



Unlocked Literal Bible

Acts

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Acts

Chapter 1

¹ The former book I wrote, Theophilus, told all that Jesus began to do and to teach, ² until the day that he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.

³ After his suffering, he presented himself alive to them with many convincing proofs. For forty days he appeared to them, and he spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ When he was meeting together with them, he commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, about which, he said, "You heard from me ⁵ that John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit in a few days."

⁶ When they were assembled together they asked him, "Lord, is this the time you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has determined by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power, when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹ When the Lord Jesus had said these things, as they were looking up, he was raised up, and a cloud hid him from their eyes. ¹⁰ While they were looking intently to heaven as he went, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing.

¹¹ They said, "You men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into heaven? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, will return in the same manner as you saw him going into heaven."

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is near to Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. ¹³

When they arrived, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were staying. They were Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴ They were all united as one, as they diligently continued in prayer. Included were the women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers, about 120 people, and said, ¹⁶ "Brothers, it was necessary that the scripture should be fulfilled, that the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who guided the ones who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷ For he was one of us and received his share of the benefits of this ministry." ¹⁸ (Now this man bought a field with the earnings he received for his wickedness, and there he fell headfirst, and his body burst open, and all his intestines poured out. ¹⁹ All those living in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language "Akeldama," that is, "Field of Blood.") ²⁰ "For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

'Let his field be made desolate,

and do not let even one person live there';

'Let someone else take his position of leadership.'

²¹ It is necessary, therefore, that one of the men who accompanied us all the time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John to the day that he was taken up from us, must be a witness with us of his resurrection." ²³ They put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also named Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴ They prayed and said, "You, Lord, know the hearts of all people, so reveal which of these two is the one whom you have chosen ²⁵ to take

the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned away to go to his own place.”²⁶ They cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Chapter 2

¹ When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in the same place. ² Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ There appeared to them tongues like fire that were distributed, and they sat upon each one of them. ⁴ They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them to speak.

⁵ Now there were Jews who were living in Jerusalem, godly men, from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When this sound was heard, the multitude came together and was confused because everyone heard them speaking in his own language. ⁷ They were amazed and marveled; they said, “Really, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” ⁸ Why is it that we are hearing them, each in our own language in which we were born? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and those who live in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya toward Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our languages about the mighty works of God.” ¹² They were all amazed and perplexed; they said to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³ But others mocked and said, “They are full of new wine.”

¹⁴ But Peter stood with the eleven, raised his voice, and said to them, “Men of Judea

and all of you who live at Jerusalem, let this be known to you; pay attention to my words. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk as you assume, for it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ ‘It will be in the last days,’ God says,
‘I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and your daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,
and your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Also on my servants and my female servants in those days

I will pour out my Spirit, and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in the sky above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, fire, and vapor of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,

before the great and remarkable day of the Lord comes.

²¹ It will be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

²² Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man accredited to you by God by the mighty deeds, the wonders, and the signs which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over by God’s predetermined plan and foreknowledge; and you, by the hand of lawless men, put him to death by nailing him to a cross. ²⁴ But God raised him up, freeing him from the pains of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it. ²⁵ For David says about him,

‘I saw the Lord always before my face,

for he is beside my right hand so that I should not be moved.

²⁶ Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced.

Also, my flesh will live in certain hope.

²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,

neither will you allow your Holy One to see decay.

²⁸ You revealed to me the ways of life;

you will make me full of gladness with your face.'

²⁹ Brothers, I can speak to you confidently about the patriarch David, he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Therefore, he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn with an oath to him, that he would set one of the fruit of his body upon his throne. ³¹ He saw what was to happen in the future and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ,

'He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see decay.'

³² This Jesus—God raised him up, of which we all are witnesses. ³³ Therefore having been raised up to the right hand of God and having received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, he has poured out what you see and hear.

³⁴ For David did not ascend to the heaven, but he says,

'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand,

³⁵ until I make your enemies the stool for your feet.'"

³⁶ Therefore, let all the house of Israel certainly know that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were pierced in their hearts, and said to Pe-

ter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, as many people as the Lord our God will call." ⁴⁰ With many other words he testified and urged them; he said, "Save yourselves from this wicked generation." ⁴¹ Then they received his word and were baptized, and there were added in that day about three thousand souls. ⁴² They continued in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.

⁴³ Fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and they sold their property and possessions and distributed them to all, according to the needs anyone had. ⁴⁶ So day after day they continued with one purpose in the temple, and they broke bread in homes, and they shared food with joy and humility of heart; ⁴⁷ they praised God and had favor with all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Chapter 3

¹ Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. ² Now a man lame from birth was being carried every day to the Beautiful gate of temple, so he could ask people who were going into the temple for a gift of money. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked them for a gift of money. ⁴ Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, "Look at

us.”⁵ The lame man looked at them, expecting to receive something from them.⁶ But Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have, I will give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”⁷ Taking him by the right hand, Peter raised him up, and immediately the man’s feet and ankle were made strong.⁸ Leaping up, the lame man stood and began to walk; and he entered with Peter and John into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God.⁹ All the people saw him walking and praising God.¹⁰ They noticed that it was the man who had been asking people for a gift of money at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement because of what had happened to him.

¹¹ As he was holding on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch that is called Solomon’s, greatly marveling.¹² When Peter saw this, he answered the people, “You men of Israel, why do you marvel? Why do you fix your eyes on us, as if we had made him to walk by our own power or godliness?¹³ The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. He is the one whom you delivered up and rejected before the face of Pilate, when he had decided to release him.¹⁴ You rejected the Holy and Righteous One, and you asked instead for a murderer to be released to you.¹⁵ You killed the Founder of life, whom God raised from the dead—and we are witnesses of this.¹⁶ Now, by faith in his name—this man whom you see and know—this same name made him strong. The faith that is through Jesus gave to him this complete health in the presence of all of you.¹⁷ Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.¹⁸ But the things which God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he has now fulfilled.¹⁹

Repent, therefore, and turn, so that your sins may be blotted out, so that there may come periods of refreshing from the presence of the Lord;²⁰ and that he may send the Christ who has been appointed for you, Jesus.²¹ He is the One heaven must receive until the time of the restoration of all things, about which God spoke long ago by the mouth of his holy prophets.²² Moses indeed said, ‘The Lord God will raise up a prophet like me from among your brothers. You shall listen to everything that he will speak to you.’²³ It will happen that every person who does not listen to that prophet will be completely destroyed from among the people.’²⁴ Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those who came after him, they spoke out and announced these days.²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your ancestors, as he said to Abraham, ‘In your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’²⁶ After God raised up his servant, he sent him to you first, in order to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”

Chapter 4

¹ As Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them.² They were deeply troubled because Peter and John were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.³ They arrested them and put them in jail until the next morning, since it was now evening.⁴ But many of the people who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men who believed was about five thousand.

⁵ It came about on the next day that their rulers, elders and scribes gathered

together in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and all who were relatives of the high priest. ⁷ When they had set Peter and John in their midst, they asked them, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "You rulers of the people, and elders, ⁹ if we this day are being questioned concerning a good deed done to a sick man, by what means was this man made well? ¹⁰ May this be known to you all and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands here before you healthy. ¹¹ Jesus Christ is the stone which you as builders despised but which has been made the head cornerstone. ¹² There is no salvation in any other person, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and realized that they were ordinary, uneducated men, they were surprised, becoming aware that Peter and John had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ Because they saw the man who was healed standing with them, they had nothing to say against this. ¹⁵ But after they had commanded the apostles to leave the council meeting, they talked among themselves. ¹⁶ They said, "What shall we do to these men? For the fact that a remarkable miracle has been done through them is known to everyone who lives in Jerusalem; we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But in order that it spreads no further among the people, let us warn them not to speak anymore to anyone in this name." ¹⁸ They called Peter and John in and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to

obey you rather than him, you judge. ²⁰ We are not able to stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." ²¹ After further warning Peter and John, they let them go. They were unable to find any excuse to punish them, because all of the people were praising God for what had been done. ²² The man who had experienced this miracle of healing was more than forty years old.

²³ After they were set free, Peter and John came to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, "Lord, you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David,

'Why did the Gentile nations rage,
and the peoples imagine useless things?'

²⁶ You said,

'The kings of the earth set themselves together,

and the rulers gathered together

against the Lord, and against his Christ.'

²⁷ Indeed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They gathered together to do all that your hand and your plan had decided in advance would happen. ²⁹ Now, Lord, look upon their warnings and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal, and to give signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." ³¹ When they finished praying, the place where they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of

God with boldness.

³² The great number of those who believed were of one heart and soul. No one said that anything he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³ With great power the apostles were proclaiming their testimony about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ There was no person among them who lacked anything, for all who owned title to lands or houses sold them and brought the money of the things that were sold ³⁵ and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each one according to their need.

³⁶ Joseph, a Levite, a man from Cyprus whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), ³⁷ sold a field and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Chapter 5

¹ Now a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of property, ² and he kept back part of the sale money (his wife also knew it), and brought the other part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. 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? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own, and after it was sold, was it not in your control? How is it that you thought of this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God." ⁵ Hearing these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last, and great fear came upon all who heard it. ⁶ The young men came forward and wrapped him up, and they carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After about three hours, his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you

sold the land for so much." She said, "Yes, for so much." ⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." ¹⁰ She immediately fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in, they found her dead, and carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ Great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard these things.

¹² Many signs and wonders were taking place among the people through the hands of the apostles. They were all together in Solomon's Porch. ¹³ But no one else had the courage to join them; however, they were held in high esteem by the people. ¹⁴ Still more believers were being added to the Lord, multitudes of men and women, ¹⁵ so that they even carried the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, so that as Peter came by, his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ There also came together a great number of people from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

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 ¹⁸ and laid hands on the apostles, and put them in the public jail. ¹⁹ Yet during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and led them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life." 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, all the elders of the people of Israel, and sent to the jail to have the

apostles brought. ²² But the officers that went did not find them in the prison, and they returned and reported, ²³ “We found the jail securely shut and the guards standing at the door, but when we had opened it, we found no one inside.” ²⁴ Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were much perplexed concerning them as to what would come of it. ²⁵ Then someone came and told them, “The men whom you put in the jail are standing in the temple and teaching the people.” ²⁶ So the captain went with the officers, and brought them back, but without violence, for they feared that the people might stone them. ²⁷ When they had brought them, they set them before the council. The high priest interrogated them, ²⁸ saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and desire to bring this man’s blood upon us.” ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰ The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him to his right hand to be a prince and a savior, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. ³² We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

³³ When the council members heard this, they were furious and wanted to kill the apostles. ³⁴ But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up and commanded the apostles to be taken outside for a little while. ³⁵ Then he said to them, “Men of Israel, pay close attention to what you propose to do with these people. ³⁶ For some time ago, Theudas rose up claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who had been obeying him were scattered and came to

nothing. ³⁷ After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census and drew away some people after him. He also perished, and all who had been obeying him were scattered. ³⁸ Now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or work is of men, it will be overthrown. ³⁹ But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; you may even find that you are fighting against God.” So they were persuaded. ⁴⁰ Then they called the apostles in and beat them and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ They left the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name. ⁴² Thereafter every day, in the temple and from house to house, they were continuously teaching and proclaiming Jesus as the Christ.

Chapter 6

¹ Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, a complaint by the Grecian Jews began against the Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² The twelve called the multitude of the disciples to them and said, “It is not right for us to give up the word of God in order to serve tables. ³ You should therefore choose, brothers, seven men from among yourselves, men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. ⁴ As for us, we will always continue in prayer and in the ministry of the word.” ⁵ Their speech pleased the whole multitude. So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte from Antioch. ⁶ The believers brought these men before the apostles, who prayed and then

placed their hands upon them.

⁷ So the word of God continued to spread, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly, and a large number of the priests became obedient to the faith.

⁸ Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ But there arose some people who belonged to the synagogue called the synagogue of the Freedmen, of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia. These people were debating with Stephen. ¹⁰ But they were not able to stand against the wisdom and the Spirit with which Stephen spoke. ¹¹ Then they bribed some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God." ¹² They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, and they approached Stephen and seized him and brought him before the council. ¹³ They brought false witnesses, who said, "This man does not stop speaking words against this holy place and the law. ¹⁴ For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us." ¹⁵ Everyone who sat in the council fixed their eyes on him and saw his face was like the face of an angel.

Chapter 7

¹ The high priest said, "Are these things true?" ² Stephen said,

"Brothers and fathers, listen to me: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran; ³ he said to him, 'Leave your land and your relatives, and go into the land that I will show you.' ⁴ Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran; from there, after his father died, God brought him into this land, where you

live now. ⁵ He gave none of it as an inheritance to him, no, not even enough to set a foot on. But he promised—even though Abraham had no child yet—that he would give the land as a possession to him and to his descendants after him. ⁶ God was speaking to him like this, that his descendants would live for a while in a foreign land, and that the inhabitants there would bring them into slavery and treat them badly for four hundred years. ⁷ 'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they will come out and worship me in this place.' ⁸ Then God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision, so Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of the twelve patriarchs. ⁹ Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him into Egypt; but God was with him ¹⁰ and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who had made him governor over Egypt and over all his household. ¹¹ Now there came a famine over all Egypt and Canaan, and great suffering, and our fathers could find no food. ¹² But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first trip. ¹³ On their second trip Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. ¹⁴ Joseph sent his brothers back to tell Jacob his father to come to Egypt, along with all his relatives, seventy-five persons in all. ¹⁵ So Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers. ¹⁶ They were carried over to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a price in silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem. ¹⁷ As the time of the promise approached, the promise that God had made to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, ¹⁸ until there arose an-

other king over Egypt, a king who did not know about Joseph. ¹⁹ This same king deceived our people and treated our fathers so badly, they had forced our fathers to leave their newborn children outside so they would die. ²⁰ At that time Moses was born; he was very beautiful before God and was nourished for three months in his father's house. ²¹ When he was placed outside, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and raised him as her own son. ²² Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and works. ²³ But when he was about forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. ²⁴ Seeing an Israelite being mistreated, Moses defended him and avenged him who was oppressed by striking the Egyptian: ²⁵ he thought that his brothers would understand that God by his hand was rescuing them, but they did not understand. ²⁶ On the next day he came to some Israelites as they were quarreling; he tried to put them at peace with each other; he said, 'Men, you are brothers; why are you hurting one another?' ²⁷ But the one who had wronged his neighbor pushed him away, and said, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?' ²⁸ Would you like to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' ²⁹ Moses ran away after hearing this; he became a foreigner in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons. ³⁰ When forty years were past, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. ³¹ When Moses saw the fire, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look at it, there came a voice of the Lord, saying, ³² 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob.' Moses trembled and did not dare to look. ³³ The Lord said to him, 'Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. ³⁴ I have certainly seen the

suffering of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them; now come, I will send you to Egypt.' ³⁵ This Moses whom they rejected, when they said, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?'—he was the one whom God sent as both a ruler and deliverer. God sent him by the hand of the angel who appeared to Moses in the bush. ³⁶ Moses led them out of Egypt, after doing miracles and signs in Egypt and at the Sea of Reeds, and in the wilderness during forty years. ³⁷ It is the same Moses who said to the people of Israel, 'God will raise up a prophet for you from among your brothers, a prophet like me.' ³⁸ This is the man who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel who had spoken to him on Mount Sinai. This is the man who was with our fathers; this is the man who received living words to give to us. ³⁹ This is the man whom our fathers refused to obey; they pushed him away from themselves, and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt. ⁴⁰ At that time they said to Aaron, 'Make us gods who will lead us. As for this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.' ⁴¹ So they made a calf in those days and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced because of the work of their hands. ⁴² But God turned and gave them up to worship the stars in the sky, as it is written in the book of the prophets,

'Did you offer to me slain beasts and sacrifices

for forty years in the wilderness, house of Israel?

⁴³ You accepted the tabernacle of Molech and the star of the god Rephan,

and the images that you made to worship them:

and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'

⁴⁴ Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, just as God commanded when he spoke to Moses, that he should make it like the pattern that he had seen. ⁴⁵ Later, our fathers, under Joshua, received the tabernacle and brought it with them when they took possession of the land. God took the land from the nations and drove them out before the face of our fathers. The tabernacle remained in the land until the time of David, ⁴⁶ who found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. ⁴⁷ But it was Solomon who built the house for God. ⁴⁸ However, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands, as the prophet says,

⁴⁹ 'Heaven is my throne, and the earth is the footstool for my feet.

What kind of house can you build for me? says the Lord,

or what is the place for my rest?

⁵⁰ Did my hand not make all these things?'

⁵¹ You people who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit; you act just as your fathers acted. ⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed the prophets who appeared in advance of the coming of the Righteous One; and you have now become the betrayers and murderers of him also, ⁵³ you people who received the law that angels had established, but you did not keep it."

⁵⁴ Now when the council members heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they ground their teeth at Stephen. ⁵⁵ But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up intently into heaven and saw the glory of God; and he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ Stephen said, "Look, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of

Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷ At this the council members covered their ears, and shouting out with a loud voice, altogether they rushed at him. ⁵⁸ They dragged him out of the city where they began to stone him, and the witnesses laid down their outer clothing at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ As they were stoning Stephen, he was calling out to the Lord and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ He knelt down and called out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

Chapter 8

¹ Saul was in agreement with his death.

So there began on that day a great persecution against the church that was in Jerusalem; and the believers were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. ³ But Saul greatly harmed the church; he went into house after house and dragged out men and women, and put them into prison.

⁴ Yet the believers who had been scattered went about proclaiming the word. ⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. ⁶ When multitudes of people heard and saw the signs that Philip did, they paid attention together to what he said. ⁷ Unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying out with a loud voice, and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. ⁸ So there was much joy in that city.

⁹ But there was a certain man in the city named Simon, who had earlier been practicing sorcery; he used to astonish the people of Samaria, while claiming that he was

an important person. ¹⁰ All the Samaritans, from the least to the greatest, paid attention to him; they said, "This man is that power of God which is called Great."

¹¹ They listened to him, because he had astonished them for a long time with his sorceries.

¹² But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³ Even Simon himself believed, and after he was baptized he stayed with Philip constantly. When he saw signs and mighty deeds taking place, he was amazed.

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

¹⁵ When they had come down, they prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ For until that time, the Holy Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money.

¹⁹ He said, "Give me this power, too, that whoever I place my hands on might receive the Holy Spirit." ²⁰ But Peter said to him,

"May your silver perish along with you, because you thought to obtain the gift of God with money. ²¹ You have no part or share in this matter, because your heart is not right with God.

²² Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord, so that he might perhaps forgive you for the intention of your heart. ²³ For I see that you are in the poison of bitterness and in the bonds of sin."

²⁴ Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, so that nothing you have said may happen to me."

²⁵ When they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, proclaiming the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said, "Arise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This road is in a desert.)

²⁷ He arose and went. Behold, there was a man from Cush, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Cushites. He was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship. ²⁸ He was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ The Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and stay close to this chariot."

³⁰ So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹ The Cushite said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" He begged Philip to come up into the chariot and sit with him. ³² Now the passage of the scripture which the Ethiopian was reading was this,

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb before his shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation justice was taken away from him.

Who can fully describe his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth."

³⁴ So the eunuch asked Philip, and said, "I beg you, who is the prophet speaking about, himself, or someone else?" ³⁵ Philip began to speak, and beginning with this scripture he proclaimed the good news about Jesus to him.

³⁶ As they went on the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, there is water here. What prevents me from being baptized?"

³⁷ So the Ethiopian commanded the

chariot to stop. They went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip appeared at Azotus and he went through that region, proclaiming the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

8:37 ^[1]The best ancient copies omit Acts 8:37, *Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may be baptized." The Ethiopian answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*

Chapter 9

¹ But Saul, still speaking threats even of murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters for the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ As he was traveling, it happened that as he came near to Damascus, suddenly there shone all around him a light out of heaven; ⁴ and he fell upon the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" ⁵ Saul replied, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting; ⁶ but rise, enter into the city, and it will be told you what you must do." ⁷ The men who traveled with Saul stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one. ⁸ Saul arose from the ground, and when he opened his eyes, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was without sight, and he neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias!" He said, "See, I am here, Lord." ¹¹ The Lord said to him, "Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² He has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him, so that he might see again." ¹³ But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ He has authority from the chief priests to arrest everyone here who calls upon your name." ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine, to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel; ¹⁶ for I will show him how much he must suffer for the cause of my name." ¹⁷ So Ananias departed, and entered into the house. Laying his hands on him, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road when you were coming, has sent me so that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ Immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he received his sight; he arose and was baptized; ¹⁹ and he ate and was strengthened.

He stayed with the disciples in Damascus for several days. ²⁰ Right away he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying that he is the Son of God. ²¹ All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who destroyed those in Jerusalem who called on this name? He has come here to take them bound to the chief priests." ²² But Saul became more and more powerful, and he was causing distress among the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

²³ After many days, the Jews planned to-

gether to kill him. ²⁴ But their plan became known to Saul. They watched the gates day and night in order to kill him. ²⁵ But his disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

²⁶ When he had come to Jerusalem, Saul attempted to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and he told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how at Damascus Saul had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸ He met with them as they were coming in and going out of Jerusalem. He spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus ²⁹ and debated with the Grecian Jews; but they kept trying to kill him. ³⁰ When the brothers learned of this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

³¹ So then, the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the church grew in numbers. ³² Now it came about that, as Peter went throughout the whole region, he came down also to the believers who lived in the town of Lydda. ³³ There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been in his bed for eight years, for he was paralyzed. ³⁴ Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed," and right away he got up. ³⁵ So everyone who lived in Lydda and in Sharon saw the man and they turned to the Lord.

³⁶ Now there was in Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated as "Dorcas." This woman was full of good works and merciful deeds that she did for the poor. ³⁷ It came about in those days that she fell sick and died; when they had washed her, they laid her in an

upper room. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, begging him, "Come to us without delay." ³⁹ Peter arose and went with them. When he had arrived, they brought him to the upper room, and all the widows stood by him weeping, showing him the coats and garments that Dorcas had made while she had been with them. ⁴⁰ Peter put them all out of the room, knelt down, and prayed; then, turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. ⁴¹ Peter then gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he called the believers and the widows, he presented her alive to them. ⁴² This matter became known throughout all Joppa, and many people believed on the Lord. ⁴³ It happened that Peter stayed for many days in Joppa with a man named Simon, a tanner.

Chapter 10

¹ Now there was a certain man in the city of Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment. ² He was a devout man, one who worshiped God with all his household; he gave much money to those in need, and he constantly prayed to God. ³ About the ninth hour of the day, he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God coming to him. The angel said to him, "Cornelius!" ⁴ Cornelius stared at the angel and was very frightened and said, "What is it, sir?" The angel said to him, "Your prayers and your gifts to the poor have gone up as a memorial offering into God's presence. ⁵ Now send men to the city of Joppa to bring a man named Simon who is called Peter. ⁶ He is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the seaside." ⁷ When the angel who spoke to him had left, Cor-

nelius called two of his house servants, and a devout soldier from among those who served him. ⁸ Cornelius told them all that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

⁹ Now on the next day at about the sixth hour, as they were on their journey and were approaching the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray. ¹⁰ He then became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while the people were cooking some food, he was given a vision, ¹¹ and he saw the sky open and a certain container descending, something like a large sheet coming down to the earth, let down by its four corners. ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals and things that crawled on the earth, and birds of the sky. ¹³ Then a voice spoke to him: "Rise, Peter, kill and eat." ¹⁴ But Peter said, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that was defiled and unclean." ¹⁵ But the voice came to him again a second time: "What God has cleansed, do not call it defiled." ¹⁶ This happened three times; then the container was immediately taken back up into the sky.

¹⁷ Now while Peter was very confused about what the vision that he had seen could mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius stood before the gate, after they had asked their way to the house. ¹⁸ They called out and asked whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there. ¹⁹ While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. ^[1] ²⁰ Arise and go down and go with them. Do not hesitate to go with them, because I have sent them." ²¹ So Peter went down to the men and said, "I am he whom you are seeking. Why have you come?" ²² They said, "A centurion named Cornelius, a righteous man and one who worships God, and is well spoken of by all the nation

of the Jews, was told by a holy angel of God to send for you to come to his house, so he could listen to a message from you." ²³ So Peter invited them to come in and stay with him.

On the next morning he got up and went with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴ On the following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them; he had called together his relatives and his close friends. ²⁵ It came about that when Peter entered, Cornelius met him and bowed down at his feet to worship him. ²⁶ But Peter helped him up, saying, "Stand up! I too am a man." ²⁷ While Peter was talking with him, he went in and found many people gathered together. ²⁸ He said to them, "You yourselves know that it is not lawful for a Jewish man to associate with or to visit someone from another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man defiled or unclean. ²⁹ That is why I came without arguing, when I was sent for. So I ask you why you sent for me." ³⁰ Cornelius said, "Four days ago at this very hour, I was praying at the ninth hour in my house; and see, a man stood before me in bright clothing. ³¹ He said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard by God, and your gifts to the poor have reminded God about you. ³² So send someone to Joppa, and call to you a man named Simon who is called Peter. He is staying in the house of a tanner named Simon, by the seaside.' ^[2] ³³ So at once I sent for you. You are kind to have come. Now then, we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear everything that you have been instructed by the Lord to say." ^[3] ³⁴ Then Peter opened his mouth and said,

"Truly, I perceive that God does not take anyone's side. ³⁵ Instead, in every nation anyone who worships and does righteous deeds is acceptable to him. ³⁶ You

know the message that he sent to the people of Israel, when he announced good news about peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all—³⁷ you yourselves know the events that took place, which occurred throughout all Judea, beginning in Galilee, after the baptism that John announced; ³⁸ the events concerning Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses of all the things Jesus did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him up on the third day and caused him to be seen, ⁴¹ not by all the people, but to the witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to proclaim to the people and to testify that this is the one who has been chosen by God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ It is to him that all the prophets bear witness, so that everyone who believes in him shall receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

⁴⁴ While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all of those who were listening to his message. ⁴⁵ The people who belonged to the circumcision group of believers—all of those who came with Peter—were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out also on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard these Gentiles speak in other languages and praising God. Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷ “Can anyone keep water from these people so they should not be baptized, these people who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?” ⁴⁸ Then he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay with them for several days.

10:19 ^[1]Some ancient copies have, *two men are looking for you or some men are looking for you*

10:32 ^[2]Some ancient copies add: *When he comes, he will speak to you.*

10:33 ^[3]Instead of *instructed by the Lord to say*, some ancient copies have, *instructed by God to say.*

Chapter 11

¹ Now the apostles and the brothers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ² When Peter had come up to Jerusalem, they who belonged to the circumcision group criticized him; ³ they said, “You associated with uncircumcised men and ate with them!” ⁴ But Peter started to explain the matter to them in detail; he said, ⁵ I was praying in the city of Joppa, and I had a vision of a container coming down, like a large sheet let down from heaven by its four corners. It descended to me. ⁶ I gazed at it and I thought about it. I saw the four-legged animals of earth, wild beasts, creeping animals, and birds of the sky. ⁷ Then I heard a voice say to me, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat!” ⁸ I said, “Not so, Lord; for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered into my mouth.” ⁹ But the voice answered again from heaven, “What God has declared clean, do not call unclean.” ¹⁰ This happened three times, and then everything was taken back up into heaven again. ¹¹ Behold, right away there were three men standing in front of the house where we were; they had been sent from Caesarea to me. ¹² The Spirit commanded me to go with them, and that I should make no distinction regarding them. These six brothers went with me,

and we went into the man's house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, "Send men to Joppa and bring back Simon who is called Peter. ¹⁴ He will speak to you a message by which you will be saved—you and all your household." ¹⁵ As I began to speak to them, the Holy Spirit came on them, just as on us in the beginning. ¹⁶ I remembered the words of the Lord, how he said, "John indeed baptized with water; but you shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit." ¹⁷ Then if God gave to them the same gift as he gave to us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could oppose God?" ¹⁸ When they heard these things, they said nothing in response, but they praised God and said, "Then God has given repentance for life to the Gentiles also."

¹⁹ Now those who had been scattered because of the persecution that started with the death of Stephen were spread as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, but they told the message about Jesus only to Jews. ²⁰ But some of them, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, came to Antioch and spoke also to Greeks, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The hand of the Lord was with them; a great number believed and turned to the Lord. ²² News about them came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas as far as Antioch. ²³ When he came and saw the gift of God, he was glad; and he encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with all their heart. ²⁴ For he was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and many people were added to the Lord. ²⁵ Barnabas then went out to Tarsus to look for Saul. ²⁶ When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. It came about, that for an entire year they gathered together with the church and taught many people. The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

²⁷ Now in these days some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ One of them, Agabus by name, stood up and indicated by the Spirit that a great famine would occur over all the world. This happened in the days of Claudius. ²⁹ So, the disciples, as each one was able, decided to send help to the brothers in Judea. ³⁰ They did this; they sent money to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

Chapter 12

¹ Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church so that he might mistreat them. ² He killed James the brother of John with the sword. ³ After he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. That was during the days of unleavened bread. ⁴ After arresting him, he put him in prison, assigning him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him; he was intending to bring him to the people after the Passover. ⁵ So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer was made earnestly to God for him by those in the church. ⁶ On the night before Herod was going to bring him out for trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. ⁷ Behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared by him, and a light shone in the prison cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him and said, "Get up quickly," and his chains fell off his hands. ⁸ The angel said to him, "Dress yourself and put on your sandals." Peter did so. The angel said to him, "Put on your outer garment and follow me." ⁹ So Peter followed the angel and went out. He did not know that what was done by the angel was real. He thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ After they had passed by the first guard and

the second, they came to the iron gate that led into the city; it opened for them by itself. They went out and went down a street, and the angel left him right away.

¹¹ When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I truly know that the Lord has sent his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from everything the Jewish people were expecting.” ¹² When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. ¹³ When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴ When she recognized Peter’s voice, out of joy she failed to open the door; instead, she came running into the room; she reported that Peter was standing at the door. ¹⁵ So they said to her, “You are insane.” But she insisted that it was so. They said, “It is his angel.” ¹⁶ But Peter continued knocking, and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed. ¹⁷ Peter motioned to them with his hand to be silent, and he told them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. He said, “Report these things to James and the brothers.” Then he left and went to another place. ¹⁸ Now when it became day, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter. ¹⁹ After Herod had searched for him and could not find him, he questioned the guards and ordered them to be put to death. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

²⁰ Now Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. They went to him together. They persuaded Blastus, the king’s assistant, to help them. Then they asked for peace, because their country received its food from the king’s country. ²¹ On a set day Herod dressed himself in royal clothing and sat on a throne; he made a speech to them. ²² The people shouted, “This is the voice of a god, not

of a man!” ²³ Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give God the glory; he was eaten by worms and died.

²⁴ But the word of God increased and multiplied.

²⁵ So when Barnabas and Saul had completed their mission, they returned from ^[1] Jerusalem, bringing with them John, also called Mark.

12:25 ^[1]Some ancient copies read, *they returned to*

Chapter 13

¹ Now in the church in Antioch, there were some prophets and teachers. They were Barnabas, Simeon (who is called Niger), Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch), and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul, to do the work to which I have called them.” ³ After they had fasted, prayed, and laid their hands on these men, they sent them off.

⁴ So Barnabas and Saul obeyed the Holy Spirit and went down to Seleucia; from there they sailed to the island of Cyprus.

⁵ When they were in the city of Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John Mark as their assistant. ⁶ When they had gone through the whole island to Paphos, they found a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar Jesus. ⁷ This magician associated with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul, because he wanted to

hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas “the magician” (that is how his name is translated) opposed them; he tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹ But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, stared at him intensely. ¹⁰ and said, “You son of the devil, you are full of all kinds of deceit and wickedness. You are an enemy of every kind of righteousness. You will never stop twisting the straight paths of the Lord, will you? ¹¹ Now look, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will become blind. You will not see the sun for a while.” Immediately there fell on Elymas a mist and darkness; he started going around asking people to lead him by the hand. ¹² After the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, because he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

¹³ Now Paul and his friends set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. But John left them and returned to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ Paul and his friends traveled from Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia. There they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. ¹⁵ After the reading of the law and the prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent them a message saying, “Brothers, if you have any message of encouragement for the people here, say it.” ¹⁶ So Paul stood up and motioned with his hand; he said, “Men of Israel and you who honor God, listen. ¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people numerous when they stayed in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm he led them out of it. ¹⁸ For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. ^[1] ¹⁹ After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave our people their land for an inheritance. ²⁰ All these events took place over four hundred and fifty years. After all these things, God gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. ²¹ Then the people asked for a king, and God

gave them Saul son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin, to be king for forty years. ²² After God removed him from the kingship, he raised up David to be their king. It was about David that God said, ‘I have found David son of Jesse to be a man after my heart, who does all I want him to do.’ ²³ From this man’s descendants God has brought to Israel a savior, Jesus, as he promised to do. ²⁴ This began to happen when, before Jesus came, John first announced the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. ²⁵ As John was finishing his work, he said, ‘Who do you think I am? I am not the one. But listen, one is coming after me, the shoes of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.’ ²⁶ Brothers, children of the line of Abraham, and those among you who worship God, it is to us that the message about this salvation has been sent. ²⁷ For they who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, did not recognize him, and they fulfilled sayings of the prophets that are read every Sabbath by condemning him. ²⁸ Even though they found no good cause for death in him, they asked Pilate to kill him. ²⁹ When they had completed all the things that were written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised him from the dead. ³¹ He was seen for many days by those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. These people are now his witnesses to the people. ³² So we are telling you the good news that what God promised to our fathers ³³ he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm:

‘You are my Son, today I have become your Father.’

³⁴ The fact that he raised him up from the dead so that his body would never decay, God has spoken in this way:

‘I will give you the holy and sure bless-

ings promised to David.’

³⁵ This is why he also says in another Psalm,

‘You will not allow your Holy One to see decay.’

³⁶ For when David had served the desires of God in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was laid with his fathers and his body experienced decay. ³⁷ But he whom God raised up experienced no decay. ³⁸ So let it be known to you, brothers, that through this man is proclaimed to you forgiveness of sins. ³⁹ By him every one who believes is justified from all the things which the law of Moses could not justify you. ⁴⁰ So then be careful that the thing the prophets spoke about does not happen to you:

⁴¹ ‘Look, you despisers, and be astonished and then perish;

For I am doing a work in your days,

A work that you shall never believe, even if someone announces it to you.’”

⁴² As Paul and Barnabas left, the people begged them that they might speak these same words again the next Sabbath.

⁴³ When the synagogue meeting ended, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

⁴⁴ On the next Sabbath, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of the Lord. ⁴⁵ When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and spoke against the things that were said by Paul and insulted him. ⁴⁶ But Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing you push it away from yourselves and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, see, we will turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷ For so

has the Lord commanded us, saying,

‘I have placed you as a light for the Gentiles,

that you should bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth.’”

⁴⁸ As the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and praised the word of the Lord. As many as were appointed to eternal life believed. ⁴⁹ The word of the Lord was spread out through the whole region. ⁵⁰ But the Jews urged on the devout and important women, as well as the leading men of the city. These stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas and threw them out beyond the border of their city. ⁵¹ But Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust from their feet against them. Then they went to the city of Iconium. ⁵² And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

13:18 ^[1]Some ancient copies read, *For about forty years he cared for them in the wilderness.*

Chapter 14

¹ It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in such a way that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. ² But the Jews who were disobedient stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and made them bitter against the brothers. ³ So they stayed there for a long time, speaking boldly with the Lord’s power, while he gave evidence about the message of his grace. He did this by granting signs and wonders to be done by the hands of Paul and Barnabas. ⁴ But the majority of the city was divided: some people sided with the Jews, and some with

the apostles. ⁵ When both Gentiles and Jews attempted to persuade their leaders to mistreat and stone Paul and Barnabas, ⁶ they became aware of it and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the surrounding region, ⁷ and there they were proclaiming the gospel.

⁸ At Lystra a certain man sat, powerless in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. ⁹ This man heard Paul speaking. Paul fixed his eyes on him and saw that he had faith to be made well. ¹⁰ So he said to him in a loud voice, "Stand up on your feet." Then the man jumped up and walked around. ¹¹ When the multitude saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the dialect of Lycaonia, "The gods have come down to us in the form of men." ¹² They called Barnabas "Zeus," and Paul, "Hermes," because he was the main speaker. ¹³ The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and wreaths to the gates; he and the multitudes wanted to offer sacrifice. ¹⁴ But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their clothing and quickly went out into the crowd, crying out ¹⁵ and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are human beings with the same feelings as you. We bring you good news, that you should turn from these useless things to a living God, who made the heavens, the earth, and the sea and everything that is in them. ¹⁶ In the past ages, he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷ But still, he did not leave himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you the rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness." ¹⁸ Even with these words, Paul and Barnabas barely kept the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

¹⁹ But some Jews from Antioch and Iconium came and persuaded the crowds.

They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking that he was dead. ²⁰ Yet as the disciples were standing around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day, he went to Derbe with Barnabas. ²¹ After they had proclaimed the gospel in that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch. ²² They kept strengthening the souls of the disciples and encouraging them to continue in the faith, saying, "We must enter into the kingdom of God through many sufferings." ²³ When they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they entrusted them to the Lord, in whom they had believed. ²⁴ Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. ²⁵ When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ²⁶ From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had now completed. ²⁷ When they arrived in Antioch and gathered the church together, they reported all the things that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. ²⁸ They stayed for a long time with the disciples.

Chapter 15

¹ Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and taught the brothers, saying, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." ² This brought Paul and Barnabas into a sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas along with some others from among them were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to meet with the apostles and elders about this question. ³ They therefore, being sent by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria and announced the con-

version of the Gentiles. They brought great joy to all the brothers. ⁴ When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all the things that God had done with them. ⁵ But certain men who believed, who belonged to the group of Pharisees, stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses." ⁶ So the apostles and the elders gathered together to consider this matter. ⁷ After much debate, Peter stood up and said to them,

"Brothers, you know that a good while ago God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. ⁸ God, who knows the heart, witnesses to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; ⁹ and he made no distinction between us and them, making their hearts clean by faith. ¹⁰ Now therefore why do you test God, that you should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹ But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they were."

¹² All the multitude kept silent while they listened to Barnabas and Paul report the signs and wonders God had worked among the Gentiles through them. ¹³ After they stopped speaking, James answered, saying,

"Brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴ Simon has told how God first graciously helped the Gentiles in order to take from them a people for his name. ¹⁵ The words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written,

¹⁶ 'After these things I will return,

and I will build again the tent of David, which has fallen down;

I will set up and restore its ruins again,

¹⁷ so that the remnant of men may seek the Lord,

including all the Gentiles called by my name.'

¹⁸ This is what the Lord says, who has done these things that have been known from ancient times. ^[1]

¹⁹ Therefore, my opinion is, that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God. ²⁰ But we will write to them that they must keep away from the pollution of idols, from sexual immorality, and from the meat of strangled animals, and from blood. ²¹ For Moses has been proclaimed in every city from the ancient times and he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

²² Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, who were leaders of the church, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas.

²³ They wrote this: "From the apostles and elders, your brothers, to the Gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings!

²⁴ We have heard that certain men have gone out from us, with no orders from us, and have disturbed you with teachings that upset your souls. ²⁵ This being so, all of us have agreed to choose men and to send them to you along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas, who will tell you the same thing themselves in their own words. ²⁸ For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: ²⁹ that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, blood, things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, it shall be well with you. Farewell."

³⁰ So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; after they gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. ³¹ When they had read it, they rejoiced because of the encouragement. ³² Judas and Silas, also prophets, encouraged the brothers with many words and strengthened them. ³³ After they had spent some time there, they were sent away in peace from the brothers to those who had sent them. ³⁴^[2] ³⁵ But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch along with many others, where they taught and proclaimed the word of the Lord.

³⁶ After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return now and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."

³⁷ Barnabas wanted to also take with them John who was called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul thought it was not good to take Mark, who had left them in Pamphylia and did not go further with them in the work. ³⁹ Then there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. ⁴⁰ But Paul chose Silas and left, after he was entrusted by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ Then he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

15:18 ^[1]Some older versions read, *This is what the Lord says, to whom are known all his deeds from ancient times.*

15:34 ^[2]The best ancient copies omit verse 34 (See: Acts 15:40): *But it seemed good to Silas to remain there.*

Chapter 16

¹ Paul also came to Derbe and to Lystra;

and behold, a certain disciple named Timothy was there, the son of a Jewish woman who believed; his father was a Greek. ² He was well spoken of by the brothers who were at Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted him to travel with him; so he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴ As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to the churches the instructions for them to obey, the instructions that had been written by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily.

⁶ Paul and his companions went through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia, since they had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came near Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus prevented them. ⁸ So passing by Mysia, they came down to the city of Troas. ⁹ A vision appeared to Paul in the night: A man of Macedonia was standing there, calling him and saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ When Paul had seen the vision, immediately we set out to go to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to proclaim the gospel to them.

¹¹ Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day we came to Neapolis. ¹² From there we went to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the most important city in the district and a Roman colony, and we stayed in this city for several days. ¹³ On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we thought there would be a place of prayer. We sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. ¹⁴ A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple from the

city of Thyatira, who worshiped God, listened to us. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ When she and her house were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay in house." And she persuaded us. ¹⁶ It came about that, as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain young woman who had a spirit of divination encountered us. She brought her masters much gain by fortunetelling. ¹⁷ This woman followed after Paul and us and shouted, saying, "These men are servants of the Most High God. They proclaim to you the way of salvation." ¹⁸ She did this for many days. But Paul, being greatly annoyed by her, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out right away.

¹⁹ When her masters saw that their opportunity to make money was now gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. ²⁰ When they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are stirring up our city. They are Jews. ²¹ They proclaim customs that are not lawful for Romans to accept or practice." ²² Then the crowd rose up together against Paul and Silas; the magistrates tore their garments off them and commanded them to be beaten with rods. ²³ When they had laid many blows upon them, they threw them into prison and commanded the jailer to keep them securely. ²⁴ After he got this command, the jailer threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. ²⁵ Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. 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 chains were unfastened. ²⁷

The jailer was awakened from sleep and saw the open prison doors; he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he thought that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul shouted with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, because we are all here." ²⁹ The jailer called for lights and rushed in and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰ and brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your house." ³² They spoke the word of the Lord to him, together with everyone in his house. ³³ Then the jailer took them at the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he and those in his entire house were baptized immediately. ³⁴ Then as he brought Paul and Silas up into his house and he set food before them, he rejoiced greatly with those of his house, that he had believed in God.

³⁵ Now when it was day, the magistrates sent word to the guards, saying, "Let those men go." ³⁶ The jailer reported the words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent word to me to let you go. Now therefore come out, and go in peace." ³⁷ But Paul said to them, "They have publicly beaten us without a trial, even through we are Romans citizens—and they threw us into prison. Do they now want to send us away secretly? No! Let them come themselves and lead us out." ³⁸ The guards reported these words to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Romans, they were afraid. ³⁹ The magistrates came and apologized to them and brought them out, asking them to go away from the city. ⁴⁰ So Paul and Silas went out of the prison and came to the house of Lydia. When Paul and Silas saw the brothers, they encouraged them and then departed from the city.

Chapter 17

¹ Now when they had passed through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to the city of Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² Paul, as his custom was, went to them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures. ³ He was opening the scriptures and explaining that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead. He said, "This Jesus whom I proclaim to you is the Christ." ⁴ Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, including a large number of devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women. ⁵ But the unbelieving Jews, being moved with jealousy, took certain wicked men from the marketplace, gathered a crowd together, and set the city in an uproar. Assaulting the house of Jason, they wanted to bring Paul and Silas out to the people. ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and certain other brothers before the officials of the city, crying, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also. ⁷ These men whom Jason has welcomed act against the decrees of Caesar; they say that there is another king—Jesus." ⁸ The crowd and the officials of the city were disturbed when they heard these things. ⁹ But after the officials made Jason and the rest pay money as security, then they let them go.

¹⁰ That night the brothers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹ Now these people were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. ¹² Therefore many of them believed, including some influential Greek women and many men. ¹³ But

when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that Paul was also proclaiming the word of God at Berea, they went there and stirred up and troubled the crowds. ¹⁴ Then immediately, the brothers sent Paul to go to the sea, but Silas and Timothy stayed there. ¹⁵ Those who were leading Paul took him as far as the city of Athens. As they left Paul there, they received from him instructions for Silas and Timothy to come to him as quickly as possible.

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and others who worshiped God, as well as in the marketplace with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ But also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. Some said, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others said, "He seems to be one who calls people to follow strange gods," because he was proclaiming Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ They took Paul and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know this new teaching which you were speaking?" ²⁰ For you bring some strange things to our ears. Therefore, we want to know what these things mean." ²¹ (Now all the Athenians and the strangers living there spent their time in nothing but either telling or listening about something new.) ²² So Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus and said,

"You men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. ²³ For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found an altar with this inscription, "To an Unknown God." What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I announce to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples built with hands. ²⁵ Neither is

he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives people life and breath and everything else.²⁶ From one man he made every nation of people to live on the surface of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons and the boundaries of their living areas,²⁷ so that they should search for God and perhaps they may feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us.²⁸ For in him we live and move and have our being, just as one of your own poets has said,

'For we also are his offspring.'²⁹ Therefore, since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the qualities of deity are like gold, or silver, or stone—images created by the art and imagination of man.³⁰ Therefore God overlooked the times of ignorance, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent.³¹ This is because he has set a day when he will judge the world in righteousness by the man he has chosen. God has given proof of this man to everyone by raising him from the dead."

³² Now when the men of Athens heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked Paul; but others said, "We will listen to you again about this matter."³³ After that, Paul left them.³⁴ But certain men joined him and believed, including Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Chapter 18

¹ After these things Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.² There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to them,³ and because he worked

at the same trade, he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.⁴ So Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath. He persuaded both Jews and Greeks.⁵ But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit to testify to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.⁶ When the Jews opposed and insulted him, Paul shook out his garment at them and said to them, "May your blood be upon your own heads; I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."⁷ Then he left from there and went to the house of Titius Justus, a man who worshiped God. His house was next to the synagogue.⁸ Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with all those who lived in his house; and many of the Corinthians who heard about it believed and were baptized.⁹ The Lord said to Paul in the night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent.¹⁰ For I am with you, and no one will try to harm you, for I have many people in this city."¹¹ Paul lived there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

¹² But when Gallio became governor of Achaia, the Jews rose up together against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat;¹³ they said, "This man persuades people to worship God contrary to the law."¹⁴ Yet when Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "You Jews, if indeed it were a matter of wrong or a crime, it would be reasonable to deal with you."¹⁵ But since these are questions about words and names and your own law, settle it yourselves. I do not wish to be a judge of these matters."¹⁶ Gallio made them leave the judgment seat.¹⁷ So they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the judgment seat. But Gallio did not care what they did.

¹⁸ Paul, after staying there for many more days, left the brothers and sailed for Syria with Priscilla and Aquila. Before he left the seaport, Cenchrea, he had his hair cut off because of a vow he had taken. ¹⁹ When they came to Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked Paul to stay a longer time, he declined. ²¹ But taking his leave of them, he said, "I will return again to you if it is God's will." He then set sail from Ephesus.

²² When Paul had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the Jerusalem church and then went down to Antioch. ²³ After having spent some time there, Paul departed and went through the regions of Galatia and Phrygia and strengthened all the disciples.

²⁴ Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, came to Ephesus. He was eloquent in speech and mighty in the scriptures. ²⁵ Apollos had been instructed in the teachings of the Lord. Being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, but he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ Apollos began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷ When he desired to pass over into Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples in Achaia to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who believed by grace. ²⁸ Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public debate, showing by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Chapter 19

¹ It came about that while Apollos was at

Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to the city of Ephesus, and found certain disciples there. ² Paul said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They said to him, "No, we did not even hear about the Holy Spirit." ³ Paul said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ So Paul replied, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance. He told the people that they should believe in the one who would come after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵ When the people heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ Then when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in other languages and prophesied. ⁷ In all they were about twelve men.

⁸ Paul went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when some Jews were hardened and disobedient, they began to speak evil of the Way before the crowd. So Paul left them and took the disciples from him, reasoning with them every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. ¹¹ God was doing mighty deeds by the hands of Paul, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits came out of them. ¹³ But there were Jewish exorcists traveling through the area. They called on the name of the Lord Jesus so they could have power over evil spirits when they said, "By the Jesus whom Paul proclaims, I command you to come out." ¹⁴ The Jewish high priest, whose name was Sceva, had seven sons who were doing this. ¹⁵ An evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" ¹⁶ The evil spirit in the man leaped

on the exorcists and overpowered them and beat them up. Then they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived at Ephesus. They became very afraid, and the name of the Lord Jesus was honored. ¹⁸ Also, many of the believers came and confessed and admitted the evil things they had done. ¹⁹ Many who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of everyone. When they counted the value of them, it was fifty thousand pieces of silver. ²⁰ So the word of the Lord spread very widely in powerful ways.

²¹ Now after Paul completed his ministry in Ephesus, he decided in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia on his way to Jerusalem; he said, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." ²² Paul sent to Macedonia two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, who had helped him. But he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

²³ At about that time there was no small disturbance in Ephesus concerning the Way. ²⁴ A certain silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver statues of Artemis, brought in much business for the craftsmen. ²⁵ So he gathered together the workmen of that occupation and said, "Sirs, you know that in this business we make much money. ²⁶ You see and hear that, not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people. He is saying that there are no gods that are made with hands. ²⁷ Not only is there danger that our trade will no longer be needed, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be considered worthless. Then she would even lose her greatness, she whom all Asia and the world worships." ²⁸ When they heard this, they were filled with anger and cried out, saying, "Great is

Artemis of the Ephesians." ²⁹ The whole city was filled with confusion, and the people rushed together into the theater. They had seized Paul's travel companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, who came from Macedonia. ³⁰ Paul wanted to enter in among the crowd of people, but the disciples prevented him. ³¹ Also, some of the officials of the province of Asia who were his friends sent him a message strongly requesting him not to enter the theater. ³² Some people were shouting one thing, and some another, for the crowd was in confusion. Most of them did not even know why they had come together. ³³ Some of the crowd informed Alexander, whom the Jews were pushing to the front, and so Alexander motioned with his hand, wanting to give an explanation to those who were assembled. ³⁴ But when they became aware that he was a Jew, they all cried out for about two hours with one voice, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians." ³⁵ When the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "You men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the image which fell down from heaven? ³⁶ Seeing then that these things are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. ³⁷ For you have brought these men to this court who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess. ³⁸ Therefore, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have an accusation against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them accuse one another. ³⁹ But if you seek anything about other matters, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. ⁴⁰ For indeed we are in danger of being accused concerning this day's riot. There is no cause for this disorder, and we will not be able to explain it." ⁴¹ When he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

Chapter 20

¹ After the uproar was over, Paul sent for the disciples and after he encouraged them, he said farewell and left to go into Macedonia. ² When he had gone through those regions and had spoken many words of encouragement to them, he came to Greece. ³ After he had spent three months there, a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to sail for Syria, so he decided to return through Macedonia. ⁴ Accompanying him as far as Asia were Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus, both from the Thessalonian believers; Gaius of Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. ⁵ But these men had gone before us and were waiting for us at Troas. ⁶ We sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and in five days we came to them in Troas. There we stayed for seven days.

⁷ On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul spoke to the believers. He was planning to leave the next day, so he kept speaking until midnight. ⁸ There were many lamps in the upper room where we had come together. ⁹ In the window was sitting a young man named Eutychus, who fell into a deep sleep. As Paul spoke even longer, this young man, still sleeping, fell down from the third story and was picked up dead. ¹⁰ But Paul went down, stretched himself out on him, and embraced him. Then he said, "Do not be upset any more, for he is alive." ¹¹ Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking with them much longer until dawn, he left. ¹² They brought back the boy alive and were greatly comforted.

¹³ We ourselves went ahead of Paul by ship and sailed away to Assos, where we planned to take Paul on board. This is

what he himself desired to do, because he planned to go by land. ¹⁴ When he met us at Assos, we took him onto the ship and went to Mitylene. ¹⁵ Then we sailed from there and arrived the next day opposite the island of Chios. The following day we touched at the island of Samos, and the day after we came to the city of Miletus. ¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not spend any time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost, if it were at all possible for him to do so.

¹⁷ From Miletus he sent men to Ephesus and called to himself the elders of the church. 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 always spent my time with you. ¹⁹ I kept serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind and with tears, and in sufferings that happened to me because of the plots of the Jews. ²⁰ You know how I did not keep back from declaring to you anything that was useful, and how I taught you in public and from house to house, ²¹ testifying both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus. ²² Now look, I am going to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit warns to me in every city that chains and sufferings await me. ²⁴ But I do not consider my life is valuable to myself, if only I may finish the race and complete the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵ Now look, I know that you all, among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom, will see my face no more. ²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of any man. ²⁷ For I did not hold back from declaring to you the whole will of God. ²⁸ Therefore be care-

ful about yourselves, and about all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be careful to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. ^[1] ²⁹ I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. ³⁰ I know that from even among you some men shall come and distort the truth in order to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ So be on guard. Remember that for three years I did not stop instructing every one of you with tears night and day. ³² Now I entrust you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are being sanctified. ³³ I coveted no man's silver, gold, or clothing. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands served my own needs and the needs of those who were with me. ³⁵ In all things I gave you an example of how you should help the weak by working, and of how you should remember the words of the Lord Jesus, words that he himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."
³⁶ After he had spoken in this way, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ There was a lot of crying and they embraced Paul and kissed him. ³⁸ They were sad most of all because of what he had said, that they would never see his face again. Then they escorted him to the ship.

20:28 ^[1] Instead of *with his own blood*, some ancient copies read, *with the blood of his own Son*.

Chapter 21

¹ When we had gone away from them and set sail, we took a straight course to the

city of Cos, and the next day to the city of Rhodes, and from there to the city of Patara. ² When we found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. ³ After sighting Cyprus, leaving it on the left side of the boat, we sailed on to Syria and landed at Tyre, where the ship was to unload its cargo. ⁴ After we found the disciples, we stayed there seven days. Through the Spirit they kept urging Paul not to go to Jerusalem. ⁵ When our days there were over, we left and went on our way, and they all, with their wives and children, accompanied out of the city. Then we knelt down on the beach, prayed, ⁶ and said farewell to each other. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

⁷ When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais. There we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for one day. ⁸ On the next day we left and went to Caesarea. We entered the house of Philip, the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and we stayed with him. ⁹ Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. ¹⁰ As we stayed there for some days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus. ¹¹ He came to us and took Paul's belt. With it he tied his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews in Jerusalem tie up the man who owns this belt, and they will hand him over into the hands of the Gentiles.'" ¹² When we heard these things, both we and the people who lived in that place begged Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³ Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready, not only to be tied up, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." ¹⁴ Since Paul did not wish to be persuaded, we stopped trying and said, "May the will of the Lord be done."

¹⁵ After these days, we picked up our bags and went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶ There also went with us some of the disciples from Caesarea. They brought with them a man named Mnason, a man from Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we would stay.

¹⁷ When we had arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us gladly. ¹⁸ The next day Paul went with us to James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹ When he had greeted them, he reported one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰ When they heard it, they praised God, and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands have believed among the Jews. They are all determined to keep the law. ²¹ They have been told about you, that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to abandon Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children, and not to follow the old customs. ²² What should we do? They will certainly hear that you have come. ²³ So do what we say to you. We have four men who made a vow. ²⁴ Take these men and purify yourself with them, and pay their expenses for them, so that they may shave their heads. So everyone will know that the things they have been told about you are false. They will learn that you also follow the law. ²⁵ But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote and gave the instructions that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from sexual immorality." ²⁶ Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself with them, went into the temple, announcing the period of the days of purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them.

²⁷ When the seven days were almost finished, some Jews from Asia, seeing Paul in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd,

and laid hands on him. ²⁸ They were shouting, "Men of Israel, help us. This is the man who teaches all men everywhere things that are against the people, the law, and this place. Besides, he has also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." ²⁹ For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they thought that Paul had brought him into the temple. ³⁰ All the city was excited, and the people ran together and laid hold of Paul. They dragged him out of the temple, and the doors were immediately shut. ³¹ As they were trying to kill him, news came up to the chief captain of the guard that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. ³² Right away he took soldiers and centurions and ran down to the crowd. When the people saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³ Then the chief captain approached and laid hold of Paul, and commanded him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. ³⁴ Some in the crowd were shouting one thing and others another. Since the captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress. ³⁵ When he came to the steps, he was carried by the soldiers because of the crowd's violence. ³⁶ For the crowd of people followed after and kept shouting out, "Away with him!"

³⁷ As Paul was about to be brought into the fortress, he said to the chief captain, "May I say something to you?" The captain said, "Do you speak Greek?" ³⁸ Are you not then the Egyptian, who previously led a rebellion and led the four thousand men of the 'Assassins' out into the wilderness?" ³⁹ Paul said, "I am a Jew, from the city of Tarsus in Cilicia. I am a citizen of an important city. I ask you, allow me to speak to the people." ⁴⁰ When the captain had given him permission, Paul stood on the

steps and motioned with the hand to the people. When there was a deep silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language. He said,

Chapter 22

¹ “Brothers and fathers, listen to my defense which I will now make to you.”

² When the crowd heard Paul speak to them in the Hebrew language, they became quiet. He said,

³ “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but educated in this city at the feet of Gamaliel. I was instructed according to the strict ways of the law of our fathers. I am zealous for God, just as all of you are today. ⁴ I persecuted this Way to the death, binding up and delivering them to prison both men and women, ⁵ as the high priest and all the elders can bear witness. I received letters from them for the brothers in Damascus, and went there to bring them back in bonds to Jerusalem in order for them to be punished. ⁶ It happened that when I was traveling and nearing Damascus, about noon suddenly a great light from heaven began to shine around me. ⁷ I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ ⁸ I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ He said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.’ ⁹ Those who were with me saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who spoke to me. ¹⁰ I said, ‘What should I do, Lord?’ The Lord said to me, ‘Arise and go into Damascus; there you will be told everything that you must do.’ ¹¹ I could not see because of that light’s brightness, and being led by the hands of those who were with me, I came into Damascus. ¹² There I met a man named Ananias, a devout man according to the law and well spoken of by

all the Jews who lived there. ¹³ He came to me, stood by me, and said, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ In that very hour I saw him. ¹⁴ Then he said, ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear the voice coming from his own mouth. ¹⁵ For you shall be a witness for him to all men about what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ Now why are you waiting? Arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.’ ¹⁷ After I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple, it happened that I was given a vision. ¹⁸ I saw him say to me, ‘Hurry and leave Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.’ ¹⁹ I said, ‘Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you in every synagogue. ²⁰ When the blood of Stephen your witness was spilled, I also was standing by and agreeing, and I was guarding the cloaks of those who killed him.’ ²¹ But he said to me, ‘Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’”

²² They listened to him until he said this. Then they shouted and said, “Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not right that he should live.” ²³ As they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and throwing dust into the air, ²⁴ the chief captain commanded Paul to be brought into the fortress. He ordered that he should be questioned with scourging, so that he himself might know why they were shouting against him like that. ²⁵ When they had tied him up with the thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, “Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and who has not been put on trial?” ²⁶ When the centurion heard this, he went to the chief captain and told him, saying, “What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen.” ²⁷ The chief captain came and said to him, “Tell

me, are you a Roman citizen?" Paul said, "Yes." ²⁸ The chief captain answered, "It was only with a large amount of money that I acquired citizenship." But Paul said, "I was born a Roman citizen." ²⁹ Then the men who were going to question him left him immediately. The chief captain also was afraid, when he learned that Paul was a Roman citizen, because he had tied him up.

³⁰ On the next day, the chief captain wanted to know the truth about the Jews' accusations against Paul. So he untied his bonds and ordered the chief priests and all the council to meet. Then he brought Paul down and placed him in their midst.

Chapter 23

¹ Paul looked directly at the council members and said, "Brothers, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day." ² The high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth. ³ Then said Paul to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall. Are you sitting to judge me by the law, yet order me to be struck, against the law?" ⁴ Those who stood by said, "Is this how you insult God's high priest?" ⁵ Paul said, "I did not know, brothers, that he was high priest. For it is written,

You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people."

⁶ When Paul saw that the one part of the council were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he spoke loudly in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is because I have the certain hope of the resurrection of the dead that I am being judged." ⁷ When he said this, an argument began between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the crowd was divided. ⁸ For the Sadducees say that there

is no resurrection, no angels, and no spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge all of them. ⁹ So a large uproar occurred, and some of the scribes belonging to the Pharisees stood up and argued, saying, "We find nothing wrong with this man. What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?" ¹⁰ When there arose a great argument, the chief captain feared that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, so he commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among the council members, and bring him into the fortress.

¹¹ The following night the Lord stood beside him and said, "Do not be afraid, for as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness in Rome."

¹² When it became day, some Jews formed a conspiracy and called a curse down upon themselves with an oath not to eat nor drink anything until they had killed Paul. ¹³ There were more than forty men who formed this conspiracy. ¹⁴ They went to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have put ourselves under a great curse, to eat nothing until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵ Now, therefore, let the council tell the chief captain to bring him down to you, as if you would decide his case more precisely. As for us, we are ready to kill him before he comes here." ¹⁶ But Paul's sister's son heard that they were lying in wait, so he went and entered the fortress and told Paul. ¹⁷ Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the chief captain, for he has something to tell him." ¹⁸ So the centurion took the young man and brought him to the chief captain and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to him, and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you." ¹⁹ The chief captain took him by the hand to a private place and asked him, "What is it that you have to tell me?" ²⁰ The young man said, "The Jews

have agreed to ask you to bring down Paul tomorrow to the council, as if they were going to ask more precisely about his case.

²¹ But do not give in to them, because there are more than forty men who are lying in wait for him. They have called a curse down on themselves, neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him. Even now they are ready, waiting for consent from you.” ²² So the chief captain let the young man go, after instructing him, “Tell no one that you have said these things to me.” ²³ Then he called to him two of the centurions and said, “Get two hundred soldiers ready to go as far as Caesarea, and seventy horsemen also, and two hundred spearmen. You will leave at the third hour of the night.” ²⁴ He also ordered them to provide animals which Paul could ride, and to take him safely to Felix the governor. ²⁵ Then he wrote a letter like this:

²⁶ “Claudius Lysias to the most excellent Governor Felix, greetings. ²⁷ This man was arrested by the Jews and was about to be killed by them, when I came upon them with soldiers and rescued him, since I learned that he was a Roman citizen. ²⁸ I wanted to know why they accused him, so I took him down to their council. ²⁹ I learned that he was being accused about questions concerning their own law, but that there was no accusation against him that deserved death or imprisonment. ³⁰ Then it was made known to me that there was a plot against the man, so I immediately sent him to you, and instructed his accusers also to bring their charges against him in your presence. Farewell.”

³¹ So the soldiers obeyed their orders. They took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. ³² On the next day, most of the soldiers left the horsemen to go with him and they themselves returned to the fortress. ³³ When the horsemen reached Caesarea and delivered the letter

to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. ³⁴ When the governor read the letter, he asked what province Paul was from. When he learned that he was from Cilicia, ³⁵ he said, “I will hear you fully when your accusers come here.” Then he commanded him to be kept in Herod’s government headquarters.

Chapter 24

¹ After five days, Ananias the chief priest, certain elders, and an orator named Tertullus went there. These men brought charges against Paul before the governor.

² When Paul stood before the governor, Tertullus began to accuse him and said to the governor, “Because of you we have great peace, and your foresight brings good reform to our nation;

³ so with all thankfulness we welcome everything that you do, most excellent Felix. ⁴ So that I detain you no more, I ask you to briefly listen to me with kindness. ⁵ For we have found this man to be a pest and one who causes all the Jews throughout the world to rebel. He is a leader of the Nazarene sect. ⁶ He even tried to desecrate the temple, so we arrested him. ^[1] ^{7[2]} ⁸ When you question Paul about all these matters, you will be able to learn about these charges we are bringing against him.” ^[3] ⁹ The Jews also joined in the accusation, affirming that these charges were true.

¹⁰ But when the governor motioned for Paul to speak, Paul answered, “I understand that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, and so I gladly explain myself to you.

¹¹ You will be able to find out that it has not been more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem. ¹² When

they found me in the temple, I did not argue with anyone, and I did not stir up a crowd, either in the synagogues, or in the city. ¹³ They cannot prove to you the accusations they are now making against me. ¹⁴ But I admit this to you, that according to the Way that they call a sect, in that same way I serve the God of our fathers. I am faithful to all that is in the law and the writings of the prophets. ¹⁵ I have the same confident hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. ¹⁶ So I always strive to have a clear conscience before God and human beings. ¹⁷ Now after many years I came to bring help to my nation and gifts of money. ¹⁸ When I did this, certain Jews from Asia found me in a purification ceremony in the temple, not with a crowd or an uproar. ¹⁹ These men ought to be before you now and say what they have against me, if they have anything. ²⁰ Or else, these same men should say what wrong they found in me when I stood before the Jewish council, ²¹ unless it is about this one thing that I shouted out when I stood among them, ‘It is concerning the resurrection of those who have died that I am on trial before you today.’”

²² Then Felix, who was well informed about the Way, ajourned the hearing. He said, “When Lysias the commander comes down from Jerusalem, I will decide your case.” ²³ Then he commanded the centurion that Paul should be kept under guard, but to have some freedom so that none of his friends would be prevented from attending to his needs.

²⁴ After some days, Felix returned with Drusilla his wife, a Jewess, and he sent for Paul and he heard from him about faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ But when Paul reasoned with him about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, “Go away for

now. But when I have the opportunity later on, I will send for you.” ²⁶ At the same time he wanted Paul to give money to him, so he often sent for him and spoke with him. ²⁷ But when two years passed, Porcius Festus became the governor after Felix, but Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he left Paul to continue under guard.

24:6 ^[1]Some ancient copies add, “*We wanted to judge him according to our law.*”

24:7 ^[2]Some ancient copies have vs 7: *But Lysias, the officer, came and took him by force out of our hands.*

24:8 ^[3]Some ancient copies add to the first part of vs 8, *sending us to you.*

Chapter 25

¹ Now, Festus entered the province, and after three days, he went from Caesarea up to Jerusalem. ² The chief priest and the prominent Jews brought accusations against Paul, and they urged him ³ and asked him for a favor that would put Paul in danger—that Festus might summon Paul to Jerusalem so that they could kill him along the way. ⁴ But Festus answered that Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea, and that he himself was soon to return there. ⁵ “Therefore, those who can,” he said, “should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him.”

⁶ Festus stayed not more than eight or ten days and then he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he sat in the judgment seat and commanded Paul to be brought to him. ⁷ When he arrived, the Jews from

Jerusalem stood nearby, and they brought many serious charges which they could not prove. ⁸ Paul defended himself and said, "I have done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar." ⁹ But Festus wanted to gain the favor of the Jews, and so he answered Paul and said, "Do you want to go up to Jerusalem and to be judged by me about these things there?" ¹⁰ Paul said, "I stand before the judgment seat of Caesar where I must be judged. I have wronged no Jews, just as you also very well know. ¹¹ Though if I have done wrong and if I have done what is worthy of death, I do not refuse to die. But if their accusations are nothing, no one may hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar." ¹² After Festus talked with the council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

¹³ Now after some days, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay an official visit to Festus. ¹⁴ After he had been there for many days, Festus presented Paul's case to the king; he said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner. ¹⁵ When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against this man to me, and they asked for a sentence of condemnation against him. ¹⁶ I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had faced his accusers and had an opportunity to defend himself against the charges. ¹⁷ Therefore, when they came together here, I did not wait, but the next day I sat in the judgment seat and I ordered the man to be brought in. ¹⁸ When the accusers stood up and accused him, I thought that none of the charges that they brought against him were serious. ¹⁹ Instead, they had certain disputes with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus who was dead, whom Paul

claims to be alive. ²⁰ I was not certain about how to investigate this matter, and so I asked him if he was willing to go to Jerusalem to stand trial there about these charges. ²¹ But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody while awaiting the decision of the emperor, I ordered him to be held in custody until I could send him to Caesar." ²² Agrippa spoke to Festus, "I would also like to listen to this man." "Tomorrow," Festus said, "you will hear him."

²³ So on the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with much ceremony; they came into the hall with the military officers and with the prominent men of the city. When Festus spoke the command, Paul was brought to them. ²⁴ Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you men who are here with us, you see this man; all the multitude of Jews consulted with me in Jerusalem and here also, and they shouted to me that he should no longer live. ²⁵ I learned that he had done nothing worthy of death; but because he appealed to the emperor, I decided to send him. ²⁶ But I do not have something definite to write to the emperor. For this reason, I have brought him to you, especially to you, King Agrippa, so that I might have something more to write about the case. ²⁷ For it seems unreasonable for me to send a prisoner and to not also state the charges against him."

Chapter 26

¹ So Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense.

² "I regard myself as happy, King Agrippa, to make my case before you today against all the accusations of the Jews; ³ especially, because you are an expert in all the Jew-

ish customs and questions. So I ask you to hear me patiently. ⁴ Truly, all the Jews know how I lived from my youth in my own nation and at Jerusalem. ⁵ They knew me from the beginning and they should admit that I lived as a Pharisee, the strictest party of our religion. ⁶ Now I stand here to be judged because of my certain hope in the promise made by God to our fathers. ⁷ For this is the promise that our twelve tribes sought to receive as they earnestly worshiped God night and day. It is for this certain hope, King Agrippa, that the Jews accuse me. ⁸ Why should any of you think it is unbelievable that God raises the dead? ⁹ At one time I thought to myself that I should do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰ I did these in Jerusalem. I locked up many of the believers in prison by the authority I received from the chief priests, and when they were killed, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹ I punished them many times in all the synagogues and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was furiously enraged against them and I persecuted them even to foreign cities. ¹² While I was doing this, I went to Damascus with authority and orders from the chief priests; ¹³ and on the way there, at midday, King, I saw a light from heaven that was brighter than the sun and it shone around both me and the men who were traveling with me. ¹⁴ When we all fell to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me that said in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick a goad.’ ¹⁵ Then I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ The Lord replied, ‘I am Jesus whom you persecute. ¹⁶ Now get up and stand on your feet; because for this purpose I appeared to you, to appoint you to be a servant and a witness concerning the things that you know about me now and the things that I will show to you later; ¹⁷ and I will rescue you from the people and

from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive from God the forgiveness of sins and the inheritance that I give to them who are sanctified by faith in me.’ ¹⁹ Therefore, King Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision; ²⁰ but, to those in Damascus first, and then at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, I gave them the message that that they should repent and turn to God, doing deeds worthy of repentance. ²¹ For this cause the Jews arrested me in the temple and tried to kill me. ²² God has helped me until now, so I stand and testify to the common people and to the great ones about nothing more than what the prophets and Moses said would happen— ²³ that Christ must suffer and that by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light to our own people and to the Gentiles.”

²⁴ As Paul completed his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, “Paul, you are insane; your great learning makes you insane.” ²⁵ But Paul said, “I am not insane, most excellent Festus, but what I am declaring is true and rational. ²⁶ For the king knows about these things; and so, I speak freely to him, for I am persuaded that none of this is hidden from him; for this has not been done in a corner. ²⁷ Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that you believe.” ²⁸ Agrippa said to Paul, “In a short time would you persuade me and make me a Christian?” ²⁹ Paul said, “I pray to God, that whether in a short or long time, not you only, but also all that hear me today, would be like me, but without these prison chains.”

³⁰ Then the king stood up, and the governor, and Bernice also, and those who were sitting with them; ³¹ when they left the

hall, they talked to one another and said, “This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds.” ³² Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been freed if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

Chapter 27

¹ When it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they put Paul and some other prisoners under the charge of a centurion named Julius of the Imperial Regiment.

² We boarded a ship from Adramyttium, which was about to sail along the coast of Asia. So we went to sea. Aristarchus from Thessalonica in Macedonia went with us.

³ The next day we landed at the city of Sidon, where Julius treated Paul kindly and allowed him to go to his friends to receive their care. ⁴ From there we went to sea and sailed under the lee of Cyprus, close to the island, because the winds were against us.

⁵ Then we had sailed across the sea and were near the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra, a city of Lycia. ⁶ There, the centurion found a ship from Alexandria that was going to sail to Italy. He put us in it. ⁷ When we had sailed slowly for many days and had finally arrived with difficulty near Cnidus, the wind no longer allowed us to go that way, so we sailed along the sheltered side of Crete, opposite Salmone.

⁸ We sailed along the coast with difficulty, until we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, which is near the city of Lasea.

⁹ We had now taken much time, the time of the Jewish fast also had passed, and it had now become dangerous to sail. So Paul warned them, ¹⁰ and said, “Men, I see that the voyage we are about to take will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.” ¹¹ But the centurion paid

more attention to the master and to the owner of the ship than to those things that were spoken by Paul. ¹² Because

the harbor was not easy to spend the winter in, most of the sailors advised to sail from there, if by any means we could reach the city of Phoenix, to spend the winter there. Phoenix is a harbor in Crete, and it faces northeast and southeast. ¹³

When the south wind began to blow gently, the sailors thought that they had what they needed. So they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore. ¹⁴

But after a short time a wind of hurricane force, called the northeaster, began to beat down from the island. ¹⁵ When the ship was caught by the storm and could no longer head into the wind, we had to give way to the storm and were driven along by the wind. ¹⁶ We sailed along the lee of a small island called Cauda, and with difficulty we were able to secure the lifeboat.

¹⁷ When they had hoisted the lifeboat up, they used its ropes to bind the hull of the ship. They were afraid that they should run upon the sandbars of Syrtis, so they lowered the sea anchor and were driven along. ¹⁸ We took such a violent battering by the storm that the next day they began throwing the cargo overboard. ¹⁹ On the third day the sailors threw overboard the ship’s equipment with their own hands.

²⁰ When the sun and stars did not shine on us for many days, and the great storm still beat upon us, any more hope that we should be saved was abandoned. ²¹

When they had gone long without food, then Paul stood up among the sailors and said, “Men, you should have listened to me, and not have set sail from Crete, so as to get this injury and loss. ²² Now I urge you to take courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only the loss of the ship. ²³ For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong, whom also I worship—his angel stood beside me

²⁴ and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar, and see, God in his kindness has given to you all those who are sailing with you.’ ²⁵ Therefore be cheerful, men! For I trust God that it will happen just as it was told to me. ²⁶ But we must run aground upon some island.”

²⁷ When the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven this way and that in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors thought that they were approaching some land. ²⁸ They took soundings and found twenty fathoms; after a little while, they took more soundings and found fifteen fathoms. ²⁹ They were afraid that we might crash on the rocks, so they lowered four anchors from the stern and prayed that morning would come soon. ³⁰ The sailors were looking for a way to abandon the ship and had lowered the lifeboat into the sea, and pretended that they would throw down the anchors from the bow. ³¹ But Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.” ³² Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat and let it drift away. ³³ When daylight was coming on, Paul urged them all to take some food. He said, “This day is the fourteenth day that you wait and do not eat; you have eaten nothing. ³⁴ So I urge you to share some food, for this is necessary for you to survive. For not one of you will lose a single hair from his head.” ³⁵ When he had said this, he took bread and he thanked God in the sight of everyone. Then he broke the bread and began to eat. ³⁶ Then they were all encouraged and they also took food. ³⁷ We were 276 people in the ship. ³⁸ When they had eaten enough, they made the ship lighter by throwing out the wheat into the sea. ³⁹ When it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a beach, and they discussed whether they could drive the ship onto it. ⁴⁰ So they cut loose the anchors

and left them in the sea. At the same time they loosed the ropes of the rudders and raised the foresail to the wind; and so they headed to the beach. ⁴¹ But they came to a place where two currents met, and the ship ran into the ground. The bow of the ship stuck there and remained unmovable, but the stern began to break up because of the waves’ violence. ⁴² The soldiers’ plan was to kill the prisoners so that none of them could swim away and escape. ⁴³ But the centurion wanted to save Paul, so he stopped their plan; and he ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. ⁴⁴ Then the rest of the men should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. In this way it happened that all of us came safely to land.

Chapter 28

¹ When we were brought safely through, we learned that the island was called Malta. ² The native people offered to us not just ordinary kindness, but they lit a fire and welcomed us all, because of the constant rain and cold. ³ But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and placed them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened onto his hand. ⁴ When the native people saw the animal hanging from his hand, they said one to another, “This man certainly is a murderer who escaped from the sea, yet justice does not permit him to live.” ⁵ But then he shook the animal into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶ They were waiting for him to become inflamed with a fever or to suddenly drop dead. But after they watched him for a long time and saw that nothing was unusual with him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

⁷ Now in a nearby place there were lands

belonging to the chief man of the island, a man named Publius. He welcomed us and kindly provided for us for three days. ⁸ It happened that the father of Publius had been made ill with a fever and dysentery. When Paul went to him, he prayed, placed his hands on him, and healed him. ⁹ After this happened, the rest of the people on the island who were sick also came and were healed. ¹⁰ The people also honored us with many honors. When we were preparing to sail, they gave us what we needed.

¹¹ After three months we set sail in a ship that had spent the winter at the island, a ship of Alexandria, with “the twin gods” as its figurehead. ¹² After we landed at the city of Syracuse, we stayed there three days. ¹³ From there we sailed and arrived at the city of Rhegium. After one day a south wind sprang up, and in two days we came to the city of Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found some brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. In this way we came to Rome. ¹⁵ From there the brothers, after they heard about us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius and The Three Taverns. When Paul saw the brothers, he thanked God and took courage.

¹⁶ When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself with the soldier who was guarding him.

¹⁷ Then it came about that after three days Paul called together those men who were the leaders among the Jews. When they had come together, he said to them, “Brothers, although I have done nothing wrong against the people or the customs of our fathers, I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. ¹⁸ After they questioned me, they wished to set me free, because there was no reason in me for a death penalty. ¹⁹ But when the Jews spoke against their desire, I was forced to appeal to Caesar, al-

though it is not as if I were bringing any accusation against my nation. ²⁰ Because of my appeal, then, I have asked to see you and to speak with you. It is because of the certain hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.” ²¹ Then they said to him, “We neither received letters from Judea about you, nor did any of the brothers come and report or say anything bad about you. ²² But we want to hear from you what you think about this sect, because it is known by us that it is spoken against everywhere.”

²³ When they had set a day for him, more people came to him at his dwelling place. He presented the matter to them, and testified about the kingdom of God. He tried to persuade them about Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning until evening. ²⁴ Some were convinced about the things which were said, while others did not believe. ²⁵ When they did not agree with one another, they left after Paul had spoken this one word, “The Holy Spirit spoke well through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers. ²⁶ He said, ‘Go to this people and say,

”By hearing you will hear, but not understand;

and seeing you will see, but will not perceive.

²⁷ For the heart of this people has become dull,

and with their ears they hardly hear,
and they have shut their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,

and hear with their ears,

and understand with their heart and turn again,

and I would heal them.”

²⁸ Therefore, you should know that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen.” ²⁹^[1] boldness. No one stopped him.

³⁰ Paul lived for two whole years in his own rented house, and he welcomed all who came to him. ³¹ He was proclaiming the kingdom of God and was teaching the things about the Lord Jesus Christ with all ^{28:29} ^[1]Acts 28:29 - Some ancient copies have vs. 29: *When he had said these things, the Jews went away. They were having a great dispute among themselves.*