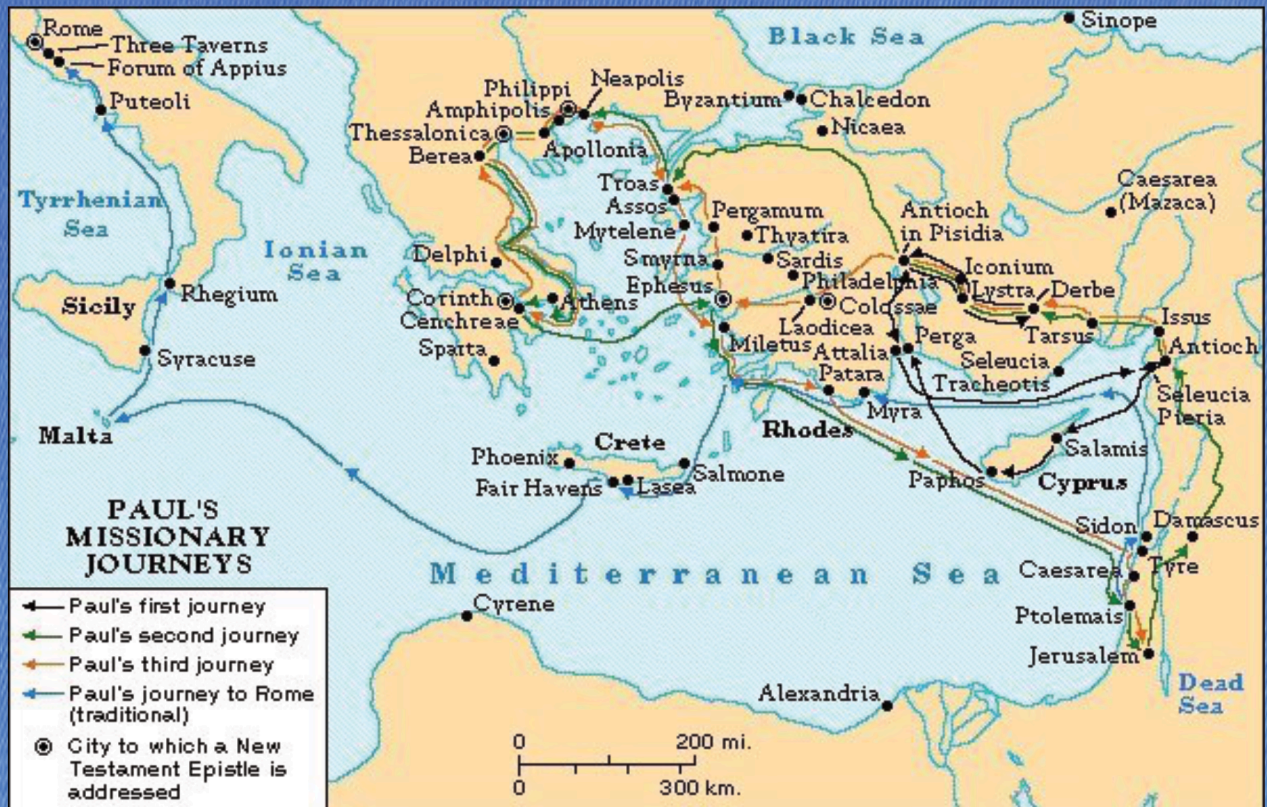


FILLMORE STUDY BIBLE

The Acts of the Apostles

Metaphysically Interpreted



FILLMORE BIBLE SOCIETY

Fillmore Study Bible

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Fillmore Bible Society

<https://fillmore.bible>

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The Fillmore Bible Society

The Fillmore Bible Society are collaborators who comb through dozens of metaphysical books written by Charles Fillmore and his students as well as over 70 years of Fillmore articles and sermons for metaphysical insights into the Bible. They edit and submit these insights as short annotations which are then applied to the text of the text of the World English Bible, a contemporary-language update of the American Standard Version of the Bible, both online and in print.

This collaboration project is managed by TruthUnity Ministries, which is the publisher of The Fillmore Study Bible. In time the Fillmore Bible Society will become free-standing with its own board, Editorial staff and peer-review committee.

Members of the Fillmore Bible Society include:



Rev. Dan Beckett. Mark, Colossians.



Thomas Scheinler. Acts, Galatians.



Rev. Lisa Herklotz and Rev Jim Ernstsén.
Revelation to John.



Susan St John. Hebrews.



Rev. Mark Hicks. General Editor. John,
Acts, Romans, Corinthians 1.



Rev. Michelle Vargas. Luke.



Mary Salama. Matthew, Corinthians 2,
Thessalonians 1 & 2, Timothy 1 & 2,
Titus, Peter 1 & 2, Jude.

The Fillmore Study Bible

The Fillmore Study Bible provides the reader with an introduction to metaphysical Bible interpretation by offering annotations and commentary from the works of Charles Fillmore and his students. Many Bible students learn their theology by reading the annotations and commentary of study Bibles. Study Bibles have a theological point of view, typically Catholic, Evangelical or Mainline Protestant. The Fillmore Study Bible makes this method of study available to the Metaphysical Christian.

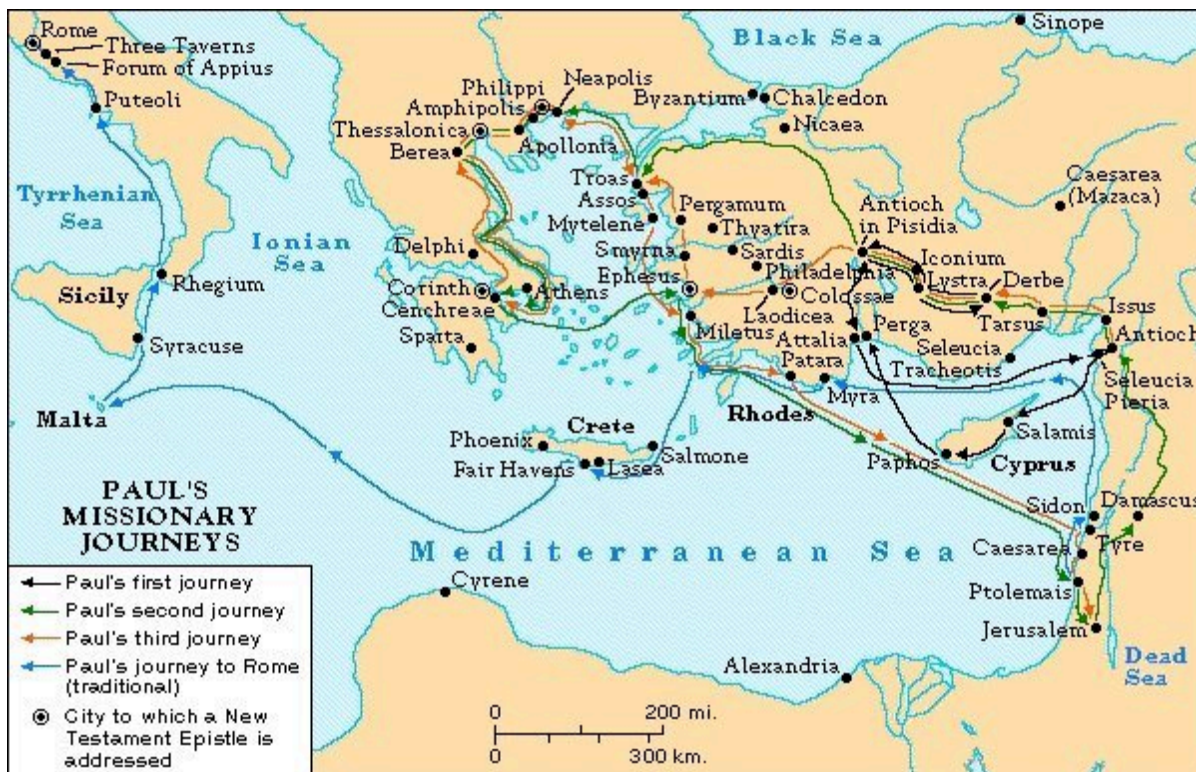
Metaphysical Christianity is an authentic and distinct expression of the historic Christian faith that acknowledges and embraces the influence of Platonic and Stoic Greek philosophy in the early development of Christian theology. Much of this influence has been suppressed in orthodox Bible commentaries because metaphysical interpretation relies on an inner knowingness as authority for spiritual matters. The annotations included here embrace inner knowingness as authority.

This study bible uses the *World English Bible* translation, which is a contemporary-language update of the bible used by Charles Fillmore, the American Standard Version. The language

of the WEB is not American nor British, but *contemporary, world* English, making the text pleasant to read for the broadest possible audience of global English speakers. The WEB differs from several contemporary-language translations by not adopting gender neutral language but it has provided footnotes when gender neutral language would be appropriate.

We believe that our present day culture of information, science and technology is ready to restore to it's spiritual teachings the perspectives of original thinkers who gave us not only mathematics, ethics, democracy and medicine, but also deep insights into the inner world of soul and Divine mind—the Greek metaphysicians. We also believe that contemporary Christianity needs a contemporary, global interpretation applied to a contemporary, global biblical text. The Fillmore Study Bible is our offering for addressing these spiritual needs.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES



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INTRODUCTION TO ACTS


(1) Author: Luke, the "beloved physician," is generally recognized as the author of Acts. Both the Gospel of Luke and Acts contain similar dedications (shown in the opening verses), and both mention "Theophilus"—who was probably a patron of Luke. The opening verse of Acts also makes mention of "the first book" (or "former treatise")—and this evidently refers to the Gospel of Luke. Many similarities, both of style and technical phrases used, will also be noted. The date of writing is usually placed at around A.D. 85. The metaphysical meaning of the name Luke is: "luminous; light-giving; enlightening; instructing" (Metaphysical Bible Dictionary/Luke)—and it is easy to recognize the significance of this interpretation when reading the Gospel of Luke, or the book of Acts.

(2) Purpose: At first reading, the book of Acts appears to consist of two main sections: the first section dealing with the activities of Peter, and the second section describing the activities of Paul. The New Testament also contains evidence of factional divisions in the early church—some Christians recognizing the leadership of Peter, with others looking to Paul for guidance. Because of this, some early New Testament commentators suggested the possibility of there being originally two books of "Acts," which were later combined.

However, in all of Luke's writings there is a marked tendency to minimize all controversial matters; hence, it seems much more likely that Luke's purpose in writing this book was to draw the factions together, and to show that the two apostles, although outwardly differing, were one in their great purpose and in their loyalty to Jesus Christ.

(3) Special feature: When writing his Gospel, Luke had to depend upon other persons, or written documents, for the needed information. But in writing Acts, Luke was able to report several important happenings at first hand, for he was actually present and took part in some of the activities mentioned. The reader is able to recognize many of these first-hand reports through Luke's use of the pronoun *we*—indicating that the writer was present on those occasions. Further reference will be made to this in later lessons.

(4) A problem: The reader will notice that the book of Acts ends rather abruptly, mentioning Paul's imprisonment at Rome, but giving no further details. Other parts of the New Testament indicate that there were important happenings during and after Paul's imprisonment; but no mention is made of these in Acts. The question therefore arises as to whether Luke planned to write a third volume—and if this volume was completed, what became of it? Possibly it was Luke's intention to write about later happenings, but there seems no indication that such a book was ever written. The probability is that Luke died, or was imprisoned and executed, before this project could be put into operation. However, in a later lesson we shall be able to trace something of what this projected volume might have contained.

 *Introduction to Acts of the Apostles* by Herbert J. Hunt, former Dean of Bible Studies for the Unity School of Christianity.

ACTS 1

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

^{1:1} The first book I wrote, Theophilus,¹ concerned all that Jesus began both to do and to teach,² ^{1:2} until the day in which he was received up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ^{1:3} To these he also showed himself alive after he suffered, by many proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking about God's Kingdom.³ ^{1:4} Being assembled together with them, he commanded them, "Don't depart from Jerusalem,⁴ but wait for the promise of the Father, which you heard from me. ^{1:5} For John indeed baptized in water, but you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit⁵ not many days from now."

1. *Theophilus*. Theophilus means "lover of God," and the metaphysical meaning is "divine love" or "spiritual unity."

2. *to do and to teach*. Jesus finished the training

of His disciples in the fundamental principles of expressing the Christ, but His work of expressing those principles was only begun. We are to carry on this work to completion.

3. *about God's Kingdom*. Jesus began to make manifest the kingdom of God or realm of spiritual truth *here and now*. This kingdom is a kingdom of spiritual consciousness.

4. *Don't depart from Jerusalem*. Jerusalem represents peace, without which the Holy Spirit finds no lodgment in our mind or heart. We must first be established in the consciousness of peace.

5. *baptized in the Holy Spirit*. Holy Spirit baptism is an absolute prerequisite for expression of the Christ. John's baptism is a symbol of self-denial or a washing away of wrong habits of thinking and living. The Holy Spirit baptism is a symbol of the burning up of all such dross in the fire of a living zeal for Truth, and an opening of the mind to the light of new and living ideas. The second baptism pours a flood of life-giving thoughts into the mind, so that the entire life undergoes a transformation and a reconstruction.

The Last Words of Jesus

^{1:6} Therefore, when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, are you now restoring the kingdom to Israel?"^①

^{1:7} He said to them, "It isn't for you to know times or seasons which the Father has set within his own authority.^① But you will receive power^② when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. You will be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth."^③

1. *are you now restoring the kingdom to Israel?* Jesus had already restored the kingdom to Israel, the kingdom of spiritual consciousness, of which men have allowed themselves to become unaware. His work was complete. Jesus adapted the teaching

to the needs of the age to which He gave it. After the Resurrection He gave the apostles further instructions, and each successive age has interpreted His teaching to fit its peculiar needs. While true in an absolute sense, the teaching of Jesus Christ is also adaptable to changing worldly conditions.

2. *you will receive power.* Metaphysical Christians proclaim the faith of Jesus rather than the faith about Jesus. If Christianity were about the worship of the person of Jesus there would be no need for empowerment of his disciples.

3. *to the uttermost parts of the earth.* The empowerment of disciples leads to world harmony which is achieved first by claiming it as already here, realizing that it is one of the eternal realities, and next by working faithfully to bring it into manifestation.

The Ascension of Jesus

^{1:9} When he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up,^① and a cloud received him out of their sight.^②^{1:10} While they were looking steadfastly into the sky as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white clothing,^① who also said, "You men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who was received up from you into the sky will come back in the same way as you saw him going into the sky."^③

1. *he was taken up (ascended).* See Luke 24:51. We who have entered into the Jesus Christ discipline are daily mentally going through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of the "Person in Christ." This new person is born of a Divine Idea through the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, and this Idea is that we are each a spiritual being. Therefore the Ascension is the final step in attaining complete union with Divine Mind. Through the realization of His oneness with Divine Mind Jesus completely spiritualized His Physical body.

2. *and a cloud received him out of their sight.* The Lord does not enter directly into our material activities. Spirit imparts to our consciousness the Word, "When he had said these things." "As they were looking" represents that there was an intelligent perception of Truth, followed by a withdrawal, "he was taken up"; then a seeming obscurity and a darkening of the consciousness, "and a cloud received him out of their sight." This all describes in symbols the impartation by the Lord of His power and His Word, which we take and use in the manifested world.

3. *will come back in the same way as you saw him going into the sky.* After a great spiritual illumination we find our minds and hearts reaching out for heavenly things until we almost forget our practical life. We continue to look steadfastly into heaven "until the two men in white apparel" (consciousness of Spirit within and without) call our attention to the fact that this New Man in Christ has not left us but will return in the same manner that he went, that is, in consciousness.

Harmony among the Disciples

^{1:12} Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain called Olivet,^① which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.^①^{1:13} When they had come in, they went up into the upper room,^② where they were staying; that is Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the

son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.^①^{1:14} All these with one accord^③ continued steadfastly in prayer and supplication, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

^{1:15} In these days, Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (and the number of names was about one hundred twenty), and said, ^{1:16} "Brothers, it was necessary that this Scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was guide to those who took Jesus. ^{1:17} For he was numbered with us, and received his portion in this ministry. ^{1:18} Now this man obtained a field with the reward for his wickedness, and falling headlong, his body burst open, and all his intestines gushed out. ^{1:19} It became known to everyone who lived in Jerusalem that in their language that field was called 'Akeldama,' that is, 'The field of blood.' ^{1:20} For it is written in the book of Psalms,

'Let his habitation be made desolate.
Let no one dwell therein;'[1]

and,

'Let another take his office.'[2]


^{1:21} "Of the men therefore who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ^{1:22} beginning from the baptism of John, to the day that he was received up from us, of these one must become a witness with us of his resurrection."

^{1:23} They put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. ^{1:24} They prayed, and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two you have chosen ^{1:25} to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell away, that he might go to his own place." ^{1:26} They drew lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

1. *Olivet.* Mount of Olives; height yielding illuminating oil; high luminous principle; shining mount; exalted enlightenment. A mountain, or ridge of hills, near Jerusalem, to the east of the city. Jesus often went to the Mount of Olives. A mountain always signifies an exalted state of mind, a high place in consciousness, while olives and olive trees signify the Spirit of love (the Mount of Olives was so named because of the many olive trees that grew on it), and illumination bespeaks light, understanding. Olive oil is symbolical of the Holy Spirit; also of peace and love. (MBD/Olivet).

2. *up into the upper room.* That high state of mind we assume in thinking about spiritual things. It may be attained through prayer, or going into the silence with true words, or in spiritual meditation.

3. *All these with one accord.* Where do we do our first missionary work? We begin in ourself, and as we patiently and persistently carry the message of Truth into every department of our being, including our mind, body, and affairs, we experience conversion in the fullest sense.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[1] v1:20. Psalm 69:25

[2] v1:20. Psalm 109:8

ACTS 2

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

^{2:1} Now when the day of Pentecost^① had come, they were all with one accord in one place.^② ^{2:2} Suddenly there came from the sky a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house^③ where they were sitting. ^{2:3} Tongues like fire appeared

and were distributed to them, and one sat on each of them.^④ ^{2:4} They were all filled with the Holy Spirit,^⑤ and began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak.

^{2:5} Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men,⁶ from every nation under the sky. ^{2:6} When this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because everyone heard them speaking in his own language. ^{2:7} They were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Behold, aren't all these who speak Galileans?" ^{2:8} How do we hear, everyone in our own native language? ^{2:9} Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, ^{2:10} Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the parts of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ^{2:11} Cretans and Arabians: we hear them speaking in our languages the mighty works of God!" ^{2:12} They were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, "What does this mean?" ^{2:13} Others, mocking, said, "They are filled with new wine."

1. *Pentecost.* Metaphysically, an unfoldment of the spiritual mind when the ideas that we have meditated upon and accepted as true, spring forth into consciousness, becoming living realities in our lives, instead of mere mental concepts. In this awakening we get the fruits of the ideas that we have planted in our minds; we have escaped from

the darkness (Egypt), and have entered into light (Promised Land).

2. *they were all with one accord in one place.* A conjunction between the thinking mind, or what we term normal consciousness, and the superconscious or spiritual mind. When this connection is made there is a descent into the body of spiritual energies that produce a great and unusual commotion.

3. *a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house.* An inrush of spiritual energy from the Spirit, which will fill the whole body.

4. *Tongues like fire ... sat on each of them.* When we are assembled in a high state of spiritual illumination, we mentally touch omnipresent Intelligence to the degree that whatever is spoken is instantly transmitted to each faculty.

5. *filled with the Holy Spirit.* To be quickened by the Holy Spirit is to "have a conscience void of offense toward God and men always." This is not a negative state, for it is one that is reached through unflagging zeal.

6. *devout men.* There dwell within us many "devout men," or subjective thoughts, of which we are totally unconscious until this Holy Spirit descends into our minds and we see good in the depths of our being that we never saw before. Then our Word of instruction and enlightenment goes into these darkened corners of our realm, and we preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the people or thoughts that are there congregated, and they "all hear in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

The First Recorded Christian Sermon

^{2:14} But Peter, standing up¹ with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spoke out to them, "You men of Judea, and all you who dwell at Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to my words. ^{2:15} For these aren't drunken, as you suppose, seeing it is only the third hour of the day[3]. ^{2:16} But this is what has been spoken through the prophet Joel:

^{2:17} 'It will be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.

Your sons and your daughters will prophesy.

Your young men will see visions.

Your old men will dream dreams.

^{2:18} Yes, and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days, I will pour out my Spirit, and they will prophesy.

^{2:19} I will show wonders in the sky above, and signs on the earth beneath;

blood, and fire, and billows of smoke.

^{2:20} The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes.

^{2:21} It will be, that whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.[4]

^{2:22} "Men of Israel, hear these words! Jesus of Nazareth, a man² approved by God to you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as you yourselves know, ^{2:23} him, being delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by the hand of lawless men, crucified and killed; ^{2:24} whom God raised up, ³ having freed him from the agony of death, because it was not possible that he should be held by it. ^{2:25} For David says concerning him,

'I saw the Lord always before my face, For he is on my right hand, that I

should not be moved.
^{2:26} Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced.
 Moreover my flesh also will dwell in hope;
^{2:27} because you will not leave my soul in Hades[5],
 neither will you allow your Holy One to see decay.
^{2:28} You made known to me the ways of life.
 You will make me full of gladness with your presence.[6]

^{2:29} "Brothers, I may tell you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.
^{2:30} Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ^{2:31} he foreseeing this spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was his soul left in Hades[7], nor did his flesh see decay. ^{2:32} This Jesus God raised up, to which we all are witnesses. ^{2:33} Being therefore exalted by the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, ^{2:34} which you now see and hear. For David didn't ascend into the heavens, but he says himself,

"The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit by my right hand,
^{2:35} until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."[8]

^{2:36} "Let all the house of Israel therefore know certainly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

1. *Peter, standing up.* Peter no longer denies the Master, but in a strong, forceful, straightforward manner makes clear to "whosoever will" the Jesus Christ way of redemption. Peter, typifying faith and spiritual understanding, is the sure foundation (the rock) upon which the Christ Church is based.
2. *Jesus of Nazareth, a man.* Jesus represents God's idea of man in expression. Christ is that idea in the absolute. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man" became the Lord Christ as attested by the Resurrection.
3. *whom God raised up.* Jesus kept the law of the indwelling God, the law of life, so completely that death could not overcome Him. By identifying Himself always with divine being He raised His consciousness to the divine. Thus God (life) raised Him up.
4. *Being therefore exalted...* Jesus became Lord through mastering the law of Being and Christ through bringing into manifestation the principle by which he identified Himself with perfect man. *he has poured out this.* God's idea of man in expression becomes the Christ through the directive power of the Spirit or hand of God actively functioning within man.

The First Converts

^{2:37} Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

^{2:38} Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ^{2:39} For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all who are far off, even as many as the Lord our God will call to himself." ^{2:40} With many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation!"

^{2:41} Then those who gladly received his

word were baptized. There were added that day about three thousand souls. ^{2:42} They continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and prayer. ²


1. *Repent, baptized, receive the Holy Spirit.* To repent is to change the mind; to give up error for Truth. Baptism washes away the old state of thought and dissolves all negative conditions, that we may be ready to receive the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. *the breaking of bread, and prayer.* Stirring the inner substance into action in the consciousness, and concentrating the mind upon it as the real possession.

Life among the Believers

^{2:43} Fear came on every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ^{2:44} All who believed were together, and had all things in common. ^{2:45} They sold their possessions and goods, and distributed them to all, according as anyone had need. ^{2:46} Day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, ^{2:47} praising God, and having favor with all the people. The Lord added to the assembly ² day by day those who were being saved.

1. *had all things in common.* It is possible for people to live in a community, and have all things in common if they "believe" that all things belong to God, and that men are merely his stewards, working for the common good of all. The whole world must eventually become an organized cooperation, based upon the understanding and application of the laws stated by Jesus Christ.

2. *assembly (church).* Metaphysically, the church is a harmonious aggregation of spiritual ideas in the mind of the individual. Less metaphysically, the Church of Christ is the great brotherhood which Jesus Christ established in Spirit. It is not made of creeds and forms, nor is it contained in walls of wood and stone. Its temple is the heart of man.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[3] v2:15. about 9:00 AM

[4] v2:21. Joel 2:28-32

[5] v2:27. or, Hell

[6] v2:28. Psalm 16:8-11

[7] v2:31. or, Hell

[8] v2:35. Psalm 110:1

ACTS 3

Peter Heals a Lame Beggar

^{3:1} Peter and John ¹ were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour^[9]. ^{3:2} A certain man who was lame from his mother's womb ² was being carried, whom they laid daily at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful, ³ to ask gifts for the needy of those who entered into the temple. ^{3:3} Seeing Peter and John ⁴ about to go into the temple, he asked to receive gifts for the needy. ^{3:4} Peter, fastening his eyes on him, with John, said, "Look at us." ^{3:5} He listened to them, expecting to receive something from them. ^{3:6} But Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none, but what I have, that I give you. In the

name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!" ^{3:7} He took him by the right hand, and raised him up. Immediately his feet and his ankle bones received strength. ^{3:8} Leaping up, he stood, and began to walk. He entered with them into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God. ⁵ ^{3:9} All the people saw him walking and praising God. ^{3:10} They recognized him, that it was he who used to sit begging for gifts for the needy at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. They were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

1. *Peter and John.* Peter (Faith) and John (Love)

went "up into the temple at the hour of prayer." Their minds were lifted up by prayer.

2. *lame from his mother's womb.* Metaphysically, one who has not affirmed his spiritual strength (the sustaining influence of spiritual ideas that permeate his being) through the living Christ. His understanding needs to be lifted up and adjusted. The feet represent a phase of the understanding.

3. *the door of the temple which is called Beautiful.* Metaphysically, spiritual understanding. The door opens when we pray and praise.

4. *Seeing Peter and John.* There must be faith on the part of the one who is to be healed that the power of the Christ to restore him lies in himself, and that he can call it forth. Faith (Peter) and love (John) are the avenues of health.

5. *leaping, and praising God.* He immediately praised God and practiced walking. He was not afraid to trust himself to his feet but accepted the gift of health and strength.

Peter Speaks in Solomon's Portico

^{3:11} As the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch that is called Solomon's, ^{3:12} greatly wondering. When Peter saw it, he responded to the people, "You men of Israel, why do you marvel at this man? Why do you fasten your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him walk?" ^{3:13} The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up, and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. ^{3:14} But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ^{3:15} and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, to which we are witnesses. ^{3:16} By faith in his name, his name has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which is through him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

^{3:17} "Now, brothers[10], I know that you did this in ignorance, as did also your rulers.


^{3:18} But the things which God announced by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled.

^{3:19} "Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, so that there may come times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, ^{3:20} and that he may send Christ Jesus, who was ordained for you before, ^{3:21} whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, ²

which God spoke long ago by the mouth of his holy prophets. ^{3:22} For Moses indeed said to the fathers, 'The Lord God will raise up a prophet for you from among your brothers, like me. You shall listen to him in all things whatever he says to you. ^{3:23} It will be, that every soul that will not listen to that prophet will be utterly destroyed from among the people.' ^{3:24} Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those who followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days. ^{3:25} You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'In your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.' ^{3:26} God, having raised up his servant, Jesus, sent him to you first, to bless you, in turning away everyone of you from your wickedness."

1. *Solomon.* Metaphysically, the state of mind that is established in consciousness when the soul is unified with wisdom and love (MBD/solomon).

2. *until the times of restoration of all things.* The restoration of all things is the work of the "church of Christ." It is of the utmost importance, then, that each of us diligently seek truth, obey it, and be able to do our work as a member of the "body." The work of restoration begins in us; we aspire to realize consciously our unity with God. Gradually our thoughts begin to shape ourselves aright and as we acquire the true perspective, we become conscious of others who are working along the same way, having the same aspirations. We perceive our oneness with others who have consecrated themselves unto the Lord, and our sense of unity becomes deepened. Unity Correspondence School Lesson 4, *Body of Christ.*

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[9] v3:1. 3:00 PM

[10] v3:17. The word for "brothers" here may be also correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[11] v3:23. Deuteronomy 18:15,18-19

[12] v3:25. Genesis 22:18; 26:4

ACTS 4

Peter and John Defend Their Authority

^{4:1} As they spoke to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came to them, ^{4:2} being upset because they taught the people and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ^{4:3} They laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was now evening. ^{4:4} But many of those who heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

^{4:5} It happened in the morning, that their rulers, elders, and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem. ^{4:6} Annas the high priest was there, with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and as many as were relatives of the high priest. ^{4:7} When they had stood them in the middle of them, they inquired, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" ²

^{4:8} Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "You rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, ^{4:9} if we are examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, ^{4:10} be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, ³ whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, in him does this man stand here before you whole. ^{4:11} He is 'the stone which was regarded as worthless by you, the builders, which has become the head of the corner.' ^{4:12} There is salvation in none other, for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, by which we must be saved!"

^{4:13} Now when they saw the boldness of

Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled. They recognized that they had been with Jesus. ^{4:14} Seeing the man who was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. ^{4:15} But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, ^{4:16} saying, "What shall we do to these men?" ⁵ Because indeed a notable miracle has been done through them, as can be plainly seen by all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we can't deny it. ^{4:17} But so that this spreads no further among the people, let's threaten them, that from now on they don't speak to anyone in this name." ^{4:18} They called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

^{4:19} But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves, ^{4:20} for we can't help telling the things which we saw and heard."

^{4:21} When they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people; for everyone glorified God for that which was done. ^{4:22} For the man on whom this miracle of healing was performed was more than forty years old.

1. *proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.* The resurrection of spiritual truth from the materialism of the present time. We need to resurrect our faculties as individuals and at the same time to undertake the resurrection of the same spiritual faculties in society.

2. *By what power, or in what name, have you*

done this? Everyone who believes in the power of the indwelling Christ to heal disease and establish harmony in human beings is authorized to speak the word. The metaphysician believes that since Jesus Christ of Nazareth demonstrated the power of God and healed many who were weak in understanding, we can do the same.

3. *in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.* We identify ourself in the inner realm by means of the I AM, and among human beings by our name. Through the right use of the I AM we build up character, and when others hear our name they identify it with the character they have given it. Thus a name has power to characterize the one who bears it.

4. *the head of the corner (cornerstone).* The spiritual I AM, which many have case aside, is the very cornerstone of our character. The Christ in Jesus was the cornerstone of his character.

5. *What shall we do to these men?* When a new relation between God and humanity is revealed, and the priest or minister who has ruled hitherto as mediator between humanity and the far away Deity is found to be superfluity, there is an uproar in consciousness. Metaphysically, the conventional thoughts lay hands on the illuminated ones and cast them into prison, or darkness and bondage. It is well to be informed about these movements of the mind, for may may thereby be saved much perplexity.

Believers Pray With Boldness

^{4:23} Being let go, they came to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

^{4:24} When they heard it, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, "O Lord, you are God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them; ^{4:25} who by the mouth of your servant, David, said,

"Why do the nations rage,
and the peoples plot a vain thing?

^{4:26} The kings of the earth take a stand,
and the rulers take council together,
against the Lord, and against his
Christ[14].[15]

^{4:27} "For truly, in this city against your holy servant, Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles

and the people of Israel, were gathered together ^{4:28} to do whatever your hand and your council foreordained to happen. ^{4:29} Now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, ^{4:30} while you stretch out your hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of your holy Servant Jesus." ^{4:31} When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were gathered together. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. ①

1. *they spoke the word of God with boldness.* It is from God through Jesus Christ that all spiritual healing comes. No one has yet done the "greater works" that Jesus foretold, but the fact that he foresaw their accomplishment encourages our faith in the possibility of these surpassing deeds.

A Community of Grace Emerges


^{4:32} The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul. Not one of them claimed that anything of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. ^{4:33} With great power, the apostles gave their testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Great grace was on them all. ① ^{4:34} For neither was there among them any who lacked, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ^{4:35} and laid them at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made to each, according as anyone had need. ^{4:36} Jesus, who by the apostles was surnamed

Barnabas^② (which is, being interpreted, Son of Encouragement), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, ^{4:37} having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

1. *Great grace was on them all.* The progress of such a community today would depend on two things: the unselfishness of its members, and confidence that the directive head of the community was guided by Jesus Christ. The apostles vigorously proclaimed the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was the head of all their work.

2. *Barnabas.* Metaphysically, Barnabas is the imagination brought into expression through association

with the word (Paul) (MBD/barnabas).

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[13] v4:11. Psalm 118:22

[14] v4:26. Christ (Greek) and Messiah (Hebrew) both mean Anointed One.

[15] v4:26. Psalm 2:1-2

ACTS 5

The Self-Deception of Ananias and Sapphira

^{5:1} But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira, his wife, sold a possession, ^{5:2} and kept back ¹ part of the price, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. ^{5:3} But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? ^{5:4} While you kept it, didn't it remain your own? After it was sold, wasn't it in your power? How is it that you have conceived this thing in your heart? You haven't lied to men, but to God." ^{5:5} Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and died. Great fear came on all who heard these things. ^{5:6} The young men arose and wrapped him up, and they carried him out and buried him. ^{5:7}

About three hours later, his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in. ^{5:8} Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." She said, "Yes, for so much." ^{5:9} But Peter asked her, "How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at

the door, and they will carry you out." ^{5:10} She fell down immediately at his feet, and died. The young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her by her husband. ^{5:11} Great fear came on the whole assembly, ² and on all who heard these things.

1. *kept back.* Self-deception is the chief theme of today's lesson. The deceptive belief (Ananias) that we can attain all the blessings of Spirit and at the same time retain our hold upon worldly ways and things, is a very subtle mortal error which causes the would-be disciple much misery. Nothing ever can be hidden from Spirit. It is always best to uncover the whole inner consciousness to Spirit and to pray earnestly to be thoroughly cleansed from every taint of deception and error.

2. *Great fear came on the whole assembly.* In a literal sense, the incident of Ananias and Sapphira is harsh and unchristian. The Spirit of truth leads sinners into all truth, not by frightening them to death, but by guiding them into the way of righteousness and peace. In a metaphysical sense this lesson is valuable, for it shows that a clean choice must be made between the life of deception and the Christ life of straightforwardness, through faith in the Spirit of truth within the heart.

The Apostles Heal Many

^{5:12} By the hands of the apostles ¹ many signs and wonders were done among the people. They were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. ^{5:13} None of the rest dared

to join them, however the people honored them. ^{5:14} More believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women. ^{5:15} They even carried out the sick into the

streets, and laid them on cots and mattresses, so that as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some of them. ^{5:16} Multitudes also came together from the cities around Jerusalem, bringing sick people, and those who were tormented by unclean spirits: and they were all healed. ²

1. *apostles*. Those sent forth; messengers; ambassadors; active spiritual thoughts. Jesus conferred this title on the Twelve whom He sent forth to teach and to heal (RW/apostles).

2. *and they were all healed*. Metaphysically, the apostles come together at Solomon's porch (place of the soul unified with wisdom and love) for Peter (Faith) to heal the the multitudes (many thoughts).

The Freeing Power Of Truth

^{5:17} But the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy, ^{5:18} and laid hands on the apostles, ¹ and put them in public custody.

^{5:19} But an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors by night, and brought them out, and said, ^{5:20} "Go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."

^{5:21} When they heard this, they entered into the temple about daybreak, and taught. But the high priest came, and those who were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. ^{5:22} But the officers who came didn't find them in the prison. They returned and reported, ^{5:23} "We found the prison shut and locked, and the guards standing before the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside!"

^{5:24} Now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these words, they were very perplexed about them and what might become of this.

^{5:25} One came and told them, "Behold, the men whom you put in prison are in the temple, standing and teaching the people."

^{5:26} Then the captain went with the officers, and brought them without violence, for they were afraid that the people might stone them.

^{5:27} When they had brought them, they set them before the council. The high priest questioned them, ^{5:28} saying, "Didn't we strictly command you not to teach in this name? Behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood on us."

^{5:29} But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men." ² ^{5:30} The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed, hanging him on a tree. ^{5:31} God exalted him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. ^{5:32} We are His witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

^{5:33} But they, when they heard this, were cut to the heart, and determined to kill them. ^{5:34} But one stood up in the council, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, ³ a teacher of the law, honored by all the people, and commanded to put the apostles out for a little while. ^{5:35} He said to them, "You men of Israel, be careful concerning these men, what you are about to do. ^{5:36} For before these days Theudas rose up, making himself out to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed, and came to nothing. ^{5:37} After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the enrollment, and drew away some people after him. He also perished, and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered abroad. ^{5:38} Now I tell you, withdraw from these men, and leave them alone. For if this counsel or this work is of men, it will be overthrown. ^{5:39} But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow it, and you would be found even to be fighting against God!"


^{5:40} They agreed with him. Summoning the apostles, they beat them and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ^{5:41} They therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for Jesus' name.

^{5:42} Every day, in the temple and at home, they never stopped teaching and preaching Jesus, the Christ.

1. *the Sadducees ... laid hands on the apostles.* Many conflicts take place in the mind between the old and the new lines of thought. The new encroaches upon the old, and occupies its field as teacher and leader. There is reaction again and again, and we sometimes think it would be best to crush out entirely these revolutionary truths which are making such powerful headway in the consciousness. Some people are too cautious to become real Christians. They dare not let go the teachings of their forefathers for fear they may be led into some heresy, and lose their chance of getting into heaven.

2. *Peter and the apostles answered We must obey God rather than men.* In all religious matters we should exercise faith and love and judgment. These faculties give balance and poise to the developing soul. In the life of Jesus they were represented by Peter (faith), John (love), and James (judgment). These three apostles were present with Jesus in the performance of all his outstanding works.

3. *one stood up in the council, a Pharisee named Gamaliel.* Gamaliel, the "doctor of the law" who advocates that Truth be tested by its fruits, was a leader among the most conservative Pharisees; he recommended common sense and reason. Prejudice and bigotry often blind us to real merit. There is in every one that spirit of fairness which will give every idea a chance to prove itself. Gamaliel's words are the conclusion of every well-balanced mind, and we should listen to every doctrine with this good judgment to the front. (MBD/gamaliel)

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

ACTS 6

New Converts Claim Injustice

^{6:1} Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, a complaint arose from the Hellenists^[16]^① against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily service. ^{6:2} The twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not appropriate for us to forsake the word of God and serve tables."^②

^{6:3} Therefore select from among you, brothers, seven men of good report, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. ^{6:4} But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word."

^{6:5} These words pleased the whole multitude. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and

Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch; ^{6:6} whom they set before the apostles. When they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. ^{6:7} The word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly. A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

1. *a complaint arose from the Hellenists.* The Hellenists represent new converts to the faith. Until selfishness is overcome, a sense of injustice arises in mind at every indication that the purely spiritual interests of life are receiving more attention and more sustaining power than the other worth-while interests of the individual. New converts are always careful to insure their own rights.

2. *It is not appropriate for us to forsake the word of God and serve tables.* We owe loyalty to the Ideal of perfection, and should harmonize all our powers and faculties to that end.

Arguing with Entrenched Beliefs

^{6:8} Stephen,^① full of faith and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. ^{6:9} But some of those who were

of the synagogue called "The Libertines," and of the Cyrenians, of the Alexandrians,^② and of those of Cilicia and Asia arose,


disputing with Stephen. ^{6:10} They weren't able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke. ^{6:11} Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." ^{6:12} They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, ³ and came against him and seized him, and brought him in to the council, ^{6:13} and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never stops speaking blasphemous words ⁴ against this holy place and the law." ^{6:14} For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." ^{6:15} All who sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face like it was the face of an angel.

1. *Stephen*. Means "crowned"; in this lesson the symbolical meaning of the name is that reason has been crowned or illumined with spiritual truth.

2. *Libertines, and the Cyrenians, and the Alexandrians*. Represent fixed states of thought in the realm of sense, which object to any new inspiration that may try to establish itself in consciousness.

3. *The elders, and the scribes*. The elders symbolize leading Pharisaical religious thoughts which are classed as having authority; the scribes symbolize that in our consciousness which records the standard beliefs of our inherited religious tendencies.

4. *blasphemous words*. The cry of "blasphemy" is always made by those who are put to rout by the Truth—it is their last resort. It is never wise to insist upon our own opinion or conviction when arguing with those of opposite beliefs. It antagonizes others instead of converting them.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Thomas Scheinler and Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[16] v6:1. The Hellenists used Greek language and culture, even though they were also of Hebrew descent.

ACTS 7

Stephen's Speech to the Council

^{7:1} The high priest said, "Are these things so?"

^{7:2} He said, "Brothers and fathers, listen. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, ¹ when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, ^{7:3} and said to him, 'Get out of your land, and from your relatives, and come into a land which I will show you.' [17] ^{7:4} Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans, and lived in Haran. From there, when his father was dead, God moved him into this land, where you are now living. ^{7:5} He gave him no inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on. He promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when he still had no child. ^{7:6} God spoke in this way: that his seed would live as aliens in a strange land, and that they would be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred

years. ^{7:7} 'I will judge the nation to which they will be in bondage,' said God, 'and after that will they come out, and serve me in this place.' [18] ^{7:8} He gave him the covenant of circumcision. So Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day. Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs.

^{7:9} "The patriarchs, moved with jealousy against Joseph, sold him into Egypt. God was with him, ^{7:10} and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, ⁴ king of Egypt. He made him governor over Egypt and all his house. ^{7:11} Now a famine came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction. Our fathers found no food. ^{7:12} But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers the first

time. ^{7:13} On the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's race was revealed to Pharaoh. ^{7:14} Joseph sent, and summoned Jacob, his father, and all his relatives, seventy-five souls. ^{7:15} Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, himself and our fathers, ^{7:16} and they were brought back to Shechem, and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a price in silver from the children of Hamor of Shechem.

^{7:17} "But as the time of the promise came close which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, ^{7:18} until there arose a different king, who didn't know Joseph. ^{7:19} The same took advantage of our race, and mistreated our fathers, and forced them to throw out their babies, so that they wouldn't stay alive. ^{7:20} At that time Moses was born, and was exceedingly handsome. He was nourished three months in his father's house. ^{7:21} When he was thrown out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and reared him as her own son. ^{7:22} Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was mighty in his words and works. ^{7:23} But when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers[19], the children of Israel. ^{7:24} Seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him who was oppressed, striking the Egyptian. ^{7:25} He supposed that his brothers understood that God, by his hand, was giving them deliverance; but they didn't understand.

^{7:26} "The day following, he appeared to them as they fought, and urged them to be at peace again, saying, 'Sirs, you are brothers. Why do you wrong one another?' ^{7:27} But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? ^{7:28} Do you want to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?'[20] ^{7:29} Moses fled at this saying, and became a stranger in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

^{7:30} "When forty years were fulfilled, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. ^{7:31} When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight. As he came close to see, a voice of the Lord came to him, ^{7:32} 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of

Jacob.'[21] Moses trembled, and dared not look. ^{7:33} The Lord said to him, 'Take your sandals off of your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. ^{7:34} I have surely seen the affliction of my people that is in Egypt, and have heard their groaning. I have come down to deliver them. Now come, I will send you into Egypt.'[22]

^{7:35} "This Moses, whom they refused, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?'-- God has sent him as both a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. ^{7:36} This man led them out, having worked wonders and signs in Egypt, in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years. ^{7:37} This is that Moses, who said to the children of Israel, 'The Lord our God will raise up a prophet for you from among your brothers, like me.'[23][24] ^{7:38} This is he who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel that spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, who received living oracles to give to us, ^{7:39} to whom our fathers wouldn't be obedient, but rejected him, and turned back in their hearts to Egypt, ^{7:40} saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods that will go before us, for as for this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt, we don't know what has become of him.'[25] ^{7:41} They made a calf in those days, and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hands. ^{7:42} But God turned, and gave them up to serve the army of the sky,[26] as it is written in the book of the prophets,

'Did you offer to me slain animals and sacrifices
forty years in the wilderness, O house
of Israel?

^{7:43} You took up the tent of Moloch,
the star of your god Rephan,
the figures which you made to worship.
I will carry you away[27] beyond
Babylon.'

^{7:44} "Our fathers had the tent of the testimony in the wilderness, even as he who spoke to Moses commanded him to make it according to the pattern that he had seen; ^{7:45} which also our fathers, in their turn, brought in with Joshua when they entered into the possession of the nations, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, to the days of David, ^{7:46} who found

favor in the sight of God, and asked to find a habitation for the God of Jacob. ^{7:47} But Solomon built him a house. ^{7:48} However, the Most High doesn't dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says,

^{7:49} 'heaven is my throne,
and the earth a footstool for my feet.
What kind of house will you build me?'
says the Lord;
'or what is the place of my rest?'
^{7:50} Didn't my hand make all these
things?'[28]

^{7:51} "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit! As your fathers did, so you do. ^{7:52} Which of the prophets didn't your fathers persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, of whom you have now become betrayers and murderers. ^{7:53} You received the law as it was ordained by angels, and didn't keep it!"

1. *Abraham.* The power of the mind to reproduce its ideas in unlimited expression. This ability of the

mind to make substance out of ideas is called faith. (MBD/Abraham)

2. *come into a land which I will show you.* The new conception of substance that the spiritually quickened man discerns when he is stirred to religious activity. This land is found by everyone who obeys his impulse to rise higher in consciousness. It is our assurance of the reality of the things of Spirit.

3. *God moved him into this land, where you are now living.* For his unswerving faith in God. Abram had a vision of what a faith consistently held makes possible, and discerned the blessings that were in store for him if he would throw the full weight of his faith on Jehovah.

4. *God was with him ... and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh.* We may take hold of events with the aid of faith and shape their course more nearly to our liking. More important still, we may remake ourselves with the aid of divine love and power.

5. *Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and reared him as her own son.* The ark in which Moses was placed was symbolic of the ark of love and trust. Love and trust always find a way out of difficulty. Pharaoh's daughter was an instrument of God. Through her, Moses (representing the progressive law of evolution working in the soul) was "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works." God is the one and only power in the universe.

The Stoning of Stephen

^{7:54} Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. ^{7:55} But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, ^{7:56} and said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

^{7:57} But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed at him with one accord. ^{7:58} They threw him out of the city, and stoned him. ❶ The witnesses placed their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ^{7:59} They stoned Stephen as

he called out, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" ^{7:60} He kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, don't hold this sin against them!" When he had said this, he fell asleep.

1. *They threw him out of the city, and stoned him.* The manner of presenting Truth rests with each individual. Those who want to continue as ministers of Truth and make a lasting impression on their hearers should be wise and should not stir up antagonism in the friends they are seeking to convert. The old method of employing accusations, condemnations, and common scoldings is not effective in getting the attention of others. Such methods have always ended in tragedies, of which the stoning of Stephen is an outstanding example.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Tom Scheinler and Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[17] v7:3. Genesis 12:1

[18] v7:7. Genesis 15:13-14

[19] v7:23. The word for "brothers" here and where the context allows may be also correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[20] v7:28. Exodus 2:14

[21] v7:32. Exodus 3:6

[22] v7:34. Exodus 3:5,7-8,10

[23] v7:37. TR adds "You shall listen to him."

[24] v7:37. Deuteronomy 18:15

[25] v7:40. Exodus 32:1

[26] v7:42. This idiom could also be translated "host of heaven," or "angelic beings," or "heavenly bodies."

[27] v7:43. Amos 5:25-27

[28] v7:50. Isaiah 66:1-2

ACTS 8

Saul Ravages the Assembly

^{8:1} Saul was consenting to his death. A great persecution arose against the assembly which was in Jerusalem in that day. They were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except for the apostles. ^{8:2} Devout men buried Stephen, and lamented greatly over him. ^{8:3} But Saul ravaged the assembly, ¹ entering into every house, and dragged both men and women off to prison.

1. *Saul ravaged the assembly.* Saul represents the action of the will in attaining that which man desires. Stephen (crowned) represents the illumined intellect under the influence of the Holy Spirit but not yet fully impregnated with that Spirit. The will, which leads man to cling to the formalism of his inherited faith, resists the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and man is unresponsive to the call of the higher influence.

Philip Preaches in Samaria

^{8:4} Therefore those who were scattered abroad went around preaching the word. ^{8:5} Philip ¹ went down to the city of Samaria, ² and proclaimed to them the Christ. ^{8:6} The multitudes listened with one accord to the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard and saw the signs which he did. ^{8:7} For unclean spirits came out of many of those who had them. They came out, crying with a loud voice. Many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. ^{8:8} There was great joy in that city.

^{8:9} But there was a certain man, Simon ³ by name, who used to practice sorcery in the city, and amazed the people of Samaria, making himself out to be some great one,

^{8:10} to whom they all listened, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is that great power of God." ^{8:11} They listened to him, because for a long time he had amazed them with his sorceries. ^{8:12} But when they believed Philip preaching good news concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ^{8:13} Simon himself also believed. Being baptized, he continued with Philip. Seeing signs and great miracles occurring, he was amazed.

^{8:14} Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John ⁴ to them, ^{8:15} who, when they had come

down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit; ^{8:16} for as yet he had fallen on none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of Christ Jesus. ^{8:17} Then they laid their hands on them, ^{8:18} and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ^{8:19} saying, "Give me also this power, that whoever I lay my hands on may receive the Holy Spirit." ^{8:20} But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! ^{8:21} You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart isn't right before God. ^{8:22} Repent therefore of this, your wickedness, and ask God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ^{8:23} For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity."

^{8:24} Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that none of the things which you have spoken happen to me."

^{8:25} They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the Good News to many villages of the Samaritans.

1. *Philip.* Philip exercises his power through the spiritual Word, which is outwardly made manifest in speech. The scattering of the disciples throughout these two regions signifies that the spiritually illumined thoughts of man may permeate his intellectual perception and quicken him to a new appreciation of the value of praise.

2. *Went down to the city of Samaria.* The Samaritans were a race of people who were a mixture of Assyrian and Hebrew. They claimed to be the descendants of Abraham and taught the books of Moses, but they were not recognized by the Jews as followers of the Jewish religion. Metaphysically, Samaria represents a state of consciousness in which both Truth and error are mixed, with Truth predominating.

3. *Simon, the sorcerer.* The ambition of personality to handle the power of Spirit, without paying the price through faith and love.

4. *Peter and John.* Peter represents faith, and John, love. These powers of the mind open the way for the descent of the Holy Spirit into all mixed states of consciousness.

5. *They laid their hands on them.* A movement prayer, in which the executive power of Faith and Love does its work, directing the spiritual forces, and through which action this state of consciousness receives the blessing of blessings, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Metaphysically speaking, we lay on hands when we affirm the presence and power of Spirit in the flesh. Physically speaking, the hands represent execution or the direct contact of Spirit with body. The body is permeated by a material consciousness, and the materially minded require a sign or outer manifestation of the power of Spirit before they will receive it. Many Christian healers lay their hands on their patients, and some anoint them with oil.

Philip, the Ethiopian Eunuch and Stillness

^{8:26} But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise, and go toward the south ^{8:27} to the way that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. This is a desert."

^{8:27} He arose and went; and behold, there was a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, ^{8:28} queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship. He was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.

^{8:29} The Spirit said to Philip, "Go near, and join yourself to this chariot." ^{8:30}

^{8:30} Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

^{8:31} He said, "How can I, unless someone explains it to me?" He begged Philip to come up and sit with him. ^{8:32} Now the passage of the Scripture which he was reading was this,

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter.
As a lamb before his shearer is silent,
so he doesn't open his mouth.

^{8:33} In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away.
Who will declare His generation?
For his life is taken from the earth." [29]

^{8:34} The eunuch answered Philip, "Who is the prophet talking about? ^{8:35} About himself, or about someone else?"

^{8:35} Philip opened his mouth, and

beginning from this Scripture, preached to him Jesus. ^{8:36} As they went on the way, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Behold, here is water. What is keeping me from being baptized?"

^{8:37} [30] ^{8:38} He commanded the chariot to stand still, ⁵ and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

^{8:39} When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, and the eunuch didn't see him any more, for he went on his way rejoicing. ^{8:40} But Philip was found at Azotus. Passing through, he preached the Good News to all the cities, until he came to Caesarea.

1. *Go toward the south.* In Scriptural symbology, east means within; west, without; north, above; south, below. The Christ truth is a germinal idea upon which all bodily regeneration depends. The di-


vine idea of man's perfection, when held in mind first quickens the brain cells at the very crown of the head; from that point it descends into the body, doing its quickening and regenerating work as it goes, until the whole body is redeemed. Gaza means strength which has been depleted (desert).

2. *Ethiopia, Candace, the eunuch.* Ethiopia symbolizes the abdominal region of the body; Candace, the divine feminine; the eunuch, the masculine principle which has lost its spiritual life.

3. *Go ... and join yourself to this chariot.* The chariot represents the body.

4. *Who is the prophet talking about?* Isaiah was prophesying the coming of the spiritual man and pointing out some of the experiences through which he would pass in rejuvenating the body. That man's body consciousness may be lifted up, the spiritual ego, Christ, must descend to the level of the body consciousness and temporarily be subjected to humiliation, desertion, and apparent death.

5. *He commanded the chariot to stand still.* Spiritual processes are accomplished in the silence of the inner man. When one has attained the ability to be still, he is ready for the cleansing, quickening flood of spiritual life.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Thomas Scheinler and Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[29] v8:33. Isaiah 53:7,8

[30] v8:37. TR adds "Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' He answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'"

ACTS 9

The Conversion of Saul

^{9:1} But Saul, still breathing threats and slaughter ¹ against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, ^{9:2} and asked for letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ^{9:3} As he traveled, it happened that he got close to Damascus, ² and suddenly a light from the sky shone around him. ³ ^{9:4} He fell on the earth, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

^{9:5} He said, "Who are you, Lord?"

The Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. [31] ⁴ ^{9:6} But [32] rise up, and enter into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

^{9:7} The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the sound, but seeing no one. ^{9:8} Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened, he saw no one. They led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. ^{9:9} He was without sight for

three days, and neither ate nor drank.

^{9:10} Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

He said, "Behold, it's me, Lord."

^{9:11} The Lord said to him, "Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judah[33] for one named Saul, a man of Tarsus. For behold, he is praying,^{9:12} and in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight."

^{9:13} But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he did to your saints at Jerusalem.^{9:14} Here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name."

^{9:15} But the Lord said to him, "Go your way, for he is my chosen vessel to bear my name before the nations and kings, and the children of Israel.^{9:16} For I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake."

^{9:17} Ananias departed, and entered into the house. Laying his hands on him,⁹ he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me, that you may receive your sight,

and be filled with the Holy Spirit."^{9:18} Immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he received his sight. He arose and was baptized.^{9:19} He took food and was strengthened.

1. *Saul, still breathing threats and slaughter.* Saul represents the will and its dominance over the mind and heart of man. When it is man's will to destroy those who disagree with him and to uphold his convictions through strife, spiritual perception is impossible to man.
2. *He got close to Damascus.* Damascus ("activity"; "alertness" in respect to trade or possessions), refers to the capacity of the intellect to engender strife and warring thoughts and conditions.
3. *Suddenly a light from the sky shone around him.* Transformation of the unbridled will to spiritual understanding.
4. *I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.* "I am Jesus" represents God's idea of man in expression, a will that transcends every other.
5. *Ananias ... laying his hands on him.* Saul received the Pentecostal baptism the same as those disciples in the "upper room" in Jerusalem. It was so intense that he could not assimilate it and the Lord sent him a healer in Ananias, who laid hands on him and helped him to equalize the tremendous spiritual energy that had descended suddenly into soul and body. This experience is quite common in this day among Truth workers, and we often find it necessary to help one another get poise and mastery of the higher forces. The body is often slow in responding to the swift vibrations of light, and a dazed condition of mind follows a special spiritual baptism. One who has attained poise and mastery is most acceptable in such cases and helps to restore sight to blinded eyes.

Saul Preaches in Damascus

Saul stayed several days with the disciples who were at Damascus.^{9:20} Immediately in the synagogues he proclaimed the Christ,¹ that he is the Son of God.^{9:21} All who heard him were amazed, and said, "Isn't this he who in Jerusalem made havoc of those who called on this name? And he had come here intending to bring them bound before the chief priests!"

^{9:22} But Saul increased more in strength,

and confounded the Jews who lived at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.

1. *Immediately in the synagogues he proclaimed the Christ.* Conversion does not mean bestowal of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit follows the spiritual and moral change called conversion that a person undergoes when he comes in contact the Christ consciousness. This baptism was Saul's authorization of apostleship. By it he was empowered to do God's work.

Saul Finds Safety

^{9:23} When many days were fulfilled, the Jews conspired together to kill him,^{9:24} but

their plot became known to Saul. They watched the gates both day and night that

they might kill him,^{9:25} but his disciples took him by night,¹ and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

1. *But his disciples took him by night.* Nonresistance is the most effective method of obtaining

safety. The disciples of Saul took him by night and let him down through the wall in a basket, which represents withdrawal of the will from its combative attitude. Saul's escape to Jerusalem (peace) carries out the idea of spiritual harmony which should be the ideal of every Christian.

Saul in Jerusalem

^{9:26} When Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. ^{9:27} But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared to them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. ^{9:28} He was with them entering into^[34] Jerusalem, ^{9:29} preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. He spoke and disputed against the Hellenists,^[35]¹ but they were seeking to kill him. ^{9:30} When the brothers^[36] knew it, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him off to Tarsus.² ^{9:31} So the assemblies throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, and were built up. They

were multiplied, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

1. *He spoke and disputed against the Hellenists.* We see in Saul, or Paul, the religious zealot, with marked ability, energy, and spirituality, having the qualities necessary to success in teaching and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, yet lacking one thing necessary to its full-rounded exposition—love. Paul saw love as the greatest asset of a Christian, but a close study of his life shows that he did not use it to overcome his enemies.

2. *And sent him off to Tarsus.* Metaphysically, Tarsus is a group of thoughts in man's consciousness of an intellectual character and bordering on, becoming blended with, the more deeply inspirational phase of understanding that we recognize as being spiritual (MBD/Tarsus).

The Healing of Aeneas

^{9:32} It happened, as Peter went throughout all those parts, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda. ^{9:33} There he found a certain man named Aeneas,¹ who had been bedridden for eight years, because he was paralyzed. ^{9:34} Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed!" Immediately he arose. ^{9:35} All who lived at Lydda and in Sharon saw him, and they turned to the

Lord.

1. *Aeneas* That which is praiseworthy arises—full of thankfulness and gratitude, no longer bound by cross currents of criticism, faultfinding and weakness—and in the name of Jesus Christ proclaims life and health and freedom; all strife is turned into constructive, spiritual activity; all desert places in consciousness receive the redeeming power of the living Word (MBD/Aeneas).

Peter raises the I AM in Tabitha


^{9:36} Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha,¹ which when translated, means Dorcas.^[37] This woman was full of good works and acts of mercy which she did. ^{9:37} It happened in those days that she fell sick, and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber. ^{9:38} As Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent

two men^[38] to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. ^{9:39} Peter got up and went with them. When he had come, they brought him into the upper chamber. All the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. ^{9:40} Peter put them all out, and kneeled down and prayed. Turning to the body, he said,

"Tabitha, get up!"^{9:40} She opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up.^{9:41} He gave her his hand, and raised her up. Calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive.^{9:42} And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.^{9:43} It happened, that he stayed many days in Joppa with one Simon, a tanner.

1. *Tabitha*. Tabitha symbolizes a graceful, feminine force that has failed to appreciate that good works such as caring for the needy, ministering to the sick, and clothing the naked do not fulfill the law of love. This power is active in doing good in its limited consciousness, but it gradually fades away. One may use his substance and power in doing good according to worldly standards, yet starve the soul.

2. *Tabitha, get up!* The I AM in Tabitha responded to his command. Her body responded to the direction of the I AM in her.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Thomas Scheinler and Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[31] v9:5. TR adds "It's hard for you to kick against the goads."

[32] v9:6. TR omits "But"

[33] v9:11. or, Judas

[34] v9:28. TR and NU add "and going out"

[35] v9:29. The Hellenists were Hebrews who used Greek language and culture.

[36] v9:30. The word for "brothers" here and where the context allows may also be correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[37] v9:36. "Dorcas" is Greek for "Gazelle."

[38] v9:38. Reading from NU, TR; MT omits "two men"

ACTS 10

Peter and Cornelius

^{10:1} Now there was a certain man in Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment,^{10:2} a devout man, and one who feared God with all his house, who gave gifts for the needy generously to the people, and always prayed to God.^{10:3} At about the ninth hour of the day^[39], he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God coming to him, and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

^{10:4} He, fastening his eyes on him, and being frightened, said, "What is it, Lord?"

He said to him, "Your prayers and your gifts to the needy have gone up for a memorial before God.^{10:5} Now send men to Joppa, and get Simon, who is surnamed

Peter.^{10:6} He lodges with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside.[40]"

^{10:7} When the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier of those who waited on him continually.^{10:8} Having explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.^{10:9} Now on the next day as they were on their journey, and got close to the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray at about noon.^{10:10} He became hungry and desired to eat, but while they were preparing, he fell into a trance.^{10:11} He saw heaven opened and a certain container descending to him, like a great sheet let down by four corners on the earth,^{10:12} in which were all kinds of four-footed animals

of the earth, wild animals, reptiles, and birds of the sky. ^{10:13} A voice came to him, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat!"

^{10:14} But Peter said, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean."

^{10:15} A voice came to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed, you must not call unclean." ^{10:16} This was done three times, and immediately the vessel was received up into heaven. ^{10:17} Now while Peter was very perplexed in himself what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood before the gate, ^{10:18} and called and asked whether Simon, who was surnamed Peter, was lodging there. ^{10:19} While Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three[41] men seek you. ^{10:20} But arise, get down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."

^{10:21} Peter went down to the men, and said, "Behold, I am he whom you seek. Why have you come?"

^{10:22} They said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous man ³ and one who fears God, and well spoken of by all the nation of the Jews, was directed by a holy angel to invite you to his house, and to listen to what you say." ^{10:23} So he called them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter arose and went out with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. ^{10:24} On the next day they entered into Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his relatives and his near friends. ^{10:25} When it happened that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, fell down at his feet, and worshiped him. ^{10:26} But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up! I myself am also a man." ^{10:27} As he talked with him, he went in and found many gathered together. ^{10:28} He said to them, "You yourselves know how it is an unlawful thing for a man who is a Jew to join

himself or come to one of another nation, but God has shown me that I shouldn't call any man unholy or unclean. ⁴ ^{10:29} Therefore also I came without complaint when I was sent for. I ask therefore, why did you send for me?"

^{10:30} Cornelius said, "Four days ago, I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour, [42] I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, ^{10:31} and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer is heard, and your gifts to the needy are remembered in the sight of God. ^{10:32} Send therefore to Joppa, and summon Simon, who is surnamed Peter. He lodges in the house of Simon a tanner, by the seaside. When he comes, he will speak to you.' ^{10:33} Therefore I sent to you at once, and it was good of you to come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God to hear all things that have been commanded you by God."

1. *Peter and Cornelius* Peter represents man's inner spiritual vision, and Cornelius represents the outer illumination. Both of them are brought together in Christ. Peter was shown by his vision that God had cleansed Cornelius, who had been earnestly seeking Truth; therefore Cornelius should no longer be called common or unclean.

2. *What God has cleansed, you must not call unclean.* Many people construe Peter's vision to be a lesson pertaining to food, and especially indicating that all animals were made for human consumption. There is no truth in this. Peter's vision pertains to the truth that people of all nations, all races, have one origin, God. God is the Father of all, and all have the same access to Him and to His good.

3. *Cornelius ... a righteous man.* Cornelius represents pride of rank and position. Cornelius however was a devout believer in God and was given to prayer. This spiritual exercise neutralized worldly pride. Cornelius was waiting for Peter, having called together his kinsman and his near friends to hear the message with him.

4. *God has shown me that I shouldn't call any man unholy or unclean.* Tolerance has never been mastered by the race as a whole. Lacking tolerance, nations set themselves up as superior to other nations, racial intolerance still exists, and even certain persons in the same nation or society feel superiority to their fellow men. Real progress in civilization awaits the dawn of a new era in tolerance.

Gentiles Hear the Good News

^{10:34} Peter opened his mouth and said, "Truly I perceive that God doesn't show

favoritism; ^{10:35} but in every nation he who fears him and works righteousness is

acceptable to him.^{10:36} The word which he sent to the children of Israel, preaching good news of peace² by Jesus Christ--he is Lord of all--^{10:37} that spoken word you yourselves know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;^{10:38} even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.^{10:39} We are witnesses of everything he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they also[43] killed, hanging him on a tree.^{10:40} God raised him up the third day, and gave him to be revealed,^{10:41} not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen before by God,³ to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.^{10:42} He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that this is he who is appointed by God as the Judge of the living and the dead.^{10:43} All the prophets testify about him, that through his name everyone who believes in

him will receive remission of sins."⁴

1. *God doesn't show favoritism.* Peter was a Jew and had been taught that the Jews were the elect of God, his favorite children, his chosen people. Now Peter received a new revelation and perceived that all offspring of God had the same opportunities--that the God attributes were given in equal measure to all alike.
2. *Preaching good news of peace.* That God is the one God, and that all men are brothers, because all are children of the one God.
3. *Not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen before by God.* The resurrected body of Jesus was functioning on a higher plane of vibration than that on which the bodies of other people were functioning at that time; it is probable that he could not be seen by those who were not illumined.
4. *Through his name everyone who believes in him will receive remission of sins.* Jesus' followers were conscious of making immediate contact with the spirituality of Jesus, and their faith was so stimulated that they had the absolute assurance that they could do miracles by proclaiming Jesus Christ as their coworker. His name and his power are still operative and marvelous things are being done in his name.


Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

^{10:44} While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word.¹^{10:45} They of the circumcision who believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was also poured out on the Gentiles.²^{10:46} For they heard them speaking in other languages and magnifying God.

Then Peter answered,^{10:47} "Can any man forbid the water, that these who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we should

not be baptized?"^{10:48} He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay some days.

1. *The Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word.* The tongue of tolerance, of justice and mercy, of kindness and understanding, of compassion and helpfulness, of praise and thanksgiving is the tongue that expresses the Holy Spirit.
2. *The Holy Spirit was also poured out on the Gentiles.* Unity of spirit will do this. "He made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth."

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Thomas Scheinler and Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[39] v10:3. 3:00 PM

[40] v10:6. TR adds "This one will tell you what it is necessary for you to do."

[41] v10:19. Reading from TR and NU. MT omits "three"

[42] v10:30. 3:00 P. M.

[43] v10:39. TR omits "also"

ACTS 11

Peter Shares His Dream in Jerusalem

^{11:1} Now the apostles and the brothers^[44] who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. ^{11:2} When Peter had come up to Jerusalem, those who were of the circumcision contended with him, ^{11:3} saying, "You went in to uncircumcised men, and ate with them!"

^{11:4} But Peter began, and explained to them in order, saying, ^{11:5} "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision: ¹ a certain container descending, like it was a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners. It came as far as me. ^{11:6} When I had looked intently at it, I considered, and saw the four-footed animals of the earth, wild animals, creeping things, and birds of the sky. ^{11:7} I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter, kill and eat!' ² ^{11:8} But I said, 'Not so, Lord, for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered into my mouth.' ^{11:9} But a voice answered me the second time out of heaven, 'What God has cleansed, don't you call unclean.' ^{11:10} This was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven. ^{11:11} Behold, immediately three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent from Caesarea ³ to me. ^{11:12} The Spirit told me to go with them, without discriminating. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house. ^{11:13} He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying to him, 'Send to Joppa, and get Simon, whose surname is Peter, ^{11:14} who will speak to you words by which you will be saved, you and all your house.' ^{11:15} As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. ^{11:16} I remembered the word of the Lord, how

he said, 'John indeed baptized in water, but you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit.' ^{11:17} If then God gave to them the same gift as us, when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?"

^{11:18} When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life!" ⁴

1. *In a trance I saw a vision.* Dreams and visions fall into two classes. First (Peter's vision) are those which occur during sleep without conscious volition on man's part. These are subconscious visions of faith. Through faith man comes in contact with higher realms of thought than he is capable of reaching otherwise. In the second class (Cornelius' vision in Acts 10:4) falls conscious vision or the power to foresee and understand events and to enjoy an unusual degree of perceptive ability. Such are conscious visions of intellect.

2. *Rise, Peter, kill and eat!* A careful translation of the command, "kill and eat," is given in Ferrar Fenton's *Complete Bible in Modern English* as "sacrifice and eat." To sacrifice is to consecrate and dedicate to the superconscious mind all life as divine life. This is not a command to kill animals for food. Peter himself explains that he finally understood the vision to mean that he should accept the Gentiles as worthy of Holy Spirit baptism.

3. *three men ... from Caesarea.* Caesarea represents the intellect, and the three men the spirit, soul and body of man under the dominance of intellect.

4. *God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life!* This lesson assures that the unregenerate state of mind in us (the Gentiles), which includes worldly thoughts, thoughts pertaining to externals, or thoughts that function through the senses, can be regenerated and transformed by words of faith if we give ourselves wholeheartedly to the habit of thinking and speaking them exclusively.

The Church in Antioch

^{11:19} They therefore who were scattered abroad by the oppression that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to

no one except to Jews only. ^{11:20} But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists,^[45]

preaching the Lord Jesus. ^{11:21} The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. ^{11:22} The report concerning them came to the ears of the assembly which was in Jerusalem. They sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch, ^{11:23} who, when he had come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad. He exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they should remain near to the Lord. ^{11:24} For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and many people were added to the Lord.

^{11:25} Barnabas went out to Tarsus to look for Saul. ^{11:26} When he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. It happened, that for a whole year they were gathered together with the assembly, and taught many people. The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.


^{11:27} Now in these days, prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ^{11:28} One of them named Agabus stood up, and indicated by the Spirit that there should be a great famine all over the world, ^{11:29} which also

happened in the days of Claudius. ^{11:29} As any of the disciples had plenty, each determined to send relief to the brothers who lived in Judea; ^{11:30} which they also did, sending it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

1. *The Hellenists ... believed and turned to the Lord.* The nonreligious (the Hellenists were nonreligious from the Jewish standpoint) gladly received the word of the Lord. The Jews symbolize our religious thoughts, the Hellenists our worldly thoughts. One normally connects the word of Truth with the religious rather than with the worldly in consciousness. However the intellect (represented in this lesson by the Hellenists) follows the religious nature (the Jews) in responding to the Spirit of truth.

2. *Barnabas, Paul.* Paul represents the will, and Barnabas, the understanding. They had both been baptized by the Lord and were ready for the ministry.

3. *Prophets ... from Jerusalem ... indicated by the Spirit that there should be a great famine all over the world* A great work has been accomplished by the disciples in converting both Jews and Gentiles. This work, in the outer sense, symbolizes rapid appropriation of life and substance, which, under the law of action and reaction, brings seeming depletion in the outer realms of consciousness.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Thomas Scheinler and Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[44] v11:1. The word for "brothers" here and where context allows may also be correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[45] v11:20. A Hellenist is someone who keeps Greek customs and culture.

ACTS 12

James Killed and Peter Imprisoned

^{12:1} Now about that time, Herod ^{12:1} the king stretched out his hands to oppress some of the assembly. ^{12:2} He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword. ^{12:3} When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This was during the days of unleavened bread. ^{12:4} When he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of four soldiers each to guard him, intending to bring him

out to the people after the Passover. ^{12:5} Peter therefore was kept in the prison, ^{12:5} but constant prayer was made by the assembly to God for him.

1. *Herod.* The ruling will of the physical man, the ego in the sense consciousness. By his manner of living the physical man reveals the basis of his face as wholly material.

2. *Peter therefore was kept in the prison* The hold of materiality on man's faith is strong. In the grip of materiality man cannot realize his nature as a son of God or exercise the powers that are his by divine right. These he should be able to discern and use

through faith. In the natural man faith is chained to material power and worldly prestige (two soldiers), and all its avenues of expression (prison doors) are closed and guarded against spiritual influences.

Peter Delivered from Prison

^{12:6} The same night when Herod was about to bring him out, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains. Guards in front of the door kept the prison. ^{12:7} And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side, and woke him up, saying, "Stand up quickly!" His chains fell off from his hands. ^{12:8} The angel said to him, "Get dressed and put on your sandals." He did so. He said to him, "Put on your cloak, and follow me." ^{12:9} And he went out and followed him. He didn't know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he saw a vision. ^{12:10} When they were past the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened to them by itself. They went out, and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

^{12:11} When Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I truly know that the Lord has sent out his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from everything the Jewish people were expecting." ^{12:12} Thinking about that, he came to the house of Mary, ² the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. ^{12:13} When Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a maid named Rhoda came to answer. ^{12:14} When she recognized Peter's voice, she didn't open the gate for joy, but ran in, and reported that Peter was standing in front of the gate.

^{12:15} They said to her, "You are crazy!" But she insisted that it was so. They said, "It is his angel." ^{12:16} But Peter continued knocking. When they had opened, they saw him, and were amazed. ^{12:17} But he,

beckoning to them with his hand to be silent, declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. He said, "Tell these things to James, and to the brothers." ³ Then he departed, and went to another place.

^{12:18} Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. ^{12:19} When Herod had sought for him, and didn't find him, he examined the guards, and commanded that they should be put to death. He went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there.

1. *His chains fell off from his hands.* The release of Peter from prison by an angel comes under the head of the supernatural. The church classes it with the miracles. Sound reason would find a lawful cause for the incident and take away superstition on the one hand and skepticism on the other. Man sets into action any of the three realms of his being, spirit, soul, and body, by concentrating his thought upon them. If he thinks only of the body, the physical senses encompass all of his existence. If mind and emotion are cultivated he adds soul to his consciousness. If he rises to the Absolute and comprehends Spirit, he rounds out the God-man.

2. *He came to the house of Mary.* When Peter is set at liberty, his first act is to go to the house of Mary and make known to them the wondrous works of the Lord. Greater faith, a more enduring strength, and an indescribable awe, tempered with a deep reverence for the things of spirit, spread throughout the consciousness, which tend to make more secure that unalterable foundation, the rock upon which the church is founded.

3. *Tell these things to James, and to the brothers.* There is new enlightenment and clear power of discernment in all the other faculties when faith is set free from material bondage. Peter instructed his fellow Christians to "tell these things to James [judgment], and to the brothers [twelve powers of man]."

The Death of Herod

^{12:20} Now Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. They came with


one accord to him, and, having made Blastus, ¹ the king's personal aide, their

friend, they asked for peace, because their country depended on the king's country for food. ^{12:21} On an appointed day, Herod dressed himself in royal clothing, sat on the throne, and gave a speech to them. ^{12:22} The people shouted, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!" ^{12:23} Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he didn't give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

^{12:24} But the word of God grew and multiplied. ^{12:25} Barnabas and Saul returned to[46] Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their service, also taking with them John

whose surname was Mark.

1. *Blastus*. A chamberlain of King Herod Agrippa's. He was a friend to "them of Tyre and Sidon". Sense man's belief that the mortal will, or the ruling ego of the sense man (Herod), causes life and its awakening ideas of good to germinate and to come to fruition in consciousness (shoot, sprout, that buds). This belief brings forth no fruit (Blastus was a eunuch) because it is a false one. God (unformed Spirit) alone is the origin of all life, understanding, growth, unfoldment, and attainment of good. The human will cannot attempt to put itself in the place of God without bringing about disastrous results (MBD/Blastus).

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Thomas Scheinler and Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[46] v12:25. TR reads "from" instead of "to"

ACTS 13

Barnabas and Saul Commissioned

^{13:1} Now in the assembly that was at Antioch¹ there were some prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.² ^{13:2} As they served the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate Barnabas and Saul for me,³ they sent them away. for the work to which I have called them." ^{13:3} Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them,⁴ they sent them away.

1. *the assembly that was at Antioch*. The church that was established at Antioch symbolizes and assembling of spiritual thoughts. The church at Antioch represents the first establishment of the Christ consciousness in man.

2. *Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, of Cyrene, Manaen and Saul*. Five interpreters of Spirit to the outer or sense consciousness. Barnabas signifies "son of consolation." His original name was Joseph, which represents the imagination. Renamed Barnabas by the disciples, he still represents the imagination, but now it is brought into expression through association with the word of Truth (Paul). Symeon,

who was called Niger, represents hearing or expectation; Lucius ("light") represents understanding; Manaen ("comforter," "consoler") represents the activity of the Holy Spirit in individual consciousness in its role of comforter or consoler. Saul ("demanded," "asked for") represents the action of the will entertaining that which it desires, in this case through the spoken word. Barnabas and Saul were chosen for missionary work among the Gentiles because of their superior qualifications for the task, mainly their firm faith, loyalty, courage, and resourcefulness, as well as their zeal for Truth. The will and imagination illumined by the Christ turn all the thoughts toward Truth.

3. *Separate Barnabas and Saul for me*. [This is the start of Paul's first missionary journey.]

4. *when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them*. Metaphysically interpreted, fasting means the denial of all thoughts that limit the growth of the soul to material sources. Prayer is the affirmation of the reality of spiritual things. The laying on of hands represents the impartation of the power of the word, and sending them away is the freedom that we give our thoughts in the unlimited realms of the absolute.

Saul and Barnabas Encounter a Sorcerer

^{13:4} So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia.¹ From there they sailed to Cyprus.^{13:5} When they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. They had also John as their attendant.² ^{13:6} When they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer³, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar Jesus,^{13:7} who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding.⁴ This man summoned Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God.^{13:8} But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith.^{13:9} But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him,^{13:10} and said, "Full of all deceit and all cunning, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?^{13:11} Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is on you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sun for a season!"

Immediately a mist and darkness fell on him. He went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand.^{13:12} Then the proconsul, when he saw what was done,

believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

1. *they went down to Seleucia.* The two disciples passed through Seleucia without lingering there because Seleucia means "beaten by waves," "troubled." The will and inspired imagination or understanding do not allow the mind to remain in a troubled state but pass on at once to a fair, unbiased state of mind (Cyprus means "fairness").

2. *they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. They had also John as their attendant.* The synagogues of the Jews represent aggressions of religious thoughts based upon Truth, thoughts that have not yet received the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; that is, the whole truth. The presence of John as an attendant represents that this inspiration was accomplished through love.

3. *sorcerer.* Elymas is magician, corrupter. He represents the mortal thought which tries to counterfeit the working of the Spirit. When the mind resists the Truth mental resistance closes the doors and windows of the mind, and shuts out the light of Spirit. Then the darkness of ignorance pervades the consciousness; and there is dependence on external leadings.

4. *Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding.* When the personal consciousness is rendered inoperative the reasoning faculty (the proconsul), observing the effect of Spirit, perceives the power of the Higher Self (the Lord), accepts Truth, and becomes a willing disciple.

Paul and Barnabas in Antioch of Pisidia

^{13:13} Now Paul and his company set sail from Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia. John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem.^{13:14} But they, passing on from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia.¹ They went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down.^{13:15} After the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, speak."

^{13:16} Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen."² ^{13:17} The God of this people^[47] chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they stayed as aliens in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm, he led them out of it.^{13:18} For a period of about forty years he put up with them in the

wilderness.^{13:19} When he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land for an inheritance, for about four hundred fifty years.^{13:20} After these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.^{13:21} Afterward they asked for a king, and God gave to them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.^{13:22} When he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, to whom he also testified, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who will do all my will.'^{13:23} From this man's seed, God has brought salvation^[48] to Israel according to his promise,^{13:24} before his coming, when John had first preached the baptism of repentance to Israel.^[49]³ ^{13:25} As John was fulfilling his course, he said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. But behold, one comes after me the sandals of whose

feet I am not worthy to untie.' ^{13:26} Brothers, children of the stock of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, the word of this salvation is sent out to you. ^{13:27} For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, ⁴ because they didn't know him, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. ^{13:28} Though they found no cause for death, they still asked Pilate to have him killed. ^{13:29} When they had fulfilled all things that were written about him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. ^{13:30} But God raised him from the dead, ^{13:31} and he was seen for many days by those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people. ^{13:32} We bring you good news of the promise made to the fathers, ^{13:33} that God has fulfilled the same to us, their children, in that he raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second psalm,

'You are my Son.
Today I have become your father.' [50]

^{13:34} "Concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he has spoken thus: 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.' [51] ^{13:35} Therefore he says also in another psalm, 'You will not allow your Holy One to see decay.' [52] ^{13:36} For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell asleep, and was laid with his fathers, and saw decay. ^{13:37} But he whom God raised up saw no decay. ^{13:38} Be it known to you therefore, brothers [53], that through this man is proclaimed to you remission of sins, ^{13:39} and by him everyone who believes is justified from all things, ⁵ from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. ^{13:40} Beware therefore, lest that come on you which is spoken in the prophets:

^{13:41} 'Behold, you scoffers, and wonder, and perish;
for I work a work in your days,
a work which you will in no way
believe, if one declares it to
you.'" [54]

^{13:42} So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. ^{13:43} Now when the synagogue broke

up, many of the Jews and of the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking to them, urged them to continue in the grace of God. ^{13:44} The next Sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. ^{13:45} But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, ⁶ and blasphemed.

^{13:46} Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, and said, "It was necessary that God's word should be spoken to you first. Since indeed you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. ^{13:47} For so has the Lord commanded us, saying,

'I have set you as a light for the
Gentiles, ⁷
that you should bring salvation to the
uttermost parts of the
earth.'" [55]

^{13:48} As the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God. As many as were appointed to eternal life believed. ^{13:49} The Lord's word was spread abroad throughout all the region. ^{13:50} But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, and stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and threw them out of their borders. ^{13:51} But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, ⁸ and came to Iconium. ^{13:52} The disciples were filled with joy with the Holy Spirit.

1. *Antioch of Pisidia.* Another city named Antioch. Metaphysically, Antioch means "formulated theology." This state of mind in us must be Christianized thoroughly. Our ideas of God and of man's relation to him must undergo a great change before we can begin uplifting and unifying the whole man - spirit, soul, and body - in life. In Acts 14:8-20 the formulated theology that Antioch represents takes on a spirit of antagonism and opposition (MBD/Antioch).

2. *Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen.* The sermon was delivered and Antioch (withstanding, lasting) of Pisidia (pitchy, clinging, tenacious), a province in Asia (a state of consciousness impregnated by old, material, outworn ideas which must be discarded by the one who would progress spiritually).

3. *when John had first preached the baptism of repentance to Israel.* John baptized his followers, and his baptism represents denial. Baptism symbol-

izes the getting rid of the limited thoughts that encumber and darken the understanding, in preparation for the entering of the Christ light.

4. *those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers.* The religious life of man, especially the formal beliefs that a man holds in order to be in conformity with the ideas of others in his class, are represented by the phrase "those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers." When a man's faith is bound up in the husks of formalism and he has no understanding of the indwelling Christ and its power, he fulfills the law negatively, and the result is adversity and suffering for him.


5. *everyone who believes is justified from all things.* When faith in the indwelling Christ is claimed and called into active expression, it enables man to overcome all the adversaries that

might otherwise wear down his resistance and conquer him.

6. *they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul.* The Jews represent traditional beliefs and opinions based on the authority of custom. This state of mind is opposed to all innovation and resists all change.

7. *light of the Gentiles.* The understanding that man's whole nature - spirit, soul, and body—is subject to the action of Divine Mind, and can be lifted up and transformed into the image of perfection by its power.

8. *they shook off the dust of their feet against them.* Shaking the dust off one's feet means the denying of material and mental beliefs and the affirming of the image-and-likeness-of-God consciousness, which brings one to Iconium (I-AM-age).

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[47] v13:17. TR, NU add "Israel"

[48] v13:23. TR, NU read "a Savior, Jesus" instead of "salvation"

[49] v13:24. TR, NU read "to all the people of Israel" instead of "to Israel"

[50] v13:33. Psalm 2:7

[51] v13:34. Isaiah 55:3

[52] v13:35. Psalm 16:10

[53] v13:38. The word for "brothers" here and where the context allows may also be correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[54] v13:41. Habakkuk 1:5

[55] v13:47. Isaiah 49:6

ACTS 14

Paul and Barnabas in Iconium

^{14:1} It happened in Iconium¹ that they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. ^{14:2} But the disbelieving^[56] Jews stirred up and embittered the souls of the Gentiles against the brothers.² ^{14:3} Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who testified to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ^{14:4} But the multitude of the city

was divided. Part sided with the Jews, and part with the apostles. ^{14:5} When some of both the Gentiles and the Jews, with their rulers, made a violent attempt to mistreat and stone them, ^{14:6} they became aware of it, and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, Derbe,³ and the surrounding region. ^{14:7} There they preached the Good News.

1. *Iconium.* The name Iconium means "imagelike,"

"yielding." It signifies a group of thoughts of an imaging and receptive character, tending to negativity in the emotional nature. It is susceptible to both good and error.

2. *Jews stirred up and embittered the souls of the Gentiles against the brothers.* Man's formal religious thoughts and convictions (Jews) influence his

worldly or secular thoughts (Gentiles), and make them inimical to the Christ ideal ("the brethren").

3. *Lycaonia, Lystra, Derbe.* These towns represent various phases of the realm of feeling in man. Lystra represents the emotional nature swayed by the undisciplined, devouring, unredeemed thoughts of the animal man.

Paul and Barnabas in Lystra and Derbe

^{14:8} At Lystra¹ a certain man sat, impotent in his feet,² a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. ^{14:9} He was listening to Paul speaking, who, fastening eyes on him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, ^{14:10} said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet!"³ He leaped up and walked. ^{14:11} When the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the language of Lycaonia, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!"⁴ ^{14:12} They called Barnabas "Jupiter," and Paul "Mercury," because he was the chief speaker. ^{14:13} The priest of Jupiter, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and would have made a sacrifice along with the multitudes. ^{14:14} But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their clothes, and sprang into the multitude, crying out, ^{14:15} "Men, why are you doing these things?"⁵ We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to the living God, who made the sky and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them; ^{14:16} who in the generations gone by allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. ^{14:17} Yet he didn't leave himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you[57] rains from the sky and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

^{14:18} Even saying these things, they hardly stopped the multitudes from making a sacrifice to them. ^{14:19} But some Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there, and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city,⁶ supposing that he was dead. ^{14:20} But as the disciples stood around him, he rose up, and entered into the city. On the next day he went out with Barnabas to Derbe.

1. *At Lystra* Lycaonia means "wolfland," and represents the wild, uncultured, emotional, passionate, animal nature in man. The like Lycaonians were nature worshipers. They assigned gods to almost all natural objects - earth, air, wood, water - and men who exhibited superior ability were supposed to be incarnations of these gods. When we allow our emotions and passions to dominate us we are swayed by emotions and passions and give way to the surface activity of the soul, we lose poise and detach ourselves from the quiet, peaceful inflow of Spirit.

2. *impotent in his feet.* The feet are those members of the body which contact the earth. They are also that upon which we stand; metaphysically, the feet represent our understanding of earthly things, that is the feet express the relation which the consciousness bears to substance.

3. *Stand upright on your feet!* The essential for healing in such cases is that the patient shall have faith that he can be made whole. If he has faith, then the word of Truth, expressed through the will (represented by Paul), gives the audible treatment spoken by Paul.

4. *The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!* The "multitude" saying in the speech of Lycaonia means that all the undisciplined, unredeemed, and unconverted thoughts of the consciousness believed that something had been accomplished outside of natural law, and desired to make gods of the personalities through which the work was done. The deification of one person by another is the expression of the emotional, animal mentality. When this emotional nature is released from the subconscious it is likely to pour out a flood of praise and adoration one moment and a whirlwind of censure the next.

5. *Men, why are you doing these things?* In some schools of metaphysics the emotional and passionate nature is classified as the animal soul. When we feel the surge of this emotional and passionate enthusiasm, what discipline should we give it? [Rather than deifying others,] we should raise the natural man to the throne of dominion and realize that the emotional and passionate nature must be restrained and disciplined by the superconscious or Christ mind.

6. *they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city.* In ministering spiritually a worker must keep in mind the one Presence and the one Power, otherwise while engaged in the work of dissolving adverse thoughts and conditions he arouses antagonism and meets with opposition. Opposition comes

from the personal consciousness and cannot be successfully overcome by counteropposition. It must be met by spiritual means.

The Return to Antioch


^{14:21} When they had preached the Good News to that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ^{14:22} confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many afflictions we must enter into the Kingdom of God. ^{14:23} When they had appointed elders for them in every assembly, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed.

^{14:24} They passed through Pisidia, and came to Pamphylia. ^{14:25} When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ^{14:26} From there they sailed to Antioch, from where they had been committed to the grace of God¹ for the

work which they had fulfilled. ^{14:27} When they had arrived, and had gathered the assembly together, they reported all the things that God had done with them,² and that he had opened a door of faith to the nations. ^{14:28} They stayed there with the disciples for a long time.

1. *the grace of God.* [This is the conclusion of Paul's first missionary journey.] The grace of God signifies the constructive power of divine love that infolds those to whom it is committed and that prospers all labors that are undertaken in the spirit of impersonal benevolence and co-operative goodwill.

2. *they reported all the things that God had done with them.* As the work of God their work contained nothing of personality.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[56] v14:2. or, disobedient

[57] v14:17. TR reads "us" instead of "you"

ACTS 15

The Council of Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem

^{15:1} Some men came down from Judea and taught the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised¹ after the custom of Moses, you can't be saved." ^{15:2} Therefore when Paul and Barnabas had no small discord and discussion with them, they appointed Paul and Barnabas, and some others of them, to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question. ^{15:3} They, being sent on their way by the assembly, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles. They caused

great joy to all the brothers.[58] ^{15:4} When they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the assembly and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all things that God had done with them.

^{15:5} But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses."²

^{15:6} The apostles and the elders were

gathered together to see about this matter. 15:7 When there had been much discussion, Peter rose up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that a good while ago God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the nations should hear the word of the Good News, and believe. 15:8 God, who knows the heart, testified about them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just like he did to us. 15:9 He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. 15:10 Now therefore why do you tempt God, that you should put a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 15:11 But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, [59] just as they are."

15:12 All the multitude kept silence, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul reporting what signs and wonders God had done among the nations through them. 15:13 After they were silent, James answered, "Brothers, listen to me. 15:14 Simeon has reported how God first visited the nations, to take out of them a people for his name. 15:15 This agrees with the words of the prophets. As it is written,

15:16 'After these things I will return.

I will again build the tent of David,
which has fallen.

I will again build its ruins.

I will set it up,

15:17 That the rest of men may seek after
the Lord;

All the Gentiles who are called by my
name,

Says the Lord, who does all these
things. [60]

15:18 All his works are known to God from
eternity.'

15:19 "Therefore my judgment is that we
don't trouble those from among the Gentiles

who turn to God, 15:20 but that we write to them that they abstain from the pollution of idols, from sexual immorality, from what is strangled, and from blood. 15:21 For Moses from generations of old has in every city those who preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

1. *Unless you are circumcised.* Circumcision is symbolical of the cutting off of mortal tendencies, and is indicative of purification and cleanliness. Under the law of Jesus Christ, circumcision is fulfilled in its spiritual meaning—the purification of the individual from the law of sin and death. One is circumcised in the true inner significance of the word only by being thoroughly purified in soul. Then the glory of the inner soul cleansing and purifying works out into the outer consciousness and the body and sets one free from all sensual, corruptible thoughts and activities. Thus man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus, he manifests wholeness and perfection throughout his being (MBD/circumcision).

2. *It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.* The bonds of custom and tradition are often very difficult to break, for inbred religious convictions take deeper root in the soul than almost anything else. Religious rites and customs are of spiritual value only to the extent that we perceive and are inspired by their inner spiritual meaning. Observing them merely from a sense of duty does not help us to grow spiritually.

3. *The apostles and the elders were gathered together to see about this matter.* Apostles and elders represent the individual's developed faculties after they have been brought under the control of the higher self and made to function as an undivided whole. [This chapter resolves some conflicts that emerged from Paul's first missionary journey. It may represent our state of consciousness after our first study of Truth.]

4. *He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.* Faith appeals to the conviction of man (the heart). In fact faith and conviction are one and the same thing. He whose faith is in principles holds to them and sees ceremonies as unimportant. Baptism with water is a rite, but the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a flooding of the whole mind, heart and soul, with the presence and power of divine love, and with this, rites and ceremonies have nothing to do.

Elders and Apostles Write to Gentile Believers

15:22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole assembly, to choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas: Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, chief men among the brothers. [61] 15:23 They wrote these things by their hand:

"The apostles, the elders, and the brothers, to the brothers who are of the Gentiles 1 in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: greetings. 15:24 Because we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, 2 unsettling your souls, saying, 'You must be circumcised and keep

the law,' to whom we gave no commandment; ^{15:25} it seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ^{15:26} men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ^{15:27} We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves will also tell you the same things by word of mouth. ^{15:28} For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay no greater burden on you than these necessary things: ^{15:29} that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality, ³ from which if you keep yourselves, it will be well with you. Farewell."

^{15:30} So, when they were sent off, they came to Antioch. Having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. ^{15:31} When they had read it, they rejoiced over the encouragement. ^{15:32} Judas and Silas, ⁴ also being prophets themselves, encouraged the brothers with many words, and strengthened them. ^{15:33} After they had spent some time there, they were sent back with greetings from the brothers to the apostles. ^{15:34} [62] ^{15:35} But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

1. *to the brothers who are of the Gentiles.* The early Christians were divided into two classes: the

Christian Jews and the Gentile Christians, who accepted Jesus as their saviour, but refused to submit to the peculiar rites of Jewish life. In our individual consciousness a similar division is at first set up. The form of words in which a truth is stated seems of great importance to us, and we cannot understand how there can be so many statements in apparently diverse words, of exact principles. The Jewish thought is the intellectual perception, which is usually wedded to certain set ways of expressing Truth, and gives careful attention that the same idea be stated in exactly the same way every time. If allowed to dominate, this Jew forms a religious caste, which separates itself from its fellows in factions and sects, based upon the form of Truth, instead of its essence.

2. *some who went out from us have troubled you with words.* Peace is the normal condition of the inner spiritual church, from which thoughts of peace (apostles and elders) go out as delegates to the outer or Gentile consciousness, represented by Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. This conference symbolizes the drawing together in conscious unity of all the intelligent directive powers of the spiritual self around the standard of peace and harmony.

3. *abstain from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.* Historically, the things mentioned accompanied pagan religious rites, which had been carried over into the worship of the new Christian church, and from which its members were advised to abstain. Metaphysically, we are to withdraw our thought from all lifeless things and not unite ourself to any illusion of sense.

4. *Judas and Silas; Paul and Barnabas.* Judas (appropriation), Silas (sturdiness), Paul (will) and Barnabas (imagination) were sent to the Gentile Christians with a list of what were deemed fundamentals of the Christ faith at that time. We see the qualities represented by the four delegates as fundamentals of the true way today.

Paul and Barnabas Separate

^{15:36} After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's return now and visit ¹ our brothers in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, to see how they are doing." ^{15:37} Barnabas planned to take John, who was called Mark, with them also. ^{15:38} But Paul didn't think that it was a good idea to take with them someone who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia, and didn't go with them to do the work. ^{15:39} Then the contention grew so sharp that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark ² with him, and sailed away to Cyprus, ^{15:40} but Paul chose Silas, ³ and went out, being commended by the brothers to the grace of God. ^{15:41} He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the assemblies.


1. *Let's return now and visit.* [This is the start of Paul's second missionary journey.] Metaphysicians find that in soul development they have to go over the same ground again and again. Regeneration is reeducation, not only of the conscious mind, but also of the subconscious mind, and those who follow Jesus find that they must visit often the various cities and villages (centers and sub-centers throughout the organism), speaking the word with love, zeal, wisdom, power, and all other qualities that enter into the Logos, or embodied mind of God.

2. *Barnabas took Mark.* The name "John Mark" means God's gift. John Mark represented a certain spiritual receptivity, meekness, and obedience. Metaphysically, Cyprus is a fair, frank, honest, just, unbiased state of mind (fairness) established in a degree of substance (a measure of corn); thus it draws to one very favorable and desirable conditions. Barnabas was a native of Cyprus (Acts 4:36),

and Cyprus in the individual consciousness is in close touch with intellectual reasonings (the Greeks) and formulated theology (Antioch). (MBD/Cyprus).

3. *Paul chose Silas.* The will (Paul) is dominating and dictatorial; it has little patience with the as yet unestablished meekness of John Mark. Because meekness has failed on former occasions to stabilize itself in certain mixed states of mind (Pamphylia), the will refuses to have anything to do with it. Silas means "woody, a forest." Silas represents

the spirit of the pioneer, who is willing to suffer the hardships that come to one who overcomes materiality by force, instead of by meekness and love. The meanings of the names of the cities which Paul and Silas visited, Cilicia (rolling), Derbe (sting), Lystra (dissolving), indicate that the work of the two required great effort and that it was not altogether pleasant. Forceful thoughts often stir up opposition, while gentle thoughts bring a peaceful victory.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[58] v15:3. The word for "brothers" here and where the context allows may also be correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[59] v15:11. TR adds "Christ"

[60] v15:17. Amos 9:11-12

[61] v15:22. The word for "brothers" here and where the context allows may also be correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[62] v15:34. Some manuscripts add: But it seemed good to Silas to stay there.

ACTS 16

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas

^{16:1} He came to Derbe and Lystra:¹ and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy,² the son of a Jewess who believed; but his father was a Greek. ^{16:2} The brothers who were at Lystra and Iconium gave a good testimony about him. ^{16:3} Paul wanted to have him go out with him, and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews³ who were in those parts; for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ^{16:4} As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered the decrees to them to keep which had been ordained by the apostles and elders who were at Jerusalem. ^{16:5} So the assemblies were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

1. *Derbe and Lystra.* [Two cities that would oppose Paul's mission.]

2. *Timothy.* Timothy means honoring or worshipping God. Timothy's father was a Greek and his mother was a Jewess. In this duality of parentage, two streams of thought enter into the ego: the spiritual from his mother and the intellectual from his father.

3. *he took and circumcised him because of the Jews.* Circumcision symbolizes the cutting off of the thought of physical generation, to the end that the attentions may be turned to spiritual generation. In his zeal for Truth, Paul admitted that he was all things to all men for the sake of Christ. To conciliate the Jews and to make the worship of God wholly spiritual, Paul sought to eliminate every carnal thought and to sanctify Timothy to purity and to Truth.

Troas: Paul Yields to the Word of Truth

^{16:6} When they had gone through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, they were

forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.¹ ^{16:7} When they had come opposite Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit didn't allow them.^{16:8} Passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.^{16:9} A vision appeared to Paul in the night.² There was a man of Macedonia standing, begging him, and saying, "Come over into Macedonia³ and help us."^{16:10} When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go out to Macedonia,⁴ concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the Good News to them.

1. *they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.* Paul and Silas represent man's use of the word of God to awaken the body centers to spiritual consciousness. Certain centers are so unreceptive to spiritual quickening that it would be unprofitable to work in them. The meanings of some of the cities mentioned in today's lesson show the character of those cities: Phrygia means "torrid, barren, dry;" Galatia, "white but lifeless;" Asia, "muddy, boggy;" Mysia, "abominable, criminal;" Bithynia, "violent precipitation."

2. *A vision appeared to Paul in the night.* We are guided by Spirit through visions, dreams, and direct inspiration of Spirit. In this lesson Paul had a dream-vision. He interpreted the meaning as a call from God to preach the Gospel in Macedonia. Paul symbolizes the converted will illumined by the Word. He represents that in man which turns from the set, unyielding letter of the law to the uplifting, life-giving, directing power of the spirit of the law.

3. *Come over into Macedonia.* Paul and his com-

panions entering Europe is symbolical of opening up in the consciousness the Word of Truth, where it had never before been realized. The body is pervaded by a life and intelligence, which has formed a little world of its own. It has no knowledge of the higher, life of the Spirit. It has to be regenerated, born from above. The spiritual spark is carried by the Converted Will, (Paul) and it has to meet obstacles of various kinds. The lands and towns through which Paul passed represent some of these. For instance, Phrygia means dry, barren; Galatia, white, but lifeless; Asia, muddy, boggy. The Holy Ghost forbade Paul speaking the Word there. When guided by the Spirit, we are led to develop along the lines of least resistance and where the conditions are most favorable. We should not be discouraged when we strike the barren places, nor waste our time in trying to quicken the localities that are at present too negative to respond. It is the experience of those who regenerate the body, that a certain fiery element is necessary to give action to the watery negative parts. This is referred to in this lesson. Macedonia means burning adoration, and is representative of that enthusiasm and energy of Spirit which sets the whole man aflame. It is necessary that this phase of the consciousness be cultivated, because without it a certain passivity sets in that is content with the battle only half won.

4. *immediately we sought to go out to Macedonia.* Paul's obedience to the guidance of Spirit stands out in bold relief. When the light shone about him and Jesus spoke out of the clear sky to him, he asked quickly what the Lord wanted him to do; then he promptly did it. When in the temple he fell in a trance and saw the Lord standing by telling him to make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, he obeyed. When in a vision or dream at night the man of Macedonia was beseeching him to "come over and help us," Paul made no delay, but proceeded at once to go and preach the gospel as requested.

Philippi: The Divine Feminine Perceives Truth

^{16:11} Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course¹ to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis;^{16:12} and from there to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the foremost of the district, a Roman colony. We were staying some days in this city.

^{16:13} On the Sabbath day we went forth outside of the city by a riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down, and spoke to the women who had come together.^{16:14} A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira,² one who worshiped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened to listen to the things which were spoken by Paul.^{16:15} When she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have

judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house,³ and stay." So she persuaded us.

1. *we made a straight course.* Troas ("penetrated," "perforated") symbolizes the dawning of spiritual consciousness in man. When this takes place, man's will (Paul) and determination (Silas) cause him to make a straight course to Samothrace ("height of Thrace"), a high, noble state of thought, at first intellectual rather than spiritual. Thence he reaches a new center of action (Neapolis), and at last, realizes power (Philippi) to remake his life by the Christ ideal.

2. *Lydia, Thyatira.* Lydia means "a dispenser of blessings." The Lydia in our lesson represents the divine feminine, which pours forth the power of good in all its attributes: health, power, joy, prosperity. Thyatira means *burning incense*; it represents the intense desire of the soul for the higher expressions of life. [Since she was the first convert

in Europe,] this reveals that the soul, symbolized by the woman, is quicker than the intellect (man) to catch the spark of zeal, when a new idea enters the mind.

3. *come into my house, and stay.* When we have

a realization that our words are charged with spiritual power, we can immerse certain centers of consciousness, not only in our own bodies but in the bodies of others. This is spiritual baptism. When we have faith in this spiritual quickening of life in the body temple, it becomes an abiding consciousness.

Prayer and Singing Opens Prison Doors

^{16:16} It happened, as we were going to prayer, that a certain girl having a spirit of divination¹ met us, who brought her masters much gain by fortune telling. ^{16:17} Following Paul and us, she cried out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation!" ^{16:18} She was doing this for many days.

But Paul, becoming greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!"² It came out that very hour. ^{16:19} But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone,³ they seized Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. ^{16:20} When they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men, being Jews, are agitating our city, ^{16:21} and set forth customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans."

^{16:22} The multitude rose up together against them, and the magistrates tore their clothes off of them, and commanded them to be beaten with rods. ^{16:23} When they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely, ^{16:24} who, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison, and secured their feet in the stocks.⁴

^{16:25} But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God,⁵ and the prisoners were listening to them.

^{16:26} Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were loosened. ^{16:27} The jailer, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

^{16:28} But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, "Don't harm yourself, for we are all here!"

^{16:29} He called for lights and sprang in, and, fell down trembling before Paul and Silas, ^{16:30} and brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

^{16:31} They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." ^{16:32} They spoke the word of the Lord to him, and to all who were in his house.

^{16:33} He took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was immediately baptized, he and all his household. ^{16:34} He brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his household, having believed in God.

^{16:35} But when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, "Let those men go."

^{16:36} The jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go; now therefore come out, and go in peace."

^{16:37} But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly, without a trial, men who are Romans, and have cast us into prison! Do they now release us secretly? No, most certainly, but let them come themselves and bring us out!"⁶

^{16:38} The sergeants reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans, ^{16:39} and they came and begged them. When they had brought them out, they asked them to depart from the city. ^{16:40} They went out of the prison, and entered into Lydia's house. When they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them, and departed.

1. *a certain girl having a spirit of divination.* This “maid” represents man’s belief in a realm in which the unknown and the past and the future may be revealed. Belief in the occult is the result of ignorance and superstition. Victor Hugo said: “There are no occult truths; all is luminous.” The superstition that centers in the occult should be denied out of consciousness, in the name of Truth.


2. *I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!* Paul and Silas represent the will and the understanding engaged in their work of cleansing the consciousness. Paul had cast the demon of “divination” out of the damsel, who “brought her masters much gain by soothsaying.”

3. *her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone.* Her masters represent acquisitiveness, greed, and selfishness, which seek gain through the use of occult or psychic forces. Like Simon Magus, they would buy the power of the Holy Ghost and use it for selfish ends.

4. *threw them into the inner prison, and secured their feet in the stocks.* The intellectual powers that have tried to hold this seemingly occult faculty as a source of material profit are enraged and endeavor to throw into bondage the freeing powers of Spirit, represented by Paul and Silas.

5. *Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God.* Spiritualized mind forces are always joyous, full of praise and thanksgiving, with no consciousness of opposition. This dynamic power shatters the error forces, throwing open the prison doors and giving the spiritual will and understanding greater freedom of expression.

6. *let them come themselves and bring us out!* Paul never missed an opportunity to make a convert. Instead of escaping from the jail and the jailer, he remained and converted the whole family. When, through the power of the Spirit, you have made a demonstration, do not leave it incomplete, but bring into spiritual harmony all the factors entering into the problem.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

ACTS 17

Thessalonica: An Immature Desire for Truth

^{17:1} Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia,¹ they came to Thessalonica,² where there was a Jewish synagogue. ^{17:2} Paul, as was his custom, went in to them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures,^{17:3} explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.”

^{17:4} Some of them were persuaded, and joined Paul and Silas, of the devout Greeks a great multitude,³ and not a few of the chief women. ^{17:5} But the unpersuaded Jews took along[63] some wicked men from the marketplace, and gathering a crowd, set the city in an uproar. Assaulting the house of Jason, they sought to bring them out to the people. ^{17:6} When they didn’t find them, they dragged Jason and certain brothers[64] before the rulers of the city,⁴ crying, “These who have turned the world upside down have come here also, ^{17:7} whom Jason has

received. These all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus!” ^{17:8} The multitude and the rulers of the city were troubled when they heard these things. ^{17:9} When they had taken security from Jason⁵ and the rest, they let them go.

1. *when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia.* Truth passes through several stages in entering the mind: first doubt, then examination, then a great desire for the Truth, then acceptance. These are represented by the Gentile cities—Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica—through which Paul passed, and Beroea where “they received the word with all readiness of mind.” (MBD/Apollonia)

2. *they came to Thessalonica.* Thessalonica (its ancient name, Thermae, meaning hot springs), a city of Macedonia from which Paul was driven by persecution by the Jews there, represents the burning or heated zeal of the soul in its desire for Truth, but at this phase of unfoldment it is without a sufficient thinking balance to give tolerance and wisdom. (MBD/Thessalonica)

3. *of the devout Greeks a great multitude.* The

Greeks represent the intellect. They were accustomed to engaging in logical argument and disputations and took delight in matching their wits with an adversary. The Jews trusted more the traditions of the fathers, in which their feelings were involved; therefore, they were more difficult to reach and convince than the Greeks.

4. *they dragged Jason and certain brothers before the rulers of the city.* We can see why Paul and Silas stirred up so much contention. Paul represents the true pioneer. He dearly loved to meet the opposition and discuss the proposition. His writings bristle with suggestions of war, and in one way or another he is constantly admonishing Christians to "put on the whole armor of God." To him soul development was a war between the Spirit and the flesh. That subtle thought of war in Paul had its effect in this work. He argued, exhorted and contended, and the result was a reaction upon them of that sort of thought. It may be that certain fixed states of human thought have to be met that way and that

the "fighting person" has his place among the pioneers of religion.

5. *When they had taken security from Jason.* Jason means deliverer, healer, he who cures, Jehovah delivers; he represents the I AM in its first stages of growth in the higher law. He is hauled before the rulers and accused of setting up a new king in opposition to Cæsar. He is called upon to give security for the brethren; that is, he heals the breach between the opposing forces in the consciousness by making concessions for the time being. He sends away the fiery Paul and the psalm-singing Silas, and harmony is restored. We should not be too full of zeal in our spiritual ongoing. We are apt to become fanatical and disagreeable and make ourselves obnoxious. Pour oil on your troubled waters by now and then going into the silence and holding for harmony (slipping away in the night).

Beroea: A Consciousness Ready for Truth

^{17:10} The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Beroea.¹ When they arrived, they went into the Jewish synagogue.² ^{17:11} Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of the mind, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. ^{17:12} Many of them therefore believed; also of the prominent Greek women, and not a few men. ^{17:13} But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Beroea also, they came there likewise, agitating the multitudes. ^{17:14} Then the brothers immediately sent out Paul to go as far as to the sea, and Silas and Timothy still stayed there. ^{17:15} But those who escorted Paul brought him as far as Athens. Receiving a commandment to Silas and Timothy that

they should come to him very quickly, they departed.

1. *to Beroea* At Beroea, while there is the same desire for Truth as in Thessalonica, there is also a readiness to look into that which differs from the old established religious thought. So Beroea signifies the zeal of the soul in religious matters, tempered by good judgment, tolerance, and intelligent willingness to examine all thoughts presented to it, that the real Truth may be discerned and received into consciousness. By understanding is any phase of man's consciousness watered so that the Truth may take root and grow and bring forth fruit.

2. *they went into the Jewish synagogue.* The fact that he always looked for a synagogue and taught the Jews first shows that spiritual truth gains by being taught in surroundings that are in harmony with it. His teaching the Jews first emphasizes our responsibility to enlighten that part of our mind which is busy with religious convictions and traditions.

Athens: Our Intellectual Center

^{17:16} Now while Paul waited for them at Athens,¹ his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city full of idols. ^{17:17} So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who met him. ^{17:18} Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers² also were conversing with him. Some said, "What does this babblar want to say?"

Others said, "He seems to be advocating foreign deities," because he preached Jesus and the resurrection.

^{17:19} They took hold of him, and brought him to the Areopagus,³ saying, "May we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by you?" ^{17:20} For you bring certain strange things to our ears. We want to know therefore what these things mean." ^{17:21} Now

all the Athenians and the strangers living there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.

^{17:22} Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus, and said, "You men of Athens, I perceive that you are very religious in all things."⁴ ^{17:23} For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' What therefore you worship in ignorance,⁵ this I announce to you. ^{17:24} The God who made the world and all things in it, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, doesn't dwell in temples made with hands, ^{17:25} neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself gives to all life and breath, and all things. ^{17:26} He made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the surface of the earth, having determined appointed seasons, and the boundaries of their dwellings, ^{17:27} that they should seek the Lord, if perhaps they might reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ^{17:28} 'For in him we live, and move, and have our being.'⁶ As some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.'⁷ ^{17:29} Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold, or silver, or stone, engraved by art and design of man. ^{17:30} The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked. But now he commands that all people everywhere should repent, ^{17:31} because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained; of which he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead."

^{17:32} Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, "We want to hear you again concerning this."

^{17:33} Thus Paul went out from among them. ^{17:34} But certain men joined with him, and believed, among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris,⁸ and others with them.

1. *while Paul waited for them at Athens.* Athens represents our intellectual center. Paul waiting at

Athens represents the spiritual will waiting for the opportunity to set into action the spiritual Word in the chief seat of intellectual learning.

2. *Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.* The Epicureans represent an aggregation of thoughts whose philosophy is that love of pleasure and enjoyment leads into abiding peace and health. The Stoic philosophers represent the direct opposite of the Epicureans. The Stoics believe that indifference in both pleasure and pain is the highest attainment of man.


3. *brought him to the Areopagus.* Areopagus, or Mars' hill, was a rocky hill in Athens; on it the court of justice was held. It symbolizes the place in consciousness where all kinds of thoughts are received and judged as to their truth. Areopagus means "court of justice," or that place in consciousness where all the different aggregations of thought forces get a hearing, and (according to the light manifested in consciousness) a righteous judgment.

4. *You men of Athens, I perceive that you are very religious in all things.* Paul, the spiritual will, in introducing himself, made it clear that he did not worship the idols of gold or silver or stone, but called Athenians' attention to their altar dedicated to "An Unknown God," thereby avoiding all cause for offense. At the same time, he awakened in his listeners a desire to know something of the real God, which their idol typified.

5. *What therefore you worship in ignorance.* Paul did not call the Athenians ignorant. This is a mis-translation. What he did say was, "Whom ye worship, not understanding his name, attributes and nature, him I set forth." God is Spirit. Spirit is not form nor condition, but formless. The character of God as Absolute Being cannot be comprehended by the intellect. The Truth, therefore, makes a total denial of all beliefs about God of a temporal character.

6. *For in him we live, and move, and have our being.* A splendid treatment for the realization of Omnipresence. The One Life permeates every fiber of our organism; we move in it and it moves in us; our true being is involved in this One Essence and Cause of all. *We believe that we live, move, and have our being in God-Mind; also that God-Mind lives, moves, and has being in us, to the degree of our consciousness (Unity Statement of Faith, #17).*

7. *Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris.* Dionysius and Damaris are two converts from Paul's speech. Metaphysically, Damaris is soul in its relation to the intellect (Athens symbolizes the intellect, and a woman refers to the soul). The soul is more closely unified (wife, joined) with our intellectual thoughts and activities than most persons realize. When we think that we have reasoned a thing out entirely with our head, and that we are acting altogether from a reasoning standpoint, it would surprise us if we could see how much we have been guided all along by the intuitions, affections, emotions, and desires of the soul. (MBD/Damaris).

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[63] v17:5. TR reads "And the Jews who were unpersuaded, becoming envious and taking along" instead of "But the unpersuaded Jews took along"

[64] v17:6. The word for "brothers" here and where the context allows may be also correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[65] v17:18. TR omits "also"

ACTS 18

Athens to Corinth: From Intellect to Love

^{18:1} After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. ^{18:2} He found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, who had recently come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, ² because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome. He came to them, ^{18:3} and because he practiced the same trade, he lived with them and worked, for by trade they were tent makers. ³ ^{18:4} He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks. ⁴ ^{18:5} But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, ⁵ testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. ^{18:6} When they opposed him and blasphemed, ⁶ he shook out his clothing and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on, I will go to the Gentiles!" ⁷

^{18:7} He departed there, and went into the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. ^{18:8} Crispus, ⁸ the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house. Many of the Corinthians, when they heard, believed and were baptized. ^{18:9} The Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Don't be afraid, but speak and don't be silent; ^{18:10} for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many people in this city."

^{18:11} He lived there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. ^{18:12} But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia,

the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat, ^{18:13} saying, "This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law."

^{18:14} But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of wicked crime, you Jews, it would be reasonable that I should bear with you; ^{18:15} but if they are questions about words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves. For I don't want to be a judge of these matters." ^{18:16} He drove them from the judgment seat.

^{18:17} Then all the Greeks laid hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. Gallio didn't care about any of these things.

1. *Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth.* In individual consciousness, Paul's going from Athens to Corinth means the withdrawal of the power of the Word from the intellectual center (Athens) and its entrance into the love center (Corinth). Corinth means "lovely, beautiful." The Corinth of Paul's time contained a temple of Venus, which was dedicated to the worship of love. Corinth represents the love center in man's consciousness, around which all his thoughts of love are grouped. It was to the Corinthians that Paul wrote his matchless poem on love (I Cor. 13).

2. *Priscilla, Aquila.* The heart center, the solar plexus, instead of being pervaded by thoughts of peace and harmony and a just appreciation of the divine law, is perverted to the basest thoughts and the most violent passions. But the patient, sustaining power within, is not wholly thwarted. When the body is lacerated, he sets his builders to work and

they patch up the holes. We call this the *healing force of nature*. Metaphysically, Priscilla is the feminine or receptive phase of the healing forces of nature that are always at work rebuilding the body and repairing the ravages of ignorant man. Aquila, husband of Priscilla, is the positive phase of these forces. These healing forces of nature are very old, in so far as man's idea of time refers to age. They have been present and active since manifest creation began. God has ever been in every atom of His universe as unifying, constructive life, energy, love, intelligence, power, substance, and progressive influence (MBD/Priscilla, MBD/Aquila).

3. *for by trade they were tent makers*. Priscilla and Aquila were Christians, and tentmakers by trade. Paul abode and worked with them in Corinth. Aquila and Priscilla represent the masculine and the feminine forces that construct the body (tent). Through the work of these forces, aided by the word of Truth (Paul) the redemption of the body (tent) is wrought. They work and cooperate with Paul (the power of the Word) in building the body.

4. *He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks*. The word of Truth appeals to the higher understanding as well as to the intellect, and is accepted by the whole man, when he is free from religious bias.

5. *when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit*. Silas represents perception from on high, Timothy zeal, Macedonia the fervor of the soul. Under the influence of exalted thought the word of Truth (Paul) is impelled to proclaim that Jesus (I AM) is the Christ, the saving power.

6. *they opposed him and blasphemed*. When one is rooted and rounded in certain religious dogmas, and especially in the teaching that the Messiah, or the anointed of God, is come again in the flesh, one opposes such teachings and calls them blasphemy, because one does not understand their spiritual import.

7. *I will go to the Gentiles!* When there is plain evidence of non-receptivity, it is wise to withdraw and begin the education of the external realms of thought.

8. *Justus, Crispus*. Justus (ASV, Titus Justus) denotes the body consciousness. The word of Truth, by being spoken from the body consciousness, reaches many worldly thoughts (Gentiles). Crispus, who "believed in the Lord with all his house" indicates that Truth encompasses the whole man, more especially the love of man's soul.

Cenchreae: Paul Returns With a Vow

^{18:18} Paul, having stayed after this many more days, took his leave of the brothers,[66] and sailed from there for Syria, together with Priscilla and Aquila. He shaved his head in Cenchreae,¹ for he had a vow.²

^{18:19} He came to Ephesus, and he left them there; but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.^{18:20} When they asked him to stay with them a longer time, he declined;^{18:21} but taking his leave of them, and saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem, but I will return again to you if God wills," he set sail from Ephesus.

^{18:22} When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the assembly, and went down to Antioch.³ ^{18:23} Having spent some time there, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, in order, establishing all the disciples.

1. *He shaved his head in Cenchreae*. Cenchreae, a harbor of Corinth. There was a Christian assembly in the place, and Phoebe was a deaconess in this church (Rom. 16:1). Metaphysically, Cenchreae means *small grains*, and, like the mustard seed of Jesus' parable, it signifies the fact that the Truth established in the consciousness of man is at first similar to a very tiny seed (the word is the seed). We should not therefore despise nor look upon as insignificant any beginning of light and Truth that comes to us or to others, no matter how small it may seem. (MBD/Cenchreae).

2. *for he had a vow*. In Cenchreae, either Paul or Aquila (the text is not quite clear) had "shorn his head...for he had a vow." [The vow taken is likely Nazirite, the vow also taken by Samson and by John the Baptist. This passage may be related to the next, regarding Apollos, a disciple of John. It is not clear why Unity never commented on this metaphysically rich passage of scripture. See MBD/Nazirite, MBD/Samson and MBD/John]

3. *went down to Antioch*. [The close of Paul's second missionary journey.]

Ministry of Apollos

^{18:24} Now a certain Jew named Apollos,¹ an Alexandrian by race, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus. He was mighty in the Scriptures.^{18:25} This man had been instructed


in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, although he knew only the baptism of John.^{18:26} He began to

speaking boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him,² they took him aside, and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

^{18:27} When he had determined to pass over into Achaia, the brothers encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him. When he had come, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace;^{18:28} for he powerfully refuted the Jews, publicly showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

1. *Apollos*. Apollos means "destroyer", "the sun." The Apollos mentioned in this lesson was a Jew, who had been converted to the teaching of John the Baptist, and who was zealous in getting rid of error. The intellectual conception of Truth tends to make one hard and destructive in one's judgments.

2. *when Priscilla and Aquila heard him*. Priscilla ("old") and Aquila ("eagle") represent the patient, sustaining power within man, that we are in the habit of calling the healing forces of nature. These healing forces have been in evidence since manifest creation began.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[66] v18:18. The word for "brothers" here and where the context allows may also be correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

ACTS 19

Ephesus: A City of Desire

^{19:1} It happened that, while Apollos was at Corinth,¹ Paul, having passed through the upper country, came² to Ephesus,³ and found certain disciples.⁴ ^{19:2} He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

They said to him, "No, we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

^{19:3} He said, "Into what then were you baptized?"

They said, "Into John's baptism."

^{19:4} Paul said, "John indeed baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in the one who would come after him, that is, in Jesus."

^{19:5} When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.^{19:6} When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke

with other languages and prophesied.^{19:7} They were about twelve men in all.^{19:8} He entered into the synagogue, and spoke boldly for a period of three months,⁵ reasoning and persuading about the things concerning the Kingdom of God.

^{19:9} But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.⁶ ^{19:10} This continued for two years, so that all those who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

1. *Apollos was at Corinth*. Apollos remains in Corinth because the word of Truth that is sown in the body by Paul does not always bear fruit immediately. Faith and understanding (Apollos) must be brought to bear on it before it can develop properly.

2. *Paul came*. Paul sows the word of Truth (seed) in all parts of the body to which Apollos will provide a true, practical understanding of faith and understanding as they are needed to refresh, encourage,

and aid the new Truth thoughts to reach fruition.

3. *to Ephesus.* Ephesus means "desirable." The city founded at least one thousand years before Christ, was at one time the chief point in Asia. Asia represents the inner realm, and the importance of the power of desire is clearly indicated in this symbolism. Desire may be fixed on the things of sense or materiality as well as on the things of the inner realm. The work of the Christ is to transform it until it becomes righteous desire and faithfully expresses the inner realm of Spirit.

4. *and found certain disciples.* Ephesus was famed for its arts; the temple of Diana was there, and many craftsmen made up the city's inhabitants. This all shows its prevailing mental state, and symbolizes a certain center of consciousness in the body of a man. Some people think it far-fetched to claim that a city or place on the earth has any relation to man's mind. The fact is that all places are representative of the mind. The prevailing idea in the race mind at any age of its history may be told by the character of its cities. The American people are picturing in their cities what exists in their minds, and we readily locate the intellectual, governmental, artistic, manufacturing, etc. cities of

our country. If we take this country as a whole and call it a man, we can easily locate the head, the heart, the stomach, etc.; in fact, every part of the man may be found in a representative city.

5. *spoke boldly for a period of three months.* The three months denote spirit, soul, and body, man's threefold avenues of expression; A synagogue represents the established religious consciousness inbred in us by tradition and inheritance. When the illumined will enters into this consciousness, it meets resistance even when man's desire is for Truth.

6. *school of Tyrannus (lecture hall of Tyrannus, NRSV).* The name Tyrannus ("tyrant," "ruling prince") represents the rule of desire in the individual. Paul's work in the school of Tyrannus represents the word of Truth continuing its work in the spiritually awakening individual through his inner desire for the things of Spirit. This work goes on even though for a time the individual may repudiate the higher message of Truth, because his mind is filled with preconceived, established religious beliefs.

The Denial of Magical Arts in Ephesus

^{19:11} God worked special miracles by the hands of Paul, ^{19:12} so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and the evil spirits went out. ^{19:13} But some of the itinerant Jews, exorcists, took on themselves to invoke over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, ¹ saying, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." ^{19:14} There were seven sons of one Sceva, ² a Jewish chief priest, who did this.

^{19:15} The evil spirit answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?"

^{19:16} The man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

^{19:17} This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived at Ephesus. Fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. ^{19:18} Many also of those who had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds. ^{19:19} Many of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them ³ in the sight of all. They counted the price of them, and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver. ^{19:20} So the word of the Lord was growing and becoming mighty.

1. *some of the itinerant Jews, exorcists, took on themselves to invoke over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus.* Ephesus was given up to idolatry, superstition and general materialism. So we find in unregenerate man that this center is given up to physical and mortal ideas, and must be raised to the spiritual through the impregnating power of the Word. Hence Paul spent three years preaching the Gospel in Ephesus. The word of Truth cast out evil spirits and healed the sick at Ephesus, and this was imitated by strolling Jew exorcists. They used the same formulas that Paul did, but they had not been converted, or not totally purified, and the evil spirits turned upon them and overpowered them so that they fled. We find people who want to be healed without repentance; they want to be freed from the penalty of error, but do not wish to do right. These ask for word formulas, magic, and they create a demand for the exorcists that imitate the Truth, but are not in the understanding of that change of heart and thought which must accompany all true healing.

2. *seven sons of one Sceva.* Sceva, the Jew, means an established instrument and refers to the fixed state of mind which prevails in the physical consciousness. The "seven sons" are the seven centers of thought and action in the body.

3. *Many of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them.* The burning of the books of those who practiced magical arts means the total denial of all formulas and aids that are not based in the understanding of Truth. Ministry of the word of Truth includes denial of error.

Chemicalization in Ephesus

^{19:21} Now after these things had ended, Paul determined in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

^{19:22} Having sent into Macedonia two of those who served him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while. ^{19:23} About that time there arose no small stir concerning the Way. ^{19:24} For a certain man named Demetrius,¹ a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis,² brought no little business to the craftsmen,^{19:25} whom he gathered together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, "Sirs, you know that by this business we have our wealth. ^{19:26} You see and hear, that not at Ephesus alone, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are no gods, that are made with hands. ^{19:27} Not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be counted as nothing, and her majesty destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worships."

^{19:28} When they heard this they were filled with anger,³ and cried out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" ^{19:29} The whole city was filled with confusion,⁴ and they rushed with one accord into the theater, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel. ^{19:30} When Paul wanted to enter in to the people, the disciples didn't allow him. ^{19:31} Certain also of the Asiarchs, being his friends, sent to him and begged him not to venture into the theater. ^{19:32} Some therefore cried one thing, and some another, for the assembly was in confusion. Most of them didn't know why they had come together. ^{19:33} They brought Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. Alexander beckoned with his hand, and would have made a defense to the people. ^{19:34} But when they perceived that he was a Jew, all with one voice for a time of about two hours cried out, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

^{19:35} When the town clerk had quieted the

multitude, he said, "You men of Ephesus, what man is there who doesn't know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great goddess Artemis, and of the image which fell down from Zeus? ^{19:36} Seeing then that these things can't be denied, you ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rash. ^{19:37} For you have brought these men here, who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess. ^{19:38} If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a matter against anyone, the courts are open,⁵ and there are proconsuls. Let them press charges against one another. ^{19:39} But if you seek anything about other matters, it will be settled in the regular assembly. ^{19:40} For indeed we are in danger of being accused concerning this day's riot, there being no cause. Concerning it, we wouldn't be able to give an account of this commotion." ^{19:41} When he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

1. Demetrius. A silversmith at Ephesus who stirred up a great tumult against Paul and the doctrine of Christ. He did this because he feared that the Truth would take away his business and he would thus lose materially (MBD/Demetrius).

2. Artemus (Diana, ASV). Artemus was the fertility goddess of the heathen world, and was associated in men's thought with the moon. The moon exerts an influence upon the whole earth, and in like manner desire is a trait common to all men. Asia represents the within, and desire reaches to man's consciousness.


3. *When they heard this they were filled with anger.* When the God of Spirit is proclaimed, the consciousness that believes in and profits from the concept of a personal God, makes an uproar and almost causes a riot, because of injury to the industry which has been built up by material religion. Demetrius, the silversmith, represents the mentality that is sending forth thoughts and images of a material God. The idea that substance is wholly material represented by Demetrius, the silversmith.

4. *The whole city was filled with confusion.* Thoughts are things, and people fill their minds with thought substance. When new ideas are entertained, if the subject matter is of a more spiritual character than the ideas previously entertained, the old ideas resist. This process is sometimes called chemicalization. It should be feared. It denotes a thorough repentance or change of mind.

5. *If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a matter against anyone, the courts are open.* The riot of Demetrius and his fellow workers symbolizes the battle of materiality

against spirituality, in which self-interest seeks to enforce its will against reason and the good of all, without regard for truth or right. The individual's right of expression must be kept within the bounds of law and order, otherwise confusion and anarchy result, and society is placed on an unstable basis. The only time when it is permissible for a person to be a law unto himself is when he rises to a con-

sciousness of the Christ and becomes selfless. The personal self must be subordinate to the good of the whole society. The good of all is paramount to the good of the personal self, and it should be so accepted. As we take the larger view of law, we see that authority is necessary to the maintenance of the social order and this in turn is necessary to individual security.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[67] v19:19. The 50,000 pieces of silver here probably referred to 50,000 drachmas. If so, the value of the burned books was equivalent to about 160 man-years of wages for agricultural laborers

ACTS 20

Paul Goes to Macedonia and Greece¹

^{20:1} After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, took leave of them, and departed to go into Macedonia.² ^{20:2} When he had gone through those parts, and had encouraged them with many words, he came into Greece.³ ^{20:3} When he had spent three months there, and a plot was made against him by Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he determined to return through Macedonia.⁴ ^{20:4} These accompanied him as far as Asia: Sopater⁴ of Beroea; Aristarchus⁵ and Secundus⁶ of the Thessalonians; Gaius⁷ of Derbe; Timothy⁸; and Tychicus⁹ and Trophimus¹⁰ of Asia.^{20:5} But these had gone ahead, and were waiting for us at Troas.^{20:6} We sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas in five days, where we stayed seven days.

1. See Acts 16:9, Acts 17:19

2. *Macedonia*. Fervor, intensity, and vehemence are required in order to carry the great and beautiful message of Truth over seeming hindrances to the different centers and states of consciousness (represented by the cities and nations through which Paul journeyed and preached). Macedonia signifies the enthusiasm and the energy of Spirit, which set the whole man aflame. It is necessary that this phase of the consciousness be cultivated,

because without it a passivity sets in that makes one content with the battle only half won. (MBD/Macedonia)

3. *Greece*. The intellect in man. Athens, the capital of Greece, and the birthplace of Plato, was a great center for learning throughout the then known world. In man's consciousness Athens refers to the intellectual center. (MBD/Greece)

4. *Sopater*. The spiritually awakened or illumined understanding, that perceives the saving power of Spirit and defends the cause (as by argument, reasoning) of the true Source of all (MBD/Sopater)

5. *Aristarchus*. Spiritual power, authority, and soul fervor--the very Christ of God or Divine Mind itself (best ruler, best leader, supreme beginning, first principle (MBD/Aristarchus)

6. *Secundus*. A secondary attitude of thought (second) that is necessary to promote the acceptance and growth of Truth in the whole being of man. It is an attitude of thought that approves of Truth and is willing to do all in its power to further the activity of the word of Truth (Paul) in the consciousness (MBD/Secundus)

7. *Gaius*. The acceptance by the body consciousness (of the earth, earthy man) of the truth pertaining to the divine law, or Lord. This acceptance of Truth by the seemingly earthy phase of man's being works with Paul (the activity of the word of Truth) in bringing about the redemption of the body (MBD/Gaius)

8. *Timothy*. A Christian convert, who helped Paul much in his ministry. Metaphysically, inspired reason united with faith and zeal (MBD/Timothy)

9. *Tychicus*. A belief in fate (fortuitous, fateful, chance, fortunate). Converted to Christian faith, this belief would take on a strong assurance of good as being ever present and demonstrable. One who learns the divine law is not subject to fate. He makes his own destiny by his use of divine law. (MBD/Tychicus)

10. *Trophimus*. Metaphysically, a thought or expression of desire. Desire in man is fundamentally spiritual; it is the foundation quality of all growth and unfoldment, and when it expresses in the higher, spiritual understanding it is fed and supported by true spiritual life and substance. (MBD/Trophimus)

Paul's Farewell Visit to Troas¹

^{20:7} On the first day of the week, when the disciples were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and continued his speech until midnight. ^{20:8} There were many lights in the upper chamber where we[68] were gathered together. ^{20:9} A certain young man named Eutychus² sat in the window, weighed down with deep sleep. As Paul spoke still longer, being weighed down by his sleep, he fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead. ^{20:10} Paul went down, and fell upon him, and embracing him said, "Don't be troubled, for his life is in him."

^{20:11} When he had gone up, and had broken bread,³ and eaten, and had talked

with them a long while, even until break of day, he departed. ^{20:12} They brought the boy in alive, and were greatly comforted.

1. *Troas*. A phase of thought by which Spirit can find its way into consciousness more easily than by other ways (penetrated, bored through). (MBD/Troas). See Acts 16:6.

2. *Eutychus*. The understanding that the youthful energies of the organism can be quickened into new life again even after they appear to be utterly dead, after such a renewal appears to be hopeless. Man is indeed fortunate in having the word of Truth (indicated here by Paul) always at hand, since by the word of Truth he can speak his whole being into newness and fullness of life at will. (MBD/Eutychus)

3. *bread*. Universal substance (MBD/bread).

The Voyage from Troas to Miletus

^{20:13} But we who went ahead to the ship set sail for Assos,¹ intending to take Paul aboard there, for he had so arranged, intending himself to go by land. ^{20:14} When he met us at Assos, we took him aboard, and came to Mitylene². ^{20:15} Sailing from there, we came the following day opposite Chios. The next day we touched at Samos³ and stayed at Trogyllium,⁴ and the day after we came to Miletus.⁵ ^{20:16} For Paul had determined to sail past Ephesus, that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening, if it were possible for him, to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

1. *Assos*. An intellectual state of consciousness that is willing to examine into the truth (Apollonia), and is therefore drawing near to (approaching) an understanding of it. (MBD/Assos)

2. *Mitylene, Chios*. A place in consciousness wherein the word of Truth (Paul) enters and does a much needed (pressing, meaning urgent) cleansing and purifying; thus error is diminished (curtailing)

and the individual is made ready for the next step, which is signified by Chios, where Paul went from Mitylene. Chios means open, and is representative of an open, unobstructed attitude of mind. (MBD/Mitylene).

3. *Samos*. The state of thought that Samos and Samothrace symbolize is intellectual rather than spiritual, since their location is in the Grecian Archipelago and Greece refers to the intellect. (MBD/Samothrace)

4. *Trogyllium*. An analyzing and assimilating of ideas; a conscious taking on of substance (eating place, place of fruits, nuts, vegetables), by means of the word of Truth, represented here by Paul. (MBD/Trogyllium)

5. *Miletus*. Miletus, meaning red, scarlet, refers to the seemingly material life in the organism of the individual. Purest wool, from the fact that only the purest of wool could take the scarlet dye, points to the true substance of life as lying back of and existing in the apparently material and corruptible, which seem to be in the ascendancy at this stage of individual unfoldment: "Trophimus I left at Miletus sick," Paul said (II Tim. 4:20). (MBD/Miletus)

Paul Speaks to the Ephesian Elders

^{20:17} From Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to himself the elders of the assembly. ^{20:18} When they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you all the time, ^{20:19} serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears, and with trials which happened to me by the plots of the Jews; ^{20:20} how I didn't shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, teaching you publicly and from house to house, ^{20:21} testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus. [69] ^{20:22} Now, behold, I go bound by the Spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there; ^{20:23} except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions wait for me. ^{20:24} But these things don't count; ^{20:25} nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify to the Good News of the grace of God.

^{20:25} "Now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I went about preaching the Kingdom of God, will see my face no more. ^{20:26} Therefore I testify to you this day that I am clean from the blood of all men, ^{20:27} for I didn't shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. ^{20:28} Take heed, therefore, to yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the assembly of the Lord and [70] God which he purchased with his own blood. ^{20:29} For I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will enter in among you, ^{20:30} not sparing the flock. Men will arise from among your own selves, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ^{20:31} Therefore watch, remembering that for a period of three years I didn't cease to admonish everyone night and day with tears. ^{20:32} Now, brothers, [71] I entrust you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build up, and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ^{20:33} I coveted no one's silver, or gold, or clothing. ^{20:34} You yourselves know

that these hands served my necessities, ^{20:35} and those who were with me. In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring you ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" ^{20:36}

^{20:36} When he had spoken these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ^{20:37} They all wept a lot, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, ^{20:38} sorrowing most of all because of the word which he had spoken, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

1. *the elders of the assembly.* The elders signify the intelligent, directive powers of the spiritual self. Paul's calling the elders together represents a drawing together in conscious unity of the spiritual powers, to the end that peace and harmony may be established in the life.

2. *how I was with you all the time.* Paul reminds the elders of the consistency of his life among them which represents the creative word of Truth that is always present when the directive powers are assembled.

3. *these things don't count.* Self-control is a most necessary part of our spiritual education, and not only that self-control which shows as outward calmness and dispassion, but also control of our very thoughts and feelings, so that with Paul, we can truly say from our heart, "None of these things move me. (KJV)" (1892 Unity Tract, *None of These Things Move Me*, Annie Rix Militz)

4. *vicious wolves will enter in among you.* One should never put fear into the mind of another, or mention impending danger, without also emphasizing the saving power of God. After telling his followers that grievous wolves would enter the flock and that even among themselves men would arise, speaking perverse things, he said, "I entrust you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build up, and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

5. *You yourselves know that these hands served my necessities.* Paul was a tentmaker and labored at his trade to support himself and companions, while he preached the Gospel to the people. We think that Paul should have taught Truth and looked to God for his supply and support without laboring with his hands.

6. *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* This quotation which Paul attributes to Jesus is nowhere else recorded in the Scriptures.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[68] v20:8. TR reads "they" instead of "we"

[69] v20:21. TR adds "Christ"

[70] v20:28. TR, NU omit "the Lord and"

[71] v20:32. The word for "brothers" here and where the context allows may also be correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

ACTS 21

Paul's Journey to Jerusalem¹

^{21:1} When it happened that we had parted from them and had set sail, we came with a straight course to Cos,² and the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. ^{21:2} Having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard, and set sail. ^{21:3} When we had come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left hand, we sailed to Syria, and landed at Tyre, for there the ship was to unload her cargo. ^{21:4} Having found disciples, we stayed there seven days. These said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. ^{21:5} When it happened that we had accomplished the days, we departed and went on our journey. They all, with wives and children, brought us on our way until we were out of the city. Kneeling down on the beach, we prayed. ^{21:6} After saying goodbye to each other, we went on board the ship, and they returned home again.

^{21:7} When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais. We greeted the brothers, and stayed with them one day. ^{21:8} On the next day, we, who were Paul's companions, departed, and came to Caesarea.

We entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. ^{21:9} Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. ^{21:10} As we stayed there some days, a certain prophet named Agabus³ came down from Judea. ^{21:11} Coming to us, and taking Paul's belt, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit: 'So will the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this

belt, and will deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

^{21:12} When we heard these things, both we and they of that place begged him not to go up to Jerusalem. ^{21:13} Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

^{21:14} When he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The Lord's will be done."

^{21:15} After these days we took up our baggage and went up to Jerusalem.⁴ ^{21:16} Some of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us, bringing one Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we would stay.

1. *Paul's Journey to Jerusalem.* The central truth of today's lesson is the going to Jerusalem at all hazards. Jerusalem is the center of the spiritual consciousness, the very acme of high perception. It requires more than ordinary courage for the apostle of Jesus Christ, the *I Am*, to go up to Jerusalem. We sometimes call it making "high statements." We know that we shall have to prove our words and that old states of consciousness both within and without will rise up in arms against us.

2. *Cos, Rhodes, Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Caesarea.* Each of these places symbolizes certain pleasant phases of consciousness in man who is seeking the highest; but they are not, strictly speaking, on the spiritual plane. Cos means summit; Rhodes, roses; Phoenicia, land of palm trees; Cyprus, fairness; Caesarea, dominant world power.

3. *Agabus.* Agabus symbolizes that in us which perceives the different forces working in the soul, at

what point of contact these forces are liable to clash, and the evident outcome. This is known in man's consciousness as the power of prophecy.

4. *We took up our baggage and went up to Jerusalem.* Jerusalem is the faculty of love in con-

sciousness, and also the "place of peace." As Jerusalem often was and still continues to be a center of turmoil and strife, so the heart of man often is a stranger to the peace that under divine law is his for the claiming. "Taking up our baggage and going to Jerusalem" is something we all need to do ;).

Paul Visits James at Jerusalem

^{21:17} When we had come to Jerusalem, the brothers received us gladly. ^{21:18} The day following, Paul went in with us to James; and all the elders were present. ^{21:19} When he had greeted them, he reported one by one the things which God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry. ^{21:20} They, when they heard it, glorified God. They said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law. ^{21:21} They have been informed about you, that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children neither to walk after the customs. ^{21:22} What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. ^{21:23} Therefore do what we tell you. We have four men who have taken a vow. ^{21:24} Take them, and purify yourself with them, and pay their expenses for them, that they may shave their heads. Then all will know that there is no truth in the things that they have been informed about you, but that you yourself also walk keeping the law. ^{21:25} But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we

have written our decision ² that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from food offered to idols, from blood, from strangled things, and from sexual immorality." ^{21:26} Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purified himself and went with them into the temple, declaring the fulfillment of the days of purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them.

1. *[Paul] reported one by one the things which God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry.* This is the idea which has seized Paul, and he is determined to reconcile Jew and Gentile. This is the object of his journey to Jerusalem. In applying this to our individual consciousness we find that there is a separation between our religious thoughts and our worldly thoughts. The Jews represent the religious thoughts, and the Gentiles the worldly thoughts.

2. *concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written our decision.* The bread Truth of the Holy Spirit enters the mind and begins to break down this wall of separation between the religious thoughts and the worldly thoughts. It perceives that the principles involved in the Fatherhood of God must go to the uttermost parts of the mind and body and unify them in the Spirit.

Paul Arrested in the Temple

^{21:27} When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, ¹ when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude and laid hands on him, ^{21:28} crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place. Moreover, he also brought Greeks into the temple, and has defiled this holy place!" ^{21:29} For they had seen Trophimus, the Ephesian, with him in the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

^{21:30} All the city was moved, and the people ran together. They seized Paul and

dragged him out of the temple. ² Immediately the doors were shut. ^{21:31} As they were trying to kill him, news came up to the commanding officer of the regiment that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. ^{21:32} Immediately he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. They, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, stopped beating Paul. ^{21:33} Then the commanding officer came near, arrested him, commanded him to be bound with two chains, ³ and inquired who he was and what he had done. ^{21:34} Some shouted one thing, and some another, among the crowd. When he couldn't find out the truth because of the

noise, he commanded him to be brought into the barracks.

^{21:35} When he came to the stairs, it happened that he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd; ^{21:36} for the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, "Away with him!"⁴

1. *Jews from Asia.* The Jews from Asia represent man's inmost and most tenaciously held religious convictions. The "people" are symbols of our thoughts, either original or gleaned from random outside sources. The law is another name for the worldly authority that we acknowledge as the guide of our actions.

2. *They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple.* The sense man shuts Truth out of his body consciousness by refusing to see that desire may be made a spiritual force.

3. *two chains.* The first chain is the chain of identity. Through the I AM man identifies himself with what he thinks is true of him, but which is often true only in appearance. The sense man therefore cherishes mistaken identity. The second chain is that of past action or experience (what man has done). Both these things bind man to temporal things.

4. *Away with him!* In this process the Truth, represented by Paul, meets with opposing thoughts from many directions. Jerusalem is the citadel of crystallized thoughts about religious matters, and the Truth must enter into it and speak the word that frees. The many warnings Paul received of obstacles to be overcome did not deter him from going right forward. When we see danger and allow it to terrify us, we are not yet equal to the highest spiritual outpouring of power. When we are warned of danger, and are not deterred nor fearful, but take advantage of the warning to be wary, then we are sure to win.

Paul Defends Himself

^{21:37} As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he asked the commanding officer, "May I speak to you?" He said, "Do you know Greek?" ^{21:38} Aren't you then the Egyptian, who before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins?"

^{21:39} But Paul said, "I am a Jew,¹ from Tarsus in Cilicia,² a citizen of no insignificant city. I beg you, allow me to speak to the people."³

^{21:40} When he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with his hand to the people. When there was a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, saying,

1. *I am a Jew.* In this statement we see an acknowledgment that faith is essentially a spiritual, not a material, faculty; that its rightful function is to transform material existence into a higher and more enduring quality of life.

2. *from Tarsus in Cilicia.* A city represents an aggregation of thoughts. Paul identified himself with his city as well as with his nation. Tarsus ("tranquillity," "pleasantness") represents a group of thoughts of an intellectual character in our consciousness, a group that blends with the more deeply inspirational phase of understanding that is spiritual.

3. *allow me to speak to the people.* Paul was not wise. Religious partisans do not argue, they dogmatize. What they have been taught is their authority and they are not open to reason or logic. Hence, to argue with one bound mentally in some religious sect creates antagonism and anger, and history proves that the heretic was never allowed to argue his case; his destruction was instantly demanded.

ACTS 22

Paul Defends Himself (continued)

^{22:1} "Brothers and fathers, listen to the defense which I now make to you." punished.

^{22:2} When they heard that he spoke to them in the Hebrew language,^① they were even more quiet. He said, ^{22:3} "I am indeed a Jew,^② born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as you all are this day. ^{22:4} I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. ^{22:5} As also the high priest and all the council of the elders testify, from whom also I received letters to the brothers, and traveled to Damascus to bring them also who were there to Jerusalem in bonds to be

1. *Hebrew language.* Paul's listeners were Hebrews, a name representing a passing over, from the purely physical or material thought to a higher conception of religious truth. Though still under the law of sin and death, they were nevertheless spiritually developed enough to be responsive to the word of Truth in man's mind.

2. *I am indeed a Jew.* Paul was born a Jew, which means that the word of Truth is innately connected with the religious instinct in man. He was also born a Roman, which considered in connection with his imprisonment in Rome, shows that the will usurps complete authority when it is allowed to control man. But Paul was converted to the way of the Christ, thus symbolizing man's voluntary allegiance to Truth over and above all compulsory loyalties.

Paul Tells of His Conversion

^{22:6} It happened that, as I made my journey, and came close to Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from the sky a great light around me.^① ^{22:7} I fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'^② ^{22:8} I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute.'

^{22:9} "Those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they didn't understand the voice of him who spoke to me. ^{22:10} I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' The Lord said to me, 'Arise, and go into Damascus. There you will be told about all things which are appointed for you to do.' ^{22:11} When I couldn't see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus. ^{22:12} One Ananias,^③ a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews who lived in Damascus, ^{22:13} came to me, and standing by me said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!'^④ In that very hour I looked up at him. ^{22:14} He said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know his

will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. ^{22:15} For you will be a witness for him to all men of what you have seen and heard. ^{22:16} Now why do you wait? Arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

1. *a great light around me.* Saul received a spiritual baptism like that received by the disciples who were in the upper room in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. This spiritual baptism was so intense that he could not assimilate the tremendous spiritual energy that had come to him.

2. *Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?* The word "Saul" means "wished" or "affirmed"; in one of its phases it represents activity of mind called the will. In man's evolution, King Saul, with his boundless ambition and erratic judgment, represents the last stand of the human will. An almost exact parallel is found in the life of Saul of Tarsus.

3. *Ananias.* The Lord sent him a healer in the person of Ananias, who laid hands on him and helped him to equalize the spiritual energy which had descended suddenly into his soul and his body. Similar experiences are quite common in this day among Truth workers; often they find it necessary to help one another to master their higher forces.

4. *Brother Saul, receive your sight!* The vision was a vision only to those who accompanied Saul; to

Saul it was a real occurrence. Jesus actually talked to him out of the fourth dimension or out of what modern scientists call the luminiferous ether.

Paul Sent to the Gentiles

^{22:17} "It happened that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance, ^{22:18} and saw him saying to me, 'Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not receive testimony concerning me from you.' ^{22:19} I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those who believed in you. ^{22:20} When the blood of Stephen, your witness, was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting to his death, and guarding the cloaks of those who

killed him.'

^{22:21} "He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you out far from here to the Gentiles.'" ¹

1. *Depart, for I will send you out far from here to the Gentiles.* Stephen was zealous for the new religion; Saul was equally zealous for the old. The zeal of Saul carried him away to other lands. On the road he meditated and opened up the superman in himself and was converted to Christianity.

Paul and the Roman Tribune

^{22:22} They listened to him until he said that; then they lifted up their voice, and said, "Rid the earth of this fellow, for he isn't fit to live!" ¹

^{22:23} As they cried out, and threw off their cloaks, and threw dust into the air, ^{22:24} the commanding officer commanded him to be brought into the barracks, ordering him to be examined by scourging, that he might know for what crime they shouted against him like that. ² ^{22:25} When they had tied him up with thongs, Paul asked the centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and not found guilty?"

^{22:26} When the centurion heard it, he went to the commanding officer and told him, "Watch what you are about to do, for this man is a Roman!"

^{22:27} The commanding officer came and asked him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?"

He said, "Yes."

^{22:28} The commanding officer answered, "I bought my citizenship for a great price."

Paul said, "But I was born a Roman."

^{22:29} Immediately those who were about to examine him departed from him, and the commanding officer also was afraid when he realized that he was a Roman, because he had bound him.

1. *Rid the earth of this fellow, for he isn't fit to live!* Paul had been high in Jewish ecclesiastical circles and he took it for granted that his friends would readily believe him. The organized Christian institutions of today do not accept special spiritual revelations from their followers.

2. *he might know for what crime they shouted against him like that.* The universal tendency of all ideas in the mind of man is toward crystallization. Our religious institutions represent the crystallization of former spiritual revelations.

Paul before the Council


^{22:30} But on the next day, desiring to know the truth about why he was accused by the Jews, he freed him from the bonds, and commanded the chief priests ¹ and all the council ² to come together, and brought

Paul down and set him before them.

1. *the chief priests* The descendants of Levi represent thoughts that spring from and belong to the

love faculty in individual consciousness. As ministers and priests in the Temple and in the Temple worship they signify our natural religious tendencies, not necessarily spiritual. (MBD/Levites)

2. *the council*. The whole consciousness (MBD/council).

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

ACTS 23

Paul before the Council (continued)

^{23:1} Paul, looking steadfastly at the council, said, "Brothers, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day."

^{23:2} The high priest, Ananias,¹ commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.

^{23:3} Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit to judge me according to the law, and command me to be struck contrary to the law?"

^{23:4} Those who stood by said, "Do you malign God's high priest?"

^{23:5} Paul said, "I didn't know, brothers, that he was high priest. For it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"^[72] ^{23:6} But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men and brothers, I am a Pharisee,² a son of Pharisees. Concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!"

^{23:7} When he had said this, an argument arose between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. ^{23:8} For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess all of these. ^{23:9} A great clamor arose, and some of the scribes of the Pharisees part stood up, and contended, saying, "We find no evil in this man. But if a spirit or angel has spoken to him, let's not

fight against God!"

^{23:10} When a great argument arose, the commanding officer, fearing that Paul would be torn in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks.

^{23:11} The following night, the Lord stood by him, and said, "Cheer up, Paul, for as you have testified about me at Jerusalem, so you must testify also at Rome."

1. *Ananias*. The high priest Ananias symbolizes a still different phase of character in man. He represents the hypocrisy that inheres in the intellectual, religious, ruling mind in man when it is governed by the letter of the word, outer forms, and ceremonies, instead of being given over to real spiritual Truth (MBD/Ananias).

2. *I am a Pharisee*. You will have more trouble with your sectarian thoughts (Pharisees and chief priests) than with all others. They are very close to the spiritual realm in your consciousness, and therefore more powerful than the more material thoughts (John 7:32). The old-established religious thoughts belonging to the intellectual domain never miss an opportunity to reason with and to dispute every true, spiritual idea that is presented to the consciousness. This is symbolized by the Pharisees, who would keep only the letter of the law. When the spirit of the law is taught it overthrows the outer forms and ceremonies that belong to the letter; so they who are strict in observing the letter usually oppose the spirit of the law. The Truth that the higher self is always bringing to every part of the individual is missed by the pharisaical phase of consciousness.

The Plot to Kill Paul

^{23:12} When it was day, some of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. ^{23:13} There were more than forty people who had made this conspiracy. ^{23:14} They came to the chief priests and the elders, and said, "We have bound ourselves under a great curse, to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. ^{23:15} Now therefore, you with the council inform the commanding officer that he should bring him down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to judge his case more exactly. We are ready to kill him before he comes near."

^{23:16} But Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, ^{23:17} and he came and entered into the barracks and told Paul. ^{23:17} Paul summoned one of the centurions, and said, "Bring this young man to the commanding officer, for he has something to tell him."

^{23:18} So he took him, and brought him to the commanding officer, and said, "Paul, the prisoner, summoned me and asked me to bring this young man to you, who has something to tell you."

^{23:19} The commanding officer took him by the hand, and going aside, asked him privately, "What is it that you have to tell me?"

^{23:20} He said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though intending to inquire somewhat more accurately concerning him.

^{23:21} Therefore don't yield to them, for more than forty men lie in wait for him, who have bound themselves under a curse neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him. Now they are ready, looking for the promise from you." ^{23:22} So the commanding officer let the young man go, charging him, "Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me."

1. But Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait. Paul was seemingly surrounded by enemies who were banded together for the purpose of killing him, but there was a higher power working for his safety. He may have made mistakes, and he may have been obstinate in his insistence upon going to Jerusalem in the face of the warning of the Holy Spirit, but this did not prevent the Lord from protecting him.

Paul Sent to Felix the Governor

^{23:23} He called to himself two of the centurions, and said, "Prepare two hundred soldiers to go as far as Caesarea, with seventy horsemen, and two hundred men armed with spears, at the third hour of the night[73]." ^{23:24} He asked them to provide animals, that they might set Paul on one, and bring him safely to Felix the governor. ^{23:25} He wrote a letter like this:

^{23:26} "Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor Felix: Greetings.


^{23:27} "This man was seized by the Jews, and was about to be killed by them, when I came with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. ^{23:28} Desiring to know the cause why they accused him, I brought him down to their council. ^{23:29} I found him to be accused about questions of their law, but not to be charged

with anything worthy of death or of imprisonment. ^{23:30} When I was told that the Jews lay in wait for the man, I sent him to you immediately, charging his accusers also to bring their accusations against him before you. Farewell."

^{23:31} So the soldiers, carrying out their orders, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. ^{23:32} But on the next day they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the barracks. ^{23:33} When they came to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. ^{23:34} When the governor had read it, he asked what province he was from. When he understood that he was from Cilicia, he said, ^{23:35} "I will hear you fully when your accusers also arrive." He commanded that he be kept in Herod's palace.

1. *bring him safely to Felix the governor* Paul wanted to go to Rome to preach the Truth, and the conspiracy of the Jews to kill him was paving the way for the fulfillment of that desire. When you are following the Spirit and seeking to do the will of the Lord to the very best of your ability, count all

your experiences as stepping-stones to your good. The central truth of this lesson is that what we are loyal to in the heart, or within, will finally make itself manifest in the without.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[72] v23:5. Exodus 22:28

[73] v23:23. about 9:00 PM

ACTS 24

Paul before Felix at Caesarea

^{24:1} After five days, the high priest, Ananias,¹ came down with certain elders² and an orator, one Tertullus.³ They informed the governor against Paul. ^{24:2} When he was called, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, "Seeing that by you we enjoy much peace, and that excellent measures are coming to this nation, ^{24:3} we accept it in all ways and in all places, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness. ^{24:4} But, that I don't delay you, I entreat you to bear with us and hear a few words. ^{24:5} For we have found this man to be a plague, an instigator of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ^{24:6} He even tried to profane the temple, and we arrested him. [74] ^{24:7} [75] ^{24:8} [76] By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him."

affirming that these things were so.

1. *Ananias*. Represents the hypocrisy that inheres in the intellectual, religious, ruling mind in man when it is governed by the letter of the word, outer forms, and ceremonies, instead of being given over to real spiritual Truth (MBD/Ananias).

2. *certain elders*. The assembling of elders signifies a drawing together in conscious unity of all the intelligent directive powers of the spiritual self, to the standard of peace and harmony. This process may take place without the conscious mind's understanding its import. The whole consciousness is made up of objective and subjective thoughts and their results. Like a chemical solution, they go through changes on the subjective side that are observed in their outer appearance only, and but dimly understood. (MBD/elders)

3. *Tertullus*. Expression in an outer, sense way, and incited by the outer, established religious ideas of the intellect in man (diminutive of Tertius, little third, minor third, one who came with the elders of the Jews to testify against Paul (MBD/Tertullus).

^{24:9} The Jews also joined in the attack,

Paul's Defense before Felix

^{24:10} When the governor had beckoned to him to speak, Paul answered, "Because I know that you have been a judge of this nation for many years, I cheerfully make my defense,¹ ^{24:11} seeing that you can recognize that it is not more than twelve days since I

went up to worship at Jerusalem. ^{24:12} In the temple they didn't find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the synagogues, or in the city. ^{24:13} Nor can they prove to you the things of which they now accuse me. ^{24:14} But this I confess to you,

that after the Way, which they call a sect, so I serve the God of our fathers,² believing all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets;^{24:15} having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.^{24:16} Herein I also practice always having a conscience void of offense toward God and men.^{24:17} Now after some years, I came to bring gifts for the needy to my nation, and offerings;^{24:18} amid which certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, not with a mob, nor with turmoil.^{24:19} They ought to have been here before you, and to make accusation, if they had anything against me.^{24:20} Or else let these men themselves say what injustice they found in me when I stood before the council,^{24:21} unless it is for this one thing that I cried standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged before you today!'

^{24:22} But Felix, having more exact knowledge concerning the Way,³ deferred them, saying, "When Lysias, the commanding officer, comes down, I will

decide your case."^{24:23} He ordered the centurion that Paul should be kept in custody, and should have some privileges, and not to forbid any of his friends to serve him or to visit him.

1. *I cheerfully make my defense.* It is absolutely impossible for man to be set free from the hard conditions that bind him by appealing to temporal helps. All the ills that beset us have their origin in the mind. There is no other source, and we must go to that source to make permanent adjustment. If we are not getting our rights, it is because we are not declaring God our advocate. Mind moves matter and the moulding power of the world will be found only in mind.

2. *after the Way ... so I serve the God of our fathers.* [Paul's defense appealed to the Law and the Prophets instead of to the living Christ]. When we have grasped the idea that Christ lives here and now, and only waits our acknowledgment to make himself manifest in our lives, we have taken that first step in the demonstration. Every spiritual Demonstration depends upon our acknowledgment of the Christ as the real self. When we acknowledge ourselves to be anything less than spiritually perfect, we are taking side with the adversary and we will surely find the Christ light growing dimmer and dimmer.


3. *the Way.* The I AM in man, the open door to the kingdom of God. See Christ and Jesus. (RW/Way)

Paul Held in Custody

^{24:24} But after some days, Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus.^{24:25} As he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was terrified,¹ and answered, "Go your way for this time, and when it is convenient for me, I will summon you."^{24:26} Meanwhile, he also hoped that money would be given to him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore also he sent for him more often, and talked with him.^{24:27} But when two years were fulfilled, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and desiring to gain favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul in bonds.²

1. *Felix was terrified.* Felix represents the twin faculties, the will and the understanding, functioning in mortal consciousness. Paul's words of Truth did not move the relaxation of the will, but disturbed the understanding, which was "terrified."

2. *Felix left Paul in bonds.* In claiming the protection of Roman citizenship, when he was arrested, Paul found the truth here stated exemplified in his experience. He gave his case to the Romans and took it out of the hands of God. The result of his servitude is shown in the years of imprisonment which he had to endure. When he and Silas were in prison and prayed and sang psalms, the doors were opened and they were immediately set free. That was wholehearted dependence, and the results show what powerful agencies were brought to bear as a result of that concentration.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[74] v24:6. TR adds "We wanted to judge him according to our law,"

[75] v24:7. TR adds "but the commanding officer, Lysias, came by and with great violence

took him out of our hands,"

[76] v24:8. TR adds "commanding his accusers to come to you."

ACTS 25

Paul Appeals to the Emperor

^{25:1} Festus therefore, having come into the province, after three days went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. ^{25:2} Then the high priest and the principal men of the Jews informed him against Paul, and they begged him, ^{25:3} asking a favor against him, that he would summon him to Jerusalem; plotting to kill him on the way. ^{25:4} However Festus answered that Paul should be kept in custody at Caesarea, and that he himself was about to depart shortly. ^{25:5} "Let them therefore," said he, "that are in power among you go down with me, and if there is anything wrong in the man, let them accuse him."

^{25:6} When he had stayed among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he sat on the judgment seat, and commanded Paul to be brought. ^{25:7} When he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing against him many and grievous charges which they could not prove, ^{25:8} while he said in his defense, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar, have I sinned at all."

^{25:9} But Festus, desiring to gain favor with the Jews, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem, and be judged by me there concerning these things?"

^{25:10} But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be

tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also know very well. ^{25:11} For if I have done wrong, and have committed anything worthy of death, I don't refuse to die; but if none of those things is true that they accuse me of, no one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar!"¹

^{25:12} Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you shall go."²

1. *I appeal to Caesar!* You must not look to Caesar for justification. "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee" (Isaiah 26:3). The Spirit will surely take care of you in any contingency. You have nothing to fear: for you have learned that "there is no evil." To "appeal unto Caesar" is to forget this basic doctrine of your faith. You, who are "in the world but not of it," should not court its favor and approbation. Such a course is inconsistent with your high calling and trust.

2. *You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you shall go.* In true metaphysics all actors are to be found within; and therefore this lesson is the picturing under the symbology of history, of the struggle going on within your own breast, as you undertake to carry out the principles of Christ in opposition to your old religious thought and that of the world. The old material consciousness will continue to assert itself, until a higher, the Spiritual consciousness, is established. So great and venomous is the hostility of the old religious thought that you take umbrage under the thought as the less of two evils; this is "appealing unto Caesar," which is not the correct thing to do. But the Christian should ever make his appeal to the Spirit, which is always a "very present help in every time of need."

Festus Consults King Agrippa

^{25:13} Now when some days had passed, Agrippa the King and Bernice arrived at Caesarea, and greeted Festus. ^{25:14} As he stayed there many days, Festus laid Paul's

case before the king, saying, "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix; ^{25:15} about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews

informed me, asking for a sentence against him. ^{25:16} To whom I answered that it is not the custom of the Romans to give up any man to destruction, before the accused has met the accusers face to face, and has had opportunity to make his defense concerning the matter laid against him. ^{25:17} When therefore they had come together here, I didn't delay, but on the next day sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought. ^{25:18} Concerning whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought no charge of such things as I supposed; ^{25:19} but had certain questions against him about their own religion, and about one Jesus, who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. ^{25:20} Being perplexed how to inquire concerning these things, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters. ^{25:21} But when

Paul had appealed to be kept for the decision of the emperor, I commanded him to be kept until I could send him to Caesar."

^{25:22} Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself."

"Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."


1. *whom Paul affirmed to be alive.* The Jews represent the religious thoughts that crystallize in certain fixed forms. Crystallization of beliefs permits no new ideas to enter in but rejects them as a matter of course. The idea that fulfillment [resurrection] had actually come was too good to accept as true, and the Jews preferred to keep fulfillment indefinitely in the future. The resurrection from the dead strained their faith to the breaking point.

Paul Brought before Agrippa

^{25:23} So on the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and they had entered into the place of hearing with the commanding officers and principal men of the city, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. ^{25:24} Festus said, ^{25:25} "King Agrippa, and all men who are here present with us, you see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews petitioned me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. ^{25:25} But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and as he himself appealed to the emperor I determined to send him. ^{25:26} Of whom I have no certain thing to write to my lord. Therefore I have brought him

forth before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, that, after examination, I may have something to write. ^{25:27} For it seems to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not to also specify the charges against him."

1. *Festus said.* Paul imprisoned at Caesarea symbolizes Truth confined to the intellect. It seems paradoxical to say that so great and powerful a thing as Truth can be confined or hampered by so small and weak a thing as the intellect, yet observation and experience proves that it can. In this connection we should distinguish between a Statement of Truth, which Paul represents, and the Whole Truth, which is the Holy Ghost. The statement of Truth goes before and opens the mind for the advent of the larger realization to follow.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

ACTS 26

Paul Defends Himself before Agrippa

^{26:1} Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak for yourself."

Then Paul stretched out his hand, and made his defense. ^{26:2} "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, that I am to make my defense

before you this day¹ concerning all the things that I am accused by the Jews,^{26:3} especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently.

^{26:4} "Indeed, all the Jews know my way of life from my youth up, which was from the beginning among my own nation and at Jerusalem;^{26:5} having known me from the first, if they are willing to testify, that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.^{26:6} Now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers,^{26:7} which our twelve tribes, earnestly serving night and day, hope to attain. Concerning this hope I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa!^{26:8} Why is it judged incredible with you, if God does raise the dead?

^{26:9} "I myself most certainly thought that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.^{26:10} This I also did in Jerusalem. I both shut up many of the

saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them.^{26:11} Punishing them often in all the synagogues, I tried to make them blaspheme. Being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

1. *I think myself happy ... that I am to make my defense before you this day.* Why was Saul inclined to be argumentative and contentious? Because his zeal, which was great, was divorced from spiritual understanding. He identified himself with the Pharisees, who represent the external forms of faith in contrast with the essence of faith itself, namely the Spirit of truth.

2. *Jesus of Nazareth.* The metaphysical meaning of the name Jesus of Nazareth means "offshoot, guarded; defended," and the name Jesus means "Saviour, Deliverer." Jesus is the Saviour, and the Christ is the I AM in man. The I AM guards and defends the common everyday life of man, until it takes on the likeness and substance of spiritual truth and saves man from the disillusionment and frustrations that he experiences in sense consciousness

Paul Tells of His Conversion¹

^{26:12} "Whereupon as I traveled to Damascus with the authority and commission from the chief priests,^{26:13} at noon, O King, I saw on the way a light from the sky, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who traveled with me.^{26:14} When we had all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'² It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'³

^{26:15} "I said, 'Who are you, Lord?'

"He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.'^{26:16} But arise, and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you a servant and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and of the things which I will reveal to you;⁴^{26:17} delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you,^{26:18} to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive

remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

1. See Acts 9:1

2. *Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?* Is it reasonable to teach that Jesus spoke to Paul out of the heavens as one personality speaks to another? Jesus lives in the ether, which is an interpenetrating, radiant realm of substance, more rarefied than the earth or its atmosphere, yet which has real existence. Jesus has manifested Himself to His followers many times from this kingdom of the heavens, and it is quite reasonable to believe that He spoke to Paul as stated in the Scripture.

3. *kick against the goads.* Zeal for God was the "goad" against which Saul was kicking, a zeal that reacted upon him later when, in preaching Christ, he was persecuted by the Jews as relentlessly as he had persecuted others.

4. *"But arise, and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you a servant (minister, ASV) and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and of the things which I will reveal to you."* Catherine Ponder writes this passage in the ASV inspired her to become a minister. *A Prosperity Love Story* p.38

Paul Tells of His Preaching

^{26:19} "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ^{26:20} but declared first to them of Damascus, at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance. ^{26:21} For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple, and tried to kill me. ^{26:22} Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would happen, ^{26:23} how the Christ must suffer, and how, by the resurrection of the

dead, he would be first to proclaim light both to these people and to the Gentiles."

1. *I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.* Does the will have a part in effecting the transformation? Yes, the change is a voluntary one. No one is transformed against his will. Saul's conversion seems to have been an exception to this rule. Was it actually so? Although it seemed not to be so, Saul's conversion was voluntary. As soon as he saw the light and heard the voice of Jesus, he acknowledged the authority of the Speaker by his words, "Who art thou, Lord?" His willingness to obey equaled his perception of his Lord.

Paul Appeals to Agrippa to Believe

^{26:24} As he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are crazy! ^{26:25} Your great learning is driving you insane!"

^{26:25} But he said, "I am not crazy, most excellent Festus, but boldly declare words of truth and reasonableness. ^{26:26} For the king knows of these things, to whom also I speak freely. For I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him, for this has not been done in a corner. ^{26:27} King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe."

^{26:28} Agrippa said to Paul, "With a little persuasion are you trying to make me a Christian?" ^{26:29}

^{26:29} Paul said, "I pray to God, that whether with little or with much, not only you, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these bonds."

^{26:30} The king rose up with the governor, and Bernice, and those who sat with them. ^{26:31} When they had withdrawn, they spoke one to another, saying, "This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds." ^{26:32}

Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar." ^{26:33}

1. *Paul, you are crazy!* When the illuminated Christian preaches the Gospel in demonstration of the Spirit, worldly wisdom calls it "madness" or "fanaticism." But "words of Truth" are "words of soberness," the very opposite of madness.

2. *Are you trying to make me a Christian?* As Festus represents the transient joys of the external life, his brother-in-law, Agrippa, shows the close association that this sort of pleasure has with pain. So long as we are enjoying ourselves in the sense life, our ears are usually dull to Truth: Festus was not moved by Paul's eloquent appeal. But pain brings us very close to an acceptance of the higher way: Agrippa was almost persuaded to believe. Most of those who are now studying Truth became interested because of an urgent need for physical healing, for release from inharmony. (MBD/Agrippa)

3. *This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.* We have spoken of Festus and Agrippa as representing worldly thought. In fact they are semi-religious and assume to have authority over the spiritual. If you "appeal unto Caesar" instead of Christ, you must remain bound in prison; you have not the consciousness of freedom. You may preach the gospel in Rome; but it will be under bondage. Sometimes Christians undertake to settle a church controversy by the courts. This is "appealing unto Caesar" and it never brings spiritual freedom, only spiritual bondage.

ACTS 27

Paul Sails for Rome

^{27:1} When it was determined that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion¹ named Julius, of the Augustan band. ^{27:2} Embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail to places on the coast of Asia, we put to sea; Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. ^{27:3} The next day, we touched at Sidon. Julius treated Paul kindly, and gave him permission to go to his friends and refresh himself. ^{27:4} Putting to sea from there, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. ^{27:5} When we had sailed across the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. ^{27:6} There the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy, and he put us on board. ^{27:7} When we had sailed slowly many days, and had come with difficulty opposite Cnidus, the wind not allowing us further, we sailed under the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone. ^{27:8} With difficulty sailing along it we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea.

^{27:9} When much time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous,² because the Fast had now already gone by, Paul admonished them, ^{27:10} and said to them, "Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo

and the ship, but also of our lives." ^{27:11} But the centurion gave more heed to the master and to the owner of the ship than to those things which were spoken by Paul. ^{27:12} Because the haven was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised going to sea from there, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, and winter there, which is a port of Crete, looking northeast and southeast.

1. *they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion.* Paul and Silas were released from prison on a former occasion by the angel of the Lord, and Peter had a similar experience. The Bible gives many examples of the interposition of the power of the Lord to set aside material bonds, when it is invoked. But it must be invoked. The law does not work unless man works it, or with his mind touches the button that sets going the machinery that does the work. If we lose faith in the higher law, or decide that it is expedient to adopt the lower, we get results according to the ability of the method under which we have placed ourselves.

2. *the voyage was now dangerous.* The illuminated Christian, who "dwells in the secret place of the Most High," dwells safely with a guarantee of immunity from everything that assails others, who know not God as their sure defense. But unless one finds the secret understanding of that "secret place" the manifestations of evil from an unfriendly environment may threaten and disturb him sometimes even more than the man of the world. For the world knows not your joys, therefore they think you are peculiar and fanatical.

The Storm at Sea

^{27:13} When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to shore. ^{27:14} But before long, a stormy wind beat down from shore,¹ which is called Euroclydon.[77] ^{27:15} When the ship was caught, and couldn't face the wind, we gave way to it, and were driven along. ^{27:16} Running under the lee of a small island called Claudia, we were able, with difficulty, to secure the boat. ^{27:17} After they had hoisted it up, they used cables to help reinforce the ship. Fearing that they would

run aground on the Syrtis sand bars, they lowered the sea anchor, and so were driven along. ^{27:18} As we labored exceedingly with the storm, the next day they began to throw things overboard.² ^{27:19} On the third day, they threw out the ship's tackle with their own hands. ^{27:20} When neither sun nor stars shone on us for many days, and no small storm pressed on us, all hope that we would be saved was now taken away.

^{27:21} When they had been long without food, Paul stood up in the middle of them,

and said, "Sirs, you should have listened to me, and not have set sail from Crete, and have gotten this injury and loss." ^{27:22} Now I exhort you to cheer up, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. ^{27:23} For there stood by me this night an angel, belonging to the God whose I am and whom I serve, ^{27:24} saying, 'Don't be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar. Behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.' ^{27:25} Therefore, sirs, cheer up! For I believe God, that it will be just as it has been spoken to me. ^{27:26} But we must run aground on a certain island." ³

^{27:27} But when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven back and forth in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors surmised that they were drawing near to some land. ^{27:28} They took soundings, and found twenty fathoms.[78] After a little while, they took soundings again, and found fifteen fathoms.[79] ^{27:29} Fearing that we would run aground on rocky ground, they let go four anchors from the stern, and wished for daylight. ^{27:30} As the sailors were trying to flee out of the ship, and had lowered the boat into the sea, pretending that they would lay out anchors from the bow, ^{27:31} Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these stay in the ship, you can't be saved." ^{27:32} Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat, and let it fall off.

^{27:33} While the day was coming on, Paul begged them all to take some food, saying, "This day is the fourteenth day that you wait and continue fasting, having taken nothing. ^{27:34} Therefore I beg you to take some food," ⁴

for this is for your safety; for not a hair will perish from any of your heads." ^{27:35} When he had said this, and had taken bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all, and he broke it, and began to eat. ^{27:36} Then they all cheered up, and they also took food. ^{27:37} In all, we were two hundred seventy-six souls on the ship. ^{27:38} When they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

1. *A stormy wind beat down from shore.* Having "appealed unto Caesar" at first you start out beautifully: "the south wind blows softly"; you "suppose you have attained your purpose." But, since you have committed your cause to the law of mortal thought, the merciless "euroclydon" is liable to swoop down on you any moment. You are threatened with the "lee shore" of "Claudia" on the one hand and the quicksands of "Syrtis" on the other. For self-preservation you seem to be "steering between the rock, Scylla, and the whirlpool, Charybdis."

2. *began to throw things overboard.* How the disobedient soul is tempest-tossed on the sea of mortal thought, while he looks unto Caesar for justice; until you loose your valuable cargo of Spiritual riches, the consciousness of abundant Good.

3. *But we must run aground on a certain island.* Fasting, if enforced, denotes denials. By your denial of hopelessness you are able to "stand forth in the midst," and make your strong affirmation of hope and cheer. Through the enlightening visions of truth you affirm hope and cheer and the indestructibility of life. You also affirm the destruction of the false reasoning that carries you to Caesar. For only after this "ship of Alexandria" (Egypt) is destroyed, can you save "all them that are with you." This leaves you stranded "on a certain island" of unreclaimed thought in the broad sea of mortal thought.

4. *take some food.* Symbolical of the affirmative state of mind. *Two hundred seventy-six souls* Mathematical accuracy, law, and order prevail in Spirit.

The Shipwreck


^{27:39} When it was day, they didn't recognize the land, ¹ but they noticed a certain bay with a beach, and they decided to try to drive the ship onto it. ^{27:40} Casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea, at the same time untying the rudder ropes. Hoisting up the foresail to the wind, they made for the beach. ² ^{27:41} But coming to a place where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground. The bow struck and remained immovable, but the stern began to break up by the violence of the waves.

^{27:42} The soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, so that none of them would swim out and escape. ^{27:43} But the centurion, desiring to save Paul, stopped them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should throw themselves overboard first to go toward the land; ^{27:44} and the rest should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. So it happened that they all escaped safely to the land.

1. *they didn't recognize the land.* Day represents a certain degree of light or understanding which establishes one in a new state of consciousness with which he is not familiar.

2. *Anchors, rudder ropes, foresail wind, beach.* What is represented by casting off the anchors and leaving them in the sea, loosening the bands of the

rudder, hoisting up the foresail to the wind, and making for the beach? One who in time of stress and storm fulfills the law through affirmation and denial and begins to see his way out of trouble, should deny everything that anchors him to the old, and should loose every mental and material bond.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[77] v27:14. Or, "a northeaster."

[78] v27:28. 20 fathoms = 120 feet = 36.6 meters

[79] v27:28. 15 fathoms = 90 feet = 27.4 meters

ACTS 28

Paul on the Island of Malta

^{28:1} When we had escaped, then they^[80] learned that the island was called Malta.^①

^{28:2} The natives showed us uncommon kindness; for they kindled a fire, and received us all, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.^{28:3} But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand.^{28:4} When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said one to another, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped from the sea, yet Justice has not allowed to live."^{28:5} However he shook off the creature into the fire, and wasn't harmed.^{28:6} But they expected that he would have swollen or fallen down dead suddenly, but when they watched for a long time and saw nothing bad happen to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.^②

^{28:7} Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us, and courteously entertained us for three days.

^{28:8} It happened that the father of Publius lay sick of fever and dysentery. Paul entered in to him, prayed, and laying his hands on

him, healed him.^③ ^{28:9} Then when this was done, the rest also who had diseases in the island came, and were cured.^{28:10} They also honored us with many honors, and when we sailed, they put on board the things that we needed.

1. *Malta.* Malta refers to the sweetness (honey), joy, and agreeable, pleasant feeling that are sensed deeply by the individual when in his overcoming he has experienced some great deliverance from error and has entered into the peace, content, and satisfaction that follow such an experience in overcoming. (MBD/Melita)

2. *They ... said that he was a god.* The inhabitants of the island supposed of course that the poison of the viper that fastened upon Paul's hand would soon produce the usual results, and their surprise was great, when he was not in the least harmed. They concluded that he was a god. This conclusion is almost identical with that of modern Christians. They tell us that it was a miraculous intervention of God. Instead of inquiring into the state of mind and body, which would cause a follower of Jesus to have power to heal himself and others, they rest in easy ignorance and say; "miraculous," "one of the gods."

3. *Paul ... healed him.* There is no miracle connected with this ability in man to overcome negative conditions. We all possess powers that we know not of, and we will always remain in ignorance of them, until we are willing to learn the law by which they are brought into expression. The Devil is an

assumed name; his real cognomen is "Ignorant Personality." This worthy invents names for things he does not understand and good people fall into his trap. He invented "miraculous" and said it designated what God did by special intervention, and what man could not understand. This is a great lie. God never performed a miracle. God does all his works

according to law. The universe would be a chaos of contending elements if God should depart from the uniform law in its control. Then whatever has been done by any man at any time can be done now.

Paul Arrives at Rome

^{28:11} After three months, we set sail in a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the island, whose sign was "The Twin Brothers."¹ ^{28:12} Touching at Syracuse, we stayed there three days. ^{28:13} From there we circled around and arrived at Rhegium. After one day, a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli, ^{28:14} where we found brothers,^[81] and were entreated to stay with them for seven days. So we came to Rome. ^{28:15} From there the brothers, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius and The Three Taverns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God, and took courage. ^{28:16} When we entered into Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard, but Paul was allowed to stay by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

1. "After three months", in the fullness of time, having by demonstration made helping friends of external mortal thought, you enter another "ship of Alexander", still "going to Caesar." A "ship", or a chariot, because it carries you along, is your reasoning; and a "ship of Alexandria" (Egyptian) is mortal-mind reasoning, which cannot carry you to Jerusalem, the Spiritual, but carries you to Rome, the worldly. To resort to human expedients for protection or healing is sailing in "a ship of Alexandria"; as in insuring against accidents, instead of realizing your absolute safety from accidents in the "secret place" of Being. Alas! How many sail in this mortal-mind ship "whose sign is the Twin Brothers," Good and Evil. These Twin Brothers, Realities (to mortal mind), are the controlling "sign" at the very prow of the ship of human reasoning. Such reasoning carries one farther and farther from Jerusalem, and nearer and nearer to Rome.

Paul and Jewish Leaders in Rome

^{28:17} It happened that after three days Paul called together those who were the leaders of the Jews.¹ When they had come together, he said to them, "I, brothers, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, still was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, ^{28:18} who, when they had examined me, desired to set me free, because there was no cause of death in me. ^{28:19} But when the Jews spoke against it, I was constrained to appeal to Caesar, not that I had anything about which to accuse my nation. ^{28:20} For this cause therefore I asked to see you and to speak with you. For because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain."

^{28:21} They said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor did any of the brothers come here and

report or speak any evil of you. ^{28:22} But we desire to hear from you what you think. For, as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against."

1. *Paul called together those who were the leaders of the Jews.* Paul called the Jews together at Rome and explained to them that he had, so far as he knew, done nothing against the religion of the fathers, "yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans." We often justify ourselves in this way when environments seem to hold us. We argue that we have been true to the science, yet we are bound hand and foot; why is this? We forget that we have appealed to Caesar in the beginning, and that the law which we then invoked is still working. But in spite of bonds, we go on declaring the Truth. The conservative element rebels against any expansion of the doctrine which it has accepted, and without investigation puts the customary hearsay stamp of counterfeit upon it: "this sect we know is everywhere spoken against".

Paul Preaches in Rome

^{28:23} When they had appointed him a day, many people came to him at his lodging. He explained to them, testifying about the Kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning until evening. ^{28:24} Some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. ①

^{28:25} When they didn't agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had spoken one word, "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah, the prophet, to our fathers," ^{28:26} saying,

'Go to this people, and say,
in hearing, you will hear,
but will in no way understand.
In seeing, you will see,
but will in no way perceive.


^{28:27} For this people's heart has grown callous.
Their ears are dull of hearing.
Their eyes they have closed.
Lest they should see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their heart,
and would turn again,
and I would heal them.' [82]

^{28:28} "Be it known therefore to you, that the salvation of God is sent to the nations. They will also listen."

^{28:29} When he had said these words, the Jews departed, having a great dispute among themselves.

^{28:30} Paul stayed two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who were coming to him, ^{28:31} preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, without hindrance.

1. *Some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.* Truth advances by degrees. Do not be discouraged if your work is slowly accepted. Go right on, as did Paul, teaching and preaching the Lord Jesus Christ, and the harvest will eventually come. The indomitable persistence of a single mind daily sending out its concentrated force, is said by occultists to be the most potent power in the world. If your philosophy is based upon Truth do not fear but what it will demonstrate, if you persist in affirming it, and refuse to dilute it for the sake of popular demand. Because people disbelieve is no sign that your statements are error. Every new statement of Truth has been hooted by the masses. What is accepted as true today in nearly every avenue of science and religion was ridiculed when it was set forth. When Jesus declared himself the Messiah, the Jews laughed at him in scorn. If Jesus in our day should tramp from town to town, and associate with the class that he did in Palestine, how many would believe in him? The church that owes its origin to his words would be the most sarcastic in its sneers, and the people that bow in adoration before the ideal pictures which art has produced, would laugh in his humble face. "Judge not according to appearances" (John 7:24).

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks

World English Bible Footnotes:

[80] v28:1. NU reads "we"

[81] v28:14. The word for "brothers" here and where context allows may also be correctly translated "brothers and sisters" or "siblings."

[82] v28:27. Isaiah 6:9-10

APPENDICES

**FILLMORE
STUDY
BIBLE**

The Acts of the Apostles

Metaphysically Interpreted

I've been in ministry for 22 years, using "Unity's basic textbook" for Sunday talks and dealing with daily life. Now I find there is a new study Bible coming that offers more than explanations of biblical terms and more than phrases of the Bible. The Acts of the Apostles shows what the upcoming Fillmore Study Bible New Testament promises to be: a tool that increases spiritual knowledge, enjoyment, and ability to be of service. I can't wait for the complete new Bible. – Rev. Prentiss John Davis, Independent Alliance of Ministers in Unity, President

The Fillmore Study Bible provides the reader with an introduction to metaphysical Bible interpretation by offering annotations and commentary from the works of Charles Fillmore and other metaphysical Christians that were published between 1895 and 1965.

Many Bible students learn their theology by reading the annotations and commentary of study Bibles. These study Bibles have a theological point of view, typically Catholic, Evangelical or Mainline Protestant. The Fillmore Study Bible makes this method of study available to the Metaphysical Christian.

The Fillmore Bible Society are collaborators who comb through dozens of metaphysical books written by Charles Fillmore and his students as well as over 70 years of Fillmore articles and sermons for metaphysical insights into the Bible.

Nearly all the New Testament writings are available online. Print editions of individual books, like this one, are being released as they become available. The society's focus in 2023 is publishing a complete New Testament edition and the start of selected Old Testament books. The society welcomes new collaborators in this ongoing project.



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