

PAUL

The Apostle

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JOHN W. LIGON

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Paul the apostle







## Paul the Apostle



# Paul the Apostle

*PIONEER MISSIONARY TO  
THE HEATHEN WORLD*

By  
JOHN W. LIGON



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To

J. W. Hardy

*who taught me the way of life, and  
who encouraged me to become a  
minister of Christ, this book is dedi-  
cated with a feeling more akin to  
filial than fraternal regard :: ::*



## Introduction

**F**EW authors would attempt to add another volume to the vast wealth of Pauline literature already easily accessible to the reading public. From both the critical and the practical point of view, the subject has been treated by scholars learned and pious.

Perhaps no character, in history, save that of the Nazarene carpenter, lends itself so satisfactorily to the purpose of the biographer as that of the Apostle Paul. Consequently the polemic and the irenic, the Protestant and the Catholic,—men of every shade of Christian faith—have undertaken to bring out in strong relief the titanic and varied qualities of this majestic hero.

The author of this volume, however, seeks to present the subject more fully than is done by the briefer biographers, yet more succinctly than Farrar and the rest of the voluminous writers. With the purpose of supplying the manifest need of such a treatise, the writer has given us this book. He has rendered very attractive his accurate and trustworthy narrative by invoking the power of a vivid imagination, a deep and warm feeling, a pronounced human interest, and a lucid style.

Sunday-school students and teachers, Christian Endeavour societies, and missionary bands, as well as

the larger group of readers of religious literature, will find this book both helpful and fascinating.

It should serve as a large and valuable factor in bringing Christian people into closer fellowship with the greatest interpreter of Christianity the world has known.

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## Preface

**T**HIS volume is published in the interest of the religion of Christ. I am fully aware that there are many excellent books already before the public, treating of the life and labours of the Apostle Paul, yet it seems to me that there is a place and a demand for another. In the course of my life as a minister of Christ I have been called upon frequently to recommend a book on Paul—something that a busy man would find time to read, and which briefly treated all the known facts in the apostle's life. Although somewhat familiar with the works of a number of authors, I was not acquainted with such a treatise. The larger works, so helpful to the preacher and the scholar, are not adapted to the young people of our Sunday-schools or the busy men and women who constitute the largest element of our churches.

On the other hand, the briefer works are too brief. In them the career of the apostle is merely outlined. They are intended for class use, and the instructor is supposed to fill the outline. This volume is a continuous narrative. Its brevity is such that all who are interested can find time to read it, and it is intended to be sufficiently comprehensive to furnish a living picture of the apostle's life so far as that life can be known.

Every one must know that any one in writing such

a volume as this is of necessity more or less familiar with the writings of others who have written on the same subject. Where I have knowingly used the exact words of others I have given proper credit; but I am conscious of the probability that one who has a somewhat extended acquaintance with the writings of others may unconsciously adapt the language of others. This I have tried to avoid. Should the reader find that I have used the words of others without giving due acknowledgment, let it be remembered that I have been very careful in my endeavours to avoid so doing.

In preparing the manuscript of this volume I have made use of every help available to me. Aside from the Book of Acts and Paul's Epistles, I have used a number of Lives of Paul and Commentaries on Acts. I have kept a map of Paul's travels ever before me.

This book is intended to be practical rather than critical. I am fully conscious that it is far from perfect from the view-point of the scholar and critic. It is hoped, however, that those who are familiar with the more voluminous works on Paul may find this volume useful as a means of briefly reviewing the subject. May this book, the preparation of which has been a labour of love, be the means of advancing the interests of the Master by causing its readers to become familiar with the chief events in the life of His greatest servant, is my earnest prayer.

J. W. L.

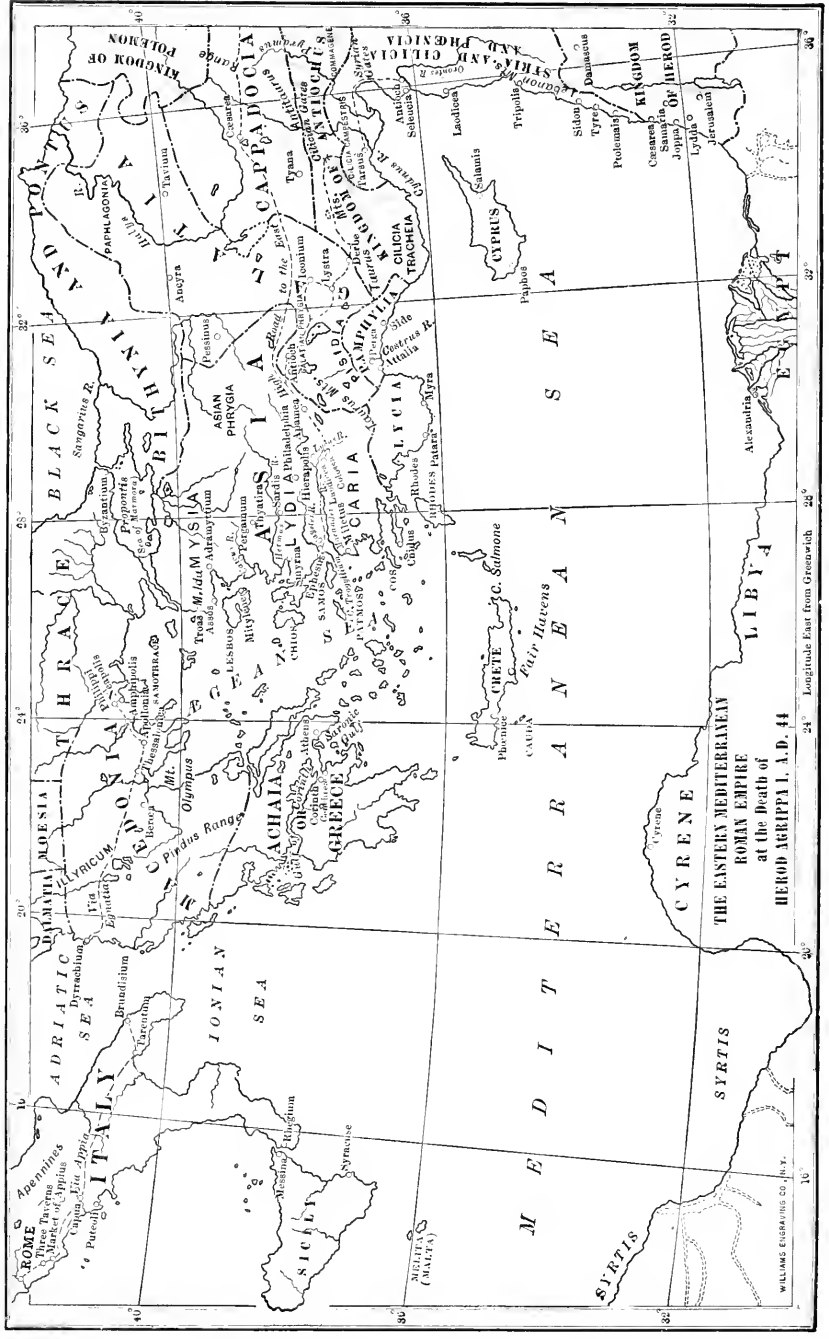
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THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN  
 ROMAN EMPIRE  
 at the Death of  
 HEROD AGRIPPA I. A. D. 44

## I

### PAUL'S EARLY YEARS

**T**HE Gospel of Christ is God's means to save the human family. Wise Gentiles from afar and plain unlettered shepherds in the homeland knelt with true devotion in the presence of the infant Saviour and gave Him the homage of their hearts. The fact that the shepherds came first faintly foreshadowed the divine arrangement that the Gospel should first be offered to the Jews, and then extended to the Gentiles. The Redeemer of mankind came to the world by way of the Jewish nation. "Salvation is of the Jews." The prophets of Israel had blazed the way for Him across the centuries. Divine wisdom had traced out clearly every step of the way from Eden to Bethlehem and from Eve to Mary.

In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus represents Himself as coming to His nation as the shepherd enters the fold. The nation of Israel was the fold, Jesus the shepherd, and the door was the one opened for Him by the prophets. We are assured that He is the Good Shepherd by the fact that He came through the right door. He declared that all who came before Him were thieves and robbers. In this declaration He alluded to the false christs who came before Him, but who could not prove their claims. They had failed to enter through the door of prophecy and had tried to climb up some other way, but the sheep

did not hear them. They were identified as impostors and came to naught.

Jesus included the whole world in His program. His Gospel was intended for all men everywhere. "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd" (John x. 16). These other sheep were the Gentiles. They were to receive the same consideration in the great plan of salvation as the Jews. God is no respecter of persons. The Gospel was to begin at Jerusalem and spread to the uttermost parts of the earth; and when the fullness of time came for the word of life to be proclaimed to the Gentiles, a foreign-born Jew with Gentile culture more or less extensive was chosen to bear the message. This man was Saul of Tarsus.

The date of his birth cannot be determined with absolute certainty, but it can be brought within very narrow limits. We know that at the time of Stephen's death he was a *young man*. The term "young man" is indefinite. It may be used to describe a man anywhere between eighteen and thirty-five years of age. It is practically certain that, a short time after Stephen's death, Saul was a member of the Sanhedrin, and, if this be true, he was at least thirty. No one was eligible to a seat in that august body until he had attained that age. Moreover, in the year 62 when writing from Rome where he was a prisoner in bonds, the apostle referred to himself as "Paul the aged." He was perhaps not quite sixty at the time he wrote the Epistle to Philemon, in which he made this reference to himself. It is prob-



able that the suffering that he had endured, the exposure to the storms and shipwrecks through which he had passed, had caused him to grow old before his time.

Very little is known in regard to the ancestry of Saul. His parents were Jews of the tribe of Benjamin, and, in religion, they were Pharisees. They had for some reason migrated to Tarsus. Tradition has it that they lived in the obscure town of Giscala before they left the land of Israel. The Pharisees were the most numerous and popular of the sects into which the Jewish people were divided at the time of Christ. They had succeeded in convincing themselves that they were very religious. They were, indeed, very scrupulous about keeping the letter of the law in small things, even though they violated both letter and spirit in larger things. Jesus denounced them as blind guides to a blinded people. They were strict in religious observances, and proud and pompous in their demeanour towards men. But, with all their faults, they were the best people of the time. Jesus chose His apostles from among them.

The main item of their teaching was the belief in the resurrection of the dead, and the future life. They held also to the tradition of the elders. This tradition, so frequently mentioned in the New Testament, was a mass of oral teaching handed down from generation to generation, and held by those who accepted it to be equal in authority to the law of Moses. The sect came into existence between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the Christian era. Their founder was one Pharez of whom little is known.

The Sadducees, founded by Sadoc, were the next party to the Pharisees in strength and influence. They held a negative position, denying the resurrection and refusing to accept the tradition of the elders. The law of Moses said nothing about a future life, and they held literally to the law. On matters of doctrine, they and the Pharisees were the antipodes of each other. It is not strange that the Pharisees took more readily to the Gospel than did the Sadducees. Saul, being the son of Pharisees, was trained from his infancy in the tenets of that party. His father, in teaching the law, naturally interpreted it with a Pharisaic colouring. Many years afterwards, when it became necessary for Saul to denounce the entire Jewish system as an obsolete institution, the knowledge that he had acquired from his father at home, and from greater teachers elsewhere, was turned to good account.

It is probable that Saul's parents left the land of their nativity to seek a home among Gentiles in their early married life; and, if he was their first born, we can admire their patriotism in bestowing upon him a name common among their own nation. Still, we do not see why a name made dishonourable in their history by the evil conduct of the first king of Israel should have been given by fond parents to their first child; but though the name had been dishonoured by one who bore it, it was destined to shine with a far more brilliant lustre than the name of any king who ever reigned on earth, because of having been borne by the greatest human character of the New Testament.

The city that had the honour of being the birth-

place of Saul was Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia, a small province in the southeast corner of Asia Minor, and on the northern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The birth of Saul was the most important event that ever occurred in Tarsus, and to that event it owes its fame in the world. That is fame enough for any one city. It was an important place at the time of the birth of Saul. It is smaller and of less importance now.

The city stood on both sides of the river Cydnus a few miles from the Mediterranean shore. Towards the north and west, and in full view, the lofty Taurus Mountains lifted their splintered peaks into the regions of everlasting snow; and, as Saul played with his sister in the streets of his native city, he could, even in midsummer, see the snow glittering like silver on the pinnacles and crags a few miles away. The river brought down from the melting snows of the mountains water of icy coldness.

A short distance above the city, the river plunges down a declivity and forms a wild and picturesque cataract, and thence flows onward unobstructed to the sea. The Cydnus was navigable as far as the cataract, and the ships of many countries ascended to the city for the purpose of trade. The site was favourable to commerce. By means of the river it had an open road to the sea, and through the noted mountain pass known as the "Cilician Gates" the products of the uplands beyond the Taurus were brought down to Tarsus and thence passed out to the heaving bosom of the Great Sea.

To us it is a matter of wonder that one so sensitive and so observing as Saul could have spent his boyhood in the midst of such surroundings without be-

ing impressed with the natural beauty of the scenery, but, if these embellishments on Nature's face made the least impression on his mind, we have no hint of it in any of his letters or addresses that have come down to us. We know that he journeyed often amid scenes of entrancing beauty and grandeur unsurpassed, but we look in vain for even a word of description of such scenes, or even the briefest reference to them. The probable reason for this silence lies in the fact that the message he had for mankind bore so heavily upon him that he could see no river but the River of Life, and no other mountain than Calvary.

Tarsus was a free city, and noted in Saul's day as an educational center. The law of Moses made it the duty of the father to instruct his children in the history and religion of Israel. Religion and history were so blended in the Jewish nation that it was impossible to study one and not become familiar with the other. It has been truly said that without their history they had no religion, and without their religion they had no history. For secular education the people of Tarsus depended upon the educational facilities of the city. Happily, these were of the very best. The University of Tarsus was known far and wide, and the youth of many lands resorted thither for instruction. Strabo, the traveller and writer, who was born sixty-four years before Christ, is authority for the statement that Tarsus surpassed both Athens and Alexandria as a seat of learning. Saul was fortunate in having such unusual opportunities in his boyhood, and in his later years he made good use of the training he had received in his native city.

At what age Saul left Tarsus is unknown, but it

was probably not later than his thirteenth year. A Jewish boy at twelve years of age became a "Son of the Law," and it is quite probable that Saul began his special training at that age. If this probability be true, he could not have possessed that high degree of scholarship that many attribute to him. There is no reason to accord to him any great familiarity with pagan philosophy and literature. It is true that on two occasions he did exhibit some knowledge of Gentile literature—once on Mars Hill and once in his Epistle to Titus,—but to argue from this that he possessed any deep knowledge of classic lore is but to argue without premises. If we are approximately correct in the conjecture as to his age on leaving Tarsus, about all the knowledge of Gentile literature he possessed was acquired before he reached his thirteenth year. What other classic learning he possessed was gathered up in his travels among Gentile peoples. The conjecture as to his age cannot be far wrong. He says himself that he was "brought up" in the school of Gamaliel in Jerusalem. He was far from grown when he entered the school of Gamaliel, else he could not have said with any degree of propriety that he had been brought up in it.

One more element of his earlier education must be mentioned before we follow him in his further progress as he pursues his studies in an institution of learning devoted to religious instruction. We refer to his industrial education. The rabbis required all Jewish fathers to teach their sons some useful and honourable trade. The purpose of this wise custom was to render each man in the nation capable of self-support, of providing for his own personal needs

and of those dependent upon him. Any one thus equipped was able to engage in useful labour if it should become necessary. It was a wise precaution against possible need. One of the wise men of the nation had said, "He that hath a trade is like a vineyard that is fenced." The rich and the poor alike followed this custom of giving their sons this industrial training. The poor needed it as means of support. The rich might be reduced to poverty by reverses and misfortunes, and they would have the trade as a recourse to supply their daily needs.

The father of Saul observed this national practice and taught him a trade. Saul became a tent-maker, but had no thought of following that trade as a vocation. Tarsus was a manufacturing city. A heavy haircloth, such as was used for making tents, was made there. Such cloth was in great demand. Most of the rural people lived in tents and moved from place to place to find water and pasture for their flocks and herds. They lived a nomadic life. The trade of tent-making was an easy one for Saul to learn, and it met the demands of the rabbis, who did not select a special trade for each youth. Saul had a good opportunity to become skillful and was soon master of his art. When he was acquiring this skill as an artisan, he never dreamed that he would ever be compelled to resort to it for his living ; but before we reach the end of our study of his life and labours, we shall see that he was brought to the necessity of performing daily labour for his daily bread. By means of this trade he was enabled to reach men with the Gospel and lead them to Christ, when, otherwise, he might have failed.

In the city of Jerusalem there was a celebrated school under the management of the Pharisees, and devoted to the education of young men who desired to become rabbis. Having made up his mind to become a rabbi, Saul determined to enter this institution. Leaving the parental home to begin life among strangers is a trying ordeal to any one, and especially trying to one so young as Saul, but the thought that after a few years spent in college he would go forth well equipped for his life-work gave him strength to endure the trial.

With light heart the ambitious youth started on his way to the Holy City. Could he realize it? Was he really to see Jerusalem, the city about which he had thought and dreamed so many times? Yes, he was actually on his way thither, and better still, he was to spend a term of years in the sacred city of his fathers, and best of all, these years were to be spent in studying the word of God, under the instruction of the greatest and best teacher alive. This was the great Gamaliel, known all over the Jewish world as the profoundest and purest of all the doctors of the law. Because of his extensive knowledge and deep piety he was known to his generation as The Beauty of the Law. He was not only an able teacher of the law, but the same principles that he taught to others he applied to himself. He made the law beautiful by striving to live up to its high demands.

Although Gamaliel was strictly loyal to the law of Moses and the tradition of the elders, he was by no means averse to Gentile culture. He wielded a mighty influence over his students, and how much of the success of Saul of Tarsus in after life was due to

him we cannot tell. The apparently perfect knowledge of the Scriptures possessed by Saul was mainly acquired in the school of Gamaliel. This familiarity with the Old Testament was not confined to any portion of it. The apostle quotes with equal ease and readiness from the law, prophecy, poetry and history.

The course of training for a rabbi was long and toilsome. Two things were especially emphasized: the Old Testament was thoroughly studied and much of it memorized, and the students were made familiar with the opinions, comments and criticisms of the great teachers of the law, living and dead. Discussion upon questions about which opinions differed was a prominent part of the instruction given. Questions were put forth by both teachers and students, and full and free discussion served to enliven the irksome and monotonous routine of daily study. Boys who intended to become rabbis entered such schools when quite young, and were literally "brought up" in them.

To go forth from such a school with sufficient equipment to enter at once upon the duties of rabbi to a synagogue was the realization of many youthful aspirations, but no doubt many of these failed in real life and, with sorrow to themselves and their friends, sought other vocations. But, whatever may be said in regard to others, Saul was not a failure. Had the current of his life flowed onward uninterrupted in its course, he would have equalled, if not surpassed, his great teacher. But the wisdom of God called him to other and better work. The wearisome years spent under Gamaliel's instruction were not wasted. In



his missionary journeys among the Gentiles he used his knowledge of the Scriptures with good effect.

While his mission was primarily to the Gentiles, he was not unmindful of his own nation. It was his custom even in heathen cities where a sufficient number of Jews could be found to build and maintain a synagogue, to speak to the Jews first and through them reach their Gentile neighbours. "To the Jew first and also to the Gentile" was not only the divine plan of evangelization, but it was Saul's plan of carrying the divine plan into practical effect.

It is not probable that Saul was in Jerusalem as a student during any portion of the ministry of Jesus. He had, quite likely, finished his course in school and returned to his home in Tarsus before Jesus began His public ministry. The fact that he makes no mention of any personal knowledge of Jesus until he saw Him in the great vision on the way to Damascus would naturally imply that he had no such knowledge. It is incredible that he could have been in Jerusalem during the years that Jesus frequented that city and not heard something about Him, or, if he had such knowledge, it is equally incredible that he would have said nothing about it. The fact that such knowledge is not mentioned in any of his writings is the best evidence that he did not possess it.

There is one more probability that is worthy of notice, relative to his domestic life. It is really more than a probability. Was he ever married? People who have so long looked upon him as having always been a single man will be slow to regard him as otherwise. No one can speak with positive assurance. We all know that during his apostolic life he

was not bound by family ties, but there are strong reasons for believing that, at one time in his life, he was a married man. In his masterly address before King Agrippa Saul said that when Christian men and women were put to death for their faith, he gave his vote against them. These unfortunate victims of enraged men were put to death by the vote of the Sanhedrin, before which body they were formally tried. Only those who were members of the Sanhedrin had the right to vote on such occasions, and if Saul cast his vote—and we have his word for it that he did,—he was a member of that body. Jewish scholars tell us that married men only were eligible to seats in the Sanhedrin; and, if this be true, Saul was at that time a man of family.

When he had completed his course in school Saul returned to his home and remained there for a few years. We have no means of knowing how these years were spent, but when he did emerge from obscurity he came forth a thunderbolt of persecution against the inoffensive followers of Christ. Men, women, and children were alike the objects of his insatiable wrath against the innocent Christians. That God should call such a man to become an apostle of Jesus Christ and the boldest champion that ever advocated New Testament Christianity remains one of the greatest marvels of all time.

## II

### THE CHURCH FOUNDED : ITS EARLY STRUGGLES

**W**HILE Saul was in obscurity many strange things occurred in Jerusalem. Among these were the public life of Jesus, His death, burial, resurrection and ascension, followed by the establishment of the church. That the church was established on the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus is a fact so well known and so generally accepted by the Christian world that it need not be argued. Before that day the church was spoken of as something yet to be, and after that day it is always referred to as an existing institution. Before Pentecost the church was a matter of prophecy, but on that day it became a matter of history and has been so regarded ever since. The circumstances connected with the founding of the church can be read in the second chapter of Acts.

The church had but fairly started on its career of redemption when it encountered fierce opposition. The character of the disciples as a body was above reproach. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and in the breaking of bread and prayers. Their love for each other was strong and deep ; and prompted by this love, those who possessed sufficient worldly goods to enable them to do so formed a common relief fund for the benefit of the poor in

the congregation. This act was both original and voluntary. There had been no precedent in human history, and the church consequently had no example to follow. The plan for caring for the poor sprang out of the hearts of men who were filled with the Spirit of Christ. Those who gave to this fund were not forced to do so, but gave freely and gladly to those in need.

The brethren used the court of the temple as a meeting place, and broke their bread from house to house with gladness and good will. This brotherly love, devotion, and sociability did not fail to attract the attention of the better class of the people who could not but admire the conduct of the disciples. The church naturally grew in numbers, in strength, and influence. The disciples had the good will of the public, and men and women were turning to Christ by hundreds and by thousands. Three thousand were added to the saved on the first day of the church's existence, and soon after that day the number grew to be about five thousand. The zeal of the apostles and the unselfishness of the disciples had a wholesome effect on the people of the city. Good fellowship and good feeling prevailed.

This happy condition of things was abruptly terminated, and the worst side of human nature asserted itself in an uprising of the religious leaders against the disciples. The opposition that was aroused was intense and resulted from one Christlike deed performed by Peter and John. In the city there was a deformed man who had never been able to walk. His feet and ankles were so weak that he could not stand. He was poor and in the hands of his friends.

They, knowing that people who frequent the house of God were more benevolent than others, laid him at the main entrance to the temple every day, where he could beg assistance of those who went to worship.

Perhaps no two men ever differed in disposition and temperament more widely than did Peter and John, but they loved each other none the less on that account. They went up to the temple and worshipped God together. As they were about to pass through the gate called Beautiful, the helpless man saw them and asked them for money, expecting to receive a small gift. Peter answered him by saying, "Look on us." The apostles did not look like men of much means, but men of wealth are not always the most liberal. Peter's words gave the poor man some encouragement. The impotent man lay upon the pavement gazing up at the two strange men who stood over his prostrate form. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but what I have that give I thee. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, walk."

The man made no effort to rise till Peter stooped down and lifted him up. And when he felt the thrill of new vigour in his feet and ankles, he leaped up and began to shout for sheer joy. His delight was ecstatic. Holding to these men with both hands, he went dancing into the temple praising God with loud exclamations. This was a strange scene to transpire in the court of the temple, and it very naturally attracted the attention of the people. They came crowding around Peter and John, filled with wonder at what had come to pass. Peter took the advantage of the occasion and preached the second great sermon of his life. A synopsis of this sermon is found in the

third chapter of Acts. It produced a profound effect upon all who heard it. The sermon was never finished. While Peter was speaking a mob broke into a frenzy and put an end to the discourse. It was a mob that had the semblance of law, but nevertheless a mob. The attacking crowd was composed of the priests and Sadducees and led by the officers in charge of the temple. They were grieved because the apostles preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead. It seems strange to us that such preaching would displease any man, and that men should regard such preaching as a crime worthy of severe punishment.

The apostles were arrested like criminals and put into prison where they spent the night. They were destined to have many waves of persecution roll over them, and were only getting a foretaste of what was to become common in their lives as pioneers of the Christian faith. The wearisome agony of their first night in prison passed away and morning dawned upon the excited city. At an early hour a meeting of the leading men was called to deliberate, and the question to be decided was what to do with Peter and John. A prominent figure in the assembly was the high priest. John and Alexander are mentioned as being present. This is the only time their names are mentioned in the New Testament, and we do not know who they were or what positions they filled to entitle them to a place among the leaders of the nation. They were doubtless well known to Theophilus to whom Luke wrote the Book of Acts as a personal letter.

The high priest was, by virtue of his office, the

chairman of the assembly. The Sanhedrin was opened in form and the prisoners were called before that body for trial. They were given seats in the center of the half circle into which the body had been arranged. The apostles, conscious of their own innocence, faced the proud array without a tremor of fear. They were strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The question asked them was this, "By what power, or in what name have ye done this?" The question referred to the healing of the deformed man at the Beautiful Gate. The question was put to both of them, but Peter, being an older man than John and having had more experience in the ways of the world, gave the answer himself. He responded by making this speech: "Ye rulers of the people and elders, if we this day be examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means this man is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in Him doth this man stand before you whole. He is the stone which was set at naught of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."

The speech was bold and daring, and characteristic of the man who made it. The members of the Sanhedrin were astounded at such a deliverance and impressed with the dignified bearing of the prisoners. They could see plainly that the apostles were not men of the schools, and they could also see from the

conduct of the apostles that they had been with Jesus. The Master had left His imprint upon them and they were readily identified as His followers. Men may differ widely in matters of religious opinion, but nothing can be said against a good life. A pure character is above criticism. The way Peter and John conducted themselves before the Sanhedrin showed that they had been much in the Master's presence. They had seen Him under trial before this same body ; they had observed His calm dignity and self-possession, and they never forgot His meek example when they came to trial.

The lame man, now lame no longer, but in the full vigour of healthy manhood, was standing in the crowd. He had been led by sheer gratitude to follow his benefactors into the council, and his presence there served to give strength to the defense of the apostles. The genuineness of the miracle could not be doubted as long as the man on whom it was wrought was present. Seeing the man, they could not dispute the miracle. They knew not what to do. Some one temporarily relieved the strain of the situation by suggesting that the prisoners be removed from the presence of the court and that further consultation be held.

The deliberations were continued, and the insincerity of the body is easily seen in the conversation that followed. Some one said : " What shall we do to these men ? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been wrought by them is manifest to all who dwell in Jerusalem ; and we cannot deny it." Why should they want to deny it ? They were very anxious to stop the spread of the Gospel among the people, and



the only question was how to do it. After much deliberation they reached the conclusion that they would endeavour to intimidate the apostles by threatening them with severe punishment, if they preached any more in the name of Jesus. They did not know the spirit of the men they were trying to silence through fear.

After reaching the conclusion to threaten them, the apostles were called once more into the presence of the council, and the chairmen announced to them the result of the consultation. It was to the effect that the present case would be dismissed on the condition that they would do no more preaching and work no more miracles in the name of Christ. The members of the Sanhedrin had no reason to hope that the proposition would be accepted. They made it as a desperate effort with little or no hope of success. The apostles received the announcement with dignified disdain and said in reply: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard."

This response hurled defiance at the whole Sanhedrin and increased the perplexity of the fathers in Israel still more. Peter was stronger then than he had been a short time before, when in the presence of the same body he denied his Lord and Master. Peter's answer was clear and pointed, and the council could say no more. The proposed threat was again repeated, and the apostles were set at liberty. Peter and John had broken no law, human or divine, in healing the impotent man, and they could not be lawfully punished. They had the sympathy of the people.

Only the leaders were opposed to them. The man who was healed was more than forty years old and well known in the city. All rejoiced at his having been healed, except the priests and scribes, and they were very much exercised. They feared that the new teaching would supplant the old, and that their vocation would come to naught. They were jealous even unto dishonesty in upholding their religious system. The cause is indeed weak that tries to succeed by means of hypocrisy.

When Peter and John were set at liberty they went to their friends and brethren and told them all that had transpired in the council. This information was the occasion of the whole body kneeling before God in earnest prayer. They had cause for thanksgiving for the release of Peter and John, and they felt the need of intercession in view of troubles yet to come. They realized fully that God was with them and blessing their labours. They prayed that the blessing might continue with them and that they might continue to preach Christ to the people as they had done. As an assurance that their prayers were heard and their petitions granted, the place where they met was shaken by a great earthquake, and all received a fresh impact of spiritual power. The apostles were not the least intimidated. They went on preaching the Gospel with great boldness. The entire congregation grew in grace and spirituality. The enthusiasm of the devotees of the new faith was boundless and was manifested in many ways. They were of one heart and soul, and in this particular the church in Jerusalem furnished an example for all congregations and for all time.

No one regarded his property as his own exclusively, if others were in need of the necessaries of life. No one suffered through lack of attention. Those who had more land than was necessary sold their surplus and brought the money to the apostles to be used for the benefit of the poor, and distribution was made according to the needs of the people. This arrangement was not socialism as many believe. No equal distribution was made. Only the needy received assistance, and they only to the extent of their need.

The inauguration of this practice of caring for the poor of the church was the means of introducing to the world one of the greatest among the early preachers of the Christian faith. A young man of the tribe of Levi, Joseph by name, to whom admiring friends gave the name of Barnabas, meaning Son of Exhortation, owned a tract of land. Seeing the distress of the needy members of the church, he sold the land and donated the proceeds to them to aid them in procuring the necessaries of life. He brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. The prominence that he afterwards attained in the work of the church doubtless prompted Luke, who wrote many years after these events transpired, to introduce Barnabas by mentioning this one incident in his earlier life. The law of Moses had made sufficient provision for the maintenance of the Levites, but at the time of Barnabas the law was not observed in all of its precepts. The restoration from the Babylonian captivity was never complete. Israel was never fully reorganized. From the days of the restoration from Babylon, or soon after that date, the Levites had been

compelled to support themselves as did the other tribes. Barnabas had either inherited or accumulated this piece of property, and in either case he had the right to dispose of it as he saw fit.

The next fact to be noted is almost a reflection upon the human race, and is in strong contrast with the liberality and unselfishness shown by the Levite. He and many others had been justly and properly honoured by the church on account of their benevolent spirit. This merited applause aroused the desire of two other members of the church to receive similar honour. Ananias and Sapphira, his wife, owned some land and, like Barnabas, they sold it. They had previously agreed that they would give only a part of the money to the poor, and that they would try to make the church believe that they had given all. They wanted the honour but were not willing to make the sacrifice. One day while church was assembled for worship at the place of meeting in the temple court, and Peter was leading the service, Ananias walked deliberately to the front carrying the money in his hand, and with much pomp and pretense laid it at the apostles' feet. Outwardly he had acted his part well, and no doubt he expected to receive great praise for his generosity. The church had honoured Barnabas, and why not applaud Ananias? After depositing the money he stood before the apostle with apparent reverence, waiting for him to speak the expected words of commendation. Peter spoke but not to commend. The robe of apparent righteousness was not thick enough to hide the wickedness of the heart of the hypocrite. Peter saw through him and knew his motive, and thus addressed him :

“Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not within thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” At the conclusion of this brief speech Ananias fell to the floor and instantly died. This tragic event was a stunning surprise to all present but it did not interfere with the service. Some young men in the congregation arose, wound the body in a sheet, and carried it out and buried it, and then returned to the temple.

Ananias was buried without his wife's knowledge of his death, and three hours afterwards his widow, but ignorant of the fact that she was a widow, came into the assembly of worshippers. She did not have time to be seated before Peter asked her if it was true that they sold the land for so much, and she replied that it was true. Then Peter said: “How is it that ye have agreed together to try the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them that have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out.” She instantly fell down and died. The young men who had buried her husband were returning to the temple after having performed that duty, and as they entered the door they saw her dead body lying on the floor, and in obedience to a command from Peter they took up her dishonoured remains and bore them out and laid them by the side of those of her husband.

The entire church was appalled. The couple had sinned grossly. They had not been compelled to sell the land at all, and after it was sold, they were

not required to bring the money to the apostles. Their sin was wanting the honour of giving all when they were willing to give only a part. Their punishment was just, and it showed to all that God could read the secrets of their hearts. The church moved forward with a new impulse to holy living and the membership increased rapidly. Great excitement prevailed throughout the entire city. The sick were carried into the streets and laid on mats in order that Peter's shadow might fall upon them as he passed and heal them. The report spread abroad from the city, and many sick people from the towns and surrounding country were brought in and were healed.

The death of Ananias and Sapphira was followed by a great revival in the church. Many miracles of healing were wrought. These cures once more aroused the resentment of the high priest and his supporters. They were of the sect of the Sadducees. They caused the apostles to be arrested again and thrown into prison. The high priest expected to bring them to trial on the following day, but an unexpected event occurred that served to prevent it. In the silent hours of the night when deep sleep had fallen upon the city, an angel of Jehovah came and opened the door of the prison and led them out and said to them, "Go ye and stand and speak in the temple all the words of this life." In obedience to this direction, the apostles went to the temple about the break of day and resumed the work of preaching the Gospel of salvation.

Later in the morning the Sanhedrin met to consider the apostles. An orderly was sent to bring the prisoners to court for trial. He went after them but soon returned and made the following report : "The

prison-house we found shut in all safety, and the keepers standing at the doors ; but when we opened the door we found no man within." This report made no small stir in the assembly. The consternation of the grave Sanhedrists can be easily imagined. How could the wonder of the absence of the apostles be explained? The only thought that seemed to give the high priest and his associates any concern was the wonder to what proportions these demonstrations and this new religion would grow.

In the midst of their perplexity they were further astonished. Some one came in haste from the temple and said, "The men whom ye put in prison are in the temple standing and teaching the people." Upon receiving this information the officer who had charge of the soldiers that guarded the temple went and brought the apostles into the presence of the council. He treated them with kindness. The apostles had many friends in the city and the officers feared an uprising. Harsh treatment of them would have aroused a mob, and the officers would have fared badly at the hands of the enraged populace. The apostles took their seats in silence and calmly awaited the pleasure of the high priest. This dignitary thus addressed them : "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name : and behold ye have filled all Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

The high priest had apparently forgotten the time when some of his own party, in urging the crucifixion of Jesus, said, "His blood be upon us and our children." Now they shudder at the thought of having the blood of Christ upon themselves. The answer

that Peter made was worthy the man and the occasion : “ We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. And we are witnesses of these things ; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” This stubborn defiance increased the rage of the council, and the first impulse was to put the apostles to death without further delay. This would have been done had it not been for one cool-headed man whose influence prevented it. This was none other than the great and wise Gamaliel who has been mentioned heretofore as the teacher of Saul of Tarsus. He was held in high esteem by the people, and this exalted standing gave him a ready hearing. With permission of the high priest he arose to speak, but before he gave his advice in the case he made the request that the prisoners be taken from the room. They were accordingly taken out of hearing and Gamaliel addressed the assembly as follows : “ Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves as touching these men, what ye are about to do. For before these days rose up Theudas, giving out himself to be somebody ; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves : who was slain : and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed, and came to naught. After this man rose up Judas, of Galilee, in the days of the enrollment, and drew away some of the people after him ; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered abroad. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men and let them alone : for,



if this council or this work be of men, it will be overthrown : but, if it be of God, ye will never be able to overthrow it ; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God "(Acts v. 35-39).

This is a model speech and shows the good sense of the man who made it. The work of Theudas and Judas came to naught ; they were fanatics whose causes died with them. Gamaliel's advice was to let these men alone. If they were not true men and advocating the truth, they would run their course and be forgotten ; but, if they were doing the work of God, they would succeed, notwithstanding the efforts of men to stop them. This wise and good advice cooled the anger of the council and recalled their judgment that had fled away. Upon reflection they agreed with Gamaliel. They could see the wisdom of his words. Order was restored. The apostles were brought into the assembly again and were brutally beaten. It is not probable that Gamaliel approved this cruelty. After receiving this beating the apostles were charged to speak no more in the name of Christ, and were set at liberty. They went out rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer pain and dishonour for the name of Jesus. The charge that they should preach Christ no more was nobly ignored. In the face of all this opposition and all the threats made against them, they fearlessly proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ. Moral courage could not rise higher. Peter and John were among the bravest of the brave.

Luke, the author of Acts, now turns from the external opposition encountered by the church at the hands of the Jews to give some information concern-

ing the internal condition of things. In the membership of the congregation there were two elements, the native Jews of Palestine and the foreign born Jews called Hellenists or Grecians. We have alluded heretofore to the plan that the church adopted for the relief of the poor widows who were unable to support themselves and had no children to care for them. They received assistance from the congregation. This relief was distributed every day. This systematic way of providing for the poor widows, good and benevolent as it was, led to the first discord that ever disturbed the church. The Hellenistic element became dissatisfied with the distribution of supplies and made complaint against the native Jews, accusing them of unfairness. They claimed that the widows of foreign birth had been neglected by those who had charge of the daily distribution. This was indeed a serious accusation to make against honest men. The apostles were the leaders in the church and responsible for its management. The complaint was a reflection on their honesty.

The Twelve called a meeting of the church to investigate the charge, and if the allegation should be sustained by the facts developed, to correct the evil. The apostles had just ground to feel aggrieved. They had done their best, and it was unpleasant to be accused of partiality. They did not resign their leadership in the church but they refused to be responsible any longer for the daily apportionment of food for the poor. They said to the church assembled that it was not proper for them to neglect preaching the Gospel in order to supply food for a few people. Giving aid to the poor was necessary, but

others could attend to that as well as the apostles could. They suggested to the church to select seven good, wise, and reliable men and place them in charge of the fund for the relief of the poor. The church acted on this advice and the men were selected.

By reading the names of the men chosen to discharge this important trust we see that all of them bore Greek names, and this is a strong indication that they were chosen from among those who had objected to the way the apostles had managed the daily distribution. This shows the broad-minded generosity of the Twelve. By this act they virtually said: "You think that we have not accorded fair treatment to your widows, and to show you our sincerity and also the full confidence we have in your impartiality, we are willing to trust our widows to your care." This noble act of concession to the minority peacefully settled the first disturbance that ever arose in the church.

It is unfortunate that troubles sometimes arise in the churches. These troubles show how weak Christian people are; but when all the churches reach the high plane of Christian living occupied by the church in Jerusalem, all such disturbances can be easily and properly adjusted. As soon as the murmur from the minority was heard, the majority made concessions that fully satisfied them, and the harmony of the church was restored. It was the larger element that saved the church from strife and furnished an example to the churches for all time. It is not to be accepted as true that the minority is always in the right or that the majority should always make con-

cessions, but the same kind of generosity shown here by the apostles will find a way to settle all troubles.

The seven men chosen were all of high character and good standing. Two of them at least became powerful preachers of the Gospel. These were Stephen and Philip. We know something of their labours. However, the silence of the record must not be taken as evidence that the other five were not useful men in the church. The Book of Acts is not a complete history of the church during the period it covers. It was never intended to be such. Only a few facts are given concerning Stephen and Philip, and nothing in regard to the other five. Stephen was the first man to give his life as a sacrifice on the altar of Christ. Philip lived to be an old man, and many years after the death of Stephen he was living in comfortable circumstances in the city of Cæsarea, and tendered the hospitality of his home to Paul and his companions when the apostle was on his way to Jerusalem for the last time.

### III

#### THE DEATH OF STEPHEN AND THE DISPERSION OF THE CHURCH

**T**HE synagogue as an institution among the Jews was not of divine appointment. It was not provided by the law of Moses, but was an expedient that resulted from the destruction of the temple and the downfall of the Jewish nation. Deprived of the privilege of the temple service, the people felt the need of a place to worship God and study the Scriptures together. The synagogue resulted. When the nation had been sufficiently restored to have the temple service resumed, the synagogue remained. In the New Testament period almost every village had its synagogue, and in many of the cities they existed in large numbers. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament for the reason that it did not exist till after the close of the period covered by that portion of the Bible.

There were many synagogues in the city of Jerusalem. The number has been estimated as high as four hundred and eighty. The city was large, and Jews in large numbers and from many lands had gone thither to reside. When a sufficient number of people from the same country to constitute a synagogue became acquainted with each other, a congregation was formed and a meeting place provided. There was one synagogue whose members

stood aloof from the others. It was composed of liberated slaves and was known as the synagogue of the libertines. It is difficult for ex-slaves to gain social recognition from the higher classes of society, but they can be a very congenial band among themselves. For these reasons the people of this class had a congregation and a meeting place of their own. They would naturally have a fellow-feeling for each other. They could be happier to themselves. The Alexandrians, the Cyrenians, the Cilicians, and Jews from proconsular Asia, each class bound together by ties of natural sympathy and esteem, constituted a synagogue. Saul having come from the province of Cilicia, was a member of the Cilician synagogue.

Each of these bands had its own organization and government. When Stephen, full of grace and power, began an aggressive campaign in the city, he encountered the opposition of all the Jews. While these various synagogues had their small differences among themselves, they united to oppose the progress of Christianity. Stephen held many discussions with men who were put forward by these different synagogues. He more than held his own in these contests. "They were not able to withstand the wisdom and spirit by which he spoke." He spoke the wisdom of God and was guided by the Spirit.

Beaten in public discussion and driven from the field of argument, the Jews were not willing to relinquish the victory and quit the contest. They resorted to desperate means to support their tottering cause. They had but one ray of hope, and that was to find some accusation under which they could

bring Stephen before the administrators of the law and convict him and punish him as a criminal. He could be thus arraigned only through deception and fraud. It is probable that they employed men to act the part of spies or detectives who listened to his teaching and reported anything that he said which could in any way be misconstrued and used as testimony against him. When the Jews thought that they had worked up a strong case, they had Stephen arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin for trial. The case was stated as it had been made out, and purchased testimony was given by false witnesses. The charge reads thus: "This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this holy place and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us." This charge was false in some points and true in others. The religion of Christ was intended to abolish the entire religious system of the Jews, and in that respect it was revolutionary in its teaching and purpose. Religion under Christ was to become world-wide rather than national as under Moses.

Those who sat in the council saw the naturally handsome features of the prisoner illuminated with a heavenly radiance as was the face of Moses when he came from the presence of God. It was a memorable scene. The grave Sanhedrists, most of them old men with flowing white beards and Stephen with the vigour of youth still glowing within him, furnished a scene for the painter. As the young evangelist faced that august body, Jonathan, the high priest and presiding officer, asked him the formal question, "Are

these things so?" A modern judge would have asked, "Do you plead guilty or not guilty?"

Stephen, knowing that the supreme moment of his life had come, made the supreme effort of his life in reply. Instead of making a direct answer to the question asked by the high priest, Stephen began a speech in his own defense, which he was not destined to finish. It was a masterpiece of eloquence, and the Christian world must needs regret that it was never completed. The real art of the speaker is seen in the perfect order in arranging the historic matter that he used as the foundation of his address. The speech is found in Acts vii. 1-57.

The first eight verses of the chapter are devoted to the introduction of a line of events that he expected to trace. Let it be remembered that he was standing before a body of men every one of whom was well versed in the history of the Jewish nation. All Jewish history was sacred. To give the history of the nation was to give the history of the religion of the nation. It was religion that made the nation historic. Had it not been for religion the Jewish people would have attained but little prominence in the world, and their place in history would have been small and obscure. To recount the most prominent events in their history was to appeal to the Jews through the two avenues of patriotism and religion. Stephen began his address by giving an account of the origin of the Hebrew people. We shall notice it in brief outline.

As the nation began with Abram the speaker began his defense by referring to the call that the patriarch received from God to go to the land of Canaan and



begin life anew and under better conditions. On receiving this call, Abram journeyed eight hundred miles up the Euphrates River in a northwestern direction, and for a time resided in Haran on one of the tributaries of that stream. He went that way to avoid the vast desert that lay between his native land and the land to which he had started. It is very probable that the age and infirmity of Terah, his father, made it necessary for Abram to stop on the way ; hence his residence in Haran.

The taper of Terah's life burned out in Haran, after which Abram turned towards the southwest and journeyed six hundred miles to his first home in Canaan. In this land his name was changed to Abraham. Here Jehovah renewed His covenant with him, promised the land to his posterity, predicted the Egyptian bondage and also the deliverance from it, and established the ordinance of circumcision.

The birth of Isaac and Jacob is next mentioned. Such a recital of events was sure to hold the attention of the members of the Sanhedrin, but they could not see any connection between these events and the charges made against the speaker. The wisdom of Stephen is seen in his endeavour to gain their good will before he applied these facts and others that were to follow to himself.

The next one of the patriarchs noticed by the speaker is Joseph. Many events are mentioned in this paragraph : the sale of Joseph to the Ishmaelites who, in turn, sold him to an Egyptian, his promotion to honour and authority by the king of Egypt, the famine that fell upon the land of Canaan, the journey of the sons of Jacob to the Nile Valley to purchase

grain, the second journey to the same place for the same purpose, the revelation of Joseph's identity to his astonished brethren, the removal of Jacob and his family to Egypt where he died seventeen years later at the age of one hundred and forty-seven years, his burial in the ancestral necropolis in the land of Canaan,—all this was but a review of a few events that occurred in the glorious days of their early history. The grave Sanhedrists listened with respectful silence and encouraging sympathy to these thrilling statements.

There is a difference between the record in Genesis and the statement of Stephen in regard to the place of Jacob's burial. It was Jacob who bought the land at Shechem and Abraham who purchased the Cave of Machpelah at Hebron. According to Genesis Jacob was buried in the cave at Hebron, yet Stephen says that he was buried in Shechem. This is a strange discrepancy. How can it be explained? Knowing the other facts as thoroughly as Stephen did, it is incredible that he could have been ignorant of these. The only explanation is that the text of Stephen's speech has been corrupted in this place by some one who copied the speech at a later date. The statement as it stands, however, does no harm to the text. The mistake in history can be corrected by the history itself. In this division of the discourse, the cruel sale of Joseph by his brothers is seen in contrast with the salvation of the nation from death by famine, which resulted from it. We can now begin to see the use that Stephen expected to make of these facts, but his hearers were still in the dark as to his purpose.

Glowing with intense enthusiasm, the speaker pro-

ceeds to discuss the career of Moses. He speaks of his birth, his escape from death as an infant, his life in the palace of the king, his crime and flight, his stay in the land of Midian, his marriage and his family. After the efforts of Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt had been ungratefully rejected, the nation was glad to welcome him as their deliverer. The speaker continues. He speaks of the call that came to Moses at the burning bush, and his commission to lead Israel to liberty. Stephen's hearers are reminded of the way God used the man that the oppressed nation rejected in the interest of the nation.

When Moses killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand, he thought that the people would understand that the time had come for the exodus of the nation and that he was to be their leader, but instead of accepting him as their leader and following him out of the country, they regarded him as an unworthy man and a murderer. Forty years later God selected him for the same service for which his people had rejected him. Moses was a great prophet, yet he predicted the coming of one who should be greater. The Jews were guilty of gross ill treatment of Moses when they refused to acknowledge him as their ruler and judge, but their conduct towards him forty years later, after he had led them out of Egypt, showed still greater ingratitude. Proceeding with his defense, Stephen reminds those to whom he spoke of the reprehensible conduct of their fathers as seen in their further treatment of Moses.

They rejected him in the wilderness and longed for the land of Egypt with its flesh pots, its onions, and its garlic; they lapsed into idolatry and made gods

to go before them ; they engaged in idolatrous orgies around a golden calf. This last sin was the greater because of the positive knowledge they had that God was in their midst. In verses 42, 43, there is a quotation from the prophet Amos in which is clearly foretold the final rejection of the chosen people.

Stephen continues by making reference to the tabernacle in the wilderness, and also to the temple that was erected at a later period. He had been accused of blasphemy against the temple. This he neither admits nor denies. Proceeding with his argument, he tells them what the true value of the temple was. The tabernacle was movable and perishable. This was followed by a splendid and costly temple, which was also destined to be destroyed. "The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." No temple erected by man could be the real dwelling place of God. Such a temple would serve a few generations as a place of worship and then tumble into ruins. The temple being a temporary structure, there could be no blasphemy in saying that it would be destroyed and its function cease.

In verses 51-53, the application thus far concealed with great care is made known. Joseph, whom God had selected to save the lives of his brothers and their families, had previously been sold by them into cruel slavery. All the prophets had been maltreated grossly by the very nation in whose interests they laboured. Now the greatest Prophet had come bringing God's latest and greatest message to mankind, and had been wickedly murdered by the descendants of those who had treated the former prophets with brutal cruelty and gross ingratitude.

Stephen could not control his feelings longer. In this connection a brilliant writer remarks: "It was, I think, something in the aspect of his audience—some sudden conviction that to such invincible obstinacy his words were addressed in vain—which made him suddenly stop short in his review of history, and hurl into their faces the gathered thunder of his wrath and scorn."<sup>1</sup> "Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the power of the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them who showed before the coming of the Righteous One: of whom ye have been the betrayers and murderers; ye who received the law ordained by angels and have not kept it."

These are burning words, and their effect was electric. All order was suspended. The court became a mob and the trial a murder. They were cut to the heart by the piercing words of the young evangelist, and, grinding their teeth in rage, they rushed upon the courageous champion of the Christian faith, determined to take his life. He stood his ground without flinching and bravely looked into the face of death. Lifting his eyes towards heaven, the vision of the glorified Christ burst upon him in all the fullness of divine splendour. The scene was too inspiring for him to withhold from his murderers. He cried out, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." As one man they came. They dragged him outside the gate of the city and stoned him till he was dead. The witnesses who had testified against him hastily threw off their outer

<sup>1</sup>Farrar.

garments, leaving them in the care of a young man whose name was Saul, and led in the work of murder. As they began to hurl stones at the erect body of Stephen, he knew that his time had come to die. He called upon the Lord in prayer saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then kneeling down upon the ground, he prayed for his murderers saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Having thus prayed for himself and his murderers, he expired.

This man's distinction is unique. He was the first person in the world to give up his life, a martyr to Jesus Christ. A great multitude that no man could number have died for the same Christ since Stephen died, and in doing this they have followed in the footsteps of this worthy pioneer of Christian martyrdom. His loss was great to the church, but his death was an inspiration to the living. His example served to strengthen the faith of the disciples in view of the probability of similar murder.

In connection with Stephen's death, we see the difference between the Jewish dispensation and that of Christ. In 2 Chronicles xxiv. 20-22 we read of the death of Zechariah who was a prophet of God and who was stoned to death by the Jews because he had rebuked their sins. As the prophet died he offered a prayer relative to his murderers. His prayer was that God would take vengeance on them for their crime. Stephen, the New Testament prophet and representative of the religion of Christ, died praying that God would not lay the sin of his murder to the charge of his murderers.

How can we account for the difference in the sentiment of these two prayers? Was Stephen a better

man than Zechariah, or was either one of them out of harmony with the religion of his respective time? The solution is easy. Zechariah lived and died under the law of Moses, and that law was stern and merciless. It was founded on justice alone. Stephen lived and died under the gospel dispensation, and the Gospel tempers justice with mercy. Each man was true to his religion. Zechariah acted in harmony with the law and Stephen in harmony with the Gospel. Jesus, when He was crucified, prayed for the forgiveness of His executioners saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." When Stephen died, he remembered the example of his Master and followed it. Had he followed the example of Zechariah and prayed for the punishment of his murderers, he would have shown himself to be a Jew in religion rather than a Christian. Zechariah was a product of the law of Moses, and Stephen of the Gospel of Christ.

## IV

### SAUL CONVERTED

“**A**ND Saul was consenting unto his death.” In these words we receive our introduction to the young man from Tarsus. The foregoing pages have been written in preparation for the study that it is now our pleasure to begin. Stephen’s death was the signal for an onslaught upon the church. A relentless persecution broke out and raged with fury. A few devout men bore the remains of Stephen to the tomb and, with many tears, gave them Christian burial. Saul soon became the leader of the persecution. The forces opposed to the church found in him a worthy champion of their unrighteous cause. The church was scattered. Men, women, and children fled in every direction to escape his wrath. Of the many thousand disciples who composed the church, only the apostles remained in the city.

This persecution was a great evil, but at least one good result came from it. God, whose power can make the wrath of man praise Him, exerted that power on this occasion. The final instruction given by Jesus to the apostles just before He ascended to His heavenly throne was that they should preach the Gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. The saving health of the Gospel should be known among the nations, and the task of the church will not be



complete till the glory of the Lord fills the earth as the waters cover the sea. For some reason—or was it for no reason—the apostles made no effort to preach the Gospel beyond the walls of Jerusalem. But when this persecution came and the church was scattered like sheep without a shepherd, these plain disciples began the work that the apostles had failed to do. They went forth and preached the Gospel in compliance with the last command of the risen Saviour.

The eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters of Acts record events that are closely connected in point of time. In the eighth chapter there is a brief account of the labours of Philip, one of the Seven. He was a man of conviction and courage. He was brave enough to disregard the prejudice of centuries, and carry the message of salvation to the despised Samaritans. This no apostle had dared to do. The Samaritans believed Philip as he preached concerning the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and were baptized in large numbers. No one can preach Christ fully and not preach the things concerning His kingdom.

Philip was directed of God to leave the city in which he was turning many to righteousness by his preaching, and to go into an uninhabited region in southern Canaan. To human wisdom this appeared to be a mistake. Apparently, there was no reason for leaving a populous city and going into the desert to preach the Gospel. Human judgment would have directed him to remain where the multitudes could hear the word of life, but Philip had too much faith in God to hesitate. He arose and went. The result of his going demonstrated the wisdom of God in sending him. On the highway he overtook a way-

faring man from Ethiopia and brought him to Christ. He baptized him in a certain water by the roadside and sent him on his way to his distant home, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. This convert to the Christian faith held a high position under the queen of his country, having charge of all her treasures. We would gladly know more about him but nothing more is told us.

On parting from this noted man, Philip passed to Azotus, the Ashdod of the Old Testament, and preached Christ as he had done in Samaria. Turning northward, he preached in all the cities in the coast plain till he came to Cæsarea where he resided in his old age. With this glimpse of the labours of Philip, we turn to pursue the career of Saul of Tarsus.

The beauty that fades from the mother's face reappears in the faces of her children ; so the zeal and consecration of Stephen reappear in the person of the apostle to the Gentiles. It is safe to say that, had Stephen lived, he would have performed a similar service for Christ and the church to that rendered by Saul. Divine wisdom took one of Stephen's murderers and put him into Stephen's place. Saul could hardly have been what he was if he had not witnessed the death agonies of the first martyr.

The church in Jerusalem had been scattered and Judea had been terrorized. Saul was relentless in his efforts to suppress the new religion and utterly merciless to its devotees. Men, women, and children, without regard to age or condition, were thrown into prison and led out to death. Not satisfied with making havoc of the church in Jerusalem, the flaming zeal of Saul in what he truly believed to be a right-

eous cause led him to long for other fields of activity and for other victories over the adherents to the Christian faith. He could not rest as long as there was a foe to the faith of his fathers breathing the breath of life. He compelled the Christians to blaspheme their Christ. When in his old age he reviewed those days of cruelty and carnage, he said that, in his early manhood, he had been so exceedingly mad against the followers of Christ that he had persecuted them even unto foreign cities.

Only one of these foreign cities is mentioned in Acts. The last city that he attempted to visit in his mad career was Damascus, and on the way to that city the whole current of his life was changed. Damascus is said to be the oldest city on the globe. It is older than the history of Abraham. The most trusted servant that the patriarch owned was from that city (Gen. xv. 2). It is mentioned in the account of the only military campaign in which Abraham participated. Lot and his family were carried away as captives by the allied armies of Chedorlaomer. One who had escaped from the enemy brought the news to Abraham who took three hundred and eighteen men, his own servants, and pursued the retiring army. He overtook the army and engaged it in battle, defeated it and pursued the fugitives as far as Hobah on the left hand of Damascus (Gen. xiv. 15). The city is located in a fertile spot in the midst of a vast desert. The oasis is formed by two small streams which render the land fruitful. Viewed from a distance, the white city, gleaming through a setting of green, presents a beautiful and pleasing appearance. It is not mentioned in the New Testament ex-

cept in connection with the conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

The road that Saul most probably travelled leads northward from Jerusalem and passes through the old city of Shechem, and thence, bearing to the right, it enters the Jordan valley and crosses that stream over a bridge the remains of which still stand a short distance south of the Lake of Galilee. Thence the road passes across the desert waste to Damascus. This was the direct route from Jerusalem and it is reasonably certain that Saul travelled it.

In some way unknown to us Saul learned that there were some disciples of Christ in Damascus. They had gone to that city for safety. Saul was determined to wreak his vengeance on them. He accordingly obtained letters from the high priest to serve to introduce him to the leading Jews of Damascus and began his journey thither, breathing out threatenings and slaughter. He was devoutly honest and deeply earnest. He was filled with that which he sincerely believed to be a righteous zeal for the truth. He never dreamed that he was unconsciously fulfilling the Master's words, "He that killeth you thinketh that he offereth service unto God." He was in high spirits and buoyant hopes when he began his journey. Those who composed his company were, like himself, zealous for the law and proud to serve under such a leader.

The distance of one hundred and thirty-six miles between Jerusalem and Damascus made it necessary for Saul to spend about a week on the road. This week of leisure gave him ample time and opportunity for quiet and serious reflection. As he rode along

the weary and monotonous way he had time to commune with his own thoughts undisturbed. He must have meditated much on the terrible scenes of blood through which he had but recently passed and in which he had been the chief actor. He reflected on the sublime faith of the Christians which enabled them to meet death with calm resignation. A fresh vision of the shining face of Stephen rose before him. He beheld the heavenly radiance flashing from the martyr's features and again he heard his dying prayer. Did Stephen die foolishly and in a mad man's cause? Was he deluded? Could it be possible after all that the crucified carpenter was the real Messiah? Such thoughts as these would naturally force themselves upon his mind as he journeyed on day after day, but when they came he drove them away and thought of himself as the one chosen of Jehovah to defend the law of Moses and maintain the purity of the national religion.

Saul drew near to Damascus. The heat was intense, and the glare from the white sand was almost intolerable. Most travellers in that land spend the midday hours resting under tents sheltered from the torrid heat; but, in the distance, Saul could see the city that was to be his destination, and pushed onward through the sweltering atmosphere. In the midst of this heat and glare he had the greatest experience of his life. Suddenly there shone round about him and his company a light of greater brightness than that of the noonday sun. The oppressive silence was broken by a voice speaking in the Hebrew language and saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The fact that the Hebrew tongue

was used in addressing Saul is stated in the twenty-sixth chapter of Acts. Those who were with him saw the light and heard the voice but were unable to understand the words that were spoken. The Hebrew was at that time a dead language, and Saul was the only one in the party who understood that sacred tongue.

Saul trembling with astonishment answered, "Who art thou, Lord?" The voice replied, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest. 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 shall appear unto thee: delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, 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" (Acts xxvi. 15-18). Saul, quaking with fear, said, "What shall I do, Lord?" Jesus told him to go into the city and he would find a man who would answer his question.

The Lord had left His cause in the hands of men whom He had qualified to conduct its affairs, and instead of answering Saul's question in a direct way He sent him to a man who could give him the desired information. Jesus appeared to Saul to make him a minister and a witness. It was to be Saul's mission in life to preach the resurrection of Jesus to the Gentile nations, and in order to qualify him to give personal testimony to this fundamental fact it was necessary for Jesus to show Himself to him after

the resurrection had occurred. The resurrection of Jesus thus became to Saul a matter of personal knowledge. He had seen Him and heard Him, and could preach the resurrection as a matter of fact. His conversion resulted from his hearing, believing, and obeying the truth. He surrendered himself completely to his Lord. He was made an apostle by this special revelation and the commission to preach Christ to the Gentiles. The Lord needs no more apostles, and, for that reason, there have been no more such revelations and experiences as Saul had.

Blinded by the vision, he arose from the earth and was led by the hand of one of his companions. He passed inside the city in a condition quite different from that in which he had expected to enter it. His pride had vanished, and his bold and independent spirit was humbled completely before the Christ, risen and glorious. He was conducted to the home of a Jew named Judas of whom nothing more is known. This man's name is found in the New Testament because he opened his door to receive the blinded Saul. His hospitality has made him famous. For three days Saul lay in darkness and agony, waiting for the instruction that Jesus had told him would be given him in the city.

There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. He was a devout man, having high standing in the estimation of the Jews of the city. To this man came a message from God saying, "Arise and go into the street that is called Straight and enquire, at the house of Judas, for one Saul of Tarsus: for behold he prayeth." Even with this direction and as-

assurance, Ananias did not feel free to go. We cannot wonder that he hesitated. Like Moses at Mount Horeb, when he was told that he was to deliver Israel from slavery, he had an objection to offer and stated it. He said, "Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem, and here he hath authority from the chief priest to bind all that call upon thy name."

Ananias cannot be censured for not readily consenting to go to Saul. The very name of Saul carried terror to the hearts of the followers of Christ, and to be ordered to go into the presence of this murderous man was hard for Ananias to understand. The Lord gave him further assurance in these words, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel; for I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake." This cup of prophecy was filled to the brim. Saul had caused others to suffer unwillingly in the interest of the Christian faith, and now he was destined to suffer willingly in the same righteous cause.

Ananias went at once to the house of Judas and enquired for Saul. He was conducted into the room occupied by Saul and found himself in the presence of the most unrelenting foe that the church ever had. He had no words of censure for Saul's former course, but addressed him by the endearing word, *brother*. He said: "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away



thy sins, calling on his name." At this instant his sight returned, and then he received Christian baptism. With body, mind, and conscience at ease, he took food and was refreshed.

We do not know how long Saul remained in the house of Judas. It is probable, however, that as soon as he was refreshed by a few days' rest he went forth and began to preach the faith that he had tried his hardest to destroy. He remained "certain days with the disciples that were at Damascus." When he was converted to the Christian faith, his conversion was complete. He brought into the church the same consuming zeal and enthusiasm that he had exhibited when fighting against it. With intense desire to preach the Gospel thrilling his heart and mind he could not long be silent, and at his earliest opportunity he went boldly into the synagogue and proclaimed the Gospel of the Son of God. The disciples of Christ at Damascus were greatly astonished when they heard that the great persecuter who had made havoc of the church in Jerusalem and who had come to their own city, breathing out threatenings and slaughter, had embraced the religion of Christ and become a preacher of the Gospel. It seemed too good to be true. But when Saul's strength had been fully restored and he began to confound the Jews that dwelt in the city, they were convinced that he was indeed a disciple.

He remained in Damascus "many days." The expression is indefinite, but when the time covered by these words had passed, he left the city and did not return for three years. In our efforts to obtain a complete record of his movements at this period of

his life, we can gain some information by the study of one of his epistles. In Galatians i. 17 he says that he went into Arabia, and in the eighteenth verse he says that his visit to Jerusalem was three years after his conversion. The larger portion of these years was spent in Arabia. The name "Arabia" was indefinite. It is now limited to the peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Damascus was in the Arabia of that day. We have no means of knowing the exact place or places visited by Saul at this time, but as the region around Mount Sinai was in Arabia, it is not improbable that he withdrew to that historic place. There Moses had seen the vision of the burning bush; there the mountain had burned beneath the feet of the God of Israel; there the Ten Commandments had been given from the midst of the thick darkness where God was, and there Elijah had spent forty days in communion with Jehovah.

But why should we believe that Saul spent three years in silent meditation? Some think that it took him all this time to study out clearly his new relation to God and the mission on which he was to be sent. Why should we believe this? There was too much flaming zeal in the heart of Saul and too strong a desire to preach the Gospel of salvation for him to have been content to remain in silent obscurity for three years. The hermit's life had no attraction for him. The world lay in wickedness. He was not long in retirement, and, like John the Baptist, he came forth a voice for God.

We have no information concerning what Paul did during these years spent in Arabia. The silence of the Scriptures leaves him in darkness and we can-

not lift the veil. Yet it is safe to say that he was not idle. If we had a record of that period, we can hardly doubt that it would be as full of the accounts of sermons delivered, sinners converted and persecutions endured as the record in the latter part of Acts. But Infinite Wisdom has left this portion of his life shrouded in darkness and we cannot penetrate the gloom.

Saul returned to Damascus but his stay was short. He began to experience at the hands of the Jews the same kind of treatment that many innocent Christians had experienced at his hands. Their anger was greatly inflamed against him. There were two reasons for this : they were hostile to the followers of Christ in general, and, since Saul had allied himself with the enemy, he was looked upon by them as a traitor. He had not only deserted them but had joined their adversaries. Deserters are ever regarded with scorn and contempt by the champions of the cause they desert. The Jews looked upon him as an unworthy apostate and thirsted for his blood. No one dared to assassinate him though all desired his death.

Men, in large bodies, will do deeds that they would not do as individuals. The Jews held some secret meetings to lay plans to rid themselves of Saul by taking his life. They carefully plotted his murder but tried to keep their design secret. Sentinels were placed at the gates of the city to prevent his escape, and this vigilance was kept up day and night. The disciples became aware of the plot, and a counter plot was formed. Saul's life seemed to depend upon a question of strategy, but he passed safely through

the danger. Some one who was well informed in Jewish history probably thought of the way the spies made their escape from Jericho (Josh. ii. 15), and suggested that Saul might be saved in a similar manner. At night when every gate was securely guarded, some zealous disciples let Saul down in a basket from a window to the ground outside the city wall, and he stole away in the darkness.

It was exceedingly humiliating to Saul to be compelled to make his escape from the city in such a criminal-like manner, but he was glad to find himself a free man once more though in the desert and alone. No human friend was near to speak a word of sympathy and encouragement. It is not certain that Saul had any definite plan of action before him, but after gaining his liberty, he turned his face towards Jerusalem and began his journey thither. He tells us (Gal. i. 18) that his object in making this visit to the Holy City was to become acquainted with Peter. The incidents on the way between Damascus and Jerusalem, if any occurred, are passed over in silence. Nothing is said of Saul's emotions as he drew near to the spot where Jesus had spoken to him three years before and invested him with apostolic authority. Our imagination must show to us the throbbing breast, the drooping head, and the tearful eyes of the solitary traveller as he listened in the darkness for that voice again. The voice was not heard, and all remained as silent as the deep dark stillness of the peaceful night.

Saul needed no further instruction at this time, and, receiving none, he pursued his lonely way. He passed from that sacred spot feeling the thrill of the

presence of the absent One, and when morning dawned, he was well on his way, walking hastily over the desert. Looking to the right he saw Mount Hermon, resplendent with the first rays of the rising sun and reaching to the clouds. Behind him in the distance lay Damascus encircled by a fringe of green ; to the left and in front of him, the barren expanse, apparently without limit, stretched away to the horizon.

Upon reaching Jerusalem after a toilsome journey of many days and weary and worn with travel, he sought out a company of disciples and attempted to join himself to them. To say the least, they were suspicious of him ; and, calling to mind his former attitude towards the church, they refused to recognize him as a disciple or admit him to their fellowship. For this he never censured them. He could see plainly that they had good reasons for their course. One of the most popular men in the Jerusalem church was Barnabas. He has been mentioned heretofore in connection with the benevolence of the church in caring for the poor. He was personally acquainted with Saul. They had been reared in neighbouring provinces and had probably been fellow-students in the same school. Barnabas knew the facts concerning Saul's conversion and took it upon himself to vouch for him as a Christian. Noted for his powers of persuasion, he was not long in convincing the leaders of the church that Saul was no longer a man to be dreaded by the Christians but a thorough Christian himself. As soon as he was recognized as a Christian he began to preach the Gospel of Christ with great zeal and success.

His stay in the city was brief and his departure hurried. He had been there but fifteen days when the Jews conspired against him, and some features of his departure from Damascus were reënacted. When his friends heard that the Jews were about to kill him, they took measures for his safety. He was assured by a vision in the temple that no immediate harm should befall him. We shall take his own description of this vision : " And it came to pass, that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance, and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem : because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee : and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and keeping the garments of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart : for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles " (Acts xxii. 17-21).

After this vision the brethren slipped him out of the city and accompanied him as far as Cæsarea, and at this port he went aboard a ship and sailed away over the Mediterranean Sea to his native city. At home in Tarsus, we leave him for a while, where he remains among friends and amid the familiar scenes of his boyhood.

## V

### EVENTS IN ANTIOCH

**S**AUL spent several years in or near his native city, and there can be no doubt as to how he spent his time. He was busy every day telling the story of redemption to his friends and associates of early days, and in evangelizing the surrounding country.

In the meantime events of momentous interest had occurred in the city of Antioch. The Gentiles, who for thirteen centuries had been regarded as a people unclean, unworthy, and undesirable, had been received into full fellowship of the church of Christ. All national boundaries had been broken down and all tribal distinctions abolished. This was a long stride forward in the fulfillment of God's plan. The manner in which this religious revolution was accomplished is given in detail in the tenth chapter of Acts, but as Peter and not Saul was the human agent in the enterprise, we refer the reader to that chapter for the facts.

When the church in Jerusalem was scattered during the persecution that began with the death of Stephen, some of the refugees went as far as Cyprus, Phœnicia, and Antioch, preaching to the Jews only. Cyprus is an island in the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea, and Phœnicia, the birthplace of letters and navigation, was a small territory border-

ing on the eastern shore of the same sea. Antioch was a splendid city on the Orontes River, once the capital of the Greek kingdom of Assyria. It was situated sixteen and one-half miles from the Mediterranean shore, and was surrounded by wild and rugged scenery. Where the Lebanon range of mountains running northward and the Taurus chain running eastward meet in a bold and abrupt angle, the noted city stands. It is situated partly on an island, and partly on the levee on the south bank of the river, and extends far up the rugged side of Mount Sulpius. It figured largely in the history of the rise and progress of Mohammedanism, and also of the crusades. Fiction has wrapped its misty folds about it. While the city is noted for many things, its greatest interest to the Christian student is because of the fact that it was at Antioch that the first great church was built up in which the Gentile element was dominant. It was the first Gentile church. When the preachers from Jerusalem arrived in the city they disregarded all national bounds and extended the blessing of the Gospel to the Gentiles. God blessed their labours abundantly and many were won to Christ.

The report of this work in Antioch reached Jerusalem, three hundred miles to the south. The church at the latter place had been fully prepared for such tidings, having heard from Peter's lips how God had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. They rejoiced at the good news from the northern city. Barnabas, one of the most useful men in the Jerusalem church, was sent to the Gentile metropolis to aid in confirming the faith of the young converts and to make proper inspection of the affairs of the church. The



desire of the brethren at Jerusalem was to see a strong congregation established at Antioch, which would serve as an evangelizing agency and center of operations among the Gentiles. Barnabas was well suited to the work committed to his hands. His description furnished by Luke shows him to have been the ideal minister of Christ. "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." The natural results of the labours of such a minister are stated in the same connection, "and much people were added to the Lord."

The coming of this excellent man was an inestimable blessing to the young church. They needed instruction, and he was well equipped to lead them in all good things. When he saw the genuineness of their faith and the depth of their piety he was glad, and exhorted them to cleave to the Lord. The church in Antioch was being prepared to enter upon an enterprise of the greatest importance, and it grew rapidly in numbers and influence.

Barnabas soon saw the need of a competent man to assist him in caring for the spiritual interests of so many people, and, casting about for a suitable fellow-worker, he thought of his friend Saul whom he had introduced to the apostles at Jerusalem, and for whose sincerity he stood pledged, when all others were suspicious of him. Saul was at this time in Tarsus whither he had gone in compliance with the direction given him in the vision while praying in the temple. Antioch and Tarsus were neighbouring cities. Barnabas left the church for a time in the care of others and went to Tarsus in search of Saul. These two devoted friends had not met since the night

the brethren in Jerusalem escorted Saul to Cæsarea and sent him forth to Tarsus. In going to Tarsus, Barnabas could have travelled by land, passing around the bay at the northeast corner of the sea, or he could have sailed from Seleucia, across the open mouth of the bay and up the Cydnus, landing at the wharf in the heart of the city. He made his appearance, a strange man in a strange city, and enquired for Saul. He found him and brought him to Antioch. It would seem from the language employed that some search was made before Barnabas found the apostle.

For a year these two great men continued to serve the church in Antioch. They taught much people and the work greatly prospered under their ministry. It was at Antioch that the name "Christian" was first used to designate the followers of Christ. Regarding the origin of this name there has been much unprofitable controversy. Some claim that it was applied to Christ's followers as a term of reproach, but this is not reasonable. The Jews looked upon the term "Christ" as equivalent to "Messiah," and consequently a name too sacred to be used in derision. Furthermore, the Jews had a real term of reproach, the name "Nazarene." It would be unreasonable to believe that they would use a sacred name in derision when the derisive term was both current and popular.

Others contend that the name was conferred by the Gentiles, and still others that the disciples bestowed this name upon themselves in honour of Christ. The contention is also made that the name Christian was given in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah (Isaiah lxii. 1-5). In this prophecy God declared

that, when the Gentiles accepted Christ, He would give His people a new name which He would bestow on them Himself. Antioch was the first great Gentile church, and it is significant that the new name, *Christian*, came into use there (Acts xi. 26). This being a new designation for God's people and first used at Antioch, would imply, if not more than imply, that it was the "new name" given by divine authority and spoken by the mouth of the Lord. Still, it must be admitted that a careful study of the passage in Isaiah does not make it absolutely certain that the name Christian was the new name that God promised to give His people; yet a stronger argument can be made for its divine origin than can be produced to prove that it originated with men. But whether it originated with God or with man is a matter of little moment. It was recognized by the friends and enemies alike as an appropriate name to distinguish the followers of Christ, and has become current throughout the world.

It is very unfortunate for the Christian religion that divisive names ever came into existence, and that the body of Christ ever came to be divided into the numerous sects and parties of the present day. To be a Christian is all that the Gospel demands, and that is all one should be. The multiplicity of denominations is not only needless but exceedingly detrimental to the progress of the religion of Jesus Christ. The lovers of Christ will be compelled to unite before the world will believe on Him as the Saviour. The first and greatest problem before the church of this age is the union of Christians, and when that is consummated, the conversion of the

world will be an easy matter. With a solidly united church, the world could be evangelized in a generation.

Some time during the year that Saul spent at Antioch, a company of teachers and prophets from Jerusalem made their appearance in the city. It was a delegation from the parent church and sent for the purpose of assisting Barnabas and Saul in caring for the church and evangelizing the city. Agabus, one of these prophets, made known the fact that a famine was impending, and that it would extend all over the known world. The Gentile Christians of Antioch had a very tender feeling for their Jewish brethren in Palestine. This feeling prompted them to send some relief to Jerusalem to be used to help the brethren through the period of scarcity. The decision was unanimous, and every one gave as God had prospered him. The amount contributed is not stated. Barnabas and Saul were appointed to bear the donation to Jerusalem. Because of the reënforcement of the preaching force by these workers from Jerusalem Barnabas and Saul could be spared long enough to go upon this journey.

Luke devotes the twelfth chapter of Acts to events that occurred in Palestine and chiefly in the city of Jerusalem. He tells of another persecution of the church. Herod Agrippa led the fight. By his orders James, the son of Zebedee, was put to death. Peter was rudely thrown into prison, and he fully expected to meet the same fate, but was delivered from death by an angel who led him out of the prison and gave him his liberty. Herod met a well deserved death by a stroke of divine judgment, and,

the tyrant out of the way, the word of the Lord grew and multiplied.

Barnabas and Saul returned in due time and reported the result of their mission. They had been well received by the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, and the relief had been accepted in the same fraternal spirit that prompted the Gentile brethren to send it. A strange young man from Jerusalem accompanied them back to Antioch. This man was John whose surname was Mark. He was a kinsman of Barnabas and his mother lived in Jerusalem. It was to her house that Peter went after the angel had opened the prison and led him out. John Mark was the man who wrote the gospel narrative that bears his name. He is mentioned as laboring in the Gospel in different countries and in the company of different fellow-labourers. His name will be often mentioned in this book.

## VI

### THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY BEGUN : EVENTS IN CYPRUS

**F**ROM the thirteenth chapter of Acts to the end of the Book, we journey in company with Saul of Tarsus. This part of Acts opens with a list of the leaders in the church at Antioch. Their names are found in the opening verse. Barnabas and Symeon, called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, the foster brother of Herod, and Saul. This was a great array of talent and consecration to be confined to one congregation, and we are not surprised that a great expansion in evangelism was the next move.

God could use some of these men more advantageously elsewhere. The Holy Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." We know that Saul was called to become a chosen vessel to bear the name of Jesus to the Gentiles, and here we learn that Barnabas was called for the same great purpose. The time had now fully come for them to enter upon the mission of their lives. Their lifelong task was to begin, and no one could foretell what and where the ending would be. They were to be the pioneers of the ages in heathen missions, and the missionaries of all the centuries since have but built upon the foundation laid by them.

After a solemn and impressive service of prayer, fasting, and the laying on of hands, the missionaries started on their long and uncertain journey. It was the most important and far-reaching enterprise ever undertaken by man. It was the beginning of the evangelization of the Gentile world, and was undertaken in obedience to the command of Christ and in answer to the appeal of the nations. The isles had long waited for God's law, and now they were to hear it. Human history records nothing worthy to be compared to the beginning of the glorious work of preaching the Gospel to the children of men; and while the Gospel had been preached prior to this time, the preaching was confined to the Jews only. The traditional provincialism of the Jews was disregarded by the church at Antioch, and under the impulse of divine direction the Gospel was offered to all mankind. The church has only one mission, and that is to preach the Gospel of Christ all round the globe. Its task will not be complete till all are brought to see the Light that lighteth every man coming into the world.

The three men, Barnabas, Saul and Mark, who undertook the perilous task of preaching the Gospel to the Gentile nations, were actuated by the strongest impulse that ever stirred the hearts of men. Their purpose was to glorify God in seeking to save men. They had lost self and found the race. Their field was the world.

On leaving Antioch, they could have travelled by boat down the winding river to the sea, but it is probable that they went to Seleucia by land. If they did this, they crossed the Orontes to its northern

bank, turned westward and passed along the highway leading thence from Antioch. The road passed through large groves of palm and jungles of oleander. Seleucia was a short distance north of the mouth of the river, and was the port of Antioch. The river was navigable for small vessels, but the larger ships could not ascend to the city. These had to unload in the harbour of Seleucia and send their freight and passengers to Antioch in boats of lighter draught.

From Seleucia the missionaries sailed for Cyprus. They were full of joy ; the whole heathen world was before them and the Spirit of God was in their hearts. This was the first voyage ever taken in the interest of heathen missions. There has been a great change since then. It is rarely, if ever, the case, in our day, that a ship sails from a Christian land, in the direction of any heathen land, that does not number among her passengers the devoted missionary on the way to help the nations shrouded in gloom.

There are some good reasons why these men went to Cyprus to begin their labours as missionaries. It was the nearest of all the foreign countries. On a clear day the mountains of Cyprus can be distinctly seen from Seleucia. There were many Jews in the island, and some preaching had already been done there, but to the Jews only (Acts xi. 19). But perhaps the strongest reason for choosing that field was that it was the native land of Barnabas, and he wanted to take the message of life and love to his own people. When Andrew found Jesus, he went at once in search of his brother Simon and brought him to the Master. That is all we know of the work of



Andrew, but if he did nothing else but bring Simon Peter to the Lord he did a great work, and must ever be regarded as an eminently successful man. Peter was the chief speaker on the day of Pentecost, when three thousand were added to the Lord's people. Andrew is not mentioned in connection with the results of Peter's sermon on that day, but we can see him dimly in the background. This same love for kindred and friends led Barnabas to Cyprus.

Mark was a young man. His mother was a sister of Barnabas. This relationship was probably the reason why he was selected to go on this journey in company with his two seniors. They took him along as an attendant. He was not probably an active preacher at this time, but assisted in the work in any way he could, and especially in administering the ordinance of baptism. Saul was not at this time regarded as the leader, the name of Barnabas always being mentioned first.

The ship sailed away towards the southwest. Cyprus is about one hundred miles from Seleucia, and, with the wind favouring them, they could have traversed the distance in a few hours. The horn of land extending northeastward from the mainland of Cyprus is known as Cape St. Andrea. This was the first land to which they drew near. Sailing on by this point, the southern projection came into view. This is known as Cape Grego. Between these two capes the ancient city of Salamis rose to view, and the vessel was soon at the dock.

In this city a large number of Jews resided, and met in a plurality of synagogues. The missionaries, being themselves Jews, had the privilege of using

these synagogues. Thus they came in contact with the heathen people who attended the Jewish services. In Salamis they "proclaimed the word of God in the synagogue of the Jews." We do not know with what success they preached, but from the silence of the historian who reports no results, it would be natural to infer that few, if any, accepted Christ. Their success could not have been great.

We do not know how long the missionaries remained in Salamis, or the manner in which they took their departure. They remained long enough to be convinced that they could do more good elsewhere, and then departed. It was not a little discouraging to achieve little or no success in the first heathen city that they attempted to evangelize. Could they expect better success in other places? They did not trouble themselves by trying to forecast the future, but went bravely forward, leaving the results with God. There is a tradition to the effect that Barnabas met a martyr's death in Salamis during the reign of Nero. This is only a legend, yet it may be true. A church and a cave, both near Salamis, were dedicated to his memory and bore his name.

Luke is very brief in recording the movements of the apostolic company. He hurries his readers along unless he has reasons to pause. He merely says that they left Salamis and came to Paphos, passing through the island on the way. He does not inform us as to any preaching on the way, or the road they travelled on their journey. If any stops were made, nothing occurred worth recording. The silence of the writer tells the story. It is about one hundred miles from Salamis to Paphos. The latter city was the principal

port on the western end of the island, and the seat of the provincial government. The two cities were connected by a well-paved and well-kept road, and it is probable that the missionaries passed over it in their journey. The trip could have been made in a short time, and with comparative ease. Sergius Paulus, the governor of the island, had his official residence at Paphos.

When Saul and his two companions arrived in Paphos, they found the city under the influence of a powerful sorcerer who claimed to possess some kind of magic power. He had a strong following, and even the governor had been attracted to him. This is not strange when we consider the times, and the customs of the people. Many people of wealth and high social standing kept such persons about them, and held them in high esteem. The oracles were consulted by them on important occasions, and, by them, deep mysteries were supposed to be made plain. This sorcerer in Paphos was a man of note. Perhaps he was fortune-teller to the governor and lived in the same house with him. He was a Jew and bore the name of Bar-Jesus. He bore the name of Elymas also. This name is Arabic and means "The Wise." He had most probably bestowed this name on himself to aid him in holding the attention of the public.

The missionaries had not been in the city very long until they attracted the attention of the governor. He was a man of understanding. He invited them to come to the palace and tell him the strange story that they had brought to the city. This invitation to tell the story of Christ to the governor in his own home came to the missionaries as a great surprise, and

they made haste to comply with it. They rejoiced at the opportunity to preach Christ to the ruler of the island. They arranged a time for a meeting with him, and, at the appointed hour, they stood in the presence of the heathen ruler. It was a momentous occasion, and, to the missionaries, a thrilling experience. To their extreme chagrin and disgust, they found Elymas the sorcerer in the room with the governor. They saw at once that they would meet opposition in their efforts to win the governor to Christ. They may have had more than one sitting with him ; and Elymas, not willing to relinquish his hold on him without a struggle, was ever present with him, and ready to act in his defense.

On one of these occasions, as Saul was endeavouring to convince the governor of the truthfulness of the Christian religion, the sorcerer thrust himself into the conversation and sought to dissuade the governor from listening, lest he should be convinced. For a while Saul endured this interference with patience, but he could see that a crisis must soon come. He saw that the only way to reach Sergius Paulus with the truth was to break the spell under which he was held by the impostor, and this he proceeded to do. With eyes flashing with righteous indignation, Saul turned to Elymas and said : “ O, full of all guile and all villainy, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord ? and now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.” As Saul finished this speech, the sight of the sorcerer began to fade out. There came a glimmer before his eyes, appearing like

fine mist ; this grew thicker and thicker until the last ray of light went out and darkness closed around him. He began to call for some one to lead him by the hand. This was a severe measure to which Saul resorted, but it had to be done in order to save the governor. The blindness of Elymas was only temporary, and it is supposed that when his sight returned he saw the spiritual light and walked in it all the rest of his life.

When Sergius Paulus saw this miracle he was astonished, and believed. Saul had fought a hard battle and had won. The governor became a disciple. Luke does not mention the baptism of the governor, and this silence may indicate that he never completed his obedience, but of this we are not certain. We know that he believed, and the statement of that fact implies that he obeyed. It is almost a matter of regret that we do not know the history of this man. We should be glad to know whether he clung to his Christian faith or reverted to heathenism.

The readers of Acts note two changes in regard to the name of Saul in connection with the conversion of Sergius Paulus. Up to this time the name of Barnabas is more prominent than that of Saul, being mentioned first ; thenceforward, Saul's name is mentioned first, and Barnabas takes second place. The only exception is in Acts xv. 25. Not only do we see this change in the relative positions of these names, but Saul's name is itself changed. For the remainder of his life he is called Paul.

There was some reason for these changes. Many think that the apostle had borne both of these names from childhood. But, if this be true, why should

the change occur at this particular time? We are bound to see some connection between this change of name and the conversion of Sergius Paulus. The custom of the Romans to confer names on persons in honour of their achievements is well known. Scipio conquered Carthage, the dominant military power in Africa, and in honour of this conquest was called Africanus. When Caius Marcius captured the town of Corioli, he received the name of Coriolanus; and, because of his hortatory powers, the apostles bestowed on Joseph of Cyprus the name of Son of Exhortation. In view of these well-known facts, it is most reasonable to believe that the name Paul was given to Saul at this time in honour of his achievement in bringing Sergius Paulus to Christ. Saul had conquered the governor with the Gospel, and, in honour of this first great triumph among the heathen, the name of the ruler was bestowed upon him. He became Paulus, or, in plain English, Paul. Henceforth we are to refer to him by this name, for by it he is known to the world.

The city of Paphos was notoriously wicked. It was the seat of the worship of Venus, the goddess of love. She is said to have risen from the foam of the sea and floated to the shore, "a laughing girl," landing at this spot. Her worship was performed with the most revolting licentiousness. The moral standard was very low, and religion was voluptuousness. The missionaries were ready to depart. They had planted the seed of the kingdom of God hard by the temple of Venus.

## VII

### THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY CONTINUED : IN THE UPLANDS OF ASIA MINOR

**H**AVING established the cause of Christ in the provincial capital, the three devoted heralds of the cross left Paphos for other fields. They sailed from Cyprus, towards the north-west, and landed at Perga, a town in the province of Pamphylia. We are not certain why this field was chosen. Different considerations may have caused the choice. It was a short distance by sail from Paphos. It must be remembered that Paul had preached the Gospel in Cilicia during his residence in his native city, before Barnabas came and took him to Antioch. The adjacent provinces were now to demand his attention. For some unknown reason, John Mark left his older companions on the shore of Pamphylia and returned to his home in Jerusalem. Nothing is said in this place about Paul's feelings at being deserted by his attendant, but we know that he was greatly displeased on account of it. This we learn from an unfortunate incident that occurred later, which will receive attention in its proper place.

The city of Perga was situated on the river Cestrus, seven miles from the sea. The river was navigable for this distance, and the ship in which they sailed had an open pathway to the city. The most conspicuous object that met their gaze on landing was the

temple of Diana. The city is now in ruins. The traveller of to-day sees nothing but a shepherd's camp amid the ruins of ancient splendour. The natural beauty of the site and the numerous tombs are all that remain to tell of departed glory.

North of the city the lofty Taurus Mountains with their peaks capped with snow border the horizon. These mountains with their dark and difficult passes, dashing torrents and yawning chasms, had to be traversed by the missionaries. The danger attending such a passage was great, and it took men of courage and determination to attempt the journey. In addition to the natural perils to be encountered, there were still graver dangers. The mountains were infested with robbers. The Roman government, with all its vigour and power, had failed to suppress these brigands.

And should the mountains be safely passed the land beyond was uninviting. Beyond the mountains lay a broad elevated plain diversified with lakes and rivers and rugged hills. The people were rude and barbarous, and many languages were spoken. It is probable that the knowledge of the hardships to be met with in such a land and among the wild tribes that inhabited it had much to do with Mark's abandoning his companions and returning to Jerusalem. Nothing is written of the experiences of these men in crossing the mountains. Luke tells us with characteristic brevity that they passed through Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. Many people from the coast plain usually went up into the mountains to escape the intense heat of summer, and it is probable that Paul and Barnabas made the journey in com-



pany of one of the many parties that made this annual migration.

Antioch was one hundred and twenty miles from Perga, but there is nothing in the brief narrative to indicate the distance. The city was built by Seleucus Nicator, and named in honour of his father, Antiochus, who succeeded Alexander the Great as king of Syria. Good roads led from all directions to the city, making it the center of trade for a large territory. The Jews, always and everywhere a commercial people, had located there in large numbers, for the purpose of trade. They had erected one synagogue, if not more, and the Sabbath was regularly observed.

Upon arriving at Antioch the missionaries ascertained the locality of the synagogue, and when the next Sabbath came, they went to the place of worship and went in quietly and sat down among the people assembled for study and devotion. The regular order of service was the reading of a lesson from the law and also one from the prophets, and then followed an address based on the passages read. After the reading of the lesson, the ruler of the synagogue sent some one to these strange men with an invitation for one or both of them to address the assembly. This was common courtesy due to all strangers. The probability is, however, that Paul and Barnabas had previously sought an opportunity to become acquainted with some of the leaders and requested the privilege to speak. They accepted the first opportunity that was offered to them and spoke in the name of Christ.

Paul arose to address the audience. He attracted the attention of the people by beckoning with his

hand, and having enlisted the interest of the people by this uncommon gesture, which was a common one with him, he began the address that it is now our pleasure to briefly study.

The speech made by Paul on this occasion is strikingly similar to the one that Stephen delivered on the day of his death. Paul heard that speech, and he never forgot it. It was the model for this one. Paul began by referring to the escape of the nation from the Egyptian bondage. The exodus, the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua, the division of the land among the Twelve Tribes,—all receive brief notice. The period of the judges is mentioned next, with the information that this form of government existed for about four hundred and fifty years. Samuel was the last of the judges, and, during his term of office, the nation became dissatisfied and asked for a king. This request was reluctantly granted, and the form of government was changed. Saul, the first king, reigned forty years. God was displeased with him, and at his death the dynasty was changed, though the monarchy continued. David was the second king of Israel, and to him Jehovah made oath that one of his descendants should be the Christ and sit on his throne.

Having introduced the thought that one should be raised up to occupy the throne of David, and whose dominion was to be everlasting, the apostle referred to Jesus as the promised One. God, according to His promise, had raised up unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. Paul next refers to John the Baptist and his testimony concerning Jesus, and then announced that

through Jesus the world could be saved. The Gospel of Christ was to be the means of salvation. He told them that it was the will of God that the message of life should be delivered to the Jews before it reached the Gentiles. They being the descendants of Abraham, God gave them the glorious privilege of hearing the Gospel first.

The apostle next spoke of the crucifixion of Jesus as the fulfillment of prophecy, and made an excuse for the men who were responsible for putting Him to death. "They knew him not." Following the record closely, Paul told his hearers that those who insisted on putting Jesus to death found no cause in him demanding such a penalty. He was murdered without cause. The crucifixion, burial, and resurrection are asserted. The statement that He had been raised from the dead demanded proof. The apostle proceeded to prove the statement by declaring that many who were His companions before His crucifixion had seen Him and conversed with Him after He arose from the dead. These men had been with Him several times between His resurrection and ascension. Forty days intervened, and these friends of Jesus could not have been mistaken. They had too many opportunities to identify Him not to be certain of His identity.

With these facts before his hearers, Paul declared that it was the mission of himself and Barnabas to tell the glorious news to the world. The promise made to the fathers had been fulfilled in the days of their children, and the resurrection had made plain the second Psalm. The real efficacy of the death of Christ was announced in these words: "Be

it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the remission of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." With a few words of exhortation, the service came to an end, and the congregation was dismissed.

After the service, many Gentiles who were present, numbers of them proselytes to the Jewish faith, came to Paul and Barnabas and requested them to preach again on the following Sabbath. Many Jews also followed them eager to hear more of the new and interesting teaching. The missionaries were glad to see the deep interest manifested by the people, and exhorted them to continue in the grace of God. Paul complied with the request of the people, and announced that he would speak again the next Sabbath. The appointment was well advertised, and on the day set almost the entire population of the city came to the synagogue to hear the word of God. These men who had entered the city with such modest and quiet dignity, and without the least ostentation, by their simple bearing and the divine message that they brought, had gained the good will of the people, and were heard with gladness.

The Jews were filled with envy when they saw the large gathering on the second Sabbath. Such crowds were never known to attend the regular services, and the fact that these strange men, with their strange teaching, had come into the city and attracted such large attention was more than they could stand. They began to tremble for their own faith, and were vigorous in their opposition to the teaching of Paul

and Barnabas. Prejudice prompted their conduct and jealousy inflamed them. As Paul spoke he was frequently interrupted by Jews in the audience. They disputed his words, belittled the message, and blasphemed the Christ.

It is exceedingly difficult for one to speak in the face of such disturbance. The patience of the apostle was sorely tried and finally exhausted, and, in a burst of righteous indignation, he said: "It was necessary that the word of God should have been first spoken to you: but seeing that ye put it from you, and judge yourselves to be unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." This change did not frustrate the plan of God. Paul was called for the special purpose of ministering to the Gentile nations, and the effect of this announcement was joyful to the heathen, and they expressed their joy in praise to the God of Israel who had included all nations in His program of mercy. All who desired salvation could be saved without respect to nationality. The number of persons converted to Christ in Pisidian Antioch is not given, but the statement that "the word of the Lord was published throughout all that region" suggests great numbers, and much activity among the new converts.

The growing popularity of the new religion aroused the anger of the Jews to a higher pitch of intensity, and prompted them to make a desperate effort to suppress it. They changed their plan of opposition and called upon the women of high social and religious standing to give them their aid and influence, and, having succeeded in forming this alliance, they were in proper condition to begin active opposition.

Great indignation arose against the missionaries, and they were expelled from the city. Following the instruction of Jesus, they shook the dust from their feet and departed.

Having been thus forced out of Antioch, Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium. The disciples in Antioch were not discouraged over the departure of their leaders. Their faith was so firmly established that they were able to continue in the grace of God without apostolic guidance.

Leaving Antioch, the missionaries followed a road leading towards the southeast, in the direction of Paul's birthplace. Beyond Antioch this road passed over an extensive plain. Travelling over this plain and crossing a range of mountains, they came to Iconium, ninety miles from Antioch. This city was one of the most important in Asia Minor and is a flourishing city to-day. The name of the modern city is Konieh, a corruption of the ancient name. Its walls are two miles in circumference, but on the east and south the city extends far beyond the walls. It is noted in history as being the capital of the Seljukian sultans, the founders of the Turkish empire.

The government and architecture have greatly changed since Paul's time, but the physical features of the city and the surrounding country remain the same. High mountains enclose it on three sides—north, west, and south. Towards the east the eye ranges over a broad and extensive plain, irregular in its surface. The city was a business center for a large territory, and contained a synagogue. We have already mentioned the custom of Paul in preaching in the synagogue as opportunity afforded. The reg-

ular meeting-place of the people was the best point from which to begin the evangelization of a city. The people who were accustomed to attend the regular services had opportunity to learn much of the law and the prophets, and they were thereby better prepared to receive the Gospel than those who had not the benefit of the information acquired in the synagogue.

Paul and Barnabas went into the synagogue and spoke to the people the word of life. They did this probably in response to an invitation, such as they had received at Antioch. They preached the Gospel so earnestly and convincingly that a large number turned to the Lord. This was probably the largest number converted at one service since the day of Pentecost. It was their most successful effort so far among the heathen. The converts were of many classes; among them were Jews, proselytes, and heathens. For a brief period the disciples were prosperous and the city peaceful. Trouble came, however, and the ministry of the missionaries in the city came to an end. The unbelieving Jews led the opposition, and instead of openly attacking the teaching of Paul and Barnabas, they stirred up the Gentiles and put them forward as the apparent leaders.

This opposition served to embolden the apostles and caused them to stay longer than they otherwise would have done. The statement that they tarried there a "long time" shows that they did not leave the city at the beginning of the opposition, but continued to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ in the face of probable death. We have no means of knowing the exact import of the words, "long time," but the

apostles remained no longer than was necessary to establish the cause of Christ firmly ; and when they saw that they could be more useful somewhere else, they departed from the city. They were really forced out of the city through the antagonism of the Jews. The conditions that led to their departure are given by Luke. He tells us that the Lord bore witness to the word of His grace by working signs and wonders. These signs and wonders were wrought to attest the truth, and the Jews were really afraid to use violence in their opposition. They worked under cover to accomplish their designs, and after securing the good will of the rulers, they laid a plan to assassinate the missionaries. Some friend learned of this plot and informed Paul and Barnabas who, seeing that their usefulness in the city was ended for the present, fled for their lives. They could see no good purpose to be accomplished in risking death so early in their career as pioneers of the missionary enterprise. They could serve God better by living than by dying, and that was the best reason why they should preserve their lives.

The apostles continued to travel towards the southeast. Their course led them across a broad plain towards the mountains. Near the base of "Kara-Dagh," or Black Mountain, about forty miles from Iconium stood the city of Lystra with Derbe not far away. The site of the city has been identified in recent times by Ramsay. The district of Lycaonia in which these cities were located was north of the Taurus Mountains and east of the district of Pisidia.

When the missionaries arrived in Lystra they were greatly disappointed to learn that there was not a



synagogue in the city. At this place they came in contact with phases of human life that they had never encountered before. They found the people much ruder than the people of Antioch or Iconium. Here there was no moralizing influence of the synagogue, and for the first time in life the missionaries were in the midst of real heathenism, untouched by the religion of the Jews. They were now to come in contact with paganism in its stronghold, and in its most hideous and revolting form. For the lack of a more suitable place, they chose the open space near one of the gates of the city as the most convenient place to speak to the people the message of life.

A large number, attracted more through curiosity than anything else, gathered to hear the speakers, and as Paul was delivering an address, he noticed a deformed man in the crowd, who appeared to be listening with deep interest. His feet and ankles were so badly deformed that he had never been able to walk. He was an object of pity. Seeing the opportunity to do good to an unfortunate man as well as to advance the cause of Christ, Paul said to him, "Stand upright on thy feet." The man, taken by surprise, leaped up and walked. When the multitude saw what had been done, they could not account for it on any other ground than that the gods had come down to earth in the likeness of men.

The people were astounded at the miracle. They called Paul Mercury, and Barnabas Jupiter. The latter was the chief deity of Lystra, and in front of the city stood a magnificent temple dedicated to his service. In mythology, Jupiter was the father of gods and men. The simple people believed that the gods

often visited the cities under their special care. There is a beautiful myth which describes a visit that Jupiter and Mercury made to this same region. The story of the two old people—Philemon and Baucis—as told by Ovid, was located here. They entertained the gods in their humble home, and in return for this hospitality received a great blessing. That Paul and Barnabas should have been, by these rude people, regarded as gods, is not strange. From their point of view it was a reasonable and natural conclusion.

The loud shouts of the people over the miracle caused Paul to pause in his sermon and wait for them to become quiet so he could proceed, but before he resumed, some one from the throng slipped away unobserved and soon returned leading two bulls and bearing a profusion of flowers to hang upon the horns of the animals. He moved towards the temple of Jupiter, intending to sacrifice the animals to the humble missionaries of the cross as unto gods. The priests were already preparing for the service. The crowd began to surge towards the temple, and this fact gave the apostles their first intimation as to what was about to occur.

We cannot describe the feelings of these Christlike men when they first realized that they were about to be worshipped as gods. They were shocked beyond measure. It was a new experience to them, and utterly repulsive. It took quick action upon their part to prevent the revolting service. When they became aware of the real intention of the people, they rent their garments in harmony with the oriental method of expressing sorrow or indignation, and ran

into the midst of the excited crowd, vehemently protesting against such conduct. As soon as they could be heard, they declared that they were men and only men, and not gods as the Lystrians believed. They endeavoured to assure the people that such sacrifices should not be made to mere men.

They proceeded to explain why they had come to the city. Their mission as stated by themselves was to bring them the Gospel of Christ, and through its pure precepts to turn them from such vanities as that in which they were about to engage. The God who had created the universe and fed the race by means of fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness, is the only true God. It was after much effort put forth by the apostles that the heathen service was prevented. The excitement cooled down, the crisis was passed, and the missionaries continued to teach the way of life.

The people were so low down in the scale of morals and intelligence and so intensely heathen in their life and thought that they could hardly be made to understand the Gospel. The report went out concerning these men who had come to the city as strangers and had been received as gods. The Jews of Antioch and Iconium heard this report and came in hot haste to Lystra where they stirred up the people and led a great persecution against the missionaries and their followers. The ignorant and unstable people were not hard to persuade. A mob of large proportions was formed, and the apostles came to grief. One of the great crimes of history is here recorded in few words. Paul was stoned, and was thought to be dead. His body, like that of a dumb animal, was

dragged outside the gate of the city and left unburied. What was in Paul's mind as the stones began to fall upon him? He must have thought of Stephen and his triumphant death, and, if he had fully learned the lesson of the young martyr's death, he kneeled down and prayed that his murderers might be forgiven. Why or how Barnabas escaped similar treatment is not known.

As many weeping friends stood around the apparently lifeless body, indications of returning life were seen in his prostrate form. He was soon able to stand up and look around upon his devoted friends. He was dazed. When he came to realize where he was and what had been done to him, he calmly went back into the city, assisted by the kindly hands of his friends. The apostle referred to this bitter experience in the last epistle that he ever wrote: "But thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions, sufferings; what things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: and out of them all the Lord delivered me" (2 Tim. iii. 10, 11). In another epistle, while enumerating his sufferings, he merely says, "Once I was stoned" (2 Cor. xi. 25).

The conjecture that Paul's experience in paradise, recorded in the twelfth chapter of Second Corinthians, occurred at this time is a matter of some interest. While his body lay upon the ground outside the city wall, his spirit may have been in the third heaven. It is a pleasing conjecture but extremely uncertain.

On the day following the stoning, Paul and Bar-

nabas left Lystra and went to Derbe. The site of this city has not been identified beyond doubt. The modern Divle, a town of considerable importance on the road between Tarsus and Lystra, is thought by many scholars to be the site of the ancient Derbe, but no one can speak with certainty on this point. It required a high degree of courage to endure patiently all that these men endured. The time they spent in Derbe, their labours there, and the circumstances of their departure, are passed over in silence, but, when they left that place, they revisited Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, "confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith." They appointed the necessary officers in the churches. They had been persecuted in all of these cities, but were willing to enter them again for Christ's sake. In passing through the scenes of their former labours, they preached the Gospel without fear. Leaving Antioch, they came to Perga, where they landed on entering Asia Minor, and where Mark deserted them. They did not preach at Perga at the time of their first visit, and we know nothing of the results they achieved at this time.

After what seems to have been a brief stay in Perga, they went on to Attalia, a city on the sea-coast, sixteen miles distant in a southwesterly direction. From this port these men, worn with toil and suffering, embarked for Antioch in Syria. The church from which these men went forth on this journey among the heathen had probably not heard from them since they left. The only known means they had of hearing from them was through John

Mark. If he passed through Antioch on his way to Jerusalem, which is not probable, he could have told of the incidents of the journey to the time he left them on the Pamphylian shore. The only event of importance was the conversion of the governor of Cyprus. The most thrilling experiences that came to Paul and Barnabas occurred after Mark left them. Of the incidents of the tour in Asia Minor the church at Antioch had heard nothing.

After an absence of about four years, these two missionaries made their appearance unheralded in the streets of Antioch. They had discovered a new world and come home to report. They had finished the most momentous journey ever undertaken by man up to that time. They had seen heathenism influenced by Judaism, as at Antioch in Pisidia; they had seen heathenism at home and untouched by external influences, as at Lystra, and they had planted the cause of Christ in many places throughout Cyprus and Asia Minor.

Their return to the church that sent them away was a great epoch in the history of the congregation. As soon as they arrived, a special meeting of the church was hurriedly called to welcome them home and to hear their report of their labours among the heathen. Luke's mention of the report is brief: "They rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." Luke did not give the report. Had he done so, he would have merely repeated the history of the journey.

The labours of the missionaries on the journey from which they returned in triumph had been full

of adventure from beginning to end. Their efforts had been crowned with abundant success. No such transformations of towns and cities had been known before. The success of the Gospel among the Jews of Palestine was more to be expected than among the Gentiles. The law of Moses was intended to prepare the Jews for the Gospel, but the heathen had no such preparation. The great victories won among them were the more astonishing. The journey had occupied about four years' time and the missionaries had travelled fourteen hundred miles in accomplishing it.

Leaving us to imagine the joy that these tidings brought to the church, the writer closes the account of the first great missionary tour among the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas "abode long time" with the church at Antioch. They enjoyed a well-earned vacation with their home church.

## VIII

### THE STATUS OF THE GENTILE CONVERTS

**W**HILE Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch resting after their first journey among the Gentiles, an unfortunate controversy arose in the church. Certain men came from Jerusalem, presumably from James, who was recognized as the leader of the mother church, and taught that all Gentiles who accepted Christ should submit to the rite of circumcision. They even demanded this submission as a condition of salvation. Paul and Barnabas resisted these teachers and boldly defended the freedom of the Gentile Christians from bondage to the law of Moses. The church of Christ was in grave danger of being narrowed down into a Jewish sect. Paul had been chosen as a special apostle to the Gentiles, and he was fully conscious that what he and Barnabas had done among them was according to the will of God; but these men from Jerusalem were supposed, by the people of Antioch, to express the sentiment of the Jerusalem church on the point at issue.

In order to settle the question, a committee was appointed to go to Jerusalem and consult the apostles and elders, and report their decision. In doing this, Paul did not surrender his prerogative as an apostle. Had he been left to his own choice, he would not have gone. He went in obedience to divine direc-



tion (Gal. ii. 2). He knew that the apostles and elders would approve his course, and that when they did this, the controversy would be settled in the minds of all who regarded apostolic authority as binding. All who should persist in preaching the essentiality of circumcision after the apostles had spoken would be guilty of disregarding the authority given to the apostles by the Master (Matt. xxviii. 18). He was, himself, anxious that the Jerusalem church should state her position. Paul and Barnabas, with others whose names are not given, were appointed to go to Jerusalem, state the case, and report the action of the church.

Paul and his companions, en route to Jerusalem, passed through Phœnicia and Samaria and made known to the churches the conversion of the Gentiles. The Samaritans were not so strongly prejudiced against the Gentiles as were the Jews. The Phœnicians were mainly Jews but lived in intimate relationship to the Gentiles in both social and business life. The news that salvation had been offered to the Gentiles and that many of them had accepted it caused joy in all the churches. The journey was not made in haste, and probably much preaching was done on the way.

In due time Paul and his companions arrived in Jerusalem. Here Barnabas had many friends and acquaintances. Paul was not so well known. In his earlier years he had many friends in the city, but they were chiefly among the opponents of the church. He had visited the city only twice since he left it to go to Damascus on his last mission of persecution. Both of these visits were short. He came from

Damascus to Jerusalem, three years after his conversion, and remained fifteen days, and when the church at Antioch sent relief to the famine-sufferers in Judea, Paul and Barnabas carried the donation. His present visit was his third since his conversion. Many knew him personally, and more by reputation. Peter was the only apostle that Paul knew personally at this time. It is true that he had met James, but that eminent man was not an apostle. On the present occasion he became acquainted with many brethren that he had never met before.

The reception of the brethren from Antioch was kind and fraternal. At the first meeting, which seems to have been called more for the purpose of becoming acquainted than for any other reason, Paul and Barnabas took occasion to recount their adventures among the Gentiles, giving facts with which the reader is already familiar. It was an astounding recital that they gave, and the audience listened with sympathetic attention.

There were some men in the congregation, however, who thought that the instruction given to the Gentiles that had accepted Christ was incomplete. These strongly contended that all converted Gentiles should be required to submit to circumcision. The men who took this position were Pharisees who had accepted Christ but still clung to many of their former notions. After many years, when Paul had learned more about this class of men, he called them false brethren (Gal. ii. 4). It was their hope to keep the church subject to the law of Moses. They first tried to destroy the church by attacking it from without; and, failing in this, they formally became

Christians and worked to the same end from within. They were the real leaders in this contention, and the men who had disturbed the church at Antioch were of their class.

Before the next public meeting, Paul and Barnabas had a private conference with Peter, James, and John. James, although not one of the Twelve, was perhaps the most prominent man in the church, and was regarded by all as one of the best and wisest of men. He was the Lord's brother, but, in the only epistle that we have from him, he modestly calls himself "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." Paul arranged for this meeting with the apostles in private, that they might let him know how they stood on the question to be decided. He expected them to endorse him and believed that they would do so, but he wanted to be certain as to their position. If he had found them on the side of the Pharisees he would have lost his contention, and the church would have been thrown backward into Judaism. Paul and Barnabas were glad, though not surprised to find that Peter, James, and John held the same view as themselves. Paul knew that he was in the right even before he left Antioch; and long after this, he wrote that Peter, James, and John imparted nothing to him (Gal. ii. 6).

Having arrived at an understanding with these "pillars," as Paul called them in his Epistle to the Galatians, he was ready to bring the subject once more before the assembled congregation. Another meeting was called and the discussion reopened. The apostles permitted the Judaizers to present their side of the case first. Their speeches and arguments

are not given, but in reply to them, whatever they were, Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and James each had something to say. After the Judaizers had stated their case, Peter spoke in reply :

“Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us ; and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now therefore why make ye trial of God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they.” When he had thus spoken, he sat down.

Barnabas spoke next and was followed by Paul. These speeches are not recorded. They were of considerable length, and gave the account of the wonders that God had done by them among the Gentiles. If Luke had recorded these speeches, he would have but repeated the history found in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Acts. He was wise to omit the repetition. God had approved the admission of Gentiles into the church, in the home of Cornelius. He had also enabled Paul and Barnabas to work signs and wonders among the Gentiles, thereby showing His endorsement of these men. He would not have given them power to do anything out of harmony with His will ; consequently, what they did met His approval.

James was the next speaker. He followed a dif-

ferent line of argument, discussing the question in the light of the Old Testament. He showed that the salvation of the Gentiles was contemplated in the program of Jesus, as shown forth by the prophets, and that they had equal rights with the Jews to the fellowship of the church, and to eternal life as well. He spoke as follows :

“Brethren, hearken unto me : Symeon hath rehearsed how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets ; as it is written, After these things will I return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen ; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up : that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from of old. Wherefore my judgment is, that we trouble not them that turn from among the Gentiles to God ; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood. For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath.”

Luke, in introducing the last speaker, tells us that James “answered.” He met the opponents of Christianity by quoting Amos ix. 11, 12. The answer was complete. The other persons who participated in these deliberations concurred in the recommendation offered by James, and the troublesome question was harmoniously settled. The only unfinished business before the body was to adopt a plan by which the suggestion of James could be carried out.

The plan adopted was to send a written decree to the church at Antioch, and also to send two of their own brethren, Judas and Silas, with Paul and Barnabas, to report verbally the decision of the apostles and elders. They sent the following letter which was intended to circulate among the churches :

“The apostles and elders, brethren, unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting : Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls ; to whom we gave no such commandment ; it seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves shall also tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things : that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication ; from which if you keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well” (Acts xv. 24-29).

This has been declared by Neander to be the first public document of the Christian church, and the statement is worthy of acceptance. We are absolutely certain that it is older than any of the apostolic epistles, and there is much reason to believe that it was written before any of the gospel narratives.

This decree of the apostles and elders circulated

among the churches as a separate communication till it was made a part of the written history of the early church, and incorporated into the Book of Acts. The inspiration of the document is shown by the fact that the Holy Spirit guided the men who framed it.

Many have erroneously regarded this meeting in Jerusalem as a general council of the church. Grave historians have called it the first church council. The fact is that it was not in any sense a church council. All the messengers were from the one congregation at Antioch, and there was no general representation of the churches. At this time Samaria, Phœnicia, Cyprus, and large portions of Asia Minor are known to have been evangelized. Many congregations had been established in these countries, and not one of them had a representative in the meeting in Jerusalem.

It is needless to add that Paul was pleased with the result of the conference. The course that he and Barnabas had followed among the Gentiles had been endorsed by the apostles, with the entire congregation concurring. The Holy Spirit had guided the deliberations. This decision fixed the status of the Gentiles in the Christian church.

The messengers, accompanied by Judas and Silas, returned to Antioch. A meeting of the church was called and the epistle was read to the assembled congregation. All rejoiced to hear the decision. From the second chapter of Galatians we learn that Titus, a Gentile, went with Paul on this mission to Jerusalem, and that the Judaizers made a strong effort to force him to submit to the rite of circumcision. We do not know how Titus received this suggestion, but

Paul refused to permit the rite to be performed. The apostle thus won a victory for the liberty that is in Christ. The church sustained Paul, and Titus was not forced to submit. The decision settled the question as to its legality, but it did not stop the work of the Judaizers. They gave Paul much trouble in after years by following him from place to place and trying to counteract his influence.

Judas and Silas remained for a while. They were prophets of great power and efficiency, and their presence was a blessing to the church. Paul and Barnabas also tarried a while in the city. They had laboured hard for more than four years, and a period of comparative ease and rest was necessary. During the time that Paul spent in Antioch, after his return from Jerusalem, Peter's visit to the Gentile city most probably occurred. This episode is not mentioned in Acts, but Paul discusses it in the second chapter of Galatians. A controversy, omitted by Luke, is mentioned by Paul as having occurred at Antioch, and it must have taken place at this time. The controversy did not involve any of the points passed upon by the church in Jerusalem and embodied in the decree that was issued. The contention at Antioch was over a question of social intercourse between Jews and Gentiles, and not the religious rights of either. Peter would not recognize the Gentile Christians socially, and stood aloof from them. Paul was much displeased at Peter's conduct, and gave him a public rebuke for it ; but the question of the social relation of the Jews and Gentiles had not been discussed in Jerusalem, and nothing bearing on it had been embodied in the decree.



Although Peter's conduct was not expedient, it did not in any way violate the provisions of the decree to which he had assented in Jerusalem. He had only refused to live in free social intercourse with the Gentiles. His act was not necessarily sinful, but, to say the least, very inconsistent.

Judas returned to Jerusalem, but Silas preferred to remain in Antioch. As matters turned out, it was very fortunate for him that he decided to remain. He became one of the most useful and best known companions of Paul. Failing to return to Jerusalem gave him his opportunity. He was with the apostle in many bitter experiences and shared his toils through many years; and in him Paul reposed the fullest confidence. This confidence was never shaken, but remained firm to the end.

## IX

### THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY BE- GUN : FROM ANTIOCH TO PHILIPPI

**A** GREAT period of prosperity was enjoyed by the church in Antioch. The many excellent men who were present and at work caused the influence of the church to become widely extended ; and, in the midst of this growth and good feeling, Paul was planning larger things. He could not be content to see so many strong preachers concentrating their labours in one church, when the mission stations that he and Barnabas had planted among the heathen were in such great need of competent instructors. To strengthen these mission churches was the motive for the second tour among the Gentiles.

Paul proposed that they should revisit the places where they had preached the Gospel, and look into the condition of the cause of Christ in the various churches. To this Barnabas readily consented, and they prepared to begin their journey. It was understood between them that this was to be a revisitation of the churches already established, but circumstances made it expedient for them to extend their labours far beyond the remotest point visited on their first tour.

When the time came to start, the deplorable difficulty between Paul and Barnabas occurred. Barnabas wanted to take Mark along with them, but to this

Paul was strongly opposed. The fact that Mark was a kinsman of Barnabas would cause the latter to desire his presence and assistance on the journey, but Paul remembered that Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia on the previous journey, and was not willing to trust him a second time. Mark had been tested and found wanting. Each contended to have his own will, and neither was willing to submit to the other. They had "sharp contention" and parted in anger. This shows that they were men. The comradeship of years was abruptly broken.

Barnabas had done much for Paul. It will be remembered that when Paul came to Jerusalem after his escape from Damascus, it was Barnabas who came to his assistance and induced the brethren in that city to receive him into their full confidence as a brother. They had refused to recognize Paul as a disciple, but the brotherly deed of Barnabas overcame their fear; and when Paul first came to Antioch, Barnabas brought him. They had been companions in joy and sorrow, success and failure, prosperity and persecution. Barnabas had reason to regard Paul as unreasonable at this time in denying him the pleasure that the presence of his kinsman would afford.

On the other hand, Paul loved Barnabas as a brother, and felt deeply grateful to him for his many acts of kindness, but he was not willing to trust a man who had once been tested and found unreliable. An agreement was never reached. Barnabas preferred to separate from Paul rather than from his own relative, and, accordingly, took Mark and sailed for Cyprus. With this act this great and good man disappears from history.

Paul's feeling towards Barnabas many years later was kind and brotherly. He mentioned his name in the First Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. ix. 6). We learn also that Paul's confidence in Mark was afterwards fully restored (2 Tim. iv. 11). God makes the wrath of man to praise Him. The parting of Paul and Barnabas was apparently unfortunate, but really the separation resulted in good, although the manner of it was deplorable. Barnabas and Mark visited some of the churches that were included in Paul's plan, and Paul himself went to the rest of them. It is believed that Barnabas lived and died in Cyprus. Reference has already been made to his traditional burial place near Salamis.

Paul chose Silas, also called Silvanus, who had come from Jerusalem with him and Barnabas, when they returned from the conference, and being solemnly commended to the favour of God by the brethren, they began the second great missionary journey. They passed through Syria and Cilicia, and strengthened the young and struggling churches. They went through the pass known as the "Syrian Gates," into the country beyond the mountains, and Paul's native province was revisited.

In previous years Paul had preached in this district and also in Syria (Gal. i. 21). This preaching was done between his departure to Tarsus (Acts ix. 30) and arrival at Antioch (Acts xi. 25). He was among his old friends. About four years had elapsed between his arrival in his home city and his first appearance in Antioch, whither he went in company with Barnabas who had come to Tarsus seeking for him. These years were spent in his own province

and those adjacent to it. He had done much work that is not recorded. His friends and acquaintances in the churches which he visited at this time were glad to see him and hear him again. It was a happy time to all.

No details are given regarding the ministry of Paul and Silas in these districts. Luke seems to hurry us on to other persons and events of more prominence. They made a brief stop at Derbe, and passed on to Lystra. Nothing is said by Paul or Luke about the bold and beautiful scenery through which they journeyed. They passed through the mountain gap known as the Cilician Gates to the uplands beyond the Taurus. Emerging from this gateway, they turned towards the west and travelled in that direction till they came to Lystra. This was the place where Paul had been stoned on his first visit a few years before. The brethren were pleasantly surprised at this unexpected visit, and no doubt many of them enquired about Barnabas, and where they both had been and what they had done since their former visit.

The most interesting and important fact that occurred on the present visit was the discovery of Timothy. He was evidently converted on the occasion of the previous visit, though the fact is not mentioned in recounting the incidents of it. Paul ever regarded Timothy as his son in the Gospel. Timothy had been reared under favourable circumstances. His mother and grandmother were both devoutly religious, and they left the impress of their character upon him. They had taught him the Scriptures from his infancy. He was hardly beyond childhood when he was con-

verted to Christ. His father was a Gentile. Timothy had grown in every way during Paul's absence. He was noted for his Christian character, and it is probable that he had already begun to preach. He not only had a good reputation at home, but as far away as Iconium he was well known and highly esteemed.

Paul's discerning eye was quick to detect in this youth the elements of genuine manhood. Being so well pleased with his improvement since he saw him last, Paul chose him as an associate and took him along with him as a fellow-worker. Timothy's father being a Gentile, the circumcision of the son had been neglected. Paul performed this rite for him in order that the Jews might have no occasion to object to him as a religious teacher. The apostle has been accused of inconsistency on the question of circumcision. When in Jerusalem he had refused to allow Titus to be circumcised when many of the Jewish Christians demanded it, and in Lystra he circumcised Timothy because of the Jews who were in those parts.

The fact that he did not allow Titus to be circumcised was to carry the point that submission to the rite was not to be demanded of Gentile converts. Titus was a Gentile. Had Paul submitted to the demands of the Judaizers, the principle would have been established that "except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." The Gospel would have been bound by fetters of steel, and the liberty that is in Christ would never have been enjoyed by the Gentile Christians. We can see clearly why Paul took a firm stand. The case of Timothy was vastly different from that of Titus.

His mother was a Jewess, and circumcision was a Jewish rite. Moreover, the decree issued from Jerusalem, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, had settled the question that circumcision should not be required of Gentile converts. It is well known that Paul regarded circumcision as nothing and uncircumcision as nothing, but he was willing to make a harmless concession to a popular sentiment when there was no principle involved. He was all things to all men, when to be such best served God. It was purely a question of expediency, and, in no sense, one of law.

After Timothy had joined himself to Paul and Silas in the work of the ministry, the three went on together among the churches, giving them the decree that was issued from Jerusalem, fixing the status of the Gentiles in the church of Christ. When the question became fully understood, the churches were much encouraged, and men and women turned to God in large numbers. By virtue of the decree, the Gentiles and the Jews could mingle together in the fullness of Christian fellowship, and God's people were one.

From Lystra the missionaries continued their westward course through the highlands of Asia Minor. Phrygia and Galatia were evangelized. We have reason to believe that the Gospel won greater victories in the latter province than anywhere else in the peninsula. In Paul's Epistle to the Galatians we learn that it was because of an infirmity that came upon him while passing through their country he had preached the Gospel to them at first. Overtaken with some kind of illness, he was forced to dis-

continue his labours for a while. During his convalescence, and for some time thereafter, he preached throughout that region. The Galatians were the descendants of some wild tribes from Gaul. They had wandered eastward and settled in Asia Minor before the time of Christ, and had become firmly fixed in their new home.

Having finished their work in Galatia, Paul and his two companions started to go into the province of Asia, the small district in which the city of Ephesus was located ; and for the first time since his conversion, the apostle found his plans out of harmony with the plan of God. He was not permitted to enter Asia, for the reason that God could use him and his associates to better advantage elsewhere. The Holy Spirit interposed and turned him back from the border of the province. The small district of Bithynia lay to the north, and Paul's next move was in that direction. Again he met divine opposition, and was forced to turn back. He seemed to be at a standstill. He had evangelized the countries behind him, and was forbidden to turn either to the left or to the right. If he moved at all, he must go forward. The apostolic company accordingly kept onward towards the northwest till they reached the Ægean Sea at Troas, near the site of the ancient city of Troy. The sea forming a natural barrier to further progress, they were compelled to halt and wait for a favourable opportunity to continue their labours—but they did not have to wait long.

Some time during the first night at Troas, Paul had a vision in which he received divine direction for his movements. In his dreams he looked across the sea



to the European shore, saw a man of Macedonia, and heard him say in pleading tones, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." The apostle was thus bidden to cross the sea and carry the glad tidings of salvation to the nations beyond. This vision made a deep impression on Paul, and, on the following morning, he related it to his companions. They all reached the conclusion that the Lord had called them to preach the Gospel in Macedonia. They interpreted the vision as an indication of God's desire, and acted in accordance with it.

It is worthy of note that the author of the Book of Acts was with Paul at this time. We learn this by the use of the pronouns "we" and "us." It is evident that Luke joined the party some time after they left Galatia, most probably at Troas. Let it be remembered that Paul and Silas left Antioch in Syria together, that they found Timothy at Lystra and took him along with them, and that Luke joined them as they were about to start for Macedonia.

Troas was a place of great historic interest, near the mouth of the Hellespont. It would be interesting to linger here long enough to gather up some of the facts and legends connected with the place, but as these are in no way connected with the life of Paul, we forbear in order to follow him and his companions over the sea. As soon as these four men reached the decision to invade Europe as the advance guard of the Lord's army, they made their arrangements to continue the journey. They went to the dock and found a ship just ready to sail to Neapolis, on the Macedonia shore. Without losing any time, they went aboard and sailed away towards

the sunset. This was Timothy's first sea voyage. He was farther from home than he had ever been and going farther still.

At this time they did not know God's plan concerning themselves. They were conscious, however, that they were hastening to the West for the glory of Christ, and that was all they knew. We learn incidentally that the wind favoured them, and that it was unusually strong. They made the voyage in two days. Paul and his company, on the last journey to Jerusalem, sailed over this route, in the opposite direction, and it took them five days to accomplish the passage (Acts xx. 6). This shows to us, more clearly than the missionaries could see at the time, how God was directing their movements.

A few devout women were praying in Philippi, and God was hastening to answer their prayers by means of these men. The missionaries could look back, after the sequel became known, and see the guiding hand of God in all their movements. They could see why they were turned back from the borders of Asia and Bithynia, and why they had but one night's rest in Troas. It was also made plain to them why they found a ship just ready to put to sea, and why the wind favoured them ; but, as yet, they did not understand the reasons that controlled their movements.

Their first day's sail brought them to Samothrace, an island in the Ægean Sea, about midway between Troas and Neapolis. Under the rugged shore of this island they passed the night, and on the next day, late in the afternoon, they landed at Neapolis. George R. Wendling has said that the greatest event

that ever occurred in Europe was the landing of Paul upon her shores. To this we cheerfully agree. That event began the evangelization of Europe, and that involved the evangelization of America, and that, still further, involves the evangelization of the world.

Philippi was ten miles from Neapolis towards the northwest, and without halting at the point where they landed, they pushed on to that inland city. It may have been that they passed the night in Neapolis, and left for Philippi early on the following morning, or they may have gone to the latter place on the same day they landed, and arrived after night-fall. In either case no time was lost on the way. They passed over a high ridge and down into the plain through which the River Gangites winds its way, and, in approaching the city, they crossed this stream.

It was at Philippi, ninety-four years before this, that the final struggle between the republican and imperial armies of Rome occurred. Brutus was defeated by Octavius; the republic fell and the empire was established. Brutus took his life after the battle, and Octavius was made emperor, assuming the title of Cæsar Augustus. These soldiers of the cross passed over the battle-field as they drew near to the city. They had come to conquer, but not with the weapons of carnal warfare. They had come in the interest of no human tyrant, or to oppress their fellow men. Their mission was one of service to the Prince of Peace.

In this city there lived a woman whose name was Lydia. The name indicates that she was a Gentile, but we cannot be certain as to her nationality. It is

probable that she was a Gentile who had been made a proselyte to the Jewish religion. One thing is certain : she was devout in her life and faithful to the demands of the law of Moses. Her native city was Thyatira, the site of one of the Seven Churches of Asia. She had located in Philippi for business reasons, and was engaged in selling purple cloth. She did an extensive business, and had in her employ a number of other women of like faith and character.

The Sabbath was unobserved and unknown in that heathen city. But, when the sacred day came around, her store was closed, and all the trade for that day went to her competitors in business. She and a few other women kept the day in harmony with God's commandment. Her conduct shows her to have been a woman of exalted character. There was no synagogue in the city, the Jews being too few in numbers to maintain one. But, out on the bank of the river, in a retired spot, was a *prosuecha*, or prayer-place, and to this these godly women went every Sabbath for the purpose of prayer. God heard the prayers of these women, and answered them. When He determined to answer them, the women who needed the gospel light, and the men who were to take it to them, were widely separated. Lydia and her friends were in Europe, and Paul and his companions in Asia. We have already traced the manner in which Paul and his associates were led to Philippi, and the rest of the story is soon told.

We have no means of knowing the day of the week on which the missionaries arrived, but they remained in the city till the following Sabbath, and then found no synagogue in which to worship. However, they

saw a few women, modest and plain-looking, going in a body towards the river, and supposed that there must be a prayer-place in that direction, and not far away. They followed the women and came to the spot.

When the women were seated and the meeting opened, these four strange men walked up, and quietly took their seats among them. The women were neither frightened nor displeased, but gave them a cordial welcome. Paul either asked permission to speak or was invited by them to do so. The apostle gratefully accepted the opportunity to preach Christ to them.

We do not know what Paul said, and even his line of argument is not mentioned ; but when we consider Lydia's spiritual and intellectual condition, in connection with Paul's mission to her, we can surmise with almost absolute certainty his theme and also his line of thought. She held to the Jewish idea of the Messiah and looked for Him yet to come. Paul's purpose was to show her that the one she expected had already come, and that her faith was obsolete. He would naturally endeavour to convince her that the prophecies found in the Old Testament were all fulfilled in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. His life, death, resurrection, and ascension were explained in the light of the Scriptures. He made an effort to convince her that the Messiah for whom she longed and looked was none other than the lowly Galilean whose life he had described.

The Lord opened her heart by using Paul as an inspired instrument to bring her to the knowledge of the truth, and when she saw the truth she was quick

to comply with its demands. When the full light broke into her mind it came with such force as to be irresistible. She believed on Jesus as the Son of God, and was baptized with all her household. The place of baptizing was doubtless the river on the bank of which was the place of prayer. Who comprised her household is unknown. The reference may be to her slaves, her assistants in business, or to her children. To dogmatize would be to no profit. The silence of the Scriptures should teach us to be silent. After she was baptized she invited the men to make her house their home while they remained in the city. This tender of hospitality shows that Lydia was a woman of more than ordinary means, and living in a house sufficiently commodious to afford room for four men besides her own household. They accepted the invitation, and Christianity found a home in Europe. It is worthy of note that the first person converted to Christ in Europe was an Asiatic.

The question of demoniacal possession is one of profound mystery. There is not enough said about it in the Bible to enable us to understand it. In Philippi there was a female slave possessed of a spirit of divination, whatever that may have been. By working on the credulity of the people she brought much gain to her masters. Most heathen people regard the ravings of crazy persons with veneration. With them a sacredness is connected with lunacy. The owners of this unfortunate girl had, in her, a great source of income. The heathen people believed that the oracles that were given out from Delphi were inspired by a serpent called a Python. This girl was believed to possess the spirit of this serpent, and to

have ability to explain all mysteries. It is not supposed that Luke, in giving this account, endorses this belief. He merely refers to it as being held by the people of the city. A modern diagnosis of the case of the slave would be that she was insane.

As Paul and his associates went daily to the prayer-place on the bank of the river, this crazy girl followed them along, proclaiming with loud voice, "These men are the servants of the Most High God that proclaim unto you the way of salvation." At first they appeared not to notice her, but this annoyance continued from day to day, and Paul was very much grieved. He had deep sympathy for the afflicted girl; and, besides that, he did not want the people of the town to get the idea that the Gospel was in any way dependent on the recommendation of an evil spirit. He turned with compassion and healed the girl. With her mental powers fully restored, she was rendered valueless to her owners. We do not know what became of her, but it is reasonable to suppose that the few Christians in the city cared for her tenderly till a permanent home was found for her, and that she continued in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

When the owners of the slave saw that she was restored to her reason, they were full of indignation against the apostles. Their income had ceased, and their anger was extreme. In each Roman colony the supreme power was vested in two officials who were called *duumviri*, but who are called magistrates in the English Bible. The missionaries were brought before these men charged with troubling the city and teaching customs contrary to the Roman law. The

real charge was not preferred against them, but a false one was presented in its stead. This fictitious charge was sufficient to inflame the anger of the magistrates, who, without even the form of law, tore the clothing from the prisoners and commanded the *lictors* to beat them with rods.

These brutal officials, ever ready to do the bidding of their superiors, "laid many stripes upon them." Only Paul and Silas were thus treated. By what means Timothy and Luke escaped similar treatment is not known. Evidently they were not present when their fellow labourers were arrested ; yet it must have been known throughout the city that they were all engaged in the same work, and had come to the city for the same purpose. After Paul and Silas had been severely beaten, they were committed to the prison for the night, and the jailer was given special charge to keep them in safety. This unusual order led the jailer to believe that they were guilty of some unusual crime, and he took special pains to insure their safety. He had them placed in the inner prison and their feet made fast in the stocks. When they had thus been disposed of for the night, escape by ordinary means was impossible.

The prisoners were in a pitiable plight. They had been charged with crime, yet they had done only a Christlike deed ; they had been shamefully beaten ; and now, with their backs bruised and bleeding, they had been abruptly thrown into prison, and fettered like the worst of criminals. For a few hours they were unable to think of anything but their own sufferings. They were human beings with feelings common to all men.



It was midnight before their drooping spirits sufficiently revived for them to be able to think of God who gives His servants "songs in the night." And when the reaction came, they lifted their voices to God in heartfelt praise. Before they sang, they prayed. In answer to their prayer their hearts were made glad, and they sang to express their joy. As the trembling voices of these men of God sounded through the gloomy prison, the other inmates heard them. They were aroused from slumber by the strange occurrence, and lay awake, listening. That was the first song of praise to the true God ever heard within those walls. It was indeed a strange sound to the attentive prisoners.

In the midst of the song there came an earthquake of sufficient violence to shake the doors of the prison from their fastenings. The power of God broke the shackles from the feet of those who were bound. The jailer was aroused from his sleep, and his first thought was of his prisoners. Looking towards the prison and seeing the doors open, he very naturally supposed that all the prisoners had escaped. He knew too well that, if they had made their escape, he would be put to death for neglect of duty.

It was a well-known trait of Roman character to prefer death by one's own hand to public execution, or even disgrace. To commit suicide was more honourable than to be put to death by process of law. The history of the city in which the jailer lived furnishes some striking examples of this. Here Cassius, after his defeat, practically took his own life by commanding one of his freed men to strike the deadly blow. Here also, after the same battle,

Brutus took leave of his friends, saying, "Certainly we must fly, yet not with our feet, but our hands." Before the battle he wrote: "If I am victorious, I shall restore liberty to my country: if I am defeated, I shall escape the curse of slavery; my condition is fixed; I run no hazard." The battle went against him, and his friend Strato held a sword, and the defeated general threw himself upon it, and, as he believed, put an honourable end to his life. His wife took her life by swallowing coals of fire. This all shows that suicide was a point of honour with the Romans. This same national feeling caused the jailer to draw his sword and prepare to take his life. But, before he fell upon the deadly blade, the voice of Paul rang out from within the dark prison-cell, saying, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here."

Being thus assured that the prisoners were safe, the jailer dismissed all thoughts of self-destruction. He called for a light and rushed for the prison. He fell before Paul and Silas, like Dagon before the ark of the Lord, and then arose and led them out of the prison. After he brought them out he asked them the greatest of all questions, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The missionaries had for "many days" preached salvation to the people of the city, and some had been brought to light. Late on the previous evening the jailer thought nothing and cared nothing about salvation. He had rudely cast the men of God into prison without the least sympathy. Without even the smallest touch of pity, he had made their feet fast in the stocks: but after the earthquake and the refusal of the prisoners to make their escape, his feelings towards them had com-

pletely changed. He had come to regard them as messengers of God, and out of an awakened conscience which had long slumbered, he made earnest enquiry for the way of life. Their answer was plain and pointed, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31).

The keeper of the prison was a heathen, and knew nothing of revealed religion. If he had listened to Paul and Silas as they preached in the city, he would have known what to do to be saved ; but not having done this, he was grossly ignorant of the plan of salvation as revealed by Christ and preached by the apostles. Paul's answer to the jailer's question was explicit. The heathen were familiar with "gods many and lords many," but there was only one Lord Jesus, and there could be but one meaning in the apostle's language. This meaning could not be misunderstood.

Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to all that were in the jailer's house. This being true, it follows that all who were in his house were able to hear and understand that which was preached to them ; and this eliminates the supposition that there were infants in his household. Without delay, the jailer took these men to some suitable place for the purpose, washed the blood from their bodies, and received baptism at their hands. As soon as he saw his duty clearly, he performed it. All earnest enquirers should imitate his example and learn the lesson of promptness from this heathen man who accepted the first invitation ever extended to him to become a Christian.

After the sacred rite of baptism had been per-

formed, the jailer brought the missionaries into his own house, fed them at his own table, and rejoiced with his entire household in their new-found faith. We learn from the words, "brought them out," that they went from the prison to some other place. They were not washed, neither was the jailer baptized, in the jail. The words, "took them," also show that they went elsewhere, and the statement that, after the baptism had been performed, "he brought them up into his house," shows clearly that he was not baptized in his house. The ordinance was administered between their leaving the prison and their entrance of the jailer's house. This is perfectly clear; and the further statement that the jailer and his entire household rejoiced, believing in God, furnishes additional proof that his home contained no persons that were not able to believe for themselves, and to rejoice in the promises of the Gospel.

The report of the events that had transpired in the precincts of the prison spread over the city before daylight, and in the early morning the magistrates sent messengers to the jailer with the command to release the prisoners. He reported to Paul and Silas, and advised them to leave the city at once, but this did not satisfy them. Had they consented to that kind of release, they would have appeared to the public as pardoned criminals, and the report that would have gone out would have injured their standing in other places where they expected to preach the Gospel.

Paul resolved to stand on his dignity and claim his rights as a Roman citizen. He said to the jailer: "They have beaten us openly and uncondemned,

men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison ; and do they now cast us out privily ? nay verily ; but let them come themselves and bring us out." The officers that had been sent by the magistrates with orders to release the prisoners returned and reported to them what Paul had said ; and when they heard that the men in custody were Romans, they were afraid and came gladly to the prison and asked them to depart from the city. It was a crime to scourge a Roman citizen before he was condemned, and that is what had been done to these men. The officers were anxious to make the best of a bad condition by being especially courteous, and by getting rid of them on the easiest possible terms. The honour of the missionaries was thus vindicated, and they were ready to depart.

It is worthy of remark that the first home in Europe into which ministers of Christ were received and in which they found the most hospitable welcome and generous entertainment was that of a woman. On the day that Lydia became a Christian she threw the doors of her house wide open to Paul and his companions and told them to make themselves at home. It is needless to say that this offer was gladly accepted. From that day till they left the city they were inmates of Lydia's house. Only one night was spent outside of that home and that was the night that they spent in the jail, their last night in the city.

The church in Philippi was the first Christian congregation established in Europe. In the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, which is the earliest of all of Paul's epistles, he referred to his experience at Philippi in these words : " But even after that we

had suffered before, and were shamefully treated as ye know at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention." These words were written soon after Paul and Silas left Philippi, while the impressions made there were still deep and fresh in his mind. He did not need the power of his inspiration to recall them to his memory. This church sent material contributions to Paul while he was in Thessalonica (Phil. iv. 16); and when he was a prisoner in Rome, this same church sent him relief for his needs by the hands of Epaphroditus (Phil. ii. 25, 26), who was detained in Rome by a severe attack of illness. Paul ever regarded this church with tender affection, and in the Epistle to the Philippians there is not a word of censure.

## X

### THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY CONTINUED : FROM PHILIPPI TO CORINTH, AND THENCE TO ANTIOCH

**I**MMEDIATELY after leaving the prison Paul and Silas went to the house of Lydia, in which they had made their home ever since she and her household were baptized, to pay a final visit and take formal leave. They saw the brethren and left the city. The missionaries had spent "many days" in the city before they were imprisoned, and the "brethren" mentioned had been baptized during that time.

The seventeenth chapter of Acts begins by the writer's using the pronoun of the third person. This fact shows that when Paul and Silas left Philippi, Luke remained behind to continue the work that all four had begun. Timothy also remained with Luke to assist him in completing the organization of the church and deepening its spiritual life. At the time Paul wrote the Epistle to the Philippians, the congregation was fully organized, with the proper officary (Phil. i. 1). These officers were probably appointed after Paul left the city.

On leaving Philippi, Paul and Silas travelled a day's journey of thirty-three miles to the city of Amphipolis. This was a beautiful place and beautifully situated. It stood near a small lake three miles

from the sea, and the river Strymon bordered it on three sides. The name "Amphipolis" means "The City Surrounded by Water." Just south of it there is a range of hills. It was a great city in Paul's day, and was formerly called "Nine Ways," because that number of excellent roads centered there. The site is now occupied by the Turkish village of Jeni-Keni, or New Town. There was no synagogue in the city, and Paul and Silas made no stop there, unless it was merely to pass the night and resume their journey the next morning.

Thirty miles to the southwest from Amphipolis stood Apollonia. The name is derived from Apollo, one of the gods of ancient mythology. The exact site of the town is not known, but there is no difficulty in locating its vicinity. In going from Amphipolis to Apollonia, Paul and Silas passed through a country of picturesque beauty. The road lay along the Strymonic Gulf, where the vision had a wide sweep over the water to their left, and on the right high wooded hills, interspersed with small valleys, added diversity to the view. The measured beat of the surf against the shore sounded in their ears for many miles along the way, but the plain, unembellished record before us in Acts merely tells us that "they passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia." Thirty miles is a good day's travel, and it is reasonable to suppose that they reached Apollonia at the close of a toilsome day, and there spent the night.

Finding no synagogue in the city, they left early in the morning and travelled due westward thirty-seven miles to Thessalonica. This was another good day's journey, if, indeed, they made it in one day.



They had now arrived at another noted city. It was located at the head of the Thermaic Gulf. Cassander had changed the name from Therma to Thessalonica in honour of his wife who was a sister of Alexander the Great. In Strabo's time it was the most popular city in Macedonia. The modern name is Saloniki and it is the most important city in European Turkey except Constantinople.

The missionaries found a synagogue in this city. It was probably the first one that they had found since leaving Antioch in Pisidia. They were glad to find a large number of Jews, and, entering the synagogue, they preached Christ to the people. Using the Old Testament as a base from which to advocate the religion of Christ gave them a ready hearing. They followed the same plan they had adopted in other cities, proving the claims of Jesus from the law and the prophets. Thus they "reasoned with them from the Scriptures." For three Sabbath days they continued to open the Scriptures, and to show that the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus fulfilled them. In doing this they made good the claims of Christ. During the time that Paul spent there, he laboured day and night for his own support, in order not to burden his friends (1 Thess. ii. 9). He received some assistance from Philippi but not enough to supply his needs, and those of Silas (Phil. iv. 15-17).

It seems that almost, if not all, the preaching done by these men was done on the Sabbath, but it is to be supposed that they had many special appointments to confer personally with men and women in quest of truth, and that their labour was not without fruit. Large numbers were added to the Lord, men and

women, Jews and Gentiles. We learn this from one of Paul's epistles, in which he reminds his readers that they had once been idolaters, but had turned to serve the true God (1 Thess. i. 9).

The Jews were greatly displeased to see the Gentiles turn to God so readily, and being influenced by prejudice and anger, they began to oppose the further progress of the Gospel. This opposition was open and violent. They began by taking into their confidence the lowest and vilest men of the city, and putting them forward as leaders of a mob intended to put down the new heresy. With such a class in the lead the city was soon in an uproar. The missionaries had been making their home in the house of a man named Jason, and this fact was known to those who had caused the disturbance. When the mob got beyond the control of the civil authorities, they rushed to the home of Jason, expecting to force an entrance, capture Paul and Silas, and bring them before the court, charged with crime. But, failing to find them, they laid hold on Jason and some other brethren and dragged them before the rulers of the city, saying : " These men that have turned the world upside down are come hither also ; whom Jason hath received ; and these all act contrary to the decree of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus."

This charge implies that Jason had been guilty of treason by extending the hospitality of his home to men who were regarded as dangerous to the authority of the emperor. The rulers of the city were troubled at hearing this charge against these men, and at the implied guilt of Jason. Reports of what these men had done in Philippi and other cities reached Thes-

salonica. The Jews of Thessalonica had heard of the violence done to them in other places, and without knowing the facts, laid all the blame on them. The only charge against Jason was easily sustained. He had received and entertained these men in his home. This he did not deny. There was no crime in entertaining them as he did. His was only an act of generous hospitality to two strange men. He was released, of course, but they required him to give bond to keep the peace, and in this bond he probably stood surety for the good behaviour of Paul and Silas.

Seeing that their usefulness in the city was over for the present, and fearing to remain longer lest their lives should be endangered, Paul and Silas made haste to get away from so many enemies. They were brave in the face of danger, but it was not good judgment to throw their lives away to no purpose when the world needed them so badly. They wisely took their departure, making their escape by the aid of the brethren, who contrived to send them away from the city by night. Paul had, long before this, made his escape from Damascus by night, and his flight from Thessalonica could not but recall melancholy memories of that lonesome journey through the desert.

When these two messengers of Christ left Thessalonica, they continued to follow the well-paved military road over which they came to the city. This broad highway, leading to the west, furnished them an easy means of escape. They followed it for several miles, but in order to reach Berea, they left the main thoroughfare and travelled a less frequented road leading more to the southwest. Berea is about sixty

miles from Thessalonica, and the travellers must have spent at least two days on the journey. Nothing is said about intervening points. Evidently no stop was made. The road all the way traversed a beautiful level country through which many sparkling streams made their way. Berea was situated on the eastern slope of the Olympian Range. It had many natural advantages, and it is now regarded as one of the best towns in Macedonia. Its gardens are shaded with plane trees, and through its streets flow streams of water. Its modern name is Kara-Veria, which is easily recognized as a corruption of the ancient name.

Paul and Silas were glad to find a synagogue in Berea, and, in keeping with their usual custom, they went to the place of meeting and preached the Gospel. A further cause for joy was the fact that they found the Jews ready to hear the word of God. To find Jews open-minded and without prejudice was such an unusual thing that the author of Acts saw proper to make a record of the fact. Their attitude towards the Scriptures is stated in these words: "The Jews of Berea were more noble than those of Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." This favourable attitude of the Jews made it easier to reach the Gentiles with the truth.

Many Jews were converted to Christ, and a great number of Gentiles, both men and women, followed their example. This was the first place visited by Paul and Silas where the Jews were favourable to the religion of Christ. There was no prejudice to

encounter and overcome ; the door was wide open. To meet with such a reception was a new experience to these men, and they were very much encouraged as to the present, and hopeful as to the future. Their bright hopes, however, were soon blasted and scattered to the winds. They were to drink the bitter waters of persecution and anguish in this city as they had often done in other cities. Again they were assailed from the rear. Paul had encountered the same kind of opposition at Lystra, and such conduct of the enemies of Christ was not new to him.

When the success of the Gospel in Berea became known in Thessalonica, Jews from that place hurried over the sixty miles of road that separated the two cities, in order that they might oppose the work of the missionaries. The details of the persecution are not given, but the brethren in Berea thought that the situation was too dangerous for Paul to remain, and without delay they sent him away from the city. His plan seems to have been to go to the sea, a distance of sixteen miles, and await the arrival of his companions. Timothy had joined him some time since leaving Philippi, but where or when we do not know. For some reason Silas and Timothy were left in Berea for a while. Paul, being the most prominent and aggressive, was in the greatest danger, and he left the city in compliance with the judgment of his friends. When he reached the sea, for some reason, his plans were changed.

Those who had him in charge and felt responsible for his life believed him to be in great danger still, and were not willing for him to remain within sixteen miles of so many enemies. They urged him to go

further away from Berca. To this he agreed. Accordingly, they took him aboard of a ship and went with him to Athens. The indications are that Paul was in feeble health at this time; otherwise, we can see no reason why the men who took him to the seashore at Dium should have gone on to Athens with him. It has been surmised that he had a weakness of the eyes, and for this there is some reason. It has also been surmised that he was subject to attacks of epilepsy, and for that reason disliked to be alone. We have never been able to find the slightest reason for the latter conjecture, although so eminent a scholar and critic as F. W. Farrar gave it his endorsement. Arriving at Athens, he sent the men who had accompanied him back to their own homes, and by them he sent a message to Silas and Timothy directing them to make haste and join him in that city where it was his intention to await their coming.

No description of Athens will be attempted. To do so would require too much space. The city is described in all encyclopedias, Bible dictionaries, and in many books of travel, and the reader is referred to such works. Athens was the center of Gentile culture, and the site of many heathen temples. It was the home of the fine arts, and known as "The mother of arts and eloquence." The streets were ornamented with the images of many gods and goddesses. These aroused Paul's indignation and provoked his spirit beyond measure. Renan, who was himself hostile to Christianity, asserts that Paul in his ignorance mistook these masterpieces of statuary for idols, and railed against them for lack of knowledge. We are left to choose between the statement

of Paul who saw what he denounced, and the opinion of the brilliant Frenchman who lived from 1823 to 1892, and who was too strongly opposed to the religion of Christ to deal justly with it.

Paul waited for Silas and Timothy, but not in idleness. He found a synagogue, and began to preach Christ and Him crucified. He reasoned with the Jews in the capital of the Greeks, and they heard him with respect. In the Agora, the market-place, the people freely approached him and engaged him in conversation. He was ever ready to give a reason for his hope, and to press the claims of Christ upon all willing listeners. These conversations often developed into hot discussions. They were all informal, and held in the open. Many people listened to them. After much effort extending through many days, Paul attracted the attention of the public and secured a hearing. He encountered the philosophers of many different schools; the two most prominent of these were the Stoics and the Epicureans. The Stoics derived their name from the *stoa*, or colonnade, in which Zeno, their founder, delivered his lectures about the year 308 B. C. Zeno and the school of philosophy that he founded taught that total indifference to both the joys and sorrows of the world would bring the greatest good in life. The Epicureans, founded by Epicurus, taught that happiness was the true aim of life, and that this springs from peace of mind resulting from proper conduct. They put no limit on the passions and taught no responsibility as to one's life, holding that a free and prudent gratification of every passion was life's true aim.

Both of these sects, though differing widely from

each other in the fundamental principles of their respective philosophies, united in denying the resurrection and the future life. In opposition to the hard and unsympathetic tenets of the Stoics Paul taught that all men should rejoice in the happiness of others, and weep with them in their sorrows and misfortunes ; and, in opposition to the indulgence of every passion as practiced by the Epicureans, he taught that men should deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, live in a spiritual atmosphere, and think pure thoughts.

The one point at which Paul antagonized both of these parties was that human life would issue in eternity, and that the righteous would enjoy everlasting life. In this great and populous city of Athens, this splendid, yet heathen city, most people with whom the apostle came in contact treated him with cold indifference and supreme contempt ; but he succeeded in gaining the attention of a few open-minded people, and towards these he directed his efforts.

The apostle was made glad by receiving an invitation to speak in the Areopagus. " Mars Hill," as it is still called, is a long low ridge extending along the northern side of the Agora. It is about thirty feet in height, and slopes towards the west for about a quarter of a mile, and descends to the level of the plain. From the Agora, a flight of steps cut into the solid rock leads to the summit of the hill. On the top of this hill, and in the open air, sat the court of the Areopagus. It was the function of this court to consider and settle all religious controversies, and also to try and condemn criminals. Paul was not



before the court. The people in the market-place had invited him to speak to them of the new doctrines and to explain to them the "strange things" that he had brought to their ears. Some of the Athenians had expressed themselves freely in regard to the apostle and his teaching. By some he was called a babbler, and others ventured the opinion that he was a proclaimer of foreign gods; and now the opportunity had presented itself, and Paul was glad to be able to explain fully the object of his mission to the city.

With the market-place in full view and thronged with a noisy multitude that cared neither for Paul nor his teaching, the great sermon on Mars Hill was delivered; and, in preaching, the apostle had to contend with the confused and mingled sounds that came from the crowd a few steps away. Paul spoke under difficulties. The people of Athens were noted for their desire to hear and tell new things, and now they were to hear something new.

The first thing that the speaker did was to pay a high tribute to the religious fervour of the people. He told them that he could see that they were very religious. Their many altars erected to many gods gave proof of this, but there was nothing in all this to appease their heart-hunger for something better. Back of all their known gods was the Unknown God, and they had erected an altar to him, even though they knew not his name or character. Paul saw that altar, and told them that he had come among them to make known the Unknown God. They worshipped Him in ignorance, and it was the apostle's mission to enable them to serve Him intelligently. He told them

of the works of the Unknown God, and declared that God did not dwell in temples erected by man.

The apostle declared that God had overlooked what men had done in ignorance, but would do so no longer, that He now commands all men everywhere to repent. As a motive to repentance the apostle announced that God had appointed a day in which He would judge the world in righteousness by the man who had been ordained for that purpose. The resurrection of Jesus is the assurance to all men that He will judge the world. The resurrection made the judgment as certain as the power and immutability of God can make anything.

At the reference to the resurrection some laughed in derision. The Greeks looked upon the doctrine of the resurrection as foolishness (1 Cor. i. 23). Some expressed more interest, and asked that they might hear more of the Gospel, but if Paul made any promise to address them again, the record does not show it. Still we know that it would not be like Paul to go away and leave men pleading for further instruction in the Gospel. It is probable that he addressed them again. At the close of the sermon, a few persons accepted the new faith. One of these was Dionysius, a member of the court of Areopagus, and another was Damaris, a well-known woman of the city.

This address, of which we only have a synopsis, was one of the most eloquent ever delivered by Paul, and, in point of results, it amounted to less than most of his sermons. He founded no church in Athens, we have no Epistle to the Athenians, and we know the names of only two persons who were con-

verted on Mars Hill. It is true that the apostle failed to establish a congregation of Christians in the center of Greek culture, but he did not fail to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There was nothing lacking on his part. The same Gospel with which he had won multitudes in other cities and which was destined to accomplish even greater things in days to come, failed to impress the people of Athens; and for this Paul was not the least responsible.

On leaving Athens Paul must have reflected seriously on his work in that city, and he almost acknowledged that he had made a mistake in his manner of preaching. Some of his own words indicate this, and help us to understand the apostle's opinion as to why he failed to establish a church of Christ in the Grecian capital. We know that at Athens the apostle descended to the arena of controversy in the market-place. He disputed daily with the philosophers. There is only one power to save men and that is the Gospel of Christ. When the preacher turns aside from that great theme to discuss philosophy with the philosophers, he will fail. Even an apostle could learn by experience, and this episode was helpful to Paul.

He left Athens with fixed determination that he would not pursue the same course in Corinth. He would preach Christ and nothing but Christ in that city. After his first work in Corinth he wrote to the great church that had resulted from his labours there describing his first appearance among them in these words: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I de-

terminated not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. ii. 1, 2). With this determination he entered Corinth, and the great success that followed his preaching showed the wisdom of his course. The comparative failure at Athens shows the weakness of philosophy and the phenomenal success at Corinth shows the power of the Gospel.

It will be remembered that Paul sent word back by his friends who accompanied him to Athens to Silas and Timothy, who had remained behind at Berea, to join him at their earliest opportunity. The record in Acts does not inform us whether they overtook him in Athens or not, but in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, written soon after leaving Athens, we learn that Timothy joined him in that city.

Silas had probably remained at Berea to continue the work of instructing the church. Timothy, on joining Paul, was sent to Thessalonica, as is seen in these words: "When we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone and sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the Gospel of Christ, to establish you and comfort you concerning the faith" (1 Thess. iii. 1, 2). We are not informed as to the purpose of this mission, but something that Paul regarded as urgent made the journey necessary. Paul was much depressed during his stay in Athens, and when he took leave of that wicked and idolatrous city, he was a melancholy, disappointed man. His failure in Athens cast a gloom over his spirit, and it took some time for him to recover from the depressing effects of his disappointment. The change of scene and environment aided him to overcome his despondency.

Taking a sorrowful departure from Athens, the city that he never visited again, Paul passed on to Corinth. The Corinth of Paul's day was a new city bearing the old name, and built among the ruins of its predecessor. It is forty miles from Athens in a due west course. Paul in journeying thither must have sailed to Cenchrea, a port on the Saronic Gulf, on the eastern side of the Isthmus of Corinth which connects the southern peninsula of Greece with the mainland to the north. The distance from Cenchrea to Corinth was only eight miles, and Paul doubtless made the journey on foot. The chief landmark of Corinth was the lofty citadel known as the Acro Corinthus. It rises to the enormous height of two thousand feet, and its dark shadow reaches far out over the sea. As Paul walked along the highway, this towering peak was in full view all the way from the time he left Cenchrea. The city was situated on the western side of the isthmus and at the head of the Gulf of Corinth. The location was favourable to commerce, and because of this fact, many Jews resided there. Cenchrea gave them an outlet towards the east, and the Gulf of Corinth on the west made connection with the Adriatic Sea. This put the important ports of the west into close commercial relation with Corinth. Paul was alone when he left Athens, and alone he entered Corinth. He was without money and without friends, but not without means of support. The industrial training that he received in his boyhood served him well in this time of need. The first effort he made was not to convert men to Christ, but to find employment at his trade of tent-making. He was thrown on his own re-

sources, and was compelled to earn his own expenses. He was fortunate in becoming acquainted with a man and his wife, who were ever afterwards among his best and dearest friends. These were Aquila and Priscilla, also written Prisca. They were Jews like himself.

Aquila was a native of Pontus, a province in Asia Minor, touching the south shore of the Black Sea. He and his wife had migrated to Rome, but had been driven out of that city by an imperial edict banishing all Jews from Italy. Not being allowed to locate anywhere in Italy, they journeyed to Corinth, and had been there but a short time when Paul arrived. They had some means of their own, and were conducting a business which seems to have been prosperous. Tent-making was their business, and their output was all made by hand. Having learned this trade when a boy, Paul applied to them for employment. We know that he abode with them and worked with them, and it is natural to suppose that he received a stipulated price for his labour. Let us not think less of Paul because he was a hired labourer. Jesus was a carpenter. There can be no disgrace in honest toil. Labour has been dignified in the life of the Master, and of Paul, His chief minister. We are not informed whether Aquila and Priscilla were Christians or not when Paul met them. The probability, however, is that they were not till their hired man taught them the way of the Lord and led them to Christ.

For a while Paul was so low spirited that he was not very aggressive in his mission work. He had not yet recovered from the depression of spirits that overcame him at Athens. The first of all of Paul's

letters is the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, which was written soon after he arrived in Corinth; and, in that document, we learn much of his inward feeling at this time. In writing to the brethren in Corinth, he reminded them that he had been with them in weakness, fear and much trembling (1 Cor. ii. 3). During these days of weakness and fear, he laboured in the shop of the tent-maker through the week and preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath. His preaching was not very successful at first, and there is reason to believe that the despondency of the apostle had much to do with his lack of visible results. A man who is down-hearted and discouraged is not at his best. Paul was below his own level at this time.

This period of discouragement was happily terminated by the arrival of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia. It is probable that Luke was at Philippi still. The indications are that he remained near that place for many years. These brethren, Silas and Timothy, brought Paul reports from the churches and kind messages from his friends in Macedonia. This refreshed him. Timothy came from Thessalonica and Silas from Berea, and from them Paul learned the general condition of affairs in the churches in Macedonia. After the arrival of his friends, Paul began to preach with more zeal and energy than had characterized his labour up to that time. He once more became aggressive, and was his old self again.

When he argued that Jesus was the Christ, many Jews opposed him. Their opposition increased till they became angry and began to blaspheme. Paul

was not a man to waste time in casting pearls before swine. He turned from the Jews to the Gentiles, and found the latter willing hearers. His parting message to the Jews was this, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." Having said this, he deliberately walked out of the synagogue, followed by a few devoted friends. Titus Justus, one of these friends, owned a house that stood next door to the synagogue, and he generously tendered Paul the use of it as a preaching place. This man was a Gentile proselyte. It is not known that he ever became a Christian, but most probably he did.

One of the men who walked out of the synagogue when Paul led the way was Crispus. He was a ruler, but he did not permit his popularity in the synagogue to keep him out of Christ. His family became Christians along with him. "Many of the Corinthians, hearing the word, believed and were baptized" (Acts xviii. 8). Two of the converts, whose names are not given in the narrative, were Gaius and Stephanas (1 Cor. i. 15, 16). Timothy and Silas did most of the baptizing. Paul could not remember whether he baptized any except the parties mentioned in the above citation. Paul was accustomed to have one or more assistants with him, and when it became necessary for him to be left alone for a while, he was always downcast. The fact that the ruler of the synagogue embraced Christianity shows that all Jews were not controlled by prejudice. The fact that he united with the disciples is not so remarkable as is the fact that he renounced a high position to follow his convictions. Not every man



would be willing to make such a sacrifice. His conduct is very much to his credit, and we should like to know more about him.

When Timothy arrived from Macedonia and reported to Paul the condition of the church in Thessalonica, the apostle immediately wrote his first epistle to that congregation. By studying the epistle, we learn much about the church to which it was written. Timothy had just come when Paul wrote (iii. 6). Paul rejoiced when he heard of their joy (iii. 6-8). It is not our purpose to examine the contents of this epistle, but the letter should be studied in connection with Paul's first visit to Corinth. The contents show why it was written and the conditions it was intended to meet. Timothy remained in Corinth but a short time, and was dispatched to Thessalonica to bear the epistle. Silas remained with Paul.

About the time that Timothy went to Thessalonica, Paul received a vision that gave him much encouragement. The Lord who had appeared to him in Jerusalem many years before and directed him to leave the city, appeared to him in Corinth and told him to continue to preach the Gospel without fear. Being thus assured that no harm would come to him personally and that his labours would be abundantly fruitful, he continued to preach the Gospel with greater power and effect than he had done. He preached in the city for eighteen months, which was the longest time that he had spent at any one place since Barnabas found him in Tarsus and took him to Antioch. This protracted stay was for a twofold purpose; he not only laboured to convert sinners to

Christ, but also to develop the spiritual life of the congregation. The principal work that he did during the latter part of his ministry there was to lead the converted heathen into the fuller light and life of the Gospel.

Affairs went well for a while; but the unbelieving Jews, inflamed with jealousy and rage, arose with one accord against Paul and brought him before the proconsul of the district, under the charge that he taught men to worship God contrary to the law. This proconsul was Gallio, a brother of Seneca, the famous philosopher and moralist. Seneca has thus described the character of Gallio, "No mortal man is so sweet to any single person as he is to all mankind." "Even those who love my brother Gallio to the uttermost of their power do not love him enough." It is unpleasant to record that both of these brothers committed suicide.

Gallio is famous for his good judgment, mild temper, and kindly disposition. He had but recently come into the province to assume the reins of power, and the Jews, hoping to enlist his sympathy and influence on their side of the controversy, made haste to bring the apostle before him. The law that Paul was charged with breaking here was the Jewish law, and for this law the Romans cared nothing. The Jews were no longer a nation with their own government and code of laws, but were tributary to the Roman Empire and subject to its laws. The authorities of the empire permitted the Jews to practice their own laws so far as it applied to religious observances. They hoped for a favourable decision from Gallio, supposing that he would forbid a Jew to

violate the laws of the Jews. The proconsul, however, was a different type of man from some officials before whom Paul had been arraigned in other cities.

He listened to the statement of the case with apparent interest and real respect, and as Paul was about to speak in his own defense, broke out with a speech of his own. He was indignant that a matter so trivial should be brought to his attention. His keen perception enabled him to see, at a glance, the malice that actuated the Jews, and he was determined that no such procedure should be recognized in his jurisdiction. He said : "If indeed it were a matter of wrong or wicked villainy, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you ; but if they are questions about words and names and your law, look to it yourselves ; I am not minded to be a judge in these matters." At the conclusion of this short speech, Gallio drove the Jews from his presence. His office was that of governor of the province, and he had no time to waste in trying to adjust such matters. The charge against Paul was too trifling for consideration.

The proconsul was a real heathen, but wise in matters of State. His speech to the Jews shows that he was pitiaibly ignorant of the Christian religion. To him the trouble was over words and names, nothing more. The majority of the people present approved the wisdom of Gallio in dismissing the case. Sosthenes, who was appointed to the office of ruler in the synagogue to fill the vacancy made when Crispus became a Christian, was the leader of the Jews ; he had brought the case before Gallio and made the speech of accusation ; and when the people saw how the governor had disposed of the

charge, they rushed upon Sosthenes and administered to him a severe beating, immediately before the judgment seat, and in the presence of the proconsul. Gallio could plainly see that the majority sympathized with Paul. He did not try to restrain the mob, knowing that Sosthenes richly deserved the castigation.

Before Paul left Corinth, Timothy returned from Thessalonica. The report that he brought from that church made it necessary for Paul to write another epistle to correct the misapprehensions of the first one. Both of the Thessalonian epistles were written within a few months of each other, in the year 52.

Paul remained in Corinth for some time after the incident before the judgment seat of the proconsul, and then closed his labours there for the time being. Here we lose sight of Silas. From this time forth his movements are unknown. Some think that he remained in Corinth till Paul made his third missionary journey, and this conjecture is plausible. When Paul left the city, he left behind him many true and devoted friends, but the two to whom he was most devoted accompanied him on his journey. These were Aquila and Priscilla, the first friends he made in Corinth, the friends who had given him employment in time of need, and who had been his helpers in the Gospel for one year and six months. They had passed through trying scenes together, and were destined to be much together in the future. They passed across the isthmus to Cenchrea, and from that port sailed away towards the east. Before Paul sailed from Cæsarea, the time of a vow that he had taken upon himself expired. He had allowed

his hair to grow long as did those under the Nazarite vow of the Jewish law. At Cenchrea he had his hair cut and resumed the ordinary course of life.

When Paul arrived at Ephesus, on the eastern coast of the Ægean Sea, he went into the synagogue and delivered a sermon. The Jews who heard him were much pleased, and earnestly requested him to remain longer. He did not consent to stay, but left a promise to visit them in the future, if God should so will. He remembered that once before he had his face turned towards that city, and that the Holy Spirit had turned him back, and he thought best to make the promise to visit the city in the future subject to God's will. He lived to fulfill the promise and to work wonders among the people. His stay this time was brief, and when he departed to go into Syria, he left his two companions behind him. We can well believe that the separation from Aquila and Priscilla was solemn and affecting, but Ephesus was so ripe for the harvest that Paul thought it best to leave his faithful helpers there to prepare the people for his return. Once more we find the apostle a solitary traveller. There were others in the ship, it is true, but he was alone, a strange man among strange men. There is no mention made of any landing between Ephesus and Cæsarea. The ship passed near Cyprus en route and landed at Cæsarea, where Peter had opened the door of the kingdom to the Gentiles many years before.

There is some uncertainty as to Paul's movements after landing at Cæsarea. It is said that he "went up and saluted the church." Some understand this to refer to the church in Cæsarea, and others con-

tend that he visited the church in Jerusalem. The Twentieth Century New Testament sustains the latter contention. "On reaching Cæsarea, he went up to Jerusalem and exchanged greetings with the church, and then went down to Antioch" (Acts xviii. 22).

We can imagine the feelings of the apostle as he entered Jerusalem. He had been there many times, and was among familiar scenes. Many changes had taken place since he first saw the city, and the greatest of these changes was in himself. He gave the church a glowing account of his work among the Gentiles. Jerusalem was the home of Silas whom Paul had left at Corinth, and many of his friends no doubt enquired about him. Paul's stay was short. He hurried away to Antioch, to the church from which he and Silas had gone out about three years before. He had travelled on this tour about 3,200 miles, and was glad to have time for a needed rest.

## XI

### THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY BEGUN: FROM ANTIOCH TO EPHEBUS

**I**N describing the time spent at Antioch on this occasion Luke is very brief and indefinite. He merely says that the apostle spent "some time" there, and in few words mentions a journey that it took several months to accomplish. It reached across at least six hundred miles. He passed through Galatia and Phrygia, and in order to do this, he passed through Syria and Cilicia. Once more, passing through the Cilician Gates, he again reached the highlands of Asia Minor. On his first visit to these countries Barnabas was with him, on his second tour Silas was his companion, and from Lystra onward Timothy was his fellow-worker also. And now at the time of which we write, he was making his third tour alone. He no doubt visited Lystra, Derbe, and the Pisidian Antioch, all of them scenes of his former labours. He found many old acquaintances among the churches.

At Lystra many questions were doubtless asked about Timothy. Had he made good? Where was he labouring at that time? It was a good report that Paul was able to make to Timothy's kindred and friends in his home town. The young evangelist had proved himself worthy to be the companion and

co-labourer of the apostle. Paul made no long stops. Ephesus was his objective point. There he had left Aquila and Priscilla to labour in the Gospel and there he had an appointment that he made while on his way to Jerusalem, to return and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was hastening to meet his friends and fill his engagement.

Before the apostle reached Ephesus, events of much moment had transpired there. Apollos, a learned and eloquent Jew from Alexandria in Egypt, had come to the city to preach. He was mighty in the Scriptures; but the work that he did was imperfect for the reason that he had been imperfectly taught. He told all he knew, but he did not know enough. He had learned nothing of the Gospel except John's baptism. His knowledge of the Gospel extended no farther than the teaching of John the Baptist, and we can readily see that his conception of Christ and the Gospel was sadly defective. He looked for Christ yet to come. Aquila and Priscilla went to hear him preach, and seeing that he was very much in need of instruction, took him into their confidence, gained his good will, and taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly. They did this very delicately so as not to make him feel sensitive. They were too late in their instruction, however, to prevent an occurrence that otherwise would have been avoided. He had already baptized twelve persons to whom he had imparted his imperfect knowledge of Jesus Christ. What Apollos could have done, had his matchless eloquence been coupled with a full knowledge of the Gospel, can be estimated by what he did later in the resplendent light of perfect teaching.



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Having learned the real truth of the Gospel, Apollos did not tarry long in the city. Either of his own accord or upon the advice of his friends who had led him into the light, he passed over to Corinth on the western side of the Ægean Sea. There was a large and flourishing congregation of Christians in Corinth, and there the cause was well established. We have already seen how it had been founded by Paul and how it was nurtured by Silas, after the apostle had left the city on his voyage to Syria. Apollos bore letters of commendation from the brethren in Ephesus, and was given a glad welcome in Corinth where Aquila and Priscilla had many friends. This endorsement served to introduce him and give him a commanding influence from the start. He did not have to spend much time getting acquainted with the people. Under his preaching the church was greatly strengthened.

A short time after Apollos left Ephesus, Paul made his appearance in that city. He had passed through the uplands of Asia Minor and come down to Ephesus, approaching the city from the interior. There is no record of the incidents of the journey till he reached Ephesus. This city became the third capital of Christianity. The teaching of Jesus began in Jerusalem, spread to Antioch, and passed on to Ephesus—all within a period of something like twenty years. Numerous intervening points of less importance had been revolutionized by the Gospel. The country was ablaze with the fire from heaven. Ephesus was situated one mile from the Icarian Sea, an arm of the Ægean, on a low swampy plain through which the river Cayster winds its way. The haven

had been one of the best on the coast of Asia Minor, but in Paul's day it had deteriorated on account of neglect. It had been filled up in part by silt deposits, but was still thronged with trading vessels from many lands. The city was large, and many different nations and tribes were represented among its inhabitants. It was the site of one of the Seven Churches of Asia. It was rich in wealth and resplendent with beauty. The calamity predicted in Revelation ii. 5 has long since become a fact, and by it we are furnished with a melancholy testimony to the truthfulness of the Master's words. The candlestick has been removed out of its place, and a desolate ruin is all that remains to mark the location of this once splendid city.

The most notable feature of the city was the temple of Diana. It was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, and one hundred and twenty feet wide; a row of marble columns extended all around it, standing less than two feet apart. There were one hundred and twenty of these columns, each one of which had been given by a king. The temple contained a stairway that had been made from a single vine from the Island of Cyprus, and the interior was magnificently decorated with sculpture and painting. The inner sanctuary contained a coarse image of a woman with many breasts. This was perhaps to symbolize two ideas—fruitfulness in human propagation, and the fact that the streams of physical life have their source in the breasts of nature. This image was believed to have been made by Jupiter and dropped down from heaven as a special gift to the city. Ephesus was known far and wide as the site of this

temple and the custodian of this image, but even the guardianship of Jupiter was not sufficient to secure the temple and the city from destruction.

On the night that Alexander the Great was born, Herostratus, an Ephesian, set fire to the magnificent temple and it was burned to the ground. The man who did this evil deed wanted to make a name in history, but was incapable of doing anything good by which to be remembered, and resorted to incendiarism. It must be remembered, however, that this temple was destroyed long before Paul's time. It was rebuilt on a still more splendid scale, if possible, and it was this rebuilt temple that Paul saw. It was plundered by the Goths, when the avalanche of invasion rolled over the nations of the south, and soon afterwards it became a neglected ruin. Some of the material of this temple has been worked into other buildings. The green jasper columns that support the dome of the mosque of St. Sophia in Constantinople were once in the temple of Diana, and in many of the cathedrals scattered throughout southern Europe other fragments of this celebrated structure can be found.

When Paul arrived at Ephesus he found the twelve persons who had been baptized by Apollos, and in order to test their knowledge of the religion of Christ, he asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit since they believed; the manner in which they answered him was sufficient to convince him that their knowledge was woefully incomplete. They had not so much as heard of the Holy Spirit. And when the apostle asked them as to their baptism, they said that they had received only the baptism of John. Apol-

los who taught them knew nothing but the teaching of John, and gave them no information beyond the statement that the Messiah was yet to come. They had accepted all the truth they had heard, and were anxious to learn more. This shows their sincerity. All people are not so consistent. Paul explained to them that John baptized in water, preparing those who accepted his baptism to receive the Christ who should come after him. He also told them that the promised one had come since the time that John announced His coming. As soon as he explained to them that the Christ had already come they saw their error and accepted the full Gospel. They received Christian baptism, after which Paul laid his hands on them and conferred upon them power to speak with tongues and prophesy. This was the beginning of the church in Ephesus. There were other disciples in the city, but they were few in number. The planting of the church there must be dated from Paul's second visit to the city.

The rebaptism of the twelve teaches us that John's baptism was not valid after the day of Pentecost. We know that it was accepted before that time. The apostles, chosen by Jesus and commissioned to preach the Gospel to the whole creation, had received John's baptism, and no other was required of them. The baptism authorized by Jesus was first administered on the day of Pentecost, and from that time forward the baptism of John was not recognized. The case of the twelve persons in Ephesus was a test case, and is the only one on record as occurring after the introduction of the baptism ordained by Christ.

When Paul had corrected the errors of his prede-

cessor by completing his unfinished work, he went into the synagogue and for three months fearlessly preached the Gospel of Christ. Many accepted the message, and many also rejected it. Others not only refused to accept it but openly denounced it as false. When the apostle saw that some viewed his preaching with derision, he showed a high degree of courage and independence. He withdrew his followers from the synagogue and found another meeting place. The Christian congregation in that city was not henceforth to be regarded as a part of the number comprising the synagogue, but as an independent and separate organization. The brethren met in a schoolhouse.

Tyrannus, who conducted a school of philosophy or rhetoric, was probably among the number converted to Christ by Paul's preaching, and was willing to allow Paul the use of his lecture hall as a place to preach. Whether the disciples rented the hall or whether Tyrannus donated the use of it, we are not told. We do know that the relationship of the apostle and the teacher of the school was pleasant and fraternal. The arrangement, whatever it was, was satisfactory to both, and for two years Paul continued to occupy the schoolroom. During this time, he saw the church grow from a small and weak congregation to a power that revolutionized the social and religious life of the entire city. Two years of faithful labour wrought great wonders.

The apostle's influence was not confined to the city, but "All that were in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks." No doubt he had many helpers who laboured under his direction.

The work greatly prospered, and many out-stations were established. Congregations were formed in the different villages throughout the country. It could not have been otherwise if all Asia had been evangelized. "God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul," and the work grew greater still. From the apostle handkerchiefs were taken to those that were too sick to be brought to him, and all the sick were healed. Even the demons fled out of those possessed of them at the mention of the name of Jesus, and the demoniacs were restored to their reason. Everything that occurred served to help the church. Paul had never met with such astounding success in all his previous experience.

In Ephesus there lived some men who professed to be exorcists. They claimed that they had the power to cast out demons. One of these men, whose name was Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, had seven sons who boasted of this power. They knew that Paul had relieved many demoniacs, and supposed that the name of Jesus possessed some magical charm. And, as Paul had used this name in casting out demons, they decided that they would adopt the apostle's method and endeavour to work it themselves. They were not willing to make a public attempt until they had made a private test of their ability. Accordingly, they decided to make a test. Two of these impostors enticed a demoniac into a private room for the purpose of experimenting on him. He was caused to stand before them, and one of them said, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth;" but, instead of the evil spirit's going out of the man, as it would have done before Paul, the demon re-

plied, "Jesus I know and Paul I know ; but who are ye?" The man, possessed of the evil spirit, was enraged by the demon within him, and rushed frantically upon the pretenders, tearing and biting them with such fierceness that they ran out of the house with their clothing torn to tatters and their bodies bleeding with many wounds. By this humiliating experience these impostors were taught that the name of Jesus was too sacred to be used by the juggler and the humbug.

The secret could not be kept. The people of the city laughed, and the impostors fell into disfavour. Fear fell upon all, and the name of Jesus was magnified. The Gospel made great gains, and the pretended magicians continued to lose ground. Their hypocrisy had been exposed, and the people no longer honoured them. Some of them were constrained to confess their duplicity. They came to Paul and declared their deeds. They showed how they had managed to delude the people and hold sway over them. However, they never confessed their deeds till they had first confessed Christ. Many of them who had formerly practiced on the credulity of the people, and who had accumulated large libraries treating of magic and legerdemain brought their books together and burned them in a public place. The value of these books is stated at fifty thousand pieces of silver. In American money this would amount to more than eight thousand dollars. The tricks of the magician and the juggler have no interest to the man who has found Christ. The confession of these tricksters and the burning of the books gave further impetus to the cause of

Christ. "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed." It grew upon the will and the affections of the people; it grew mightily; it prevailed. The religion of Christ became the greatest power in the city, and the church the most popular institution.

The strength of the church became such that Paul began to think of other fields that were white for the harvest. He planned journeys that it would have taken him several years to complete. He intended to go through Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem, and thence to Rome. He sent Timothy and Erastus, who had been with him some time in Ephesus, into Macedonia, expecting to follow them himself in the near future. The plan was carried out, but in a way far different from that which Paul expected. He did go through Macedonia to Jerusalem and on to Rome, and it will be our pleasant task, at the proper time, to follow him all the way, and note the incidents of the journey.

Timothy had been sent as far as Corinth (1 Cor. iv. 17); and as that city was the home of Erastus, who had accompanied him from Ephesus through Macedonia, and who had long been absent from home, it is probable that they both went on to Corinth together. At a later period, Erastus was treasurer of the city, and it is not improbable that he held that office at this time (Rom. xvi. 23). Because of some statements in 2 Corinthians, some think that Paul had, previous to this time, visited Corinth and returned to Ephesus.

We have now come to the time and place of the writing of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In



1 Corinthians xvi. 8, 9, the apostle writes, "I will tarry at Ephesus till Pentecost ; for a great and effectual door is opened to me and there are many adversaries." This door was opened by the book burning already mentioned. The epistle was written during the period of prosperity that followed the victory over the magicians. It is not the first epistle that Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, notwithstanding the title it bears. An earlier and, perhaps, a much shorter epistle had been written to that church, and is mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians v. 9. This letter has been lost. The document that we know as the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written about the time that Timothy and Erastus left Ephesus to go into Macedonia, and it is almost certain that one of these men bore the epistle to its destination.

The epistle was called forth by certain sinful practices that were rife in the church in Corinth, where many kinds of sin and disorder prevailed. By studying this letter we obtain much knowledge of the internal condition of the church at the time the apostle wrote. The object of the communication was to correct the disorders that it rebukes. Paul obtained his information as to the condition of the church from some members of the household of Chloe, and who were members of the Corinthian church (1 Cor. i. 11). He thus learned that the congregation was divided into parties (i. 12 ; iii. 1-4) ; that some of the brethren were going to law with each other before heathen judges (vi. 1-18) ; that adultery, and even the worse crime of incest, were openly practiced (v. 1-13) ; that some of the members of the

church denied his authority as an apostle (iv. 1-6; xiv. 21); that some of the Corinthian women were violating the common rules of modesty and decency in the public meetings of the church (xi. 1-16); that there was much confusion arising from jealousy in regard to spiritual gifts (Chapters xii., xiii., xiv.); that the sacred institution of the Lord's supper had been grossly perverted by those who should have known better than to practice such sin (xi. 17-34); and further still, that he had received letters from certain persons in the church asking him about marriage and divorce, and eating meat offered to idols (vii. 1; viii. 1).

All of these questions are answered and all of these sins rebuked in the epistle. The language is sometimes severe in tone. The condition of the church was deplorable, and the apostle felt impelled to rebuke with harshness. The church had cost him much pain, labour and sorrow. He never wrote anything in his first epistle to indicate the deep feelings and emotions that he experienced when writing, but in his second epistle he wrote, "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote to you with many tears" (2 Cor. ii. 4). He was evidently overflowing with grief when he placed that epistle in the hands of Timothy or Erastus to be delivered to his erring but beloved brethren of Corinth.

Soon after these two brethren had been sent away on the mission to Macedonia, serious trouble arose in Ephesus. A riot occurred in the city, and Paul was involved in it. He had denounced idolatry in the strongest terms, and the guild of silversmiths arose against him, and accused him of injuring their busi-

ness. These adversaries (mentioned in 1 Cor. xvi. 18) became very aggressive. A man named Demetrius was their leader. He and several others of the same craft had their income from making silver images as souvenirs to supply the demands of the tourists who visited the temple of Diana. These images were imitations of the one within the temple. Calling his fellow-craftsmen together, Demetrius delivered an inflammatory address to them and roused them to active opposition. He told of the falling off in the sale of "shrines," and very properly attributed the decrease in business to the preaching of Paul. The apostle had said in Ephesus what he had said in Athens, and still earlier at Lystra, that there were no gods made with hands. Demetrius quoted him correctly. If the people should believe Paul, the temple would be deserted and the market for shrines destroyed, and the city, known throughout the world as the seat of the most splendid of all temples, would lose its prestige. Should the temple fall into disfavour, the city would diminish in popularity and importance.

The silversmiths were filled with intense anger, and raised a cheer for their favourite goddess, saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The enthusiasm of the artisans spread to the populace, and the tumult increased. Two of Paul's companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, were seized and dragged into the theatre, followed by a throng of angry men. The theatre was made in the natural rock, open to the sky, and large enough to accommodate thirty thousand men. The frenzied mob took Gaius and Aristarchus thence in order to find room

for the large number that had gathered under the excitement of the moment. Paul was not present when his companions were seized, and it is perhaps fortunate that he was not; but when he heard that they had been forcibly dragged into the theatre, and fearing that they would be murdered, he endeavoured to go to their rescue. He could not think of being safe himself when the lives of his friends that he loved and trusted were in danger, but he had other friends who persuaded him not to risk his life in that way. It is probable that Paul refers to this exciting experience in 2 Corinthians i. 8-10.

After telling how Paul's life was saved, Luke proceeds to record what took place inside the theatre. Excitement ran high, some cried one thing and some another, and many did not know the cause of the gathering. Alexander, a Jew, was put forward by the Jews and began to address the assembly. They knew him, and being aware that he and Paul were both Jews, refused to hear him speak in behalf of the latter's friends. They howled him down with the familiar exclamation, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." They kept up a continuous roar of shouting for two hours. The Jews as a class feared the mob. They opposed idolatry as did Paul, and expected to be classed with him as opposed to the temple and its service. If Alexander had been permitted to finish his speech, he probably would have said that Paul was a degenerate, an apostate from the faith of Israel, and that the orthodox Jews should not be held accountable for his conduct. It may be that the mob saw the point he was trying to make and refused, on that account, to hear him further, drowning his

speech in a torrent of tumultuous noise. This is one of the ways a coward meets argument.

After two hours of excitement and shouting, the town clerk arose, and with a few well chosen words put an end to the riotous scene. The speech can be read in Acts xix. 35-41. He stated what his hearers regarded as facts, that all men knew that Ephesus was temple-keeper for Diana, that all men believed that the image within the temple had fallen down from Jupiter, and that these facts were too well known to be disputed. He exhorted them to act with calmness and deliberation, and to do nothing rash. He declared that Paul and his friends were neither robbers of the temple nor blasphemers of the goddess, and that Demetrius had access to the civil courts where any grievance that he might have against the Christians could be easily adjusted. Then he reminded the people that the city was in danger of incurring the wrath of the Emperor for allowing such a riot to occur, there being no reason that they could give for such an outbreak.

At the conclusion of the address, the assembly quietly filed out of the theatre, and the turbulent scene ended and quiet was restored. Gaius and Aristarchus, who had been so near to death at the hands of the angry populace, made their escape, and for many years laboured in the Gospel. Both of them afterwards made the journey with Paul from Corinth to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 3, 4); Aristarchus was with him on the voyage to Rome as a fellow-prisoner (Acts xxvii. 1, 2). He was also with him during at least a portion of the time of his first imprisonment in Rome (Col. iv. 10). Gaius returned

to Corinth after the riot in Ephesus, and it is almost certain that Aristarchus went with him. When Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans a few months after leaving Ephesus, he was in the home of Gaius in Corinth (Rom. xvi. 23); and when he started to Jerusalem soon after writing the epistle, both Gaius and Aristarchus were his companions on the journey (Acts xx. 3, 4).

## XII

### THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY CONTINUED: FROM EPHESUS THROUGH MACEDONIA TO JERUSALEM

**P**AUL remained longer in Ephesus than in any other city in which he laboured during his entire ministry, unless his imprisonment in Rome covered a longer period. His long stay in Ephesus was brought to an abrupt close by the uprising of the silversmiths. The apostle passed uninjured through the perils of that day, but such strong feeling had been aroused against him as to render it unsafe for him to remain. The great and effectual door did not stand open long. His many adversaries had won the victory over him and closed the door in his face, thus forcing him to leave the city.

He gathered a few of his friends about him, took leave of them, and departed for Macedonia. The parting was sorrowful. With deep emotion the apostle turned his face towards the north and began his journey. He went alone to Troas where he expected to meet Titus. The latter had been for some time at Corinth, and Paul was anxious to meet him and hear from the church there. In this expectation he was disappointed, and how keenly he felt the disappointment is pathetically told in his own words: "When I came to Troas for the Gospel of Christ,

and when a door was opened to me in the Lord, I had no relief for my spirit because I found not Titus my brother ; but taking leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia'' (2 Cor. ii. 12, 13). This was the only time in Paul's life that he was so overwhelmed by a feeling of despondency that he was unable to enter an open door to preach the Gospel. He had looked forward to the presence of Titus to cheer him in his gloom, and failing to meet him at Troas, he went on alone, hoping to meet him somewhere in northern Macedonia. This hope was realized. The two friends met. Titus brought good news from the church in Corinth, and this raised Paul's drooping spirits and put new life and zeal into his work.

In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, written soon after he met with Titus, Paul wrote: "Nevertheless he that comforteth the lowly, even God, comforted us by the coming of Titus ; and not by his coming only, but also by the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you, while he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me ; so that I rejoiced yet the more" (2 Cor. vii. 6, 7). His joy was late in coming, but it was great when it did come. He had not been troubled so much on his own account as on behalf of his children in the Gospel.

Paul learned from Titus that the epistle written from Ephesus had been well received by the church in Corinth, and that many of the sins he had condemned had been forsaken. They had withdrawn fellowship from the man guilty of incest (2 Cor. ii. 5-11) ; they were zealous in preparing to make an offering for the relief of the poor saints in Jerusalem (ix. 1, 2). Titus furthermore informed the apostle



that certain men in the church in Corinth were trying to discredit his apostolic authority, and had refused to heed the admonition given in the epistle (x. 1-11 ; xi. 13-15). For the purpose of counteracting the influence of these "ministers of Satan," to strengthen the faith and increase the zeal of those who remained true, and to maintain the dignity of his apostolic office, he wrote another epistle and sent it by Titus and two other brethren whose names are not given (viii. 16-24). There can be no doubt as to the date of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. Paul had recently come from Asia into Macedonia (i. 8 ; vii. 5) ; he wrote from Macedonia as he was about to leave that country to make a visit to Corinth (ix. 3, 4 ; xii. 14 ; xiii. 1). This fixes the date in the summer of 57. The First Epistle to the same church was written a few months earlier, in the spring of the same year.

Paul passed through Macedonia and came into Greece where he spent three months urging the churches in Macedonia and Achaia to make a liberal contribution for the relief of their suffering brethren in Jerusalem (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2 ; 2 Cor. viii. 1-15). It was not the apostle's wish to take the money to Jerusalem himself. He wrote, "Whomsoever ye shall approve them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem : and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me" (1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4).

It became expedient for Paul to go on this mission of mercy to his own nation, and he went. As he was about to leave Corinth for Jerusalem he wrote : "Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers for me ; that I may

be delivered from them that be disobedient in Judea, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints; that I may come unto you with joy through the will of God and together we may find rest" (Rom. xv. 30-32). We shall see that this prayer was answered. He was delivered from the disobedient in Judea, his offering was acceptable to the saints, and he was enabled to make the long-desired journey to Rome.

During the three months spent in Corinth, the winter of 57 and 58, the apostle wrote two of his most important epistles, Romans and Galatians; and the fact that they were written about the same time and under similar circumstances accounts in a large measure for the similarity of their contents. In Romans the apostle states that he was to leave for Jerusalem with contributions from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia (Rom. xv. 25, 26). He was in the home of Gaius in Corinth at the time of writing (Rom. xvi. 23; 1 Cor. i. 14). Phœbe was a member of the church in Cenchrea and bore the epistle (Rom. xvi. 1). Paul had made a second visit to the province of Galatia (Gal. iv. 13); and his Epistle to the Galatians was written soon after this visit (Gal. i. 16). The fundamental teachings of this epistle and that to the Romans are the same; the doctrine of justification by faith rather than by the law of Moses is the central truth in both of them. The argument in both of them is directed against the Judaizing teachers who claimed that one could not be saved without circumcision after the manner of Moses.

These two epistles having been written and dis-

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patched, and the messengers from the scattered churches having come together, Paul was ready to start on his journey to Jerusalem ; but at this juncture he heard of a plot that had been laid by the Jews perhaps to waylay him and rob him of the money that he was bearing to Jerusalem. The Jews who formed this plan of robbery were not of the better class. All nations are infested more or less with robbers.

It seems that the plot was to have been executed somewhere on the road between Corinth and Cenchrea, but the apostle, being made aware of this, changed his plan and avoided passing over that road. Instead of taking ship at Cenchrea as he had intended to do, he made the much longer journey through Macedonia, retracing the route he had followed in coming into Greece. His party was composed of Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, Timothy of Lystra, Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia, and Luke of Antioch in Syria. This journey was made long before the day of bank drafts, foreign exchange, or letters of credit. The money was all coin, and was usually carried in belts worn around the body beneath the outer clothing. One person could not carry a very large amount of money in this manner. It had to be kept concealed to avoid robbery. The large number of men was necessary to carry the money with any degree of safety.

All of them except Luke went on before Paul. It is known that Luke was a physician and that Paul was not a strong man physically. It is highly probable that the physician remained behind to assist the

apostle in caring for his health, and to administer medical treatment if necessary. We have reason to believe that Luke and Paul met at Philippi. Luke had been left there by Paul on the first missionary tour of Macedonia about seven years before, and there is much probability for the belief that he had remained there all these years. These two men, the medical missionary and the tent-making apostle, followed on and overtook the advance party at Troas where they were waiting for them. Paul and Luke sailed away from Neapolis, the port of Philippi, where they with Silas and Timothy had landed seven years before, and after a voyage of five days, reached Troas and joined their companions. It will be remembered that when Paul sailed over that same route on his first journey to Europe he made the trip in two days.

It was at Troas that Paul had received the vision directing him to go into Macedonia with the Gospel. This was his second visit since that memorable night. On the visit preceding this, a great door was opened to him, but he was too much dejected by his recent experience in Ephesus to enter it, and hurried over into Macedonia to meet Titus, leaving the door open (2 Cor. ii. 12, 13). He was now ready to enter the door. The seven brethren who had gone before him had been there several days, and the reasonable supposition is that they had put in their time preaching the Gospel of Christ; and when Paul and Luke came, the entire company spent seven days in the city. It was the greatest week in the history of Troas, already noted as an historic place. The last day of the seven was the first day of the week, or the

Lord's day. The early disciples observed the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. The disciples in Troas observey this universal custom of the church. Paul and his companions were present at the Supper in memory of the Master, and the apostle preached to the congregation assembled; and as he expected to leave them on the morrow with little prospects of ever seeing them again in the flesh, he was exceedingly earnest and tender in his speaking. The solemnity of the occasion caused him to be intensely interested in his theme, and so profoundly interesting to his hearers, that he continued his speech till midnight.

The meeting place was in the third story of a building, and at midnight a young man named Euty-chus, who was sitting in a window, became overcome with sleep, and fell backward to the ground outside of the building and was taken up dead. This tragic event caused a recess in the service. Paul ceased speaking long enough to go down to the dead man and restore him to life. The service for which the meeting was held had not taken place at the time of the death of Euty-chus. The Lord's Supper had not been observed. After the young man had been restored to life, the disciples once more climbed to the third story and the memorial feast was spread. After the Supper, Paul resumed his discourse and continued till morning dawned; then, bidding farewell to his brethren, he continued his journey to Jerusalem.

All the party except Paul went on board the ship and sailed away. The apostle, preferring to walk across the isthmus to Assos, was left behind. Troas is on the northern side of a peninsula and Assos on

the southern side. The distance around by water is at least forty miles, but it is only about twenty miles across the isthmus. This gave Paul ample time to walk the distance while the ship sailed around Cape Lectum, the point of the peninsula. It is strange that Paul, who had spent a sleepless night in Troas and was weary with hard work, preferred this lonely and laborious walk twenty miles through a strange country, to resting at ease in the ship with his companions. The wonder grows when we call to mind the fact that the apostle was at least fifty-five years of age, and by no means a strong man.

There must have been some reason for this preference. He had left many friends behind him and he knew that there was trouble ahead. He was not certain that the offering that he was taking to Jerusalem would be accepted by the saints, and this uneasiness bore heavily upon his mind. He had been assured repeatedly that bonds and afflictions awaited him. He was so weighed down with burdens and oppressed with gloomy forebodings that he longed for solitude that his tears might flow freely and unobserved, and that nothing might disturb his communion with the Father. He could not even enjoy the presence of his friends who deeply sympathized with him, and who were anxious to share his sufferings. This sad and downcast man taking this lonely walk of several hours, through an unknown country, forms a picture in the mind not easily forgotten. With all his greatness and goodness, the apostle was a man and needed to be alone with God. There could not have been much difference between the time that Paul reached Assos and the arrival of the ship. He rejoined his

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companions at the appointed time and place and the ship continued on her voyage.

The vessel reached Mitylene the next day. The entire day was spent sailing among the picturesque islands that lie near the eastern shore of the Ægean Sea. Mitylene was situated on the eastern shore of the Island of Lesbos. A town bearing the same name occupies the site at the present day, and is a place of some importance. They anchored the next day over against Chios. This is a small island separated from the mainland by a narrow strait running north and south. In passing through this strait the ship was going a due south course. Somewhere in this narrow channel they passed the night with the ship riding at anchor.

Early next morning the sails were spread and the voyage resumed. During the day the ship passed near Ephesus without entering the harbour. No doubt Paul would have been glad to risk himself in the city again, believing that the anger that expelled him a few months before had measurably passed away ; but no landing was made, and he had no opportunity to visit his friends. He was only a passenger booked for Syria, and had no control of the ship's movements. The vessel was not expected to stop at Ephesus, and Paul experienced no disappointment. The next landing was at Miletus, and between the mouth of the harbour at Ephesus and that place, the ship passed within sight of the Isle of Patmos, famous as the scene of the wonderful visions described in the Book of Revelation. Miletus was on the coast of Asia Minor about thirty miles south of Ephesus. The distance by water was slightly greater.

A small Turkish village called Melas now stands near the ancient city.

Paul was very anxious to reach Jerusalem in time for the observance of the day of Pentecost, but for some reason not given the ship lay in the harbour at Miletus at least three days. Time was precious to Paul and his companions, but the delay was unavoidable and they had to make the best of it. As soon as Paul learned the length of time to be spent in the port, he sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church to come to him at Miletus for a conference. They came at once. The touching conversation that the apostle held with the elders is found in Acts xx. 17-38. The address to the elders is the most tender of all of Paul's speeches. He felt a deep interest in the church at Ephesus, and gave these men much tearful instruction as to its future. The close of the interview was especially pathetic. They all knelt down and prayed together, after which the elders one by one fell upon Paul's neck and kissed him while their tears fell in showers. It was a strong cord that bound them together—stronger than any human tie. The one thing that caused the elders such deep sorrow was that Paul, in the course of his remarks, had said that they should see his face no more. This broke their hearts and unsealed the fountain of their tears. Paul did go to Ephesus several years after this interview; but, at this time, he never expected to go there again. The fact that he did not foresee his own future does not affect his inspiration. Many incidents in his life confirm this.

When they arose from prayer they saw indications that the ship was about ready to sail, and after this



touching leave-taking, the men from Ephesus went with Paul and the others to the vessel. They saw their beloved friend and father in the Gospel go aboard, the cable loosed, and the ship sail away. They looked longingly after the departing craft till they saw it fade away into the distant blue where sea and sky meet; and then with hearts subdued and warmed into deeper devotion to the Christ, they solemnly turned their faces towards home.

Under ordinary conditions Paul's separation from his friends would have been sorrowful; but this being what he thought was his last separation from them, and his future pathway being overhung with clouds, dark and angry, made the parting exceedingly touching and pathetic. He turned from his friends and towards that future so big with mystery and anticipated dangers, and moved forward to an unknown destiny. Like the Master, he set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem.

After leaving Miletus, the ship kept close to the shore for a considerable distance. The graphic account given by Luke informs us that they came with a straight course unto Cos. This was their first day's sail from Miletus, and the distance covered indicates that conditions for sailing were good. Cos is an island near the southwestern corner of Asia Minor. The next day the ship sailed fifty miles to the city of Rhodes, in the harbour of which they passed the night, with the boat at anchor. This city was on the Island of Rhodes, and was a place of importance. Here once stood the famous Colossus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was a human figure made of brass, or imitation of brass, and was one

hundred and twenty-five feet in height. It was a statue of Apollo. The statue was shaken down by an earthquake in the year 224 B. C. The island was known for its clear skies and healthful climate. There was a popular saying that the sun shone every day in Rhodes.

The next stop was at Patara. This was in the province of Lycia, and was the port of Xanthus ten miles from the seashore. This point being the destination of the ship in which Paul and his companions had made voyage from Neapolis, it became necessary to find other means of completing the journey to Syria. They were fortunate in finding a vessel ready to sail to Tyre, one of the principal ports on the Syrian coast. The distance from Patara to Tyre is three hundred and forty miles. With the favourable wind that usually prevails in the Levant during the spring season, this portion of the voyage could have been made in two days and nights. In following Paul's movements from Troas to Patara we have been skirting the coast, seldom out of sight of land for more than a few hours at a time ; we have passed through narrow channels, under the shadow of great mountains, and between picturesque islands. The scenery has been entrancing. We must now leave the coast and follow the ship across the open sea.

The only land seen on the way, of sufficient importance for Luke to mention, was the Island of Cyprus. They passed within sight of it, leaving it to the left, the ship passing near the southern shore of the island. It must be kept in mind that Cyprus was the first mission field entered by missionaries sent out from Antioch, and that Paul and Barnabas

were the first missionaries. As Paul stood upon the deck, looked out over the white-capped waves, and beheld Cyprus in the distance, rising from the blue surface of the sea, he must have thought of his early labours there and wondered if Barnabas were still in the island, and, if so, what success had crowned his labours.

The voyage from Patara was made in the silver light of a full moon. By referring to Acts xx. 6, we learn that Paul left Neapolis, the port of Philippi, after the days of unleavened bread. This means that they started seven days after the full moon. To this we must add the five days spent in sailing to Troas. Thus we have twelve days; and to this period must be added the seven days spent with the brethren at Troas, making nineteen days since the full moon. They spent four days between Troas and Miletus, and from the latter place they sailed to Patara in three days (Acts xx. 13-15; xxi. 1). This makes twenty-six days. They must have spent at least three days in Miletus. Paul had time to send thirty miles to Ephesus for the elders and they had time to come to him for a conference. This would make twenty-nine days since the last full moon, and bring the full moon again. Out in the deep open sea they could sail day and night, thus avoiding the delay of anchoring each night, as they had been compelled to do during the moonless nights, when sailing among the islands along the western and southwestern coasts of Asia Minor.

The vessel landed at Tyre, a well-known commercial city in Phœnicia. It is often mentioned in the Bible, and fills a prominent place in profane

history. At the present time it is a city of considerable importance. Paul probably enquired if there were any Christians in the city, and having learned that there was a congregation, he found it and spent seven days with the brethren. There was now no reason for haste in his journey. He saw that he would reach Jerusalem in time for the Pentecost, and the rest of the journey was leisurely made. He was a stranger to the brethren in Tyre, having never been in that city since the cause of Christ was planted there. The men who were with him were likewise strangers. The week spent by Paul and his company in Tyre was the greatest week in the history of the church in that city. For such a company of men, led by such a man as Paul, to spend a week with a mission church in a heathen city meant much to the permanency of the cause and the prosperity of the congregation.

The brethren of Tyre all knew Paul by reputation, and were glad of the opportunity to become personally acquainted with him. They learned from him that he and his companions were on their way to Jerusalem, and knowing something of the personal danger that would attend the visit, begged him to change his purpose and not set foot in the city. He could have sent the money to the poor by the hands of others and remained in safety among his friends; but for some reason not given, he preferred to brave the dangers that awaited him and go on to Jerusalem, risking the consequences.

When the seven days were passed, there was enacted another scene of pathos and tears. This week had served to bind Paul and his party to the brethren at Tyre with the strongest ties of Christian love.

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The parting was heartrending to all. There is no speech recorded, such as Paul made to the elders who came from Ephesus to meet him at Miletus, but the unembellished description of the parting scene is extremely touching. All the men of the church, with their wives and children, followed Paul out of the city ; they kneeled together on the sands of the beach and prayed, while the rhythmic waves of the surf dashed against the shore. After the prayer came the final scene. Paul and his companions bade the friends of Tyre an affectionate farewell, which was responded to by them with equal fervour, and went on board the ship. The brethren of Tyre returned in deep dejection to their homes. The influence of this visit must have been felt for a long time in the church in Tyre.

Setting sail, the ship stood out to sea and turned towards the south, skirting the eastern coast of the Great Sea. One day's sail brought them to Ptolemais, the modern Acre. This is an old city ; it was known as Accho before the advent of the Jews into Palestine, while it was yet in the hands of the Canaanites. The name of the city was changed by Ptolemy, the founder of a line of Greek kings in Egypt. The original name was restored at a later date, and, with slight change, remains to the present day. Paul found Christians here as he had done at Tyre and spent a day with them. Ptolemias was on the northern cape of the Bay of Acre. Haifa, on the southern cape near where Mount Carmel butts against the sea, opposite the present city of Acre, is a more important city, being one of the few cities in Palestine with the convenience of railway service.

Thirty-five miles to the south from Ptolemias is the city Cæsarea. This is the place where the Gospel was first preached to the Gentiles, Cornelius and his household being the first converts. This was the next stopping place of this party of pilgrims. It is believed that they left their ship at Ptolemias and made the rest of the journey by land. They passed around the Bay of Acre and along the road that runs between the bold and precipitous front of Mount Carmel and the sea, and on down the coast road to Cæsarea.

It was in this city that Paul and his company met a man that they had all known by reputation for many years, and perhaps some of them knew him personally. This man was Philip the evangelist, "one of the Seven." This description given by Luke identifies him as the man whose evangelistic labours are briefly noted in the eighth chapter of Acts. We learn from the last verse of that chapter that, after sending the eunuch on his way rejoicing to his own benighted people, Philip preached in all the cities of the coast plain till he came to Cæsarea. It is probable that this city was the place of his residence, and that his stay in Jerusalem was but temporary. He had a permanent home in Cæsarea, and lived in a house of sufficient capacity to enable him to entertain Paul and his nine companions without embarrassment.

One fact in connection with Philip's home and family deserves special mention : he had four unmarried daughters, and all of them were prophetesses. Paul had, in his writings, prohibited certain women in Corinth and Ephesus to speak in the open meet-

ings of the church. They were recent converts from heathenism, and, consequently, their knowledge of the Christian religion was limited and imperfect. They had no qualifications for leadership ; but Philip had reared his daughters in a Christian atmosphere, and from their infancy they had been trained in the work and worship of the church. They knew no other religion than the Gospel of Christ, and the fact that they were daughters instead of sons did not disqualify them for religious service. They had the knowledge of the Gospel and the ability to impart it, and these qualities gave them much power for good.

Paul has said that to prophesy, in the New Testament sense of the word, means to speak unto men to edification, exhortation, and consolation (1 Cor. xiv. 13). Thus we see that the prophets' work was to strengthen the weak, exhort the wavering, and console the sorrowing. Philip's daughters did this, and their inspired father permitted them to do so, and no doubt encouraged them in it. He allowed his daughters to do the very thing that Paul refused to permit the women of Corinth and Ephesus to do. The reason for this is seen in the fact already mentioned that those women who were not given the privilege of speaking in the public meetings of the church were new converts from heathenism. Paul made no objection to the public teaching done by Philip's daughters. He never would have commanded any consecrated and cultivated woman who knew what to say and how to say it to keep silent in the church. This, however, is no endorsement of the popular notion in modern times that the pulpit and ministry are as well filled by women as men.

While Paul was visiting in the home of Philip, merely to rest and resume his journey, he was once more warned against going on to Jerusalem. The warning was given this time by a prophet from Judea, whose name was Agabus. He had predicted the famine in Canaan many years before (Acts xi. 28). That prediction was the occasion of the brethren sending relief to the disciples in Judea by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. Now the same man comes into the presence of Paul, and, true to the symbolism of the Old Testament prophets, he delivered his message in a very impressive manner. He took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet with it and delivered his warning : " Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." This prediction was too clear to be misunderstood.

After the company had taken sufficient time to reflect on the import of the message of the prophet, all present made a strong effort to induce Paul to change his mind and not visit the city ; but the combined influence of his travelling companions and the brethren in Cæsarea was not sufficient to cause him to make the least change in his plans. They even wept over him, entreating him with many tears, but to no avail. His friends were exceedingly anxious for him to escape from the hands of his enemies in Jerusalem. In the reply of Paul to the entreaties of his friends we see heroism reaching its sublimest height. His words are these : " What do ye weeping and breaking my heart ? for I am ready not to be bound only but also to die at Jerusalem for the name



of the Lord Jesus." The man had lost himself completely in the importance of his mission. When they saw that they had no effect on him with their pleadings, they ceased their importunities, and became reconciled to anything that might come. In their sadness, they meekly said, "The will of the Lord be done."

Soon after the message of Agabus had been delivered, Paul and his company set forward on their journey to Jerusalem and towards that future, unknown and mysterious to them all. Some brethren from Cæsarea accompanied them, among whom was Mnason, who had been associated with the Christians a long time, perhaps from the day of Pentecost. This old man owned a house in Jerusalem in which it had been arranged for the entire party to lodge while in the city. They were in time for the feast, having been forty-three days on the way. They had fifty days in which to make the trip. This gave them time for their short stay in Cæsarea, if they counted with the same accuracy that we do. It is well known, however, that the Jews counted each fraction of a day as a whole day, and in this way several days could have been gained en route. The long and tiresome journey was over ; and Paul, now growing old, found himself once more in the Holy City. Here he had spent his youth and much of his early manhood ; hither he had come at irregular intervals during his mature life ; and now, after a journey of almost two months, he had come on what proved to be his last visit to the city.

### XIII

#### JERUSALEM AND CÆSAREA

**D**URING the long journey to Jerusalem, Paul had been very uneasy. It was not certain that his Jewish brethren would accept the offering that he and his friends were bearing to them, and this uncertainty gave him much concern. He had earnestly prayed that his service might be accepted, and that he might be delivered from unbelievers in Judea (Rom. xv. 31). Upon reaching the city his mind was set at rest. He met a glad reception, and though he said nothing about it, we know that the contribution was gratefully received. When he had delivered the money to the proper persons, the purpose of his mission to the city was accomplished. However, he did not hurry out of the city.

The next day he and Luke, and perhaps the entire company that came with him from Europe, called upon James, who was the recognized leader of the Jerusalem church, and were fortunate in finding all the elders present. Probably some important matters concerning the affairs of the church were being considered. Paul took advantage of the occasion to tell James and the elders about the great work that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry and that of his fellow-workers ; and all rejoiced together.

At this meeting James suggested to Paul the pro-

priety of the latter's performing a work of policy and expediency, in order to prevent the anger of the Jews rising against the Christians. Paul, who was willing to become all things to all men when the interests of the cause of Christ demanded it, was quite willing to comply with the request of James. James reminded Paul of the large number of Jews who had accepted Christ, but who still regarded, with reverence, the law of Moses. He also told Paul that the Jewish Christians believed that Paul taught always and everywhere doctrines contrary to the laws and customs of the Jews. The suggestion made by James was intended, when acted upon, to convince the believing Jews that Paul, though an apostle of Christ, had no objections to their observing the ordinances of the law.

There were four men in the city who were under one of the vows of the Jewish law, probably the Nazarite vow, which is described in Numbers vi. 2-12. The time of the vow had about expired, and the ceremonial cleansing was to be performed. James advised Paul to go into the temple with these men, and pay the expenses incurred by all of them, and go through the ceremonies of purification with them. There was always some cost attached to the temple service. Paul followed this advice. The next day he went through the service and paid the entire cost of the sacrifices that were made in connection with the purification of the men. In doing this the apostle made no compromise of conscience. He was never opposed to the Jewish Christians clinging to the law, if they so desired. His contention was that they were not bound to keep the law; and when the

Judaizers from Jerusalem came to Antioch teaching that circumcision was necessary to salvation, he opposed them boldly and with all his power! His conduct in Jerusalem was only a harmless concession to the imperfect knowledge of the Jewish Christians. Neither James nor Paul attached any importance to the law; but they were willing that the Jews who had accepted Christ should keep it till a fuller knowledge should enable them to see that Moses had been superseded as lawgiver by Jesus of Nazareth, and that the sublime teachings of the Man of Galilee had become the means of divine rule among men.

It took seven days to complete the purification, though the ceremonial part of it could have been performed in a few minutes. The time had almost expired, when some Jews from Asia saw Paul in the temple, raised an outcry, and had him arrested. The charge brought against him was that he had taught all men everywhere against the people, the law, and the temple. This charge was absolutely false, and is plainly seen to be such by Paul's course in the temple in company with the men who had been under the vow. The weakness of the charge must have been apparent to those who made it. They brought forward another. The second accusation was that Paul had defiled the temple by taking Gentiles into it. This charge was also false, though the Jews were honest in believing it to be true. They had seen him walking in the streets of the city with Trophimus, a Gentile from Asia, whose home was in Ephesus. The Jews knew that Trophimus had come to the city with Paul's party, and they supposed that Paul had taken him into the temple.

The Jews who led this movement against Paul were from Asia. The Jews from Asia had caused Paul much trouble before this (Acts xx. 19). Believing that Trophimus had been taken into the temple, they wanted to stir up the people in the quickest manner possible, and cause Paul to fall into the hands of his enemies. They laid hold on him and made the outcry, "Men of Israel, help." Great excitement followed. They forced Paul out of the temple, shut the door, and began to beat him in the temple court. His life was in actual peril. Some one saw that the civil authorities of the city were either unable or unwilling to protect the apostle, and notified the commandant of the military post quartered in the Tower of Antonia. The Jews were dissatisfied with Roman rule, to which they were subject, and, to insure the peace of the province, a military post was maintained in Jerusalem. The commandant, hearing of this disturbance in the court of the temple, ordered out a sufficient number of soldiers, and, with himself at their head, marched down to the scene of the trouble. The sight of the soldiers in uniform and the commander wearing the insignia of his authority caused the ruffians to cease beating Paul. The commander, called the chief captain, thinking that Paul was a noted criminal, took him out of the hands of the would-be murderers, and gave orders that he should be bound with two chains.

After securing the prisoner the chief captain tried to find out from the crowd who he was and what he had done, but was unable to obtain any reliable information. Some cried one thing and some another.

Seeing that he could gain no information from the people, excited as they were, he directed that the prisoner be carried into the castle and there confined till his case could be investigated. The command was obeyed with military promptness. The castle to which he was borne was the Tower of Antonia. When the soldiers came to the stone stairway leading into the tower, they lifted Paul to their shoulders and began the ascent. The crowd, filled with violence, followed yelling, "Away with him." The soldiers worked with speed and energy to save the apostle out of the hands of his enemies, and literally carried him to a place of safety.

As he was being borne up the stairway, Paul said to the officer in command, "May I speak unto the people?" The captain was surprised to hear Paul speak Greek, and asked if he were not an Egyptian outlaw who had, at one time, gathered an army of four thousand murderers and led them out into the wilderness. The captain must have thought that the notorious freebooter had ventured into the city, and that the popular indignation against him was asserting itself. He saw the rough manner in which the mob was dealing with the apostle, and his conclusion was very natural. The reply of Paul was such as to convince the captain that his prisoner was not the leader of a band of assassins, but a man of high culture and good breeding. In reply to the captain's question, Paul said: ["I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, give me leave to speak unto the people."]

Upon receiving the desired permission, he stood on the steps cut into the solid rock and addressed the

people who stood on the level of the temple court a few steps below him. A synopsis of this address is found in the twenty-second chapter of Acts. It is a review of his own life, and the way he was brought to a knowledge of salvation. The story of his conversion is told three times in the Book of Acts. It is told by Luke as a part of the history of the rise and progress of the church. (Acts chapter ix.) It is told twice by Paul—once as he spoke from the stairway in Jerusalem to people below (Chapter xxii.), and once as he stood in the presence of King Agrippa in the city of Cæsarea (Chapter xxvi.). It is not necessary to study this speech in detail; we will notice a few points only, mentioned here, but omitted by Luke. Paul tells us here that it was about noon when he received the vision, that his companions heard the voice, but not being familiar with the Hebrew language, they did not understand the words that were spoken, and that the command to go to Damascus was given in response to his question, "What shall I do, Lord?" He fails to mention the fasting and prayer, and what took place at the house of Ananias before he and Ananias met, but he does mention the high esteem in which the latter was held by the Jews of the city. He omits some of the speech made by Ananias as given by Luke. The complete address of Ananias to Saul is found by putting together what Luke gives in the ninth chapter, and what Paul gives in his speech from the stairway. The reason for the postponement of baptism on the part of Saul was unknown to Ananias at the time, hence his words, "Why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." The apostle next gives a brief account

of his call to his work of preaching Christ to the Gentiles; he refers also to the death of Stephen, and his own part in the tragedy. He did not finish his address; when he reached the point in the narrative, describing the direction that he received to go to the Gentiles with the Gospel, the Jews who heard him, and who had been awed into silence by the presence of the soldiers, were thrown into a frenzy of excitement. They raised a loud shout, which made it impossible for Paul to continue his speech.

They could not endure the thought that God had any kind of blessing for the Gentiles. In extreme rage, they vociferously demanded his death, on the ground that any man who would advocate so absurd a thing as the salvation of the Gentiles was not fit to live. They expected a riot, threw off their outer garments, and cast dust into the air. Seeing that Paul could not finish his address in the midst of such excitement, the captain had him taken inside the Tower and ordered him to be whipped till he told why the people were so enraged against him.

When he was being stripped of his garments in preparation for the cruel ordeal of scourging, and when his arms were being bound with thongs, Paul took advantage of the protection to which he was entitled by virtue of his Roman citizenship. He said to the centurion who commanded the soldiers detailed to punish him till he made confession, "Is it lawful to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" This, of course, stopped the preparation. The centurion hastened to Lysias, the chief captain, with the information that the man about to be scourged was a Roman. That official was aware that



to scourge such a man before he had been condemned would be a violation of the law. He went at once to the prison to interview Paul, in order to be certain how to proceed. On coming into his presence, the chief captain asked the apostle if he was a Roman and received an affirmative answer; the chief captain replied that his own citizenship had been purchased at a high price, and Paul responded that he himself was a Roman born. Hearing this, the chief captain sent away those who had been ordered to perform the scourging, and Paul was kept in prison till the next day.

The Sanhedrin was assembled the next morning by order of the chief captain, and Paul was to appear before the body to undergo an examining trial. When this grave and dignified body was duly opened and ready for the dispatch of business, Paul was brought down from the Tower and presented to the court. The assembly was probably held in the court of the temple known as the Court of the Gentiles. Instead of bringing formal charges against Paul, he was permitted to state his own case.

Bravely facing that august body, he began his defense by saying, "Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience unto this day." This declaration evidently means that all his conduct in the past, both as a Jew and as a Christian, had been conscientious. He never contended that he had been in the right in all that he had done; he was fully conscious that his earlier life had been wrongly spent; he did claim, however, that he had always done what he believed at the time to be right; his motives had been pure and his convictions honest. This assertion was

more than the high priest could bear and not resent. Forgetting for the moment the dignity of his exalted station, he commanded a man who stood near to smite Paul on the mouth. We are not told that the blow was given, but it is probable that it was promptly delivered. It was then Paul's time to be indignant. How he kept from smiting the man who had ordered him to be smitten is a wonder ; and, with all his self-control, he could not keep from talking back to the Jewish dignitary. With flashing eyes and tone full of resentment, the apostle said : "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall ; and sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law ?" The high priest was plainly playing the hypocrite, and Paul was brave enough to tell him so. No sooner had the apostle uttered these stinging words than some one present said, "Revilest thou God's high priest?" Paul then showed the true manliness of his character by saying, "I knew not, brethren, that he was the high priest ; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." He did not admit that the rebuke was undeserved. His language implies that he would not have spoken as he did, had he known that Ananias was the high priest. His respect for the office was as great as his contempt for the time-server who filled it. It was somewhat of an apology to the assembly, but not to the unscrupulous man he had rebuked. This high priest was one of the worst of men, and his iniquitous career was ended by assassination.

Paul was conscious of the fact that his bitterest enemies were the Sadducees, and he had good reason to believe that they had been the leaders in stirring

up the present trouble. Looking over the assembly, he observed that the larger number present were Pharisees, and declared himself a Pharisee. It is well known that the Pharisees believed in the resurrection and the future life, and that the Sadducees denied both of these points of belief. In declaring himself to be a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee, he enlisted the sympathy of the larger portion of the council. All that Paul meant by the declaration was that he agreed with the Pharisees on those points whereon they and the Sadducees disagreed. It was known to all present that Paul was a Christian. When he proclaimed himself a Pharisee, there came a division of sentiment in the assembly. Division grew to discussion; discussion led to excitement; excitement became clamour. The Pharisees contended that there was no fault in Paul, and that, if he had received any revelation from angel or spirit, he should be heard with respect. The excitement became so intense that the chief captain, fearing that Paul would actually lose his life in the *mêlée*, ordered soldiers to go at once to his rescue. They took him out of the excited assembly and conducted him back to the Tower from which he had been brought at the opening of the session. Lysias had learned the facts in regard to Paul's case, and had found that his enemies had made no real charge against him.

Paul was very much dejected to find himself once more within the gloomy walls of the prison. To him it looked like an impossibility to obtain justice at the hands of his own nation. Weary in body and mind, he lay down to rest and refresh himself in order to have sufficient strength to meet new troubles

on the morrow. He awoke with a serene countenance, and heart and mind at ease. This was not so much the result of the rest he had obtained as of what he had experienced in his dreams. The Lord stood by him in the darkness of the night and encouraged him with these words, "Be of good cheer; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou also bear witness of me in Rome." This was positive assurance that, in some way unknown as yet, God would deliver him out of the hands of his enemies and direct his course to the city on the Tiber. He had long desired to visit Rome, and had so expressed himself in his epistle to the church in that city (Rom. x. 1-13); but when this desire was to be realized, it would be under circumstances quite different from what he had anticipated.

Early in the morning following the night in which Paul had received the vision, a conspiracy was formed to assassinate him. More than forty men, goaded by anger and desperation, had bound themselves with a solemn oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had taken his life. To carry out their gruesome design, they endeavoured to secure the service of the chief priests and elders, telling them of the vow they had made and of the strength of the oath that bound them. They made the request of the priests and elders to have the Sanhedrin called together again, ostensibly, to reconsider Paul's case, to have the prisoner brought to the temple court as though he were to be tried, and that they would assassinate him between the Tower and the place of trial. It was a bold, daring, and well planned scheme. We do not know in what spirit the chief priests re-

ceived the suggestion, but it is not probable that they approved it, though it is possible that they did. Most of them had doubtless been guilty of crimes as great. But whether they were favourable or unfavourable to the plan does not concern us. It was never carried out.

In treating of the childhood of Paul in his native city, we spoke of his sister and said that she was casually mentioned later in his life. She probably lived in Jerusalem at the time of Paul's arrest. Her son, whose name is not given, heard of the plot to murder his uncle, and with promptness commendable in one of his age, went to the prison and laid the matter before Paul. Upon receiving this information, the apostle called a centurion and requested him to conduct the young man to the chief captain. The official promptly complied with the request of the prisoner, and the youth soon stood in the presence of the commanding officer. In presenting the young man, the centurion said that Paul had asked him to do so, and that the youth had a message to deliver to the chief captain in person.

Lysias, thinking that the information might be of a military character, took the young man aside privately and asked him what he had to tell. The youth unfolded the whole plot to murder Paul, and advised the captain to refuse to allow him to be taken from the Tower. This advice was unnecessary. A military man is supposed to know his duty in such a crisis, and to perform it with promptness. That the young man presumed to advise the professional soldier as to his duty can be accounted for on the grounds of youth and inexperience. The chief cap-

tain seemed to understand the situation fully, and, without a word of reproof, dismissed him, telling him to keep the matter secret.

The chief captain is to be commended for his conduct towards Paul. He was ever courteous in his demeanour, and, in many ways, showed himself to be a man of delicate taste and good judgment. He knew that the young man's life would be endangered by the mob, if it should become known to them that he possessed their secret, and took proper means to protect him, by having everything done with military secrecy. Lysias called two centurions to him and ordered them to make ready a company of four hundred and seventy soldiers to go to Cæsarea, to provide the necessary animals for Paul and his companions, and to be ready to start by nine o'clock that night. Cæsarea was the provincial capital and the place of residence of the governor. To save Paul's life Lysias sent him away under a strong military guard that protected him till he was placed under the official protection of Felix, the governor.

Lysias wrote a letter of committal to Felix and sent it by one of the officers in charge of Paul and his friends. We give the letter in full : "Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix, greeting : This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be slain by them, when I came upon them with soldiers, and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. And desiring to know the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him down to their council : whom I found to be accused about certain questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.

And when it was shown to me that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to thee forthwith, charging his accusers to speak against him before thee.”

One point in this letter is a serious reflection upon the otherwise good character of Lysias. He tried to make the impression on the governor that the reason that he rescued Paul from the mob was that he had heard that the apostle was a Roman. The fact is that he ran down and took him out of the hands of the ruffians, thinking that he was an Egyptian outlaw. He did not know that Paul was a Roman until he was about to have him scourged after his arrest. Lysias claimed more credit than was due him. He evidently desired to retain the good will of the governor, and this led him to colour his official report to his own credit. The statement that he had ordered Paul's accusers to prosecute him before the governor was virtually but not actually true, at the time he wrote the letter. The fact is that Paul was slipped away from the city at night, without the knowledge of his accusers ; but, in the letter, Lysias anticipated what he intended to do on the following morning. He expected to tell Paul's accusers that they would have to go to the provincial capital, if they wished to press the case.

The centurion in charge of Paul performed his duty in good faith. Early in the morning, perhaps before the dawn of day, he arrived with his charge at Antipatris. This town was situated in the Plain of Sharon, at the foot of the mountains, on its eastern border, and about midway between Jerusalem and Cæsarea. The original name of the place was Caphar-

saba, but it had been rebuilt by Herod the Great, and named in honour of his father, Antipater. It was thirty and one-half miles from Cæsarea. The centurion probably went no further than Antipatris, but putting the apostle in the hands of a trusted subordinate, sent him on to the capital, under the guard of two hundred men, returning to Jerusalem himself to report to his superior.

Upon arriving at Cæsarea on the afternoon of the second day, Paul was handed over to the governor, and the letter of committal presented. Felix read the letter, and learning from it that Paul was a Roman, asked him of what province he was ; and, being informed that he was of Cilicia, he assured him that his case would be heard when his accusers should come down and file charges against him. The prisoner, in the meantime, was to be kept in Herod's palace. The governor's mansion bore this name. Paul was committed to the guard-room. He was tired and sore from his long ride on horseback, not being accustomed to that mode of travel. The night's rest, though within prison walls, was a pleasant experience. He had ridden continuously for about eighteen hours, and was in condition to appreciate any kind of resting place, and any kind of bed upon which to rest.

Five days were spent in waiting for the trial. Ananias, the high priest, came down from Jerusalem, bringing with him an able lawyer named Tertullus. This man was an educated Roman, and well skilled in his profession. He came as the paid attorney of the high priest, and was to conduct the prosecution against the prisoner. Felix, the governor of the



province, was himself a man of notorious character. In his early life he had been a slave to Agrippina, the mother of Claudius, the emperor. He became a favourite with the emperor, who gave him his freedom and made him the governor of a province. His rise in life is commendable, but that is about all there is in his life worthy of praise. He possibly possessed some good traits which caused the emperor to think well of him. Shortly after he assumed the duties of governor, he became acquainted with Drusilla, the wife of Aziz, king of Emesa. The dominion of this monarch was a very small territory, between Palestine and the eastern desert. Drusilla was a member of the notorious Herod family, being the oldest child of Herod Agrippa, some of whose deeds and whose death are recorded in the twelfth chapter of Acts. She was a sister of Herod Agrippa II, before whom Paul made his memorable defense found in the twenty-sixth chapter of the Book of Acts. Felix fell in love with her, and used the influence of one Simon, a sorcerer from Cyprus, to induce her to leave her husband, and then took her for his own paramour. She had one son by Felix, Agrippa by name, who perished with her in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, August 25th, 79 A. D. Nineteen years later Felix incurred the ill will of the emperor, and vanished into obscurity. The time and place of his death are not known, but it is believed that he met his end in Gaul.

The court was formally opened and the case was called for trial. The attorney for the prosecution arose, and, with suitable dignity, proceeded to state the case. We think best to give the synopsis of the

opening speech as given by Luke : but, before we do this, let us note the wisdom and policy displayed by Tertullus. He began by complimenting the governor, and paying a high and flattering tribute to his ability to meet the demands of the exalted position he occupied. He was very anxious to make a favourable impression on the governor. He said : " Seeing that by thee we enjoy much peace, and that by thy providence evils are corrected for this nation, we accept it always and in all places, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness. But that I be not further tedious unto thee, I entreat thee to hear us of thy clemency a few words. For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of insurrection among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes : moreover, he assayed to profane the temple ; on whom we laid hold ; from whom thou wilt be able, by examining him thyself, to take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him." This was the formal statement of the charges against the prisoner. The Jews who were present, all controlled by Ananias, said that these allegations were true. It will be seen that the general charge was that the apostle was a " pestilent fellow." There were three specifications under this charge : stirring up the people and endeavouring to raise an insurrection, being a ringleader of the Nazarenes, and trying to profane the temple. If any one of these three specifications could be sustained by reliable testimony, the charge would be made good.

Paul had no idea what the charges against him would be till he heard them read in open court ; he had no one to testify in his interest, and no time to

prepare an address in his own defense. He relied solely on the promise of God (Luke xxi. 15) and that was sufficient. The promise was kept.

Tertullus had shown much tact in his attempt to win the governor over to his side of the case, but Paul was more than equal in skill to the trained and eloquent lawyer pitted against him. We give the synopsis of his reply: "Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been for many years a judge unto this nation, I do cheerfully make my defense: seeing that thou canst take knowledge, that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship at Jerusalem; neither in the temple did they find me disputing with any man, or stirring up a crowd, nor in the synagogue, nor in the city. Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. But this I confess unto thee, that after the Way which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers, believing all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets: having hope towards God which these also themselves look for, that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. Herein do I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense towards God and men always. Now, after many years, I come to bring alms to my nation, and offerings: amidst which they found me purified in the temple, with no crowd nor yet with tumult: but there were certain Jews from Asia who ought to have been here before thee, and make accusation, if they had aught against me. Or else let these men themselves say what wrong-doing they found when I stood before the council, except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the

resurrection of the dead, I am called in question before you this day."

A careful study of this speech reveals the fact that Paul made a complete answer to every specification. He denied being a sectarian, but confessed that he was what they called such. He declared his faith in the Old Testament.

The case was not decided at this hearing. Felix saw proper to continue the case till Lysias, the chief captain, who was an important witness, should come down from Jerusalem, at which time the apostle would be given another hearing. He gave orders that Paul should be kept in prison, but should be allowed certain liberties, and that any of his friends be permitted to visit him who should desire to do so.

While they were waiting for Ananias to come down, Felix and Drusilla desired to hear Paul concerning the Christian faith, and had him brought into their presence for that purpose. The fact that Drusilla was a daughter of the Herod whose death is recorded in the twelfth chapter of Acts has already been mentioned. She was six years old when her father died in the year 44, and this incident occurred in 58; she was, therefore, only twenty years of age at this time. She is said to have been a very beautiful woman. We have already referred to the fact that Felix was once a slave, and had become governor through the generosity of his former master. Tacitus says that Felix "exercised the authority of a king with the temper of a slave." In speaking to this wicked pair concerning the faith, the apostle had a wide field from which to choose a subject. He was free to select his own theme. He was not on trial at

this time, but was to preach by the invitation of the governor. Instead of selecting some profound subject of doctrinal character, he took aim at the best loved sins of his hearers and let drive! Only a brief outline of the sermon is given. He discussed three points: 1, Righteousness; 2, Self-control; 3, Judgment to come. This couple were exceedingly wicked, hence the exhortation to righteousness; they followed the promptings of their unholy passions, and the exhortation to self-control was timely; condemnation at the day of judgment is certain to all who follow such sinful practices as did the governor and his paramour. Paul must have pictured the punishment of sin in horrid colours. Such preaching is calculated to arouse the consciences of all people who are not too far gone in sin to be aroused by anything that could be said or done.

Felix trembled from head to feet with fear, and ordered Paul to go from his presence, telling him that at some suitable time he would call for him again. This was merely an excuse for the moment; he had no intention of calling him again; he desired to hear no more such preaching. Felix was afterwards deposed and banished. He died in obscurity, misery, and sin. He was within reach of salvation only one time in life. He rejected the opportunity, and was lost. As we have already remarked, Drusilla was a member of the notorious Herod family, and she was probably too hard-hearted to be touched with the sublime message of the Gospel.

Felix showed his real character in his further dealings with Paul. He kept him in prison for two years, hoping that a large bribe would be paid by him to

secure his liberty. He sent for him often but not to hear him preach ; he suggested many plans by which he hoped to secure a large amount of money from his illustrious prisoner. It is needless to add that Paul would not encourage such crime. He preferred honourable imprisonment to fraudulent liberty. He chose to remain in prison with a clear conscience rather than to go free with a guilty one. Felix thought that Paul had much wealth or many wealthy friends who would come to his relief if he should call upon them. He remembered that the apostle had said that his mission to Jerusalem at the time of his arrest was to bring alms to his nation ; and, not knowing the source whence he obtained his money, he naturally supposed that more could be had if necessary. The two years' imprisonment was only a long and fruitless effort on the part of the corrupt governor to extort money for his own enrichment. Graft in official life is not a new sin.

When Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as governor, he found Paul still in prison. Festus assumed his official duties in the year 60. The two years spent in prison in Cæsarea were the most inactive years of Paul's life ; he wrote no letters, and it is not probable that he did any preaching. Festus, on assuming the duties and responsibilities of his high station, made an official visit to Jerusalem, which was the metropolis of the province, that he might become acquainted with the leading men among the Jews ; and while he was in the city, some of the prominent men of the nation requested him to send Paul back to them for trial. They had laid a plan to assassinate him on the way, if the governor should consent to

gratify their desire. They knew that Festus had not been in the province long enough to know the bitter feeling of the Jews against Paul, and hoped that he would allow him to be brought back to Jerusalem.

Festus was wise enough to move with caution. He told the men of Jerusalem that Paul was still a prisoner in Cæsarea, and that he himself would return to that city within a few days. He suggested also that those who had charges to make should go with him to the provincial capital, and that the case would be heard there. This decision of Festus was a sore disappointment to Paul's enemies and a protection to his life. The governor remained in Jerusalem for nearly or quite two weeks, and, when he departed, several of the leading Jews went down to Cæsarea with him, and the case that had been deferred for two years was called for trial. Festus acted promptly. On the day following his arrival, he sat down on the judgment seat and ordered the prisoner to be presented before him.

The Jews, who had come from Jerusalem, made many serious charges against the apostle, but they were all baseless, and were not sustained. In his defense the apostle made a speech very much like the one he made in reply to the charges made by Tertullus two years before; and this would imply that the same old charge of being a "pestilent fellow" was made before Festus. Paul declared that he had broken no law, Jewish or Roman. Festus, having so recently assumed the reins of government, was very anxious to give a peaceful and satisfactory administration to the province, and he knew that he could not accomplish his desire unless he had the

good will of the Jews. He was, therefore, willing to show them any favours he could consistent with his duty as an impartial ruler. He knew also that a prisoner accused of crime had certain rights and privileges that those who administered the law were bound to respect. Personally, he was willing to try the case in Jerusalem, but was not willing to force Paul to submit to such a trial without his full consent. He, accordingly, decided to leave the matter to the prisoner himself, and be governed in his own conduct by his decision.

The governor was ignorant of the plot to assassinate the apostle. He asked Paul if he would go up to Jerusalem and be tried before him there. Paul's reply shows his idea of propriety. He said: "I am standing at Cæsar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged; to the Jews I have done no wrong as thou very well knowest. If I am a wrong-doer, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but, if none of these things are true, whereof they accuse me, no man can give me up to them. I appeal unto Cæsar." This is sublime. The statement that he ought to be judged at Cæsar's judgment seat was his objection to going to Jerusalem. By what had come to light at the trial, Festus learned that Paul was innocent, and that the Jews were persecuting rather than prosecuting him, and doing this through malice. He felt glad and relieved when the prisoner claimed the right of every Roman citizen and appealed his case to the Imperial Court at Rome. He readily acknowledged Paul's right to take the appeal, and told him that it would be granted.



A short time after Festus took charge of the provincial government, Herod Agrippa II, with his sister Bernice, came to Cæsarea to pay a congratulatory visit to the new governor. He was the only son of Herod Agrippa I (Acts xii. 1, 2). He was a youth of seventeen when his father died in the year 44, was regarded as too young to succeed to the throne of the entire kingdom, and was given the small district of Chalsis, east of the Jordan, for his dominion, with the title of king. He was thus deprived of the larger part of his political inheritance, but was consoled by being recognized as king, and being permitted to exercise regal authority in a small way. When Festus came to rule the province in the year 60, Agrippa was only thirty-one years old. His sister Bernice, like his other sister, Drusilla, is said to have been a very beautiful and attractive woman; and however revolting it may appear to us, her relation to her brother with whom she lived was not above suspicion. In her girlhood she became the wife of her uncle, the former king of Chalsis, but, at this time, she was a widow and lived in her brother's palace. Drusilla was her younger sister. The king and his sister spent many days with the governor, who took special pains to furnish them many kinds of entertainment; and we may be sure that no pains were spared to contribute to the pleasure of the royal guests.

We have already said that Festus had learned at the trial of Paul that the apostle had committed no crime against the law; and, as the prisoner had appealed to Cæsar, it was the duty of the governor to send a statement of the charge laid against him along with

the appellant. Festus was in an embarrassing position. He did not know what kind of letter to write, as he was unable to say for what cause the prisoner was put on trial. He mentioned his embarrassment to Agrippa, and said that it seemed to him unreasonable to send a prisoner to be tried, and not, at the same time, send a statement as to the charges against him. Agrippa expressed the desire to hear Paul tell his own story, and Festus promised him that a part of the entertainment on the next day would be a speech from the prisoner. The governor was very anxious for the king to hear Paul state his own case. By listening closely to what the apostle had to say, Agrippa might be able to detect some lawlessness that Festus had overlooked, and the two together might be able to formulate a charge to be considered before the supreme court of the empire.

At the appointed time the next day, Paul was once more called before Festus. He appeared with the fetters of the felon upon his hands, to state his case in the presence of both the governor and the king. This was the first time, and, perhaps, the only time that Paul ever preached the Gospel to a king. Festus opened the proceedings by making a formal speech to the king and his attendants: "King Agrippa and all men who are present with us, Ye behold this man about whom all the multitude of the Jews made suit, both in Jerusalem and here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death; and as he himself appealed to the emperor, I determined to send him, of whom I have no certain thing to write, unto my Lord. Wherefore I have brought

him before thee, King Agrippa, that after examination, I may have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable in sending a prisoner and not withal to signify the charges brought against him."

This speech of Festus shows his dense and gross ignorance of the Christian religion, which had, at that time, spread over most of the Roman Empire. The Christian faith had penetrated even to the city of Rome, and a strong church existed there, the church to which Paul's greatest epistle was written. Agrippa had better knowledge. He knew of the rise and progress of the Christian religion. It was his great-grandfather who attempted to murder Jesus as an infant; it was his great-uncle who had murdered John the Baptist; it was his father who beheaded the apostle James, and who had Peter thrown into prison expecting to put him to death the next day, and who miserably perished in Cæsarea (Acts xii. 1, 2). It must have been a mystery to the king how the governor should have known so little about the Christian religion, which faith was so well known in the empire.

Paul's speech before Agrippa is one of the most eloquent extant. It is frequently used by teachers of oratory as an exercise by which to drill their students. Paul was not by nature either eloquent or graceful; he was criticized as a man of weak bodily presence and contemptible speech by some of his contemporaries, but on this occasion he was at his best, and did his best. Circumstances were favourable; before him sat the governor, and near the governor sat the visiting king and his royal sister. It was a momentous occasion. These two royal audit-

ors were members of a family that, through four generations, had fought the religion of Christ with all possible zeal. The crimes of this family against Christ and His cause have already been mentioned. This was the second time in life that Paul ever spoke to members of that family. Two years before he had spoken to Drusilla, but to no effect. Now, the apostle had the opportunity to speak to the king, the only male Herod who ever heard the Gospel. We shall not quote the speech. All can read it in Acts xxvi. It is very probable that Luke heard the address. It was delivered just before Paul started to Rome as a prisoner, and Luke was with him on the voyage. It was a personal experience, an autobiography epitomized. He told of his career as a persecutor of the church, of his vision and call to the apostleship, and of his career as an apostle of Jesus Christ. It was in substance the same story that we have studied twice heretofore as we have read the record of his life and deeds.

Jesus did not appear to Paul, primarily, to convert him. (See Acts xxvi. 16-18.) That could have been done without a vision. Lydia, the jailer of Philippi and the Ethiopian eunuch, were all converted, yet they saw no vision. All must become Christians in the same way ; they must hear the truth, believe the truth, and obey the truth, and in this there is no place for a miracle. In Paul's case, there was more than a conversion ; he was called to the apostleship. The one supreme fact that Paul was to make known to the world was the resurrection of Christ, and, in order for him to do this, it was necessary for him to know beyond doubt the certainty of that fact ; and

the only way that he could possess such knowledge was to see Him and hear Him after He had been raised from the dead.

At the conclusion of the address, the king, Bernice and the governor quietly left the room, with Paul still standing on the floor. When out of hearing, they freely expressed themselves in regard to the apostle, and their opinion was that he had done nothing worthy of death or imprisonment. Agrippa said that the prisoner might have been acquitted before this, had he not appealed to the Imperial Court. It is not probable that he knew how hard it was for Paul to secure a fair trial in the courts of the province. Jewish influence was too strong there for the apostle to get justice.

Neither the king nor the governor could detect any crime in Paul, and Festus was forced to do what he tried to avoid. He sent Paul to be tried, and sent no charge against him.

## XIV

### FROM CÆSAREA TO THE END

**I**T was not long after Paul appealed his case to Cæsar till he began his long-desired journey to Rome. For many years he had cherished the hope of making this journey, and now this hope was to be realized. Festus delivered him and some other prisoners, who were to be arraigned before the same court, into the hands of a centurion whose name was Julius. Two of Paul's dearest and most trusted friends had the pleasure of making this journey with him : one of these men was Luke, whom the apostle called the "beloved physician," and the other was Aristarchus, one of the two men for whom Paul was willing to risk his life in the theatre at Ephesus. Paul had languished in prison for two years, and his body, naturally frail, had grown weaker and more subject to ailments of different kinds by reason of his long confinement. The presence of the skillful physician as his companion in travel was a blessing highly esteemed. We have no information as to where Luke and Aristarchus spent the two years that Paul spent in prison ; but, as they were both with him when he visited Jerusalem at the time of his arrest, and both made the journey with him from Cæsarea to Rome, we can reasonably infer that they were not very far from him during the period of imprisonment. They must have remained near enough

to assist him in any way that he might need their services.

Julius, into whose hands the prisoners were intrusted, was a man of kindly heart and obliging disposition. The voyage was begun in the autumn, a stormy time for seafaring. In those days travelling was necessarily slow and uncertain. The traveller had to depend upon the movements of the ships of the day, and these were very irregular as to the time of arrival and departure. There was no vessel to be found going from the Syrian coast to Italy, but the centurion thought best to take passage on the first one going in that direction, go as far as he could on it, and then make the best possible arrangements to complete the journey. He, accordingly, embarked with his prisoners on a ship bound for Adramyttium, on the western coast of Asia Minor. Perhaps Julius thought that he would probably find a vessel in some port along the south or west coast, and thus be able to continue the voyage.

The first day out was favourable and they made good time. The vessel arrived in Sidon the next day, having run [sixty-seven miles. At this place the centurion gave Paul permission to go ashore and refresh himself among his friends. These friends were probably unknown to Paul in person. There is no record that he was ever in Sidon before this. They all knew him by reputation, and perhaps a few brethren there had met him elsewhere. There was some special reason why Paul needed rest and refreshment after only one day's sailing. He was naturally weak from his long period of confinement; it has also been surmised with much plausibility that

he suffered from seasickness, and that the humane centurion gave him an opportunity to recover from the attack.

The length of time spent in Sidon is not stated ; but when they put to sea again, they continued their northward course till they passed the Island of Cyprus, when they turned westward, leaving that island to the south. There is at the present day a strong current running towards the west, between Cyprus and the mainland of Cilicia towards the north ; and if this same current ran there at that time, the accurate nautical knowledge of the ship-master is seen by his choice of that route. The natural flow of the water facilitated the progress of the ship. No landing was made till they reached the city of Myra on the coast of the province of Lycia. At this place the centurion found a ship from Alexandria, in Egypt, loaded with grain and bound for Italy. The entire company under the command of Julius, soldiers, prisoners, Luke and Aristarchus, were transferred from the ship bound for Adramyttium to that of Alexandria, en route to Italy.

This appeared to be a stroke of good fortune, but we shall see that it proved to be otherwise. The autumn storms began to sweep the sea, and navigation became difficult and dangerous. The gale appears to have been from the west, and raging with such fury that many days were spent in going from Myra to Cnidus, a distance of one hundred and thirty miles. Had the weather been propitious, a day and night would have been ample time for the voyage. Finding it impossible to advance beyond Cnidus, the master of the ship turned her prow to the southwest,



and held in that direction till they passed the eastern end of the Island of Crete, when once more the ship was turned towards the west, keeping close to the southern shore of the island. They coasted along for some time, protected from the storm by the island. This slight protection, however, was not sufficient to remove the danger. The progress of the ship was slow, and the peril of all on board was great. With much labour and anxiety they arrived at a place called Fair Havens.

They had spent more time on the voyage thus far than they had anticipated. Time was now precious and pressing. Paul, though a prisoner, volunteered to offer the captain some advice. The apostle had been much on the sea; he had been in many storms and shipwrecks, and had spent a day and night struggling in the surging waters, clinging to bits of wreckage and driftwood. In some way unknown to us, he had been rescued after this bitter experience. The only information we have of this episode in his eventful life we obtain from a modest reference in his own writing (2 Cor. xi. 25). Paul advised the captain to spend the winter in the port of Fair Havens. The captain would not listen to this advice, but had reason to regret afterwards that he did not. Fair Havens was not a desirable place to spend the winter, and this was the ostensible reason that the captain did not take Paul's advice. The majority of the crew and passengers agreed with the captain that they push on to the harbour of Phoenix and there spend the winter. This port was thirty-four miles from Fair Havens, and to reach it they would have to pass Cape Matala. The wind changed to the south,

and they weighed anchor. They had but fairly started till a more severe storm than any they had yet encountered swooped down upon them from the mountains of Crete, and put them in still greater peril. The ship was caught in the gale. It was impossible to steer or control the vessel, and they had to let her scud before the blast.

After running twenty-three miles before the gale, they came to the small island of Claudia, and took shelter under its lee. With this small protection they succeeded in lifting the ship's life-boat to the deck. It had probably been allowed to drag behind the ship, and the captain, knowing that he was likely to need it any hour, took pains to hoist it to the deck, and thus save it from being crushed against the sides of the ship and destroyed. After they had, with much difficulty, secured the boat, they took the further precaution to undergird the ship. This was done by passing strong cables under the bow and drawing them back more towards the center, and tightening them around the hull. The timbers were already strained almost to parting, and the cables were intended to reënforce them.

On the northern coast of Africa, far to the southwest, were the quicksands known to the mariners as the Syrtis; and, fearing that the ship would be driven into this by the long continued and furious hurricane, they took down all sails that were left, and once more drifted helplessly upon the tumbling billows of the main. After battling all night with the wind and waves, as the dawning light appeared, they began to lighten the load of the ship by throwing the cargo overboard, and on the third day they

cast out all the tackling and appliances of the vessel that were not absolutely necessary to keep her afloat. The storm continued to rage around the apparently doomed ship for many weary and anxious days; neither sun, moon nor stars appeared, and all hope was abandoned. The tempest grew in severity, and terror seized upon the captain and the crew.

All had been a long time without food. The great danger that surrounded them, and the intense mental strain to which they were subjected, had banished all desire for food. In the midst of all this dejection and terror, Paul stood forth before the excited throng and endeavoured to calm their fears by that same power of personality that restored quiet to the Lystrian mob many years before. He reminded the captain and the crew that they had made a great blunder in sailing away from Crete contrary to his advice to spend the winter in the harbour of Fair Havens. He had no censure for them, but attributed the loss that would come to the owners of the ship to the fact that the captain had not taken his advice. He had something more to say, and had reason to believe that they would receive it gladly. He assured them that no life would be lost, but that the ship was destined to go to pieces. It had been revealed to him in a vision during the night that the ship would be dashed against a certain island and destroyed, but that all would escape with their lives. This announcement relieved the dejection of all on board. We cannot think of this perilous adventure on the stormy sea and not recall the vivid description of such a scene furnished us by the poet of Israel: "They that go down to the sea in ships, they that do

business in the great waters ; these see the works of Jehovah and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heavens, they go down again to the depths : their soul melteth away because of trouble. They reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man, and they are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still" (Psalm cvii. 23-29). The ship on which Paul and his fellow-travellers sailed was doomed to loss, but God had promised Paul to save the passengers and crew.

The storm continued to rage with unabated fierceness for more than fourteen days, and the ship was helplessly tossed about in the angry sea. About midnight, on the fourteenth day after leaving Clauda, a sound was heard, which the skilled seamen recognized as the roar of the surf beating against the shore not far away. This sound caused fresh fear to take possession of the sailors. They dropped the lead to sound the depth of the water, and found it to be one hundred and twenty feet ; a few minutes later they made another sounding and found that the depth had diminished to ninety feet. This indicated that they were fast approaching land. The night was intensely dark, and they did not want to drift any nearer to the unknown shore lest they should be wrecked against the beach. They cast four anchors out of the stern of the ship, and wished for day. While thus waiting in suspense for the coming dawn, the sailors attempted to make their escape in the life-boat.

They had already lowered the boat to the water and were about to embark. Paul saw them, and reported to the centurion, who stood near, and said that if they went away all would be lost. We have seen that this man had been very considerate of Paul throughout the voyage thus far, and when the apostle told him that unless the sailors remained in the ship all would be lost, he assumed authority, and without asking permission from the captain of the ship, ordered some soldiers to cut the ropes. The order was obeyed with promptness, and the boat drifted away in the darkness.

About daybreak, Paul, who alone had remained tranquil throughout the entire storm, advised all on board to take some food. They had fasted fourteen days, and consequently were weak and emaciated. Food had now become an actual necessity ; and to encourage them to eat, Paul took bread, and after thanking God for it, began to eat. This act encouraged the others, and they all took food and were refreshed. Paul assured them that all would be saved. After eating they lightened the ship further by throwing the last of the freight into the sea.

When day dawned, they found themselves anchored near the shore of an unknown island. The storm had blown them so far out of their course as to carry the sailors into strange regions. They saw a small bay on the coast, and after holding a consultation, decided to make an effort to run the ship into it. They cut the cables that held the anchors, hoisted the fore-sail to the wind, and made for the beach. The prow drove into the mud and stuck fast. The rear portion of the ship began to break to pieces under the beat-

ing of the waves. The soldiers advised that the prisoners should be killed to prevent their escape, but Julius would not allow such brutal conduct. He had many reasons for wishing to save Paul and no reason to murder the others entrusted to his care. Paul was now the unofficial commander both of the ship and of the soldiers, and all listened to him. When Julius had forbidden the soldiers to murder the prisoners, Paul took it upon himself to command all who could swim to cast themselves into the sea and make for the shore. They obeyed with alacrity, and were soon safe on land, filled with joy at their great deliverance. Those who could not swim availed themselves of planks and other things from the ship, to aid them in remaining above water till they could be washed ashore by the waves. The climax of the thrilling account is given in these words, "And it came to pass that they all escaped safe to land." They had come four hundred and seventy-six miles from Clauda, and the storm had been upon them all the way. We have no means to estimate the distance travelled in the zigzag voyage through the storm.

The island against which the vessel stranded was Melita, the modern Malta. The landing of so many strange people on the shores of the island naturally attracted the attention of the natives. The people of the island were of Phœnician origin, but many Greeks were scattered among them, all being under the dominion of Rome. The natives showed much kindness to the unfortunate men from the ship. They gathered a large amount of wood and made a fire to dry the clothes and warm the shivering bodies of the strangers who had struggled through the chilling

waters to the shore. The morning was cold for that climate ; and though the fury of the storm had somewhat abated, the rain was still falling. Paul was busy with the others in gathering brushwood for the fire. He gathered an armful of sticks, and after throwing them on the fire, remained for a short time holding his hand over the blaze. As he thus stood warming his hand, a deadly serpent, benumbed by the cold, and which was in the bundle of brush that the apostle had gathered and thrown upon the fire, being warmed by the heat, came out of the blaze and fastened its poison fangs in the flesh of his hand.

The islanders could see that Paul was a prisoner, and they supposed him to be a murderer and the bite of the serpent to be a just punishment for his crime. Paul shook the serpent from his hand and it fell back into the flames and perished. The apostle experienced no inconvenience from the bite. The islanders watched him, expecting to see the hand swell, and to see the apostle fall dead as a result of the poison ; but when they saw no evil effects, they changed their minds and said that he was a god. This was the second time in the life of the apostle that he had been regarded by heathen people as a superior being. The other occasion was on his first visit to Lystra.

The residence of the governor of the island was near the place where the ship went to pieces. The town is now called *Alta Vecchia*, and the indentation on the shore where the ship stranded is still known as *St. Paul's Bay*. Julius, the centurion, being a person of considerable prominence, the governor invited him and the prisoners under his care to share the hospitality of his home. He did this as a matter

of official courtesy, and was rewarded for his kindness in a way of which he had not even dreamed. The father of the governor was very ill of fever and dysentery, a malady common in the island at that season of the year. If Luke tried his medical skill for the relief of the patient, he failed to make a cure; at any rate, Paul's miraculous power was brought to bear on the case and the man was healed. This won the gratitude of the governor. The entire company remained in the island during the months of November, December and January, and while they were there the afflicted people from all over the island came to Paul and obtained relief from their diseases. This great benevolence exhibited by Paul caused many honours to be heaped upon him and his companions, and when they departed, about the first of February, the natives of the island provided them with the comforts necessary for the rest of the journey.

As soon as the sea was open for navigation another corn ship from Alexandria, which had wintered in the island, made ready to sail into Italy. This ship was known by its figurehead as the *Castor and Pollux*, or the Twin Brothers. Julius, anxious to reach Rome as early as possible with his prisoners and to be relieved of further responsibility, arranged to take passage on this vessel. We do not know what became of the crew from the vessel that had been wrecked.

The first port reached by the *Castor and Pollux*, after leaving the Island of Melita, where they had spent three months, waiting better conditions of weather, was Syracuse, on the eastern shore of the Island of Sicily. This city is eighty miles from Alta Vecchia, and was probably reached in one day's sail.



In the first chapter of this book reference was made to the fact that Paul made no allusion to the beauty of the scenery through which he passed in his journeys, and now we have a conspicuous example of it. During the first day out from Malta, he looked for the first time on the volcano of Etna; he had never before beheld such a sight. It was then active and sending forth its fiery belches from the interior of the earth, and yet no mention is made of it either by Luke or Paul.

The ship was detained at Syracuse for three days on account of contrary wind; then, with the wind unfavourable they put to sea, and, by hard sailing, reached Rhegium, the modern Reggio. Here they spent a day waiting for the wind to favour them, and when the south wind sprang up, they made good speed through the straits of Messina, with mountains covered with snow on either side of them. The wind was not only from the south, but it was strong. In one day the ship sailed from Rhegium to Puteoli, a distance of one hundred and eighty miles. At the latter place Paul found a small congregation of Christians, and remained a while with them. He had not been among Christian brethren, except the few who made the journey with him, since he left Sidon about five months before. He longed for the fellowship of brethren. Puteoli was probably the destination of the Twin Brothers. The rest of the journey was performed by land.

We have already noticed the kindness with which the centurion treated Paul. The storm, and the apostle's conduct during those trying days, the shipwreck, and the months spent together in the island among

the barbarians, had served to heighten the esteem that Julius had for his favourite prisoner. Julius was in haste to reach Rome, but in order to accommodate Paul, he waited seven days at Puteoli to allow him the opportunity to enjoy the hospitality of his brethren and to confirm them in their Christian faith. We admire this great-hearted man ; heathen though he was, he knew how to be courteous.

On the eighth day after reaching Puteoli, Paul began his land journey to Rome, one hundred and forty miles distant. The first recorded stop on the way was at Appii Forum, the Market of Appius, within forty miles of the city. The disciples in Rome had heard of Paul's coming, and a reception committee from the church came these forty miles to meet him. They doubtless would have met him further out from the city, but they did not know certainly what road to take.

Ten miles beyond Appii Forum, at a place called The Three Taverns, another party of Christians met him ; and when the apostle saw their love for him as expressed in their coming to meet him so far out on the road, he thanked God and took courage. These brethren from Rome had read, or heard read, the greatest of all Paul's epistles. They had learned to love him through his writings, and were filled with joy at meeting him face to face. They continued with Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, and Julius, the centurion, till they all arrived in Rome. Here the long and pleasant companionship of the soldier of the empire and the soldier of the cross terminated. Julius turned the prisoners over to the proper authorities, and his journey of more than five months was complete.

They arrived in Rome in March, A. D., 61. We should be glad to know what effect, if any, the long term of association with Paul had on Julius, whether he became a Christian or died a pagan ; but here, again, the veil is drawn and we cannot part its folds.

Although Paul was a prisoner, he was allowed more liberty than prisoners usually enjoy. There were two reasons for this : first, there was no charge against him in the letter that Festus sent along with the legal forms of appeal ; and, secondly, Julius had doubtless told the authorities in Rome of the good conduct of the prisoner during the long voyage from Cæsarea. Instead of being incarcerated in the common prison, the apostle was permitted to rent a house for himself, and to receive all friends who desired to visit him. The rental for the house was probably supplied by his friends in the different cities in which he had preached the Gospel and established churches.

In his epistles written during this imprisonment, Paul often refers to the assistance that different friends had given him. He was doomed to wait long before being called to trial. The case could not be tried till his accusers arrived from Judea, and that would make a delay of several months necessary. We have seen that he reached Rome in the spring of 61, and we know that his accusers did not come along with him ; and, as the navigation of the sea for the winter closed soon after Paul set out from Cæsarea, they could not have left Palestine till the following spring ; and, if they started as soon as the sea was open for travel, they began their journey about the time that Paul arrived in Rome. They could not have reached Rome until the latter part of the summer, or the early fall

of 61, if everything favoured them ; and, in those days of slow movement and deliberate action, much more than the necessary time was probably consumed.

For some reason it was more than two years before the apostle was called to trial. During this time he was in military custody, having a Roman soldier chained to him all the time, but was freely permitted to preach to all who came to hear him. The soldiers who guarded him by turns heard the Gospel from him. He took delight in telling the story of Christ to each one. In the Epistle to the Philippians, written during his imprisonment, the apostle writes, "My bonds are manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard, and to all the rest" (Phil. i. 13). The guard mentioned was a band of Roman soldiers bivouacked outside of the walls of the city, whose function it was to protect the life of the emperor and guard the prisoners who were being held for trial before the court of Nero. As these soldiers sat around the camp-fire when off duty they would naturally speak of the strange and interesting prisoner, and the new and wonderful story that he told them of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, in a short time, the gospel story became known to all the soldiers in the camp.

Many friends from a distance visited Paul during his period of imprisonment, and some epistles were written to churches and individual brethren remote from Rome. At least four letters were written from Rome while the apostle was a prisoner—Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. The authorship of Hebrews is uncertain and will not be discussed here. The first three of these epistles were written to churches, and the other is a letter to a per-

sonal friend. We learn from Paul's writings that Tychicus was the bearer of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and also the one to the Colossians, and that Onesimus bore the Epistle to Philemon. We learn further that these messengers travelled together. That Onesimus carried the Epistle to Philemon is seen in verses 8-12 of that document ; that Tychicus bore the Epistle to the Ephesians is seen in Ephesians vi. 21, 22, and that he was the bearer of the Epistle to the Colossians also is confirmed by Colossians iv. 7, 8. And Colossians iv. 8, 9 shows that Tychicus and Onesimus travelled together. These three were the earliest of his epistles written from Rome. In both Ephesians and Colossians he makes request that his brethren pray for him that he might have boldness to preach the Gospel in its fullness.

During his imprisonment, the apostle had been instrumental in converting a Greek slave to Christ. The name of this slave was Onesimus. He was owned by Philemon, but had run away from his master and found his way to Rome. Philemon was a friend and a convert of Paul's, and resided at Colossæ. This slave had been worthless to his master. It is implied in the epistle that the slave had wronged his master in some way. Some think that he had robbed him, and then escaped. He had robbed him of the service due him as his master, if nothing worse. He was brought to Christ by Paul and sent back to Philemon, bearing a letter from the apostle. In this brief epistle Paul hints strongly at the propriety of Philemon's emancipating Onesimus on his arrival home. Whether or not Philemon acted in harmony with the suggestion is left unre-

vealed. Paul was generous enough to say to Philemon that, if the latter had lost anything by the conduct of Onesimus, he himself would repay it.

The Epistle to the Philippians was written later than the others. In this epistle we learn that Paul looked forward to his trial in the near future, and that he expected to be acquitted, and be a free man once more. We learn also that his confinement had given him the opportunity to evangelize the whole prætorian guard in whose custody he was, and that there were saints in Cæsar's household. The royal palace had been invaded in the interest of the King of kings ; and, when we bear in mind that the Cæsar then on the imperial throne was the merciless Nero, the statement that there were saints in his household is astounding. He could throw Christians to the lions and send apostles to the execution block ; he could saturate the clothing of both men and women with oil and set them on fire, that, in their anguish, they might run blazing through the streets and serve to illuminate the city, but he could not prevent the Gospel from finding its way into his own palace and making converts in his own household ! (Phil. iv. 22).

Paul was not alone though a prisoner in chains. Some of his best earthly friends were with him, at least a portion of the time of his confinement. He speaks of Aristarchus and Epaphras as his fellow-prisoners (Col. i. 4 ; Philem. 23). It may have been that Aristarchus was arrested in Judea about the time that Paul was sent to Rome. We know that he made the journey to the imperial capital in company with the apostle, although it is not intimated by Luke

that he was a prisoner. We know nothing of the arrest of Epaphras, nor the charge brought against him. Mark, who was once rejected by Paul as an unfit companion, had been fully restored to his confidence and esteem, and was with him in his trouble (Col. iv. 10). Demas was still faithful to him, though we read the humiliating statement that he deserted him later and went to Thessalonica (Col. iv. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 10). Luke, who had come all the way from Cæsarea with him and Aristarchus, was still with him in close brotherly companionship.

The New Testament tells us nothing about the result of Paul's appeal to Cæsar, but we have reason to believe that he was acquitted, and that he did much valuable work in the Gospel after his release. This reason appears in the journeys mentioned in the epistles to Timothy and Titus. He left Timothy at Ephesus to oppose the false teachers who were troubling the church there, and went into Macedonia himself (1 Tim. i. 3). This is not mentioned in Acts. He left Titus in Crete to instruct the new converts, and to appoint elders in all the churches (Tit. i. 5). Acts tells us nothing about Paul's ministry in Crete. He made a visit to Miletus where he left Trophimus sick (2 Tim. iv. 20). This item is unrecorded in Acts. He made a journey towards Nicopolis, and expected to spend the winter there (Tit. iii. 12). This is not mentioned in Acts. The entire term of his Roman imprisonment is unknown. At the close of the record in Acts, Paul had been a prisoner two full years, and was still waiting for trial. We have seen that he arrived in Rome in the spring of 61, and he could not have been set at liberty before the

spring of 63. The last statement in the Book of Acts is that Paul lived two whole years in his own rented house, and that he preached the kingdom of God to all who came to him, no man forbidding him.

From passages in his epistles written later than the year 63, and which we have noted in the preceding paragraph, it is almost absolutely certain that the apostle stood before Nero and stated his case so clearly and forcibly that the young emperor, tyrant though he was, gave him his liberty. In describing the meeting between Paul and Agrippa, we said that that was probably the only time in life the apostle ever stood before a king. Yet it is reasonably certain that he stood before Nero. In doing this he stood before an emperor and not a king. The emperor was a king of kings, and many crowned heads bowed in submission to his will.

By means of some of Paul's epistles we can trace out some of his movements after his release. During his prison life he cherished the hope that he would be released (Philem. 22; Phil. i. 25). After his acquittal he went into Macedonia, and from there wrote to Timothy at Ephesus that he expected to visit him shortly (1 Tim. ii. 14, 15). From Ephesus he probably visited Philemon at Colossæ, and realized the hope expressed in the letter sent to him by the hand of Onesimus the slave (Philem. 22). We know that he was at Miletus (2 Tim. iv. 20); and it is very probable that he sailed from this point to Crete, in company with Titus, whom he left in the island to perfect the organization of the churches there (Tit. i. 5). The Epistle to Titus seems to have been written while the apostle was on his way to Nicopolis,



where he expected to spend the winter (Tit. iii. 12). The most probable supposition is that it was written from Corinth in the year 65. By reference to the map it can be seen that what is known of the geography of the journey tends to add strength to this supposition.

We know that the apostle had, long before this, planned a tour to the southwestern peninsula of Europe. When he was about ready to leave Corinth, with contributions for the relief of the poor saints in Jerusalem, he wrote the Epistle to the Romans, in which we have a statement from him that he expected to go into Spain with the Gospel, and that his plan was to visit Rome on the way (Rom. xv. 24, 28). Whether he made this journey or not is another question that has no Scriptural answer. It is a matter of tradition, however, that he did go to Spain. One thing is certain: if he ever made the journey as he had it planned, he did so after the first imprisonment in Rome. There is no record of such a journey in the New Testament. Had he made the journey before the imprisonment, it would have been a matter of record. As the Book of Acts closes with Paul in prison, awaiting his first trial, there is no place in that Book for the record of any of the events that occurred after his trial and release.

When, where, and upon what ground the apostle was arrested the second time we have no information. Many are of the opinion that his second arrest occurred at Nicopolis some time during the year 65, and this is probably correct. We are certain, however, that he once more experienced the horrors of imprisonment in Rome, and that during his last period of confinement in that city he wrote his last epistle.

This was his Second Epistle to Timothy ; and in it we read his last message to one of his dearest and best friends. The feeling that had once haunted him that he might be rejected after having spent his life in preaching to others had long since vanished (1 Cor. ix. 27). His faith had risen to the sublimest height to which faith can rise. As he realized that death was near, he expressed his feelings in these words so full of faith and resignation : " I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day ; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing " (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8). In these words he describes his present condition, reviews his past, and takes a sweeping survey of the future. This is as far as we can follow him in the light of history. The early tradition of the Church is that he was put to death by the order of Nero. That he fully expected death we know ; and, as the time of his departure had come when he wrote his last message to Timothy, we can readily accept the tradition. We are reasonably certain that soon after writing the words of the last quotation he was led out to death. Although we cannot follow him to the place of execution and witness his last agonies and death, we can heed his exhortation to follow him as he followed Christ ; and by doing this, we are assured that we can follow him through the Gates into the City.





WAY

