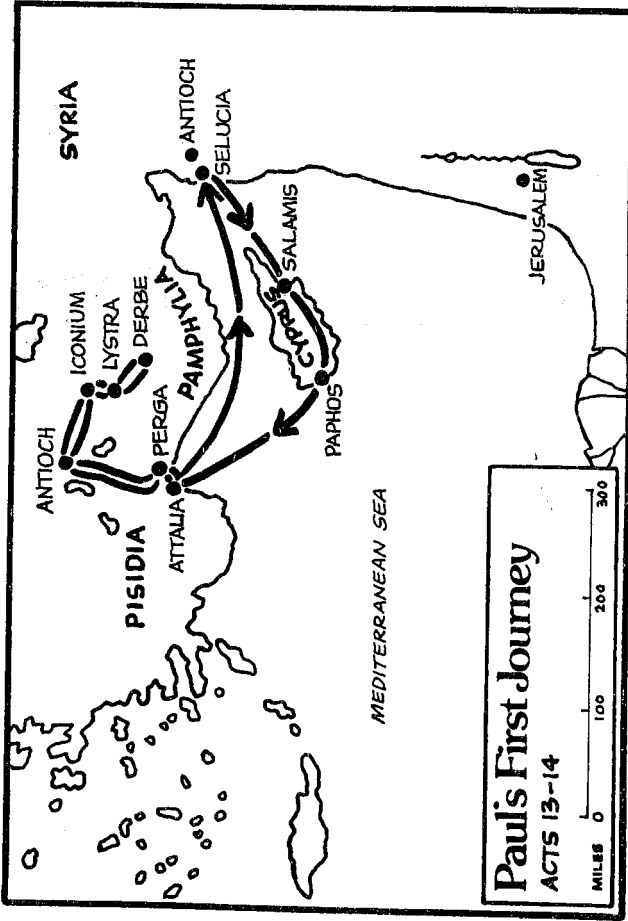


PART THREE

PAUL'S THREE

EVANGELISTIC TOURS

THE GREAT BOOK OF ACTS



CHAPTER 8

The First Tour*A. Antioch of Syria*
(Study Acts 13:1-3)

Ever since the gospel was brought to Antioch, capital of Syria, a few miles inland from the Mediterranean and an estimated 200 miles north of the Galilean border, it has been unconsciously gearing up to become the next great center of Christianity following the original center at Jerusalem. A "great number" of that city believes and turns to the Lord before Barnabas comes (Acts 11:21), and after he comes "much people was added unto the Lord" (Acts 11:24). Then comes that whole year when he and Saul labor together here teaching "much people" (Acts 11:26).

As our new chapter opens, the Antioch work is blessed (equipped) with five "prophets and teachers" (some evidently inspired and some not). Barnabas's name heads the list while Saul's is listed last (probably because he is the latest to come to Antioch). Something is said about each of the other three. Simeon is evidently black, for he is called "Niger" which means "black". Lucius is from Cyrene. He was probably among those Cyrenians who first brought the gospel to Antioch (Acts 11:19,20). Mansen "had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch", ruler of Galilee who stole his brother's wife and had John the Baptist beheaded.

Though all five of these are great men and involved in the important work at Antioch, we know much about Barnabas and Saul but only the above scanty information about the other three. Why? It has been pointed out that Acts is primarily a book of expansion, the gospel spreading to new people and places, the church launching forth through leaders sent out

and leaders willing to go. Thus Acts follows the travel-labors of Barnabas and Saul, of Paul and Silas, etc. while not telling us of these others' continuing labors at Antioch. Again, the apostles stay in Jerusalem after the scattering of that congregation, but Acts follows Philip's labors rather than covering the apostles' reestablishment of the Jerusalem church. And finally, Peter is an elder in Jerusalem (I Pet. 5:1), but Acts does not report on his work as an elder in Jerusalem but of the times he was out of Jerusalem (Acts 8:14-25; Acts 9:32-43; Acts 10:9-48).

It is during the faithfulness of these five leaders' labors in Antioch and while they are fasting over some unrecorded matter that it is revealed through one or more of them that Barnabas and Saul are to be sent forth on a tour of taking the gospel to new places (v. 2). Antioch has received the gospel from others--now it is to share two of its great leaders so that others also may hear. All in Christ recognize that He is "Lord" (ruler, master), and that as head of the church (Col. 1:18) He can say to one, "Go," and to another, "Stay," and though blessed with the power of choice, Christians are pleased to let Christ decide the "moves" much like a checker-player moves his checkers from one spot on the board to another.

And how are they sent forth? By fasting, prayer, and having hands laid on them. Since Paul is already an apostle and therefore already has miracle-power, it is obvious that this is not to confer miracle-power on them. Furthermore, those laying on hands are not apostles, so they cannot be conferring such power (see notes on Acts 8:14ff). When people are embarking on special, important assignments for Christ, it is Biblical to have such a service to ask God's blessing on the work He is calling them to do (Acts 6:6; I Tim. 4:14). This is a solemn way of recommending such workers to have the grace of God upon them (notice Acts 14:26 as it-looks back on this service). From the

language in Acts 15:40 it appears that such a service will again be held when Paul and Silas launch forth on Paul's next tour.

QUESTIONS: 1. *What place will become the next great center of Christianity?* 2. *Name the 5 prophets and teachers now in Antioch?* 3. *Which 2 of them do we know the most about?* 4. *What single item of information do we know about each of the other 3?* 4. *What call do Barnabas and Saul receive?* 5. *What 3 things does the church do in sending them forth?*

B. Seleucia
(Study Acts 13:4)

The first leg of their westward trip is to the seaport town Seleucia, 16 miles west of Antioch. It was built in 300 B.C. (during the Inter-Testament period) by Seleucus Nicator to provide a seaport for Antioch, and it was named for its founder. From here they sail to the island of Cyprus, Barnabas's native island (Acts 4:36).

QUESTIONS: 1. *Where is Seleucia located?* 2. *When was it built?* 3. *For whom was it named?*

C. Salamis
(Study Acts 13:5)

Salamis is on the east side of Cyprus island and is the largest city. Jews are so numerous in Salamis that Barnabas and Saul preach in several synagogues. Why are there so many Jews here? Reece says it is because the Roman emperor Augustus has farmed out Cyprus's copper mines to Herod I, and many Jews have

come here to work in them. It is also not far off the Palestine mainland. We note that Mark, who has accompanied them to Antioch from Jerusalem (Acts 12:25), is with them on this tour.

QUESTIONS: 1. *Where is Salamis located?* 2. *Where do Barnabas and Saul preach here?* 3. *Who is the third member of their party?* 4. *Why are there so many Jews here?*

D. Paphos
(Study Acts 13:6-12)

The two evangelists and Mark make their way across this 100-mile-long island to a city on its west side--Paphos (v. 6), the capital of the island and seat of Roman government. They may have preached in other places coming across the island, but in preaching to the major cities of Salamis and Paphos we begin to discern a general pattern observable later throughout the ministry of Paul to go to the centers of population and preach, expecting the gospel to spread out from those centers to the smaller places and area around (Ephesus and its surrounding area is an example--Acts 19:8-10).

At Paphos they are confronted with a renegade Jew who seeks to hinder their influencing Sergius Paulus, a government official, with the gospel. The King James speaks of him as a "deputy". The American Standard and other versions translate the word "proconsul". A coin has been found bearing the inscription, "Paulus the proconsul," which indicates the prominence of the man with whom Barnabas and Saul are in connection. He is said to be a "prudent" man, one desirous to hear what Christ's men are preaching (v. 7). The sorcerer Elymas is probably the proconsul's private "prophet" whom he

consults for divine answers. Being a sorcerer the Bible labels him a "false prophet", and since he is a "Jew" he is an apostate from the Jewish religion. He withstands Barnabas and Saul (opposes what they are saying) (v. 8) because he is a sorcerer, because he is an apostate, and possibly because he can foresee that his very job and position are in jeopardy should the proconsul side with Christianity.

Right in the middle of this event we learn that Saul also has another name ("Paul"), and from the moment he takes over this situation we know him by his Roman name "Paul" rather than his Hebrew name "Saul". It is probably because he will be working with more among the Roman world than with the Jewish that this change has occurred. Furthermore from this event his name usually precedes Barnabas's name so that what was "Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 13:2) has now become "Paul and Barnabas" (Acts 13:46; Acts 15:2,22,35) but not always (see Acts 14:14 and Acts 15:12). However as we follow Luke's account of the rest of this trip, it is evident that Paul is the recognized leader from this point forward.

From what you know from his epistles about the apostle Paul, how would you like him to fasten his eyes on you as he does on the sorcerer (v. 9) in preparation for delivering the scathing rebuke found in the following verse? As can be seen from v. 9 he is especially directed of the Spirit to administer probably the most personal, most cutting rebuke found in all the Bible when he calls him not one undesirable name but three: "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness" (v. 10). Though these are not music to the sorcerer's ears, they are not erroneous. And with his question, "Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" he is demanding that Elymas cease his resistance to their teaching the proconsul (v. 10). And to be sure that he will, and that the

proconsul might know who is right in the confrontation, Paul pronounces a visible judgment on the sorcerer: "Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season" (v. 11), and "immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand." To use an expression current when your writer was a boy, "That took the starch out of him!"

The proconsul can see that the power of God is with Paul, who now can proceed teaching him. We assume that when Luke says he "believed" (v. 12), it means he became a Christian (as in Acts 4:4,32; Acts 5:14; Acts 14:1). The blindness that fell on Elymas is reminiscent of God's smiting Paul himself blind on the road to Damascus when he too had to have others lead him by the hand (Acts 9:8). This miracle is evidently performed to signify to the proconsul that these messengers are of God (compare Mark 16:20). His blindness having fulfilled its purpose, Elymas's sight will return to him in time, for he is to be blind "for a season"--not permanently.

QUESTIONS: 1. How far is it across Cyprus? 2. What city is on its west side? 3. Who is the proconsul? 4. Who is Elymas? 5. What wicked thing does Elymas do? 6. What does Paul say to him? 7. What happens to Elymas? 8. What is the final thing said about the proconsul? 9. What evidence do we have that it is here that Paul becomes the main leader of the party?

E. Perga
(Study Acts 13:13)

"So completely has Paul now become the central figure of Luke's narrative that Barnabas and John Mark are called simply 'his company'," McGarvey observes as they leave Cyprus and sail north to Perga on the main-

land of Asia. "Perga" is the city and "Pamphylia" the province. It seems we have hardly been told that "they had also John to their minister" (v. 5) that we are now told, "And John departing from them returned to Jerusalem."

Howsom thinks it is because of the robbers lurking in the Pisidian highlands before them that prompts Mark to leave the party: "No population through the midst of which Paul ever traveled abounded more in those 'perils of robbers' of which he speaks, than the wild and lawless clans of the Pisidian highlands," referring to his "perils of robbers" in connection with his journeys to preach the gospel in II Cor. 11:26. Later there will be a sharp difference between him and Barnabas over Mark's case, and from the way Acts 15:38 words it ("Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work"), you might think Mark has merely flunked out and treated his work-responsibility very irresponsibly.

Why return to "Jerusalem"? That is his home (Acts 12:12). He is young and possibly unsettled. The novelty of going along on a big trip into new country has now worn off, and he can think of only one thing--go home! And so "go home" he does without regard to what effect his decision will have on the salvation of many souls. If Paul and Barnabas take the same attitude, the trip will terminate, and they will fail to do the work the Holy Spirit had for them to do when He said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:3). But they do not let this deter them, proceeding as planned.

QUESTIONS: 1. What is the relationship of "Perga" to "Pamphylia"? 2. What unexpected thing happens at Perga? 3. What are some explanations as to why this happens?

F. Antioch of Pisidia
(Study Acts 13:14-52)

Luke is sure to inform us that this is Antioch "of Pisidia" to distinguish it from Antioch "of Syria" where the tour began. This Antioch, like the one in Syria, was built by Seleucus Nicator and named in honor of his father Antiochus.

Again their first attempt to win converts to Christianity is the synagogue sabbath service. After the reading of the law and the prophets the synagogue ruler invites them to bring an exhortation to the people, likely not realizing they are anything other than Jewish in their religion (v. 14,15). What an opportunity for these who wish to tell men of Jesus!

Again we notice it is "Paul" who speaks (v. 16). We have in Acts sermons by Peter (Acts 2 and 3) and one by Stephen (Acts 7). Now we are to be treated to Paul's first recorded message! It is in the synagogue of Antioch of Pisidia.

After addressing them as "Men and brethren" and "Ye that fear God" (v. 16) Paul likewise begins a brief reference to certain events in their glorious Old Testament history: their Exodus from Egypt (v. 17); their 40 years in the wilderness (v. 18); the Conquest Period (v. 19); the Judges Period (v. 20); the 40-year reign of King Saul (v. 21); and the reign of King David (v. 22). The "about 450 years" in v. 19 needs to be fitted in with I Kings 6:1's statement that Solomon built his temple in the 480th year after the Exodus. V. 19 is talking about the length of time it took Israel to subdue the whole land God promised to Israel, a project that began under Moses and was not fully completed until the time of David, about 450 years of the 480 of I Kings 6:1 would be involved.

The "seven nations" whose land God gave to Israel were the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites (Deut. 7:1). Saul's

reign having been "forty years" in length is another one of those New Testament bits of information not recorded in the Old Testament. V. 22 explains God's statement about David ("a man after mine own heart") as meaning one who would fulfill all His will in contrast to Saul who was rejected for his disobedience (I Sam. 15:1-26).

Paul points out to his Antioch of Pisidia audience that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Saviour, born of David's line (v. 23). Mention is made of the ministry of John the Baptist (v. 24) who had been sent to the nation of Israel ahead of time to prepare the way, to his statement that he was not the Christ, and to his reiteration that the Christ was coming after him (v. 25).

It is at this point that Paul shows he is getting to the heart of his message when he calls them to special attention in v. 26 by inserting, "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God," before proceeding with, "To you is the word of this salvation sent," and he gets right into the meat of his message showing that in their rulers' rejection and crucifying of Jesus they were unknowingly fulfilling the very thing their prophets had predicted concerning the Messiah (v. 27-29).

Paul goes on to inform his baffled audience that God raised Jesus from the dead and in so doing fulfilled His promises to the Hebrew patriarchs and several prophecies by or about David (v. 32-35) found in Psa. 2:7; Isa. 55:3; Psa. 16:10. Not to see corruption meant his body would not decay. His body decayed by being dead so many years, but Jesus' body did not (v. 36,37) being resurrected the third day.

Now that Paul is ready to draw some conclusions, he again calls their attention ("Men and brethren") (v. 38). He tells them the forgiveness of sins is preached through Jesus, something they can never receive through the law of Moses (v. 38,39). See John 1:

17 for the same teaching.

The prophet Habakkuk predicted that the calamities God would soon send on his people in Old Testament times would be so great His audience would not believe him when he tried to tell them (Hab. 1:5-11). In like manner the good news of the gospel is so great that many people hardly think such can be true (v. 40, 41). It is obvious that many of Paul's hearers are rejecting what he is saying. But the Gentiles want his message repeated to them the next sabbath (v. 42). We observe that what some don't want to hear is what others ask for. But don't conclude from these verses that it is only Gentiles who are interested in what the preachers have to say, for "many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas" (v. 43). Their speaking to them and persuading them to continue in the grace of God (v. 43) are between the sabbath past and the sabbath coming up.

Spirit mounts in the city as the next sabbath nears. Finally it comes, and v. 44 says, "The next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." This is what the Great Commission envisions--every creature hearing the gospel. Obviously there are believers made, but Luke's coverage pays particular attention to the gospel's opposers: "When the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming" (v. 45). Envy begrudges others' success and more often than not manifests itself outwardly instead of remaining hidden within their hearts. The preachers are not cowed by their opposition nor do they doubt the rightness of their message. Boldly they announce they will be turning to the Gentiles who will be willing to hear rather than continuing to preach to people who are interested in their traditional religion instead of eternal life (v. 46), pointing out that their chief mission is to the Gentiles anyway (v. 47). As to be

expected this brings great joy to the Gentiles (v. 48).

V. 48's "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" sounds in contrast to the many other Bible passages where man's free will is taught (such as I Tim. 2:4; II Pet. 3:9; Rev. 22:17; John 1:11,12; Matt. 11:28; John 5:40; Matt. 23:37; etc.; etc.; etc.). The Greek word for "ordained" is *tetragmenai* and can be translated as a perfect passive participle where somebody else does the ordaining concerning a person's case (as it is translated in the King James and many other versions), or it can be translated as a perfect middle participle where one does the ordaining for himself. To translate it passively not only sets this verse against many Bible passages (as indicated above) but also sets it against the other verses right around it. In the verses just preceding it the Jews who are resisting what Paul and Barnabas are preaching are making their own decision concerning eternal life ("Seeing ye...judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles"--v. 46). The Gentiles who believe are just the opposite: they "ordained themselves" (a middle participle translation) to eternal life. They are interested in salvation--they want to be saved, so they believe. There are several translations that seek to bring out this thought: "They believed--as many as had become disposed for age-abiding life" (Rotherham); "As many as were disposed for aionian Life, believed" (Emphatic Diaglott); and others. Since this is a possible translation of the Greek, either translation is allowable, it is a translator's choice, and since treating it as middle is in harmony with the immediate Scripture setting instead of clashing with it, and since it is in harmony with what the rest of the Bible says on this subject rather than in opposition to it, your writer's personal conclusion is that it should be translated as a perfect middle participle instead of a perfect passive participle.

While Paul and his party are in certain cities for some length of time, several times does Acts record the gospel spreading to surrounding territories (v. 49 and Acts 19:10).

It is in the midst of these evangelistic successes (particularly among Gentiles) that the Jews raise an opposition against Paul and Barnaba that results in their being banned from Antioch of Pisidia (v. 50). We notice this opposition works through "devout and honourable women", "devout" indicating they are religious women and "honourable" ("honorable estate," ASV) that they are prominent, and also through the "chief men of the city" (unconverted rulers). Realizing the general low estate of women in Bible days we might wonder why the Jews enlist "women" to get the apostles expelled. Robertson observes, "The prominence of women in public life here at Antioch is quite in accord with what we know of conditions in the cities of Asia Minor." "Thus women were appointed under the empire as magistrates, as presidents of the games, and even the Jews elected a woman as Archisynagogos, at least in one instance at Smyrna."

Writing years later Paul recalls these persecutions and afflictions received here at "Antioch" and the ones at "Iconium" and "Lystra" coming up (II Tim. 3:11). Our Acts coverage however does not give us even the slightest report of any of these persecutions except Paul's coming stoning at Lystra.

We can only admire and desire to emulate these dedicated men who can add this adversity at Antioch of Pisidia on the heels of Mark's turning back at Perga and still go on to the next place (Iconium) (v. 51) to preach the gospel. They do not doubt the rightness of their message even when there are those who don't believe it. They simply shake off the dust of their feet against them as Jesus instructed (Mark 6:11). It is good to note also that these developments in Antioch do not overturn the converts in their new-found faith,

for v. 52 says they are "filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost."

QUESTIONS: 1. Where is Paul's first sermon preached that has been preserved for us? 2. What are some of the Old Testament events mentioned in this sermon? 3. Name the 7 nations living in Palestine before Israel took their land. 4. Whose body did not see corruption--David's or Jesus'? 5. Who want to hear more the next sabbath? 6. How do the Jews react the next sabbath when so many assemble to hear the preaching? 7. To whom do the preachers announce they will go to preach? 8. Which way does your author prefer to translate the Greek "tetragmenai"--"as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" or "as many as ordained themselves to eternal life believed?" 9. Comment on the "devout" and "honorable" women who cause the preachers to be banned from the city?

G. Iconium
(Study Acts 14:1-6a)

The city's name "Iconium" attracts our attention for its root syllable "icon" is the Greek word for "image". Obviously it was the site of a famous image, but we are too many centuries this side of its ancient history to know what image. There are several legends that "Blaiklock" in his book, "Cities of the New Testament," calls "aetiological" myths (stories made up later to account for an existing fact, name, or institution). If such were true, we would have the explanation.

In spite of their declared statement at Antioch that they will "turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46), their love for their fellow-Jews in other places who have not as yet heard the gospel again possesses them

as at Iconium they go into the Jewish synagogue and preach (v. 1). And their faith is rewarded, for "a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed" (v. 1). The well-known verse, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17), is well illustrated by this verse's statement that they so speak that many believe. People cannot believe the message of God until they have heard it (Rom. 10:14), giving high purpose to preaching and to being a messenger of Christ.

The "Greeks" in v. 1 are in some sense distinguished from the "Jews". Since they are in the synagogue, they are probably Greek proselytes to Judaism. They are distinguished from "Gentiles" in v. 2. If we have rightly concluded that Greeks here are proselytes, and the conclusion seems warranted, it shows that the word "Greek" or "Greeks" must be studied in each of its occurrences in Acts to determine its meaning in each instance. For additional meanings: we have seen that "Grecians" in Acts 6:1 were Grecian Jews (Jews born outside of and living outside of Palestine who talked Greek), and in Rom. 1:16 it appears to be synonymous with "Gentiles".

We are not told in what way the unbelieving Jews stir up the Gentiles against Paul and Barnabas and those who believe (v. 2), but the evangelists do not run--they stay on for an extended time, speaking boldly for the Lord who grants them power to work many miracles (v. 3). McGarvey is observant when he comments on v. 3: "This is the only note of time given by Luke in the whole account of this tour."

The gospel makes enough inroads into Iconium that the city is divided--the result of not running, the result of boldly continuing to preach and work. Paul and Barnabas have been here long enough that when they learn of a plot to stone them (stoning was Jewish), they abruptly break off their Iconium labors, trusting that sufficient start has been made to carry on until

such a time as it will be safe to return, and they move on to evangelistic labors elsewhere.

QUESTIONS: 1. What does "icon" in "Iconium" mean? 2. Where do they first preach in Iconium? 3. How is faith brought about in people? 4. What are some of different usages of the word "Greeks" in the New Testament? 5. Do they have a short or an extended ministry here in Iconium? 6. What plot causes them to leave town?

H. Lystra

(Study Acts 14:6b-20a)

Lystra is 40 miles south of Iconium, far enough in those days to do another good work before word can reach Iconium of their whereabouts. V. 6 is a general report of the final places preached before beginning their return to Antioch of Syria. Lycaonia is the province, and Lystra and Derbe are two cities in it. We note that in addition to preaching in these cities, they preach in the region around them. With v. 8 Luke tells of excitement and danger attending their labors in Lystra.

It all centers around a certain cripple who has never walked (v. 8) who as a result of listening to Paul's message about the miracle-working Christ believes he too can be healed by these representatives of Christ. The man's faith is noted by Paul either by something he says or does or by God's revealing it to him, and here in this heathen city Paul is about to perform one of his most notable miracles. That the man may know he is to be healed and that all who see the man immediately well will connect the healing with Paul's preaching, he speaks to the man in a loud

voice, "Stand upright on thy feet" (v. 10). The miracle is obvious when the man leaps as well as walks!

In heathen mythology their gods were supposed to come down at times in the form of men, and Lystra being a worshiper of Jupiter (Zeus, chief of the gods) they immediately and excitedly draw the conclusion that the evangelists are actually gods in the form of men. They label Barnabas "Jupiter" and Paul "Mercury" (Hermes, speaker for the gods). You can imagine the excitement reigning as they change their attention from the healed man to these looked on as gods who healed him! Imagine, Jupiter and Mercury in their very streets! They must be worshiped, and here come the priest of Jupiter's temple and the people with oxen to sacrifice to them. "Garlands" are wreaths of flowers put on the horns of the oxen.

What their intentions are is obvious to Barnabas and Paul. Besides they have heard them say in their Lycaonian language, "The gods are come down to us." How can the apostles understand their strange language? This is what I Cor. 12:10 calls the "interpretation of tongues", the opposite of speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues is speaking in a language the speaker does not know while interpretation of tongues is understanding a language the hearer does not know.

Barnabas and Saul rend their clothes in strong feeling, run in among the people to stop the idolatrous procession, and cry out, "Sirs, why do ye these things?" explaining they themselves are but men and are in town to preach to them to turn from such idolatry (here labeled 'vanities') to the "living God" (v. 14,15). Evangelizing among the Jews their message is that Jesus is the Son of God, but evangelizing among the Gentiles their message has to begin with who the true God is before stating anything about His Son whom He has sent to save the world. What do they tell the people of Lystra about the living God? That He is one

great God (not several gods) who made everything: the heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything in them, and that He permitted all nations to follow their own ways throughout Old Testament times when God was dealing with the Jews alone, yet manifesting Himself all the time in the rain and fruitful seasons He sent on the earth (v. 15-17). It seems they are just getting underway with the preaching when the people are more eager than ever to sacrifice to them (v. 18).

But then come those enemies from the last two places the brethren have preached (Antioch and Iconium), and their lies will change the preachers from gods to devils in the eyes of the people of Lystra, for in the same city where they are about to be worshiped Paul is stoned and left for dead (v. 19).

It is interesting to note that about fourteen years later when Paul is writing II Cor. 12, he writes of an experience he had fourteen years earlier when he was "caught up to the third heaven" (II Cor. 12:3) ("paradise," v. 4) and heard things he was not permitted to come back to earth and tell. The experience was divinely planned completely for Paul's own blessing. It is commonly thought that the "third heaven" experience takes place while the brethren in Acts 9:20 are standing around his motionless body in Lystra. When he suddenly rises in their midst and departs the next day with Barnabas to Derbe, they are not sure whether he has indeed risen from the dead or has been miraculously healed and brought out of a coma. And II Cor. 12 does not shed any conclusive light on the matter, for Paul himself wrote that he did not know whether he was in the body (unconscious but alive) or whether out of the body (dead) (II Cor. 12:2,3). And if Paul didn't know, it seems sure that we have no certain way of knowing either.

- QUESTIONS: 1. *How far is Lystra from Iconium?*
2. *What notable miracle does Paul perform in Lystra?*

3. What mythological gods do the townspeople take Paul and Barnabas to be? 4. What are the people about to do that would be wrong? 5. What does Paul say to them about it? 5. Enemies from what 2 places come to Lystra? 6. What happens to Paul as a result? 7. In writing II Cor. years later what does Paul say about this event?

I. Derbe

(Study Acts 14:20b)

This is the terminus of this First Evangelistic Tour--the final place they will go with the message. And the briefest report is given of their labors here: they do evidently stay here for sometime and teach "many" before returning to Antioch where the tour began.

QUESTIONS: 1. From what city do they begin their return trip to Antioch? 2. What is said of their labors in this place?

J. Their Return Trip to Antioch in Syria

(Study Acts 14:21-26)

These verses include the places where they stop on their return: Lystra, Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia, Perga in Pamphylia, and Attalia. This is a retracing their trip out place by place. Evidently they do not return by way of the isle of Cyprus. Attalia is a new name, merely being the seaport where they board ship for Antioch.

Why are they going back to the places where Paul was stoned (Lystra) and from which they had to flee for their very lives (Iconium and Antioch)? First to

confirm the disciples through repreaching the things that had won them to Christ, to exhort them to continue in the Christian life, and to help them realize it is through much tribulation that Christians will enter the kingdom of God (v. 22).

This "confirming" is not a ceremony but is done through preaching and teaching (see Acts 15:32,41 for similar uses of the word). In the religious world "Confirmation" is a ceremony coming at the end of a period of catechism for those who were sprinkled as infants but now wish to "confirm" their parents' decision to have them sprinkled. Time-out to remark that the whole system is built on the false premise that man is born a sinner (the doctrine of "Original Sin"). Since man is supposedly born a sinner, they say he needs to be baptized immediately even though too young to understand--hence, infant baptism so-called. And then when one is old enough to be personally responsible for accepting or rejecting the sprinkling performed by the decision of his parents, he can then be "confirmed". But the use of the word "confirmed" in Acts does not point to a ceremony.

Another purpose for returning to these young congregations is to ordain elders for each place (v. 23). Just as each Jewish town or city has its "elders" (the ones in charge of the business of the town), so is each congregation given elders to oversee it. An elder is called a "bishop" in Tit. 1:7 (compare I Tim. 3:1, 2). The word "bishop" is translated from the Greek word "episcopos" which means "overseer". Elders are to take the oversight (I Pet. 5:2), watching over the souls entrusted to their shepherd-care (Heb. 13:17). I Tim. 5:17 aptly speaks of elders ruling well. Paul and Barnabas better understand the kind of men needed to fulfill the role of shepherds than the people themselves", thus the American Standard properly translates, "They (Paul and Barnabas)...appointed for them (dative case in Greek signifying indirect object) elders in every church" (v. 23). For a fuller treatment

of the appointment of elders, see your author's work, "Editorials on the Eldership." "Fasting" along with their praying shows the solemnity of their commending them to the Lord for His blessings on their lives and labors as elders (v. 23).

Now that suitable leadership has been provided for the congregations, they continue their homeward journey, stopping at Perga to preach, the place where John Mark deserted them on their journey out (Acts 13:13), catching a ship at the seaport Attalia for their Antioch destination.

QUESTIONS: 1. *What route do they follow in returning to Antioch?* 2. *What do they do on their return trip?* 3. *Why does the word "confirm" here not uphold the denominational doctrine of "Confirmation"?* 4. *How many "elders" are appointed by them?* 5. *What is another New Testament designation of "elders"?*

K. Back at Antioch
(Study Acts 14:26-28)

Antioch is said to be the place where "they had been recommended to the grace of God" by the fasting and prayers and laying on of hands (Acts 13:3) "for the work which they fulfilled", "the work" whereunto the Holy Spirit had called them (see Acts 13:3). The Antioch congregation is eager to hear how God has used them to open the door of faith to many Gentiles (v. 27). As evangelists sent forth from that congregation they are giving a report of the work for which they were sent forth. After all the dangers and difficulties they have experienced on the trip, they are glad to have time to labor again with the Antioch congregation (v. 28).

QUESTIONS: 1. *Is the Antioch congregation eager to*

learn of the success of their labors? 2. After giving their report to the congregation, do they leave immediately or labor for sometime with the congregation?

L. *A Problem Arises between the First and Second Tours*
(Study Acts 15:1-35)

The devil will not long leave alone a work that is prospering for God. He makes his appearance in Antioch at this time in certain men who come from Judea and say that except the Gentile Christians be circumcised, they cannot be saved (v. 1). Who are these men? According to v. 5 they are Pharisees who have accepted Christ and according to Acts 21:20 are representatives of several thousand Jews of Jerusalem who believe in Jesus but are zealous for the law at the same time. Paul labels them "false brethren" in Gal. 2:4. Though being a decided element in the Jerusalem church in Acts 21, they will eventually become an isolated group known in Church History as the Ebionites.

New Testament evangelism finds it easier to convince some people that Jesus is the Christ, the divine Son of God, than to convince them that all authority resides in Him. The Ebionites were Jews who wished to keep their former law (Law of Moses) also. Another group in the church of the early centuries (the Greek Gnostics) wanted to retain some of their Greek philosophical ideas to go along with the gospel. And then the Manicheans sought to blend Persian and Christian thought.

Paul by inspiration taught there is "one Lord" and "one faith", that Lord being Jesus Christ, "the head of the church" who in all things has the preeminence (Eph. 4:5 and Col. 1:18). He affirmed that in Christ are "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3) so that we are "complete in him" (Col. 2:

10). He warned his readers about being beguiled by enticing words (Col. 2:4) and said, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8).

From the above we can well understand Paul and Barnabas arising in Antioch and having no small disputation with these Judean teachers (v. 2). The great Antioch church is torn by this question. McGarvey says, "We have to think of a congregation in our own day, distracted by an earnest controversy between its teachers over a vital question of doctrine, in order to realize the distress and confusion which must have racked the minds of the brethren in Antioch while this controversy was in progress."

Well might Paul, being an apostle, refuse to go up to Jerusalem in order to ascertain the mind of the Lord in the matter. It was necessary for Him to reveal to Paul that he should go up, for in Gal. 2:2 he writes that "by revelation" he went up to Jerusalem when the Antioch brethren wished him to go.

It is appropriate to remark that even today when any problem or question arises in the church, the matter should be referred to Christ's apostles for settlement. We do this by consulting the "apostles' doctrine" in the New Testament in which the church is to continue (Acts 2:42). If they speak on any question, that should settle the matter. If it is a question on which they do not speak, then it must be considered a subject without a Biblical treatment and therefore one over which brethren should not claim, "I'm right...you are wrong:" or, "This is true...that is false." Adherence to what we have just said will save the church from endless controversy and division.

Disregarding it will bring nothing but trouble and disaster.

"Being brought on their way by the church" (v. 3), an expression found in Paul's writings in Rom. 15:

24; I Cor. 16:6; and II Cor. 1:16, can mean they are provided with travel companions as in Acts 20:38 where "accompanied" comes from the same Greek word as "brought" in this verse, or it can mean they are given provisions along the way. The latter, in this writer's judgment, is the more likely meaning, especially in view of two other instances of the same Greek word. In III John 5-8 John writes, "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth." "Bring forward" is the same Greek word, and it is surrounded with indication of Gaius's hospitality. In Tit. 3:13 Titus is told to "bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently"--why? "that nothing be wanting unto them." Those who are sent out by the church and who do the work of the church should be thus provided for, for Paul writes, "Who goeth at warfare any time at his own charges?" (I Cor. 9:7).

Their journey to Jerusalem takes them south from Antioch through Phenice (Phoenicia) probably to Ptolemais and then inland by way of the Esdraelon Plain and then south through Samaria. (For an account of the evangelization of Phenice and Samaria, see Acts 11:19 and Acts 8:5-25.) The Jewish brethren in Phenice and the Samaritan brethren both rejoice to hear the account of conversions among Gentiles (v. 3).

Upon arrival it is noteworthy that they are "received" of the church as well as of the "apostles and elders" unto whom they have been sent by Antioch (see v. 2). In the report of their work among Gentiles they are careful to tell them of things that "God" has done through them. Certain of the Pharisees rise to dispute this fact (v. 5). Since this is just an "arrival get-

together", they do not continue with a discussion. Before the big meeting of v. 6, when "the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter", Gal. 2:2 shows Paul meets with the apostles James, Peter (Cephas), and John to be sure they are all standing firm on the question. If the Jerusalem apostles side with the opposition, it will have a nullifying effect on the work of Paul and Barnabas ("lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain," Gal. 2:2). But they are all in agreement not only in what they are teaching but in their carrying it out: Titus, a Greek whom they have evidently purposely brought along, is not compelled to be circumcised (Gal. 2:1,3), and they find the Jerusalem apostles to be "pillars", who give Paul and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship to continue their labors with the heathen while they continue theirs among the Jews (Gal. 2:9). They are now ready to meet in the public meeting to settle the matter.

V. 7 passes over many words and strong feelings when it puts into one dependent clause this non-detailed report: "When there had been much disputing." Luke now proceeds with the side that really matters-- what the apostles say. It seems wise that Peter should take the floor first, reminding them that God sent him to the Gentiles, putting "no difference between us (the Jews) and them (the Gentiles), purifying their hearts by faith," neither requiring them to be circumcised nor observe the law of Moses (v. 7-9). When he pleads for them not "to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (v. 10), and when he says, "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (v. 11), "all the multitude kept silence" (v. 12). Thus the stage is set for Barnabas and Saul to speak. Barnabas is listed first, for he is likely more accepted in Jerusalem because of his past connections in the Jerusalem church than Saul who is their chief target of criticism. They declare

"what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them" on their great tour (v. 12). This being unanswerable the critics continue to hold their peace (v. 13), for they can see which way the wind is blowing with the apostles as a united group. Since James (the Lord's brother--the other James is dead, Acts 12:1) is the most acceptable to those in opposition, it seems intentional that he has been chosen to conclude the meeting (v. 13). Let us notice his conclusion and proposal.

When Amos and other Jewish prophets wrote of the future, they spoke of the Gentiles being brought in (Amos 9:11,12). James finds what Peter did in going to the Gentiles completely in harmony with their predictions (v. 14-18). His inspired judgment, "that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God" (v. 19), declares that Gentiles do not have to be circumcised nor keep the law of Moses to be Christians. But since for centuries the Gentiles have had abominable practices of idols, fornication, and eating things strangled and blood (practices contrary to the patriarchal code even before there was a law of Moses, practices into which Gentile weakness for such will make it easy for them to revert), James proposes they send a special epistle to the Gentiles warning them against these named practices (v. 19,20). The Jews with their law read every sabbath for generations do not need to be told specially to abstain from the above (v. 21), but the Gentiles without a written revelation have drifted far from the original oral understanding of God's will and need to be specially told of the wrongness of such practices.

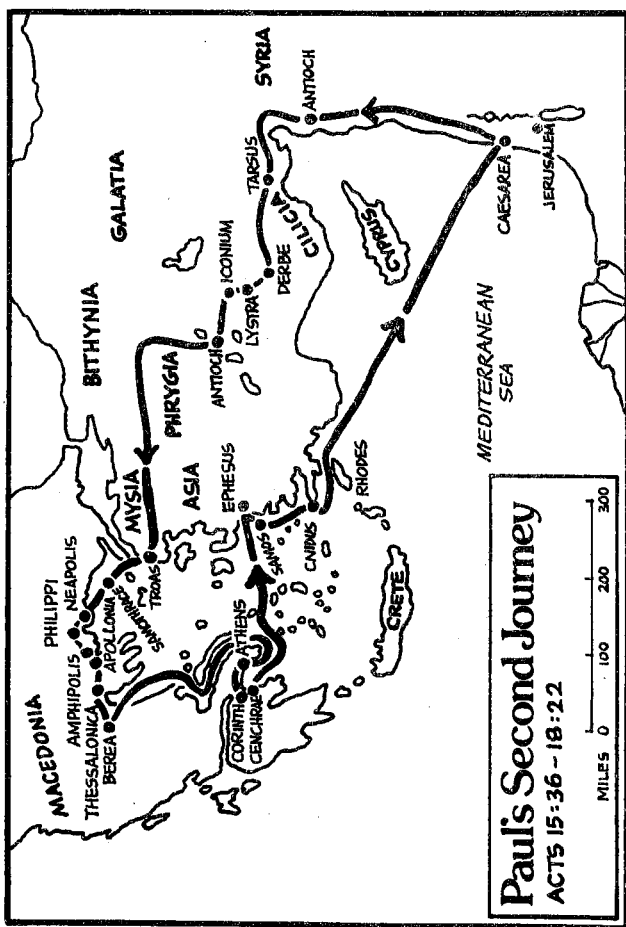
Obviously all the inspired apostles are agreeable to James's words, and so the matter is settled (v. 22). In addition to Barnabas and Saul's taking back an oral report of the decision along with the written warning to the Gentile Christians, they decide to send with them two well known Jerusalem men (Judas and Si-

las) to verify their report (v. 22,27). Judas and Silas are provided with a letter of introduction from which we learn they are men who have "hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 26). Upon the group's arrival in Antioch they gather the church together and give their report (v. 30). The Antioch church is relieved to know that its Gentile members are right, that it has been right in receiving them without circumcision, and that the matter is now settled (v. 31).

Judas and Silas do not immediately return to Jerusalem, but being prophets they stay on to exhort and further confirm the Antioch brethren (v. 32). When the time comes for them to go back, Silas decides to remain at Antioch (v. 33,34). So with Silas, Paul, Barnabas, and several others teaching and preaching the Word of the Lord in Antioch (v. 35), it is a great time of strengthening for the saints.

QUESTIONS: 1. What are some of the Judean Jews saying about the Gentile converts? 2. What does Paul label these Jews? 3. What did the Ebionites want to go by as well as the gospel? 4. What ideas did the Gnostics later want to retain? 5. What did the Manicheans later seek to blend with the gospel? 6. Do Paul and Barnabas combat this Judean teaching? 7. What does the Antioch church want Paul and Barnabas to do? 8. What causes us to know that God confirms the fact that they should go? 9. To whom should doctrinal matters be referred today for settlement? 10. Suppose they have nothing to say on the subject being disputed? 11. What does "being brought on their way by the church" mean? 12. Why do Paul and Barnabas meet with the other apostles before going into the big meeting? 13. Which apostle speaks first at the circumcision council? 14. Who follows him? 15. Which apostle summarizes the meeting and proposes the con-

clusion? 16. What 4 practices do they especially warn the Gentiles about? 17. Who accompany Paul and Barnabas and the letter back to Antioch? 18. Why do these 2 men stay on in Antioch for awhile? 19. Which stays in Antioch when the other returns to Jerusalem?



CHAPTER 9

The Second Tour*A. Antioch of Syria*
(Study Acts 15:36-40)

Time goes by, conditions in Antioch no longer require their staying longer, and Paul wonders how the churches established on the First Tour are getting along. He proposes to Barnabas they make another tour of them. Barnabas is agreeable, but a contention arises between them over whether to take John Mark who is obviously back at Antioch. (Did he come back with them from Jerusalem, or has he been in Antioch for sometime?) Barnabas, a relative of Mark (Col. 4:10), is set on taking him with them (v. 37), but Paul is just as set not to take him on the basis that he once deserted them and the Lord's work (v. 38). Even though they are both inspired men, it is obvious that Inspiration that gives them their message does not destroy the role of personal decision in matters such as is now before them.

Neither one finds it within himself to budge. Barnabas has always been big hearted, and Paul has always been rigid. Both are acting according to the dominant elements in their characters. So being unable to agree on the matter they part ways, Barnabas taking Mark and going to his native Cyprus (Acts 4:36), the first area covered by the First Tour and the part of the tour when Mark was still with them. Paul finds a replacement partner in Silas and goes forth with the Antioch brethren's blessing (v. 40). It appears that Antioch's sympathies are more with Paul than Barnabas.

But regardless of who is right or wrong we rejoice over two facts: (1) Mark evidently takes advantage of the opportunity to do better, for he becomes great enough to be chosen later to pen the Gospel account that bears his name, Paul accepts him (Col. 4:10; II Tim. 4:11), and he holds no ill-will against Paul, understanding why Paul acted toward him as he did; and (2) the rift between Paul and Barnabas is not permanent, for in Paul's later writings he speaks of Barnabas and himself most companionately (I Cor. 9:6). Cleavages between sincere brethren do not have to be permanent. God can help them come together again after time has passed during which they have busied themselves in God's work. Praise the holy name of God for this assurance!

QUESTIONS: 1. *What proposal does Paul make to Barnabas?* 2. *Over whom do they have a disagreement?* 3. *Why would Barnabas want to take him along?* 4. *Why does Paul think it best not to take him?* 5. *How serious is their disagreement?* 6. *What 2 new parties are formed?* 7. *How good a man does Mark later turn out to be?* 8. *How do we know Paul and Barnabas have no permanent hard feelings over this matter?*

B. Syria and Cilicia (Study Acts 15:41)

Antioch is in "Syria", and "Cilicia" is Paul's native province where Tarsus is located. Neither Barnabas nor Paul want to make their difference something to carry to the churches, so just as Barnabas goes to one group Paul and Silas take the land-route north and then west through the two countries mentioned. No mention was made on the First Tour of any work done in

Cilicia, but you will recall when the apostles rushed Paul out of Jerusalem in Acts 9:29,30, they sent him to Tarsus. Paul refers to this himself in Gal. 1:2ff where he mentions preaching in Cilicia. Thus there are "churches" to confirm on this tour (v. 41) in Cilicia as well as in Syria.

QUESTIONS: 1. *Where do Paul and Silas go instead of paralleling Barnabas and Mark's trip to Cyprus?*
2. *What are Paul and Silas said to be doing among the congregations where they go?*

C. Derbe and Lystra
(Study Acts 16:1-3)

Only one item is mentioned in connection with their stop in Derbe and Lystra, that of securing young Timothy of Lystra as an addition to their evangelistic party. You will remember that on the First Tour after Paul and Barnabas had suffered at Antioch of Pisidia and Iconium, they came to Lystra where at first they were taken for gods but later Paul was stoned. Since Timothy seems to be familiar with these First Tour sufferings (see II Tim. 3:10,11), likely he as well as his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois (II Tim. 1:5) became Christians on Paul's first visit. If so, the interval between Paul's Lystra visits has been a great period of spiritual development for Timothy, who is well reported not only in his local area of Lystra and Derbe but also at Iconium some distance away. Future leaders are to be "faithful" men even before being considered for leadership (II Tim. 2:2).

So impressed is Paul with Timothy that he desires to take him with him (v. 3), and as long as Paul will live Timothy will serve as a son with him in the gos-

pel (Phil. 2:22). Paul will speak of him in the most laudatory way (Phil. 2:19,20). We note too that Timothy becomes the first person added to Paul's party from any of the places where he has gone preaching.

You might wonder why Paul speaks so highly of Timothy's mother in II Tim. 1:5 when she is married to a "Greek" (v. 1). But remember in the patriarchal culture a girl did not choose whom she would marry. Her marriage was worked out for her by her father. This accounts for Timothy's not being circumcised. Since this will be a stumblingblock to evangelizing among the Jews, Paul circumcises him (v. 3) in harmony with his statement in I Cor. 9:20. The case of Titus the Greek is totally different, which explains why Paul did not circumcise him (Gal. 2:3).

It is probably at this time that the hands of the "presbytery" (eldership) are laid on Timothy (I Tim. 4:14), separating him to the work of the gospel. At some time Paul himself lays his hands on Timothy also (II Tim. 1:6), which confers inspiration and miraculous power on him. It may be now--or possibly later after Paul sees how Timothy does.

QUESTIONS: 1. *What one event is recorded in conjunction with their stop at Derbe and Lystra?* 2. *How is Timothy described?* 3. *Why does Paul speak so highly of Timothy's mother when she is married to a Greek?* 4. *Why does Paul circumcise Timothy?*

D. A Parenthetical Report
(Study Acts 16:4,5)

One of the things done on this Second Tour is deliver the Jerusalem circumcision decree wherever they go. We note that they deliver the decrees to the churches to "keep"--not to decide on. The apostles and

elders issue the inspired decision, so the deciding is already done. In Christianity we accept the teachings of the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). This is God's plan, and it is the only way questions can be settled and the church have peace. And v. 5 shows the churches where Paul and Silas go accepting the apostolic decision and becoming established in the faith. And all this results in daily additions to the congregations (v. 5).

QUESTIONS: 1. *What are they carrying with them and delivering to the congregations on this tour?* 2. *What results does this bring?*

E. On to Troas
(Study Acts 16:6-10)

From here on the party presses into new country not covered by the First Tour. The Second Tour is so much more extensive in territory covered than the First. You must look at the map of Paul's travels to see what Luke is recording in these verses. Going north and west from Lystra they go through both Phrygia and Galatia, and though our text does not record their work it seems right to assume they preach throughout Phrygia and Galatia. When they come to the point where the region of Mysia begins, they intend to turn to the left into the province of Asia, but the Holy Spirit reveals to them not to, nor does He allow them to turn to the right into Bithynia. "Something's different," Paul has a right to think, for we do not read of this happening before. God has something great in mind for them instead of continuing their work in these parts. He does not forbid their work in Mysia, so they proceed to the seaport city of Troas (the ancient Troy of history--remember the fall of Troy via the "wooden horse" full of soldiers?). They might well

wonder what God has in store for them. In time He will reveal it.

While in Troas they evidently convert a physician named Luke (Col. 4:14) who is so thrilled with Christianity that he drops his doctoring profession and joins Paul's party also, for no commentator overlooks the fact that when Paul's party departs from Troas the Acts account quits talking about the party as "they" and begins talking about it as "we" (note Acts 16:10, 11,12,13). The author Luke is along! Thus on this tour Paul has picked up two great associates in Timothy and Luke, men who will be with him much of the time until his death. Luke was with him even at the end (II Tim. 4:11).

One night Paul is given a vision. Macedonia (northern Greece) is over in Europe across the Aegean Sea from Troas. In the vision a man of Macedonia beckons Paul to "come over into Macedonia and help us" (v. 9). This is commonly referred to as the "Macedonian Call". Even though this will mean leaving Asia and entering Europe, the party is eager to go because the Lord is especially directing them there (v. 10).

QUESTIONS: 1. Which tour was the more extensive-- the First or the Second? 2. Before they arrive at Troas, what is probably baffling to the party? 3. What was Troas called in ancient history? 4. Who joins the party in Troas? 5. What has been his occupation? 6. What famous vision does God give Paul here? 7. Are they obedient to God's call?

F. Over to Philippi
(Study Acts 16:11-40)

Their voyage takes them from Troas to the island Samothracia, and another day of sailing brings them to the seaport Neapolis on the European mainland. Their

destination is the larger city Philippi, ten miles inland.

The Jewish element of the city is practically non-existent. There is no synagogue in which to preach, but on the sabbath they go down to the river where the King James says, "Prayer was wont (accustomed) to be made," while the American Standard and many other versions say, "Where we supposed there was a place of prayer." The difference is not in translating but in what the original Greek word was. In both instances the verb stem is the same, but those Greek copies followed by the King James have a third person singular subject for this verb while the other versions follow those copies where a first person plural subject is used. This slight difference in the sentence's subject also affects the choice of meanings for the very stem itself. If the King James is right, Paul and his party learn of this sabbath riverside prayer meeting and go out to teach the Jewish women who meet because there is no synagogue to attend. If the other versions are correct, Paul supposes there might be such a prayer meeting from a traditional Jewish practice going back to the Jews in Babylonian Captivity who congregated along rivers when there was no synagogue in which to meet (see Psa. 137:1,2).

Paul's European labors begin on a very small scale, but Zech. 4:10 says not to despise (belittle) the day of small things. One who takes a small opportunity when that is the only known opportunity will likely be given larger opportunities.

Let us look at this woman Lydia. She is from "Thyatira" in Asia (one of the seven-churches-of-Asia cities--Rev. 1:11). She is a "seller of purple". Purple is the royal color in Lydia's day because its scarcity makes it costly and obtainable only by the very rich. Their lone source of purple dye is a rare shell-fish (*Murex Purpurarius*) along the coast of Tyre, each shell-fish yielding only one drop. So Ly-

dia is a woman of means.

Though wealthy she is a very religious woman, very conscientious. Though away from her native setting and in a city where there is no synagogue, she carefully observes the sabbath even though her heathen competitors will proceed with their business as usual.

As she listens to Paul's message, it makes sense to her. The Lord uses the message to open her heart so that she and her household are obedient to the faith (v. 14,15). In her case her "household" is likely herself and her maidens (servants).

We do not know where the party of four (Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke) are staying while in Philippi, but it is probably mediocre at best. Her wealth enables her to invite them to make her home their home while in Philippi. Evidently they protest that such is an unreasonable imposition on her, for she "constrained" them. She counts it a privilege to show hospitality to these who have brought the gospel to her. She does not look down on them as objects of charity. She doesn't say, "Since you have no other place to go, come to my house;" but, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house" (v. 15)--not just for a meal but to "abide" (stay).

It appears from v. 18's "This she did many days" that the sabbath-day prayer get-together has become a daily prayer meeting (v. 16). A soothsaying girl possessed of a demon follows them as they go to prayer, and she tells the truth when she says, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation (v. 16,17). Demons also spoke the truth when crying out concerning Jesus (Mark 1:23,24), but Jesus cast them out and quieted them (Mark 1:25, 34) even as Paul does to this soothsaying girl (v. 18). Just as Jesus was displeased with demons giving Him publicity, so Paul is "grieved" with the same (v. 18). In print we have what the demons say, but print

does not convey the tone nor the attitude with which they speak. Paul considers this poor advertising much like a known prostitute following an evangelistic party through the city streets saying, "These be the men of the most high God who are preaching the gospel at 38th and Adams Street every night."

Possibly not all who undertake to tell fortunes are demon-possessed, but this young woman surely has been, and now that the demon is gone out of her she is no longer able to perform as she was accustomed to do. Her money-making masters are enraged and haul Paul and Silas into court and wildly charge them before the city's magistrates (v. 19-21). The masters get the multitude to join them in crying out against the preachers. Poor Paul and Silas have many stripes laid across their bare backs, and this does not fulfill their punishment--they are put into prison, and the jailer is severely charged to keep them safely (v. 22, 23). What kind of criminals are these! The jailer takes no chances on their escape--he puts them into the innermost prison and secures their feet in stocks (v. 24).

Here we are about to see a demonstration of the victory Christianity brings into people's lives. The men do not complain of their hardships and mistreatment. They could have been killed. At midnight they sing praises to God and pray, and the other prisoners take note (v. 25). God is pleased with them and honors them by sending an earthquake that shakes the prison to its very foundation. In the process the prison doors are thrown open and each prisoner's bands loosed (v. 26). The quake also wakes the jailer, who seeing the prison doors open and supposing the prisoners to be gone draws his sword to take his life, realizing the fate awaiting him if the prisoners are gone (v. 27). But a voice from the dark innermost prison calls out, "Do thyself no harm for we are all here" (v. 28). He recognizes this as the voice of one of the preach-

ers. He calls for a light, goes in where they are, falls down before them begging, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (v. 30). For a heathen who has not sat in even one church service, he couldn't word his question any better than he has, for "salvation" is what everyone needs, it is that which Paul and Silas are preaching, there are things a person "must do" to be saved, and these are things which everyone must do.

When Paul tells him to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" which will bring the salvation he is inquiring about, he is not eliminating either repentance or baptism which he has been preaching throughout the book of Acts. Numerous times does the Bible connect a single matter with salvation: "love" in Jas. 1:12, "obedience" in Heb. 5:9, "baptism" in I Pet. 3:21, "faith" here, etc. To one like the jailer who as yet has heard no preaching, it is understandable why Paul summarizes and simplifies the answer in "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ". The jailer takes them to his house, and though it is past midnight he has all his household listen as Paul and Silas bring their message to them (v. 32). Convinced, he washes their bloody backs and is baptized, he and all his, straightway (v. 33). Oh, how happy he and his household are now that they believe in the true God and are Christians (v. 34)! And Paul and Silas are treated to some good food in his house (v. 34).

Paul and Silas return to the jail, probably voluntarily to safeguard the jailer from being executed for their absence. In the meantime the rulers have decided to release them anyway (v. 35,36), but Paul tells their messenger, "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily: but let them come themselves and fetch us out" (v. 37). Roman citizens are not to be scourged according to a law enacted in 300 B.C. Learning that they have beaten Roman citizens when imprisoning them the night be-

fore puts fear into these Philippian authorities. Why Paul didn't tell them this earlier and save themselves such mistreatment as he did later (Acts 22:22-29) we are not told. The authorities are glad to see them depart from their city, but before leaving the city they report back to Lydia and tell those at her house how they are released and are proceeding to other places to preach.

This report of Lydia's conversion is the only reference to her in the New Testament, and though the account of her is short it does indicate that she possesses many great qualities.

Before bidding her goodbye let us observe that hers is one of four cases of household conversion either narrated or mentioned in the New Testament: Cornelius (Acts 10:44,48), Lydia (Acts 16:14,15), the jailer (Acts 16:33), and Stephanas (I Cor. 1:16). Those who believe in infant baptism sometimes use these household baptisms as proof of infant baptism in the Bible. But many households do not have infants in them--actually more households don't than do. No mention of infants is found in any of the above accounts. Furthermore the New Testament contains information on most if not all of these cases to the effect that they do not contain infants. All in Cornelius's house heard the Word and spoke in tongues (Acts 10:44-47). Those in Lydia's house are comforted when Paul and Silas get out of jail (Acts 16:40). All in the jailer's house turned to belief in God (Acts 16:34). Those of Stephanas's house were consecrated to ministering to the saints (I Cor. 16:15).

QUESTIONS: 1. *At what seaport in Europe do they land?* 2. *They go inland to what chief city?* 3. *What indication is there that this city has very few Jews in it?* 4. *Where does Paul go to speak?* 5. *From what*

city is Lydia? 6. What was the source of "purple"? 7. Who are converted on this day? 8. With what words does Lydia urge the preachers to stay where she is living? 9. What does the demon-possessed girl say of the preachers? 10. What does Paul do that gets him and Barnabas beaten and jailed? 11. What do they do while in the jail? 12. What special divine act does God perform? 13. Why is the jailer about to kill himself? 13. What keeps him from doing it? 14. What does he ask the preachers? 15. What is their answer? 16. Where do they teach him and his household? 16. In what hour are they baptized? 17. What do they do before returning to the jail? 18. What fact does Paul reveal in the morning that puts fear into the authorities? 19. Where do the preachers go before leaving town? 20. How do the cases of household conversion mentioned in the New Testament not support infant baptism?

G. On to Thessalonica
(Study Acts 17:1-10)

Locate Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica on the map, and you will see the movements of the evangelistic party after leaving Philippi. Thessalonica, his next stop, remains a great city to this day. Paul finds it a city with numerous Jews, and according to his custom already noticed he goes to the synagogue on the Jewish sabbath to speak to them if the opportunity is available. He does this for three sabbaths until their hostility causes him to leave their city (v. 2). We note that he "reasoned" with them "out of the Scriptures" (v. 2). These "Scriptures" are the Old Testament (the Word of God), and his synagogue-method is to "reason" with them (a method still very useful in presenting the truth for people's honest consideration).

What is meant by "opening and alleging" in v. 3?

Since he reasons with them "out of the Scriptures", obviously he opens their copy of the Scriptures. At the same time "open" is the same Greek word used by Luke in Luke 24:45 ("Then opened he their minds" so they might understand the Scriptures). "Expositor's Greek New Testament" says, "Making plain to the understanding the meaning of the Scriptures." "Alleging" means "to set forth", and from the Old Testament Paul is setting forth the facts that the Messiah was to suffer and be resurrected and then the fact that Jesus whom he is preaching is indeed the Messiah (v. 3).

The Jewish concept of the Messiah was that He would be a reigning monarch, One who would rule and be triumphant--not One who would be killed by His enemies. This shows up in John 12:34. It also explains Paul's statement in I Cor. 1:23 that a crucified Christ, when preached to Jews, was a stumblingblock to their acceptance of Jesus. We are not told what arguments he uses to prove each point, but he probably uses Psa. 22:1-18 and Isa. 53:1-12 to show that the words in Psa. 22:1 are the very words Jesus spoke when dying, that the scorn and reproach in Psa. 22:6,7 well describe what happened to Jesus on the cross, that Psa. 22:18 uses the very words Jesus' enemies hollered out at the cross, that Psa. 22:14,15 describe His sufferings, that His hands and feet were pierced according to Psa. 22:16, and that the soldiers cast lots for the various pieces of His clothing just as Psa. 22:18 predicted. It is easy for Paul to show that the rejection and sufferings brought on Jesus were thoroughly predicted in Isa. 53. Paul also shows from the Old Testament that the Messiah was to rise from the dead. The following great prediction is found right in the midst of Isa. 53: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin...he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in his hands" (v. 10). It is a prediction of Christ's resurrection, and that God's program (Christianity) will be

in Christ's hands following the resurrection, and it will prosper. From the above it is not hard for Paul to offer a good case for Jesus being the Messiah.

Paul's presentation is used by the Holy Spirit to persuade "some" of the Jews and "many devout Greeks" including numerous "prominent women" (v. 4). But what about those who don't believe? They are "moved with envy" and utilize "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort" (worthless idlers who hang around the marketplace) to stir up the whole city so that a crowd descends on the house of Paul's host Jason in order to lay hold on the preachers (v. 5). But Paul and those with him are usually a step ahead of impending danger. This probably accounts for their not being found at Jason's house now. The enemies are wrathful enough that they take Jason into custody, charging him with receiving men who have "turned the world upside down" with their preaching another king (Jesus) besides Caesar (v. 6,7). Note two things: (1) They are preaching that Jesus is king, one of several Biblical indications that the kingdom is already in existence. However, He is not the same kind of king as Caesar (John 18:36). (2) Their preaching is turning the world upside down, indicative of great changes brought about by their preaching in different places. Since Thessalonica is one of the first places in Macedonia where they have preached, what they have done through preaching elsewhere has spread to Thessalonica and all around. Jonah's preaching affected Nineveh (Jon. 3:1-10), John the Baptist's affected Judea (Matt. 3:1,2,5,6), Philip's affected Samaria (Acts 8:5-8,12), etc. Christianity has a message. It is a preaching religion. We need to realize that God has not changed His plan for saving the world but will still bless that preaching with results (Matt. 28:20).

Because the charges brought against Jason stir up the rulers and people (v. 8), he will face trial. It is interesting to note that even back then a person

could post bond and be free until the time of his trial (v. 9). How bad Paul and company feel as they learn of the hardship they have brought on their host. Since Acts does not tell us how Jason came out, we are left to our own wondering.

The city authorities may not know where Paul and party are, but the brethren do, for they send Paul and Silas away for their own safety, taking advantage of the darkness of night to smuggle them out (v. 10).

This is the beginning of the church at Thessalonica. Later Paul will write two epistles to this church. Actually there is more in the first chapter of I Thess. about their stop here in Thessalonica than in Acts itself. It will add to your appreciation of their entering Thessalonica if you read I Thess. 2:1-14, 19, 20. To study I Thess. 1:5-10 will reveal several additional bits of information. The Thessalonian church has so assumed its evangelistic responsibility that it sounds forth the Word of the Lord both in its district of Macedonia and also in Achaia to its south, and their turning from idolatry to Christianity is so significant that wherever Paul goes he finds people already knowing about it.

QUESTIONS: 1. *What next great city do they stop in for labor?* 2. *What is Paul's custom where there are Jews?* 3. *What is meant by "opening" and "alleging"?* 4. *What false concept of the Messiah do the Jews hold?* 5. *What are some Old Testament verses Paul may be using to connect the sufferings of Jesus with their prophecies?* 6. *In whose home is Paul a guest?* 7. *When the mob cannot find Paul anywhere, what do they do with his host?* 8. *When do the preachers leave Thessalonica?* 8. *What chapters in I Thess. give us additional information on their stay in Thessalonica?*

H. In Berea
(Study Acts 17:10-14)

Berea is southwest of Philippi (note map). The Christian workers' mistreatment does not stop this zealous group. They understand that Christians are soldiers of Christ, and they are enduring hardness as good soldiers (II Tim. 2:3). The work of Christ is furthered by those who understand that Christianity involves renouncing self, taking up the cross daily, and following Jesus (Luke 9:23).

Since they again begin their work in the Jewish synagogue, they are not denying Jews in Berea the gospel on the basis that certain Thessalonian Jews persecuted them. And they are rewarded, for the Jews in Berea are "more noble than those in Thessalonica," for "they searched the scriptures daily" to see if the things Paul is preaching are true (v. 11). In view of what we have read in I Thess. 1,2 about the success of the gospel in Thessalonica, this verse has to indicate an even greater turning to Christ in Berea. The fact that the Bereans search their Scriptures shows they are not prejudiced (unwilling to believe after facts). That they do so before believing shows at the same time they are not gullible (willing to swallow anything). Few people indeed are not guilty of either prejudice or gullibility. V. 12 again demonstrates the relationship between honest hearing and faith (compare Rom. 10:14,17; John 20:31; Acts 14:1). Luke mentions in v. 12 first the Jews who believe and then the honorable women and men who are Greeks. Such successes with the gospel sustain the preachers in their persecutions.

When Paul later writes of the "churches of Macedonia" (II Cor. 8:1), praised in II Cor. 8,9 for their generosity, Berea, Thessalonica, and Philippi were among those Macedonian congregations.

Amid the success at Berea Paul and party must again experience persecution. When word reaches the un-

believing Jews at Thessalonica, they come to Berea to stir up the people against them (v. 13). The Berean brethren do not underestimate the potential danger to Paul but send him away by sea without delay (v. 14). The fact that Silas and Timothy can remain at Berea indicates that Paul is their main target.

- QUESTIONS: 1. *Why does mistreatment not stop Paul?*
2. *What about the Jews of Berea in comparison to those of Thessalonica?* 3. *Why do they search the Scriptures?*
4. *How does this prove they are not prejudiced?*
5. *How does this prove they are not gullible?* 6. *Who come and stir up the people against the preachers?*
7. *Who leaves Thessalonica and who stay?*

I. At Athens
(Study Acts 17:15-34)

Since Paul's method is to go to the great cities, we can see why he comes to Athens, one of the great cities of his times. It was a great city even before there was a country of Greece when there were only city-states like Athens, Sparta, etc. It is to this Greek city, center of philosophy and architecture, that Paul has hastily come. From v. 15 it is obvious he has been escorted and accompanied here by brethren from Berea. As they depart for home, Paul sends a message by them to Silas and Timothy to join him in Athens with all haste (v. 15). No mention is made in this chapter whether they do or don't join him before his leaving Athens. The first verse of the next chapter (18:1) gives us our information. From it we learn that Silas and Timothy join Paul at his next place of labor

(Corinth). They come from Macedonia (18:5), where Berea is located. It takes information by Paul himself in his first letter to the Thessalonians to be filled in on what has happened. According to I Thess. 3:1-5 Timothy joins Paul at Athens, but Paul's great concern for the extreme persecutions being brought on the Thessalonian church causes him to send Timothy to Thessalonica while he remains alone at Athens.

Now back to our consideration of Paul's work in Athens. If he has intended to wait for Silas and Timothy to arrive before beginning to invade Athens with the gospel, he doesn't continue to wait. He cannot wait, for his spirit is stirred deeply as he, a Jewish Christian, beholds the abundance of idolatry on every hand in this famous Greek city (v. 16). He cannot contain himself but begins by disputing with the Jews in the synagogue on the sabbath and in the marketplace daily with people there.

Paul is not a preacher who works only one day a week. The Lord's work is an every day matter with him. Nor does he limit himself to the public service of the Jews but goes to the marketplace daily (compare Acts 20:20). His approach in Athens is one of "disputing". Just to be a nice person or to visit among the Athenians is not sufficient. The "reasoning" he did in Thessalonica (Acts 17:2) must have given way to "disputing" as the gospel runs head-on with deep-rooted error. The "Epicureans" and "Stoicks" who encounter him are opposing Greek philosophical groups who both find themselves in opposition to the gospel just as the Pharisees and Sadducees who opposed each other theologically (see Acts 23:8) found a common enemy in Jesus (Matt. 16:1,6). The Stoics believe in suppressing all emotion (both sorrow and joy) while the Epicureans believe in "living it up", doing whatever gives them pleasure. Their basis for mutual opposition to Paul is his belief in life after death, which they both deny.

Some call Paul a "babbling". Vine's Greek dictionary says the word translated "babbling" signifies a bird picking up seeds, and that metaphorically it has come to be used of a man who picks up scraps of information here and there and passes them off as his own. Such a name hardly fits the apostle Paul who is far from a collector of religious ideas which he peddles to whoever will listen. It shows they either don't understand Paul as yet, or they intend merely to smear his name and discredit his preaching.

Others are saying Paul is a setter forth of "strange gods" upon which McGarvey remarks as follows: "The prevalence he gave to the name of Jesus, a man who had died and risen again, suggested the idea of demon-worship, because the demons worshiped by the Greeks were dead men deified." The Greek for "strange" really means "foreign" and has to do with the "foreign" ideas being taught by Paul. Since Athens is a center for new ideas, people from many areas come here to tell or to hear such. It is this fact that gives Paul his opportunity to be heard on Mars Hill, a hill above the noise of the marketplace to its north. Mars Hill is so called "because a temple of Mars once stood on its summit" (McGarvey). The name "Aeropagus" means "Area's Hill". The god "Area" was called "Mars" by the Romans. This smooth, white, treeless, granite hill is noticeably dwarfed by the sizable and famous temple-studded "acropolis" hill from which it is separated by only a small depression.

To begin with, the issue with the Athenians is not "Jesus is the Son of God" but who "God" is. Paul has noticed an altar in Athens inscribed to "The Unknown God". It seems to this writer that since Athens worshiped so many different gods, they realize there may be additional gods whom they know not, and to be on the safe side they have erected this altar so any additional god may think he is being worshiped by those who bow before it. Paul finds this an ideal be-

ginning place, telling them it is this "Unknown God" that he will tell them about (v. 23).

He first affirms that the God whom he is preaching "made the world and all things therein" and is therefore "Lord of heaven and earth" and as such cannot be contained in "temples made with hands" (v. 24) (compare Acts 7:47-50). On "neither is worshipped with men's hands," Boles observes, "The heathen clothed their gods with costly garments, overlaid them with silver and gold, carried them in state, installed them at banquets, and brought them costly offerings of food and drink," which seems to be borne out by Luke's statement, "As though he needeth anything" (v. 25). Quite the contrary Paul says God gives to all of us "life, and breath, and all things" (v. 25).

This one God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (v. 26). This is contrary to Greek thinking who think themselves to be "a super race in origin, character and destiny" (Boles). In confirmation of Paul's teaching that regardless of where people live, what language they speak, or what their skin-color may be, they can cross and reproduce--they all descend from the same parents (Adam and Eve)--they are all of "one blood". The opposite is true of man and animals--they cannot cross and reproduce, for they are not of the same blood.

When Paul speaks of God's having "determined" for the nations "the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (v. 26), it appears he is saying the same thing Daniel said in the following passages: "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings" (Dan. 2:21); "The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Dan. 4:25). It is difficult for us finite beings to comprehend at all times what part God has in the poli-

tical affairs of the world, but according to these passages of Scripture, both Old Testament and New, we must conclude that some of the changes brought about have His hand in them. When Daniel so vividly foretold the fall of Babylon, the rise of Medo-Persia, the overthrow of Persia by Alexander the Great, and the ultimate coming of the Roman Empire, it is admittedly easier for us to comprehend His great hand in those transpirings than it is in our present war-torn world. But let us not limit God to our grasp of the situation.

On the other hand when Job speaks of man's life on earth, he says, "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou has appointed his bounds that he cannot pass" (Job 14:5), and it almost sounds like Paul has human-life in mind in v. 26 rather than nations. Both considerations are true. Commentators generally consider Paul to be talking about "nations" rather than "mankind".

Because God is the Creator and the Lord, men should seek Him (v. 27): God does reward those who diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6). The purpose of seeking God is to "find" Him. Through the Athenians' idolatry they have been feeling for God much like blind men feeling around for that which they are seeking. For all man's futile seeking God is really not far from each of us (v. 27), for it is "in him we live, and move, and have our being" (v. 28). How much closer can God be? Yet even in philosophical Athens "the world by wisdom knew not God" (I Cor. 1:21). The close connection between God and His creation set forth in Paul's message is also borne out by one of their own poets (Aratus writing in 270 B.C.) who wrote, "We are also his offspring" (v. 28). Paul reasons if we are the offspring of God, and we are not made by man out of gold or silver or stone, we should not think God is any of the idols they are worshiping (v. 29).

As Paul stands on Mars Hill adjacent to the Acropolis with its many marble temples and especially its

beautiful Parthenon and 40-foot-tall golden statue of Athena, goddess of wisdom, he speaks of all idolatry as "ignorance" (v. 30) and says, "The times of this ignorance God winked at" ("overlooked"--ASV). Reiterating what he preached in Lystra, "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways" (14:16). But it is different now, for in New Testament times He is dealing with all nations (Matt. 28:19), and He "commandeth all men every where to repent" (v. 30). The urgency of repentance is based on the fact that God has "appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness," and here Paul makes his first reference to Jesus in this message even though he does not mention Him by name when he says God will judge the world "by that man whom he hath ordained (see John 5:22; Rom. 2:16; Acts 10:40-42; II Tim. 4:1); whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (v. 31).

They have been an attentive audience through all Paul has said until he now speaks of a resurrection. This is a sore-spot with both the Epicureans and Stoics. Mention of the subject causes them to mock (v. 32). They likely get that opportunity, for as we have seen from I Thess. 3:1,2 Paul remains here at Athens longer than we would conclude if we had only the information in Acts.

As "Paul departed from among them" (v. 33), it is the same that he will do in Corinth when some will reject the message there (18:6,7). Yet some do believe, two being mentioned by name: "Dionysius the Areopagite" (one of the judges on Mars Hill) "and a woman named Damaris" (v. 34).

QUESTIONS: 1. Who escort Paul to Athens? 2. Is Athens a relative new or an ancient city? 3. Whom does Paul desire to come to him? 4. When Timothy comes

to Athens, why does he not stay with Paul? 5. What causes Paul's spirit to be stirred? 6. In what 2 places does Paul dispute here? 7. How do the Stoics and Epicureans differ? 8. What doctrine causes both of them to oppose Paul? 9. Why does "babbler" not fit Paul? 10. What is the relationship between the words "Areopagus" and "Mars Hill"? 11. What more famous and much larger hill is very close to Mars Hill? 12. To what Athenian altar does Paul make mention? 13. What does he say about God and their temples? 14. How can we confirm Paul's statement that God has made of one blood all people who are on earth? 15. What does Paul call "ignorance"? 16. What does God command all men everywhere to do now? 17. What day has God appointed? 18. Who will be the judge? 18. How do the hearers react when Paul speaks of the resurrection? 19. What 2 believers are mentioned by name?

J. Corinth.
(Study Acts 18:1-18)

Having given Athens ample opportunity to respond to the gospel, Paul now makes his way forty miles across the Corinthian Isthmus between the Ionian and the Adriatic Seas to the great commercial city Corinth (v. 1). Both of these great cities in Achaia (southern half of Greece) must hear the gospel. His experience at Athens and the wicked reputation of Corinth have made him fearful as he later narrates in I Cor. 2:1-3: "I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." But God was with him, for he went on to relate, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (I Cor. 2:4).

V. 2 introduces us to a Jewish couple (Aquila and Priscilla). He was born in "Pontus" (a province in the upper part of Asia Minor) but had gone to Rome from which he and his wife, along with all other Jews, have been driven out by the emperor (Claudius Caesar). In Corinth they are making tents. Paul resides with them.

We read of Paul's working occupationally in several places (Acts 20:34; I Thess. 2:9). V. 3 tells us what he did when he worked occupationally: he made tents. From your author's work, "Simple, Stimulating Studies in the Life of Paul": "The rule among Jews was that every boy, regardless of what profession he might follow in life, should be taught a trade as a resort in time of trouble. Saul had been trained in the most common trade in Tarsus, that of making tents (Acts 18:3). Little did he or his parents realize the great importance that this trade was to mean to him in later life when at times it became necessary for him to make tents as a livelihood because financial support was lacking."

Sometimes congregations that can fully support a preacher will cite Paul's working with his hands in justification for their not providing a living for those preaching to them, but they need to read Matt. 10:9,10; I Cor. 9:1-14; Gal. 6:6. And sometimes preachers who really don't want to give churches the leadership they can provide will cite Paul's example of working as justification for their working occupationally. But you should notice Paul did not always work to provide his own living--only in a few places and often when he first arrived on a new field until he could get a church established and underway.

The question comes up whether Aquila and Priscilla are already Christians when Paul comes to Corinth. Your writer thinks not. Paul abides with them "because he was of the same craft" (v. 3)--not because they are all Christians. We, therefore, cite this as an example of converting those with whom one lives and also con-

verting those with whom one works occupationally. Every later reference in the Bible to this couple shows them to be an ideal Christian couple fully dedicated to the Lord's work (Acts 18:24-26; I Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:3,4).

The first phase of Paul's eighteen months in Corinth (v. 11) finds him, as usual, reasoning every sabbath in the synagogue where he is able to persuade some of the Jews and Greeks. The next phase is when Silas and Timothy come from Macedonia (Silas from Berea and Timothy from Thessalonica) and join him. Their coming greatly encourages him in his labor to be even more urgent in his declaring Jesus to be the Messiah (v. 5). His more insistent presentation incites a more vocal opposition to his message ("They...blasphemed," v. 6)--as it always does. Whether we like it or not, whether it is natural for us or not, we must face the fact that confrontation is indeed involved in spreading the gospel. We cannot preach the gospel to every creature without running into opposition from some people. Nor can we hope to convert some people without crossing swords with them. When Paul "reasons" in the synagogue, he is using the II Tim. 2:24-26 method of gentle, patient teaching that works best with most people, but when he urgently testifies concerning Jesus and stirs up hostile opposition he is using the Jude 3 method of "earnestly contending for the faith" in an attempt to reach that element that will never respond apart from gospel confrontation.

The element that resists Paul's message is said to oppose themselves (v. 6). The Greek construction is middle voice, allowing a choice of translation: either "oppose themselves" or "set themselves in opposition to". In actuality they are doing both. They are also blaspheming (speaking against, opposing verbally).

This opposition puts an end to Paul's participation in the synagogue services ("he departed thence," v. 7), but not without telling them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will

go unto the Gentiles" (v. 6). It shows that the Old Testament principle of responsibility for preaching to the wicked set forth in Eze. 3:18,19 ("When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning...to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul") is still in effect. Paul constantly keeps this principle in mind, for to the Ephesians he later says, "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26,27). Paul utters these words with strong feelings for he "shook his raiment" as he speaks to them (v. 6).

When Paul "entered into a certain man's house name Justus" (v. 7), was it a new place to stay or a base for future operations? The fact that he departs from the synagogue and enters Justus's house seems to imply it will become the new meeting place for those who wish to hear Paul. The description of Justus as "one that worshippeth God" would not be necessary if he were a Jew. Bearing a Roman name we conclude he is a Gentile who so welcomes Paul's desire to go to the Gentiles that he makes his house available for Paul's use. His house is surely large enough for the role it is to play, evidently making him a wealthy man. Fortunately it is next to the synagogue. Since the ruler of the synagogue (Crispus) gets converted (v. 8), Paul has not lost contact with given Jews. Later when Paul writes back to the Corinthians, he recalls the baptism of Crispus--I Cor. 1:14. Crispus's successor as synagogue-ruler is Sosthenes (v. 17). He too gets converted, for he is with Paul when he writes I Corinthians (I Cor. 1:1). Converting two successive synagogue-rulers is no small accomplishment in itself.

In contrast to the few converts in Athens "many

of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (v. 8). Reece observes, "Among the converts we may count the household of Chloe (I Cor. 1:11), Quartus and Erastus, the treasurer of the city (Rom. 16:23), and many of the lower and middle classes of society (I Cor. 1:26)." And don't forget the low-down and immoral (I Cor. 6:9-11). Notice the connection between the (1) hearing, (2) believing, and (3) baptism of v. 8 with Mark's account of the Great Commission: "Preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (16:15,16). John Sweeney in his book, "Sweeney's Sermons," in writing on Acts' coverage of the various cases of conversion notes, "Acts 2 contains not only the first, but the fullest report of apostolic preaching and of details generally of making disciples to Christ, to be found in the whole book. And how very natural, and how very reasonable, that, being the first, it should also be the fullest; that is, that in this report of the opening meeting of the campaign the writer should enter more into the details of the preaching of the apostle, of the effect of the sermon, of the instructions of the apostle to enquiring sinners, and of the whole matter of making disciples to Christ under the great commission...Luke, like other sensible reporters... made his first report...a pretty full one; and thereafter contented himself, when reporting meetings and sermons, with abridged and general statements."

When Paul writes in I Cor. 1:17, "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name...for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," some use it to belittle the divine importance of baptism as if there are only a few baptized. How can we blend v. 8 ("many of the Corinthians...were baptized") with I Cor. 1:14,16 ("I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius...also the household of Stephanas")? Most of the "many" were baptized by

somebody else (probably Silas or Timothy).

No doubt the great success of the gospel in Corinth has really stirred up Paul's opposition, for the Lord speaks to him in a night vision, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall sit on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (v. 9,10). And Paul does continue (v. 11). The opposition does arise against him, and he is brought before the judgment seat ("Bema" in Greek). Today when you visit the ruins of Corinth, you are shown the "Bema". The Jews' charge against Paul ("This fellow persuadest men to worship God contrary to the law") does not solicit the civil ruler's interest. He says, "I will be no judge of such matters" (v. 15). Augustine tells us that Gallio is not fond of the Jews, so it is not surprising that he drives them from the judgment seat. The vision's message that "no man shall...hurt thee" is fulfilled. The Greeks present take Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue (this is before he is converted), and "beat him before the judgment seat," showing their distaste for the Jews in this setting where Gallio's attitude assures he will do nothing to them for it. And he doesn't (v. 17). If this is the Sosthenes later associated with Paul (I Cor. 1:1), and we think it is, no doubt they both vividly recall this incident in which they are adversaries and not associates.

McGarvey in commenting on v. 9,10 earlier and on v. 17 now very ably discusses Paul's writing I Thessalonians and II Thessalonians at different times during this stay here at Corinth.

After the Jews' failure to get Paul condemned in Gallio's court, he stays on in Corinth for a short while (v. 18). McGarvey's very observant mind notices and remarks, "Thanks to Gallio, this was the only church in Macedonia and Greece in which he was permitted to remain as long as he thought proper." On his departure for Syria (where Antioch is) he takes with

him Priscilla and Aquila (the first of several moves they will make in connection with the Lord's work).

QUESTIONS: 1. How far is Corinth from Athens? 2. With whom does Paul stay while in Corinth? 3. What is the background of this couple? 4. What trade has Paul learned as a young man? 5. Why did Paul work with his hands here and a few other places? 6. From what city does Silas come to Paul at Corinth? 7. From what city does Timothy come? 8. What is meant by "your blood be upon your own heads"? 9. What points toward Justus being a Gentile? 10. What 2 synagogue-rulers get converted here at Corinth? 11. How many of the Corinthians hear, believe, and are baptized? 12. How do we know Paul does not baptize very many of these personally? 13. What message does God give to Paul in a night vision? 14. Does the ruler Gallio fall in with the Jews' desire to condemn Paul? 15. What happens to poor Sosthenes? 16. Who leaves Corinth when Paul departs?

K. Cenchrea
(Study Acts 18:18)

Check the map and you will note that Cenchrea is close to Corinth.

The vow mentioned here is a Jewish vow, and Paul's connection with it is in harmony with his statement in I Cor. 9:20. A fuller discussion of Paul's doing some things of the law is found in our comments on Acts 21:18-26.

QUESTIONS: 1. *Where is Cenchrea?* 2. *What does Paul do here?*

L. Ephesus
(Study Acts 18:19-21)

This is Paul's first visit to Ephesus, the principle city on Asia Minor's west coast. On the First Tour they were not this far west. On the Second Tour going out they were always north and east of this while on the large peninsula, but on their trip back to Antioch they are now here.

His reasoning in their synagogue is favorably received--so different from the usual. In fact the Jews beg him to remain longer than he is able to do. What a welcome change from having to leave because of danger to his life! Most translations do not include, "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem."

Leaving Priscilla and Aquila with them he departs promising to return if God so wills. See Jas. 4:13-15 for his meaning of this statement. Boles: "'If the Lord will' was a common expression among the early Christians (Rom. 1:10; 15:32; I Cor. 4:19; 16:7; Heb. 6:3)."

QUESTIONS: 1. *How is Paul received in the Ephesian synagogue?* 2. *Whom does he leave here in Ephesus?*

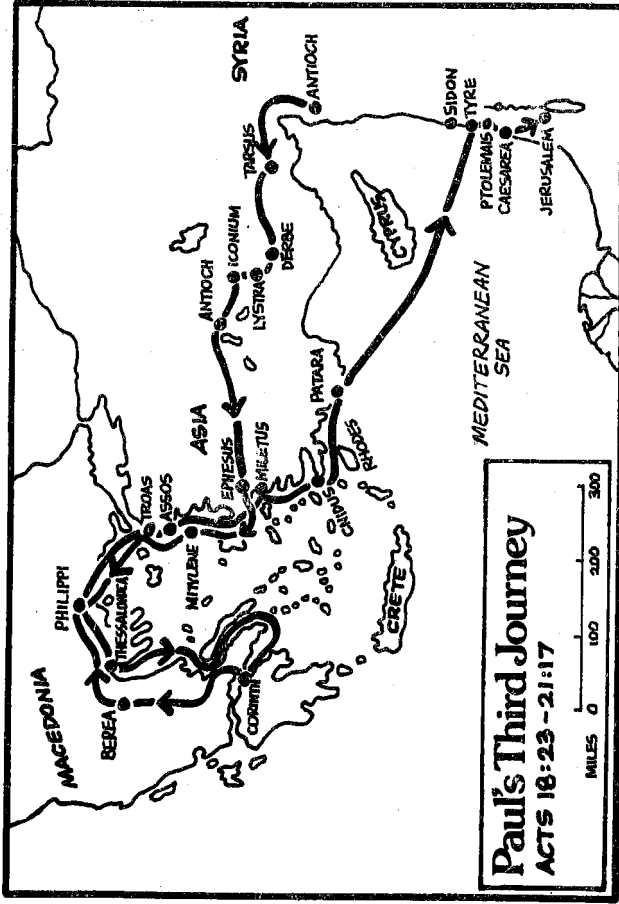
M. To Antioch via Caesarea and maybe Jerusalem
(Study Acts 18:22)

He is on the ship from Ephesus to Caesarea many days. Landing at Caesarea it says he went "up" and saluted the church and then went "down" to Antioch. This

statement gives trouble to all versions that do not indicate in v. 21 that Paul is bound for Jerusalem, for there is no way that going from the seaport Caesarea to Antioch is "down". If the disputed statement in v. 21 is not genuine, its inclusion by someone was probably based on a fact known at the time, and if he does go to Jerusalem to that feast, he is going "up" from Caesarea and then "down" to Antioch. I, therefore, lean to the idea that he goes to a feast at Jerusalem, which also explains why he could not accept Ephesus's invitation to stay longer.

His arrival at Antioch terminates his Second Tour, a tour covering many miles, a tour originally planned for visiting the churches established on the First Tour but one that broadened out and lengthened into a great church-planting tour particularly in Macedonia and Achaia.

QUESTIONS: 1. *At what Palestine port does Paul land?* 2. *Geographically how does Paul go "up" from Caesarea to salute the church and then go "down" to Antioch?*



CHAPTER 10

The Third Tour

A. *Through Galatia and Phrygia* (Study Acts 18:23)

Luke is getting briefer and briefer in his coverage of certain events. Whatever time Paul has spent at Antioch and what he did while there are condensed into the simple statement, "After he had spent some time there, he departed." Nor does he bother to tell us who, if anybody, accompanies him on this Third Tour. Nor does he tell us of any setting-apart service they had in sending him forth on this final Antioch-based tour even though they likely had such a service.

In going through Galatia and Phrygia, places he went on his Second Tour (Acts 16:6), he has likely taken the land-way north from Antioch and then west into Galatia. Again we can see his love for those whom he has evangelized and his concern for their continued development, for he strengthens "all the disciples" in these parts.

QUESTIONS: 1. *What does Luke tell us about Paul's stay at Antioch between his Second and Third Tours?*
2. *Who accompanies him as he leaves Antioch on this Third Tour?* 3. *Through what districts does he go?*

B. A Parenthetical Event at Ephesus
(Study Acts 18:24-28)

Sometime after Paul left Ephesus on the Second Tour and before he returns here on this tour, the event involving Apollos takes place.

Apollos has some admirable attributes and advantages mentioned in v. 24,25: "born at Alexandria" (great Jewish educational center); "eloquent" (a master of words and expression); "mighty in the scriptures" (so informed in the Old Testament Scriptures that he has an able use of them at his command); "fervent in the spirit" (his soul is aglow with what he is preaching).

This outstanding Jewish speaker has come to Ephesus, and Aquila and Priscilla hear his bold messages in the synagogue (v. 26). What a refreshing speaker to listen to! What a sincere man to meet! Part of his boldness is because he is presenting one divine step farther than his Jewish hearers have gone (though John the Baptist is dead, Apollos is carrying on as one of John's distant disciples). Yet he himself does not know the final divine step (that the Messiah whom John preached about has actually come) (v. 25). It is as puzzling to your writer as to yourself how one so well informed otherwise would be so uninformed concerning the coming of Jesus. Hardly can this happen if Apollos is living in Palestine instead of Africa.

Enter, Christian couple Aquila and Priscilla. They are quick to assist Apollos to a fuller understanding--to an update in the matter. This is not done publicly but privately, for "they took him unto them" (v. 26). This gives them a better opportunity to communicate with him, and it also makes it more favorable for him to be approached successfully. Aquila and Priscilla expound to him "the way of God more perfectly" (v. 26), the very thing still needed in many cases today of people who love the Lord and

believe in Him but who have not really been taught the plan of salvation, the plan of New Testament Christianity, etc. To these honest souls we should not be afraid to do as Aquila and Priscilla are doing--we should be afraid not to! And from the verses that follow it is evident Apollos gratefully receives this greater understanding.

When Apollos desires to cross the Aegean Sea to Achaia (specifically Corinth--Acts 19:1; I Cor. 3:6), the Ephesian "brethren" (Aquila, Priscilla, and whom ever else they may have converted before Paul returns) write a letter for him to carry to Corinth exhorting the congregation to receive him (v. 27). He is a great encouragement to the Corinthian brethren as he mightily and publicly convinces many more Jews by the use of the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus is indeed the Christ (v. 27,28).

QUESTIONS: 1. What are some of Apollos's attributes and advantages? 2. Where is Apollos speaking in Ephesus? 3. What baptism is he preaching to the Jews? 4. Who explains the way of the Lord more perfectly to him? 5. From here where does Apollos go? 6. Who recommends him to the church there?

C. Paul at Ephesus
(Study Acts 19:1--20:1)

Apollos has left for Corinth while Paul is passing through the "upper coasts" on his way to Ephesus. Paul can come to Ephesus through the low-country route, coming from the east through the Lycus and Meander River valleys. Instead he comes by the upper route (through the highlands to the north of the Lycus

and Meander valleys) (v. 1).

Upon arrival he finds twelve men whom he asks, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (v. 2). These are men baptized by Apollos before he was straightened out. Paul likely knows their situation either by revelation as an apostle or through Aquila and Priscilla. Your writer considers his question to be a "door-opening" question. And it works: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" (v. 2). If they have been baptized with New Testament baptism, they have had at least two opportunities to hear about the Holy Spirit: (1) when they were baptized into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19); and (2) when promised the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38,39). The conversation continues: "Unto what then were ye baptized?" (v. 3). Their answer: "Unto John's baptism" (v. 3).

There was a time when John's baptism was valid but not now. It has been replaced by New Testament baptism. There are at least two contrasts between the two baptisms: (1) John's baptism looked forward to the coming Saviour (v. 4) while New Testament baptism is commanded by the Saviour Himself into whose death people are now baptized (Rom. 6:3,4); and (2) John's baptism carried no promise of the indwelling Spirit as New Testament baptism does (Acts 2:38). Seeing the difference they are now baptized according to the baptism Christ commands (v. 5).

Here is a Scriptural example that if people have not been baptized properly, they should have it done correctly. This applies to people baptized in infancy, people baptized by sprinkling or pouring, people baptized as a mere form (not really believing, not really repenting, not really loving the Lord), and people baptized for the wrong reason (to demonstrate that one is already saved, to get a wife, to gain votes in one's political bid for office, to please parents

without any further personal significance, etc.).

We might wonder why Apollos did not stay and baptize them properly. We can only conjecture, for there is no inspired explanation, but if these twelve began as Jews and Apollos persuaded them to be baptized with John's baptism, it is probably best that he move on and let somebody else (like Paul) come in and tell them they need to be baptized properly. Had Apollos tried to tell them, they might have said to him, "Won't you please make up your mind?"

There are those who claim these men are baptized with the Holy Spirit, contending that any baptism "in the name of the Lord Jesus" is Holy Spirit baptism (citing Matt. 3:11 as proof). But when Peter commanded Cornelius and his people to be baptized "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48), it was "water" baptism (see v. 47). Also, if Acts 19:5 is Holy Spirit baptism, why does the Holy Spirit not come on them until Paul lays his hands on them afterwards? (v. 6).

V. 7 is another instance in Acts of an apostle conferring miraculous powers through the laying on of his hands.

The "reasoning" Paul did in the Ephesian synagogue on his earlier visit (18:19) is now replaced by bold disputing and persuading (v. 8). The topic of discussion and dispute is the "kingdom of God" (v. 8), a subject of Jewish prophecies in Dan. 2, Dan. 7, Isa. 9, and others. Three months of this (v. 8) not only result in converts ("disciples"--v. 9) but in others strongly opposing what he is saying. The opposition is so strong that Paul withdraws the disciples from the synagogue (he "separated the disciples"--v. 9) and takes the opportunity to dispute "daily in the school of one Tyrannus" (v. 9). Obviously this man Tyrannus is more cordial to Paul than are the Jews, or he would not be making his school facility available to Paul on a daily basis. A footnote in the Revised Standard Version indicates that some ancient Greek copies read, "Daily from the fifth hour to the tenth." Possibly

Paul has use of it when Tyrannus is not using it. Ramsay indicates that ancient work hours, which would include school, ran from early morning until 10:00 A.M. So possibly Paul uses it afterwards (from 11:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M.). From Acts 20:33,34 we learn that Paul is also working with his hands while here in Ephesus to supply the necessities for himself and these with him. He likely does this work during the early morning work hours and then utilizes the Tyrannus facility during the afternoon. Whatever the procedure is, v. 10 shows how effective it is--all in the province of Asia (both Jews and Greeks) hear the Word!

Obviously this is not done by Paul alone. Ephesus is the principle city of the province of Asia, is the seat of government, and sea-borne merchandise going east unloads in Ephesus harbor for land-travel to all points east and to Africa. People converted while in Ephesus carry the message with them while disciples from Ephesus likely go throughout the province with the gospel. These two years are tremendous in their accomplishment! Very likely some of the seven churches of Asia addressed by John in the book of Revelation come into existence at this time.

V. 11,12 give particular attention to the miracles Paul is performing here and how they contribute to the fame of Jesus in Ephesus. The "special" miracles are the ones performed by merely taking handkerchiefs and aprons that have touched Paul's body to the sick; causing both diseases and evil spirits to depart. These miracles attract so much attention and widespread comment that certain vagabond ("strolling" --A.S.V.) Jews who practice exorcism decide to see what they can do by using the name of Jesus in their incantations. McGarvey points out that in their incantations Jewish exorcists "uttered certain unmeaning words that they claimed to have derived from Solomon, and they naturally supposed that the secret of Paul's power was something of the same kind; so they watched him as he cast out demons to see if they could disco-

ver his talismanic word. They were not long in observing that in every instance he used the name of Jesus; and they concluded that the charm was in that word." They decide to try that name. They say to a demon-possessed case, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth" (v. 13). And the evil spirit in the man answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" (v. 15). And the demon-possessed man leaps on them, overcoming them and prevailing against them so that they flee out of the house naked and wounded (v. 16).

This really makes news among all the Jews and Greeks of Ephesus, and the name of Jesus is both feared and magnified (v. 17). What a victory for the gospel over sorcery and witchcraft as people come confessing their involvement in such and bringing their books on sorcery for a great public bonfire (v. 18-20)! "This whole account fully confirms the reputation assigned to Ephesus by ancient writers as the chief center of magical arts in the whole Roman empire" (McGarvey).

Paul wishes to include a trek through Macedonia and Achaia (northern and southern Greece) before going to Jerusalem and after that to Rome (v. 21), and from his I Corinthian epistle written at this time, the tour is also to raise a sizable offering from the Gentile congregations to help their Jewish brethren at Jerusalem. For a long while he has also wanted to go to Rome but has been hindered because of labors elsewhere (Rom. 1:13). He decides to send Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia while he remains at Ephesus (v. 22).

The great book-burning causes him to write, "I will tarry at Ephesus...for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries" (I Cor. 16:8,9). From what follows in the Acts' account we can understand what he means by "many adversaries". for at "the same time there arose no small stir about that way" (v. 23). This stir is led by the silversmith Demetrius. The success of the gospel is taking its

toll on his business of making and selling small, household-size shrines of Diana (Artemis) and her temple (v. 24,25). In addressing his fellow-craftsmen Demetrius unwittingly pays a great tribute to Paul and the success of the gospel in many places (see v. 26, 27). While there is no less than 32 other temples of Diana scattered throughout the world, Ephesus is the very center of Diana-worship, and its temple is the greatest and the most magnificent of them all (one of the seven wonders of the ancient world). It is so tremendous in Paul's day that some said, "If you have seen this temple, you need not see any of the other six wonders." After 800 years of continuous Diana-worship it went out, and it was the preaching of Christianity that began it on its downward course. Today the place where the temple once stood is only a frog-marsh with only a few remnants of its once-mighty pillars left to mark its location. Later on Christianity did the same to the pagan gods worshiped in Europe. The great Pantheon in Rome was built to honor the gods of the Roman Empire, but today its niches where the gods once stood are vacant because of the victory of Christianity. Praise the Lord, for we who are of European descent are recipients of this change from pagan gods to the true and living god!

Demetrius's words stir up the populace causing them to cry out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (v. 28). Two of Paul's companions (Gaius of Derbe and Aristarchus of Thessalonica--Acts 20:4) are caught and rushed into the vast theater (the largest stadium in the ancient world--now restored) (v. 29). Learning of their danger Paul is about to go into the theater, but the disciples and some of his friends among the ruling class persuade him not to (v. 30,31). The Jews put forth one of their number (Alexander) to speak and show they have nothing to do with Paul and his party (v. 33), but Diana-worshippers have no more love for the Jews than they do for the Christians, and they

will not give Alexander a chance to be heard. And for two whole hours they chant, chant, chant, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" (v. 34).

The Ephesian townclerk, taking a mild view of Paul's effect on Diana-worship and knowing he cannot silence the people for awhile has let them chant on until they are weary. Then he speaks, assuring them of the stability of their religious institution (v. 35, 36). He points out that any opposition brought to their religion by these men is legal (v. 37), and if Demetrius and the craftsmen wish to bring charges against them they may do so in the court (v. 38). He then urges that any further proceedings be determined in a lawful assembly rather than an unlawful riot such as they have been involved in which could bring the city into trouble with Rome (v. 39,40). And the hoarse, worn-out people of Ephesus trudge to their homes (v. 41). It is possible that Paul refers to the dangers and deliverance of this day when he wrote II Cor. 1:8-10.

When Timothy and Erastus departed for Macedonia carrying the I Corinthian letter, Paul was expecting to remain in Ephesus until Pentecost (I Cor. 16:8). But the "open door" he wrote about then is now closed by the silversmith-inspired riot. So he embraces the disciples and departs for Macedonia himself (20:1).

QUESTIONS: 1. What is meant by Paul's coming to Ephesus by the "upper coasts"? 2. List at least 2 contrasts between John's baptism and New Testament baptism? 3. Prove that the baptism these 12 men now receive is not Holy Spirit baptism? 4. What subject does Paul dispute about in the synagogue? 5. How long does he speak in the synagogue till forced out? 6. In whose school does he carry on his disputations? 7. What statement indicates this to be a time of great evangelism in Asia? 8. Tell of Sceva's sons and the

demon-possessed man? 9. Tell of the great bonfire in Ephesus? 10. What 2 men does Paul send into Macedonia? 11. Who cause a great stir to be made in Ephesus? 12. What great temple is in Ephesus? 13. What do the Ephesians cry out concerning Diana? 14. What 2 companions of Paul are rushed into the vast theater? 15. Who keeps Paul from rushing into the theater? 16. Who finally puts an end to the people's chanting? 17. What has this riot done to Paul's "open door" at Ephesus?

D. Greece
(Study Acts 20:2-5)

Why Acts' coverage of this period is so brief is unknown to this writer. From II Cor. we gain several details of this time: (1) Paul is still waiting to see how Corinth has responded to the many corrections ordered in his I Corinthian epistle; and (2) he is working on the Gentile offering for the saints at Jerusalem. Concerning the first, Titus has been in Corinth to help them accept the instructions in I Cor. This is no small job. Likely going by land to Troas Paul hopes to meet Titus there with a report on Corinth. But Titus is not there when Paul arrives. To Paul this can mean only one thing--Titus has been detained in Corinth because of the situation. Another "open door" seems to be possible for Paul's labor here at Troas, but he is so uneasy about Corinth that he cannot bring himself to remain at Troas and take advantage of it. Listen to his own words about the matter: "When I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking leave of them, I went from there into Macedonia" (II Cor. 2:12,13).

Now we are again ready to follow Luke's coverage

in Acts. "When he had gone through those parts" (v. 2), where Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea are, he finds the Macedonia churches very generous in their contribution for the Jerusalem offering: "We make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints" (II Cor. 8:1-4 ASV).

While Paul is here in Macedonia, Titus arrives with great news from Corinth! Listen to Paul again: "When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more" (II Cor. 7:5-7).

From Titus's coming Paul also learns of an element in Corinth slandering him: "His letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible" (II Cor. 10:10). Commentators usually think that in II Cor. 1:15ff Paul is replying to a charge made by his critics that he was afraid to come directly to Corinth from Ephesus as he had originally proposed following his writing of I Corinthians (see I Cor. 4:18,19; 11:34; 16:1). In II Cor. 1:23 Paul explains why he did not carry out his original proposal: "I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet into Corinth."

Earlier Paul had boasted to the Macedonians of the generosity of the Corinthians (II Cor. 9:1,2). As

we have seen, Macedonia has come through with a tremendous offering, so Paul is sending Titus back to Corinth to be sure they will have their offering ready when Paul and those with him arrive (II Cor. 8:6; 9:3-5). He sits down and writes II Corinthians here to send with Titus.

Finishing up his work in Macedonia after some time, Paul is said to enter "Greece" (where Corinth is) (v. 2) where he spends three months (v. 3). While Luke gives us no particulars, reason would say Paul is following up matters raised in I Corinthians and II Corinthians and is getting everything ready for both safely and honorably transporting the churches' great offering to Jerusalem. Different brethren will accompany Paul with the money both to safeguard it from potential robbers along the way ("perils of robbers"--II Cor. 11:26) and to keep any of Paul's critics from saying he did not administer it properly (see I Cor. 16:3,4 and II Cor. 8:16-23). The actual men who will go with him and the places they represent are listed in v. 4. These men, chosen by their respective congregations, are nearly all known to us through other references to them in the New Testament. "Sopater" is taken to be a shortened form of "Sosipater" mentioned in Rom. 16:21. "Aristarchus" is mentioned in Acts 19:29; Phm. 24; and Acts 27:2. "Timothy" is the best known to us. "Tychicus" is mentioned in Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7; II Tim. 4:12; and Tit. 3:12. "Trophimus" is mentioned in Acts 21:29 and II Tim. 4:20. "Gaius of Derbe" is not to be confused with the Macedonian "Gaius" of Acts 19:29, but he may be the "Gaius" mentioned in Rom. 16:23 or the "Gaius" mentioned in III John 1. We have no other reference to "Secundus"; but his name simply means "Second" (probably the second child in his family). Reece observes that such numerical names were common among slave families.

Now that it is time to sail from Corinth with the offering, Paul learns of a plot among some Jews against him (v. 3)--maybe to get the money as well as

destroy him and his work. He foils their attempt by not sailing from Corinth but sending these messengers and the money on ahead of him to Troas, thus taking a different route to Jerusalem (v. 5). Paul makes his way north by land to Philippi (v. 6).

As generous as the Philippian church has always been, it is hard to think it will not be represented with an offering and a messenger. Luke joins the trip to Jerusalem here at Philippi (notice the "we" in v. 6). McGarvey: "Luke's 'us', here introduced once more implies that he too joined the company at Philippi. It was here on the First Tour that this pronoun was dropped, and the presumption is that Luke has remained at Philippi ever since the departure of Paul and Silas therefrom six or seven years previous." He then is Philippi's representative on this money-tour.

QUESTIONS: 1. Why does Paul not stay in Troas and take advantage of the "open door" that is here? 2. Does he find the Macedonian congregations' offering generous or small? 3. What news does Titus bring to Paul here in Macedonia? 4. What are Paul's critics at Corinth saying about him at this time? 5. Why is Paul sending Titus back to Corinth? 6. What does he write and send with Titus? 7. Why will Paul have men accompany him and the churches' offering? 8. Name the men who will go with Paul to Jerusalem? 9. How does Paul foil a plot against him? 10. Who becomes Philippi's representative with the money?

E. Troas

(Study Acts 20:6-12)

Paul departs from Macedonia and Philippi when he and Luke take ship (v. 6) to go across the Aegean Sea

to meet up with Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus at Troas. Time-wise their departure from Philippi is right after Jerusalem's Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover time) (v. 6). This is to keep us informed as to the time of year it is, for Paul is endeavoring to get this offering to Jerusalem by the coming Feast of Pentecost (see Acts 20:16). Time is becoming a factor. The plot against him at Corinth that has forced him to reroute his course to Jerusalem has thrown him to the north. As they sail away from Philippi, it is but a few weeks until Pentecost. Landing at Troas he decides to spend a few days here where he found an open door a few months before but chose not to develop it then because of his concern for the Corinth case (II Cor. 2:12,13).

His seven-day stop here includes a Lord's day. It is interesting to note the disciples do not come together on the Jewish sabbath (the seventh day of the week) but on the first day of the week (v. 7). The same is seen in I Cor. 16:2. Seventh Day Adventists claim the emperor Constantine changed the day of worship from the sabbath to Sunday. He became emperor in the early 300's. The following quotations from church history all antedate Constantine's time and also give us insight as to why the early church met on the first day instead of the seventh: "We solemnize the day after Saturday in contradiction to those who call this day their sabbath" (Tertullian, A.D. 200); "On one day, the first of the week, we assemble ourselves together" (Bardesanes A.D. 180); "Sunday is the day which we all hold our common assembly, because Jesus Christ, our Savior, on the same day rose from the dead" (Justin Martyr A.D. 140); "We keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead" (Barnabas A.D. 120). What Constantine did was make Sunday a legal holiday throughout his empire. Adventists represent Constantine changing the day of worship and the church accepting his change whereas church history shows the church was

already meeting on that day and he merely legalized that day as one of several steps in Christianizing his vast empire.

Grammatically the independent clause in v. 7 is, "Upon the first day of the week...Paul preached unto them." The dependent clause ("when the disciples came together to break bread") is a non-restrictive clause grammatically (telling us something about the "first day of the week"--that it is the day when the disciples come together to break bread). Campbell says, "All antiquity concurs in evincing that for the first three centuries all the churches broke bread once a week...It was the universal practice in all the weekly assemblies of the brethren." Klingman in his "Church History for Busy People" says, "Many authorities could be quoted to prove the truthfulness of this statement, but it is not called in question by any one who has carefully investigated the subject." Congregations today seeking to be New Testament congregations have the Lord's supper each week.

What a privilege it is for the Troas congregation to have the great apostle with them as it gathers for the weekly communion and to have him preach to them! It is an evening meeting. In congregations where there are slaves, as is often the case in Gentile country, the slaves cannot assemble in daytime. The evening hour enables them to meet after the day's work is over.

The "upper chamber" (v. 8) ("third loft" or third story--v. 9) where the meeting is being held is the top floor of a well-to-do member's house, or it may be rented. With a large crowd in the room and Paul preaching a longer-than-usual message, and with the many lights both burning up the oxygen in the air and creating heat, it is no wonder that young man Eutychus sitting in the window falls asleep and tumbles out to his death (v. 9). This emergency stops the meeting, and Paul and the group rush down where his lifeless body is lying. But this is not the end of the young

man, for Paul miraculously restores him to life (v. 10,12). In so doing he joins that select group who have exercised resurrection-power (Elijah, Elisha, Jesus and Peter).

Since it is after midnight when Paul returns to the meeting hall and breaks bread (v. 10) makes it the next day and not the first day of the week. Is this communion not on the first day of the week? If they are using Jewish time, it is still the first day of the week after midnight, for Jewish days run from sundown to sundown. If it is Roman time (the time that we use), there are two possible solutions to the problem: (1) They have been so engrossed with Paul's preaching that they have forgotten the time and thus unwittingly partake of it after the first day of the week is over; or (2) They have already broken bread in the sense of the Lord's supper, and this breaking of bread in v. 11 is the other use of that expression--the eating of food (see Luke 24:30,35). Luke is employing Roman time, for it says the reason Paul speaks so long (until midnight) is that he is expecting to depart "on the morrow". The next morning would only be "on the morrow" by Roman time.

After the raising of Eutychus it appears the service is ended, and Paul eats and visits with them until his daybreak departure.

QUESTIONS: 1. *Where will Paul and Luke meet up with the other men?* 2. *What feast has just passed?* 3. *By which feast is Paul endeavoring to get to Jerusalem?* 4. *Why do Christians meet on the first day of the week instead of the seventh?* 5. *Did Constantine change the day of worship from the seventh to the first day of the week, or did he merely legalize the first day of the week already being observed?* 6. *What do the Christians come together on the first day of*

the week to do? 7. What special privilege does the Troas congregation have this first day of the week? 8. Who goes to sleep and falls out of a window? 9. Is the breaking of bread done after midnight the Lord's supper or an earthly meal? 10. When does Paul depart from Troas?

F. Trip South to Miletus
(Study Acts 20:13-16)

Paul chooses to walk the first leg of this journey--from Troas to Assos (v. 13). It will be twenty miles by land but forty by sea as the ship will have to circumvent Cape Lectum. This in spite of no sleep the night before. It is his own doing (v. 13), evidently wishing to be alone for the day. All he has been through and that which is before him make a day alone with God a most welcome opportunity. Since the ship will not be obligated to wait for him, he is likely at the Assos harbor a short time before its arrival. The ship and Paul's travel companions welcome him aboard (v. 14), and they continue south to the city of Mitylene, capital of the island of Lesbos. Our word "lesbianism" (homosexuality among females) comes from this island's name where this practice became popular just as "sodomy" (homosexuality among men) comes from Sodom where it was practiced. The next day's sailing brings them as far as the island of Chios and the next day to Samos (ASV) or at Trogyllium near Samos (KJV). Samos is the name of both an island and a city on the island. Trogyllium is a peninsula from the mainland that comes within a mile of the isle of Samos. Another day brings them to Miletus, an important seaport on the west coast of Asia Minor. Paul has purposely gotten on a ship that is not stopping at Ephesus, which they have by-passed on their way to Miletus, for he is still hurrying to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost (v. 16).

If you look at the map covering this Third Tour, you will see Paul has been sailing south just off the western shoreline of Asia Minor and between its coast and the Greek islands Lesbos, Chios, and Samos just off that coast.

QUESTIONS: 1. *To what town has Paul chosen to walk?* 2. *How long a trip is it for him?* 3. *Sailing from Assos to Miletus takes them south down the western coast of what land?* 4. *What Greek islands are just to the west of their route?*

G. Miletus
(Study Acts 20:17-38)

Having the elders come from Ephesus (about 30 miles) while the ship is stopped in Miletus harbor means Paul will be ready to go to Jerusalem whenever the ship pulls out.

The words of Paul to the Ephesian elders coming up are among the greatest in all the New Testament. The words recorded in v. 18-35 are worthy of anybody's memorization. Preachers especially will find valuable thoughts in them. Bruce says, "This speech is quite distinctive among all the speeches reported in Acts. It is the only Pauline speech delivered to Christians which Luke has recorded."

First, Paul says they know that from the first day he came into their province the faithful life of service he has lived among them (v. 18), serving the Lord humbly amid both tears and temptations (v. 19), holding back nothing from them that would be helpful to them, for he exemplified his teaching ("shewed you") and taught them publicly (in the synagogue) and from house to house (v. 20) as he sought to get both

Jews and Gentiles to repent toward God and believe in the Lord Jesus (v. 21). In the foregoing we note an emphasis on stability in spite of hardships to be suffered in serving God. Through the centuries God's servants have shown themselves to be made out of the right material. Among the many contrasts so often observable in people who profess to be church leaders and Paul are the humble attitude of Paul, his tears of concern, and the lying in wait of his fellow-countrymen for him. We note too that Paul not only taught but lived what he preached. And he was not only willing to speak publicly but to go into the homes of the lost with the message of Christ. And finally we note he went to both Jews and Gentiles and carried the same message to both.

Turning from his past among them Paul now turns to his uncertain future. Paul tells them that in each city where he has been the Holy Spirit has delivered to him through an inspired man that "bonds and afflictions" await him at Jerusalem (v. 22,23). But we see the strength of Paul's faith and dedication to God when he says, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry" of preaching the gospel of God's grace (v. 24). This same spirit came to characterize the many martyrs who willingly laid down their lives for the Lord Jesus, and every Christian needs this same immoveableness.

At this time Paul is heading for Jerusalem where he will be taken prisoner for a number of years (first at Jerusalem, then at Caesarea, and finally at Rome). After he is released at Rome, it seems obvious that he does revisit Ephesus (I Tim. 1:3) as well as Troas above Ephesus (II Tim. 4:13) and Miletus below Ephesus (II Tim. 4:20). This poses a problem when in v. 25 he is confident he will never see the Ephesian brethren again. In possible solution of the problem "Expositor's Greek New Testament" says Paul's statement here in v. 25 is "no infallible presentiment or prophetic

inspiration but a personal conviction based on human probabilities, which was overruled by subsequent events. The word cannot fairly be taken to mean more than this, for in the same context the Apostle himself had distinctly disclaimed a full knowledge of the future, v. 23." The same source goes on to say, "If 'oida' (the Greek word translated 'know' in v. 25) is to be pressed here into a claim of infallible knowledge, it is difficult to see why it should not be also so pressed in Phil. 1:25 where the Apostle expresses his sure conviction of a release from his Roman imprisonment. Compare also Acts 26:27 where Paul uses the same verb in expressing his firm persuasion of Agrippa's belief but surely not any infallible knowledge of Agrippa's heart."

Just as the aged prophet Samuel declared his service to Israel to be free from covetousness and dishonesty (I Sam. 12:1-5), so does Paul declare his faithfulness in proclaiming "all the counsel of God" to them (v. 26,27). For a background understanding of being "pure from the blood of all men" see both Eze. 3:17-19 and our comment on Acts 18:6. Preachers are not called to preach part of the counsel of God but all of it (Matt. 28:20), not what people want to hear but what Christ commands to be preached (Gal. 1:10 and II Tim. 4:2-4). Such obedience to this divine calling demands conviction, dedication, and reverence and godly fear. Because of this Jas. 3:1 says, "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment" (ASV).

Having spoken about himself Paul now addresses the elders with reference to themselves and their work, calling on them to take heed (1) to themselves, and (2) to the flock over which they have been divinely placed as overseers (v. 28). All persons must take heed to themselves before they do their work, for without this they are not spiritually fit to be doing any work for God. Beams must be extracted from our eyes before we can see clearly to extract notes from

others' eyes (Matt. 7:5). Unless attention is paid to one's own spiritual life, in time he will not want to do any work for God. Of course, leaders must take heed to the work they have been given to do, for they will be called to render an account in judgment (Heb. 13:17) just like any Christian will be called to account (Matt. 25:14-30). The seriousness of the elders' work is seen when it is not merely "a church" that they are to oversee but "the church of God", and that "purchased with his own blood".

V. 28 points out the Holy Spirit as the great Architect of the church. He has made the elders the overseers of the congregation. They should therefore do that work, and people should recognize their responsibility to be the overseers. As shepherds they are not only to oversee the flock but to "feed" it. This they do by providing the spiritual food (particularly God's Word) that each sheep needs. I Pet. 5:1-4 is a fuller statement of their role.

Note that the "church" is called the "flock" in v. 28 just as it is called a "body" in Col. 1:18, a "house" (temple) in I Tim. 3:15, a "kingdom" in Matt. 16:18,19, and other designations in other passages.

In their overseeing the flock the elders are to be on guard against two likely enemies: (1) wolves from the outside, and (2) leaders from within the congregation (maybe some of the elders themselves, Boles thinks) who will lead away disciples after them (v. 29,30). The wolves who will not spare the flock but ravage it will be false teachers (compare Matt. 7:15). It is sad, but they will adversely affect some of the very people whom Paul has won to Christ. Between Paul's two imprisonments at Rome Timothy is later left at Ephesus to "charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (I Tim. 1:3). Such a concentrated effort to keep false teachers out of Ephesus must have paid off, for when John wrote the book of Revelation Jesus said to the church at Ephesus, "Thou canst not bear them that are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they

are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars" (Rev. 2:2). However that western part of Asia Minor later became the scene of many endless religious controversies so that most of the ecumenical church councils of the early centuries were convened within reasonable proximity of Ephesus including the Council of Ephesus itself in 431: Council of Nicea (325), Council of Constantinople (381), Council of Chalcedon (451), Council of Constantinople (553), Council of Constantinople (680,681), and Council of Nicea (787). Even those who would arise from the congregation itself would be "speaking perverse things" and would "draw away disciples after them" (v. 30). Boles remarks, "The church at Ephesus became notorious in after days as a seat of a great Gnostic heresy. Even in the New Testament writings not fewer than six of the pioneers of these false teachers are mentioned as belonging to Ephesus; they are Hymanaeus and Alexander (I Tim. 1:20), Phygelus and Hermogenes (II Tim. 1:15), and Philetus. In III John 9 we read of Diotrophes who lived at Ephesus."

It is a grave responsibility Paul is laying on the elders when he tells them to "watch" for these things, reminding them that during the three years he was in Ephesus he warned them about this "night and day with tears" (v. 31). As you can see, Paul is no dry theologian doling out deep thoughts without concern for the people themselves. Not only has he warned with "tears" in Ephesus, but "out of much affliction and anguish of heart" he wrote to the Corinthians (II Cor. 2:4); he has warned the Philippian church with weeping about those who were the enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil. 3:18); and he had "great heaviness and continual sorrow" in his heart over the lostness of his people Israel (Rom. 9:1,2; 10:1).

With v. 32 Paul begins to enter into his parting thoughts to these to whom he has committed grave responsibilities. He says, "I commend you to God"--I speak well of you to God, asking His blessing to be

upon you, something they will really need in the task before them. But he also says he commends them "to the word of his grace". But how can he commend them to something impersonal? It seems to this writer he is necessarily personifying God's Word so that just as he is asking God to bless these elders, he is also asking God's gracious Word to build them up and make them strong for their work and also to keep them so they will be partakers of the divine inheritance along with others who are sanctified.

"Sanctified" is a Greek verb used 29 times in the New Testament which in its noun forms (sanctification or holiness) is used another 14 times and which in its adjective form (holy) or noun form (saint) is used, would you believe, another 234 times. That makes it used in one form or another 277 times in the New Testament! And yet it is a word seldom heard today in teaching and preaching and in the conversations of religious people. Note that the "inheritance" (heaven) is for those who are "sanctified". Without holiness ('sanctification'--ASV) no man will get to see God (Heb. 12:14). A worldly person is not sanctified nor is an unconsecrated person. We must be separated from the evil of the world and be set apart to the service and transforming power of God!

His parting reference is that they will financially support those who are in dire circumstances ("laboring ye ought to support the weak"--v. 35; compare Eph. 4:28 and I John 3:17,18) in which he reminds them of his own toil while in Ephesus to provide not only for himself but for those who were with him (v. 34 plus "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel"--v. 33) and also recalls an evidently well known statement of Jesus though it is not found in either of our gospel accounts ("It is more blessed to give than to receive" (v. 35). Jesus subscribed to this truth himself, for He received little but gave much and was helped seldom but helped frequently, for He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). And yet you hear people saying they are taking care of No. 1 (themselves) as an excuse for not doing more for others or the Lord's work. How unlike Christ!

It is time to get to the ship before it pulls out. They all kneel down and pray and cry and hug him and kiss him (v. 36,37). It is an extremely emotional parting for both him and them, for they don't expect to see each other any more on this earth (v. 38). And you can be sure that nobody leaves, but they all accompany him to the ship (v. 38).

QUESTIONS: 1. Who comes to Paul at Miletus while the ship is stopped? 2. Tell some of the things Paul says about his past labors in Ephesus? 3. What problem does he tell them awaits him at Jerusalem? 4. Does he expect ever to be back at Ephesus? 5. Does it appear that he did eventually get back to Ephesus? 6. To what 2 matters does Paul tell the elders to take heed? 7. Who has designed the elders to be "overseers" in the congregation? 8. They are warned to be on guard against what 2 likely enemies to the congregation? 9. What proof does Church History later present that western Asia did become a hotbed of false teachings? 10. How many times is some form of the Greek word "sanctify" used in the New Testament? 11. What instruction does Paul give them concerning helping those who are in dire need in Ephesus? 12. In so doing what well known statement of Jesus does he quote which is not found in any of the gospel accounts but only here? 13. Tell of their parting.

H. Voyage to Tyre (Study Acts 21:1-6)

Sailing is favorable, for they go *a* "straight course unto Coos" (v. 1), a distance of about 40 miles

south of Miletus. Coos is the island where Hippocrates (the father of medicine) lived some four hundred years before Christ. Another day of sailing brings them to the famous harbor of Rhodes--famous for the one-time location of the Colossus of Rhodes, a gigantic statue of Helios made out of brass that was so tall that ships entered and left the harbor by sailing between its legs. It was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world and was destroyed by an earthquake in 224 B.C.

Their next stop is at Patara where Paul gets on a ship sailing to Phenicia (v. 2). This ship circles around Cyprus and heads for Tyre where it is to unload (v. 3).

Now that Paul is on land, he can better control his arrival-time at Jerusalem with reference to the coming Feast of Pentecost, for he can either go to Jerusalem by foot or part way by ship and the rest by foot. He will go by ship and even have time to spend seven days with the church here at Tyre (v. 4). Here also trouble is foretold for him at Jerusalem (v. 4). Again as he departs from brethren for Jerusalem, there is prayer with him--this time "on the shore", kneeling, and every age is there (men, women, and children). No doubt they continue waving to him until the ship finally disappears from sight.

QUESTIONS: 1. What famous man once lived at Coos? 2. What once graced the harbor of Rhodes? 3. At Patara Paul gets on a ship going to what place? 4. How many days does Paul get to spend with the church at Tyre? 5. Tell of his parting from the Christians at Tyre.

I. Ptolemais
(Study Acts 21:7)

Ptolemais is on the north side of the big bay on the Mediterranean. It is a later name for Accho (Acre) of Old Testament times. It is one of the world's oldest cities, occupying the important position of "gateway city" from the Mediterranean to the interior of Palestine via the Plain of Esdraelon east of it. He spends but one day here before continuing his journey southward to Caesarea.

QUESTIONS: 1. *Where is Ptolemais?* 2. *What was its Old Testament name?* 3. *How did its geographical location make it an important city?* 4. *How long is Paul at Ptolemais?*

J. Caesarea
(Study Acts 21:8-14)

Paul is back in the city where years ago he took ship for his hometown Tarsus when the Lord warned him to get out of Jerusalem (Acts 9:28-30) and where he will later spend two years as a prisoner. This stop finds him a guest in the good home of Philip the evangelist. This is not Philip the apostle but the Philip who preached to the Ethiopian years back and preached his way north until he came here to Caesarea (Acts 8:40). Our supposition is that Philip has made this his base of evangelistic operations ever since. Special mention is made of Philip's four virgin daughters all

of whom possess the gift of prophecy (v. 9). While prolonging his visit with Philip's family for several days, the Judean prophet Agabus, who earlier prophesied at Antioch the famine that caused the Antioch church to send an offering to Jerusalem (Acts 11:27-30), comes where Paul is and likewise predicts the coming imprisonment of Paul at Jerusalem (v. 10,11). Both Paul's party and Philip's family earnestly beg Paul not to continue his trip to Jerusalem under the conditions (v. 12). But Paul remains undisturbed by the prediction and unaffected by the brethren's pleadings (v. 13). Finally the brethren just say, "The will of the Lord be done" (v. 14).

QUESTIONS: 1. In whose home in Caesarea is Paul a guest? 2. What is said about his 4 daughters? 3. Tell of Agabus's visit and prophecy? 4. Who urges Paul not to continue his journey to Jerusalem?

K. To Jerusalem
(Study Acts 21:15-19)

Accompanying Paul and party from Caesarea to Jerusalem is Mnason from the isle of Cyprus called "an old disciple" by the King James but "an early disciple" by the American Standard (v. 16). Like Barnabas from Cyprus he evidently accepted the gospel at very early time. At Jerusalem they are to lodge with him, so he must own some property there.

At Jerusalem Paul is warmly welcomed by the brethren (v. 17), and at a meeting of James (the

Lord's brother and prominent Jerusalem apostle) and the elders he reports to them on his God-blessed work among the Gentiles (v. 18,19). In the later years of the apostles, history tells us of their scattering to different sections for their final years of service. With only James mentioned here, we wonder if that scattering has not already taken place.

QUESTIONS: 1. *Who accompanies Paul and his party the rest of the way to Jerusalem?* 2. *Which apostle is mentioned as being in Jerusalem when Paul arrives and reports his labors among the Gentiles?*