

ARAMAIC ALBUM NO.5


ACTS OF THE

APOSTLES

**THE MASTER'S
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THE BOOK OF ACTS-ARAMAIC COMMENTARY

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INTRODUCTION

This book has a fascinating “key” –the tell-tale word “when” **ܘܢܢ** which is “the” omnipresent marker used by Luke not only as a mere temporal pronoun but also in the it’s linguistic root cousin **ܘܢܢ** which means “yoke” or “coupling”. “When” is technically in Aramaic not an adverb but a conjunction designating an instant in time or a linkage of complimentary events. Though it is primarily a time marker it is more. It serves as an indicator of the sovereignty of the Lord in time. It confirms a complimentary divine hand at multiple vital points in the narrative of Acts. It shows the divine hand moving behind events. It manifests as Paul say s in Romans that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. This quite the most familiar word of Acts highlights events where the Lord is working with the church and the apostle(s) (Mark16.10)confirming His words by signs accompanying it”. The conjunction signals “spiritual roots” of “common events”- like a scout’s symbol marking the pathway ahead the Lord’s hand shadows the apostles in this second book to Theophilus with it’s frequent and repeated testimony to “the Lord working with them”.

Thus the “Acts of the Apostles” is veritably what AT Pierson took it to be- “The acts of the Holy Spirit” grosses up not merely as primitive church history but as spiritual history of the early first century spreading flame of Christianity where numerous apparently dislocated events are patently linked by a very evident divine provenance, intervention and source.

Whatever assiduous editorial work and research Luke undertook his purpose in writing is fully aligned with the gospel and its humble aim is to show that the Lord is at work ostensibly and without any shadow of doubt day by day in the life of the saints. So it was and so it is for those “intimate” with the Lord even in the 21st century-indeed as His Second Coming approaches and the harvest grows mightily His workmen and women need to be re-established in this truth of His sovereignty in the day to day development of the work on earth-uncannily but unerringly directing it to that once far off now more nearly approaching goal of His glorious return synchronized with the fulfillment of the work of the church. The chapter sub-heads typify the spread of the rule of Christ over the first 2 decades of the church as the Lord worked through His Spirit among His people.

ACTS CHAPTER 1

SOVEREIGN IN ZION ABOVE & BELOW

1. I wrote the earlier Book O Theophilus about all those things that our Lord Jesus the Messiah “unloosed” or “unbound” (*As in loosing paralysed limbs and silent tongues*) and “introduced” *releasing new teaching and expositions*). The “O” is a vocative of grief wonder or reproof-presumably not the latter. It may also be a distinguishing particle where the watershed would be the ascension. Actions and teachings were the subject of the former book and the possibility is that Theophilus might be the high priest himself-Theophilus was deposed by Agrippa who as Josephus said “**Had for minor cause been imprisoned with chains but after his fall gained greater dignity**”. Theophilus son of Ananus was not re-appointed but he may have been revered among the believers. Equally Luke **may be** expressing grief at Theophilus (AD 37-41) loss of office and who is to say this perspective may not be correct. (Josephus Antiquities 18.6.2). **▲If this Theophilus is the priestly man the date of the books of Luke and Acts is easily affirmed as 41 AD.**

2. Until the day He was taken up from after He was taken up after He had commanded the apostles whom He had chosen as corn fully ripe or gathered by the Holy Spirit. *The ripe harvest of Jesus’ ministry was at the point of the cross and resurrection and those apostles whom He selected were easily distinguished from tares-for example Judas was plainly separate. The Holy Spirit was also involved in the ministry of Matthias and especially Paul and Barnabas. This is the significance of “Separate unto me”.*

3. To those He also showed himself-His very soul-after He suffered by many signs over 40 days **when (1)** He had appeared to them –He expounded and reiterated for them **ܘܢܢ** the topic of the kingdom of God. **This first “when” serves as a reminder for all time that the intervention of heaven and its continual provenance behind all news and emergent events is a constant. As daily Jesus was present and moving with His people so today he is unchangeably the same. The foremost topic of Christ Risen was the “kingdom” not of men but of God. He was committing all the apostles to the future rule of God and investing all in the church to carry the news of the kingdom to the world and to live for the Kingdom and to seek first the kingdom and**

to herald the coming King. It is of interest that Poland declared Christ its king 2018 with the effect of distinguishing it from secular and Islamic principles.

4. And **when** (2) He ate bread with them He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the declaration ~~of~~ of the Father which you have heard of me. *The **second** “when” of the book may be one event or incorporate meetings after the first Sunday but it does predict firmly a “paraclete” and the continued and powerful grasp of the Lord by the Spirit on the Spirit on the history of the church of which the Book of Acts is the first instalment. The promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit was the Father’s plan and mighty contribution to the success of the Kingdom project. Everywhere the power of God could be expressed and effective through the church. Not excluded is the probability that our Lord appeared conversed or ate oftentimes with the apostles.*

5 John baptized in water and you shall be baptized in the Spirit of Holiness and not after many days. *The Kingdom’s fulfilment is not to be confused with the power by which it will be released. The penetrating and immersing ~~and~~ of the believers in God the Holy Ghost signifies their whole and entire absorption into the dynamic concept and power of God for witness and expansion of the kingdom.*

6 But **conversely when** (3) *they were assembled as a fellowship* they asked Him saying to Him “Our Lord would it be in this time that you will convert or turn back or cause a reversal of the decline of the Kingdom for Israel? *The **third** “when” pinpoints a meeting when a question is posed. “When will the kingdom come?” They meet and He clarifies the uncertainty concerning the great divine event of His return and in so doing lays stress on the divine interventions and provenance going on increasingly towards that far off unalterable epoch making sequel-the eschatological glory of Christ’s return. ▲ The independence of the nation of Israel waited until 1948 –over 1900 years beyond the time in question. All that time the Holy Spirit has been ministering among the Gentiles for the most part. The miracle of the “ascendant moon” of Israel has begun and one cannot but feel that what the apostles dreamed of and gave their lives for is even now under way.*

7. He impresses on them that it was not for them to know the time or times which the Father has established and set in his own absolute power. *The origin of seasons and their duration is a matter for God to determine. History is His.*

8. But when the Spirit of Holiness will come over you, you will receive power *which will aggregate might or miracle and impartation-distinctly the capacity to prevail* and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and also in the house of the Samaritans and unto the ends of the earth.

9. And **when** (4) He had spoken these things when they were watching Him he was taken up and a cloud received Him and He was hidden from their eyes. *Scarce anywhere has heaven and earth seemed so near as in this **fourth** “when”-in the ascension when the apostles fancied they could peer into glory. In this as in the Baptism and on the Mount the accent is on the “yoking” of the sublime and the ordinary-the spiritual and the secular, the Holy Spirit and Church History. They could feel his blessing-his power was demonstrated-His welcome beyond was undoubted.*

10 And **when** (5) they were gazing into the sky when He was going away two powerful men in white shining clothes were found present ~~and~~ standing and remaining with them. *The **fifth** “when” records God deliberately stationing two men from beyond-persons from glory-with the apostles-providing an indication that God cares not to insulate heavenly beings from his saints on earth-indeed he revels in the occasional surprise for those intimate with Him. Paul could say “be meekly adorned for angels visit amongst you”. The sudden appearance of men from glory was a surprise but it shows that people can come from heaven on cue and we are not to think obscurants about the return of our Lord for His church. It also shows that the Lord revels in the church triumphant as in the church militant –He is the bridegroom.*

11 And the men were saying “Galileans Why do you continue to stand gazing into the heavens? This very same Yeshua who was taken up from you to heaven shall come in this manner exactly how you have seen him rising up ~~and~~ (as smoke might) into heaven.

12 And from after this they got themselves back to Jerusalem from the Mount that is called Bith Zitha which is on the side of Jerusalem and separated from it by about 7 furlongs. *The precise point of the ascension is virtually a mile to the east of the golden gate.*

13 And from after they entered they themselves ascended to an upper room –that in which Peter and John and James and Andrew and Philip and Thomas and Matthew and Bartholmai and James BarAlphai and Simon the zealot and Judas BarYakov were staying. *The upper room was very commodious and it could clearly be hired or was owned by a friend –but it was used over time by the Galileans.*

14 These all were faithfully continuing as one in prayerful leaning on God in oneness or singleness of life with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with His brothers. *There is a splendid intimacy and*

union now between the Lord's family and the apostles which also included the women to whom the apostles were married and clearly Magdalene. There was mutual support and this was obviously not a problem over almost 6 weeks. The believers had excellent cohesion.

15 And among them Simon Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples –there existed there an assembly of exactly 120 and he expounded. *Peter was undertaking the task the Lord set him in Galilee leading the sheep pastorally.*

16 “Men, brothers, it was right that the scripture should be fulfilled-that which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David about Judas –he who was guide to those who held Jesus captive. ▲ *Judas is listed as a “recorder” “chronicler” as if he wrote down details of Christ's movements but it also means leader and pilot –so one who guided them.*

17 Because He was numbered with us and there existed a part or lot in this ministry...*The idea of ministry in Aramaic is of the deliverance of light and life –the work with which the sun is tasked by God.*

18 He bought a field for himself from the reward of sin and fell upon his face on the earth and burst within like fruit and all his organs inside poured out as a torrent. *This terrible death mirrors the rottenness within but the “hanging” is not mentioned in the Aramaic-just his deadly fall.*

19 This is known to all who stay in Jerusalem and so that field was called in the language of the region **ܩܡܬܗ** (Aramaic) Haqeldama of which the current or existing translation is “field of blood”. *The Aramaic is being translated by Luke into Hebrew here showing that even in Jerusalem Aramaic was the current lingua franca.*
20 It is written in Psalms “His dwelling shall be desolate-no dweller in it; his ministry another “different one” shall take”. The “ministry” which like that of the sun ever continued fell to Paul though it was shared for a time by Joseph Barsabas also called Justus and Matthias. The point of “difference” **ܩܡܬܗ** in faithfulness is seen clearly in the ministry Paul received by the favour of God.

21-22 It is “suitable” “fitting” and “right” that it is one who was with the disciples from John's baptism until Jesus resurrection as a witness to the resurrection. Thus one who was at least on the mountain or even in the upper room and on the Mount of Beatitudes and the Mount of Olives. The **ܩܡܬܗ** QIMTHA is the “standing corn” or the “monument” or the “flourishing” and “remaining” Christ. The idea of continuity of witness grants connection between **incarnation** and the ministry of **teaching death and resurrection and ascension** of Christ-five key aspects of the Lord's life. These narrow to the Lord's flourishing and remaining of which Paul could testify.

23 And they raised up or made to stand two men. One was Joseph son of Shaba-“son of a captive” or “robber” who had another name in Latin “Justus”-and Matthias-whose name means “The Lord came” or “The Lord arrived”. On the mere basis of names and background the second was much preferable. That there was a man who had some Roman connection and was also product of questionable background did not matter-they were both considered.

24 They prayed and then said “You Lord know all hearts show which you have chosen **ܩܡܬܗ**”

25 That he should receive “title” of the ministry and apostleship of sending from which Judas separated in abandonment to go away to “His place” –a deserted realm.

26 And it came up or lifted up Matthias like the flood lifted the ark. This describes a mounting vote in favour of Matthias. They had a show of hands and it was not even then instant but it grew quite obvious he was chosen. ▲ This “cheirotonic” choice was not ceded to Paul who was not of the twelve but a late apostle –No.13 and not the apostle of the Jews but sent to the Gentiles and not the Jews of the diaspora specifically. *The detail of this appointment would be relevant to and of great interest to one who had been high priest of Israel were Theophilus indeed the recipient of this history. The fact that the Gospel he previously read finished at Bethany means that this event and appointment takes us from that point seamlessly.*

CHAPTER 2

SOVEREIGN IN COVENANT POWER(THE SPIRIT)

1 And **when** (6) the days of Pentecost were complete **ܩܡܬܗ** when all of them were gathered (as chickens under the wing or “as milk curdled in one butter lump” or “as tax in one cash lot” or “stories bound in one book”) as ONE **ܩܡܬܗ** This **sixth** “when” involves the most highly charged spiritual event of the spiritual era since Jesus' incarnate ministry-the coming of the blessed Holy Spirit.

2 There was ▲ a sound or tune **from stillness** or calm and quiet at once as a vehement, calling beautiful sonorous voice carrying **ܩܡܬܗ** overpowering enduring **ܩܡܬܗ** wind **QALA AIK RUHA from heaven** and **from the wind** the whole room where they were sitting was filled. *This is not a “raging” storm-it is not even a storm at all- but rather a powerful song or message in the air like mighty gusts of praise.*

3 And there appeared to them tongues that had divided exactly like light. Luke avoids “lightning” ⲛⲓⲛⲁ and speaks of light ⲛⲓⲛⲁ though the division of fire is an upwards division and that of lightning a downwards division. He is speaking of the division of light in lightning but not the flashing and momentary nature of the flames-he “sat” on the believers. The numerous flames suggest a running fire and it is not “the tongues” but its instigator-the Spirit ⲛⲓⲛⲁ who abides with each of them or “one and another” of them.

4 And all of them were filled in the Spirit of holiness (The Holy Spirit) ⲁ and they actively proceeded towards or translated into [Aphel causative of ⲁⲛⲁ basically means they “added”] a language and interestingly in the Aphel tense [without the *Aphel deprivative*] the meaning is “they went forward to add” in a procedure of the Spirit. So they “published” the message –even “hatching” an unlearned language – precisely whatever language the Spirit was giving them to speak. The ministry of the Spirit was miraculous and consequently those who heard gave them with immediacy their ministry and very possibly directed where their futures were cast.

5 The “but” of verse five ⲛⲓⲛⲁ DEIN in Aramaic relates to **rule and judgment** so the existence of god-fearing men from all nations under heaven in Jerusalem is *like the arrival of the animals to Noah’s ark a matter of sovereign providence*. But is a “declaration of providence” not just an adversative but participates in the idea of “**the converse**” ruling of God–i.e. God working in circumstances for the good or “**conversion**” of nations.

6 And when the sound ⲛⲓⲛⲁ or occurred-it was heavenly-it was intriguing as song-it was unique. It is quite boorish to call it a “noise” and inaccurate to call it a wind or storm-it did not blow anybody anywhere. As a wind “whistles” it had about it the characteristic of music but it seemed like modern amplification carrying voice and song. Alone it created huge interest and attention. The entire population of the city ⲛⲓⲛⲁ was “ruffled” in the sense of “moving like creatures in the wild stirring at something” but the verb ⲁⲛⲁ SHEGESH also means “coaxed” and “soothed”. It seems this experience like the Spirit moving on the waters brings much sought hope and joy out of chaos and deep need is being met by this “call” ⲛⲓⲛⲁ

7 And they were saying one to another in all these languages “Galilia” because they knew the men were all from Galilee where Jesus was. Their astonishment ⲛⲓⲛⲁ THAHAR and amaze or *trembling wonder* was connected to the event and the Galileans and Jesus. The Greek does not have “one to another” showing the more precise data available through the Aramaic MSS.

8-11 “Exactly how do we man after man hear this in the language of our birth?” These men were born in Parthia Media Elam Bayth Nahrayn “between the rivers” (In Greek Meso(s) potamos) Judea, Qapodoqia (Cappodocians-a name that in Aramaic means “bristling with fear”) and those from Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libyan Cyrene or coastal Libya, Jewish proselytes from Rome, Cretes and Arabs –we hear some of the speakers ⲛⲓⲛⲁ MANHON D’MALLALIN in our own languages the amazing wonders of God. Their topics must have been the death resurrection and ascension of Jesus-hence the Galilee connection.

12 However, that is to say all had been trembling ⲛⲓⲛⲁ and shocked or dazed ⲛⲓⲛⲁ (with the sort of bewilderment or shock that lasts for 30 days) and saying each to the other “what is this thing or possession” ⲛⲓⲛⲁ (base word) ⲛⲓⲛⲁ (actual word). *The people had assessed this as “possession” but knew it was not demonic since it produced many languages simultaneously and defied all normality of acquisition of language.*

13 However, there was a different group mocking them ⲛⲓⲛⲁ (this word is taken precisely from Aramaic to English-“Mock” is an Aramaic root word) saying they are “intoxicated” ⲛⲓⲛⲁ

14 After this Simon Peter stood up with the one and ten apostles and raised his voice and said to them “Jews –**valiant ones or men of fortitude** and all who live in Jerusalem cause this to be made known to you and heed or obey ⲛⲓⲛⲁ my words.

15 For (it) is not as you are supposing proclaiming “These are drunk”-*sending out news*. Peter is objecting to “fake news”. For behold until this moment there are but three hours” (of daylight). *The simple Aramaic of Peter is precisely retailed here.*

16 But this is what was spoken by Joel the prophet (830-750BC). Joel 2.28-32. For the Jews this was a long term prophecy fulfilled and evidence that however long it may take God fulfils His promises.

The wheels of God grind slowly but they grind exceeding small.

17 “It shall be in later or delayed or remaining days” ⲛⲓⲛⲁ God says “I will pour out “as tears” or “as blood” my Spirit (The expression means God in glory like Christ on earth is giving all. One can understand the Eastern Church teaching that God alone gives the Spirit. “And your sons and daughters shall prophecy and

you young becoming youths אֲנֹכִי shall see or consider and provide visions and your elders or grandparents or older brothers shall dream healthy restorative dreams אֲנִי

18 And on my servants and mother's handmaids I will pour out my Spirit in those days and they will prophecy.

19 And I will give signs or covenant signs of approaching things (as a covenant or will re death) in the heavens and deeds of military might on earth –blood and fire and smoke clouds.

20 The sun shall be changed into obscurity or concealment and the moon into blood until the great and dreadful day of Yahwe comes.▲ Thus this is not a mere eclipse –this is a darkness and a conversion of the ministry of both orbs *before* and *until* the awesome day. The Aramaic“AD” אֲדָ on its own simply means “until” or “during a period or perhaps a lifetime”. So the expression intentionally means from the event of the obscuration the sun and moon remain opaque issuing in fearful consequences.

21 And everyone who calls on the “name of Maryah” shall be saved. This is the word that the disciples always associated with Jesus. He is Lord and God only wise. In Him is life and salvation.

22 **Valiant men** Sons of Israel hear these words “Jesus of Nazareth **the Valiant man** who has appeared from God belonging to you (your people) with mighty works signs and miracles that God did by His hand exactly as you experience אֲנִי

23 Concerning this very one אֲנִי separated or set apart to God in the prior אֲנִי awareness and will of God you handed over to wicked hands crucified and murdered.

24 But God raised Him and▲ He annihilated or unbound/ “repudiated the partnership of”/“revoked the law of”/ “cut the knot of” travail or perishing or corruption אֲנִי of Sheol because it was not possible He should be held in Sheol. *Peter was speaking as usefully as Paul in Athens and his practical and simple observations are as profound and go further than Paul who was cut off in full flow-though the apostle of the Gentiles repaired the deficit in 1Cor 15 and 2 Cor6. This unbinding of bonds is by the power of God in Christ. The “pangs of Sheol” is George Lamsa’s rendering. This is good-it accords with Psalm 18 4-5 & 116.3.*

25 For David said about Him ““From early I was seeing אֲנִי as “the provided lamb” “as face to face” my Lord at all times –the one who was on my right (as an armour-bearer) so that I was not “agitated” “disturbed” “unstable” or “struggling” אֲנִי

26 “Because my heart is soothed as with fragrant incense or perfume and **my praise** or hymn or canticle or musical instrument(s) אֲנִי is intoxicated or satiated אֲנִי *David is ecstatic with praise.* And my body shall rest אֲנִי (GEN speaks of “being protected” or “overshadowed” by God’s keeping or power) in gospel hope or good news hope אֲנִי

27“Because You did not let my soul “remain” אֲנִי in Sheol and You did not give to your separated one that He would see or “consider” “marred covenant” or “travail” or “destruction” אֲנִי

28 “You have demonstrated to me the (carriage) way of life; You fill me with the setting forth אֲנִי of the showbread of Your Presence or person.” The problem with BASIMUTHA is that it has no “with” but reads “You fill me sweetness or gladness” (feminine). Besides “sweetness” is a feminine term and it is argued that it is a word personifying God in the feminine and so inappropriate. ▲ But the “setting forth” although also feminine is not a personification but a statement about “**filling** with spiritual food” in the bread of life and “bread” אֲנִי is at any rate “masculine” “B’SIMUTHA is the “placing” or “portion” of Your presence like the **showbread** fresh every day. It ahs been shown that the “sweetness”. Both translations are interesting.

29 “Valiant men, brothers the lot falls to me/ I have permission to speak with uncovered and open eyes to you about the “best” or “chief” or “headstream” father David who died and was also buried and the place of his burial exists untouched or open אֲנִי till today”

30 For he was a prophet and he was aware of an oath God had sworn to him “that from the fruit of your body I shall sit upon your throne.” ▲*It is notable that Peter puts no object to this statement other than the one who swore as if the same one is the one who fulfils the prophecy.*

31 And he saw early and spoke of the resurrection of Messiah “That He should not remain in Sheol and His body should not see destruction.

32 This very אֲנִי Yeshua God ahs raised up and we are all His witnesses.

33 And He is the one who lives exalted at the right hand of God and **He has received from the Father the declaration or promise which is about the Spirit of Holiness and has poured out אֲנִי (with extravagance) this gift (giving Himself) אֲנִי which is what you are seeing and hearing.** *Peter was stating that God’s own being was involved in the outpouring as it was involved in the incarnate sitting on the*

throne. In a sense the Omniscience of God was well understood by Peter who said “There God was in Christ on the throne, here God was by the Spirit on earth.

34 For David is not “ascending or ascended to heaven” because Jehovah **יהוה** specifically said to my Lord **יְהוָה** “You sit at my right hand”. Peter is not denying that David’s soul is in heaven but he is denying that He is at God’s right hand of power and he is not claiming for David a similar bodily demonstration as that of the risen Lord.

35 “Until I place your “Lord of flies/locusts” (enemy) as a footstool” **חַבְלֵי** (The word is a cognate of “subjecting to the plough” so enemies are understood to be subjugated to Christ through God’s fieldwork.

36 In reality let the whole house of Israel therefore or “after this” **אַחַר** that God **יהוה** has made this Yeshua that you crucified Jehovah **יהוה** and Messiah **מָשִׁיחַ**

37 And **When (7)** they heard these words they were “wounded with sorrow” **אֵכָבֵד** in their hearts. The verb **אָכַב** is in the Ethpael which is intensive and the reference to the heart indicates “sorrow”. They desired to act to remedy their critical situation before God. They already felt a family bond with the apostles. *This is the glorious **seventh** “when” of the book and it spells the phenomenal work of the Holy Spirit in granting repentance to three thousand people. It is harbinger of all the great mission outreaches and crusading triumphs of the gospel ever since. Here Peter and the apostles are yoked to the work of the Holy Spirit intimately and mightily.*

38 And Simon said “Turn to God and be immersed **טָבַח** (as in the sea) man by man from you in the name of MaryahYashua to leave your sins that you may receive the gift of the Spirit of holiness.

39 For this promise, declaration or protasis about the Holy Spirit is to you and to your sons and those afar off whom God **יהוה** will call. Peter was adamant that the gospel call was to go wide and to all nations.

40 With many different words he was witnessing and pleading with them when he said “Live/be saved/recover from this crafty perverted or crooked **מַחֲסֵד** generation.”

41 And valiant men from among them were prepared or equipped **מְצוּדִים** to receive the word –they believed and were immersed and there were added on that day three thousand souls. *Luke presents this as army recruitment. It was a challenging message and received an overwhelming response.*

42 And they faithfully remained in the apostles’ teaching (literally “added Amen” to this teaching). And they were sharing in prayerful “leaning” or “turning aside (to God)” and in **the breaking** of the Eucharist. ▲The “breaking” signifies “morsel” **מַחֲסֵד**. *This is best understood as the “dipped morsel” which signifies special friendship. Judas received such a morsel from the Lord. In Passover each breaks off a small morsel and so it became the custom with Christians to imitate this most intimate symbol of close relationship.*

▲THE SEVENFOLD CREATIVE DIFFERENCE THAT THE CHURCH MAKES

43 Fearfulness or worshipful awe –she was beginning or originating as a primary influence **אֵתָרַע** part of every soul and many signs and mighty or prevailing acts came into existence occurring by the hand of the apostles at Jerusalem. A new reverence for God came from Pentecost.

44 And all those who believed had an original or new-created oneness akin to that of the trinity and everything that belonged to them began to be within the body heart or community **אִתָּם**. *In these verses 43-45 five times Luke uses the verb to be in a double sense. 1. **Worshipping with reverence** of a new sort began as a primary factor in life 2. **Prevailing signs & exploits** began as a primary factor in life where God gave signs and believers acted bravely in faith-of Stephen Philip Peter & Paul. 3. **Sharing** of possessions began as a primary factor of life. 4. **Selling** and beginning as a primary factor of life providing for the needy all their needs.*

45 And those things that were bought or inherited they were selling of it and in a new departure they began **5. Dividing** man by man exactly in accordance with what was needed.

46 And every day remaining faithful in the temple with one soul and in houses they were breaking the bread morsel of kindness and beginning to receive nourishment or that which sustained **מִמֶּנּוּ** from **מִמֶּנּוּ** as food itself is a matter of waiting and trusting God for harvest. When they thrived and **6. Rejoicing** like a garden with many kinds of fruits “simply” **בְּרִצְוֹתָם** or without daily care or liberty of mind. *Again Luke speaks of new departure a sort of harvest rejoicing so appropriate to Pentecost and new fruits and again he uses the verb “to be” twice.*

47 And they were praising God **when (8)** they were given in deep compassionate affection before all the people of the city and the Lord was creatively adding every day those who were beginning life in the **church assembly**. *This final new departure 7. **Loving with new deep affection** for souls as God began every day to add souls to their fellowship. Baucher has a very interesting take on the Aramaic word “assembly” where*

עַד כֵּן comes from two roots- “until” and “come” so the church or assembly is the gathering together “until He comes” somewhat like Ekklesia which focuses on our being “called out”. Communion retains the same focus-“This do until He comes!”

CHAPTER 3 ONE SOVEREIGN NAME

1 And **when** (9) Simon Cephas and Johanan went up as one to the temple at the time of prayer (שְׁמֵרָה ZALOTHA) it was the ninth hour. *Luke observes it was when the Lord gave up His spirit on the cross. The eighth “when” begins another day with the same reliable divine interpenetration of each new day in the apostles’ lives as in our own. This “beautiful work” as it is later described is none other than the act of Jesus of Nazareth as Peter declares.*

2 And behold **ONE** man crippled impeded fettered (שָׁבִיב) from his mother’s womb. Those burly men keeping appointment (daily) were bringing him and setting him at **the gate of the temple which is called SHAPHIRA** (שַׁפְּרָיָה) (1) **“beautiful dawn” or “glimmering light”** to be there **a-praying for “the right” or “alms** (שְׂמֵרָה), *Scripture upholds the right of the poor for consideration. His was an agreeable prayer and people passing gave to him “righteous alms”. The gate stood 75feet high and 60 wide. It was Corinthian brass overlaid by heavy silver and gold plate –larger than the other 9gates and more richly adorned to boot.*

3 **When** (10) this man saw Simon and John coming into the temple he was pleading from them to give him righteous charity. *It was the hour of prayer but this man had a sing song prayer and needed to raise his game-he needed to see the penury of the divine apostolic suppliants whose trust with Jesus of Nazareth was their goal. He needed to recall the name that was all over Jerusalem –the Saviour who was the true “righteous gift” of God to Israel. He needed to walk and “to walk with God”. Into that life came the healing and “making whole” of the Master. The lame man became hinged or “yoked” to the Lord and His apostles.*

4 And Simon and John fixed their gaze on him and said “Fix your gaze on us”. *The man was turning to others who were entering in hope of money.*

5 By contrast he looked steadfastly (שָׁבִיב) at them hoping for good news that he was to hope for something (In the way of money) from them.

6 Simon said to him “Gold and silver is not anywhere near me but the thing I have I give you. **In the name of Jesus of Nazareth** stand up, walk.”

7 And he took hold of him by the right arm and raised him and in that moment his legs and feet were strong and trustworthy (שָׁבִיב)

8 And he was “bounding away” (שָׁבִיב) –he stood-and he walked and entered with them to the temple –**when** (11) he was walking he was jumping and praising God. *Luke gives this faithful account of the man’s new life-of the “spiritual” aspect of the healing both in praise and prayer. The whole tenor of Luke’s writing is designed to bring his reader intimately close to the Lord in full awareness of God’s immanence.*

9 And the people knew that he was the vagrant buttonholer or “hinge” (שָׁבִיב) –*Luke is playing on the idea of the Beautiful Gate and the vagrant who sat like a hinge at the gate of the temple.* The people knew he was the “hinge” of the gate which had been called “Beautiful” (שַׁפְּרָיָה) (2) and they were filled with rigidity or “they were speechless” (שָׁבִיב) and trembling amazement at the thing that happened. *The beautiful gate gives rise to a use of this word in the text over and over again by Luke who appears to use the idea of its intricacy and concern for detail in his text over the next few chapters.*

10 And **when** (12) he was holding (like a hinge) to Simon and John all the people ran while they were marveling to the porch that is called that of **Solomon or “peace” or “health and welfare”** or “consent and agreement”. *The lame man swapped his disability for glorious fitness and the Lord showed Himself in being present to heal. The porch of Solomon became the sign of a healthful peace and united consent to the reality of God with us in power on the part of the people.*

11 And **when** (13) Simon gazed at them he answered and said to them “Valiant ones and sons of Isaac and Jacob-“Why wonder or “tremble with astonishment” (שָׁבִיב) at this –or at us? Why do you gaze steadfastly at us-exactly as if it was by power that belongs to us or by our absolute authority we have made this man walk? 13 He, God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob –the Strong God of our fathers has glorified His Son Yashua-He whom you handed over and wiped out or blotted out (שָׁבִיב) before the face of Pilate when had judged aright to “validate or judge as true or free(Him)” (שָׁבִיב)

14 You conversely (or) on the other hand by holiness blotted out the righteous one and prayed for a man who was a murderer to be given you.

15 And you killed the head and ruler of eternal life whom God of strength raised up from among the dead – of which we are all witnesses.

16 And by the faith or trust in His name this **one** whom you are gazing at and whom you know well He has restored and healed and faith in Him has given him this health before you all. *Again Luke records the words of Peter attesting the work of the risen Christ and giving glory to the Lord who continued the work and ministry He had begun in the flesh through the operation of the Holy Spirit and miracle.*

17 **But now Brothers I know that by mistake or oblivion** ~~لقد~~ you did this exactly as did your rulers.

18 And God heralded this exact matter before by the mouth of all the prophets that His anointed Messiah would suffer and He has fulfilled this.

19 Therefore repent and be converted exactly (or precisely in the same way) your sins will be **blotted out** ~~لقد~~ and times of refreshing or rather **rest-like the quiet of recovery from illness** ~~لقد~~ will come from before the person of Maryah. *The Apostle was confident that the repentance of Israel would result not in the return of Christ but in the coming of times of spiritual refreshment. God was at work and the response of repentance would demonstrate just how wonderfully so when hearts were melted by His love..*

20 And He will send that one who was prepared for you. *The RT has “was “heralded”.*

21 Whom as belonging heaven it must and will receive ~~لقد~~ (as one carrying his plea before the judge-and defending us) right until the conclusion or the treaty or fullness of times concerning all of which God spoke by the mouth of His ancient prophets who were from the age gone by (~~لقد~~ *the millennium past*)

22 For Moses said that “Jehovah will raise for you a prophet exactly like me –Him you will obey in everything He will speak to you.”

23 And it will be so that every soul that will not hear that prophet –that soul will perish from the people. *This is a millennial doctrine and a matter of judgment.*

24 And all the prophets from Samuel and those that followed have heralded these days.

25 You are the sons and heirs of the prophets and of the covenant which God appointed our fathers when He said to Abraham “In your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed” This ~~لقد~~ runs across the generations since and encompasses the “nations” of the world.

26 And to you first *God appointed and sent His Son* while actively blessing you if you are converted and turn from your sad illness or evil malady. ~~لقد~~ *Luke is clearly very taken by Simon’s analysis of Israel’s malady in the light of the lame man’s illness.*

CHAPTER 4

SOVEREIGN GRACE AND TRUTH

1 And **when (14)** they were uttering these words as they were in the act of speaking to the people of the city the priests and Zaduqia and the rulers of the temple rose against them. *The fact is the Rulers took a very different view and showed a diametrically opposite response to the lame man-they too rose but they rose “against” the apostles. The malady had been diagnosed but the priests who were called to bring people close to God, forfeited the blessing of peace with God by refusing the verdict and attacked the emissaries of Christ. The “words” of Peter were inspired by the Holy Spirit. The legal priestly ministry was impotent-the spiritual prophetic ministry was lively.*

2 And **when (15)** they had been enraged (with hot anger) against them who were teaching the people and heralding the resurrection from the dead by the Messiah. *This doctrine expressly displeased the Sadducees from which group the higher escalon of the priesthood was drawn.*

3 And they laid hands on them and guarded them until the following day because the evening ~~لقد~~ (so called from the sun “going low’). *It was almost 6pm and they had come to the temple for 3pm.*

4 And many who were “born” or “occasioned to be” there or “began” there hearing the word began believing and there were (born)in the exact region of 5000 brave hearts ~~لقد~~ *Luke is playing as ever with his verb “to be” in a repetitive way and forever telling us of this “new generation” of believers coming to the birth. For him it is a wonderful story of re-creation of mankind. What Jesus began or was creating was continuing.*

5 And next day the rulers and Elders and Scribes gathered.

6 And also High Priest Hanan and Caipha and Johanan and Alexander and those who were from the family of the High Priest.

7 And **when (16)** they placed them in the midst they were asking them “By what power or by what Name are you doing this?”

8 At that precise time Simon Cepha was filled by the Holy Spirit and said to them “Rulers of the people and Elders of the House of Israel –listen!”

9 If we today have been judged (already) over **this “beautiful deed”** (3) **جَمَلًا** generated for this ill man that by what means he was healed

10 Let this be known by experience to you and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Yeshua Messiah Nazarene –He whom you crucified –He whom God raised from among the dead –behold is it by Him when this man stands before you whole.

11 **And when (17)** he was holding (like a hinge) Simon and John all the people ran when they were marveling to the porch that is called “Solomon’s” *The “union” of this man with the apostles was significant. It is a manifestation of the fact that the gate of his old hand to mouth life was nothing in comparison with the life he had by faith and the help he had by the servants of Jesus beyond the coins of wealthy Jews. The Spirit had opened the door of faith to this man.*

12 And **when (18)** Simon gazed answered and said to them “Valiant sons of Israel, why do you wonder at this or at us –why do you even contemplate **قُوَّة** that it is by our own power or authority that we have done this –that this man should walk.

13 The strong God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob-God of our fathers has sustained the repute and credit **شَرَفًا** belonging His creator Son Yeshua –He whom you handed over and renounced (as in apostasy) or “blotted out” **حُفَّت** from memory **حُفَّت** before the face of Pilate when he had rightly judged that he would unbind and free Him **جَمَلًا**

14 You conversely rejected or “blotted out” **حُفَّت** the Righteous in (His) holiness or consecration (to your salvation) and you asked for a notorious murderer to be given you.

15 And He who is ruler of *Eternal Life* you killed whom God in His strength raised from the dead and we –all of us-are witnesses.

16 And by faith in His “Name” this man whom you see and know well He (Jesus) has restored and healed and by faith towards Him has given him this fortitude strength or health **قُوَّة** before you all. *This eighteenth “occasion” noticing divine intervention gives testimony to the fact that “faith” in the name of Jesus changed the lame man’s life and will change the lives of all who call on Him.*

17 But, my brothers, know very well that by deception you did this exactly as your (Roman) rulers did.

18 And this exact matter God heralded before **by the mouth of all the prophets** that His anointed or Messiah would suffer He has thus fulfilled.

19 Therefore repent and be converted so your sins will exactly be blotted out **مُكْتَفًى** “covered” or “effaced” like a “debt cancelled”. *Peter here deliberately uses another word than simply “put out of memory” or “forgotten” or “covered” like the ark by tar. He uses a word that speaks of “resolved debt”. And there will come to you times of “rest” from the very person of Maryah (the Lord Himself)*

20 And He will send to you the one who was prepared for you. *Jesus prepared Himself as fruit is prepared even from the seed of Abraham and before that into eternal ages. The word **פֶּסַח** TOV is used of “Passover” and Peter is so aware that the Lord prepared Himself for crucifixion” and of course to give His people rest and freedom-this was the huge challenge he was issuing to the Jewish authorities. The Greek “who was preached” understates the matter of Christ’s Passover preparation-of God’s Passover plan which is the final piece of the jig saw of Peter’s argument to the Jewish religious leaders.*

21 And they threatened them and released them for they found not a “cause” **מִסָּדָה** (an “altar” or a “heading”) to pursue their “heads” because all the people were praising God for the thing that happened. *They had a sacrifice but not an altar.*

22 For the man to whom this sign of healing happened was more than 40 years of age.

23 And **when (19)** they were released **جَمَلًا** they came to the intimate fellowship of their brothers and related (literally **جَمَلًا** “played ball” or batted to and fro) the details of what the priests and elders had said.

24 (A) And **when (20)** they heard they lifted their voice to God and said “Maryah You are God in strength who made heaven and earth sea and all that is in them”.

25 And You are He who spoke by the Spirit of Holiness **by the mouth of your servant David**, “Why have the nations raged and the people “thought out” or “planned” **مُكْتَفًى** emptiness vanity idols or that which is unprofitable **مُهَيَّبًا**

26 The Kings of earth and rulers stood up and reigned as one against Maryah and against His Christ.

27 For really they gathered in this city against Your Holy Son Yeshua, whom You Anointed Herod and Pilate with the Gentiles and mobs of Israel.

28 To do all that your hand and your will beforetime engraved inscribed to happen.

29(B) And also now Maryah Behold and consider (for disapproval) their menaces **אָרְבֵּי** and give to your servants that they would preach your word publicly and boldly. *The “eye” of the public suggests something as evident as a public “fountain”. They wanted a great Engedi in Jerusalem-a spate of preaching and heralding of Christ to follow.*

30 **When (21)** You stretch out your hand for healing and for mighty acts and for signs to be created in the name of your Holy Son Jesus. *The apostles were praying the continued intervention of Christ. It was no use depending on themselves. “Lord use me” is good-but “Lord, stretch out your hand” is better. The early believers prayed alongside the Lord and lived out its belief in a mighty co-operative enterprise of heaven and earth-of the Lord and the servant-of the Spirit and the church.*

31 And **when (22) they pleaded and had whispered softly** and earnestly **אָרְבֵּי** the place in which they met was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they were speaking –*and clearly issuing out speaking the word of God “eyes in the open” each a little Engedi fountain or a river flowing. They were not in public but in a room but they were no longer whispering but heard one another in a crescendo of Spirit given voices.*

32 Conversely it **existed(by the Spirit’s creation)** for crowds of people –those who believed were of one soul and one intelligent mind and no-one from them said that the wealth of real estate he possessed was his own but all things they had were for general or common use or for inside use.

33 And with great strength those apostles were testifying of the resurrection of Yeshua the Messiah and there **existed (as by the Spirit’s creation)** great grace with them all.

34 And there was not a needy man among them for those who owned land or houses sold them and were bringing the price of those things that were sold.

35 And they were setting the gain at the feet of the apostles and that was given to any man exactly according to that need he had.

36 Conversely there was Joseph Barnabas which is translated “Son of comfort or consideration and understanding” **בָּרְנָבָא** / **בָּרְנָא** from the land of Cyprus.

37 And there existed a farm or **village hamlet** **כְּפָרִים** belonging him and he sold it and brought the price and set it before the feet of the apostles. *This is a very considerable act and in itself it probably secured the welfare of Jerusalem multitudes for quite some time. It was an act requiring several weeks of negotiation abroad and the estate involved was sizable.*

CHAPTER 5

SOVEREIGN OVER HIDDEN THINGS ,PLACES & HEARTS

1 **ONE** man named Hananiah (grace of God) with his wife whose name was Shaphira (4) **שָׁפִירָא** had sold his estate.

2 And he took from its value and he hid or concealed **אָרְבֵּי** it when his wife was aware of it (the disgraceful act) **אָרְבֵּי** and he brought some of the silver and set it at the feet of the apostles.

3 And Simon said to him “Hananiah, why has Satan thus filled your heart to defraud and deceive the Holy Spirit and to hide some of the silver from the value of the field?” *Now Simon was not an auctioneer but he would be aware over the weeks of this transaction of the land price-especially as Barnabas had made a similar sale.*

4 “Was it not yours till it was sold and from the time it was sold you had absolute authority over the sale price. Why have you placed in your heart to do this folly or depraved thing **אָרְבֵּי**? You have not cheated the sons of men but God!” *Because we have not the whole background we do not have proof of depravity but clearly the “deduction” was like taxable income undeclared. Hananiah was **cheating God** and dissimulating.*

5 And **when (23)** Hananiah heard these words he fell and died and great awe was among all those who heard of it. *This “when” solemnly affirms that the Lord respects vows and deals in judgment where vows are broken? The huge dislocation of society under the crisis of marriage in our era may well owe more to the law of divine retribution following broken vows and hardness of heart. We can be sure that Pharaoh like harshness of the human heart God hates.*

6 And those young men among them arose and gathered him together *as chickens under a wing (in his own garment)* and buried him. *The implication is that he was spread out in his death.*

7 And after three hours passed his wife entered who did not know what happened

8 And Simon said “Tell me if for this price you sold the estate?” and she said “Yes”. *Clearly this same dissimulation was the cause of the death of Hananiah. In this instance we are told explicitly that the statement is mendacious.*

9 And he said to her-“Because you have agreed to tempt the Holy Spirit of Maryah behold the feet of those who buried your husband are at the door and they will take you out. *The preparation and burial took all of three hours-it is unlikely that the wife was not called to witness that. It is the more solemn if confronted with her husband’s death she did not confess sin-it just maybe she had not participated in the burial ceremony which by custom men undertook.*

10 And **at that moment** she fell at their feet and died and those young men entered and found her dead and took her up and carried her out and buried her at her husband’s side.

11 And there was great awe in the whole church and among those who heard.

12 And there were signs and many mighty acts by the hand of the apostles and they all congregated as one in the porch of Solomon.

13 And from among the people not another man made brave to come near the apostles (with an offering) but the people of the city accorded them renown.

14 And there were won and remained added to them more-those who were believing in Maryah by *generation* –multitudes of men and women.

15 **They were bringing into the markets the sick while they laid them out on beds or cloth precisely** **كسوا** *as one might place produce or articles for sale in the manner of the east setting merchandise on the ground but on rugs...* that when Simon will come his shadow might rest on or recline over them **كسوا**

16 Conversely, crowds were coming intimate from other cities that surrounded Jerusalem like market areas and they were bringing to them their sick and those who had unclean spirit is and **they were all having healing as by the Spirit’s creation.** Another double “verb to be.

17 And the high priest was filled with jealousy (**كسوا**) contention to emulate) and all who were with him of **the doctrine of Zaduqia**

18 They laid hands on the apostles and held and bound them in prison

19 Exactly at that time in the night the angel of Maryah opened the door of the prison and brought them out and said

20 Go stand in the temple and speak to the people of the city all these words of life. *This is a command from heaven about preaching about the “new life” of the Spirit.*

21 And they went out at dawn and entered the temple and they were teaching but the high priest And those with them called their associates and the elders of Israel and sent to the prison to bring the apostles.

22 And **when (24)** those sent went out they did not find them in prison and returned. *This “when” consolidates the testimony that God interacted with the apostles to release them and no other explanation than the supernatural could be arrived at.*

23 And they said “We found the prison locked secure and guards standing by the doors and we did not find a man there.

24 And **when (25)** the chief priests and leaders of the temple heard these words they were astonished and were considering what this was.

25 A man came testifying “These very men that you shut in prison are standing in the temple teaching the people.

26 Precisely then the leaders went with the attendants to bring them –not with force for they were afraid lest the people would stone them.

27 And **when (26)** they brought them they had them stand before the entire council and the High Priest began to say to them. *The occasion of the speech of the High Priest could not pass without his referring to the Christ “This man” in his own words-because the clear continuing church affirmed Jesus relevance even though the high priest would not or could not bear to admit of Jesus being alive.*

28 Did we not continue commanding you that you do not teach (any) man in this name but behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine and you want to bring upon us **the blood of this man.**

29 Simon along with the apostles answered and said to them “It is necessary to obey God rather than men”.

30 The God of our Fathers raised Jesus –the one you murdered when you hanged Him on the tree.

31 He is the one God appointed head and life-giver and has raised him at his right hand to give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

32 And we are witnesses of these of these words and the Holy Spirit whom God gives to those who believe in Him.

33 And **when** (27) they had heard these words they were angry and with passion were thinking of killing them. *Again Luke inserts his notice that the testimony of the Holy Spirit reached the conscience of militant unbelievers who in their rage would have gone about the silencing of the gospel witness.*

34 And there stood up **ONE** of the Pharisees named Gamaliel who taught the law and was precious from all sectors of the people and he commanded they take the apostles out for a short time.

35 And He said to them “Men, sons of Israel be prudent circumspect or restrained **בְּחָכְמָה**, and watch what is right for you to do concerning these men.

36 For before this time Theudas arose and said he was something special and there followed him about 400 and he was killed and they were as nothing.

37 And after him arose Judas the Galilean in the days when the people were registered in poll tax and he seduced many and he died and all those following him were routed or dissipated.

38 And now I say to you “Divide yourselves **בְּיָדְכֶם**—separate you from them and let them remain for if this counsel and work is from the sons of men they will dissolve and pass away.

39 But if it is from God it does not fall **בְּיָדְכֶם** to your hands to destroy or demolish it lest you find you standing against God.

40 And they were persuaded **בְּדַבְרֵי** by him and called the apostles and scourged them and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus and dismissed them.

41 And they departed from their presence rejoicing that they were worthy to be made small **בְּשֵׁם** for the Name.

42 And they were not silent—teaching every day in the temple and in the houses to bring the good news about our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

CHAPTER 6

SOVEREIGN IN JERUSALEM MINISTRY

1 And in those days **when** (28) the disciples **בְּלִמְדָתָם** those receiving instruction were multiplied the Greeks or Greek culture Christians **בְּהֵמָה** complained against the Hebrews that their widows were neglected **בְּחֵם** (usually in the matter of clothes-but here the context speaks more particularly of food) in the daily ministry. This ‘when’ or ‘pairing of God’s arm and the hands of the apostles’ gives testimony to the growth—indeed the multiplication of the church.

2 The twelve apostles called the entire assembly of disciples and said to them “It is not beautiful (5) **בְּיָדְכֶם** or pleasant that we leave the word of God and minister to gifts tables or trays **בְּיָדְכֶם** The “ministry of the word” was not just open air evangelism but instructing the disciples—heads of each household.

3 Therefore my brothers choose seven fit men from you of whom the testimony exists that they are **full of the Spirit** of Maryah and wisdom—we shall set them up over this ordering or this dress matter **בְּיָדְכֶם** Again it seems possible this involves clothing and food. *The singular is used of the speaker and it appears Peter who stood up in those days was the leader prior to James.*

4 And we shall abide steadfast in prayer and the ministry of the word. *The first meant joining the whole nation at prayer at 3pm and thereafter preaching at Solomon’s and instructing the disciples both there and house to house.*

5 And this word was “beautiful” (6) **בְּיָדְכֶם** before all the people and they chose Stephen a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit and Prochorus and Nicanor and Timon and Parmena and Nicholas a stranger or alien from Antioch. *The latter designation suggests the last man as neither Jew nor Greek was a rare choice. There was a man of this name who headed up the Nicolaitans in Ephesus (Apoc2.6) but this may be coincidental.*

6 These stood before the apostles and when they prayed **leaning on God they placed their hands** on them. *This is prayer with laying on of hands or ordination.*

7 And the word of God was magnified increased or grew **בְּיָדְכֶם** and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem desirably exceedingly—thank you **בְּיָדְכֶם** TOB.

8 But, conversely, Stephen was full of the Spirit and power and was doing signs and wonders among the people. *It appears Stephen was not alone interested in food and clothes but extended his ministry far more importantly to the spiritual needs of the people he met.*

9 But there arose men from the synagogue that has been named “Libertines” or “Freedmen” both from Cyrenia and Alexandria and Cilicia and Asia and they were debating on well trodden points **בְּיָדְכֶם** with Stephen.

10 And they were not capable of standing against the wisdom and the Spirit that was giving the word by him.

11 At that precise time they sent men and instructed them to say “We have heard him say words blasphemous of Moses and God.”

12 And they provoked or ruffled and stirred **אָפּ** the people and the elders and scribes and they came and stood around him and snatched him by force and brought him to the centre of the council assembly **הַבַּיִת**

This is information that Paul could relay to Luke from his early encounter with the church as a persecutor. In fact perhaps the earlier data about Peter and John was also confirmed by Paul. It is of interest when Paul went to see Peter what facts they could share about the early days following Pentecost.

13 And they appointed false witnesses who said “This man does not fall silent speaking words against the law and against this holy place. *The rule the Council gave Christians was not to proclaim-ie with the purpose of “silencing” them.*

14 For we have heard him say that Yeshua this Nazarene will destroy this place and change the customs delivered in completion **אָפּ** to you by Moses.

15 And all who were sitting there in the assembly gazed at him and saw his face like **the face of an angel**. *Paul was one who saw this young witness and he was deeply impressed with his person and the radiance of his life.*

CHAPTER 7

SOVEREIGN IN ANCIENT UR, EGYPT &

STEPHEN'S APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA –SUMMARISED COMMENTS (29-46=18EVENTS)

(1)1-8 ABRAHAMIC ALTAR AND COVENANT

The High priest asked Stephen if he argued temple destruction and change from the law?

He spoke “conversely” of Abraham’s vision **when (29)** he was “between the rivers” **בֵּית נָהָרִים** BETH

NAHARIM between Tigris and Euphrates in Mesopotamia. Stephen argues God wished Abram by faith to “depart” or issue out as an army **אָפּ**—the Hebrew section of Genesis has it ““Go alone” i.e with what you

have and any who will join you-but go by faith. **לֵךְ לָךְ** lech lach. God called him to depart the land of his “birth” **אֶרֶץ** for “some land”-literally “what land!” Precisely at that time he left the land of the Chaldeans-notice the expedition of faith. He stayed in Haran for his father’s sake to enable communication-God being gracious. **When (30)** father died God changed him again-He removed or dislocated or translated him. He did not give him as much as a footprint **אָפּ** in the land but promised **אֶרֶץ** it to him-again it was God’s word alone-but Abram took it. The promise was given when he was childless-it took some believing! God actively interposed with this promise “Your seed will be enslaved-400 years. What a difficult matter. Who but a great man would be loyal to a Lord who would countenance this development? Posterity resigned to slavery affliction alienation and strangers. But God gave him the circumcision covenant and precisely then **אָפּ** he was circumcised at 100 along with Isaac from whom came Jacob and the fathers. It was a painful experience for Abram-but he still believed! What a backcloth to the address.

(2)9-19 BONDAGE IN EGYPT

Our Fathers sold Joseph –being jealous to Egypt but God was with Him. This **אִתּוֹ** “was with” Stephen pointedly emphasized concerning Abram also. The difference with Joseph is that he suffered but was “saved” from them” and given “favour and wisdom before Pharaoh”. In this he was an ancient type of Christ who first suffered and then was glorified. The rule of Joseph mirrored that of Christ. Stephen then speaks of the famine or hunger **אָפּ** that only Joseph could allay by the wisdom given him of God. **When (31)** it somehow became known to Jacob that there was an agent **אִתּוֹ** in Egypt –not produce or grain but a person who produced it he sent the brothers not once but twice. *Who can doubt the interposition of the Lord in the life of Joseph-it was predicted in vision-affirmed in famine-realised in the life of the Jewish people.* It was **when (32)** second visit occurred Joseph bared his soul and introduced them to Pharaoh’s family. Joseph brought the entire household-75 persons-to Egypt. **God interposed above the Ismaelites-above Potiphar-above Pharaoh but using each and every one of them.** Jacob died he was placed in the Shechem tomb Abraham bought from Hamor’s sons. **When (33)** the 400plus years till the promise came Israel had grown strong **אִתּוֹ** –*Stephen shows that suffering made this nation what it was. Not one year was missing of the promise the sovereign God gave Abraham. There were many hard years following the good ones.* **Israel unlike any other nation was to be also a “suffering servant” yet believe.** *The witness of Stephen made sense of suffering. He saw it in Abraham and in Joseph and in Israel as a people-it was to become identified with the whole race of Israel and yet God was with them. There was surely a message being conveyed by God’s*

sovereignty over them. Israel can no way be called “slaves” but the nation can be rightly called “servant” and “God’s servant” and so understood as the “suffering servant of Yahwe. Another king arose who did not know Joseph and was moved to wrath or indignant against and jealous of Israel and commanded the exposure to the elements **אֲנָשׁ** of the male babies.

(3)20-28 MOSES IN EGYPT

At that time Moses was born and was tender or “a delight” **אֲהָבָה** to God-he was “beloved” and “pitied”. God took especial care of Him. And he grew bigger in his father’s house for 3 months.

And **when (34)v.21** he was cast by up by the water or flowed away from mother **אֲהָבָה** the daughter of Pharaoh found him and had him and had him grow up as her own son. Moses was trained proceeding initiated and taught in all the wisdom of the Egyptians equipped in all required eloquence or command and for all work and actions. And **when(35)v.23** he was 40 it came up or rose upon his heart *as of high importance* **אֲהָבָה** to visit his brothers. He saw an Egyptian use coercion on an Israelite and avenged him by slaying the Egyptian. He thought his brothers would understand **אֲהָבָה** that God would use him to deliver them. Another day he was appealing or interceding **אֲהָבָה** that they be reconciled **אֲהָבָה** –but the offender “drove” or “thrust” him off **אֲהָבָה** saying “Who set you up as a ruler over us? Do you wish to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday? *The message was rude but the authority was indeed wanting. Some ministries are premature –some are unwarranted. The making of a mediator is no small task. Not many succeed unless they have total credibility. Jesus came with the commendation of the Lord and in time Moses obtained the divine prerogative.*

(4)29-34 MOSES AT THE BUSH IN MIDIAN

Moses fled and was a settler lodger stranger **אֲהָבָה** with two sons in the land of Midian. *The Land was the home of Ishmaelites designated “land of offering”. It was here that Moses offered himself to the Lord and the Lord appointed him.* And **when (36)** v30 -40 more years were complete “the angel of Yahwe” appeared to him in the fire that burned with the intensity of a burnt offering **אֲהָבָה** in the bush. **When (37)** v.31a Moses saw it he marveled. **When (38)**31b he approached to see Maryah said “I, I am God of your fathers, Abraham Isaac and Jacob and while Moses trembled he dared not or presumed not or ventured not **אֲהָבָה** to gaze. Maryah said “Loose the bound sandals **אֲהָבָה** for the earth where you stand is holy ground. I have been looking and seen the suffering of my people in Egypt and heard the sighs or groans **אֲהָבָה** and come down to save them-“**Come now אֲהָבָה** and I will send you to Egypt.” *God did not act till Abraham was 80. This was late but Moses was still strong- he had a consecrated heart and was given firsthand experience of the God who met Abraham and Isaac at Moriah and Jacob at Bethel.*

(5)35-44 MOSES IN SINAI-DEROGATION-

(a)**This very Moses** they rejected or “wiped out” **אֲהָבָה** as ruler & judge God made chief and Saviour by the power of the angel who appeared to him at the bush.(b) **This very one** emancipated or launched them out **אֲהָבָה** when he did signs and wonders and mighty acts in the land of Egypt(the plagues) and at the sea of reeds(the opening & closure of the seaway) and in the wilderness(the manna & water provision and various other works of the hand of the Lord). (c)**And this very Moses** said “A prophet exactly like me shall the Lord God set up and you must listen to Him.” **This very Moses** who was with the assembly in the wilderness with the angel who spoke with Him & our fathers was at the mount SINAI receiving the living words which he gave us. But our father chose not to obey him and in their hearts returned to Egypt **when (39)** v.40 they said to Aaron “Make us gods to go out before us because this Moses who launched us out of Egypt-we know not what has happened him. And they made a calf and sacrificed to the idol and were pleased or enjoyed themselves and had sweet delight in their work. God surrendered them to become worshippers of the heavenly hosts as is writ in the prophets “Why 40 years in the wilderness have you approached me with animal sacrifices? This was a façade-in their hearts they were idolaters. But you carried the tabernacle of Malcolm and the star of the god Remphan and images you made to worship. I shall move you beyond Babel. *Again the Lord promised to put them where these gods were worshipped-that again in 400 years time.* “Behold, says Stephen, the tabernacle in the wilderness made exactly as God who spoke with us commanded. Moses made it exactly in the image God showed him. *Idolatry opposes the tabernacle which carries the true replica of God’s salvation and the works of Christ. At this point Stephen is showing that this tabernacle is a picture of something greater-and he is going on to David and Solomon and all the while holding Christ as the reality to which it testifies אֲהָבָה Both the law tables and the tabernacle were testimonies to something higher-the salvation of God and the finger of God. They spoke of the judgment and*

severity of God and the redemption of the Lord and insofar as they witnessed they witnessed to the angel of the Lord and to God in His justice and mercy of salvation.

(6)45-49 TABERNACLE AND TEMPLE

And that very same tabernacle our fathers lifted it and brought it **אלה** with Joshua to the land that God gave them—an inheritance from those nations He drove out from before them and it was brought on the journey **ל** until the days of David—he who found mercy or favour **חסד** in the presence of God and inquired to find a settled place for the God of Jacob **יחזקאל** ▲ *David was praying not for a place where God would always be but a “perch” as for a bird—a SHECAN from which we have Shekinah- a bestowed or bequeathed presence. Conversely Solomon built him a house. The prayer of David did not assume permanency but visitation. Conversely Solomon built Him a house. There is a vital understanding in David’s heart and prayer and it comes out of his practice of God’s presence. Stephen adds affirming David’s understanding “The exalted one does not dwell in what is made by hands as the prophet says ‘Heaven is my throne and earth the stool under my feet—where is the house you will build me or where is the place **מקום** of my rest says Maryah”* Isa661-2 *Isaiah is directing attention to the New heaven and earth which the Lord Himself will construct. There He will abide.*

(7)50 -60 ISRAEL’S SIN –▲AND STEPHEN’S LAST MOMENTS DETAILED

“Behold!” *the Lord says* “Has not my hand made all these things”-*the reference is to the new heaven and earth* “O inflexible necks who are not circumcised in their hearts” and listening—you are always standing against the Holy Spirit—you are exactly as your fathers—for which of the prophets have your fathers not persecuted and murdered—those who searched out the coming of the righteous one whom you betrayed and killed. You received the law by visit of angels and have not kept it.” **When (40)** v.54 they heard they were enraged and sharpening their teeth over him.*The mention of opposition to the Holy Spirit and the resultant beast like action of the persecutors rejecting the Spirit serves to remind us that opposition to the gospel can be extreme and patently Satanic.* But **When (41)**v55 he being full of faith and the Holy Spirit gazed up to heaven and saw the glory of God *The nearness of heaven and the unshakable ;proof that the Lord was working with them is found in this vision to which Stephen testifies.* **When (42)** he stood at the right side of God. *The matter was pursued in two courts simultaneously—heaven and earth. For the perpetual assurance of the church the testimony of Stephen stands to confirm that at the parting with this world our Lord is ready to greet his martyrs and to acknowledge his servants(cf Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord)* He said “Behold I see heavens **When (43)** v56a they are opened and the Son of man v56b **When (44)** He stood up at the right hand of God. *This impressive cooperation of the Christ even at the death of Stephen serves to show us that the death of believers is not a tragedy but a triumph.* And they shouted with a loud voice and blocked their ears and all rushed on him and held him and brought him outside or repudiated him **ל** out of the city and they were hurling stones at him and those who testified **ל** against him set their long outer garments or tunics at the feet of a vigorous youth who was called Saul. *The name is picked out because Luke came to be his companion in the gospel. The name meant “petitioner” or enquirer. It may be he asked to get involved. He later began to enquire of the Lord.* And they were stoning Stephen **When (45)** v60a placing his knees he broke into prayer (leaning on the Lord **אלה** “Lord Jesus accept my spirit”. And when he knelt deliberately (*placed his knees*) he cried out in a loud voice and said “Our Lord do not cause this one sin to stand against them and **When (46)** v60b he said this he fell asleep.*Paul several times talks of those who “sleep in Jesus” but he is not saying that beyond the grave no faculties live on—he is not saying that no bodies are granted to the saints; he is not saying that they cannot enjoy paradise; he is saying that eternity has well and truly begun—the mortal has put on immortality.*

CHAPTER 8

SOVEREIGN –IN SAMARIA & ETHIOPIA

(1) PHILIP IN SAMARIA 1-8

And Saul was consenting and actively administering or associated with his(Stephen’s) murder and there was in that day great persecution toward the church in Jerusalem and they were all scattered into the country villages **ל** of Judea and also among the Samaritans excepting only the apostles. *It is notable that Samaria played her part like the gentleman of the Lord’s parable to shield the church in that bad day.* And faithful men took up Stephen and buried him and they wept greatly over him. But Saul was persecuting the church when he entered homes and actively and constantly dragging **ל** husbands and wives from home and consigning them to prison. But those scattered ones were circling around **ל** heralding the world of God. Philip by contrast went down to a city of the Samaritans and was heralding Messiah to them.

And when the men there were listening to his message they were persuaded by all he said for they were looking at the signs he did. For many foul spirits who had seized them were coming out screaming in a loud voice and others paralysed and crippled were healed. And there was great joy **אֲנִי** in that city. *Luke draws the contrast with the persecution. Luke's language is quite poetic and the Aramaic transliteration is "weaharna meshria wemahagra athasin" which means "other paralysed and crippled ones were healed."*

(2) SIMON MAGUS & SIMEON PETER 9-25

Conversely there lived there **ONE** outstanding man whose name was Simon who had stayed in the city on multiple occasions and he had deceived the Samaritan people by sorceries and when he actively magnified his soul he said "I, I am the Great" and they were all praying leaning on him –the nobility **אֲנִי** and the common people **אֲנִי** saying "This man is the mighty power of God". *Simon was actually assuming the role of the Holy Spirit.* And they had all been persuaded because by his many "crusades" or "times of sorceries" he had astonished them. **(1)** However **אֲנִי** **when (47) they believed Philip** who was proclaiming the kingdom of God through the name of our Lord **אֲנִי** Jesus the Messiah husbands and wives were being baptized. And as for Simon he also believed and was baptized and joined Philip and **(2) (48) when** he saw the signs and great miracles that were done by his hand he marveled and was speechless. And when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that the city of the Samaritans had received with gracious consent **אֲנִי** the word of God they sent Simon Peter and John to them. And they went down and prayed over them so that they would graciously receive the Holy Spirit. *Because of Simon Magnus' attitude and self conceit this is a vital action.* **▲**He (the Spirit) was not intimate in a relationship **אֲנִי** with one of them up to the measure **אֲנִי** but they had only been baptized in the name of Jesus our Lord. The work of grace was not completed in the Samaritans even at baptism. *The measure of the "fullness" of which Paul teaches to the Ephesians speaking of the "filling of the Holy Spirit" (Eph 4 7,13,16). John who accompanied Peter to Samaria also led the Ephesian church at a later date maintaining this doctrine that He with Peter taught in Samaria before returning to Jerusalem.* Then at that **precise time** they were laying hands on them and they were actively receiving with grace the Holy Spirit. Then **when (49)** Simon saw that by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit had been given he brought a gift of silver to them. **(3)** And **when (50)** he said "Give me also this **absolute authority** that on whom I place a hand he will receive the Holy Spirit. And Simon Peter said to him "Your silver will go away to destruction with you because you hoped that the gift of God is bought by the currency or buying power of this world. *Simon did not value the inner witness of the Holy Spirit for himself but "naked power" - all faith is not "saving faith" and Simon's was not the holy faith which pinions on the work of the Holy Spirit.* **▲**There is neither intimate part nor lot in this faith for you because your heart is not straight **sincere** upright **אֲנִי** with God. Nevertheless turn from this evil request from God and who knows the guile or dissimulation **אֲנִי** of your heart may be laid aside **אֲנִי** for I see that you are in a **bilious condition** **אֲנִי** of bitterness and in a **magic knot or enigma or perplexity** of evil **אֲנִי**. *Simon was himself in a binding spell under Satan and that bond needed to be broken and he needed to pray about that. Even before that he was full of bitter wrath.* Simon answered "You pray on my behalf that none of these things you have spoken of shall come upon me!" But Simon and John when **they had testified and taught the word of God** returned to Jerusalem and preached in many villages of the Samaritans. *There is no written resolution of the matter of Simon who was later found in Rome subverting the people but the personal desire of the man was searched and found wanting. Paul and John testified of their experience at Pentecost and taught the word concerning the fullness of salvation. Meantime a considerable work of grace proceeded in Samaria during the persecution.*

(3) PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH 26-40

And the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said to him "Rise, go away south by a desert road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza. And he arose to go and **ONE** single eunuch who had come from Cush encountered him **אֲנִי** an official of Candice queen of the Cushites and he was in full charge of her finance and he had come to worship at Jerusalem. And **when (51)** he turned his face to leave he sat in his chariot and was reading in Isaiah the prophet. *The eunuch was proficient in Hebrew and had purchased a scroll and was travelling at a moderate rate while he read.* And the Spirit said to Philip "Make an approach and follow the chariot **אֲנִי**. **(2) (52)** And **when (53)v.30** he came near he heard what he read in Isaiah the prophet and said to him "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said "Exactly how could I understand unless one instruct me **אֲנִי** *Ratha is the Aramaic word used for preparing a candidate for baptism.* And he asked Philip

to come up and sit with him. And the phrase or cutting **כַּתְּוֵב** of scripture that he read existed in it (*his copy of Isaiah-since some copy had sections excised-hence the word "cutting"*) This was **"As a lamb for sacrifice He is led and exactly as a ewe before the shearer is silent also thus he did not open His mouth. In His meekness He was led from the cloister prison **סִבְרָא** and from judgment and who will tell the story **אֵל** for His life was translated or suddenly taken **לָרֵעַ** from the earth"** And that eunuch said to Philip "I ask from you "About whom did the prophet say this-about himself or about another man?" At *that precise time* Philip opened his mouth and began from this scripture writing. He preached to him about "our Lord" Jesus and as they were travelling away on the road. And **when (54)** they were going further away on the road they reached **כַּתְּוֵב** a cutting or narrow place **סִבְרָא** where there was water in it and that eunuch said "Behold water-what is the obstacle **חַלְטָא** to my being baptized?" And Philip said "If you believe from your whole heart it is absolutely good authority." **▲** And he answered and said "I do believe that Jesus is the Messiah the Son of God!" ***This verse was first supplied from the Greek to the Harklean Aramaic in AD616 and significantly the Old Itala Version of the 2nd century has it. In this case we are indebted to Roman scribal work. The eliding of the verse in the Peshitta could be on account of confusing words or mistaking the ending of v.37 for v.36.*** And he commanded the chariot to stand still and the two went down to the water and Philip baptized that eunuch. And **when (55)** they came up from the water the Spirit of Maryah snatched Philip away and the eunuch did not see him again but **when (56)** he went on the road he rejoiced. Philip by contrast was found at Azotus and from there he had circled around preaching in all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

CHAPTER 9 SOVEREIGN IN ANTIOCH & LYDDA

(1) SAUL'S CONVERSION 1-9

Saul by contrast was until this time (or) **for a little** time breathing out **לִמְנַעַת** menace and threats **אֵל** and fury of murder against the disciples of our Lord. He himself requested that the high priest give him letters of introduction to the synagogues of Damascus that should he find followers of this path *the people of the way* –men or women-he might bind them and bring them to Jerusalem. And **when (57)** he had gone and began to draw near **סִבְרָא** Damascus from under stillness (of night) there was a dazzling shining light **אֵל**, from heaven over him. ***This "coupling of Damascus ahoy and Christ aloft is humongous evidence in itself of spiritual source and historical event. This and the subsequent ministry of the western church are intertwined as is the Pauline corpus of the scriptures.*** And he fell on earth and heard a voice that said to him "Saul, Saul, Why do you persecute me?" "It is a hard road (or) stubborn and hard of heart as Pharaoh (or) severe as winter **כַּתְּוֵב** to keep kicking against the goads or "rough wood". ***The Lord's comparison was with an animal. The idea is that a horse has its mouth full of the bit pulling on it and it kicks. The Greek conveys the idea of a horse "breathing out fury". The metaphor is commonly taken as referring to cattle kicking the goads-a pointless reaction.*** He answered and said "Who are you my lord?" And our Lord said 'I. I am Jesus the Nazarene-him whom you are persecuting. But arise enter the city and there will be a talk with you about what it is essential for you to do as an active servant **סִבְרָא** And the men who went out with him **when (58)** they were standing on the road were amazed because they were only hearing a voice but there was not a man to be seen so far as concerned them. ***The voice is most plainly the Lord's voice and the intervention is that of the Lord from heaven.*** Saul rose from the ground and he could not see anything **when (59)** his eyes were opened.***The Lord showed his power to stop Paul in his tracks as in the case of those who in Elisha's days attacked Samaria.*** And **when (60)** they took hold of his hands they conducted him to Damascus. And nothing was seen by him for three days and he neither ate nor drank. ***Further divine intervention in the uncanny "voice" of God and the evidential "stroke" of the hand of God combine to bring awe to the companions of Paul.***

(2) ANANIAS & SAUL 10-19 **▲** Hanan-yah's 5 part story

Conversely there lived in Damascus **(i) ONE** or a certain disciple named Hanan-yah and **(ii)** Maryah said to him in a vision "Hanan-yah" and he said "Behold it is I my Lord!" **(iii)** And our Lord said to him "Arise Go to the street that has been named "straight as a carpenter's rule" or "direct" and ask at the house of Judah for Saul who is from the city of Tarsus –Look for he prays. ***The implication would be Paul was praying about his future and certainly praying at the hour of prayer-3pm.*** He is seeing in a vision a man whose name is Hanan-yah who comes in and places his hand on him so that his eyes will be opened". **(iv)** And Hanan-yah said "My Lord I have heard from many about this man how much evil he has laid upon the saints at Jerusalem. And behold he is living here with absolute authority from the high priests to bind all those who

call on your name. Maryah said to him “Arise go because he is a “chosen number” **١٤٤** to me to bear my name to the Gentiles kings and the sons of Israel for **I will give him vision of how much he is to suffer on behalf of my name.** (v) At that precise time **١٤٤** Hanan-yah went to the house and intimate and set a hand on him and said to him “**Brother Saul** our Lord Jesus has sent me-**He who came in vision to you on the road** when you came exactly so your eyes should be opened and you should be filled with the Holy Spirit. And **Son of the Hour** (cf 6th hour & cross) or *instantly* there fell from his eyes something like fish scales, **١٤٤** or cataracts and his eyes were opened-he arose and **he was baptized.** He took food and was strengthened and stayed some days with those disciples in Damascus.

(3) SAUL'S ESCAPE 20-25

And as a **Son of the hour**(cf The cross & the opportunity and the “hour of prayer”-the latter takes us to the 3 express times 3rd 6th & 9th hours –especially the ninth when our Lord prayed and expired) he was heralding in the Jewish synagogue on the topic of Jesus that He is Son of God. And all who heard him were awe-inspired **١٤٤** (as “at the structure of the heavens”-so Paul must have given his testimony) saying “Was not he who was persecuting all who were calling on this name and he is also sent here for this one purpose-precisely to bind and remove them to the High Priests. Saul conversely had further strengthened and was causing those Jews who were living at Damascus to tremble and fear **١٤٤**, **when(61)** he was demonstrating that this (one) is Messiah.**Paul used the OT and mustered the many foreshadowings as Acts 28 shows- there his method is expressly stated. He worked with the Spirit and the word.** And **when (62)** v.23 the days passed or brought praise **١٤٤** the Jews made a plot against him to kill him. And the plot they were seeking to effect was spied out **١٤٤** and pointed out to Saul –and they were watching the gates of the city day and night. Precisely then the disciples set him in a round basket (ASPARIDA) and let him down from the wall at night. **This providence of the Lord toward the apostle were not merely at a human level-both were spiritual in source and effectiveness. Paul made an escape modeled on that of the spies who escaped Jericho. His life was directed by the Lord and aided always by scripture**

(4) SAUL MEETS BARNABAS 26-31

And he went away to Jerusalem and desired to join in agreement and relationship **١٤٤** with the disciples but they were all in dread of him and did not believe that he was a disciple. On the contrary Barnabas got hold of him and brought him to the apostles and he related **١٤٤** “to tell the story” or narrate” exactly how on the road he had vision of Maryah and exactly how He spoke with him and exactly how in Damascus his eyes were opened and he spoke in the name of Yeshua. And he was going up (either to the temple or to oppose enemies of the faith) and joined with them in full relationship **١٤٤**. **Paul had obtained his greatest wish to stand with the people of faith.** And **when (63)** the brothers got to know him personally they brought him by night to Caesarea and sent him to Tarsus. **It was clearly thought he could do well to go home for a spell.** However the church that was alive was at peace in all Judea and Galilee and Samaria as it was built up and going forward in awe of God and comfort or consolatory discourses of the Holy Spirit –it was multiplying.

(5) PETER AT LYDDA AND SHARON-AENEAS & TABITHA HEALED 32-43

And **when (64)**v.32 Simon (Peter) **was circling** among the cities he came down to the saints who were living in the city of Lud and found **ONE** man whose name was Annis (urgent) who was lying on a bed paralysed for eight years. **▲**And Simon said to him “Annia (“Jah is urgent”-apparently Peter renames the man) “the Lord Jesus the Messiah is healing you” or in a variant of Annis “Ania Jesus the Messiah is healing you!” **This is no “coincidence”-it is an ordained event in which the Christ who raised the dead in Capernaum and Nain is acting through Peter to the glory of God.** Stand up and spread out your bed **١٤٤** i.e. “fold it for carrying”. And all who lived in Lud and Sharon were witnesses and turned their faces to God. Conversely there was **ONE** lady who was a disciple in the city of Joppa whose name was **Tabitha**-this woman was rich in good works and righteous acts she was doing. **This and five other NT instances proves that Luke and others translated into Greek from the original Aramaic-the Greek here is given along with a transliteration of the Aramaic(**Note v.39). She conversely had been sick but in those days they washed her and placed her in an upper room. The disciples heard that Peter was in the city of Lud which is beside Joppa and sent two men to ask him “Do not delay or disregard to come on their request *at their side.* **١٤٤**

And Simon rising went with them and **when (65)** v.39 he arrived and they took him up to an upper room where all the widows gathered around him **١٤٤** **besiege like an army▲ when(66)** they were weeping as they showed him the coats and cloaks Tabitha **had given them** **١٤٤** when she was alive. *We would call it a*

mannequin parade-but it was a roomful of women who were clad for winter weather by the deceased righteous Tabitha.

Tabitha being translated “Dorcas” in the Greek is not in the Aramaic-both mean “Gazelle”.

And Simon sent them all out and knelt on his knees prayed and turned near to the corpse and said “Tabitha arise” –by contrast she opened her eyes and **when (67)**v.40a she saw Simon she sat up. And he reached her his hand and raised her and called the saints and widows and **gave her** **ܘܥܠ** to them **when (68)** v40b she was alive. And this special or unique occurrence became known in the entire city and lots of people believed in the Lord. By contrast he was in Joppa not a few days when he had his quarters like a soldier **ܘܥܠ** in the house of Simon the tanner. *The rather cursory dismissal of the crowd of mournful ladies and saints follows their demonstration of the lovely gifts they received-over many Christmasses as it were. Then in a surprise package Simon suddenly called them and gave her “alive” to them. Luke revels in the contrast and the surprise. Peter for his part was virtually repeating what happened in the home of the Rabbi at Capernaum.*

CHAPTER 10

SOVEREIGN IN SHARON AND CAESAREA

1 In Caesarea there was **ONE** centurion whose name was Cornelius from the Italian regiment. *The name means “horn” and the name connects to warfare and strength.*

2 He was righteous **ܘܥܠ**, and in awe of or worshipping Eloha with his whole family and household. And he did manifold righteousness among the citizens and at all time he was pleading from God (help)!

3 This person saw an angel of God in a vision plainly **▲ (A)before his face** **ܘܥܠ** at the ninth hour of the day **who came in close to him** and said to him “Cornelius”.

4 And he gazed at him and feared and said “What’s the score my lord?” And the angel said to him, “Your prayerful dependence and your righteousness have gone up belonging to a memorial or remembrance **ܘܥܠܘܬܐ** (in connection with sacrifice) in the presence of God. *The sacrifice involved is first and foremost that of the ninth hour when our Lord died and within that the righteous acts done by Cornelius so at this memorable hour the angel came to confirm him in Christ. Here is a man who with minimal knowledge was in the elect but now was extraordinarily being linked with the visible church through angelic ministry and special providences.*

5 And now send a man to the city of Joppa and bring Simon who is called Cephas

6 Behold he is lodging in the house of Simon the Tanner which is by the side of the sea.

7 And **when (69)** the angel who spoke with him left he called two of the sons of his house and one servant who feared God who revered God and who had become as sweet or pleasant perfume to him **ܘܥܠܘܬܐ**

(passive participle). **▲ Luke faithfully presents the link between the Centurion’s obedient action and the divine vision. Again the spiritual source and the mind of the righteous man are attune resulting in a widening frame of witness. Luke is explaining something very intimate in the entourage of Cornelius demonstrating at the same time that Paul and he knew Cornelius first-hand. This detail came from separate conversation and longer acquaintance. The NIV brings over the notion by the opaque phrase “who was one of his attendants” The AV has “who waited on him continually” –getting one of the ideas-that coming from the passive participle-“He having been...there”. The Greek προσκαρτερεω indicates “firm and faithful” service by the verb chosen but it misses the “sweetness” of the friendship—a sweetness borne of the Christian faith” and also misses the “passive” using a present participle in place of the Aramaic passive so there is a compound mistake not amounting to a great deal and involving nothing doctrinal yet it **certainly could better discriminate between the personal and military relationship.** It is of interest that Tyndale has “A devout soldier that waited on him.” Tyndale notices the mutuality of devotion to God in the centurion and soldier and is not speaking merely of the military relationship of respect.**

8 And he discussed or “told the story” **ܘܥܠ** “filling up the spaces in awareness” as a road repairer fills up holes. He related the story and sent them to Joppa.

9 And the day after **when (70)** they were journeying *continuing downstream* and they approached the city Simeon went up to the roof to lean on the Lord in prayer at the sixth hour. *The spiritual roots of what follows are aligned with the prayerful intimacy of Peter and Christ. In this sense prayer is an event and the trigger of multiple events. In Aramaic **ܘܥܠܘܬܐ** means both “housetop” and “altar-top”. Peter was giving himself to prayer at the time when darkness fell at Calvary. The event of our Lord’s death deeply affected the church in those days and drew them to prayer daily whether at the 6th or 9th hour. It would seem that the siesta time was used for prayer.*

10 And he was continuing to be ravenous and he wanted to have a good feed **לֶחֶם** and when they were being bought for him a stupendous heavenly sign fell upon him-or flooded him. *The idea seems to be he was "numbed" and awed but not to the point of speechlessness.*

11 And he saw the heavens when they were opened and one vessel or costly cotton sheet **כִּתְמוֹן** when it was bound on four corners as at the horns of the altar –it was like a great linen sheet **חֲבִילָה** and it was let down from heaven to earth. **▲***The word "let down" comes from a base **שׁוּב** SHAB which also means to "hatch out under heat" as would fish in the shallows or eggs under a hen-so the sheet was swarming with great numbers of creatures.*

12 And in it were absolutely all existing **כָּל־חַיָּוָה** four-footed animals and creeping things of earth and the birds of heaven.

13 And a voice came to him saying "Rise Simeon slay and eat the sacrifice.

14 And Simeon said "My Lord forbid **▲** or better "spare" or "pardon, propitiate". *The reply was not just an objection-it was a call to "spare" the creatures-so many and so beautiful and lively-**לֹא יִשְׁחָדוּ לָנוּ** Romans 8.32 "Because He spared not His own Son. Peter is saying that the entire animal population is in danger but he appeals on its behalf. From the beginning or for ever I have not eaten anything **דִּמְיָה** or polluted **טָמֵא***

15 But again for a second time the voice came (now) close to him **אֵלָיו** "Those that God has purified you do not call "**דִּמְיָה**"

16 But this happened three times and the garment was taken to heaven. The vessel of mercy **כִּלְיָת הַחֶסֶד** Romans 9.23 *It is of considerable significance that this experience supplies two of the concepts at the heart of Paul's argument in Romans-(1) The grace that spared not Christ on our behalf" and (2) The "Vessels of Mercy" whom the Lord prepared for His glory. No doubt Peter at some point communicated this story-for Luke retails it here and doubtless Paul had it perhaps when he visited Peter or when at some subsequent time the apostles conversed.*

17 And **when (71)** Simeon wondered **in his soul** what the vision he saw was about those men who were sent from Cornelius arrived and enquired about the house where Simeon stayed and they came and stood at the gate of the open courtyard. *Notice how this "when" expounds a matter of the mind and heart and links it to God's sending of the Gentile delegation prompted by a separate vision. It may seem uncanny but it is "God working all things after the counsel of His will". On a visit to Joppa one ventured into this very space now the home of an Arab gentleman who apparently just roused from sleep ushered us unceremoniously from the ample rear foyer.*

18 And there they were calling and asking "Is Simeon called Cephas lodging here?"

19 And **when (72)** Simeon contemplated the vision the Spirit said to him "Behold three men are seeking you!" *Could there be a clearer "yoke" of History and Christ; of event resulting and spiritual sourcing; of God working with them? Again Luke's "when" is redolent with affirmation of spiritual events and progress. For him and us history is God's story.*

20 Arise go down and leave with them when there is no doubt in your mind because I am He who has sent them! **▲** *This declaration of the Spirit takes us back to v3 &v7 where Cornelius saw an "angel of God". Thus the claim to have sent the men is made by the Spirit who refers back to the Lord's appearance to Cornelius in a vision. The realm of vision is a spiritual realm and there is little doubt but that we are being advised of the visual reality in the Spiritual world. Eloha of v.4 must be God the Father whom no man has ever seen.*

21 **At that precise time** Simeon went down into the intimate presence of the men and said to them "I am he who you seek –what is the precise reason for which you have come?"

22 And they were saying "A particular man of power named Cornelius an upright or just centurion who is a worshipper of God and all the people of the Jews witness and hold him in repute. And it was told him in a vision by a holy angel to send to bring you to his house and he would hear the word from you.

23 And Simeon brought them in and received them where he lodged and he arose after the day was declining or gone **בַּיּוֹם** he went with them and there went with him some of the brothers from Joppa. *Peter probably gave them a meal and then travelled under cover of darkness-his habit?*

24 And next day he entered Caesarea; Cornelius on the other hand was waiting for them. When they were all gathered to him-sons of relative and also beloved friends that he had

25 **And (73) when Simeon entered** and encountered him (as if with sword-**בְּחֶרֶב**) he worshipped and fell at his feet. *There is something of a similar occurrence as in the Garden of Gethsemane-where the soldiers fall to the ground. The pre-history of this soldier's service is unknown. Did he ever listen to John the Baptist?*

Was he ever called to disturbances in Jerusalem from Caesarea? Did he have acquaintance with the soldiers at the cross? Luke gives us yet another piece of evidence in the great jigsaw of ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT & APOSTLES of the continued work of the Spirit in conviction.

26 And Simeon raised him up and said to him "Rise by yourself also am a son of a man."

27 And **when** (74) he was speaking with him he entered and found many who had come there. *The soldier had gathered many and they had come at his invitation that morning. The invites issued were laced with spiritual purpose as was the journey of Peter. Both men were "yoked" to the Lord in their actions which involved "faith risk".*

28 And he said to them "You do know it is not lawful **לִפְנֵי** for a noble Jew to join in fellowship **אִתּוֹ** with a fleshly man of foreign race who is not of his stock but God has shown me that I should not pronounce any man unclean or defiled." *Clearly Cornelius had laid on a big spread.*

29 Because of this I have come prepared **when** (75) you sent following **אֵת** me –however I have to enquire from you for what purpose you have sent to summon **אֵת** me?" *This is the question of a man somewhat pensive of his role in such strange forbidding company.*

30 Cornelius said to him "Behold it is four days until this time when I was fasting at the ninth hour when(74) I was praying in my house One warrior like man stood (B)**directly in front of** **מִפְּנֵי** me when clothed in white.

31 And he said to me "Cornelius your prayer of leaning on me **עָלֵי** has been heard and your righteous work is memorialized (like the Eucharist here below) **לִפְנֵי** (C)**before** **פְּנֵי** God. The significance of this statement is that it has become quotable and would not just be mentioned in despatches to heaven but rehearsed from time to time in God's presence. It is notable that this man prayed at the time of the crucifixion daily-had he been there-had he close friends who were there-did he vow to pray like Jesus did on the cross –what was the meaning of his "praying?" *This is one of the contexts in scripture where a sanctified imagination is essential to reaching the quintessence of the story*

32 "Nevertheless" *the angel breaks off from his narrative about heaven having just given a morsel of truth from its inner courts-and directs as he was told to do. "Send to the city of Joppa and bring Simeon who is called Cephas-behold he is staying in the house of Simeon a tanner that is by the side of the sea and he will come and will speak with you!" It is notable that the angel does not bring the Word of the Gospel-but leaves that role to a redeemed man. The mission of saints is special and set out by Jesus our Lord in Matthew 28.19.*

33 **And a son of the hour(cf The cross` & the opportunity)** *Cornelius is emphasizing this is the ninth hour and that he was prompto-immediate in his obedience-as the Son of God at the cross was immediate at that crucial hour of the death of our Lord. I sent to you and you have done well to have made it here and Behold we are all (D)**before you** **לִפְנֵי** and we implore to hear everything whatever it is that is commanded from the immediate presence of God. Here Cornelius took up the story which the angel had curtailed and understood that Peter would know the rest of the facts he needed to hear and that God would have revealed them to him.*

34 Simeon conversely opened his mouth and said "In reality **לִפְנֵי** I have threshed out the fact **עָלֵי** like an ox treading out or threshing the corn that God is not remembering faces. **נִשְׁכַּח** *The fact is Cornelius was the conversation of heaven and not Peter-for the reason that this man was living righteous and was at the heart of the gospel's new outreach so far as God and the angels were concerned. Peter had to be like a stubborn ox put through a process to learn this truth.*

35 But among all of the nations or cities whoever worships or fears Him and does business for or fights strenuously for righteousness **לִפְנֵי** is acceptable to be close to Him **לִפְנֵי**

36 For He sent the **▲ 1 WORD** (Bethlehem word of peace & tranquillity **שָׁלוֹם / שְׁלוֹמָה**) to the children of Israel and announced to them **good news of peace and quietness** by the hand of Jesus the Messiah-this is Maryah Lord of all .

37 And you (plural) also know by personal experience by the **2 WORD (Jordan word of repentance & the lamb)** that has been in the whole of Judea and went out from Galilee after the baptism that John preached.

38 About Jesus from Nazareth whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. He was circling around and healing those who were injured or hurt by the evil one because God was with Him.

39 And we witnessed everything that He ever did in all the land of Judea and of Jerusalem-this is the very one the Jews hanged on a tree and murdered Him.

40 And God raised Him the third day and gave Him to be seen in the eye of the public

41 But not to all the people but to us who had been appointed or chosen by God to be witnesses to Him—we ate and imbibed (wine?) with Him after the resurrection from the house of the dead.

42 And He commanded us to herald and testify to the people that HE is the one separated by God as the Judge of the living and the dead.

43 And concerning Him all the prophets witness that everyone who believes actively in His name will **receive “leaving aside of”** **4 forgiveness of sins.**

44 And **when (76)** **Simeon** was actively speaking these words the Holy Spirit descended and rested on all of them who were listening to the **WORD**(Pentecostal word of life & forgiveness). *Again we have the neat and glorious fine stitching of event and spiritual root cause together in Luke’s “when”.*

45 And those circumcised brothers who came with him were speechless or dazed and wondered or delighted? that the gift of the Holy Spirit **poured out like a river** on the Gentiles.

46 For they were listening to them speaking in language to language (from one to another) and they were magnifying God. And Simeon was saying...

47 What man **can withhold water** that those should not be baptized for behold they have received the Holy Spirit exactly as we did. *Luke is playing on the “outpouring” as indeed Peter may have done—showing that God has allowed the Spiritual river to flow—so why not the baptismal one too.*

48 At that precise time He (Peter) commanded them to be baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah and they pleaded from him that he would abide close to them for days.

CHAPTER 11

SOVEREIGN IN DIASPORA

1 And it was heard by the apostles and brothers in Judea that the Gentiles had received the word of God.

2 And **when (77)** Simeon came up to Jerusalem those of the circumcision were legally debating in contention with him.

3-4 When they were saying that he had come into the close presence of uncircumcised and eaten with them but Peter was continuing and saying in addition... *The spiritual work of the Spirit amid hot debate was to be brokered and championed by the Lord through “vision”—this Luke is instant to affirm.*

5 **When (78)** I was praying in Joppa I saw a vision—a garment was descending which was like linen and it was bound at the four corners and it was coming down from the sky and▲ it blew immediately to me.

The Aramaic goes further than the καταβαινω ηλθεν of the Greek and speaks of the sheet blowing towards Peter and arriving immediately with him. The event is linked as on multiple occasions in this Letter to Theophilus to heavenly intervention.

6 And I beheld **Peter’s look** was like a look behind or towards the stem of the ship or the inky depths and I saw beasts that lived in it—four-legged beasts and creeping things of earth and carrion birds of the sky.

7 And I had been hearing a voice saying to me “Arise Simeon slay and eat”.

8 And I said “My Lord Never because without beginning has what is polluted or unclean entered my mouth.

9 And again a voice spoke to me from heaven “That which God has purified you shall not besmear or falsely describe or pollute

10 This one thing happened three times and then everything in it was taken up to heaven. **like the ark.**

11 And within that “moment” or “hour” three men were sent to me from Cornelius from Caesarea and they came and stood at the gate of the courtyard of the house where I was staying.

12 And the Spirit said to me “Go with them” **DOL** literally “move with them” or “stir you” without hesitation **—the idea is without query or delay or division.** And six brothers also went with me and we entered the house of the soldier/man

13 And he related **told the story—smoothed out the issues and narrated** to us exactly how he saw an angel in his house who stood and said to him “Send to the city Joppa and bring Simeon who has been called Peter.

14 And he will speak words of command with you by which you and your whole house will live.

15 And **when (79)** I was marching directly there to speak with authority the Holy Spirit rested upon them exactly as upon us from the first. *Once more Luke attaches his “when” of tandem event and the “Spirit’s operation” in Peter’s life and he is appraised of this connection by Peter or Paul—here making us aware of Peter’s firsthand experience of the Holy Spirit’s work.*

16 And I was reminded **ܘܚܝܢ** of the word of our Lord which He said “that John was baptizing with water but you shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

17 And if God equally or evenly **ܘܥܠܡܐ** gave Him as a gift to those Gentiles who have believed in our Lord Jesus Messiah exactly as to us who am I that I would be qualified or capable **ܘܥܠܡܐ** to hinder **ܘܥܠܡܐ** God.

18 And **ܘܚܝܢ** (80) they heard these words they were silent and they praised God and were saying “perhaps **ܘܚܝܢ** God has also given the Gentiles return or **repentance to life** **ܘܥܠܡܐ ܘܥܠܡܐ** ▲TIBUTHA HIA *This phrase is taken into the Shorter Catechism. It shows that “repentance” –not just change of mind μετανοια but rather “returning to life” from “death” is involved. Life cannot be created by the mind of man and this “conversion” is divinely enabled.*

19 Conversely those who were scattered from the suffering of persecution that was about Stephen reached **ܘܥܠܡܐ** as far as *the word speaks of “bidding as high as one can” or “going as far as one could”* Phoenicia and the region of Cyprus and Antioch when they were not speaking the word to any man only to Jews. *This persecution appears to have been one that promoted a push to promote the faith among the Jews so as to win Israel.*

20 On the other hand there were men from Cyprus and Cyrenia who had entered the Antiochene church and they were speaking with Greeks and telling the gospel news concerning our Lord Jesus. *It appears from this that the earliest push beyond the margins of Israel came from Africans who carried the word to the Greeks at Antioch. Luke of course is keenly interested in the Antioch situation and it was there that the word spread wide of the Jewish pale at the first. It was possibly there also that the Greek copies of NT stories began to be written in line with this evangelism for there were scribes and workers in vellum and manuscripts in that city.*

21 And the hand of Maryah was acting with them in a living way **ܘܥܠܡܐ** and many turned their faces to **ܘܥܠܡܐ** Maryah. *The difference or procedural difference between “turning one’s face to the Lord” **ܘܥܠܡܐ** and “repentance unto life” **ܘܥܠܡܐ ܘܥܠܡܐ** is that the life that grants change is God’s part and is prior though it may not be evidently so-the turning of the face may be what is perceived to be initial. The Life-giving Holy Spirit with his preventive work is there as the daughter of the morning before the rising sun of human response of redemptive and saving work*

22 And this was reported for the ears of the sons of the assembly that was in Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas to those in Antioch.

23 And **ܘܚܝܢ** (81) he came there and saw the grace **ܘܥܠܡܐ** of God he rejoiced and pleaded with them that with all their heart they would be intimate with **ܘܥܠܡܐ** the Lord. *The appeal of Barnabas is for “union” “closeness” “bridal affection” and “delight in” the Lord. .It is an intense word formed on the notion of the best intimacy of marriage-in body soul and mind. The truth is that a man spiritually attune to the Lord saw what was wrought by the Spirit and what remained to be achieved in the Christian walk of believers.*

24 Because he was a good man and replenished or completed **ܘܥܠܡܐ** in such a way as to have handfuls of purpose for others-to be able to pour out and supply or console and comfort –he represented the “consummate” of Christian living in himself. He was completed in the Holy Spirit and in faith and numerous people were added to our Lord. *The church that Paul joined in teaching there had been largely developed by Barnabas and its progress aided by his gifts. This verse is the huge CV that Luke accords to the man who was the friend of Paul and with whom he had a very sharp disagreement.*

25 And he was launching out **ܘܥܠܡܐ** to Tarsus in an expedition to seek or plead with Saul.

26 And **ܘܚܝܢ** (82) he found him he brought him with him to Antioch and for a whole simultaneous consenting year **ܘܥܠܡܐ** they gathered as a synod **ܘܥܠܡܐ** with the church and taught numerous people from that precise time in the front or frontally. *Luke has struck a golden moment of the Spirit’s work in the church both in the call of Paul to Antioch and the naming of believers. ▲And the disciples called themselves Christians among the Antiochenes. As to the verb “They were called” it is really a Hithpael which is both intensive and reflexive. Thus they “called themselves constantly” ‘Christians’ among the Antiochenes. None of the three words for “because” **ܘܥܠܡܐ** / **ܘܥܠܡܐ** / **ܘܥܠܡܐ** is used and so we are given to understand that they called themselves Christians. The “termination” “I pray” in Aramaic may simply be a transliteration of a Greek word –so whether this word derived from a jibe by the Greek speakers or is a term self devised by the Aramaic speakers is the question.*

27 And in those days prophets came there from Jerusalem.

28 And **ONE** from them(of Jerusalem) stood up whose name was Agabus (*High feast or fear*) and made them aware by the Spirit that a great famine would happen through all the earth and the famine would be in the days of Claudius Caesar.

29 The disciples however (contrary to local practice **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ**) exactly in line with what each had separated and sent for the ministry of the brothers who lived in Judea.

30 And they sent (aid) by the hand of Barnabas and Saul to the elders who were there.

CHAPTER 12

SOVEREIGN IN PRISON AND PALACE

1 Conversely in that period of time there was a taking in the arms of custody of people in the churches precisely to threaten them evilly. **Herod the king who had the title or surname “Agrippa”**

2 Also killed James the brother of John with the sword. *A significant martyrdom that taught the Church to seek God for Peter.*

3 And **when (83)** this act was pleasing the Judeans he added to lay hold on Simeon Peter and these were the days of unleavened bread or quitting banquets **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ**. *Even this “wrath of man” was to be used of the Spirit of God to praise the Lord.*

4 And he gained hold of him and caused him to be cast (Aphel of **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ**) into prison and **delivered him** (Aphel of **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ**) to sixteen soldiers (4 quaternions) to guard him till after Passover until he **delivered him** to the people of Judea.

5 And **when (84)** Simeon was under guard in prison “dependent praying was faithfully and constantly **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** brought near to God by the church assembly **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** on his behalf **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ**”

6 And in that night when it was toward birdsong daybreak **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** he was going to **deliver him** over. **When (85)** Simeon was sleeping between two soldiers. ▲ (The root of “soldier” and “Estrangela” [the Aramaic “simple” script] seems to be “roll straight-as soldiers move straight to battle and written lines run straight or simple) and the others were guarding the gate of the prison.

7 The angel of the Lord stood over him and dazzling light shone **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** in the whole place and **he (the angel) dug or gored him in his side and caused him to rise and said “Arise quick and the chains fell from his hands.”** *The experience was akin to the power of electricity acting in the prison. Once more in his “when” Luke testifies to coupled spiritual cause and historical result.*

8 And the angel said to him “Wrap (your garment) tightly around your loins and bind on your sandals (ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ) like **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** which refers to “light” sandals” not heavier footwear. He did this and again he said to him “Wrap your cloak **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** around you and come after me.” *Peter had been imprisoned whilst wearing sandals and a warm cloak and his underclothing. It may be that Peter had been taken quickly and when clothed much as a fisherman was habitually or that he was not to put on more than necessary. Divine sovereignty includes the sending of an angel*

9 And he went out and was going after him **when (86)** he did not know that it was real **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** the matter that was happening to him by the hand of an angel. He thought that he was seeing a vision. *To have an angel in front and see solid doors unbar and unlock and find the evening air on your cheeks was surreal if he had not felt the blow on his side and knew it was real-the Lord intervening in sovereign care.*

10 And **when (87)** he passed the first and the second guard they came to the iron gate and it opened for them from the wish of its own soul. *More providences-this is not automatic-this is God at work as in Romans “working in all things for Paul’s good” and when (88) they went out and passed one street the angel moved away **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** from him. (Here again Luke gives explicit evidence of the Lord “yoked” to His church and the coupling of spiritual intervention and physical events.)*

11 It was at that precise time that Simeon had realized and he said “Now I know in truth and justice **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** that the Lord has sent His angel and save me from the hand or power of Herod the king and from the thing that the Judeans have been devising against me.”

12 And as he recognized and understood he came to the house of Mary mother of John who was titled or surnamed Marcus because many brothers were gathered there *leaning on God [prayer of faithi] in prayer.* **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ**

13 And he knocked at the gateway of the enclosed court **ܘܢܘܨܘܢܝܘܬܝܗܘܢ** and a girl whose name was Rhoda went out to answer.

14 And she knew Simeon’s voice and in her joy she did not open the door for him but she returned racing rapidly and was saying to them “Look-Simeon-he is standing at the gateway of the courtyard.

15 And they were saying to her “You are being stirred to ferment or impulsive and shaken **ἄσπ** and she had quarreled or striven **ἠἰσῆσθε** that this (she said_) was so. And they were saying “Perhaps it is his angel” *For Luke this is written with some humour for Peter had indeed been guided by an angel but they were saying that it might be he had died and his spirit was visiting them.*

16 But Simeon was knocking at the gate and they went out and saw him and wondered in themselves.

17 And he was brandishing or waving his hand to and fro **ἄσπ** exactly to silence **ἠἰσῆσθε** them and entered and related or told **ἠἰσῆσθε** the story or hare and hound incident **ἠἰσῆσθε** for the word indicates a gamble or a sort of diversionary sport—he related to them exactly how the Lord had brought him from the prison and he said to them “Relate the story to James and the brothers” and he went out and went to another place.

18 And **when (89)** it was birdsong time of morning there was a crowd/group row **ἠἰσῆσθε** in the soldiers’ barracks over Simeon and what happened to him. *There must have been among the soldiers on guard those who understood by the Spirit the event that had taken place.*

19 Herod conversely when He searched for him and failed to find him judged the guards at fault and commanded they be killed. And He went out of Judea and was in Caesarea.

20 And because he was at odds with those of Tyre and Sidon they gathered and came to him as one man and persuaded Blastus the King’s chamberlain that there be a peace treaty or truce **ἠἰσῆσθε** because the sustenance (bread) and protection **ἠἰσῆσθε** of their regions **ἠἰσῆσθε** was from the kingdom of Herod.

21 On a day that was or became well known Herod was wearing the robes of the kingdom and sat down on the judgment seat and was speaking to the crowd.

22 All the people conversely were crying out and said “These are the daughter of the trumpet like voice **ἠἰσῆσθε** of God but are they not the sons of men”.

23 And he did not give glory to God instead **ἠἰσῆσθε** in that very hour **the angel of the Lord struck him** and he was throbbing or wriggling **ἠἰσῆσθε** with worms and he died.

24 And the gospel of God was heralded and it became great. *The reversal of the fortunes of Peter and Herod came through angelic intervention. The divinity of Herod was false but the good news of Christ prevailed and grew. ▲ In Acts we need to notice the manner in which God dealt with opposition-sometimes very severely-cf Ananias & Sapphira; Paul, Herod, Elymas.*

25 Barnabas and Saul conversely turned their faces from Jerusalem to Antioch after they had completed their extensive ministry. *Ministry is predicated on the operation of the “Sun” which serves very widely-so the sustenance of the Gentiles helped Jerusalem just as Tyre & Sidon were hoping for largesse from Herod. The care of the Christians was proving even more valuable to the city of Jerusalem as hunger & need spread than the help of Herod to the populous cities of Tyre & Sidon!*

CHAPTER 13

SOVEREIGN IN CYPRUS (1ST JOURNEY)

Where Antiochus Epiphanes had stamped his power in Syria and in Asia Minor and where Elymas held sway the work of the Lord prevailed with striking success through Paul’s ministry of sovereign grace.

1 But on the other hand/conversely there (already) existed prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch – Barnabas and Shimeon called Niger and Luquius(Luke) who was from the city of Qorina (Cerene) and Manuel son of the those who “grew up with” or “who brought up” **ἠἰσῆσθε** Herod the tetrarch and also Saul . *Luke records a college of five teachers of whom at least two may have been engaged in work with African origin believers whereas Saul would have been effective among the Greeks. Barnabas and Manuel were clearly proficient Aramaic speakers and as the Antiochene church had many believers of Greek origin Paul would have been an valued teacher.*

2 And **when (90)** they were fasting and praying earnestly in low voice **ἠἰσῆσθε** the Holy Spirit said to them – “Separate for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them, *This left three principle preachers and teachers in the church at Antioch and one has to believe they were well able to maintain the work although we know nothing of their story.*

3 And after they had fasted and “Leaned on the Lord in prayer” they laid their hands on them and sent them out.▲ *The “leaning” is a prayer of faith. This is prayer proportioned to the will to risk all on God in a given circumstance and also one that operates in proportion to faith (cf Bishop Martin Snow-relative of J O Frazer of the Lisu who said his great uncle had faith for hundreds of Lisu not thousands yet today God has brought in multiple hundreds of thousands of Lisu in Younan province.*

4 And **when (91)** they were sent from the Holy Spirit (*Here Luke makes explicit as occasionally the “yoke” of events in his spiritual progress of the Church-where the Holy Spirit of Christ works with the Church*)they went down to Seleucia and from there journeyed by sea to **Cyprus**.

5 And **when (92)** they entered the city of Salamis they were heralding the word of our Lord in the synagogues of the Jews **and John was their active minister** ~~_____~~

6 And **when (93)** they had circled through the whole island ~~_____~~ (“Island” and “flock of sheep” are kindred roots) to Paphos city they discovered **ONE** notorious man –a Jew and enchanter with charms who was living as a pseudo prophet ~~_____~~his name was **▲Bar-Shuma** (“*Son of Shem*” or “*Son of Renown*” or “*Son of God*” (*Shem being an abbreviation for “God”*))*This man was making huge claims.*

7 This man was sticking with or embedded with an illustrious wise man who was a substitute ruler for a proconsul. He was called Sergius Paulus-and the acting proconsul called Paul and Barnabas and requested to hear the word of God from them.

8 This sorcerer named Bar-Shuma (“Son of the name [of God] which name has been translated “Alumnus” (Latin) of which Elymas is an Aramaic transliteration) conversely stood up against them because he wanted to **turn away** ~~_____~~ the acting proconsul from the faith.

9 **▲Saul** conversely who **must** be called Paul(The Aphel tense is causative with an imperative connection and it is a “perfect” or passive-so “Whom we had to call “Paulus” for he was genuinely of the famous Roman military “Paulus” family line) filled with the Holy Spirit simply looked directly at him ~~_____~~

10 And he said “Oh you who are full of all guile plotting or dissimulation ~~_____~~ and all evils –son of the “swallower accuser”/“scornful glancer” and Baal Debab (the husband or partner of the locust or dog fly) of all righteousness –you do not cease to twist and turn away from the straight paths ~~_____~~ TARIZTHA of the Lord. **▲ There is a fair extent of criticism of this man of contumely. He was a schemer par excellence; he was a man imbued with much malice. He was a man who could melt others with a look of burning scorn and he was a locust that vacuumed up everything that was righteous besides which he was in league with the devil and acting as the advocate of Satan at the highest level. Secular records note his later appearance in Rome.**

11 And now the hand of Maryah is upon you and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time and in that moment there fell on him blackness & darkness and he was circling round seeking someone to hold his hand. *There is a vital equivalence to how God dealt with Paul in his wholesale opposition to the Lord. Paul saw the equivalence and was attune to God’s handling of this affair-hence his declaration.*

12 And **when (94)** the acting Proconsul saw what happened he was awed and believed in the teaching of Maryah (Yahwe)

13 Paul and Barnabas conversely made their way by sea from the city of Paphos and came to those of the city of Perga of Pamphylia and John(Mark) separated from them and went away to Jerusalem- “separation” ~~_____~~ **here is the distinction of “seceding” “standing aloof” or “parting from relationship”.** **John under pressure took a personal decision**-*though young he felt unappreciated.*

14 They by contrast went forth from Perga and came to **Antioch –a city of Disidia** and entered and sat down on the Sabbath.

15 And after the law & prophets was read the Elders of the synagogue sent to them and said to them Men and brothers if there is a word of comfort that you have speak with the people.

16 And Paul stood up and lifted or waved to and from his hand ~~_____~~ and said “Noble men –sons of Israel and those who are worshippers of God listen!”

17 The God of this people chose our fathers and raised up and multiplied them when they were aliens in the land of Egypt (a) He brought them out **with a high shoulder**. *This is the action of a shepherd who rescued His people-the Shepherd of Israel-a nation given to sheep and shepherding.*

18 (b) He **reared them** (~~_____~~ as His flock) in the wilderness forty years. *The shepherd metaphor runs on and His care followed them all of this time.*

19 He broke down seven nations in the land of Canaan and gave them their land for a heritage.

20 And for 450 years He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.

21 And at that precise time they asked for a king and God gave them Saul son of Kish a warrior from the tribe of Benjamin (to rule) for forty years.

22 And he took him away (in war) and raised up David the king for them and testified about him and said(c) “I have found David son of Jesse –**a man exactly like my heart** and he shall do my desires. *Again the hint is “He shall shepherd the people as I have been doing!”*

23 And from this man’s seed God raised up Jesus the Saviour exactly as was promised ~~_____~~

24 And He sent John to herald the baptism of repentance to all Israel before His coming.

25 And **when** (95) John had completed his ministry he said “I am not who you think I am but **behold** He who comes after me whose sandal strap I am not worthy to unloose.”

26 “Men, brothers- sons of the line of Abraham- and those who worship with you- God has sent the word of life to you”. *Luke picks up the term MALTHA which he used in the gospel Chapter 1.2 in connection with “servants” and “eyewitnesses”. When John the gospel writer introduced Jesus as “the word” he was using a term his mentor John first employed. Let us explore the whole periphery of this term It allows us to think of “The answer to a question!”; “An affair tedious to communicate or understand(Gen39.19-Potiphar’s wife’s story); “A cause to be taken up”; “Word9theological) made flesh”(Ephraim-the Word came down and clothed himself as flesh from Mary); “An action word or word of action”; the “speech or discourse”(of God); “The promise(r) or security”; “the consent(er)”; “The narrator(so one who can keep us informed on things divine); “the blessing” or in this case “blesser” and finally “a proverb-or likeness of a defense lawyer’s plea”. All these Aramaic usages throw light on the Word as proclaimed by John.*

27 These citizens of Jerusalem and their leaders did not perceive Him **ܕܢܝܢܐ** (desire, become acquainted with or get to know) nor the scriptures of the prophets which are read each Sabbath but they judged Him and fulfilled (unknown to themselves) these written things.

28 And **when** (96) they did not find a capital cause or pretext or accusation (**ܩܪܒܢܐ** a parallel root means an altar or oblation) against him they asked Pilate to put Him to death.

29 And **when** (97) they had completed the entire affair that was written about him they took him down from the cross and put him in a tomb.

30 God conversely raised Him up from the house of the dead.

31 And He appeared for many or multiplied days to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem and they are now witnesses to the people.

32 **Behold** we also herald the good news of hope to you –that declaration **ܩܘܪܒܢܐ** that was intimately **ܕܢܝܢܐ** (known to)your fathers.

33 **Behold** God has fulfilled it to us their children-God who raised up Jesus exactly as it is written in the second Mizmor (plentiful)Psalm “That You are my Son today I have brought you forth” **ܕܢܝܢܐ** with the travail of a mother. It is the action both of the mother and midwife that we do not concentrate upon-the delivery of our Saviour from the cross and the tomb and from the real of the dead was a hugely victorious and glad act of the Father though fraught with divine travail of heart. *Thus the travail of Calvary is the end of such travail on the part of the Father and the Son-though mankind still face such outside of the grace of God.*

34 And thus(in this manner –as by the travail of birth) **ܩܪܒܢܐ** God raised Him up that He would not again return to see destruction **ܩܪܒܢܐ** or the travail of childbirth or the “measured portion” of a short life) **ܩܪܒܢܐ**

exactly as it says that “I will give you the grace of believing David. *Thus the result of the resurrection was the grace of God given to us to believe in our destiny and the provision for us as a divine favour.*

35 And again He says in another place that “You have not given your Pure Holy One to see destruction or corruption” **ܩܪܒܢܐ** (Psalm16.10 LXX Aramaic and Hebrew concur).*Our Saviour endured great pain but the pangs of Sheol were not part of that-in a sense his short stay in victory within that realm and his raising of many first-fruits saints fulfils that prophecy. There were no pains after the Cross.*

36 For David ministered sunshine **ܩܪܒܢܐ** in his generation serving the will of God and he fell asleep and was added to his fathers and saw and thought of **ܩܪܒܢܐ** corruption.**ܩܪܒܢܐ**

37 This **ONE...** conversely whom God raised up did not consider or think of corruption,

38 Know then brothers that by this one the laying aside or forgiveness **ܩܪܒܢܐ** of sin has been heralded to you. *SEBAQ is used of “allowing to remain” “forgiving” and “leaving in a will”-also of “allowing” “freeing from taxes” “deserting” and “passing over”(Passover)-its predominant meanings are “to leave” and “to leave behind as in a will”. Its famous use is in the dereliction cry.*

39 And from all things that you can’t be justified by the law of Moses all who believe are justified by this **ONE**.

40 And be cautious or beware therefore lest that which is written in the prophets come on you.

41 “Behold scorners (you who despise & condemn **ܩܪܒܢܐ**) and wonder and be devoured or destroyed **ܩܪܒܢܐ** as by the pains of childbirth for I am doing a work in your days which you will not believe if a man repeats his report to you **ܩܪܒܢܐ** –even though you have rehearsed narratives.

42 **And when** (98) they were going out from their presence they pleaded that on another Sabbath they would talk over these words with them.

43 And from the time when the synagogue was untied or dissolved many Jews went off after them and also foreigners who were in awe of God and they were actively speaking to them and persuading them to be joined as in marriage **חבב** (not HABAR—simply companions or friends of “grace” nor added to HALAT and mixed up with as currents in bread. the grace of God.

44 And on another Sabbath the entire city came together to hear the word of God.

45 And **when (99)** (“when” is a pronoun of time and **כח** relates to **יגח** ‘yoke” so it speaks about a temporal period and “yoke” which I suggest is not just the coincidental occurrences linked to time but the “happenings” linked to the movements of the Holy Spirit. Thus the time clock that Luke watches is that of the Holy Spirit and the “when’s” portray acts where the Lord works with the Church through subsequent acts of power and events of note... The Jews saw the great crowds they were filled with anger and were standing against the words that Paul was speaking and they were blaspheming.

46 Paul and Barnabas conversely said in the public eye “It was necessary that God has spoken the word first to you but because you drive it away as chaff **שפיר** from you and you decree or settle the value **מחצית** against your own souls on that account you are not worthy of the life of eternity we have turned us to the Gentiles.” 47 Thus the Lord commanded us exactly as it is written “I have established you a light for the Gentiles to be for life to the ends of the earth.”

48 And **when (100)** the Gentiles were listening they were rejoicing and glorifying God and those that were placed or knelt or planted **נחם** for eternal life believed.

49 And the word of Yahwe was spoken in that entire region.

50 The Jews conversely stirred the foremost leaders of the cities and noble women who with them worshipped God and raised persecutions against Paul and Barnabas and they expelled them from their city boundaries.

51 And **when (101)** they went out they shook off the dust of their feet against them and they themselves came to the city of **Iconium**.

52 And the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 14

SOVEREIGN IN ASIA MINOR

1 And they came and entered the Jewish synagogue on their own initiative and thus spoke with them – precisely in this way many of the Jews and Greeks believed. *The visit was not by invitation but by entering to worship and engaging in personal work and witness.*

2 The Jews who were not persuaded to the contrary stirred up or provoked **אצא** the Gentiles to do evil to the brothers.

3 And they were a long time there and they were speaking of Yahwe in the public eye or fountain (a reference to “open forum” and public address in the street) and He was testifying of the word of His grace by signs and wonders that He was doing by their hands.

4 And the whole multitude of the city was divided: some of them were with the Jews and some of them were joined to the apostles.

5 And there was a decree of cutting off **קצא** like cutting off a branch from the Gentiles and from the Jews & their leaders to abuse and stone them with stones. *The Gentiles excluded them and the Jews went a step further to abuse and if possible kill them.*

6 And **when (102)** they knew they departed **עזב** as Enoch-as a landmark gone without trace and fled for refuge **נחם** to the cities of Lycaonia - **Lystra and Derbe** and the villages that were around them. *In Deuteronomy 9 there were to be 3 cities set apart for Refuge. If we look more thoroughly we find that in the next missionary journey Paul revisited amongst others the family of Timothy in Lystra to which city they formerly fled (Acts 16.1). Since this first journey when some had believed Timothy had been marked amongst them. **What heavenly guidance** took them further south and into the area that later became the “land of 1000churches” is not written down but it was divine! It was obedience to Christ’s rule-go to another city. It was also action in accord with Deuteronomy 9.From those parts was to spring the bishop of Ephesus-Timothy-who built up the mother church of Asia.*

7 And yonder they were preaching the good news. *The word **שמם** in Aramaic also conveys the notion of “heaven” almost exactly as we have it in our old hymn “I have a mansion just over the hilltop in that fair land where we’ll never grow old; And some day yonder I’ll never more wander but walk the streets that are pure as gold. These cities appeared to be very heaven itself when they arrived and had a good hearing and found converts.*

8 And there was one man who was sitting in the city of Lystra who was disabled in the feet –disabled in his feet **בְּרַגְלָיו** from the womb of his mother who had never walked *We are to notice that there was just one such man-the society was agrarian and fit –the men were active and getting about their duties except this One. He was the Mephibosheth of Lystra.*

9 This one man listened to Paul speaking and **when** (103) Paul saw him and it had become known that there was faith in him of life(eternal)

10 He said to him in a loud voice “I say to you in the Name of our Lord Yeshua Messiah Stand on your feet and he sprang up **קָפָץ** as a trap would snap or as an arrow would shoot from a bow and he stood and he walked. **The Lord was working with Paul and this concrete evidence shows again the yoking of the hand of the Lord and the word of the apostle.**

11 And throngs of people **when** (104) they saw the thing that Paul did raised their voices in the language of the country and they were saying “The Gods have become like the sons of men and have descended to us”. **This “when” is a patent acknowledgement that the hand of God was in the healing. It is a not disingenuous remark as it reflects the actual situation-The Lord Jesus Christ had literally come down and it was by His specific work and grace that this miracle occurred. This once more is a sign to them of God in action. It is recorded with approval by Luke because it is indeed Jesus working with the Church.**

12 And they were calling Barnabas “Lord of the gods and Paul Hermes” because he was the first to speak (Aramaic Paal “the initial speaker”).

13 And the priest of the Lord of the Gods who was outside the city brought bulls and chaplets or garlands to the gates of the court yard where they were staying and he wanted to make a sacrifice to them.

14 Barnabas and Paul conversely when they listened tore their outer garments and jumped to their feet *like the man who was healed-the very same term **קָפָץ** is employed -but not as when the man was healed for joy but out of deep disquiet that such should be the impression of who they were.* And they went out intimately **הִלָּל** among the mob who were crying out.

15 And they were saying “O Men what are you doing, we- who bring you good news that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God who made heaven and earth and sea and all that is in them –we also are sons of men capable of pain suffering and grief **אֲכָזָב** exactly like you.

16 He who in the first ages allowed all of the nations to go away **אָזַח** in the path of their own lives or souls. *Luke uses “allow” –the notable verb oof the dereliction cry which has this main meaning of permitting or letting remain as was.*

17 **When** (105) this ancient “yoke” of the Lord and His witnesses in old time is inserted to show the very same action of the Lord in both testaments. He did not leave or allow Him to be without witness evidence or martyr **מָרְטִיר** in giving or serving them grace **חַסְדֵּי** from heaven and sending down to them rain and multiplying fruit in their times and He was filling them with food and with gladness **שִׂמְחָה** like the Hebrew **SIMCHA**-“joy” in their hearts. **This “witness” and “serving” and “joy” should have induced returning love and thankfulness. The witness of provision beyond food is there. The word witness adds the message that tells precisely who He is. By his gifts He demonstrated his work for His people as their sovereign Lord.**

18 And **when** (106) they were saying these things prevailing with difficulty **חִשְׁבֵּי** they restrained the people so that a strong man did not make a sacrifice to them. **Where is the yoke with Christ? It is very clear-Jesus was foremost in their minds-His unique person, His cross, His once for all atonement-He was watching-He was glorified-He was thrilled that these two drew attention to that day He washed our sins away!**

19 The Jews from Iconium and Antioch conversely came there and stirred the people against them and they stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city they thought he was dead.

20 And the disciples gathered around Him and he stood up-“he arose” and entered the city and the next day he went out with Barnabas and they came to the city of Derbe. *The honour they gave to Christ when they might have been lionized was acknowledged by the Saviour as He raised up the heavily stoned Paul whom they first looked on as dead.*

21 And **when** (107) they were preaching to the people of that city and disciplined many they turned around **חָזְרוּ** and retraced their steps to evangelise the inhospitable parts to the city of Lystra and Iconium and Antioch.

22 When they were confirming or establishing **קָבְעוּ** the souls of the disciples they were saying to them “By much suffering it is essential to enter the kingdom of God.”**The witness to suffering was never denied by :Paul-he told it like it is “A road marked with suffering. The Lord said “Take up your cross and follow”-and Paul was equally authentic-preaching the cross and bearing it too. In this the Lord was with him.**

23 And they raised up elders for them in every church **when (108)** they were fasting and leaning on the Lord in prayer and entrusting or devoting them to our Lord on whom they believed. *Not so explicit but implicit and acutely precious was the “yoke” with Jesus for these burgeoning fellowships which were born in fasting prayer and a deposit of mutual commitment*

24 And **when (109)** they had circled in the region of Pisidia they came to themselves at Pamphylia. *The idea of the circuit was used by Wesley because more than most since Revival times he transited around whole areas and termed his perambulations “circuits”. The concept of encirclement is akin to that of Jericho and the clue to the “yoke” idea here is that as the Lord led Joshua so he led Paul and Silas triumphant in the gospel in the cities of this land of robbers. This also Jesus did and several times in Acts the apostles do the same. It is an expression reminiscent of the circling of Jericho or the movement of the sun. So from the “land of raindrops” to the “land beloved”. Pamphylia was a province of Cilicia and Paul’s own beloved area. 2Cor11.26 refers to “perils by robbers” which may refer to Pisidia which the Seleucids ruled from Pisidian Antioch stronghold; it was home to fierce tribes of predatory mountaineers in the West Taurus range.*

25 And **when (110)** they had spoken the word of Jehovah or Marya in the city of Perga they came down to Antalya. *One has travelled that very route and been chased by would be robbers. We distributed tracts and gave a farmer one Turkish New Testament before climbing the Taurus shoulder to the plateau and descending to Antalya. The apostles now approaching the coast and enjoying the coastal plain of Pamphylia which land they loved uttered with Aramaic eloquence the Lord’s word in the city of Perga. The word of the Lord is technically the “promise of the king” ܡܠܟܘܬܐ*

26 And from there they travelled by sea and came to Antioch because they were committed from there to the grace of Maryah for the work that they had (now) completed.

27 And **when (111)** they had gathered the whole church they laid on the table or opened up everything that God did with them who had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. *There must have been a lot to tell of the “yoke” of Christ with the apostles in Pisidia. This was a highly significant breakthrough in a dangerous terrain amongst a predatory and fickle tribal group. The “door” the Lord opened led to the area being later dubbed “the land of a thousand churches” when Ephesus to the west became the mother church of Asia. The Lord truly was at work and His grace had been made known to thousands.*

CHAPTER 15

SOVEREIGN IN PIDISIA (2ND JOURNEY)

1 And men had dismounted from carriage and horse ܡܠܟܐ from Judea and they were teaching the brothers that “If you are not circumcised in the customary manner of the law you cannot have Life (eternal).

2 And there was a huge dispute ܡܠܟܐ with them and Paul and Barnabas. It followed that Paul and Barnabas and another person with them should go up to the Apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem because of this dispute. *The assumption behind this approach is that the apostles would not affirm it.*

3 And the church accompanied and commissioned them and they were travelling through all Phoenicia and also among the Samaritans **when (112)** they were telling the story ܡܠܟܐ as a warlike engagement or dice-game gamble about the conversion of the Gentiles and they were creating great joy for all the brothers. *The risk involved and the story of almost being worshipped and the result of big numbers of conversions alongside the near death experiences would evoke both gasps of horror and gales of laughter and an overall impression of elation to think the gospel was doing so well so soon. This was a manifest sign the Lord was working with them and further evidence of the “yoke” of God’s unseen hand behind what “happened”.*

4 And **when (113)** they came to Jerusalem they were received by those from the church apostles and elders and they told them the story of everything **God did** with them. *The “God did” testifies to the “yoke” of their ministry and the hand of the Lord working with them. The very same story of Christian warfare and faith risk promoted a very different response at home. Pharisees who believed in Christ’s teaching and resurrection appear not to have engaged with the significance of the outpouring of the Spirit so they held circumcision of the flesh and legal instruction in Moses as priority and would have the evangelists go back and proselytize the Gentiles. This is the Galatian controversy at source and it comes not from the Apostles or the Church at large nor the Elders but from a Pharisaic group who believed faith was completed by works and opposed law to Spirit. Thus the work of the Lord was potentially imperiled by*

5 But those men who had believed from the school of the Pharisees stood up and were saying “It is essential for you to circumcise them and command them to keep Moses law!”

6 But the Apostles and Elders gathered to look at this word or topic and scripture ܡܠܟܐ

7 And **when (114)** there was great dispute Simon (Peter) arose and said to them “Men brothers You know that from the early days when **God chose** that the Gentiles hear the word of the gospel by my mouth and to believe

8 And **God who knows** what is in the hearts testified about them and **gave them the Spirit** of Holiness exactly as to us.

9 And He made no distinction between us and them because He purified their hearts by faith.

10 And now **why are you tempting God** precisely to put a yoke on the necks of the disciples which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear?” **כִּבְיָ**—the term “bear” refers to a camel load which is too heavy or a ship’s freight that would sink the vessel. Peter was stating that such a load would sink Christianity as a faith. *Works would sink the ship of the gospel*

11 “But by the **Grace** **חַסְדֵּנוּ** of our Lord Jesus the Messiah we exactly as they believe that we may live.” **Peter had it exactly right—it was by divine favour the Lord was extending His church. The Lord is at work where the pre-eminence of Grace is evident in the message and the lives of believers.**

12 And the entire host became silent **הֶחֱלְטוּ** and they were listening to Paul and Barnabas who told the story of all the signs and mighty deeds of spiritual warfare **מִלְחָמָה** that God did by their hands.

13 And after they fell quiet James arose and said “Men brothers listen to me!”

14 Simon has told the story to you of how God began to choose approve and purify **טָהַר** from the Gentiles a people for His name.

15 To this the words of the prophets bring complete ratification **אֵלֶּם** exactly as it is written...

16 After these things I shall return and raise the tabernacle of David which has fallen and I that from it that has fallen and I shall cause it to be raised up.

17 Precisely then the rest of the children of men and nations wherein my name is called on, shall seek the Lord Maryah.

18 From anciently **מִלְפָּנֵי** the works of God are known.

19 Because of this I say I move that we do not trouble those who from the Gentiles have been turning to God. *James uses a double “I” precisely as Jesus did and thereby virtually speaks with the authority of Jesus himself.*

20 But let there be a missive to them that they break free from defilement of sacrifices and from fornication and from that which dies by strangulation and from blood.

21 For Moses from the earliest generation has in every town his heralds who on every Sabbath in the synagogues read him (i.e the Pentateuch and HafTorah).

22 At that precise time **בְּהַזְכֵּר** the apostles and elders along with the whole church chose from their number and sent to brothers of the Gentiles in Antioch in Cilicia Paul and Barnabas in company with Judah Barshaba and Silas—the leading men among them..

23 And they wrote in their own handwriting a letter thus “The apostles and elders and brothers to those in Antioch Syria and Cilicia brothers of the Gentiles Shalom”.

24 We hear that men from us went out and have alarmed you with words and have turned your souls upside down **הִפְּכֵם** **when (115)** they were saying “Be circumcised and observe the law —which things we have not commanded. **The value of this letter is that it had the authority of Christ. It came from those who knew the mind of the Lord and so it set the rule of grace over against the supposition that life was bound to circumcision and legal observance—which became at best tradition and a weight to be shed and at worst a heresy. Christ’s Sovereignty was never more clearly spelt out than when Grace took the foremost position in the message.**

25 “Because of this we have given thought and when we were all assembled we chose men and sent them with Paul and Barnabas our beloved friends...

26 Men who committed them fully for the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah...

27 And we sent Judah and Silas with them for they in the word (scripture and perhaps the comments of the Lord) the same things. *This confirmation from Jerusalem suggests that these two additional persons and great competence in scripture and perhaps thorough awareness of our Lord’s own mind. This was no small occasion and the matter of how salvation was to be obtained was affirmed to be by grace alone.*

28 For it was **the will of the Holy Spirit** that we would lay on you no additional burden other than these necessary things...

29 “To abstain from that sacrificed (to idols) and from blood and what is strangled and from fornication and when you keep yourselves from these you will be beautiful (in conduct and life) —you will be faithful to our Lord. *The “beauty” of the Christian faith and its “truth” are seen in our way of life which is enabled by the*

Holy Spirit. It is not just the negative will of the Spirit but the positive work and will of the Spirit within that the Apostles here stress.

30 But those sent came to Antioch and gathered all the people and handed them the letter.

31 And **when** (116) they read it they rejoiced and were comforted **سكنا**

32 And by the prepared/enriched **سكنوا** word they strengthened the brothers and established **those who were of the house of Judah and Silas because they were also prophets**. *The prophetic aspect from the Old Testament and the direct enrichment by prophetic word from the Holy Spirit which appears to be referred to here especially uplifted the church. The emphasis is not on the prepared statement but on the Holy Spirit's desire that the church live without the burden of law. The Lord by His Spirit was at work forwarding the mission of Matthew 28.19 from the Antioch base.*

33 And **when** (117) they were there for a time the brothers sent them to the Apostles in peace and full commitment (to the letter). *The God given unity of the churches at Jerusalem and Antioch centers around carrying the word to the Gentiles. The body obeys the Head who works within it.*

34 However it was **the wish** of Silas to remain there. *This continued stay is not noted in the Western Syriac or Peshitta or Eastern Peshitto but in Tremellius 1569 and in the TR Greek and the 5thC Codex Claremontanus alongside the Peshitta.*

35 But Paul and Barnabas did remain in Antioch teaching and preaching the word of God with many others.

36 And after days Paul said to Barnabas "Let us return and visit our brothers in every city where we have heralded the word of God and see how they are doing."

37 But Barnabas **wished** to take John surnamed Mark with him.

38 But Paul did not **wish** to take or manage or steer him (as a vessel) **سكن** with them because he left them when they were in Pamphylia and did not go away with them.

39 **On this account there was a schism /dispute/contradiction/ controversy-even a polemic** **سكن** Greek *παροξυσμος* and they separated one from another and Barnabas took Mark and travelled by sea and they went in close intimacy **سكن** to Cyprus.

40 But Paul chose Silas and he went out or **launched out** **سكن** **when** (118) he was committed by blessing of the brothers to the Grace **سكن** of God. *In this matter the sequel demonstrates the continuing work of the Lord through Paul and Silas-the "yoke" of the Holy Spirit and faith rich mission continues. There is in GABA the term "chose" a possible noun that Silas was of the party that was very strong on Grace. Silas is the one who with Judah was committed to prophecy. Silas was very content with the Gentiles who were not of the Judiasers. It seems clear that Paul was equally committed in this direction. To give v.32 its proper weight the element of prophecy and guidance of the Holy Spirit was strong in the Antioch church. The matter of John Mark is to be considered separate although it probably meant that Barnabas who had been foundational there before the conversion of Paul moved his sphere of influence to Cyprus and perhaps even to Alexandria later. The notable "sea-going idioms used by Luke throw light on the dispute. Steering Mark would be difficult; launching out on an extended spiritual voyage would be demanding. The Greek testifies to PAROXYSM or very heated dispute.*

40 And he (Paul) was travelling in Syria and Cilicia **confirming** and **establishing** churches.

CHAPTER 16

SOVEREIGN IN ASIA MINOR & PHILIPPI

1 And he arrived **سكن** or happened upon the city of Derbe but in its environs (literally "neighbouring") at Lystra (literally "belonging Lystra") there lived **ONE** disciple named Timothy whose mother was **ONE** Jewess believer and his father was an Aramean.

2 And all the disciples from Lystra and Iconium were testifying about him.

3 They testified that this man wanted Paul to take him with him and he adopted him **سكن** and circumcised him because of the Jews that lived there who all knew that his father was an Aramean. *Paul can truly say that Timothy was his own son for his assumed rights in respect of him that virtually made him a foster father. This "genuine son" was not just a "son of the law" but in some special sense he owned a special relationship with Paul*

4 And **when** (117) they had gone out among the cities heralding they were teaching them that they should keep those commands that the Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem had written.

5 Nevertheless churches were actively established in faith and were enlarging or becoming abundant numerically by the day. *The adding to the church recalls Acts 2.47 where the "Lord added to the numbers of the church daily" but here the plural is used-the same action of the Lord is to be assumed-"God*

working with the apostles” and the increase was a work of the Holy Spirit of God using His servants. In Acts 9.31 the church as one in its widening circle was strengthened and encouraged by the Holy Spirit and grew in numbers—here again is the “shadowing ministry of the Spirit” growing the unitary body in Judea and Samaria. The point being made in 16.5 is that individual churches were being planted in good numbers and this too was the work of the Holy Spirit in tandem with the apostle’s witness. Albeit there had been a not altogether pleasant breach with Barnabas but church growth continued apace.

6 But they travelled in Phrygia and distant areas of Galatia and the Holy Spirit hindered or restrained or suspended them that they should speak the word of God in Asia

7 And **when (118)** they came to the region of Mysia they wanted to go out from there to Bithynia but the Spirit of Jesus did not permit or allow them **ﷻ The permission is that of the Holy Spirit and the word PAS or PASIS has to do with a declaration. This like many situations Christians meet the decision may have related to “circumstances” such as health or terrain or weather or inhospitable reception or again “the reading of scripture” and “memory of the Lord’s bidding” on cities being unwilling to hear or again the “advice of a colleague”-behind the guidance is the hand of the Lord and the voice of the Holy Spirit.. The reason Luke appends is the clear inner witness of the Holy Spirit which is greater than all. Bithynia later in the time of Pliny introduced a harsh persecution of Christians(112AD) so the church then had mature as well as new Christians—ie it must have existed 20-30 years earlier circa 80-90AD if not earlier still.**

8 And **when (119)** they issued out **ﷻ** of Mysia they went down to those of the Troas area. **There is a sort of battle plan or strategic withdrawal not disguised by the wording. Now they stood at the famous city associated with the Trojan horse where a few soldiers opened the gates of a city to its conquerors. Curiously the apostles were to be in the hands of the sovereign Lord they were the advance soldiers of the faith in Europe—not clandestine but a glorious foretaste of witness on the new and fruitful field of continental Europe.**

9 And in a night vision a man appeared to Paul exactly like **ONE** single Macedonian who stood and invoked or implored from him **when (120)** he said “Come to Macedonia and help me”. *This is amongst the clearest “yoke” episodes in the book of Acts. God is interacting by vision just as he interacted with the wise men by dream. The reader will notice that the Aramaic has but a single man in Europe before Paul who is committed to the Christian work. Who is that man of the vision? He is precisely Macedonian in height and he stands as a single figure a bit like the brave three at the Pass of Thermopulae. When Paul and Silas would join him there would indeed be three who might stand together against Satan in Macedonia or northern Greece. The voice was not one of command—it was one of a suppliant beseeching support. One can hardly resist the thought that this is the Christ in Macedonian dress speaking in the Greek language. The vision is heaven given and demonstrates the continued interaction of God and the apostle as the gospel stands poised to enter Europe.*

10 **When (121)** Paul conversely saw this vision we wanted to proceed at once to Macedonia because **WE** recognized or perceived **ﷻ** that our Lord called US to bring gospel news to them. **This clarifies the agent of calling—it is none but the Lord! Yet another highly significant moment—a God moment—a time of focus when absolute assurance kicked in and they were confirmed in their certainty of God with them and they “yoked” with Him in His sovereign ministry.**

11 And **WE** travelled from Troas and went straight to Samothrace and from there the day following **WE** came to the city of Neapolis. *Without ceremony Luke enters the scene and writes himself into the story. Where did he come from? What brought him to Troas? Was he a physician Paul met or a ship’s doctor Paul teamed up with? The sudden lasting partnership of the narrator who must have had a facility in Greek to live in these parts is not reflected by any linguistic transformation in style.*

12 And from there to Philippi which is the first city of Macedonia and it is a colony. But we were in this city during notable or festival or outstanding days. *The time spent in Philippi may have corresponded to a special Jewish feast period or dates of special Christian significance or they may simply have been notable as marked by drama.*

13 And we issued out side on the Sabbath day from the gate of the city on the river side because we had seen there a house of prayer and **when (122)** we sat we were speaking with the women who were assembled there. *The προσευχη or ﷻ would be used on the Sabbath at the hour of prayer—beginning at noon and ending at 3pm. The women were either Jewesses(cf Lydia) or proselytes for the culture was pagan. Perhaps Lydia had erected the place of prayer. It is for my wife and I a very special location. I had adopted Philippians 1.21 as my motto in early life and dearly wished to one day reach Philippi. The Lord granted this dream to be realized in May of 1997 aged 52 & 51 respectively and the morning after we arrived—breakfast with chocolate being finished—we hurried out into the field behind Hotel Lydia and saw the*

modern House of Prayer and stood for a time by the river Lycus and the baptismal site where doubtless in 49AD the first Christians were baptized by the apostle. **This little prayer assembly was the seed of the Philippian church and God's sovereign hand led Paul to that lovely place by the River.**

14 And **ONE** single woman—a seller of purple cloth **לודיא** who was a worshipper of Eloha whose name was Lydia from the Thyatira city or Medina—our Lord opened the heart of this one soul and she was listening to what Paul said.

15 And she was immersed—she and the children of her house and she was imploring from us and saying that “If really you are sure and can rely that I have believed on our Lord come lodge **למנו** become settled or fixed in my house and she was greatly urgent upon us. Lydia’s invitation was for the long term. She might travel on business but she was granting the apostle and his party a base for their European mission> The Lord had given them a virtual pastoral base =once which no doubt they appreciated greatly at this time.

16 And it was **when** (123) we were going to the house of prayer there fell upon us as by misfortune or opposition or in greeting **ONE** single girl who had a spirit of divination and had been creating great trade for her masters in the divination she had been divining. *The commercial profits were considerable—hers was perhaps the best business in the town but there was more. She was a diviner. The word “divine” **קצמא** qatzama is based on the word used for “barley bread” because it was broken in divining. Strangely this was a spiritual sign of the staff of life itself and in the highest symbolism of life received from God bread is also broken. The girl detained them from reaching the House of Prayer but the Lord was in this meeting and that is evidenced by Luke’s use of “one”—which is not a device but represents an individual interest of the evangelist Paul who like the master specialized in personal need. Jesus healed one blind man, cleansed a leper, cast out a demon from a man—often and often He reached just one life as in the case of the Gadarene and he in turn reached a multitude of others. As the sequel shows this girl was released from demonic power. In the gospel of Luke the same impress of individual care can be seen—the good shepherd leaves the 99 and seeks the lost sheep. The sovereignty of God is stressed by Luke in the **ONE** concept which he employs frequently in both accounts of the Gospel and the Acts*

17 And she was coming behind Paul and after us and she was crying out and saying “These men are servants of Eloha Marima (God and Lord of all) and they are bringing the gospel of the way of life to you”. *Such accuracy could normally only have been gained by listening to Paul but she appears not to have done so. This information was supernaturally shared with her.*

18 And she was doing thus for many days and Paul was snorting with anger **אצ** In Acts 9.1 the Greek word *επνευω* “breathing out” is exactly the reaction but curiously in the Aramaic of Acts 9 we read “full to overflowing **למא** of threat **למא** and hot fury **למא**—actually not since then except perhaps when there was the breach with Barnabas in Acts 15.39 and a Paroxysm of anger displayed was such a burst of indignation shown by the apostle. We are indebted to the doctor for his candour in the matter of Paul’s short fuse. **The difference in the Greek of Acts 9 and the Aramaic and the similarity of the Aramaic of Acts 9 Greek and Acts 16 18 is tantalizing. It tends to show that the Greek and Aramaic texts are of roughly similar age and that the wording transferred from text to text during the same period of original writing.** And he said to that spirit “I command you in the name of Jesus the Messiah that you come out of her and in the moment it came out.

19 And **when** (124) her masters saw that the hope or gospel of their agora business was gone **למא** they laid hold of Paul and Silas and they dragged them as they brought them to the suq.

20 And they brought them to the presence of the commander of the army or governor **למא** and the leaders of the city and were saying “These men are disturbing **למא** our city because they are Jews. *Roman law was weighted against Jewish religion—it was not a “permitted religion” so the charge was serious. The exorcism was final—their hope was lost with the emancipation of a slave—that is one of the regular uses of “gone”—gone from slavery. Thus the work of God releases slaves—this is what Jesus said in Nazareth—“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me—He has sent me to proclaim good news—to proclaim good news to the poor—to ransom those who are captive.” Luke 4.18. So once more the Lord is active alongside the apostles as truly as when he cast out the demon in Luke 4 in Capernaum.*

21 And they are heralding practices which are not permitted **למא** us to do because we are Romans. *The racial objection was an effective card in the culture.*

22 Great crowds also gathered around them at that precise time—the military statesmen tore their long outer garments **למא** and commanded to beat them with rods or thongs **למא**

23 And **when** (125) they had scourged them repeatedly they threw them **לָאֵרֶץ** into prison and commanded the keeper of the prison to watch them strenuously or valiantly as *his conquest לָאֵרֶץ*, *The reality is that “as the master so the servant” His servant-he was scourged before a Roman soldier by soldiers-now Paul is scourged before the soldier governor by military officials. We bear as Samuel Rutherford said “the lighter end of the cross”-the very yoke of Christ. There is no mention of the Lord being in this public humiliation but there can be no doubt that heaven watched this with solemn and profound respect and planned an answer as the subsequent story shows. Everywhere in Acts we must look beneath the events for the omnipresent sovereign Lord. “Thou God seest me!” said Hagar.*

24 And he **when** (126) received this order (a) he quickly lifted them **לְאֵרֶץ** and (b) shut them up **בְּבֵית** in the inner house **בְּבֵית** of the house of prisoners and (c) bound their legs in stocks. *Four expeditions are seen here. He promptly lifted them-possibly on a chariot. He shut them up under lock; he put them in a “private” section and he fastened them or immobilized them in stocks.*

25 And in the middle of the night (lit PELEG –division-6-12pm (middle) and 12-6am) PAUL AND Silas were leaning on God in prayer and celebrating in song and the prisoners heard them.

26 And from the time (they) desisted or went quiet **לְאֵרֶץ** (a) there was a great earth quake movement and (b) the foundation or base wall of the prison house and (c) **all** of the doors were opened at once and (d) the chains of them **all** were released. **לְאֵרֶץ** *Some might call this a coincidence –but when the apostles extolled the mighty acts of God He initiated this most recent act of God-an intervention timed with the precision and exact result that prayers so recently uttered would have sought. There can be no doubt that on this 121st occasion as in previous numerous events the legend of “The Acts of the Apostles and the Holy Spirit” ‘the Lord was working with them with signs following’.*

27 And **when** (127) the keeper on watch of the prison was awakened and he saw that the doors of the prison were open he took a sword and pleaded or endeavoured **לְאֵרֶץ** that he should kill himself because he thought or was convinced **לְאֵרֶץ** that the prisoners had fled. *The warden valued his life but in a frenzy discussed with himself & Paul taking his life. The gospel and the assurance of Paul on the security of prisoners prevented this. This is a case of wise forward thinking on Paul’s part. He was a man of great prudence and like Stephen gifted in the sovereignty of God with this wisdom by the Spirit. It is seen in his Appeal to Caesar and in his direction of the ship on his last voyage-everywhere God gave him rare perception.*

28 And Paul called him in a loud voice and said to him “Do not do not do yourself any hurt because we are all here in this place at this time in this world. **לְאֵרֶץ** *Paul was still in the bowels of the prison and with him other convicted persons. Doubtless he had been sharing on their story of prayer and song and they would never forget it. They were now the first Prison Christian Fellowship and when they would be released they would probably be the first rehabilitated prisoners to join the Christian Church.*

29 And he lit the lamp and jumped (the obstacles) and entered when he was quaking or shaking and he fell before the feet of Paul and Silas. *Luke’s synecdoche and zeugma comes out in his humour when he tells us that the Keeper was quaking and rising and falling like the earth itself. He is skilled at transferring one idea and linking it to another and also at using a verb appropriately but in a new framework.*

30 And he brought them outside and said to them “My **lord MARI** –and what is exactly necessary for me to do to live or have life (eternal)?

31 And they were saying to him “Trust by faith in our **Lord MARAN** Jesus Messiah and you shall live-you and your House. *The concept here may not be so theological as the “oikos” formula of theologians think-it may be simply a case of this man having exactly the same confidence in the Lord as the apostles had when they prayed and sang in their “house or inner house of prisoners”. The whole prison family had come under the gospel. Now the whole household of the governors’ family were able alike to come under its ample roof and protection.*

32 And they spoke with him the word of the sovereign Lord **MARYAH** and with all the sons of his house.

33 And in that hour of the night he went here and there managing **לְאֵרֶץ** –he washed them from their wounds and “the son of the hour” he was immersed in baptism and the sons of his house-every one. *There was nothing this man left until the morning. Luke is not erring when he says it was just after midnight but it was within the hour not the watch(which is 3hours) that the man had sorted the apostles and comforted them and had his whole house taught and baptized.*

34 And he bustled about and led them up to his house and placed a table for them and he rejoiced and the sons of his house with confident faith in God.

35 And **when** (127) it was dawn (the time of first birdsong) the military magistrates and those who shouldered rods (lictors) sent to the high officer of the prison to release these men. *This quite independent*

action did not even query if the prisoners had escaped-they did not apply Roman law. They were moved and their hearts were softened. Was not this an act of God? Again the Lord was working with them by signs which the wider society well understood.

36 And **when** (128) the chief of the house of prisoners entered he spoke this message to Paul. “The military magistrates have sent a missive that you now be released and depart in Peace.

37 Paul said to him “Without offense they scourged us publicly-all of us being Romans (*that must have included Silas and Luke*) and cast us in prison and now they are secretly **سرا** releasing us-No so –but they should come and they should release us.

38 And the bearers of rods (*lictors or police charged with the maintenance of civil order and the prison*) went and told these words spoken to them to the military magistrates and when they heard that they were Romans they dreaded that. *A fear almost greater than the fear of the earthquake now gripped their hearts.*

39 And they came to them and they pleaded with them and that they should go out free **بهدا** and go somewhere else **من** from the city.

40 And **when** (129) they issued out emancipated **بهدا** from prison they went to Lydia and saw **the brothers** there and they comforted them and they went off freemen. *It appears that the church and the men who by now had come to faith were gathered there. It was very early in the morning and we can only presume that they had been praying for the prisoners. We are not told that Lydia suffered damage-only that things were encouraging and doubtless the church was united in praying to the lord for them.*

CHAPTER 17

SOVEREIGN IN ATHENS GREECE

Greece steeped as it was in philosophy had now a new message to digest-the message of the crucified risen Lord. We would say that the early advent of Christianity to Greece was heaven blessed and it took root and survived every early blast of persecution and opposition.

1 And they passed by the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica precisely where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

2 And Paul went in exactly as he was accustomed and on the third Sabbath he spoke with them from the scriptures

3 **When** (130) he was actively commenting **بهدا** and showing that Messiah was coming **to suffer and to rise from the dead** and that Jesus is this Messiah of whom I bring you the good news.

4 And people from among them believed and adhered to Paul and Silas and many from those Greeks who were God-fearers and also not a few notable women. *The success of Paul’s evangelistic ministry in Thessalonica was built on testimony derived from the mighty work of God in the resurrection and even now the Holy Spirit used this testimony to convert not a few who by the work of the Holy Spirit received this message. Further and further the gospel reaches into Europe and the Holy Spirit brings fruit for Paul’s labour and uses his faithfulness amid much suffering.*

5 And the Jews were envious and contacted evil men (*local mafia*) from the suq of the city and constructed a big mob and they were agitating the city and they came and arose against the house of Jason and were asking that they be brought out and surrendered to the mob.

6 And **when** (131) they did not find them there they dragged Jason and the brothers who were there and when they brought them to the Governor of the city they were crying out “These have disturbed the whole land and behold they have come here also. *They had the wrong men –the persons held were locals but they were to be scapegoats. Jason was doubtless a householder and the believers met with him.*

7 This opposition which accepts (the evangelists) and all these oppose the commands of Caesar raising an insurrection **مضاد** saying there is another King –Jesus. *The charge cites Jason’s guilt by association and “by receiving” the evangelists. Luke records no objection of the new Christians to the charge. They stood loyal to Christ. Again the Holy Spirit was at work –God was giving them grace and courage to be witnesses to the Risen Lord. From the first as the Thessalonian epistle states “They welcomed the message amidst severe suffering with joy given by the Holy Spirit. 1Thess1.6 Jason’s name means “God does it” and indeed the work wrought in the church at Thessalonica was the sovereign work of the Lord.*

8 But the governor and all the citizens were alarmed when they heard these things.

9 And they took bail from Jason and from the brothers and released them precisely then.

10 But the brothers –like the son of the moment they were sent Paul and Silas in the night to the city of Berea and **when** (132) they came there they entered the synagogue of the Jews.

11 **For** those Jews that were there were **men of rank and freeborn** **أحرار** superior to those of Thessalonica (*We have to reckon that the local Jews including the significant Jason had some idea about the neighbouring city of Berea where the people of the synagogue were freedmen and Romans and also noble.*

Paul in his Corinthian epistle speaks of those called to faith and recounts that not many “noble” were among those called **שָׂרָפִים** which speaks of “high birth” as opposed to “people who obtained freedom or citizenship” who might have risen in society.) Paul still using the method he employed “to the Jew first” was working with God in his outreach in every new location...and they were listening to the word every day **when** (133) they were determining or selecting **שָׂרָפִים** that these things were alike. *The idea of the “Bible School” emerges in Berea. These people desired a daily time of teaching and testimony when Paul related the events of the life of Christ and the 40 days –no doubt emphasizing the grand miracle and its preceding self offering of the Christ as a sin offering for mankind. The apostle was being used in preparing for us the New Testament work he executed as he proceeded under God to relate the work of Jesus to the prophecy of the Old Testament. This again evidences the “yoke” that Luke intends to display of the Spirit at work in the apostle(s).*

12 And many of them believed and also of the Greeks many **notable** men and women. *There were among the believers at Berea many well known names שָׂרָפִים of Gentiles in that area.*

13 And **when** (134) those Jews from Thessalonica knew that the word of God was heralded by Paul in Berea city they came there and did not cease to stir the people to alarm.

14 And Paul sent the brothers off to go down to the sea and Silas and Timothy remained in that city. *This time Paul did not wait for the provocation to gain further momentum-in a city where many Romans were on his side he might have weathered the storm but he acted as Christ advised and went to another city. This again displays his tactics-to work with the Lord when criticism mounted of the word.*

15 And they who came with Paul came with him to Athens city and when they left his presence they were handed a letter from him to Silas and Timothy that they should leave quickly to be with him. *Clearly some important people who regularly travelled to Athens were going back there fairly promptly and they acted as postmen for his correspondence to those left behind.*

16 But when (133) Paul himself remained in Athens he became exacerbated or saddened **שָׂרָפִים** when he saw that the whole city was full of idols.

17 And he was speaking in the synagogue with the Jews and with those god-fearers and in the market (suq) with those who were gathered every day.

18 And also philosophers who were from the school of Epicurus and others who were called Stoics were debating with expertise with him and some of them were saying “What does this collector of saying reasons or definitions want?” *Clearly Paul’s address was very rich in quotations and biblical and other authorities. He was seen to be capable of precise definitions and logic and these men wanted to know what his purpose behind issuing such speeches & reasoning... Others were saying “He is heralding alien gods” because he was heralded intimately among them Jesus and His resurrection. The provocation of idolatry to any one familiar with Moses was a spiritual provocation of the Holy Spirit and under the inspiration of the Spirit he spoke of the Father and the Son and understandably these philosophers took them to be another pantheon. The Epicureans originated in 306BC and were affianced to pleasure and emotional joy whilst the Stoics founded in the first half of the 4th century BC emphasized reason and the will.*

19 *One feels a compulsion to insist that Paul would have addressed the Areopagus in Greek and on that account to accept that in this address the Greek text must earn respect as of primary relevance.* “And they took hold of him and brought him to the place of judgment and decision making **שָׂרָפִים** that was called

Areopagus and were saying to him “
We are actively making it possible to understand personally what this new teaching that you herald is? *The leaders wished to become more familiar with his material clearly being impressed on his seriousness. The Greek seems to say “We have the power or moral right and intelligence to know or appreciate...”*

20 “For you have sown strange word in our hearing and we want to become familiar with what these things are?” *Paul was at the heart of Greek civilization and doubtless he was communicating in Greek-whereas Luke’s gospel in the Peshitta is in western Aramaic. Paul was “sowing” the word. He was using the technique Jesus used in his sermon on the mount.*

21 But all the Athenians who went there were strangers to any other thing; it was no concern to them except to speak or listen to something novel or new teaching **שָׂרָפִים** *The Greek puts it “strangers to no other leisure or pastime than to talk about or listen what was newer or fresh.”*

22 And **when** (135) Paul arose in the Areopagus he said “Valiant men, Athenians, I see that in all things you are into everything; you are abounding in the worship of demons or evil spirits” **שָׂרָפִים** *In the Greek the emphasis is on the most extensive demonic or fearful religion. In this matter Paul was acting with the conscience and the Holy Spirit to speak of the grave sin of Greece to create gods to worship-the sin of*

idolatry. This was not just criticism-from his awareness of God it was essential to show that the Athenians should indeed be “brave men” and begin to soldier against evil.

23 “For **when** (136) I was doing a circular tour I was looking at your houses of worship I found one altar on which it was written ‘The unknown God’ **ἄγνωστος** .remote hidden mysterious, secret “hiding”- the Greek simply has “unknown. He, whom you worship while you do not know Him –of this **ONE** I bring you good news. Paul injects “hope” and expresses “newness” in his message-the gospel exactly fits the situation he speaks of. **There can be no doubt the Lord brought him to that altar to show him the ignorance that someone somehow felt to erect an altar with such an inscription. The Lord was prompting him using the “tour” to give him a handle on how best to approach declaring the gospel to this learned nation.**

24 “For Eloha made the world and whatever is in it and He is the Lord of heaven and earth and He does not dwell in temples made with hands.”

25 “And He is not ministered to by the hands of the sons of men for He is not in need of anything because He gives to every person Life and a Soul.” *The Greek adds “and everything”.*

26 “And from one blood He made the whole world of the sons of men that they should become dwellers on the face of the whole earth; and He divided the eras in his decrees or by His visitations **ἰστορίαι**

ἱστορίας and established (by the same means) the coast of the dwelling places of the sons of men. Paul in declaring God’s decrees uses the term **ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ** which associates decrees with visitation. Thus God visited Adam and Noah and Abraham and Moses and finally in the New Testament visited us in Jesus. Thus the covenants that attach to His visitations are decrees.

27 “That they should be seeking God and actively enquiring and by His creation they might be discovering Him because in addition He is not far from any one of us.”

28 “For it is by him we live and move or are set in motion **κίνησις** and have essence as a number or entity in a place **τόπος** exactly as wise men who were among you have said ‘From Him is our race or descent’” **ἡμετέρας**

29 “Therefore, men, because our lineage is from Eloha (God-Greek **θεός**) we must not **καταδικασθῆναι** (we are guilty or condemned if we think) think that gold silver or stones carved by the cunning work **ἐπιτεχνήματα** or knowledge of a son of men is like the collective godhead (or maybe Deities)” **θεοῦ**.

30 “For times of wandering like sheep or deception and seduction **ἁμαρτίας** God **ἠγάπησεν** has passed over (as one would a river) (God has forgotten them made them vanish-changed them **ἠγάπησεν** and at this time He commands all the children of men—every man in every place shall repent”. *This new rule for all humanity clearly set out by Paul involves God Himself making a distinctive move. He(God)has adventured into the world and by the gospel brought such certainty that all may cease to wander and be lost in uncertainty.*

31 “Because He has established a day in which He is coming to judge the whole earth in righteousness by the hand of the valiant man whom He set apart **ἁγίον** (the fact is Christ was separated from the Father by the incarnation and given a redemptive function. This is like the separation of two legs of the divine purpose-that of judging and of forgiving) and He has faced every man with His (Christ’s) faithfulness or turned them to their faithful redeemer-in that He raised him from the dead. *There never was a manner in which man has been confronted with the nemesis of sin like this. Men did their worst-God did His best. Men killed God made alive. Men said “We have ended His influence” God said “I have made His influence like no other”.*

32 And **when** (137) they heard of the resurrection from the dead some made a pantomime of it-or jested and mimed **ὑποκρίσασθαι** and some said “We will hear you on another occasion about this.

33 Thus Paul went out from among them. **ἔβη** He went out free-he “went out” like published literature as one marked for his reference to the resurrected Christ.-and he went out in the sense of “taking away” for he was able to convince at least one.

34 And some of them joined him and believed-but among them **ONE** Dionysius (God of wine) was outstanding among the judges of the Areopagus and **ONE** woman (also outstanding) whose name was Damaris (marvelous) and others with them. *It appears the leading judge was converted and so Paul was very effective and indeed secured release without a question. These who joined Paul doubtless did hear on another occasion what he could add. The Lord had most notably been at work by His Spirit in the conversion of several leading lights of Athens and the church in that city would have been established as a result.*

CHAPTER 18

SOVEREIGN IN ACHAEA

Paul came to Achaia where the message had arrived before him through the Macedonians (cf Philippians 1). A thrilling story of his meeting with Priscilla and Aquila leads beautifully into the story of Apollous and

his instruction. The providential events behind these things—the Macedonian call and the discovery of Apollos forward the faith substantially.

1 **When** (138) Paul issued out from Athens he went to Corinth itself.

2 And he found there one man a Jew whose name was Aquila who originally was from the country of Pontus who at that time had come from the country of Italy—he and Priscilla his wife because Claudius Caesar had commanded all Jews to leave Rome and he (Paul) came close to them **ܐܩܘܝܠܐ**. *The decree of Claudius in 49AD upset the liberty of Jew and Christian alike in Rome. Christianity had but emerged in the capitol and Aquila was a trailblazer. However the Spirit of God was working with these pioneers of the gospel to ignite in Paul a strategy and determination to reignite the flame of faith in the capitol of the empire. Meantime the Holy Spirit would link him with Apollos through this couple.*

3 And because he was a son of their craft he lodged with them working hard in their trade because they were tentmakers **ܩܘܠܘܢܐ**—the term is used in Aramaic for rough cloth made of hair-horse or goat hair—and used for tents.

4 And he was speaking on the synagogues every Sabbath and he was persuading the Jews and Gentiles (often but hardly here “godless and profane”) **ܩܘܠܘܢܐ**

5 And **when** (139) Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia Paul was constrained **in the word** because the Jews were rising against him and blaspheming and he was testifying to them that Jesus is Messiah. *Paul was pressed spiritually by the wholesale opposition of the Jews on the matter of Jesus being Son of God. Paul had met Jesus on the Damascus turnpike and could not deny his belief—he taught that speaking against Jesus was Blasphemy and no part of the defense of Monotheism. There is however a point of logic where the mind cannot fully comprehend the relationship of Father and Son so the very proclamation of Jesus as Christ is tested not by mental capability but by spiritual experience and this is gained by faith not by reason. It was not that Paul’s spirit was tormented but that “the Word hemmed him in”—he was aware that he could not verbally convince the Jews and he knew like the others who stood for Christ in Macedonia he must be faithful to the word and “hemmed in” by its truth.*

6 And he shook or removed or threw off his clothes and said to them “From now on I am clean—I am taking myself off to the Gentiles. *The apostle no longer went around in his Jewish habit but adopted ordinary Gentile clothing as he moved onward in mission. He appears to have become like Mr. Pigtail-Hudson Taylor himself and sought to identify with the people he is evangelizing. This was a bold move and it began by his declaration that purity does not inhere in outward apparel but in inward cleansing by the blood of Jesus. The establishment of the Philippian church and the experience of Timothy and Silas consolidated Paul’s mind on the greater value of missioning among the Gentiles but his conviction was born of the Holy Spirit and the Word as the Peshitta and the critical Greek show—not of any pressure of spirit.*

7 And he left there and came to the house of a man whose name was Titus who at what time and in whatever manner **ܩܘܠܘܢܐ** (as he knew best) was a worshipper of God. And his house was agreeing with or **adhering to** or **next to** the synagogue. *There are two equal options for the commentator. Either the household were Jewish adherents or he was close merely in location and not necessarily in heart and mind. The Greek **οικια συμορορμειω** does not help a lot for it tells us “his premises were **bordering on**” or “his family were **marching with**” the synagogue. It would seem both were possible.*

8 And Crispus the leader of the congregation was trusting in our Lord—he and all the children of his household and many Corinthians were listening and trusting in God and they were being baptised. *What we are learning is that there was a Messianic synagogue in Corinth.*

9 And the Lord said to Paul in a vision “Do not fear but speak and do not be silent”.

10 Because I am with you and no man can molest or injure **ܩܘܠܘܢܐ** you. In this city there live a large number of people who belong to me.”

11 But he was sitting a year and six months in Corinth teaching them the word of God. *Of all situations this was the best and most fruitful since he left Antioch in Syria. The Titus-Crispus-Paul Triangle of witness flourished.*

12 And when Galion was there as proconsul of Achaia the Jews gathered as one against Paul and brought him before the seat **ܩܘܠܘܢܐ** Greek BEMA.

13 **When** (140) they were saying “This one outside the law the sons of men to be worshippers of Eloha.” *The Jews were dissimulating for they also worshipped Eloha but they were using the latest law to entrap the apostle aware that it might backfire. It was tedious. God was using the Roman proconsul who could clearly see what was afoot though it is doubtful if he realized that the very definition of Eloha and of God in Christ was probably the focus of the controversy.*

14 And **when** (141) Paul pleaded to open his mouth and speak Galion said to the Jews “If you are accusing this man about a matter of bad conduct or fraud or hate O Jews I would rightly **לא** receive you” **Paul was willing to speak and to suffer but God was in this to keep his promise that none would harm him.**

15 But if the charges are about the Word or a topic or names or you law you do that among yourselves for I do not wish to be a judge of these matters.”

16 And he drove them off with force from his judgment seat.

17 And all the pagans were laying hold of Sosthenes and elder of the synagogue and they were beating him before the judgment seat of Galion who was actively disregarding **למה** these things.

18 And **when** (142) Paul was there many days he gave his farewell blessing of peace to the brothers and journeyed by sea to go to Syria and Priscilla and Aquila came with him when he shaved his head at Cenchræa because he himself had vowed a vow. **The period of tranquility had ended and the circumstance of common suffering under law brought Paul back to the fold of Jewish Christian interlocution. He would not after all break with Judaism-he determined to keep his vows to the people of God and to stand with them against the pagan culture of his day-but most of all to keep his trust at the feast with the church at Jerusalem as they worked with the Lord together.**

19 And Paul arrived at Ephesus and entered the synagogue and was actively speaking with the Jews. *Here is palpable evidence that Paul would not make the clean break with the nation of Israel. However he reached out to the Gentiles in their worst excesses and when they vilified his people before God he vowed he would have no part in it and would stand by them and remain their helper in Christ. The Messianic Jewish position could not at this time be established as easily as in Corinth. In other contexts progress would be painfully slow His vow showed he was working with God and maintained his rule “to the Jew first”.*

20 And they were pleading with him to continue at length with them but he did not shelter himself (*under their wings*) **למה** Paul was never inclined to the safe choice and his mission was to reach parts where the gospel was unknown.

21 **When** (143) he said I must always be in Jerusalem to observe at that feast that is coming and if God will I shall turn toward you again and he left Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus. **Paul appears to consider this his duty under his new vow to his people and to the Lord whose death is central to his message. He set apart the Lord in his heart-and was working with Him before all.**

22 And he travelled by sea and came to Caesarea and he ascended and prayed in the peace of the sons of the assembled church and went on to Antioch. *The church in Caesarea had Philip as one of its leaders and it appears to have been in good heart—aware and appreciative of his work. It is thought that Luke made good use of such times to gain background to Jesus’ ministry.*

23 And **when** (144) he was there (in Israel) for these well known days of deep Christian experience and fellowship (at the feast) he proceeded on his strategic mission **למה** and circled in succession (after and after) in the lands of Galatia and Phrygia **The deep encouragement of coming back to base—where he had sat at Gamaliel’s feet and more especially where the Lord was crucified and first showed his resurrection promoted in Paul a kindred desire to go back among disciples as Jesus for 40 days showed Himself and His resurrection to His disciples. when** (145) he was establishing or confirming all the disciples. **Paul’s mission was unabated—he went out like an army to conquer for Christ—to order the Church in the provinces. This with the renewed awareness of God working with him.**

24 There was one man whose name was **Apollo**—a Jew who was native of Alexandria and he was instructed or “corrected” **למה** in the word (*in the sense of having the NT fullness*) and he was expert **למה** in the scriptures and he came to Ephesus.

25 This man had been taught the way of the Lord and was enthusiastic and bubbling over **למה** in spirit and was speaking and teaching fully about Jesus **when** (146) he had not known anything but only the baptism of John. **Apollo has four important notices. The first shows that he was trained in Rabbinitic in Alexandria and so would have been conversant with the LXX. It goes on to speak of his God given fervour and Luke is really intimating that he was in the right place at the right time to be used of God and further advance the apostolic message.**

26 And he began speaking in the public eye in the synagogue **when** (147) they heard him Aquila and Priscilla brought him to their home and showed him the way of the Lord fully. **The further divine providence of meeting persons at the pioneering end of the faith from Rome itself filled in this learned man’s escutcheon with truth and experience of God so that with increased effectiveness he gave witness as the Lord worked with His church.**

27 And **when** (148) he wished to move away to Achaia they exhorted the brothers and wrote to the disciples to receive him and when he went he helped many by grace—all the believers. **Thirdly this man moved on to**

the West to Achaia where that noble Corinthian assembly of Messianic Jews were met. There he would further establish them in the faith stressing the grace of God. How strongly instructed Corinth was at this time –no wonder Paul said “Had you 1000 instructors you have one father” Paul who had been there 18 months was followed by this fervent preacher of grace as the Lord worked to build his Greek church. 28 For he was intensely and mightily instructing in opposition to the Jews in front of crowds. **When(149)** he was showing from the scripture that Jesus is the Messiah or the Christ. **Clearly even in Corinth Jews were seeking to retrieve ground from the Messianic believers among them and in this instance Apollo was a key man. He was exactly the quarry legalists needed to take the sting out of their criticism and show that the King promised in the OT was indeed the Christ of the NT. The Lord was working through Apollos using the word of the OT scriptures.**

CHAPTER 19

SOVEREIGN IN EPHEBUS

Diana’s image supposedly fell from heaven and a temple was born in Asia. Chris the Son came form Glory and a church was born in Ephesus. That church discomfited the endemic paganism

1 And **when (150)** Apollo was in Corinth Paul had been circling in the higher regions or hilly lands and he came to Ephesus and was enquiring after or counseling **Δαδ** the disciples he found there. **It was a providence that Paul posed the searching question and that the Holy Spirit led him to Ephesus as the Lord worked with him for the up-building of his flock and what would have continued otherwise as a Johannine sect became at once a Christian church. It will be in Chapter 20 .24-29 that Luke sets out plainly Paul’s purpose in circling around confirming the churches in God’s grace and in the “kingdom” of Christ only Messiah by whose blood gained possession of the souls of believers.**

2 “On whether you received the Holy Spirit from (the time) when you believed or at your believing?” They answered and were saying “But we have not even been caused to hear if there is a Spirit of holiness for us!”

3 And he said “Into what were you immersed or plunged **ῥαδ** and they were saying “Into the dipping depth penetration or washing of John!” *The value of Repentance cannot be discounted but it is shallow where the work of the Holy Spirit in filling the life and giving power to live for Christ is absent.*

4 Paul said to them “John baptized the people from the plunging of returning or converting from backsliding. **ῥαδ** when he was saying that they were to believe in the one who would come after him who is Jesus the Messiah.”

5 And **when (151)** they heard these things they were baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

6 And Paul placed a hand on them and the Spirit of Holiness came upon them and they were actively speaking in language and language and they were prophesying.

7 But they were twelve in all-twelve men. *The added note of Luke is a simple historical fact suggestive of a future leadership of the Ephesian church. It mirrored the first beginnings of the kingdom under Christ with twelve apostles. The important thing to bear in mind is that this was an ordination of the pierced hands-not of Paul only but of the Holy Spirit who was at work with the Apostle. Jesus authenticated his ownership by giving the Holy Spirit as at Pentecost when the twelve were in the upper room. This church became a very great engine of Christ in Asia and from it grew up one of the widest catchments of faith on the continent of Asia in the first century.*

8 Additionally Paul was going into the synagogues and for three months persuading them publicly concerning the kingdom of God.

9 And some of them were hardened and disputing and reviling the way of God in front of the assembly of Gentiles. At that precise time Paul left and separated the disciples and he was speaking **daily** in the school *(The term SAKAL pulls together the notion of ignorance and understanding –so that those present were educated from lack of knowledge to clarity of comprehension)* of a man by the name of Tyrannus.

10 And this **one** distinct thing **ῥαδ** continued for two years until all who dwell in Asia Jews and Arameans *(The Greek text has “Greeks”)* heard the word of Maryah

11 And God was doing great acts of might by the hand of Paul.

12 Thus also from his long outer garment **ῥαδ** headbands or handcloths **ῥαδ** or tattered rags **ῥαδ** were drawn out and placed on the sick and diseases and demons were departing from them. **Paul lost his clothing but the sick lost their illness and the Lord was working mightily through this indirect means of contact-a means being adopted somewhat like the distant word of healing of the centurion’s servant in Capernaum. Again the Lord was working with them after the fashion of His own ministry on earth.**

13 But there were Jews-medical quacks **ῥαδ** and exorcists **ῥαδ** of demons who had been circling around who were exorcising in the name of our Lord Jesus over those who had polluted spirits –they were saying “We command you to come out in the name of Jesus whom Paul heralds”.

14 And there were seven sons of **one** man-a chief Jewish priest whose name was SQEVA “a tool” who were doing this. *Sqeva’s sons were a tool in the hands of the adversary though they did good. But it was as ever good with evil attendant when Satan is divided,*

15 And this evil demon answered and said to them “I have known Jesus and I (now) know Paul but who are you?” *The travel capability of demons shows this power had been in Israel and now it is in Asia where it professes personal experience of Jesus and now of Paul.*

16 And that man who had the spirit in him jumped on them and threw them and **when(150)** they were skinned *(as when a serpent or fish is skinned)* and wounded they fled from that house.

17 And this one singular event came to be familiar to all the Jews and Arameans who lived in Ephesus and an awe fell on them all so that the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah was lifted high.

18 And many of those who believed were coming and telling their folly and offence **לחם** and confessing the things they were doing.

19 On the other hand numbers of sorcerers collected their writings and brought and burned them before all and they estimated the cost and it came up to 50,000 silver drachma.

20 And so with increasing power the faith of God was growing.

21 But **when (152)** these things were complete Paul established in his mind **לד** *(purpose or willed or “sustained the hope”-in the Greek εν πνευματι “in his spirit”)* to circle around all **Macedonia** and Achaia and to go away to Jerusalem and he said “When I have left there it is essential that I see Rome also. *The jḡṛb could have been mistaken for jḡṛb in a lesser known Peshet Habakkuk script of Aramaic –whatever the result is that we have a Greek reading relating to Paul’s inspiration where the Aramaic directs us to his mature mind. In either case the Lord was working with his people and in the heart of Paul -to give him inner direction and compulsion to end his mission at Jerusalem and like the Lord he “set his face steadfastly to go in Paul’s case to the heart of Gentile power as the Lord went to the heart of Israel.”.*

22 And he sent two of those men who were ministering to him in **Macedonia** –Timothy and Erastus-but he remained for a time in Asia. *Paul covers Macedonia through these two emissaries.*

23 But there was at that time a great stir danger tumult or disorderly strife **לחם** about the “way” or “manner of life” or “religion” of God **לחם**

24 But there was one worker of silver whose name was Demetrius who was making silver shrines for Artemis and was causing the members of his skill set to accumulate great profit.

25 This person gathered together the members of his craft and those who worked hard with them and said to them “Men you know that all our profit is from this hard work

26 And you are hearing and seeing that Paul has persuaded and turned away multitudes not alone the sons of Ephesus but the whole of Asia **when(153)** he said that these that are made by men’s hands are not gods.”

27 And not just this consent **לחם** has been exposed **לחם** and finished but also the temple of Artemis the great goddess is reckoned as nothing and also this goddess whom all Asia and all nations of the world worship has been despised or neglected **לחם** *It is hardly possible that Pau alone could have convinced the continent that Artemis was a non-entity. Clearly the Holy Spirit was abroad over these 2 years of address-730 days of ministry paid off because God was in it in sovereign Grace and Power.*

28 And **when (154)** they heard these things they were all filled with hot anger and were crying out and saying “Great is the living Artemis of the Ephesians” **RABAH HI ARTEMIS D’EPESIA.**

29 And the whole city was stirred up and they ran as one and went out to the theatre and took by force and caused to bring with them Gaius and Aristarchus Macedonians and sons of the intimates of Paul.

30 And Paul had wished to enter the theatre but the disciples hindered or prohibited him.

31 And also the chiefs of Asia because of compassion on him sent and pleaded with him not to give his life to enter the theatre. *After two years Paul had enough credit in this city to be fondly thought of by the leaders and because he caused no strife but simply discussed the faith in a hall he was subject to no strictures. The Lord was working with the Apostle as many were converted and convinced by the word preached and taught.*

32 But the crowds that were in the theatre were very stirred up **לחם** and one was shouting at the other for many of them did not know for what cause they had assembled.

33 But the people of the Jews who were there raised up a Jewish man whose name was **Alexander** and when he arose he signaled with his hand and desired to make a public defense **לחם** to the people.

34 And **when (155)** they knew he was a Jew all of them cried out in one voice about two hours “Great is the living Artemis of the Ephesians.” *Alexander who appears to be “Alexander the coppersmith” 2Tim.4.14 would have been well known to Paul who had early relations with the synagogue. The fact that the Gentiles characterized Diana as “living” is perhaps to parry what Paul was teaching that Yahwe was the living*

God and that Christ was alive **☩** *The Greatness of Diana for the locals was that she was supposedly alive.*

The Pauline proof of the “living Christ” was that He was working with him (Paul) daily)

35 And the governor of the city stilled them **when**(156) he said “Men, Ephesians, For who among the race of men does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the city of the temple worship of Artemis the Great and the image **☩** that descended **☩** from heaven. *The governor’s symbolic argument about the evidence for Diana mirrored Paul’s teaching that our Lord came down from heaven where He had from eternity dwelt with the Father. This quite cleverly worded repose connecting the many breasted meteor to the heavenly goddess whether original or a well-established apology was fairly effective in bolstering the religion of the crowd and placating them. This apology contrasts with the reality of the Lord who came down from heaven to save mankind-the Lord who was daily at work in the hearts of men so that many believed.*

36 “Because no man can speak against this it is required that you be composed and do nothing in Hasty trepidation or agitation **☩**

37 For you have brought these men when they have not pillaged or committed sacrilege of temples **☩** nor reviled (**☩** “accused of gross sin”) our goddess.

38 But if this Demetrius and his fellow tradesmen have any judicial matter with any man behold the proconsuls in the city are skilful **☩** let them litigate one with another.

39 And if there is another matter that you are seeking other than what is permitted by the law the assembly must be discharged **☩**

40 Because we now stand in danger of being censured **☩** precisely on the charge of sedition or tumult **☩** so that we shall not be capable of issuing **☩** a defense on account of the crowd we have gathered today idly and we are in tumult without a pretext **☩**.

41 And **when** (157) he had said these things he loosed or broke up **☩** the crowd. *The Lord was at work in this presentation which prevented the cutting short of the ministry of Paul. The cause of “showing that men do not make gods with their own hands” was not furthered. The better reasoning that a likeness of Diana fell from heaven seems to have demolished the idea that human copies had any significance other than being copies of a copy. The fact that a Jew was proposing the charge further undermined its likelihood of success in Roman law. The matter was considered a waste of time.*

CHAPTER 20

SOVEREIGN IN COMFORT

1 And after the tumult was silenced Paul called the disciples and prayed and discussed with them **☩** and kissed them and issuing out (**☩** Paul often and often moves like a military general and Luke records this attitude and resolute poise)and went to Macedonia.

2 And when he had circled those regions and prayed and discussed **☩** with them with many words he came to the land of Greece.

3 And he was three months there (in Greece) but the Jews created treachery or perfidy or betrayed him **when** (158) *It appears Paul was headed for Syria and he was in the act of going to leave for Syria* **☩** (**☩** participate defining “the very act”) **he had thought to return to Macedonia. Plans were altered by the treachery and it appears Paul sent on the others from Greece and arranged for those from Asia to meet with them and him at Troas. His third Macedonian circular tour appears to have followed in place of his direct travel from Greece to Syria. Even amid treachery the Lord was at work preserving him much like he preserved Luther under the wing of the Elector of Saxony.**

4 And Sopater from Berea and Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica and Gaius from the city of Derbe and Timothy from Lystra and Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia went out with him to Asia. *The Greek and Asian representatives proceeded to Troas*

5 These **went** (159) before us (Paul and Luke) and waited for us at Troas.

6 But we departed from Philippi the city of Macedonia after the days of unleavened bread—they went by sea and came to Troas in five days and waited there seven days. *The preparation of heart for the great “Passover” of Easter is in mind-such heart-searching as Jews still do mirrors that seriousness. Paul who said “Christ our Passover is slain for us” kept the cross central to his preaching and thus the Lord rejoiced to work with him-whose obedience to “This do in remembrance of me” was everywhere known.*

7 And **the first day** of the week **when** (160) we assembled to break **the eucharist** Paul was speaking to them because the following day he was going out and he lengthened or persevered in speaking until

midnight. *In this instance we see the Lord at work even amid difficult circumstances or what we would call accidents. The supper was normally taken about 6pm but Paul preceded with an exceptionally long address that eventually ran almost 12 hours.*

8 And there were many lamps of fire burning in an upper room where they were gathered.

9 And there was a young man sitting in the window whose name was Eutychus and he listened and he sank down ~~and~~ into heavy wearisome ~~and~~ sleep and in his sleep he fell from three stories ~~and~~ (zones as “three heavens or flats) and was taken up when (161) dead. *The expertise of Luke as a doctor gives us sufficient ground for believing the diagnosis-which may even have been confirmed by Luke himself. This death required a miracle to reverse the actual situation. God could use Peter but here he uses Paul also to revive the life of one in whom the vital signs of life were not traced.*

10 And Paul came down and fell over him and clasped him to his breast ~~and~~ and said “Do not be fearful-~~and~~, his life is in him”

11 But when (162) he came up he broke bread and was actively speaking until dawn and at that precise time **he went out to leave the land.** *The Monday morning began-the second watch with the breaking of bread. That morning the eucharist was a real thanksgiving and the death and resurrection of Christ was reflected in the power of the Lord being present to heal.*

12 And they took or carried the youth when (163) he came alive and rejoiced greatly with him. *It appears that Luke remained after Paul –who journeyed by land setting off earlier. This miracle demonstrates again that the Lord was at work and while his soul had not departed signs of life next appeared and the youth was then moved.*

13 But we went down to the ship and we sailed to the port of Thesos because from there we were prepared to receive Paul for thus he commanded us when (164) he went on by land. *Paul had preached for long hours-he had given of himself in healing ministry. He appears to have wished to walk alone to Thesos in the morning air-no doubt to commune with the Lord without whom ministry is in vain. This might be called Paul’s Emmaus walk not just time to meditate but time to commune with His Lord.*

14 And when (165) we received (or met as promised) ~~and~~ him from Thesos we took him into the ship and came to Mitelene

15 And from there next day we sailed close to the isle of Kios and again the next day we came to Samos and we stayed in Trogyllium and the next day came to Miletus. *Three days on board with a break at Trogyllium-this detail the Alexandrian and Greek text omits. The 6thC Bezae text and the Peshitta (425AD) have it. It is a straw in the wind showing the excellence of the Aramaic. The omitted data as K LMcKay argues in the NB Dictionary suggests an overnight because of the difficulty of navigating the narrow sea passage between Samos and the mainland. This section shows how the Lord who works with his servant provides “journeying mercies” both by “land and sea” for Paul as he proceeds on his ministry. Paul testified in 2 Corinthians 11.26 how he was preserved against physical dangers and the inhumanity of man”*

16 For it was swiftly determined ~~and~~ by Paul to pass it for Ephesus lest he be delayed ~~and~~ there because he was hastening that if he were able he would occupy or work ~~and~~ the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem.

17 And from it (Ephesus) he sent and brought the Elders of the church of Ephesus.

18 And when (166) they came intimately to him he said to them “You are aware that from the first day I entered Asia exactly how I have been with you through all that period.” *This must have meant he was weak but Christ was strong-the Lord was given glory to show His way among His people. The muted point Paul was making is that he was at work in weakness but in Him the Lord was at work through His grace and strength.*

19 When (167) I served God in humility and many tears and trials –those that have come upon me by the treachery of the Jews.

20 I have not neglected to teach and to preach in marketplaces and houses anything that was useful (producing blossom & fruit) for your souls **God was working through the Word preached for Paul preached “everything” in the counsel of God over these years and strengthened the church.**

21 When (168) I was testifying to Jews and Arameans about repentance or returning home to God ~~and~~ that is intimate with God and faith that is in our Lord Jesus the Messiah

22 And now I go bound **by the Spirit** and I go on to Jerusalem and I do not know what I will encounter in it. *We have to accept the stress Paul sets on this position from which he cannot release him-he is bound by the Spirit of God and only at the end of the story of acts can we discover the relevance of this powerful drive which governs his life even beyond words of knowledge and prophetic words.*

23 However the **Holy Spirit actively testifies** in every city and says to me “**Chains and afflictions are prepared for you**”.

24 But for me it has not caused consideration that my life is anything (in itself) exactly that I may complete my course and my ministry that I received from our Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God. *It is apparent that the Spirit kept pace with Paul and he with the Spirit as he knew he must persevere in face of suffering.*

25 And now I know that you all shall not see my face again –you among whom I have circled preaching the kingdom of God.

26 And on account of this I testify to you today that I am pure of the blood of you all.

27 For I have not declined or excused myself **אני** to making known to you all the will of God

28 Be vigilant **שמרו**, therefore to yourselves and the whole flock over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers **רועים** (*eastern Syriac & Greek-the ancient Aramaic of Assyrian-Babylonia has loan words akin to Greek which transliterate almost letter for letter*) to shepherd the assembly of God which He bought with His blood.

29 I know that after that time when I go away great strong **אנשים** wolves will enter along with you who have no pity **רחמים** on the flock.

30 And also some belonging to you will rise up-men speaking crafty things exactly gauged to turn the disciples to go away after them.

31 Because of this you be vigilant to remember and mention **אני** that for **three years** I was not silent by day or night when with tears I actively instructed **אנשים** man after man of you.

32 And now I entrust **אני** you to God and the word of his grace **אשר** which is able to build you up and give you inheritance among all the holy ones.

33 I have not coveted or been greedy for **כסף** silver or gold or apparel

34 And you know-you really do-that I have ministered with these hands to my needs **אני** and those of the ones with me.

35 And I have shown **אני** you that it is necessary to provide for and to take pains or be solicitous for **אני** the weak and remember and mention the words of our Lord Jesus because He said “Blessed is the man who gives more than the one who receives.

36 And **when (169)** he said these things he knelt on his knees and prayer **אני** (*leaning on God*) and all the men with him. *After these mission years Paul had trained his fellow workers to do as Jesus did. He used the words of Jesus-and now he adopts the pose of Jesus at Gethsemane. The significance of those with him cannot be lost. Paul was headed into his largest test of a lifetime of service but He wanted God by his side. He wanted to be in step with the Lord. He wanted beyond all else to be responsive to the Holy Spirit.*

37 And there was great weeping **אני** as at the time of a death and they embraced and were actively kissing him.

38 But additionally they were tortured **אני** about the word he said that “we are not going to see his face” and they accompanied him to the ship.

CHAPTER 21

SOVEREIGN OVER MOSAIC LAW

In this chapter we read of a request in line with the law where the Jewish Christians request Paul to buy a sacrifice of approach for some Gentiles. The matter ends with Paul being detained. Paul's concession perhaps was a concession he was willing to make but it conceded that purity and entrance could be gained in the old legal way. He argued presumably that it was just a shadow-but it can be viewed as a compromise of the provisions gospel. It was the Chiliarch that rescued the apostle from the mess.

1 And we parted from them and travelled straight to the isle of Co(os) and the next day came to Rhodes and from there to Patara.

2 And there we found a ship which was going out to Phenice and we climbed aboard and sailed in it.

3 And we drew near the island of Cyprus and let it remain to our left (*This phrase is simple fact but it can speak of the position of an enemy or foe. It was interestingly, the island where Barnabas had his roots and where he went after the dispute with Paul*). And we came to Syria and from there drew near to Tyre for it was there that the ship would unload its cargo.

4 And **when (170)** we found disciples there we remained with them seven days and these were saying to Paul every day *by the Spirit* “Do not go off to Jerusalem”.

5 And when these days were behind we went out to go off by road and all of them were following us and their wives and children till we were outside the city and they knelt on their knees by the side of the sea **and prayed. The word from the Spirit of God through many believers was “Paul, don’t go!” in spite of which the apostle proceeded. The total unity of the advice and the nature of the whole family turn-out to plead and pray is therefore significant. Paul decides on an alternative course to that the Spirit indicated by these believers.**

6 And we kissed one with another **וּשְׁכַחְנוּ** and we went up to the ship and they returned to their homes.

7 But we journeyed from Tyre and came to the city of Akko and we gave a greeting of Shalom to the brothers there and stayed with them one day.

8 And the next day we departed and went to Caesarea and entered and lodged in the house of Philip the evangelist-he who was of the seven.

9 And he had four virgin daughters who had been prophesying or preaching.

10 And **when (171)** we were living there many days **one** single prophet whose name was Agabus had come down from Judea.

11 And he came up close to us and took off the belt **וּשְׁכַחְנוּ** of Paul’s waist and bound his own feet and hands and said **“Thus says the Holy Spirit ‘ The valiant man who “rules” this belt –thus the Jews will bind him in Jerusalem and deliver him over to the hand of the Gentiles. This typical prophetic and dramatic action affirms the determination of the Holy Spirit also recognized in far-away Ephesus-Paul was headed for nemesis-for bondage-for death itself. The Lord gave fair warning but Paul’s determination to suffer for the Lord was unwavering.**

12 And **when (172)** we heard these words we pleaded from him-we and the sons of the place-(Caesarea) that he would not go to Jerusalem.

13 At that precise time Paul answered and said “What are you doing that you weep and break my heart for I am ready not only to be bound but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of our Lord Jesus.” **The Lord was working with Paul alongside and out with the tearful pleading of the Church included that of Philip who later died in Ephesus. Paul had a personal awareness of his calling and despite several deterrents he followed his vision despite the pleading being like a threshing machine tending to whittle away his confidence.**

14 And **when (173)** he had not been persuaded by us we ceased **וּשְׁכַחְנוּ** and we said “The will of our Lord be done” **.Luke joined the others in a virtual last minute pleas-for soon his ability to accompany Paul would cease because Paul would be put in bonds. Yet Philip and Luke and others realized the Lord was in all this as the Lord worked with them and the Spirit predicted what would happen accurately in words of knowledge. This could not outweigh the will of the apostle to testify even unto death. Here we find a curious and yet too often real divine compassion lying alongside a divine conviction which works in a contrary direction.**

15 And after these days we prepared ourselves and we went up to Jerusalem. **Luke prepared his heart for a separation and to live apart from the apostle he had shadowed for years. Paul prepared for his meeting with his fellow Jews who had long since broken every bond with him.**

16 And well placed men who were disciples came from Caesarea with us **when (174)** they took with them **one** brother of the earliest disciples whose name was Mnason and he was from Cyprus and he it was that received us into his house. **Paul had spent time with a man who knew the story of Jesus well and no doubt material he could afford Luke found its way into the gospel account the good doctor penned. The wonder of the Lord working with them and of life with Jesus is that there is often just one person whom the Spirit uses to make a massive contribution to the testimony and to be a huge encouragement to the Christian in distress-Mnason was that one man.**

17 And **when (175)** we came to Jerusalem the brothers received us gladly or “to the breast” **וּשְׁכַחְנוּ**

18 And the next day we went up with Paul to intimacy **וּשְׁכַחְנוּ** with James when there were there all the elders abiding with him. **The subsequent text shows that this conference was pre-convened to deal with the matter of how Paul’s ministry was proceeding and if rumours of it were correct.**

19 And we offered to them greeting of peace and Paul was actively reporting **וּשְׁכַחְנוּ** one thing after another -everything that God did through his ministry. **There are two things to observe –the elders would meet and seek God in prayer and Paul would detail all that God did in his report to the elders. The continued working of Eloha-God the Father –was the message that Paul conveyed. The triune God exercised his strength through his ministry.**

20 And when they heard they glorified God and said to him “You see, our brother, how many ten thousands there are who believe in Judea and all of these are zealous of **למד** the law (as Paul sought the Gentiles should be zealous of the best gifts of the Spirit)

21 But it has been told them of you that you actively teach all of the Jews among the Gentiles to separate from Moses when you say that that **they should not circumcise their sons and not walk in the customs of the law.**

22 Because this has been reported to them they have convened here.

23 “Undertake this which we instruct you to do; here are four men with us who have vowed to cleanse them under the ceremonial law” **למד**

24 “Take them and go away and have purification(baptism) with them and **pay the cost** **למד** for them to shave their heads so that it will be precisely known to all that what has been spoken about you is false and you fulfill and keep the law.”

25 “But about those who believe from the Gentiles we have written that ‘They should be keeping their lives from what is sacrificed and from fornication and from strangled things and blood.’” *This letter retains the ceremonial law only in sexual and sacrificial contexts-Christians would not resume support for sacrifices in any context-Jewish or pagan.*

26 At that precise time Paul took those men the next day and was purified with them and entered and went up to the temple when he took them through the experience from the end of the days of purification until an **approach offering was brought near** for each of these men. *It would appear that some offering-perhaps doves-were offered for approach. This was a serious compromise for neither money nor animal was essential for approaching God. James himself writes “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you!” The heart of this procedure and the seriousness of the dispute are far clearer in the Aramaic than in the Greek.*

27 And **when (176)** the seventh day arrived the Jews of Asia saw him in the temple and provoked incited or quarreled **למד** over him and all the people laid hands on him. *The Asian Jews no doubt had previous knowledge of Paul and his Christian outreach-and could hardly be unaware of what happened in Ephesus. Their opposition was informed and serious. That Paul’s reputation travelled so far is testimony to the effectiveness of the work of the Lord in his hands*

28 And **when (177)** they appealed (against entry) and they were saying “Sons of Israel Help! This is the man who opposes our people teaching in every place against the law and this place and he also brought an Aramean into the temple and has defiled this holy place. *Clearly the information was incorrect.*

29 For they had earlier seen Trophimus and Ephesian with him in the city and were imagining that Paul had entered the temple with him.

30 And the city was stirred and the entire people gathered and held Paul and carried him off **למד** outside the temple land the gates were suddenly **למד** (in the son of a moment) shut. *Luke observes that the Jews shut Paul out. This was an act scarce ever endured by any Christian. It has equivalence to the charge of Blasphemy which was applied to our Lord. Amid all this the Lord was with Paul even when he was prisoner to the mob.*

31 And **when (178)** this crowd was appealing to kill him it was reported to the Chiliarch of the regiment that the whole city had been shaken.

32 And the son of a moment he took a centurion took many soldiers and they ran toward them and when they saw the Chiliarch and the soldiers they left off or ceased **למד** beating Paul.

33 And the Chiliarch called to him and took him and commanded to bind him with two chains and he was asking about him “Who he was and what he had done?” *The Lord was working with his servant and interposed his aid in the form of the Roman Chiliarch who had the means at his disposal to prevent the death of Paul.*

34 And men from this mob... (**למד** Aramaic **οχλος** Greek: there is a transliteration here showing that the Aramaic could be derived from a Greek original-the reverse is seen elsewhere-my view is that there were two very early mirror volumes in Aramaic and Greek. ..were yelling aloud this thing and that and because of their shouting he(the Chiliarch) was not able effectively to know what the reality was and he commanded that he be escorted **למד** to the camp **למד** (literally the place where the troops “relax” **למד**)

35 And **when (179)** Paul came to the stairs (**למד** the “steps where you march or walk up”) the soldiers conveyed him (**למד** as luggage) because of the violence or coercion **למד** of the people. *The sovereign goodness of God gave Paul life-cover when he was in grave peril.*

36 For many people were coming after him shouting and saying “Hang him!”

37 And **when (180)** he actually approached to come up to the fortress Paul said to the Chiliarch “If you allow me I would speak with you!” but he said to him “Do you know Greek?” *Whereas this is in Aramaic it was clearly originally in Greek reading thus:*

“ει εξεστιν μοι ειπειν τι προς σε: ο δε εφη Ελληνιστι γινωσκεις;”

The Lord again provides for the apostle as the soldiers carry him and as his rare fluency in Greek serves him well. Josephus said that but a handful of leading Jews spoke Greek-Paul was one of the five!

Learning is a light burden. The Lord used his training to protect him.

38 Are you not that Egyptian who before these days made a shake up **בד**, and led 4000 bandits who lived in the wilderness.

39 Paul said to him “I am a Jewish man from Tarsus of Cilicia –a well known city in which I was born. I beg you to allow me speak to the people.

40 And **when (181)** He permitted him Paul stood on the steps and was shaking his hand toward them **The commander in chief was impressed by Paul’s learning and allowed him to speak to the people. This was a rare concession but again it demonstrates that the Roman army had many brave wise soldiers some of whom became leaders of the people of Rome. Paul’s approach as he was carried by the soldiers and his approach was clearly polite and appreciated. The Lord was at work giving him favour with strangers-as he did with Miriam and Joseph and Daniel so very often - and when (179) they ended their actions בד**

he spoke with them in Aramaic and said:-

CHAPTER 22

SOVEREIGN IN ADOPTION

As Paul pleads for Jews to become real Sons of Abraham in chapters 22 & 23 we read of the centurion who is mentioned 9 times by Luke and his purchase of Roman citizenship with a large payment of silver-Jesus made us citizens of his kingdom with his precious life-blood. Paul owed a lot to the Chiliarch but everything to Christ.

1 Brothers and fathers hear my defense that is for your very hearts **לדלעב** Paul learned to speak

“intimately” to the heart and this is how Jesus did. **The Lord was working in him and with him as he presented the gospel with love and felicity.**

2 And **when (182)** they heard that he was speaking to them in Aramaic **בבש** (Thayers’ Lexicon reads

“Εβραϊς (בבש) refers only to Aramaic” they further lowered their roudiness and he said to them-

3 But I was lifted high (meaning “I was uplifted by our great Master scholar”) in this city at the side of the feet of Gamaliel and I was instructed completely in the legal tradition of our fathers and I live my life zealous of God exactly as you yourselves are also. **Again Paul showed how the Lord was working with his people and how providence set him at the feet of Simeon’s grandson –the man who received Christ in his arms. What a gentleman was Simeon and how he waited on the Lord’s appearance-what a gentleman and scholar was Gamaliel and how he advised Israel not to act against the Christians lest they fight against God.**

4 And in this singular way I persecuted to the death when I would bind when I would bind and deliver men and wives to prison.

5 Exactly in line with what the High Priest and all the Elders witness about me-from whom I received letters to the brethren who are in Damascus so that also I was authorized or caused to go out and bring **בבש**

(causative) them to Jerusalem **when (183)** they were bound and they would receive capital punishment. **This extradition in the Roman province of Syria was strictly illegal and a bold breach of Roman law and illegitimate assuming of power-but it never occurred because God interposed. The conversion of Paul saved many lives in God’s sovereignty**

6 And **when (184)** I had gone away and began actually to get near Damascus in the division of the day (midday) from beneath a tranquil heaven there broke on me increased or growing dazzling radiance or effulgence or meteor like rays **בבש**

7 And I fell on the earth and I heard a voice saying to me “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting e?”

8 **I countering** **בב** answered “Who are you my Lord?” and He said to me “I am Jesus the Nazarene whom you-you are persecuting!” **The double “Saul” and double “you” are of high significance. To know a name is to have power over that one-Jesus knew the name-Paul was discomfited and further so when the Lord**

said *“You, you” Here is testimony to the Lord working with Paul-and it was so real and so vivid as not to be forgotten over the intervening 17 years and more(cf Galatians 2)*

9 And the men who were with me saw the light-but counter to that they did not hear the voice which was continuing to speak with me.

10 And I said “What shall I do my Lord?” and our Lord said to me “Rise go to Damascus and there all that will be commanded you to do will be talked over”.

11 And **when** (185) He was not seen by me because of the glory of that light they who were with me gripped me by the hands and I went to Damascus.

12 And **one** man Hananiah righteous in the law about whom all the Jews there were testifying...

13 He came intimately to me and said to me, “Brother Saul –open you eyes and in this moment my eyes opened and I saw brightly **بصيرة** in the moment. **Luke records as a medic this miracle of the Lord’s immediate working to heal Paul. In a moment he lost his vision and in a moment it was restored-such is the Lord’s working.**

14 And he said to me “The God of our Fathers has appointed you to know his will and to see the righteous one and to hear the voice from his own mouth...”

15 “You shall be a witness for him to all the children of men about everything which you have seen and heard...”

16 “And now why continue to wait –arise and be baptized and be cleansed from your sins while you call on His name.”

17 And I have returned-I came here to Jerusalem.

18 And I saw Him in a vision **when** (186) He said to me “Hurry and depart from Jerusalem because they will not receive your testimony about me!”

19 And I said “My Lord they also know that I have delivered to prison and beaten in all our synagogues those who believed in you”. **This historic evidence of the Lord at work was preserved because Paul had to account for his mission to his own people.**

20 And **when** (187) the blood of Stephen Your Witness was shed I was also standing with them and greeting or saluting their will who killed him and I was watching the baggage or costly garments **كسوة** of those who stoned him.

21 And He said to me “Go for I am sending you to a great distance to preach to the Gentiles.

A further vision statement from the Lord confirms Paul’s mission and its divine source.

22 And **when** (188) they had listened to Paul until this **one** word they raised their voice and cried out that he should be lifted up from the earth (crucified) for it is not right that such as this one should live on earth. **The jealousy of the Jews concerning the god-given mission of Paul to the heathen –the Gentiles is the reason for this opposition-besides the insinuation that God affirmed Christian mission. The adversaries “got it”-they well understood that Paul was a Christian and they supposed that he was making their religion common by introducing Gentiles to the temple as they supposed unpurified. In a sense this “word” presuming a direct connect of Jesus as servant of the Almighty and as one able to direct from heaven amounted to blasphemy in their book.**

23 And **when** (189) they were clamouring **جهد** and throwing their costly garments aside and casting up dust toward heaven. **This action was a way by which they showed their despite of Christ who spoke from heaven. The dust came down upon themselves and though they saved their glorious robes they did no more or less than Rousseau of whom it was said “You throw the dust against the wind and the wind blows it back again”. They might spoil for a victim but the Lord was at work protecting Paul.**

24 The Chiliarch commanded to take him to the camp and ordered that by scourging he be questioned exactly that they might know for what reason they were crying out against him.

25 And **when** (190) they had spread him out **أشبه** with leather belts or reins Paul said to the centurion who was standing over him. “Is it allowed that you scourge a man who is a Roman uncondemned?” **Paul had been bound to posts and that with leather thongs-the hide of animals. But ironically the hide of Paul was unscathed for God gave him in that moment words which he could speak. The Spirit of God was working in his lively mind for His good**

26 And **when** (191) the centurion listened he called the Chiliarch when and said to him “What have you done to this man for he is a Roman!”

27 And the Chiliarch approached **intimately close** **أشبه** and said to him (Paul) “Are you a Roman?” and he said to him “Yes!”

28 And the Chiliarch answered and said “With much silver I bought Roman citizenship!” And Paul countering **جواب** said to him “I also was born with it”.

29 And at once they separated those from him who were pleading to scourge him and the Chiliarch was in dread when he learned that he was a Roman for he had bound him.

30 And the next day he wished to know what was the real or true category or charge which the Jews had brought against him. And he released him and commanded all the chief priests and all the council of their rulers to come and he led Paul and brought him down and stood him in their midst. ***The truth or reality was sought by the Chiliarch. This would be tested by a face to face with the Jewish leaders. Clearly this was the most significant meet up to date and it fulfilled what the Lord said "You will come before leaders and kings for my sake". The Lord was at work maintaining the pressure of truth in face of His adversaries. In all of this the secular Roman power continued to be a factor. It was almost a replay of Pilate and Herod and the Priests.***

CHAPTER 23

SOVEREIGN IN OUR DEFENSE

1 And **when** (192) Paul beheld or gazed **بصرا** at the assembly he said "Men, brothers I have governed my life and steered **بصرا** in all good conscience until this day. ***Paul had not always made the right decisions but he had not violated what he knew to be right as his conscience led him. God is Lord of the conscience and in this way the Lord was working with him –this area of Christian life is extremely important.***

2 And Hananiah the Priest commanded those who stood at Paul's side to deliver a blow **ضرب** on the mouth to Paul.

3 And Paul said to him "God is going to strike you –a whitened partition wall-and you are sitting to judge me according to the law **when** (193) you violate and conflict with the law and command me to be hurt. ***The Lord does not work against his law. The principles of right in the moral law are absolute. The high priest was striking to hurt and probably aiming to kill had he power to obtain such verdict. Only the Gospel can change the heart-this religious leader was in heart in error-the contrast with men of faith like Paul could not be starker. The Lord at work in Paul had deeply changed his heart and life.***

4 And those who were standing there were saying to him-"Do you strive with or dispute **جادل** the High Priest?"

5 And Paul said to them "I did not know, brothers that he is the Priest for it is written "You shall not curse **لعن** the Ruler of your people."

6 And **when** (194) Paul knew that some of the people were of the Sadducees and some of the Pharisees he was calling out in the council "Men brothers I am a Pharisee son of a Pharisee and on the gospel hope **بالبشارة** of the resurrection of the dead I am judged. ***Paul was adopting another tack which also put him at odds with the Priest who would be a Sadducee –but he was duly aligning him with Christ who rose from the dead. The risen Lord was Paul's daily companion and for His name Paul stood.***

7 And **when** (195) he said this one on one Pharisees and Sadducees fell on each other and the people were divided.

8 For the Sadducees were saying there is no resurrection nor angel nor spirit-but the Pharisees confess all these. ***The fact that Paul held by the "spiritual" evidences-the "supernatural" allies with his insistence upon the "resurrection" because of his dramatic and unassailable evidence of that reality in his Damascus Road experience.***

9 And there was a big clamour and some scribes on the Pharisee side were quarreling **جادل** with them and saying "We do not find anything evil in this man but if the Spirit or an angel spoke with him what is there in that matter?"

10 And **when** (196) there was a great tumult (disorder) **فزع** among them the Chiliarch was afraid lest for Paul's life and he sent Romans to go and seize him from their midst and bring him to the camp. ***The Lord used this man to protect Paul –reflecting the fact that the secular powers are ordained of God.***

11 And when it was night our Lord appeared to Paul and said to him "Be strong you testified to me in Jerusalem-you are also going to Rome thus to testify. ***After the opposition of Paul's determination and prophetic words there is at length distinct guidance from the Lord Himself. The weeks long uncertainty had come to an end.***

12 And **when** (197) it was dawn (birdsong) some of the Jews were gathered and they bound them that they would neither eat nor drink until they should kill Paul.

13 Countering that there were those who took up this covenant oath-more than forty men.

14 And they intimately approached (*in secret nefarious plotting*) the priests and elders saying "We have bound ourselves by a curse that we shall not taste food or drink until we have killed Paul.

15 And now you and the rulers of the Council desire from the Chiliarch that he bring “him” to you to really examine his affair **לפניו** and we are ready to kill him before he gets to your presence.

16 And the son of Paul’s sister heard this contrived stratagem **מכרה** and he entered the camp and showed what would happen **לפניו** to Paul. **The Lord somehow enabled the secret stratagem to be leaked and to get to the ears of the nephew of Paul. He may even have been a Christian but certainly he knew which side he was on and even in this young teenager’s heart the Lord was at work..**

17 And Paul sent and called **one** of the centurions and said escort **לפניו** this youth to the Chiliarch for he has a matter to tell him.

18 And the centurion led the youth and brought him to the Chiliarch and said “Paul the prisoner called me and pleaded with me to bring this youth close to you for he has something to say to you.

19 And the Chiliarch held the youth by the hand and drew him to one side and was enquiring of him “What is it that you to want say to me?” *This is a felicitous act presuming a very young teenager or a boy just entered double figures of years. The hand holding and the quiet one-to one situation and the simple Aramaic five word statement **לפניו** suggests a wise family man occupies this office.*

20 And the youth said to him “The Judeans (designating “city people from the capitol) have planned to plead from you to let Paul go tomorrow to their gathering like they want to learn something more from him...

21 “Therefore you should not consent **לפניו** to them for behold more than forty men from them are keeping watch for him in an ambush **לפניו** and they have bound them in an oath of their lives that they will not eat or drink until they kill him and behold they are ready and waiting for your declaration **לפניו**

22 And the Chiliarch loosed (from his gentle grip) **לפניו** (a word associated with disheveled or loose hair or loosening the tongue) the youth when or while he commanded no man should know those things you have spied out **לפניו** for me. *The contrast of loosing and binding in this context is that the boy could tell his uncle even though others were sworn to secrecy. This shows the trust the Chiliarch imposed in Paul and his family.*

23 And he called two centurions and said to them “Prepare 200 Roman soldiers and go away to Caesarea and seventy horsemen and 200 right handed shooters and go out on the third hour of the night-(12 mid-night)

24 And on the other hand prepare also beasts of burden precisely to convey Paul by mounted (chariot) and allow him to escape to Felix the governor. *The Chiliarch conveyed Paul in a chariot and did not simple allow him to be taken on horseback. He was to be conveyed with total safety in a protected chariot with several horses to make his escape swift and very hard to prevent.*

25 And he wrote a letter and gave it to those who were with him (reading) thus...

26 Claudius Lusius to Felix celebrated victorious **לפניו** governor, Shalom.

27 The Judeans seized this man for the precise purpose to kill him. I lifted him with Romans and drew him away when I learned he is a Roman.

28 And **when** (198) I enquired to know the pretext **לפניו** on which they were accusing him I brought him down to their council. *This essentially was correct (21.39)-and at this opportunity listened to a debate in Aramaic and so could understand that the problem was Jewish-cum-Christian teaching-i.e. “their law”*

29 And I found that they were accusing him on misdeeds or impeachment **לפניו** of their law and an accusation worthy of prison or death was not against him. *Again the Chiliarch had ascertained that the charges were not legal under Roman considerations. The Lord continued to protect Paul as his refuge and strength with the secular arm of the law. He gave Paul the full protection of Roman law.*

30 And **when** (199) a plot was became known **לפניו** to me by ambush that the Judeans made against him at once I sent him to you and I commanded his accusers to go and speak with him before you-keep well!

31 At that precise time the Romans precisely as ordered brought Paul in the night to the city of Antipatris.

32 And the next day the horsemen and their comrades on foot were loosed to return to camp.

33 And they brought him to Caesarea and gave the letter to the governor and caused Paul to stand before him. **The Chiliarch did not refer to the boy but wisely relayed the story of the plot and again we observe that the Lord Himself stood by Paul affording him full military protection.**

34 And **when** (200) he read the letter he was querying him about which province he was from and when he learned that he was from Cilicia...

35 He said to him “I shall hear you when your accusers are come and he commanded to keep him in the Praetorium (**לפניו** “residence” or “palace”) of Herod. **It appears Paul was put up in a palace. His residency was not a problem-it was free and in the best chambers. The Lord at this stage in his life**

cushioned Paul's life with Roman privilege and even gave him residence in a palace, This episode makes one smile but it shows no less than Joseph Paul had the goodwill of political leadership. The Lord stood by his servant.

CHAPTER 24 SOVEREIGN IN JUDGMENT

- 1 **And after five days** Hananiah the High Priest with the elders and Tertullus the orator came down and informed the Governor about Paul.
- 2 And **when (201)** Tertullus was called he proceeded to accuse him adding "We dwell in great tranquility on account of you and there is great stability for this people getting your care.
- 3 And we all in every part receive your **favour**, **رحمة** Your Excellency, Felix.
- 4 But lest we weary you with many things I pray you may attend to our meekness briefly (or "abridged **مختصرا**)
- 5 For we have found this man who lives as an active violator of women **مفسد** and awakener **مضطرب** of tumult; to all the Jews who are in every land he is the head for he is of the teaching of the Nazarene.
- 6 And he wanted to defile our temple and when we held him we sought to judge him according to what is in our law.
- 7 But Lusius the Chiliarch came and with great violence snatched him from our hands and sent him to you.
- 8 And he commanded the accusers to come to you-and you can when you question him learn all these things of which we accuse him.
- 9 But those Jews cried out also over him saying "These things are even so.
- 10 And the Governor beckoned to Paul to speak and Paul answered and said "From many years ago I know that you are the judge of this nation and because of this I joyfully issue **أفد** or spend my breath on my own behalf. *Paul is saying that he needs no lawyer for the governor is fair and learned and can well adjudge.*
- 11 **When (202)** as you have actively discovered that **it is not more than twelve days** since I came to Jerusalem to worship. *Paul was stressing that he was merely a week there until Festus arrived-little time to foment trouble.*
- 12 And they did not find that I was speaking with a man in the temple nor had I gathered a crowd and I was not in their synagogues in the city
- 13 And nothing has come in their hands to demonstrate in your presence concerning anything of which they now accuse me. *Paul proved the reality of Jesus' words "Think not before what you shall speak-it will be given you in that hour!" It was truly given by the Lord to Paul to stress that there was no concrete written record that any lawyer might present-he had undermined Tertullus.*
- 14 Yet supplementary to this I confess that in the same doctrine or teaching they speak of I serve God of our Fathers **when (203)** while I believe all things that are written in the law and the prophets. *Paul with the Lord's Spirit supporting him asserted his total belief in the truth of the law including the types and the foreshadowing and the reality of the creation narrative and the prophetic references to Christ.*
- 15 And **when (204)** or while I live out the hope or expectation or good news on God which things they also herald that there is going to be a resurrection from the dead of the righteous and the wicked. *The Lord stood with Paul who had the best evidence ever given after Pentecost of the resurrection*
- 16 Because of this also I labour hard that I may have a pure conscience always before God and men.
- 17 But for many years I have come intimate to the children of my people to give charity and offer gifts.
- 18 These men found me in the temple **when (205)** I was purified neither with crowds nor with tumult.
- 19 But **if the Jews** stirred up people who came with me from Asia they are obligated to stand with me before you and to bring whatever charge they have.
- 20 Or let those say what offense they have found in me when I stood before the council.
- 21 Except this single statement that I cried out when I stood in their midst "I am judged of the resurrection of the dead before you today." *Paul's 179 word defense cited his short stay & worship intent; his "non-contact"; his doctrinal agreement; his clear conscience; his charitable intent; his purification and his single raised voice when he urged his 7word stance on the resurrection. In this matter the Lord stood with him and enabled him to testify to his experience of conversion.*
- 22 But Felix because he knew this "Way" fully deferred them when he said "At whatever time the Chiliarch comes I will hear between you (i.e. "the case between").
- 23 And he ordered the centurion to guard Paul with easy or restfulness so that no man of his acquaintance should be prohibited (access) to him.
- 24 After a few days Felix and Drusilla his wife who was a Jewess sent and called Paul and heard from him concerning the faith of Messiah.

25 And **when (206)** he was speaking with them of **righteousness and about holiness and about judgment** that was going to be fulfilled Felix was afraid and said “Now go away and when there is an opportunity yielded **എന്നാൽ** I shall send to you to follow up.” **എന്നാൽ**

26 For he hoped that a bribe would have been given him by Paul because of this he was everlastingly **എന്നാൽ** sending to bring him and speaking with him. **This salient address wrought in the conscience of Felix and his wife and the fear of the Lord and Judgment to come afflicted his soul. The Lord worked manifestly with Paul as he spoke on major themes of scripture.**

27 And **when (207)** two years were completed the next governor that came in his place was called Porquius Festus but Felix precisely for the reason of doing a favour (grace **നന്മ**) to the Jews let Paul remain **എന്നാൽ** in prison. **Felix temporized for two years and put money before faith. The spirit of the Lord will not always strive with man and Felix still had to face the judgment. Paul was ever ready to testify and never considered it too much to repeat the gospel challenge before this temporizing leader-the herald must present the grace of God**

CHAPTER 25

SOVEREIGN GRACE TRUMPS CURRIED FAVOUR

1 And when Festus came to Caesarea after three days he came up to Jerusalem. **The question is –was Luke at Jerusalem? Again our writer is conscious of the contrast between governors-Festus is prompt in duty and seems to get on to the case of Paul directly. The Lord was working with the apostle to complete the testimony at Rome.**

2 And the Chief Priests and Rulers of the Jews informed him about Paul and they were pleading with him.

3 **When (208)** they asked this favour –to send and bring him to Jerusalem while they were making an ambush by the road to kill him. **The favour Festus envisaged was one of callous betrayal of a righteous man. The favour and grace of God was the painful giving of his Only Son and the self-giving and abnegation of that glorious Son for the sake of bringing righteousness to man.**

4 And Festus returned answer that Paul is to be kept at Caesarea and I am in a hurry to get on my way **എന്നാൽ**

5 Those therefore of you to whom it (violence) has happened –it is in their hands to go down with us and on every offence involving him there is to be a man to accuse. **Festus challenged their vagary. He sought specific evidence. The wheels of justice turn on facts and as the sequel shows these facts were lacking. Festus whether pressed or not wanted to return home but one suspects he was giving little time to constructing a case because he knew the charge was bogus. The ruler was possibly irate that he could not deliver the favour he presumed to be so easy and now his mind on the deserts of the Jews waivered if not entirely altered. It was Paul's presence of mind that swung the case and saved the apostle's life. Paul was given in that moment the words to say in accord with the promise of the sovereign Lord (Mark13.11)that the word of God would be given of the Holy Spirit. God is sovereign**

6 And **when (209)** he was there eight or ten days he went down to Caesarea and the next day he sat on the judgment seat and commanded that they bring Paul. **Festus operated a rule parallel to Magna Carta that justice should not be delayed or denied. In under 2 weeks Festus had set up a proper trial. The Lord was at work in His overruling to justify his servant Paul of pernicious charges.**

7 And **when (210)** he came the Jews and Leaders who came down from Jerusalem surrounded him and had brought many grievous things behind him which they were not able to demonstrate. **In the providence of the Lord's working the trumped up charges were too quickly contrived and too easily dismissed.**

8 And **when (211)** Paul had issued a defense that he had not offended against **എന്നാൽ** the law or the temple or Caesar

9 Festus on the other hand because he wanted to confer a favour **എന്നാൽ** on the Jews said to Paul “You will go up to Jerusalem and there be judged of these things before me!” **This was an insidious command deferring judgment –a sudden surprise and a devised plot of a time-serving ruler to curry favour. Clearly it put Paul in precisely the position Jesus found Himself in –he would be a victim of Jewish criminal practice and he wasn't having it. His reply would be vital. As a Roman he had rights in the divine providence and he was to cite them immediately.**

10 Paul answered and said “At the judgment seat of Caesar I will stand–here it is right or righteous for me to be judged –also I have not sinned one thing against the Jews and you know that precisely. **എന്നാൽ**

11 And if an offense was committed by me or anything worthy of death I do not excuse myself from death but there is nothing against me from these things that they accuse me–and a man will not give me as a gift to them. I call to Caesar.

12 At that precise time Festus spoke with the sons of the kingdom and said “You have called for an appeal to Caesar, right to Caesar (literally “close to”) you will go.

13 And **when** (212) days passed King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to ask about the wellbeing of Festus.

The political move of Agrippa was not geared to the incident so far as we know—simply a gesture of welcome since the Herods were closely associated with the Roman aristocracy. As Luke shows events continued to move fast. The Lord works in all things for the good of those he has called to serve.

14 And **when** (213) they were with him some days Festus related **the** legal matter of Paul to the king when he said “One man was left—a bound prisoner from the hands of Felix. **This may be so in that Felix may have changed Paul’s accommodation before his term finished or Paul may have been bound though living in the palace. Again the sovereignty of God enabled Paul to stand before kings as the prophecy that went before concerning him promised. The Lord was with him in this.**

15 And **when** (214) I was in Jerusalem the Chief Priests and Elders of the Jews made me aware of him and appealed that I bring him to judgment.

16 And I said to them “It is not the custom for Romans to give a man to death until the man at law with him shall accuse him to his face and an opportunity shall be given him to make his defense concerning that of which he is accused” **The precision of Roman law was followed—this same tradition was denied our Saviour. On the throne the Lord was providing righteous process for Paul.**

17 And **when** (215) I came here without delay I sat on the Bema the next day and I ordered that this man be brought to me.

18 And his accusers stood with him and they could not demonstrate any indictment against him as I had supposed (they might)

19 But enquiries about one thing or other about their religion exist for them with him and they are about Jesus a man who had died—whom Paul was saying is alive. **The testimony of Paul to the Risen Lord was consistently given before Festus and now is reported to Agrippa. The Lord was working with the apostle to make his will and power known and to bring the good news of life after death to the wider world.**

20 Because I was not raised on enquiries of this sort I had said to Paul “Do you wish to go to Jerusalem to be judged of these things!”

21 But he pleaded to be reserved for the judgment of Caesar and I ordered that he be kept **until I sent him to Caesar**

22 And Agrippa said “I would like to hear this man” and Festus said “Tomorrow you will hear him!”

23 And the following Day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the Bema or place of judgment with the Chiliarch and leaders of the city and Festus gave command and Paul came.

24 And Festus said “King Agrippa and all of you men who are with us on the case of this man whom you all see. The people of the Jews complained to me in Jerusalem and here when they were crying out that “This one should live no longer!”

25 “I conversely have found there is nothing worthy of death done by him and because he asked to be kept for the judgment of Caesar **I have commanded** that he be sent.” *Festus is nothing but decisive. He presented the case as closed on the last hearing and that by Paul’s request and his own fiat. Paul had of course to deal with the unfair favour to which he did not refer of providing for the baying Jews a scapegoat or Christian to crucify—which would have been a travesty of law. Essentially Festus acted pusillanimously but overall again the Lordship of Christ overruled it for the glory of His name.*

26 And I do not know what to write about him to Caesar because of this I desired to bring him before you and additionally King Agrippa in front of you that it seems likely **(further) enquiry of his case I will be able to find what I can write.**

27 For it is not right that we send a man prisoner that we should not write his offense.

CHAPTER 26

SOVEREIGN KING OF KINGS

1 And **Agrippa** said to Paul “You are permitted to speak on your own behalf”. At that precise time Paul stretched out his hand and issued his defense and said...

2 “On the question of everything whatever it is of which I am accused by the Jews O king Agrippa I think myself happy or felicitous **because I bring my defense before you today.**

3 Additionally I know that you are expert **in all questions and in the law of the Jews—because of this I ask that with all patience (patient as a carpenter whilst sawing wood for a project or patient as a traveller on a long itinerary) you will listen to me .**

4 For you also are cognizant that the Jews if they wish to testify of my way of life from youth that was in the beginning in my nation in Jerusalem.

5 Because over a long time they who know believe I lived in the teaching authorized of the Pharisees.

6 And now for the hope or good news of the promise to our fathers from God I rise to be judged.

7 For carried into **א** this hope our twelve tribes hope to be brought safe by diligent **א** prayer or leaning **א** day and night for upon this hope **א** I have been accused or disenfranchised **א** by the hand of the Jews **O King Agrippa**.

8 How do you decide? Or what would you decide? And ought we to believe that God raises the dead?

9 For earlier I had set firm in my mind that against the name of Jesus of Nazareth I would practice and oversee **א** many things

10 This is the thing I also was engaged in in Jerusalem and I cast many holy persons into prison by the absolute authority that I received from the Chief Priests and when they were being killed I took part **א** With those who routed and condemned **א** them.

11 And through every synagogue I was torturing **א** them **when (216)** by lashes or crushing **א** to blaspheme the name of Jesus and I was full of great rage against them—I was also going out to other cities to persecute them. *“Confession is good for the soul”-before the king Paul spelt out his persecution with attitude-dire and vicious hatred. That this occurred under the king’s watch gave Agrippa no pleasure but the change in Paul demonstrated that there was a king sovereign over all earthly kings in the life of Paul.*

12 **When (217)** I was going away on this account to Damascus with authority and with persuasion or petition of **א** the High Priests.

13 In the middle of the day on the road I saw from heaven **O King** a light that was greater than the sun shone with dazzling effulgence **א**, upon me. *It is of note that when the Hebrew writer speaks of “effulgence” he used the term **א** not **א**. It would have been in spite of the historic note of Tertullian and the different sourcing of Hebrews impressive evidence of Paul’s hand for he alone could speak of the “burst of dazzling light” but the Hebrew writer speaks of “the bright shining” as starlight whereas **א** carries the idea of the power of firelight-hence like the sun but nearer and stronger. The definitive evidence of the Lord sovereign in Paul’s experience comes out mightily in this testimony. Jews were forever impressed by “signs from heaven.*

14 And we all fell on the ground and I heard a voice—a tuneful trumpet like voice **א** when He said to me in Aramaic “Saul Saul why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick often or violently **א** against the sharp goads” **א** SHUL SHUL MANA RODEPH ANATH LI QESHA HI LECH LEMBATO L’OQSA. *Stunning words heavenly music with the thunder of a trumpet yet the sweetness of a harp.*

15 And I said “Who are you my Lord and our Lord said to me “I am Jesus the Nazarene whom you are persecuting! ANA HOL YESHUA NAZARIA D’ANATH RADAPH ANATH “*You you are persecuting...me”*

16 And he said to me “Rise to your feet for on this account I have appeared to you to establish you as a minister (like the sun)and a witness of the singular sight of me and that you are going on to see me” QUM AL REGELIK METEL HADA GIR ETHHAZITH LEK D’AQIMEK M’SHEMNAW’SAHADA D’MADAM D’HEZITHNI W’DATHIK ANATH D’THHEZINI

17 “And I shall save you from the people of the Jews and from other nations to close relationship to whom **א** I am sending you” W’APZIK MIN HAMAD’YEHUDIA W’MEN HAMMA AHARNA D’LOTHHON M’SHADAR ANA LEK

18 “And you will open their eyes exactly (alike your own) that they will turn from darkness to the light; and from the full authority of Satan to God and they will receive departure from or leaving sin and a portion or lot **א** with the holy ones by faith that is through me.” RATKHP;ATHAH AINIHUN AIK D’NAHPKON MIN KHASHOCA L’NHIRA W’MIN SHULTANA D’SATNA LOTH ELOHA W’NAQBALON SHOBAQAN KHATAA W’PESA IM QADISHA B’HIMANOTHA D’BI

19 Because of this **O King Agrippa** I did not stand in dispute or as a heretic **א** against the heavenly vision.

20 But I heralded from the first to those in Damascus and to those in Jerusalem and those in all the villages of Judea and also to the Gentiles I heralded to turn and be converted to be close to God and to do works that were worthy of Grace **א**

21 And because of these things the Jews apprehended me in the temple and wanted to kill me.

22But God helped me till this day I stand—**even I** to the **small א**, and the great while or **when (218)** I say nothing outside that which Moses and the prophets said were going to come to pass. **Paul’s adherence**

to the law and prophets was at root an obedience to the Holy Spirit-it was ostensibly prophetic and the line he took on scripture was directed since His conversion by acknowledging that all references to Messiah were to be fulfilled in Jesus-the Lord he met and served who promised to work with him.

23 That Messiah would suffer and would be **the principal or supreme power** over **אֱלֹהִים**

resurrection...The term is reminiscent of Gen.1.1 "In the beginning B'RISHITH. The word has to do with commanding or captaincy so as "in the beginning" derives from the word of God so Resurrection belongs to the authority of Christ once questioned by Satan because Moses body was not found and had somehow been buried and not found though much sought. He died on Nebo but was found raised in the Golan...from the dead and would herald light to the people and to the Gentiles.

24 And **when** (219) Paul thus rendered his defense Festus cried out in a loud voice "Paul you are mad or frantic **אֲדֹנָי** much literary or book study **אֲדֹנָי** has made you insane.

25 Paul said "I am not insane O excellent Festus but I am speaking words of reality **אֱמֶת** and stability or excellent fashioning **אֲדֹנָי** Paul claims his words are real and true and the words he repeated from Christ were fashioned by the best Aramaic speaker ever-the Lord himself.

26 And also King Agrippa Paul uses the Latinised word which is transliterated in Aramaic –not the Vocative –he is not uttering this expression as an appeal but as a fact. King Agrippa particularly well about such things as these –because this is in the public gaze or eye I speak before him-because not one of these matters I think escaped him for they were not done as secret things **אֲדֹנָי**

27 **O King Agrippa** do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe!

28 Agrippa said to him "In a brief time **אֲדֹנָי** you will actively persuade me to become a Christian.. This remark was I believe earnest. The word "little" was already humorously used by Paul in v.22 where he gets the comedy of such a small man holding such a big brief before such noble company. In a sense Agrippa is a most gracious ruler and is saying "Though a little man you could persuade anyone in a little time."-a covert tribute to the plausible case Pau has mounted.

29 And Paul said "I have desired from God not a little **אֲדֹנָי** but in multiplied or magnified fashion not only you but also all those who are listening to me today would be exactly like me apart from these chains. **Yet again the pun on "littleness" is used. Paul switches to the thought of a prayer to the Lord working with him prayed before he spoke that the whole audience would be "fully persuaded"-he sought no small thing from God but magnificent fruit. It is to be marked that while Paul rendered his best apology he also prayed his most earnest prayer to the Lord who was working through his word in the heart of the hearer.**

30 And the King and the Governor and Bernice **stood up for him** and those who were sitting with them. The King led the whole party in respect and appreciation and each one made this appreciative gesture to Paul.

31 And **when** (220) they withdrew from there they were speaking one to one and they were saying that "This man has done not a thing worthy of death or imprisonment.

32 And Agrippus said to Festus "This man could have been released **אֲדֹנָי** if the appeal **אֲדֹנָי** o Caesar had not been held on to or kept in possession" **אֲדֹנָי** The appeal in question was an appeal against a lower court involving Festus himself. Agrippa is saying "You could have dropped the appeal if it were not invoked or proclaimed-in other words Festus made a huge mistake in exposing a prisoner to a higher court when at a lower he could have been exonerated. Agrippa gently rebuffed Festus. Thus a great presentation and serious empathy on Agrippa's part leads to the inevitable –Paul's Rome-ward journey-a matter Festus mildly regretted and Agrippa and Bernice would have discussed as most unfortunate. Yet the Lord was working with Paul in it all that he should see T=Rome and encourage the church there.

CHAPTER 27

SOVEREIGN OF THE SEA

1 And Festus gave command about him that he be sent to the presence of Caesar to Italy and Paul and other prisoners with him be handed over to **one** man- a centurion from the Roman seed or Regiment of Sebastia whose name was Julius.

2 And **when** (221) time came that we should travel or proceed **אֲדֹנָי** we went down to a ship which was from the city of Adrimintus and it was going off to the region of Asia. And Aristarchus a Macedonian who was from the city of Thessalonica entered the ship with us.

3 And the next day we came to Sidon and the centurion behaved **אֲדֹנָי** with compassion in close relation to Paul and allowed him to go out to his caring friends and have restful refreshment. **Amid the foreboding and**

the huge issues for Paul the Lord allowed him to have much of the milk of human kindness through this good centurion. The sovereignty of God is written all over Luke's account as it draws to a close

4 And we sailed from there and because the wind was against us we circled round to Cyprus.

5 And our passage was by the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia and we arrived at Myra a city of Lucia.

6 And the centurion found a ship from Alexandria there that was going to Italy and he had us go in it.

7 And because it (the ship) was weighed down **بثقلها** it was labouring for many days we came to the island of Cnidus and because the wind would not allow us to remain **مستقيمين** on a straight course we circled around Crete close to the city of Salmona

8 And **when(222)** hardly **لجئنا** (from **مضنا**) only just or with difficulty we sailed to go right around it **بجانبها** we came to a place that was called "Beautiful harbour" and close to it was a city called Lasea. **Luke is describing an experience that seems of geographical interest and the journey for him and Paul opens a new travel experience but continues the theme of divine sovereign providence as they reach this lovely place and escape the storm.**

9 And we were there a long time until the day of the fast of the Jews and **there was anxiety** **توسكتهم** for **man** travelling (at this time) and Paul was counseling them.

10 And he said "Brave men, I have seen in a vision that our voyage will be through calamity and with great loss not only of our cargo and our ship but that which belongs personally to us also- **بنافسيكم** .

11 But the centurion was paying attention to the helmsman and master of the ship more than the words of Paul.

12 And because the port was not fitted to sustain(us) **لنا** (for us) to pass the winter **شيف** in it many of us desired to journey from there and if it were possible to arrive and winter at one port which was in Crete called Phoenix and it does not look to the south. *Here Luke seems to be of this mind and interestingly he gives us an inkling of possible past experience of this port-which would chime with his possible profession as a (ship's) doctor.*

13 And **when (223)** the south wind blew and they hoped to arrive precisely as they were wishing they were tacking their journey around Crete.

14 And after we had gone out a little a light breeze **رياح** of a hurricane that was named Typhonikos Euroclydon attacked or pursued us (like an army) **كأنهم** **The prophetic vision was realized and the Lord showed the centurion that He ruled as the ultimate sovereign and that He was concerned and wiser than the helmsman in his care of those under His care. Even the pending calamity was forcefully showing that the Lord travelled with them and that they would have to prepare to meet God's purpose-this even concentrated their minds to prepare their souls to hear the message Paul carried.**

15 And the ship was taken by force and could not withstand the wind and we gave way to its power.

16 And **when (224)** we passed one island which is called Queda we were in difficulty **بصعوبة** to hold the ship's (life)boat **صنعة** **The sovereign providence of God was with Paul and the sailors so that they were able to keep the lifeboat which could offer help in distress.**

17 And **when(225)** we took up the weight of the ship's sail **سفن** we had been retaining it for the ship because we dreaded that it would fall in a long drawn out (battle) **منازلة** of the sea and so we took down the sail and thus (without sail) we were moving on. **Again in such a hurricane to get the rigging down was a signal achievement without loss of life. This second providence meant that they were able to slow the vessel lest it would turn over and sink.**

18 And **when (226)** the storm rose on us it was overpowering **توسكتهم** and next day we threw the ship's fittings into the sea. **Now Paul's prophecy that they would suffer loss of goods became reality and the sovereignty of God in prophecy was experienced to their chagrin.**

19 And the third day we cast overboard the ship's furniture with our hands.

20 And **when (227)** the storm winter storm **توسكتهم** held on for many days and the sun or moon did not appear nor the stars all hope of our lives was completely cut off. *(The ship's company saw this as determined and settled) This is Luke's comment on the mood of the crew and passengers. The future seemed to be drowning or death by hunger or by break-up. The wonder is when hope is lost and darkness surrounds God is still on the throne. Men without Christ see no hope in such circumstances.*

21 And **when (228)** **man was not able to endure** the thing at that precise moment **توسكتهم** Paul arose in their midst and said "If men you had taken my shelter or refuge **كأنا** and we had not sailed from Crete we would have been spared **مجانين** this loss and suffering.

22 And I now counsel that we may be without harm **כִּי** for not one of your lives will perish but only the ship.

23 For an angel of God to whom I belong and whom I serve appeared to me in the night

24 And he said to me “Paul do not fear for it is the future or it is prepared **הָיָה** that you stand before Caesar and behold God is giving you a gift or present or favour **חַסְדָּא**—all who travel with you!” *In the middle of the Adriatic in an overwhelming storm God decides to send an angel and to tell Paul he has a future to appear before Nero and the angel adds God has a present-every life aboard will be saved. Who can gainsay that the Lord was working with and watching over Paul with the most intimate watch-care?*

25 “Men because of this take heart for I trust that it is exactly thus as spoken to me!”

26 However there was one island upon which we could be cast **כִּי**

27 And after 14 days when we erred or strayed and were buffeted afflicted or exhausted **בְּיָמַי** in the Sea of Hadrian in the middle of the night the sailors thought they were coming near land.

28 And they cast an anchor and found (it was) 20 fathoms and again they sailed a little and found it was 15 fathoms.

29 And when we feared lest we would be found in places that have rocks in them we cast four anchors from the prow of the ship and were praying that day would come!

30 But the sailors appealed to flee from the ship and they lowered the lifeboat from it into the sea on the pretext or argument to go off in it and tie the ship to shore.

31 And **when (229)** Paul saw it he told the centurion and the soldiers that if these did not remain **יְהִי** on the ship you are not able to survive. *How could Paul know that he precisely interpreted the angel to mean that all who travelled with him would be saved. How important it is to believe implicitly and precisely the word of God and not to take a general view of one’s own! God is sovereign and His word is to be obeyed.*

32 Precisely at that moment the soldiers cut the ropes of the lifeboat and left it adrift of the ship.

33 But Paul was persuading them all until it was morning to take food when he said to them “Today – fourteen days from the peril you have tasted nothing.

34 Because of this I beg you to take food for the continuance and fixed ration for you lives for not a hair **כִּי** from the head of one of you will perish.

35 And when he said these things he took bread and praised God before them all and broke it and began to eat. *This is so like the communion service-he probably repeated the Jewish grace and once more gave testimony to the sovereign Lord.*

36 And all of them were comforted and received their daily bread or victuals **כִּי**

37 We were on the other hand 276 souls on the ship.

38 And when they were filled with food they lightened the ship and they took wheat and threw it into the sea.

39 And **when (230)** it was day the sailors did not know what land it was but they saw on the side of the land one definite peninsula or skirting bay **כִּי** of the sea precisely where they were considering whether it would be actually possible to push the ship like a battering ram **כִּי**

40 And they cut the anchors from the ship and left them slack **כִּי** in the sea. *Some years ago a friend who travelled in Crete pointed out that in St Paul’s bay in that very island one or more anchors had been found. Even more significant the sailors had obtained faith and courage and now ceased to depend on their anchors –they had neither lifeboat nor sail nor anchor-they were thrown on God alone-the one they learned was sovereign and with Paul.* And they loosed the rudder bands *The ship was now going the way the Lord directed by the tide and wind.* And they lifted the small topsail to capture or carry **כִּי** the wind

41 And the ship contacted or spied out **כִּי** a rise or high spot between two deep places of the sea and it was held on it and stood upon its front end and its end was not moved but the back was destroyed or broken up **כִּי** from the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers had wanted to kill the prisoners lest they dive down or cast them in swimming and escape from them.

43 And the centurion refused this **כִּי** because he wanted to keep Paul alive and he commanded those who were able to dive in and to swim first and proceed to land.

44 And they sent the rest upon wood tables and other planks of the ship and thus all of them **כִּי** escaped to land.

CHAPTER 28

SOVEREIGN IN REFUGE

- 1 And after this we learned that the island was called Melita-in Aramaic “One that curses”-in Greek “soft” or “soft mixture/honey” but its true meaning is “**refuge**” in Phoenician
- 2 And the Barbarians who lived in it there showed great compassion to us and bound a fire together and called us to get warm **حطب** because of the torrential rain and freezing cold that there was.
- 3 And Paul took a lot of sticks and put them on the fire and a viper came out from the heat of the fire and bit him **حبيبي** on the hand
- 4 And **when** (231) the barbarians saw it hanging or fastened **حبيبي** on his hand they were saying perhaps **حبيبي** (formerly) this man is a murderer who when he escaped the sea justice will not allow **حبيبي** him to live. *This is a fascinating deduction from pagan traditional thought for it was on the mark-Paul indeed had a past which made him accomplice to murder but God had forgiven him and the sequel proves the miracle that God gave to prove that fact for Luke. The barbarians of course did not realize how right they were, In this also the sovereign grace and care of the Lord working with Paul and on his behalf is shown in the narrative and the act of God that wet morning.*
- 5 But Paul shook his hand and threw the viper into the fire and nothing detestable or disfiguring **حبيبي** happened to him.
- 6 But the barbarians were thinking that within the hour he would putrify or swell **حبيبي** and **when** (232) he died he would fall to the ground *The normal result of a viper bite was death and the hour long vigil was sufficient to show that something uncanny was afoot-for pagans this was “God” and Paul was a god. For Paul it was the sovereign Lord keeping his promise of Mark 16.17 “They will pick up snakes and be well” and **when** (233) they waited a long time that nothing detestable happened to him and they changed their words and said “He is a God”.*
- 7 But there was a village there in that place belonging to **one** man whose name was Poplius (father?)- he was the chief of the island-he received us joyfully into his house for three days.
- 8 But the Father of Publius was ill with a fiery fever and that through a disease of the intestines and Paul entered intimately and prayed and placed his hand on him and he was made whole or cured **حبيبي** *Paul in prayer gave glory to the Lord and though one might imagine Luke was the answer to this need and that medicine would help it was Paul who took the initiative. In both events his medical care would have been too late-the viper had struck-final stages of intestinal sickness had come but the sovereign Lord was present to heal*
- 9 And **when** (234) this happened those remaining or surviving in illness on the island were coming to him and they were healed. *The great love of God was seen in His answer to the prayers of Paul. To the 276 souls from the ship and the entire population the wonder of God working with Paul was immediately evident. It is not a question for us that “If only we could preach like Paul-it is rather a question that if we could keep close to the Lord like Paul and be used to heal through prayer like Paul great things might happen. This is a glorious conclusion to the ministry of Paul and it took place on a barbarian island when the Lord reached a whole people through this shipwreck-an event that changed the history of their lives and of literally hundreds if not thousands of lives.*
- 10 And they greatly honoured us and when we were going from there they gave us provisions for the journey **حبيبي**
- 11 But after three months we went out and journeyed on an Alexandrian ship which had wintered in the island and there was on it the sign of “The twins”- *Anciently this intimated the two aspects of Christ-His princely sovereignty and his redeeming grace for in the constellation Gemini there are two other stars “the prince of the left hand” and the “prince of the right hand” speaking of the redemptive and ruling ministry of our Lord. Luke was clearly cognizant of the significance and felt that even in this the Lord was declaring His care.*
- 12 And we came to the city of Syracuse and we stayed there 3 days.
- 13 And from there we circled around the region of the city and after one day the south wind blew and in 2 days we came to Puteoli –a city of Italy.
- 14 And we found brethren there and they implored us and we were with them 7 days and precisely at that time we went on to Rome. *It would appear that Paul was almost a free man. Perhaps by this time the centurion who guarded him was virtually a brother in Christ. If Paul stayed with brothers where did the centurion stay-perhaps in the same place? Was he now enjoying the faith and fellowship and what of the prisoners he and his soldiers had with them? Had the letters of Appeal been lost or ruined during the sea*

storm? The situation appears to have resolved itself into a semi voluntary state where Paul was obliged by circumstance and the holding factor was the centurion himself who continued to use a support soldier invariably with Paul but otherwise trusted Paul implicitly and allowed events requested by Paul's schedule. He may have forwarded the other prisoners to Rome. He permitted Paul to follow with a guard (cf v.16) though it would appear he was in touch during Paul's Roman residence.

15 And when (235) the brothers there heard they issued out like soldiers to meet **אַנְטוֹנִיוֹס** to the public forum called Apius Phorus "bread market" and to Three Taverns **שְׁלֹשׁ אֲרָצוֹת** "three cells or arches" **Paul and his party passed through the public forum or market because daily bread was a necessity and here the parties met and one thing is fairly certain they had something to eat-the Lord granted that they met at a most appropriate centre....** and when(236) Paul saw them he praised God and was strengthened. **The hand of the Lord was with Paul and while he traversed the Appian Way he could not miss the brothers but the very sight of those who had prayer shawls and owned the name of Christ was a special treat as he made his first days of progress in mainland Europe after being at sea and becalmed for so long.**

16 And we entered Rome and the centurion granted or permitted **אַנְטוֹנִיוֹס** Paul to dwell where he wished with a soldier who was watching him.

SOVEREIGN OF HOPE AND THE FUTURE

17 And after 3 days Paul sent and called the leaders of the Jews and when (237) they assembled he said to them "Men, brethren...**Paul in his address always called the Jews his brothers. He was zealous that they should become what he encouraged them to aspire to but so often they denied that relationship because they denied Christ. It is of interest that he stood with them when heralding not over against them. He did not assume their conversion rather he revealed אֱלֹהִים as opposed to heralding אֱלֹהִים the message but still challenged them. If they rejected his fellowship but first they rejected Christ.**

when (238) "I have in nothing stood to oppose the people of the law of my fathers I was handed over in bonds into the hands of the Romans at Jerusalem..." **Paul did not oppose the Jews because they had the oracles and they would have to reject them to stand against Christ and against him. The betrayal of Paul was like that of Jesus-it was a sinful act and upon the Christ rejection of that generation hung the forgiveness of the people and their maintenance of the heritage of Israel.**

18 "When (239) they queried me they wanted to release me because one after another the rulers found nothing subsequently worthy of death..."**The investigation that followed the charge showed no evidence of anything alleged and this Paul could assert with integrity. Had there been charges there would have been letters or representations. The Lord enabled Paul to present the facts of courts he had attended**

19 And when (240) the Jews were standing against me I was constrained to call for an appeal to Caesar not exactly because I had anything of which to accuse the children of my people.

20 Because of this I pleaded for you to come and I will see you and relate these things to you because for the **hope of Israel** I am bound in this chain. **Paul spoke of the hope or good news of Israel-that hope was in one King-one Lord-and His resurrection and when he further expounded Christ in all the scriptures with the conviction of the Holy Spirit.**

21 They were saying to him "We have not received a letter about you from Judea nor has a man from our brothers in Jerusalem said anything that is bad against you".

22 But we desire to hear from you what knowledge you have in your mind because we know this teaching is **not acceptable to any man. Here is one of the generalizations Luke retails-it states a current view that all and sundry reject Christianity. The initial starting point of Jews in Rome lined up Christianity as a religio illicita and gave its lack of acceptance the imprimatur of Roman Jews as well. This was hard for Paul to hear after his great successes amongst Gentiles which affirmed the exact opposite-the faith was being widely received. Paul was not discomfited because the Holy Spirit had shown him through his voyage that thousands were out there waiting to hear this life-giving message and Romans were firmly embedded among them. Jesus said "Go into all the world" and Jesus promised to be with him as he obeyed that mission command. The Lord stood by him as ever and he was not discouraged.**

23 And they appointed a day and gathered to him many people where he was living and he made manifest for them (his teaching) about the kingdom of God when (241) he testified and persuaded them about Yeshua from the law of Moses and from the prophets from morning till evening.

24 And some of them were persuaded by his words and others were not persuaded. **A whole day presumably one where there was food available was used. The persuasion was by foreshadowings of scripture which was now the manner in which Paul received the word. Jesus made a statement central to interpretation "You know neither the scriptures nor the power of God -these are they that testify of me! John 5.39. The Jews would have to unhinge from their scribal method to adopt this prophetic view of the word. This is the work of the Lord in the heart and those who subscribed it were responsive to the sovereign Spirit.**

25 And they were dismissed from his immediate presence **when** (242) they did not agree with one another and Paul said to them “This saying the Holy Spirit has beautifully spoken by the mouth of Isaiah against your fathers...*In his persuasion Paul was not depending on logic or psychology but the word and the Spirit of God. The word ~~كلمة~~ means “shadowed forth” or typified and foreshadowed. Paul’s “persuasion” was simply going over the whole field of OT foreshadowing of the Christ from Moses and the prophets. He used the scriptures to convince and worked with the Holy Spirit and the Lord who gave the word. This remains the most effectual means of demonstrating the truth of Christ and the truth of the kingdom of God.*

26 **When** (243) he said ‘Go to this people and say to them that *hearing you will hear and you will not understand or perceive or **closely inspect** the vision ~~بصيرة~~ and you will see the vision and not **test it out** (by obeying the Holy Spirit as when one tests silver and separates it from dross by essay of fire)

27 For the heart of this people has become hard ~~قلوبهم~~ and their lively hearing they have made dull (with age or other cares) and their eyes they have closed (as in sleep or as flowers to the sun) lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and should have understanding in their hearts and turn to me and I would forgive or allow them to remain (in the land).~~فلا~~

28 You must therefore know this that this salvation is sent to the Gentiles of God for they are also listening to it.

29 And **when** (244) he said these things the Jews issued out and many were debating among themselves (literally “threshing it out” as they were “treading” the road)

30 And Paul hired for him from his own means ~~أجر~~ a house and he was there two years receiving all who came to be intimate with him.

31 And he was actively heralding about **the kingdom of God** and teaching in the public eye about our Lord Yeshua **Messiah** without being forbidden or put under restraint ~~بحد~~ *To the end Paul is true in the very face of the Lion to his message. He is on cue speaking about the Sovereign king of all who is as real to him as when he met Jesus on the Damascus turnpike. The Lord’s work goes on even when his servants are restricted-indeed it grows more and more. Like Joseph Paul prepared for further advances-“I must see Spain also”-Rome was not the end. Until we see Jesus we shall not know how the story of his life concluded save that he died a martyr’s death. No life ever was more given to daily working with the Lord and the Lord from this telling account let none of his words fall to the ground. He like Samuel did a circuit of the churches once and again. His acclaim is in all the churches and his crown from the nail-pierced hands was gallantly won.*

FINIS

ALBION COURT 24.11.2018