

# BOOK OF ACTS

**Approximate date:** after the Gospel of Luke, 60-62 C.E., late 60s C.E., or 70s-80s C.E.  
**Time period:** establishment of a more definitive history of the expansion of the gospel in the ancient world  
**Author:** Luke the doctor  
**Location of author:** Rome  
**Target audience and their location:** Theophilus, and broad groups of Jews, Greeks, and Romans

The Acts of the Apostles, the Greek title of which is *Praxeis* (ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ) or “Actions,” is the second book in a set written to Theophilus (1:1). While in the canonical order of the New Testament, the Book of Acts is separated from the Gospel of Luke by the Gospel of John, the Book of Acts was actually intended to be the second volume of a two-volume piece. Traditional authorship of the Book of Acts is given to Luke the physician, also author of the Gospel of Luke. Conservative expositors generally hold to Acts being written several years after the Gospel of Luke. Just as Luke’s Gospel takes us from Yeshua’s birth to His crucifixion in Jerusalem and subsequent resurrection, Acts now takes us from Jerusalem to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to Paul’s trial in Rome. The events in the Book of Acts span across three decades from approximately 30-60 C.E.,<sup>1</sup> which means that any dating for the composition of Acts must begin in the early 60s, which if Luke is the real author, can place it as late as the early 80s. “In Acts, Luke conducts the reader on a whirlwind tour of three decades of church history. We visit Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Syria, Cyprus, many cities in Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and, finally, Rome. We witness everything from preaching and miracles to jailbreaks and shipwrecks” (Carson and Moo).<sup>2</sup>

The early Christian Church recognized Lukan authorship of Acts. Eusebius attested in his *Ecclesiastical History*, “That Paul preached to the Gentiles and established churches from Jerusalem and as far as Illyricum is evident both from his own expressions and from the testimony of Luke in the Book of Acts” (3.4.1).<sup>3</sup> Conservatives today generally

accept genuine Lukan authorship of Acts,<sup>4</sup> something that went unchallenged until the Eighteenth Century. We know that Luke was a traveling companion of Paul, and with this various references to “we” seen in the Book of Acts regarding Paul’s company, would by necessity include Luke (16:10-17; 20:5-21:19; 27:1-28:16). Like his Gospel, Luke immediately directed his account to Theophilus, likely his patron, or perhaps even a Roman official. As Acts ends with Paul in Rome, it may be safely assumed that Luke wrote Acts from Rome, and from Rome it was disseminated throughout the congregations of Believers in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Generally speaking, dating the Book of Acts often falls between those who think that the text was written prior to 70 C.E., and those who think that the text was written after 70 C.E. Those who advocate that Acts was written prior to 70 C.E., appeal to the fact that Paul’s trial is not mentioned and that Acts seems to end abruptly. Speculating on this, it is thought that Acts was composed just prior to Paul’s trial. Various evangelicals today lean toward a composition of Acts around 60-62 C.E.<sup>5</sup> The fact that the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans in 70 C.E. is not mentioned in Acts, can be used in support of a pre-70 C.E. composition.

A post-70 C.E. composition of Acts is also possible. While he personally leans toward a composition of Acts before 64 C.E.,<sup>6</sup> Guthrie is aware of how “it would certainly not be impossible for Luke to have written Acts any time up to about AD 85 but it could hardly have been much later. A date between AD 70 and 85 is, therefore, preferred by the majority of scholars.”<sup>7</sup> While Acts is described by some as an “incomplete story,” what it addresses is historically accurate, thorough, and demonstrates that it was written for a wide audience of Jewish, Greek, and Roman Believers.<sup>8</sup> Conservative theologians generally tend to treat the Book of Acts

<sup>1</sup> H.J. Cadbury, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *IDB*, 1:29; F.F. Bruce, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *ISBE*, 1:43.

<sup>2</sup> Carson and Moo, 285.

<sup>3</sup> *Ecclesiastical History*, pp 68-69.

<sup>4</sup> Bruce, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *ISBE*, 1:35; Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 383-388; Carson and Moo, pp 290-296.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Bruce, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *ISBE*, 2:37-38; Carson and Moo, pp 296-300.

<sup>6</sup> Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 355-361.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 362.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 371-372.

as providing valuable historical background material for various Pauline letters like Galatians, 1&2 Corinthians, Philippians, or 1&2 Thessalonians.<sup>9</sup>

Some interpreters think that in addition to the Book of Acts having been written to simply attest to the history of the early community of Messiah followers, that it was actually written as a defense for the gospel message. Guthrie summarizes, "The author appears to go out of his way to show the close connection between Christianity and its antecedents in Judaism. The Christians, and particularly Paul himself, still observe Jewish ceremonial requirements: Timothy is circumcised and Paul takes a vow, while James, both at the Council of Jerusalem and on the occasion of his later meeting with Paul, draws attention to the relationship between Jewish practices and Christian procedure. The appeal to the Old Testament as predicting events which were happening in the Christian church would influence Jewish readers in the direction of a favorable view of the church. But it is in its approach to official relationships with the Roman Empire that Acts becomes most clearly apologetic."<sup>10</sup> This viewpoint attests that Luke knew his historical account was going to be read by a broad group of people, and it had to be accurate regarding Jewish theological expectations from the Tanach, and be factual for Romans regarding the placement of the events in their regional settings.

Considering that Luke was likely in Rome when he composed the Book of Acts, and the wide target audience of this book of history, it seems most unlikely that it was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic.<sup>11</sup> A few Messianics espouse a Hebrew or Aramaic origin of this text, but it is an opinion based on spurious presuppositions.<sup>12</sup> Like his Gospel, the Book of Acts demonstrates a vocabulary of a very high level of Greek, but certainly includes Semitic influences via the Septuagint, and "perhaps Aramaic or Hebrew documents relating the early events of Christianity in and around Jerusalem" (Gundry)<sup>13</sup> were incorporated as source materials for the final Greek composition. These documents would likely have been second-hand notes regarding historical events. "It is noteworthy that the clearest evidence of an Aramaic substratum beneath Luke's Greek appears in the first five chapters of Acts" (Bruce, *ISBE*).<sup>14</sup> Of course, the events of Acts chs. 1-5 are contained to Jerusalem and the immediate vicinity, easily explaining for oral Semitic influences on the

written Greek. Some of the various speeches in Acts may demonstrate non-Greek character,<sup>15</sup> and others may demonstrate Greek character.<sup>16</sup> As the events of Acts spread beyond the Holy Land, less and less Semitic influence is seen in the text. The Greek text has a grammar consistent with the LXX. The following summary from *IDB* is useful to remember when properly approaching the language issue of the Book of Acts:

"On the one side it has been argued that the whole first part of Acts is based upon a lost but coextensive Aramaic composition, which shows through the present Greek text by both overliteral translation and mistranslation. On the other hand, it is supposed that both the book of Acts and any written sources which it used were composed exclusively in Greek. If Semitisms appear, they then are to be attributed to the oral stage of transmission, and are echoes of the original speakers and narrators in Palestine...It is, however, not to be forgotten that the final author of both volumes could vary his style and was not incapable of importing, under the influence of the Greek OT which he knew, 'Septuagintisms' while composing himself in Greek."<sup>17</sup>

The Book of Acts was composed to create a sort of history for the early Messianic community, bridging the narratives of Yeshua's life to the spread of the good news throughout the First Century world. It gives us a defense of the early Messianic faith, depicting Believers' endurance through persecution. Conservatives are willing to accept the Book of Acts as being historically accurate in its detail,<sup>18</sup> and the author uses speeches from the early Apostles to communicate his main points. Liberals, on the other hand, tend to doubt in various ways the historicity and reliability of Acts,<sup>19</sup> although some prefer to view the author of Acts as "an apologetic historian of a very special sort" (*ABD*).<sup>20</sup> Too often it is claimed by some liberals that the Book of Acts really focuses on the Apostle Paul, and not on the original Apostles as commissioned by the Messiah.<sup>21</sup> Yet, how much of the focus on Paul and his work, has to do to the setting of the events portrayed, and not some sort of theological impetus? There continue to be vigorous discussions and debates as to how interpreters should best approach the historical nature of Acts.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:40-42; cf. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 373-374; Carson and Moo, pp 319-320, 322.

<sup>10</sup> Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 367.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 390-392, 398-399.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:39.

<sup>13</sup> Gundry, "Acts: A Promotion of Christianity in the Greco-Roman World at Large," in *A Survey of the New Testament*, 296.

<sup>14</sup> Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:39.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 378-379; Carson and Moo, pp 320-321.

<sup>17</sup> Cadbury, "Acts of the Apostles," in *IDB*, 1:35.

<sup>18</sup> Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:42-43; Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 371-373; Carson and Moo, pp 316-320.

<sup>19</sup> W.C. Robinson, Jr., "Acts of the Apostles," in *IDBSup*, 8; Christopher R. Matthews, "Acts of the Apostles," in *EDB*, 17; cf. Carson and Moo, pp 302-303.

<sup>20</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson, "Luke-Acts, Book of," in *ABD*, 4:408.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. John T. Squires, "Acts," in *ECB*, 1213.

<sup>22</sup> J.B. Green, "Acts of the Apostles," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, pp 7-9.

The storyline of Acts begins with the ascension of Yeshua into Heaven, and the events that followed shortly thereafter with the giving of the Holy Spirit at *Shavuot* or Pentecost (chs. 1-3). From there we see how the Believers in Jerusalem grew in number, and how indeed many Jews came to faith in the Messiah of Israel and were Spirit filled (chs. 4-8). A rabbi from Tarsus, Saul, has an encounter with Yeshua on his way to Damascus to persecute Jewish Believers. Following this radical Christophany, he is commissioned by the Messiah to spread the good news to the nations (ch. 9). Greeks and Romans begin to come to faith in Israel's Messiah in massive numbers, and debate arises among the Jewish Believers as to how they are to be incorporated into the fold (chs. 13-14). One of the book's most important events is the Jerusalem Council, which laid the groundwork for the inclusion of non-Jewish Believers into the assembly, and what they were expected to do (ch. 15).

Acts contains much internal Biblical background information behind Paul's epistles to the new congregations of Asia Minor, Greece, and the Mediterranean basin, and the missionary journeys which he undertook. In the second half of Acts (chs. 16-28), we see Luke's account from him accompanying Paul on these journeys. Acts ends with Paul being tried in a religious court in Jerusalem, he testifies to his Jewish brethren about the Messiah, and then Paul travels to Rome with the intention of going before Caesar and testifying of Yeshua before him as well.

Christian theologians have widely considered the Book of Acts to represent the "beginnings of the Church," which in many cases has been coupled with some kind of replacement theology, but not always. In contemporary theological examination, there has been a noticeable trend of reading the Book of Acts together with Luke. "The title '(The) Acts of (the) Apostles' was given to it after its original close connection with the Gospel of Luke was broken....It looks as if the author in both volumes recorded as much as could be contained in a papyrus roll of normal length" (Bruce, *ISBE*).<sup>23</sup> The *ABD* entry does not even separate Luke and Acts, noting, "The decision to read these separate texts as a single literary work represents the triumph of a literary-critical approach to the NT writings,"<sup>24</sup> even if the *ABD* entry also does represent a few liberal presuppositions. "The Gospel of Luke...anticipates the Acts of the Apostles, and it also authorizes the narrative of the Acts, with Acts both continuing the narrative of God's mighty acts of salvation begun with the births of John and Jesus (Lk 1-2) and at the same time showing how the significance of the Jesus

story might be worked out and articulated for changing times...Acts thus builds on the foundation established in Luke, demonstrating the ongoing relation of the church to the Jesus event by interpreting the significance of Jesus for a new day" (Green).<sup>25</sup>

Today's Messianic Believers tend to give various amounts of importance to the Book of Acts.<sup>26</sup> The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in association with the festival of *Shavuot*/Pentecost tends to be highly valued (chs. 2-3), as is the Jerusalem Council ruling for the new, non-Jewish Believers coming to faith (15:19-21).<sup>27</sup> Areas of difficulty tend to be in evaluating Peter's vision (chs. 10-11),<sup>28</sup> the relationship of the early Believers to the mainline Jewish Synagogue,<sup>29</sup> issues regarding Paul and Peter and the Torah,<sup>30</sup> and *really understanding* the spread of the good news into the nations.<sup>31</sup> The advice of Gamaliel toward the early Believers (5:17-42), is something that we not often consider for some of our own internal debates and squabbles. For a variety of complicated reasons, the further and further out from the Holy Land that the setting of events gets, the more difficult Messianic examination with the Book of Acts tends to be.<sup>32</sup> As basic as it may sound, the challenges that Acts 1:8 presents much of today's emerging Messianic movement are larger than they should be: "you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (NASU). More needs to surely be evaluated from James the Just's acknowledgment that the nations coming to faith in Israel's Messiah, was a definite sign of the Kingdom of Israel being in the process of restoration (15:14-18; cf. Amos 9:11-12, LXX).

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<sup>23</sup> Green, "Acts of the Apostles," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, 13.

<sup>26</sup> A popularly written Messianic commentary on the Book of Acts, is Joel Liberman, *The Acts of the Emissaries: Practical Sermons on the Spirit-filled Birth & Explosive Growth of Messianic Judaism* (San Diego: Tree of Life, 2014).

<sup>27</sup> Consult the commentary *Acts 15 for the Practical Messianic* by J.K. McKee for a more detailed examination of the Jerusalem Council, and the implementation of the Apostolic decree.

Be aware of the considerable textual variants appearing in Acts 15:24 and 21:25, from the critical edition Greek New Testaments used in modern versions like the RSV/NRSV/ESV, NASU, NIV/TNIV, and CJB, versus the Textus Receptus used for the KJV/NKJV.

<sup>28</sup> Consult the *Messianic Kosher Helper* by Messianic Apologetics.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Green, "Acts of the Apostles," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, pp 18-19; Carson and Moo, pp 321, 325.

<sup>30</sup> Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, pp 374-376.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:46.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Johnson, "Luke-Acts, Book of," in *ABD*, 4:416-417; Carson and Moo, pp 288-290.

<sup>23</sup> Bruce, "Acts of the Apostles," in *ISBE*, 1:33, 36; cf. Green, "Acts of the Apostles," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, pp 13-14; Carson and Moo, 285.

<sup>24</sup> Johnson, "Luke-Acts, Book of," in *ABD*, 4:404.

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# 1

## ***The Promise of the Holy Spirit***

- <sup>1</sup> The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Yeshua began to do and teach,  
<sup>2</sup> until the day when He was taken up, after He had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen.  
<sup>3</sup> To them He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God.  
<sup>4</sup> And having come together with them, He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, “Which,” *He said*, “you heard from Me;  
<sup>5</sup> for John indeed immersed<sup>a</sup> with water, but you will be immersed with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

## ***The Ascension of Yeshua***

- <sup>6</sup> So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the Kingdom to Israel?”  
<sup>7</sup> And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by His own authority.  
<sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the remotest part of the Earth.”  
<sup>9</sup> And when He had said these things, as they were looking, He was lifted up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.  
<sup>10</sup> And while they were gazing intently into Heaven as He was going, behold, two men stood by them in white clothing;  
<sup>11</sup> who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into Heaven? This Yeshua, who has been taken up from you into Heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him going into Heaven.”

## ***The Choice of Judas’ Successor***

- <sup>12</sup> Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath<sup>b</sup> day’s journey away.  
<sup>13</sup> And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying; both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James *the son of Alphaeus*, and Simon *the Zealot*, and Judas *the son of James*.  
<sup>14</sup> These all with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, with *the women* and Mary the mother of Yeshua, and with His brothers.  
<sup>15</sup> And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren<sup>c</sup> (and there was a crowd of persons at the same *place*, about a hundred and twenty), and said,

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. noun *baptisma* (βάπτισμα); verb equiv. *baptizō* (βαπτίζω), more neutrally meaning, “wash ceremonially for purpose of purification, wash, purify, of a broad range of repeated ritual washing rooted in Israelite tradition,” but more theologically meaning “to use water in a rite for purpose of renewing or establishing a relationship w. God, plunge, dip, wash, baptize. The transliteration ‘baptize’ signifies the ceremonial character that NT narratives accord such cleansing” (BDAG, 164).

Perhaps due to some of the varied and diverse Christian traditions—across the spectrum—regarding “baptism,” Messianic people prefer to speak in terms of “immersion.” This is not because the term “baptism” is at all wrong, but more because of the intense amount of Christian-cultural associations or baggage that can come with it. A common term that you will hear across the Messianic community is *mikveh* (מִקְוֵה), which is a “gathering of water, esp. the ritual bath of purification” (Jastrow, 829).

<sup>b</sup> Grk. noun *sabbaton* (σάββατον); Heb. equiv. *Shabbat* (שַׁבָּת); “the seventh day of the week in Israel’s calendar, marked by rest fr. work and by special religious ceremonies, **sabbath**” (BDAG, 909); “the seventh day of each week, which was a sacred festival on which the Israelites were required to abstain from all work (Exo. 20:10; 31:13f; Deut. 5:14)” (Thayer, 565).

<sup>c</sup> Grk. *tân adelphōn* (τῶν ἀδελφῶν); “believers” (NRSV, TNIV).

<sup>16</sup> “Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was guide to those who took Yeshua.

<sup>17</sup> “For he was numbered among us, and received his share in this ministry.”

<sup>18</sup> (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle, and all his bowels gushed out.

<sup>19</sup> And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so that in their language that field was called Hakeldama<sup>a</sup>, that is, Field of Blood.)

<sup>20</sup> “For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘LET HIS HABITATION BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO ONE DWELL IN IT’ [Psalm 69:25]<sup>b</sup>; and, ‘HIS OFFICE LET ANOTHER TAKE’ [Psalm 109:8]<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> “It is therefore necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Yeshua went in and went out among us,

<sup>22</sup> beginning from the immersion of John, until the day that He was taken up from us— one of these *must* become a witness with us of His resurrection.”

<sup>23</sup> And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

<sup>24</sup> And they prayed, and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have chosen

<sup>25</sup> to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside, to go to his own place.”

<sup>26</sup> And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

## 2

### ***The Coming of the Holy Spirit***

<sup>1</sup> And when the day of Pentecost<sup>d</sup> had come, they were all together in one place.

<sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came from Heaven a sound like a violent rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

<sup>3</sup> And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, being distributed, and they rested on each one of them.

<sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues<sup>e</sup>, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

<sup>5</sup> Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under Heaven.

<sup>6</sup> And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> And they were amazed and marveled, saying, “Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *Hakeldamach* (Ἡκελδαμάχ); “Aram. חַקֵּיל דִּמְאָ [chakeil dema] =field of blood...)...Akeldama, expl. as χωρίου αἵματος [chōrion haimitos]...**Field of Blood**, of the field bought w. Judas’ money” (BDAG, 35).

<sup>b</sup> “May their camp be desolate; may none dwell in their tents” (Psalm 69:25, PME).

<sup>c</sup> “Let his days be few; let another take his office” (Psalm 109:8, PME).

<sup>d</sup> Grk. *pentēkostē* (πεντηκοστή); “**Pentecost** (really ἡ π. ἡμέρα [hē p. hēmerā], because it means the festival celebrated on the fiftieth day after Passover חַג שָׁבֻוֹת [chag shavuot] ‘feast of weeks’ Dt 16:10; rabb. יוֹם חַמִּישִׁים יוֹם [chag chamishim yom] ‘feast of 50 days...’)” (BDAG, 796); Delitzsch Heb. NT *haShavuot* (חַג שָׁבֻוֹת); “*Shavu’ot/Shavuot*” (CJB/TLV).

<sup>e</sup> Grk. noun *glōssa* (γλῶσσα); meaning either “a **body of words and systems that makes up a distinctive language, language, tongue**,” or “an **utterance outside the normal patterns of intelligible speech and therefore requiring special interpretation, ecstatic language, ecstatic speech, tongue**” (BDAG, 201). The HCSB has notably rendered 2:4, *heterais glōssais* (ἑτέραις γλώσσαις), as “different languages.”

<sup>f</sup> Or, “dialect,” “his proper dialect” (YLT); “his own dialect” (LITV).

Grk. *dialektos* (διᾱλεκτος); “**language** of a nation or a region” (BDAG, 232); “*dialect: a local word or phrase*” (LS, 190).

<sup>8</sup> “And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own language<sup>a</sup> in which we were born?”

<sup>9</sup> “Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

<sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

<sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs, we hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty deeds of God.”

<sup>12</sup> And they were all amazed and were perplexed, saying one to another, “What does this mean?”

<sup>13</sup> But others were mocking, saying, “They are filled with sweet wine.”

### **Peter’s Speech at Pentecost**

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea, and all you who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words.

<sup>15</sup> “For these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is *only* the third hour of the day<sup>b</sup>;

<sup>16</sup> but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> ‘AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,’ God says, ‘THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH, AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;

<sup>18</sup> EVEN UPON MY MALE SERVANTS AND FEMALE SERVANTS IN THOSE DAYS I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT and they shall prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> ‘AND I WILL SHOW WONDERS IN THE HEAVEN ABOVE, AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BENEATH, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE.

<sup>20</sup> ‘THE SUN SHALL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS, AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE DAY OF THE LORD COMES, THAT GREAT AND MAGNIFICENT *day*.

<sup>21</sup> ‘AND IT SHALL BE THAT WHOEVER CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED’ [Joel 2:28-32]<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> “Men of Israel, hear these words: Yeshua of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know –

<sup>23</sup> this *Yeshua*, delivered up according to the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a wooden scaffold by the hand of the lawless, and you killed Him.

<sup>24</sup> “And God raised Him up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

<sup>25</sup> “For David says concerning Him, ‘I SAW THE LORD ALWAYS IN MY PRECENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, THAT I MAY NOT BE SHAKEN.

<sup>26</sup> ‘THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL DWELL IN HOPE;

<sup>27</sup> BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO SHEOL<sup>d</sup>, NOR LET YOUR HOLY ONE SEE CORRUPTION.

<sup>28</sup> ‘YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE’ [Psalm 16:8-11]<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *tē idia dialektō hēmōn* (τῆ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ ἡμῶν); “in our own dialect” (LITV).

<sup>b</sup> “nine in the morning” (NIV); “nine o’clock in the morning” (NRSV).

<sup>c</sup> “It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. I will display wonders in the sky and on the Earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke. The Sun will be turned into darkness and the Moon into blood before the great and awesome day of YHWH comes. And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of YHWH will be delivered; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, as YHWH has said, even among the survivors whom YHWH calls” (Joel 2:28-32, PME).

<sup>d</sup> Grk. noun *Hadēs* (ᾍδης); “Hades (literally *unseen place*)...the place of the dead *underworld*...usually in the NT as the temporary underworld prison where the souls of the ungodly await the judgment...personified as following along after Death” ([BibleWorks 9.0: Friberg Lexicon](#)); “most often equivalent of Hebr. שְׁאוֹל *Sheol, netherworld*” ([BibleWorks 8.0: LEH Lexicon](#) [Lust-Eynikel-Hauspie]).

<sup>29</sup> “Brethren, I may say to you confidently of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

<sup>30</sup> “Being therefore a prophet, and having known that GOD HAD SWORN WITH AN OATH TO HIM, THAT *one* OF THE FRUIT OF HIS LOINS HE WOULD SET UPON HIS THRONE [Psalm 132:11<sup>b</sup>; 2 Samuel 7:12-13]<sup>c</sup>,

<sup>31</sup> he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO SHEOL, nor did His flesh SEE CORRUPTION [Psalm 16:10]<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> “This Yeshua God raised up, of which we all are witnesses.

<sup>33</sup> “Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you see and hear.

<sup>34</sup> “For David did not ascend into Heaven, but he himself says, “THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

<sup>35</sup> UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET” [Psalm 110:1]<sup>e</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> “Let all the House of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Messiah, this Yeshua whom you executed on a wooden scaffold<sup>f</sup>.”

<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

<sup>38</sup> And Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and be immersed every one of you in the name of Yeshua the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and your children and for all those who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.

<sup>40</sup> And with many other words he solemnly testified and was exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this crooked generation!”

<sup>41</sup> So then, those who had received his word were immersed; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

<sup>42</sup> And they were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

<sup>a</sup> “I have set YHWH continually before me; because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will dwell securely. For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; neither will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fulness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever” (Psalm 16:8-11, PME).

<sup>b</sup> “YHWH has sworn to David, a truth from which He will not turn back; ‘Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne’” (Psalm 132:11, PME).

<sup>c</sup> “When your days are complete and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom” (2 Samuel 7:12, PME).

<sup>d</sup> “For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; neither will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay” (Psalm 16:10, PME).

<sup>e</sup> “A Psalm of David. YHWH says to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’” (Psalm 110:1, PME).

<sup>f</sup> Grk. noun *stauros* (σταυρός) or verb equiv. *stauroō* (σταυρώω); “to fasten to a cross, crucify” (BDAG, 941). History fully attests that criminals in the Roman Empire were crucified upon some kind of a cross. It was an extremely brutal, humiliating, and painful way to suffer and die. It was intended to serve as a public warning to others not to infuriate the Roman state:

“Under the Roman Empire, crucifixion normally included a flogging beforehand. At times the cross was only one vertical stake. Frequently, however, there was a cross-piece attached either at the top to give the shape of a ‘T’ (*crux commissa*) or just below the top, as in the form most familiar in Christian symbolism (*crux immissa*). The victims carried the cross or at least a transverse beam (*patibulum*) to the place of the execution, where they were stripped and bound or nailed to the beam, raised up, and seated on a *sedile* or small wooden peg in the upright beam. Ropes bound the shoulders or torso to the cross. The feet or heels of the victims were bound or nailed to the upright stake. As crucifixion damaged no vital organs, death could come slowly, sometimes after several days of atrocious pain” (Gerald G. O’Collins, “Crucifixion,” in *ABD*, 1:1208-1209).

A Messianic version of the CJB often uses an alternative like “execution-stake,” instead of the more traditional “cross” for *stauros*, some of which is intended to counter traditional Jewish hostility to the sign of the cross. A Messianic version like the TLV, however, will frequently use the traditional “cross” for *stauros*, although it may also use “execution-stake” as well. The PME uses the new alternative, “wooden scaffold.”

**Life among the Believers**

<sup>43</sup> And fear was coming upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles.

<sup>44</sup> And all those who were believing were together, and had all things common;

<sup>45</sup> and they were selling their possessions and goods, and were distributing them to all, as anyone had need.

<sup>46</sup> And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they were sharing their meals with gladness and sincerity of heart,

<sup>47</sup> praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to them day by day those who were being saved.

**3****The Lame Man Healed at the Gate of the Temple**

<sup>1</sup> Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth *hour*<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> And a certain man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering into the temple.

<sup>3</sup> When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he was asking to receive alms.

<sup>4</sup> And Peter, having gazed at him, with John, said, "Look at us."

<sup>5</sup> And he was giving attention to them, expecting to receive something from them.

<sup>6</sup> But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Yeshua the Messiah of Nazareth, walk."

<sup>7</sup> And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles received strength.

<sup>8</sup> And leaping up he stood and was walking around and he entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God.

<sup>9</sup> And all the people saw him walking and praising God;

<sup>10</sup> and they recognized him as the one who *was* sitting for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

**Peter's Speech in Solomon's Portico**

<sup>11</sup> And while he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the portico called Solomon's, utterly astonished.

<sup>12</sup> And when Peter saw *it*, he responded to the people, "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this, or why gaze at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him walk?"

<sup>13</sup> "The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our ancestors,<sup>b</sup> has glorified His servant Yeshua, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.

<sup>14</sup> "But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

<sup>15</sup> and killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.

<sup>a</sup> "three in the afternoon" (NIV); "three o'clock in the afternoon" (NRSV).

<sup>b</sup> The CJB has bolded "The God of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov, the God of our fathers" for 3:13, noting a possible allusion to Exodus 3:6, 15: "I am the God of your father," he continued, 'the God of Avraham, the God of Yitz'chak and the God of Ya'akov.' Moshe covered his face, because he was afraid to look at God...God said further to Moshe, 'Say this to the people of Isra'el: "Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [[ADONAI]], the God of your fathers, the God of Avraham, the God of Yitz'chak and the God of Ya'akov, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever; this is how I am to be remembered generation after generation" (CJB).

<sup>16</sup> “And on the basis of faith in His name, *it is* His name which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.

<sup>17</sup> “And now, brothers and sisters, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.

<sup>18</sup> “But the things which God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Messiah would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

<sup>19</sup> “Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be blotted out, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

<sup>20</sup> and that He may send the Messiah who has been appointed for you, Yeshua,

<sup>21</sup> whom Heaven must receive until *the* period of restoration of all things, of which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

<sup>22</sup> “Moses indeed said, ‘THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you [Deuteronomy 18:15-16]<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> ‘And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly rooted out<sup>b</sup> from among the people.’

<sup>24</sup> “And, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who followed after, also proclaimed these days.

<sup>25</sup> “It is you who are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your ancestors, saying to Abraham, ‘AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED’ [Genesis 22:18<sup>c</sup>; 26:4<sup>d</sup>].

<sup>26</sup> “To you first, God, having raised up His servant, sent Him to bless you by turning away every one *of you* from your wickedness.”

## 4

### ***Peter and John before the Council***

<sup>1</sup> And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them,

<sup>2</sup> being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Yeshua the resurrection from the dead.

<sup>3</sup> And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

<sup>4</sup> But many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

<sup>5</sup> And it came about on the next day, that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;

<sup>6</sup> and Annas the high priest *was there*, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent.

<sup>7</sup> And when they had set them in the midst, they were inquiring, “By what power, or in what name, have you done this?”

<sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders,

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<sup>a</sup> “YHWH your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of YHWH your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of YHWH my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, lest I die!’” (Deuteronomy 18:15-16, PME).

<sup>b</sup> Grk. verb *exolethreūō* (ἐξολεθρεύω); “to eliminate by destruction, **destroy utterly, root out**” (BDAG, 351); “utterly destroy, root out, completely cut off” (BibleWorks 9.0: Friberg Lexicon); “utterly rooted out” (NRSV); “completely cut off” (NLT).

<sup>c</sup> “And in your seed all the nations of the Earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice” (Genesis 22:18, PME).

<sup>d</sup> “And I will multiply your descendants as the stars of Heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the Earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 26:4, PME).

<sup>9</sup> if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a sick person, by what means this man has been made well,

<sup>10</sup> let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Yeshua the Messiah of Nazareth, whom you executed on a wooden scaffold, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you well.

<sup>11</sup> "He is the **STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED BY YOU THE BUILDERS, but which WAS MADE THE VERY CORNER stone** [Psalm 118:22]<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under Heaven that has been given among mortals, by which we must be saved."

<sup>13</sup> Now observing the confidence of Peter and John, and having understood that they were uneducated and untrained people, they were marveling, and were recognizing them as having been with Yeshua.

<sup>14</sup> And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply.

<sup>15</sup> But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the Sanhedrin<sup>b</sup>, they were conferring with one another,

<sup>16</sup> saying, "What shall we do with these people? For that indeed a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is manifest to all the inhabitants in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

<sup>17</sup> "But in order that it may not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to any person in this name."

<sup>18</sup> And they had called them and charged them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Yeshua.

<sup>19</sup> But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge;

<sup>20</sup> for we cannot but speak what we have seen and heard."

<sup>21</sup> And when they had threatened them further, they let them go, finding no way to how they might punish them, because of the people; for all were glorying God for what was done.

<sup>22</sup> For the man was more than forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was performed.

### ***The Believers Pray for Boldness***

<sup>23</sup> And when they had been released, they went to their own *companions*, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

<sup>24</sup> And when they heard *this*, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is You who **MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA** [Exodus 20:11; Psalm 146:6<sup>d</sup>], and all that is in them,

<sup>25</sup> who by the Holy Spirit, *through* the mouth of our ancestor David Your servant, said, 'WHY DID THE NATIONS RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES IMAGINE VAIN THINGS?

<sup>26</sup> 'THE KINGS OF THE EARTH SET THEMSELVES IN ARRAY, AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER, AGAINST THE LORD, AND AGAINST HIS ANOINTED' [Psalm 2:1-2]<sup>e</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Yeshua, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the nations and the peoples of Israel,

<sup>a</sup> "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone" (Psalm 118:22, PME).

<sup>b</sup> Grk. *sunedrion* (συνέδριον); often rendered as "Council" (NASU); "the high council in Jerusalem, *Sanhedrin*, the dominant mng. in our lit. (...Hebraized in the Mishnah סנהדרין [*Sanhedrin*]); in Roman times this was the highest indigenous governing body in Judaea, composed of high priests (ἀρχιερεὺς [*archiereus*]...), elders, and scholars (scribes), and meeting under the presidency of the ruling high priest. This body was the ultimate authority not only in religious matters, but in legal and governmental affairs as well, in so far as it did not encroach on the authority of the Roman procurator" (BDAG, 967).

<sup>c</sup> "For in six days YHWH made the Heavens and the Earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore YHWH blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Exodus 20:11, PME).

<sup>d</sup> "who made Heaven and Earth, the sea and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever" (Psalm 146:6, PME).

<sup>e</sup> "Why are the nations in an uproar, and the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the Earth take their stand, and the rulers take counsel together against YHWH and against His Anointed" (Psalm 2:1-2, PME).

<sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and Your plan predestined to occur.

<sup>29</sup> “And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant to Your servants to speak Your word with all confidence,

<sup>30</sup> while You stretch out Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of Your holy servant Yeshua.”

<sup>31</sup> And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

### **All Things in Common**

<sup>32</sup> And the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of *them* was saying that the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common.

<sup>33</sup> And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Yeshua, and great grace was upon them all.

<sup>34</sup> For there was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses were selling them and were bringing the proceeds of what was sold,

<sup>35</sup> and were laying them at the apostles' feet; and it was distributed to each, as anyone had need.

<sup>36</sup> And Joseph, who was also called Barnabas<sup>a</sup> by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), a Levite of Cyprus by birth,

<sup>37</sup> sold a field which belonged to him, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

## 5

### **Ananias and Sapphira**

<sup>1</sup> But a certain man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property,

<sup>2</sup> and kept back *some* of the price, his wife also being aware of it, and having brought a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet.

<sup>3</sup> But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back *some* of the price of the land?

<sup>4</sup> “While it remained *unsold*, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your control? How is it that you have conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to human beings, but to God.”

<sup>5</sup> And hearing these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came upon all who heard of it.

<sup>6</sup> And the young men arose and wrapped him up, and they carried him out and buried him.

<sup>7</sup> And there was an interval of about three hours, and his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in.

<sup>8</sup> And Peter answered her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much.” And she said, “Yes, for so much.”

<sup>9</sup> But Peter *said* to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.”

<sup>10</sup> And she fell down immediately at his feet, and breathed her last; and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *Barnabas* (Βαρναβᾶς); “(בַּר [bar] son, and נָוִי [navi]; according to Luke's interpretation υἱός παρακλήσεως [*huios paraklēseōs*], i. e. excelling in the power τῆς παρακλήσεως [*tēs paraklēseōs*]” (*Thayer*, 96).

<sup>11</sup> And great fear came upon the whole assembly, and upon all who heard of these things.

### **Many Signs and Wonders Performed**

<sup>12</sup> And by the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were being performed among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.

<sup>13</sup> But none of the rest was daring to associate with them; however the people held them in high esteem.

<sup>14</sup> And all the more believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women,

<sup>15</sup> so much that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, so that as Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them.

<sup>16</sup> And also the multitudes came together from the cities around Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were afflicted with unclean spirits; and they were all being healed.

### **Persecution of the Apostles**

<sup>17</sup> But the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy;

<sup>18</sup> and they laid hands on the apostles, and put them in a public jail.

<sup>19</sup> But an angel of the Lord during *the* night opened the prison doors, and brought them out and said,

<sup>20</sup> "Go and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this Life."

<sup>21</sup> And when they heard *this*, they entered the temple about daybreak, and were teaching. Now the high priest came, and those who were with him, and called the Sanhedrin<sup>a</sup> together, and all the Council of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison house to have them brought.

<sup>22</sup> But the officers who came did not find them in the prison; and they returned and reported,

<sup>23</sup> saying, "We found the prison house locked all securely and the guards standing at the doors; but when we had opened up, we found no one inside."

<sup>24</sup> Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, as to what would come of this.

<sup>25</sup> And someone came and told them, "Behold, the men whom you put in the prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people."

<sup>26</sup> Then the captain went with the officers and was bringing them, *but* without violence; for they were afraid of the people, lest they should be stoned.

<sup>27</sup> And when they had brought them, they set them before the Sanhedrin. And the high priest questioned them,

<sup>28</sup> saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

<sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than human beings.

<sup>30</sup> "The God of our ancestors<sup>b</sup> raised up Yeshua, whom you killed by hanging Him on a tree.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *sunedrion* (συνέδριον); often rendered as "Council" (NASU); "the high council in Jerusalem, *Sanhedrin*, the dominant mng. in our lit. (...Hebraized in the Mishnah סנהדרין [*Sanhedrin*]); in Roman times this was the highest indigenous governing body in Judaea, composed of high priests (ἀρχιερεὺς [*archiereus*]...), elders, and scholars (scribes), and meeting under the presidency of the ruling high priest. This body was the ultimate authority not only in religious matters, but in legal and governmental affairs as well, in so far as it did not encroach on the authority of the Roman procurator" (BDAG, 967).

<sup>b</sup> The CJB has bolded "The God of our fathers" for 5:30, noting a possible allusion to Exodus 3:15: "God said further to Moshe, 'Say this to the people of Isra'el: "Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [[ADONAI]], the God of your fathers, the God of Avraham, the God of Yitz'chak and the God of Ya'akov, has sent me to you.'" This is my name forever; this is how I am to be remembered generation after generation'" (Exo 3:15 CJB).

<sup>c</sup> The CJB has bolded "hanged on a stake" for 5:29, noting a possible allusion to Deuteronomy 21:22-23: "If someone has committed a capital crime and is put to death, then hung on a tree, his body is not to remain all night on the tree, but you must bury

<sup>31</sup> “God exalted Him to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

<sup>32</sup> “And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

<sup>33</sup> But when they heard this, they were cut to the quick and were intending to do away with them.

<sup>34</sup> But a certain Pharisee name Gamaliel, a teacher of the Torah, respected by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin, and ordered to put the men outside for a while.

<sup>35</sup> And he said to them, “Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men.

<sup>36</sup> “For before these days Theudas arose, claiming himself to be somebody, to whom were associated a number of men, about four hundred. And he was slain; and all, as many as were obeying him, were dispersed and came to nothing.

<sup>37</sup> “After this man Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away *some* people after him; he also perished, and all, as many as were obeying him, were scattered.

<sup>38</sup> “And so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or work be of mortals, it will be overthrown;

<sup>39</sup> but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found to be fighting against God.”

<sup>40</sup> And they were persuaded by him; and after calling the apostles in, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Yeshua, and let them go.

<sup>41</sup> They therefore departed from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name.

<sup>42</sup> And every day, in the temple and at home, they did not cease teaching and proclaiming Yeshua *as* the Messiah.

## 6

### ***The Appointment of the Seven***

<sup>1</sup> Now in these days when the disciples were increasing *in number*, there arose a complaint by the Hellenistic *Jews* against the *native* Hebrews, because their widows were being neglected in the daily service.

<sup>2</sup> And the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up the word of God to serve tables.

<sup>3</sup> “Therefore, brothers and sisters, select from among yourselves seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this need.

<sup>4</sup> “But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the service of the word.”

<sup>5</sup> And the statement pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch;

<sup>6</sup> whom they set before the apostles; and having prayed, they laid their hands on them.

<sup>7</sup> And the word of God was increasing; and the number of the disciples was multiplying greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obeying the faith.

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him the same day, because a person who has been hanged has been cursed by God—so that you will not defile your land, which *ADONAI* your God is giving you to inherit” (CJB).

### **The Arrest of Stephen**

<sup>8</sup> And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.

<sup>9</sup> But some of those from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, *were* debating with Stephen.

<sup>10</sup> And they were not able to contradict the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

<sup>11</sup> Then they secretly instigated men, saying, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God."

<sup>12</sup> And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him into the Sanhedrin<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> And they set up false witnesses, saying, "This person does not cease speaking words against this holy place, and the Torah;

<sup>14</sup> for we have heard him say, that this Yeshua of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will alter the customs which Moses delivered to us."

<sup>15</sup> And having gazed at him, all who were sitting in the Sanhedrin saw his face like the face of an angel.

## 7

### **Stephen's Speech**

<sup>1</sup> And the high priest said, "Are these things so?"

<sup>2</sup> And he said, "Brethren and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,

<sup>3</sup> and said to him, 'DEPART FROM YOUR LAND AND YOUR RELATIVES, AND COME INTO THE LAND WHICH I WILL SHOW YOU' [Genesis 11:31-12:1, 5<sup>b</sup>; 15:7<sup>c</sup>].

<sup>4</sup> "Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and settled in Haran. And from there, after his father died, *God* removed him into this land, in which you are now living.

<sup>5</sup> "And He gave him no inheritance in it, not so much as to set his foot on;<sup>d</sup> and *yet* He promised that HE WOULD GIVE IT TO HIM IN POSSESSION, AND TO HIS SEED AFTER HIM, when he *still* had no child [Deuteronomy 2:5]<sup>e</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> "And God spoke to this effect, that his SEED WOULD BE ALIENS IN A STRANGE LAND, AND THAT THEY WOULD BE ENSLAVED AND MISTREATED FOR FOUR HUNDRED YEARS.

<sup>7</sup> "'AND I WILL JUDGE WHICHEVER NATION TO WHICH THEY WILL BE IN BONDAGE' [Genesis 15:13-14]<sup>a</sup>, said God, 'AND AFTER THAT THEY WILL COME OUT AND SERVE ME IN THIS PLACE' [Exodus 3:12]<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *sunedrion* (συνέδριον); often rendered as "Council" (NASU); "the high council in Jerusalem, *Sanhedrin*, the dominant mng. in our lit. (...Hebraized in the Mishnah סֵנְהֶדְרִין [Sanhedrin]); in Roman times this was the highest indigenous governing body in Judaea, composed of high priests (ἀρχιερεῖς [archiereus]...), elders, and scholars (scribes), and meeting under the presidency of the ruling high priest. This body was the ultimate authority not only in religious matters, but in legal and governmental affairs as well, in so far as it did not encroach on the authority of the Roman procurator" (BDAG, 967).

<sup>b</sup> "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran. Now YHWH said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you'...And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan" (Genesis 11:31-12:1, 5, PME).

<sup>c</sup> "And He said to him, 'I am YHWH who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it'" (Genesis 15:7, PME).

<sup>d</sup> The CJB has bolded "not even space for one foot" for 7:5, noting a possible allusion to Deuteronomy 2:5: "and don't get into disputes with them; for I am not going to give you any of their land, no, not even enough for one foot to stand on; inasmuch as I have given Mount Se'ir to 'Esav as his possession" (CJB).

<sup>e</sup> "do not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land, even as little as a footstep because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession" (Deuteronomy 2:5, PME).

<sup>8</sup> “And He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so *Abraham* begot Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac *begot* Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs.

<sup>9</sup> “And the patriarchs became jealous of Joseph *and* sold him into Egypt. And God was with him,<sup>c</sup>

<sup>10</sup> and rescued him from all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his household.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>11</sup> “Now a famine came over all Egypt and Canaan,<sup>e</sup> and great affliction, and our ancestors were not finding sustenance.

<sup>12</sup> “But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our ancestors *there* the first time.

<sup>13</sup> “And on the second *visit* Joseph made himself known to his brothers,<sup>f</sup> and Joseph's family became disclosed to Pharaoh.

<sup>14</sup> “And Joseph sent *word* and summoned Jacob his father, and all his relatives, seventy-five persons.<sup>g</sup>

<sup>15</sup> “And Jacob went down to Egypt and *there* he died, he and our ancestors,

<sup>16</sup> “and they were carried back to Shechem, and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.<sup>h</sup>

<sup>a</sup> “And God said to Abram, ‘Know for certain that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions’” (Genesis 15:13-14, PME).

<sup>b</sup> “And He said, ‘Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain’” (Exodus 3:12, PME).

<sup>c</sup> The CJB has bolded “grew jealous of Yosef and sold...in Egypt” for 7:9, noting a possible allusion to Genesis 37:11, 28; 39:1-3, 21, 23:

“His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind” (Genesis 37:11, CJB).

“So when the Midyanim, merchants, passed by, they drew and lifted Yosef up out of the cistern and sold him for half a pound of silver *shekels* to the Yishma'elim, who took Yosef on to Egypt” (Genesis 37:28, CJB).

“Yosef was brought down to Egypt, and Potifar, an officer of Pharaoh's and captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Yishma'elim who had brought him there. *ADONAI* was with Yosef, and he became wealthy while he was in the household of his master the Egyptian. His master saw how *ADONAI* was with him, that *ADONAI* prospered everything he did” (Genesis 39:1-3, CJB).

“But *ADONAI* was with Yosef, showing him grace and giving him favor in the sight of the prison warden” (Genesis 39:21, CJB).

“The prison warden paid no attention to anything Yosef did, because *ADONAI* was with him; and whatever he did, *ADONAI* prospered” (Genesis 39:23, CJB).

<sup>d</sup> The CJB has bolded “gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him chief administrator over Egypt and over all his household” for 7:10, noting a possible allusion to Genesis 41:37-44: “The proposal seemed good both to Pharaoh and to all his officials. Pharaoh said to his officials, ‘Can we find anyone else like him? The Spirit of God lives in him!’ So Pharaoh said to Yosef, ‘Since God has shown you all this—there is no one as discerning and wise as you—you will be in charge of my household; all my people will be ruled by what you say. Only when I rule from my throne will I be greater than you.’ Pharaoh said to Yosef, ‘Here, I place you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.’ Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Yosef's hand, had him clothed in fine linen with a gold chain around his neck and had him ride in his second best chariot; and they cried before him, ‘Bow down!’ Thus he placed him in charge of the whole land of Egypt. Pharaoh said to Yosef, ‘I, Pharaoh, decree that without your approval no one is to raise his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt’” (Genesis 41:37-44, CJB).

<sup>e</sup> The CJB has bolded “Now there came a famine...throughout Egypt and Kena'an” for 7:11, noting a possible allusion to Genesis 41:54; 42:5:

“and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Yosef had said. There was famine in all lands, but throughout the land of Egypt there was food” (Genesis 41:54, CJB).

“The sons of Isra'el came to buy along with the others that came, since the famine extended to the land of Kena'an” (Genesis 42:5, CJB).

<sup>f</sup> The CJB has bolded “revealed his identity to his brothers” for 7:13, noting a possible allusion to Genesis 45:1: “At last Yosef could no longer control his feelings in front of his attendants and cried, ‘Get everybody away from me!’ So no one else was with him when Yosef revealed to his brothers who he was” (CJB).

<sup>g</sup> Seventy-five persons according to the Septuagint of Genesis 46:27: “All the persons of Iakob's house who came into Egypt were seventy-five” (NETS).

<sup>h</sup> Per some of the historical issues present in 7:16, Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Acts* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), pp 371-372 summarizes,

<sup>17</sup> “But as the time of the promise was drawing near which God had assured to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt,

<sup>18</sup> until THERE AROSE ANOTHER KING OVER EGYPT WHO DID NOT KNOW JOSEPH [Exodus 1:7-8]<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> “The same took advantage of our race, and mistreated our ancestors so that they would expose their infants, that they might not be kept alive.

<sup>20</sup> “At this time Moses was born, and was well-pleasing to God; and he was nourished three months in his father's house.

<sup>21</sup> “And when he was exposed, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nurtured him as her own son.

<sup>22</sup> “And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and works.

<sup>23</sup> “But when he was approaching forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel.

<sup>24</sup> “And having seen one of *them* being treated unjustly, he defended him, and avenged him who was oppressed, striking down the Egyptian.

<sup>25</sup> “And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was giving them deliverance by his hand; but they did not understand.

<sup>26</sup> “And on the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them to peace, saying, ‘Men, you are brethren, why do you wrong one another?’

<sup>27</sup> “But the one who was wronging his neighbor thrust him away, saying, ‘WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE OVER US?’

<sup>28</sup> ‘DO YOU NOT WANT TO KILL ME AS YOU KILLED THE EGYPTIAN YESTERDAY? [Exodus 2:13-14]<sup>b</sup>’

<sup>29</sup> “And at this word MOSES FLED, AND BECAME AN ALIEN IN THE LAND OF MIDIAN, where he fathered two sons [Exodus 2:15]<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> “And when forty years had been completed, AN ANGEL APPEARED TO HIM IN THE WILDERNESS OF MOUNT Sinai, IN A FLAME OF FIRE IN A BUSH [Exodus 3:2-3]<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> “And when Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight; and as he drew near to look closely, there came the voice of the Lord:

<sup>32</sup> ‘I AM THE GOD OF YOUR ANCESTORS, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND OF ISAAC AND OF JACOB’ [Exodus 3:6]<sup>e</sup>. And Moses trembled and was not daring to look.

<sup>33</sup> “AND THE LORD SAID TO HIM, ‘TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND.

<sup>34</sup> ‘I HAVE SURELY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT, AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANING, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO DELIVER THEM; AND NOW COME, I WILL SEND YOU TO EGYPT’ [Exodus 3:4-10]<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> “According to Gen 50:12-14 (cf. 49:29-32), Jacob was buried at Machpelah near Hebron in a plot of land that Abraham had purchased (Gen 23) and where Abraham was buried (Gen 27:8-10). While the Old Testament does not specify where the sons of Jacob were buried, Jewish tradition asserts they were buried with their father at Hebron [Josephus *Antiquities* 1.237; 2.193-199; also *Jubilees* 45:15; 46:9-10] According to Josh 24:32 Joseph was buried at Shechem on land Jacob had purchased from the sons of Hemor (Gen 33:18-20). While many commentators assume that Stephen (Luke) has confused several Old Testament traditions, some suggest that Machpelah near Hebron and Shechem have been telescoped into one site and that the two transactions have been run together into one, with such a procedure being ‘on a par with other instances of telescoping in this speech’ [quoting F.F. Bruce].”

<sup>b</sup> “But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them. Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph” (Exodus 1:7-8, PME).

<sup>c</sup> “And he went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, ‘Why are you striking your companion?’ But he said, ‘Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian?’ Then Moses was afraid, and said, ‘Surely the matter has become known’” (Exodus 2:13-14, PME).

<sup>d</sup> “When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well” (Exodus 2:15, PME).

<sup>e</sup> “And the messenger of YHWH appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. So Moses said, ‘I must turn aside now, and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up’” (Exodus 3:2-3, PME).

<sup>f</sup> “He said also, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God” (Exodus 3:6, PME).

<sup>35</sup> “This Moses whom they refused, saying, ‘WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE? [Exodus 2:14]<sup>b</sup>’ – this one God sent *to be* both a ruler and a deliverer with the hand of the angel that appeared to him in the bush.

<sup>36</sup> “He led them out, having performed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea and in the wilderness forty years.

<sup>37</sup> “This is the Moses who said to the children of Israel, ‘GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN’ [Deuteronomy 18:15]<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> “This is the one who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors, who received living oracles to give to us,

<sup>39</sup> “And our ancestors were unwilling to be obedient, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt,

<sup>40</sup> SAYING TO AARON, ‘MAKE FOR US GODS WHO WILL GO BEFORE US; FOR THIS MOSES, WHO LED US OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HAS BECOME OF HIM’ [Exodus 32:1, 23]<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> “And they made a calf in those days, and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and were rejoicing in the works of their hands.

<sup>42</sup> “But God turned and gave them up to serve the host of Heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, ‘DID YOU OFFER TO ME SLAIN BEASTS AND SACRIFICES FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL?’

<sup>43</sup> ‘AND YOU TOOK UP THE TABERNACLE OF MOLOCH AND THE STAR OF THE GOD REPHAN<sup>e</sup>, THE FIGURES WHICH YOU MADE TO WORSHIP; AND I WILL REMOVE YOU BEYOND BABYLON’ [Amos 5:25-27]<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> “Our ancestors had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed *him* to make it according to the pattern that he had seen.

<sup>45</sup> “And having received it in turn, our ancestors brought it in with Joshua, dispossessing the nations which God thrust out before our ancestors, to the days of David,

<sup>46</sup> “who found favor in the sight of God, and asked to find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob.

<sup>47</sup> “But it was Solomon who built a house for Him.

<sup>48</sup> “However, the Most High does not dwell in *houses* made with hands; as the prophet says,

<sup>a</sup> “When YHWH saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush, and said, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ Then He said, ‘Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’ He said also, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. And YHWH said, ‘I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them. Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt’” (Exodus 3:4-10, PME).

<sup>b</sup> “But he said, ‘Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian?’ Then Moses was afraid, and said, ‘Surely the matter has become known’” (Exodus 2:14, PME).

<sup>c</sup> “YHWH your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him” (Deuteronomy 18:15, PME).

<sup>d</sup> “Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled around Aaron, and said to him, ‘Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him’...For they said to me, ‘Make a god for us who will go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him’” (Exodus 32:1, 23, PME).

<sup>e</sup> Grk. *Rhaiphan* (Ῥαιφάν); “Rephan, *Rompha*, a deity worshipped by some Israelites, put by the LXX in Am 5:26 in the place of קִיּוּן [Kivun] (=Saturn...” (BDAG, 941).

It is to be recognized that a slightly different name appears in the Hebrew of Amos 5:26, *Kivun* (קִיּוּן), “(portable) pedestal or carrier (for images); but usu. vocalized *kēwān*, name of astral god Saturn” (CHALOT, 156). Apparently, “The erroneous Greek form appears to have resulted from the mistaking of כ [kaf] for ר [resh], and the transliteration of ו [vav], probably taken as consonantal φ [phi]. Rephan or Kaiwan, clearly an astral deity, is the Babylonian name for Saturn” (F.W. Beare, “Rephan,” in *IDB*, 4:36).

<sup>f</sup> “‘Did you present Me with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel? You also carried along Sikkuth your king and Kivyun, your images, the star of your gods which you made for yourselves. Therefore, I will make you go into exile beyond Damascus,’ says YHWH, whose name is the God of Hosts” (Amos 5:25-27, PME).

49 'HEAVEN IS MY THRONE, AND EARTH THE FOOTSTOOL OF MY FEET; WHAT KIND OF HOUSE WILL YOU BUILD ME?' says the Lord; 'OR WHAT PLACE IS THERE FOR MY REST?

50 'DID NOT MY HAND MAKE ALL THESE THINGS? [Isaiah 66:1-2]<sup>a</sup>'

51 "You stiff-necked<sup>b</sup> and uncircumcised in heart and ears<sup>c</sup>, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your ancestors did, so do you.

52 "Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? And they killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become;

53 you who received the Torah as ordained by angels, and did not keep it."

### **The Stoning of Stephen**

54 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they were gnashing at him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed intently into Heaven and saw the glory of God, and Yeshua standing at the right hand of God,

56 and he said, "Behold, I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."<sup>d</sup>

57 But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and they rushed upon him with one accord.

58 And they cast him out of the city and were stoning him, and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 And they were stoning Stephen, *who was* calling upon *the Lord*, and saying, "Lord Yeshua, receive my spirit."

60 And falling to his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

## 8

### **Saul Persecutes the Assembly**

1 And Saul was consenting to his death. And on that day a great persecution arose against the assembly in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2 And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him.

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<sup>a</sup> "Thus says YHWH, 'Heaven is My throne, and the Earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being,' declares YHWH. 'But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word'" (Isaiah 66:1-2, PME).

<sup>b</sup> The CJB has bolded "Stiffnecked people" for 7:51, noting a possible allusion to Exodus 32:9; 33:3, 5:

"ADONAI continued speaking to Moshe: 'I have been watching these people; and you can see how stiffnecked they are'" (Exodus 32:9, CJB).

"You will go to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I myself will not go with you, because you are such a stiffnecked people that I might destroy you on the way'... ADONAI said to Moshe, 'Tell the people of Isra'el, "You are a stiffnecked people! If I were to go up with you for even one moment, I would exterminate you! Now, keep your ornaments off; then I will decide what to do to you'" (Exodus 33:3, 5, CJB).

<sup>c</sup> The CJB has bolded "uncircumcised hears and ears" for 7:51, noting a possible allusion to Leviticus 26:41; Jeremiah 6:10; 9:26:

"At that time I will be going against them, bringing them into the lands of their enemies. But if their uncircumcised hearts will grow humble, and they are paid the punishment for their misdeeds" (Leviticus 26:41, CJB).

"To whom should I speak? Whom should I warn? Who will listen to me? Their ears are dull, they can't pay attention. For them the word of ADONAI has become unattractive, an object of scorn" (Jeremiah 6:10, CJB).

"Egypt, Y'hudah, Edom, the people of 'Amon and Mo'av, and all those living in the desert who cut the edges [of their beard]: For although all the *Goyim* are uncircumcised, all the house of Isra'el have uncircumcised hearts" (Jeremiah 9:25, CJB).

<sup>d</sup> The CJB has bolded "at the right hand of God" for both 7:55, 56, noting a possible allusion to Psalm 110:1: "A psalm of David: ADONAI says to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool'" (CJB).

<sup>3</sup> But Saul was ravaging the assembly, entering into every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

***The Good News Proclaimed in Samaria***

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, those who had been scattered abroad went about proclaiming the word.

<sup>5</sup> And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and was proclaiming the Messiah to them.

<sup>6</sup> And the multitudes with one accord were paying attention to what was said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs which he was performing.

<sup>7</sup> For unclean spirits were coming out of many having *them*, crying with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed.

<sup>8</sup> And there was much joy in that city.

<sup>9</sup> Now there was a certain man named Simon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city and astonishing the people of Samaria, saying that he was some great one;

<sup>10</sup> and they all gave heed to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great."

<sup>11</sup> And they gave heed to him, because for a long time he had astonished them with his magic.

<sup>12</sup> But when they believed Philip proclaiming the good news about the Kingdom of God and the name of Yeshua the Messiah, they were being immersed, both men and women.

<sup>13</sup> And even Simon himself believed; and having been immersed, he continued with Philip; and seeing signs and great miracles taking place, he was amazed.

<sup>14</sup> Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John,

<sup>15</sup> who came down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

<sup>16</sup> For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been immersed in the name of the Lord Yeshua.

<sup>17</sup> Then they were laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

<sup>18</sup> Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money,

<sup>19</sup> saying, "Give me also this authority, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

<sup>20</sup> But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!

<sup>21</sup> "You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.

<sup>22</sup> "Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you.

<sup>23</sup> "For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity."

<sup>24</sup> And Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

<sup>25</sup> And so, when they had solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they were returning to Jerusalem, and were proclaiming the good news to many villages of the Samaritans.

***Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch***

<sup>26</sup> But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert *road*.

<sup>27</sup> And he arose and went; and behold, an Ethiopian, a eunuch,<sup>a</sup> a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasury, who had come to Jerusalem to worship.

<sup>28</sup> And he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.

<sup>29</sup> And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot."

<sup>30</sup> And having run up, Philip heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

<sup>31</sup> And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

<sup>32</sup> Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: "HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO THE SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH.

<sup>33</sup> "IN HIS HUMILIATION HIS JUDGMENT WAS TAKEN AWAY; WHO WILL DESCRIBE HIS GENERATION? FOR HIS LIFE IS TAKEN UP FROM THE EARTH" [Isaiah 53:7-8, LXX]<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> And the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself, or of someone else?"

<sup>35</sup> And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he proclaimed Yeshua to him.

<sup>36</sup> And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Behold, *here is water!* What prevents me from being immersed?"

<sup>37</sup> [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Yeshua the Messiah is the Son of God."]<sup>c</sup>

<sup>38</sup> And he commanded the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he immersed him.

<sup>39</sup> And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he was going on his way rejoicing.

<sup>40</sup> But Philip was found at Azotus; and passing through he was proclaiming the good news to all the cities, until he came to Caesarea.

## 9

### *The Saving of Saul*

Acts 22:6-16; 26:12-18

<sup>1</sup> But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest,

<sup>a</sup> Grk. noun *eunouchos* (εὐνοῦχος); this term has a variety of meanings, including: "a castrated male person, *eunuch*," "a human male who, without a physical operation, is by nature incapable of begetting children, *impotent male*," "a human male who abstains fr. marriage, without being impotent, *a celibate*" (BDAG, 409). In all probability, the first definition is what is intended for 8:27.

Proponents of an original Aramaic New Testament, who you will find in the Messianic community, will commonly claim that the reference to the Ethiopian as a "eunuch" is incorrect, and that there has been a mistransmission. It has been proposed that the Ethiopian in view was instead a "believer" (Acts 8:27, Hebraic-Roots Version). It is suggested that the Aramaic term *m'haimna* (ܡܗܝܡܢܐ) can mean both "eunuch" and "believer," with the latter in view per the Torah's prohibition on eunuch's entering into the assembly (Deuteronomy 23:1).

This might, on the surface, appear to make sense. However, in light of the Ethiopian's further inquiry from Isaiah 53:7-8 in 8:32-33, it should not go unnoticed how in the surrounding chapters from Isaiah, is the explicit word about eunuchs (Heb. sing. *saris*, סָרִיס) not being excluded from God's own (Isaiah 56:3-4). In all likelihood, the Ethiopian eunuch had attempted to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, seeking after Israel's God, and was turned away from the Temple. Yet, Philip was able to declare to him that it was Yeshua of Nazareth spoken of in Isaiah 53, and through Him no person is excluded from the assembly of Israel's God.

<sup>b</sup> "And he, because he has been ill-treated, does not open his mouth; like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and as a lamb is silent before the one shearing it, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away. Who will describe his generation? Because his life is being taken from the earth, he was led to death on account of the acts of lawlessness of my people" (Isaiah 53:7-8, NETS).

<sup>c</sup> Note that not all manuscripts include 8:37, and so it has been placed in brackets [] per the NASB (cf. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 359-360).

<sup>2</sup> and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> And as he journeyed, he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from Heaven flashed around him;

<sup>4</sup> and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

<sup>5</sup> And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He *said*, "I AM Yeshua<sup>a</sup> whom you are persecuting,

<sup>6</sup> but rise and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do."

<sup>7</sup> And the men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one.

<sup>8</sup> And Saul arose from the ground, and having had his eyes opened, he was seeing nothing; and being led by the hand, they brought him into Damascus.

<sup>9</sup> And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Behold, I *am here*, Lord."

<sup>11</sup> And the Lord *said* to him, "Arise, and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying,

<sup>12</sup> and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight."

<sup>13</sup> But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to Your holy ones at Jerusalem;

<sup>14</sup> and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon Your name."

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the nations and kings and the children of Israel;

<sup>16</sup> for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."

<sup>17</sup> And Ananias departed and entered the house, and having laid his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Yeshua, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

<sup>18</sup> And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he arose and was immersed;

<sup>19</sup> and he took food and was strengthened. Now for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus,

### ***Saul Proclaims at Damascus***

<sup>20</sup> and in the synagogues immediately he was proclaiming Yeshua, *saying*, "He is the Son of God."

<sup>21</sup> And all who were hearing him were amazed, and said, "Is not this he who in Jerusalem made havoc of those who called on this name? And he has come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests."

<sup>22</sup> But Saul was increasing in strength and was confounding the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that this is the Messiah.

### ***Saul Escapes from the Jews***

<sup>23</sup> And when many days were completed, the Jews took counsel together to do away with him,

<sup>24</sup> but their plot became known to Saul. And they were also watching the gates day and night so that they might put him to death;

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *egō eimi Iēsous* (ἐγώ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς).

<sup>25</sup> but his disciples took him by night, and let him down through *an opening in the wall*, lowering him in a basket.

### ***Saul at Jerusalem***

<sup>26</sup> And when he had come to Jerusalem, he was trying to be associated with the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.

<sup>27</sup> But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Yeshua.

<sup>28</sup> And he was with them going in and going out in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord.

<sup>29</sup> And he was speaking and disputing with the Hellenistic *Jews*; but they were attempting to put him to death.

<sup>30</sup> But when the brethren learned *of it*, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

<sup>31</sup> So the assembly throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being built up; and, going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it was being multiplied.

### ***The Healing of Aeneas***

<sup>32</sup> Now it came about that as Peter was passing through all *those regions*, he came down also to the holy ones who lived at Lydda.

<sup>33</sup> And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years, for he was paralyzed.

<sup>34</sup> And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Yeshua the Messiah heals you; arise, and make your bed." And immediately he arose.

<sup>35</sup> And all who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

### ***Dorcas Restored to Life***

<sup>36</sup> Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha<sup>a</sup> (which translated *in Greek* is called Dorcas); this woman was full of good works and alms giving, which she was doing.

<sup>37</sup> And it came about in those days that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.

<sup>38</sup> And since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, entreating him, "Do not delay to come to us."

<sup>39</sup> And Peter arose and went with them. And when he had come, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas was making while she was with them.

<sup>40</sup> But Peter put them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

<sup>41</sup> And he gave her his hand and raised her up; and calling the holy ones and widows, he presented her alive.

<sup>42</sup> And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

<sup>43</sup> And it came about that he stayed many days in Joppa with one Simon, a tanner.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *Tabitha* (Ταβιθά); "transliterated from the Aramaic; *Tabitha* [תַּבִּיִּתָּ], feminine proper noun, interpreted in AC 9.36 as meaning Δορκάς; [*Dorkas*] (*gazelle*), a small antelope or deer" ([BibleWorks 9.0: Friberg Lexicon](#)).

# 10

## **Peter and Cornelius**

<sup>1</sup> Now *there was* a certain man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Cohort,

<sup>2</sup> a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, gave many alms to the people, and prayed continually to God.

<sup>3</sup> About the ninth hour of the day<sup>a</sup> he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God having come to him, and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

<sup>4</sup> And having gazed at him and being frightened, he said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God.

<sup>5</sup> "And now send men to Joppa, and send for a certain Simon, who is called Peter;

<sup>6</sup> he is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside."

<sup>7</sup> And when the angel who was speaking to him departed, he called two of his household servants and a devout soldier of those waiting on him,

<sup>8</sup> and having explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

<sup>9</sup> Now on the next day, as they were on their journey, and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> And he became hungry, and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance;

<sup>11</sup> and he sees the sky opened, and a certain object descending, like a great sheet, being let down by four corners upon the Earth,

<sup>12</sup> and in it were all all kinds of four-footed animals and reptiles of the Earth and birds of the air.

<sup>13</sup> And there came a voice to him, "Rise, Peter; slaughter<sup>c</sup> and eat."

<sup>14</sup> But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean."

<sup>15</sup> And a voice *came* to him again a second time, "What God has cleansed, you do not make common<sup>d</sup>."

<sup>16</sup> And this happened three times; and immediately the object was taken up into the sky.

<sup>17</sup> Now while Peter was greatly perplexed inside as to what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood before the gate;

<sup>18</sup> and having called, they were asking if Simon, who was called Peter, was lodging there.

<sup>19</sup> And while Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you.

<sup>20</sup> "But arise and go down and accompany them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."

<sup>21</sup> And Peter went down to the men, and said, "Behold, I am<sup>e</sup> the one you are looking for; what is the reason for which you have come?"

<sup>22</sup> And they said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man, and well spoken of by the entire the nation of the Jews, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to *come* to his house and hear a message from you."

<sup>a</sup> "about three in the afternoon" (NIV); "about three o'clock" (NRSV).

<sup>b</sup> "About noon" (NIV, NRSV).

<sup>c</sup> Grk. verb *thuō* (θύω); rendered as "slaughter" in CJB; basically meaning "*sacrifice, slaughter, kill, celebrate*" (A Reader's Greek New Testament, 273); more fully meaning "**to make a cultic offering, sacrifice,**" "**to kill ceremonially, slaughter sacrificially,**" "**celebrate,** but perh. only when an animal is slaughtered in connection with a celebration" (BDAG, 463).

The rendering "slaughter" is useful to keep in mind, given the further scene witnessed in 14:13.

<sup>d</sup> Grk. *su mē koinou* (σὺ μὴ κοῖνου); "make not thou common" (ASV); "you must not consider unholy" (TLV).

<sup>e</sup> Grk. *idou egō eimi* (ἰδοὺ ἐγώ εἰμι).

<sup>23</sup> So he called them in and received them as guests. And on the next day he arose and went away with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

<sup>24</sup> And on the next day he entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his relatives and close friends.

<sup>25</sup> And when it came about that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped *him*.

<sup>26</sup> But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a mortal."

<sup>27</sup> And as he talked with him, he went in, and finds many gathered together.

<sup>28</sup> And he said to them, "You yourselves know how forbidden<sup>a</sup> it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with or visit a foreigner; and *yet* God has shown me that I should not call any human being common or unclean.

<sup>29</sup> "So, therefore I came raising no objections, having been summoned. I ask then for what reason you summoned me."

<sup>30</sup> And Cornelius said, "Four days ago to this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour<sup>b</sup> of prayer in my house; and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

<sup>31</sup> and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.

<sup>32</sup> 'Send therefore to Joppa and summon Simon, who is called Peter; he is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the seaside.'

<sup>33</sup> "So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

#### ***Peter Speaks in Cornelius' House***

<sup>34</sup> And Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality,

<sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears Him and does what is right<sup>c</sup> is acceptable to Him.

<sup>36</sup> "The word which He sent to the children of Israel, proclaiming good news of peace by Yeshua the Messiah (He is Lord of all)–

<sup>37</sup> you know the thing which happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the immersion which John proclaimed.

<sup>38</sup> "You know of Yeshua of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the Devil; for God was with Him.

<sup>39</sup> "And we are witnesses of all the things that He did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put Him to death by hanging Him on a tree.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>40</sup> "God raised Him up the third day and granted Him to be visible,

<sup>41</sup> not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, *that is*, to us, who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

<sup>42</sup> "And He commanded us to proclaim to the people, and to solemnly testify that He is the One who has been appointed by God *to be* the Judge of the living and the dead.

<sup>43</sup> "To Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

#### ***People from the Nations Receive the Holy Spirit***

<sup>44</sup> While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were hearing the word.

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *athemitos* (ἀθέμιτος); "pert. to not being sanctioned, not allowed, forbidden" (BDAG, 24); "not permitted" (TLV).

<sup>b</sup> "at three in the afternoon" (NIV); "at three o'clock" (NRSV).

<sup>c</sup> Grk. *ergazomenos dikaiosunēn* (ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην); "works righteousness" (NKJV).

<sup>d</sup> The CJB has bolded "hanging him on a stake" for 10:39, noting a possible allusion to Deuteronomy 21:23: "his body is not to remain all night on the tree, but you must bury him the same day, because a person who has been hanged has been cursed by God—so that you will not defile your land, which ADONAI your God is giving you to inherit" (CJB).

<sup>45</sup> And the believers from among the circumcision who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the nations.

<sup>46</sup> For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered,

<sup>47</sup> "Can anyone forbid the water, that these should not be immersed, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we *have*?"

<sup>48</sup> And he ordered them to be immersed in the name of Yeshua the Messiah. Then they asked him to stay on for some days.

# 11

## ***Peter's Report to the Assembly at Jerusalem***

<sup>1</sup> Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were throughout Judea heard that the nations also had received the word of God.

<sup>2</sup> And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those who were of the circumcision were taking issue with him,

<sup>3</sup> saying, "You went to foreskinned men and ate with them."

<sup>4</sup> But Peter began, and was explaining to them in order, saying,

<sup>5</sup> "I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain object descending like a great sheet being let down from the sky by four corners; and it came to me,

<sup>6</sup> into which, having gazed *upon it*, I was observing and saw the four-footed animals of the Earth and the wild beasts and the reptiles and the birds of the sky.

<sup>7</sup> "And I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; slaughter<sup>a</sup> and eat.'

<sup>8</sup> "But I said, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'

<sup>9</sup> "But a voice answered the second time from Heaven, 'What God has cleansed, you do not make common<sup>b</sup>.'

<sup>10</sup> "And this happened three times, and everything was drawn up again into Heaven.

<sup>11</sup> "And behold, at that moment three men stood before the house in which we were *staying*, having been sent to me from Caesarea.

<sup>12</sup> "And the Spirit told me go with them, making no distinction. And these six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house.

<sup>13</sup> "And he told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, 'Send to Joppa, and summon Simon, who is called Peter,

<sup>14</sup> who will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.'

<sup>15</sup> "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as *He did* upon us at the beginning.

<sup>16</sup> "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed immersed with water, but you will be immersed with the Holy Spirit.'

<sup>17</sup> "If then God gave to them the same gift as *He gave* to us also, when we believed in the Lord Yeshua the Messiah, who was I that I could withstand God?"

<sup>18</sup> And when they heard this, they remained silent and glorified God, saying, "Then to the nations also God has granted repentance unto life."

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. verb *thuō* (θύω); rendered as "slaughter" in CJB; basically meaning "*sacrifice, slaughter, kill, celebrate*" (*A Reader's Greek New Testament*, 273); more fully meaning "**to make a cultic offering, sacrifice,**" "**to kill ceremonially, slaughter sacrificially,**" "**celebrate**, but perh. only when an animal is slaughtered in connection with a celebration" (*BDAG*, 463).

The rendering "slaughter" is useful to keep in mind, given the further scene witnessed in 14:13.

<sup>b</sup> Grk. *su mē koinou* (σὺ μὴ κοῖνου); "make not thou common" (ASV); "you must not consider unholy" (TLV).

### **The Assembly at Antioch**

<sup>19</sup> Now those who had been scattered abroad because of the tribulation that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.

<sup>20</sup> But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch, speaking also to the Greeks, proclaiming the Lord Yeshua.

<sup>21</sup> And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

<sup>22</sup> And the news about them came to the ears of the assembly in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

<sup>23</sup> When he came and had seen the grace of God, he rejoiced and was encouraging everyone, that with purpose of heart they would stay near to the Lord;

<sup>24</sup> for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a large company was added to the Lord.

<sup>25</sup> And he went to Tarsus to look for Saul;

<sup>26</sup> and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came about, that for a whole year they were gathered together with the assembly, and taught a large company; and the disciples were first called "Christians"<sup>a</sup> in Antioch.

<sup>27</sup> Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

<sup>28</sup> And one of them named Agabus stood up and indicated by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world, which took place during *the reign* of Claudius.

<sup>29</sup> And the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers and sisters living in Judea,

<sup>30</sup> which they also did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

## 12

### **James Killed and Peter Imprisoned**

<sup>1</sup> Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some of the assembly, to harm them.

<sup>2</sup> And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

<sup>3</sup> And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. And *it was during* the days of Unleavened Bread.

<sup>4</sup> And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover<sup>b</sup> to bring him out to the people.

<sup>5</sup> So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made earnestly by the assembly to God.

### **Peter Delivered from Prison**

<sup>6</sup> And on the very night when Herod was about to bring him forth, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards in front of the door were watching the prison.

<sup>7</sup> And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands.

<sup>8</sup> And the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me."

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *chrēmatisai*...*Christianous* (χρηματίσαι...Χριστιανούς); "it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called 'Christianoi'" (TLV); "it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called 'Christians'" (NRSV); "The disciples were first called 'followers of Chrestus' in Antioch" (The Messianic Writings); "it was in Antioch that the *talmidim* for the first time were called 'Messianic'" (CJB).

<sup>b</sup> Grk. *meta to Pascha* (μετὰ τὸ πάσχα); the KJV notably mistranslated this with "after Easter," corrected by the NKJV with "after Passover."

<sup>9</sup> And he went out and was following, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was true, but thought he was seeing a vision.

<sup>10</sup> And when they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them of its own accord; and they went out and passed on through one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

<sup>11</sup> And when Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I truly know that the Lord has sent forth His angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

<sup>12</sup> And when he realized *this*, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

<sup>13</sup> And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer.

<sup>14</sup> And having recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood at the gate.

<sup>15</sup> And they said to her, "You are mad." But she was insisting that it was so. And they were saying, "It is his angel."

<sup>16</sup> But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened, they saw him and were amazed.

<sup>17</sup> But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Tell these things to James, and to the brothers and sisters." And he departed and went to another place.

<sup>18</sup> Now when day came, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers, *as to* what became of Peter.

<sup>19</sup> And when Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away *to execution*. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and was staying there.

### ***The Death of Herod***

<sup>20</sup> Now he was very angry with the Tyrians and Sidonians; and with one accord they came to him, and having won over Blastus the king's chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by the king's country.

<sup>21</sup> And on an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat upon the throne and was delivering an oration to them.

<sup>22</sup> And the people were crying out, "The voice of a god, and not of a mortal!"

<sup>23</sup> And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

<sup>24</sup> But the word of God was growing and multiplying.

<sup>25</sup> And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, taking with them John, who was also called Mark.

## **13**

### ***Barnabas and Saul Commissioned***

<sup>1</sup> Now there were at Antioch, in the assembly that was *there*, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

<sup>2</sup> And ministering to the Lord, and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

<sup>3</sup> Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

### ***The Apostles Proclaim in Cyprus***

<sup>4</sup> So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there sailed to Cyprus.

<sup>5</sup> And when they arrived at Salamis, they were proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John as their attendant.

<sup>6</sup> And when they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet whose name was Bar-Yeshua,

<sup>7</sup> who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence. He summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

<sup>8</sup> But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

<sup>9</sup> But Saul, who is also *called* Paul,<sup>a</sup> filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze at him,

<sup>10</sup> and said, "You who are full of deceit and fraud, you son of the Devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord?"<sup>b</sup>

<sup>11</sup> "And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sun for a while." And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking someone to lead him by the hand.

<sup>12</sup> Then the proconsul, when he saw what had happened, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

### ***Paul and Barnabas at Antioch of Pisidia***

<sup>13</sup> Now Paul and his company set sail from Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John left from them and returned to Jerusalem.

<sup>14</sup> But going on from Perga, they came to Antioch of Pisidia, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.

<sup>15</sup> And after the reading of the Torah and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it."

<sup>16</sup> And Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand, said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen:

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<sup>a</sup> "Sha'ul, also known as Paul" (CJB); "But Saul, who is also Paul" (TLV).

Paul, or *Paulos* (Παῦλος), as it appears in the Greek, is the name that the Apostle most frequently calls himself in his letters. *Shaul* (שׂוּל) or "Saul" was the original name given to this Jew who was born in the city of Tarsus. Like many Jews of the First Century, he was given two names: one Hebrew or Aramaic, and then another Greek or Latin. This is plainly attested by Acts 13:9 which speaks of "Saul, who was also *known as* Paul" (NASU).

It is not incorrect to refer to the Apostle Paul as Shaul, but we refer to him as the Apostle Paul because this is what he calls himself, as the vast majority of his audience was Greek-speaking. There are Messianics, and Messianic Bible translations, which fail to recognize the First Century reality of Shaul or Saul having two names. The *ISR Scriptures* (2009), a Sacred Name Only Bible, states, "Who changed the name of Sha'ul to Paul (Paulus)? We find no evidence in Scripture as to why, when, and by whom this change of his name was instigated. All we could find was this: The ancient Romans had a national hero named Paulus. Was this change from 'Sha'ul' to 'Paulus' done in order to appease the Roman people?" (p 1226). This kind of reasoning is without any historical basis at all. The name of Shaul was not "changed" by some sordid, evil conspiracy, as some might try to make the naïve believe.

It is true that some in mainstream Christianity believe and teach that prior to his conversion of faith, this apostle was known as "Saul," and then after his conversion at the Damascus Road, he had his name changed to "Paul." Many of these people are as uninformed as the Messianics who believe that the name "Paul" was a fabrication of the Romans. The *Ryrie Study Bible*, a dispensationalist Christian source, correctly acknowledges in its commentary for Acts 13:9, "Saul was his Jewish name and Paul his Roman or Gentile name. Both were given him at the time of his birth, but he now begins to use his Gentile name in this Gentile environment" (Charles C. Ryrie, ed., *The Ryrie Study Bible*, New American Standard [Chicago: Moody Press, 1978], 1669). This is by no means an indication that Shaul had his name changed to Paulus by "evil scribes," as some would like to insinuate, but a recognition of the reality that he had two names. Many Jews in the United States today are given a Hebrew name, and then a comparable English name.

The Salkinson-Ginsburg modern Hebrew New Testament translation actually uses the Hebrew form of *Paulos*, *Polos* (פּוֹלוֹס), in its translation of the Greek. Using *Paulos* is appropriate both for recognition of the fact that the Apostle had two names, and be true to the source text of the Apostolic Scriptures.

<sup>b</sup> The CJB has bolded "making crooked the straight paths of the Lord" for 13:10, noting a possible allusion to Proverbs 10:9: "He who walks purely walks securely, but he who walks in crooked ways will be found out" (CJB).

17 “The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors, and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it.<sup>a</sup>

18 “And for about forty years<sup>b</sup> He put up with them in the wilderness.

19 “And when He had overthrown seven nations<sup>c</sup> in the land of Canaan, He gave *them* their land as an inheritance, for about four hundred and fifty years.

20 “And after these things He gave *them* judges<sup>d</sup> until Samuel the prophet.

21 “And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.

22 “And after He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king; of whom He also testified and said, ‘I HAVE FOUND DAVID THE SON OF JESSE, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will’ [1 Samuel 13:14]<sup>e</sup>.

23 “Of this man's seed, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Yeshua,

24 after John had proclaimed before His coming an immersion of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25 “And as John was completing his course, he said, ‘What do you suppose that I am? I am not *He*. But behold, one is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.’

26 “Men, brethren, children of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us the word of this salvation was sent out.

27 “For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not recognize Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are being read every Sabbath, fulfilled *these* by condemning *Him*.

28 “And though they found no cause for *putting Him to death*, yet they asked Pilate to do away with Him.

29 “And when they had carried out all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree,<sup>f</sup> and laid Him in a tomb.

30 “But God raised Him from the dead;

31 and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now His witnesses to the people.

32 “And we bring to you the good news of the promise made to our ancestors,

33 that God has fulfilled this *promise* to our children in that He raised up Yeshua, as also it is written in the second Psalm, ‘YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY HAVE I BEGOTTEN YOU’ [Psalm 2:7]<sup>g</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> The CJB has bolded “with a stretched-out arm he led them out of that land” for 13:17, noting a possible allusion to Exodus 6:6; 12:51:

“Therefore, say to the people of Isra’el: ‘I am *ADONAI*. I will free you from the forced labor of the Egyptians, rescue you from their oppression, and redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments” (Exodus 6:6, CJB).

“On that very day, *ADONAI* brought the people of Isra’el out of the land of Egypt by their divisions” (Exodus 12:51, CJB).

<sup>b</sup> The CJB has bolded “forty years” for 13:18, noting a possible allusion to Exodus 16:35; Numbers 14:34:

“The people of Isra’el ate *man* for forty years, until they came to an inhabited land. They ate *man* until they arrived at the borders of the land of Kena’an” (Exodus 16:35, CJB).

“It will be a year for every day you spent reconnoitering the land that you will bear the consequences of your offenses—forty days, forty years. Then you will know what it means to oppose me!” (Numbers 14:34, CJB).

<sup>c</sup> The CJB has bolded “seven nations” for 13:19, noting a possible allusion to Deuteronomy 7:1: “*ADONAI* your God is going to bring you into the land you will enter in order to take possession of it, and he will expel many nations ahead of you—the Hitti, Girgashi, Emori, Kena’ani, P’rizi, Hivi and Y’vusi, seven nations bigger and stronger than you” (CJB).

<sup>d</sup> The CJB has bolded “he gave them judges” for 13:20, noting a possible allusion to Judges 2:16: “But then *ADONAI* raised up judges, who rescued them from the power of those who were plundering them” (CJB).

<sup>e</sup> “But now your kingdom shall not endure. *YHWH* has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and *YHWH* has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what *YHWH* commanded you” (1 Samuel 13:14, PME).

<sup>f</sup> The CJB has bolded “stake” for 13:29, noting a possible allusion to Deuteronomy 21:23: “his body is not to remain all night on the tree, but you must bury him the same day, because a person who has been hanged has been cursed by God—so that you will not defile your land, which *ADONAI* your God is giving you to inherit” (CJB).

<sup>g</sup> “I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You’” (Psalm 2:7, NASU).

<sup>34</sup> “As for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken in this way, ‘I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY and SURE blessings OF DAVID’ [Isaiah 55:3, LXX]<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> “Therefore He also says in another *Psalm*, ‘YOU WILL NOT LET YOUR HOLY ONE SEE CORRUPTION’ [Psalm 16:10, LXX]<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> “For David, after He had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his ancestors, and saw corruption;

<sup>37</sup> but He whom God raised up saw no corruption.

<sup>38</sup> “Therefore let it be known to you, brothers and sisters, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,

<sup>39</sup> and through Him everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Torah of Moses.

<sup>40</sup> “Beware, therefore, lest there come upon *you* what is spoken of in the Prophets:

<sup>41</sup> ‘BEHOLD, YOU SCOFFERS, AND WONDER, AND PERISH; FOR I WORK A WORK IN YOUR DAYS, A WORK WHICH YOU WILL NEVER BELIEVE, IF ONE SHOULD DECLARE IT TO YOU’ [Habakkuk 1:5, LXX]<sup>c</sup>.”

<sup>42</sup> And as they were going out, they were begging that these words might be spoken to them the next Sabbath.

<sup>43</sup> Now when the *meeting* of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God.

<sup>44</sup> And the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered together to hear the word of the Lord.

<sup>45</sup> But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy and were contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and blasphemed.

<sup>46</sup> And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be first spoken to you; since you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the nations.

<sup>47</sup> “For so the Lord has commanded us, ‘I HAVE SET YOU TO BE A LIGHT FOR THE NATIONS, THAT YOU SHOULD BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH’ [Isaiah 49:6]<sup>d</sup>.”

<sup>48</sup> And when the nations heard this, they were rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

<sup>49</sup> And the word of the Lord was being spread abroad throughout all the region.

<sup>50</sup> But the Jews incited the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district.

<sup>51</sup> But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and went to Iconium.

<sup>52</sup> And the disciples were being filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

## 14

### ***Paul and Barnabas at Iconium***

<sup>1</sup> And it came about in Iconium that they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and so spoke that a great multitude believed, both of Jews and of Greeks.

<sup>2</sup> But the Jews who had disobeyed stirred up the souls of the nations, and embittered them against the brethren.

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<sup>a</sup> “But his form was without honor, failing beyond all men, a man being in calamity and knowing how to bear sickness; because his face is turned away, he was dishonored and not esteemed” (Isaiah 53:3, NETS).

<sup>b</sup> “because you will not abandon my soul to Hades or give your devout to see corruption” (Psalm 16:10, NETS).

<sup>c</sup> “Behold, ye despisers, and look, and wonder marvelously, and vanish: for I work a work in your days, which ye will in no wise believe, though a man declare *it to you*” (Habakkuk 1:5, LXE).

<sup>d</sup> “He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the Earth’” (Isaiah 49:6, PME).

<sup>3</sup> Therefore they spent a long time *there* speaking boldly for the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands.

<sup>4</sup> But the multitude of the city was divided; and some sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles.

<sup>5</sup> And when an attempt was made by both the nations and the Jews with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them,

<sup>6</sup> they became aware of it and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the surrounding region;

<sup>7</sup> and there they were proclaiming the good news.

### ***Paul and Barnabas at Lystra***

<sup>8</sup> And at Lystra there was sitting a certain man, without strength in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked.

<sup>9</sup> This man heard Paul speaking, who having gazed at him, and having seen that he has<sup>a</sup> faith to be saved,

<sup>10</sup> said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and was walking.

<sup>11</sup> And when the multitudes saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human likeness."

<sup>12</sup> And they were calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.

<sup>13</sup> And the priest of Zeus, whose *temple* was in front of the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and was wanting to offer a sacrifice with the crowds.

<sup>14</sup> But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out among the multitude, crying out

<sup>15</sup> and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also mortals of the same nature as you, and bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM [Exodus 20:11<sup>b</sup>; Psalm 146:6<sup>c</sup>].

<sup>16</sup> "And in the generations gone by He allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways;

<sup>17</sup> and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you from Heaven rains and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."

<sup>18</sup> And with these sayings, they with difficulty restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them.

<sup>19</sup> But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

<sup>20</sup> But when the disciples stood around him, he rose up and entered the city. And the next day he went out with Barnabas to Derbe.

### ***The Return to Antioch in Syria***

<sup>21</sup> And when they had proclaimed the good news to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,

<sup>22</sup> strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and *saying* that through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God.

<sup>23</sup> And when they had appointed elders for them in every assembly, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

<sup>24</sup> And they passed through Pisidia, and came to Pamphylia.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *echei* (ἔχει); third person present active indicative; more commonly rendered as the past tense "had" (NASU).

<sup>b</sup> "For in six days YHWH made the Heavens and the Earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore YHWH blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Exodus 20:11, PME).

<sup>c</sup> "who made Heaven and Earth, the sea and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever" (Psalm 146:6, PME).

- 25 And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia;  
 26 and from there they sailed to Antioch, from which they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled.  
 27 And when they had arrived and gathered the assembly together, they were reporting all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the nations.  
 28 And they stayed no little time with the disciples.

## 15

### *The Council at Jerusalem*

- 1 And certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brethren<sup>a</sup>, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."  
 2 And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, *the brethren* appointed that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question.  
 3 Therefore, being sent on their way by the assembly, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the turning of the nations *to God*, and they were bringing great joy to all the brothers and sisters.  
 4 And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the assembly and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.  
 5 But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees<sup>b</sup> who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to order them to observe the Torah of Moses."  
 6 And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.  
 7 And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that from days of old God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the nations would hear the word of the good news and believe.  
 8 "And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us;  
 9 and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.  
 10 "Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?  
 11 "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Yeshua, in the same way as they also are."  
 12 And all the multitude kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had performed through them among the nations.  
 13 And after they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, "Brethren, listen to me.  
 14 "Simeon has related how God first visited the nations, to take from them a people for His name.  
 15 "And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just it is written,  
 16 'AFTER THESE THINGS I WILL RETURN, AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT,  
 17 'SO THAT THE REST OF HUMANITY MAY SEEK THE LORD, AND ALL THE NATIONS WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,'  
 18 SAYS THE LORD, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM OF OLD [Amos 9:11-12, LXX]c.

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *tous adelphous* (τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς); "the believers" (TNIV).

<sup>b</sup> Grk. *tines tōn apo tēs haireseōs tōn Pharisaiōn* (τινες τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς αἵρέσεως τῶν Φαρισαίων); or, "some of the faction of the Pharisees."

<sup>c</sup> "On that day I will raise up the tent of David that is fallen and rebuild its ruins and raise up its destruction, and rebuilt it as the days of old in order that those remaining of humans and all the nations upon whom my name has been called might seek out me, says the Lord who does these things" (Amos 9:11-12, NETS).

19 “Therefore it is my judgment, that we do not trouble those who are returning<sup>a</sup> to God from among the nations,

20 but that we write to them that they abstain from the pollutions of idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood.

21 “For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those proclaiming<sup>b</sup> him, being read<sup>c</sup> in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

### ***The Reply of the Council***

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole assembly, to choose men from among them and to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers and sisters,

23 and they wrote this letter with their hand, “The apostles and the elders, brothers and sisters, to the brothers and sisters who are from the nations in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings.

24 “Since we have heard that certain ones from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, to whom we gave no instruction,<sup>d</sup>

25 it seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 people who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah.

27 “Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also tell you the same things by word of *mouth*.

28 “For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

29 that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; from which if you keep yourselves free, you will do well. Farewell.”

30 So, when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter.

31 And when they had read it, they rejoiced at the exhortation.

32 And Judas and Silas, also being prophets themselves, exhorted the brothers and sisters with many words, and strengthened them.

33 And after they had spent some time *there*, they were sent away from the brothers and sisters in peace to those who had sent them.

34 [But it seemed good to Silas to remain there.]<sup>e</sup>

35 But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and proclaiming the word of the Lord, with many others also.

<sup>a</sup> Grk. verb *epistrepḥō* (ἐπιστρέφω); “to return to a point where one has been, turn around, go back” (BDAG, 382). Amos 9:14 in the LXX renders the Hebrew verb *shuv* (שׁוּב) as *epistrepḥō*: “And I will return [*epistrepḥō*] the captivity of my people Israel...” (NETS).

<sup>b</sup> Grk. *kērussontas* (κηρύσσοντας); present active participle; “preaching” (Brown and Comfort, 472); “proclaiming” (Marshall, 395).

<sup>c</sup> Grk. *anaginōskomenos* (ἀναγιγνωσκόμενος); present passive participle; “being read” (Brown and Comfort, 472; Marshall, 395).

<sup>d</sup> There is an additional clause of note which appears in the Greek Textus Receptus, and appears in modern versions like the NKJV:

“Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, ‘You must be circumcised and keep the law’—to whom we gave no *such* commandment” (Acts 15:24, NKJV).

The clause *legontes peritemnesthai kai tērein ton nomon* (λέγοντες περιτέμνεσθαι καὶ τηρεῖν τον νόμον) is actually something that is omitted from the oldest extant Greek texts of Acts (Aland, *GNT*, 467; Nestle and Aland, *GNT*, 367), does not appear in major English versions (i.e., RSV/ESV/NRSV, NASB/NASU, NIV/TNIV/2011 NIV, et. al.), and is recognized as a later interpolation (Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 436). It is actually labeled by Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*, 392, as “but another example of unnecessary gap-filling, which found its way into TR and KJV.”

<sup>e</sup> Note that not all manuscripts include 15:34, and so it has been placed in brackets [] per the NASB (cf. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 439).

***Paul and Barnabas Separate***

<sup>36</sup> And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brothers and sisters in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are."

<sup>37</sup> And Barnabas wanted to take with them John, also called Mark.

<sup>38</sup> But Paul was insisting that they not take him along, who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

<sup>39</sup> And there arose a sharp contention, so that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

<sup>40</sup> But Paul choose Silas and departed, being commended by the brothers and sisters to the grace of the Lord.

<sup>41</sup> And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the assemblies.

# 16

***Timothy Accompanies Paul and Silas***

<sup>1</sup> And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek,

<sup>2</sup> who was well spoken of by the brothers and sisters at Lystra and Iconium.

<sup>3</sup> Paul wanted him to go out with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

<sup>4</sup> And as they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees, which had been decided by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to keep.

<sup>5</sup> So the assemblies were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily.

***Paul's Vision of the Man of Macedonia***

<sup>6</sup> And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;

<sup>7</sup> and when they had come opposite Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Yeshua did not permit them;

<sup>8</sup> and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

<sup>9</sup> And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing, beseeching him, and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

<sup>10</sup> And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

***The Salvation of Lydia***

<sup>11</sup> Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis;

<sup>12</sup> and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a *Roman* colony; and we were staying in this city for some days.

<sup>13</sup> And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and were speaking to the women who had come together.

<sup>14</sup> And a certain woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening, whose heart the Lord opened to to pay attention to the things spoken by Paul.

<sup>15</sup> And when she and her household were immersed, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

***The Imprisonment at Philippi***

<sup>16</sup> And it happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain slave-girl having a spirit of Python<sup>a</sup> met us, who was bringing her owners much profit by fortune-telling.

<sup>17</sup> Following after Paul and us, she was crying out, saying, "These people are servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation."

<sup>18</sup> And she was doing this for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Yeshua the Messiah to come out of her!" And it came out that very hour.

<sup>19</sup> But when her owners saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers,

<sup>20</sup> and when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These people are disturbing our city, being Jews,

<sup>21</sup> and are proclaiming customs which it is not permitted for us to accept or observe, being Romans."

<sup>22</sup> And the crowd rose up together against them, and the magistrates tore their garments off them, and were ordering *them* to be beaten with rods.

<sup>23</sup> And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely,

<sup>24</sup> who, having received such a charge, threw them into the inner prison, and fastened their feet in the stocks.

<sup>25</sup> But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them;

<sup>26</sup> and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were unfastened.

<sup>27</sup> And when the jailor had been roused out of sleep and had seen the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

<sup>28</sup> But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here!"

<sup>29</sup> And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas,

<sup>30</sup> and having brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

<sup>31</sup> And they said, "Believe in the Lord Yeshua, and you will be saved, you and your house."

<sup>32</sup> And they spoke the word of the Lord to him, with all who were in his house.

<sup>33</sup> And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and immediately he was immersed, he and all his *family*.

<sup>34</sup> And he brought them into his house and set a table before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his household, having believed in God.

<sup>35</sup> But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those people go."

<sup>36</sup> And the jailor reported the words to Paul, *saying*, "The magistrates have sent to release you. Now therefore, come out and go in peace."

<sup>37</sup> But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, people who are Romans, and have thrown us into prison; and now do they throw us out secretly? No indeed! But let them come themselves and bring us out."

<sup>38</sup> And the police reported these words to the magistrates. And they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans,

<sup>39</sup> and they came and begged them, and when they had brought them out, they were asking them to leave the city.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *pneuma puthōna* (πνεῦμα πύθωνα); more commonly rendered as something like "a spirit of divination" (NASU); the CJB actually has "a snake-spirit."

<sup>40</sup> And they went out of the prison and entered *the house* of Lydia, and when they saw the brothers and sisters, they encouraged them and departed.

# 17

## ***The Uproar in Thessalonica***

<sup>1</sup> Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

<sup>2</sup> And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

<sup>3</sup> explaining and demonstrating that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*, "This Yeshua whom I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah."

<sup>4</sup> And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a great multitude of the devout Greeks and no small few of the leading women.

<sup>5</sup> But the Jews, having become jealous, and having taken along some wicked men of the marketplace<sup>a</sup>, and having gathered a mob, set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people.

<sup>6</sup> And when they did not find them, they were dragging Jason and some of the brethren before the city authorities, crying, "These people who have turned the world upside down have come here also,

<sup>7</sup> whom Jason has received. And they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Yeshua."

<sup>8</sup> And they stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things.

<sup>9</sup> And when they had taken a bond from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

## ***The Apostles at Berea***

<sup>10</sup> And the brothers and sisters immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea; and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.

<sup>11</sup> Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, *to see* whether these things were so.

<sup>12</sup> Many of them therefore believed, and not a few *also* of the Greek women of high standing, and *also* men.

<sup>13</sup> But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea also, they came there likewise, stirring up and troubling the crowds.

<sup>14</sup> And then immediately the brothers and sisters sent Paul out to go as far as to the sea; and Silas and Timothy remained there.

<sup>15</sup> Now those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed.

## ***Paul at Athens***

<sup>16</sup> Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was beholding the city full of idols.

<sup>17</sup> So he was reasoning in the synagogue with Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those happening to be there.

<sup>18</sup> And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. And some said, "What would this seed-picker<sup>a</sup> say?" Others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities," because he was proclaiming Yeshua and the resurrection.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *tōn agoraion andras tinas ponērous* (τῶν ἀγοραίων ἀνδρας τινὰς ποιηροῦς); "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort" (KJV); "certain vile fellows of the rabble" (ASV); "some ruffians in the marketplaces" (NRSV).

<sup>19</sup> And they took hold of him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is, which is being spoken by you?”

<sup>20</sup> “For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; we want to know therefore what these things mean.”

<sup>21</sup> (Now all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there spent their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new.)

<sup>22</sup> And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that you are very religious in all things.

<sup>23</sup> “For as I was passing through and observing the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

<sup>24</sup> “The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of Heaven and Earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;

<sup>25</sup> neither is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all things;

<sup>26</sup> and He made from one, every nation of people to live on all the face of the Earth, having determined *their* appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation,

<sup>27</sup> that they should seek God, if perhaps they might feel after Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

<sup>28</sup> for in Him we live and move and have our being, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’<sup>b</sup>

<sup>29</sup> “Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine is like gold or silver or stone, an image impressed by human art and imagination.

<sup>30</sup> “The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent,

<sup>31</sup> because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all, having raised Him from the dead.”

<sup>32</sup> Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some were mocking, but others said, “We will hear you again concerning this.”

<sup>33</sup> So Paul went out from among them.

<sup>34</sup> But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. noun *spermologos* (σπερμολόγος); derived from “σπέρμα, λέγω [*sperma, legō*] lit. ‘picking up seeds,’” “in pejorative imagery of persons whose communication lacks sophistication and seems to pick up scraps of information here and there *scrapmonger, scavenger*” (BDAG, 937); more commonly rendered as “babblers” (RSV) or “idle babblers” (NASU).

<sup>b</sup> There is no uniform agreement as to which classical Greek figure(s) Paul may have been quoting. David G. Peterson, *Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), pp 499-500 does offer a useful selection of options:

“Paul offers support for the preceding claim by asserting that “*in him we live and move and have our being*”. This triad is used ‘to bring out all sides of man’s absolute dependence on God for life’. Some have argued that Paul is citing words originally addressed to Zeus in a poem attributed to Epimenides of Crete, who flourished in the sixth century BC. However, we do not have the original poem, and there are similar assertions by other Greek writers (e.g. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 12.43). Whatever the source, Paul will have been using these words to convey the biblical truth that God, not merely the creation, is the environment in which we exist. As a personal being he can be known, understood, and trusted. In the syntax of the sentence, the words ‘*as some of your own poets have said*’ most naturally relate to what follows. Paul goes on to quote Aratus of Cilicia (*Phaenomena* 5), a philosopher-poet from the third century BC, who said of Zeus, “*we are his offspring*” (*tou gar kai genos esmen* [τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐομεν]). The poet will have understood these words in a pantheistic sense, but Paul appears to have viewed them in the light of the image of God theology in Genesis 1:26-27...He recognized that a search for God had been taking place in the Greco-Roman world, but condemned the result—the idolatry which was everywhere present and the ignorance of the true God which it betrayed (vv. 22-25).”

# 18

## **Paul at Corinth**

<sup>1</sup> After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth.

<sup>2</sup> And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently having come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them,

<sup>3</sup> and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and was working; for by trade they were tentmakers<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath, persuading Jews and Greeks.

<sup>5</sup> But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Yeshua is the Messiah.

<sup>6</sup> And *when* they were opposing *him* and blaspheming, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood *be* upon your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the nations."

<sup>7</sup> And he departed from there and went to the house of a certain man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue.

<sup>8</sup> And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were immersed.

<sup>9</sup> And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent;

<sup>10</sup> for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many people in this city."

<sup>11</sup> And he settled *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

<sup>12</sup> But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat,

<sup>13</sup> saying, "This man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the Law<sup>b</sup>."

<sup>14</sup> But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of vicious crime, O Jews, I might reasonably put up with you;

<sup>15</sup> but if there are questions about words and names and your own Law, see to it yourselves; I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters."

<sup>16</sup> And he drove them away from the judgment seat.

<sup>17</sup> And they all took hold of Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and were beating him in front of the judgment seat. And Gallio was not concerned for any of these things.

## **Paul's Return to Antioch**

<sup>18</sup> And Paul, having stayed a number of days longer, took leave of the brothers and sisters and sailed for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. In Chenchrea he shaved his head, having taken a vow.

<sup>19</sup> And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

<sup>20</sup> And when they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent,

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. noun *skēnopoios* (σκηνοποιός); "a tentmaker, N.T." (LS, 733); there is some disagreement as to whether "tentmaker" is the best translation, though, as "If the trade is that of making tents of goat's hair, Paul is perhaps weaving fabric. But rabbinical scholars do not favor weaving, and it is thus more likely that Paul is a 'leather worker,' and that as such he is a 'tent maker'" (W. Michaelis, "pitching tents, Tabernacles," in *TDNT*, 1044).

The Moffat New Testament actually does have, "They were workers in leather by trade," for 18:3.

<sup>b</sup> Grk. *para ton nomon* (παρὰ τὸν νόμον); even though various Messianic versions will have "in ways that violate the *Torah*" (CJB) or "contrary to the *Torah*" (TLV), due to the ambiguity of whether the Pentateuch proper or Jewish religious law, with Rabbinical rulings or *halachah*, is in view, the rendering here simply has "the Law," although "our law" (NLT) would be an appropriate extrapolation.

<sup>21</sup> but taking leave of them and saying, "I will return to you again if God wills," he set sail from Ephesus.

<sup>22</sup> And when he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the assembly, and went down to Antioch.

<sup>23</sup> And having spent some time *there*, he departed and was successively passing through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

### ***Apollos Proclaims at Ephesus***

<sup>24</sup> Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures.

<sup>25</sup> He had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Yeshua, being acquainted only with the immersion of John;

<sup>26</sup> and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila<sup>a</sup> heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

<sup>27</sup> And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to receive him; and when he had arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace;

<sup>28</sup> for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Yeshua was the Messiah.

## **19**

### ***Paul at Ephesus***

<sup>1</sup> And it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples,

<sup>2</sup> and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

<sup>3</sup> And he said, "Into what then were you immersed?" And they said, "Into John's immersion."

<sup>4</sup> And Paul said, "John immersed with the immersion of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him coming after him, that is, in Yeshua."

<sup>5</sup> And when they heard this, they were immersed into the name of the Lord Yeshua.

<sup>6</sup> And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they were speaking with tongues and prophesying.

<sup>7</sup> And there were in all about twelve men.

<sup>8</sup> And he entered the synagogue and was speaking boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading *them* about the Kingdom of God.

<sup>9</sup> But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

<sup>10</sup> And this continued for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *Priskilla kai Akulas* (Πρίσκιλλα καὶ Ἀκύλας); correctly ordered as "Priscilla and Acquila" (RSV/NRSV/ESV, NASB/NASU, NIV/TNIV, CJB, et. al.); incorrectly ordered as "Aquila and Priscilla" in the KJV/NKJV, following the Textus Receptus with *Akulas kai Priskilla* (Ἀκύλας καὶ Πρίσκιλλα). Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary*, 409 describes,

"The D-reviser...reversed the order of 'Priscilla and Aquila' so as not to give prominence to Priscilla. One would then expect that his revision would have been thoroughgoing, but he did not change the order of Priscilla and Aquila in 18:18" (cf. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 466-467).

The inferior reading of "Aqulas and Priscilla" is followed in the Sacred Name ISR Scriptures (1998/2009).

***The Sons of Sceva***

<sup>11</sup> And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul,  
<sup>12</sup> so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried away from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

<sup>13</sup> But also some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Yeshua, saying, "I adjure you by Yeshua whom Paul proclaims."

<sup>14</sup> And seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this.

<sup>15</sup> And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "Yeshua I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?"

<sup>16</sup> And the person, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

<sup>17</sup> And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Yeshua was being magnified.

<sup>18</sup> Many also of those who had believed were coming, confessing and disclosing their practices.

<sup>19</sup> And a number of those who practiced magic brought their books together and were burning them in the sight of all; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

<sup>20</sup> So the word of the Lord was growing and prevailing.

***The Riot at Ephesus***

<sup>21</sup> Now after these things were completed, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

<sup>22</sup> And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

<sup>23</sup> And about that time there arose no small stir concerning the Way.

<sup>24</sup> For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the artisans;

<sup>25</sup> these he gathered together with the workers of similar *trades*, and said, "Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth.

<sup>26</sup> "And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods.

<sup>27</sup> "And not only is there danger that this trade of ours come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may count as nothing and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship."

<sup>28</sup> And when they heard *this* they were filled with rage, and were crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

<sup>29</sup> And the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's companions in travel.

<sup>30</sup> And when Paul wanted to go into the crowd, the disciples would not let him.

<sup>31</sup> And also some of the Asiarchs who were his friends, sent to him and were begging him not to venture into the theater.

<sup>32</sup> So then, some were crying one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority did not know why they had come together.

<sup>33</sup> And some of the crowd prompted Alexander, the Jews having brought him forward; and Alexander motioned with his hand, and was wanting to defend himself to the people.

<sup>34</sup> But when they recognized that he was a Jew, everyone with one voice, for about two hours, was crying out, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

<sup>35</sup> And when the town clerk had quieted the multitude, he said, “Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis, and of the *image* which fell down from the sky?”

<sup>36</sup> “Seeing then that these things cannot be contradicted, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash.

<sup>37</sup> “For you have brought these men *here* who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess.

<sup>38</sup> “If therefore Demetrius and the artisans who are with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges against one another.

<sup>39</sup> “But if you want anything further, it shall be settled in the lawful assembly.

<sup>40</sup> “For indeed we are in danger of being accused of a riot concerning today’s *events*, since there is no cause *for it*, about which we will be unable to account for this commotion.”

<sup>41</sup> And having said this he dismissed the assembly.

## 20

### ***Paul’s Journey to Macedonia and Greece***

<sup>1</sup> And after the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had exhorted them, took leave of them and departed to go to Macedonia.

<sup>2</sup> And when he had gone through those parts and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece.

<sup>3</sup> And *there* he spent three months, and when a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he determined to return through Macedonia.

<sup>4</sup> And accompanying him were Sopater of Berea, *the son* of Pyrrhus; Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.

<sup>5</sup> But these had gone on before and were waiting for us at Troas.

<sup>6</sup> And we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas in five days, where we stayed seven days.

### ***Paul’s Farewell Visit to Troas***

<sup>7</sup> And on the first of the week<sup>a</sup>, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul was lecturing them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.

<sup>8</sup> And there were many lights in the upper chamber where we were gathered together.

<sup>9</sup> And there was a certain young man named Eutychus sitting at the window, being overcome by a deep sleep; and as Paul, lecturing still longer, *Eutychus* being overcome by his sleep fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead.

<sup>10</sup> And Paul went down and fell upon him, and having embraced him said, “Do not be troubled, for his life is in him.”

<sup>11</sup> And when he had gone up and had broken the bread and eaten, he had talked with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed.

<sup>12</sup> And they took the lad away alive, and were not a little comforted.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *En de tē mia tōn sabbatōn* (Ἐν δὲ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων); Delitzsch Heb. NT *b’echad b’Shabbat* (בְּאַחַד בְּשַׁבָּת); while lit. meaning “and on the first of the week,” it is taken by the CJB to be “On *Motza’ei-Shabbat*,” and actually by the NEB as “On the Saturday night.”

**The Voyage from Troas to Miletus**

<sup>13</sup> But we, going on to the ship, set sail for Assos, intending from there to take Paul aboard; for so had he arranged, intending himself to go by land.

<sup>14</sup> And when he met us at Assos, we took him aboard and came to Mitylene.

<sup>15</sup> And sailing from there, we came the following day opposite Chios; and the next day we touched at Samos; and the day after we came to Miletus.

<sup>16</sup> For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening, if possible, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost<sup>a</sup>.

**Paul Speaks to the Ephesian Elders**

<sup>17</sup> And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the assembly.

<sup>18</sup> And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time,

<sup>19</sup> serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which happened to me through the plots of the Jews;

<sup>20</sup> how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,

<sup>21</sup> solemnly testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Yeshua the Messiah.

<sup>22</sup> "And now, behold, I am going bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what will befall me there,

<sup>23</sup> except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.

<sup>24</sup> "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Yeshua, to solemnly testify the good news of the grace of God.

<sup>25</sup> "And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about proclaiming the Kingdom, will see my face no more.

<sup>26</sup> "Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of all.

<sup>27</sup> "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.

<sup>28</sup> "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the assembly of God which He purchased with His own blood.

<sup>29</sup> "I know that after my departing savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;

<sup>30</sup> and from among your own selves will arise men, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

<sup>31</sup> "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease, night and day, to admonish everyone with tears.

<sup>32</sup> "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

<sup>33</sup> "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel.

<sup>34</sup> "You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me.

<sup>35</sup> "In all things I have shown you that by laboring in this manner you ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Yeshua, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

<sup>36</sup> And when he had spoken these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

<sup>37</sup> And they were all weeping greatly, and were embracing Paul and kissing him,

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *pentēkostē* (πεντηκοστή); "**Pentecost** (really ἡ π. ἡμέρα [*hē p. hēmera*], because it means the festival celebrated on the fiftieth day after Passover חַג שָׁבוּעוֹת [chag shavuot] 'feast of weeks' Dt 16:10; rabb. חַג חֲמִישִׁים יוֹם [chag chamishim yom] 'feast of 50 days'...)'" (BDAG, 796); Delitzsch Heb. NT *haShavuot* (חַג שָׁבוּעוֹת); "*Shavu'ot/Shavuot*" (CJB/TLV).

<sup>38</sup> sorrowing most of all because of the word which he had spoken, that they would see his face no more. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

## 21

### ***Paul's Journey to Jerusalem***

<sup>1</sup> And when it came about that we had parted from them and had set sail, we came by a straight course to Cos and the next day to Rhodes and from there to Patara;

<sup>2</sup> and having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail.

<sup>3</sup> And when we had come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left, we were sailing to Syria and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload its cargo.

<sup>4</sup> And having searched for the disciples, we stayed there seven days; and they were telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup> And when it came about that we had completed the days, we departed and went on our journey; and they all, with wives and children, brought us on our way until *we were* out of the city. And kneeling down on the beach, we prayed and said farewell to one another,

<sup>6</sup> and we boarded the ship, and they returned home again.

<sup>7</sup> And when we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and having greeted the brothers and sisters, we stayed with them one day.

<sup>8</sup> And on the next day we departed and came to Caesarea; and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him.

<sup>9</sup> Now he had four virgin daughters, who prophesied.

<sup>10</sup> And as we were staying there for some days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

<sup>11</sup> And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the nations.'"

<sup>12</sup> And when we had heard this, both we and the local residents were begging him not to go up to Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup> Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Yeshua."

<sup>14</sup> And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

<sup>15</sup> And after these days we got ready and were going up to Jerusalem.

<sup>16</sup> And *some* of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us, bringing us to Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we should lodge.

### ***Paul Visits James***

<sup>17</sup> And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brothers and sisters received us gladly.

<sup>18</sup> And the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

<sup>19</sup> And after he had greeted them, he was explaining one by one the things which God had done among the nations through his ministry.

<sup>20</sup> And when they heard it, they were glorifying God; and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Torah;

<sup>21</sup> and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the nations apostasy from Moses<sup>a</sup>, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.

<sup>22</sup> "What, then, *is to be done*? They will certainly hear that you have come.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *apostasian...apo Mōuseōs* (ἀποστασίαν...ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως).

<sup>23</sup> “Therefore do this that we tell you: We have four men who have a vow upon themselves;

<sup>24</sup> take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Torah.

<sup>25</sup> “And concerning<sup>a</sup> those from the nations who have believed, we wrote, giving judgment that they should abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication.”

<sup>26</sup> Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself along with them, went into the temple, giving notice of the completion of the days of purification, until the offering was made for each one of them.

### ***Paul Arrested in the Temple***

<sup>27</sup> And when the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the temple, were stirring up all the multitude and laid hands on him,

<sup>28</sup> crying out, “Men of Israel, help! This is the person who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people and the Torah and this place; and moreover he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.”

<sup>29</sup> For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

<sup>30</sup> And all the city was aroused, and the people ran together; and having seized Paul, they dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut.

<sup>31</sup> And as they were seeking to kill him, a report came up to the commander of the *Roman* cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion.

<sup>32</sup> And at once he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them; and when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

<sup>33</sup> Then the commander came up and took hold of him, and ordered him to be bound with two chains; and he was inquiring who he was and what he had done.

<sup>34</sup> And some among the crowd were shouting one thing, *and* some another, and when he could not know something definite because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks.

<sup>35</sup> And when he came to the stairs, it so happened that he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd;

<sup>36</sup> for the multitude of the people was following, crying out, “Away with him!”

### ***Paul Defends Himself***

<sup>37</sup> And as Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the commander, “May I say something to you?” And he said, “Do you know Greek?

<sup>38</sup> “Then you are not the Egyptian, who before these days stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?”

<sup>39</sup> But Paul said, “I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city; and I beg you, allow me to speak to the people.”

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *peri de* (περί δέ); this is often rendered as a contrasting thought, “But concerning/as...” (NASU, RSV, NKJV, NRSV, ESV), but can also be a continuing thought, “And concerning/as...” (YLT, LITV), “and~concerning” (Brown and Comfort, 499). As it regards the conjunction *de* (δέ), it is “one of the most common Gk. particles, used to connect one clause to another, either to express contrast or simple continuation” (BDAG, 213). In the estimation of Robert W. Wall, “The Acts of the Apostles,” in *NIB*, 10:294,

“Some commentators find James’s reiteration of his pastoral exhortation to Antioch (see 15:29; also see 15:20) superfluous here: The reader of Acts knows well that the current crisis is not about Paul’s mission among uncircumcised Gentiles but rather about his mission among repentant Jews...As I have argued...this repetition of James’s verdict provides a narrative prompt for a review of Paul’s mission in Acts: At no time has Paul allowed the ‘pollutions of idols’ to contaminate a Jewish identity in the congregations of the diaspora church.”

<sup>40</sup> And when he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned with his hand to the people; and when there was a great hush, he spoke to them in the Hebrew dialect, saying,

## 22

<sup>1</sup> “Brethren and fathers, hear the defense which I now make before you.”

<sup>2</sup> And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew dialect, they became more quiet; and he said,

<sup>3</sup> “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to the Torah of our ancestors, being zealous for God, just as you are today.

<sup>4</sup> “And I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women,

<sup>5</sup> as also the high priest and the whole Council of the elders testifies for me. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and journeyed to Damascus to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem in bonds to be punished.

### **Paul Tells of His Salvation**

**Acts 9:1-19; 26:12-18**

<sup>6</sup> “And it came about that as I was traveling and drawing near to Damascus, about noon, a very bright light suddenly flashed from Heaven all around me,

<sup>7</sup> and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, are you persecuting Me?’

<sup>8</sup> “And I answered, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said to me, ‘I AM Yeshua of Nazareth<sup>a</sup>, whom You are persecuting.’

<sup>9</sup> “And those who were with me indeed beheld the light, but did not hear the voice of the One who was speaking to me.

<sup>10</sup> “And I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Arise and go on into Damascus; and there you will be told all that has been appointed for you to do.’

<sup>11</sup> “And when I could not see because of the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.

<sup>12</sup> “And a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the Torah, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there,

<sup>13</sup> came to me, and standing by me said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And in that very hour I looked up at him.

<sup>14</sup> “And he said, ‘The God of our ancestors<sup>b</sup> has appointed you to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from His mouth.

<sup>15</sup> ‘For you will be a witness for Him to all people of what you have seen and heard.

<sup>16</sup> ‘And now why do you delay? Arise, and be immersed, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.’

### **Paul Sent to the Nations**

<sup>17</sup> “And it came about when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance,

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *egō eimi Iēsous ho Nazōraios* (ἐγώ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος).

<sup>b</sup> The CJB has bolded “God of our fathers” for 22:14, noting a possible allusion to Exodus 3:15: “God said further to Moshe, ‘Say this to the people of Isra’el: “Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [[ADONAI]], the God of your fathers, the God of Avraham, the God of Yitz’chak and the God of Ya’akov, has sent me to you.” This is my name forever; this is how I am to be remembered generation after generation” (CJB).

<sup>18</sup> and saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste, and get quickly out of Jerusalem, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.'

<sup>19</sup> "And I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that in every synagogue I was imprisoning those who believed in You.

<sup>20</sup> 'And when the blood of Stephen Your witness was being shed, I also was standing by and approving and watching over the garments of those who were slaying him.'

<sup>21</sup> "And He said to me, 'Depart; for I will send you far away to the nations.'"

### **Paul and the Roman Tribune**

<sup>22</sup> And they were listening to him up to this word, and *then* they lifted up their voice, and said, "Away with such a fellow from the Earth, for he should not be allowed to live."

<sup>23</sup> And as they were crying out and throwing off their garments and casting dust into the air,

<sup>24</sup> the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, having stated that he should be examined by scourging so that he might know for what reason they were shouting against him that way.

<sup>25</sup> And when they had stretched him up with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, "Is it permitted for you to scourge a person who is a Roman and uncondemned?"

<sup>26</sup> And when the centurion heard *this*, he went to the commander and told him, saying, "What are you about to do? For this person is a Roman."

<sup>27</sup> And the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" And he said, "Yes."

<sup>28</sup> And the commander answered, "I acquired this citizenship with a large sum of money." And Paul said, "But I was actually born a citizen."

<sup>29</sup> Therefore those who were about to examine him immediately withdrew from him; and the commander also was afraid when he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

### **Paul before the Council**

<sup>30</sup> But on the next day, desiring to know for certain why the Jews accused him, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the Sanhedrin<sup>a</sup> to gather, and brought Paul down and set him before them.

## 23

<sup>1</sup> And Paul, looking intently at the Sanhedrin, said, "Brethren, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day."

<sup>2</sup> And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.

<sup>3</sup> Then said Paul to him, "God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! And do you sit judging me according to the Torah, and in violation of the Torah order me to be struck?"

<sup>4</sup> And those who stood by said, "Do you revile God's high priest?"

<sup>5</sup> And Paul said, "I did not know, brethren, that he was high priest; for it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT SPEAK EVIL OF A RULER OF YOUR PEOPLE' [Exodus 22:28]<sup>b</sup>."

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *sunedrion* (συνέδριον); often rendered as "Council" (NASU); "the high council in Jerusalem, *Sanhedrin*, the dominant mng. in our lit. (...Hebraized in the Mishnah סְנֵדְרִין [Sanhedrin]); in Roman times this was the highest indigenous governing body in Judaea, composed of high priests (ἀρχιερεύς [archiereus]...), elders, and scholars (scribes), and meeting under the presidency of the ruling high priest. This body was the ultimate authority not only in religious matters, but in legal and governmental affairs as well, in so far as it did not encroach on the authority of the Roman procurator" (BDAG, 967).

<sup>b</sup> "You shall not curse God, nor curse a ruler of your people" (Exodus 22:28, PME).

<sup>6</sup> But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he was crying out in the Sanhedrin, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am on trial."

<sup>7</sup> And having said this, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees; and the company was divided.

<sup>8</sup> For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

<sup>9</sup> And there arose a great uproar; and some of the scribes of the Pharisaical party stood up and were contending, saying, "We find nothing wrong in this person. And what if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?"

<sup>10</sup> And as a great dissension was coming about, the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them, *and* ordered the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks.

<sup>11</sup> But on the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, "Take courage; for as you have solemnly testified about Me at Jerusalem, so must you witness also at Rome."

### ***The Plot against Paul's Life***

<sup>12</sup> And when it was day, the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves with an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.

<sup>13</sup> And there were more than forty who formed this plot.

<sup>14</sup> And they came to the chief priests and the elders, and said, "We have bound ourselves with an oath, to taste nothing until we have killed Paul.

<sup>15</sup> "Now, therefore, you with the Sanhedrin notify the commander to bring him down to you, as though you were going to determine his case more exactly; and we, before he comes near, are ready to slay him."

<sup>16</sup> But the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, and he came and entered the barracks and told Paul.

<sup>17</sup> And Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, "Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to report to him."

<sup>18</sup> So he took him and brought him to the commander and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to him and asked me to bring this young man to you, who has something to tell you."

<sup>19</sup> And the commander took him by the hand, and going aside was inquiring him privately, "What is it that you have to report to me?"

<sup>20</sup> And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down tomorrow to the Sanhedrin, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more exactly about him.

<sup>21</sup> "Therefore do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in wait for him who have bound themselves with an oath neither to eat or to drink until they slay him; and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you."

<sup>22</sup> So the commander let the young man go, charging him, "Tell no one that you have informed me of these things."

### ***Paul Sent to Felix the Governor***

<sup>23</sup> And he called to him two of the centurions, and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready to go as far as Caesarea, and seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen, at the third hour of the night<sup>a</sup>."

<sup>24</sup> *They were* also to provide mounts to put Paul on and bring him safely to Felix the governor.

<sup>25</sup> And he wrote a letter having this form:

<sup>26</sup> "Claudius Lysias, to the most excellent governor Felix, greetings.

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<sup>a</sup> "at nine tonight" (NIV); "by nine o'clock tonight" (NRSV).

27 "This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be slain by them, when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman.

28 "And desiring to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their Sanhedrin;

29 and I found him to be accused about questions of their Law<sup>a</sup>, but having no accusation worthy of death or imprisonment.

30 "And when I was informed that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ordering his accusers also to speak these things against him before you."

31 So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris.

32 But the next day, having allowed the horsemen to go with him, they returned to the barracks.

33 And when they came to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul before him.

34 And when he had read it, he asked from what province he was; and when he learned that he was from Cilicia,

35 he said, "I will give you a hearing when your accusers arrive also." And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's Praetorium.

## 24

### **The Case against Paul**

1 And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders, and an orator, a certain Tertullus; and they presented their case to the governor against Paul.

2 And when he was called, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, "Since through you we have attained much peace, and since by your provision reforms are being carried out for this nation,

3 we accept *this* in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness.

4 "But, that I may not detain you any longer, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly.

5 "For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and inciting insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.

6 "And he even tried to profane the temple; and we arrested him. [And we would have judged him according to our own Law.

7 "But Lysias the commander came, and with much violence took him out of our hands,

8 ordering his accusers to come before you.]<sup>b</sup> By examining him yourself you will be able to ascertain all these things of which we accuse him."

9 And the Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that these things were so.

### **Paul Defends Himself before Felix**

10 And when the governor had nodded him to speak, Paul replied: "Knowing that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, I cheerfully make my defense,

11 since you can verify that it is not more than twelve days ago I went up to worship at Jerusalem.

12 "And neither in the temple did they find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, nor in the synagogues or in the city.

13 "Neither can they prove to you the things of which they now accuse me.

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *tou nomou autōn* (τοῦ νόμου αὐτῶν); the CJB renders this as "their 'Torah'" in quotation marks, but the TLV has "their law"; due to the ambiguity of whether the Pentateuch proper or Jewish religious law, with Rabbinical rulings or *halachah*, is in view, the rendering here simply has "the Law," although "their religious law" (NLT) would be an appropriate extrapolation.

<sup>b</sup> Note that not all manuscripts include the extended reading of 24:6b-8a, and so it has been placed in brackets [] per the NASB (cf. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 490).

<sup>14</sup> “But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, I serve the God of our ancestors,<sup>a</sup> believing everything which is in accordance with the Torah, and that is written in the Prophets;

<sup>15</sup> having a hope in God, which these also themselves anticipate, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and unjust.

<sup>16</sup> “But in this I also do my best to always have a blameless conscience toward God and people.

<sup>17</sup> “Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings;

<sup>18</sup> in which they found me, having been purified in the temple, without *any* crowd or uproar. But *there were* certain Jews from Asia—

<sup>19</sup> who ought to be here before you, and to make accusation, if they have anything against me.

<sup>20</sup> “Or else let these men themselves say what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the Sanhedrin<sup>b</sup>,

<sup>21</sup> other than for this one statement, which I cried out while standing among them, ‘For the resurrection of the dead I am being judged before you this day.’”

<sup>22</sup> “But Felix, having more exact knowledge about the Way, put them off, saying, “When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case.”

<sup>23</sup> And he gave orders to the centurion that he should be kept in custody and *yet* have *some* ease, and not to prevent any of his friends to attend to him.

### **Paul Held in Custody**

<sup>24</sup> But after some days Felix came with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him *speak* about faith in Messiah Yeshua.

<sup>25</sup> And as he was reasoning about righteousness and self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was terrified and answered, “Go away for the present, and when I have an opportunity, I will summon you.”

<sup>26</sup> At the same time also, he *was* hoping that money would be given to him by Paul; therefore he was also sending for him often and conversed with him.

<sup>27</sup> But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and desiring to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison.

## 25

### **Paul Appeals to Caesar**

<sup>1</sup> Festus therefore, having come into the province, after three days went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.

<sup>2</sup> And the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews informed him against Paul; and they were urging him,

<sup>3</sup> asking a favor against him, that he would send for him at Jerusalem, setting an ambush to kill him on the way.

<sup>4</sup> Festus then answered that Paul was being kept in custody at Caesarea, and that he himself was about to go *there* shortly.

<sup>a</sup> The CJB has bolded “God of our fathers” for 24:14, noting a possible allusion to Exodus 3:15: “God said further to Moshe, ‘Say this to the people of Isra’el: “Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [[ADONAI]], the God of your fathers, the God of Avraham, the God of Yitz’chak and the God of Ya’akov, has sent me to you.” This is my name forever; this is how I am to be remembered generation after generation’” (CJB).

<sup>b</sup> Grk. *sunedrian* (συνέδριον); often rendered as “Council” (NASU); “the high council in Jerusalem, *Sanhedrin*, the dominant mng. in our lit. (...Hebraized in the Mishnah סנהדרין [Sanhedrin]); in Roman times this was the highest indigenous governing body in Judaea, composed of high priests (ἀρχιερεὺς [*archiereus*]...), elders, and scholars (scribes), and meeting under the presidency of the ruling high priest. This body was the ultimate authority not only in religious matters, but in legal and governmental affairs as well, in so far as it did not encroach on the authority of the Roman procurator” (BDAG, 967).

<sup>5</sup> "Therefore," he said, "let the powerful among you go down with me, and if there is anything wrong in the man, let them accuse him."

<sup>6</sup> And after he had spent not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea; and on the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought.

<sup>7</sup> And when he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing against him many and serious charges which they could not prove;

<sup>8</sup> while Paul said in his defense, "Neither against the Torah of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar, have I committed any offense."

<sup>9</sup> But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem, and there be tried of these things before me?"

<sup>10</sup> But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried; to the Jews have I done no wrong, as you also very well know.

<sup>11</sup> "If then I am a wrongdoer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is *true* of which these accuse me, no one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar."

<sup>12</sup> Then Festus, when he had conferred with his council, answered, "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go."

### ***Paul Brought before Agrippa and Bernice***

<sup>13</sup> Now when some days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and greeted Festus.

<sup>14</sup> And as they were staying there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix,

<sup>15</sup> about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed *me*, asking for a sentence against him.

<sup>16</sup> "And I answered them that it is not the custom of the Romans to give up any person before the accused should have the accusers face to face, and an opportunity to make his defense concerning the matter laid against him.

<sup>17</sup> "When therefore they had come together here, I made no delay, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal, and ordered the man to be brought,

<sup>18</sup> "concerning whom, when the accusers stood up, they were bringing no charge of such evil things as I supposed.

<sup>19</sup> But, they had certain questions against him about their own religion, and about one Yeshua, who was dead, whom Paul asserted to be alive.

<sup>20</sup> And being at a loss how to investigate these things, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be tried on these matters.

<sup>21</sup> "But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of the Emperor, I ordered him to be kept in custody until I send him to Caesar."

<sup>22</sup> And Agrippa *said* to Festus, "I also would like to hear the person myself." "Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."

<sup>23</sup> So, on the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and leaders of the city, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.

<sup>24</sup> And Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all men who are here present with us, you behold this one, about whom all the multitude of the Jews appealed to me, both at Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer.

<sup>25</sup> "But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death; and as he himself appealed to the Emperor, I decided to send him,

<sup>26</sup> "about whom I have nothing definite to write to my lord. Therefore I have brought him before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after investigation has taken place, I may have something to write.

27 "For it seems to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not to indicate also the charges against him."

## 26

### ***Paul Defends Himself Before Agrippa***

1 And Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and was making his defense:

2 "I consider myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that I am about to make my defense before you today concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews;

3 especially because you are an expert in all customs and questions among *the* Jews; therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

4 "My manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my *own* nation and at Jerusalem, is known by all the Jews.

5 They, previously knowing me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, *are aware* that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived *as* a Pharisee.

6 "And now I stand trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our ancestors,

7 to which our twelve tribes, earnestly serving *God* night and day, hope to attain. And for this hope I am accused by Jews, O King!

8 "Why is it considered unbelievable by you, if God does raise the dead?

9 "So then, I thought to myself that I ought to do many things hostile to the name of Yeshua of Nazareth.

10 "And this is also what I did in Jerusalem. And I locked up many of the holy ones in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them.

11 "And I was punishing them often in all the synagogues, I was forcing them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I was persecuting them even to foreign cities.

### ***Paul Tells of His Salvation***

**Acts 9:1-19; 22:6-16**

12 "In this connection as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests,

13 at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from Heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me.

14 "And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

15 "And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I AM Yeshua<sup>a</sup> whom You are persecuting.

16 'But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and the things in which I will appear to you;

17 delivering you from the people and from the nations, to whom I am sending you,

18 to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *egō eimi Iēsous* (ἐγώ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς).

**Paul's Testimony to Jewish People and the Nations**

<sup>19</sup> "Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the Heavenly vision,  
<sup>20</sup> but was declaring both to those of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the nations, that they should repent and turn to God, performing works worthy of repentance.

<sup>21</sup> "For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.

<sup>22</sup> "So, having obtained the help that comes from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to happen:

<sup>23</sup> that the Messiah was to suffer, *and* that by reason of *His* resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the people and to the nations."

**Paul Appeals to Agrippa to Believe**

<sup>24</sup> And as he thus was making his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are mad; *your* great learning is turning you mad."

<sup>25</sup> But Paul said, "I am not mad, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking words of truth and rationality.

<sup>26</sup> "For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice, for this has not been done in a corner.

<sup>27</sup> "King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you believe."

<sup>28</sup> And Agrippa *said* to Paul, "In a short time you persuade me to become a 'Christian.'<sup>a</sup>"

<sup>29</sup> And Paul *said*, "I would to God that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains."

<sup>30</sup> And the king rose, and the governor and Bernice and those who were sitting with them,

<sup>31</sup> and when they had withdrawn, they were speaking to one another, saying, "This man is not doing anything worthy of death or imprisonment."

<sup>32</sup> And Agrippa *said* to Festus, "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

## 27

**Paul Sails for Rome**

<sup>1</sup> And when it was decided that we would sail for Italy, they were delivering Paul and some other prisoners over to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort, named Julius.

<sup>2</sup> And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the places along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica.

<sup>3</sup> And the next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius treated Paul kindly, and gave him leave to go to his friends and receive care.

<sup>4</sup> And putting to sea from there we sailed under the shelter of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.

<sup>5</sup> And when we had sailed across the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia.

<sup>6</sup> And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy, and he put us on board.

<sup>7</sup> And when we had sailed slowly many days, and with difficulty had arrived off Cnidus, the wind not permitting us to go farther, we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone;

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. noun *Christianos* (Χριστιανός); "you are trying to persuade me to be Messianic" (TLV); "you're trying to convince me to become Messianic" (CJB); "you try to persuade me to become a disciple of Chrestus" (The Messianic Writings); "The name was first given to the worshippers of Jesus by the Gentiles, but from the second century...onward accepted by them as a title of honor" (Thayer, 672).

<sup>8</sup> and with difficulty sailing past it we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

<sup>9</sup> And when much time had elapsed and the voyage was now dangerous, because the Fast<sup>a</sup> was already over, Paul was advising them,

<sup>10</sup> and said to them, "Men, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."

<sup>11</sup> But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the captain of the ship, than what was being said by Paul.

<sup>12</sup> And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority decided to put to sea from there, if somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing southwest and northwest, and winter *there*.

### ***The Storm at Sea***

<sup>13</sup> And when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and were sailing along Crete, close *inshore*.

<sup>14</sup> But after not much time, there rushed down from *the land* a tempestuous wind, called Euraquilo<sup>b</sup>;

<sup>15</sup> and when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way *to it*, and were being driven along.

<sup>16</sup> And running under the shelter of a small island called Cauda, we were able, with difficulty, to secure the boat.

<sup>17</sup> And after they had hoisted it up, they used supports in undergirding the ship; and fearing that they might run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and in this way were being carried along.

<sup>18</sup> The next *day* we were being violently storm-tossed, *and* they were throwing *the cargo* overboard;

<sup>19</sup> and the third day they cast out with their own hands the tackle of the ship.

<sup>20</sup> And when neither Sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing *us*, all hope for us to be saved was being abandoned.

<sup>21</sup> And when they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in the midst of them and said, "Men, you should have followed my advice and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss.

<sup>22</sup> "And now I urge you to take courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but *only* of the ship.

<sup>23</sup> "For this very night there stood by me an angel of the God to whom I belong, and whom I serve,

<sup>24</sup> saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.'

<sup>25</sup> "Therefore, men, be courageous, for I believe God, that it will be just as I have been told.

<sup>26</sup> "But we must run aground on a certain island."

<sup>27</sup> But when the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors were supposing that they were approaching some land.

<sup>28</sup> And they took soundings, and found twenty fathoms<sup>c</sup>; and a little farther on, they took another sounding, and found fifteen fathoms<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> And fearing that we might run aground on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for daybreak.

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<sup>a</sup> "the Day of Atonement" (NIV); "Yom Kippur" (CJB).

<sup>b</sup> Or, "northeaster."

<sup>c</sup> "a hundred and twenty feet deep" (NIV).

<sup>d</sup> "ninety feet deep" (NIV).

<sup>30</sup> And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the boat into the sea, on the pretense of intending to lay out anchors from the bow,

<sup>31</sup> Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved."

<sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat, and let it fall off.

<sup>33</sup> And while the daybreak was coming on, Paul was encouraging them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you are continuing, waiting, without eating, having taken nothing.

<sup>34</sup> "Therefore I encourage you to take some food, for this is for your preservation, for not a hair from the head of any of you will perish."

<sup>35</sup> And when he had said this, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of all; and he broke it and began to eat.

<sup>36</sup> Then they were encouraged, and they also took food.

<sup>37</sup> And we were in all two hundred and seventy-six persons in the ship.

<sup>38</sup> And when they had eaten enough, they were lightening the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

### ***The Shipwreck***

<sup>39</sup> And when it was day, they were not recognizing the land; but they were observing a certain bay with a beach, and they were resolving if they might be able to run the ship aground.

<sup>40</sup> And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes of the rudders, and hoisting the foresail to the wind, they were making for the beach.

<sup>41</sup> But striking a reef where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the bow struck and remained immovable, but the stern *began* to break up by the force of *the waves*.

<sup>42</sup> And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape;

<sup>43</sup> but the centurion, wishing to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should throw themselves overboard first, and get to land,

<sup>44</sup> and the rest *should follow*, some on planks, and others on pieces from the ship. And so it was that they all were brought safely to land.

## 28

### ***Paul and the Island of Malta***

<sup>1</sup> And when we had been brought safely through, then we learned that the island was called Malta.

<sup>2</sup> And the natives showed us no common kindness, for they kindled a fire and received us all, because of the rain that had set in, and because of the cold.

<sup>3</sup> But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

<sup>4</sup> And when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they were saying to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has been brought safely through the sea, *the goddess Justice*<sup>a</sup> has not allowed him to live."

<sup>5</sup> However he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.

<sup>6</sup> But they were expecting that he was about to swell up or suddenly fall down dead; but when they had waited a long time and saw nothing unusual happening to him, they changed their minds and were saying that he was a god.

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *dikē* (δική); "Justice personified as a deity **Ac 28:4**" (BDAG, 250).

<sup>7</sup> Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the leading *official* of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us courteously three days.

<sup>8</sup> And it happened that the father of Publius was lying sick with fever and dysentery, to whom Paul, having approached and prayed, laid his hands on him and healed him.

<sup>9</sup> And when this had taken place, the rest of *the people* on the island also who had diseases were coming and being cured.

<sup>10</sup> They also honored us with many honors; and when we were setting sail, they put on board all we needed.

### **Paul Arrives at Rome**

<sup>11</sup> And after three months we set sail in a ship which had wintered in the island, *a ship* of Alexandria, which had the Twin Brothers<sup>a</sup> for its figurehead.

<sup>12</sup> And having put in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days.

<sup>13</sup> And from there we made a circuit and arrived at Rhegium; and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli.

<sup>14</sup> There we found *some* brothers and sisters, and were invited to stay with them seven days; and so we came to Rome.

<sup>15</sup> And the brothers and sisters, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us, whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.

<sup>16</sup> And when we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself with the soldier who was guarding him.

### **Paul Proclaims in Rome**

<sup>17</sup> And it happened that after three days he called together those who were the leaders of the Jews, and when they had come together, he said to them, "Brethren, though I had done nothing against the people or the customs of our ancestors, yet I was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

<sup>18</sup> "And when they had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty, because there was no reason for *the death penalty* in my *case*.

<sup>19</sup> "But when the Jews spoke against it, I was forced to appeal to Caesar; not that I had any accusation against my nation.

<sup>20</sup> "For this reason, therefore, I have invited you to see and to speak with *me*, for I am wearing this chain for the hope of Israel."

<sup>21</sup> And they said to him, "We have neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren come here and reported or spoken any evil about you.

<sup>22</sup> "But we desire to hear from you, what you think; for concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against."

<sup>23</sup> And when they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in great numbers, and he was expounding *the matter* to them by solemnly testifying to the Kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Yeshua, from both the Torah of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.

<sup>24</sup> And some were being persuaded by the things spoken, and some were not believing.

<sup>25</sup> And when they did not agree among themselves, they were dismissed after Paul had spoken one word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your ancestors,

<sup>26</sup> saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE, AND SAY, "IN HEARING YOU WILL HEAR, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE, BUT WILL IN NO WAY PERCEIVE;

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<sup>a</sup> "the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux" (NIV).

<sup>27</sup> FOR THIS PEOPLE'S HEART HAS BECOME DULL, AND THEIR EARS ARE HEAVY OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED; LEST THEY MIGHT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM" [Isaiah 6:9-10]<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> "Let it be known to you therefore, that this salvation of God has been sent to the nations; they will also listen."

<sup>29</sup> [And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, having a great dispute among themselves.]<sup>b</sup>

<sup>30</sup> And he stayed two whole years in his own rented quarters, and was welcoming all who came to him,

<sup>31</sup> proclaiming the Kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Yeshua with all boldness, unhindered.

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<sup>a</sup> "And He said, 'Go, and tell this people: "Keep on listening, but do not perceive; keep on looking, but do not understand." Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed" (Isaiah 6:9-10, PME).

<sup>b</sup> Note that not all manuscripts include the extended reading of 28:29, and so it has been placed in brackets [] per the NASB (cf. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 502).