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 Aramaic language, a few weeks after the crucifixion. Is it possible, therefore, that he should give such an account as that in verses 18, 19, of the end of Judas, which he himself, indeed, says was known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem? Is it possible that, speaking in Aramaic to Jews, probably in most part living at and near Jerusalem, he could have spoken of the field being so called by the people of Jerusalem "in their own tongue"? Is it possible that he should, to such an audience, have translated the word Acheldamach? The answer of most unprejudiced critics is that Peter could not have done so. As de Wette remarks: "In the composition of this speech the author has not considered historical decorum."<sup>1</sup> This is felt by most Apologists, and many ingenious theories are advanced to explain away the difficulty. Some affirm that verses 18 and 19 are inserted as a parenthesis by the author of the Acts, whilst a larger number contend that only v. 19 is parenthetical. A very cursory examination of the passage, however, is sufficient to show that the verses cannot be separated. Verse 18 is connected with the preceding by the *μὲν οὖν*, 19 with 18 by *καὶ*, and verse 20 refers to 16, as indeed it also does to 17 and 18, without which the passage from the Psalm, as applied to Judas, would be unintelligible. Most critics, therefore, are agreed that none of the verses can be considered parenthetical. Some Apologists, who feel that neither of the obnoxious verses can be thus explained, endeavour to overcome the difficulty by asserting that the words, "in their own tongue" (*τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ*) and "that is, the field of blood" (*τοῦτ' ἔστιν χωρίον αἵματος*), in verse 19, are merely explanatory and inserted by the author of Acts. It is unnecessary to say that this explanation is purely arbitrary, and that there is no ground, except the difficulty itself, upon which their exclusion from the speech can be based.

In the cases to which we have hitherto referred, the impossibility of supposing that Peter could have spoken in this way has led writers to lay the responsibility of unacknowledged interpolations in the speech upon the author of Acts, thus at once relieving the Apostle. There are some Apologists who do not adopt this expedient, but attempt to meet the difficulty in other ways, while accepting the whole as a speech of Peter. According to one theory, those who object that Peter could not have thus related the death of Judas to people who must already have been well acquainted with the circumstances have totally overlooked the fact that a peculiar view of what has occurred is taken in the narrative, and that this peculiar view is the principal point of it. According to the statement made, Judas met his miserable end in the very

<sup>1</sup> *Apostelg.*, p. 12.



field which he had bought with the price of blood. It is this circumstance, it appears, which Peter brings prominently forward, and represents as a manifest and tangible dispensation of Divine justice. Unfortunately this is clearly an imaginary moral attached to the narrative by the Apologist, and is not the object of the supposed speaker, who rather desires to justify the forced application to Judas of the quotations in verse 20, which are directly connected with the preceding by γὰρ. Moreover, no explanation is here offered of the extraordinary expressions in verse 19 addressed to citizens of Jerusalem by a Jew in their own tongue.

Another explanation, which includes these points, is still more striking. With regard to the improbability of Peter's relating, in such a way, the death of Judas, it is argued that, according to the Evangelists, the disciples went from Jerusalem back to Galilee some eight days after the resurrection, and only returned before Pentecost to await the fulfilment of the promise of Jesus. Peter and his companions, it is supposed, only after their return became acquainted with the fate of Judas, which had taken place during their absence, and the matter was, therefore, quite new to them; besides, it is added, a speaker is often obliged on account of some connection with his subject to relate facts already known. It is true that some of the Evangelists represent this return to Galilee<sup>1</sup> as having taken place, but the author of the third Gospel and the Acts not only does not do so, but excludes it.<sup>2</sup> In the third Gospel (xxiv. 49) Jesus commands the disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they are endued with power from on high, and then, after blessing them, he is parted from them, and they return from Bethany to Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> In Acts the author again takes up the theme, and, whilst evidently giving later traditions regarding the appearances after the resurrection, he adheres to his version of the story regarding the command to stay in Jerusalem. In i. 4 he says: "And being assembled together

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 10, 16; Mark xvi. 7; John xxi. 1. Dr. Farrar, somewhat pertinently, asks: "Why did they (the disciples) not go to Galilee immediately on receiving our Lord's message? The circumstance is unexplained..... Perhaps the *entire* message of Jesus to them is not recorded; perhaps they awaited the end of the feast" (*Life of Christ*, ii., p. 441, note 1).

<sup>2</sup> In Luke xxiv. 49 the *Cod. Alex.* reads ἐν τῇ πόλει Ἱερουσαλήμ, with *Cod. C \* \**, F, H, K, M, and a number of others of less note. The other older *Codices* omit Ἱερουσαλήμ, but there is no difference of opinion that the "city" is Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> We shall hereafter have to go more fully into this, and shall not discuss it here. The third Gospel really represents the Ascension as taking place on the day of the Resurrection; and Acts, whilst giving later tradition, and making the Ascension occur forty days after, does not amend, but confirms, the previously enunciated view that the disciples had been ordered to stay in Jerusalem.



with them he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father," etc. ; and here again, verse 12, the disciples are represented, just before Peter's speech is supposed to have been delivered, as returning from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem. The author of Acts and the third Synoptic, therefore, gives no countenance to this theory.

Setting all this aside, the apologetic hypothesis we are discussing is quite excluded upon other grounds. If we suppose that the disciples did go into Galilee for a time, we find them again in Jerusalem at the election of the successor to Judas, and there is no reason to believe that they had only just returned. The Acts not only allow of no interval at all for the journey to Galilee between i. 12-14 and 15 f., but by the simple statement with which our episode commences, verse 15, "And in these days" (*καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις*), Peter conveys anything but the impression of a very recent return to Jerusalem. If the Apostles had been even a few days there, the incongruity of the speech would remain undiminished ; for the 120 brethren who are said to have been present must chiefly have been residents in Jerusalem, and cannot be supposed also to have been absent ; and, in any case, events which are represented as so well known to all the dwellers in Jerusalem must certainly have been familiar to the small Christian community whose interest in the matter was so specially great. Moreover, according to the first Synoptic, as soon as Judas sees that Jesus is condemned, he brings the money back to the chief priests, casts it down, and goes and hangs himself, xxvii. 3 f. This is related even before the final condemnation of Jesus and before his crucifixion, and the reader is led to believe that Judas at once put an end to himself, so that the disciples, who are represented as being still in Jerusalem for at least eight days after the resurrection, must have been there at the time.

With regard to the singular expressions in verse 19, this theory goes on to suppose that, out of consideration for Greek fellow believers, Peter had probably already begun to speak in the Greek tongue ; and when he designates the language of the dwellers in Jerusalem as "their own dialect," he does not thereby mean Hebrew in itself, but their own expression, the peculiar confession of the opposite party, which admitted the cruel treachery towards Jesus, in that they named the piece of ground Hakel Damah. Here, again, what assumptions ! It is generally recognised that Peter must have spoken in Aramaic, and, even if he did not, *τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ*<sup>1</sup> cannot mean anything but the language of "all the dwellers at Jerusalem." In a speech

<sup>1</sup> *διάλεκτος* is used six times in Acts, and nowhere else in the New Testament ; *τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ* occurs thrice, i. 19, ii. 6, 8 ; and *τῇ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ* thrice, xxi. 40, xxii. 2, xxvi. 14.



delivered at Jerusalem, in any language, to an audience consisting at least in considerable part of inhabitants of the place, and certainly almost entirely of persons whose native tongue was Aramaic, to tell them that the inhabitants called a certain field "in their own tongue" Acheldamach, giving them at the same time a translation of the word, is inconceivable to most critics, even including Apologists.

There is another point which indicates not only that this theory is inadequate to solve the difficulty, but that the speech could not have been delivered by Peter a few weeks after the occurrences related. It is stated that the circumstances narrated were so well known to the inhabitants of Jerusalem that the field was called in their own tongue Acheldamach. The origin of this name is not ascribed to the priests or rulers, but to the people, and it is not to be supposed that a popular name could have become attached to this field, and so generally adopted as the text represents, within the very short time which could have elapsed between the death of Judas and the delivery of this speech. Be it remembered that from the time of the crucifixion to Pentecost the interval was in all only about seven weeks, and that this speech was made some time before Pentecost—how long we cannot tell, but in any case the interval was much too brief to permit of the popular adoption of the name. The whole passage has much more the character of a narrative of events which had occurred a long time past than of circumstances which had taken place a few days before.

*Howin* The obvious conclusion is that this speech was never spoken by Peter, but is a much later composition put into his mouth, and written for Greek readers, who required to be told about Judas, and for whose benefit the Hebrew name of the field, inserted for local colouring, had to be translated. This is confirmed by several circumstances, to which we may refer. We shall not dwell much upon the fact that Peter is represented as applying to Judas two passages quoted from the Septuagint version of Psalm lxix. 25 (Sept. lxviii.) and Psalm cix. (Sept. cviii.) which, historically, cannot for a moment be sustained as referring to him. The first\* of these Psalms is quoted freely, and, moreover, the denunciations in the original being against a plurality of enemies, it can only be made applicable to Judas by altering the plural "their" (αὐτῶν) to "his habitation" (ἐπαυλὶς αὐτοῦ), a considerable liberty to take with prophecy. The Holy Spirit is said to have spoken this prophecy "concerning Judas" "by the mouth of David," but modern research has led critics to the conclusion that neither Psalm lxix. nor Psalm cix. was composed by David at all. As we know nothing of Peter's usual system of exegesis, very little weight as evidence can be attached



to this. On the other hand, it is clear that a considerable time must have elapsed before these two passages from the Psalms could have become applied to the death of Judas.

The account which is given of the fate of Judas is contradictory to that given in the first Synoptic, and cannot be reconciled with it, but follows a different tradition. According to the first Synoptic (xxvii. 3 f.), Judas brings back the thirty pieces of silver, casts them down in the Temple, and then goes and hangs himself. The chief priests take the money and buy with it the Potter's field, which is not said to have had any other connection with Judas, as a place for the burial of strangers. In the Acts, Judas himself buys a field as a private possession, and, instead of committing suicide by hanging, he is represented as dying from a fall in this field, which is evidently regarded as a special judgment upon him for his crime. Beyond calling attention to this amongst other phenomena presented in this speech, however, we have not further to do with the point at present. We have already devoted too much space to Peter's first address, and we now pass on to more important topics.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE WORK, CONTINUED

#### PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

WE now enter upon a portion of our examination of the Acts which is so full of interest in itself that peculiar care will be requisite to restrain ourselves within necessary limits. Hitherto our attention has been mainly confined to the internal phenomena presented by the document before us, with comparatively little aid from external testimony, and, although the results of such criticism have been of no equivocal character, the historical veracity of the Acts has not yet been tested by direct comparison with other sources of information. We now propose to examine, as briefly as may be, some of the historical statements in themselves by the light of information derived from contemporary witnesses of unimpeachable authority, and to confront them with well-established facts in the annals of the first two centuries. This leads us to the borders not only of one of the greatest controversies which has occupied theological criticism, but also of still more important questions regarding the original character and systematic development of Christianity itself. The latter we must here resolutely pass almost unnoticed, and into the former we shall only enter so far as is absolutely necessary to the special object of our inquiry.

The document before us professes to give a narrative of the progress of the primitive Church from its first formation in the midst of Mosaism, with strong Judaistic rules and prejudices, up to that liberal universalism which freely admitted the Christian Gentile, upon equal terms, into communion with the Christian Jew. The question with which we are concerned is strictly this: Is the account in the Acts of the Apostles of the successive steps by which Christianity emerged from Judaism, and, shaking off the restrictions and obligations of the Mosaic law, admitted the Gentiles to a full participation of its privileges, historically true? Is the representation which is made of the conduct and teaching of the older Apostles on the one hand, and of Paul on the other, and of their mutual relations, an accurate one? Can the Acts of the Apostles, in short, be considered a sober and veracious history of so important and interesting an epoch of the Christian Church? This has been vehemently disputed or denied, and the discussion, extending on



every side into important collateral issues, forms in itself a literature of voluminous extent and profound interest. Our path now lies through this debatable land; but, although the controversy as to the connection of Paul with the development of Christianity and his relation to the Apostles of the Circumcision cannot be altogether avoided, it only partially concerns us. We are freed from the necessity of advancing any particular theory, and have here no further interest in it than to inquire whether the narrative of the Acts is historical or not. If, therefore, avoiding many important but unnecessary questions, and restricting ourselves to a straight course across the great controversy, we seem to deal insufficiently with the general subject, it must be remembered that the argument is merely incidental to our inquiry, and that we not only do not pretend to exhaust it, but distinctly endeavour to reduce our share in it to the smallest limits compatible with our immediate object.

According to the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, the Apostolic age presents a most edifying example of concord and moderation. The emancipation of the Church from Mosaic restrictions was effected without strife or heart-burning, and the freedom of the Gospel, if not attained without hesitation, was finally proclaimed with singular largeness of mind and philosophic liberality. The teaching of Paul differed in nothing from that of the elder Apostles. The Christian universalism, which so many suppose to have specially characterised the great Apostle of the Gentiles, was not only shared, but even anticipated, by the elder Apostles. So far from opposing the free admission of the Gentiles to the Christian community, Peter declares himself to have been chosen of God that by his voice they should hear the Gospel,<sup>1</sup> proclaims that there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile,<sup>2</sup> and advocates the abrogation, in their case at least, of the Mosaic law.<sup>3</sup> James, whatever his private predilections may be, exhibits almost equal forbearance and desire of conciliation. In fact, whatever anomalies and contradictions may be discoverable, upon close examination, beneath this smooth and brilliant surface, the picture superficially presented is one of singular harmony and peace. On the other hand, instead of that sensitive independence and self-reliance of character which has been ascribed to the Apostle Paul, we find him represented in the Acts as submissive to the authority of the "Pillars" of the Church, ready to conform to their counsels and bow to their decrees, and as seizing every opportunity of visiting Jerusalem and coming in contact with that stronghold of Judaism. Instead of the Apostle of the Gentiles, preaching the abrogation of the law, and more

<sup>1</sup> Acts xv. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, xv. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, xv. 10.



than suspected of leading the Jews to apostatise from Moses,<sup>1</sup> we find a man even scrupulous in his observance of Mosaic customs, taking vows upon him, circumcising Timothy with his own hand, and declaring at the close of his career, when a prisoner at Rome, that he "did nothing against the people or the customs of the fathers."<sup>2</sup> There is no trace of angry controversy, of jealous susceptibility, of dogmatic difference, in the circle of the Apostles. The intercourse of Paul with the leaders of the Judaistic party is of the most unbroken pleasantness and amity. Of opposition to his ministry, or doubt of his Apostleship, whether on the part of the Three or of those who identified themselves with their teaching, we have no hint. We must endeavour to ascertain whether this is a true representation of the early development of the Church, and of the momentous history of the Apostolic age.

In the Epistles of Paul we have, at least to some extent, the means of testing the accuracy of the statements of the Acts with regard to him and the early history of the Church. The Epistles to the Galatians, to the Corinthians (2), and to the Romans are generally admitted to be genuine,<sup>3</sup> and can be freely used for this purpose. To these we shall limit our attention, excluding other epistles, whose authenticity is either questioned or denied; but in doing so no material capable of really affecting the result is set aside. For the same reason, we must reject any evidence to be derived from the so-called Epistles of Peter and James, at least so far as they are supposed to represent the opinions of Peter and James; but here again it will be found that they do not materially affect the points immediately before us. The veracity of the Acts of the Apostles being the very point which is in question, it is unnecessary to say that we have to subject the narrative to examination, and by no means to assume the correctness of any statements we find in it. At the same time it must be our endeavour to collect from this document such indications—and they will frequently be valuable—of the true history of the occurrences related, as may be presented between the lines of the text. In the absence of fuller information, it must not be forgotten that human nature in the first century of our era was very much what it is in the nineteenth, and, certain facts being clearly established, it will not be difficult to infer many details which cannot now be positively demonstrated. The Epistle to the Galatians, however, will be our most invaluable guide. Dealing, as it does, with some of the principal episodes of the Acts, we are enabled by the words of the Apostle Paul himself, which have all the accent of truth and vehement earnestness, to control the narrative of the unknown writer of that work; and, where this source fails,

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxi. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, xxviii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> In great part, at least.



we have the unsuspected testimony of his other Epistles, and of later ecclesiastical history, to assist our inquiry.

The problem, then, which we have to consider is the manner in which the primitive Church emerged from its earliest form, as a Jewish institution with Mosaic restrictions and Israelitish exclusiveness, and finally opened wide its doors to the uncircumcised Gentile, and assumed the character of a universal religion. In order to understand the nature of the case, and be able to estimate aright the solution which is presented by the narrative in the Acts of the Apostles, it is necessary that we should obtain a clear view of the actual characteristics of Christianity at the period when that history begins. We must endeavour to understand precisely what view the Apostles had formed of their position in regard to Judaism, and of the duty which devolved upon them of propagating the Gospel. It is obvious that we cannot rightly appreciate the amount of persuasion requisite to transform the primitive Church from Jewish exclusiveness to Christian universality, without ascertaining the probable amount of long-rooted conviction and religious prejudice or principle which had to be overcome before that great change could be effected.

We shall not here enter upon any argument as to the precise views which the Founder of Christianity may have held as to his own person and work, nor shall we attempt to sift the traditions of his life and teaching which have been handed down to us, and to separate the genuine spiritual nucleus from the grosser matter by which it has been enveloped and obscured. We have much more to do with the view which others took of the matter, and, looking at the Gospels as representations of that which was accepted as the orthodox view regarding the teaching of Jesus, they are almost as useful for our present purpose as if they had been more spiritual and less popular expositions of his views. What the Master was understood to teach is more important for the history of the first century than what he actually taught without being understood.

Nothing is more certain than the fact that Christianity, originally, was developed out of Judaism, and that its advent was historically prepared by the course of the Mosaic system, to which it was so closely related. In its first stages, during the apostolic age, it had no higher ambition than to be, and to be considered, the continuation and the fulfilment of Judaism, its final and triumphant phase. The substantial identity of primitive Christianity with true Judaism was, at first, never called in question; it was considered a mere internal movement of Judaism, its development and completion, but by no means its mutilation. The idea of Christianity as a new religion never entered the minds of the Twelve or of the first believers, nor, as we shall presently see, was it so regarded by the Jews themselves. It was, in fact,



originally nothing more than a sect of Judaism holding a particular view of one point in the creed, and, for a very long period, it was considered so by others, and was in no way distinguished from the rest of Mosaism. Even in the Acts there are traces of this, Paul being called "a ringleader of the sect (*αἵρεσις*) of the Nazarenes,"<sup>1</sup> and the Jews of Rome being represented as referring to Christianity by this term.<sup>2</sup> Paul, before the Council, not only does not scruple to call himself "a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee," but the Pharisees take part with him against the more unorthodox and hated sect of the Sadducees.<sup>3</sup>

For eighteen centuries disputes have fiercely raged over the creed of Christendom, and the ingenuity of countless divines has been exhausted in deducing mystic dogmas from the primitive teaching; but if there be one thing more remarkable than another in that teaching, according to the Synoptics, it is its perfect simplicity. Jesus did not appear with a ready-made theology, and imposed no elaborate system of doctrine upon his disciples. Throughout the prophetic period of Mosaism one hope had sustained the people of Israel in all their sufferings and reverses—that the fortunes of the nation should finally be retrieved by a scion of the race of David, under whose rule it should be restored to a future of unexampled splendour and prosperity. The expectation of the Messiah, under frequently modified aspects, had formed a living part in the national faith of Israel. Primitive Christianity, sharing, but recasting, this ancient hope, was only distinguished from Judaism, with whose worship it continued in all points united, by a single doctrine, which was in itself merely a modification of the national idea—the belief that Jesus of Nazareth was actually the Christ, the promised Messiah. This was substantially the whole of its creed.

The Synoptic Gospels, and more especially the first,<sup>4</sup> are clearly a history of Jesus as the Messiah of the house of David, so long announced and expected, and whose life and even his death and resurrection are shown to be the fulfilment of a series of Old Testament prophecies. When his birth is announced to Mary, he is described as the great one, who is to sit on the throne of David his father, and reign over the house of Jacob for ever,<sup>5</sup> and the good tidings of great joy to all the people (*παντὶ τῷ λαῷ*), that the Messiah is born that day in the city of David, are proclaimed by the angel to the shepherds of the plain.<sup>6</sup> Symeon takes the child in his arms and blesses God that the words of the Holy

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxiv. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, xxviii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, xxiii. 6 f.

<sup>4</sup> The Gospel commences with the announcement, i. 1, 17, 18; cf. Mark i. 1 f.

<sup>5</sup> Luke i. 32, 33.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, ii. 10 f.



Spirit are accomplished, that he should not die before he had seen the Lord's anointed, the Messiah, the consolation of Israel.<sup>1</sup> The Magi come to his cradle in Bethlehem, the birthplace of the Messiah indicated by the prophet,<sup>2</sup> to do homage to him who is born King of the Jews,<sup>3</sup> and there Herod seeks to destroy him,<sup>4</sup> fulfilling another prophecy.<sup>5</sup> His flight into Egypt and return to Nazareth are equally the fulfilment of prophecies.<sup>6</sup> John the Baptist, whose own birth as the forerunner of the Messiah had been foretold,<sup>7</sup> goes before him preparing the way of the Lord, and announcing that the Messianic kingdom is at hand. According to the fourth Gospel, some of the twelve had been disciples of the Baptist, and follow Jesus on their master's assurance that he is the Messiah. One of these, Andrew, induces his brother Simon Peter also to go after him by the announcement: "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (i. 35 f. 41). And Philip tells Nathaniel: "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write: Jesus, the Son of Joseph, who is from Nazareth" (i. 45). When he has commenced his own public ministry, Jesus is represented as asking his disciples, "Who do men say that I am?" and, setting aside the popular conjectures that he is John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets, by the still more direct question, "And who do ye say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And in consequence of this recognition of his Messiahship, Jesus rejoins: "And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church."<sup>8</sup>

It is quite apart from our present object to point out the singular feats of exegesis and perversions of historical sense by which passages of the Old Testament are forced to show that every event in the history, and even the startling novelty of a suffering and crucified Messiah, which to Jews was a stumbling-block and to Gentiles folly,<sup>9</sup> had been foretold by the prophets.

From first to last the Gospels strive to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, and connect him indissolubly with the Old Testament. The Messianic keynote, which is struck at the outset, regulates the strain to the close. The disciples on the way to Emmaus, appalled by the ignominious death of their Master, sadly confide to the stranger their vanished hope that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they now merely call "a prophet mighty in word and deed before

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii. 25-28; so also Elizabeth, ii. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. ii. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, ii. 17 f.

<sup>7</sup> Luke i. 17 (cf. Matt. xi. 14, xvii. 12 f.; Mark ix. 11 f.), ii. 67 f.; Matt. iii. 3; Mark i. 1 f.

<sup>8</sup> Matt. xvi. 13-18; cf. Mark viii. 29; Luke ix. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. ii. 5, 6; cf. Micah v. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, ii. 16 f.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, ii. 23.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. i. 23.



God and all the people," was the Christ "who was about to redeem Israel," and Jesus himself replies: "O foolish and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spake! Was it not needful that the Christ (Messiah) should suffer these things and enter into his glory? And, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."<sup>1</sup> Then, again, when he appears to the eleven immediately after, at Jerusalem, he says: "'These are the words that I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning me.' Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them: 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise from the dead the third day.'"<sup>2</sup>

*most important* The crucifixion and death of Jesus introduced the first elements of rupture with Judaism, to which they formed the great stumbling-block. The conception of a suffering and despised Messiah could naturally never have occurred to a Jewish mind.<sup>3</sup> The first effort of Christianity, therefore, was to repair the apparent breach by proving that the suffering Messiah had actually been foretold by the prophets; and to re-establish the Messianic character of Jesus, by the evidence of his resurrection. But, above all, the momentary deviation from orthodox Jewish ideas regarding the Messiah was retraced by the representation of a speedy second advent, in glory, of the once rejected Messiah to restore the kingdom of Israel, by which the ancient hopes of the people became reconciled with the new expectation of Christians. Even before the ascension the disciples are represented in the Acts as asking the risen Jesus: "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"<sup>4</sup> There can be no doubt of the reality and universality of the belief, in the Apostolic Church, in the immediate return of the glorified Messiah, and speedy "end of all things."

The substance of the preaching of the Apostles in Acts simply is that Jesus is the Christ,<sup>5</sup> the expected Messiah. Their chief

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 15-17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, xxiv. 44-46.

*q.* <sup>3</sup> In the Gospels the disciples are represented as not understanding such a representation, and Peter, immediately after the famous declaration, "Thou art the Christ," rebukes Jesus for such an idea (Matt. xvi. 21 f.; cf. Mark ix. 32; Luke ix. 45, xviii. 34, etc.).

<sup>4</sup> Acts i. 6. Hase pertinently observes: "The Apostolic Church, both before and after the destruction of Jerusalem, devoutly expected from day to day the return of Christ. If an interval of thousands of years (Jahrtausenden) occur between both events, then there is either an error in the prophecy or in the tradition" (*Das Leben Jesu*, 5te Aufl., p. 226).

*Note.* <sup>5</sup> Cf. Acts ix. 22, ii. 36, v. 42, viii. 4 f., 35, x. 36 f., xiii. 23 f., xvii. 3, xviii. 5, 28, xxvi. 22 f. Hegesippus says of James that he was a witness both to Jews and Greeks that Jesus is the Christ (*Euseb.*, *H. E.*, ii. 25).



aim is to prove that his sufferings and death had been foretold by the prophets,<sup>1</sup> and that his resurrection establishes his claim to the title.<sup>2</sup> The simplicity of the creed is illustrated by the rapidity with which converts are made. After a few words, on one occasion three thousand,<sup>3</sup> and on another five thousand,<sup>4</sup> are at once converted. No lengthened instruction or preparation was requisite for admission into the Church. As soon as a Jew acknowledged Jesus to be the Messiah he thereby became a Christian. As soon as the three thousand converts at Pentecost made this confession of faith they were baptised.<sup>5</sup> The Ethiopian is converted whilst passing in his chariot, and is immediately baptised,<sup>6</sup> as are likewise Cornelius and his household after a short address from Peter.<sup>7</sup> The new faith involved no abandonment of the old. On the contrary, the advent of the Messiah was so essential a part of Judaic belief, and the Messianic claim of Jesus was so completely based by the Apostles on the fulfilment of prophecy—"showing by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ"—that recognition of the fact rather constituted firmer adherence to Mosaism, and deeper faith in the inviolable truth of the Covenant with Israel. If there had been no Mosaism, so to say, there could have been no Messiah. So far from being opposed either to the form or spirit of the religion of Israel, the proclamation of the Messiah was its necessary complement, and could only be intelligible by confirmation of its truth and maintenance of its validity. Christianity—belief in the Messiah—in its early phases, drew its whole nourishment from roots that sank deeply into Mosaism. It was indeed nothing more than Mosaism in a developed form. The only difference between the Jew and the Christian was that the latter believed the Messiah to have already appeared in Jesus, whilst the former still expected him in the future; though even this difference was singularly diminished, in appearance at least, by the Christian expectation of the second advent.

It is exceedingly important to ascertain, under these circumstances, what was the impression of the Apostles as to the relation of believers to Judaism and to Mosaic observances, although it must be clear to anyone who impartially considers the origin and historical antecedents of the Christian faith that very little doubt can have existed in their minds on the subject. The teaching of Jesus, as recorded in the synoptic Gospels, is by no means of a doubtful character, more especially when the sanctity of the Mosaic system in the eyes of a Jew is borne in mind. It must be apparent that, in order to remove the obligation of a Law and form

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 23 f., iii. 13 f., xxvi. 22 f.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 31, iii. 26, iv. 33, v. 30 f., x. 40 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, ii. 41.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, iv. 4. There may be doubt as to the number on this occasion.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, ii. 41.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, viii. 35 f.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.*, x. 47 f.



of worship believed to have been, in the most direct sense, instituted by God himself, the most clear, strong, and reiterated order would have been requisite. No one can reasonably maintain that a few spiritual expressions directed against the bare letter and abuse of the law, which were scarcely understood by the hearers, could have been intended to abolish a system so firmly planted, or to overthrow Jewish institutions of such antiquity and national importance, much less that they could be taken in this sense by the disciples. A few passages in the Gospels, therefore, which may bear the interpretation of having foreseen the eventful supersession of Mosaism by his own more spiritual principles, must not be strained to support the idea that Jesus taught disregard of the Law. His very distinct and positive lessons, conveyed both by precept and practice, show, on the contrary, that not only he did not intend to attack pure Mosaism, but that he was understood both directly and by inference to recognise and confirm it.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus states to the disciples in the most positive manner: "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be accomplished."<sup>1</sup> Whether the last phrase be interpreted "till all the law be accomplished," or "till all things appointed to occur be accomplished," the effect is the same. One clear explicit declaration like this, under the circumstances, would outweigh a host of doubtful expressions. Not only does Jesus in this passage directly repudiate any idea of attacking the law and the prophets, but, in representing his mission as their fulfilment, he affirms them, and associates his own work in the closest way with theirs. If there were any uncertainty, however, as to the meaning of his words, it would be removed by the continuation: "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these commandments, even the least, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."<sup>2</sup> It would be difficult for teaching to be more decisive in favour of the maintenance of the law, and this instruction, according to the first Synoptic, was specially directed to the disciples.<sup>3</sup> When Jesus goes on to show that their righteousness must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, and to add to the letter of the law, as interpreted by those of old, his own profound interpretation of its spirit, he only intensifies, without limiting, the operation of the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 17, 18; cf. xxiii. 2 f.; cf. Luke xvi. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, v. 19. Hilgenfeld (*Einl. N. T.*, p. 469 f.) and some others consider this, as well as other parts of the Sermon on the Mount, to be inserted as a direct attack upon Pauline teaching.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. v. 1, 2.

Note.

very likely; it seems posterior, and the phrase before.



law; he merely spiritualises it. He does no more than this in his lessons regarding the observance of the Sabbath. He did not, in point of fact, attack the genuine Mosaic institution of the day of rest at all, but merely the intolerable literalism by which its observance had been made a burden instead of "a delight." He justified his variation from the traditional teaching and practice of his time by appeals to Scriptural precedent.<sup>1</sup> As Dr. Farrar has said: ".....the observance of the Sabbath, which had been intended to secure for weary men a rest full of love and peace and mercy, had become a mere national fetish—a barren custom fenced in with the most frivolous and senseless restrictions."<sup>2</sup> Jesus restored its original significance.

In restricting some of the permissive clauses of the law, on the other hand, he acted precisely in the same spirit. He dealt with the law not with the temper of a revolutionist, but of a reformer, and his reforms, so far from affecting its permanence, are a virtual confirmation of the rest of the code.<sup>3</sup> Ritschl, whose views on this point will have some weight with Apologists, combats the idea that Jesus merely confirmed the Mosaic moral law and abolished the ceremonial law. Referring to one particular point of importance, he says: "He certainly contests the duty of the Sabbath rest, the value of purifications and sacrifices, and the validity of divorce; on the other hand, he leaves unattacked the value of circumcision, whose regulation is generally reckoned as part of the ceremonial law; and nothing justifies the conclusion that Jesus estimated it in the same way as Justin Martyr, and the other Gentile Christian Church teachers, who place it on the same line as the ceremonies. The only passage in which Jesus touches upon circumcision (John vii. 22) rather proves that, as an institution of the patriarchs, he attributes to it peculiar sanctity. Moreover, when Jesus, with unmistakable intention, confines his own personal ministry to the Israelitish people (Mark vii. 27, Matt. x. 5, 6), he thereby recognises their prior right of participation in the kingdom of God, and also, indirectly, circumcision as the sign of the preference of this people. The distinction of circumcision from ceremonies, besides, is perfectly intelligible from the Old Testament. Through circumcision, to wit, is the Israelite, sprung from the people of the Covenant, indicated as sanctified by God; through purification, sacrifice, Sabbath rest, must he continually sanctify himself for God. So long, therefore, as the conception of the people of the Covenant is maintained, circumcision cannot

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii. 3 f.; Mark ii. 25 f.; Luke vi. 3 f.

<sup>2</sup> Farrar, *Life of Christ*, i., p. 375, cf. p. 431 f., ii. 115 f.

<sup>3</sup> Ritschl limits the application of much of the modification of the law ascribed to Jesus to the disciples, as members of the "kingdom of God" (*Entst. altk. Kirche*, p. 29 f.).



be abandoned, whilst even the prophets have pointed to the merely relative importance of the Mosaic worship."<sup>1</sup>

Jesus everywhere in the Gospels recognises the divine origin of the law,<sup>2</sup> and he quotes the predictions of the prophets as absolute evidence of his own pretensions. To those who ask him the way to eternal life he indicates its commandments,<sup>3</sup> and he even enjoins the observance of its ceremonial rites.<sup>4</sup> Jesus did not abrogate the Mosaic law; but, on the contrary, by his example as well as his precepts he practically confirmed it. According to the statements of the Gospels, Jesus himself observed the prescriptions of the Mosaic law. From his birth he had been brought up in its worship.<sup>5</sup> He was circumcised on the eighth day.<sup>6</sup> "And when the days of their purification were accomplished, according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, even as it is written in the law of the Lord: Every male, etc., and to give a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord," etc.<sup>7</sup> Every year his parents went to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover,<sup>8</sup> and this practice he continued till the close of his life. "As his custom was, he went into the synagogue (at Nazareth) and stood up to read."<sup>9</sup> According to the fourth Gospel, Jesus goes up to Jerusalem for the various festivals of the Jews,<sup>10</sup> and the feast of the Passover, according to the Synoptics, was the last memorable supper eaten with his disciples,<sup>11</sup> the third Synoptic representing him as saying: "With desire I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say unto you that I shall not any more eat it until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."<sup>12</sup> However exceptional the character of Jesus, and however elevated his views, it is undeniable that he lived and died a Jew, conforming to the ordinances of the Mosaic law in all essential points, and not holding himself aloof from the worship of the Temple which he purified. The influence which his adherence to the forms of Judaism must have exerted over his followers can scarcely be exaggerated, and the fact must ever be carefully borne in mind in estimating the conduct of the Apostles and of the primitive Christian community after his death.

As befitted the character of the Jewish Messiah, the sphere of

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Entst. altk. Kirche*, p. 34, cf. 46 f.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xv. 4, etc. Paley says: "Undoubtedly our Saviour assumes the divine origin of the Mosaic institution" (*A View of the Evidences*, etc., ed. Potts, 1850, p. 262).

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xix. 17; Mark x. 17; Luke xviii. 18; x. 25 f., xv. 29, 31, 32.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. viii. 4; Luke v. 14; John vii. 8. <sup>5</sup> Cf. Gal. iv. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Luke ii. 21. <sup>7</sup> *Ib.*, ii. 22 f. <sup>8</sup> *Ib.*, ii. 41. <sup>9</sup> *Ib.*, iv. 16.

<sup>10</sup> John v. 1, vii. 8, 10, x. 22 f., xi. 55, 56, xii. 1, 12; xiii. 1 f.

<sup>11</sup> Matt. xxvi. 17 f.; Mark xiv. 12 f.; Luke xxii. 7 f.

<sup>12</sup> Luke xxii. 15 f.



the ministry of Jesus and the arrangements for the proclamation of the Gospel were strictly, and even intensely, Judaic. Jesus attached to his person twelve disciples, a number clearly typical of the twelve tribes of the people of Israel; and this reference is distinctly adopted when Jesus is represented, in the Synoptics, as promising that, in the Messianic kingdom, "when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory," the Twelve also "shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel";<sup>1</sup> a promise which, according to the third Synoptist, is actually made during the last supper.<sup>2</sup> In the Apocalypse, which, "of all the writings of the New Testament, is most thoroughly Jewish in its language and imagery,"<sup>3</sup> the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb are written upon the twelve foundations of the wall of the heavenly Jerusalem, upon the twelve gates of which, through which alone access to the city can be obtained, are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.<sup>4</sup> Jesus himself limited his teaching to the Jews, and was strictly "a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." To the prayer of the Canaanitish woman, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David," unlike his gracious demeanour to her of the bloody issue,<sup>5</sup> Jesus at first, it is said, "answered her not a word"; and even when besought by the disciples—not to heal her daughter, but—to "send her away," he makes the emphatic declaration: "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."<sup>6</sup> To her continued appeals he lays down the principle: "It is not lawful to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." If after these exclusive sentences the boon is finally granted, it is as of the crumbs<sup>7</sup> which fall from the master's table. The modified expression in the second Gospel, "Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs," does not affect the case, for it equally represents exclusion from the privileges of Israel, and the Messianic idea fully contemplated a certain grace to the heathen when the children were filled. The expression regarding casting the children's bread "to the dogs" is clearly in reference to the Gentiles, who were so called by the Jews. A similar, though still stronger, use of such expressions might be pointed out in the Sermon on the Mount in the first Gospel (vii. 6): "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 28.<sup>2</sup> Luke xxii. 30.<sup>3</sup> Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Ep. to the Galatians*, 4th ed., p. 343.<sup>4</sup> Rev. xxi. 12, 14.<sup>5</sup> Matt. ix. 22.<sup>6</sup> This expression does not occur in the parallel in Mark.<sup>7</sup> These ψίχια, it is supposed, may mean the morsels of bread on which the hands were wiped after they had, in Eastern fashion, been thrust into the dishes before them.

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pearls before swine." It is certain that the Jews were in the habit of speaking of the heathen both as dogs and swine—unclean animals—and Hilgenfeld<sup>1</sup> and some other critics see in this verse a reference to the Gentiles. We do not, however, press this application, which is, and may be, disputed, but merely mention it and pass on. There can be no doubt, however, of the exclusive references to the Gentiles in the same sermon and other passages, where the disciples are enjoined to practise a higher righteousness than the Gentiles. "Do not even the publicans.....do not even the Gentiles or sinners the same things."<sup>2</sup> "Take no thought, etc., for after all these things do the Gentiles seek; but seek ye, etc."<sup>3</sup> The contrast is precisely that put with some irony by Paul, making use of the common Jewish expression "sinner" as almost equivalent for "Gentile."<sup>4</sup> In another place the first Synoptic represents Jesus as teaching his disciples how to deal with a brother who sins against them, and as the final resource, when every effort at reconciliation and justice has failed, he says: "Let him be unto thee as the Gentile (ἐθνικός) and the publican" (Matt. xviii. 17). He could not express in a stronger way to a Jewish mind the idea of social and religious excommunication.

The instructions which Jesus gives in sending out the Twelve express the exclusiveness of the Messianic mission to the Jews, in the first instance, at least, in a very marked manner. Jesus commands his disciples: "Go not into a way of the Gentiles (ἐθνῶν), and into a city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand."<sup>5</sup> As if more emphatically to mark the limitation of the mission, the assurance is seriously added: "For verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man come."<sup>6</sup> It will be observed that Jesus here charges the Twelve to go rather "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" in the same words that he employs to the Canaanitish woman to describe the exclusive destination of his own ministry.<sup>7</sup> In coupling the Samaritans with the Gentiles there is merely an expression of the intense antipathy of the Jews against them as a mixed and, we

<sup>1</sup> Hilgenfeld, *Die Evangelien*, p. 64; *Einl.*, p. 470; Reuss, *Théol. Chr.*, ii., p. 348; cf. Schoettgen, *Horæ Hebr.*, p. 87; Keim, *Jesu v. Nazara*, ii., p. 406, anm. 3; Köstlin, *Urspr. synopt. Evv.*, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 46 f., vi. 7 f.; cf. Luke vi. 32 f., where "sinners" is substituted for "Gentiles."

<sup>3</sup> Matt. vi. 31 f.; cf. xx. 25 f.; Luke xii. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. ii. 15; cf. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Ep. to Gal.*, 4th ed., p. 114.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. x. 5-7; cf. Mark iii. 13 f., vi. 7 f.; Luke ix. 1 f.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. x. 23.

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.*, xv.; cf. Acts iii. 25, 26, xiii. 46.



W. | may say, renegade race excluded from the Jewish worship, although circumcised, intercourse with whom is to this day almost regarded as pollution.<sup>1</sup>

The third Gospel, which omits the restrictive instructions of Jesus to the Twelve given by the first Synoptist, introduces another episode of the same description—the appointment and mission of seventy disciples,<sup>2</sup> to which we must very briefly refer. No mention whatever is made of the incident in the other Gospels, and these disciples are not referred to in any other part of the New Testament.<sup>3</sup> Even Eusebius remarks that no catalogue of them is anywhere given,<sup>4</sup> and, after naming a few persons, who were said by tradition to have been of their number, he points out that more than seventy disciples appear, for instance, according to the testimony of Paul.<sup>5</sup> It will be observed that the instructions supposed to be given to the Seventy in the third Synoptic are, in the first, at least in considerable part, the very instructions given to the Twelve. There has been much discussion regarding the whole episode, which need not here be minutely referred to. For various reasons the majority of critics impugn its historical character. A large number of these, as well as other writers, consider that the narrative of this appointment of seventy disciples, the number of the nations of the earth according to Jewish ideas, was introduced in Pauline universalistic interest, or, at least, that the number is typical of Gentile conversion, in contrast with that of the Twelve who represent the more strictly Judaic limitation of the Messianic mission; and they seem to hold that the preaching of the Seventy is represented as not confined to Judæa, but as extending to Samaria, and that it thus denoted the extension of the Gospel also to the Gentiles. On the other hand, other critics, many, though by no means all, of whom do not question the authenticity of the passage, are disposed to deny the Pauline tendency and any special connection with a mission to the Gentiles, and rather to see in the number seventy a reference to well-known Judaistic institutions. It is true that the number of the nations was set down at seventy by Jewish tradition,<sup>6</sup> but, on the other hand, it was the number of the elders

<sup>1</sup> Farrar, *Life of Christ*, i., 208 f.

<sup>2</sup> Luke x. 1 f. We need not discuss the precise number, whether 70 or 72. The very same uncertainty exists regarding the number of the elders and of the nations.

<sup>3</sup> Even Thiersch is struck by this singular fact. "It is remarkable," he says, "that no further mention of the seventy disciples of Christ (Luke x. 1) occurs in the N. T., and that no credible tradition regarding them is preserved" (*Die Kirche im ap. Zeit.*, p. 79, anm. 2).

<sup>4</sup> Euseb., *H. E.*, i. 12.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, cf. 1 Cor. xv. 5 f.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 63; *Clem. Recog.*, ii. 42; Epiphanius, *Hær.*, i. 5; Eisenmenger, *Entd. Judenthum*, ii., p. 3 f., p. 736 f.



chosen by Moses from amongst the children of Israel by God's command to help him, and to whom God gave of his spirit;<sup>1</sup> and also of the national Sanhedrin, which, according to the *Mischna*,<sup>2</sup> still represented the Mosaic council. This view receives confirmation from the *Clementine Recognitions* in the following passage: "He, therefore, chose us twelve who first believed in him, whom he named Apostles; afterwards seventy-two other disciples of most approved goodness, that, even in this way, recognising the similitude of Moses, the multitude might believe that this is the prophet to come, whom Moses foretold."<sup>3</sup> The passage here referred to is twice quoted in the Acts: "Moses indeed said: A prophet will the Lord our God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me," etc.<sup>4</sup> On examination, we do not find that there is any ground for the assertion that the seventy disciples were sent to the Samaritans or Gentiles, or were in any way connected with universalistic ideas. Jesus had "stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem," and sent messengers before him who "went and entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him," but they repulsed him, "because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem."<sup>5</sup> There is a decided break before the appointment of the Seventy. "After these things (*μετὰ ταῦτα*) the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was about to come."<sup>6</sup> There is not a single word in the instructions given to them which justifies the conclusion that they were sent to Samaria, and only the inference from the number seventy, taken as typical of the nations, suggests it. That inference is not sufficiently attested, and the slightness of the use made of the seventy disciples in the third Gospel—this occasion being the only one on which they are mentioned, and no specific intimation of any mission to all people being here given—does not favour the theory of Pauline tendency. So far as we are concerned the point is unimportant. Those who assert the universalistic character of the episode generally deny its authenticity; most of those who accept it as historical deny its universalism.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xi. 16 f., 25 f.; also the number of the sons of Jacob who went into Egypt (Gen. xlv. 27).

<sup>2</sup> *Sanhedr.*, i. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Nos ergo primos elegit duodecim sibi credentes, quos Apostolos nominavit, postmodum alios septuaginta duos probatissimos discipulos, ut vel hoc modo recognita imagine Moysis crederet multitudo, quia hic est, quem praedixit Moysis venturum prophetam* (*Recog.*, i. 40; cf. Hilgenfeld, *Die Evv. Justins*, p. 356 f.). Hilgenfeld suggests the possibility of an earlier tradition out of which both the third Synoptist and the Clementines may have drawn their materials.

<sup>4</sup> Acts iii. 22, vii. 37; cf. Deuteron. xviii. 18.

<sup>5</sup> Luke ix. 51 f.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, x. 1.



The order to go and teach all nations by no means carries us beyond strictly Messianic limits. Whilst the Jews expected the Messiah to restore the people of Israel to their own Holy Land and crown them with unexampled prosperity and peace, revenging their past sorrows upon their enemies, and granting them supremacy over all the earth, they likewise held that one of the Messianic glories was to be the conversion of the Gentiles to the worship of Jahveh. This is the burden of the prophets, and it requires no proof. The Jews, as the people with whom God had entered into Covenant, were first to be received into the kingdom. "Let the children first be filled,"<sup>1</sup> and then the heathen might partake of the bread. Regarding the ultimate conversion of the Gentiles, therefore, there was no doubt; the only questions were as to the time and the conditions of admission into the national fellowship. As to the time, there never had been any expectation that the heathen could be turned to Jahveh in numbers before the appearance of the Messiah, but converts to Judaism had been made in all ages, and after the dispersion, especially, the influence of the Jews upon the professors of the effete and expiring religions of Rome, of Greece, and of Egypt was very great, and numerous proselytes adopted the faith of Israel, and were eagerly sought for,<sup>2</sup> in spite of the abusive terms in which the Talmudists spoke of them.<sup>3</sup>

The conditions, on the other hand, were perfectly definite. The case of converts had been early foreseen and provided for in the Mosaic code. Without referring to minor points, we may at once say that circumcision was indispensable to admission into the number of the children of Israel.<sup>4</sup> Participation in the privileges of the Covenant could only be secured by accepting the mark of that Covenant. Very many, however, had adopted Judaism to a great extent who were not willing to undergo the rite requisite to full admission into the nation, and a certain modification had gradually been introduced by which, without it, strangers might be admitted into partial communion with Israel. There were, therefore, two classes of proselytes: the first called Proselytes of the Covenant or of Righteousness, who were circumcised, obeyed the whole Mosaic law, and were fully incorporated with Israel; and the other called Proselytes of the Gate, or worshippers of Jahveh, who in the New Testament are commonly called οἱ σεβόμενοι τὸν Θεόν, or οἱ εὐσεβεῖς. These had not undergone the rite of circumcision, and therefore were not participators in the Covenant, but

<sup>1</sup> Mark viii. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> They were said to be "as a scab to Israel." *Bab. Middah*. fol. xiii. 2; Lightfoot, *Horæ. Hebr.*, *Works*, xi., p. 282.

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xii. 48; Numb. ix. 14; cf. Ex. xii. 19, etc.



merely worshipped the God of Israel, and were only compelled to observe the seven Noachian prescriptions. These Proselytes of the Gate, however, were little more than on sufferance. They were excluded from the Temple, and even the Acts of the Apostles represent it to be pollution for a Jew to have intercourse with them: it requires direct divine intervention to induce Peter to go to Cornelius, and to excuse his doing so in the eyes of the primitive Church.<sup>1</sup> Nothing short of circumcision and full observance of the Mosaic law could secure the privileges of the Covenant with Israel to a stranger, and in illustration of this we may again point to the Acts, where certain who came from Judæa, members of the primitive Church, teach the Christians of Antioch: "Except ye have been circumcised after the custom of Moses ye cannot be saved."<sup>2</sup> This will be more fully shown as we proceed.

The conversion of the Gentiles was not, therefore, in the least degree an idea foreign to Judaism, but, on the contrary, formed an intimate part of the Messianic expectation of the later prophets. The conditions of admission to the privileges and promises of the Covenant, however, were full acceptance of the Mosaic law and submission to the initiatory rite. That small and comparatively insignificant people, with an arrogance that would have been ridiculous if, in the influence which they have actually exerted over the world, it had not been almost sublime, not only supposed themselves the sole and privileged recipients of the oracles of God, as his chosen and peculiar people, but they contemplated nothing short of universal submission to the Mosaic code, and the supremacy of Israel over all the earth.

We are now better able to estimate the position of the Twelve when the death of their Master threw them on their own resources, and left them to propagate his Gospel as they themselves understood it. Born a Jew of the race of David, accepting during his life the character of the promised Messiah, and dying with the mocking title "King of the Jews" written upon his cross, Jesus had left his disciples in close communion with the Mosaism which he had spiritualised and ennobled, but had not abolished. He himself had taught them that "it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness," and from his youth upwards had set them the example of enlightened observance of the Mosaic law. His precept had not belied his example, and, whilst in strong terms we find him inculcating the permanence of the Law, it is certain that he left no order to disregard it. He confined his own preaching to the Jews;

<sup>1</sup> Acts x. 2 f., xi. 2 f. Dr. Lightfoot says: "The Apostles of the circumcision, even St. Peter himself, had failed hitherto to comprehend the wide purpose of God. With their fellow-countrymen they still 'held it unlawful for a Jew to keep company with an alien' (Acts x. 28)" (*Galatians*, p. 290).

<sup>2</sup> Acts xv. 1.



the first ministers of the Messiah represented the twelve tribes of the people of Israel ; and the first Christians were of that nation, with no distinctive worship, but practising as before the whole Mosaic ritual. What Neander says of "many" may, we think, be referred to all : "That Jesus faithfully observed the form of the Jewish law served to them as evidence that this form should ever preserve its value."<sup>1</sup> As a fact, the Apostles and the early Christians continued as before assiduously to practise all the observances of the Mosaic law, to frequent the Temple,<sup>2</sup> and adhere to the usual strict forms of Judaism. In addition to the influence of the example of Jesus and the powerful effect of national habit, there were many strong reasons which obviously must to Jews have rendered abandonment of the law as difficult as submission to its full requirements must have been to Gentiles. Holding as they did the Divine origin of the Old Testament, in which the observance of the Law was inculcated on almost every page, it would have been impossible, without counter-teaching of the most peremptory and convincing character, to have shaken its supremacy ; but, beyond this, in that theocratic community Mosaism was not only the condition of the Covenant and the key of the Temple, but it was also the diploma of citizenship, and the bond of social and political life. To abandon the observance of the Law was not only to resign the privilege and the distinctive characteristic of Israel, to relinquish the faith of the Patriarchs who were the glory of the nation, and to forsake a divinely appointed form of worship, without any recognised or even indicated substitute, but it severed the only link between the individual and the people of Israel, and left him in despised isolation, an out-cast from the community. They had no idea that any such sacrifice was required of them. They were simply Jews believing in the Jewish Messiah, and they held that all things else were to proceed as before, until the glorious second coming of the Christ.

The Apostles and the primitive Christians continued to hold the national belief that the way to Christianity lay through Judaism, and that the observance of the law was obligatory and circumcision necessary to complete communion. Paul describes with unappeased irritation the efforts made by the community of Jerusalem, whose "pillars" were Peter, James, and John, to force Titus, a Gentile Christian, to be circumcised,<sup>3</sup> and even the Acts represent James and all the elders of the Church of Jerusalem as

<sup>1</sup> *Pflanzung, u. s. w.*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 46, iii. 1, v. 20, 42, xxi. 20-27, xxii. 17, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. ii. 3 f. As we shall more fully discuss this episode hereafter, it is not necessary to do so here.



requesting Paul, long after, to take part with four Jewish Christians, who had a vow and were about to purify themselves and shave their heads and, after the accomplishment of the days of purification, make the usual offering in the Temple, in order to convince the "many thousands there of those who have believed, and are all zealous for the law," that it is untrue that he teaches: "all the Jews who are among the Gentiles apostacy (*ἀποστασίαν*) from Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs," and to show, on the contrary, that he himself walks orderly and keeps the Law.<sup>1</sup> As true Israelites, with opinions fundamentally unchanged by belief that Jesus was the Messiah, they held that the Gospel was specially intended for the people of the Covenant, and they confined their teaching to the Jews.<sup>2</sup> A Gentile, whilst still uncircumcised, even although converted, could not, they thought, be received on an equality with the Jew, but defiled him by contact.<sup>3</sup> The attitude of the Christian Jew to the merely Christian Gentile, who had not entered the community by the portal of Judaism, was, as before, simply that of the Jew to the proselyte of the Gate. The Apostles could not upon any other terms have then even contemplated the conversion of the Gentiles. Jesus had limited his own teaching to the Jews, and, according to the first Gospel, had positively prohibited, at one time at least, their going to the Gentiles, or even to the Samaritans, and if there had been an order to preach to all nations it certainly was not accompanied by any removal of the conditions specified in the Law.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxi. 18-26; cf. xv. i. Paul is also represented as saying to the Jews of Rome that he has done nothing "against the customs of their Fathers."

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Lightfoot says: "Meanwhile at Jerusalem some years passed away before the barrier of Judaism was assailed. The Apostles still observed the Mosaic ritual; they still confined their preaching to Jews by birth, or Jews by adoption, the proselytes of the Covenant," etc. (*Paul's Ep. to Gal.*, p. 287). Paley says: "It was not yet known to the Apostles that they were at liberty to propose the religion to mankind at large. That 'mystery,' as St. Paul calls it (Eph. iii. 3-6), and as it then was, was revealed to Peter by an especial miracle" (*A View of the Evidence*, etc., ed. Potts, 1850, p. 228).

<sup>3</sup> Acts x. 1 f., 14, 28; xi. 1 f.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Lightfoot says: "The Master himself had left no express instructions. He had charged them, it is true, to preach the Gospel to all nations, but how this injunction was to be carried out, by what changes a national Church must expand into an universal Church, they had not been told. He had, indeed, asserted the sovereignty of the spirit over the letter; he had enunciated the great principle—as wide in its application as the law itself—that 'man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for man.' He had pointed to the fulfilment of the law in the Gospel. So far he had discredited the law, but he had not deposed it or abolished it. It was left to the Apostles themselves, under the guidance of the Spirit, moulded by circumstances and moulding them in turn, to work out the great change" (*St. Paul's Ep. to Gal.*, p. 286).



It has been remarked that neither party, in the great discussion in the Church regarding the terms upon which Gentiles might be admitted to the privileges of Christianity, ever appealed in support of their views to specific instructions of Jesus on the subject. The reason is intelligible enough. The Petrine party, supported as they were by the whole weight of the Law and of Holy Scripture, as well as by the example and tacit approval of the Master, could not have felt even that degree of doubt which precedes an appeal to authority. The party of Paul, on the other hand, had nothing in their favour to which a specific appeal could have been made; but in his constant protest that he had not received his doctrine from man, but had been taught it by direct revelation, the Apostle of the Gentiles, who was the first to proclaim a substantial difference between Christianity and Judaism, in reality endeavoured to set aside the authority of the Judaistic party by an appeal from the earthly to the spiritualised Messiah. Even after the visit of Paul to Jerusalem about the year 50, the elder Apostles still retained the views which we have shown to have been inevitable under the circumstances, and, as we learn from Paul himself, they still continued mere "Apostles of the Circumcision," limiting their mission to the Jews.<sup>1</sup>

The Apostles and the primitive Christians, therefore, after the death of their Master, whom they believed to be the Messiah of the Jews, having received his last instructions and formed their final impressions of his views, remained Jews, believing in the continued obligation to observe the Law, and, consequently, holding the initiatory rite essential to participation in the privileges of the Covenant. They held this not only as Jews believing in the Divine origin of the Old Testament and of the law, but as Christians confirmed by the example and the teaching of their Christ, whose very coming was a substantial ratification of the ancient faith of Israel. In this position they stood when the Gospel, without their intervention, and mainly by the exertions of the Apostle Paul, began to spread amongst the Gentiles, and the terms of their admission came into question. It is impossible to deny that the total removal of conditions, advocated by the Apostle Paul with all the vehemence and warmth of his energetic character, and involving nothing short of the abrogation of the law and surrender of all the privileges of Israel, must have been shocking not only to the prejudices but also to the deepest religious convictions of men who, although Christians, had not ceased to be Jews, and, unlike the Apostle of the Gentiles, had been directly and daily in contact with Jesus,

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 9.



without having been taught such revolutionary principles. From this point we have to proceed with our examination of the account in the Acts of the relation of the elder Apostles to Paul, and the solution of the difficult problem before them.

H



## CHAPTER V.

### THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE WORK (CONTINUED):

#### STEPHEN THE MARTYR

BEFORE the Apostle of the Gentiles himself comes on the scene, and is directly brought in contact with the Twelve, we have to study the earlier incidents narrated in the Acts, wherein it is said the emancipation of the Church from Jewish exclusiveness had already either commenced or been clearly anticipated. The first of these which demands our attention is the narrative of the martyrdom of Stephen. This episode, although highly interesting and important in itself, might, we consider, have been left unnoticed in connection with the special point now engaging our attention; but such significance has been imparted to it by the views which critics have discovered in the speech of Stephen that we cannot pass it without attention.

We read<sup>1</sup> that, in consequence of murmurs amongst the Hellenists against the Hebrews that their widows were neglected in the daily distribution of alms, seven deacons were appointed specially to attend to such ministrations. Amongst these, it is said, was Stephen, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." Stephen, it appears, by no means limited his attention to the material interests of the members of the Church, but, being "full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs (*τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα μεγάλα*) amongst the people." "But there arose certain of those of the synagogue which is called (the synagogue) of the Libertines<sup>2</sup> and of the Cyrenians and of the Alexandrians and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen; and they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Then they suborned men who said: We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God. And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and came upon him and seized him, and brought him to the Council, and set up false witnesses, who said: This man ceaseth not to speak words against the holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that Jesus, this Nazarene, shall destroy this place, and shall change the

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi. 1 f.

<sup>2</sup> The Libertines were probably Jewish freedmen, or the descendants of freedmen, who had returned to Jerusalem from Rome.



customs which Moses delivered to us." The high priest asks him: Are these things so? And Stephen delivers an address, which has since been the subject of much discussion amongst critics and divines. The contents of the speech, taken by themselves, do not present any difficulty so far as the sense is concerned; but, regarded as a reply to the accusations brought against him by the false witnesses, the defence of Stephen has perhaps been interpreted in a greater variety of ways than any other part of the New Testament. Its shadowy outlines have been used as a setting for the pious thoughts of subsequent generations, and every imaginable intention has been ascribed to the proto-martyr, every possible or impossible reference detected in the phrases of his oration. This has mainly arisen from the imperfect nature of the account in the Acts, and the absence of many important details, which has left criticism to adopt that "*divinatorisch-combinatorische*" procedure which is so apt to evolve any favourite theory from the inner consciousness.

The prevailing view amongst the great majority of critics of all schools is, that Stephen is represented in the Acts as the forerunner of the Apostle Paul, anticipating his universalistic principles, and proclaiming with more or less of directness the abrogation of Mosaic ordinances and the freedom of the Christian Church.<sup>1</sup> This view was certainly advanced by Augustine, and lies at the base of his famous saying, "*Si sanctus Stephanus sic non orasset, ecclesia Paulum non haberet*";<sup>2</sup> but it was first clearly enunciated by Baur, who subjected the speech of Stephen to detailed analysis,<sup>3</sup> and his interpretation has to a large extent been adopted even by Apologists. It must be clearly understood that adherence to this reading of the aim and meaning of the speech, as it is given in the Acts, by no means involves an admission of its authenticity, which, on the contrary, is impugned by Baur himself, and by a large number of independent critics. We have the misfortune of differing most materially from the prevalent view regarding the contents of the speech, and we maintain that, as it stands in the Acts, there is not a word in it which can be legitimately construed into an attack upon the Mosaic law, or which anticipates the Christian universalism of Paul. Space, however, forbids our entering here upon a discussion of this subject; but the course which we must adopt with regard to it renders it unnecessary to deal with the interpretation of the speech. We consider that there is no reason for believing that the

<sup>1</sup> Holsten, we think rightly, denies that Stephen can be considered in any way the forerunner of Paul (*Zum Ev. Paulus u. Petr.*, p. 52 anm. \* \*, p. 253 anm. \*).

<sup>2</sup> *Sermo i. in fest. St. Stephani.*

<sup>3</sup> *De orationis habitæ a Stephano consilio*, 1829; *Paulus u. s. w.*, i. 49 f.



discourse put into the mouth of Stephen was ever actually delivered, but, on the contrary, that there is every ground for holding that it is nothing more than a composition by the author of the Acts. We shall endeavour clearly to state the reasons for this conclusion.

With the exception of the narrative in the Acts, there is no evidence whatever that such a person as Stephen ever existed. The statements of the Apostle Paul leave no doubt that persecution against the Christians of Jerusalem must have broken out previous to his conversion, but no details are given, and it can scarcely be considered otherwise than extraordinary that Paul should not in any of his own writings have referred to the proto-martyr of the Christian Church, if the account which is given of him be historical. It may be argued that his own share in the martyrdom of Stephen made the episode an unpleasant memory, which the Apostle would not readily recall. Considering the generosity of Paul's character, on the one hand, however, and the important position assigned to Stephen, on the other, this cannot be admitted as an explanation, and it is perfectly unaccountable that, if Stephen really be a historical personage, no mention of him occurs elsewhere in the New Testament.

Moreover, if Stephen was, as asserted, the direct forerunner of Paul, and in his hearing enunciated sentiments like those ascribed to him, already expressing much more than the germ—indeed, the full spirit—of Pauline universality, it would be passing strange that Paul not only tacitly ignores all that he owes to the proto-martyr, but vehemently protests: "But I make known unto you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached by me is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> There is no evidence that such a person exercised any such influence on Paul.<sup>2</sup> One thing only is certain, that the speech and martyrdom of Stephen made so little impression on Paul that, according to Acts, he continued a bitter persecutor of Christianity, "making havoc of the Church."

The statement, vi. 8, that "Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people," is not calculated to increase confidence in the narrative as sober history; and as little is the assertion, vi. 15, that "all who sat in the Council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." This, we think, is evidently an instance of Christian

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> It is further very remarkable, if it be assumed that the vision, Acts vii. 55, actually was seen, that, in giving a list of those who have seen the risen Jesus (1 Cor. xv. 5-8), which he evidently intends to be complete, he does not include Stephen.



subjective opinion made objective. How, we might ask, could it be known to the writer that all who sat at the Council saw this? Neander replies that probably it is the evidence of members of the Sanhedrin of the impression made on them by the aspect of Stephen.<sup>1</sup> The intention of the writer, however, obviously is to describe a supernatural phenomenon, and this is in his usual manner in this book, where miraculous agency is more freely employed than in any other in the Canon. The session of the Council commences in a regular manner,<sup>2</sup> but the previous arrest of Stephen,<sup>3</sup> and the subsequent interruption of his defence, are described as a tumultuous proceeding, his death being unsanctioned by any sentence of the Council.<sup>4</sup> The Sanhedrin, indeed, could not execute any sentence of death without the ratification of the Roman authorities,<sup>5</sup> and nothing is said in the narrative which implies that any regular verdict was pronounced; but, on the contrary, the tumult described in v. 57 f. excludes such a supposition. Olshausen<sup>6</sup> considers that, in order to avoid any collision with the Roman power, the Sanhedrin did not pronounce any formal judgment, but connived at the execution which some fanatics carried out. This explanation is inadmissible, because it is clear that the members of the Council themselves, if also the audience, attacked and stoned Stephen. The actual stoning<sup>7</sup> is carried out with all regard to legal forms, the victim

<sup>1</sup> *Pflanzung*, u. s. w., p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> vi. 13 f., vii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> vi. 11, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Humphrey (*On the Acts*, p. 668 f.), with a few others, thinks there was a regular sentence. De Wette (*K. Erkl. Apostelgesch.*, p. 114) thinks it more probable that there was a kind of sentence pronounced, and that the reporter, not having been an eye-witness, does not quite correctly state the case.

<sup>5</sup> John xviii. 31. Cf. Origen, *Ad African.*, § 14; Alford, *Gk. Test.*, ii., p. 82 f.; Baur, *Paulus*, i., p. 62; von Döllinger, *Christ. u. Kirche*, p. 456 f.; Holtzmann, in *Bunsen's Biblew.*, viii., p. 338; Neander, *Pflanzung*, p. 72 f.; Olshausen, *Apg.*, p. 125; Weizsäcker, in *Schenkel's Bib. Lex.*, v., p. 387; Zeller, *Apg.*, p. 150. It is argued, however, that the trial of Stephen probably took place just after the recall of Pontius Pilate, either in an interval when the Roman Procurator was absent, or when one favourable to the Jews had replaced Pilate. A most arbitrary explanation, for which no ground, but the narrative which requires defence, can be given.

<sup>6</sup> *Die Apostelgesch.*, 125.

<sup>7</sup> It is said both in v. 58 and v. 59 that "they stoned" him. The double use of the term *ἐλιθοβόλουν* has called forth many curious explanations. Heinrichs (ad vii. 57, p. 205), and after him Kuinoel (iv., p. 288), explain the first as meaning only that they prepared to stone him, or that they wantonly threw stones at him on the way to the place of execution. Olshausen (on vii. 57-60, p. 125) considers the first to be a mere anticipation of the second more definitely described stoning. So also Meyer (on vii. 57, p. 193). Bleek (*Einkl. N. T.*, p. 341 f.) conjectures that the author only found it stated generally in the written source which he uses, as in v. 58, that they cast Stephen out of the city and stoned him, and that, from mere oral tradition, he inserted the second *ἐλιθοβόλουν*, v. 59, for the sake of what is there related about Saul.



being taken out of the city,<sup>1</sup> and the witnesses casting the first stone,<sup>2</sup> and for this purpose taking off their outer garments.

The whole account, with its singular mixture of lawlessness and formality, is extremely improbable, and more especially when the speech itself is considered. The proceedings commence in an orderly manner, and the high priest calls upon Stephen for his defence. The Council and audience listen patiently and quietly to his speech, and no interruption takes place until he has said all that he had to say; for it must be apparent that, when the speaker abandons narrative and argument and breaks into direct invective, there could not have been any intention to prolong the address, as no expectation of calm attention after such denunciations could have been natural. The tumult cuts short the oration precisely where the author had exhausted his subject, and by temporary lawlessness overcomes the legal difficulty of a sentence which the Sanhedrin, without the ratification of the Roman authority, could not have carried out. As soon as the tumult has effected these objects, all becomes orderly and legal again; and, consequently, the witnesses can lay their garments "at a young man's feet whose name was Saul." The principal actor in the work is thus dramatically introduced. As the trial commences with a supernatural illumination of the face of Stephen, it ends with a supernatural vision, in which Stephen sees heaven opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Such a trial and such an execution present features which are undoubtedly not historical.

This impression is certainly not lessened when we find how many details of the trial and death of Stephen are based on the accounts in the Gospels of the trial and death of Jesus. The irritated adversaries of Stephen stir up the people and the elders and scribes, and come upon him and lead him to the Council.<sup>3</sup> They seek false witness against him;<sup>4</sup> and these false witnesses accuse him of speaking against the temple and the law.<sup>5</sup> The false witnesses who are set up against Jesus with similar testimony, according to the first two Synoptics, are strangely omitted by the third. The reproduction of this trait here has much that is suggestive. The high priest asks: "Are these things so?"<sup>6</sup> Stephen, at the close of his speech, exclaims: "I see the heavens opened,

<sup>1</sup> Levit. xxiv. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xvii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Acts vi. 12; cf. Luke xxii. 66, Matt. xxvi. 57.

<sup>4</sup> Acts vi. 11; cf. Matt. xxvi. 59, Mark xiv. 55.

<sup>5</sup> Acts vi. 13 f.; cf. Matt. xxvi. 60 f., Mark xiv. 57 f.

<sup>6</sup> The words in Acts vii. 1 are: *εἶπεν δὲ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς· Εἰ (ἄρα) ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχει;* in Matt. xxvi. 63, *ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ἐξορκίζω σε..... ἵνα ἡμῖν εἴπῃς εἰ σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός.....;* in Luke xxii. 66.....*λέγοντες· Εἰ σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός, εἰπὸν ἡμῖν.* Cf. Zeller, *Die Apostelg.*, p. 153, anm. 2.



and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." Jesus says: "Henceforth shall the Son of Man be seated on the right hand of the power of God."<sup>1</sup> Whilst he is being stoned, Stephen prays, saying: "Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit"; and, similarly, Jesus on the cross cries, with a loud voice: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and, having said this, he expired."<sup>2</sup> Stephen, as he is about to die, cries, with a loud voice: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge; and when he said this he fell asleep"; and Jesus says: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."<sup>3</sup> These two sayings of Jesus are not given anywhere but in the third Synoptic,<sup>4</sup> and their imitation by Stephen, in another work of the same Evangelist, is a peculiarity which deserves attention. It is argued by Apologists that nothing is more natural than that the first martyrs should have the example of the suffering Jesus in their minds, and die with his expressions of love and resignation on their lips. On the other hand, taken along with other most suspicious circumstances which we have already pointed out, and with the fact, which we shall presently demonstrate, that the speech of Stephen is nothing more than a composition by the author of Acts, the singular analogies presented by this narrative with the trial and last words of Jesus in the Gospels seem to us an additional indication of its inauthenticity. As Baur<sup>5</sup> and Zeller<sup>6</sup> have well argued, the use of two expressions of Jesus only found in the third Synoptic is a phenomenon which is much more naturally explained by attributing them to the author, who of course knew that Gospel well, than to Stephen, who did not know it at all.<sup>7</sup> The prominence which is given to this episode of the first Christian martyrdom is intelligible in itself, and it acquires fresh significance when it is considered as the introduction of the Apostle Paul, whose perfect silence regarding the proto-martyr, however, confirms the belief which we otherwise acquire, that the whole narrative and speech, whatever unknown

<sup>1</sup> Acts vii. 56, Luke xxii. 69.

<sup>2</sup> .....λέγοντα· Κύριε Ἰησοῦ, δέξαι τὸ πνεῦμά μου. Acts vii. 59. καὶ φωνήσας φωνῇ μεγάλῃ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· Πάτερ, εἰς χεῖράς σου παρατίθεμαι τὸ πνεῦμά μου. τοῦτο δὲ εἰπὼν ἐξέπνευσεν. Luke xxiii. 46.

<sup>3</sup> .....ἔκραξεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ· Κύριε, μὴ στήσης αὐτοῖς ταύτην τὴν ἁμαρτίαν. καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐκοιμήθη. Acts vii. 60.

<sup>4</sup> ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἔλεγεν· Πάτερ, ἄφες αὐτοῖς· οὐ γὰρ οἶδασιν τί ποιοῦσιν. Luke xxiii. 34.

<sup>5</sup> *Paulus*, i., p. 64, anm. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Apostelgesch.*, 152.

<sup>7</sup> Neander admits that the narrative in Acts is wanting in clearness and intuitive evidence of details, although he does not think that this at all militates against the trustworthiness of the whole (*Pflanzung, u. s. w.*, p. 68, anm.). Bleek points out that viii. 1-3, which is so closely connected with this episode, shows a certain confusion and want of clearness, and supposes the passage interpolated by the author into the original narrative of which he made use (*Einl. N. T.*, p. 342).



tradition may have suggested them, are to be ascribed to the author of the Acts.

On closer examination, one of the first questions which arises is, How could such a speech have been reported? Although Neander<sup>1</sup> contends that we are not justified in asserting that all that is narrated regarding Stephen in the Acts occurred in a single day, we think it cannot be doubted that the intention is to describe the arrest, trial, and execution as rapidly following each other on the same day. "They came upon him, and seized him, and brought him to the Council, and set up false witnesses, who said," etc.<sup>2</sup> There is no ground here for interpolating any imprisonment, and, if not, then it follows clearly that Stephen, being immediately called upon to answer for himself, is, at the end of his discourse, violently carried away without the city to be stoned. No preparations could have been made even to take notes of his speech, if upon any ground it were reasonable to assume the possibility of an intention to do so; and indeed it could not, under the circumstances, have been foreseen that he should either have been placed in such a position or have been able to make a speech at all. The rapid progress of all the events described, and the excitement consequent on such tumultuous proceedings, render an ordinary explanation of the manner in which such a speech could have been preserved improbable, and it is difficult to suppose that it could have been accurately remembered, with all its curious details, by one who was present. Improbable as it is, however, this is the only suggestion which can possibly be advanced. The majority of Apologists suppose that the speech was heard and reported by the Apostle Paul himself, or at least that it was communicated or written down either by a member of the Sanhedrin or by some one who was present. As there is no information on the point, there is ample scope for imagination; but, when we come to consider its linguistic and other peculiarities, it must be borne in mind that the extreme difficulty of explaining the preservation of such a speech must be an element in judging whether it is not rather a composition by the author of Acts. The language in which it was delivered, again, is the subject of much difference of opinion, many maintaining that it must have originally been spoken in Aramaic, whilst others hold that it was delivered in Greek. Still, a large number of critics and divines of course assert that the speech attributed to Stephen is at least substantially authentic. As might naturally be expected in a case where negative criticism is arrayed against a canonical work upheld by the time-honoured authority of the Church, those who dispute its authenticity are in the minority. It is maintained by the latter that the language is

<sup>1</sup> *Pflanzung, u. s. w.*, p. 68, anm.

<sup>2</sup> Acts vi. 12 f.



more or less that of the writer of the rest of the work, and that the speech, in fact, as it lies before us is a later composition by the author of the Acts of the Apostles.

Before examining the linguistic peculiarities of the speech, we may very briefly point out that, in the course of the historical survey, many glaring contradictions of the statements of the Old Testament occur.<sup>1</sup> Stephen says (vs. 2, 3) that the order to Abraham to leave his country was given to him in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Haran; but according to Genesis (xii. 1 f.) the call is given whilst he was living in Haran. The speech (v. 4) represents Abraham leaving Haran after the death of his father, but this is in contradiction to Genesis, according to which<sup>2</sup> Abraham was 75 when he left Haran. Now, as he was born when his father Terah was 70,<sup>3</sup> and Terah lived 205 years,<sup>4</sup> his father was only 145 at the time indicated, and afterwards lived 60 years. In v. 5 it is stated that Abraham had no possession in the promised land, not even so much as to set his foot on; but, according to Genesis,<sup>5</sup> he brought the field of Ephron in Machpelah. It is said (v. 14) that Jacob went down into Egypt with 75 souls, whereas in the Old Testament it is repeatedly said that the number was 70.<sup>6</sup> In v. 16 it is stated that Jacob was buried in Schechem in a sepulchre bought by Abraham of the sons of Emmor in Schechem, whereas in Genesis<sup>7</sup> Jacob is said to have been buried in Machpelah; the sepulchre in Schechem, in which the bones of Joseph were buried, was not bought by Abraham, but by Jacob.<sup>8</sup> Moses is described (v. 22) as mighty in words; but in Exodus<sup>9</sup> he is said to be the very reverse, and Aaron, in fact, is sent with him to speak words for him. These are some of the principal variations. It used to be argued that such

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wordsworth says of those who venture to observe them: "The allegations in question, when reduced to their plain meaning, involve the assumption that the Holy Ghost, speaking by St. Stephen (who was 'full of the Holy Spirit'), *forgot* what He Himself had written in the Book of Genesis; and that His Memory is to be refreshed by Biblical commentators of the nineteenth century! This kind of criticism is animated by a spirit very alien from that Christian temper of reverential modesty, gentleness, and humility, which are primary requisites for the discovery and reception of truth. *Mysteries are revealed to the meek* (Eccles. iii. 19). *Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment; and such as are gentle, them shall He learn His way* (Psalm xxv. 8). But such a spirit of criticism seems willing to accept any supposition, however fanciful, except that of its own fallibility! It is ready to allege that St. Luke is in error in saying that St. Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost. It is ready to affirm that St. Stephen was forgetful of the elements of Jewish history..... No wonder that it is given over by God to a reprobate mind" (*Greek Test., Acts of the Apostles*, p. 66 f.).

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> xi. 26.

<sup>4</sup> xi. 32.

<sup>5</sup> xxiii. 4 f., 17 f.

<sup>6</sup> Gen. xlv. 27, Exod. i. 5, Deut. x. 22. It must be added that in the last two passages the version of the lxx. also gives 75 including the sons of Joseph.

<sup>7</sup> xlix. 29, l. 13.

<sup>8</sup> Joshua xxiv. 32.

<sup>9</sup> iv. 10 f.



mistakes were mere errors of memory, natural in a speech delivered under such circumstances and without preparation,<sup>1</sup> and that they are additional evidence of its authenticity, inasmuch as it is very improbable that a writer deliberately composing such a speech could have committed them. It is very clear, however, that the majority of these are not errors of memory at all, but either the exegesis prevailing at the time amongst learned Jews, or traditions deliberately adopted, of which many traces are elsewhere found.

The form of the speech is closely similar to other speeches found in the same work. We have already, in passing, pointed out the analogy of parts of it to the address of Peter in Solomon's porch, but the speech of Paul at Antioch bears a still closer resemblance to it, and has been called "a mere echo of the speeches of Peter and Stephen."<sup>2</sup> We must refer the reader to our general comparison of the two speeches of Peter and Paul in question,<sup>3</sup> which sufficiently showed, we think, that they were not delivered by independent speakers, but, on the contrary, that they are nothing more than compositions by the author of the Acts. These addresses, which are such close copies of each other, are so markedly cast in the same mould as the speech of Stephen that they not only confirm our conclusions as to their own origin, but intensify suspicions of its authenticity. It is impossible, without reference to the speeches themselves, to show how closely that of Paul at Antioch is traced on the lines of the speech of Stephen, and this resemblance is much greater than can be shown by mere linguistic examination. The thoughts correspond where the words differ. There is a constant recurrence of words, however, even where the sense of the passages is not the same, and the ideas in both bear the stamp of a single mind. We shall not attempt fully to contrast these discourses here, for it would occupy too much space, and we therefore content ourselves with giving a few illustrations, begging the reader to examine the speeches themselves :—

STEPHEN.	PAUL AND PETER.
vii. 2. Men, brethren, fathers, hear.	xiii. 15. Men, brethren .....
	16. Men, Israelites, and ye that fear God, hear.
	* <i>Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί.....ἀκούσατε.</i>
	xxii. 1. Men, brethren, and fathers, hear.....

<sup>1</sup> Even de Wette says: "The numerous historical errors are remarkable; they may most probably be ascribed to an unprepared speech" (*K. Erkl. Apostelgesch.*, p. 93).

<sup>2</sup> Schneckenburger, *Zweck der Apostelgesch.*, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> See back, p. 623 f.



## STEPHEN.

Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατέρες, ἀκούσατε.....

The God of glory (ὁ θεὸς τῆς δόξης)<sup>1</sup> appeared to our father (τῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν) Abraham when he was in (ὄντι ἐν τῇ M.) Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in (κατοικῆσαι αὐτὸν ἐν) Haran, etc.

6.....that his seed should be a sojourner in a strange land (πάροικον ἐν γῇ ἀλλοτρίᾳ).....

5.....and to his seed.....(καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ).<sup>2</sup>

8. And he gave him (Abraham) a covenant.....(καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ διαθήκην.....) of circumcision.<sup>3</sup>

22. (Moses) was mighty in his words and deeds (ἦν δὲ δυνατὸς ἐν λόγοις καὶ ἔργοις αὐτοῦ).

32. I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. (Ἐγὼ ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων σου, ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ.)

36. This (Moses) brought them (the people τὸν λαόν) out (ἐξήγαγεν αὐτοὺς) having worked wonders and signs<sup>4</sup> in the land of Egypt (ἐν γῇ Αἰγύπτῳ) and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἔτη τεσσαράκοντα). v. 42..... forty years in the wilderness..... (ἔτη τεσσαράκοντα ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ).

37. This is the Moses who said unto the children of Israel: A prophet shall God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me.....

42.....God delivered them up to serve the host of heaven (ὁ θεὸς παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς λατρεύειν, κ. τ. λ.).

## PAUL AND PETER.

Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατέρες, ἀκούσατε.

xiii. 17. The God of this people (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου) Israel chose our fathers (τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν) and exalted the people in their sojourn in the land of Egypt (ἐν τῇ παροικίᾳ ἐν γῇ Αἰγύπτῳ).....

iii. 25. Ye are the children.....of the covenant (τῆς διαθήκης) which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed (καὶ ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου), etc.

(Luke xxiv. 19. Jesus.....mighty in deed and word (δυνατὸς ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ.....))

iii. 13. The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers. (ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ, ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν.....)

xiii. 17.....and exalted the people (τὸν λαόν) in their sojourn in the land of Egypt (ἐν γῇ Αἰγύπτῳ), and with a high arm brought them out of it (ἐξήγαγεν αὐτοὺς), 18. and for about the time of forty years<sup>5</sup> (τεσσαρακονταέτη) nourished them in the wilderness (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ).

iii. 22. Moses indeed said:<sup>6</sup> A prophet shall the Lord our God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me, etc.

(Rom i. 24.....God delivered them up.....to uncleanness (παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς.....εἰς ἀκαθαρσίαν, κ.τ.λ. cf. 26.....παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας.....28.....παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν.....)).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. ii. 8, κύριος τῆς δόξης; cf. lxx. Ps. xxviii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Compare with this verse Rom. iv. 13; Gal. iii. 16, 29.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Rom. iv. 11, καὶ σημεῖον ἔλαβεν περιτομῆς.

<sup>4</sup> .....ποιήσας τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα.....ii. 22.....τέρασιν καὶ σημείοις οἱς ἐποίησεν.....

<sup>5</sup> vii. 23 reads.....τεσσαρακονταέτης χρόνος.....and xiii. 18.....τεσσαρακονταέτη χρόνον.....and again vii. 23, ἀνέβη ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ.....1 Cor. ii. 9, ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη.....

<sup>6</sup> The authorised version, on the authority of several important MSS., adds "unto the fathers"—"πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας"; but the balance of evidence is decidedly against the words.



STEPHEN.

45. Which also our fathers..... brought in with Joshua when they took possession of the Gentiles (*τῶν ἐθνῶν*), whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David.

46. Who found (*εὗρε*) favour with God.....

48. Howbeit, the Most High dwelleth not in what is made with hands (*οὐχ ὁ ὑψιστος ἐν χειροποιήτοις κατοικεῖ*), even as the prophet saith:

49. The heaven (*ὁ οὐρανός*) is my throne, and the earth (*ἡ γῆ*) is my footstool. 50. Did not my hand make all these things? (*Οὐχὶ ἡ χεὶρ μου ἐποίησεν πάντα ταῦτα*;) 51. Ye uncircumcised in hearts.....(*ἀπερίτμητοι καρδίαις*.....)

52. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed (*ἀπέκτειναν*) them which announced before of the coming of the righteous One (*τοῦ δικαίου*), of whom ye have become betrayers and murderers (*φονεῖς*).

53. Ye received the law at the arrangements of angels.....(*ἐλάβετε τὸν νόμον εἰς διαταγὰς ἀγγέλων*.....)

54. And hearing these things they were cut to their hearts (*ἀκούοντες δὲ ταῦτα διεπρίοντο*), and gnashed their teeth upon him.

PAUL AND PETER.

xiii. 19. And he destroyed seven nations (*ἐθνη*) in the land of Canaan,<sup>1</sup> and divided their land to them by lot.

22.....he raised up unto them David as king, to whom also he bare witness and said: I found (*εὗρον*) David, a man after mine own heart, etc.

xvii. 24 f. The God that made the world and all things therein (*ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιήσας τὸν κόσμον καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ*), he being lord of heaven and earth (*οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς*) dwelleth not in temples made with hands (*οὐκ ἐν χειροποιήτοις ναοῖς κατοικεῖ*), neither is served by men's hands (*χειρῶν*), etc.

(Rom. ii. 29. Circumcision is of the heart, in spirit (*περιτομὴ καρδίας ἐν πνεύματι κ. τ. λ.*.....))

xxii. 14.....the righteous One (*τὸν δίκαιον*).....

iii. 14. But ye denied the holy and righteous One (*τὸν δίκαιον*), and desired a murderer (*ἄνδρα φονέα*) to be granted unto you, 15. and killed (*ἀπεκτείνετε*) the Prince of Life, etc.

(Gal. iii. 19. What then is the law? It was added.....; being arranged by means of angels.....(*τί οὖν ὁ νόμος; προσετέθη.....διαταγὰς δι' ἀγγέλων*.....))

v. 33. When they heard they were cut (to their hearts) (*οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες διεπρίοντο*) and took counsel to slay them.

It is argued that the speech of Stephen bears upon it the stamp of an address which was actually delivered. We are not able to discover any special indication of this. Such an argument, at the best, is merely the assertion of personal opinion, and cannot have any weight. It is quite conceivable that an oration actually spoken might lose its spontaneous character in a report, and, on the other hand, that a written composition might acquire oratorical reality from the skill of the writer. It would indeed exhibit great want of literary ability if a writer, composing a speech which he desires to represent as having actually been spoken, altogether

<sup>1</sup> vii. 11. Then came a famine upon all Egypt and Canaan.



failed to convey some impression of this. To have any application to the present case, however, it must not only be affirmed that the speech of Stephen has the stamp of an address really spoken, but that it has the character of one delivered under such extraordinary circumstances, without premeditation, and in the midst of tumultuous proceedings. It cannot, we think, be reasonably asserted that a speech like this is peculiarly characteristic of a man suddenly arrested by angry and excited opponents, and hurried before a council which, at its close, rushes upon him and joins in stoning him. Unless the defence attributed to Stephen be particularly characteristic of this, the argument in question falls to the ground. On the contrary, if the speech has one feature more strongly marked than another, it is the deliberate care with which the points referred to in the historical survey are selected and bear upon each other, and the art with which the climax is attained. In showing, as we have already done, that the speech betrays the handiwork of the author of the Acts, we have to a large extent disposed of any claim to peculiar individuality in the defence, and the linguistic analysis conclusively settles the source of the composition. We must point out here in continuation that, as in the rest of the work, all the quotations in the speech are from the Septuagint, and that the author follows that version even when it does not fairly represent the original.

A minute analysis of the language of the whole episode from vi. 9 to the end of the seventh chapter, in order to discover what linguistic analogy it bears to the rest of the Acts and to the third Synoptic, leads to the certain conviction that the speech of Stephen was composed by the author of the rest of the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>1</sup> It may not be out of place to quote some remarks of Lekebusch at the close of an examination of the language of the Acts in general, undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining the literary characteristics of the book, which, although originally having no direct reference to this episode in particular, may well serve to illustrate our own results: "An unprejudiced critic must have acquired the conviction from the foregoing linguistic examination that throughout the whole of the Acts of the Apostles, and partly also the Gospel, the same style of language and expression generally prevails, and, therefore, that our book is an original work, independent of written sources on the whole, and proceeding from a single pen. For when the same expressions are everywhere found; when a long row of words, which only recur in the Gospel and Acts, or comparatively only very seldom in other works of the New Testament, appear equally in all parts; when certain forms of

<sup>1</sup> This analysis will be found in the complete edition 1879, vol. iii., p. 164-175.



words, peculiarities of word-order, construction of phraseology, indeed even whole sentences, recur in different sections, a compilation out of documents by different earlier writers can no longer be thought of, and it is 'beyond doubt that we have to consider our writing as the work of a single author, who has impressed upon it the stamp of a distinct literary style' (Zeller, *Theol. Jahrb.*, 1851, p. 107). The use of written sources is certainly not directly excluded by this, and probably the linguistic peculiarities, of which some of course exist in isolated sections of our work, may be referred to this. But as these peculiarities consist chiefly of ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, which may rather be ascribed to the richness of the author's vocabulary than to his talent for compilation, and in comparison with the great majority of points of agreement almost disappear, we must from the first be prepossessed against the theory that our author made use of written sources, and only allow ourselves to be moved to such a conclusion by further distinct phenomena in the various parts of our book, especially as the prologue of the Gospel, so often quoted for the purpose, does not at all support it. But in any case, as has already been remarked, *the* opinion that in the Acts of the Apostles the several parts are strung together almost without alteration, is quite irreconcilable with the result of our linguistic examination. Zeller rightly says: 'Were the author so dependent a compiler, the traces of such a proceeding must necessarily become apparent in thorough dissimilarity of language and expression. And this dissimilarity would be all the greater if his sources, as in that case we could scarcely help admitting, belonged to widely separated spheres as regards language and mode of thought. On the other hand, it would be altogether inexplicable that, in all parts of the work, the same favourite expressions, the same turns, the same peculiarities of vocabulary and syntax, should meet us. This phenomenon only becomes conceivable when we suppose that the contents of our work were brought into their present form by one and the same person, and that the work as it lies before us was not merely *compiled* by some one, but was also *composed* by him.'"<sup>1</sup>

Should an attempt be made to argue that, even if it be conceded that the language is that of the author of Acts, the sentiments may be those actually expressed by Stephen, it would at once be obvious that such an explanation is not only purely arbitrary and incapable of proof, but opposed to the facts of the case. It is not the language only which can be traced to the author of the rest of the Acts, but, as we have shown, the whole plan of the speech is the same as that of others in different parts of the work.

<sup>1</sup> Lekebusch, *Die Comp. und Entsteh. der Apostelgesch.*, p. 79 f.



Stephen speaks exactly as Peter does before him and Paul at a later period. There is just that amount of variety which a writer of not unlimited resources can introduce to express the views of different men under different circumstances; but there is so much which is nevertheless common to them all that community of authorship cannot be denied. On the other hand, the improbabilities of the narrative, the singular fact that Stephen is not mentioned by the Apostle Paul, and the peculiarities which may be detected in the speech itself, receive their very simple explanation when linguistic analysis so clearly demonstrates that the speech actually ascribed to the martyr Stephen is nothing more than a later composition put into his mouth by the author of the Acts.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE WORK (CONTINUED) :

#### PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH. PETER AND CORNELIUS.

WE have been forced to enter at such length into the discussion of the speech and martyrdom of Stephen that we cannot afford space to do more than merely glance at the proceedings of his colleague Philip, as we pass on to more important points in the work before us. The author states that a great persecution broke out at the time of Stephen's death, and that all (πάντες) the community of Jerusalem were scattered abroad "except the Apostles" (πλὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων). That the heads of the Church, who were well known, should remain unmolested in Jerusalem, whilst the whole of the less known members of the community were persecuted and driven to flight, is certainly an extraordinary and suspicious statement. Even Apologists are obliged to admit that the account of the dispersion of the whole Church is hyperbolic; but exaggeration and myth enter so largely and persistently into the composition of the Acts of the Apostles that it is difficult, after any attentive scrutiny, seriously to treat the work as in any strict sense historical. It has been conjectured by some critics, as well in explanation of this statement as in connection with theories regarding the views of Stephen, that the persecution in question was limited to the Hellenistic community to which Stephen belonged, whilst the Apostles and others, who were known as faithful observers of the law and of the temple worship,<sup>1</sup> were not regarded as heretics by the orthodox Jews. The narrative in the Acts does not seem to support the view that the persecution was limited to the Hellenists; but beyond the fact vouched for by Paul, that about this time there was a persecution, we have no data whatever regarding that event.

Philip, it is said, went down to the city of Samaria, and "was preaching the Christ"<sup>2</sup> to them. As the statement that "the multitudes with one accord gave heed to the things spoken" to them by Philip is ascribed to the miracles which he performed there, we are unable to regard the narrative as historical, and still less so when we consider the supernatural agency by which his further proceedings are directed and aided. We need only remark that the Samaritans, although only partly

<sup>1</sup> iii. 1, 11, iv. 1, v. 25.

<sup>2</sup> viii. 5.....ἐκήρυσεν αὐτοῖς τὸν Χριστόν.



of Jewish origin, and rejecting the Jewish Scriptures with the exception of the Pentateuch, worshipped the same God as the Jews, were circumcised, and were equally prepared as a nation to accept the Messiah. The statement that the Apostles Peter and John went to Samaria, in order, by the imposition of hands, to bestow the gift of the Holy Spirit to the converts baptised by Philip, does not add to the general credibility of the history. As Bleek<sup>1</sup> has well remarked, nothing is known or said as to whether the conversion of the Samaritans effected any change in their relations towards the Jewish people and the temple in Jerusalem. The mission of Philip to the Samaritans, as related in the Acts, cannot in any case be considered as having an important bearing on the question before us. We shall not discuss the episode of Simon at all, although, in the opinion of eminent critics, it contains much that is suggestive of the true character of the Acts of the Apostles. An "Angel of the Lord" (ἄγγελος κυρίου) speaks to Philip, and desires him to go to the desert way from Jerusalem to Gaza,<sup>2</sup> where the Spirit tells him<sup>3</sup> to draw near and join himself to the chariot of a man of Ethiopia who had come to worship at Jerusalem, and was then returning home. Philip runs thither, and, hearing him read Isaiah, expounds the passage to him, and at his own request the Eunuch is at once baptised. "And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away (πνεῦμα κυρίου ἥρπασε) Philip, and the Eunuch saw him no more; for he went on his way rejoicing; but Philip was found at Azotus."<sup>4</sup>

Attempts have, of course, been made to explain naturally the supernatural features of this narrative. Ewald, who is master of the art of rationalistic explanation, says with regard to the order given by the angel: "he felt impelled as by the power and the clear voice of an angel" to go in that direction; and the final miracle is disposed of by a contrast of the disinterestedness of Philip with the conduct of Gehazi, the servant of Elisha: it was the desire to avoid reward "which led him all the more hurriedly to leave his new convert"; "and it was as though the Spirit of the Lord himself snatched him from him another way," etc. "From Gaza Philip repaired rapidly northward to Ashdod, etc."<sup>5</sup> The great mass of critics reject such evasions, and recognise that the author relates miraculous occurrences. The introduction of supernatural agency in this way, however, removes the story from the region of history. Such statements are antecedently and, indeed, coming from an unknown writer and without

<sup>1</sup> *Hebräerbr.*, i., p. 57, anm. 72.

<sup>2</sup> viii. 26.

<sup>3</sup> v 29.

<sup>4</sup> v. 39 f. Azotus was upwards of thirty miles off.

<sup>5</sup> *Gesch. V. Isr.*, vi. 219, 220.



corroboration, absolutely incredible, and no means exist of ascertaining what original tradition may have assumed this mythical character. Zeller supposes that only the personality and nationality of the Eunuch are really historical.<sup>1</sup> All that need here be added is, that the great majority of critics agree that the Ethiopian was probably at least a Proselyte of the Gate, as his going to Jerusalem to worship seems clearly to indicate.<sup>2</sup> In any case, the mythical elements of this story, as well as the insufficiency of the details, deprive the narrative of historical value.<sup>3</sup>

The episodes of Stephen's speech and martyrdom and the mission of Philip are, in one respect especially, unimportant for the inquiry on which we are now more immediately engaged. They are almost completely isolated from the rest of the Acts; that is to say, no reference is subsequently made to them as forming any precedent for the guidance of the Church in the burning question which soon arose within it. Peter, as we shall see, when called upon to visit and baptise Cornelius, exhibits no recollection of his own mission to the Samaritans, and no knowledge of the conversion of the Ethiopian. Moreover, as Stephen plays so small a part in the history, and Philip does not reappear upon the scene after this short episode, no opportunity is afforded of comparing one part of their history with the rest. In passing on to the account of the baptism of Cornelius, we have at least the advantage of contrasting the action attributed to Peter with his conduct on earlier and later occasions, and a test is thus supplied which is of no small value for ascertaining the truth of the whole representation. To this narrative we must now address ourselves.

As an introduction to the important events at Cæsarea, the author of the Acts relates the particulars of a visit which Peter pays to Lydda and Joppa, in the course of which he performs two very remarkable miracles. At the former town he finds a certain man, named Æneas, paralysed, who had lain on a bed for eight years. Peter said to him: "Æneas, Jesus the Christ healeth thee: arise and make thy bed." And he rose immediately.<sup>4</sup> As the consequence of this miracle, the writer states that "All who dwelt at Lydda and the Sharon saw him, who turned to the Lord."<sup>5</sup> The exaggeration of such a statement is too palpable to

<sup>1</sup> *Die Apostelgesch.*, p. 176. Cf. Holtzmann, *Bunsen's Biblework*, viii. 339.

<sup>2</sup> Some critics doubt whether the term *εὐνοῦχος* does not indicate merely an official position. Zeller, *Apog.*, p. 176, anm. 1; Milman, *Hist. of Chr.*, i., p. 367, note. Humphrey maintains that it does so here, Acts, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> viii. 37 of the authorised version, which is omitted by Codices A, B, C, H, N, and many others, and of course omitted as spurious by most editors, is an example of the way in which dogmas become antedated.

<sup>4</sup> ix. 33, 34.

<sup>5</sup> ix. 35.



require argument. The effect produced by the supposed miracle is almost as incredible as the miracle itself, and the account altogether has little claim to the character of sober history.

This mighty work is altogether eclipsed by a miracle which Peter performs about the same time at Joppa. A certain woman, a disciple, named Tabitha, who was "full of good works," fell sick in those days and died, and when they washed her they laid her in an upper chamber, and sent to Peter at Lydda, beseeching him to come to them without delay. When Peter arrived they took him into the upper chamber, where all the widows stood weeping, and showed coats and garments which Dorcas used to make while she was with them. "But Peter put them all out, and kneeled down and prayed; and, turning to the body, said: Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and raised her up, and when he called the saints and the widows he presented her alive." Apparently, the raising of the dead did not produce as much effect as the cure of the paralytic, for the writer only adds here: "And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord."<sup>1</sup> We shall hereafter have to speak of the perfect calmness and absence of surprise with which these early writers relate the most astonishing miracles. It is evident from the manner in which this story is narrated that the miracle was anticipated. The *ὑμερῶν* in which the body is laid cannot have been the room generally used for that purpose, but is probably the single upper chamber of such a house which the author represents as specially adopted in anticipation of Peter's arrival. The widows who stand by weeping and showing the garments made by the deceased complete the preparation. As Peter is sent for after Dorcas had died, it would seem as though the writer intimated that her friends expected him to raise her from the dead. The explanation of this singular phenomenon, however, becomes clear when it is remarked that the account of this great miracle is closely traced from that of the raising of Jairus' daughter in the Synoptics,<sup>2</sup> and more especially in the second Gospel. In that instance Jesus is sent for; and, on coming to the house, he finds people "weeping and wailing greatly." He puts them all forth, like Peter; and, taking the child by the hand, says to her: "'Talitha koum,' which is, being interpreted, Maiden, I say unto thee, arise. And immediately the maiden arose and walked."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ix. 36-42.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. ix. 18, 19, 23-25; Mark v. 22, 23, 35-42; Luke viii. 41, 42, 49-56.

<sup>3</sup> Mark v. 38-42.



Baur and others<sup>1</sup> conjecture that even the name "Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas," was suggested by the words Ταλιθά κούμ, above quoted. The Hebrew original of Ταβιθά signifies "Gazelle," and they contend that it was used, like Ταλιθά, in the sense generally of: Maiden.<sup>2</sup> These two astonishing miracles, reported by an unknown writer, and without any corroboration, are absolutely incredible, and cannot prepossess any reasonable mind with confidence in the narrative to which they form an introduction; and the natural distrust which they awaken is fully confirmed when we find supernatural agency employed at every stage of the following history.

We are told<sup>3</sup> that a certain devout centurion, named Cornelius, "saw in a vision plainly" (εἶδεν ἐν ὁράματι φανερώς) an angel of God, who said to him: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, who is surnamed Peter, whose house is by the seaside." After giving these minute directions, the angel departed, and Cornelius sent three messengers to Joppa. Just as they approached the end of their journey on the morrow, Peter went up to the housetop to pray about the sixth hour, the usual time of prayer among the Jews. He became very hungry, and while his meal was being prepared he fell into a trance and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending as it had been a great sheet let down by four corners, in which were all four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the air. "And there came a voice to him: Rise, Peter; kill and eat. But

<sup>1</sup> In Mark. v. 41, Ταλιθά κούμ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον τὸ κοράσιον.....In Acts ix. 36, Ταβιθά, ἡ διερμηνευομένη λέγεται Δορκάς.

\* The leading peculiarities of the two accounts may be contrasted thus:—

Acts ix. 36.....τις ἦν μαθήτρια ὀνόματι Ταβιθά, ἡ διερμηνευομένη λέγεται Δορκάς. 38.....ἀκούσαντες ὅτι Π. ἐστὶν ἐν αὐτῇ (Λύδδ.), ἀπέστειλαν δύο ἄνδρας πρὸς αὐτὸν παρακαλοῦντες· Μὴ ὀκνήσης διελθεῖν ἕως ἡμῶν. 39.....πᾶσαι αἱ χῆραι κλαίουσai καὶ.....40. ἐκβαλὼν δὲ ἔξω πάντας ὁ Π.....καὶ ἐπιστρέψας πρὸς τὸ σῶμα εἶπεν· Ταβιθά ἀνάστηθι. ἡ δὲ.....ἀνεκάθισεν. 41. δοὺς δὲ αὐτῇ χεῖρα ἀνέστησεν αὐτήν.

Luke viii. 41. καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος..... παρεκάλει αὐτὸν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ. 52. ἔκλαιον δὲ πάντες καὶ.....54. αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκβαλὼν πάντας ἔξω\*, καὶ κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς, ἐφώνησεν λέγων· Ἡ παῖς, ἐγείρου. 55. καὶ ἐπέστρεψεν τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτῆς, καὶ ἀνέστη πασαχρήμα.

Mark v. 40.....αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκβαλὼν πάντας.....εἰσπορεύεται.....41. καὶ κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ παιδίου λέγει αὐτῇ, Ταλιθά κούμ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον· Τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε. 42. καὶ εὐθέως ἀνέστη τὸ κορ. κ. τ. λ.

\* Although this is the reading of the Cod. A (and C, except the ἔξω) and others, it is omitted by other ancient MSS.

<sup>3</sup> x. 1 f.



Peter said : Not so, Lord ; for I never ate anything common or unclean. And the voice came unto him again a second time : What God cleansed call not thou common. This was done thrice ; and straightway the vessel was taken up into heaven." While Peter "was doubting in himself" what the vision which he had seen meant, the men sent by Cornelius arrived, and "the Spirit said unto him : Behold men are seeking thee ; but arise and get thee down and go with them doubting nothing, for I have sent them." Peter went with them on the morrow, accompanied by some of the brethren, and Cornelius was waiting for them with his kinsmen and near friends whom he had called together for the purpose. "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet and worshipped. But Peter took him up, saying : Arise ; I myself also am a man."<sup>1</sup> Going in, he finds many persons assembled, to whom he said : "Ye know how it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company with or come unto one of another nation ; and yet God showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore, also I came without gainsaying when sent for. I ask, therefore, for what reason ye sent for me?" Cornelius narrates the particulars of his vision, and continues : "Now, therefore, we are all present before God to hear all the things that have been commanded thee of the Lord. Then Peter opened his mouth and said : Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him," and so on. While Peter is speaking, "the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word. And they of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also has been poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit ; for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter : Can anyone forbid the water that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we ? And he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord."

We shall not waste time discussing the endeavours of Kuinoel, Neander, Lange, Ewald, and others, to explain away as much as possible the supernatural elements of this narrative, for their attempts are repudiated by most Apologists, and the miraculous phenomena are too clearly described and too closely connected with the course of the story to be either ignored or eliminated. Can such a narrative, heralded by such miracles as the instantaneous cure of the paralytic Æneas, and the raising from the dead of the maiden Dorcas, be regarded as sober history ? Of course, many maintain that it can, and comparatively few have declared

<sup>1</sup> x. 26 ; cf. xiv. 14, 15.



themselves against this. We have, however, merely the narrative of an unknown author to set against unvarying experience, and that cannot much avail. We must now endeavour to discover how far this episode is consistent with the rest of the facts narrated in this book itself, and with such trustworthy evidence as we can elsewhere bring to bear upon it. We have already in an earlier part of our inquiry pointed out that, in the process of exhibiting a general parallelism between the Apostles Peter and Paul, a very close *pendant* to this narrative has been introduced by the author into the history of Paul. In the story of the conversion of Paul, the Apostle has his vision on the way to Damascus,<sup>1</sup> and about the same time the Lord in a vision desires Ananias ("a devout man, according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews that dwell" in Damascus),<sup>2</sup> "arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul of Tarsus; for behold he prayeth, and saw in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive sight." On this occasion also the gift of the Holy Spirit is conferred, and Saul is baptised.<sup>3</sup> Whilst such miraculous agency is so rare elsewhere, it is so common in the Acts of the Apostles that the employment of visions and of angels, under every circumstance, is one of the characteristics of the author, and may therefore be set down to his own imagination.

No one who examines this episode of Cornelius attentively, we think, can doubt that the narrative before us is composed in apologetic interest, and is designed to have a special bearing upon the problem as to the relation of the Pauline Gospel to the preaching of the Twelve. Baur<sup>4</sup> has acutely pointed out the significance of the very place assigned to it in the general history, and its insertion immediately after the conversion of Paul, and before the commencement of his ministry, as a legitimation of his Apostleship of the Gentiles. One point stands clearly out of the strange medley of Jewish prejudice, Christian liberalism, and supernatural interference which constitute the elements of the story: the actual conviction of Peter regarding the relation of the Jew to the Gentile, that the Gospel is addressed to the former and that the Gentile is excluded, which has to be removed by a direct supernatural revelation from heaven. The author recognises that this was the general view of the primitive Church, and this is the only particular in which we can perceive historical truth in the narrative. The complicated machinery of visions and angelic messengers is used to justify the abandonment of Jewish restric-

<sup>1</sup> ix. 3 f.<sup>2</sup> xxii. 12; cf. x. 1 f., 22.<sup>3</sup> ix. 10-18.<sup>4</sup> Baur, *Paulus*, i., p. 90; Schneckenburger, *Zweck d. Apostelgesch.*, p. 170 f.



tions, which was preached by Paul amidst so much virulent opposition. Peter anticipates and justifies Paul in his ministry of the uncircumcision, and the overthrow of Mosaic barriers has the sanction and seal of a divine command. We have to see whether the history itself does not betray its mythical character, not only in its supernatural elements, but in its inconsistency with other known or narrated incidents in the Apostolical narrative.

There has been much difference of opinion as to whether the centurion Cornelius had joined himself in any recognised degree to the Jewish religion before this incident, and a majority of critics maintain that he is represented as a Proselyte of the Gate. The terms in which he is described, x. 2, as *εὐσεβὴς καὶ φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν*, certainly seem to indicate this, and probably the point would not have been questioned but for the fact that the writer evidently intends to deal with the subject of Gentile conversion, with which the representation that Cornelius was already a proselyte would somewhat clash. Whether a proselyte or not, the Roman centurion is said to be "devout and fearing God with all his house, giving much alms to the people, and praying to God always";<sup>1</sup> and probably the ambiguity as to whether he had actually become affiliated in any way to Mosaism is intentional. When Peter, however, with his scruples removed by the supernatural communication with which he had just been favoured, indicates their previous strength by the statement: "Ye know how it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company with or come unto one of another nation,"<sup>2</sup> the author evidently oversteps the mark, and betrays the unhistorical nature of the narrative; for such an affirmation not only could not have been made by Peter, but could only have been advanced by a writer who was himself a Gentile, and writing at a distance from the events described. There is no injunction of the Mosaic law declaring such intercourse unlawful,<sup>3</sup> nor indeed is such a rule elsewhere heard of, and even Apologists who refer to the point have no show of authority by which to support such a statement. Not only was there no legal prohibition, but it is impossible to conceive that there was any such exclusiveness practised by traditional injunction.<sup>4</sup> As de Wette appropriately remarks, moreover, even if such a prohibition existed as regards idolaters, it would still be inconceivable how it could apply to Cornelius,

<sup>1</sup> x. 2, cf. 22.

<sup>2</sup> x. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Davidson, *Int. N. T.*, ii., p. 242; Overbeck, *zu de Wette, Apg.*, p. 159; de Wette, *Apg.*, p. 158; Zeller, *Apg.*, p. 187.

<sup>4</sup> De Wette quotes against it *Schemoth Rabba*, § 19 f., 118. 3. ad Exod. xii. 2: "*Hoc idem est, quod scriptum dicit Jes. lvi. 3: Et non dicet filius advenæ, qui adhæsit Domino, dicendo: separando separavit me Dominus a populo suo*" (*Apostelgesch.*, p. 158).



"a righteous man and fearing God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews."<sup>1</sup> It is also inconsistent with the zeal for proselytism displayed by the Pharisees,<sup>2</sup> the strictest sect of the Jews; and the account given by Josephus of the conversion of Izates of Adiabene is totally against it.<sup>3</sup>

There is a slight trait which, added to others, tends to complete the demonstration of the unhistorical character of this representation. Peter is said to have lived many days in Joppa with one Simon, a tanner, and it is in his house that the messengers of Cornelius find him.<sup>4</sup> Now, the tanner's trade was considered impure amongst the Jews,<sup>5</sup> and it was almost pollution to live in Simon's house. It is argued by some commentators that the fact that Peter lodged there is mentioned to show that he had already emancipated himself from Jewish prejudices. However this may be, it is strangely inconsistent that a Jew who has no objection to live with a tanner should, at the same time, consider it unlawful to hold intercourse of any kind with a pious Gentile, who, if not actually a Proselyte of the Gate, had every qualification for becoming one. This indifference to the unclean and polluting trade of the tanner, moreover, is inconsistent with the reply which Peter gives to the voice which bids him slay and eat: "Not so, Lord, for I never ate anything common or unclean." No doubt the intercourse to which Peter refers indicates, or at least includes, eating and drinking with one of another country, and this alone could present any intelligible difficulty, for the mere transaction of business or conversation with strangers must have been daily necessary to the Jews. It must be remarked, however, that, when Peter makes the statement which we are discussing, nothing whatever is said of eating with the Centurion or sitting with him at table. This leads to a striking train of reflection upon the whole episode.

It is a curious thing that the supernatural vision, which is designed to inform Peter and the Apostles that the Gentiles might be received into the Church, should take the form of a mere intimation that the distinction of clean and unclean animals was no longer binding, and that he might indifferently kill and eat. One might have thought that, on the supposition that Heaven desired to give Peter and the Church a command to admit the Gentiles unconditionally to the benefits of the Gospel, this would be simply and clearly stated. This was not done at all, and the intimation by which Peter supposes himself justified in considering it lawful

<sup>1</sup> x. 22; de Wette, *Apog.*, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Antiq.*, xx. 2, 3.

<sup>4</sup> ix. 43, x. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Schoettgen, *Horæ Hebr.*, p. 447; Alford, *Greek Test.*, ii., p. 109; Hackett, *Acts*, p. 144; Meyer, *Apog.*, p. 235; Renan, *Les Apôtres*, p. 199; de Wette, *Apog.*, p. 150; Wordsworth, *Greek Test.*, Acts, p. 88.



to go to Cornelius is, in the first place, merely on the subject of animals defined as clean and unclean. Doubtless the prohibition as to certain meats might tend to continue the separation between Jew and Gentile, and the disregard of such distinctions of course promoted general intercourse with strangers; but this by no means explains why the abrogation of this distinction is made the intimation to receive Gentiles into the Church. When Peter returns to Jerusalem we are told that "they of the circumcision"—that is to say, the whole Church there, since at that period all were "of the circumcision," and this phrase further indicates that the writer has no historical standpoint—contended with him. The subject of the contention, we might suppose, was the baptism of Gentiles; but not so: the charge brought against him was: "Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them."<sup>1</sup> The subject of Paul's dispute with Peter at Antioch simply was that, "before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they came he withdrew, fearing them of the circumcision."<sup>2</sup> That the whole of these passages should turn merely on the fact of eating with men who were uncircumcised is very suggestive, and as the Church at Jerusalem make no allusion to the baptism of uncircumcised Gentiles, it would lead to the inference that nothing was known of such an event, and that the circumstance was simply added to some other narrative; and this is rendered all the more probable by the fact that, in the affair at Antioch as well as throughout the Epistle to the Galatians, Peter is very far from acting as one who had been the first to receive uncircumcised Gentiles freely into the Church.

It is usually asserted that the vision of Peter abrogated the distinction of clean and unclean animals so long existing in the Mosaic Law, but there is no evidence that any subsequent gradual abandonment of the rule was ascribed to such a command; and it is remarkable that Peter himself not only does not, as we shall presently see, refer to this vision as authority for disregarding the distinction of clean and unclean meats, and for otherwise considering nothing common or unclean, but acts as if such a vision had never taken place. The famous decree of the Council of Jerusalem, moreover, makes no allusion to any modification of the Mosaic law in the case of Jewish Christians, whatever relaxation it may seem to grant to Gentile converts, and there is no external evidence of any kind that so important an abolition of ancient legal prescriptions was thus introduced into Christendom.

We have, however, fortunately one test of the historical value of this whole episode, to which we have already briefly referred, but which we must now more closely apply. Paul himself, in his

<sup>1</sup> xi. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. ii. 12.



Epistle to the Galatians, narrates the particulars of a scene between himself and Peter at Antioch, of which no mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles, and we think that no one can fairly consider that episode without being convinced that it is utterly irreconcilable with the supposition that the vision which we are now examining can ever have appeared to Peter, or that he can have played the part attributed to him in the conversion and baptism of uncircumcised Gentiles. Paul writes: "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was condemned. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles, and when they came he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them of the circumcision; and the other Jews also joined in his hypocrisy."<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that, in the case of Cornelius, "they of the circumcision" in Jerusalem, at the head of whom was James, from whom came those "of the circumcision" of whom Peter was afraid at Antioch, contended with Peter for going in "to men uncircumcised and eating with them,"<sup>2</sup> the very thing which was in question at Antioch. In the Acts, Peter is represented as defending his conduct by relating the divine vision under the guidance of which he acted, and the author states as the result that "When they heard these things they held their peace and glorified God, saying: Then to the Gentiles also God gave repentance unto life."<sup>3</sup> This is the representation of the author of the vision and of the conversion of Cornelius, but very different is Peter's conduct as described by the Apostle Paul, very dissimilar the phenomena presented by a narrative upon which we can rely. The "certain who came from James" can never have heard of the direct communication from Heaven which justified Peter's conduct, and can never have glorified God in the manner described, or Peter could not have had any reason to fear them; for a mere reference to his vision, and to the sanction of the Church of Jerusalem, must have been sufficient to reconcile them to his freedom. Then, is it conceivable that after such a vision, and after being taught by God himself not to call any man or thing common or unclean, Peter could have acted as he did for fear of them of the circumcision? His conduct is convincing evidence that he knew as little of any such vision as those who came from James. On the other hand, if we require further proof it is furnished by the Apostle Paul himself. Is it conceivable that, if such an episode had ever really occurred, the Apostle Paul would not have referred to it upon this occasion? What more appropriate argument could he have used, what more legitimate rebuke could he have administered, than merely to have reminded Peter of his own vision? He both rebukes him and argues, but

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 11-13.<sup>2</sup> Acts xi. 2, 3.<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, xi. 18.



his rebuke and his argument have quite a different complexion ; and we confidently affirm that no one can read that portion of the Epistle to the Galatians without feeling certain that, had the writer been aware of such a divine communication—and we think it must be conceded without question that, if it had taken place, he must have been aware of it<sup>1</sup>—he would have referred to so direct and important an authority. Neither here nor in the numerous places where such an argument would have been so useful to the Apostle does Paul betray the slightest knowledge of the episode of Cornelius. The historic occurrence at Antioch, so completely ignored by the author of the Acts, totally excludes the mythical story of Cornelius.

There are merely one or two other points in connection with the episode to which we must call attention. In his address to Cornelius, Peter says : “ Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons ” (*οὐκ ἔστιν προσωπολήμπτης ὁ θεός*). Now this is not only a thoroughly Pauline sentiment, but Paul has more than once made use of precisely the same expression. Rom. ii. 11 : “ For there is no respect of persons with God ” (*οὐ γάρ ἐστιν προσωποληψία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ*) ; and, again, Gal. ii. 6 : “ God respecteth no man’s person ” (*πρόσωπον ὁ θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει*).<sup>2</sup> The author of the Acts was certainly acquainted with the Epistles of Paul, and the very manner in which he represents Peter as employing this expression betrays the application of a sentiment previously in his mind, “ Of a truth I perceive,” etc. The circumstance confirms what Paul had already said.<sup>3</sup> Then, in the defence of his conduct at Jerusalem, Peter is represented as saying : “ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit.”<sup>4</sup> Now these words are by all the Gospels put into the mouth of John the Baptist, and not of Jesus ;<sup>5</sup> but the author of the Acts seems to put them into the mouth of Jesus at the beginning of the work,<sup>6</sup> and their repetition here is only an additional proof of the fact that the episode of Cornelius, as it stands before us, is not historical, but is merely his own composition.

The whole of this narrative, with its complicated series of miracles, is evidently composed to legitimate the free reception into the Christian Church of Gentile converts ; and, to emphasize

<sup>1</sup> Indeed the reference to this case, supposed to be made by Peter himself, in Paul’s presence, excludes the idea of ignorance, if the Acts be treated as historical.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ephes. vi. 9, Col. iii. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Compare further x. 35 f. with Rom. ii. iii., etc. The sentiments and even the words are Pauline.

<sup>4</sup> xi. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. iii. 11, Mark i. 8, Luke iii. 16, John i. 26, 33. <sup>6</sup> i. 5.



the importance of the divine ratification of their admission, Peter is made to repeat to the Church of Jerusalem the main incidents which had just been fully narrated. On the one hand, the previous Jewish exclusiveness both of Peter and of the Church is displayed first, in the resistance of the Apostle, which can only be overcome by the vision and the direct order of the Holy Spirit, and by the manifest outpouring of the Spirit upon the Centurion and his household; and, second, in the contention of the party of the circumcision, which is only overcome by an account of the repeated signs of divine purpose and approval. The universality of the Gospel could not be more broadly proclaimed than in the address of Peter to Cornelius. Not the Jews alone, "but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him." Pauline principles are thus anticipated, and, as we have pointed out, are expressed almost in the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles. The Jews who go with Peter were astonished because that on the Gentiles also had been poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit;<sup>1</sup> and the Church of Jerusalem, on hearing of these things, glorified God that repentance unto life had been given to the Gentiles. It is impossible that the admission of the Gentiles to the privileges of the Church could be more prominently signified than by this episode, introduced by prodigious miracles and effected by supernatural machinery. Where, however, are the consequences of this marvellous recognition of the Gentiles? It does not in the slightest degree preclude the necessity for the Council, which we shall presently consider; it does not apparently exercise any influence on James and the Church of Jerusalem; Peter, indeed, refers vaguely to it, but as a matter out of date and almost forgotten; Paul, in all his disputes with the emissaries of the Church of Jerusalem, in all his pleas for the freedom of his Gentile converts, never makes the slightest allusion to it; it remains elsewhere unknown, and, so far as any evidence goes, utterly without influence upon the primitive Church. This will presently become more apparent; but already it is clear enough to those who will exercise calm reason that it is impossible to consider this narrative, with its tissue of fruitless miracles, as a historical account of the development of the Church.

<sup>1</sup> x. 45 f.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE WORK (CONTINUED): PAUL THE APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES

WE have now arrived at the point in our examination of the Acts in which we have the inestimable advantage of being able to compare the narrative of the unknown author with the distinct statements of the Apostle Paul. In doing so, we must remember that the author must have been acquainted with the Epistles which are now before us, and, supposing it to be his purpose to present a peculiar view of the transactions in question, whether for apologetic or for conciliatory reasons, it is obvious that it would not be reasonable to expect divergencies of so palpable a nature that any reader of the letters must at once perceive them. When the Acts were written, it is true, the author could not have known that the Epistles of Paul were to attain the high canonical position which they now occupy, and might, therefore, use his materials more freely; still, it would be natural to expect a certain superficial consistency. Unfortunately, our means of testing the statements of the author are not so minute as is desirable, although they are often of much value; and, seeing the great facility with which, by apparently slight alterations and omissions, a different complexion can be given to circumstances regarding which no very full details exist elsewhere, we must be prepared to seize every indication which may enable us to form a just estimate of the nature of the writing which we are examining.

In the first two chapters of his Epistle to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul relates particulars regarding some important epochs of his life, which likewise enter into the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles. The Apostle gives an account of his own proceedings immediately after his conversion, and of the visit which about that time he paid to Jerusalem; and, further, of a second visit to Jerusalem fourteen years later; and to these we must now direct our attention. We defer consideration of the narrative of the actual conversion of Paul for the present, and merely intend here to discuss the movements and conduct of the Apostle immediately subsequent to that event. The Acts of the Apostles represent Paul as making five journeys to Jerusalem subsequent to his joining the Christian body. The first, ix. 26 f., takes place immediately after his conversion; the second, xi. 30, xii. 25, is upon an occasion when the Church at Antioch are represented as sending relief to



the brethren of Judæa by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, during a time of famine; the third visit to Jerusalem, xv. 1 f., Paul likewise pays in company with Barnabas, both being sent by the Church of Antioch to confer with the Apostles and Elders as to the necessity of circumcision, and the obligation of Gentile converts to observe the Mosaic law; the fourth, xviii. 21 f., when he goes to Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquilla, "having shaved his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow"; and the fifth and last, xxi. 15 f., when the disturbance took place in the temple which led to his arrest and journey to Rome. The circumstances and general character of these visits to Jerusalem, and more especially of that on which the momentous conference is described as having taken place, are stated with so much precision, and they present features of such marked difference, that it might have been supposed there could not have been any difficulty in identifying with certainty, at least, the visits to which the Apostle refers in his letter, more especially as upon both occasions he mentions important particulars which characterised them. It is a remarkable fact, however, that the divergencies between the statements of the unknown author and the Apostle are so marked that upon no point has there been more decided difference of opinion amongst critics and divines from the very earliest times. Upon general grounds, we have already seen, there has been good reason to doubt the historical character of the Acts. Is it not a singularly suggestive circumstance that, when it is possible to compare the authentic representations of Paul with the narrative of the Acts, even Apologists perceive so much opening for doubt and controversy?

The visit described in the ninth chapter of the Acts is generally identified with that which is mentioned in the first chapter of the Epistle. This unanimity arises mainly from the circumstance that both writers clearly represent that visit as the first which Paul paid to Jerusalem after his conversion, for the details of the two narratives are anything but in agreement with each other. Although critics are forced to agree as to the bare identity of the visit, this harmony is immediately disturbed on examining the two accounts, and, whilst the one party find the statements in the Acts reconcilable with those of Paul, a large body more or less distinctly declare them to be contradictory and unhistorical. In order that the question at issue may be fairly laid before the reader, we shall give the two accounts in parallel columns:—

## ACTS IX. 19 f.

19. And he was certain days  
(ἡμέρας τινάς) with the disciples in  
Damascus.

20. And immediately (εὐθέως) was

## EP. TO GAL. I. 15 f.

15. But when it pleased God.....

16. To reveal his son in me, that  
I might preach him among the Gen-  
tiles;



## ACTS IX. 19 f.

preaching Jesus in the synagogues, etc.

21. And all that heard him were amazed, saying, etc.

22. But Saul was increasing in strength more and more, and confounding the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.

23. And after many days (*ἡμέραι* *ikaval*) were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him; 24. But their plot was known to Saul. And they were even watching the gates day and night to kill him.

25. But the disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall in a basket.

26. And when he came to Jerusalem he was assaying to join himself to the disciples; but all were afraid of him, not believing that he is a disciple.

27. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he saw the Lord in the way, and that he spake to him; and how he preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

28. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord.

29. And he was speaking and disputing against the Grecian Jews; but they took counsel to slay him;

30. But when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

## EP. TO GAL. I. 15 f.

immediately (*εὐθέως*) I conferred not with flesh and blood;

17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia, and returned again into Damascus.

18. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit<sup>1</sup> Cephas, and abode with him fifteen days.

19. But other of the Apostles saw I not save James the Lord's brother.

20. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

21. Thereafter I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

22. But I was unknown by face unto the churches of Judæa which were in Christ; but they were only hearing that he who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith which once he was destroying: and they glorified God in me.

It is obvious that the representation in the Acts of what Paul did after his conversion differs very widely from the account which the Apostle himself gives of the matter. In the first place, not a word is said in the former of the journey into Arabia; but, on the contrary, it is excluded, and the statement which replaces it directly contradicts that of Paul. The Apostle says that after his conversion "Immediately<sup>2</sup> (*εὐθέως*) I conferred not with flesh and blood," but "went away into Arabia." The author of the Acts says that he spent "some days" (*ἡμέρας τινάς*) with the

<sup>1</sup> To become acquainted with.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Ellicott remarks: "*Straightway*; the word standing prominently forward, and implying that he not only avoided conference with men, but did so from the *very first*" (*St. Paul's Ep. to the Gal.*, 4th ed., p. 16).



disciples in Damascus, and "immediately" (εὐθέως) began to preach in the synagogues. Paul's feelings are so completely misrepresented that, instead of that desire for retirement and solitude which his words express, he is described as straightway plunging into the vortex of public life in Damascus. The general apologetic explanation is, that the author of the Acts either was not aware of the journey into Arabia, or that, his absence there having been short, he did not consider it necessary to mention it. There are no data for estimating the length of time which Paul spent in Arabia, but the fact that the Apostle mentions it with so much emphasis proves not only that he attached considerable weight to the episode, but that the duration of his visit could not have been unimportant. In any case, the author of the Acts, whether ignorantly or not, boldly describes the Apostle as doing precisely what he did not. To any ordinary reader, moreover, his whole account of Paul's preaching at Damascus certainly excludes altogether the idea of such a journey, and the argument that it can be inserted anywhere is purely arbitrary. There are many theories amongst Apologists as to the part of the narrative in Acts in which the Arabian journey can be placed. By some it is assigned to a period before he commenced his active labours, and therefore before ix. 20, from which the words of the author repulse it with singular clearness; others intercalate it with even less reason between ix. 20 and 21; a few discover some indication of it in the *μᾶλλον ἐνεδυναμοῦτο* of verse 22—an expression, however, which refuses to be forced into such service; a greater number place it in the *ἡμέραι ἱκαναί* of verse 23, making that elastic phrase embrace this as well as other difficulties till it snaps under the strain. It seems evident to an unprejudiced reader that the *ἡμέραι ἱκαναί* are represented as passed in Damascus. And, lastly, some critics place it after ix. 25, regardless of Paul's statement that from Arabia he returned again to Damascus, which, under the circumstances mentioned in Acts, he was not likely to do, and indeed it is obvious that he is there supposed to have at once gone from Damascus to Jerusalem. These attempts at reconciliation are useless. It is of no avail to find time into which a journey to Arabia and the stay there might be forcibly thrust. There still remains the fact that, so far from the Arabian visit being indicated in the Acts, the *εὐθέως* of ix. 20, compared with the *εὐθέως* of Gal. i. 16, positively excludes it, and proves that the narrative of the former is not historical.

There is another point in the account in Acts which further demands attention. The impression conveyed by the narrative is that Paul went up to Jerusalem not very long after his conversion. The omission of the visit to Arabia shortens the interval before he



did so, by removing causes of delay ; and, whilst no expressions are used which imply a protracted stay in Damascus, incidents are introduced which indicate that the purpose of the writer was to represent the Apostle as losing no time after his conversion before associating himself with the elder Apostles and obtaining their recognition of his ministry ; and this view, we shall see, is confirmed by the peculiar account which is given of what took place at Jerusalem. The Apostle distinctly states, i. 18, that three years after his conversion he went up to visit Peter.<sup>1</sup> In the Acts he is represented as spending "some days" (ἡμέρας τινάς) with the disciples, and the only other chronological indication given is that, after "many days" (ἡμέραι ἱκαναί), the plot occurred which forced him to leave Damascus. It is argued that ἡμέραι ἱκαναί is an indefinite period, which may, according to the usage of the author,<sup>2</sup> indicate a considerable space of time, and certainly rather express a long than a short period.<sup>3</sup> The fact is, however, that the instances cited are evidence, in themselves, against the supposition that the author can have had any intention of expressing a period of three years by the words ἡμέραι ἱκαναί. We suppose that no one has ever suggested that Peter stayed three years in the house of Simon the tanner at Joppa (ix. 43) ; or that when it is said that Paul remained "many days" at Corinth after the insurrection of the Jews, the author intends to speak of some years, when in fact the ἡμέραι ἱκαναί contrasted with the expression (xviii. 11), "he continued there a year and six months," used regarding his stay previous to that disturbance, evidently reduces the "yet many days" subsequently spent there to a very small compass. Again, has any one ever suggested that in the account of Paul's voyage to Rome, where it is said (xxvii. 7) that, after leaving Myrra "and sailing slowly many days" (ἡμέραι ἱκαναί), they had scarcely got so far as Cnidus, an interval of months, not to say years, is indicated ? It is impossible to suppose that by such an expression the writer intended to indicate a period of three years.

That the narrative of the Acts actually represents Paul as going up to Jerusalem soon after his conversion, and certainly not merely at the end of three years, is obvious from the statement in verse 26, that when Paul arrived at Jerusalem, and was assaying to join himself to the disciples, all were afraid of him, and would not believe in his conversion. The author could certainly not have stated

<sup>1</sup> "The 'straightway' of verse 16 leads to this conclusion : 'At first I conferred not with flesh and blood, it was only after the lapse of three years that I went to Jerusalem'" (Lightfoot, *Galatians*, p. 83).

<sup>2</sup> Acts ix. 43, xviii 18, xvii. 7 ; Lightfoot, *ib.*, p. 89, note 3.

<sup>3</sup> "The difference between the vague 'many days' of the Acts and the definite 'three years' of the Epistle is such as might be expected from the circumstances of the two writers" (Lightfoot, *ib.*, p. 89, note 3).



this, if he had desired to imply that Paul had already been a Christian, and publicly preached with so much success at Damascus, for three years. Indeed, the statements in ix. 26 are irreconcilable with the declaration of the Apostle, whatever view be taken of the previous narrative of the Acts. If it be assumed that the author wishes to describe the visit to Jerusalem as taking place three years after his conversion, then the ignorance of that event amongst the brethren there and their distrust of Paul are utterly inconsistent and incredible; whilst if, on the other hand, he represents the Apostle as going to Jerusalem with but little delay in Damascus, as we contend he does, then there is no escape from the conclusion that the Acts, whilst thus giving a narrative consistent with itself, distinctly contradicts the deliberate assertions of the Apostle. It is absolutely incredible that the conversion of a well-known persecutor of the Church (viii. 3 f.), effected in a way which is represented as so sudden and supernatural, and accompanied by a supposed vision of the Lord, could for three years have remained unknown to the community of Jerusalem. So striking a triumph for Christianity must have been rapidly circulated throughout the Church, and the fact that he who formerly persecuted was now zealously preaching the faith which once he destroyed must long have been generally known in Jerusalem, which was in such constant communication with Damascus.

The author of the Acts continues in the same strain, stating that Barnabas, under the circumstances just described, took Paul and brought him to the Apostles (*πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους*), and declared to them the particulars of his vision and conversion, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus.<sup>1</sup> No doubt is left that this is the first intimation the Apostles had received of such extraordinary events. After this, we are told that Paul was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. Here again the declaration of Paul is explicit, and distinctly contradicts this story both in the letter and the spirit. He makes no mention of Barnabas. He states that he went to Jerusalem specially with the view of making the acquaintance of Peter, with whom he remained fifteen days; but he emphatically says: "But other of the Apostles saw I not, save (*εἰ μὴ*) James, the Lord's brother"; and then he adds the solemn declaration regarding his account of this visit: "Now the things which I write unto you behold, before God, I lie not." An asseveration made in this tone excludes the supposition of inaccuracy or careless vagueness, and the specific statements have all the force of sworn evidence. Instead of being presented "to the Apostles," therefore, and going in and out with them at Jerusalem,

<sup>1</sup> ix. 27.



we have here the emphatic assurance that, in addition to Peter, Paul saw no one except "James, the Lord's brother."

There has been much discussion as to the identity of this James, and whether he was an Apostle or not; but into this it is unnecessary for us to enter. Most writers agree at least that he is the same James, the head of the Church at Jerusalem, whom we again frequently meet with in the Pauline Epistles and in the Acts, and notably in the account of the Apostolic council. The exact interpretation to be put upon the expression *εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον* has also been the subject of great controversy, the question being whether James is here really called an Apostle or not; whether *εἰ μὴ* is to be understood as applying solely to the verb, in which case the statement would mean that he saw no other of the Apostles, but only James, or to the whole phrase, which would express that he had seen no other of the Apostles save James. It is admitted, by many of those who think that in this case the latter signification must be adopted, that grammatically either interpretation is permissible. Even supposing that, rightly or wrongly, James is here referred to as an Apostle, the statement of the Acts is, in spirit, quite opposed to that of the Epistle; for when we are told that Paul is brought "to the Apostles" (*πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους*), the linguistic usage of the writer implies that he means much more than merely Peter and James. It seems impossible to reconcile the statement, ix. 27, with the solemn assurance of Paul; and if we accept what the Apostle says as truth, and we cannot doubt it, it must be admitted that the account in the Acts is unhistorical.

We arrive at the very same conclusion on examining the rest of the narrative. In the Acts, Paul is represented as being with the Apostles going in and out, preaching openly in Jerusalem, and disputing with the Grecian Jews.<sup>1</sup> No limit is here put to his visit, and it is difficult to conceive that what is narrated is intended to describe a visit of merely fifteen days. A subsequent statement in the Acts, however, explains and settles the point. Paul is represented as declaring to King Agrippa, xxvi. 19 f.: "Wherefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but first unto those in Damascus, and throughout all the region of Judæa, and to the Gentiles, I was declaring that they should repent and turn to God," etc. However this may be, the statement of Paul does not admit the interpretation of such public ministry. His express purpose in going to Jerusalem was, not to preach, but to make the acquaintance of Peter; and it was a marked characteristic of Paul to avoid preaching in ground already occupied by the other Apostles before him.<sup>2</sup> Not only is the account in Acts

<sup>1</sup> ix. 28 f.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. x. 14 f.; cf. Rom. xv. 20.



apparently excluded by such considerations and by the general tenour of the Epistle, but it is equally so by the direct words of the Apostle (i. 22): "I was unknown by face unto the churches of Judæa." It is argued that the term, "churches of Judæa," excludes Jerusalem. It might possibly be asserted with reason that such an expression as "the churches of Jerusalem" might exclude the churches of Judæa, but to say that the Apostle, writing elsewhere to the Galatians of a visit to Jerusalem, and of his conduct at that time, intends, when speaking of the "churches of Judæa," to exclude the principal city seems to us arbitrary and unwarrantable. The whole object of the Apostle is to show the privacy of his visit and his independence of the elder Apostles. He does not use the expression as a contrast to Jerusalem. Nothing in his account leads one to think of any energetic preaching during the visit, and the necessity of finding some way of excluding Jerusalem from the Apostle's expression is simply thrust upon Apologists by the account in Acts. Two passages are referred to as supporting the exclusion of Jerusalem from "the churches of Judæa." In John iii. 22 we read: "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa." In the preceding chapter he is described as being at Jerusalem. We have already said enough about the geographical notices of the author of the fourth Gospel.<sup>1</sup> Even those who do not admit that he was not a native of Palestine are agreed that he wrote in another country and for foreigners. "The land of Judæa" was therefore a natural expression superseding the necessity of giving a more minute local indication which would have been of little use. The second instance appealed to, though more doubtfully,<sup>2</sup> is Heb. xiii. 24: "They from Italy salute you." We are at a loss to understand how this is supposed to support the interpretation adopted. It is impossible that if Paul went in and out with the Apostles, preached boldly in Jerusalem, and disputed with the Hellenistic Jews, not to speak of what is added, Acts xxvi. 19 f., he could say that he was unknown by face to the churches of Judæa. There is nothing, we may remark, which limits his preaching to the Grecian Jews. Whilst Apologists maintain that the two accounts are reconcilable, many of them frankly admit that the account in Acts requires correction from that in the Epistle;<sup>3</sup> but, on the other hand, a still greater number of critics pronounce the narrative in the Acts contradictory to the statements of Paul.

There remains another point upon which a few remarks must be made. In Acts ix. 29 f. the cause of Paul's hurriedly leaving

<sup>1</sup> See p. 528 f.

<sup>2</sup> Lightfoot, *Galatians*, p. 85.

<sup>3</sup> Bleek, *Einl.*, p. 364 f.; Ewald, *Gesch. V. Isr.*, vi., p. 403, anm. 1; *Sendschr. d. Ap. Paulus*, 1857, p. 68 f.; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, p. 92; Neander, *Pflanzung*, p. 127 f.



Jerusalem is a plot of the Grecian Jews to kill him. Paul does not, in the Epistle, refer to any such matter; but, in another part of the Acts, Paul is represented as relating, xxii. 17 f.: "And it came to pass that, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I was in a trance, and saw him saying unto me: Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy witness concerning me," etc. This account differs, therefore, even from the previous narrative in the same book; yet critics are agreed that the visit during which the Apostle is said to have seen this vision was that which we are discussing. The writer is so little a historian working from substantial facts that he forgets the details of his own previous statements; and in the account of the conversion of Paul, for instance, he thrice repeats the story with emphatic and irreconcilable contradictions. We have already observed his partiality for visions, and such supernatural agency is so ordinary a matter with him that, in the first account of this visit, he altogether omits the vision, although he must have known of it then quite as much as on the second occasion. The Apostle, in his authentic and solemn account of this visit, gives no hint of any vision, and leaves no suggestion even of that public preaching which is described in the earlier, and referred to in the later, narrative in the Acts.<sup>1</sup> If we had no other grounds for rejecting the account as unhistorical, this miraculous vision, added as an afterthought, would have warranted our doing so.

Passing on now to the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, we find that Paul writes: "Then, after fourteen years, again I went up to Jerusalem....." (ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα.....). He states the particulars of what took place upon the occasion of this second visit with a degree of minuteness which ought, one might have supposed, to have left no doubt of its identity when compared with the same visit historically described elsewhere; but such are the discrepancies between the two accounts that, as we have already mentioned, the controversy upon the point has been long and active.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Paley (*Horæ Paul.* v., No. viii.) actually endeavours to show the genuineness of the Epistle to the Galatians by the "undesigned coincidence" of the shortness of Paul's visit as stated by himself and the miraculous order reported Acts xxii. 17 f., "Get thee quickly out of Jerusalem." The fallacy, not to say unfairness, of this partial argument needs no demonstration, and, indeed, it has been well pointed out by Dr. Jowett (*The Epistles of St. Paul*, i., p. 350 f.).

<sup>2</sup> There was anything but unanimity on the point among the Fathers. Irenæus identified the second Galatian visit with the third of Acts (xv.). It is not certain whether Tertullian agreed in this (*Adv. M.*, v. 2, 3) or placed it later (*Adv. M.*, i. 20); Eusebius thought it the same as the second of Acts; Epiphanius identified it with the fifth of Acts (xxi. 15); Chrysostom places it



Acts, it will be remembered, relate a second visit of Paul to Jerusalem, after that which we have discussed, upon which occasion it is stated (xi. 30) that he was sent with Barnabas to convey to the community, during a time of famine, the contributions of the Church of Antioch. The third visit of the Acts is that (xv.) when Paul and Barnabas are said to have been deputed to confer with the Apostles regarding the conditions upon which Gentile converts should be admitted into the Christian brotherhood. The circumstances of this visit, more nearly than any other, correspond with those described by the Apostle himself in the Epistle (ii. 1 f.); but there are grave difficulties in the way of identifying them. If this visit be identical with that described Acts xv., and if Paul, as he states, paid no intermediate visit to Jerusalem, what becomes of the visit interpolated in Acts xi. 30?

The first point which we must endeavour to ascertain is what the Apostle actually intends to say regarding the second visit which he mentions. The purpose of Paul is to declare his complete independence from those who were Apostles before him, and to maintain that his Gospel was not of man, but directly revealed to him by Jesus Christ. In order to prove his independence he categorically states exactly what had been the extent of his intercourse with the elder Apostles. He protests that, after his conversion, he had neither conferred with flesh and blood nor sought those who had been Apostles before him, but, on the contrary, that he had immediately gone away to Arabia. It was not until three years had elapsed that he had gone up to Jerusalem, and then merely to make the acquaintance of Peter, with whom he had remained only fifteen days, during which he had not seen other of the Apostles save James, the Lord's brother. Only after the lapse of fourteen years did he again go up to Jerusalem. It is argued that when Paul says, "he went up again" (πάλιν ἀνέβην), the word *πάλιν* has not the force of *δευτερον*, and that, so far from excluding any intermediate journey, it merely signifies a repetition of what had been done before, and might have been used of any subsequent journey. Even if this were so, it is impossible to deny that, read with its context, *πάλιν ἀνέβην* is used in immediate connection with the former visit which we have just discussed. The sequence is distinctly marked by the *ἔπειτα* "then"; and the adoption of the preposition *διά*—which may properly be read "after the lapse of"<sup>1</sup>—instead of *μετά*, seems clearly to indicate that no other journey to Jerusalem had been made in the interval. This can be maintained linguistically;

after the third of Acts; and the *Chronicon Paschale* interpolates it between Acts xiii. and xv. It is not now necessary to enter minutely into this.

<sup>1</sup> Winer, *Grammatik des N. T. Sprachidioms*, 7th Aufl., § 47, i., p. 356.



but the point is still more decidedly settled when the Apostle's intention is considered. It is obvious that his purpose would have been totally defeated had he passed over in silence an intermediate visit. Even if, as is argued, the visit referred to in Acts xi. 30 had been of very brief duration, or if he had not upon that occasion had any intercourse with the Apostles, it is impossible that he could have ignored it under the circumstances, for by so doing he would have left the retort in the power of his enemies that he had, on other occasions than those which he had enumerated, been in Jerusalem and in contact with the Apostles. The mere fact that a visit had been unmentioned would have exposed him to the charge of having suppressed it, and suspicion is always ready to assign unworthy motives. If Paul had paid such a hasty visit as is suggested, he would naturally have mentioned the fact and stated the circumstances, whatever they were. These and other reasons convince the majority of critics that the Apostle here enumerates all the visits which he had paid to Jerusalem since his conversion. The visit referred to in Gal. ii. 1 f. must be considered the second occasion on which the Apostle Paul went to Jerusalem.

This being the case, can the visit be identified as the second visit described in Acts xi. 30? The object of that journey to Jerusalem, it is expressly stated, was to carry to the brethren in Jerusalem the contributions of the Church of Antioch during a time of famine; whereas Paul explicitly says that he went up to Jerusalem, on the occasion we are discussing, in consequence of a revelation, to communicate the Gospel which he was preaching among the Gentiles. There is not a word about contributions. On the other hand, chronologically it is impossible that the second visit of the Epistle can be the second of the Acts. There is some difference of opinion as to whether the fourteen years are to be calculated from the date of his conversion or from the previous journey. The latter seems to be the more reasonable supposition, but in either case it is obvious that the identity is excluded. From various data—the famine under Claudius, and the time of Herod Agrippa's death—the date of the journey referred to in Acts xi. 30 is assigned to about A.D. 45. If, therefore, we count back fourteen or seventeen years, we have as the date of the conversion, on the first hypothesis, A.D. 31, and on the second A.D. 28, neither of which is tenable. In order to overcome this difficulty, critics at one time proposed, against the unanimous evidence of MSS., to read, instead of *διὰ δεκατεσσ. ἐτῶν* in Gal. ii. 1, *διὰ τεσσάρων ἐτῶν*, "after four years"; but this violent remedy is not only generally rejected, but, even if admitted for the sake of argument, it could not establish the identity, inasmuch as the statements in Gal. ii. 1 f. imply a much longer period of missionary