas was a Sadducee.

Notice in Acts.

As trying Peter and John for preaching the doctrine of the resurrection after the healing of the cripple at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (Acts iv. 6, &c.).

Caiaphas, called also Joseph, high priest of the Jews under Tiberias, during the years of our Lord's ministry, and at the time of His condemnation and crucifixion. He was son-in-law of Annas. He was appointed by the Romans A.D. 24. In Luke iii. 2, both Annas and Caiaphas are mentioned as high priests (for explanation see Annas above). "Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people" (John xviii. 14). When our Lord was captured in the garden of Gethsemane, He was

taken to Annas first, who sent Him bound to Caiaphas, by whom He was tried (John xviii. 24, 28).

Notice in Acts.

As along with Annas and others trying Peter and John for preaching the doctrine of the resurrection after the healing of the cripple at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (Acts iv. 6, &c.).

John, one of the Sadducean party, who tried Peter and John for preaching the doctrine of the resurrection after the healing of the cripple at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (Acts iv. 6).

Alexander, one of the Sadducean party, who tried Peter and John for preaching the doctrine of the resurrection after the healing of the cripple at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (Acts iv. 6).

Ananias (or Hananiah = one to whom the Lord has been gracious), a disciple at Jerusalem, husband of Sapphira. Having sold a piece of land for the benefit of the Church, he kept back part of the price, bringing to the Apostles the remainder, as if it were the whole, his wife being also privy to the scheme. Peter being enabled by the power of the Spirit to see through the fraud, denounced him as having lied to the Holy Ghost, *i.e.* having attempted to pass upon the Holy Spirit which guided the Apostles an act of deliberate deceit. On the denunciation of Peter, Ananias fell down and expired.

Sapphira (Sapphire, a precious stone), the wife of Ananias, who conspired with her husband to deceive the Apostles in selling a piece of land, and bringing to the Apostles part of the price, professing it to be the whole. Sapphira entered the presence of the Apostles after the death of Ananias, and when questioned by Peter, told the same tale as her husband, for which she was like him denounced by the Apostle, and likewise fell down and died.

Gamaliel, a Pharisee and celebrated doctor of the law. He was president of the Sanhedrim under Tiberias, Caligula, and Claudius, and is reported to have died eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Notices in the Acts.

"A Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honour of all the people" (Acts v. 34).

He was the instructor of Paul, who was "brought up in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel" (Acts xxlii. 3).

He gave prudent worldly advice to the Sanhedrim concerning the treatment of the followers of Jesus. "Refrain from these men and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men it will be overthrown; but if it be of God ye will not be able to overthrow them, lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God" (Acts v. 38, 39). His counsel was followed.

Theudas.

Notice in Acts.

An insurgent mentioned in Gamaliel's speech before the Jewish Council (Acts v. 35-39) at the time of the trial of the Apostles. He appeared, according to Luke's account, at the head of about four hundred men. He boasted himself to be somebody, *i.e.* professed to be the Messiah. He was slain, and his followers were dispersed.

Josephus speaks of a Theudas, who played a similar part in the time of Claudius, A.D. 44, *i.e.* some ten or twelve years after the delivery of Gamaliel's speech. Luke has, therefore, been charged with having committed an anachronism.

But at the time of the death of Herod the Great, anterior to the rebellion of Judas of Galilee, the Jews were very turbulent, the land being overrun with insurrectionary chiefs or fanatics. Josephus mentions three of these disturbers *by name*; he passes over the others with a general allusion. Among those whom he has omitted to name may have been the Theudas to whom Gamaliel refers.

Judas of Galilee.

Notice in Acts.

The leader of a popular revolt "in the days of the taxing," and referred to by Gamaliel in his speech before the Sanhedrim. Judas himself perished, and his followers were dispersed.

Josephus records that Judas was a Gaulonite of the city of Gamala, probably taking the name of Galilæan from his insurrection taking its rise in Galilee. His watchword was, "We have no Lord or Master but God," thus denying the right of the Romans to tax the Jews. He was the founder of the sect of the Gaulonites.

Stephen.

The first martyr.

Notices in the Acts.

1. He was the chief of the Seven (commonly called Deacons), appointed to rectify the complaints in the early Church at Jerusalem made by the Grecians (or Hellenists) against the Hebrew Christians.

2. *Character* (a) "A man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost" (vi. 5).

(b) "Full of grace and power" (vi. 8).

(c) Of irresistible "spirit and wisdom" (vi. 10).

(d) "Full of the Holy Ghost" (vii. 55).

3. *Work* (a) "Did great wonders and miracles among the people" (vi. 8), and this is the first outside the Apostles who is recorded as having worked miracles.

(b) Disputed with the synagogues of the Libertines, Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and them of Cilicia and Asia, and discomfited them (vi. 9).

4. *Teaching.* He maintained that the worship of Jehovah was now no longer to be

confined locally to one nation, one city, and one temple, and also declared that the Jewish ritual connected with the local worship was now no longer essentially binding upon all worshippers.

5. *Accusers.* The Hellenistic Jews, who, discomfited in argument by Stephen, "stirred up the people, the elders, and the Scribes, and brought him before the Council" (vi. 12).

6. *Charge or accusation.* False witnesses declared, "This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us" (vi. 13, 14).

7. *Defence.* (For analysis thereof, see pp. 93-95.) The framework of the defence is a summary of the history of the Jewish Church. In the facts quoted he is guided by two principles.

I. He endeavours to prove that even in the previous Jewish history the presence and favour of God had not been confined to the Holy Land, or the Temple of Jerusalem.

II. He shows that from the earliest times of the Jewish nation there had been the same rebellious, ungrateful, narrow spirit that had appeared in this last stage of their political existence.

It would seem that at the close of his argument Stephen saw a change in the aspect of his judges, as if for the first time they caught the drift of his reasoning. He suddenly breaks off his calm argument, and turns upon them with an impassioned attack.

8. *Fate.* His judges "were cut to the heart, and gnashed upon him with their teeth," and when Stephen, turning his face to heaven, declared that he saw "the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right-hand of God," they broke into a loud yell, clapped their hands to their ears, flew upon him, as with one impulse, and dragged him out of the city to the place of execution. Here he was stoned, the witnesses laying their clothes at the feet of Saul.

To Stephen the name of "*martyr*" is first applied, "And when the blood of thy *mar̄tyr*, Stephen, was shed" (Acts xxii. 20).

Philip.

First mentioned in the account of the dispute between the Hebrew and Grecian disciples in Acts vi.

He was one of the seven appointed to superintend the daily distribution of alms (vi. 5).

He is known as Philip the Evangelist (Acts xxi. 8), or Philip the Deacon.

Upon the persecution after the death of Stephen, and which persecution naturally fell upon the *party of Stephen*, Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached the Gospel there. It is recorded that he worked miracles and signs (viii. 5, 6).

From Samaria he is directed by an angel of the Lord to take the desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza, and on this road he baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch (viii. 26-40).

He is taken up from the eunuch by the Spirit, and is afterwards found at Azotus (Ashdod), and makes his way to Cæsarea, along the coast-line, preaching the word in the cities he passes through.

The last notice of him in the Acts is in the account of Paul's last journey to Jerusalem. It is to his house at Cæsarea, as one well known to them, that Paul and his companions turn for shelter. He had four daughters, who possessed the gift of prophetic teaching. It is in his house that Agabus prophesied of the persecution Paul should undergo at Jerusalem at the hands of the Jews (xxi. 8-14).

Prochorus.

One of the seven deacons, being third on the list, and named after Stephen and Philip (vi. 5).

Nicanor.

One of the seven deacons appointed to superintend the "daily ministrations" after the dispute between the Grecian and Hebrew disciples (vi. 5).

Timon.

One of the seven deacons appointed to superintend the "daily ministrations" after the dispute between the Grecian and Hebrew disciples (vi. 5).

Parmenas.

One of the seven deacons appointed to superintend the "daily ministrations" after the dispute between the Grecian and Hebrew disciples (vi. 5).

Nicolas.

One of the seven deacons appointed to superintend the "daily ministrations" after the dispute between the Grecian and Hebrew disciples (vi. 5).

He was a native of Antioch, and a proselyte to the Jewish faith (vi. 5).

A sect of Nicolaitanes is mentioned in Rev. ii. 6, 15, against which John speaks in condemnatory terms. It has been much questioned whether this Nicolas was their founder. There seems, however, to be little trustworthy evidence for connecting this Nicolas with the immoral and licentious Nicolaitanes.

Candace.

A queen of Ethiopia (Meroe) mentioned in Acts viii. 27.

The name was not a proper name of an individual, but that of a dynasty of Ethiopian queens, as the Pharaohs, kings of Egypt, or the Cæsars, emperors of Rome.

Barnabas.

A name signifying "son of prophecy" or "exhortation" (or, but not so probably, "consolation," as A.V.), given by the Apostles to Joses or Joseph, a Levite, of the island of Cyprus, one of the early disciples of Christ.

He had a sister Mary, mother of John Mark, living in Jerusalem (Acts xii. 12).

His relationship to Mark is recorded (Col. iv. 10), "Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas."

Notices in Acts.

1. As selling land and giving the price to the common fund (iv. 37).
2. We find him (Acts ix. 27) introducing the newly-converted Saul of Tarsus to the Apostles at Jerusalem, in a way which seems to imply previous acquaintance between them. (Possibly Barnabas, of Cyprus, had visited the famous schools of Tarsus, and there met Saul.)

3. When tidings came to the Church at Jerusalem that men from Cyprus and Cyrene had been preaching to Gentiles at Antioch, Barnabas (a native of Cyprus) was sent there (xi. 19, 22).

4. From Antioch he went to Tarsus, to seek Saul, and having found him, he brought him to Antioch (xi. 25, 26).

5. With Saul he went up to Jerusalem from Antioch, with the relief collected there for the brethren in Judæa during the famine prophesied by Agabus (xi. 29, 30).

6. On their return to Antioch Saul and Barnabas were ordained by the Church for missionary work, and sent forth (xiii. 1-3).

From this time Barnabas and Paul are acknowledged as *Apostles*. Their first missionary journey was confined to Cyprus and Asia Minor, and there is no special mention of Barnabas save that he was called "Jupiter" by the people of Lycaonia, who gave to Paul the name of "Mercurius."

7. Some time after their return from the first missionary journey they were sent to Jerusalem to settle the difficult question respecting the necessity of circumcision for Gentile converts (xv. 1-3).

8. After a stay at Antioch, on their return, a variance arose between Paul and Barnabas on the question of taking with them, on a second missionary journey, John Mark, sister's son to Barnabas. "The contention was so sharp between them that they parted asunder," and Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus (xv. 36-39).

There is no further notice of Barnabas in Scripture.

Tradition states that he went to Milan, and became first bishop there.

Ananias.

A Jewish disciple at Damascus to whom the Lord appeared in a vision, and ordered him to seek out Saul at the house of Judas, in the street called Straight, commissioning him to lay hands upon Saul, to restore his sight, to announce his election as a preacher to the Gentiles, and to baptize him (ix. 10, 17).

Paul describes Ananias as "a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt in Damascus" (xxii. 12).

Tradition reports that he was afterwards Bishop of Damascus, and that he died by martyrdom.

Æneas.

A paralytic at Lydda, bedridden for eight years, who was healed by Peter (ix. 33, 34).

Tabitha. (Aramaic) or *Dorcas* (Greek) = a gazelle.

Was a female disciple at Joppa. She was "full of good works and almsdeeds," among which the making of "coats and garments" for the poor is specially mentioned. She fell sick and died, and as Peter was at the neighbouring town of Lydda, the disciples at Joppa sent an urgent message to him begging him to come without delay. On his arrival Peter found Tabitha prepared for burial, and the room full of those upon whom she had bestowed her charity. After the example of the Saviour in the house of Jairus (where Peter had been present), the Apostle "put them all forth," prayed, and then commanded Tabitha

to arise. She opened her eyes, sat up, and, assisted by the Apostle, rose from her couch. This miracle produced an extraordinary effect at Joppa, and was the cause of many conversions there (ix. 36—42).

Simon, known as **the tanner**, to distinguish him from other Simons mentioned in Scripture, was a Christian disciple living at Joppa, with whom Peter lodged. He was a tanner (ix. 43), and his house was near the seaside (x. 6). Here Peter was lodging when he saw the vision of the sheet containing all manner of creatures, and it was hence that he was summoned by the messengers of Cornelius to go to visit him at Cæsarea (x. 17, 18).

Simon Magus,

A magician or sorcerer living at Samaria, who by his arts had bewitched the people of Samaria, so that they said of him—"This man is the great power of God" (viii. 9, 10). Amazed at the miracles of Philip, he became one of his disciples, and was baptized (viii. 13). When Peter and John came down to Samaria, and the gift of the Holy Ghost was conferred by the laying on of hands, Simon desired to buy this gift for money. The motive evidently was to apply the power to the prosecution of magical arts. His proposition met with severe denunciation from Peter, followed by a petition on the part of Simon denoting terror rather than repentance.

From other sources we learn that he was born at Gitton, a village of Samaria, and that he was probably educated at Alexandria. He seems to have been of the Gnostic school. The later history given of Simon represents him as the persistent enemy of Peter, and as following that Apostle to Rome for the purpose of encountering him. In all encounters Simon was signally defeated. There are wild and vague traditions concerning his death. According to one account Simon was buried alive at his own request in the confident assurance that he would rise again on the third day. According to another account he endeavoured to prove his supernatural powers by attempting to fly, but fell in answer to the prayer of Peter, breaking his leg, and in vexation committed suicide.

Cornelius, of the Cornelia-gens, one of the best known patrician families or clans of Rome. It included the two Scipios, Africanus and Asiaticus, the Dictator Sulla, the historian Tacitus, and the physician Celsus. Of its women, Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, is the most famous.

Notices in the Acts.

A Roman centurion of the Italian band stationed at Cæsarea. His character is described as being "a devout man, and one which feared God, with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway" (x. 2), *i.e.* he was a worshipper of the true God, but did not conform to the rites and ordinances of the Law.

This is conclusively proved by the language of Peter (v. 28), when he declares that it was unlawful for himself, a Jew, to consort with Cornelius, a Gentile. He was not, therefore, a complete proselyte. Whilst Cornelius was praying at Cæsarea, an angel appeared unto him, bidding him send to Joppa for Peter, who should instruct him in what he had to do. On Peter's arrival, and after explanation from Cornelius, and an address from Peter, the Holy Ghost descended upon Cornelius and his friends, and they spake with tongues, whereupon Peter caused them to be baptized. Subsequently Peter, before the elders at Jerusalem, defended his action in having Cornelius baptized.

Cornelius thus became the first-fruit of the Gentile world to Christ.

Tradition states that he built a Christian Church at Jerusalem.

Agabus, a Christian prophet in the Apostolic age.

Notices in the Acts.

1. He came down from Jerusalem to Antioch, "and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world" (xi. 28).

The famine occurred in the reign of Claudius, A.D. 44.

In consequence of the prediction, the disciples at Antioch sent relief to the brethren at Judæa (xi. 29).

2. He came down from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, when Paul, on his last journey to Jerusalem, was staying with Philip, the Evangelist, and when he was come, "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 owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him unto the hands of the Gentiles" (xxi. 10, 11).

The brethren endeavoured to persuade Paul not to go up to Jerusalem, but the Apostle persisted in his purpose.

The prophecy was fulfilled by the Jews seizing Paul in the Temple (xxi. 30).

The chief captain rescued Paul, and finally sent him to Felix, at Cæsarea. Subsequently, when Paul appealed to Cæsar, Festus sent the Apostle to Rome, in which city Paul remained till his martyrdom.

Claudius, the fourth Roman Emperor, reigned from 41—54 A.D. He owed his nomination to the supreme power mainly through the influence of Herod Agrippa I., whom he rewarded by bestowing upon him the kingdom of Judæa. After a weak reign he was poisoned by his wife Agrippina, the mother of Nero, A.D. 54.

Notices in Acts.

1. The famine predicted by Agabus "came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar" (xi. 28).

2. Aquila and Priscilla came to Corinth from Rome "because Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome" (xviii. 2).

Blastus.

The chamberlain of Herod Agrippa I. The people of Tyre and Sidon made him their friend, and employed him as a mediator between them and the anger of Herod (xii. 20).

As the name implies, most probably Blastus was a Roman. As Herod Agrippa I. had spent many years at Rome, and was high in

favour with Claudius, the reigning emperor, it is probable that some Romans would take office under the Jewish king.

Mary, mother of Mark, was the sister of the Apostle, Barnabas, "Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas," Col. iv. 10. She had a house in Jerusalem. As her brother had (iv. 37) given up lands for the common treasury, so possibly Mary was possessed of means which enabled her to put a house at the service of the Church for prayer. Peter, on his release from prison, went to the house of Mary. This indicates that there was some special intimacy between Peter and the family of Mary, and this is confirmed by his styling Mark as "his son" (1 Peter v. 13). Like Barnabas, Mary must have been of the tribe of Levi, and connected with Cyprus.

Rhoda, the maid who announced Peter's arrival at the door of Mary's house after his miraculous release from prison. When she recognised Peter's voice "she opened not the gate for gladness but ran in, and told how Peter stood at the gate" (xii. 14). The assembled Christians were incredulous, and did not believe her story till they had opened the door and found that Peter was really there.

John Mark is probably the same as Mark the Evangelist.

Notice in the Gospels.

None, unless he were the young man with the linen garment mentioned by Mark alone on the night of our Lord's betrayal (Mark xiv. 51, 52).

Notices in the Acts.

1. His mother's name was Mary, and she had a house in Jerusalem, to which Peter came, as to a familiar place, after his miraculous deliverance from prison (Acts xii. 12). The deduction from this event is that Peter was an intimate friend of the family.

2. Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas as their "minister" on their first missionary journey, but only proceeded as far as Perga, where he turned back (Acts xiii. 5; xiii. 13).

3. On the second journey he was the occasion of a sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas. "Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed the one from the other; and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus. And Paul chose Silas, and went through Syria and Cilicia" (Acts xv. 37-41).

Notices in the Epistles.

1. "Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas" (Col. iv. 10).

This passage shows that Mark was the nephew of Barnabas; the relationship will account for the indulgent treatment he received from Barnabas. As Paul speaks of Mark as being with him it is clear that the estrangement was not of long duration. As the Epistle to the

Colossians was written from Rome, it is evident that Mark was Paul's companion during his imprisonment there.

2. "Marcus, my fellow-labourer" (Philem. 24).

This passage furnishes a further proof of his reconciliation to Paul, and of his being the companion of the Apostle at Rome during his first imprisonment.

3. "Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry (2 Tim. iv. 11).

Therefore, he was with Timothy at Ephesus when Paul wrote to the latter during his second imprisonment at Rome.

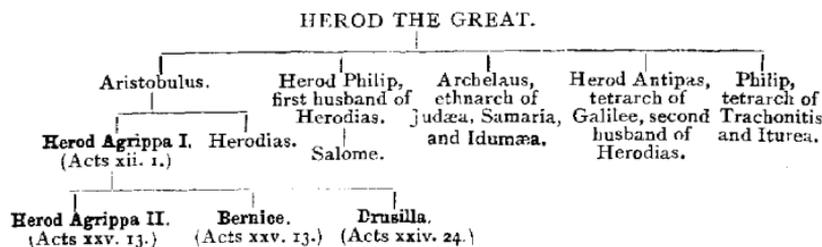
4. "The Church which is at Babylon saluteth you, and so doth Marcus, my son" (1 Pet. v. 13).

Therefore, later he was with Peter at Babylon. This passage confirms the familiar relationship between Peter and the family of Mark, and supports the theory that Mark was converted by Peter.

It also confirms the universal tradition of the Church that Mark wrote the Gospel which bears his name under the superintendence of Peter.

Tradition asserts that he was the companion of Peter at Rome, and that he was sent by Peter on a mission to Egypt. Here he founded the Church of Alexandria, of which Church he was the first Bishop, and where he suffered martyrdom. His body is reported to have been conveyed to Venice, and to have been deposited in the Cathedral in that city which bears his name. The symbol of Mark is "a Lion" (Rev. iv. 7), and the standard of Venice is still "The Lion of St. Mark."

KINGS AND GOVERNORS.



Herod Agrippa I., grandson of Herod the Great, and son of Aristobulus. He went to Rome to accuse Herod Antipas, and fell under the displeasure of Tiberius for paying open court to Caius Cæsar, afterwards the Emperor Caligula. He was imprisoned by Tiberius,

but on the accession of Caligula was released and presented with the tetrarchy (Trachonitis) of Philip, who had lately died. He was also accorded the title of King. On this Antipas, by persuasion of his wife Herodias, went to Rome to try and obtain the royal title also. Agrippa followed him and managed to get him banished to Spain, and to obtain his tetrarchy (Galilee and Peræa) for himself. Finally, for services rendered to Claudius at the time of Caligula's death, he obtained Samaria and Judæa, and *thus ruled over all the kingdom of Herod the Great.*

In the Acts he is mentioned as having beheaded James, the brother of John, and imprisoned Peter, who was miraculously released by an angel. For accepting the impious homage of the people hailing him as God, he was smitten with worms, and died at Cæsarea A.D. 44.

By Josephus he is described as anxious to be considered a devout Jew. He was extremely careful of the observance of the laws of his country, and never allowed a day to pass without its accustomed sacrifice. This character will abundantly account for his persecution of the Christians, who were so odious to the Jews.

Herod Agrippa II., son of Herod Agrippa I., was only seventeen at the death of his father, and was not allowed to succeed him at once, the kingdom being placed under procurators. Later on he received the principality of Chalcis, and subsequently the tetrarchy of Trachonitis, and was called King by courtesy. He never succeeded to his father's kingdom of Judæa. When the last war broke out he attached himself to the Romans, and after the fall of Jerusalem retired to Rome with his sister Bernice, and there died A.D. 100. He was the last of the Herods. He is mentioned in the Acts as coming to Cæsarea with his sister Bernice "to salute" Festus, who had succeeded Felix as procurator. Festus availed himself of the opportunity of consulting Agrippa and obtaining his advice on Jewish law, and so consulted him on the case of Paul. It was before this King that Paul made his defence as recorded in chap. xxvi.

Bernice, eldest daughter of Herod Agrippa I., sister of Herod Agrippa II., and of Drusilla. She was one of the most unprincipled women of the time. She was first married to her uncle Herod, King of Chalcis. After his death she lived with her brother Agrippa II. She subsequently married Polemon, King of Cilicia. The marriage was, however, soon dissolved, and she returned to her brother. She was afterwards the mistress of Vespasian and of Titus.

In the Acts she is mentioned as accompanying Agrippa II. "to

salute" Festus. She sat with Agrippa II., and heard the defence of Paul (chap. xxvi.).

Drusilla was daughter of Herod Agrippa I., and so sister of Agrippa II. and of Bernice. She married Azizus, King of Emesa. Felix, being enamoured of her beauty, persuaded her to leave her husband and live with him. She bore him a son Agrippa, and both mother and son perished in an eruption of Vesuvius in the reign of Titus.

Before Felix and his wife Drusilla Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come" (Acts xxiv. 24, 25).

Gallio, deputy (proconsul) of Achaia, before whom at Corinth Paul was accused by the Jews of "persuading men to worship God contrary to the law." Gallio refused to have anything to do in deciding on matters connected with the Jewish law, and drove the Jews from his judgment-seat (Acts xviii. 12—17).

Gallio was the brother of the famous philosopher Seneca, who describes him as a most good-natured, popular, and affectionate man. Originally Gallio was called Marcus Annæus Novatus, but, having been adopted by the orator Lucius Junius Gallio, he took the name Junius Annæus Gallio.

Felix, governor (procurator) of Judæa, to whom Paul was sent by the chief captain, Lysias. The Jews, through the orator Tertullus, accused Paul before him. Felix kept Paul a prisoner for two years, during which time the Apostle preached to the governor and his wife Drusilla. At the end of his procuratorship Felix "willing to show the Jews a pleasure left Paul bound" (Acts xxiii. 26—xxiv. 27).

His name was Antonius Felix, and he was the brother of Pallas, the freedman and favourite of the Emperor Claudius, by whom he was appointed procurator A.D. 52—53. He induced Drusilla, the daughter of Herod Agrippa I. and sister of Herod Agrippa II. and of Bernice, to leave her husband and become his wife. He is represented as an avaricious, profligate, and servile man. His avarice was shown by his continuing Paul as a prisoner in the hope "that money should have been given him of Paul that he might loose him"; his profligacy in persuading Drusilla to leave her husband and be his wife; his slavish temperament by his leaving Paul bound in order to win the favour of the Jews. In this he did not succeed, for on the appointment of his successor Festus, A.D. 60, the Jews of Cæsarea followed Felix to Rome, and accused him. He was saved by the influence of his brother Pallas with Nero.

Festus.—Porcius Festus, the successor of Felix in the procuratorship of Judæa. When he, "willing to do the Jews a pleasure," suggested to Paul that he should go up to Jerusalem and be judged there before him, the Apostle appealed to Cæsar. Subsequently, when Agrippa II. and Bernice came to Cæsarea, Paul made a defence before the King and the Governor (Acts xxv., xxvi.).

Festus was appointed Governor by Nero A.D. 60, and died in about two years. His character contrasts favourably with that of his predecessor, Felix.

MIRACLES IN THE ACTS.

Peter.—1. Heals the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (iii. 2—9).

2. Strikes Ananias and Sapphira dead (v. 1—10).
3. Heals many by his shadow at Jerusalem (v. 15).
4. Cures Æneas of palsy, at Lydda, near Joppa (ix. 33, 34).
5. Raises Dorcas or Tabitha to life at Joppa (ix. 40).

Paul.—1. Strikes Elymas the Sorcerer blind at Paphos, in the isle of Cyprus (xiii. 11).

2. Heals the lame man at Lystra (xiv. 10).
3. Casts out the spirit of divination at Philippi (xvi. 18).
4. Heals many by handkerchiefs and aprons at Ephesus (xix. 12).
5. Raises Eutychus to life at Troas (xx. 9, 10).
6. Is delivered from the viper at Melita (xxviii. 5).
7. Cures Publius' father of a fever at Melita (xxviii. 8).

Stephen performed miracles (vi. 8).

Philip the deacon performed miracles at Samaria (viii. 6, 7).

The Apostles generally performed "wonders and signs" (ii. 43).

Signs and wonders wrought by Paul and Barnabas at Iconium (xiv. 3).

The gates of the prison were miraculously opened for Peter and John by the angel (v. 19).

The gates of the prison again miraculously opened for Peter by an angel (xii. 7).

ADDRESSES IN THE ACTS.

Peter.—1. To the one hundred and twenty at Jerusalem on the election of an apostle (i.).

2. His address to the Jews on the day of Pentecost (ii.).

3. Address to the Jews in Solomon's Porch after healing the lame man (iii.).
 4. To the Sanhedrim in his defence (iv.).
 5. To Cornelius and his friends at Cæsarea (x.).
 6. Defends himself before the elders at Jerusalem when charged with eating with Gentiles (xi. 4—18).
 7. His speech at the Council at Jerusalem (xv. 7—11).
- Paul.**—1. At Antioch, in Pisidia, in the Synagogue, on the Sabbath, to the Jews and Proselytes (xiii. 16—47).
2. At Lystra after healing the lame man (xiv. 15—18).
 3. At Athens to the philosophers on Mars Hill (xvii. 22—32).
 4. At Miletus, to the Christian Elders of the Church at Ephesus (xx. 18—36).
 5. On the stairs of the Castle of Antonia, at Jerusalem, to the Jews in Hebrew (xxii. 1—21).
 6. At Cæsarea before Felix, the Roman Governor, in answer to the accusation of Tertullus (xxiv. 10—21).
 7. Before Festus when he appealed unto Cæsar (xxv. 8—11).
 8. At Cæsarea before Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice (xxvi. 1—23).
 9. Addresses the Jews at Rome, explaining his position (xxviii. 17—20).

OTHER ADDRESSES.

Gamaliel counsels the Sanhedrim to refrain from persecuting the Apostles (v. 34—39).

Stephen. Defence before the Sanhedrim (vii.).

James sums up the discussion at the Council at Jerusalem on the question of circumcision (xv. 13—21).

Demetrius to the craftsmen at Ephesus, inciting them against Paul (xix. 25—27).

The Town Clerk of Ephesus addresses the multitude excited by the speech of Demetrius, and calms the riot (xix. 35—41).

Tertullus, acting as the prosecutor for the Jews, accuses Paul before Felix (xxiv. 2—9).

Festus (1) explains Paul's cause to Agrippa, and asks his advice (xxv. 14—22).

(2) Further explains the case publicly before Agrippa and Bernice on the following day (xxv. 24—27).

APPEARANCES OF OUR LORD.

Bodily.

To the Apostles at the Ascension (i. 4—9).

To Paul at his conversion (ix.).

Was seen by Stephen standing at the right hand of God (vii. 56).

In Visions.

1. **Damascus.** The Lord, in a vision, spoke to Ananias, and bade him go and baptize Saul (ix. 10).

2. **Corinth.**—"Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee" (xviii. 9, 10).

3. **Jerusalem.**—To Paul, in the Temple, on his first visit to that city soon after his conversion, bidding him depart out of Jerusalem, as his testimony will not be received by the Jews (xxii. 17, 18).

4. **Jerusalem.**—To Paul, in the Castle of Antonia, bidding him be of good cheer, and foretelling that he should bear witness of Jesus in Rome (xxiii. 11).

APPEARANCES OF ANGELS.

1. **At the Ascension.**—"Two men stood by them in white apparel" (i. 10).

2. **Jerusalem.**—An angel released Peter and John from prison (v. 19).

3. **Samaria.**—The angel of the Lord sent Philip from Samaria to Gaza to meet the Ethiopian eunuch (viii. 26).

4. **Cæsarea.**—An angel appeared to Cornelius, bidding him send to Joppa for Peter (x. 3).

5. **Jerusalem.**—The angel appeared to Peter and delivered him from prison out of the hands of Herod (xii. 7).

6. On board ship during the voyage to Rome. An angel appeared to Paul foretelling the safety of the passengers and Paul's appearance before Cæsar (xxvii. 23, 24).

OTHER VISIONS.

1. **Damascus.**—Saul of Tarsus in a vision saw "Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight" (ix. 12.)

2. **Joppa.**—A vision vouchsafed to Peter of a sheet let down from heaven, containing animals clean and unclean (x. 11, etc.).

3. **Troas.**—A man of Macedonia appearing to Paul and saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us" (xiv. 9).

THE SYNAGOGUE.

Origin.—Synagogues were buildings set apart for the worship of God. They appear to have originated after the Babylonish Captivity, to meet the necessities of the Jews dispersed throughout the world, millions of them far out of reach of the Temple and its priestly ritual. In our Saviour's time these buildings had so increased in number that there was no town without one or more of them.

Structure.—The synagogue was simply an oblong chamber. It stood, if possible, on the highest ground in or near the city to which it belonged. It was so constructed that the worshippers, as they entered and as they prayed, looked towards Jerusalem.

Arrangement.—At the upper or Jerusalem end stood an ark, or chest, containing a copy of the Law and the Prophets. At this end sat the **Elders** of the congregation on seats facing the people. "The chief seats of the synagogue" (Matt. xxiii. 6). Here, too, was a pulpit, in which the reader stood to read the lesson or sat down to teach. The congregation were divided, the men on one side, the women on the other (or in a separate gallery).

Officers.—1. The Elders, who formed a sort of college, presided over by one who was "the chief of the synagogue." (Crispus and Sosthenes are mentioned as being "chief rulers of the synagogue," Acts xviii. 8, 17).

2. The *Sheliach* (= legatus), or delegate, or spokesman, who led the form of prayer.

3. The *Chazzan*, or "minister" (Luke iv. 20), whose duties were to look after the building and act as schoolmaster during the week.

4. The *Batlanim* (= otiosi), or men of leisure. Ten in number, who managed the affairs of the synagogue, and corresponded to our churchwardens.

The order of the Synagogue Service was as follows:—

1. The **Sheliach** read the prayers prescribed, the people responding at the close of each with an audible "Amen."

2. A first lesson from the Law ("Moses was read in the synagogues every Sabbath day," Acts xv. 21).

3. A second lesson from the Prophets (Luke iv. 17). The readers were selected by the **Sheliach**, and "stood up to read."

4. An exposition by any Rabbi who might be present. The preacher was selected by the **Sheliach**, and he seated himself whilst expounding the Scriptures (Luke iv. 20; Acts xiii. 15).

Judicial Functions.—The Elders seem to have exercised a judicial power over the community. We find the following mentioned in Scripture :—

1. *Trying offenders.* “They shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues” (Luke xxi. 12).

2. *Scourging them.* “They will scourge you in their synagogues” (Matt. x. 17).

3. *Sending them to Jerusalem for trial.* Paul had letters to Damascus to the synagogues, empowering him to send Christians bound to Jerusalem (Acts ix. 2).

4. *Excommunicating them.* “They shall put you out of the synagogues” (John xvi. 2).

The influence of the Synagogue on the Early Christian Church.—In the synagogue the Apostles found their readiest means of proclaiming their doctrines. On arriving at any town they naturally betook themselves to the synagogue. Of their method of proceeding we find a detailed account in the preaching of Paul at Antioch in Pisidia.

“They (Paul and Barnabas) came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down. 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. Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand, said” (Acts xiii. 14—16).

And so wherever they went they made use of the synagogue service so long as the congregation would suffer them.

If, as at Berea, the elders and congregation listened and were converted, the synagogue at once became a Christian church.

If, as at Thessalonica and Corinth, the Jews refused to listen to them, then the Apostles withdrew to a neighbouring house belonging to one of the converts, *e.g.* the house of Jason at Thessalonica, the house of Justus at Corinth. Hence the phrase so often occurring in the Epistles: “The church in thy house.” The very name of synagogue was retained: “If there come unto your synagogue” (James ii. 2).

From the synagogue was borrowed the term “Presbyter,” or “Elder” (Acts xi. 30; xiv. 23).

The “legatus” of the synagogue appears in the “angel of the church at Ephesus” (Rev. ii. 1).

THE SANHEDRIM.

The **Sanhedrim** was the supreme council of the Jews in the time of Christ. The origin of this assembly is traced to the seventy elders appointed by Moses (Numb. xi. 16, 17.) But the Sanhedrim in the form known in the New Testament was probably instituted by the Maccabees.

Constitution.—It consisted of chief priests, or the heads of the twenty-four courses or classes into which the priests were divided, elders, men of age and experience, scribes or lawyers, *i.e.* those learned in the Jewish law.

The number of members was seventy-two, and the meetings were held in the Temple. Joseph of Arimathæa, Nicodemus, Gamaliel, and Saul of Tarsus were members of the Sanhedrim.

The president was styled *Nasi*, and the office was generally filled by the High Priest.

While in session the Sanhedrim sat in the form of a half-circle.

Recorded trials before the Sanhedrim are

1. Our Lord on the charge of blasphemy.
2. Peter and John for having preached the doctrine of the resurrection (Acts v. 27).
3. Stephen for having spoken blasphemous words against the Temple and the law (Acts vii. 1).
4. Paul was brought before the Sanhedrim by the chief captain (xxii. 30).

Judicial Functions.—The Sanhedrim had jurisdiction over all matters, both criminal and social.

Had the Sanhedrim the power of life and death ?

It is generally supposed that the Sanhedrim lost the power of inflicting capital punishment when Judæa became a Roman province. This view is supported

1. By the reply of the Jews to Pilate. "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death" (John xviii. 31).
2. By a passage from the Talmud to the effect that "the power of inflicting capital punishment was taken away from the Sanhedrim forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem."

If so the death of Stephen must have been a tumultuary outbreak.

In reply it has been argued

1. That the chief priests consulted how they might put both Jesus

and Lazarus to death (John xi. 53; xii. 10). Therefore they must have had the power of inflicting capital punishment.

2. That the reply of the Jews to Pilate meant "that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death" *at the feast time*.

3. That our Lord's special prediction of the manner of His death (Matt. xx. 19), and the careful way in which St. John shows how that prediction came to be fulfilled, seem to imply that if the usual course had been followed the Sanhedrim would have condemned our Lord to be executed *by stoning* so soon as the Passover Feast was over.

4. That the priests dared not run the risk of waiting till the conclusion of the Feast and so forced Pilate to execute Jesus in the Roman manner. The priests evidently dreaded popular feeling, see Matt. xxi. 46; xxvi. 5.

5. That the stoning of Stephen was a judicial proceeding and not a mere tumultuary outbreak; for,

(a.) The sentence seems to have been given by regular vote; for St. Paul alluding to the Christian persecution says: "And when they were put to death I gave my voice (*i.e.* my vote) against them" (Acts xxvi. 10).

(b.) The requirements of the law were all complied with, for

(1.) The stoning took place outside the city.

(2.) The witnesses cast the first stones.

(3.) They laid their garments at the feet of Saul who seems to have been commissioned to superintend the execution.

Dean Milman's opinion "that the power of the Sanhedrim, at this period of political change and confusion, on this as well as on other points, was altogether undefined," is perhaps the safest conclusion to follow (*Norris*).

As regards the stoning of Stephen it is clear from the narrative and from the fact of a bloody persecution taking place soon after it that the Jews did by connivance of, or in the absence of the Procurator, administer summary punishments of this kind (*Dean Alford*).

THE TEMPLE.

The temple stood upon Mount Moriah, a hard limestone rock, nearly surrounded by precipices, on the eastern side of Jerusalem. The summit of the mountain was levelled to make a space sufficiently large on which to erect the building, and as the site, even then, was not extensive enough for the temple and its courts, a ter-

race was raised by building a wall from the valley beneath. The **First Temple** was raised on the site so elaborately prepared by Solomon. This noble edifice was burned by the Chaldeans after it had existed about four hundred and thirty years.

The **Second Temple** was commenced by Zerubbabel after the return from the Babylonish Captivity. This second temple stood for about five hundred years, when, being much decayed, Herod the Great undertook to rebuild it. He employed eighteen thousand workmen for more than nine years in completing the main building; subsequently other works were undertaken, the courts were enlarged, so that in our Saviour's time the Jews could truthfully state that it had been forty-six years in course of erection.

It is said that the courts of this vast edifice were sufficiently large to accommodate half a million people. No expense was spared to make this temple equal if not superior in beauty and grandeur to any building of its age.

The principal entrance to the outer court of the temple—the **Court of the Gentiles**—was by the east or King's Gate, so called to remind the Jews of Solomon who raised the foundations of the temple from the valley beneath. The piazza on this side of the court was wider than the rest and known as **Solomon's Porch**. Josephus informs us that no person could look down from the flat roof of this cloister without dizziness, so high was it raised above the valley.

After passing the buildings immediately about the entrance gates, pens and folds containing cattle, sheep, and lambs for sacrifice met the eye. Here, too, sat the money changers ready to supply Jewish coins, in exchange for foreign money, with which the worshippers from afar might pay the temple dues. Shops for the sale of wine, oil, meal, and other necessaries for use with the sacrifices were also to be found here.

In this court persons of all nationalities were seen, but none but Jews were allowed to advance further. The piazza, or covered walk surrounding this court, was ornamented with pillars of white marble, and the whole area thus enclosed and paved with variegated marble is said to have been equal to four and a half acres.

From the Court of the Gentiles the Jews ascended twelve steps to the sacred fence, a wall of lattice work five feet high broken by several entrances.

A further ascent of five steps led to the **Court of the Women**, or

Treasury. The eastern entrance to this court was the **Beautiful Gate** (*Acts* iii. 2), which was overlaid with plates of Corinthian brass, an alloy of gold, silver, and copper. This court occupied an area of about one and a half acres; it was entirely surrounded by a piazza, paved with marble, and had four gates.

In this court were the chests for reception of offerings, and it was the usual place of worship for those who did not bring sacrifices to offer on the altar.

A further ascent of fifteen steps conducted the worshipper into the **Court of Israel**. This was no more than a piazza about fourteen feet wide, under which the Jews stood while their sacrifices were being consumed on the altar. The whole area of this court was less than half an acre.

The **Court of the Priests**, or inner division of the temple, containing about an acre and a half, was nearly filled by the temple proper and the brazen altar. This court was only entered by the people when they came to offer sacrifices.

The **Brazen Altar**, which stood on the site of the threshing floor of Araunah, was sixty-two feet square at the base, forty-four at the summit, and eighteen feet high. Ledges, on which the priests walked, ran around the altar, and these ledges were approached by inclined planes.

Between the altar and the porch of the temple itself was a space, about forty feet wide, which was considered peculiarly sacred.

The temple itself had a flat roof surrounded by battlements. The east front or **Porch** was a lofty building, entered by twelve steps. The entrance stood open always, and was not furnished with doors.

The body of the temple behind this porch was narrower, so that the whole edifice was in the form of the letter T.

A wall eleven feet thick, pierced in the centre and furnished with two pairs of folding doors, separated the porch from the **Holy Place**. When these doors were open the entrance was closed by a richly-wrought curtain. The holy place contained the golden candlestick, the table for the shew-bread, and the golden **Altar of Incense**.

Two veils so disposed as to form but one partition separated the holy place from the **Holy of Holies**, where the ark and the sacred books were stored.

THE OFFICERS OF THE TEMPLE.

The duties of the **Levites** were—

1. To diffuse religious and moral teaching throughout the nation.
2. To take charge of the public records.
3. To undertake the duties of the temple as porters, guards, singers, and musicians. For this purpose the whole tribe was divided into twenty-four courses, which performed the duties in turn. They also assisted the priests in killing the sacrifices.

The **Priests**, who were descended from Aaron, discharged the higher duties of the Jewish ritual. They—

1. Offered the sacrifices.
2. Maintained the fire on the altar.
3. Trimmed the lights in the golden candlestick.
4. Made the loaves of shew-bread.

They, too, were divided into twenty-four courses, and their official costume was provided at the public expense.

The **High Priest** in the New Testament times was changed annually; he wore splendid garments when officiating in the temple, a full description of which will be found in the book of Exodus, chap xxxix.

Captain of the Temple, mentioned by Luke (xxii. 4; Acts iv. 1, v. 24), superintended the guard of priests and Levites who kept watch by night in the temple.

THE DAILY SERVICES OF THE TEMPLE.

Having seen that all was safe and in order in the temple and its precincts, the first important daily duty, the preparation for the morning sacrifice of a lamb, was proceeded with; prayers were then offered to God, the commandments were recited, and the incense burnt on the altar in the Holy Place. After burning the incense the officiating priest stepped out of the Holy Place and solemnly pronounced the blessing upon the steps of the porch to the people praying in the courts.

The daily meat and drink offerings were then offered, at the conclusion of which the Levites began their song of praise, pausing at times while the trumpets sounded and the people worshipped.

On the Sabbath day an additional service of praise was performed.

The mid-day duties of the priests were the offering of the people's

sacrifices, which varied in number according to circumstances, being especially numerous at the great festivals.

The evening service commenced at the ninth hour—three o'clock—and was similar to that solemnised in the morning.

THE JEWISH FESTIVALS.

Three times a year the devout Jews from all parts repaired to the temple to keep the great festivals.

The first of these was the **Passover**, or *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, which was instituted to remind the Israelites of their deliverance from Egypt. The Passover was observed very strictly. The original mode of celebrating the feast is given in the twelfth chapter of Exodus.

In the time of our Lord the ceremonial observed was somewhat different:—

1. The males assembled in the evening, and after washing their hands and feet reclined at table in the customary way. A cup of wine over which a blessing had been pronounced was presented to each, and then the Paschal lamb which had been killed in the temple was eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

2. A second course, consisting of bitter herbs and a thick sauce, called "*haroseth*," compounded of bruised palm branches and raisins mixed with vinegar, was taken, followed by a cup of wine.

3. Next the unleavened bread was blessed and partaken of; and here the youngest present asked the meaning of the rite, and was answered in the words of Exodus xii. 26, 27.

4. A third cup of wine—"the cup of blessing"—was now tasted by each, and to conclude the ceremony a fourth cup of wine was taken and the Great Hallel—Psalms cxiii. to cxviii.—was sung.

The second great festival was the **Feast of Pentecost**, so called because it was celebrated on the fiftieth day after the first day of the Passover. On this day were presented the first-fruits of the wheat harvest, and the giving of the law from Mount Sinai was commemorated.

On this occasion the worshippers from a distance travelled to Jerusalem in solemn procession, carrying their offerings of first-fruits in splendid baskets ornamented with flowers.

The **Feast of Tabernacles**, the third of the great annual festivals, lasted a week, during which time the people dwelt in tents or **bovers**

made of the branches of trees, and often placed upon the flat roofs of their houses. They carried palm branches in their hands, singing "Hosanna," which means Save, I beseech Thee.

The Feast of Tabernacles was held in commemoration of the wanderings in the wilderness, and was also the Jewish harvest thanksgiving.

SECTS AND ORDERS OF MEN.

The various religious sects and parties among the Jews all appear to have sprung up in the period that intervened between the close of the Old Testament history and the commencement of that of the New Testament.

The most important sect was that of the **Pharisees**, so called from the claim of its members to more than ordinary sanctity and strictness in religious observances, which for the most part was merely outward show.

Josephus describes the Pharisees as assuming to greater piety and devotion than other men, which sprang out of their claim to a more strict and accurate interpretation of the law.

The precise date of the origin of this sect is uncertain, but they rapidly rose to vast reputation and power, till it became a proverbial saying among the Jews that if but two persons were allowed to enter heaven one of them would be a Pharisee.

The main features of their creed were—

1. They claimed for the *Traditions of the Elders* an equal authority with the law. These traditions, many of which related to the most trivial affairs of daily life, were not committed to writing till the second century of the Christian era, when they were embodied in a book called the *Mishna*.

2. They held that ceremonial observances were of the utmost importance, and not merely means to an end. They prayed while standing at street corners, and caused trumpets to be sounded when they engaged in the work of charity.

3. They affected many peculiarities in their dress. Their phylacteries were broader than those of other Jews, the fringes on the borders of their garments were wider, the tassels being particularly large.

The phylacteries alluded to in the above passage were texts of Scripture written on narrow strips of parchment and worn as a literal interpretation of Deuteronomy vi. 6, 8.

“And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.”

Fringes on their garments all Jews were commanded to wear.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them.” (*Numbers xv. 38—39.*)

4. The Pharisees believed in the existence of angels and spirits; in the resurrection of the dead; and the transmigration of souls.

The name **Pharisee** is derived from the Hebrew *Perushim* = separated.

The **Sadducees** were as careless and profligate in their habits as the Pharisees were over-strict.

Sochæus, a scholar who flourished about 250 B.C., taught his followers that they should serve God purely from love and gratitude towards Him, and not from an interested desire of reward, or from a servile dread of punishment.

The Sadducees, in opposition to the Pharisees, taught—

1. That there was no authority for following the *Traditions of the Elders*.
2. That there was no future state, and no resurrection from the dead. They denied the existence of angel or spirit.

“The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection” (*Matt. xxii. 23.*)

“For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit” (*Acts xxiii. 8.*)

3. They contended for free will, and denied any particular interference of Divine Providence in the affairs of men.
4. From the circumstance that in arguing with the Sadducees on the doctrine of a future life our Lord quoted from the Pentateuch only, it has been suggested that the Sadducees rejected all the sacred scriptures except the books of Moses. It is generally admitted that this idea is erroneous.

The Sadducees were not a numerous sect, but made up for their want of numbers by their wealth and influence. Annas and Caiaphas, with the high priestly party, were of the sect of the Sadducees.

It is worthy of notice that the Sadducees were the earliest opponents of the Apostles. This is explainable by their objection to the teaching of the doctrine of the resurrection, as stated, Acts iv. 1, 2. "The priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them. Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead."

When Stephen gave a new direction to the teaching of the Christian Church, the Pharisees headed by Saul of Tarsus became bitter opponents of the new doctrines.

The Sadducees disappeared rapidly from history after the first century, mainly owing to two causes—

1. The state of the Jews after the capture of Jerusalem by Titus.
2. The growth of the Christian religion and the universal acceptance of the doctrine of the resurrection.

THE NAZARITE VOW.

A Nazarite was a person bound by a vow to be set apart from others for the service of God. The obligation was either for life or for a defined time.

I. The Nazarite during the time of his vow was bound—

1. To abstain from all intoxicating drink.
2. Not to cut the hair of his head.
3. Not to approach any dead body.

II. Of Nazarites for life three are mentioned in the Scriptures, Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist. The only one of these actually called a Nazarite is Samson.

III. There are two instances of vows in the Acts.

1. Of Paul it is said "having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow" (Acts xviii. 18).
2. By the advice of the Elders Paul joined the four men at Jerusalem who had a vow (Acts xxi. 24).

From the fact that these men shaved their heads there can be little doubt that this was a strictly legal Nazarite vow.

**PASSAGES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT QUOTED IN THE
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.**

- Acts i. 20 Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein Psalm . . . lxix. 25.
 And his bishoprick let another take Psalm . . . cix. 8.
- ii. 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 handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy
- 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke
- 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come. . .
- 21 And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved Joel . . . ii. 28—32.
- 25 I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved . . .

- 26 Therefore did my heart re-
joice, and my tongue was
glad ; moreover also my
flesh shall rest in hope .
- ii. 31 { Because thou wilt not leave
xiii. 35 { my soul in hell, neither
wilt thou suffer thine
Holy One to see corrup-
tion
- 28 Thou hast made known to
me the ways of life ; thou
shalt make me full of joy
with thy countenance . Psalm . . . xvi. 8—11.
- 30 Knowing that God hath
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 Psalm . . . cxxxii. 11.
- 34 The Lord said unto my Lord,
Sit thou on my right hand
- 35 Until I make thy foes thy
footstool Psalm . . . cx. 1.
- iii. 22 { A prophet shall the Lord
vii. 37 { your God raise up unto
you of your brethren, like
unto me ; him shall ye
hear in all things what-
soever he shall say unto
you Deuteronomy xviii. 15.
- 23 And it shall come to pass
that every soul which will
not hear that prophet shall
be destroyed from among
the people Deuteronomy xviii. 19.
- 25 And in thy seed shall all
the kindreds of the earth
be blessed Genesis { xii. 3, xxii. 18,
xxvi. 4, xxviii. 14.
- iv. 11 This is the stone which was
set at nought of you buil-

- ders, which is become the
head of the corner . . . Psalm . . . cxviii. 22
- 25 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 Psalm . . . ii. 1, 2.
- vii. 3 Get thee out of thy coun-
try, and from thy kindred,
and come into the land
which I shall show thee . Genesis . . . xii. 1.
- 6 That his seed should so-
journ in a strange land ;
and that they should bring
them into bondage, and
entreat them evil four
hundred years
- 7 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 Genesis . . . xv. 13, 14.
- 26 Sirs, ye are brethren ; why
do ye wrong one to an-
other? Exodus . . . ii. 13.
- 27 } Who made thee a ruler and
35 } a judge over us?
- 28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou
diddest the Egyptian yes-
terday? Exodus . . . ii. 14.
- 32 I am the God of thy fathers,
the God of Abraham, and
the God of Isaac, and the
God of Jacob Exodus . . . iii. 6.
- 33 Put off thy shoes from thy
feet ; for the place where

- thou standest is holy
 ground Exodus . . . iii. 5.
- 34 I have seen, I have seen
 the affliction of my people
 which is in Egypt, and I
 have heard their groan-
 ing, and am come down
 to deliver them Exodus . . . iii. 7, 8.
- 40 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 Exodus . . . xxxii. 1.
- 42 O ye house of Israel, have
 ye offered to me slain
 beasts and sacrifices by
 the space of forty years
 in the wilderness? . . .
- 43 Yea, ye took up the taber-
 nacle of Moloch, and the
 star of your god Remphan,
 figures which ye made to
 worship them: and I will
 carry you away beyond
 Babylon Amos . . . v. 25—27.
- 49 Heaven is my throne, and
 earth is my foot-stool:
 What house will ye build
 me? saith the Lord: or
 what is the place of my
 rest?
- 50 Hath not my hand made
 all these things? Isaiah . . . (lxv) 1. 2.
- viii. 32 He was led as a sheep to
 the slaughter; and like
 a lamb dumb before his
 shearer, so opened he not
 his mouth
- 33 In his humiliation his judg-

- ment was taken away :
and who shall declare his
generation? for his life
is taken from the earth . . . Isaiah . . . liii. 7, 8
- xiii. 33 Thou art my Son, this day
have I begotten thee . . . Psalm . . . ii. 7.
- 34 I will give you the sure
mercies of David . . . Isaiah . . . lv. 3.
- 41 Behold, ye despisers, and
wonder, and perish : for I
work a work in your days,
a work which ye shall in
no wise believe, though a
man declare it unto you . . . Habakkuk . . . i. v.
- 47 I have set thee to be a light
of the Gentiles, that thou
shouldest be for salvation
unto the ends of the earth . . . Isaiah . . . xlix. 6.
- xv. 16 After this I will return, and
will build again the taber-
nacle of David, which is
fallen down ; and I will
build again the ruins there-
of, and I will set it up . . .
- 17 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 Amos . . . ix. 11, 12.
- xxiii. 5 Thou shalt not speak evil of
the ruler of thy people. Exodus . . . xxii. 28.
- xxviii. 26 Go unto this people, and
say, Hearing ye shall
hear, and shall not un-
derstand ; and seeing ye
shall see and not perceive.
- 27 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

Isaiah . . . vi. 9, 10.

EXPLANATION OF WORDS.

Presbyters or Elders.—The appointed overseers or rulers of the local churches during the Apostolic period. This order was probably appointed in the first instance at Jerusalem to provide for the permanent direction of the Church, when the Twelve had been dispersed by the second persecution. After this persecution they always appear as managing the affairs of the Church at Jerusalem.

The missionary apostles are described as appointing presbyters or elders in every church.

The idea appears to have been adopted by the apostles from the government of the synagogue.

All through the New Testament they appear to be identical with the bishops or overseers, for—

1. They are never contrasted as distinct officers.

2. The same persons are described by both names.

(a). St. Paul sent from Miletus to Ephesus for the “elders,” but when he meets them he addresses them as the “bishops” (Acts xx. 17 ; xx. 28).

(b). He tells Titus to appoint “elders,” and in the same sentence he describes them as “bishops” (Titus i. 5 and 7).

The work of these Presbyter-Bishops included—

1. The superintendence of the spiritual being of the flock connected with the local church which they governed, “Feed the flock of God which is among you” (1 Peter v. 2).

2. Teaching “That he (the elder) may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince gainsayers” (Titus i. 9).

Deacons.—The Third Order in the Christian Ministry. Derived from the Greek word *diakonein*—to minister.

The appointment of the Seven (Acts vi.) is generally regarded as the

institution of this order, instituted to keep the apostles free for their own special work.

The Seven are, however, nowhere termed "Deacons," which word, as the title of a distinct office, does not appear in the Acts, but only in Phil. i. 1, and 1 Tim. iii. 8—13. But that their appointment was practically the establishment of the order of the Diaconate can scarcely be doubted: for—

(a.) The first Christian writer who alludes to them (Irenæus) holds them to have been Deacons.

(b.) Their functions were afterwards those performed by Deacons.

(c.) Their appointment is evidently recorded not as an isolated incident, but as the initiation of a new order of things in the Church.

The office clearly existed before the name, and the name was afterwards used to describe the office.

History of the office during the Apostolic period.

1. The office suggested by the apostles for the regular and systematic relief of the Christian poor.

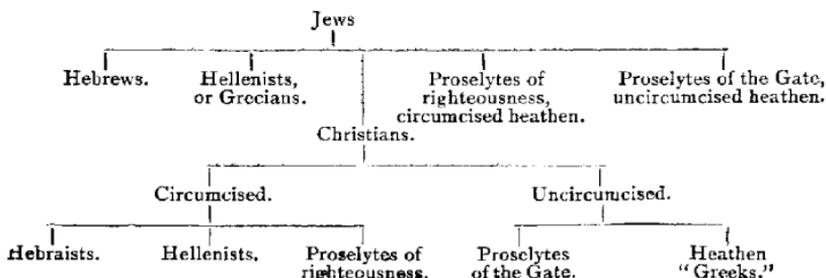
2. The choice of the Seven by the Church, and their ordination by the apostles "to serve tables."

3. Being men full of the spirit and wisdom they availed themselves of opportunities to preach.

4. Women deacons or deaconesses appointed to do the work where men were debarred. Phœbe was a deaconess to the church at Cenchrea.

5. Recognised together with the deaconesses as the ministry of a local church as, for instance, at Philippi.

TABLE REPRESENTING THE DESCENT OF CHRISTIANITY.



Hebrews were home Jews, Jews born and bred in Palestine, speaking Aramaic, a dialect of Hebrew = Hebraists.

Grecians or Hellenists were foreign Jews, or Jews of the Dispersion, Jews born and bred in foreign parts, speaking Greek, called Hellenists in the New Testament.

Proselyte, from the Greek *proselutos* = one who has come over; always descriptive of a convert from heathenism to Judaism. They were divided into two main classes, viz.:

Proselytes of Righteousness, known also as **Proselytes of the Covenant**, perfect Israelites, who had undergone the rite of circumcision, and kept the whole ritual of Moses.

Proselytes of the Gate, who were not bound by circumcision, and the other special laws of the Mosaic code. It was enough for them to observe the seven precepts of Noah.

Greeks, sometimes natives of Greece, as in Acts xviii. 17, but more usually Gentiles as opposed to Jews.

THE EARLY DAYS OF PAUL, AND LIFE AS FOUND IN ACTS (i.—xii.).

Name.—His Jewish name was **Saul**, but after chap. xiii. he is known as Paul.

Birth Place.—Tarsus, in Cilicia.

“I am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city” (xxii. 3).

Date of Birth.—At the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts vii. 58) he is called a young man, and when he wrote the Epistle to Philemon he styles himself “Paul the aged” (Philemon 9). The martyrdom of Stephen probably took place 37 A.D., and as Saul was a member of the Sanhedrim he could not have been less than thirty. The Epistle to Philemon was written about 63 A.D.

We therefore conclude that Paul was born during the first ten years of the Christian era, and probably about A.D. 3.

Family.—Of it we know nothing except that his father was of the tribe of Benjamin, and a Pharisee, and had acquired by some means the Roman franchise.

These details are obtained as follows:—

- (1) “Of the tribe of Benjamin” (Phil. iii. 5).
- (2) “I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee” (Acts xxiii. 6).
- (3) “But I was free born” (xxii. 28).

N.B.—Paul claims the Roman franchise on two occasions.

- (a) At Philippi where he says to the sergeants sent to release himself and Silas from prison, “They have beaten us openly uncondemned being Romans.”
- (b) To the chief captain in the Tower of Antonia. “Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?”

Trade.—The learning of a trade was a duty enjoined by the Rabbis on the parents of every Jewish boy. Paul learnt the trade of a “tent-maker.” The chief manufacture at Tarsus was the weaving of goats’-hair cloth, largely used for making tents. Allusion to Paul’s trade is made Acts xviii. 3, 4, where Paul is said to have lived at Corinth with Aquila and Priscilla, “because he was of the same craft . . . for by occupation they were tent-makers.”

Education.—At Jerusalem, under the famous Rabbi, Gamaliel, “Brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel” (Acts xxii. 3).

Saul first appears in Christian history at the martyrdom of Stephen. It is probable that he was one of those of Cilicia, who are described as disputing with Stephen (vii. 9). He was probably a member of the Sanhedrim, for of himself he says, “I also was consenting unto his (Stephen’s) death.” He was probably commissioned to superintend the stoning, for “the witnesses laid their clothes at a young man’s feet whose name was Saul.”

The subsequent events narrated in Acts occur in the following order.

1. Saul became an active persecutor of the Christians at Jerusalem, casting men and women into prison (viii. 1—3).

2. On the dispersion of the Christians to Judæa and Samaria, he obtained letters from the high priest to Damascus to the synagogues for the purpose of arresting Christians in that city, that he might bring them to Jerusalem for trial before the Sanhedrim (ix. 1, 2).

3. His conversion, as related in ix. 3—9.

4. The visit of Ananias ; the baptism of Saul (ix. 10—19).

5. Saul immediately preaches the gospel in the synagogues, to the amazement of all, who were astounded to find the *persecutor* become preacher (ix. 20—22).

6. As related in Gal. i. 17, 18, Saul departed from Damascus to Arabia, where he remained in retirement three years.

7. At the end of this period he returned to Damascus and preached. The Jews entered into a plot to kill him, and he only escaped out of their hands by being let down from the city wall in a basket (ix. 23—25).

8. He then went up to Jerusalem, where he essayed to join himself to the disciples, but they were afraid of him, and did not believe he was a disciple. Barnabas, however, introduced him to the Apostles (ix. 26—27).

9. From Gal. i. 18, we gather that his stay in Jerusalem lasted only fifteen days. His departure is explained (Acts ix. 28. 29) by the

enmity of the Grecians, who, confounded in argument, plotted to slay him.

10. In consequence of this plot the brethren sent Saul first to Cæsarea and thence to Tarsus, where he remained till Barnabas comes for him, after the gospel had been preached to the Greeks at Antioch (xi. 25).

11. For a whole year Barnabas and Saul preached at Antioch, and on the prophecy of the famine by Agabus, they are selected to go up to Jerusalem to take the contributions of the disciples to the brethren in Judæa (xi. 26—30).

12. After going up to Jerusalem Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch (xii. 25), taking with them John. Saul remained at Antioch till ordained by the Holy Spirit to start on his first missionary journey.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS (Chaps. i.—xii.).

The Acts of the Apostles begins with Pentecost, 33 A.D., and ends with the close of the imprisonment of Paul in Rome in 63 A.D. Chapter xii. ends with the death of Herod Agrippa I. in 44 A.D., and the return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch. We can deduce dates for the intermediate events by referring to contemporaneous history.

At the death of our Lord in 33 A.D., the old kingdom of Herod the Great was still parcelled out into three divisions, viz. :—

1. **Judæa and Samaria**, governed by a Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate, who usually resided at Cæsarea.

2. **Galilee and Perea**, ruled over by Herod Antipas, known in the Gospels as Herod the tetrarch.

3. **Iturea and Trachonitis**, ruled over by Herod Philip, known in the Gospels as Philip, tetrarch of Iturea.

The political situation remained unchanged till 37 A.D., when Herod Philip died, and was succeeded by Herod Agrippa I. (the Herod of Acts xii.). In the year 36 A.D. Pontius Pilate was recalled to Rome. The Emperor Tiberius died in 37 A.D., and was succeeded by Caligula, a personal friend of Herod Agrippa. There seems to have been no governor appointed during the disorders following upon the death of Tiberius. Herod Antipas was banished in 40 A.D., and his dominions added to those of Herod Agrippa by Caligula. The Emperor Claudius, who succeeded Caligula in 41 A.D., was also a friend of Agrippa, and seems to have recalled the Roman procurator of Judæa and Samaria, and added these provinces to the kingdom of

Agrippa. The death of Herod Agrippa (Acts xii.) took place in 44 A.D. These facts, and the inferences drawn therefrom, enable us to construct the following table for the first twelve chapters of the Acts.

(N.B.—The only date that can be fixed with absolute certainty is the martyrdom of James, which occurred the Easter of the year in which Herod Agrippa died, viz., in 44 A.D.).

Emperors.	Rulers in Palestine.	High Priests.	Events in Acts.
Tiberius, from 14 A.D.	Pontius Pilate; from 26 A.D. Pilate recalled 36 A.D. Tiberius died before Pilate reaches Rome. No Governor during the disorders following the death of Tiberius.	Caiaphas appointed 25 A.D.	33 A.D. The crucifixion of our Lord. 33 A.D. Pentecost. Descent of the Holy Ghost. The growth of the Church at Jerusalem as described in Acts ii.—v. The Sadducees, the opponents of Christianity.
37 A.D. Caligula.	37 A.D. Herod Agrippa I. succeeds to the tetrarchy of Herod Philip.	37 A.D. Jonathan, son of Ananus. 38 A.D. Theophilus, son of Annas.	37 A.D. <i>First Persecution by the Pharisees and Sadducees.</i> Martyrdom of Stephen, vii. 59. Dispersion of the disciples, viii. 4. Missionary journeys of Philip and Peter, viii. 5—40. Conversion of Saul.
[40 A.D. Caligula orders his statue to be set up in the Temple.]	40 A.D. Antipas goes to Rome to solicit the title of King, but is banished to Lyons and his tetrarchy given to Agrippa.		38—40 A.D. Peace of the churches. Conversion of Cornelius. Saul after three years in Arabia returns to Damascus. Saul in Jerusalem. Saul in Cilicia.
41 A.D. Claudius.	41 A.D. Herod Agrippa I. obtains Judæa and Samaria, and rules over all Palestine. 44 A.D. Death of Herod.	41 A.D. Simon, son of Boethus, surnamed Cantheras. 42 A.D. Matthias, son of Annas. 43 A.D. Elionacus, son of Cantheras.	Preaching of the Gospel at Antioch, xi. 19, 20 43 A.D. Barnabas at Antioch. Saul at Antioch. 44 A.D. <i>Second Persecution by Herod.</i> Martyrdom of James. Imprisonment of Peter. Paul and Barnabas come to Jerusalem. They return to Antioch.

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.
Chaps. I.—XII.

Introduction I. 1—12.

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|-----|--|---------|
| I. | The forty days and the commandments of Jesus | i. 1—8. |
| II. | The Ascension | 9—12. |

The Church in Jerusalem.

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|------|--|------------|
| I. | The Church of the Upper Chamber.
The appointment of Matthias | 13—26. |
| II. | The day of Pentecost. | |
| | 1. The descent of the Holy Ghost | ii. 1—13. |
| | 2. The address of Peter. | 14—36. |
| | 3. The effect on the people. 3,000
baptized | 37—41. |
| | 4. The first converts. | 42—47. |
| III. | Progress of the Church in Jerusalem. The
Sadducees and the Apostles. | |
| | 1. The healing of the lame man at the
Beautiful Gate of the Temple by
Peter and John | iii. 1—10. |
| | 2. Peter's sermon to the crowd in Solo-
mon's Porch | 11—26. |
| | 3. Peter and John arrested by the party
of the High Priest, examined and
dismissed | iv. 1—22. |
| | 4. A second outpouring of the Holy
Spirit | 23—31. |
| | 5. The unanimity and charity of the
Early Church | 32—37. |
| | 6. False Brethren. The sin and death
of Ananias and Sapphira | v. 1—11. |
| | 7. Miracles wrought by the Apostles.
The Church grows greatly | 12—16. |
| | 8. Arrest of the Twelve. | 17, 18. |
| | 9. Miraculous deliverance of the Apos-
tles from prison by an Angel | 19—21. |

10. Trial before the Sanhedrim. Council of Gamaliel. The Apostles are scourged and then dismissed . . . v. 22—42.
11. Beginnings of organization. Election and ordination of the seven Deacons vi. 1—7.
- IV. The First Persecution.
1. The preaching of Stephen. His arrest 8—12.
2. The accusation and trial of Stephen 13—15.
3. Stephen's Defence vii. 1—53.
4. The death of Stephen 54—viii. 2

The Church beyond Jerusalem in Judæa and Samaria.

- I. The scattered converts become missionary preachers viii. 3—4.
- II. Philip's missionary journeys.
1. To Samaria.
- (a) Philip in Samaria 5—8.
- (b) Simon the Sorcerer 9—13.
- (c) Mission of Peter and John to Samaria to confirm the disciples baptized by Philip 14—25.
2. The baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch 26—40.
- III. The conversion of Saul ix. 1—31.
- IV. Peter's missionary journeys.
1. Peter at Lydda. Healing of the paralytic Æneas 32—35.
2. Peter at Joppa. The raising of Tabitha or Dorcas 36—43.
3. Peter at Cæsarea.
- (a) An angel warns Cornelius to send for Peter x. 1—8.
- (b) Peter's vision 9—16.
- (c) Peter goes to Cæsarea. Descent of the Holy Ghost. Baptism of Cornelius 17—48.

4. Peter defends his action of consorting
with Gentiles xi. 1—7.
The Church rejoices at the accep-
tance of the Gentiles 18.

The Church at Antioch.

- I. The Gospel spreads as far as Antioch.
1. Wandering missionaries preach the
word to Gentiles at Antioch 19—21.
 2. The Church at Jerusalem send Bar-
nabas to Antioch 22—24.
 3. Barnabas goes to Tarsus for Saul,
and brings him to Antioch 25, 26.
 4. The disciples are called Christians
first at Antioch 26.
- II. The famine foretold by Agabus. Relief sent
to Jerusalem 27—30.

The Persecution under Herod Agrippa I.

- I. The martyrdom of James xii. 1—2.
- II. Imprisonment and deliverance of Peter 3—19.
- III. Death of Herod Agrippa I. 20—23.
- IV. Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch 24, 25.

(For Chronology of Chapters xiii.—xxviii., and Analysis of Chapters
xiii.—xvi., see Appendix).

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Connection of the Acts with St. Luke's Gospel.

I The ^{1a}former treatise I made,
I O ²Theophilus, concerning all
that Jesus began both to do and
to teach, ²until the day in which he
was received up, after that he had
given ³commandment through the
^bHoly Ghost unto the ⁴apostles whom
he had chosen: ³to whom he also
^cshewed himself alive after his ⁵passion
by many proofs, appearing unto
them by the space of forty days, and
speaking the things concerning the
kingdom of God: ⁴and, ^dbeing assem-
bled together with them, he charged
them not to depart from Jerusalem,
but to wait for the ⁶promise of the
Father, which, *said he*, ye heard from
me: ⁵for John indeed baptized, with

¹ Treatise (Gk., *logos*). A modest name for the Gospel, indicating rather an authentic account told briefly and naturally than a long and laboured history.

² Theophilus = lover of God. The person to whom St. Luke addresses both his Gospel and the Acts. Of him nothing is known, though the adjective "*most excellent*" applied to him (Luke i. 3) is also applied to Felix (Acts xxiii. 26, xxiv. 3), and to Festus (Acts xxvi. 25). We may infer that Theophilus was a person of rank, and possibly a Roman officer.

³ Commandment (Rheims), i.e. commissioned them to do the works of which the Acts is a partial record.

⁴ Apostle (Gk., *apostolos*) = one sent forth.

⁵ Passion (Lat., *passio*) means "suffering."

⁶ Promise, i.e. the comforter (John xiv. 16—26; Luke xxiv. 49).

V. 3.—Many Infallible Proofs.

- (1) Walking with the two disciples to Emmaus. Luke xxiv. 13—30.
- (2) Eating with them at Emmaus. Luke xxiv. 30.
- (3) Showing His hands and feet. Luke xxiv. 39.
- (4) Eating of a broiled fish and honeycomb. Luke xxiv. 43.
- (5) Giving proofs to Thomas. John xx. 26—29.
- (6) Appearance at the Sea of Galilee. Second miraculous draught of fishes. John xxi.

V. 3.—Forty days in Scripture is significant of probation before some great event; thus—

- (1) Forty days at the flood. Gen. vii. 4.
- (2) Moses was forty days in the Mount receiving the Law. Ex. xxiv. 18.
- (3) The spies were forty days searching the land. Num. xiii. 25.
- (4) Elijah was forty days on Horeb. 1 Kings xix.
- (5) The time of probation of Nineveh was forty days. Jonah iii. 4.

V. 3.—Kingdom of God—the visible Church of Christ on earth.

As regards the visible Church we find in the Gospels—

- (1) That Jesus has all power in His Church. Matt. xxviii. 18.
- (2) The Commission to preach and baptize. Matt. xxviii. 19, Mark xvi. 15.
- (3) That Jesus will be constantly present with His Church. Matt. xxviii. 20.
- (4) "That signs shall follow them that believe." Mark xvi. 17, 18.
- (5) That our Lord interpreted the Scriptures, and opened the understanding of His disciples. Luke xxiv. 27 and 45.
- (6) As the Father had sent Jesus, so He sent His disciples. John xx. 21.

V. 4.—They were to remain at Jerusalem for two reasons:—

- (1) That they should receive the Holy Ghost collectively ^a as a body
- (2) To fulfil prophecy: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem."

^a Gr. *first*. ^b Or, *Holy Spirit*: and so throughout this book. ^c Gr. *presented*. ^d Or, *saying with them*.

water; but ye shall be baptized^a with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6 They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, ⁹ dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath ^b set ¹⁰ within his own authority. 8 But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both ¹¹ in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. 9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went, behold, ¹² two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 which also said, ¹³ Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.

12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is nigh unto Jerusalem, ¹⁴ a sabbath day's journey off. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into ¹⁵ the upper chamber, ¹⁶ where they were abiding; both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and

9 The Apostles were still thinking that the kingdom of God was to be a restored kingdom of David, v. 3.

10 In his own absolute disposal.

11 This order of evangelization was exactly carried out.

12 Two men. Evidently "angels" in human form.

13 Ye men of Galilee. The Apostles, except Judas Iscariot, were Galileans, and were easily distinguished by their Galilean dialect. Of St. Peter, see Matt. xxvi. 73. "Of a truth thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee."

(St. Luke xxiv. 50) says, "He led them out until they were over against Bethany," which was on the further side.

14 Sabbath day's journey. 2,000 cubits, or rather more than a mile. It was the distance between the tabernacle and the farthest part of the camp in the wilderness.

15 Probably the same upper room (Mark xiv. 15) used for our Lord's last Pass-over.

16 The tense is imperfect = were abiding, thus denoting where the Apostles usually stayed.

Note! The Lord's brothers are placed apart from the Twelve and therefore were not Apostles.

V. 10.—Instances of angels described as men are—

(1) "A young man arrayed in a white robe." Mark xvi. 5.

(2) "Two men in dazzling apparel." Luke xxiv. 4.

(3) "A man in bright apparel." Acts x. 30.

^a Or, in ^b Or, appointed by

Matthew, James *the son* of Alphæus, and Simon the Zealot, and ^aJudas *the son* of James. 14 These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with ¹⁹ the women, and Mary the mothër of Jesus, and with his ²⁰ brethren.

Note! The last mention of the Virgin Mary

19 **The Women.** The mention of "the women" as a body is peculiar to Luke (see Luke viii. 1—3; xxiii. 49). The women mentioned in the Gospel included Mary Magdalene, Susanna, Joanna, and to these may be added Martha and Mary of Bethany, and Salome, the wife of Zebedee.

20 **Brethren.** Their names were James, Joses, Simon and Judas. Mark vi. 3, Matt. xiii. 55. The following suggestions have been made, viz. that they were—

(1) Children of Joseph by a former wife.

(2) Children of Joseph and Mary after the birth of Christ.

(3) Children of Mary, a sister of the Virgin, and wife of Cleopas, or Alphæus.

The first is the best supported theory, and explains the superiority which His brethren always assumed over our Lord.

For list of Apostles and account of each, see Introduction, p. vii.

Election of Matthias in place of Judas Iscariot.

15 And in these days Peter stood up in the midst of ^athe brethren, and said (and there was a multitude of ^cpersons gathered together, about a ¹hundred and twenty), 16 Brethren, it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost spake before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was ²guide to them that took Jesus. 17 For he was numbered among us, and received his ^dportion in this ministry. 18 (Now this man obtained a ³field with the reward of his iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. 19 And it became known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch that in ⁴their language that field was called Akeldama, that is, The field of blood.) 20 For it is written in the book of Psalms,

Brethren. The usual expression for acknowledged followers of our Lord

1 The first Christian congregation consisted of about one hundred and twenty persons, viz. :—

1. The eleven. (Judas is dead.)

2. Certain women, including the Virgin Mary.

3. The brethren of Jesus.

4. Disciples, i.e. believers in the Messiahship of Jesus.

2 **Guide.** Psalm xli. 9.

3 "The Potter's Field" purchased by the priests with the money bribe paid for the betrayal of Jesus, which Judas, in remorse, threw back to them.

4 **Their language,** viz. Aramaic. Readers ignorant of it would need the explanation of Akeldama—field of blood.

Let his habitation be made desolate,

And let no man dwell therein: and,

His ^{6a}office let another take.

21 Of the men therefore which have ⁷companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out ^bamong us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection. 23 And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew of these two the one whom thou hast chosen, 25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas fell away, ¹⁰ that he might go to his own place. 26 And they gave ¹¹lots^c for them; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

This Scripture. Ps. xli., written originally by David of Abithophel

AHITHOPHEL—

- (1) Was the familiar friend of David.
- (2) Sided with Absalom in his rebellion.
- (3) Hanged himself when the plot failed.

The Death of Judas is also described by St. Matthew. St. Matthew xxvii. 3—10.

The chief priests . . . bought the potter's field.

He went away and hanged himself.

Calls the field "the potter's field."

There is no satisfactory explanation of these discrepancies. They are differing accounts of the same events, but do not destroy the historic truth of the events because they differ.

Instances of lots.

- (1) The selection of the scapegoat. Lev. xvi. 8.
- (2) The detection of Achan's sin. Josh. vii. 16—18.
- (3) The division of Canaan among the tribes. Josh. xiv. 2.
- (4) The election of Saul as King of Israel. 1 Sam. x. 20—21.
- (5) The detection of Jonathan as having tasted food in the pursuit of the Philistines, contrary to the oath of Saul. 1 Sam. xiv. 42.
- (6) The sailors detected Jonah by casting lots. Jonah I. 7.

6 Office. "Let another take his office," Ps. cix. 8.

7 Companied—associated.

Qualification of an apostle = to have been a disciple of Jesus, and an eye-witness from the beginning.

Work and duty of an apostle = to witness to the resurrection of Jesus. (See p. vii.).

Nothing is known of these men, though possibly they were of the Seventy.

10 "Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place" (Numb. xxiv. 25), interpreted by the Rabbis as "the place of torment."

11 Lots—tablets. Each one wrote on a tablet the name of one of the candidates. These tablets were placed in a vessel and shaken together until one of the tablets fell out. The name on this tablet signified the elected candidate.

Barsabbas = son of the oath, or of wisdom.

Matthias = given by Jehovah.

JUDAS—

- (1) Was the disciple of Jesus.
- (2) Betrayed our Lord to the chief priests.
- (3) Hanged himself.

The two accounts differ.

St. Luke, Acts I. 18, 19.

This man (Judas) purchased a field.

And, falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, etc.

Calls the field "Akeldama," the field of blood.

Descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

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

5 Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem ⁴ Jews, ⁵ devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And ⁶ when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these which speak ⁷ Galilæans? 8 And how hear we, every man in our own language, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judæa and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, 10 in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and ⁹ sojourners from Rome, both Jews and ¹⁰ proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabians, we do hear them speaking in our tongues the

1 Pentecost (Gk. Pentecostos, *hēkōtē*), because it was held on the fiftieth day after the Passover Sabbath. Whit Sunday is the corresponding Christian Festival. So the "great and strong wind" that rent the mountains on Horeb before Elijah (1 Kings xix. 11).

2 Distributed, so that one appeared on each.

3 Other tongues—in languages different from their own.

4 Jews of the Dispersion who were now permanent residents in Jerusalem.

5 Devout men, i.e. reverent men; men who would treat and discuss sacred things with reverence. See Simeon (Luke ii. 25). The men who carried Stephen to burial (Acts viii. 2).

6 When the sound of the rushing of the wind was heard (probably) throughout Jerusalem.

7 Galilæans, see i. 11.

Pentecost was peculiarly fitted for the descent of the Holy Ghost—

1. More strangers were present in Jerusalem at this feast than at the Passover or Feast of Tabernacles; for the dangers of travel in early spring or late autumn prevented many from undertaking the journey for Passover and Tabernacles.

2. As the "feast of harvest—the feast of firstfruits," it was symbolical of the first gathering of converts into the Christian Church.

3. Pentecost was also regarded by the Jews as a commemoration of the giving of the Law on Sinai. Now God's law was henceforward to be written, "not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh" (2 Cor. iii. 3).

⁹ Roman Jews come up to the Holy City to worship.

¹⁰ Proselyte (Gk. *proselutos*)—one who has come over; always descriptive of a convert from heathenism to Judaism.

^a Gr. was being fulfilled. ^b Or. parting among them Or. distributing themselves

mighty works of God. 12 And they were all amazed, and ¹¹ were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this? 13 But others mocking said, They are filled with ¹² new wine.

11 ἐξίσταντο = "were perplexed" so the women at the tomb "were perplexed" (St. Luke xxiv. 4). These strangers were at a loss to understand what they saw and heard.

12 Original has "sweet wine," i.e. stronger and more intoxicating than the lighter wines that were ordinarily drunk.

This is a catalogue of the Jews of the Dispersion. They are classified into three great sections—

- (1) Babylon, including Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia.
- (2) Syria, including Judæa, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia.
- (3) Egypt, including also "the parts of Libya about Cyrene."

Pompey's conquest had added a Roman section. Cretes and Arabians are added as finding no place in the above classification. For geographical description, see Intro. pp. xvii—xx.

The Jewish hours of prayer were the third (nine o'clock), the sixth (midday), and the ninth (three o'clock).

PETER'S SERMON.

I. Refutation of the Charge of Drunkenness.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and ^a spake forth unto them, saying, ¹ Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is *but* the ² third hour of the day; 16 but this is that which hath been spoken ^a by the prophet ³ Joel; 17 And it shall be in the ⁴ last days, saith God,

I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh:

And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

And your young men shall see visions,

And your old men shall dream dreams:

1 St. Peter addresses

(1) The Jews dwellers in Jerusalem.

(2) The Jews sojourners from other parts.

2 Third hour = 9 a.m., the first hour of prayer, the hour of morning sacrifice, before which the law allowed no Jew to eat or drink.

3 Joel ii. 28—32.

4 Last days = the days of the Messiah.

- 18 Yea and on my^aservants and on
my^bhandmaidens in those days
Will I pour forth of my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
- 19 And I will shew wonders in the
heaven above,
And signs on the earth beneath;
Blood, and fire, and vapour of
smoke:
- 20 The sun shall be turned into
darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the day of the Lord come,
That⁵ great and notable day:
- 21 And it shall be, that whosoever
shall call on the name of the
Lord shall be saved.

5 The prophecy of Joel was fulfilled.

(1) Destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

(2) Destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

The Christians fled to Pella, and thus escaped the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem.

Prophecy has two significations.

(I.) as regards the future—to foretell; to predict future events.

Examples:—

Agabus, who, at Antioch (Acts xi. 28), "signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine" which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.

Agabus, at Cæsarea (Acts xxi. 11), "taking Paul's girdle, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles."

(II.) As regards the present—to foretell, to proclaim, to preach, and expound.

Examples:—

Judas and Silas being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren (Acts xv. 32).

The twelve men at Ephesus on whom St. Paul laid his hands, "they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts xix. 6).

The daughters of Philip. "Four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" (Acts

xxi. 9).

Analysis of St. Peter's Sermon.

He addresses two classes, viz. the mockers (v. 13) and the devout men (v. 5), and so the sermon comprises two main divisions.

I. The Mockers answered.

(1) The charge of drunkenness is refuted, for it is very unlikely that so many would be drunken before nine in the morning.

(2) These men are not under the influence of wine, but under the influence of the Holy Spirit, foretold by the prophet Joel (Joel ii. 28).

II. An explanation is given to the devout men.

The cause of the outpouring of the Spirit is stated—

(1) The miracles, crucifixion and death of Jesus are alluded to as well-known facts.

(2) The resurrection of Jesus is stated as a proposition to be proved.

(3) Proof of this resurrection.

(a) It was foretold by David. Ps. xvi. 8, 9.

(b) This passage cannot apply to David, for he is dead and buried, and his sepulchre remains.

(c) But it does apply to one of the seed of David. Ps. cxxxii. 11.

(d) Therefore when David spoke the prophecy (Ps. xvi.) he referred to the resurrection of the Christ.

(e) The prophecy has been fulfilled in Jesus, for "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

(4) Further explanation—

- (a) Jesus has not only risen, but is ascended into heaven.
 (b) Being ascended, "he has received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost."
 (c) And now from heaven hath poured forth this (gift of tongues), foretold by Joel, and "which ye (men of Israel) now see and hear," and are amazed and perplexed thereat.
 (d) This ascension was foretold by David (Ps. cx. 1), which prophecy cannot apply to David (for he is not ascended), but does apply to Jesus.

Conclusion of the Argument. Therefore this outpouring of the Holy Spirit, shown in his gift of tongues, is the proof given by God that He has made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

The Gift of Tongues.

Instances :—

- (1) The Day of Pentecost, ii. 11.
- (2) The conversion of Cornelius, x. 46.
- (3) The twelve men baptized by St. Paul at Ephesus, xix. 6.

Nature of the Gift. There are two varying accounts given in the New Testament :—

- (1) A miraculous power of speaking different languages. This is the account given at the Day of Pentecost—"and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 (2) An ecstatic and unintelligible utterance expressive of praise and adoration. This is St. Paul's account in the Epistle to the Corinthians—"He that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." 1 Cor. xiv. 2.
 St. Paul further explains—"Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving." 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

How can we explain this difference ?

- (1) Were there two gifts of tongues ?—
 (a) Given to the Apostles only, for missionary purposes.
 (b) Given to Christians of the Apostolic Church for Worship.
 (2) Was the gift of tongues simply an impression made on the hearers, whereby though the language spoken was one, each hearer heard in his own ?

On this it may be said—

- (1) That there is no evidence that the gift was ever used for missionary purposes.
- (2) That St. Paul could not speak at Lystra in the foreign tongue of Lycaonia, when it would have been a valuable aid to him. Acts xiv. 11.
- (3) That it was used when the Churches met for worship.
- (4) That the "hearing" supposition does not meet St. Paul's description at all.

Wherefore we may conclude that the gift of tongues was an actual gift of languages on the day of Pentecost, given as a "sign," but that afterwards it became the utterance of an ecstatic condition. This agrees with St. Paul's description that it was a "sign" to them that believe not, and this sign was necessary on all these occasions when the gift is recorded, viz. :—

- (1) Day of Pentecost, on the foundation of the Church.
- (2) The conversion of Cornelius, at the admission of the Gentiles into the Church.
- (3) At Ephesus, in order to make an impression upon the population of that maritime city, the centre of Asia, and resorted to by men from different countries speaking different languages.

The disappearance of the miraculous element from the gift is consistent with the withdrawal of the power to work miracles.

II. The Resurrection of Jesus a Proof of His Messiahship.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words :
 Jesus of Nazareth, a man ¹ approved
 of God unto you by ^{2a} mighty works
 and ³ wonders and ⁴ signs, which God

¹ Approved means "proved,"
 i.e. a man publicly avouched
 or declared.

² Mighty works ; indicating
 the power of the worker.

³ Wonders—portents, indicating the astonishment caused to the observers.

⁴ Signs pointing out the divinity of the worker.

a. Gr. powers.

did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; 23 him, being delivered up by the ⁵ determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of ^a lawless men did crucify and slay: 24 whom God raised up, having loosed the ⁶ pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. 25 For David saith concerning him,

I beheld the Lord always before my face;

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

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

Moreover my flesh also shall ⁷ dwell in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in ⁸ Hades,

Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption.

28 Thou madest known unto me the ways of life;

Thou shalt make me full of gladness ^c with thy countenance.

29 Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his ¹⁰ tomb is with us unto this day.

30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins ^d he would set *one* upon his throne;

31 he foreseeing *this* spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus

⁵ Determinate counsel = fixed resolve.

⁶ Pangs of death = birth pangs denoting that the death of Christ was the life of the world.

Ps. xvi. 8—11.

⁷ dwell = will pitch its tabernacle, i.e. only for a time

⁸ Hades, the place of departed spirits, not the Gehenna, the place of torment.

Patriarch = "head or prince of a tribe."

Instances of the use of the word in this meaning are—

1. Of David, here.

2. Of Abraham. Heb. vii.

4.

3. Of the twelve sons of Jacob as the founders of the twelve tribes of Israel.

In common usage the title is assigned especially to those whose lives are recorded in Scripture previous to the time of tribes.

¹⁰ Sepulchre or Tomb. The tomb of David was a conspicuous object in Jerusalem.

did God raise up,^a whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore^b by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he¹² hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. 34 For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,

13 The Lord said unto my Lord,
Sit thou on my right hand,
35 14 Till I make thine enemies the
footstool of thy feet.

36 Let^c all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both¹⁵ Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

12 (ii. 17). Hath poured forth this; and so fulfilled the prophecy of Joel.

13 Psalm cx., appropriated to himself by Jesus (Matt. xxii. 44, 45). Lit. in Heb., "Jehovah said unto Adonai," etc.

14 To pour contempt on princes taken in battle, the Easterns put their feet on their necks.

Earliest example—Joshua said to his captains, "Come near, and put your feet upon the necks of these kings" (Josh. x. 24—26).

15 Lord and Christ=Ruler and Messiah.

Results of the Sermon.

37 Now when they heard *this*, they were¹ pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren,² what shall we do? 38 And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him. 40 And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.

1 Pricked in their heart, Conviction, like a sword, pierced through their hearts.

They were self-convicted of their

(1) **Blindness**, in not recognizing Jesus as the Christ.

(2) **Crime**, in persecuting Him as a false Christ.

(3) **Cruelty**, in crucifying Him.

3 What shall we do? i.e. to expiate our sin, and to avert the punishment.

Mark xvi. 15, 16, "preach the gospel to the whole creation He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved."

The Conduct of the Early Christians.

41 They then^d that received his word were baptized; and there were added *unto them* in that day about three

^a Or, of whom. ^b Or, at. ^c Or, every house. ^d Or, having received

thousand souls. 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and ^afellowship, in ² the breaking of bread and the prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done ^b by the apostles: 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things ³ common; 45 and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. 46 And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread ⁴ at home, they did ⁵ take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added ^a to them day by day those that were being saved.

Apostles' Doctrine and Fellowship. This indicates that already there were some settled forms of teaching and of Church organization, which eventually developed into Creeds and settled form of government.

2 Breaking of Bread. The earliest title of the Holy Communion (Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 16).

3 Community of Goods, Instances of the same idea—
1. Plato in his ideal republic.

2. The Essenes had no distinctions in property.

3. Our Lord and His disciples had a common purse.

4. Later monastic orders lived a communistic life.

4 At home. The breaking of bread took place at their own homes—at one time at one house, and at another at another house.

5 Take their food, i.e. their usual meals.

Characteristics of the Apostolic Communism—

1. It did not extend beyond Jerusalem.
2. It was not compulsory as with the Essenes and monastic orders.
- 3 It would seem to have been an attempt under newly roused feelings to realise the ideal felt by their deeper nature.
4. It ended abruptly in the treachery of Ananias and Sapphira, and this may account for the poverty of the saints at Jerusalem afterwards.
- V. 46.—Continuing daily with one accord in the Temple. The first Christians kept all the religious observances of the Jewish religion, its feasts, its hours of prayer and its ritual, and as far as possible consistently with their Christian faith. Thus:—
 - (1) The hours of prayer were observed by Peter and John (iii. 1); by Peter at Joppa, (x. 9).
 - (2) The Apostles and disciples were in the Temple (iii. 1) (v. 12) (v. 21).
 - (3) Paul, though holding the Mosaic ritual as non-obligatory, kept the Nazarite vow—
 - (i.) At Caesarea, where he shaved his head because he had a vow (xviii. 18).
 - (ii.) At Jerusalem, on his arrival there after his third missionary journey (xxi. 23, 24).
 - (4) St. Paul hastened to be at Jerusalem on the Feast of Pentecost (xx. 16).

The Cripple at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple made whole by Peter and John.

1 Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour. 2 And a certain man that was lame from his mother's

Ninth hour=three p.m., the last of the three appointed hours of prayer. Also that of the evening sacrifice.

^a Or, in fellowship. ^b Or, through. Many ancient authorities add in Jerusalem; and great fear was upon all. ^c Or, together.

womb ¹ was carried, whom they laid daily at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; 3 who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked to receive 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 from them. 6 But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. ² In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk. 7 And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and his ankle-bones received strength. 8 And leaping up, he stood, and began to walk; and he 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 took knowledge of him, that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

(4) John takes Peter to the Palace of the High Priest (John xviii. 16).

(5) Peter and John go in company to the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection (John xx. 6).

(6) It was Peter who asked our Lord concerning John "And what shall this man do?" (John xxi. 21).

The Jewish hours of prayers were the third hour, or morning prayer; the sixth hour, or noon; and the ninth hour, or evening prayer. Daniel is recorded to have prayed "three times a day." (Dan. vi. 10).

Beautiful Gate. Probably the magnificent Eastern Gate, adorned and covered with massive plates of gold and silver, which led up from the Court of the Gentiles to the Court of the Women.

St. Peter's Address to the Multitude.

11 And as he held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the "porch that is called Solomon's,

¹ Was carried, better "was being carried."

No miracle would so widely affect the "religious world" of Jerusalem, because the beggar, being laid daily at the Beautiful Gate, would be familiar to all Temple worshippers.

Unlike that other cripple from birth at Lystra, in whom "Paul perceived that he had faith to be healed," Peter saw no such symptoms in this one.

² In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk. As brief as the soldier's word of command.

How vivid and graphic, yet so detailed! Do we owe this to Luke the Physician's knowledge of anatomy?

Peter and John had been friends from youth. In the Gospels we find—

(1) They had been partners as fishermen on the Sea of Galilee (Luke v. 10).

(2) Together they had received the baptism of John (John i. 42).

(3) They had been sent together to prepare the Passover Feast (Luke xxii. 8).

greatly wondering. 12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this ^aman? or why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or ¹godliness we had made him to walk? 13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his ^{2b}Servant Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. 14 But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a ⁴murderer to be granted unto you, 15 and killed the ⁶Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead; ⁴whereof we are witnesses. 16 And ⁶by faith in his name hath his name made this man strong, whom ye behold and know: yea, the faith which is through him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. 17 And now, brethren, ⁵I wot that ⁶in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. 18 But the things which God foreshewed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled. 19 Repent ye therefore, ⁷and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; 20 and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, *even* Jesus: 21 whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets

Ye men of Israel expresses the whole dignity and glory of the theocratic people in peculiar covenant relation with God. The Hebrew shared the glory of being a descendant of Abraham with the Ishmaelites: of Isaac with the Edomites; but of Jacob with no one, it was particularly his own. Their descent was traced to Jacob not as Jacob, but as "Israel," who had power with God and man and prevailed." The ten tribes assumed the title "kingdom of Israel," as one of peculiar honour.

1 Godliness. The apostles give all the glory to Jesus, and disclaim all the credit for themselves.

2 Servant Jesus, i.e. not the Son of God, but, the Servant of God. "*Behold, my Servant whom I have chosen*" (Matt. xii. 18; Isaiah xlii. 1). So Jehovah calls "*Moses my servant*" (Josh. i. 7).

4 Murderer. Barabbas, "*who for certain insurrection . . . and for murder was cast into prison.*"

5 I wot—I know. Present tense of to wit; past tense wist. "*Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house?*" (Luke ii. 49).

6 In ignorance. The people sinned through want of instruction and knowledge of the law. The rulers sinned in spite of instruction and knowledge of the law.

7 And turn again from your blindness and blood-guiltiness.

^a Or, *thing* ^b Or, *Child*: and so in ver. 26; iv. 27, 30. See Matt. xii. 18; Is. xlii. 1; lji. 13; liii. 11. ^c Or, *Author* ^d Or, *of whom* ^e Or, *on the ground of*

which have been since the world began. 22 Moses indeed said, ¹¹ A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren,^a like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. 23 And it shall be, that every soul, which shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. 24 Yea and all the prophets from ¹² Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days. 25 Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God^b made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.

Solomon's Porch. Magnificent cloisters on the east side of the Temple. They are minutely described by Josephus, who asserts that they were the original work of Solomon, and formed part of the first temple. Hence the name, Solomon's Porch.

Jesus taught in this porch, and the Jews took up stones to stone See John x. 23-31.

Like unto me. The parallelism between Moses and Jesus can be shown thus:—

Moses was—

- (1) A Deliverer, freeing the Israelites from Pharaoh and the Egyptians.
- (2) A Lawgiver, promulgating the Law at Sinai.
- (3) A Mediator, at Sinai, where the Israelites implore Jehovah to speak to them through Moses.

Jesus was—

- (1) A Deliverer, freeing "his people from their sins." Egypt is a type of the bondage of sin.
- (2) A Lawgiver. "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another."
- (3) A Mediator. "Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant." Heb. xii. 24.

For Moses indeed said, i.e. not Moses truthfully said, but it is a fact that Moses said.

¹¹ Deuteronomy xviii. 15; also quoted by Stephen, Acts vii. 37.

Peter charges the Jews:—

- (1) Ye delivered Him to trial.
- (2) Ye denied Him before Pilate, a heathen.
- (3) Ye denied his righteousness.
- (4) Ye preferred a murderer.
- (5) Ye killed the Prince (or author) of Life.

¹² Samuel, the founder of the schools of the prophets. The prophetic period began with Samuel. God "gave them judges until Samuel the prophet" (Acts xiii. 20).

Peter's Address interrupted through the Jealousy of the Sadducees.

4 And, as they spake unto the people,^c the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, 2 being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the

Captain of the Temple. The officer in command of the Temple Guard, composed of Levites.

^a Or, as he raised up me ^b Gr. covenanted. ^c Some ancient authorities read the chief priests.

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

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

The High Priestly families belonged to the Sadducean party. They denied the resurrection (Matt. xxiii. 23, "which say that there is no resurrection"), and did not believe in the existence of angels (Acts xxiii. 8, "the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit").

^a Or, in whom ^b Or, saved ^c Or, this name

⁴ i.e. an increase of 2,000 since the Day of Pentecost.

⁵ The party of the Sadducees.

⁶ In the midst. The Sanhedrim sat in a semi-circle, the president being in the middle of the arc, whilst the accused stood in the centre.

⁷ In what name? Deuteronomy xiii. 15, decreed that any one working a miracle in the name of any other God should be put to death. The question admits the fact and reality of the miracle.

⁸ Good deed = act of beneficence. The Sanhedrim refer to the miracle contemptuously as "this thing." Peter describes it as "a good deed."

⁹ Name. The use of the expression in the Bible "in the name of" always indicates the individuality, attributes, and character of the person named.

¹⁰ He is the stone. Psalm cxviii. 22. Applied to Himself by Jesus (Matthew xxi. 42).

¹¹ Any other name, i.e. any other individual character or individual power.

We notice that whereas the Pharisees were Christ's enemies, the Sadducees are His Apostles' enemies, being specially opposed to the doctrine of the resurrection. When Stephen and the Hellenists gave a new direction to their teaching, the Pharisees, headed by Saul of Tarsus once more turned against them.

The Sadducees had perhaps listened to end of verse 15, and then on the mention of the resurrection had gone to call the Temple Guard.

On Annas and Caiaphas, both called high priests (Luke iii. 2), see Intro. Biog. Notes. Of John and Alexander nothing is known.

The Apostles are released without Punishment

13 Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were ¹ unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they ² took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. 14 And ³ seeing the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the ⁴ council, they conferred among themselves, 16 saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed ⁵ a notable ^a miracle hath been wrought through them, is manifest to all that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. 17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. 18 And they called them, and ⁸ charged them not ⁹ to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: 20 for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard. 21 And they, when they had further threatened them, let them go, finding ¹¹ nothing how they might punish them, ¹² because

1 Unlearned and ignorant = untutored common fellows, not Rabbis.

2 They began to recognise, i.e. the members of the council began to remember that they had seen these two Apostles with Jesus in the Temple.

3 The presence of the healed cripple ties the hands of the priests.

4 Council = the Sanhedrim.

5 A notable miracle. Second acknowledgment of the complete cure of the cripple, and of their resolve to ignore it as a sign from God.

Notable = "that can be known," and therefore an actual fact which they could not deny.

8 Charged. Our Lord charged the leper to tell no man (St. Luke v. 14).

9 "Absolutely not to utter" —the very name of Jesus was not to pass their lips.

11 They could assign no reason for punishment.

12 They feared an outburst of indignation, on the part of the people.

of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done. 22 For the man was more than ¹³ forty years old, on whom this^a miracle of healing was wrought.

V. 19.—⁵The Apostles' answer.

Which is right? To obey God or man?

Judge ye! You may judge for yourselves!

We have judged for ourselves.

To obey you is impossible.

The things our eyes saw and our ears heard speak and teach we must.

Peter and John going to the Brethren unite with them in Prayer and are Answered from Heaven.

23 And being let go, they came to their own ¹ company, and ² reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said unto them. 24 And they, when they heard it, lifted up their voice to God ³ with one accord, and said, O ^{4b} Lord, ^c thou that didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 ^d who by the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David thy servant, didst say,

Why did the ⁷ Gentiles rage,

And the ⁸ peoples ^e imagine vain things?

26 The ⁹ kings of the earth set themselves in array,

And ¹⁰ the rulers were gathered together,

Against the Lord, and against his ^f Anointed:

27 for of a truth in this city against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together, 28 to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel foreordained

¹³ Thus the man's case was well known.

¹ Company implies there was a recognised place of meeting.

² Reported. Even if the Judgment Hall were open to the general public but few Christians would be present at the trial.

³ With one accord, i.e. they united in singing the hymn.

⁴ Lord. Greek is not Kyrios but Despotas = absolute ruler of the universe.

⁷ Gentiles = Roman soldiers.

⁸ Peoples (the word is in the plural) = or Israel (Twelve Tribes).

⁹ Kings = Herod Antipas.

¹⁰ Rulers = Pontius Pilate and the Jewish rulers.

^a Gr. sign. ^b Or, Master ^c Or, thou art he that did make ^d somewhat uncertain. ^e Or, meditate ^f Gr. Christ.

^d The Greek text in this clause

to come to pass. 29 And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings: and grant unto thy^aservants to speak thy word with all boldness, 30 while¹² thou stretchest forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of thy holy Servant Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the¹³ place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

¹² Compare the Old Testament phrase "with a stretched out arm."

¹³ So after the prayers of Paul and Silas, the prison at Philippi was shaken (xvi. 26).

V. 29.—The Apostles' prayer and the answer to their prayer. Petitions of their prayer to God—

1. Look upon their threatenings.
2. Grant us to speak Thy word with all boldness.
3. Stretch forth Thy hand to heal.
4. Do signs and wonders in the name of Jesus.

Answers to their prayer—

1. The place was shaken wherein they were gathered.
2. All were filled with the Holy Ghost.
3. They were filled with boldness to speak the Word.

The Unanimity and Charity of the Early Church.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of *them* said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33 And with great power gave the apostles³ their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus^b: and⁴ great⁵ grace was upon them all. 34 For neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need.

³ Their witness, i.e. were rendering their appointed testimony.

⁴ Grace from God, not favour with the people.

⁵ Joseph, Intro., Biographical Notes.

36 And⁵ Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is,

^a Gr. bondservants. ^b Some ancient authorities add Christ.

being interpreted, ⁶ Son of^a exhortation), a Levite, a ⁷ man of Cyprus by race, ³⁷ having a field, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

⁶ Son of exhortation. Barnabas is called a prophet (Acts xiii. 1).

⁷ A Jew, but born in Cyprus.

Unanimity, unselfishness, and zeal in the Church at this period.

Unanimity, or concord. All of one heart and one soul.

Unselfishness. All property was for the common use.

Zeal. The resurrection was preached with great power.

Plenty. There was no one in need.

Special examples :—Many sold their property and paid the price into a common fund, to be distributed according to their several needs, as did Barnabas of Cyprus, a Levite.

Account of Ananias and Sapphira.

5 ¹ But a certain man named Ananias, with ¹ Sapphira his wife, sold a ² possession, ² and kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being ³ privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to ⁴ lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? ⁴ Whiles it remained, ⁴ did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. ⁵ And Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost: and great fear came upon all that heard it. ⁶ And the ^{5c} young men arose and ⁶ wrapped him round, and they ⁷ carried him out and buried him.

¹ Sapphira, probably derived from Gk. sapphire, the name of a precious stone.

² Possession, called in verse 3 "the land."

³ Privy = "secret," here "cognizant of the secret." The sin was a deliberate act, as shown by the wife being party to it.

⁴ Did it not remain thine own, i.e. to be disposed of as you pleased.

⁵ The young men. The use of the article seems to indicate a definite class. Perhaps a lay organization of helpers.

⁶ Wrapped him round, i.e. in his own flowing robes. They became his winding-sheet. In hot climates burial follows quickly after death.

⁷ Carried him out. The burial would be outside the city walls.

⁸ Space = interval of time.

⁹ Yea, for so much. Sapphira confesses her complicity (1) in the sale (2) in the purloining.

⁷ And it was about the ⁸ space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. ⁸ And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much. And she said, ⁹ Yea,

for so much. 9 But Peter *said* unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together ¹⁰ to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out. 10 And she fell down immediately at his feet, and gave up the ghost: and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her by her husband. 11 And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon ¹¹ all that heard these things.

10 Tempt, Latin, tentare, has two meanings:

- (1) to try, to make trial of
(2) to entice to sin.

Here—to try or test whether the spirit that dwelt in the Apostles really knew the secrets of men's hearts.

11 All that heard, i.e. those outside the Christian Church.

But. This paragraph opens with a But, because it contrasts Barnabas, a single-minded giver, with Ananias, a double-minded giver, who was actuated by ambition, covetousness, love of praise, and deceit.

The sin of Ananias and Sapphira. They sold the field and brought part of the money to the Apostles, professing to be bringing the whole sum into the common fund.

They were guilty of—

Vanity, seeking the praise of their fellows for their devotion and sacrifice.

Covetousness, in keeping part of the money back.

Contempt for God, in thinking that their offence would not be detected by the Apostles acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They had "*not lied unto men, but unto God.*"

The Sin was deliberate, for Sapphira was "*privy to it,*" i.e. Ananias and Sapphira had consulted together and arranged their plan of action so that both would tell the same tale. See v. 8.

Their punishment was necessary—

(1) To show that their sin was detected.

(2) To prevent internal corruption of the infant Church, a corruption infinitely more dangerous than any external persecution, had not such a crime been at once severely visited.

So was necessary the punishment of the man for gathering sticks on the Sabbath at the early institution of the Sabbath. Num. xv. 32-36.

So was necessary the punishment of Nadab and Abihu at the commencement of the Jewish priesthood. Lev. x. 2.

Miracles wrought by the Apostles. The Church grows greatly.

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in ¹ Solomon's porch. 13 But of the ² rest durst no man join himself to them: howbeit the people magnified them; 14^a and believers were the more added ³ to the Lord, multi-

1 Solomon's porch. See iii. 11.

2 The rest. Terror caused by the sudden death of Ananias and Sapphira prevented others intruding on the Christians during worship.

3 To the Lord. By being added to His Church, which is His Body.

^a Or, and there were the more added to them, believing on the Lord

tudes both of men and women; 15 insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on ⁴ beds and couches, that, as Peter came by, at the least his ⁵ shadow might overshadow some one of them. 16 And there also came together the multitude from the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and ⁶ them that were ⁷ vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

⁴ The "Beds" were those of the well-to-do people; the "couches" were the mats or pallets of the poor.

⁵ Shadow of Peter. A parallel to this occurred at Ephesus, where "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul" (xix. 11).

⁶ The demoniacs. In the Gospels they are usually described as those possessed with a devil.

⁷ Vexed = tormented.

Arrest of the Twelve.

17 But the ¹ high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with ² jealousy, 18 and laid hands on the apostles, and put them in ³ public ward.

¹ Annas, &c. See Intro. p. xxvii. Josephus tells us that Annas and his five sons were Sadducees.

² Jealousy included—

(1) Zeal against the doctrine.

(2) Envy of the popularity of the Apostles.

³ The public prison.

Deliverance of the Apostles.

19 But an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them out, and said, 20 Go ye, and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of ¹ this Life. 21 And when they heard *this*, they entered into the temple ² about daybreak, and taught.

¹ This Life = the future life, of which the resurrection of Jesus was a promise and a pledge.

² About daybreak, i.e. as soon as possible after daydawn.

Trial before the Sanhedrim.

But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison-house to have them brought. 22 But the officers that came found them not in the prison; and they returned, and told,

Council = Sanhedrim. See Intro.

Senate = the whole council of representatives of the people.

23 saying, The prison-house we found shut in all safety, and the keepers standing at the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within. 24 Now when the ¹ captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were much ² perplexed concerning them whereunto this would grow. 25 And there came one and told them, Behold, the men whom ye put in the prison are in the temple standing and teaching the people. 26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them, *but* without violence; for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned. 27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, 28 saying, We ³ straitly charged you not to teach in this name: and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your ⁵ teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. 29 But Peter and the apostles answered and said, ⁶ We must obey God rather than men. 30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. 31 Him did God exalt^a with his right hand *to be* ⁷ a Prince and ⁸ a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and ⁹ remission of sins. 32 And we are witnesses^b of these^c things; ^d and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

1 Captain of the temple. See iv. 1.

2 perplexed. They were at a loss what to do. The Sadducees denied the existence of angels, and therefore the extraordinary nature of the release of the apostles perplexed them. During the examination they put no question as to how the release was effected.

3 Straitly—strictly.

5 Teaching. Before Pilate the Priests cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matt. xxvii. 25).

6 We must obey. Implying not merely obligation but necessity.

7 Prince, to whom ye owe obedience.

8 Saviour, by whom ye must be saved from your sins.

9 Remission of sins.

Hanged on a Tree. This is an expression peculiar to St Peter. He used it again (v. 32): "*Whom they slew and hanged on a tree.*" Also (1 Pet. ii. 24), "*His own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree.*"

^a Or, at ^b Some ancient authorities add *in him*. ^c Gr. sayings. ^d Some ancient authorities read *and God hath given the Holy Ghost to them that obey him*.

Argument of Peter's Reply—

We ought to obey God rather than man.

Reasons why? Because—

1. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus.
2. Whom ye slew hanging Him on a tree.
3. But God exalted Him to His own right hand.
4. And God has made Him a Prince and a Saviour.
5. To give repentance and remission of sins.
6. And we are witnesses of these things.
7. So too the Holy Ghost is a witness.

Speech of Gamaliel. Release of the Apostles.

33 But they, when they heard this, were cut to the heart, and ¹ were minded to slay them. 34 But there stood up one in the council, a Pharisee, named ² Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honour of all the people, and commanded to put the men forth a little ³ while. 35 And he said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves as touching these men, what ye are about to do. 36 For before these days rose up ⁴ Theudas, giving himself out to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed, and came to nought. 37 After this man rose up ⁶ Judas of Galilee in the days of the ⁷ enrolment, and drew away *some of the* people after him: he also perished; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered abroad. 38 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 be overthrown: 39 but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest ⁹ haply ye be found even to be fighting against God. 40 And to him

Cut = cut through as with a saw.

1 They wished or intended to put the apostles to death but were afraid, and therefore listened to Gamaliel.

2 Gamaliel. Intro. Biog. Notes.

Doctor = teacher.

3 Put the men forth a little while, i.e. outside, so that they might not hear the deliberations of the council.

4 Theudas. Intro. Biog. Notes.

Somebody = some great person.

6 Judas of Galilee. Intro. Biog. Notes.

7 Enrolment (St. Luke ii. 2). But the revolt took place not at the enrolment, but at the actual imposition of the tax seven years later.

9 Haply — perhaps, per chance.

they agreed: and when they had¹⁰ called the apostles unto them, they beat them and¹¹ charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 They therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for¹² the Name. 42 And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as¹³ the Christ.

10 Called, *i.e.* back into the judgment hall.

11 Charged. (See note p. 160).

12 The Name, *i.e.* the Name before which every knee must bow

13 The Christ. The article in the original implies that they proclaimed Jesus as *the* Christ—the Messiah.

Argument of Gamaliel—

Be cautious, do not proceed to extremities. Why?—

1. Theudas' insurrection came to nothing, and he himself was slain.
2. The insurrection of Judas of Galilee was a failure.

Conclusion. Refrain from these men—let them alone! Time tries all things, and time will show if this movement is of God or man—

1. If of man, it will fall to pieces.
2. If of God, it will stand and your efforts will fail.

Therefore leave it alone—fight not against God.

Election and Ordination of the Seven Deacons.

6 I Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the² Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2 And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not^b fit that we should forsake the word of God, and^c serve⁵ tables. 3^d Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men⁶ of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the whole

2 Grecian Jews. As they spoke a foreign language, their widows would be likely to be over-looked.

5 Tables. The bench or counter at which the money was distributed. "The tables of the money-changers" (St. Matthew xxi. 12).

6 Good report. The qualifications were (1) good character, (2) wisdom, (3) the "Indwelling Spirit."

^a Gr. Hellenists. ^b Gr. pleasing. ^c Or, minister to tables
But, brethren, look ye out from among you.

^d Some ancient authorities read

multitude: and they chose ⁷ Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: 6 whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

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

⁷ The names are all Greek names, so probably every one of the seven was a Grecian Jew.

On the names see Biographical Notes.

Deacon. From Greek diakonein = to minister. The seven are nowhere called "Deacons" which word, as the title of a distinct office, does not appear in the Acts but only in Phil. i. 1, and 1 Tim. iii. 8—13. For history, etc., see Intro. pp. lviii., lix.

The three classes of hearers to whom the Gospel was preached are called "Hebrews," "Grecians," and "Greeks."

Hebrews were home Jews, Jews born and bred in Palestine, speaking Aramaic, a dialect of Hebrew.

Grecians were foreign Jews, or Jews of the Dispersion, Jews born and bred in foreign parts speaking Greek, called Hellenists in the Greek Testament.

Greeks, sometimes natives of Greece, as in Acts xviii. 17, but more usually Gentiles, as opposed to Jews.

The word Greek is properly opposed to Jew.

The word Grecian is properly opposed to Hebrew.

Of the seven we hear in future only of Philip (Intro.) and Stephen (Intro.) There is a tradition, but founded on no trustworthy evidence, that Nicolas was the originator of the heresy of the Nicolaitans referred to by St. John (Rev. ii. 6). "*The works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*"

A great number of the Priests.—This mention of the conversion of the priests stands alone, and is important. Ezra tells us (ii. 36) that they numbered four thousand two hundred and eighty-nine on the Return from Babylon. Their numbers at this time were probably greater.

The Preaching of Stephen. His Arrest.

8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people. 9 But there arose certain of them that were of the ³ synagogue called *the synagogue* of the ⁴ Libertines, and of the ⁵ Cyrenians, and of the ⁶ Alexandrians, and of them of ⁷ Cilicia and

³ Synagogue. See Intro.

⁴ Libertines.—Most likely the descendants of Jews who had been carried captive to Rome by Pompey (B.C. 63), and had been made freedmen (libertini). They had been expelled from Rome by Tiberius.

⁵ Cyrenians.—The district on the north coast of Africa. Josephus states that a fourth part of the population of Cyrene consisted of Jews.

⁶ Alexandria.—Josephus states that three of the five districts of Alexandria were occupied by Jews.

⁷ Cilicia, in the south-east corner of Asia Minor; chief town, Tarsus, the birth-place of St. Paul, had many Jews there, descendants of those Jews whom Antiochus Epiphanes placed there.

⁸ Asia, disputing with Stephen. ¹⁰ And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake. ¹¹ Then they ⁹ suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God. ¹² And they ¹⁰ stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and seized him, and brought him into the council,

⁸ Asia.—Here and usually in the Acts implies procon-sular Asia, a large and important Roman province, including Mysia, Lydia, Caria, and Phrygia. Ephesus was the chief town. The Grecian Jews, not speaking Aramaic, naturally had synagogues of their own in Jerusalem. The number of synagogues is estimated at four hundred and eighty.

⁹ Suborned, *i.e.* procured others to take a false oath.

¹⁰ It would appear as if the onset against Stephen was not a casual outburst of fury, but planned beforehand.

The Accusation against Stephen.

¹³ and set up ¹ false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law: ¹⁴ for we have heard him say, ² that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us. ¹⁵ And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the ³ face of an angel.

¹ False witnesses. So "the chief priests sought false witness against Jesus."

² See John ii. 19; Matt. xxiv. 2.

³ Face of an angel. Describes either
(1) The calm and holy aspect with which he stood before the council, or
(2) A supernatural appearance glorifying the face of Stephen.

Analogy between our Lord's trial and St. Stephen's:—

Our Lord's.

False witnesses.—"Though many false witnesses came."

False charge.—That Jesus said "I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days."

Prayed for His murderers.—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Commended His soul to God.—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Stephen's.

False witnesses.—"and set up false witnesses."

False charge.—That Stephen "ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place (*i.e.* the temple), and the law."

Prayed for his murderers.—"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Commended his soul to God.—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Stephen's Trial.

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

¹ These things, *i.e.* the two charges against Stephen.

The ² God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in ³ Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in ⁴ Haran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy land, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. ⁴ Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Haran: and from thence, when his father was dead, God removed him into ⁵ this land, wherein ye now dwell: ⁵ and he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to ⁶ set his foot on: and he promised that he would give it to him in possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child. ⁶ And God spake on this wise, that his seed should sojourn in a ⁷ strange land, and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil, ⁸ four hundred years. ⁷ And the nation to which they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and ⁹ serve me in this place. ⁸ And he gave him the ¹⁰ covenant of circumcision: and so *Abraham* begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac *begat* Jacob, and Jacob the twelve ¹¹ patriarchs. ⁹ And the patriarchs, moved with jealousy against Joseph, sold him into Egypt: and God was with him, ¹⁰ and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom before Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. ¹¹ Now there came a famine

² God of Glory. Unusual address, found only in Psalm xxix. 3.

³ Mesopotamia. The country watered by the rivers Tigris and Euphrates.

⁴ Haran, one day's journey from Orfa or Ur, of the Chaldees.

⁵ This land, *i.e.* Judea.

⁶ Set his foot on, *i.e.* a foot's breadth.

The cave of Machpelah was purchased for a special purpose, not given to Abraham, as an inheritance.

⁷ Strange land = Egypt (Gen. xv. 13, 14).

⁸ 400 years. Ex. xii. 40, Gal. iii. 17, have 430 years. See note.

⁹ Serve in this place, *viz.* Sinai, where God was speaking to Moses (Ex. iii. 21).

¹⁰ Covenant of circumcision. Given the year before Isaac was born (Gen. xvii. 21).

¹¹ Patriarchs = the sons of Jacob, who were the fathers of the twelve tribes (from Gk. *πάτρια* = a race, clan, or tribe, and *ἀρχεῖν* (archein), to rule.

over all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. 12 But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent forth our fathers ¹⁴ the first time. 13 And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's race became manifest unto Pharaoh. 14 And Joseph sent, and called to him Jacob his father, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls. 15 And Jacob went down into Egypt; and he died, himself, and our fathers; 16 and they were carried over unto Shechem, and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a price in silver of the sons of Hamor in Shechem. 17 But as ¹⁷ the time of the promise drew nigh, which

14 Jacob's sons went thrice to Egypt,
(1) When Simeon was detained.
(2) Joseph made known.
(3) Jacob accompanied them.

17 The time, i.e., of the fulfilment of the promise.

Historical Discrepancies.

V. 2 and 3.—Assert that God appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Haran.

Objection.—Nothing is said in Gen. xi. 31, of any call that Abraham received in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Haran.

Reply.—But it is said, Gen. xv. 7, "I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land."

And Josh. xxiv. 3, "I took your father Abraham from beyond the River" (i.e. the river Euphrates).

And Nehemiah ix. 7, "Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees."

And so, according to Jewish tradition, there were two calls of Abraham (1) from his country and kindred (Ur); (2) from his father's house (Haran).

V. 4 states that Abraham left Haran when his father Terah was dead.

Objection.—The notices of Terah in Genesis are:—

Gen. xi. 26. "And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran."

Gen. xi. 32. "And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran."

Gen. xii. 4. "And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran."

From comparison of these notices it appears that Terah lived sixty years after Abraham left Haran.

Explanation.—(1) Some suppose Abraham a younger son, born sixty years after the eldest.

(2) The Samaritan Pentateuch in Gen. xi. 32, for 205 reads 145, which has most probably been an alteration to remove the apparent inconsistency.

(3) The Rabbis' explanation of the inconsistency by making the departure of Abraham to have taken place after the spiritual death of Terah, is plainly a subterfuge to reconcile their tradition to the sacred chronology.

Reply.—Stephen is merely quoting the rabbinical tradition, and his statement would be accepted by his hearers. The discrepancy does not affect the argument.

V. 6.—400 years. The statements on this period are:—

Gen. xv. 13. "They shall afflict them four hundred years."

Ex. xii. 40. "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, which they sojourned in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years."

Objection.—The Israelites were not in Egypt more than 215 years.

Reply.—The texts refer to the time that Abraham, the patriarchs, and the Israelites were sojourners in a strange land, for till they entered into Canaan under Joshua they were strangers in the promised land.

Stephen's argument is that God's favour is not confined to a particular place or nation. It is therefore enough for him to show that Abraham and the chosen seed were sojourners. For a considerable time the land of promise was to them a strange country.

In Gal. iii., 17, St. Paul states "A covenant, confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul."

The difference of four hundred and four hundred and thirty receives three explanations—

- (1) One number dates back to the first call, and the second only to the departure from Haran.
- (2) The one is reckoned from the promise of the land, and the other from the covenant of circumcision.
- (3) The one is merely a round number, and the other an attempt at greater exactness.

V. 7.—They "shall serve me in this place," i.e. in Horeb and not in Canaan.

Objection.—These words are not in the promise given to Abraham (Gen. xv. 13, 14), but are taken from Ex. iii. 12, where the promise is repeated to Moses at Sinai.

God vouchsafed unto Abraham, the people grew and ¹⁸ multiplied in Egypt, 18 till there arose another king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. 19 The same dealt ¹⁹ subtilly with our race, and evil entreated our fathers, that ^a they should ²¹ cast out their babes to the end they might not ^b live. 20 At which season Moses was born, and was ²² ^c exceeding fair; and he was nourished three months in his father's house: 21 and when he was ²³ cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him ²⁴ for her own son. 22 And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works. 23 But when he was well-nigh forty years old, it came into his heart ²⁶ 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, smiting the Egyptian:

18 "600,000 on foot that were men, beside children" came out of Egypt (Ex. xii. 37).

19 Subtilly = craftily.

21 Cast out, i.e. by the orders of the king of Egypt (Ex. i. 15—22).

22 Lit. Fair unto God, i.e. of extraordinary beauty.

23 Cast out—exposed in the ark of bulrushes (Ex. ii. 1—10).

24 Jewish tradition says that Moses was designed to succeed Pharaoh, who had no son.

26 To visit, i.e. with intent to do kindness to them (Ex. ii. 12).

Josephus relates the great success and sagacity of Moses as a general.

25 and he supposed that his brethren understood how that God by his hand was giving them^a deliverance; but they understood not. 26 And the day following he appeared unto them as²⁷ 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 Wouldest thou kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian yesterday? 29 And Moses fled at this saying, and became a²⁸ sojourner in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons. 30 And when forty years were³⁰ fulfilled, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness

27 They=two men of the Hebrews (Ex. ii. 13).

The Hebrews rejected Moses, as the Jews afterwards rejected Jesus.

28 sojourner, or a temporary dweller.

Two sons. Gershom and Eliezer. Their mother was Zipporah, daughter of Jethro.

30 Completed. Making Moses eighty years old.

Reply.—Stephen combines the two prophecies that he may emphasize his argument which is that the Jews are not to imagine that God can be worshipped only in Judæa and at Jerusalem. God Himself had appointed that He should be worshipped by their forefathers in the wilderness of Arabia at Mount Sinai, before any worship was offered to Him in the city of Jerusalem.

V. 14.—Threescore and fifteen souls.

Objection.—This is inconsistent with Gen. xli. 27, where it is said that the souls which went down with Jacob into Egypt were seventy.

Reply.—Stephen quotes from the Septuagint, which seems to reckon the five sons of Manasseh and Ephraim born in Egypt (1 Chron. vii. 14).

V. 16.—Objection. The statement that Jacob was buried at Shechem is at variance with the Old Testament account.

The facts in the Old Testament are:—

(1) Jacob, dying in Egypt, was taken into Canaan and buried in the cave of Machpelah at Mamre.

(2) Joseph, dying also in Egypt, was embalmed and carried into Canaan at the Exodus, and buried at Shechem.

(3) Of the burial of the other patriarchs there is no mention.

The Jewish traditions were that the patriarchs were buried at Sychem.

Josephus states that they were taken and buried at Hebron.

Explanation.—(1) Stephen followed the traditions of the rabbis, and in haste or inadvertence classed Jacob with the other patriarchs.

(2) If "they" is distinct from Jacob, the difficulty about his burial disappears.

V. 16.—"Abraham bought for a price in silver of the sons of Hamor in Shechem."

Objection.—It was Jacob, not Abraham, who purchased this land.

Old Testament facts are:—

(1) Abraham bought Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite (Gen. xxiii. 16).

(2) Jacob bought a plot of ground at Shechem, from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of silver (Gen. xxxiii. 19).

^a Or, *salvation*

Reply.—(1) Shechem was one of the resting places of Abraham, when he came first to Canaan, and probably he bought a possession there for he built an altar there.

(2) If so, there is no difficulty about there being two princes of Shechem named Hamor, which may have been an hereditary title, as the Pharaohs of Egypt. The name Hamor occurs (Judges ix. 28) five hundred years after the death of Jacob.

(3) Even the inaccuracy does not invalidate the argument, for whether the burying place were Hebron or Shechem it was not Jerusalem. Stephen probably emphasises Shechem, because it was in the hated land of Samaria.

Stephen's Teaching, Accusation, and Defence.

STEPHEN'S TEACHING may be gathered from his defence. It is clear that he must have been proclaiming that no longer was the worship of the Almighty to be confined to one nation, one city, and one temple. He was following out the declaration of Jesus to the woman of Samaria: "*The hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father*" (St. John iv. 21). This was construed by the Jews into blasphemous words against this holy place.

It is also clear that he must have announced that the observance of the Jewish ritual was no longer absolutely necessary for acceptance with God. In this he was in advance of the Apostles themselves. This teaching was construed by the Jews into blasphemous words against Moses, or blasphemous words against the Law.

THE CHARGE AGAINST STEPHEN is twofold:—

1. That he had spoken blasphemous words against this holy place (*i.e.* the temple).
"We have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place" (vi. 14).

of mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. 31 And when Moses saw it, he ¹ wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold, there came a voice of the Lord, 32 I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. And Moses trembled, and durst not behold. 33 And the Lord said unto him, Loose the shoes from thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. 34 I have surely seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I am come down to deliver them: and now come, I will send thee into Egypt. 35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? him hath God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. 36 This man led them forth, having wrought wonders and signs in Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness

¹ He wondered, &c. Because the bush was not consumed (Ex. iii. 2—10).

Loose or untie the shoes, *i.e.* sandals, which were bound to the feet by leather thongs. So Joshua before Jericho (Josh v. 15).

A Hebrew idiom. "I have surely seen" (Ex. iii. 7).

The once rejected Moses is now the ruler and deliverer appointed by God.

forty years. 37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall God raise up unto you from among your brethren, ^{32a}like unto me. 38 This is he that was in the ^bchurch in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received ³³ living oracles to give unto us: 39 to whom our fathers ³⁴would not be obedient, but thrust him from them, and ³⁵turned back in their hearts unto Egypt, 40 saying unto Aaron, Make us gods which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, which led us forth out of the land of

32 Like unto me. See note ii. 22 (Deut. xviii. 15).

33 living, "The word of God, which liveth and abideth" (1 Pet. i. 23).

34 Would not be obedient. Lit. i.e. were not willing (did not choose) to be obedient.

35 After the return of the spies, the people said, "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt" (Num. xiv. 4).

II. That he had spoken blasphemous words against the Law, i.e. the authority of Moses. "Shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us" (vi. 14).

STEPHEN'S DEFENCE is therefore a reply to these two accusations: thus:—

I. Blasphemous words against this holy place.

To this he replies:—

- (1) God's earliest revelation of Himself had been to Abraham in Mesopotamia, not in Canaan.
- (2) For four hundred years God's people were without a country they could call their own.
- (3) Moses, their great lawgiver, was born in Egypt, and owed his education to the Egyptians.
- (4) Jehovah appeared to Moses in the bush in the wilderness of Sinai.
- (5) The Tabernacle, the pattern of the Temple, was erected in the wilderness.
- (6) After they entered the Promised Land the Tabernacle was moveable and not confined to any one place until the time of Solomon.
- (7) No temple was needed from the time of Moses to that of Solomon.
- (8) When David desired to build a temple God did not allow him to do so.
- (9) Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple declared "That the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands."
- (10) Isaiah the prophet declared that God needs no temple.

Therefore his teaching was consistent with God's purpose and dealings with His chosen people, and in harmony with the declarations of their own prophets.

II. He shows how their fathers had resisted every prophet of God.

- (1) Joseph (the type of the Messiah) had been sold into Egypt by his brothers through envy.
- (2) Moses (the type of the Messiah) when endeavouring to assist his oppressed brethren had been rejected, and forced to flee to Midian.
- (3) The Israelites had made and worshipped the golden calf in the wilderness.
- (4) "Which of the prophets had they not persecuted?"
- (5) As they had slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One, so they had been the betrayers and murderers of that Just One Himself.

Therefore it was they, not he, who had failed to keep the Law.

The speech, in addition to being a defence, is also a direct attack on the Council, thus—

History.

The patriarchs rejected Joseph.

Joseph became the ruler of those who rejected him.

Your ancestors rejected Moses, the law-giver and abandoned the law.

God rejected your fathers.

The final outburst of indignation was possibly evoked because Stephen saw signs of disapproval exhibited by the Council.

Inference.

So ye have rejected Him of whom Joseph was the type.

So He whom ye have rejected is your ruler.

Ye have rejected the Messiah and abandoned His law.

And so He may reject you.

Egypt, ³⁶ we wot not what is become of him. 41 And they made a ³⁷ calf in those days, and brought a sacrifice unto the idol, and ³⁸ rejoiced in the works of their hands. 42 But God turned, and gave them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the ³⁹ book of the prophets,

Did ye offer unto me slain beasts and sacrifices

Forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?

43 And ye took up the tabernacle of ⁴⁰ Moloch,

And the star of the god ⁴¹ Rephan, The figures which ye made to worship them:

And I will carry you away beyond ⁴² Babylon.

44 Our fathers had ⁴³ the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, even as he appointed who spake unto Moses, that he should make it according to the figure that he had seen. 45 Which also our fathers, in their turn, brought in with ^{45a} Joshua when they entered on the possession of the nations, which God thrust out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; 46 who found favour in the sight of God, and ⁴⁶ asked to find a habitation for the God of

36 When Moses was absent forty days on the Mount (Ex. xxxii. 1).

37 Calf. In imitation of the sacred bull, Apis.

38 Rejoiced. When Moses came down from the mount he said, "It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome; but the noise of them that sing do I hear" (Ex. xxxii. 18).

39 Amos v. 25.

40 Moloch. The Phœnician Saturn.

41 Rephan. O.T., Chiun, the Egyptian name for Saturn.

42 Babylon O.T. Damascus, but Babylon is the place most closely connected with the captivity, and so Stephen substitutes Babylon for Damascus.

43 The tent of the testimony (Numb. ix. 15).

The Tabernacle contained the ark, and in the ark were (1) the Two Tables of stone, (2) Aaron's rod which budded, (3) the pot of manna. All these were testimonies to God's power and His will.

45 Joshua who carried the tabernacle into Canaan at their taking possession.

46 Permission was asked through Nathan, the prophet, and at first granted, but afterwards denied.

Jacob. 47 But Solomon built him a house. 48 Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in *houses* made with hands; as saith the 47 prophet,

49 The heaven is my throne,
And the earth the footstool of
my feet :

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

Or what is the place of my rest ?

50 Did not my hand make all these
things ?

51 48 Ye 49 stiffnecked and 50 uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost : as your fathers did, so do ye. 52 Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute ? and they killed them which shewed before of the coming of 51 the Righteous One ; of whom ye have now become 52 betrayers and 53 murderers ; 53 ye who received the law ^a as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not.

47 Isaiah lxi. 1, 2. See also Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings viii. 27).

48 Stephen suddenly breaks from calm argument to vehement denunciation.

49 Stiff-necked. So the Israelites are termed "a stiff necked people" (Ex. xxxii. 9 ; Ex. xxxiii. 3).

50 Uncircumcised. The same term is applied by Jeremiah (Jer. vi. 10).

51 The Righteous One, i. e. one who kept the law.

52 Betrayers. By the treachery of Judas.

53 Murderers. By the hands of the Romans.

Moloch was the Egyptian Saturn ; his image was of brass, with the head of an ox, and outstretched arms of a man, hollow ; and human sacrifices (of children) were offered, by laying them in these arms and heating the image by a fire kindled within. King Ahaz made his own "son to pass through the fire" (2 Kings xvi. 3) of Moloch. The image was in the valley of Hinnom. The worship of Moloch was strictly forbidden as early as the time of Moses (Lev. xviii. 21).

Effect of the Speech.

54 Now when they heard these things, they were ¹ cut to the heart, and they ² gnashed on him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the ³ glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the

1 Cut to the heart—sawn through and through.

2 Gnashed on him with their teeth, in the frantic rage of brute passion.

3 Glory of God. Possibly the Shechinah (Ex. xvi. 10.)

^a Or, as the ordinance of angels. Gr. *unh. ordinances of angels.*

⁴ Son of man ⁵ standing on the right hand of God. ⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord; ⁵⁸ and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their ⁶ garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ And they ⁷ stoned ⁸ Stephen, calling upon *the Lord*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. ⁶⁰ 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. **I** And **8** Saul was consenting unto his death.

4 The Son of man. This title is peculiar to Stephen, and is not found elsewhere in the Acts, nor in the Epistles, only in the Gospels and Revelation.

5 Standing. This description of our Lord's posture is also peculiar to Stephen. See Collect of St. Stephen's Day, "*O Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee.*"

6 Their garments. *i.e.* their loose outer garments, so as to be the more ready for stoning Stephen.

7 Stoning. The punishment for blasphemy. See note.

8 Stephen. The name means "a crown," and he received "a crown of life."

Effect of the address of Stephen—

- (1) **On the Judges.** Their anguish was unendurable, their hearts cut asunder, and their anger irrepressible; they gnashed with their teeth.
- (2) **On Stephen.** He looked up to heaven and saw—
 - (a) The glory of the God whom he began by appealing to.
 - (b) Jesus, not sitting, but standing at God's right hand.
- (3) **Effect upon Paul.**—The teaching of Stephen made a deep impression on Saul's mind, as shown—
 1. By the touching allusion, "*When the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him*" (xxii. 20).
 2. By the reappearance of so many of Stephen's phrases in the language of the Apostle to the Gentiles. Thus—
 - (a) The speech at Antioch reminds us of the defence of Stephen (xiii. 17—23).
 - (b) In his speech at Athens Paul uses the very words of Stephen, "*God dwelleth not in temples made with hands*" (xvii. 24).
 - (c) Stephen calls his judges "*uncircumcised in heart,*" whilst Paul speaks of "*the true circumcision of the heart.*"
 3. Paul, when death approached, prayed like Stephen for his enemies, that it "*may not be laid to their account*" (2 Tim. iv. 16).

Stoning. The legal punishment for blasphemy. As all the legal requirements were complied with, the stoning of Stephen was evidently a judicial act.

The stoning must take place outside the camp (Lev. xxiv. 14), so Stephen was cast out of the city.

The first stone must be cast by the witnesses (Deut. xvii. 7), (a regulation laid down to prevent the bringing of hasty charges against a person); so the witnesses laid aside their garments to be free to cast the stones.

The process of stoning was as follows. There was a place, outside the city, set apart for the purpose. The criminal had his hands bound, and was placed on an elevation, whence he was cast down. The witnesses then rolled a stone down upon him, after which all the people present cast stones upon him.

V. 1.—St. Paul refers to this (chap. xxii. 20), "*When the blood of Stephen, thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him.*" Saul was not less than thirty years of age. He seems to have been a member of the Sanhedrim, for he speaks, in xxvi. 10, of having a vote, and was present at Stephen's death in an official capacity, as shown by his having to take charge of the raiment of the witnesses.

Persecution and Flight of the Christians.

And there arose ¹ on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of ² Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. ² And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him. ³ But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and ⁴ haling men and women committed them to prison.

⁴ They therefore that were scattered abroad ⁵ went about preaching the word.

¹ On that day, i.e. immediately following the stoning of Stephen.

² Judæa and Samaria. Thus according to Christ's words (i. 8), the disciples became "witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria."

⁴ Haling. Also spelt hauling = to drag. "Horses haul the barges along the canal." The halyards of a ship.

⁵ Except the Apostles.—There is a tradition that our Lord bade the Apostles remain at Jerusalem for twelve years

The Gospel Spreads to Samaria.

⁵ And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ. ⁶ And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by ⁴ Philip, when they heard, and saw the ³ signs which he did. ⁷ For from many of those which had unclean spirits, they came out, crying with a loud voice: and many that were palsied, and that were lame, were healed. ⁸ And there was much joy in that city.

⁹ But there was a certain man, ⁵ Simon by name, which beforetime in the city used ⁶ sorcery, and amazed the ⁶ people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is that

³ "Both Philip and Stephen wrought miracles."

⁴ Philip, the Deacon (vi. 5). Also called "*Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven*" (Acts xxi. 8). If the Apostle Philip had been the preacher, there would have been no need for Peter and John to come down to confirm (v. 14-25).

⁵ Simon. Intro. Biog. Notes.

⁶ Sorcerer comes, through French *sorcier*, from Latin *sortitor* = a caster of lots for the purpose of divination.

Amazed (v. 9).

V. 9.—Amazed. His magic or conjuring tricks had fairly amazed the simple Samaritans, so that they attributed supernatural power to him, saying, "This man is that power of God which is called Great."

^a Or, For many of those which had unclean spirits that cried with a loud voice came forth
^b Gr. nation.

power of God which is called Great. 11 And they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed them with his sorceries. 12 But when they believed Philip ⁹ preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13 And Simon also himself believed: and being baptized, he continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great^a miracles wrought, he was amazed.

⁹ *Lit.* evangelizing.

Mission of Peter and John to Samaria.

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16 for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: ¹ only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and ² they received the Holy Ghost. 18 Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, ³ he offered them money, 19 saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. 20 But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. 21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right before God. 22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the

¹ Only they had been baptized. The tense "had been" emphasizes the baptism of the converts as having been previous to the laying on of hands.

² They received the Holy Ghost. No special signs are mentioned as following the gift, as is the case with Cornelius (x. 46), and the twelve men at Ephesus (xix. 6), who spake with tongues.

³ From this offer of money by Simon, all trafficking in sacred things has since been called *Simony*.

thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. 23 For ⁵ I see that thou art in the ⁶ gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. 24 And Simon answered and said, ⁷ Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me.

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

self. We may, therefore, paraphrase thus: "Thou art better at the very root, and bound by the force of sinful habits as if chained with fetters."

7 Pray for me. Simon was terrified, but not repentant. He is afraid of punishment but has no horror of guilt.

The first instance of confirmation by the imposition of hands. We may note—

- (1) That it followed baptism.
- (2) None but the Apostles could administer it. Philip could baptize, but could not confirm.
- (3) The rite consisted of—
 - (a) Prayer that the confirmed might receive the Holy Ghost.
 - (b) The laying on of hands.

Conversion of the Eunuch of Ethiopia.

26 But an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same is desert. 27 And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem for to worship; 28 and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and ¹ was reading the prophet Isaiah. 29 And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. 30 And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the

5 I see that thou art falling into the misery of a poisoned conscience, and the thralldom of habitual sin.

6 There are here two metaphors. The ancients regarded the gall of venomous reptiles as the source of the poison; so Peter declares to Simon that unless he repents he will become worse and worse till he is all venom. This is the first metaphor. The second metaphor represents Simon's iniquity as having so great hold upon him as to cause him to be bound as it were with the iron chains of a habit from which he was unable to free him-

Gaza. Intro. Geog. Notes. There were two ways from Jerusalem to Gaza: one through Ascalon and by the coast to Gaza, the other by Hebron and through desert country. The latter was probably the road travelled by Philip.

For to worship. This object proves him to have been a Jew or a proselyte, and this view is confirmed by his study and knowledge of Isaiah.

¹ Read, i.e. aloud. A common practice of the Jews.

^a Or, will become gall (or, a gall root) of bitterness and a bond of iniquity. ^b Or, at noon

prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And ³ he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 Now the ⁴ place of the scripture which he was reading was this,

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;

And as a lamb before his shearer is dumb,

So he openeth not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgement was taken away:

⁵ His generation who shall declare?

⁶ For his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, ⁷ of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other? 35 And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus. 36 And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, *here is water*; what doth hinder me to be baptized? ⁸ 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both ⁹ went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they came up out of the water, ¹⁰ the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at ¹¹ Azotus: and passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities, till he came to ¹² Cæsarea.

³ He besought Philip. So eager was he to learn.

Isaiah liii. 7, 8. Taken from the Septuagint version.

⁴ The place of the scripture = the section. The Jews divided the law and the prophets into sections, which were read in regular order in the Synagogue service. The section which the Eunuch was reading was the section or lesson appointed for the Feast of Tabernacles, and therefore it is supposed he had been attending that feast.

⁵ His generation who shall declare? *i.e.* the age in which he shall live—the wickedness of his own contemporaries.

⁶ The Hebrew has "*for he is cut off from the land of the living.*"

⁷ Of whom speaketh the prophet? This question of the Eunuch is explained by the fact that the Jews did not apply these words to the Messiah; their Messiah was a conquering captain not a suffering Saviour.

⁹ Into the water. It was almost the universal practice in the early Church for the person about to be baptized to lay aside his garments, to enter the water, to stand there waist deep, and then to be plunged beneath the surface "in the name of the Lord Jesus."

¹⁰ See 1 Kings xviii. 12, where Obadiah expects that whilst he is on his way to Ahab Elijah may be carried away by the Spirit of the Lord.

¹¹ Azotus = Ashdod. Intro., Geog. Notes.

¹² Cæsarea. Intro., Geog. Notes. Here Philip seems to have made his home (xxi. 8).

^a Some ancient authorities insert, wholly or in part, ver. 37 *And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*

Ethiopia, called also Meroe—the whole country south of Egypt extending over Nubia and Abyssinia.

Candace, the common title of the Queens of Meroe, as Pharaoh of the Kings of Egypt and Caesar of the Emperors of Rome.

V. 33. In his humiliation, so Phil. ii. 8. "As a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

His judgment was taken away, i.e. His condemnation was set aside by God, i.e. He was made perfect through suffering, and exalted through and because of his humiliation.

The Conversion of Saul, also Chapa. xxii., xxvi.

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

¹ Still in the same mind as when he consented to Stephen's death.

² Letters, i.e. written authority or commission from the High Priest and Sanhedrim (Acts xxvi. 12).

³ Damascus. Intro., Geog. Notes.

⁴ Of the Way—"of the Christian way of belief."

Of Himself our Lord said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (St. John xiv. 6).

⁵ A light out of heaven. It happened at noon-day, but the light was brighter than the noon glare of the eastern sun.

⁶ R.V. omits "it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

Kick against the pricks. An old and familiar Jewish proverb. The "pricks" are the goad used to spur on oxen. The goad did but prick the more sharply the more the oxen struggled against it. The meaning of the proverb therefore is that it is useless to resist a power superior to our own, and that the more we resist the more we shall suffer for resistance.

The pricks in Saul's case were the prickings of his conscience, roused perhaps by such events as the counsel of Gamaliel, the martyrdom of Stephen, or the conduct of the Christians whom he haled into prison.

⁸ The voice. But not understanding the words spoken to Paul.

Saw no man. **Saw nothing.** The blindness was complete. Full of strange new ecstasy he held communion with God, secluded from the world of sight. His mental feelings overpowered the natural craving for food.

V. 2. The Way. For examples of the Christian belief termed "the Way" see—Acts xix. 9. "Speaking evil of the Way before the multitude."

- Acts xix. 23. "And about that time there arose no small stir concerning the Way."
 Acts xxii. 4. "And I persecuted this Way unto the death."
 Acts xxiv. 14. "But this I confess unto thee, that after the Way which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers."
 Acts xxiv. 22. "But Felix, having more exact knowledge concerning the Way."

How could the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem have any authority over the Jews at Damascus? Because C. Julius Caesar had made a decree giving the High Priest at Jerusalem a kind of protectorate over all Jews in foreign places.

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named ¹ Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go to the ² street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of ³ Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth; 12 and ⁴ he hath seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 But Ananias answered, ⁵ Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy ⁶ saints at Jerusalem: 14 and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a ⁷ chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and ⁸ kings, and the children of Israel: 16 for I will shew him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17 And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, ⁹ Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

1 **Ananias.** Intro., Biog. Notes. He is not mentioned elsewhere (xxii. 12).

2 **Street**—a lane, narrow but straight. Such a street stretching through Damascus still exists.

3 **Tarsus.** Intro., Geog. Notes.

4 **He hath seen**—in anticipation and preparation for the coming of Ananias.

5 **Lord, I have heard from many of this man.** These words indicate the character and duration of the persecution in which Saul had been the leader. It had been severe and long continued, and the Christians who had fled from Jerusalem had evidently spread abroad the tale of the sufferings inflicted by Saul upon the brethren.

6 **Saints** (Latin, sanctus=set apart). The first time the term is applied to believers in Jesus.

8 **Kings.** At Casarea before Herod Agrippa II. (xxvi. 1-32), and at Rome before Cæsar.

10 **Brother Saul.** Words of welcome spoken to the persecutor by one of the very men he had come to drag to Jerusalem.

18 And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were ¹¹ scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; 19 and he took food and was strengthened.

And he was certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. 20 And ¹² straightway in the

The Acts gives three different accounts of Paul's conversion. These should be compared carefully. They are found in ix. 3-8; xxii. 6-11; xxvi. 13-18.

Italics mark what are given in two narratives; black letters what are peculiar to one.

Acts ix. 3-9.

3 and as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto *Damascus*; and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven:

4 and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest:

6 but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into *Damascus*. 9 And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

Acts xxii. 6-11.

6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto *Damascus*, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of *Nazareth*, whom thou persecutest.

9 And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. 10 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.

11 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*.

11 Scales, i.e. a scaly substance thrown off in the process of the instantaneous and miraculous healing.

It is generally supposed that this blindness left permanent effects upon Paul, and that his eyesight was weak for the rest of his life.

Meat=food, his abstinence (verse 9) then ending.

12 Straightway. He began his work at once.

Acts xxvi. 12-18.

12 Whereupon as I journeyed to *Damascus* with the authority and commission of the chief priests,

13 at *midday*, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goad.

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 But arise, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee: 17 delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee.

18 to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me.

By comparing the three accounts we gather

- (1) That they were near Damascus.
- (2) That the time was noon.
- (3) That the light shone above the brightness of the sun.
- (4) That they all fell to the earth.
- (5) That all saw the light and heard a voice.
- (6) That none but Saul saw the form, and that Saul alone heard the words.
- (7) That the words were uttered in the Hebrew or Aramaic language.
- (8) That after the vision Saul could not see, but his companions could.
- (9) That Saul was led by the hand into Damascus.
- (10) That he was three days without sight, and during that time did not eat nor drink.
- (11) In chap. xxvi. 17, 18, Christ's apostolic commission to Saul is related as if it were given him while he lay on the ground; but probably Paul in the brevity of his speech, anticipated what occurred afterwards in the temple at Jerusalem (xxii. 17—21).

synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God. 21 And all that heard him ¹³ were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havock of them which called ¹⁵ on this name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests. 22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and ¹⁶ confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.

¹³ Were amazed. All knew why he had come to Damascus, and the miracle of his conversion was acknowledged by all.

¹⁵ On this name. Jesus of Nazareth.

¹⁶ Confounded the Jews. Saul, as a trained Rabbi, would be able to refute the Jews more effectually than the other preachers of the Gospel could.

V. 16.—For the sufferings of St. Paul read 2 Cor. xi. 24—27:—

"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep:

"In journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

"In labour and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

Saul flees from Damascus to avoid a Plot against his Life.

23 And when ¹ many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him: 24 but their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates also day and night that they might kill him: 25 but his disciples took him by night, and let him down ³ through the wall, lowering him in a ⁴ basket.

¹ Many days = three years (Gal. i. 17, 18).

³ Through the wall, i.e. through the window of a house on the city wall.

So the spies were lowered from the house of Rahab at Jericho (Josh. ii. 15).

So Michal let down David, who thus escaped the messengers sent by Saul to slay him (1 Sam. xix. 12).

⁴ Basket (spuris), the same as that mentioned in the "feeding of the four thousand." It was large enough to contain a man.

This escape is referred to by St. Paul in 2 Cor. xi. 32-33. *"In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king besetted the city of the Damascenes in order to take me; and through a window was I let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hands."* Governor = Ethnarch, see *lutra*.

How came Aretas, King of Arabia, to have dominion over Damascus? Herod Antipas had been at war with Aretas on account of the divorce by Herod of Aretas's daughter at the instance of Herodias. Herod was defeated by Aretas, and then Tiberius, who favoured Herod, ordered Vitellius, governor of Syria, to march against Aretas. Tiberius died and was succeeded by Caligula, who deposed Antipas and banished him to Lyons. It is conjectured that Caligula assigned Damascus to Aretas as a compensation for injuries received at the hands of Antipas. This conjecture is borne out by the fact that there are no coins of Damascus, of Caligula, or Claudius, but there are coins of their predecessors and successors.

Saul Visits Jerusalem. He is shunned and sent away to Tarsus.

26 And when he was come to ¹ Jerusalem, he ² assayed to join himself to the disciples: and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. 27 But ³ Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 And he was with them ⁴ going in and going out at Jerusalem, 29 preaching boldly in the name of the Lord: and he spake and disputed against the ^{5a} Grecian Jews; but they went about to kill him. 30 And ⁶ when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

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

1 Saul was in Jerusalem fifteen days (Gal. i. 18), and saw Peter and James, the Lord's brother, only.

2 Assayed=endeavoured to join himself.

3 Barnabas, a native of Cyprus, might well have been known in youth to Saul of Tarsus. The schools of Tarsus were greatly famed.

4 His stay at Jerusalem lasted fifteen days (Gal. i. 18) with the disciples on familiar terms.

5 Grecian Jews. Greek-speaking Jews (Intro., lxviii.) who had put Stephen to death. They now plot the death of Saul.

6 In Acts xxii. 17, 18, another reason is stated, viz. a vision of the Lord, commanding him to depart, because they would not receive his testimony.

8 Edified (Edifico), built up.

Gal. i. 17, 18, gives particulars. "I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother."

V. 31. Cause of the rest. Because the attention of the Jews was at this time drawn away from the Christians by the attempt of Caligula to set up his statue in the Temple at Jerusalem. The opposition of the Jews and the intercession of Agrippa caused the Emperor to desist from his purpose.

The order of events in Paul's life at this period seems to have been (see also Intro. pp. lxxviii., lxxix., lxxx.)—

- (1) The vision on the road to Damascus near the town. Saul struck with blindness (3-8).
- (2) Three days' blindness spent in silent communion with God in the house of Judas in the street called Straight (9).
- (3) Visit of Ananias; sight restored; baptism, received the Holy Ghost (10-19).
- (4) Preached Jesus in the synagogues and confounded the Jews (19-22).
- (5) Sudden departure to Arabia, where he was three years (Gal. i. 17, 18).
- (6) Return to Damascus; conspiracy to slay him, escapes to Jerusalem (23-26).
- (7) The disciples are afraid of him, but Barnabas vouches for his conversion (27).
- (8) Preaches to the Hellenists, and, in consequence, they conspire to slay him (28-29).
- (9) The brethren send him to Cæsarea and thence to Tarsus (30), where he remains till Barnabas comes to fetch him to Antioch (xi. 25).

Æneas the Paralytic made Whole.

32 And it came to pass, as Peter went throughout all parts, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at ² Lydda. 33 And there he found a certain man named Æneas, which had kept his bed eight years; for he was ³ palsied. 34 And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee: arise, and make thy bed. And straightway he arose. 35 And all that dwelt at Lydda and in ⁵ Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

This was probably a tour of visitation or oversight.

² Lydda. Intro., Geog. Notes.

³ Palsied = *i.e.* a helpless paralytic, and so bedridden for eight years.

⁵ Sharon. The celebrated plain of that name, extending along the coast from Cæsarea to Joppa, Intro., Geog. Notes.

Dorcas raised to Life at Joppa.

36 Now there was at ¹ Joppa a certain disciple named ² Tabitha, which by interpretation is called ^a Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. 37 And it came to pass in those days, that she ³ fell sick, and died: and when they had washed her, they laid her in ⁵ an upper chamber. 38 And as Lydda was ⁴ nigh unto Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men unto him, intreating him, Delay not to come on unto us. 39 And Peter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and

¹ Joppa. Modern Jaffa Intro., Geog. Notes.

² Tabitha (Aramaic), Dorcas (Greek) = a gazelle. The name Dorcas is now commonly given to sewing-meetings to make garments for the poor.

³ Fell sick, and died, *i.e.* the attack and death were sudden.

⁴ Distant about nine miles.

⁵ They laid her in an upper chamber. They did not bury her at once. Why this delay in the usual rapidity of Eastern funerals? Probably the knowledge that Peter was close at hand, and the hope that the power which had been exerted to heal Æneas, might extend even to the further work of raising the dead.

^a That is, *Gazelle*.

all the ⁶ widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the ⁷ coats and ⁸ garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. 40 But Peter ⁹ put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up. 41 And he gave her his hand, and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42 And it became known throughout all Joppa: and many believed on the Lord. 43 And it came to pass, that he abode many days in Joppa with one Simon a ¹⁰ tanner.

The prayer is the essential feature by which the raising of Tabitha is distinguished from that of the daughter of Jairus. Jesus acts of His Divine power; Peter prays his Master to grant the power.

10 **Tanner.** The trade of a tanner was held as abominable by the Jews.

6 **Widows.** The "widows" of the Church were the object of special provision. See vi. 1: *The Grecians murmured against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.*

7 **Coats**—close-fitting tunics, worn next the body.

8 **Garments**—the loose outer cloaks worn over them.

9 **Put them all forth.** As Christ had done at the raising of Jairus's daughter (Matt. ix. 25).

We may note how Peter copies his Master in every detail. As Jesus put out the hired mourners, so Peter put all forth. Jesus says, "*Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.*" Peter says, "*Tabitha, arise.*" Jesus took the maid by the hand and she arose; and so Peter gave Tabitha his hand and lifted her up.

Instances of raising to life:—

Old Testament. Elijah raised the son of the widow of Sarepta, 1 Kings xvii. 17-24
Elisha raised the Shunammite's son. 2 Kings iv. 32-57.

The dead man cast into the grave of Elisha was restored to life. 2 Kings xiii. 20-21.

New Testament. Christ raised Jairus's daughter. (Matt. ix. 23-26).

Christ raised the widow of Nain's son. (Luke vii. 11-16).

Christ raised Lazarus. (John xi. 43-44).

St. Peter raised Tabitha at Joppa. (Acts ix. 36-43).

St. Paul raised Eutychus at Troas. (Acts xx. 9-10).

An Angel warns Cornelius to send for Peter.

IO Now *there was* a certain man in ¹ Cæsarea, ² Cornelius by name, a ³ centurion of the band called the ⁴ Italian^a band, ² a ⁵ devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. ³ He saw in a vision ⁶ openly, as it were about the ⁷ ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him,

1 Cæsarea. Intro. Geog. Notes.

2 Cornelius. Intro. Biog. Notes.

3 Centurion. Commander of a sixth part of a cohort = half a manipule.

4 Cohors Italica, i.e. a cohort levied in Italy, not in Syria.

5 Devout = religious.

6 Openly, plainly. He was not in a trance, as Peter was (v. 11).

7 Ninth hour, i.e. 3 p.m. Hour of evening prayer (iii. 1).

^a Or, cohort

Cornelius. 4 And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being affrighted, said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a ¹⁰ memorial before God. 5 And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter: 6 he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side. 7 And when the angel that spake unto him was departed, he called two of his household-servants, and a ¹² devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; 8 and having rehearsed all things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

10 **Memorial**, such as to be remembered by God, who is now about to answer them.

12 **Devout soldier**. The devout centurion has devout soldiers, thus showing the influence of Cornelius upon his servants.

Whenever centurions are mentioned in the N. T. they are always referred to in commendatory language, thus:—

The centurion at Capernaum whose servant Jesus healed is described as being "*worthy that thou shouldst do this for him.*" (Luke vii. 4).

The centurion at the cross confessed "*Truly this was the Son of God.*" (Matt. xxvii. 54). Cornelius is described as "*a devout man, and one that feared God.*"

Julius, the centurion, who had charge of St. Paul on his voyage to Rome was evidently of noble and humane character.

V. 4.—Not abject panic, fear—still less the fear of a coward or of an evil conscience—but such as Peter (Luke v. 8) felt when he fell at Jesus' knees, or Moses when, hearing the voice from the burning bush, he "*hid his face: for he was afraid to look upon God.*" (Ex. iii. 6).

V. 6.—**By the sea side**, apart from the town. This was for sanitary reasons and from religious scruples of the Jews. The house now shown to visitors occupies that situation.

V. 8.—**Rehearsed** is not a happy expression, for it looks too much to the past. The meaning is rather "*explained and advised,*" i.e. he recounted what had happened, and directed the soldier what to do. The sequel shows how thoroughly the messenger understood the situation and how wisely he acted on his instructions.

The Vision of Peter.

9 Now on the morrow, as they were on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the ¹housetop to pray, about the ²sixth hour: 10 and he became hungry, and desired to eat: but while ⁴they made ready, he fell into a ⁵trance; 11 and he beholdeth the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great ⁶sheet,

1 **Housetop**. Roofs of Eastern houses are flat (see note)

2 **Sixth hour**. Noon, and the second hour of prayer.

4 **They**—people of the house

5 **Trance**. Literally ecstasy fell upon him. Peter saw things mentally, as in a dream.

6 **The sheet**—the world.

let down by four ⁷ corners upon the earth: 12 wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts and creeping things of the earth and fowls of the heaven. 13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. 14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean. 15 And a voice *came* unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, ⁸ make not thou common. 16 And this was done ⁹ thrice: and straightway the vessel was received up into heaven.

⁷ **Corners**—end of a cord. What Peter saw was the four rope ends attached to the sheet.

The four corners. North, south, east, and west (Luke xiii. 29), the directions into which the Gospel was to be preached.

⁸ **Make not thou common,** i.e. it is not for man to make distinctions when God himself removes all distinctions and separations. See chap. xi. 5.

⁹ **Thrice.** To indent the lesson more effectually on the apostle's mind.

Housetop. In eastern houses the roofs are flat and are protected by a parapet. (Deut. xxii. 8).

They were used:—

- (1) For various household purposes, such as drying corn, hanging up linen. Rahab hid the spies at Jericho under flax spread on the roof to dry. (Josh ii. 6.)
- (2) For places of recreation in the evening, and sleeping places at night. David rose from his bed and was walking on the roof when he saw Bathsheba. 2 Sam. xi. 2. They spread Absalom a tent on the top of the house. (2 Sam. xvi. 22). Samuel communed with Saul on the top of the house. (1 Sam. ix. 26).
- (3) For places of devotion and even idolatrous worship. Jeremiah (xxxii. 29, xix. 13) speaks of "*the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal.*" Zephaniah (i. 5) speaks of "*them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops.*" Josiah removed "*the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Akaz.*" (2 Kings xxiii. 12). "*Peter went up upon the housetop to pray.*" (Acts x. 9).

The Arrival of the Messengers interprets the Vision.

17 Now while Peter was ¹ much perplexed in himself what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men that were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood before ² the gate, 18 and called and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodging there. 19 And while Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, ³ three men seek thee.⁴ 20 But arise, and get thee down, and

¹ **Much perplexed.** Peter evidently felt he had been taught a lesson, but what the lesson was he scarcely knew. Was it that henceforth he should eat what he had before thought unclean or had it a wider application?

² **The gate**—at the porch, where they called on some one from the house to come forth.

³ **Three men**—the two servants and the soldier sent by Cornelius (v. 7).

⁴ **These words of the Spirit** sweep away the doubts of Peter, and explain the vision.

go with them, nothing doubting : for I have sent them. 21 And Peter went down to the men, ⁵ and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek : what is the cause wherefore ye are come ? 22 And they said, Cornelius a centurion, a righteous man and ⁷ one that feareth God, and well reported of by all the nation of the Jews, was warned of God by a holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to ⁸ hear words from thee. 23 So he called them in and lodged them.

And on the morrow he arose and went forth with them, and ⁹ certain of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him. 24 And on the morrow ^a they entered into Cæsarea. And Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his kinsmen and his

Instances of heavenly warnings :—

An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream telling him not to fear to take Mary his wife.

Matt. i. 20.

The wise men of the east were warned not to return to Jerusalem. Matt. ii. 12.

Joseph warned by an angel in a dream to flee to Egypt with the young child Jesus.

Matt. ii. 13.

Joseph instructed by an angel in a dream to return to Judæa on the death of Herod the Great. Matt. ii. 19.

V. 24.—**The morrow after they entered into Cæsarea.** The distance from Cæsarea to Joppa was 30 Roman miles, about 27½ English miles. The double journey took four days (see v. 30) taken up as follows :—

The vision of the angel appeared to Cornelius at the ninth hour (3 p.m.). He despatched the messengers the same evening. They stayed at Apollonia (probably) for the night, arriving at Joppa at noon on the second day. They stayed with Peter that night, and left for Cæsarea on the third day, and breaking their journey at Apollonia arrived at the house of Cornelius at 3 o'clock on the fourth day.

Peter Arrives at Cæsarea.

near friends. 25 And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius ¹ met him, and ² fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. 26 But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up ; I myself also am a man. 27 And

one meaning, i.e. religious worship to the Apostle as God's messenger. Peter refuses this worship.

^a Some ancient authorities read *he*.

5 R.V. omits which were sent unto him from Cornelius. The addition was evidently inserted in the A.V. to make the text quite clear.

7 One that feareth God. An expression commonly used to denote a *proselyte of the gate*, who worshipped Jehovah in Jewish fashion, but had not become a full proselyte. Cornelius and the Ethiopian Eunuch were such proselytes.

8 To hear words—to receive commandment.

9 Six brethren (xi. 12). They were of the circumcision, (v. 45), i.e. Jews, and were taken by Peter to be witnesses of what might occur. Peter appeals to their testimony (xi. 12).

1 From verse 27 it is clear that Cornelius went out and met Peter outside the house.

2 **Fell down at his feet.** Common enough in the East, but unknown in the West, except in adoration of their gods. In a Roman officer such conduct carried but

⁴ as he talked with him, he went in, and findeth many come together: 28 and he said unto them, Ye yourselves know ^a how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come unto one of another nation; and *yet* unto me hath God shewed that I should not call any man common or unclean: 29 wherefore also I came ⁵ without gainsaying, when I was sent for. I ask therefore with what intent ye sent for me. 30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago, until this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house; and behold, a man stood before me in bright apparel, 31 and saith, Cornelius, ⁷ thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call unto thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodgeth in the house of Simon a tanner, by the sea side.⁸ 33 Forthwith therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded

Peter's Speech.

thee of the Lord. 34 And Peter opened his mouth, and said,

¹ Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is ² acceptable to him. 36^b The word which he sent unto the children of Israel,

4 As he talked—implies a long conversation outside the house.

The strict Jew would not enter a Gentile's house, nor sit on the same couch, nor eat or drink out of the same vessel.

Peter now learns and profounds the lesson which the vision had taught him.

5 Without gainsaying—without having a word to say against it, without objecting.

7 Thy prayer is heard. The singular number denotes that the prayer of Cornelius was for some definite blessing. The coming of Peter and the revelation by his mouth was *the answer* to his prayer. His desire, therefore, was evidently for more light, for further teaching. He could not rest satisfied as he was. He felt the need for something, he knew not what.

8 R.V. omits who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

Forthwith therefore. Soldier-like, he obeyed promptly and sent at once.

1 The appearance of the angel to Cornelius and the vision vouchsafed himself, convince St. Peter that God is now making himself known to all workers of righteousness whether Jew or Gentile.

2 Acceptable to him is everyone possessing two qualifications—
(1) Fearing God.
(2) Working righteousness.

^a Or, how unlawful it is for a man etc. ^b Many ancient authorities read *He sent the word unto*.

preaching^a good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)—37³ that saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judæa, ⁴ beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 *even* Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; ⁵ for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. 40 Him God raised up the third day, and ⁶ gave him to be made manifest, 41 not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he ⁷ charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he which is ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. 43 To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.

3 Ye (Gentiles) know the facts and teaching.

4 Jesus commenced His ministry in Galilee after John the Baptist was put in prison (Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14).

5 So Nicodemus confessed, "No man can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him" (John iii. 2).

6 Gave him to be made manifest. Christ was not openly shown, but by many proofs was made manifest to His disciples.

7 Charged. Two truths about Jesus.

(1) His justice—He is to judge, to discover if men possess the two qualifications.

(2) His mercy—through His name is remission of sins.

Is. xlix. 6; Joel ii. 32.

V. 41.—Who did eat and drink with him. The recorded instances are:—

(1) "And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish. And he took it, and did eat before them." (Luke xxiv. 42, 43).

(2) With the two disciples at Emmaus. "And it came to pass, when he had sat with them to meat, he took the bread, and blessed it," etc. (Luke xxiv. 30).

(3) At the Sea of Galilee after the miraculous draught of fishes it is most probable that Jesus dined with His disciples, though it is not actually stated that he did so (John xxi. 12-15).

Descent of the Holy Ghost. Baptism of Cornelius.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, ¹ the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And

1 The gift of the Holy Ghost came upon Cornelius and on his friends in the very way it had come on the earliest disciples, without

any human intervention, and made itself manifest in the same way. There was no difference between Jew and Gentile.

³ they of the circumcision which believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them ⁴ speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he ⁵ commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

² The six Jews who accompanied Peter.

⁴ The Pentecostal gifts proving that Cornelius and his friends were acceptable to God.

⁵ Peter does not baptize them himself. Paul also refrained from baptizing converts, and he assigns a reason (1 Cor. i. 12-16), *i.e.* lest men should call themselves by the names of some one of the Apostles, and thus form factions.

Peter, accused of consorting with Gentiles, satisfies his Accusers.

II Now the apostles and the brethren that were in Judæa heard that the ¹ Gentiles also had received the word of God. 2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, ² they that were of the circumcision contended with him, 3 saying, Thou wentest in to men ³ uncircumcised, and ⁴ didst eat with them. 4 But Peter began, and expounded *the matter* unto them in order, saying, 5 ⁶ I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even unto me: 6 upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw the fourfooted beasts of the earth: and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the heaven. 7 And I heard also a voice saying unto me, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. 8 But

¹ The admission of uncircumcised Gentiles was an event so new and startling that the news of it spread rapidly and created great stir among the brethren. The words of the text imply that news came to Jerusalem before Peter had left Cæsarea.

² *They that were of the circumcision.* The believers who were Jews, and clung to the Mosaic system.

³ *Men uncircumcised,* *i.e.* Gentiles, heathens, not Jews.

⁴ *Didst eat with them.* The charge brought against Peter is not that he preached to the Gentiles, but that he associated familiarly with them, and especially that he did eat with them.

⁶ The differences in the repetition of the vision add additional vividness to the narrative: thus, *Even unto me* (5); *I considered, and saw* (6); *Were drawn up* (10); *These six brethren* (12); *Whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved* (14); *As I began to speak* (15); *And I remembered* (16).

I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing ⁷ common or unclean hath ever entered into my mouth. ⁹ But a voice answered the second time out of heaven, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common. ¹⁰ And this was done thrice: and all were drawn up again into heaven. ¹¹ And behold, forthwith three men stood before the house in which we were, having been sent from Cæsarea unto me. ¹² And the Spirit bade me go with them, ¹⁰ making no distinction. And these six brethren also accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house: ¹³ and he told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, Send to Joppa, and fetch Simon, whose surname is Peter: ¹⁴ who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house. ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, even ¹¹ as on us at ¹² the beginning. ¹⁶ ¹³ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized ^a with the Holy Ghost. ¹⁷ If then God gave unto them the like gift as *he did* also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God? ¹⁸ And when they heard these things, ¹⁴ they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.

7 Common or unclean.

According to the Levitical law of clean and unclean; things clean might be eaten, but unclean things not. In v. 8 Peter shows that he had not yet realised that the old ceremonial law is no longer of necessity.

10 making no difference or distinction, i.e. treating Jew and Gentile exactly alike.

11 As on us. Without human intervention, and accompanied by the same manifestations. Peter was deeply impressed with the fact that the descent of the Holy Ghost on the household of Cornelius was in all respects the same as the outpouring at Pentecost.

12 The beginning—day of Pentecost.

13 And I remembered the word of the Lord. The special promise is contained in chap. i. 5. When uttered it seemed to refer to the disciples only, and to have received its fulfilment on the day of Pentecost. But the descent of the Spirit upon Cornelius taught that the promise had a wider range, that the gift might be bestowed on those who were not of Israel, and who were not called to come outwardly within the covenant of Israel.

V. 17 contains the conclusion of the argument. If the Gentiles had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, it was clear that, as the greater includes the less, they were admissible to the baptism of water, and therefore, "I," says Peter, "enjoined that they be baptized."

14 Held their peace and glorified God. The Greek tenses make the scene more vivid—a breathless pause and then a continuous utterance of praise. Luke is particular to note this as being a complete answer to the Judaizers, for—

(1) Peter, the chief of the Apostles, had admitted the Gentiles.

(2) The admission had been under direct guidance from above.

(3) And it had received formal approval and expressions of gratification by the members of the Church at Jerusalem, themselves of the circumcision.

They that were of the circumcision. Were not all Christians circumcised men at this time? Yes, at the time of which St. Luke is writing, but not at the time when he wrote. At the time when he wrote the Judaizers were a distinct party, and had been the bitter opponents of St. Paul, so from later habit St. Luke used the phrase, "they of the circumcision," as though the Gentile element of which Cornelius was the first fruits were already in existence.

The Gospel speaks as far as Antioch.

19 They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as ² Phœnicia, and ³ Cyprus, and ⁴ Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews. 20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the ^{6a} Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord. 22 And the report ⁷ concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth ⁸ Barnabas as far as Antioch: 23 who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, ^b that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord: 24 for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. 25 And he went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul: 26 and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for ⁹ a whole year they were gathered together ^c with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

2 Phœnicia. Intro. Geog. Notes.

3 Cyprus, Cyrane, Intro., Geog. Notes.

4 Antioch. Intro., Geog. Notes.

6 The best MSS. give Greek. i.e. Gentiles. To the Greek-speaking Jews the Gospel had always been preached.

7 i.e. concerning the Gentile converts.

8 Barnabas (Intro., Biog. Notes) a native of Cyprus, would be well known to the Cyprians preaching at Antioch.

The character of Barnabas is described in the same words as applied to Stephen (vi. 5).

And now that the Gospel is being preached to the Gentiles Barnabas fetches Saul, who has been marked (ix. 15) as a "chosen vessel" to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.

9 Whole year. Paul's first work as the Apostle of the Gentiles was at Antioch, and continued for a whole year. Hence his constant return to Antioch at the conclusion of each missionary journey.

The New Testament names for the followers of Jesus were—*The saints* (Acts ix. 41); *The brethren* (Acts xi.); *Those of the Way* (Acts ix. 2). *The disciples* (Acts ix.). *The faithful* (Eph. i. 1).

^a Many ancient authorities read *Grecian Jews*. ^b Some ancient authorities read *that they would cleave unto the purpose of their heart in the Lord*. ^c Gr. in.

Speaking the word to none but unto the Jews only. At the earlier period of their exile the disciples observed our Lord's rule, "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. xv. 24). But later on some from Cyprus and Cyrene broke through this rule and speak to Greeks, *i.e.* heathen.

It is difficult to fix the time of this preaching to the Greeks, but on the circumstance being reported no objection is made at Jerusalem as was done (chap. xi.) against Peter for receiving Gentiles; on the contrary Barnabas, a man of Cyprus, was commissioned to help the movement.

Hence it may be inferred that the news of the preaching of the Gospel to the Greeks or heathen did not reach the church at Jerusalem until after the contention of the Jews with Peter as recorded, xi. 1-18.

Christians.—The word occurs three times only in the N.T.

1. "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts xi. 26).
2. Agrippa says to Paul, "With but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian" (Acts xxvi. 28).
3. "If a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." (1 Pet. iv. 16).

By whom was the name given?

Not by the disciples of Jesus, for they never give it to themselves.

Not by the Jews, for the title would imply the Messiahship of Jesus. The Jews always styled the disciples of Jesus as Galileans or Nazarenes.

Most probably by the heathen, and in ridicule and scorn of the humble occupation of Christ and His followers.

Reason of the new term. Hitherto the disciples had been Jews only, but now they are a mixed body of Jews and Gentiles, and so some new appellation is needed.

The term at first applied in ridicule and taunt soon became a title of honour and a name in which to glory.

Famine foretold by Agabus. Relief sent to Jerusalem.

27 Now ¹ in these days there came down ² prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named ³ Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great ⁴ famine over all ^a the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. 29 And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send ^b relief unto the brethren that dwelt in ⁶ Judæa: 30 which also they did, sending it to the ⁶ elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

¹ These days, *i.e.* during the year's ministry of Barnabas and Saul.

² Prophets. See note p. vii.

³ Agabus. Intro. p. xxvii. He also foretold Paul's imprisonment at Jerusalem and Rome (xxi. 10, 11).

⁴ famine. It raged in Judæa A.D. 44—the fourth year of Claudius.

⁵ It is probable that the visit of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem took place after the events recorded in xii. 1-23. This visit is omitted in Gal. i. 18; ii. 1.

⁶ Elders = presbyters, the first time this term is used. See Intro.

The 12th chapter is a huge parenthesis describing events going on in Jerusalem when Paul and Barnabas visited it. They probably delivered their mission, and immediately returned to Antioch. The shortness of their stay (due to persecution going on) may account for their visit not being mentioned by St. Paul in Galatians.

Persecution by Herod. Imprisonment of Peter.

12 I Now ¹ about that time ² Herod the king put forth his hands to afflict certain of the church. 2 And he killed ⁴ James the brother of John with the sword. 3 And

¹ About that time, *i.e.* of the famine, A.D. 44.

² Herod Agrippa I. See Intro.

⁴ James. Intro., p. vi. The only martyrdom of an Apostle mentioned in the New Testament.

when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. And *those* were ⁵ the days of unleavened bread. ⁴ And when he had taken him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four ⁶ quaternions of soldiers to guard him; intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people. ⁵ Peter therefore was kept in the prison: but prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him. ⁶ And when Herod was about to bring him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and guards before the door kept the prison. ⁷ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the cell: and he smote Peter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. ⁸ And the angel said unto him, ¹³ Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. ⁹ And he went out, and followed; and he wist not that it was true which was done^a by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. ¹⁰ And when they were past the first and the second ¹⁵ ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city; which opened to them of its own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him. ¹¹ And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a truth, that the Lord hath sent

⁵ Days of unleavened bread = the Passover feast.

⁶ Four quaternions, *i.e.* four parties of four soldiers each, one set for each watch of the night. The prisoner was chained to two of them, whilst the other two kept watch at the doors of the prison, forming the first and second wards (guards) of v. 10.

¹³ Gird thyself, *i.e.* bind up the loose garments so as to be ready for quick movement. (See Ex. xii. 11). Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 46); Gehazi (2 Kings iv. 29).

¹⁵ Ward. The warders or guards, stationed probably one at the door of the cell, the other at the outer door of the prison. The iron gate formed the exit from the premises. The prison seems to have been in the midst of the city.

^a Or, through

forth his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. 12 And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of 17 Mary the mother of 18 John whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together and were praying. 13 And when he knocked at the 19 door of the 20 gate, a 21 maid came 22 to answer, named 23 Rhoda. 14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for joy, but ran in, and told that Peter stood before the gate. 15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she 24 confidently affirmed that it was even so. And they said, It is his angel. 16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened, they saw him, and were amazed. 17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him forth out of the prison. And he said, Tell these things unto 25 James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went to 26 another place. 18 Now as soon as it was day, 27 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 guards, and commanded that they should be ^aput to death. And he went down from Judæa to 29 Cæsarea, and tarried there.

- (1) The Tetrarchies of Herod Philip and Lysanias.
 (2) The Tetrarchy of Antipas and the title of king.
 (3) The districts of Judæa and Samaria.

So Herod, and not a Roman governor, was in power at Cæsarea at this time. Intro (Kings and Governors).

^a Gr. led away to death.

- 17 **Mary.** Sister of Barnabas Intro. Biog. Notes.
 18 **John Mark.** Intro. Biog. Notes.
 19 **Door** = the wicket opened to admit anyone.
 20 **Gate** = porch into which this wicket gave admission.
 21 **A maid** = a maid servant. The portress in Jewish houses was commonly a maid servant. Compare John xviii. 17, where another maid who kept the door recognised Peter when John brought him into the palace of the high priest.
 22 **To answer.** The original which means "to hearken" was the phrase used among the Greeks for "answering the door." Peter's voice was well-known (Matt. xxvi. 73).
 23 **Rhoda** = rose.
 24 The whole scene is so vivid that an eye-witness, probably Mark himself, must have told it to Luke.
 25 **James.** The same who is afterwards described as presiding over the Council at Jerusalem (xv. 13), "*the Lord's brother.*" Intro., p. vi.
 26 **Another place.** We know not where. Some suggest that Peter went to Rome at this time and founded the Church there, but there is no warrant for the statement. Others suggest Antioch, but (see Gal. ii. 12) there are no traces of his presence there till after the Council at Jerusalem (xv.)
 27 The guards were alarmed, knowing they would probably answer with their lives (as they did, v. 19), for the life of Peter.
 29 **Cæsarea.** Herod Agrippa I. received in order—

Why did Herod Agrippa I. persecute the Church?

Josephus records that he was desirous of being esteemed a devout Jew. Hence his eagerness to put down the Christians and his desire to please the Jews.

James, the brother of John, and the son of Zebedee, who had declared his willingness "to drink of the cup that Christ drank of, and to be baptized with his baptism." He now drinks the cup of persecution and is baptized with the baptism of martyrdom.

V. 4.—After the Passover. Peter was arrested at the commencement of the Passover, and it was Herod's intention to execute him at the conclusion of the Feast. Peter would therefore be in prison 8 days, and so it was necessary to take careful precautions for guarding him.

V. 15.—It is his angel, i.e. his guardian angel in the likeness of Peter, a doctrine believed in by the Jews at that period, which was that each man had a guardian angel assigned to him.

V. 17.—Tell these things unto James, showing that James was the chief of the brethren at Jerusalem.

Death of Herod.

20 Now he was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: and they ² came with one accord to him, and, having made ³ Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, they asked for ⁴ peace, because their country ⁵ was fed from the king's country. 21 And upon a ⁶ set day Herod arrayed himself in royal apparel, and sat on the ^a throne, and made an oration unto them. 22 And the people shouted, saying, The voice of a god, and not of a man. 23 And immediately an angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

2 Came with one accord—sent a combined embassy.

3 Blastus (Intro., Biog. Notes) is a Roman name. As Herod Agrippa I. was in favour at Rome, it is probable he would have some Romans as his confidential officers.

4 Peace better reconciliation. There was not open war but Herod was not on friendly terms with them.

5 Tyre drew its supplies of corn from Judæa (Ezek. xxvii. 17).

6 Set day. The events here described took place in the Theatre at Caesarea, when Herod was celebrating festive and votive games in honour of Claudius.

V. 22.—The voice of a god. Josephus writes that Herod did not rebuke this impious flattery but accepted it. But later, when suffering violent pain, he reproved their lying words and acknowledged God's providence and his approaching end.

Eaten of Worms. Josephus is not so particular in his description of the cause of death, though he attributes it to a swift and fatal disease on the stomach.

The same painful death occurred to Antiochus Epiphanes (2 Macc. ix. 5).

Josephus gives a similar account of the death of Herod the Great.

Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch.

24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned ^b from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ¹ ministration, taking with them John whose surname was Mark.

Jerusalem, in Judæa, and Samaria, and in Palestine.

1 Their ministration, i.e. the handing over to the Church at Jerusalem the contributions of the disciples at Antioch for the support of their brethren in Judæa during the famine foretold by Agabus (xi. 28).

The first portion of the Acts closes with the establishment of the Gospel in

^a Or, judgement-seat ^b Many ancient authorities read to Jerusalem

Note.—We now enter upon the missionary labours of Paul. The first part of the Acts, though describing the spread of the Gospel in Judæa, Samaria, and as far as Damascus, has treated mainly of "the Gospel to the Jews," with Peter, the "Apostle of the Circumcision," as the leading figure. We now have the history of the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, with St. Paul, "the Apostle of the Uncircumcision," as the prominent actor. From Chapter xix. the narrative is almost a memoir of Paul.

Consecration of Paul and Barnabas for Missionary Work.

I ³ Now there were at ² Antioch, in the church that was *there*, prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, ⁴ Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ³ Then, when they had ⁵ fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

² Antioch. Intro., Geog. Notes.

Barnabas, Symeon, Lucius, Manaen. (See Intro.)

Herod the tetrarch = Herod Antipas.

Ministered. The verb so translated. (*leitourgein* - whence the "Liturgy" of the Church) is commonly used of the ministry of the Priests and Levites in the Temple. It is here used to mean Christian worship. Old words were taking new meanings, and worship now meant prayer and fasting.

⁴ Separate me now at once.

⁵ Fasted and prayed. A solemn service of dedication and ordination. In the case of the Seven Deacons, the laying on of hands was preceded by special prayer; in the case of Barnabas and Saul by prayer and fasting.

So our Lord fasted and prayed at the setting apart of the Twelve (Luke vi. 12, 13).

Prophets and Teachers. The ministers of the Church.

The prophets as (1) Foretellers, as Agabus (xi. 28);

Or (2) Forthtellers or Preachers, as Judas and Silas (xv. 32)

Teachers were instructors less influenced by the Holy Ghost.

As they. "One a Cypriote, another a Cyrenian, another a Jew, and from his double name accustomed to mingle with non-Jews, one a connection of the house of Herod, and Saul the heaven-appointed apostle to the Gentiles, the list may be deemed in some sort typical of 'the world' into which the Gospel was now to go forth" (*Lumby*).

The work. To preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, as foreshadowed in the conversion of Saul (Acts ix. 15). The inward call is now sanctioned by the outward call of the Church prompted by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Beginning of the First Missionary Journey. The Apostles visit Cyprus. Contest for a Soul.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, ¹went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to ²Cyprus. 5 And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the ³synagogues of the Jews: and they had also ⁴John as their ⁵attendant. 6 And when they had gone through the whole island unto ⁶Paphos, they found a certain ^asorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus; ⁷which was with the proconsul, ⁷Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding. The same called unto him Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the ^asorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn ⁹aside the proconsul from the faith. 9 But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, ¹⁰fastened his eyes on him, ¹⁰and said, O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun ^bfor 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. 12 Then the proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the ¹¹teaching of the Lord.

¹ Went down to Seleucia, i.e. down the river (frontes to Seleucia, which was situated near the mouth of the river about sixteen miles from Antioch, and was the port of that city.

² Cyprus. Geog. Notes. The country of Barnabas, and possibly on this account chosen as the scene of their first labours.

Salamis. Geog. Notes. The port of Cyprus nearest to Seleucia, in the bay now called Famagousta.

³ Synagogues. A large number of Jews were living in Salamis so that several synagogues would be required.

⁴ John Mark. Intro., Biog. Notes.

⁵ attendant, meaning "helper." His duties were probably to wait on the Apostles, aid them in their preaching, and to baptize (1 Cor. i. 13-16).

⁶ Paphos. Geog. Notes. Now Pafo, lay at the western extremity of the island. It was the capital and the residence of the Roman Governor.

⁷ Sergius Paulus. Biog. Notes.

⁹ Aside = to pervert (such is the force of the preposition)

¹⁰ Denoting an intense, earnest gaze. So Peter to the cripple at the Gate of the Temple (iii. 4).

¹¹ Teaching of the Lord i.e. the teaching which had the Lord (= Lord Jesus) as its main theme

Sorcerer, magician or magus. So Simon Magus (viii. 9). The first conflicts of Peter and Paul were with magicians. In this age of superstition sorcerers were paid hangers on in the households of Roman noblemen. They pretended to be able to foretell the future. Many of these sorcerers were depraved Jews, who traded on the religious prestige of their race.

Proconsul. The name was given to the chief governor of a province under the Senate. A province under the Emperor had a procurator as governor.

Roman provinces were divided into two classes. Those that required the presence of troops to overawe the people were placed under the control of the Emperor, and were governed by **proprators**, the commanders of the legions, and may be considered as under **military** rule; the others were under the rule of the Senate, and were governed by civil magistrates, **proconsuls**, i.e. were under **civil** not **military** rule.

In thus describing the Government of Cyprus, Luke is strictly accurate, for the island was an imperial province up to 22 A. D., when it was given over to the Senate; later it became imperial, and still later again proconsular.

Saul, who is also called Paul. The following reasons are given for the change of name:

1. That it was adopted from the proconsul's, his first convert of distinction.
2. That the Greek word **Saulos** had an opprobrious meaning as = waulon.
3. That the meaning of **Pavlos** = little, commended itself to the Apostle's humility.
4. That Saul (like almost all other Jews who mingled much with Gentiles) had had the two names previous to this occasion.

The last-named is the most probable explanation. The change of name marks a change of work and position. Henceforth Paul takes the lead, and from this point the order is Paul and Barnabas, not Barnabas and Saul. Luke recognising that the history of Paul is now to be his chief theme, names the Apostle by the name which became most familiar to the Churches.

Bar-Jesus or Elymas. Biog. Notes. The prefix Bar (son of) = Mac in Gaelic, MacIvor; Fitz in English, Fitz-William.

Elymas is an Arabic word which means a wise man, and corresponds to Ulema, the Arabic name for a theological student.

Note here how the epithets of Paul meet the character of Elymas:—

Sorcerer or wise man, met by "*full of all guile and all villiany.*"

Bar-Jesus, son of Jesus, met by "*son of the devil.*"

Withstood them, met by "*thou enemy of all righteousness.*"

To turn aside the deputy from the faith, met by "*not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord.*"

The hand of the Lord. As Saul had been struck blind on the way to Damascus, when fighting against the Christian faith, so Paul now strikes Elymas blind when resisting the preaching of the Gospel.

Note.—Two miracles of judgment occur in the Acts:

1. The death of Ananias and Sapphira at the foundation of the Jewish Church.
2. The blindness of Elymas just as the Gospel is going to the Gentiles.

For a season. Justice was tempered with mercy as to Paul himself at Damascus.

Mist and darkness. The blindness was gradual. First dimness, then darkness, then such total blindness that the sorcerer instinctively groped about.

The opposite effect occurs in the recovery of the blind man at Bethsaida. He first saw "men as trees walking," and afterwards all things clearly (Mark viii. 23-25).

The Apostles leave the Island of Cyprus, and preach on the mainland of Asia Minor.

13 Now Paul and his company ¹ set sail from Paphos, and came to ² Perga in Pamphylia: and ³ John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem.

14 But they, passing through from

¹ **Set sail.** They sailed north-west to Perga, and without tarrying there went on through the country to Antioch.

² **Perga in Pamphylia.** p. 178.

³ **John departed from them returned to Jerusalem.**

John Mark may have been deterred by the perils and

hardships of the journey into the country, or he may have been induced to return by affection for his mother, who lived in Jerusalem (xii.) Whatever the cause, it was clearly one which did not satisfy Paul (xv. 38).

Perga, came to ⁴ Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and ⁵ sat down. 15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

⁶ *Sat down.* By this act they implied that they were not listeners only but teachers. It was the custom in the Jewish synagogues to ask distinguished strangers present in the audience to address the congregation. (See Intro. The Synagogue).

Paul's Speech at Antioch.

16 And Paul stood up, and beckoning with the hand said,

¹ Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, hearken. 17 The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they ² sojourned in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm led he them forth out of it. 18 And for about the time of forty years ^{4a} suffered he their manners in the wilderness. 19 And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, ⁵ he gave them their land for an inheritance, for about four hundred and fifty years: 20 and after these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. 21 And afterward they ⁶ asked for a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for the space of forty years. 22 And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king; to whom also he bare witness, and said, ⁷ I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who shall ⁸ do all my ^b will.

⁴ *Antioch of Pisidia.* This Antioch must be carefully distinguished from the other Antioch, which was in Syria.

And they went into the synagogue. St. Paul invariably made his way to the Synagogue of the Jews first for service. See Intro., The Synagogue.

¹ *Men of Israel, and ye that fear God.* Two classes addressed. 1, Israelites, 2, God-fearing Gentiles, i.e. proselytes of the gate. See Intro. Explan. of Words et seq.

³ *Sojourned.* French, *so-journer*—dwell as strangers, not permanently.

⁴ *Suffered he their manners,* or bore with their ways as a patient, long-suffering ruler.

Or "*bare he them as a nursing father.*" The alteration of a single letter from "p" to "ph" in a six-syllable word accounts for the two meanings.

⁵ *He gave them their land for an inheritance* (fulfilling his promise to Abraham, "*unto thy seed will I give this land*"). (Gen. xii. 7), for about four hundred and fifty years: and after these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. This translation connects four hundred and fifty years with the land, A.V. with the judges, and removes any discrepancy between O.T. and N.T.

⁶ ¹ Samuel viii. 5.)

⁷ The quotation is a combination of Ps. lxxxix. 20, "*I have found David my servant,*" and 1 Sam. xiii. 14 "*a man after his own heart.*"

⁸ *Do all my will,* implying that Saul did not, while David did.

^a Many ancient authorities read *bare he them as a nursing father in the wilderness.* See Deut. i. 31. ^b Gr. *wills.*

23⁹ Of this man's seed hath God according to promise brought unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus; 24 when John had first preached^a before his coming the ¹¹ baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 And as John ¹² was fulfilling his course, he said,

What suppose ye that I am? I am not *he*. But behold, there cometh one after me, the shoes of whose feet I am not worthy to unloose. 26 Brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and those among you that fear God, ¹³ to us is the word of this salvation sent forth. 27 For they that dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they ¹⁴ knew him not, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath, fulfilled

9 Ps. cxxxiii. 11, "of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."

11 Baptism of repentance. Paul uses the very words of Matt. iii. 11, Mark i. 4, Luke iii. 3.

12 Was fulfilling his course (the tense is imperfect), i.e. progressing in his appointed work.

V. 26. The two classes are as before (see v. 16) again contrasted and addressed equally.

13 To us. The message is for other than Jews, but Paul carefully avoids wounding any Jewish prejudice, and so classes himself with his hearers.

14 Knew him not, &c., i.e. knew not Jesus as the Messiah, and failed to grasp the significance of the prophecies concerning the Messiah. Compare Peter (Acts iii. 17), "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers"; and our Lord Himself: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Analysis of Paul's Speech at Antioch in Pisidia.

We may note in this the first recorded sermon of Paul, a remarkable similarity to the defence of Stephen (chap. vii.), which Paul must have heard, and which made a deep impression upon him.

The main thought is the purpose of God in his dealings with the nation of Israel in manifesting himself in a series of saving acts culminating in the giving of a Saviour, Jesus Christ. The line of argument seems to be:—

1. The God of Israel had manifested His purpose in saving His people—
 - (a) By delivering them from Egypt (v. 17).
 - (b) In saving them from the perils in the wilderness (v. 18).
 - (c) In driving out before them the seven nations of Canaan (v. 19).
 - (d) In delivering them from internal troubles by means of Judges, and establishing the kingdom under Saul and David (v. 20-22).
 - (e) All these acts are part of the great promise of the Saviour Jesus, who should be of the lineage of David (v. 23).
2. This Saviour has come, and is Jesus—
 - (a) Proclaimed by John the Baptist (v. 24-26).
 - (b) Rejected through ignorance by the Jewish rulers (v. 27, 28).
 - (c) And in this rejection they fulfilled the prophecies respecting the Messiah (v. 29).
3. Jesus was put to death, and by his sufferings and crucifixion fulfilled in every particular the prophecies written of the Messiah (v. 29, 30).
4. Jesus had risen again from the dead, and thus—
 - (a) By his death had brought forgiveness and justification;
 - (b) By his resurrection had given evidence of his Messiahship (v. 31-35).
5. Forgiveness and justification could not have been accomplished by any of the saviours previously mentioned, for they (of whom David was the chief) had served their own generation and passed away. They had not risen again (v. 36, 37).

^a Cf. before the face of his entering in.

6. True salvation is forgiveness of sins and justification, and Jesus is the Christ because through him is obtained that pardon and justification which the law of Moses, till completed by the coming of Jesus, could not give (v. 38, 39).

A solemn warning from the Old Testament prophecies not to neglect this salvation now offered through this Saviour (v. 40, 41).

It is most interesting to note how St. Paul adapts his addresses to his audience. He was "all things to all men." We have illustrations of this different style on three different occasions, viz. :—

1. To the Jews and mixed congregation of educated men at Antioch in Pisidia, he addressed himself in a careful argument based on the Old Testament.
2. To the mountaineers of Lystra, as a primitive people, he describes God as the food-giver, an appeal which even the rudest intellect could comprehend.
3. To the Athenians on Mars Hill, he bases his argument on their magnificent temples and altars, and illustrates his speech by allusions to history and literature, appealing to their souls and consciences.

them by condemning him. 28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet asked they of Pilate that he should be slain. 29 And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. 30 But God raised him from the dead: 31 and he was seen for ¹⁵ many days of them that came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses unto the people. 32 And we bring you ¹⁷ good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers, 33 how that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children, in that he raised up Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, ¹⁹ Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. 34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. 35 Because he saith also in ²⁰ another psalm, Thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption. 36 For David, after he had ^a in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell

¹⁵ During many days. Because the appearances were occasional: he was not visible at all times during the forty days.

¹⁷ The good tidings were not only published, but Paul and Barnabas journeyed so far to deliver them.

¹⁹ (Ps. ii. 7).

²⁰ (Ps. xvi. 10).

The words of the Psalm cannot refer to David, because David died, was buried, and did not rise again: he saw corruption. The Psalm speaks of one who cannot see corruption.

^a Or, served his own generation by the counsel of God, fell on sleep. Or, served his own generation, fell on sleep by the counsel of God.

on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37 but he whom God raised up saw no corruption. 38 Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you ²³ remission of sins: 39 and by him ²⁴ every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. 40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken in the prophets; 41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and ^a perish;

For I work a work in your days, A work which ye shall in no wise believe, ²⁵ if one declare it unto you.

V. 16.—Beckoning with the hand. A gesture to procure silence and attention. So Peter (xii. 17), Paul on the stairs of the castle of Antonia (xxi. 40), and before Agrippa (xxvi. 1).

V. 19.—Seven nations (Deut. vii. 1). The Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites.

V. 21.—Forty years. The length of Saul's reign is not found directly in the Old Testament, but is stated by Josephus as being forty years, viz., eighteen years before Samuel's death, and twenty-two after it. Saul was a "young man" when chosen King (1 Sam. ix. 2), and Ishbosheth, his youngest son, was forty years old at the time of Saul's death (2 Sam. ii. 10).

V. 27.—The voices of the prophets. The readings from the prophets would tell of a suffering Saviour as well as a conquering Messiah. So Jesus to the disciples on the road to Emmaus: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" (Luke xxiv. 26).

V. 28.—So Pilate declared: "Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him" (Luke xxiii. 22).

V. 29.—Among the prophecies fulfilled by the crucifixion and burial, are—

"They shall look upon me whom they had pierced" (Zech. xii. 10).

"They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" (Ps. lxxix. 21).

"They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they did cast lots" (Ps.

xxii. 18; John xix. 24).

"He was numbered with the transgressors" (Is. liii. 12).

"A bone of him shall not be broken" (Ex. xii. 46; John xix. 38).

"He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death" (Is. liii. 9).

Paul sees every detail of trial, indignity, and death foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures.

Further Preaching to the Jews and Gentiles. Jealousy of the Jews. Expulsion of the Apostles from Antioch.

42 And ¹ as they went out, they besought that these words might be spoken to them the next sabbath.

²³ Remission. The keynote of the Apostolic preaching.

²⁴ Justification by faith, the favourite doctrine in Paul's Epistles, appears in his first recorded sermon.

²⁵ If one declare it unto you (Hab. i. 5), referring there to destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans.

prosllytes, wished to hear Paul again, and not, as in A.V., that the Gentiles only made the request after the Jews had gone out.

q Or, *sanitē avey*

¹ And as they went out, they besought, thus implying that the whole congregation both Jew and Gentile

43 Now when the synagogue ³ broke up, many of the Jews and of the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

44 And the next sabbath ⁵ almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of ^a God. 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with ⁶ jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and ^b blasphemed. 46 And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so ⁸ hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*,

I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles,

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

48 And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of ^a God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region. 50 But the Jews urged on the ¹⁰ devout women of honourable estate, and the ¹¹ chief men of the city, and stirred up a persecution

³ Broke up — dissolved or dismissed.

⁵ Almost the whole city. Heathens as well as Jews and proselytes. The Gospel message had excited general interest.

⁶ Jealousy. The Jews had received the message gladly when they thought it was limited to themselves, but they could not endure that the Gentiles should be made equal with them.

⁸ Hath the Lord commanded (Is. xlix. 6). Paul finds in the prophets the divine purpose of love to all the heathen world. The Jewish teachers found only the exaltation of Israel.

¹⁰ The wives of the men in high position among the heathen were much inclined to the Jewish religion (Josephus B. J. ii. 20-22). These would be easily moved by the Jews to take action against the Apostles (*Lumby*).

¹¹ Chief men, possibly influenced by their wives, or as magistrates, appealed to by the Jews.

V. 46.—Ye thrust it from you. The original is strong—thrust it away; scornfully reject. The Jews wilfully rejected the Gospel—the Apostles did not take it from them. Wherever Paul went, he first addressed himself to the Jews. To them as the covenant nation the Gospel must be preached first. When they rejected the preaching it was then offered to the Gentiles.

^a Many ancient authorities read the Lord. ^b Or, resisted

against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their borders. 51 But they ¹³ shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto ¹⁴ Iconium. 52 And the disciples were ¹⁵ filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost.

¹³ Shook off the dust. In compliance with the injunction of our Lord (Matt. x. 14). The act implied that from henceforth the Apostles had nothing to do with these Jews, and that they were left to go their own way.

¹⁴ Iconium. Modern Konieh. Intro., Geog. Notes.

¹⁵ Filled with joy (Matt. v. 12) because they were called upon to suffer for the Master's sake.

The Apostles preached Jesus at Iconium, and are forced to flee.

And it came to pass in **I 4** Iconium, that they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. 2 But the Jews that were ¹ disobedient stirred up the souls of the Gentiles, and made them evil affected against the brethren. 3 Long time therefore they ² tarried *there* speaking boldly in the Lord, which ³ bare witness unto the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. 4 But the multitude of the city was divided; and part held with the Jews, and part with ⁴ the apostles. 5 And when ⁵ there was made an onset both of the Gentiles and of the Jews with their rulers, to ⁶ entreat them shamefully, and ⁷ to stone them, 6 they became aware of it, and fled unto the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the region round about: 7 and there they preached the gospel.

¹ Disobedient. The Jews' underhand talk undermined the first favourable impressions made on the Gentiles, some of whom were perverted.

² tarried, denoting a long stay, rendered necessary by the opposition of the Jews.

³ Bare witness. The Lord witnessing to the word, and granting signs and wonders to be done.

⁴ The apostles. Paul and Barnabas, now first called Apostles.

⁵ The words do not imply that an actual attack was made. The whole city was excited, and an attack might have come at any moment.

⁶ See 1 Thess ii. 1.

⁷ To stone them. The prompting, therefore, came from the Jews. The charge against the Apostles would be that of blasphemy.

V. 1.—Greeks. The Greek word is *Hellenes*, but as the writer speaks of Jews and Greeks in conjunction, it has been suggested that *Hellenista* is the proper word. But as Luke is describing a lengthened stay of the Apostles at Iconium, it is clear that he includes all the converts. Paul and Barnabas spoke first to the Jews in the synagogue, and to the Gentiles afterwards, and also converted many of the latter.

V. 3.—Signs, as God's credentials to man, went side by side with the preaching of the Gospel thus explaining St. Paul's claims to Apostleship—"Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you . . . in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds" (2 Cor. xii. 12).

It is the distinguishing feature of nearly all the persecutions in the Acts that they originated in the opposition of the Jews. The case of Demetrius at Ephesus (xix. 24) seems to be the solitary exception, and even in this riot there are traces of Jewish influence.

V. 4.—The multitude was divided. Two distinct parties, a Christian and a non-Christian party sprung up. Also at Thessalonica (xvii. 4, 5).

V. 6.—They became aware of it and fled as Jesus advised—"When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another" (Matt. x. 23).

Lystra; Derbe, Lycaonia. See Intro., Geog. Notes. Lystra was about forty miles from Iconium. Lycaonia (wolf-land) was a dreary plain destitute of water.

Cure of Cripple at Lystra. The Apostles regarded as Gods.

8 And at Lystra there sat a certain man, impotent in his feet, ¹ a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. ⁹ The same heard Paul speaking: who, ² fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had ³ faith to be ^amade whole, ¹⁰ said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And ⁴ he leaped up and walked. ¹¹ And when the multitudes saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. ¹² And they called Barnabas, ^bJupiter; and Paul, ^cMercury, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³ And the priest of ^dJupiter whose ^etemple was before the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the ⁶ gates, and would have done sacrifice with the multitudes. ¹⁴ But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they ⁷ rent their garments, and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out ¹⁵ and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of ⁸like ^fpassions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should

¹ A cripple. Luke the Physician notes particularly the man's case. He was "*impotent in his feet*," i.e. powerless to use them. He had been born so.

² Fastening his eyes upon him. As Peter upon the lame man (iii. 4), and as Paul did on Elymas (xiii. 9), and on the Council (xxiii. 1). The same word is used throughout.

³ This requirement of responsive faith reminds us of our Lord's miracles (Matt. ix. 28, 29).

⁴ Leaped up and walked. Two distinct actions. In response to Paul's command he leaped up, thus showing the cure was perfect, and he then continued to walk, showing that the power to walk was continued.

⁵ The temple of Jupiter was at the entrance of the city. Jupiter was their tutelary deity.

⁶ Gates of the porch, or outer door of the house where the Apostles lodged.

⁷ Rent their garments, and sprang forth. They did not know the language, and had not understood what was being done. When the truth flashed on them they sprang up, horror-stricken, rent their clothes, and rushed out into the crowd to prevent the blasphemy.

^f Like passions i.e. "men subject to like conditions" = mortal men.

^a Or, saved ^b Or Zeus ^c Or Hermes ^d Or Saturn

turn from these ¹⁰ vain things unto the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: 16 who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. 17 And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness. 18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them.

to Vain things (Lat., *vanus* = empty): the word constantly used to contrast the empty worthless heathen worship with the reverence due to the living God.

V. 9.—**Heard Paul speaking.** The Greek implies that he had heard Paul several times. The Apostles would naturally select some place of public resort for their preaching, and such a place would be most suited for the purposes of a begging cripple.

Speech of Lycaonia. The people spoke their own dialect, though they understood Greek. So in many towns of Wales, English is understood, though Welsh is the language of the common people. So in Canada, French Canadians would express wonder in French, though addressed in English.

It is clear that the dialect was not understood by the Apostles (verse 14); this seems to show that the gift of tongues was not used for the purposes of intercourse.

V. 11.—**The gods are come down, &c.** Nothing was more familiar to the heathen mind than the thought of the gods assuming human shape. But it was only among barbarous people like the Lycaonians that men were still prepared to believe such stories.

There are several reasons why Barnabas was called Jupiter, and Paul Mercury. The Temple of Jupiter was near the city, and to that god was their worship chiefly paid. Jupiter (Gk. Zeus) was the king of gods, of stately and commanding presence. Mercurius (Gk. Hermes) was the chief attendant of Zeus, and the god of eloquence. It was obvious, therefore, to assign the name *Mercurius* to the chief speaker, and the name of Jupiter to the one of the two Apostles who had the more commanding presence. Of Paul we know that he was of weak bodily presence from his own words—"His bodily presence is weak" (2 Cor. x. 10).

The poet Ovid preserves a legend that the gods Jupiter and Mercury descended into these very regions, and how they were hospitably entertained by Baucis and Philemon. This legend presents an additional reason for the action of the Lycaonians.

V. 13.—**Garlands, the vittæ** of wool interwoven with leaves and flowers, with which the victims and altars were decorated at a heathen sacrifice.

V. 15.—**The nations** (The article is emphatic) = the nations of the heathen = i.e. the Gentiles.

V. 17.—**Rains.** The allusion to *rain* as a Divine gift was peculiarly appropriate, as the district was bare and dreary, and frequently suffered from a scarcity of water.

V. 18.—**From doing sacrifice unto them.** So persuaded were they of the divinity of Paul and Barnabas.

Analysis of the Speech to the Lystrians.

1. Why do ye these things? i.e. attempt to offer sacrifice to us (v. 15).
2. For we are mortal men like yourselves (v. 15).
3. And are commissioned to tell you of a different God to those vain idols which ye worship (v. 15).
4. For he is the living God; and all life comes from Him. He has made heaven and earth and sea (v. 15).
5. Till now this God has not been fully revealed to you Gentile nations (v. 16).
6. But He has given you the evidence of nature, testifying to His Providence (v. 17).
7. From Him come all good gifts: Thus rain, the best gift to this barren-wolf land, is the gift of God, and with the rain He has made the earth bring forth food, which made their hearts glad (v. 17).

Paul is stoned by the fierce Lycaonians. The Apostles return to Antioch in Syria.

19 But there came Jews thither from Antioch and Iconium: and having persuaded the multitudes, ¹ they stoned Paul, and ² dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. 20 But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city: and on the morrow he went forth with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had ³ made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, 22 confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through ⁴ many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. 23 And when they had ⁵ appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed. 24 And they passed through Pisidia, and came to Pamphylia. 25 And when they had ⁶ spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia; 26 and thence they sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been ⁷ committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled. 27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they ⁸ rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and how that he had opened ⁹ a door of faith unto the Gentiles. 28 And they tarried no little time with the disciples.

1 They stoned Paul. "Once was I stoned" (2 Cor. xi. 25). How deeply this terrible act affected Paul can be gathered from his allusions to it (2 Tim. iii. 11).

2 Dragged him out of the city. The stoning therefore took place in the city.

3 Had made many disciples, among them Gaius of Derbe (xx. 4).

4 Many tribulations. None but a man fully persuaded could have held such language.

5 The Apostles were as careful in organising the newly-formed churches as they were zealous in preaching the Gospel.

6 This was on their return; on their going up they had not done so.

7 Committed refers to the solemn service in which a blessing on the mission had been invoked (xiii. 2-4).

8 Rehearsed all, i.e. recounted. The old, not the modern meaning of rehearse.

9 A door of faith. A favourite metaphor of Paul's. "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me" (1 Cor. xvi. 9). "A door was opened unto me of the Lord" (2 Cor. ii. 12).

"That God would open unto us a door of utterance" (Col. iv. 3). A door had been opened unto the Gentiles, and henceforth none could shut it. Their success in effectually calling the Gentiles is attributed to God.

V. 19.—**Jews.** The Jews of Antioch and Iconium act in concert. Those of Antioch travelled one hundred and thirty miles in order to thwart Paul in his work.

There need be no surprise at the sudden change. The fickleness of an ignorant population is proverbial. The Jewish accusers probably suggested that the Apostles were sorcerers or demons. For instances of the same change, note (1) the Jews towards our Lord, "Hosanna" into "Crucify Him" (Matt. xxi. 9. xxvii. 22); (2) The people of Melita towards Paul (xxviii. 6).

V. 20.—**Rose up.** The restoration seems miraculous. (1) How could one stoned and left for dead act as if nothing had befallen him? (2) On the morrow (v. 20) he journeyed to Derbe, a distance of twenty miles from Lystra. (3) St. Paul says of his stoning that "the Lord had delivered him" (2 Tim. iii. 11).

V. 21.—**Returned to Lystra, &c.** Though Paul was near the Cilician pass that led to Tarsus he preferred to retrace his steps that he might confirm by the imposition of hands those he had converted, and who had been baptized at his first visit.

Attalia. Intro., Geog. Notes. The Apostles on their voyage from Paphos had sailed up the river Cesthus and landed at Perga. On their return they go by land from Perga to the sea coast at Attalia, where there was more likelihood of finding a vessel in which they could sail into Syria.

V. 28.—**tarried no little time.** Probably about a year. Antioch was Paul's favourite centre, for here the Gentiles first formed a Church, and consequently here Paul found most sympathy with his special labours.

Council of Jerusalem.

And ¹certain men came
15 down ²from Judæa and taught
 the brethren, saying, Except
 ye be circumcised after the ³cus-
 tom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.
 2 And when Paul and Barnabas had
 no small dissension and questioning
 with them, *the brethren* ⁴appointed
 that Paul and Barnabas, and ⁵certain
 other of them, should ⁶go up to
 Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders
 about this question. 3 They there-
 fore, being ⁷brought on their way
 by the church, passed through both
⁸Phœnicia and Samaria, declaring the
 conversion of the Gentiles: and they
 caused great joy unto all the brethren.
 4 And when they were come to Jeru-
 salem, they were received of the church
 and the apostles and the elders, and

¹ Certain men, described (Gal. ii. 4) as "*jal e brethren unawares brought in.*"

² From Judæa. Thus claiming authority from the Apostles, and assuming to be delegates from the Church at Jerusalem.

³ Custom — what is enjoined by positive law. Circumcision was ordained by God with Abraham, and sanctioned by Moses as a national obligation.

⁴ Appointed. The Antioch Church formally deputed Paul and Barnabas to go up to Jerusalem.

⁵ Certain other. Among these was Titus (Gal. ii. 3).

⁶ Go up to Jerusalem. This is the journey alluded to in Gal. ii. 1. (See note p. 61).

⁷ Brought on their way, i.e. accompanied a short way on the journey by the elders of the Church at Antioch.

⁸ Phœnicia. Intro. Geog. Notes.

So the disciples at Tyre "*brought Paul on his way*" to Jerusalem (xxi. 5).

Conversion. Not found elsewhere in the N.T.

V. 4.—**They were received of the Church, &c.** Luke relates the public proceedings and omits all mention of the private proceedings at Jerusalem concerning the dispute. Paul on the contrary relates (Gal. ii.) the private side and omits all notice of the public side of the events. Taken together we get a complete account of the origin and conclusion of a controversy which was a matter of life and death to Paul's mission to the Gentiles.

they ⁹ rehearsed all things that God had done with them. 5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.

9 Rehearsed or recounted—told the story of. This was done at the preliminary meeting. See below.

The Council assembles.

6 And the apostles and the elders ¹ were gathered together to consider of this matter.

The Council consisted of (1) Apostles, (2) Elders, (3) the brethren or multitude (ver. 13).

1 Were gathered together. Formally and officially. The verb is in the passive voice, denoting that the assembly was authoritatively convened.

The Debate. Peter's Speech.

7 And when there had been much ¹ questioning, Peter rose up, and said unto them,

Brethren, ye know how that ^{2a} a good while ago God made choice ³ among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 and he ⁴ made no distinction between us and them, ⁵ cleansing their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why ⁶ tempt ye God, that ye should put a ⁸ yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, ⁹ in like manner as they.

1 i.e. many speeches made on both sides.

2 Good while ago. Ten or twelve years.

3 Peter alludes to the conversion of Cornelius (chap. x.).

4 God bestowed the Holy Ghost on the Gentiles, and thus put them on the same platform as the Jews.

5 What God hath cleansed, Peter had learnt not to call common.

6 Tempt ye God, by distrust- ing His guidance and disobeying His revealed will.

8 Yoke—the burden of fulfil- ling the Law.

9 In like manner as they. The alteration emphasises the truth that salvation must come through Christ's grace to the circumcised Jew, just as to the uncircumcised Gentile.

Yoke. The "law" which the Judaizers wished to

make binding upon the Gentiles. It would include (a) the ceremonial law of Moses, (b) the tradition of the Elders and Rabbinical additions, (c) the moral law, which, though of perpetual and universal obligation as a law of life, was, and is, an intolerable burden if its perfect observance is the condition of salvation.

* See from early days.

12 And all the multitude kept silence; and they hearkened unto Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

This visit of Paul to Jerusalem is the same as described in Galatians, chap. ii. ; for—

1. The situation is the same, viz., men from Jerusalem disturb the Gentile Christians at Antioch.
2. Their teaching is similar, viz., that the Gentiles must be circumcised.
3. An appeal to Jerusalem is resolved upon.
4. The Apostles, Barnabas and Paul, go from Antioch to Jerusalem, and return again to Antioch.
5. Paul and Barnabas are on one side, Peter and James on the other.
6. The cause of the controversy is the same, viz., whether the Gentiles should be circumcised.
7. The result is the same, viz., the authority of Paul was acknowledged, and circumcision was not forced on the Gentiles.

The discrepancies between the narratives can be easily accounted for, since Paul did his work in private conferences and he describes them, whilst Luke is writing for the whole Church and thus describes the general conference.

It is instructive to note the conduct of the chief actors in this Council in their subsequent treatment of its decrees.

1. Paul in his Epistles discusses the question of idol meats as a perfectly open question (1 Cor. viii.). To the Galatians, when alluding to the Council, he never once appeals to its decrees.
2. Peter at Antioch mingled freely at first with the uncircumcised, but after a while seemed to forget the decree of the Council, and fell back into his old scruples, declining to eat with the Gentiles (Gal. ii. 12). For this action he was openly rebuked by Paul (Gal. ii. 12, 14).
3. James continued to identify himself with the strict observers of the Mosaic law (Acts xxi. 23, 24), willing to facilitate intercourse between the Hebrew and Gentile Christians, but himself declining such intercourse.
4. Barnabas at Antioch was led away by the example of Peter into declining to eat with the Gentiles (Gal. ii. 13).

With Acts xv. compare Gal. ii. 1—14.

1 Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. 2 And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain. 3 But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4 and that because of the false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: 5 to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. 6 But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me: 7 but contrariwise, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision 8 (for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles); 9 and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; 10 only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned. 12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. 13 And the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation. 14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

The First Christian Council.

Where held. At Jerusalem.

Cause of meeting. Certain brethren, who came down from Judea to Antioch in Syria asserted that it was necessary that the Gentiles be circumcised (XV. 1). As they maintained that such was the view held by the Apostles at Jerusalem their statements caused much discussion at Antioch. The Church in that city therefore decided to appoint Paul and Barnabas with certain others to go up to Jerusalem to confer with the Apostles.

James sums up as President, and announces the Decision.

13 And after they had held their peace, ¹ James answered, saying,

Brethren, hearken unto me :

14 ² Symeon hath rehearsed how ³ first God did visit the Gentiles, to ⁴ take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets ; ⁵ as it is written,

16 After these things I will return,

And I will build again the ⁶ tabernacle of David, which is fallen ;

And I will build again the ruins thereof,

And I will set it up :

17 That the ⁷ residue of men may seek after the Lord,

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

18 Saith the Lord, ⁸ who maketh these things known from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore ⁹ my judgement is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles turn to God ;
20 but that we ¹⁰ write unto them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood.

21 For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath.

¹ James. Intro., p. vi.

² Symeon (the old form of Simon)

³ first, i.e. before Paul and Barnabas had preached to the Gentiles. Thus the question had already been decided.

⁴ To take out of them a people. Thus "the chosen people" were no longer to be Jews only, and if not Jews only what need for those ceremonial ordinances which had marked out the Jews as distinct from Gentiles ?

⁵ Amos (ix. 11, 12). The statements of the prophets agree with this purpose of God. Paul (Rom. xv. 9-12) quotes other prophets.

⁶ Tabernacle, or booth, used at the Feast of Tabernacles, made of tree branches, to remind the Jews of their dwelling in tents in the wilderness and of the protection of Jehovah. These ruined booths would be restored as the festival came round.

⁷ Residue of men. The tabernacle is restored by the nations seeking the Lord.

⁸ My judgement is. The tone of authority. James proposes a resolution, does not pronounce a decree.

⁹ Or, who teach these things which were known ¹⁰ Or, enjoin them

The Letter of the Council to the Christians at Antioch.

22 Then ¹ it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the ² whole church, to ³ choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, ⁴ Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

1 It seemed good. Indicative of an official announcement.

2 Whole church. The decision was unanimous.

3 This was necessary to give unmistakable authenticity to the decree. Had Paul and Barnabas alone been the bearers of the letter they might have been accused of forging it.

4 Judas and Silas. Intro., Biog. Notes.

Question in dispute. Was it necessary that Gentiles should be circumcised?

Order of events:—

1. A public reception by the Church at which Paul and Barnabas gave an account of their missionary work (xv. 4).
2. At the close of this reception the Pharisaical Christians emphatically asserted that the Gentile converts of Paul must be circumcised (xv. 5).
3. A private conference between Paul and the Apostles (Gal. ii. 2) at which—
 - (a) Paul's claims to Apostolic authority were acknowledged (Gal. ii. 7).
 - (b) Peter, James, and John seem to have accepted Paul's views and to have repudiated the ideas of the Judaizing Christians (Gal. ii. 8, 9, 10).
4. A Public conference (xv. 6, 7).

Constitution of the Council:—

1. The Apostles (verse 7).
2. The Elders (verse 7).
3. The Brethren and multitude (verse 12).

The Proceedings at the Council:—

1. A full discussion, speeches being made on both sides (xv. 7).
2. Peter speaks, and argues—
 - (a) That God had accepted Cornelius and his friends without circumcision (xv. 7).
 - (b) That the Holy Ghost had been given to Gentiles as freely and as fully as to Jews on the day of Pentecost. No difference whatever was made between these Gentiles and Jews (xv. 8, 9).
 - (c) God had purified the Gentiles by *faith*, not by law (xv. 9).
 - (d) To insist on the Gentiles keeping the ceremonial law was to tempt God, i.e. to distrust His guidance, and to disobey His commands (xv. 10).
 - (e) For the law could not purify. It had been found an intolerable yoke by the Jews (xv. 10).
 - (f) The Jews can find salvation only by the grace of God, not by the law. Jews and Gentiles need the same salvation (xv. 11).
3. Paul and Barnabas relate the miracles they had wrought amongst the Gentiles as a proof that their mission was sanctioned by God (xv. 12).
4. James sums up the discussion thus:—
 - (a) He agrees with Peter that God had, by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Cornelius and his household, received the Gentiles (xv. 14).
 - (b) This inclusion of the Gentiles in the Church had been God's purpose from the first (xv. 14).
 - (c) This purpose had been revealed in the prophets, for it had been foretold that the Gentiles would seek after God (xv. 15-17).
 - (d) God was now fulfilling His purpose. (We had expected Gentiles would be gathered in by becoming Jews, but God means that they should be fellow heirs) (xv. 18).
 - (e) Therefore we must not unnecessarily harass the Gentiles (xv. 19).
 - (f) But request them to abstain from four practices, viz.—
 - (1) Pollutions of idols, i.e. meats offered to idols (xv. 20, 21).
 - (2) Fornication.
 - (3) Things strangled.
 - (4) And from the use of blood in the matter of food.
 - (g) It is necessary to give these injunctions to the Gentiles but not to the Jews who, bearing the Law in their synagogues on the Sabbath, would have full knowledge of these restrictions (verse 21).

The Letter. Styled by Lightfoot not only "the charter of Gentile freedom but the assertion of the supremacy of the Gospel." It contains —

1. Kindly greeting from the Apostles to the Gentiles in the Churches in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia (verse 23).
2. Strongly expressed repudiation of the Judaizers who had disturbed those Churches (verse 24).
3. A full recognition of the authority of Paul and Barnabas and their position as Apostles equally with those of the circumcision (verses 25, 26).
4. A declaration that circumcision is not absolutely necessary to admission into the Church of God (verse 24).

23 and they wrote ⁵ thus by them, The apostles and the elder brethren unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting: 24 Forasmuch as we have heard that ⁶ certain ^a which went out from us have troubled you with words, ⁷ subverting your souls; ⁸ ⁹ to whom we gave no commandment; 25 it seemed good unto us, ¹⁰ having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with ¹² our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things ¹³ by word of mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ¹⁴ it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.

5 This is the earliest synodical letter in the Christian Church. It is styled by Lightfoot "the charter of Gentile freedom."

6 Certain which went out from us, i.e. the teachers mentioned in verse 1.

7 Subverting your souls. The Greek word means *turning upside down*, and implies great excitement and disturbance. The minds of the Gentiles had been completely unsettled.

8 R.V. omits *Ye must be circumcised and keep the law*. Probably a marginal explanation.

9 To whom we gave no commandment. A complete repudiation of the false teachers.

10 Lit. *Having become of one mind*, i.e. the decision was unanimous, not merely carried by a majority.

12 Our beloved Barnabas and Paul. Not Paul and Barnabas. The old official order is retained. There is no repudiation of the Apostles. On the contrary, they were to be honoured with all honour.

13 Another proof of scrupulous anxiety to guarantee the authenticity of the letter.

These necessary things, i.e. necessary for the age in which they lived; necessary for free social intercourse between Jew and Gentile: not necessary for salvation.

14 It shall be well with you (Howson), i.e. you shall be in a good state.

The four prohibitions, important in themselves, are not the chief points of the letter. The important points of the letter are:—

1. The strongly expressed disapproval of the Judaizers.
2. The commendation of Barnabas and Paul.
3. The exclusion of circumcision from the "necessary" things

4 Some ancient authorities — "which need not"

4. The rules are taken from the seven precepts of Noah, which were held to be binding on all mankind, while the Law was binding on Israel only.

- (a) "Blood" was forbidden to the Jews by the Levitical Law (Lev. iii. 17; xvii. 10-14), but among the Gentiles it was in various forms a delicacy
- (b) "Things strangled" were not used by the Jews because the blood was still in them.
- (c) "Meats offered to idols," the flesh of animals offered in sacrifices, a portion of which was eaten at the sacrificial feasts, and other parts were sometimes sold in open market.
- (d) "Fornication" the great sin of the Roman Empire, and one which the Jew was trained from his childhood to condemn severely.

It will be seen that all four injunctions were of a nature to facilitate intercourse between Jew and Gentile. The Jew had been trained to abstain rigorously from "blood," "things strangled," and from "meats offered to idols." To him fornication was a deadly sin. In Gentile society it was the custom at their entertainments to have meats from the neighbouring temples, and strangled fowls on the tables, and harlots among their guests. Manifestly such customs would render social intercourse with them impossible to a conscientious Hebrew. So the Gentile is required to make a sacrifice on these points in order to facilitate social intercourse, for it was essential to the Church's unity that the Hebrew and the Gentile converts should break bread, i.e. partake of the communion together.

- 5. A recommendation to the Gentiles to abstain from—
 - (a) Meats offered to idols.
 - (b) Blood.
 - (c) Things strangled.
 - (d) Fornication.

Seat of Pharisees which Believed.

Jewish Christians, who insisted that all Gentiles must be circumcised before they could be accepted as Christians.

They are styled by Paul as "*false brethren*." (Gal. ii. 4).

They are also known under the name of—

- (1) **Judaizers**, because they wished to impose Jewish ordinances on Gentile Christians.
- (2) "They of the circumcision" (xi. 2).

They were the bitter enemies of Paul.

- (a) **Doubting his claim to apostleship, and thus causing him to assert constantly his claims to that office, thus—**

- (1) "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1).
- (2) "Am I not free? am I not an Apostle? have I not seen Jesus our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?" (1 Cor. ix. 1).
- (3) "Have we not right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" (1 Cor. ix. 5).
- (4) "Need we, as do some, epistles of commendation?" (2 Cor. iii. 1).
- (5) "In everything commending ourselves, as ministers of God." (2 Cor. vi. 4).
- (6) "For I reckon that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles" (2 Cor. xi. 5).
- (7) "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more" (2 Cor. xi. 22, 23).
- (8) "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 11, 12).

- (b) **Sneering at his work.**

- (1) "For, his letters, they say, are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account" (2 Cor. x. 10).
- (2) "But though I be rude in speech, yet am I not in knowledge" (2 Cor. xi. 6).

- (c) Doing their utmost to thwart him in his work by preaching another Gospel.
- (1) "There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ" (Gal. i. 7).
- (3) "Ye were running well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" (Gal. v. 7).
- (4) "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised" (Gal. vi. 12).

Paul's Claims to Apostleship (see Gal. I. and II).

- i. The Gospel had been revealed to him by Jesus himself.
 "For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 12).
- ii. He had not been ordained by the Apostles. He was not an Apostle of secondary authority.
 "But when it was the good pleasure of God, who . . . called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me" (Gal. i. 15, 16, 17).

Reception of the Letter at Antioch.

30 So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle. 31 And when they had read it, they rejoiced for the ^{1a} consolation. 32 And Judas and Silas, being themselves also ² prophets, ^bexhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. 33 And after they had spent some time *there*, they were dismissed ³ in peace from the brethren unto those that had sent them forth. 35^o But Paul and Barnabas ⁴ tarried in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

1 **Consolation.** That the Gentiles were free from the yoke of Jewish observances. It is noteworthy as being delivered by Barnabas, the son of consolation.

2 **Prophets.** (See p. vii.)

3 **In peace.** Does not signify that they were allowed to go quietly away, but that they were dismissed with a blessing.

R.V. Omits verse 34. It may have been a marginal note to explain why Paul chose Silas (verse 40).

4 It is probable that the dispute between Peter and Paul, mentioned in Gal. ii. 11-13, occurred during this period.

A Second Missionary Journey proposed. Contention between Paul and Barnabas.

36 And after some days Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us return now and visit ¹ the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see* how they fare.

1 **Brethren in every city,** i.e. the converts in communion with the Christian Churches.

^a Or, *exhortation* ^b Or, *comforted* ^c Some ancient authorities insert, with variations, ver. 34. *But it seemed good unto Silas to abide there.*

37 And ² Barnabas was minded to take with them ³ John also, who was called Mark. 38 But Paul thought not good to take with them him ⁴ who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. 39 And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus; 40 but Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being ⁶ commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. 41 And ⁷ he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

² Barnabas was minded (Alford) = intended, had it in his mind.

³ John Mark. Intro. p. xliii.

⁴ See xiii. 13.

⁶ Commended. Apparently the Church at Antioch agreed with Paul, not with Barnabas.

⁷ He = St. Paul.

III. God had sealed his apostleship by granting miracles to be wrought by him.

"Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them" (Acts xv. 12).

IV. If Peter had founded Churches in Jerusalem, Samaria, Casarea, Joppa, etc., so he, Paul, had founded Churches in Antioch, Paphos, Iconium, Derbe, Lystra.

"For he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles" (Gal. ii. 8).

V. His claims were admitted by the Apostles at Jerusalem.

"Our beloved Barnabas and Paul—men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xv. 25, 26).

"James and Cephas, and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision;" (Gal. ii. 9).

Syria and Cilicia. The letter from the Church at Jerusalem was specially addressed to the Churches in these regions (verse 23). Probably this was the reason why Paul made his way northwards through these districts, and then by the Cilician gates, a pass in the Taurus range, to Derbe and Lystra.

The dispute. There were faults on both sides in this quarrel. It was natural for Barnabas to wish to have his nephew Mark with him, and, if Mark were willing to go, it would seem only charitable to give him another chance. The act thus was in accordance with the generous temperament of Barnabas. On the other hand, Paul would be naturally unwilling to risk the chance of Mark again abandoning the mission. The alienation was brief. Six years later Mark was Paul's fellow labourer and fellow prisoner.

Paul re-visits Derbe and Lystra, and chooses Timothy as a Companion.

16 I And he came also to ¹ Derbe and to ¹ Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named ² Timothy, the ³ son of a Jewess which believed; but his father was a ⁴ Greek. ² The same was ⁵ well

¹ Derbe, Lystra. Intro., Geog. Notes.

² Timothy. Intro., Biog. Notes.

³ Son of a Jewess. His mother's name was Eunice, and his grandmother's Lois (2 Tim. i. 5). They were both devout, and had trained Timothy in the Law (2 Tim. iii. 15).

⁴ A Greek, i.e. a Gentile by birth. He was probably a proselyte of the gate.

⁵ Well reported. So Cornelius (x. 27), Ananias (xxii. 12).

reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to 6 go forth with him ; and he took and 7 circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts : for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

scouted by his countrymen as an apostate, and would therefore have been of no assistance to Paul, but the circumcision of Titus would have been a surrender of Gentile liberty. Paul's views were " *that neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision* " (Gal. v. 6).

Paul visits Galatia.

4 And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the 1 decrees for to keep, which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem. 5 So the churches were 2 strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 And they went through the region of 3 Phrygia and 3 Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in 4 Asia ; 7 and when they were come over against 5 Mysia, they 7 assayed to go into 6 Bithynia ; and the 3 Spirit of Jesus suffered them not ; 8 and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

7 Assayed. Old English for essay—attempt.

8 Thus Jesus in Heaven directed the journeyings of the Apostle.
Troas. Intro., Geog. Notes.

6 Go forth. Replacing John Mark as Silas had replaced Barnabas.

7 Circumcised him. Why did Paul circumcise Timothy and not Titus ? Because the former was half a Jew (xvi. 1), and the latter a pure Greek (Gal. ii. 3). Timothy, unless circumcised, would have been

1 Decrees. The injunctions of the Assembly at Jerusalem (xv.) regarded by the Gentiles as the Magna Charta of their spiritual rights.

2 Confirmed in consequence of the removal of the barrier of circumcision to the Gentiles ; therefore the number of Christians increased.

3 Phrygia, Galatia. Intro., Geog. Notes. The only record of the visit to Galatia is found in the Epistle to the Galatians. Paul seems to have been detained in Galatia by an attack of illness.

4 Asia. Geog. Notes. Proconsular Asia. This district contained many important cities with large Jewish colonies, but Paul was not allowed to preach in them.

5 Mysia. Intro., Geog. Notes.

6 Bithynia. Intro., Geog. Notes.

The Apostles cross into Macedonia.

9 And a 1 vision appeared to Paul in the night ; There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10 And when he had seen the vision, straightway 2 we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding

1 For Visions see Intro. Apparances of Our Lord *et seq.*

2 We. The writer of the Acts now joins Paul. (See p. x.) Sought. Enquired how and when they could cross over into Europe.

Concluding. Paul accepted the vision as God's call to preach the Gospel to the West.

that God had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11 ⁵ Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis; 12 and from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the ⁹ first of the district, ¹⁰ a Roman colony: and we were in this city tarrying certain days.

5 The wind was favourable, and they crossed in two days. In chap. xx. 6, the voyage from Philippi to Troas takes five days.

9 First. Either as most important, or as being the first to which they came in the route by which they travelled. Neapolis was in Thrace.

10 A Roman colony differed from the modern in being essentially a military position and settlement of Roman citizens and soldiers, either in a conquered country with a view of maintaining Roman authority there, or on the frontiers of the empire for protection. Portions of the conquered territory were commonly assigned to veteran soldiers, and the settlements thus formed were considered integral parts of Rome, being, in the words of an ancient writer, "a miniature likeness of Rome." They used Roman coinage, spoke the Latin language, and their chief magistrates were sent out as appointed from the Mother city. Philippi was made a colony by Augustus after the defeat of Brutus and Cassius.

Preaching at Philippi. Conversion of Lydia.

13 And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a ¹ river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which were come together. 14 And a certain woman named ² Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of ³ Thyatira, ⁴ one that worshipped God, ⁵ heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, ⁶ to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul. 15 And when she was ⁷ 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 ⁸ constrained us.

1 Where the Jews were too few to build a synagogue they preferred a river bank from its quiet and convenience for their ceremonial ablutions. Such places were called *proseucha* or oratories.

River. The Gaugites.

2 Lydia. (Intro., Biog. Notes), who traded in purple dye or cloth dyed that colour.

3 Thyatira. (Intro., Geog. Notes.) was famous for its dyeing works, especially purple.

4 One that worshipped God. A Jewish proselyte.

5 Heard us. Became a hearer.

6 To give heed unto, and so become convinced of the truth.

7 Baptized. Her conversion was followed by the baptism of herself and her household, as (verse 33) "was the jailor and all his."

8 Constrained us. So the disciples at Eremus constrained our Lord. So ardent was her gratitude, so generous her hospitality, so pressing her entreaties that she would hear no "nay."

Paul casts out the Spirit of Divinations.

16 And it came to pass, as we were going to ²the place of prayer, that a certain maid having ^aa ⁷spirit of divination met us, which brought ⁸her masters much gain by sooth-saying. 17 The same following after Paul and us cried out, saying, These men are ^bservants of the ⁴Most High God, which proclaim unto you ^cthe way of salvation. 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, being ⁵sore troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to ⁶come out of her. And ⁶it came out that very hour.

patiently borne the crying out of the girl day after day, but at last was compelled to speak out.

⁶ Come out of her. Paul's proceedings resembled his Lord's in spirit and result.

⁷ Spirit = a Python; the name commonly applied by the Greeks to professed soothsayers or fortunetellers. It is derived from Python, the fabulous dragon, which originally held the cave of Delphi, and was killed by Apollo. He was the god of prophecy, and Greece consulted the priests of Delphi for oracles on critical occasions.

Paul Accused, Scourged, Imprisoned.

19 But when her masters saw that the hope of their ¹gain was ^dgone, they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the ⁴marketplace before the rulers, 20 and when they had brought them unto the ^{5a}magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, 21 and ⁶set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans. 22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the ⁶magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded ⁷to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them,

the Roman lictors. This must have been one of the beatings referred to (2 Cor. xi. 25). "Thrice was I beaten with rods."

^a Gr. a Spirit. ^b Gr. Python. ^c Gr. bondservants. ^d Or, a way. ^e Gr. come out. ^f Gr. Prætors.

² To the place of prayer. The article makes it clear that the *proseuchæ* or oratory is intended (note v. 17).

³ Her masters. The girl was a slave. She was troubled with some kind of hysteria. Her masters traded on her supposed inspiration, and persuaded the people to resort to her with their questions.

⁴ Most High God. A wonderful testimony from a hostile witness: for every Greek thought the girl inspired by Apollo. Compare the witness of the evil spirit cast out by Jesus at Capernaum (Mark i. 24).

⁵ Sore troubled, i.e. thoroughly worn out by annoyance. Paul had

but at last was compelled to

come out of her.

Paul's proceedings resembled his Lord's in spirit and result.

Spirit = a Python; the name commonly applied by the Greeks to professed soothsayers or fortunetellers. It is derived from Python, the fabulous dragon, which originally held the cave of Delphi, and was killed by Apollo. He was the god of prophecy, and Greece consulted the priests of Delphi for oracles on critical occasions.

¹ Gain. This, the first case of heathen persecution arises from love of money.

⁴ Marketplace. Gk., *agora*, Lat., *forum*, the place of general concourse.

⁵ Magistrates, Gk., *strategoi*, Lat., *Duumviri*, or prætors, who formed the executive of a Roman colony.

⁶ set forth = make proclamation of. The Apostles had committed a twofold offence (1) as being Jews they were not complying with the decree of Claudius banishing all Jews from Rome [Rome would include Roman colonies like Philippi]; (2) teaching a new religion to Romans. Whilst Rome tolerated the religions of the nations they conquered, it sternly prohibited Romans abjuring their own religion for another.

⁷ Beat them, the fæces of

they ⁸ cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: 24 who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the ⁹ stocks.

feet only were fastened, the rest of the body lying on the ground.

⁸ V. 24. cast, significant of the position of the inner prison, probably a foul dungeon underground.

⁹ Stocks. A wooden frame with five holes, into which head, feet, and arms were thrust. Here, however, the

Conversion of the Jailor at Philippi.

25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them; 26 and suddenly there was a ³ great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed. 27 And the jailor being roused out of sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword, and ⁶ was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 And he called for lights, and ⁹ sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 and brought them out, and said, ¹⁰ Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. 32 And they ¹¹ spake the word of ^a the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. 34 And he brought them up into his house, and set ¹² meat before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, ^c having believed in God.

³ Great earthquake, so violent as to throw open the doors of the prison and loosen the staples in the walls to which the prisoners' chains were attached. N.B. The time and place were noted for violent earthquakes.

⁶ Was about to kill himself. According to a Roman custom a prison-keeper answered for his prisoners with his life (see xii. 19, where Herod put the guards of Peter to death: also, xxvii. 42, where the Roman soldiers would have killed the prisoners to prevent their escape). Suicide under such circumstances would be considered an honourable death: for example, the suicide of Cato.

⁹ Sprang in—leapt down, i.e. into the underground cell of the inner prison. The prisoners of the jailor are now his Lords.

¹⁰ Sirs. Gk. *Kyroi*—Lords, an honourable title. Paul points out that salvation can be obtained by belief in the Lord Jesus.

¹¹ Spake the word, etc., i.e. explained what "belief in the Lord Jesus Christ" implied.

¹² Meat—food.

^a Some ancient authorities read God. ^b Gr. a table. ^c Or, having believed God

Special mention is made of three converts at Philippi.

- (1) Lydia, a native of Asia, evidently a woman of wealth and influence.
- (2) The Slave-girl, possessed of a spirit of divination.
- (3) The Jailor, of a low class, only such being found willing to accept so degrading an office.

Hanson points out "that Philippi is famous in the annals of suicide." Brutus and Cassius both committed suicide there after their final defeat at the battle of Philip.

Release of the Apostles. Paul claims the rights of a Roman citizen.

35 But when it was day, the ^{1a} magistrates sent the ^{2b} serjeants, saying, Let those men go. 36 And the jailor reported the words to Paul, saying, The ^a magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore ³ come forth, and go in peace. 37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us ⁴ publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? nay verily; but let ⁵ them come themselves and bring us out. 38 And the ^b serjeants reported these words unto the ^a magistrates: and ⁷ they feared, when they heard that they were Romans; 39 and they came and besought them; and when they had brought them out, they asked them to go away from the city. 40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they ^c comforted them, and departed.

1 The magistrates (praetors) sent the serjeants (licitors): evidently the magistrates, in imprisoning the Apostles, intended to keep them safe for the night, and then to expel them from the city.

2 Licitors, attendants of Roman governors. They carried fasces, or bundles of rods, bound with leather thongs; when scourging a criminal they unbound the fasces, and, having used the leather thongs to bind the prisoner, beat him with the rods.

3 Paul and Silas had evidently returned to the prison.

4 i.e. at the palus or the public whipping-post.

5 Them = The licitors.

7 They feared. Why? Because so to treat a Roman citizen without trial was high treason, punishable with death and confiscation of property. Cicero in his Verrine orations declares that "to bind a Roman citizen is a misdeed, to scourge him is a crime, to put him to death is almost a parricide," and dilates on the power of the magic words "Civis Romanus sum" (I am a Roman citizen).

The house of Lydia. Paul goes there for three reasons—(1) a determination not to leave the city secretly, but to compel the magistrates to confess the illegality of their action; (2) to rest there till they were fit to travel farther; (3) to comfort and exhort the disciples.

Paul alludes to his sufferings at Philippi in his Epistles, as follows: "and *be:en shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi*" (1 Thess. ii. 2).

"Because to you it hath been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer in his behalf: having the same conflict which ye saw in me," (Phil. i. 29, 30).

Paul claimed his right of Roman citizenship on three occasions.

- (1) At Philippi (xvi. 37).
- (2) At Jerusalem, where the chief captain would examine him by scourging (xxii. 24).
- (3) When before Festus he appealed unto Caesar (xxv. 10, 11).

ANALYTICAL COMMENTS ON THE TEXT.

A.V. An upper room. R.V. **The upper chamber.** (i. 13.)

The "article" in the original denotes that the chamber was a well known room. According to tradition it was the same room in which our Lord partook of the Last Supper with His disciples (St. Mark xiv. 15), and was in the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark. The same Greek word is translated "chamber" (ix. 37, xx. 8).

A.V. "Disciples." R.V. **Brethren.** (i. 15.)

A.V. follows the reading *μαθητῶν* = disciples.

R.V. adopts *ἀδελφῶν* = brethren. After the Ascension the followers of our Lord are known and addressed as "*the brethren*," not "*the disciples*." Their Master, to whom they had been "*disciples*," had ascended into Heaven, so they now recognize their relationship to each other as "*brethren*."

A.V. Purchased. R.V. **Obtained.** (i. 18.)

To acquire or obtain is the Old English sense of the word "*purchase*."

Gk. *ἐκτήσατο*, *lit.* "acquired."

Thus we get a clear idea of what actually occurred. Judas threw down in the Temple the money, which he had received from the priests as the price of the betrayal of Jesus. With this money the priests purchased "*the potter's field*." So Judas may be said to have "obtained the field with the reward of iniquity."

A.V. Ordained. R.V. **Become.** (i. 22.)

Gk. *γενέσθαι*. Vulgate *feri* = to become.

"Ordained" has now a special ecclesiastical meaning. The R.V. avoids confusion.

A.V. "Cloven tongues." R.V. **Tongues parting asunder.** (ii. 3.)

Gk. *διαμεριζόμενοι* = dividing or parting themselves off; or as R.V. (margin) distributing themselves.

Vulgate *dispertita lingua* = distributed tongues.

The A.V. implies that each tongue was divided into two or more. The R.V. correctly described what took place. The tongues, appearing like flames, distributed themselves throughout the assembly, with the result that "it (i.e. a tongue) sat upon each of them."

A.V. "Now when this was noised abroad." (ii. 6.)

R.V. **And when this sound was heard.**

The Gk. *φωνή* in the N.T. never has the sense of "a report" or "a rumour" as translated by the A.V.

Instances of its use are :—

"In Rama was there a voice heard" (St. Matt. ii. 18.)

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness" (St. Mark i. 3).

"There came a voice from heaven" (St. Mark i. 11).

"Behold a voice out of the cloud" (St. Matt. xvii. 5).

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" (St. Matt. xxvii. 50).

Thus it was "a sound" that was heard.

"The sound" may have been either the noise of the mighty wind or the voices of the Apostles speaking in other tongues.

A.V. Strangers of Rome. R.V. **Sojourners from Rome.** (ii. 10.)

Gk. *οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες Ῥωμαῖοι* = the sojourning Romans, i.e. the Jews who lived at Rome as sojourners, and were now present at Jerusalem for the Pentecostal feast.

A.V. Pains. V.R. **Pangs.** (ii. 24.)

Gk. *ὥδινας* = birth pangs. "The two periods ('this age,' 'the age to come') were sharply distinguished. But the New was significantly regarded as the child of the Old, and the passage from the one to the other was habitually presented as a new birth" (*Westcott*).

The word is significant in this passage as denoting that the death of Christ was the life of the world.

A.V. "Doctrine." R.V. **Teaching.** (ii. 42, v. 28, xiii. 12, xvii. 19.)

διδάχνη = teaching, not "doctrine" in the modern sense of a definite system or canon of the faith.

A.V. "Daily such as should be saved." (ii. 47.)

R.V. **Day by day those that were being saved.**

Gk. *τοὺς σωζομένους* (present participle) = those who were being saved, *i.e.* those who were putting themselves in the way of salvation. The A.V. is taken from the Vulgate *qui salvi fient*.
The doctrinal point in the change is obvious.

A.V. This. R.V. **This man.** (iii. 12.)

The A.V. expresses the people as marvelling at *this thing*, *i.e.* what has happened to the man: the R.V. represents them as marvelling at the man whom they see walking, and also agrees with "this man" later in the verse.

A.V. Forgiveness of sins. R.V. **Remission of sins.** (v. 31.)

Gk. *ἄφεις* = a letting go, setting free, discharge or remission. It is translated "remission" in A.V. (Acts ii. 38), and should be so rendered throughout.

A.V. Took counsel. R.V. **Were minded.** (v. 33.)

The A.V. adopts the reading *ἐβουλεύοντο* = to take counsel. The R.V. adopts *ἐβούλοντο* = to wish, to be willing. This alteration in reading is the cause of many changes in the R.V.

A.V. Taxing. R.V. **Enrolment.** (v. 37.)

Gk. *ἀπογράφη* denotes an enrolment of names for the purpose of ascertaining the population of the empire, and not necessarily accompanied by the imposition of a tax.

A.V. In every house. R.V. **At home.** (v. 42.)

A.V. Grecians. R.V. **Grecian Jews.** (vi. 1.)

The Gospel was preached to three classes.

- (1) Hebrews, *i.e.*, home Jews, Jews born in Palestine, speaking Aramaic, a dialect of Hebrew.
- (2) Foreign Jews, or Jews of the Dispersion, Jews born and bred in foreign countries, and speaking Greek, called in the A.V. Grecians, in the R.V. **Grecian Jews.**
- (3) Gentiles, sometimes natives of Greece, styled in A.V. and R.V. **Greeks.**

It is important to keep the distinction between Grecians or foreign Jews, and Greeks or Gentiles. The student is apt to forget that by the Grecians of the A.V. is meant foreign Jews speaking Greek.

The R.V. by uniformly translating **Grecian Jews** makes the distinction clear.

A.V. Kindred. R.V. **Race.** (vii. 13.)

A.V. Was made known. R.V. **Became manifest.** (vii. 13.)

Gk. *γένος* = race, descent, and hence "a nation."

Gk. *φάνερον* = plain, manifest.

The A.V. might lead us to understand that Joseph's relatives were presented to Pharaoh, and that the Egyptian king thus became acquainted with them.

The R.V. makes clear what actually took place, viz., that the arrival of Joseph's brethren revealed his nationality. He was now known to be a Hebrew or Israelite.

A.V. Preached Christ. R.V. **Proclaimed Jesus.** (ix. 21.)

Preached (as shown in Note p. 159) is best rendered "proclaimed." Jesus. The R.V. follows the reading adopted by the latest critics (*Jesus for Christ*).

The R.V. gives what Saul actually did. In the synagogues he repeatedly proclaimed that Jesus of Nazareth was *the* Christ, the Messiah, the promised Prophet, Priest, and King of Israel, foretold in the Old Testament.

A.V. "Their laying await was known of Saul." (ix. 24.)

R.V. **Their plot became known to Saul.**

Laying await,—the simple meaning of the Greek is conspiracy or plot. The R.V. denotes that this plot was made known to Saul either by report or divine communication.

A.V. By the wall. R.V. **Through the wall.** (ix. 25.)

A.V. In a basket. R.V. **Lowering him in a basket.** (ix. 25.)

The R.V. translates the original closely and describes the exact occurrences. His friends let Paul down through the window of a house built on the city wall, placing him in a basket which they lowered by means of a rope. Thus the Apostle escaped the notice of the Jews, who were closely watching the gates of the city.

A.V. Nothing doubting. R.V. **Making no distinction.** (xi. 12.)

Making no distinction, *i.e.* making no difference between Jew and Gentile, but treating both exactly alike. The alteration is due to a change in the Voice of the Greek verb.

The Middle Voice (as in A.V.)=*to doubt or hesitate.*

The Active Voice (as in R.V.)=*to separate, divide,—to make a distinction.*

A.V. Departed unto Seleucia. (xiii. 4.)

R.V. **Went down to Seleucia.**

Gk. *κατηλθον*, which always implies going down from an inland place to the sea. The R.V. correctly describes the Apostles as going down the river Orontes from Antioch to Seleucia, the port at the mouth of the river.

A.V. A prudent man. R.V. **A man of understanding.** (xiii. 7.)

In the original a person of understanding and intelligence is meant; an idea not conveyed in the modern signification of "prudent."

(1) A.V. Subtilty. R.V. **Guile.** (xiii. 10.)

The original implies deceit, an idea not necessarily conveyed in "subtilty" as in A.V.

(2) A.V. Mischief. R.V. **Villainy.**

The original signifies a readiness for mischief of any kind.

(3) A.V. Child of the devil. R.V. **Son of the devil.**

Sonship is implied in the original. *υιος* =son.

A.V. Whom think ye? R.V. **What suppose ye?**

A change of text from masculine to neuter accounts for the substitution of *that* for *whom*. The original verb means "to make a guess at," the R.V. represents this.

A.V. "The devout and honourable women." (xiii. 50.)

R.V. **Devout women of honourable estate.**

A change of reading omitting the conjunction brings out that there was only one class of the women. Honourable refers to their social position or rank.

Thus the R.V. expresses clearly that the Jews persuaded the devout ladies of high social position in Antioch to use their influence against the Apostles (see note p. 66.)

A.V. "And had taught many." (xiv. 21.)

R.V. **And had made many disciples.**

The literal meaning of the Greek is "*had disciplined many*," i.e., they had not merely taught, but this teaching had taken effect, and they "*had made many disciples.*"

A.V. Ordained them elders. (xiv. 21.)

R.V. **Appointed for them elders.**

The R.V. brings out the literal meaning of the Greek, i.e., *to elect by show of hands*, not *to ordain by the laying on of hands*. The imposition of hands is an ecclesiastical usage of the word long posterior to apostolic times.

A.V. Sentence. R.V. **Judgment.** (xv. 19.)

Lit. I judge (*L. censeo*). The A.V. implies a judicial decree. The decree (xvi. 4) was the decree of the whole Council. The Greek phrase is a common formula signifying an expression of individual opinion. The R.V. makes it clear that James is impressing his own "judgment," not the "sentence" or "decision" of the Council.

A.V. Loosing. R.V. **Setting Sail.** (xvi. 11.)

The Gk. means "having sailed" or "put to sea."

A.V. We came with a straight course. R.V. **We made a straight course.**

The R.V. makes it clear that they had a straight run across, sailing before the wind, without tacking.

A.V. "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.** (xvi. 12.)

The Gk. *πρώτη* may mean that Philippi was either *the chief city of the district*, or *the first city they came to*. The A.V. gives the same double meaning in the English colony. St. Luke uses the Latin word *colonia*, thus clearly indicating that Philippi was a Roman colony. The R.V. preserves the distinction, most necessary because at the period there were also many Greek colonies, distinct in their nature and government from Roman colonies.

A.V. " Where prayer was wont to be made." (xvi. 13.)

R.V. **We supposed there was a place of prayer.**

The Gk. may mean either (1) *prayer*, or (2) a *prayer-house*, the latter the more probable as the article is prefixed in v. 16. - The R.V. adopts this view. A place for prayer, or *proseuche*, was generally established in any Jewish community not sufficiently numerous or wealthy to build a synagogue (see note p. 79).

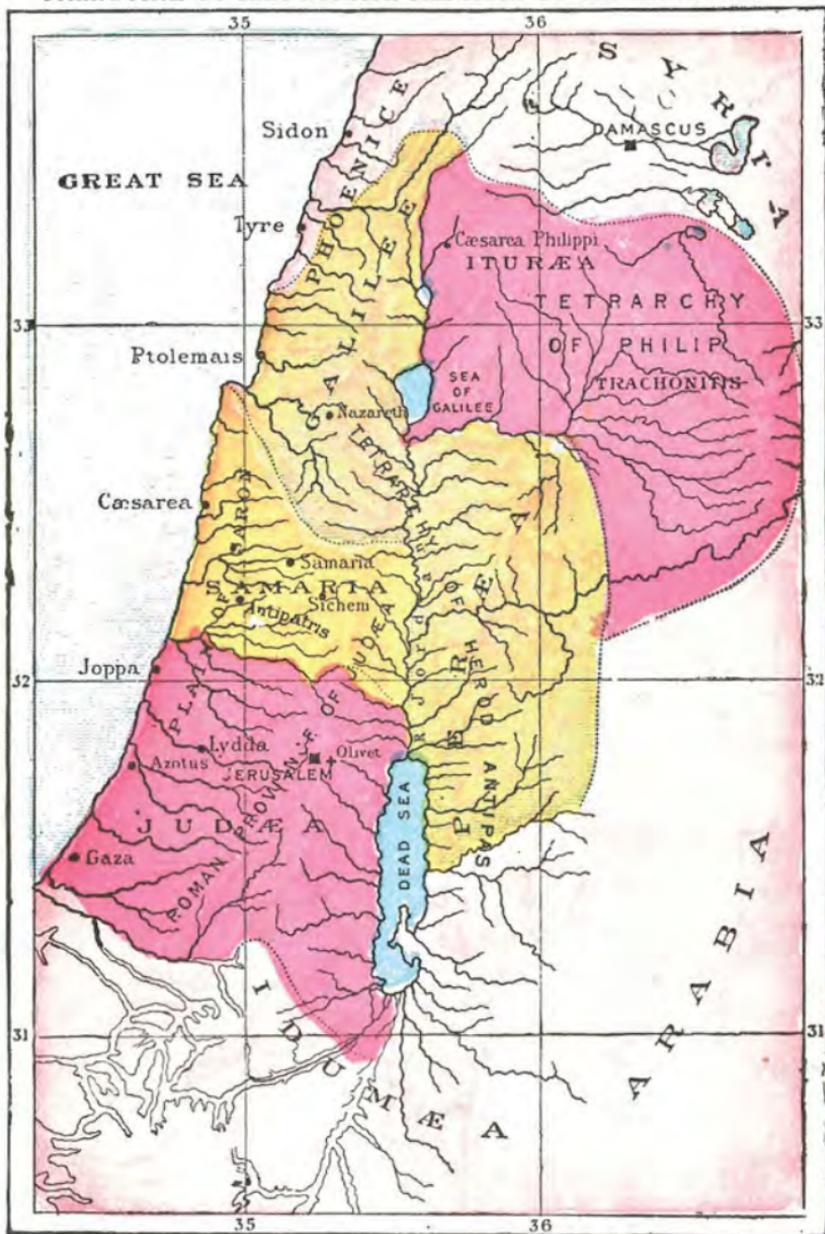
A.V. Openly. R.V. **publicly.** (xvi. 37.)

The Gk. here is very clear. The Apostles had been publicly whipped at the *palus* or public whipping post.

A.V. Being Romans. R.V. **Men that are Romans.**

The R.V. gives the literal rendering of the Greek, and brings out strongly the nature of the indignity. It was unlawful to scourge a Roman citizen save after condemnation by lawful trial.

PALESTINE TO ILLUSTRATE THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES .



CRITICAL NOTES.

The MSS. of the New Testament. About one thousand in number, of which not more than thirty are complete copies.

These MSS. are of two kinds—

-Uncial, so called from being written in *uncial* or large capital letters. These are the more ancient MSS.

Cursive, so called from being written in a *cursive* or running hand, are of a much later date, ranging from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries.

The five oldest Uncial MSS. are :

1. *CODEX SINAITICUS*, discovered by Tischendorf in the convent of Mount Sinai in 1859 ; now at St. Petersburg. It is assigned to the fourth century.
2. *CODEX VATICANUS*, in the Vatican Library at Rome. Assigned to the fourth century. Some of the Epistles and the Apocalypse are wanting.
3. *CODEX ALEXANDRINUS*, presented to King Charles I. by the Patriarch of Constantinople, and now in the British Museum.
4. *CODEX EPHRAEMI*, in the National Library at Paris.
5. *CODEX BEZÆ*, in the Cambridge University Library, having been presented by the great Swiss critic, Beza, in 1581.

Versions.

The two most important ancient Versions are—

1. *THE LATIN VULGATE*, a revision made by St. Jerome of already existing Latin Versions, about A.D. 384.
2. *THE SYRAIC VERSION*, known also as *Peshito* or simple. It is generally admitted that a Version of the New Testament in Syriac existed in the second century.

Translations.

1. *WYCLIF'S*: from the Vulgate. The New Testament was finished and published in 1381, and a second edition revised by Purvey was published in 1388.
2. *TYNDALE'S*, first published in 1526.
3. *CRANMER'S*, or the Great Bible, a revision of Tyndale's with the aid of the Vulgate, and the work of Coverdale, published in 1538.
4. *THE BISHOP'S BIBLE*; a revision of the Great Bible: published in 1568.
5. *GENEVA BIBLE*, printed at Geneva by the Reformers, who had taken refuge in that city from the Marian persecution, first published in 1557.
6. *THE RHEMISH VERSION*—or the Rheims and Douay Version.

The New Testament was published "in the English College of Rheims" in 1582.

The Old Testament was published at Douay, in Flanders in 1610.

Authorities.

(Quoted in these notes and referred to by the accompanying letters.)

For the Greek text—

The Greek Testament: Dean Alford (1856)—(A).

The Greek Testament: Bishop Wordsworth—(W).

The Greek Testament: Tischendorf (1876)—(T).

The New Testament in the Original Greek: Text revised by Westcott & Hort (1885)—(WH).

Greek Testament: Scrivener (1881)—(S).

Greek Testament: Palmer (1881)—(P).

These authorities are quoted and referred to in preference to giving the original MSS. authority.

Translations and Commentators.

(Quoted in these Notes and referred to by the accompanying letter.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| (a) Alford: New Testament for English Readers (1863). | (s) Murdoch: Translation of Syriac Testament (1879). |
| (b) Alford: Greek Testament (1854). | (t) Newberry: English-Greek Testament. |
| (c) Alexander (1879). | (u) Norris (1880). |
| (d) Barnes: Notes on Acts (1860). | (v) Noyes (1869). |
| (e) Bowes: Translation of the Greek Testament (1870). | (w) Patrick (1842). |
| (f) Calvin: Commentaries (1534) | (x) Rheims (1582). |
| (g) Cheyne: Various Renderings (1876). | (y) Rotherham (1872). |
| (h) Cranmer's Bible (1539). | (z) Scarlett (1798). |
| (i) Davidson: New Testament (1875). | (aa) Schaff (1879). |
| (j) Douay (1610). | (bb) Sharpe (1844). |
| (k) Ellicott: New Testament. | (cc) H. Smith: Acts (1879). |
| (l) Geneva Bible (1557). | (dd) J. II. Smith (1884). |
| (m) Walsham How (1872). | (ee) Speaker's Commentary (1880) |
| (n) Highton: Translation (1866) | (ff) Trollope: Notes (1847). |
| (o) Haweis, Translation (1795). | (gg) Wordsworth: Greek Testament. |
| (p) Lightfoot: Fresh Revision of New Testament (1871). | (hh) Tyndale: Bible (1534). |
| (q) McClellan: New Translation (1875). | (ii) Wakefield: New Testament (1791). |
| (r) Morrish: New Testament (1871). | (jj) Westcott: Notes on the Revised Version (1887). |
| | (kk) Wyclif (1381). |
| | (ll) Newcome: New Testament (1808). |
| | (mm) Ainslie: New Testament (1869). |
| | (nn) Howson (1856). |

CRITICAL NOTES.

- I. 2. *Had given* (A.V.) commandments—(R.V.) **commandment** (f, i, x, bb).
- Gk. ἐντειλάμενος = to enjoin, command. Our Lord gave His Apostles a commission to preach the Gospel, but did not give them specific rules.
- I. 3. (A.V.) Being seen—(R.V.) **appearing unto** (c, g, h, l, m, x, aa, ee, ff, hh, kk).
- Gk. ὀπτάμενος is frequentative, denoting " *appearing from time to time.*"
- Vulgate *apparens eis* = appearing unto them.
- Forty days—**by the space of forty days** (f, g, i, l, cc).
- Gk. διὰ ἡμερῶν τεσσαράκοντα. διὰ with genitive (of time) = during.
- I. 7. A.V. *In his own power*—R.V. **authority** (a, c, d, i, h, m, o, u, v, ee, gg).
- Gk. ἐξούσια = authority. The word translated power (v. 8) is δύναμις.
- I. 20. A.V. Bishoprick—R.V. **Office** (c, g, h, q, t, aa, cc, ee, ll).
- Gk. τὴν ἐπισκοπήν = "overseer," the literal meaning of "bishop." The present ecclesiastical sense of the word "bishop" suggests an idea foreign to the passage. The translation *office* or *charge* is free from this ambiguity.
- II. 2. A.V. As of a rushing mighty wind—R.V. " **as of the rushing of a mighty wind** " (h, j, bb, hh, ii).
- Gk. ὡσπερ φερομένης πνοῆς βιαίας. The participle is passive, meaning borne or carried, *i.e.* as if a violent gust was being borne along, impelled by a superior power; an idea not suggested by the active participle "rushing" of the A.V., which represents the wind as the active agent.
- II. 14. (A.V.) "Peter lifted up his voice and said," may be better translated (R.V.) " **spake forth unto them** " (c, n, r).
- Gk. ἀπεφθέξατο = to speak out loudly and clearly, and is so translated in A.V., xxvi. 25, " *But speak forth the words of truth and soberness.*"

- II. 26. A.V. Rest—R.V. **Dwell** (*g, v, bb, ii*).

Gk. *κατακηνώσει* = to pitch a tent, encamp, and there sojourn for a time. The same word is translated lodge (St. Matt. xiii. 32). "*The birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.*"

- II. 31. A.V. That his soul was not left in hell—R.V. "**Neither was he left in Hades**" (*i, q, u, x, aa, kk*).

The best MSS. (A.) leave out *ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ* (his soul) and substitute *οὔτε* (neither for) *οὐκ* (not).

- III. 13. A.V. His son Jesus. Son *should* be R.V. **Servant** (*a, g, i, k, q, t, u, aa, bb, cc, ee, gg, ll*).

The Greek is *παῖς*, which can be rendered "son" or "servant."

The usual word for son is *υἱός*.

The phrase "servant" is specially applied to the Messiah (Is. xlii. 1).

Also to Israel, "*He hath holpen his servant Israel*" (St. Luke i. 54)

To David, "*The house of his servant David*" (St. Luke i. 69).

"*Who by the mouth of thy servant David*" (Acts iv. 25).

To Moses, "*Moses his servant*" (Josh. i. 1).

Our Lord came to do His Father's will, and so the Messiah was emphatically "the servant" of God.

So iv. 27. Holy child.

And iv. 30. Child *should* be **servant**, for the same reason.

- III. 18. A.V. That Christ should suffer. Christ = R.V. **His Christ** (*a, g, i, q, u, x, aa, ee, ff, gg, kk*).

The best MSS. give *τὸν χριστὸν αὐτοῦ* = His Christ.

- III. 19. A.V. And be converted—R.V. **And turn again** (*a, c, i, k, l, aa, hh, ii*).

The Greek verb is active, and literally means "*to turn.*"

- IV. 2. A.V. Preached—R.V. **Proclaimed** (*v*).

The Greek word is *καταγγέλλειν*, which means simply to announce or proclaim.

Preach has now a special signification, and does not convey the exact sense of the Greek.

Render **proclaim** for *preach* (passim).

IV. 18. A.V. Commanded—R.V. **charged** (*j, o, x, ii*).

Gk. *παρηγγειλαν* signifies a peremptory command.

So V. 28. Command = **charge** (*ff*).

And V. 40. Commanded = **charged** (*j, x, ii*).

And XV. 5. Command = **charge**.

IV. 25. Here are two very different readings.

(1) ὁ διὰ στόματος Δαβὶδ τοῦ παιδὸς σοῦ = By the mouth of thy servant David (A.V.).

(2) ὁ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν δια πνεύματος Ἁγίου στόματος Δαβὶδ παιδὸς σου (A, T, WH, S, P), = who by the Holy Ghost by the mouth of our father David, thy servant (*a, g, h, i, j, k, u, x, aa, kk*).

VII. 17. A.V. Had sworn—R.V. **vouchsafed** (*j, g, aa*).

Two readings (1) ὥμοσεν = sworn (as in A.V.).

(2) ὠμολόγησεν (*g, j, aa*), (A, W, T, WH, S, P) = promised or vouchsafed.

IX. 2. A.V. Of this way—R.V. **of the Way** (*a, c, g, i, k, q, aa, bb, cc, ee, gg*).

Gk. τῆς ὁδοῦ, *lit.*, of the way, *i.e.* the new way, the way of salvation.

IX. 7. A.V. Hearing a voice—R.V. **the voice** (*a, i, q, v, x, aa, bb, ee, gg*).

Gk. τῆς φωνῆς, *lit.*, the voice—denoting the voice which had spoken to Saul.

IX. 8. A.V. Saw no man—R.V. **saw nothing** (*g, i, j, q, u, v, x, aa, ee, gg*).
Two readings.

(1) οὐδένα ἑβλεπε (masculine) = saw no man.

(2) οὐδὲν ἑβλεπε (neuter) (W) = saw nothing.

The latter translation shews how complete was the blindness.

IX. 31. A.V. The Churches—R.V. **the Church** (*a, g, i, j, k, q, t, u, v, x, aa, ee, kk*).

The best supported reading (A, W, T, WH, S, P) gives the noun in the singular.

X. 35. A.V. Accepted with him—R.V. **acceptable to him** (*c, i, j, o, q, u, v, x, aa, bb, cc, ee, gg*).

Gk. δεκτός, a verbal adjective represented in English by the termination—*ble*.

A.V. follows the Vulgate *acceptus* = accepted.

- X. 40. A.V. Shewed him openly—R.V. **gave him to be made manifest** (*a, c, d, i, j, q, t, v, x, ee*).

The strict translation of the Greek is, *and gave him (i.e. caused or suffered him) to be (or to be come) visible (apparent, manifest) (Alexander)*.

Jesus was not openly shewn to all people, but He was made manifest, or became visible, to His disciples on many occasions.

- XI. 20. A.V. Spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

A.V. Grecians—R.V. **Greeks** (*e, h, i, j, q, u, v, x, aa, bb, ee, hh, kk*).

The A.V. follows the reading Ἑλληνιστάς = Grecians or Grecian Jews.

The best MSS. give Ἕλληνας (A, T, S, P) = Greeks.

Greeks is preferable not only because of the weight of authority in the MSS., but also because it gives the true rendering of what took place.

That the Gospel should be preached to Grecian Jews would create no surprise, for it had always been preached to them, even dating from the Day of Pentecost. But that the good tidings should be proclaimed to the Greeks or Gentiles was an unprecedented event, and of such momentous issue that the Apostles at Jerusalem deemed it necessary to send Barnabas on a special mission to Antioch.

- XI. 19. A.V. Persecution—R.V. **Tribulation** (*f, t, x, ee, kk*).

Gk. θλίψεως is literally *affliction* or *distress*.

- XIII. 13. A.V. Loosed from Paphos. A.V. "loosed" should be "set sail" (*c, j, q, aa, ff*).

Gk. ἀνάχθεντες, a technical nautical term = "were carried up" from the shore to the sea.

- XIII. 19. A.V. He divided their land to them by lot. And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years; or R.V. **He gave them their land for an inheritance for about four hundred and fifty years, and after these things he gave them judges** (*c, f, g, i, j, k, o, u, aa*).

- (1) Gk. *κατεκληροδότησεν αὐτοῖς*=divided by lot to them.
 (2) Gk. *κατεκληρονόμησεν* (A, W, T, WH, S, P)=to inherit, obtain by inheritance.

There is also another change of text by a transposition of *καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα*="and after these things." The A.V. presents a discrepancy between the statement of St. Paul and the chronology of the Old Testament as to the space of time from the Exodus to the days of Samuel. The change of text gives a translation which removes this discrepancy.

- XIII. 43. A.V. Congregation R.V. **Synagogue** (*c, f, i, j, k, o, s, v, x, aa, bb, ii, hh*).

Synagogue is the literal translation of the Greek.

- XIV. 14. A.V. They rent their clothes and ran in. R.V. **rent their garments and sprang forth** (*i, o, v, w, ll*).

Clothes=the *abba* or long outer cloke, best rendered "garment."
 Two readings of the Greek Text

εἰσεπήδησαν=sprang in ;

ἔξεπήδησαν (A, W, T, WH, S, P)=sprang forth.

- XIV. 26. A.V. Recommended. R.V. **committed** (*c, h, j, ii*).

A more appropriate word. We may recommend a man to the favourable notice of another man ; but we commit a man to God's care or favour.

- XV. 10. A.V. *Why tempt ye God to put a yoke.* R.V. **that ye should put a yoke** (*q, hh*).

The A.V. has followed the Vulgate *imponere jugum*=to put a yoke but this is not the true rendering of the Greek infinitive, which implies not that they tempted God to do it, but that they tempted Him by doing it themselves.

- XV. 17. A.V. Who doeth all these things. R.V. **who maketh these things known** (*u, g, u, v*).

Two readings :

(1) *ὁ ποιῶν ταῦτα πάντα*=who doeth all these things.

(2) *ὁ ποιῶν ταῦτα γνωστὰ* (A, T, WH, P, S)=who maketh these things known.

So also :

- XV. 33. A.V. Unto the Apostles. R.V. **unto those that had sent them** (*a, c, b, i, k, q, u, x, bb, kk, ll*).

A change of text :

(1) A.V. *πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους* = to the Apostles.

(2) *πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστειλάντας αὐτούς* (A, W, T, WH, S, P) = to those that had sent them.

The latter gives the correct statement of what took place. Paul and Barnabas now returned to Antioch to the elders of the Church, who had sent them on the mission to Jerusalem.

- XV. 40. A.V. Recommended—R.V. **commended** (*d, o, s, v, z, ii*). Calvin translates "committed."

- XVI. 27. A.V. Would have killed himself—R.V. **was about to kill himself** (*a, c, f, i, ll*).

Gk. *ἔμελλεν ἑαυτὸν ἀναιρεῖν* = was on the point of killing himself.

- XVI. 27. A.V. Had been fled—R.V. **had escaped** (*a, o, v, ii, ll*).

The Greek verb is compound and denotes successful flight or escape.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

CHAPTERS XIII.—XVI.

Antioch in Pisidia.—A city at the extreme north of Pisidia on the borders of Phrygia. It was founded by Seleucus Nicanor. It must be carefully distinguished from Antioch in Syria.

Notices in Acts.

- (1) Visited by Paul on his first missionary journey. Here he preached his first recorded sermon (xiii. 16-41).
- (2) This preaching led to the reception of the Gospel by a great number of the Gentiles. The jealousy of the Jews was aroused, and a violent persecution followed, which drove Paul and Barnabas from Antioch to Iconium. On departing the Apostles "*shook the dust off their feet against the Jews*" (xiii. 50, 51).

Attalia.—A coast town of Pamphilia, built by Attalus Philadelphus, and named after that monarch. Paul and Barnabas sailed from Attalia to Antioch in Syria on their return from the first missionary journey (xiv. 25).

Cyprus.—An island situated in the extreme eastern corner of the Mediterranean, due east of Syria, and south of Cilicia.

Notices in Acts.

- (1) Barnabas, the Apostle, was a native of Cyprus (iv. 36).
- (2) Men of Cyprus and Cyrene preached the Gospel first to Gentiles at Antioch (xi. 20).
- (3) Paul and Barnabas visited Cyprus on the first missionary journey, landing at Salamis, and going through the island to Paphos, where the deputy Sergius Paulus was converted, and Elymas, the sorcerer, smitten with blindness.
- (4) Barnabas, when he separated from Paul, took Mark with him, and visited Cyprus.

Derbe.—A town of Lycaonia visited by Paul on his first and second missionary journeys. Gaius was a native of Derbe.

Iconium.—Modern Konieh, a city of Lycaonia, of which it was the capital; visited by Paul with Barnabas on his first missionary journey. The opposition of the Jews forced the Apostle to leave Iconium and go to Lystra and Derbe.

Lycaonia (= Wolf-land).—A dreary plain, bare of trees, with scarcity of water, to the north of Cilicia and east of Phrygia and Pamphylia. Iconium was its capital, and amongst its cities are numbered Lystra and Derbe. Its inhabitants spoke a language different from Greek.

Lystra.—A town of Lycaonia. Visited by Paul on his first and second missionary journeys.

Notices in Acts.

- (1) Paul healed the cripple, and, in consequence, the inhabitants would have worshipped the Apostles as Gods, calling Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury (xiv. 8-18).
- (2) The Jews, coming from Antioch and Iconium, persuaded the people and they stoned Paul (xiv. 19, 20).
- (3) It was the home of Timothy. Paul, on his second missionary journey, visited Lystra and took Timothy as his companion and fellow missionary (xvi. 1-3).

Paphos.—The capital of Cyprus, at the western extremity, and the residence of the Roman governor.

Notice in Acts.

Paul, on the first missionary journey, converted Sergius Paulus, the Governor, and smote Elymas the sorcerer with blindness for resisting his teaching and for endeavouring to persuade the Governor against the Apostles (viii. 6-12).

Perga.—A city of Pamphylia, situated on the river Cestrus.

Notice in Acts.

Here Paul and Barnabas, on the first missionary journey, first entered Asia Minor (xiii. 13).

Here John Mark, who had accompanied them from Antioch, departed from them and returned to Jerusalem (xiii. 13).

Salamis.—A city of the eastern end of the island of Cyprus, in the bay which is now called Famagousta. It was the first place visited by Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey on leaving the mainland at Seleucia (xiii. 5).

Seleucia.—Near the mouth of the Orontes and sixteen miles from Antioch, of which city it was the seaport.

Paul and Barnabas sailed from Seleucia starting on their first missionary journey (xiii. 4).

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Elymas the Sorcerer, or Bar Jesus (son of Jesus), a magician found by Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey as living with Sergius Paulus, the governor of Cyprus, at Paphos. He endeavoured to withstand the preaching of the Apostles, and was smitten with blindness by Paul (xiii. 6-12).

Judas surnamed Barsabas, a leading member of the Apostolic Church at Jerusalem. He was endued with the gift of prophecy.

Notices in Acts.

1. Judas and Silas were chosen as delegates to accompany Paul and

Barnabas to Antioch to make known and explain the decree of the Council at Jerusalem concerning the terms of admission of Gentile converts (xv. 22).

2. After using his prophetic gifts to confirm the brethren at Antioch Judas returned to Jerusalem (xv. 32).

It has been suggested that he was the brother of Joseph, surnamed Barsabas (i. 23).

Lucius of Cyrene, a prophet and teacher of the Church at Antioch; one of those who, instructed by the Holy Ghost, consecrated Paul and Barnabas for their missionary work (xiii. 1).

Notices in Acts.

1. He was very possibly one of "the men of Cyrene" who being "scattered abroad on the persecution that arose about Stephen" went to Antioch preaching the Lord Jesus (xi. 19, 20).
2. It is supposed he is the Lucius mentioned as joining with Paul in his salutation to the Roman brethren.

There is no reason for regarding him as identical with Luke the Evangelist (see Intro. p. 11).

Manaen, one of the teachers and prophets at the Church of Antioch, at the time of the appointment of Saul and Barnabas as missionaries to the Gentiles (xiii. 1).

He is described as the foster-brother of Herod, "*brought up with Herod, the tetrarch.*"

Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus when Paul and Barnabas visited that island on the first missionary journey. He is described as an intelligent man and a seeker after truth. Though opposed by Elymas the sorcerer, the teaching of the Apostles convinced and converted the governor (xiii. 7).

Silas.—The name (from *silva*, a wood) indicates a Hellenistic Jew.

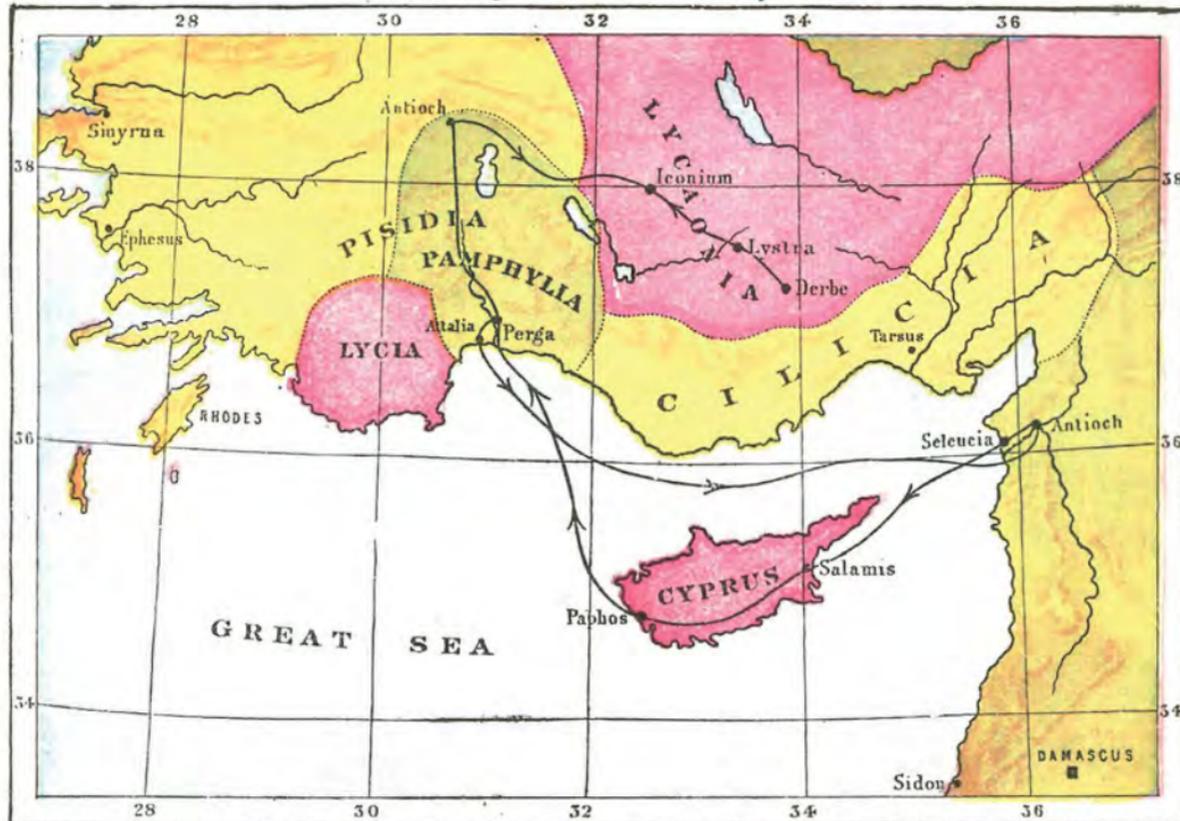
Notices in Acts.

- (1) A prophet and teacher at Jerusalem; sent with Judas, surnamed Barnabas, to convey the letter of the Council from Jerusalem to Antioch (xv. 22, 32).
- (2) He remained at Antioch, and on the quarrel between Paul and Barnabas was chosen by Paul as his companion on the second missionary journey (xv. 40).
- (3) Was imprisoned with Paul at Philippi, and like the Apostle claimed the Roman franchise (xv. 37). Hence we conclude that Silas was a Roman citizen.
- (4) At Berea he was left behind with Timothy while Paul proceeded to Athens (xvii. 14).
- (5) He afterwards rejoined the Apostles at Corinth (xviii. 5).

Under the name of Silvanus he is mentioned frequently in the Epistles as being at Corinth. Tradition represents him as having become bishop of Corinth.

(For remainder of Biographical Notes see page 184).

(Starting Point Antioch in Syria.)



ST PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

St. Paul's First Missionary Journey. Acts xiii., xiv.

They started from

Antioch in Syria, at the bidding of the Holy Ghost—"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, wherunto I have called them."

The party consisted of Barnabas, Paul, and John Mark as their minister. From Antioch they went to

Seleucia, the port of Antioch, and thence sailed to Cyprus, landing at

Salamis, where "they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews," and went through the island unto

Paphos, where the deputy, Sergius Paulus, was converted, and Elymus the sorcerer smitten with blindness. Thence they sailed to

Perga in Pamphylia, where John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem. Thence they departed and came to

Antioch in Pisidia, where, in the synagogue, Paul delivered his first recorded sermon to the Jews and to the Gentiles. The Jews, envious that the Gentiles were included in the Gospel message, raised up a persecution and expelled Paul and Barnabas, who "shaking off the dust of their feet against them," came to

Iconium, whither they were followed by the Jews and were compelled to flee to

Lystra, where Paul cured the cripple, impotent from his birth, who had never walked.

The people of Lystra took the Apostles to be gods and attempted to sacrifice to them but were prevented by Paul. The Jews from Antioch stirred up the people and stoned Paul, and supposed they had killed him. Paul recovered and departed to

Derbe, where they preached and thence returned to

Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, confirming the disciples and ordaining elders, thence through Pisidia to Pamphylia, Perga, as far as

Attalia, whence they sailed to Antioch their original starting point.

Time taken. Not less than three to four years, and as the district traversed was but small, a considerable time was spent at each place, thus:—

(1) **Antioch.** "And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region" (xiii. 49).

(2) **Iconium.** "A great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed" (xiv. 1).

"Long time therefore abode they" (xiv. 3).

(3) **At Lystra** (see xvi. 1) it is evident many converts had been made.

Plan adopted. To make a stay at some centre of population, and there preach the Gospel till a sufficient number of disciples had been made, and those disciples so instructed that the work might go on after Paul had left them.

Method of preaching. Though Paul had been specially marked out as the Apostle to the Gentiles, still as expressed in Romans x. 1, his "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was that they might be saved." So throughout this missionary journey Paul always publishes the Gospel first to his own nation. Thus—

(1) At **Salamis** "they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews" (xiii. 5).

(2) At **Antioch** "they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day" (xiii. 14).

(3) At **Iconium** "they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews" (xiv. 1).

It was only when the Jews rejected his preaching that Paul turned to the Gentiles—as at Antioch in Pisidia. "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" (xiii. 46).

The same method is adopted on the second and third missionary journeys, for—

(1) At **Thessalonica**, "where was a synagogue of the Jews; and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them" (xvii. 1, 2).

(2) At **Berea**, "who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews" (xvii. 11).

(3) At **Corinth**, "and he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath" (xviii. 4).

(4) At **Ephesus**, "and he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months" (xix. 8).

It is also in consequence of the action of the Jews that Paul leaves off preaching in the synagogues. Thus—

(1) At **Corinth**. "And when they (the Jews) 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" (xviii. 6).

(2) At **Ephesus**. "But when divers were hardened and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them" (xix. 9).

'ST PAULS SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.



(Starting Point, Antioch in Syria.)

St. Paul's Second Missionary Journey. Acts xv., xvi., xvii., xviii.

Antioch in Syria was the starting-place, where Paul suggested to Barnabas that they should go and visit their brethren in the cities where they had preached. Barnabas wished to take John Mark again, but Paul refused to take him with them because he had left them at Perga on the first missionary journey. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus, whilst Paul chose Silas as his companion and went by land through Syria and Cilicia, and came to

Derbe and Lystra, where he met with Timothy, and having circumcised him, took him as a companion on the journey; thence they went "*through Phrygia and Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, and after they were come to Mysia they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.*" And passing by Mysia they came to

Troas, where Paul in a vision saw a man of Macedonia, who prayed him saying, "*Come over into Macedonia and help us.*" Here Luke joined the company, and they sailed to

Samothracia, and the next day to

Neapolis the port of Philippi, and thence to

Philippi, where Lydia was converted, and Paul cast out the spirit of divination from a damsel, whose masters, finding their gains gone, brought the Apostles before the magistrates, who beat them and put them in prison. The jailor was converted, and next day the magistrates sent them away, and they departed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, and came to

Thessalonica, where the Jews raised an uproar against them, and assaulted the house of Jason where they lodged. So the brethren sent Paul and Silas away by night to

Berea, where the people received them favourably till the Jews came from Thessalonica and stirred up the multitude, so, whilst Silas and Timotheus abode at Thessalonica, Paul was sent to

Athens, where he delivered his famous speech on Mars Hill (Areopagus) and converted Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris among others. Thence he journeyed to

Corinth, where he met with Aquila and Priscilla, and lodged with them, working at the same trade, viz., tent-making. Silas and Timotheus joined him, and he preached to the Jews, converting Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue. Rejected by the Jews St. Paul continued his preaching in the house of Justus. He abode there eighteen months, being encouraged to do so by the words of the Lord, who appeared to him in a vision. The Jews, incensed at his preaching to the Gentiles, and the success attending the same, brought him before Gallio, the Roman Governor, who refused to hear the charge. Thence, taking with him Aquila and Priscilla, he went to

Cenchrea, where he shaved his head under a Nazarite vow; then he sailed to

Ephesus, where he left Priscilla and Aquila, and being desirous himself of reaching Jerusalem in time for the approaching feast, left Ephesus, promising to return, and sailed to

Cæsarea, whence he went up to

Jerusalem, where he saluted the Church, and then went down to

Antioch in Syria, the original starting point.

Simeon called Niger, one of the teachers and prophets of the Church at the time of the appointment of Paul and Barnabas as missionaries to the Gentiles (xiii. 1).

Timothy.

- (1) The son of a Greek (Gentile) father and a Jewish mother. His family lived at Lystra or Derbe (Acts xvi. 1-3).
- (2) His mother's name was Eunice, and his grandmother's Lois (2 Tim. i. 5).
- (3) Of a child he had learnt to know the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. iii. 15).
- (4) On Paul's second visit to Lystra he took Timothy, circumcised him, and made him his companion on his second missionary journey along with Silas (xvi. 3).
- (5) He accompanied Paul as far as Berea where he and Silas remained whilst the Apostle went on to Athens (xvii. 14). He rejoined the Apostle at Athens.
- (6) From Athens he was sent to Thessalonica with the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iii. 2).
- (7) From Thessalonica he rejoined Paul at Corinth.
- (8) He was sent on in advance from Ephesus into Macedonia and Greece (xix. 22).
- (9) He was one of the band of friends who accompanied Paul from Greece to Asia on his return to Jerusalem from his third missionary journey (xx. 4), but does not appear to have gone further than Miletus.
- (10) He must have joined the Apostle at Rome for he was with him when the Epistles to the Philippians, to the Colossians, and to Philemon were written.
- (11) From 1 Tim. i. 3 we learn that on the release of Paul from imprisonment Timothy accompanied him to Asia, and stayed at Ephesus, while Paul went on to Macedonia.

According to tradition he was the first bishop of Ephesus and is said to have suffered martyrdom at the hands of the populace.

Date.	Emperors.	Governors of Judæa, &c.	High Priests.	Events in Acts.		
A.D. 46	Claudius, Emperor from 41 A.D.			The first missionary journey of Paul with Barnabas.		
48				Ananias.	Return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch.	
49				Herod Agrippa II, made King of Chalcis.		
50 51						Council at Jerusalem. Second missionary journey of Paul, with Silas, lasting three years, 51—54 A.D.
52						Paul crosses over into Europe.
53		Felix, Procurator of Judæa. Herod Agrippa II gets Batania and Trachonitis. Gallio, Procurator of Achaia.				
54	Nero.	[The Egyptian al- luded to in Acts xxi. 38 raises a tumult A.D. 56].		Paul at Jerusalem where he keeps Pentecost. A few weeks at Antioch. Third missionary journey, 54—58 A.D.		
54—57				Paul at Ephesus for three years.		
57				Paul leaves Ephesus, and crosses into Europe.		
58				Return of Paul to Jerusa- lem. Arrives there Pente- cost, 58 A.D. Arrest of Paul.		
60		Festus succeeds Felix.	Ishmael, son of Phabi, 59 A.D.	Two years imprisonment at Cæsarea. 58—60 A.D. Paul embarks for Italy in the Autumn.		
61			Joseph Cabi.	Arrival at Rome.		
62			Ananias.	Two years military im- prisonment, ending 63 A.D.		
63			Jesus, son of Da- maïneas.	Release of Paul.		
66—68				[Subsequent imprisonment of Paul at Rome. Martyr- dom.]		

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

Chaps. XIII.—XXVIII.

I.—The First Missionary Journey, xiii., xiv.

1. The Consecration of Paul and Barnabas at

Antioch xiii. 1—4.

2. The Apostles at Cyprus	xiii.	4—12.
(a) Conversion of the Deputy		4—12.
(b) Elymas smitten with blindness		8—11.
3. At Perga in Pamphylia. The return of John Mark		13.
4. At Antioch in Pisidia		14—52.
(a) St. Paul's first recorded sermon		14—43.
(b) The Apostles turn to the Gentiles		44—52.
5. At Iconium. Persecution	xiv.	1—5.
6. In Lycaonia		6—21.
At Lystra (1) the cripple healed.		6—8.
(2) The Apostles looked upon as gods		8—18.
(3) Paul stoned		19—20.
7. Return to Antioch in Syria		21—28.

II.—The Council at Jerusalem.

1. The question raised at Antioch in Syria	xv.	1.
2. A deputation, including Paul and Barnabas, sent to Jerusalem		2—5.
3. The Council		6—21.
4. The letter embodying the decree of the Council		22—29.
5. The decision received at Antioch		30—35.

III.—The Second Missionary Journey.

1. The contention between Paul and Barnabas. They separate	xv.	36—39.
2. Paul and Silas pass through Syria and Cilicia to Lystra		40—41.
3. Timothy chosen as a companion in the mission	xvi.	1—5.
4. They pass through Phrygia and Galatia, and come to Mysia and to Troas		6—8.
5. By a vision Paul is called into Macedonia		9—12.
6. At Philippi		13—40.
(a) The conversion and baptism of Lydia		13—15.
(b) The spirit of divination cast out by Paul		16—23.
(c) Scourging and imprisonment of Paul and Silas		23—24.
(d) The conversion of the jailor		25—40.