

Acts

1:1 Theophilos, I myself composed the first story concerning all the things which Jesus began to do and teach **1:2** until the day when he was taken up and after he had instructed, through the Holy Spirit, the apostles whom he had chosen. **1:3** After he had suffered, he presented himself alive to them with many convincing proofs, appearing to them for forty days and talking about things concerning the Kingdom of God. **1:4** While he was spending time with them, he commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, “Which you heard about from Me, **1:5** because John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

1:6 Therefore, when they would come together, they were asking him,

Lord, is this the time when you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?¹

1:7 And he would say to them,

It is not for you to know times and seasons which the Father has established by His own authority, **1:8** but you will receive authority when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and as far as the end of the earth.

1:9 And after he had said these things and they were looking at him, he was lifted up and a cloud received him out of their sight. **1:10** As they were gazing into heaven after he had gone, indeed, behold, two men in white clothing stood by them. **1:11** and they said,

Men of Galilee, why are you standing looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was received from you into heaven, will come in the same manner you watched him go into heaven.

1:12 Then, they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain which is called The Olive Grove, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away. **1:13** And when they entered, they went up into the upstairs room where they were staying—Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas of James. **1:14** All these were busily engaged with one mind in prayer along with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

1:15 In those days, Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers, and he said (by the way, there was a crowd of about a hundred and twenty present),

1:16 Men, brothers, it was necessary for the scripture to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus, **1:17** that he was numbered among us and received a portion of this work.

1:18 Then, this man acquired a field with the wage of unrighteousness, and falling headfirst, he burst open in the middle and all his guts spilled out. **1:19** And it became known to all those living in Jerusalem so that that field was called in their own dialect, ‘*Hakeldama*,’ that is, ‘Field of Blood.’ **1:20** For it was written in the book of Psalms,

Let his home become a wilderness,
And let not there be someone who lives in it <Psalm 69:25>.

In addition,

Let a different person receive his position of responsibility <Psalm 109:8>.

1:21 Therefore, it is necessary, of the men who have been accompanying us during all the time between when the Lord Jesus came to us and when he left us, 1:22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day He was taken up from us, one of these should become a witness of His resurrection with us.

1:23 And they put forward two men, Joseph who was called Barsabbas, who was called Justus, and Matthias. 1:24 And they prayed and said,

You, Lord, are the knower of everyone's heart. Reveal which one of these two You have chosen 1:25 to receive the place in this work and apostleship from which Judas turned away in order to go his own way.

1:26 And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias, and he was counted along with the eleven apostles.

2:1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in the same place. 2:2 Suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 2:3 And tongues like fire were seen, being divided among them, and they sat on each one of them. 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak with other languages as the Spirit was giving them to speak.

2:5 There were Jews living in Jerusalem, God-fearing men from every nation under heaven. 2:6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speaking in his own dialect. 2:7 They were confused and wondering, saying,

Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 2:8 So how is each of us hearing them speak in his own language in which he was born. 2:9 Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and those who dwell in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 2:10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and parts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, 2:11 Jews and converts, Cretans and Arabs, we hear them in our languages talking about the mighty acts of God.²

2:12 And they all continued to be confused and perplexed, saying to one another,

What does this mean?

2:13 And others were making fun of them and saying,

They are full of wine.

2:14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them,

Men, Jews and all those who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and pay close attention to my words, 2:15 for these men are not drunk as you suppose, because it is the third hour. 2:16 But this is that which was spoken of through the prophet Joel,³
2:17 Indeed, it will be in the last days, says God, I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.⁴ 2:18 And on My male slaves and on My female slaves, in those days, I will pour out My Spirit, and they will prophesy.⁵ 2:19 And I will give warning signs in heaven above and signs on the earth below—blood, fire, and

vapor of smoke.⁶ 2:20 The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming of the great and remarkable Day of Yahweh. 2:21 And it will be that everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved <Joel 2:28-32>.⁷

2:22 Men, Israelites, listen to these words. Jesus the Nazarene, a man who has been confirmed by God to you by means of powers, warning signs, and signs, which God did through him in your midst, just as you yourselves know,⁸ 2:23 this man, given over by the fixed plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.⁹ 2:24 God resurrected him, having loosed the cords of death because it was impossible for Him to be held by it,¹⁰ 2:25 for David says with reference to him,¹¹ I was always seeing Yahweh in front of me. Because He is at my right hand, I will not be disturbed.

2:26 On account of this my heart was cheered, and my tongue exulted. Moreover, my flesh will dwell in hope,

2:27 because You will not abandon my life to Hades, and You will not give your committed one to see decay.¹²

2:28 You have made known to me the ways of life. You will fill me with joy with Your presence <Psalm 16:8-11>.

2:29 Men, brothers, it is right to say with bold openness to you concerning the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is in our midst to this day.¹³ 2:30 Therefore, being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat someone from the fruit of his loins on his throne <Psalm 132:11>,¹⁴ 2:31 he foresaw and spoke concerning the resurrection of the Messiah, that he would neither be abandoned to Hades, nor his flesh see decay.¹⁵ 2:32 God resurrected this Jesus of whom we are all witnesses.

2:33 Therefore, having been lifted up to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you both see and hear.¹⁶ 2:34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, Yahweh said to my Lord, sit at My right hand,

2:35 until I place your enemies as a footstool for your feet <Psalm 110:1>.¹⁷

2:36 Therefore, let the whole house of Israel know for sure that God has made Him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.¹⁸

2:37 And when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles,

What should we do, men, brothers?

2:38 Then, Peter said to them,

Repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit,

2:39 because the promise belongs to you, your children, and all those who are far off, as many as Yahweh our God will Himself call.¹⁹

2:40 And with many other words, he was carefully bearing witness to persuading them saying,

Be saved from this morally twisted generation.²⁰

2:41 Therefore, those who embraced his message were baptized, and, in that day, about three thousand persons were added. 2:42 And they were devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles and togetherness, to the breaking of bread and prayer. 2:43 And fear came upon every person, and many attesting miracles and signs occurred through the apostles. 2:44 And all those

who were believing were together, and they were holding everything in common. **2:45** They were also selling their possessions and property and were distributing them to everyone according to his need. **2:46** Each day they were persevering with one accord in the temple, breaking bread in each house, and sharing food with gladness and singleness of heart. **2:47** They were praising God and having favor with all the people, and the Lord was adding daily to their togetherness those who were being saved.²¹

3:1 Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour of prayer.²² **3:2** And a certain man, crippled from birth, was being carried, whom they used to set down daily at the gate of the temple which was called Beautiful, so that he could ask for alms from those who were entering the temple. **3:3** When he saw Peter and John as they were about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. **3:4** But Peter, along with John, gazed at him and said,

Look at us.

3:5 And he gave them his close attention, expecting to receive something from them. **3:6** But Peter said,

Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have, I give you this—in the name of Jesus the Messiah of Nazareth, rise up and walk.²³

3:7 And seizing him by the right hand he lifted him up. And immediately his feet and ankles were strengthened. **3:8** And leaping up he stood and began to walk. Then, he entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. **3:9** And all the people saw him walking and praising God. **3:10** And they were recognizing him as the one sitting at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and they were filled with amazement and astonishment at what had happened to him. **3:11** While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together towards them at that which is called Solomon's Porch, utterly astonished.

3:12 But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people,

Men, Israelites, why are you marveling at this, or why are you staring at us as if by our own power or devotion to God we have made him walk? **3:13** The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, whom you handed over and denied before Pilate, who judged that he should be released.²⁴ **3:14** You denied the Holy and Righteous One, and you asked for a murderer to be given you.²⁵ **3:15** Thus, you killed the leader of life whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.²⁶

3:16 His name has strengthened this man whom you observe and know—on the basis of belief in his name. And belief, which is through him, has given to him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.²⁷ **3:17** And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, just like your leaders.²⁸ **3:18** But God has thus fulfilled the things which He announced beforehand through the mouth of all His prophets, that His Messiah would suffer.²⁹

3:19 Repent, therefore, and turn, so that your sins may be blotted out,³⁰ **3:20** so that seasons of revival may come from the presence of Yahweh and He sends you the appointed Messiah, Jesus,³¹ **3:21** whom heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things, about which God spoke through the mouth of His holy prophets from the age.³²

3:22 Moses said,

Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You will listen to him in all that he says to you.³³ **3:23** And it will happen that everyone who does not listen to this prophet will be completely destroyed from among the people <Deuteronomy 18:15,19; cf. Leviticus 23:29>.³⁴

3:24 Indeed, all the prophets who spoke, from Samuel on, also announced these days.³⁵ 3:25

You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham,

And in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed <Genesis 12:3; cf. 22:18>.³⁶

3:26 For you first God raised up His servant and sent him, blessing you by turning each one of you from your evil ways.³⁷

4:1 As they were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came up to them.³⁸ 4:2 They were greatly annoyed because of their teaching the people and proclaiming the resurrection from the dead by means of Jesus. 4:3 And they laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day, because it was already evening. 4:4 But many of those who heard the message believed, and the number of the men was five thousand.³⁹

4:5 It happened the next day that they gathered together—the rulers, elders, and scribes in Jerusalem,⁴⁰ 4:6 along with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and as many as were from the high-priestly family. 4:7 When they had stood them in their midst, they inquired,

By means of what power or in what name did you do this?

4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them,

Rulers and elders of the people, 4:9 if we today are being examined for an act of kindness towards an unhealthy man, that is, by means of what this man has been healed, 4:10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus the Messiah of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by means of this man he stands before you well.⁴¹ 4:11 He is the stone which was disdained by you the builders, which became the chief cornerstone <Psalm 118:22>. 4:12 Plus, by means of nothing else is there salvation, for there is no other name which has been given under heaven among men by which we must be saved.⁴²

4:13 When they observed Peter's and John's bold openness and grasped the fact that they were uneducated and unlearned men, they were amazed, and they recognized that they had been with Jesus. 4:14 Seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in response. 4:15 Then, having commanded them to go outside the Sanhedrin, they were conferring with one another, 4:16 saying,

What should we do with these men? It is apparent to everyone who lives in Jerusalem that an obvious miracle has occurred through them, and we cannot deny it. 4:17 But in order that it might not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more in this name to anyone.

4:18 And having called them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said to them,

If it is right before God to listen to you rather than to God, you judge. 4:20 For we cannot not speak about the things we have seen and heard.

4:21 After threatening them further, they released them (finding no basis on which to punish them), on account of the people, because they were glorifying God because of what had happened, 4:22 for the man towards whom this sign of healing had taken place was more than forty years old.⁴³

4:23 And after being released they went to their own people and reported the things which the high priests and elders had said to them. 4:24 And when they heard, they lifted up their voices to God with one accord and said,

O Sovereign Lord, who has made the sky, the land, and the sea, and everything that is in them <Exodus 20:11; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 146:6>,⁴⁴ 4:25 who, through the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father David, Your servant, said,

Why are the nations disrespectful, and why do the peoples ponder futile things?⁴⁵

4:26 The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers have gathered together for the same purpose, against Yahweh and against His Messiah <Psalm 2:1-2>.⁴⁶

4:27 For truly there were gathered together in this city against Your holy servant, Jesus, whom You made the Messiah, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel⁴⁷ 4:28 to do whatever Your hand and Your plan predestined to occur.⁴⁸

4:29 And now, Yahweh, take note of their threats and grant that Your bondslaves may proclaim Your message with all bold openness,⁴⁹ 4:30 in the midst of Your stretching out Your hand for the purpose of there being healing, signs, and warning signs by the name of Your holy servant, Jesus.⁵⁰

4:31 After they prayed, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they were proclaiming the message of God with bold openness.⁵¹ 4:32

Indeed, the hearts and souls of the multitude of those who believed were one, and no one was saying anything that belonged to him was his own, but everything was common property to them.

4:33 In addition, with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. 4:34 And there was no needy person among them, because as many as owned land or houses were selling them and bringing the proceeds of the sales. 4:35 They placed them at the feet of the apostles, and they were being distributed to each according to his need.

4:36 And Joseph, who was called Barnabas by the apostles, which is translated Son of Persuasion, a Levite of Cyprian birth, 4:37 who owned a field, sold it and brought the proceeds and laid them at the feet of the apostles. 5:1 But a certain man by the name of Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, 5:2 and he held back some of the price. And his wife was fully aware of it. Bringing a portion of the full price, he laid it at the feet of the apostles. 5:3 But Peter said,

Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart, so that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and held back some of the price of the field? 5:4 While it remained in its past condition, did it not remain yours? And after it was sold, did it not still exist under your authority? Then why have you conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.⁵²

5:5 When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died. And great fear came over all those who were listening.⁵³ 5:6 Then the young men stood and wrapped him up, and after carrying him out, they buried him.

5:7 An interval of about three hours occurred, and his wife entered, not knowing what had happened. 5:8 Peter responded to her,

Tell me whether you sold the field for such and such a price?

And she said,

Yes, for such and such a price.

5:9 Then Peter said to her,

Why is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.

5:10 Immediately, she fell at his feet and died. And the young men entered and found her dead. Then they carried her out and buried her next to her husband. 5:11 And a great fear came over the whole gathering and over all those who heard of these things.

5:12 By means of the hands of the apostles, many signs and affirming miracles were occurring among the people. And they were all of one accord in Solomon's porch. 5:13 And none of the rest dared to join them. Nevertheless, the people spoke highly of them. 5:14 Plus, more of those who believed in the Lord were added to them, multitudes of men and women,⁵⁴ 5:15 so that they also carried the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, in order that when Peter came, even his shadow could fall on any of them. 5:16 And the multitude from the cities surrounding Jerusalem were coming together, bringing the sick and those afflicted by unclean spirits.

5:17 But the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (that is, the faction of the Pharisees), and they were filled with strong aggression.⁵⁵ 5:18 Then, they laid hands on the apostles and put them in public prison. 5:19 But, during the night, an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison, and leading them out, he said to them,

5:20 Go, stand, and speak to the people in the temple all the words of this life.

5:21 After hearing this, they entered into the temple at dawn, and they were teaching. When the high priest and those who were with him appeared, they called together the Sanhedrin and all the council of the sons of Israel. And they sent to the prison for them to be brought. 5:22 But the officers who came did not find them in the prison. Instead, they returned and reported back,

5:23 We found the prison locked very securely and the guards standing at the doors. But when we opened them, we found no one inside.

5:24 When the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard this, they doubted them as to what had happened. 5:25 But someone came and reported to them,

Behold, the men whom you put in prison are in the temple, standing and teaching the people.

5:26 Then, the captain went with the officers, and they brought them, but without violence, because they were afraid of the people, that they might be stoned. 5:27 And when they brought them, they stood them in the Sanhedrin. And the high priest questioned them,

5:28 Did we not command you absolutely not to teach in this name? But, behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you want to bring down on us the blood of this man.

5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered,

We must obey God rather than men. **5:30** The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a cross.⁵⁶ **5:31** God lifted up this man as leader and savior to His right hand to grant repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.⁵⁷ **5:32** And we are witnesses of these matters, along with the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.

5:33 And when they heard this, they became furious and planned to kill them.⁵⁸ **5:34** But a Pharisee by the name of Gamaliel, a teacher of the Torah and respected by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and commanded that the men be put outside for a short while.⁵⁹ **5:35** And he said to them,

Men of Israel, take care what you are about to do with these men.⁶⁰ **5:36** For some time ago, Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a group of about four hundred men joined him. But he was killed, and all who trusted in him were dispersed and came to nothing. **5:37** After this man, Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census, and he drew people away after him. But he too died, and all those who trusted in him were scattered. **5:38** So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and leave them alone, because if this plan or action it is from men, it will be destroyed. **5:39** But if it is from God, you will not be able to destroy them, lest you be found fighting against God.⁶¹

And they trusted in him. **5:40** After calling the apostles in, they beat them and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus. Then they released them. **5:41** Therefore, they went out from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer dishonor on behalf of his name. **5:42** And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease from teaching and proclaiming the good news of Jesus as the Messiah.

6:1 In those days, while the number of disciples was increasing, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the Hebrew Jews, that their widows were being neglected in the daily assistance efforts. **6:2** So the twelve summoned the large gathering of the disciples and said,

It is not desirable that we forsake the message of God in order to serve tables. **6:3** Therefore, brothers, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this duty. **6:4** But we will persevere in prayer and the responsibility of serving with the message.

6:5 This statement was pleasing to all the large gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of belief and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. **6:6** They stood them before the apostles, and, after praying, they laid their hands on them. **6:7** And the message of God kept spreading, and the number of disciples was growing in Jerusalem. In addition, a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.⁶²

6:8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing marvelous acts and great signs among the people. **6:9** And some of those from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen. **6:10** But they were unable to oppose the wisdom and spirit with which he was speaking. **6:11** Then they secretly introduced men, saying,

We have heard him speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God.

6:12 And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, and they came up to him and seized him, and they brought him before the Sanhedrin. 6:13 Then, they put forth false witnesses, who said,

This man has not stopped speaking words against this holy place and the Torah. 6:14 For we have heard him say that this Jesus the Nazarene will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses handed down to us.⁶³

6:15 And fixing their gaze on him, all those sitting in the Sanhedrin observed his face like the face of an angel. 7:1 And the high priest said,

Are these things so?

7:2 And he said,

Hear me, brothers and fathers. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran. 7:3 And he said to him, Leave your land and your family, and come into the land that I will show you <Genesis 12:1>.

7:4 Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. From there, after his father died, He moved him into this land in which you now live. 7:5 And He gave him no inheritance in it, not even where his foot stepped. And when he had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession and to his descendants after him <Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8>. 7:6 But God spoke thus, that his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land and would be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years. 7:7 And I will judge whatever nation to which they are enslaved, God said, and after that they will come out and worship Me in this place <Genesis 15:13ff.; cf. Exodus 3:12>.

7:8 And He gave him the covenant of circumcision. Thus, he became the father of Isaac, and he circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac with respect to Jacob, and Jacob with respect to the twelve patriarchs. 7:9 Then, the patriarchs became jealous of Joseph, and they sold him into Egypt. But God was with him 7:10 and rescued him from all his afflictions. And He gave him grace and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he put him in charge of leading Egypt and his whole house.

7:11 Then a famine came over all Egypt and Canaan, and there was a great tribulation. And our fathers found no food. 7:12 But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers for the first time. 7:13 And the second time, Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. 7:14 Then Joseph sent and invited Jacob his father and all his relatives, seventy-five persons. 7:15 So Jacob went down to Egypt, and he died there, along with our fathers. 7:16 And they were removed to Shechem and placed in a tomb which Abraham had bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

7:17 As the time of the promise which God had assured Abraham was nearing, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt, 7:18 until there arose a different king over Egypt who did not know Joseph. 7:19 This king got the better of our race and mistreated our fathers, so that they would expose their infants and they would not live.

7:20 At this time Moses was born, and he was special to God. He was brought up for three months in his father's house.⁶⁴ 7:21 And after he was set outside, Pharaoh's daughter carried him away and brought him up as her own son. 7:22 Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was a strong man in his words and deeds.

- 7:23 As he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his heart to visit his brothers, the sons of Israel. 7:24 And when he saw one being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. 7:25 Now, he supposed that his brothers understood that God was granting them deliverance through his hand. However, they did not understand.⁶⁵
- 7:26 On the following day, he appeared to them as they were quarreling together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying,
Men, you are brothers. Why are you hurting each other?
- 7:27 But the one who was hurting his neighbor pushed him away, saying,
Who put you in charge as ruler and judge over us?⁶⁶ 7:28 You do not desire to kill me in same manner that you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you <Exodus 2:14>?
- 7:29 At this remark, Moses fled and became a stranger in the land of Midian <Exodus 2:15>, where he became the father of two sons. 7:30 After forty years had gone by, an *angelos* appeared to him in the wilderness of Mt. Sinai in the flame of the burning bush <Exodus 3:1ff.>. 7:31 When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight, and as he approached to understand better, there came the voice of Yahweh,
7:32 I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
Moses shook with fear and did not dare to approach more closely. 7:33 But Yahweh said to him,
Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. 7:34 I have certainly seen the suffering of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their groans. So I have come down to deliver them. Come now. I am sending you to Egypt.⁶⁷
- 7:35 This Moses whom they rejected, saying, Who put you in charge as ruler and judge <Exodus 2:14>, is the one whom God sent as ruler and redeemer with the hand of the *angelos* who appeared to him in the bush.⁶⁸ 7:36 This man led them out, performing marvelous actions and signs in the land of Egypt, in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years.⁶⁹ 7:37 This is the Moses who said to the sons of Israel, God will raise up a prophet for you like me from your brothers <Deuteronomy 18:15,18>.⁷⁰ 7:38 This is the one who was in the gathering in the wilderness with the *angelos* who was speaking to him on Mt. Sinai and with our fathers, who received the living messages to give to us,⁷¹ 7:39 to whom our fathers did not desire to be obedient, but they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt, 7:40 saying to Aaron, Make for us gods who will go before us, for this Moses, who led us out of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him <Exodus 32:1,23>.⁷²
- 7:41 In those days they made a calf and brought a sacrifice to the idol. And they were rejoicing in the works of their hands.⁷³ 7:42 But God turned away and delivered them over to worshipping the army of heaven, just as it has been written in the book of the prophets, It was not to Me that you offered sacrificial victims and sacrifices for forty years in the wilderness, was it, O house of Israel?⁷⁴ 7:43 And you also took along the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of your god Rompha, the images which you made to worship. Indeed, I will deport you beyond Babylon <Amos 2:25-27>.⁷⁵
- 7:44 The tabernacle of testimony belonged to our fathers in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses commanded him to make it according to the pattern which he had seen,⁷⁶ 7:45 which also our fathers, who took possession of it, brought in with Joshua in the process of taking possession of the nations, whom God drove out before our fathers until the days of David, 7:46 who found grace before God and asked that he find a dwelling place for the house of the God of Jacob. 7:47 But Solomon built a house for Him.⁷⁷
- 7:48 However, the Most High does not dwell in buildings made with hands, just as the prophet says,⁷⁸

7:49 Heaven is My throne, and the earth is the footstool of My feet. What kind of house will you build for Me, says Yahweh. Or what place exists for My place of rest? 7:50 Was it not My hand which made all these things <Isaiah 66:1,2>?⁷⁹

7:51 You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in your hearts and ears, you are always resisting the Holy Spirit. Just as your fathers did, you are doing. 7:52 Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? Indeed, they killed those who previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become,⁸⁰ 7:53 you who received the Torah as the decrees of *angeloi* and do not guard it.⁸¹

7:54 And when they heard these things, they became infuriated in their hearts, and they were grinding their teeth at him. 7:55 But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 7:56 And he said,

Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.

7:57 But they cried out with a loud voice and covered their ears and rushed at him as a single force. 7:58 And when they had thrown him out of the city, they began stoning him, and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 7:59 Then they went on stoning Stephen as he called out and said,

Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

7:60 And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice,

Lord, do not hold this sin against them.

And having said this, he died. 8:1 Now, Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution occurred against the gathering in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except for the apostles.⁸² 8:2 And some deeply committed men buried Stephen, and they mourned greatly over him. 8:3 And Saul was trying to destroy the gathering by entering house after house, dragging off men and women and putting them into prison.

8:4 As a result, those who had been scattered went about proclaiming the good news of the message of God. 8:5 For example, Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and he was proclaiming the Messiah to them. 8:6 And the crowds as a united group were paying attention to what was being said by Philip, while they heard his words and saw the signs which he was performing. 8:7 For there were many of those who had unclean spirits, and they were coming out of them while shouting with a loud voice. And many who were paralyzed and crippled were healed. 8:8 Therefore, there was much joy in that city.

8:9 Now, there was a man named Simon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city, and he was amazing the people of Samaria, while saying that he was someone great. 8:10 Everyone, from the small to the great, were paying attention to him, saying,

This man is the power of God, which is called great.

8:11 And they were paying attention to him because of his amazing them for a long time with his magical acts. 8:12 But when they believed Philip after he had proclaimed the good news about the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus the Messiah, they were being baptized, both men and

women alike. 8:13 Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized, he stayed close to Philip. And he continued to be amazed as he observed the signs and miracles which were taking place.

8:14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had embraced the message of God, they sent to them Peter and John,⁸³ 8:15 who came down and prayed for them, that they receive the Holy Spirit. 8:16 For He had not yet fallen on any of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 8:17 Then they began laying hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.⁸⁴ 8:18 And when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, 8:19 saying,

Give me this authority as well, so that the one on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.

8:20 But Peter said to him,

May your silver be destroyed with you, because you supposed that you could obtain the gift of God with money. 8:21 You have no part or portion in this message, for your heart is not right before God. 8:22 Therefore, repent of this evil of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you. 8:23 For I see you as being in the gall of bitterness and the chains of unrighteousness.

8:24 But Simon answered and said,

Pray to the Lord for me yourselves, so that nothing of what you said comes upon me.

8:25 Therefore, when they had borne witness with deep sincerity and spoken the message of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem and were proclaiming the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans. 8:26 But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying,

Get up and go south to the road which descends from Jerusalem.

This say is wilderness. 8:27 So he got up and went. And, behold, there was a man, an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship, 8:28 and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, reading the prophet Isaiah. 8:29 Then, the Spirit said to Philip,

Go forth and join this chariot.

8:30 And Philip ran forward and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and he said,

Do you understand what you are reading?

8:31 And he said,

How can I, unless someone leads the way for me?

And he invited Philip to come and sit with him. 8:32 Now, the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this,

He was led as a sheep to slaughter. And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, thus he did not open his mouth.⁸⁵ 8:33 In humiliation his judgment was taken away. Who will explain his generation, because his life is taken away from the earth <Isaiah 53:7,8>?⁸⁶

8:34 The eunuch answered Philip and said,

I ask you, concerning whom is the prophet saying this, himself or someone else?

8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture, he proclaimed the good news of Jesus to him. 8:36 And as they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said,

Look! Water! What is preventing me from being baptized?

[8:37 And Philip said,

If you believe with your whole heart, you may.

And he answered and said,

I believe the Son of God is Jesus the Messiah.]

8:38 And he ordered the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. 8:39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away, and the eunuch no longer saw him. Nevertheless, he proceeded on his way rejoicing. 8:40 And Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through, he was proclaiming the good news to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

9:1 Now Paul, still breathing threats and murder towards the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 9:2 and asked for letters from him for the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, both men and women, he could lead them bound to Jerusalem.⁸⁷ 9:3 While he was proceeding, it happened that as he came near to Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him, 9:4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him,

Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

9:5 And he said,

Who are you, Sir?

And he said,

I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 9:6 But get up and enter the city, and it will be told to you what you must do.

9:7 The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. 9:8 Saul rose up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he saw nothing. And leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. 9:9 He was three days without sight, and he neither ate nor drank.

9:10 Now, there was a disciple in Damascus by the name of Ananias, and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am Lord." 9:11 And the Lord said to him,

Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, 9:12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he receives his sight.

9:13 But Ananias answered,

Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to your holy ones in Jerusalem. 9:14 And here he has the authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.

9:15 But the Lord said to him,

Go, for he is as chosen vessel of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel. 9:16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake.

9:17 So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him, he said,

The Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, sent me so that you regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

9:18 And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight and got up and was baptized. 9:19 Then, he took food and was strengthened. And he was with the disciples in Damascus for several days.⁸⁸ 9:20 Soon thereafter in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God.⁸⁹ 9:21 And all those who heard him were amazed and were saying,

Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?

9:22 But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that this man is the Messiah.⁹⁰

9:23 When many days had elapsed, the Jews plotted together to kill him, 9:24 but their plan became known to Saul. They were also watching the gates day and night in order to kill him. 9:25 But his disciples took him during the night, and they let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket. 9:26 When he appeared in Jerusalem, he was trying to join up with the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. 9:27 But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles. And he explained to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that he spoke to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken out with bold openness in the name of Jesus.⁹¹ 9:28 And he was with them, going in and out of Jerusalem, speaking out with bold openness in the name of the Lord. 9:29 And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews, and they were trying to kill him. 9:30 But when the brothers learned about it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.⁹² 9:31 Therefore, the gathering throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed peace while being built up. And going on in the fear of the Lord and the persuasion of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.

9:32 Now it happened that as Peter was traveling through all these areas, he came down also to the set apart ones who lived in Lydda. 9:33 There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years, who was paralyzed. 9:34 And Peter said to him,

Aeneas, Jesus the Messiah heals you. Rise up and spread your wings.

Immediately, he got up, 9:35 and all who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him. And they turned to the Lord. 9:36 In Joppa, there was a disciple named Tabitha, which translated means Dorcas [Gazelle]. This woman was abounding in good and charitable works, which she was continually doing. 9:37 And it happened in those days that she fell sick and died. When they had washed her body, they placed her in an upstairs room.

9:38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him,

Do not delay in coming to us.

9:39 So Peter rose up and went with them. When he arrived, they led him up to the upstairs room, and all the widows stood next to him, weeping and showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas used to make when she was with them. 9:40 Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed. Turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. 9:41 Then, he gave to her his hand and raised her up. Calling the set apart ones and widows, he presented her alive. 9:42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. 9:43 And he remained many days in Joppa with a certain man named Simon, a tanner.

10:1 There was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort,⁹³ 10:2 a committed man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave many alms to the people and prayed to God continually.⁹⁴ 10:3 About the ninth hour of the day, he clearly saw in a vision an *angelos* of God, who had come in to him and said to him, "Cornelius." 10:4 And looking intently at him and being much afraid, he said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him,

Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God. 10:5 So now send men to Joppa, and send for a man named Simon, who is also called Peter. 10:6 He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea.

10:7 When the *angelos* who was speaking to him had left, he summoned two of his servants and a committed soldier of those who were his personal attendants. 10:8 He explained everything to them and sent them to Joppa.

10:9 The next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up about the sixth hour on the rooftop to pray. 10:10 But he became hungry and was desiring to eat. While they were making preparations, he fell into a trance, 10:11 and he saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground. 10:12 And there were on it all kinds of four-footed animals, creeping things of the earth, and birds of the sky. 10:13 Then a voice came to him,

Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.

10:14 But Peter said,

By no means, Lord, because I have never eaten anything common or unclean.

10:15 Again, a voice came to him a second time,

The things which God has cleansed, no longer consider common.

10:16 This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into heaven. 10:17 Now, while Peter was greatly perplexed within himself as to what the vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked for directions to Simon's house, stood at the gate. 10:18 And calling out, they were asking if Simon, who is called Peter, was a guest there. 10:19 As Peter was thinking over the vision, the Spirit said to him,

Behold, three men are looking for you. 10:20 Get up, go down, and proceed with them without any feelings of doubt, because I Myself has sent them.

10:21 So Peter went down to the men and said,

Behold, I am whom you are seeking (ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ εἰμι ὃν ζητεῖτε). What is the reason for which you have come?

10:22 And they said,

Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man, well-spoken of by the entire nation of Jews, was directed by a holy *angelos* to send for you to come to his house and to hear a message from you.

10:23 Therefore, he invited them in and gave them lodging. And on the next day, he rose up and went with them. And some of the brothers from Joppa went with him. 10:24 On the following day, he entered Caesarea. And Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. 10:25 When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet and worshiped him. 10:26 But Peter raised him up and said,

Stand up, I myself am a man.

10:27 And as he talked with him, he entered and found many people assembled. 10:28 And he said to them,

You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to become intimately involved with or come to a foreigner. But God has shown me not to call any man common or unclean. 10:29 That is why I came without objection when I was sent for. Therefore, I ask for what reason (τίνι λόγῳ) you sent for me?

10:30 And Cornelius said,

Four days ago to this hour I was praying in my house during the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments. 10:31 And he said,

Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms have been remembered before God. 10:32 Therefore, send to Joppa, and invite Simon, who is called Peter, to come to you. He is a guest at the house of Simon the Tanner by the sea.

10:33 Therefore, I immediately sent for you, and you have done well in coming. Now then, we are all present here before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.

10:34 Opening his mouth, Peter said,

On the basis of truth, I have reached the conclusion that God does not show favoritism. 10:35 Instead, the one who fears Him and performs righteousness in every nation is acceptable to Him. 10:36 He sent the message to the sons of Israel, proclaiming the good news of shalom by means of Jesus the Messiah. This one is Lord of all. 10:37 You know that which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. 10:38 You know about Jesus from Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with authority. He went about performing good works and healing all those who were oppressed by the adversary, because God was with him.

10:39 And we are witnesses of all the things he did in the region of the Jews and Jerusalem, whom they also killed by hanging him on a cross. 10:40 God raised him on the third day and granted him to become visible, 10:41 not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, namely us, who ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead.

10:42 And he commanded us to proclaim to the people and to bear witness solemnly that he is the one appointed by God to be the judge of the living and the dead.⁹⁵ 10:43 All the prophets bear witness to him, that everyone who believes in him obtains forgiveness of sins.

10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who were listening to the message,⁹⁶ 10:45 and the believers from the circumcision, as many as had come with Peter, were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had also been poured out on the Gentiles.⁹⁷ 10:46 For they were hearing them speaking with languages and extolling God. Then, Peter responded,⁹⁸

10:47 Certainly no can withhold water from these so that they are not baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we also did.⁹⁹

10:48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus the Messiah. Then, they asked them to stay with them for a few days. 11:1 The apostles and the brothers who were in Judea heard that, indeed, the Gentiles had embraced the message of God. 11:2 And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those from the circumcision were at odds with him, 11:3 saying,

You entered in with uncircumcised men and ate with them.

11:4 But Peter began explaining to them in an orderly fashion,

I was praying in the city of Joppa, and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain object coming down, like a large cloth, being let down from the sky by its four corners. And it came to me. 11:6 I observed it, looking steadfastly at it, and I saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the sky. 11:7 I also heard a voice saying to me,

Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.

11:8 But I said,

By no means, Lord, because nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.

11:9 And the voice from heaven answered a second time,

The things which God has cleansed, you should not consider common.

11:10 And this happened three times, and everything was pulled up again into heaven. 11:11 Behold, immediately three men arrived at the house in which we were staying. They had been sent from Caesarea to me. 11:12 The Spirit told me to go with them without thinking twice. So, these six brothers went with me, and we entered into the man's house. 11:13 He reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying,

Send to Joppa, and have Simon, who is also called Peter, brought here. 11:14 He will speak words to you, by which you will be saved, along with all your household.

11:15 As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, just as He did on us at the beginning.¹⁰⁰ 11:16 And I remembered the message of the Lord, when he said,

John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

11:17 Therefore, if God gave to them the same gift as He did to us who believe in the Lord Jesus the Messiah, who am I that I have the power to hinder God?

11:18 When they heard these things, they quieted down and glorified God, saying,

In which case, God has given repentance to the Gentiles for the purpose of life.¹⁰¹

11:19 Then, those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen, traveled to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the message to no one but Jews alone. 11:20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch, speaking also to the Greeks and proclaiming the good news of the Lord Jesus. 11:21 The hand of Yahweh was with them, and a large number who believed turn to Yahweh.¹⁰² 11:22 And the story was heard in the ears of the assembly in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

11:23 When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with a resolute heart,¹⁰³ 11:24 because he was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of belief. And a great crowd were added to the Lord. 11:25 He then left for Tarsus to look for Saul, 11:26 and, when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. It then happened that they brought them together in an assembly for a whole year and taught the large crowd. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

11:27 At this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 11:28 One of them named Agabus stood up and indicated that a great famine was about to take place over the whole world. It happened during the reign of Claudius. 11:29 And just as anyone of the disciples had the financial ability, each of them decided to send a contribution for the purpose of providing relief to the brothers living in Judea. 11:30 Thus, they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

12:1 At that time, Herod the king laid hands on some of the gathering in order to mistreat them. 12:2 And he put to death James, the brother of John, by the sword. 12:3 When he saw that it was pleasing to the Jews, he added to it the arrest of Peter also. It was the days of Unleavened Bread.

12:4 When he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people. 12:5 Therefore, Peter was kept in prison, but prayer by the gathering was constantly made to God on his behalf.

12:6 On the night when Herod was going to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and guards in front of the door were guarding the prison. 12:7 And, behold, the *angelos* of Yahweh appeared, and a light shown in the cell. And he struck Peter's side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands. 12:8 Then the *angelos* said to him, "Gird yourself, and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you, and follow me."

12:9 And he went out and was following him, and he did not know that what was being done by the *angelos* was real, but he thought he was seeing a vision. 12:10 When they had passed the first and second guard, they came to an iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them automatically. And they went out and proceeded along one street, and immediately the *angelos* left him. 12:11 When Peter came to himself, he said,

Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His *angelos* and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.

12:12 And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was called Mark, where many were gathered and praying. 12:13 When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer. 12:14 And when she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but she ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front to the gate. 12:15 And they said to her, "You're crazy." But she kept insisting that it was so. And they kept saying, "It is his *angelos*." 12:16 And Peter continued knocking, and when they opened the the gate, they saw him and were amazed. 12:17 But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had led him out of prison. And he said, "Report these things to James and the brothers." And he left and went to another place.

12:18 When the day arrived, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers as to what became of Peter. 12:19 When Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away. 12:20 Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. And with one accord they came to him, and having persuaded Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by that of the king. 12:21 On an appointed day, Herod, having put on his royal clothing, he took his seat on the judgment seat and was making a speech to them. 12:22 And the people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man." 12:23 And immediately the *angelos* of Yahweh struck him, because he did not give glory to God, and he was eaten by worms and died.

12:24 And the word of God continued to grow and be multiplied. 12:25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem after they had fulfilled their service, taking along with them John, who was also called Mark. 13:1 There were in Antioch, in the existing gathering, prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon, who was called Niger, Lucas the Cyrenian, Manaen, brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 13:2 While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said,

Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

13:3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

13:4 Therefore, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they

sailed to Cyprus. 13:5 And when they reached Salamis, they were proclaiming the message of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they also had John as their helper. 13:6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a magician, a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar-Jesus, 13:7 who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the message of God. 13:8 But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. 13:9 But Saul, who was also Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze on him 13:10 and said,

You are full of all deceit and unscrupulousness, you son of the devil, you enemy of all unrighteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord? 13:11 Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is on you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time.

And immediately a mist and darkness fell on him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by hand. 13:12 Then, the proconsul believed when he saw what happened, being amazed at the teaching of the Lord.

13:13 Now those who were accompanying Paul put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia, but John left them and returned to Jerusalem. 13:14 And going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. 13:15 After reading the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue leaders sent to them, saying,

Brothers, if you have any message of encouragement for the people, say it.

13:16 Paul stood up, motioned with his hand, and said,

Men, Israelites and those who fear God, listen. 13:17 The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and He lifted up the people in their stay in Egypt. And with an uplifted arm, He led them out from it. 13:18 Then, for forty years He put up with them in the wilderness. 13:19 After He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He divided up their land—13:20 for four hundred and fifty years. Then, after these things, He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. 13:21 And they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. 13:22 And when He removed him, He raised up David to be their king, with respect to whom He also said and bore witness,

I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My wishes
<Psalm 89:20; 1 Samuel 13:14>.

13:23 From the seed of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a savior, Jesus,¹⁰⁴ 13:24 after John had proclaimed before the appearance of his entrance a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.¹⁰⁵ 13:25 And as John was finishing his course, he kept saying,

Who do you suppose that I am? I am not he. But, watch, there is one coming after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.

13:26 Men, brothers, sons of the offspring of Abraham (υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραάμ), and those who fear God among you, the message of salvation was sent forth to us. 13:27 Now, those who

live in Jerusalem, because they ignored him and what is said by the prophets which is read each Sabbath, fulfilled it by condemning him.¹⁰⁶ 13:28 And, even though they found no cause to put him to death, they asked Pilate that he be executed. 13:29 When they finished all that had been written about him, they took him down from the cross and laid him in a tomb.¹⁰⁷ 13:30 But God raised him from the dead.¹⁰⁸ 13:31 He appeared for many days with those who traveled up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who now are his witnesses to the people. 13:32 And we are proclaiming to you the good news of the promise that was made to the fathers,¹⁰⁹ 13:33 that God has carried out this promise to their children, to us, when He raised up Jesus, as it was also written in the second Psalm,

You are My son. Today, I have given birth to you <Psalm 2:7>.¹¹⁰

13:34 And because He raised him from the dead, no longer to be about to return to decay, thus He has spoken,

I will give you the divinely vital and trustworthy things of David <Isaiah 55:3>.¹¹¹

13:35 Therefore, He also says in a different Psalm,

You will not grant to Your set apart one to see decay <Psalm 16:10>.¹¹²

13:36 For David, after he had served the purpose of God with respect to his own generation, died, was laid among his fathers, and he saw decay. 13:37 But the one whom God raised, he did not see decay. 13:38 Therefore, let it be known to you, Men, brothers, that forgiveness of sins and all which you are not able to be justified by means of the instruction of Moses, is being declared to you through this man. 13:39 By means of this man, everyone who believes is justified. 13:40 Therefore, be careful that that which was spoken by the prophets does not happen,

13:41 Behold, you who mock, be amazed and be destroyed, because I am performing an action in your days, an action which you would not believe, even if someone were to state it plainly to you <Habakkuk 1:5>.¹¹³

13:42 While they were going out, they were urging them to speak to them of these matters on the next Sabbath. 13:43 After the synagogue let out, many of the Jews and the worshiping converts from paganism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were persuading them to continue in the grace of God.

13:44 When the Sabbath arrived, almost the whole city gathered to hear the message of the Lord. 13:45 But, when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with envy and, by blaspheming, were contradicting the things spoken by Paul. 13:46 And Paul and Barnabas spoke out with bold openness and said,

It was necessary that the message of God be spoken to you first. Because you have rejected it and judge yourselves not to be worthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. 13:47 Because it is thus that the Lord has commanded us,

I have appointed you as a light for the Gentiles, in order that you may exist for salvation to the end of the earth <Isaiah 42:6;49:6>.

13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they rejoiced, glorified the message of the Lord, and believed it, as many as had been appointed to eternal life.¹¹⁴ 13:49 And the message of the Lord was spread throughout the whole region. 13:50 But the Jews stirred up the worshipping women of prominence and the leaders of the city. Thus, they instigated a persecution against of Paul and Barnabas, and they drove them out of their district. 13:51 And they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and they went to Iconium. 13:52 Meanwhile, the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

14:1 And it happened in Iconium, according to the same practice, they entered into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in such a manner that a large multitude believed, both Jews and Greeks. 14:2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up and embittered the minds of the Gentiles against the brothers. 14:3 Therefore, they spent a long time there, speaking out with bold openness on the basis of the Lord, who was bearing witness to the message of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. 14:4 But the multitude of the city were divided, and some were with the Jews, and some were with the apostles.¹¹⁵ 14:5 And when an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and the Jews with their leaders to mistreat and stone them, 14:6 they became aware of it and fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe, and the surrounding region.¹¹⁶ 14:7 And there they continued to proclaim the gospel.

14:8 At Lystra, a certain man was sitting with no strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked. 14:9 This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who fixed his gaze on him and saw that he had belief to be saved. 14:10 He said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he jumped up and began to walk. 14:11 When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the Lycaonian language,

The gods have become like men and have come down to us.

14:12 And they were calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the primary speaker. 14:13 And the priest of Zeus, who was just outside the city, brought bulls and garlands to the gates, and he wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. 14:14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard about it, they tore their robes and rushed into the crowd, crying out 14:15 and saying,

Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you and are proclaiming the good news to you that you should turn from these futile things to the living God, who made heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them <Exodus 20:11; Psalm 146:6>.

14:16 In the generations gone by, He permitted all the nations to go their own ways. 14:17 And yet He did not leave Himself without witness in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and merriment.

14:18 Even after saying these things, they hardly restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them. 14:19 But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he had died.¹¹⁷ 14:20 But while the disciples stood around him, he rose up and entered the city. The next day he went away with Barnabas to Derbe.¹¹⁸ 14:21 And after they had proclaimed the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch,¹¹⁹ 14:22 strengthening the lives of the disciples and encouraging them to continue in the faith, while saying,

It is necessary that through many tribulations we enter the Kingdom of God.¹²⁰

14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every gathering, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.¹²¹

14:24 Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia.¹²² 14:25 And when they had spoken the message in Perga, they went down to Attalia. 14:26 From there they sailed to Antioch, from which they had been delivered over to the grace of God for the work which they accomplished. 14:27 When they arrived and brought together the gathering, they reported all the things which God had done with them and that He had opened a door of belief to the Gentiles.¹²³ 14:28 And they spent a long time with the disciples.

15:1 Some men came down from Judea and started teaching the brothers,

Unless you are circumcised according to the ethics of Moses, you cannot be rescued.

15:2 And after there ensued no small argument and debate between Paul and Barnabas and them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, along with some of the others of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this question. 15:3 Having been sent on their way by the gathering, they were passing through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and they were bringing great joy to all the brothers. 15:4 When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the gathering, the apostles, and the elders. And they recounted all that God had done with them.

15:5 But some from the faction of the Pharisees stood and said,

It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the Torah of Moses.¹²⁴

15:6 And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. 15:7 After a lot of debate had occurred, Peter stood up and said to them,

Men, brothers, from the old days God selected among you for the Gentiles to hear by my mouth the message of the good news and to believe. 15:8 And God, who knows the heart, bore witness when He gave them the Holy Spirit just as He had given us.¹²⁵ 15:9 Thus, He made no distinction between us and them, when He cleansed their hearts with belief. 15:10 Therefore, why are you now testing God by laying a yoke on the necks of the disciples, a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?¹²⁶ 15:11 Instead, we believe that we are rescued through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way that they also are.

15:12 The whole multitude were silent. In addition, they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they explained what signs and testifying miracles God performed among the Gentiles through them. 15:13 After they were finished, James responded,

Men, brothers, listen to me. 15:14 Simeon has explained how God first concerned Himself with taking from the Gentiles people for His name. 15:15 And with respect to this, the messages of the prophets agree, just as it is written,

15:16 After these things, I will return, and I will rebuild the fallen tent of David. And I will rebuild its ruins and restore it. 15:17 in order that the rest of men may seek Yahweh, and all the Gentiles among them who call on My name among them, says Yahweh, who is doing these things, 15:18 which have been known from the age <Amos 9:11,12>.¹²⁷

15:19 Therefore, it is my judgment that we not add extra trouble to those who are turning to God from the Gentiles, **15:20** but that we write them to distance themselves from the polluted things of idols, from sexual immorality, from that which has been strangled, and from blood.¹²⁸ **15:21** For Moses, from ancient generations, has those who proclaim him in every city, because he is read in synagogues every Sabbath.

15:22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and elders with the whole gathering to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers. **15:23** And they sent this letter by them,

The apostles and elders, brothers, to the brothers from the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, greetings.

15:24 Since we heard that some men, whom we had not instructed to do so, came and disturbed you with their words, unsettling your lives, **15:25** it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to choose men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, **15:26** men who have handed over their lives on behalf of the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

15:27 Therefore, we have sent Judas and Silas, even them who will report the same things with a message. **15:28** For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to lay on you any greater burden than these essentials: **15:29** to stay away from meat offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality, from which, if you keep yourselves free, you will be doing well.

Be in good health.

15:30 Therefore, when they were sent away, they went down to Antioch, and having gathered together the entire group, they delivered the letter. **15:31** And when they had read it, they rejoiced on the basis of its encouragement. **15:32** In addition, Judas and Silas, because they were also prophets, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with a lengthy message. **15:33** After sending some time there, they were sent away from the brothers with shalom to those who had sent them. [**15:34** But it seemed good to Silas for him to stay.] **15:35** Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, teaching and proclaiming the good news of the message of the Lord with many others.

15:36 After some days, Paul said to Barnabas,

Let us return and visit the brothers in every city in which we proclaimed the message of the Lord, and see how they are.¹²⁹

15:37 Now Barnabas also wanted to take along with them John, called Mark. **15:38** But Paul considered it worthwhile not to take him along who had left them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. **15:39** And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark and sailed away to Cyprus. **15:40** But Paul chose Silas and left, being delivered over to the grace of the Lord by the brothers. **15:41** And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the gatherings.

16:1 Paul also came to Derbe and Lystra. And, behold, a certain disciple was there by the name of Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was Greek. **16:2** And he was well spoken of by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium. **16:3** Paul desired that he come with him, and he took him and circumcised him on account of the Jews who were in those parts, because they all knew that his father was a Greek. **16:4** And as they were passing through the cities, they delivered to them the commands which had been decided upon by the apostles and

elders in Jerusalem for them to observe. 16:5 Therefore, on the one hand, the gatherings were being strengthened in their faith, and they were increasing in number daily.

16:6 On the other hand, they passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the message in Asia. 16:7 And after they came to Mysia, they were attempting to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them. 16:8 So, passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

16:9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night, a man from Macedonia was standing and urging him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 16:10 When he had seen the vision, we immediately sought to leave and go into Macedonia, concluding that God had summoned us to proclaim the gospel to them.¹³⁰ 16:11 And putting out to sea from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and on the day following to Neapolis, 16:12 and from there to Philippi, which is the leading city of the district of Macedonia and a colony.¹³¹

16:13 And on the Sabbath day, we went outside the gate to a river, where we were supposing there to be a place of prayer, and we sat down and were speaking to the women who had come together. 16:14 A certain woman by the name of Lydia, a merchant of purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, a worshiper of God, was listening. And the Lord opened her heart to the things which were being spoken by Paul.¹³² 16:15 When she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying,

If you have judged me to be faithful in the Lord, come into my house and stay.

And she persuaded us.¹³³ 16:16 And it happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl, having a spirit of divination, met us, who was providing her masters with much profit by telling fortunes. 16:17 Following after Paul and us, she was crying out, saying,

These men are bond-slaves of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.

16:18 And she continued doing this for many days. But Paul, being greatly disturbed, turned and said to the spirit,

I command you in the name of Jesus the Messiah to come out of her.

And it came out at that very moment. 16:19 And when her masters saw that their hope of profit had disappeared, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. 16:20 And when they brought them to the chief magistrates, they said,

These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, 16:21 and are proclaiming customs which are not lawful for us to perform, being Romans.

16:22 And the crowd joined in attacking them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and ordered them to be beaten with rods. 16:23 After they had laid many blows on them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to guard them securely. 16:24 When he received such a command, he threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet to a wooden stake.

16:25 But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 16:26 And suddenly a great earthquake occurred so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and

everyone's chains were unfastened. 16:27 When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing the prisoners had escaped. 16:28 But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying,

Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.

16:29 And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. 16:30 And after he brought them out, he said,

Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

16:31 They said,

Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.

16:32 And they spoke the message of the Lord to him with his whole household. 16:33 And he took them at that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and he was immediately baptized, he and all his household. 16:34 And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and he rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

16:35 Now when day came, the chief magistrates sent their policemen, saying, "Release those men." 16:36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying,

The chief magistrates have sent to release you. Therefore, come out now and go in peace.

16:37 But Paul said to them,

They have beaten us in public without trial, men who are Romans, and have thrown us in prison. And now they are sending us away secretly? No indeed! But let them come themselves and bring us out.

16:38 The policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans. 16:39 So they came and urged them. And when they brought them out, they kept begging them to leave the city. 16:40 They left the prison and entered the house of Lydia. And after they saw the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

17:1 When they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a gathering of the Jews.¹³⁴ 17:2 And, according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and, for three Sabbaths, he reasoned with them from the scriptures. 17:3 He explained and gave evidence that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead, and

This is the Messiah Jesus, whom I am proclaiming to you.

17:4 Some of them were persuaded and joined up with Paul and Silas, along with a large number of the Greeks who were committed to God, and a number of the leading women. 17:5 But the Jews became jealous and, taking along some of the evil men from the marketplace, they formed a mob and stirred up the city. They even attacked the house of Jason and were seeking to bring them before the people. 17:6 When they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city rulers, shouting,

These men, who are subverting the world, have come here also. 17:7 Jason has welcomed them, and they are all acting contrary to the judgments of Caesar, saying that there is a different king, Jesus.

17:8 They stirred up the crowd and the city rulers, who heard these things, 17:9 and when they had received an assurance from Jason and the rest, they released them. 17:10 The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 17:11 Now these were better behaved than those in Thessalonica, who received the message with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so. 17:12 As a result, many of them believed, along with a good number of the respected Greek women and men. 17:13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the message of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they went there, agitating and stirring up the crowds. 17:14 Then immediately the brothers sent Paul out to go as far as the sea, but Silas and Timothy remained there. 17:15 Now those who were escorting Paul led him as far as Athens, and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.

17:16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was being upset within him as he observed the city full of idols. 17:17 Therefore, on the one hand he was discussing in the synagogue with the Jews and God-fearers and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be present. 17:18 On the other hand, some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were also disputing with him. Some were saying, “What would this yakker wish to say?” And others were saying, “He seems to be a proclaimer of strange demons”—because he was proclaiming the good news of Jesus and the resurrection. 17:19 And they took him and led him to the Hill of Ares, saying,

May we know what is this new teaching being proclaimed by you? 17:20 For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore, we want to know that these things mean.

17:21 Now all the Athenians and visiting strangers used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new. 17:22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Hill of Ares and said,

Men of Athens, I observe that in all respects you are very religious. 17:23 For while I was passing through and closely examining your objects of worship, I found an altar on which had been written, “To an Unknown God.” Therefore, what you worship without knowing, this I proclaim to you.

17:24 The God who made the cosmos and all things in it, because He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.¹³⁵ 17:25 Nor is he taken care of by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives life and breath and all things to everyone.¹³⁶ 17:26 And He made from one man every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,¹³⁷ 17:27 to seek God, if perhaps they would search for Him and find Him, even though He is not far from each one of us.¹³⁸ 17:28 For in Him we live and move and have our being, as even some of your own poets have said, “For we are His offspring.”¹³⁹

17:29 Therefore, since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to suppose that the divine nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image of the skill and thought of man. 17:30 Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now commanding men, that everyone everywhere must repent, 17:31 because He has established a day in which He will rule the world in righteousness by means of a man whom He has determined, having provided proof to everyone by raising him from the dead.¹⁴⁰

17:32 When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to scoff at him, while others said, "We shall indeed hear you again concerning this." 17:33 Thus, Paul went out of their midst. 17:34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom were Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

18:1 After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. 18:2 And he found a Jew by the name of Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to him, 18:3 and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them, and they were working, for by trade they were tentmakers.¹⁴¹ 18:4 And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks. 18:5 But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself to the message, sincerely providing evidence to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. 18:6 But when they resisted and spoke negatively, he shook out his garments and said to them,

Your blood is on your own head. I am clean. From now on I am going to the Gentiles.

18:7 Then he left there and entered the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. 18:8 And Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole household, and many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were being baptized. 18:9 And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision,

Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent, 18:10 because I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to harm you, because I have many people in this city.

18:11 And he settled there a year and six months, teaching the message of God among them. 18:12 But while Gallio was governor of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat, 18:13 saying,

This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the Torah.

18:14 But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews,

If it were a matter of a wrongdoing or an evil crime, O Jews, it would be reasonable for me to bear with you. 18:15 But since it is a matter of disagreements concerning words, names, and the law which is according to you, you should look into this yourselves. I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters.

18:16 And he drove them away from the judgment seat. 18:17 And they all took hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and they were beating him in front of the judgment seat. But Gallio was unconcerned with any of these things.

18:18 And Paul, having remained many days longer, said good-bye to the brothers and set sail to Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow. 18:19 And they arrived at Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 18:20 When they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not agree to do so, 18:21 but saying good-bye, he told them,

I will return to you if God desires.

And he put out to sea from Ephesus. 18:22 When he had arrived at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the gathering. Then he went down to Antioch. 18:23 And having spent some time there, he left and passed successively through the Galatian region and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

18:24 Now a Jew by the name of Apollos, a native Alexandrian, an educated man, arrived in Ephesus, and he was mighty in the scriptures. 18:25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in the Spirit, he was speaking and teaching diligently the things concerning Jesus. However, he knew only of the baptism of John, 18:26 and he began speaking out with bold openness in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the way of God to him more precisely. 18:27 And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped through grace those who had believed, 18:28 for he was vigorously refuting the Jews in public, demonstrating through the scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah.

19:1 It happened that while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the upper region and came to Ephesus, and he found some disciples. 19:2 And he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said to him, “No, we have not even heard of the Holy Spirit.”¹⁴² 19:3 And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” And they said to him, “Into John’s baptism.”¹⁴³ 19:4 Paul said,

John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling people that they should believe in the one who is coming after him, that is, in Jesus.

19:5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 19:6 And after Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with languages and prophesying. 19:7 There were in all about twelve men.

19:8 And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out with bold openness for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the Kingdom of God. 19:9 But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. 19:10 This occurred for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the message of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

19:11 And God was performing extraordinary works of power by the hands of Paul,¹⁴⁴ 19:12 so that handkerchiefs or aprons were being carried from his skin to the sick, and the diseases were removed and the evil spirits went out. 19:13 But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, “I command you Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” 19:14 Seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish priest, were doing this. 19:15 And the evil spirit answered and said to them,

I recognize Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?

19:16 And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them, and he subdued them all and overpowered them so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. 19:17 This became known to everyone, both Jews and Greeks, who were living in Ephesus. And fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified. 19:18 Many of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. 19:19 And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and were burning them in the sight of everyone. And they counted

up their price and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver. 19:20 Thus the message of the Lord was increasing powerfully and was strong.

19:21 When these things were finished, Paul set in his spirit to proceed to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."¹⁴⁵ 19:22 And having sent into Macedonia two of those who served with him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while. 19:23 About that time, there occurred no small disturbance concerning the Way, 19:24 for a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was providing no little profit for the craftsmen. 19:25 These he gathered together with the workmen of similar trades and said,

Men, you know that our prosperity is from this work. 19:26 And you observe and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. 19:27 Not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be considered worthless, and that she whom all Asia and the world worship will even be dethroned from her magnificence.

19:28 When they heard this, they became filled with rage and were crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" 19:29 And the city was filled with confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia. 19:30 And when Paul wanted to enter into the assembly, the disciples would not let him. 19:31 Also some of the people from Asia, being his friends, sent to him and urged him not to present himself in the theater.

19:32 As a result, some were shouting one thing and some another, because the gathering was in confusion, and the majority did not know for what reason they had come together. 19:33 Some of the crowd concluded it was Alexander, because the Jews had put him forth. And having motioned with his hand, Alexander was wanting to defend himself to the people. 19:34 But when they recognized that he was a Jew, a single outcry was created by them all as they shouted for about two hours, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

19:35 After quieting the crowd, the city clerk said,

Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of the image which fell from heaven? 19:36 Therefore, since these are undeniable facts, you must stay calm and do nothing rash. 19:37 For you brought these men here who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess. 19:38 So then, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a complaint against someone, the courts are in session and the proconsuls are there. Let them bring charges against one another. 19:39 But if you are seeking something beyond this, it shall be resolved in a lawful gathering. 19:40 For indeed we are in danger of being accused of a riot in connection with today's events, since there exists no real cause for it. In this regard, we will be unable to provide a reason for this disorderly gathering.

19:41 And after saying these things, he dismissed the gathering. 20:1 After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had exhorted them and taken his leave of them, he left to go to Macedonia. 20:2 When he had gone through those districts and had exhorted them with a sizeable message, he came to Greece 20:3 and spent three months there. When a plot was formed against him as he was about to sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. 20:4 And

he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus, and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus, the Asians. 20:5 But these had gone ahead and were waiting for us in Troas. 20:6 So we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread and came to them at Troas within five days. There we stayed for seven days.¹⁴⁶

20:7 On the first of the sabbaths, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul was discussing with them, intending to leave the next day, and he extended his message until midnight. 20:8 And there were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were gathered together. 20:9 And there was a certain young man by the name of Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep. As Paul talked on more and more, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. 20:10 But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him." 20:11 When he had gone back up and broken bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak. Then he left. 20:12 And they took the boy away alive, and they were encouraged not just a little bit.¹⁴⁷

20:13 But we, going ahead to the ship, set sail for Assos, intending from there to take Paul on board, for so he had arranged it, intending himself to travel by land. 20:14 And when we met him at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene. 20:15 Sailing from there, we arrived the next day opposite Chios. And the next day we crossed over to Samos, and the day following we came to Miletus. 20:16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia. For he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the gathering. 20:18 And when they came to him, he said to them,

You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, 20:19 making myself a bondservant of the Lord with all humility and tears and trials that came upon me through the plots of the Jews, 20:20 how I did not shrink from proclaiming to you anything which was helpful, and from teaching you publicly and from house to house, 20:21 bearing witness with seriousness to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and belief in our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

20:22 And now, behold, having become resolved in my spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 20:23 except the Holy Spirit bears witness with seriousness to me in every city, saying that chains and afflictions await me. 20:24 But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my race and the service which I received from the Lord Jesus, to bear witness with seriousness to the good news of the grace of God.

20:25 And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom, will no longer see my face. 20:26 Therefore, I testify to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 20:27 For I did not shrink from declaring the whole plan of God to you. 20:28 Be on guard for yourselves and for the whole flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the gathering of the Lord, which he purchased with his own blood.

20:29 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock, 20:30 and from among your own selves, men will arise, speaking perverse things in order to draw away the disciples after them.

20:31 Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years, I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. 20:32 And now I commend you to God and to the message of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who have been set apart.

20:33 I have desired no one's silver or gold or clothes. 20:34 You know that these hands have served my needs and the men who were with me. 20:35 In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner, it is necessary to help the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

20:36 When he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 20:37 And they all wept aloud and fell on Paul's neck. And they were kissing him, 20:38 grieving especially over the statement he had made, that they would no longer see his face. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

21:1 When we had parted from them and set sail, we ran a straight course to Cos, and the next day to Rhodes, and then to Patara.¹⁴⁸ 21:2 And having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went on board and set sail. 21:3 When we came in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left, we kept sailing to Syria and landed at Tyre, for there the ship was to unload its cargo. 21:4 After seeking out the disciples, we stayed there seven days. They kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem. 21:5 When our days were ended there, we left and started on our way, while they all, with wives and children, escorted us until we were outside the city. After kneeling down on the beach and praying, 21:6 we said farewell to one another. We went on board the ship, and they returned to their homes.

21:7 When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais, and after greeting the brothers, we stayed with them for a day. 21:8 On the next day, we left and came to Caesarea. And entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him. 21:9 Now this man had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses. 21:10 As we were staying there many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 21:11 And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his feet and hands and said,

This is what the Holy Spirit says: In this way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man whose belt this is and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

21:12 When we heard this, we and the locals were urging him not to go up to Jerusalem. 21:13 Then Paul answered,

What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.¹⁴⁹

21:14 And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, saying,

The will of the Lord be done.

21:15 After these days, we got ready and started on our way up to Jerusalem. 21:16 And some of the disciples from Caesarea came with us, leading us to Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple with whom we were to lodge. 21:17 After we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers received us gladly. 21:18 On the following day, Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. 21:19 And after greeting them, he was explaining one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. 21:20 When they heard it, they were glorifying God and saying to him,

You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Torah. 21:21 And they have been told about you, that you

are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to rebel against Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children and not to walk according to the customs.

21:22 What, then, is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come. 21:23 Therefore, do this that we tell you. We have four men under a vow.¹⁵⁰ 21:24 Take them and purify yourself with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads. Thus, all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself walk in a proper manner, guarding the Torah.

21:25 But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having decided that they should guard themselves from anything sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from sexual immorality.

21:26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself with them, went into the temple, giving notice of the completion of the days of purification, until the sacrifice was offered for each one of them. 21:27 When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, began to stir up all the crowd and laid hands on him, 21:28 crying out,

Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people, the Torah, and this place. Besides, he has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled his holy place.¹⁵¹

21:29 For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple. 21:30 Then, the whole city was provoked, and the people rushed together. And seizing Paul, they dragged him out of the temple, and immediately the doors were shut. 21:31 While they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the Roman cohort that all of Jerusalem was in confusion. 21:32 At once he took along soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. Now, when they saw the commander and soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 21:33 Then, the commander approached and seized him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. And he was asking who he was and what he had done. 21:34 But among the crowd some were shouting one thing and some another. And when he was unable to find out the facts on account of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks. 21:35 When he got to the stairway, he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd, 21:36 because the multitude of the people kept following them, shouting, "Away with him!"

21:37 As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the commander,

May I say something to you?

And he said,

Do you know Greek? 21:38 Then you are not the Egyptian who some days ago stirred up a revolt and led four thousand men of the Assassins into the desert?

21:39 But Paul said,

I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city. And I beg you, permit me to speak to the people.

21:40 When he [Lysias the Roman commander] gave him permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned with his hand to [the Jews who were accusing him of desecrating the temple], and after a great silence had fallen on them, he said in the Hebrew language,

22:1 Men, brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense to you.

22:2 When they heard that he was speaking to them in the Hebrew language, they became even more quiet. And he said,

22:3 I am a Jewish man, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but educated in this city, instructed at the feet of Gamaliel, from the precise instruction of the Torah of our fathers, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today. **22:4** I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering over to the prisons both men and women, **22:5** as also the High Priest and the body of elders will bear witness concerning me. From them I also received letters to the brothers when I went to Damascus, in order to lead those who were there bound to Jerusalem, so that they may be punished.

22:6 But while I was on my journey and approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed around me, **22:7** and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying,

Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

22:8 I answered, Who are you, Sir? And he said to me,

I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.

22:9 Those who were with me saw the light, but they did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. **22:10** And I said, What should I do, Sir? And the man said to me,

Get up and go to Damascus, and there it will be told to you all that has been appointed for you to do.

22:11 And because I could not see on account of the intensity of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and I came to Damascus. **22:12** A certain Ananias, a man well-committed according to the Torah and well-spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, **22:13** came to me and stood by me, saying,

Brother Saul, receive your sight.

At that very moment, I saw again towards him. **22:14** And he said,

The God of our fathers has handpicked you to know His will, to see the one who is righteous, and to hear the sound from his mouth, **22:15** because you will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. **22:16** And now, what will you do? Rise up, be baptized, and wash away your sins, while calling on his name.¹⁵²

22:17 And when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance.¹⁵³
22:18 And I saw him saying to me,

Hurry, and leave Jerusalem quickly, because they will not embrace your testimony concerning me.

22:19 And I said, Lord, they themselves understand that I was the one imprisoning and beating in the synagogues those who believe in you. **22:20** And when the blood of your witness

Stephen was being poured out, I was the one standing by them and approving, while I guarded the cloaks of those who were killing him. 22:21 And he said to me,

Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.¹⁵⁴

22:22 They listened to him until this statement, and then they raised their voices and said,

Away with such a man from the land, because it is not lawful for him to live.¹⁵⁵

22:23 And as they were crying out and throwing off their cloaks and tossing dust into the air, 22:24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, saying that he should be examined by scourging, so that he could find out the reason why they were shouting against him that way.

22:25 But when they stretched him out with straps, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by,

Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and uncondemned?

22:26 When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and told him, saying,

What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman.

22:27 So the commander came to him and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" And he said, "Yes." 22:28 And the commander responded,

I acquired this citizenship with a large sum of money.

And Paul said,

I was actually born a citizen.

22:29 Therefore, those who were about to examine him immediately let go of him. And the commander was also afraid when he found out that he was a Roman and that he had put in him chains. 22:30 But on the next day, wishing to know for certain why he had been accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the Sanhedrin to assemble. And he brought Paul down and stood him before them. 23:1 Paul, looking intently at the Sanhedrin, said,

Men, brothers, I have lived my life before God with a perfectly good understanding up to this day.

23:2 The high priest Ananias commanded those standing beside him to strike him on the mouth.

23:3 Then Paul said to him,

God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit to try me according to the Torah and order me to be struck in violation of the Torah?

23:4 But the bystanders said, "Do you revile God's high priest?" 23:5 And Paul said,

I was unaware, brothers, that he was the high priest, for it is written, "You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people" <Exodus 22:28>.¹⁵⁶

23:6 But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul cried out in the Sanhedrin,

Men, brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees. I am on trial for the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

23:7 After he said this, there occurred an argument between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the crowd was divided. 23:8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an *angelos*, nor the Spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.¹⁵⁷ 23:9 And there occurred a great uproar, and some of the scribes of the Pharisee party stood up and were protesting heatedly, saying,

We find nothing wrong in this man. What if a spirit or an *angelos* has spoken to him?

23:10 And as a great argument was developing, the commander was afraid Paul would be torn apart by them, and he ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force and bring him into the barracks. 23:11 But the next night, the Lord stood at his side and said,

Take courage, for as you have solemnly borne witness in Jerusalem to the things concerning me, so also it is necessary for you to bear witness in Rome.¹⁵⁸

23:12 When it was day, the Jews made a pact and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. 23:13 And there were more than forty of them who formed this plot. 23:14 They came to the chief priests and elders and said,

We have bound ourselves under penalty of being cursed to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. 23:15 Now, therefore, you with the Sanhedrin inform the commander to bring him down to you, as though you are going to examine his case more thoroughly, and we are ready to kill him before he gets near here.

23:16 But the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, and he came and entered the barracks and told Paul.¹⁵⁹ 23:17 Paul summoned one of the centurions and said,

Lead this young man to the commander, for he has something to report to him.

23:18 Therefore, he took him and led him to the commander and said,

Paul, the prisoner, summoned me and asked me to lead this young man to you, because he has something to tell you.

23:19 The commander took him by the hand, and stepping aside he inquired of him privately,

What is it that you have to report to me?

23:20 And he said,

The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down tomorrow to the Sanhedrin, as though they are going to inquire somewhat more thoroughly about him. 23:21 But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of them are lying in wait for him who have bound themselves under a curse not to eat or drink until they kill him. And now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you.

23:22 So the commander let the young man go, instructing him,

Tell no one that you have notified me of these things.

23:23 And he called to him two of the centurions and said,

Get two hundred soldiers ready by the third hour of the night to proceed to Caesarea with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen 23:24 and to provide a mount for Paul to bring him safely to Felix the governor.

23:25 And he wrote a letter having this form,

23:26 Claudius Lysias, to the most excellent governor Felix, greetings:

23:27 When this man was seized by the Jews and about to be killed by them, I came up to them with the troops and rescued him. Having learned that he was a Roman, 23:28 and desiring to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their Sanhedrin. 23:29 And I found him to be accused over questions about their Torah, but not having a charge deserving death or imprisonment. 23:30 And when it was made known to me that there was a plot against the man, I immediately sent him to you, instructing his accusers to speak about him before you.

23:31 So the soldiers, in accordance with their orders, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris.¹⁶⁰ 23:32 But the next day, leaving the horsemen to go on with him, they returned to the barracks. 23:33 When these had come to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. 23:34 When he had read it, he asked from what province he was. And when he learned that he was from Cilicia, 23:35 he said,

I will give you a hearing when your accusers also arrive.

And he commanded that he be guarded in Herod's Praetorium.¹⁶¹ 24:1 After five days, the High Priest Ananias came down with some elders and the attorney Tertullus, and they brought charges to the governor against Paul. 24:2 After Paul had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him saying,

Since we have attained through you much peace, and since through your care improvements are being carried out for this nation, 24:3 we welcome these in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness. 24:4 But in order that I may not weary you any further, I urge you to hear us briefly by your kindness, 24:5 for we have found this man a real pest and someone who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the heresy of the Nazarenes.¹⁶² 24:6 And he even tried to desecrate the temple, and then we arrested him. [We desired to judge him according to our Law, 24:7 but Lysias the commander came along, and with much violence took him out of our hands, 24:8 ordering his accusers to come before you.] By examining him yourself concerning all these matters, you will be able to ascertain the things of which we accuse him.

24:9 The Jews also joined in the attack, asserting that these things were so. 24:10 When the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul responded,

Knowing that for many years you have been a judge for this nation, I cheerfully make my defense, 24:11 because it is possible for you to note that it was not more than twelve days

ago that I went up to Jerusalem to worship, 24:12 and neither in the temple, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city did they find me discussing with anyone or causing a disturbance. 24:13 Nor is it possible for them to present to you evidence of that which they now accuse me. 24:14 But I admit to you that according to the Way, which they call heresy, I thus serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that was written in the Torah and the Prophets, 24:15 having the hope in God for which these men are waiting, that there will be a future resurrection of both the justified and the unjustified.¹⁶³

24:16 Because of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless understanding towards God and man.¹⁶⁴ 24:17 And after several years, I came to make gifts to my people and to bring offerings. 24:18 They found me engaged in these in the temple, having been purified, with neither a crowd nor a disturbance. 24:19 However, there were some Jews from Asia, who ought to be present before you and to make their accusation, if they actually have anything against me. 24:20 Or let these men themselves state what crime they found when I stood before the Sanhedrin, 24:21 except for this one statement which I shouted out while standing among them, 'I am on trial before you today for the resurrection of the dead.'

24:22 But Felix, because he understood more precisely the things concerning the Way, put them off by saying,

When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case.

24:23 Then he gave orders to the centurion for him to be kept in custody and to have some freedom and to prevent none of his friends from being helpful to him.¹⁶⁵ 24:24 But some days later Felix appeared with Drusilla his wife, who was as Jewess, and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about his belief in the Messiah Jesus. 24:25 And as he was discussing justification, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and responded,

Go away for the present, and when it is the right time, I will summon you.¹⁶⁶

24:26 At the same time, too, he was hoping that money would be given him by Paul. Therefore, he would also send for him frequently and converse with him. 24:27 But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and desiring to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned. 25:1 Festus then, having arrived in the province, three days later went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. 25:2 And the chief priests and the leading men of the Jews brought charges against Paul, and they were urging him, 25:3 requesting a favor against him, that he would send him to Jerusalem, while they were setting an ambush to kill him on the way. 25:4 Then Festus responded that Paul was being held in custody in Caesarea and that he was about to leave shortly. 25:5 He said,

Therefore, let the influential men among you go down with me, and if there is anything wrong in regard to the man, let them accuse him.

25:6 After he had spent no more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea. The next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought. 25:7 After he appeared, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him which they could not prove. 25:8 And Paul said in his defense,

I have done nothing wrong against the Law of the Jews, the temple, or Caesar.

25:9 But Festus, desiring to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said,

Do you desire to go up to Jerusalem and to stand trial there before me?

25:10 But Paul said,

I am standing before Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know. 25:11 If therefore I have done wrong and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die. But if there is nothing to the things which these men accuse me, no one can give me to them. I appeal to Caesar.

25:12 Then, after Festus had conferred with his council, he answered,

You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you shall go.

25:13 Now when several days had elapsed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and paid their respects to Festus. 25:14 While they were spending many days there, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying,

There is a man who was left a prisoner by Felix. 25:15 And when I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and elders of the Jews brought charges against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him. 25:16 I answered that it is not the custom of the Romans to hand over any man before the accused meets his accusers face to face and has an opportunity to make his defense against the charges. 25:17 So after they had assembled here, I did not delay, but on the next day took my seat on the judgment seat and ordered the man to be brought before me. 25:18 When the accusers stood up, they were bringing charges against him not of such crimes as I was expecting. 25:19 But they had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive. 25:20 Being at a loss how to investigate these matters, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there stand trial on these matters. 25:21 But when Paul appealed to be held in custody for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him to be kept in custody until I send him to Caesar.¹⁶⁷

25:22 And Agrippa said to Festus,

I also would like to hear the man myself.

And he said,

Tomorrow, you shall hear him.

25:23 So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and they entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city. And at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. 25:24 Festus said,

King Agrippa and all you gentlemen here present with us, you see this man about whom all the people of the Jews appealed to me, both at Jerusalem and here, loudly declaring that he ought not to live any longer. 25:25 But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death. And since he himself appealed to the Emperor, I decided to send him. 25:26 Yet I have nothing definite about him to write to my lord. Therefore I have brought him before you and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the examination has taken place, I may

have something to write. 25:27 For it seems irrational to me in sending a prisoner, not to indicate also the charges against him.

26:1 And Agrippa said to Paul,

You are permitted to speak for yourself.

Then, Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense,

26:2 Concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to make my defense before you today, 26:3 especially because you are one who knows all the traditions and questions in accordance with Jewishness. Therefore, I ask you to listen to me patiently. 26:4 All the Jews have known my way of life from my youth, that which took place from the beginning among my people and in Jerusalem (26:5 since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to bear witness), that I have lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest faction of our religion. 26:6 And now I stand to be judged for waiting expectantly for the promise made by God to the fathers.

26:7 This is the promise which our twelve tribes are waiting expectantly to arrive, while serving earnestly night and day. Concerning this hope, King, I am being accused by the Jews. 26:8 Why is it considered unbelievable among you if God raises the dead?

26:9 Therefore, I thought to myself that I must do many things in opposition to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, 26:10 which I did in Jerusalem. After receiving authority from the chief priests, I locked up in prison many of those who had been set apart. And when they were being killed, I cast my vote. 26:11 Plus, when I often punished people in all the synagogues, I forced them to blaspheme. And all the more being enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities. 26:12 In the midst of these things, I was going to Damascus with the authority and decision of the chief priests. 26:13 At midday, King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, and shining all around me and those who were traveling with me. 26:14 After we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me in the Hebrew language,

Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard to kick against the goads.

26:15 And I said, Who are you, Sir? And the Lord said,

I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 26:16 But get up and stand on your feet. For this purpose, I have appeared to you, to appoint you a servant and witness of the things which you have seen, namely, me, and of the things in which I will appear to you, 26:17 when I rescue you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, 26:18 to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan to God, so that they receive forgiveness of their sins and an inheritance among those who have been set apart by belief in me.

26:19 Consequently, King Agrippa, I did not become disobedient to the heavenly vision, 26:20 and I continued declaring first to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem, throughout the region of Judea, and to the Gentiles, to repent and turn to God, performing actions worthy of repentance.¹⁶⁸ 26:21 Because of these things, the Jews seized me while I was in the temple and attempted to kill me. 26:22 Therefore, having obtained help from God, I stand this day bearing witness to the small and to the great, saying nothing outside the things of which the prophets and Moses said regarding things that were going to

happen,¹⁶⁹ 26:23 that there would be a suffering Messiah, that by virtue of the resurrection from the dead, he would be the first to proclaim light to the people and to the Gentiles.¹⁷⁰

26:24 After he said these things in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice,

Paul, you are insane. The many writings are driving you into insanity.

26:25 But Paul said,

I am not insane, most excellent Festus. But I am speaking words of truth and good sense, 26:26 because the king knows about these things. And I am speaking to him with bold openness, since I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him, for this has not been done in a corner. 26:27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe them.

26:28 Agrippa replied to Paul,

In a short time, you will persuade me to make of myself a Christian.

26:29 And Paul said,

I would pray to God, in a short and in a long time, not only you, but also all who are listening to me today, would become such as I am, except for these chains.

26:30 The king stood up, along with the governor, Bernice, and those who were sitting with them, 26:31 and after they had left, they were saying to one another,

This man is not doing anything worthy of death or imprisonment.

26:32 And Agrippa said to Festus,

This man could be released if he had not appealed to Caesar.

27:1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, they proceeded to deliver Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion named Julius of the Imperial cohort. 27:2 And embarking in an Adramyttian ship, which was about to sail to the regions along the coast of Asia, we put out to sea accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica. 27:3 The next day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul with consideration and allowed him to go to his friends and receive care. 27:4 From there we put out to sea and sailed under the shelter of Cyprus because the winds were contrary. 27:5 When we had sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia. 27:6 There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy, and he put us onboard it. 27:7 When we had sailed slowly for a good many days, and with difficulty had arrived off Cnidus, since the wind did not permit us to go farther, we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone. 27:8 And with difficulty sailing past it we came to a place called Beautiful Harbors, near which was the city of Lasea.

27:9 When considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous, since even the fast was already over, Paul began to advise them, 27:10 and he said to them,

Men, I perceive that the voyage will certainly be with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.

27:11 But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the owner of the ship than by what was being said by Paul. 27:12 And because the harbor was unsuitable for wintering, the majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there. 27:13 When a moderate south wind came up, supposing that they had attained their purpose, they weighed anchor and began sailing along as close as possible to Crete. 27:14 But before very long there rushed down from it a violent wind, called Euraquilo. 27:15 And when the ship was caught in it and could not head into the wind, we gave way to it and let ourselves be driven along. 27:16 Running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were scarcely able to get under control the ship's boat. 27:17 After they had hoisted it up, they used supporting cables in undergirding the ship. And fearing that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis, they let down the sea anchor and in this way let themselves be driven along. 27:18 The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they began to jettison the cargo. 27:19 And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. 27:20 Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was attacking us, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

27:21 When they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in their midst and said,

Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete and incurred this damage and loss. 27:22 Now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 27:23 For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me, 27:24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar, and behold, God has graced you all those who are sailing with you.'

27:25 Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told. 27:26 But we must run aground on a certain island.

27:27 But when the fourteenth night came, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors were suspecting that they were approaching some land. 27:28 They took soundings and found it to be twenty fathoms. And a little farther on they took another sounding and found it to be fifteen fathoms. 27:29 Fearing that we might run aground somewhere on the rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern and wished for daybreak.

27:30 But as the sailors were trying to escape from the ship and had let down the ship's boat into the sea, on the pretext of intending to lay out anchors from the bow, 27:31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers,

Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved.

27:32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it fall away. 27:33 Until the day was about to dawn, Paul was encouraging them all to take some food, saying,

Today is the fourteenth day that you have been constantly watching and going without eating, having taken nothing. 27:34 Therefore I encourage you to take some food, for this is for your preservation, for not a hair from the head of any of you will perish.

27:35 Having said this, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of all, and he broke it and began to eat. 27:36 All of them were encouraged, and they themselves also took food. 27:37 All of us in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six souls. 27:38 When they had eaten enough, they began to lighten the ship by throwing out the wheat into the sea.

27:39 When day came, they could not recognize the land. But they did observe a bay with a beach, and they resolved to drive the ship onto it if they could. **27:40** And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea while at the same time they were loosening the ropes of the rudders. And hoisting the foresail to the wind, they were heading for the beach. **27:41** But striking a place where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground. And the bow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern began to be broken up by the force of the waves.

27:42 The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, so that none of them would swim away and escape. **27:43** But the centurion, wanting to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their intention, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land, **27:44** and the rest should follow, some on planks, and others on various things from the ship. And so it happened that they all were brought safely to land.

28:1 When they had been brought safely through, then we found out that the island was called Malta. **28:2** The barbarians showed us extraordinary kindness, for because of the rain that had set in and because of the cold, they kindled a fire and received us all.¹⁷¹ **28:3** But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand. **28:4** When the barbarians saw the creature hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another,

Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and although he has been saved from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live.

28:5 However, he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. **28:6** But they were expecting that he was about to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had waited a long time and had seen nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and were saying that he was a god.

28:7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius, who welcomed us and entertained us courteously for three days. **28:8** And it happened that the father of Publius was lying in bed afflicted with fever and dysentery. And Paul went in to see him, and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and healed him. **28:9** After this had happened, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases were coming to him and getting cured. **28:10** They also honored us with many marks of respect. And when we were setting sail, they supplied all that we needed.

28:11 At the end of three months we set sail on an Alexandrian ship which had wintered at the island, and which had the Twin Brothers for its figurehead. **28:12** After we had put in at Syracuse, we remained there for three days. **28:13** From there we sailed around and arrived at Rhegium, and a day later a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. **28:14** There we found some brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And thus we came to Rome. **28:15** And the brothers, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us. And when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

28:16 When he entered Rome, Paul was permitted to stay by himself with a soldier guarding him. **28:17** And after three days, he called together those who were leaders of the Jews. And when they gathered together, he said to them,

Men, brothers, even though I had done nothing wrong to the people or with respect to the traditions of the fathers, I was handed over as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of

the Romans. 28:18 When they had examined me, they were willing to release me, because there was no cause in me to put me to death. 28:19 But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that my nation had anything with which to accuse me. 28:20 For this reason, I have requested to see you and speak to you—because I am wearing this chain for the sake of the hope of Israel.

28:21 They said to him,

We have received no letters concerning you from Judea. Nor have any of the brothers come here and reported or spoken anything bad about you. 28:22 And we would count it an honor to hear from you what you think, because it has become known to us concerning this sect that it is spoken against everywhere.

28:23 When they had set a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers. He explained to them by carefully bearing witness to the Kingdom of God, persuading them about Jesus from the instruction of Moses and the prophets, from morning to evening. 28:24 Some were persuaded by the things being said, but some did not believe. 28:25 And after they did not agree with one another, they left after Paul made one more statement,

The Holy Spirit correctly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers,

28:26 Go to this people and say, You will keep on hearing, but you will not understand. You will keep on seeing, but you will not see. 28:27 For the heart of this people has become dull, with their ears they barely hear, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise, they see with their eyes, they hear with their ears, they understand with their heart, and they turn, so that I heal them <Isaiah 6:9,10>.

28:28 Therefore, let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles. They will indeed listen.

28:30 And he stayed for a full two years in his own rented quarters, and he received all those who came to him, 28:31 proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching with all bold openness and unhindered the things about the Lord Jesus the Messiah.

¹ Οἱ μὲν οὖν συνελθόντες ἡρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες· κύριε, εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ – In Acts 3:21, Peter speaks of heaven receiving Jesus “until the times of the restoration (ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως) of all things which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from the past age”). This would be the restoring of the Davidic Kingdom to Israel with the Messiah, Jesus, as its king? The apostles are wondering that now that Jesus has risen from the dead, is this the time for God to fulfill His promise of Genesis 12:1-3 to make the Jews the greatest nation in history. Therefore, this is the hope specific to the Jews and not the hope for all sinners who become authentic believers to acquire eternal life.

cf. [Jeremiah 16:15](#) but, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.’ For I will restore them (יְשׁוּבָהּ) (καὶ ἀποκαταστήσω αὐτούς) to their own land which I gave to their fathers.

cf. [Malachi 4:6](#) “He will restore (יְשׁוּבָהּ) (ἀποκαταστήσει) the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.” I.e., God will restore the kind of heart that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had to their descendants who will all become authentic believers in the millennial kingdom.

² προσήλυτοι from *pros* and *eleusis* (ἐλευσις) = coming to, i.e., those who have come to Judaism from paganism and are proselytes.

³ However, Joel is speaking specifically of the time just before the return of the Messiah and the restoring of the Kingdom of Israel by Jesus. Therefore, Peter is saying that this is very much like what will happen at the end of the present realm when Jesus returns, thus demonstrating that God is fully intending to fulfill His promise to the Jews to change their hearts en masse and make of them a great nation according to Genesis 12:1-3.

⁴ As in Joel, “flesh” refers to only the Jewish people who will live on the land of Israel under the rule of the Messiah Jesus as believers in him and as his submissive subjects. God will change their hearts so that they finally become the inwardly committed people that He always wanted and commanded them to be (cf. Deuteronomy 10:16 and Deuteronomy 30).

⁵ God’s slaves are the Jews, His chosen people, whose hearts He will change by means of His Spirit.

⁶ Because these warning signs do not take place until the very last days before Jesus’ return, and because they were not occurring in Peter’s day, we know that he is saying that God’s changing the hearts of the disciples in the upper room and causing them to speak in foreign languages is an indication that God is fully intending to complete His promises to Abraham’s descendants, the Jewish people. Basically the process has started, and it will culminate when Jesus returns. Therefore, what a special thing it is when any Jew between the first and second comings of Jesus becomes an authentic follower of Jesus as the Messiah. It is further evidence that God is continuing the process of restoring the Kingdom of Israel on that land with Jews who are fully committed to Him and Jesus as their king and priest.

⁷ Here is where Peter really wants to arrive in the quote from Joel 2:28-32, that it is vital that Jews “call on the name of Yahweh” in order to be saved from His wrath and condemnation during the great and remarkable Day of Yahweh, so that he can go on to explain that belief in Jesus as the Messiah is how this is accomplished, which is being demonstrated by the disciples speaking in foreign languages which they do not know.

⁸ Either by their own personal observing of Jesus’ performing miracles or through hearing the stories circulating in Jerusalem and the rest of the land of Israel about Jesus, all these people to whom Peter is speaking, whether actual inhabitants of Jerusalem or visitors from other parts of the Roman Empire during this Feast of Pentecost, are familiar with God’s having demonstrated Jesus as the Messiah through the miracles which He caused through his words and actions. They were acting as God determined they do so for His eternal purposes.

⁹ God is in control of His story which features Jesus as the main character, and Peter knows that at least some of these people encouraged the Jewish leadership and Romans to crucify him, because they were people of unchanged hearts at the time.

¹⁰ The impossibility of Jesus’ remaining dead is not because he was God, but because David wrote in Psalm 16 that his descendant, the Holy One of God, would not experience the decomposition of his physical body after he died. Thus, God obligated Himself to raise Jesus from the dead by having David write Psalm 16 to this effect as part of the inerrant scriptures.

¹¹ The Expositor’s Bible Commentary attributes the Psalm either to someone living during the time of David’s reign or to David himself and as speaking of the Psalmist’s experience during a time of peace. This includes his being in the presence of God in some sense once he dies — “David, to whom the psalm is attributed, died; but we are confident that in his death he, too, enjoyed the presence of God in some special sense. For Peter and Paul the text spoke of the resurrection. They appropriately argued that since David died and did not rise from the grave, the psalm received a special significance in view of Jesus’ death and resurrection.” But this comment by the EBC does not make sense. The better interpretation is that David realized that either the Messiah would never die and go on living forever or that he would die and his body resurrected soon after his death. In both cases, the body of the Messiah would not dissolve or decompose. It would remain intact and be resurrected by God.

However, in light of Peter’s statements in 2:29-32, it makes even more sense that David was aware of both the Messiah’s death and his resurrection, and it was exactly these which he was predicting in the Psalm 16. This also means

that it makes the most sense to attribute to Jesus the Messiah everything that David says about the subject of the psalm in its entirety.

¹² In BDAG, διαφθορά = the condition or state of rotting or decay and is the word from a direct quote in the LXX of Psalm 16:10 where the Hebrew is תִּתְּנֵנִי לַפִּיטָה = to see the pit, where “pit” comes from the verb meaning become ruined or spoiled. While it is possible that the psalmist is not referring to actual body decay after death, Peter’s interpretation presented in 2:29-32 would indicate that he is. It is not just that the Holy One (τὸν ὁσιόν) does not end up in the spatial location of Hades (as the first line of Psalm 16:10 could be saying), but that his body does not decompose after he dies—in line with Peter’s comments in 2:31, “he foresaw and spoke concerning the resurrection of the Messiah, that he would neither be abandoned to Hades, nor his flesh see decay.”

¹³ This is the first use in Acts of the noun παρρησία (4:13,29,31; 28:31). Along with the verb παρρησιάζομαι in 9:27,28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26, the meaning is openness to speak with boldness what one confidently believes is true. Acts 28:31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness (μετὰ πάσης **παρρησίας**), unhindered.

Contrary to the common understanding within modern Christianity that people die and immediately go to heaven, Peter is saying that David is still dead. Therefore, when David says that he speaks in Psalm 16:10 of God’s not allowing His Holy One’s body to decompose, he cannot be talking about himself. He must be talking about Jesus who is raised from the dead three days after his death. David “foresaw” this.

¹⁴ προφήτης οὖν ὑπάρχων καὶ εἰδὼς ὅτι ὅρκῳ ὤμοσεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς ἐκ καρποῦ τῆς ὀσφύος αὐτοῦ ἵ καθίσει ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον αὐτοῦ –

cf. **Psa. 132:11** The LORD has sworn to David (ὅρκῳ ὤμοσεν αὐτῷ ὁ Θεός) a truth from which He will not turn back; of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne (ἐκ καρποῦ τῆς ὀσφύος αὐτοῦ τὸ κατὰ σάρκα ἀναστήσει τὸν Χριστόν, καθίσει ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου αὐτοῦ).

cf. **Psa. 89:3** “I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, **4** I will establish your seed forever and build up your throne to all generations.”

cf. **Psa. 89:35** “Once I have sworn by My holiness I will not lie to David, **36** his descendants shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before Me. **37** It shall be established forever like the moon, and the witness in the sky is faithful.” David got the impression not only that God was promising him descendants who would keep his throne of ruling over Israel in existence into perpetuity, but also that He was guaranteeing this by means of an oath which He swore to this effect. Thus, we know that God has sworn two oaths, or one oath with two parts, 1) that the Messiah would rule forever on David’s throne (cf. Psalm 132:11), and 2) that the Messiah would be a High Priest for the people according to the order of Melchizedek (cf. Psalm 110:4). It is interesting that both the oaths were made in the connection with David, the first Son of God (cf. Psalm 89) and the person to whom made His covenant of continuing David’s line as kings of Israel.

¹⁵ Here is Peter’s interpretation of Psalm 16:10, that David as a spokesman for God and with foresight provided by God spoke directly of the Messiah’s death and resurrection.

cf. Paul in Acts 13:34-37, **34** “As for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: ‘I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY AND SURE blessings OF DAVID.’ **35** “Therefore He also says in another Psalm, ‘YOU WILL NOT ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.’ **36** “For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay; **37** but He whom God raised did not undergo decay.”

¹⁶ Metaphorically, Jesus within the creation sits at the right hand of God the Father who exists outside the creation, thus making Jesus God’s proxy and fellow ruler within the creation. From this position, Jesus participates with the Father in sending the Holy Spirit to work in people’s hearts and beings, even to the extent that they speak about God in foreign languages that they have never learned, as has just occurred among the disciples with Peter.

¹⁷ Peter quotes Psalm 110:1 where David knows that Yahweh, the transcendent Creator, has said to his own Lord, one of his descendants who will rule over him in the eternal Kingdom of God after He has destroyed all his enemies within the created realm. Thus, Jesus metaphorically continues in a position of being God’s proxy without actually ruling until the time when these enemies are eliminated. These enemies will be the Man of Lawlessness and his army who invade the land of Israel just prior to Jesus’ return.

Furthermore, it is not David who is alive at the right hand of God, because he is still dead. Instead, it is Jesus who is.

¹⁸ The people listening to Peter must acknowledge that some of them at least played a role in encouraging the Jewish leadership and the Romans to execute Jesus. Nevertheless, God has demonstrated by raising Jesus from the dead that he has qualified to be David’s Lord and Messiah (=anointed King).

¹⁹ Because of Peter’s later experience with Cornelius and his family in Acts 10, along with Peter’s specific statement in 10:34,35, “On the basis of truth, I have reached the conclusion that God does not show favoritism. **10:35** Instead, the one who fears Him and performs righteousness in every nation is acceptable to Him,” Peter must be referring to only Jews when he says, “and all those who are far off,” i.e., all those who are part of the Jewish dispersion in Asia, etc. outside of the land of Israel. Peter does not expand the horizons of authentic believers in Jesus to include the Gentiles who are not obligated to the Mosaic Covenant until after and as a result of his experience with Cornelius and his household in Acts 10.

Perhaps he is thinking that there will be Gentiles who will become believers, because certainly there were proselytes

(προσήλυτοι from *pros* and *eleusis* = coming to) who were listening to this first sermon of his. But his thought process was still that Gentiles would observe Jews who were not only following the MC but also believing in Jesus and become so attracted to their complete religion of both the MC and the NC that they would want to join the Jews and do both likewise, obligating themselves to the MC and also believing in Jesus according to the NC.

²⁰ Peter is calling the present Jewish generation a perverted one, seemingly contradicting his statement in 2:16 to the effect that the simultaneous conversion of three thousand Jews constitutes a “fulfillment” of Joel’s prophecy that God would convert all the Jews at some point in their future. Instead of this being a contradiction, it substantiates the interpretation that Peter is only saying of Joel that what is happening before his eyes on Pentecost in Jerusalem is like what God will later do according to Joel, and that it is significant enough, i.e., 3,000 plus Jews becoming authentic believers all at once (cf. 2:47), that he feels comfortable connecting this phenomenon, at least loosely, to Joel’s prophecy.

²¹ Adding to the three thousand who had already become believers through Peter’s first sermon.

²² It would be helpful to know how much time has elapsed since the events of Acts 2, but too difficult to say. Probably not more than a few weeks at the most (?).

²³ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Ναζωραίου – of Jesus the Messiah of Nazareth – interesting way of identifying him

²⁴ τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν – another interesting way of identifying Jesus, using the word παῖς (used 24x in NT to refer to children and servants). Peter calls Jesus God’s servant (παῖς) in Acts 3:26, and the apostles first call David God’s servant (παῖς) in their prayer in Acts 4:25 and then call Jesus His servant (παῖς) in the same prayer in 4:27 & 30. If παῖς is used to refer to a girl, it has the feminine definite article as in Luke 8:51,54. In Luke 1:54, Mary calls Israel God’s servant (παῖς).

God has slated Jesus for the glory or ruling the Kingdom of God, both the restored Kingdom of Israel and the following eternal kingdom on the new earth. But his glory actually began when God raised him from the dead as Peter will emphasize in v. 15.

Pilate, the Roman governor, had found Jesus innocent of any charge worthy of death. But the Jews insisted that he be crucified.

²⁵ Probably “Holy” here is a title that Peter is assigning to Jesus as the most special and set apart one by God for His eternal plans and purposes of fulfilling His promise to Abraham of making his descendants a “great nation” and providing eternal life to all authentic believers in Him. This title is in conjunction with the “Righteous One.”

The Righteous One (δικαῖον) is a title that most likely comes from [Isaiah 53:11](#), “As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the **Righteous One**, My Servant (צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי מִלְּרַבִּיּוֹת), will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. Cf. 1 John 2:1, My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν δίκαιον) [Righteous One].

(δικαιῶσαι δίκαιον εἰς δουλεύοντα πολλοῖς), will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. Cf. 1 John 2:1, My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν δίκαιον) [Righteous One].

cf. [Acts 7:52](#) “Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the **Righteous One** (περὶ τῆς ἐλεύσεως τοῦ δικαίου), whose betrayers and murderers you have now become.”

cf. [Acts 22:14](#) “And he said, ‘The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will and to see the **Righteous One** (τὸν δίκαιον) and to hear an utterance from His mouth.’”

cf. [1 John 2:1](#) My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (δικαῖον) [Righteous One?].

²⁶ Peter also calls Jesus the leader of life (τὸν δὲ ἀρχηγὸν τῆς ζωῆς), an interesting reference to his being the one who leads people to eternal life because they embrace him as the Jewish Messiah and advocate before God as their judge. This was probably a common term in that culture even though it is used only 4x in the NT. In the midst of Jews who are worshiping God at the temple, it makes sense that Peter calls Jesus the “leader of life,” i.e., the one who leads people to eternal life, in contrast to their belief that Moses through the Mosaic Covenant leads them to life. Maybe the Messiah rescues them from their earthly enemies, but certainly it remains Moses who continues leading them to the Messiah and to eternal life through their obedience to the Mosaic Covenant.

Peter provides the interesting juxtaposition of Jesus as the one who leads people into eternal life by suffering death on the cross. We would wonder why God has made the story this way, but it certainly highlights what sinners deserve and then what they can acquire through the death of Jesus—and his resurrection.

[Acts 5:31](#) He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior (ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα), to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

[Hebrews 2:10](#) For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect [bring to the completion of his role on earth] the author of their salvation (τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν) through sufferings.

[Hebrews 12:2](#) fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author [leader] and perfecter [finisher] of faith (ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν), who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

²⁷ Peter must be talking about his belief as an apostle that God would verify his authority and the truth of his message by healing this man—for the sake of verifying Jesus’ role and status as the Messiah of Israel from God.

²⁸ Here “your rulers” (οἱ ἄρχοντες ὑμῶν) involve a different word from leader (ἀρχηγός) above. Peter is not saying that the people are innocent in their insisting Jesus be crucified, but that they clearly did not understand the OT and Jesus who fit its predictions. So now that he is explaining clearly to them what the connection between Jesus and the OT is, they have the opportunity to abandon not only their ignorance, but also their hostility towards God and believe the truth for the sake of their own salvation and eternal life.

²⁹ For example, Isaiah 53.

³⁰ Cf. [Psalm 51:1](#) Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions (עֲשֵׂה נֶחֱמָה לִּי יְיָ) (ἐξάλειψον τὸ ἀνόμημά μου). Thus, Peter’s listeners would be familiar with this language as it pertained to Jesus’ ancestor David himself when he sought eternal forgiveness from God for his adultery and murder.

³¹ These seasons of revival from the “face” of the Lord (καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου) are most likely for the Jews during the millennial kingdom and the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. Then Peter goes on to explain further that this will happen when God “sends you the appointed (literally “hand-picked beforehand”) Messiah, Jesus” (καὶ ἀποστείλῃ τὸν προκεχειρισμένον ὑμῖν ἡριστὸν Ἰησοῦν).

Here is the only use of ἀνάψυξις in the NT. It is used once in the LXX – [Exodus 8:15](#) But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief (הִתְחַיַּיֵּץ) (ἀνάψυξις), he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

But maybe Peter is referring to the hope for the Jews of eventually participating in the millennial kingdom. That this would be reviving and refreshing for them over and over as they reminded themselves of the certain destiny of God’s fulfilling His promise to Abraham of making them a great nation.

³² Peter further explains that Jesus’ return [for the purpose of bringing about the “seasons of revival”?] for the Jews will involve the “restoration of all things about which God spoke through the mouth of His set apart prophets from the age (ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων ὧν ἐλάλησεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ στόματος τῶν ἁγίων ἁπ’ αἰῶνος αὐτοῦ προφητῶν),” i.e., the continuation of the Davidic Kingdom as foretold by prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others.

See the notes at [Acts 1:6](#) So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring (ἀποκαθιστάνεις) the kingdom to Israel?”

³³ Peter, like Stephen in Acts 7, leans heavily on Moses’ statement regarding the new prophet who will be like him and the importance of following him just as the Israelites should have and to a degree did follow Moses. To disobey Moses and the Mosaic Covenant was to rebel against God and lose one’s place in the nation of Israel. The same will be true of Jews who disobey Jesus. See v. 23 here.

³⁴ ἔσται δὲ πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἣτις ἐὰν μὴ ἀκούσῃ τοῦ προφήτου ἐκείνου ἐξολεθρευθήσεται ἐκ τοῦ λαοῦ – Genesis 17:14, But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person will be cut off from his people (וְהָיָה כָּרְחָל בְּעַמִּי הַזֶּה) (ἐξολεθρευθήσεται ἡ ψυχὴ ἐκείνη ἐκ τοῦ γένους αὐτῆς). He has broken My Covenant.

But to lose one’s place in the Kingdom of Israel is also to lose one’s place in the eternal Kingdom of God.

³⁵ “These days” I assume to be the days of Jesus’ first and second appearances and everything in between that will culminate in God’s fulfilling His promise to Abraham to make his descendants a “great nation.”

³⁶ As stated above, Peter is probably interpreting God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 to the effect that Gentiles will become attracted to Jews who are properly following the Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant so that they will want to join the Jews and follow both covenants in the same way—thus obtaining the blessing of Abraham of eternal life (not the millennial kingdom per se for the Jews). Peter has not figured out yet that the Gentiles believers in Jesus will not be obligated at all to the MC with the result that a Jewish believer’s love for his Gentile neighbor (fellow believer) is more important than keeping the MC and remaining kosher.

[Deuteronomy 4:5](#) “See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. [4:6](#) “So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’” This statement by Moses shows that God’s purpose for the Jews was for them to be evangelists to the rest of the world on His behalf to attract them to Him as bona fide believers like the Jews. But they have failed miserably at this responsibility and will fulfill it only when God brings about the millennial kingdom of Revelation 20.

³⁷ Coherence – you as Jews are the first “family” to be blessed with belief and the promise eternal life and will followed by the families of the Gentiles. Thus, the blessing begins with God’s changing their hearts so that they repent of their sins in a genuine manner and believe in Jesus as their mediator of mercy in order to acquire eternal salvation and life (cf. [Acts 20:21](#) bearing witness with seriousness to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and belief in our Lord Jesus the Messiah).

This is what Paul means in Romans by the phrase “for the Jew first and also the Greek” (cf. Romans 1:16; 2:9,10; 3:29; 10:12)

³⁸ This is the first recorded direct confrontation between the Jewish leadership (the first appearance of the “Beast” after Jesus’ ascension) and the Christians. There will be two more, one in Acts 5 that involves all the apostles and one in Acts 7 that involves only Stephen, while this one involves only Peter and John.

³⁹ Assuming this is five thousand more, then the number of Christians in Jerusalem has grown to maybe 10,000 or even double this number if τῶν ἀνδρῶν is referring to only men as it does in the gospel accounts of the feeding of the five thousand.

⁴⁰ Here rulers (οἱ ἄρχοντες) is a different word from leader (ἀρχηγός) above. Peter uses the same word in 4:8.

⁴¹ The first direct accusation by the Christians of the crime of the Jewish leaders, that they murdered to Messiah. But God raised him from the dead.

⁴² Again, Peter may be referring mainly to the salvation of the nation of Israel from their enemies which would include salvation from God's eternal condemnation for the purpose of eternal life.

⁴³ This first encounter between the Jewish leadership and the Christians results in no physical repercussions towards them. This will not be the case in the next two of chapters 5 & 7.

⁴⁴ οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἦραν φωνὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ εἶπαν· δέσποτα, σὺ ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς. — Exodus 20:11, "For in six days Yahweh made heavens and the earth, the sea and all the things which are in them (LXX – ἐν γὰρ ἑξ ἡμέραις ἐποίησεν κύριος τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς). And He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, Yahweh blessed the Sabbath, and He set it apart."

The beginning of the apostles' theology is God as the Creator who rules as a "despot" (δέσποτα) over all that He has made. But I think they are talking about more than what Exodus 20:11 is probably addressing. They consider God to be the Author of all material and the sequence of events of the creation. They are thinking as idealists and not as materialists.

cf. [Nehemiah 9:6](#) You are Yahweh, even you alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them, and you preserve them all; and the host of heaven worships you.

cf. [Revelation 4:11](#) "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created (ὅτι σὺ ἔκτισας τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ τὸ θέλημά σου εἰσὶ (ἦσαν) καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν)." "Are" makes more sense than "were," i.e., that everything is exactly as it is supposed to be according to God's desire and plan.

cf. [Revelation 10:5](#) Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT, that there will be delay no longer, 7 but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets.

⁴⁵ ὁ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου στόματος Δαυὶδ παιδὸς σου εἰπόν· ἵνα τί ἐφρόνουν ἔθνη καὶ λαοὶ ἐμελέτησαν κενά — Psalm 2:1, "Why are the nations worked up and the peoples meditating on futility (ἵνα τί ἐφρόνουν ἔθνη καὶ λαοὶ ἐμελέτησαν κενά)?"

⁴⁶ παρέστησαν οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ — Psalm 2:2, "The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers counsel together against Yahweh and against His anointed one (παρέστησαν οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ)."

In the light of recent events, not only Jesus' own death at the hands of his enemies but also Peter and John's arrest and short imprisonment because of their promoting Jesus publicly as the Messiah, the apostles reflect on what David wrote in Psalm 2 in regard to how unbelievers will oppose God and His Messiah, the king of Israel.

⁴⁷ συνήχθησαν γὰρ ἐπ' ἀληθείας ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ ἐπὶ τὸν ἅγιον παῖδά σου Ἰησοῦν ὃν ἔχρισας, Ἡρώδης τε καὶ Πόντιος Πιλάτος σὺν ἔθνεσιν καὶ ἴλαοις Ἰσραὴλ — The irony is that while the parallelism of Psalm 2:1 leads in the direction of it being only the Gentile peoples who are referred to as opposing God and His Messiah, the apostles point out that it is the peoples of Israel who participate in this. The very people who ought to embrace the king whom God has sent reject him. This is unexpected unless we take into account how much the Jews rebelled against God in the OT. The "Gentiles" probably refer to the powers of Rome as represented by not only Herod and Pontius Pilate, but also the Roman soldiers who crucify Jesus.

⁴⁸ ποιῆσαι ὅσα ἡ χεὶρ σου καὶ ἡ βουλή σου προώρτισεν γενέσθαι —

⁴⁹ καὶ τὰ νῦν, κύριε, ἔπιδε ἐπὶ τὰς ἀπειλὰς αὐτῶν καὶ δὸς τοῖς δούλοις σου μετὰ παρρησίας πάσης λαλεῖν τὸν λόγον σου —

⁵⁰ ἐν τῷ ἔτιν χεῖρά σου ἐκτείνειν σε εἰς ἵαριν καὶ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα γίνεσθαι διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ ἁγίου παιδὸς σου Ἰησοῦ —

⁵¹ καὶ δεθέντων αὐτῶν ἐσαλεύθη ὁ τόπος ἐν ᾧ ἦσαν συνηγμένοι, καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν ἅπαντες τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος καὶ ἐλάλουν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ μετὰ παρρησίας —

⁵² The issue here is that Ananias and Sapphira have not taken into account all of reality—that they exist and are making their decisions in life in the presence of not only human beings but also a transcendent Creator who sees all reality at every moment and is even sovereignly orchestrating all reality according to His eternal plans and purposes. As a result, they actually think that they can hide their thoughts and actions from God, thus "lying" to the Holy Spirit, i.e., to God. In this way, the arch-lier within the creation, has somehow injected the lie of being able to hide thoughts and actions from God into Ananias and Sapphira, either through the culture to which they have been listening or within them

individually, and they have bought the lie in its entirety. The point is that we should always consider that our thoughts, words, and actions are things which we perform in the presence of God and for which we are accountable. And if we are intentionally thinking, speaking, and doing what is right, then this is good. But if we are intentionally thinking, speaking, and doing what is wrong, even trying to lie to God or hide from Him our existential decisions, then this is evil and worthy of His condemnation and of appropriate repentance from us. Not to repent and confess our sin of this type is to deny Jesus' death and its significance. To repent is to throw ourselves on the mercy of God and employ our understanding of Jesus in the right manner. In other words, we cannot expect ourselves to think, speak, and act perfectly, but we should welcome our internal urging, which comes from the Spirit of God, to repent of our sin and pursue goodness and morality in imitation of Jesus and God.

The word "intentionally" in the above paragraph is key, because even Jesus had thoughts that were in contrast to what God intended and desired for him and his life. The prime example is when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane regarding the possibility of his not having to be suffer crucifixion the next day. These thoughts were not evil on his part. They were normal for any human being. Thus, he did not intend to defy God's plans and purposes for him. He merely entertained as a possibility an option for those plans. But, in the final analysis, Jesus intentionally continued to choose to obey God and do what was good and right with his thoughts, words, and actions as demonstrated by the subsequent events that led to his dying on the cross.

Therefore, we need to be disturbed by normal, human thoughts that are even immoral—thoughts and even feelings that are initially contrary to God's moral commandments. It is what we then do with them that is important to our moral status at the moment. Do we intentionally pursue them further, when we know that they will lead us into sin if we act upon them? Or do we bring them before God as Jesus did and confess that further pursuit would be wrong, so that we seek God's help in thinking, speaking, and acting differently from them? The latter is what Jesus did perfectly! We will have to be content in this realm to imitate him rather imperfectly and even be unsuccessful in doing so, because we lack all that is required to keep ourselves from sinning. It is to this extent and degree that we are dependent on God as the sovereign ruler of all reality.

It more likely that Peter is saying that this married couple have been the sole target of this lie from Satan, just as what must have been the case with Peter himself when he tried to convince Jesus that he would not have to suffer (cf. Matthew 16:23). This individual attention by Satan was also the situation with Judas when Satan "entered" him (εἰσῆλθεν εἰς Ἰούδαν) as recorded in Luke 22:3 and then in regard to Peter again in Luke 22:31 (**Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat.**).

Cf. **John 13:27** After the morsel, **Satan** then entered into him [Judas] (εἰσῆλθεν εἰς ἐκεῖνον). Therefore Jesus said to him, **"What you do, do quickly."**

⁵³ Then God chooses to make an example of both Ananias and Sapphira as to how observant of all reality He is and how accountable to Him human beings are for their thoughts, words, and actions. Even this lie of the couple deserves death. The least amount of rebellion and not taking Him seriously as the morally perfect God and Judge deserves His condemnation and death. And so God demonstrates this simple but profound truth. No wonder Paul urges the Philippians to "work out their salvation with fear and trembling because God is a work within them to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12,13). This is both comforting and a bit frightening. My life, indeed my choices, are under God's complete sovereign control, which I cannot escape!! Therefore, I really must trust God to get me to the eternal Kingdom of God with both my good choices and by evil choices, my righteousness and my sin. And nothing will be able to stop Him from doing so.

⁵⁴ Another reference to the growing number of believers in Jesus as the Messiah, thus increasing the number to beyond 10,000 in Jerusalem (?). God was definitely at work among the Jews, but then He seemed to stop as evidenced by the rest of Christian history. As a result, we are waiting for Jesus' return when God will once again work much more effectively among the Jews when they all are changed inwardly for the millennial kingdom.

⁵⁵ The second direct confrontation between the Jewish leadership and the Christians, this time involving all the apostles and with some physical repercussions towards them.

⁵⁶ The second direct accusation of the Jewish leaders that they murdered the Messiah.

⁵⁷ Immediately the apostles follow up their accusation of the Jewish leaders with the statement that God raised Jesus from the dead. This is the second use by them of ἀρχηγός = leader to refer to Jesus. (See notes at Acts 3:15.) Then they combine it with σωτήρ = savior, champion. They are referring to Jesus' being Israel's champion to lead them into the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel—as evidenced by their referring to the forgiveness of sins **to Israel**.

⁵⁸ Now the reaction is one of intent to kill the apostles. But Gamaliel steps in and prevents this from happen. Nevertheless, there will be a physical repercussion of the apostles' being flogged by the Jewish leaders.

⁵⁹ Probably Luke references Gamaliel by name because he will quote Paul as referring to him as his rabbi who basically misled him in understanding the Old Testament when he presents his defense before the Jews who think that he has desecrated the temple by bringing a Gentile into it. Notice that Luke identifies him as a teacher of the Torah and respected by all the people of Israel, the Jews.

Acts 22:3 I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today.

These are the only references to Gamaliel in the NT.

⁶⁰ Gamaliel is acting as a wise, upright man who believes in justice even if he is not believing in Jesus as the Messiah.

- ⁶¹ Gamaliel's point simply is that if God is not causing something permanent to occur through this movement of "the Way," then it will die off as a result of the death of its leader just as these other two movements did.
- ⁶² So even more inward work by God to cause more Jews to become believers. Remarkable growth in numbers of the Christian community in Jerusalem at that time.
- ⁶³ Probably Stephen had claimed that Jesus had predicted the destruction of the temple, saying this publicly and openly. But certainly he had not stated that Jesus himself would destroy it, although he may have alluded to God's destroying it as part of His judgment of the Jews. No doubt this would be disconcerting to Jewish unbelievers and they could easily misrepresent what Stephen had said.
- ⁶⁴ Now Stephen is going to allude to the similarities and differences between Moses with his situation and Jesus with his situation.
- ⁶⁵ In the same way, the Jews of Jesus' day should have understood by his claims to be the Messiah and the miracles that credentialed him that he was going to grant them deliverance from their enemies through his hand.
- ⁶⁶ τίς σε κατέστησεν ἄρχοντα καὶ δικαστὴν ἐφ' ἡμῶν – In other words, the Jews rejected Moses just as they rejected Jesus. Are the Sanhedrin hearing what Stephen is trying to tell them?
- ⁶⁷ And Stephen is trying to communicate to the Sanhedrin that God sent Jesus to Israel to deliver them in the midst of their suffering under the oppression of the Romans just as He sent Moses to the Jews in Egypt.
- ⁶⁸ And Jesus is ruler and redeemer with the "hand of the *angelos*" of God, this is to say with the powerful work of the Yahweh, to save Israel from their enemies, starting with the Romans.
- ⁶⁹ And God performed miracles through Moses to credential his authority, meaning that Stephen is staying that the same occurred with Jesus. Here we have Stephen's way of claiming that the Messiah, when he appeared, would manifest his identity by performing miracles.
- ⁷⁰ Moses predicted the coming of a similar prophet to him, indeed the Messiah, who would be miracle worker, ruler, and redeemer of Israel—permanently!!
- ⁷¹ Similarly, Jesus received the instruction of God to present to the Jews of his generation, if they would be willing to listen to what he had to say and embrace the truth.
- ⁷² But again, the people of Israel rejected Moses and his leadership. They turned their hearts back to Egypt and rejected God's plans and purpose for them through Moses and his leadership. And Stephen is hinting strongly that the present Jewish leadership have done the same with Jesus. It is as though they have turned their hearts back to Egypt, which is to say to a manner of living that does not involve God's plans and purposes for them through Jesus.
- ⁷³ Now Stephen addresses another specific issue—what exactly are the Jewish leadership worshiping and what brings joy to their hearts and minds? Is it God and God alone? Or is it what they have "made with their own hands," i.e., the temple, which they probably did not actually build themselves? Yet, they are more excited about this building and their using it for the very practical purposes of bringing offerings to God than they are about God. A subtle but deadly shift in their so-called obedience to God that on the outside looks as though it is in line with the Mosaic Covenant. However, their hearts are turned away from God.
- ⁷⁴ Just as the people turned away from God, God turned away from them and let them run with their rejection of Him as they continued worshiping the foreign gods of the Egyptians.
- ⁷⁵ Stephen is quoting from Amos 5:26 where the LXX renders the words מִלְכָּם מִלִּיכָם by τὴν σκηνὴν τοῦ Μολόχ (τῆς Μολόχ). Moloch is the Canaanite-Phoenician god of the sky and sun. His point is that the Israelites once again "rejoiced in the works of their hands" by carrying with them a portable shrine of the god Moloch. While this god was a Canaanite god, nevertheless they were still worshiping the natural elements of the sky and sun instead of their creator God, Yahweh.
- Then Stephen interprets Amos' words "I will make you go into exile beyond Damascus" in the light of what happened. The Babylonians destroyed the southern Kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem and took the people into exile to Babylon.
- ⁷⁶ In addition to the shrine of a pagan god, the Israelites also built a shrine, a portable tent, for the one true God as instructed by Him. However, Stephen is hinting at the temptation to take what even the real God commands them to do, build a portable dwelling place for Him that will eventually become a stationary "shrine," the temple in Jerusalem, and value it more than God while using it to bring their offerings to Him.
- ⁷⁷ Eventually it was Solomon who built the stationary shrine, the first temple in Jerusalem.
- ⁷⁸ In spite of God's command for the Israelites to build the portable tabernacle and then the stationary temple, He never intended them to place as much emphasis on the building and its function as they did. Stephen is subtly encouraging the Jewish leaders to examine their hearts as to whom or what they are really worshiping. It is not God, he is saying.
- ⁷⁹ Yes, the Israelites built the tabernacle and the temple with their hands. But God built the heavens and the earth with His hand. There is no comparison, but the Jewish leaders are placing way too much significance in the product of their labor. Instead, they need to forsake the temple with their hearts in comparison to the value they place on God alone.
- ⁸⁰ This the third time a Christian has accused the Sanhedrin of murdering their own Messiah. Their ancestors repudiated and killed the prophets. Now they have killed the most important prophet, Jesus the Messiah.
- ⁸¹ The Jewish leaders believe they have embraced God's Torah and are following it properly. But they are rejecting it and God instead of guarding the Torah in their hearts and minds as they should.
- ⁸² Probably it was simply God's protection of the apostles that prevented them from having to leave Jerusalem.

⁸³ While it is possible that the issue of the gift of the Holy Spirit may refer to the Samaritans having believed without the complete change of heart that comes from the inward work of the Spirit, Simon's desire to be provided with the same ability to affect people as the apostles reveals that it is about something more obvious, i.e., speaking in foreign languages. So when the apostles in Jerusalem heard about the Samaritans believing in Jesus, they were probably puzzled why their belief was not accompanied by the sign of their speaking foreign languages as it had been with them and others in Jerusalem. This then motivated them to send Peter and John to the city of Samaria to assess the situation and even pray for these new believers who are from a outcast group that would be suspect to the Jews as to the authenticity of their faith.

Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. **45** All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. **46** For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, **47** "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?" **48** And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.

⁸⁴ This shows how God wanted the Samaritan believers to understand their dependence on the Jewish apostles for a complete understanding of their new faith.

⁸⁵ ἡ δὲ περιοχή τῆς γραφῆς ἦν ἀνεγίνωσκεν ἦν αὕτη, ὡς πρόβατον ἐπὶ σφαγὴν ἤχθη, καὶ ὡς ἀμνὸς ἐναντίον τοῦ κείροντος αὐτὸν ἀφῶνος, οὕτως οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ

Isaiah 53:7, He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth, καὶ αὐτὸς διὰ τὸ κεκακῶσθαι οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα· ὡς πρόβατον ἐπὶ σφαγὴν ἤχθη καὶ ὡς ἀμνὸς ἐναντίον τοῦ κείροντος αὐτὸν ἀφῶνος οὕτως οὐκ ἀνοίγει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ

⁸⁶ ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτοῦ ἡ κρίσις αὐτοῦ ἦρθη, τὴν δὲ γενεάν αὐτοῦ τίς διηγῆσεται; ὅτι αἵρεται ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἡ ζωὴ αὐτοῦ

Isaiah 53:8, By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?

ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει ἡ κρίσις αὐτοῦ ἦρθη τὴν γενεάν αὐτοῦ τίς διηγῆσεται; ὅτι αἵρεται ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἡ ζωὴ αὐτοῦ, ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνομιῶν τοῦ λαοῦ μου ἤχθη εἰς θάνατον

It sounds as though the LXX translators mean that this person did not receive a proper judgment before his generation because his life was removed improperly from the earth, i.e., that he was killed when he did not deserve to die.

⁸⁷ Why Damascus? Why not cities in Galilee?

Similar to the use of other words in Acts, such as ἀρχηγός = leader, the phrase the Way (τῆς ὁδοῦ) was probably something common in that culture as a description of and reference to Christianity (Acts 18:25,26; 19:9,23; 22:4; **24:14,22**).

This is from the Expositor's Bible Commentary as an introduction to Acts 9 –

It is, of course, impossible today to speak with certainty about what was going on in Saul's subconscious mind at the time, for psychoanalysis two millennia or so later is hardly a fruitful exercise. His own references as a Christian to this earlier time in his life, however, do not require us to view him as struggling with uncertainty, doubt, and guilt before becoming a Christian. They rather suggest that humanly speaking he was immune to the Christian proclamation and immensely satisfied with his own ancestral faith (cf. my *Paul*, pp. 65–105). While he looked forward to the full realization of the hope of Israel, Paul seems from his reminiscences of those earlier days to have been thoroughly satisfied with the revelation of God that was given through Moses and to have counted it his chief delight to worship God through those revealed forms. Nor need we suppose that the logic of the early Christian preachers greatly affected Paul. His later references to "the offense of the cross" show that for him the cross was the great stumbling block to any acknowledgment of Jesus of Nazareth as Israel's Messiah—a stumbling block no amount of logic or verbal gymnastics could remove (cf. 1Cor 1:23; Gal 5:11; note also Justin Martyr, *Dialogue* 32, 89).

It is probable that Saul took up his brutal task of persecution with full knowledge of the earnestness of his opponents, the stamina of the martyrs, and the agony he would necessarily cause. Fanaticism was not so foreign to Palestine in his day as to leave him unaware of these things, and it is quite possible that he was prepared for the emotional strain involved in persecuting those he believed to be dangerous schismatics within Israel.

More important, however, in days when the rabbis viewed the keeping of the Mosaic law as the vitally important prerequisite for the coming of the Messianic Age (cf. b *Sanhedrin* 97b-98a; b *Baba Bathra* 10a; b *Yoma* 86b), Paul could validate his actions against the Christians by reference to such godly precedents as (1) Moses' slaying of the immoral Israelites at Baal-peor (cf. Num 25:1-5); (2) Phinehas's slaying of the Israelite man and Midianite woman in the plains of Moab (cf. Num 25:6-15); and (3) the actions of Mattathias and the Hasidim in rooting out apostasy among the people (cf. 1Macc 2:23-28, 42-48). Perhaps even the divine commendation of Phinehas's action in Numbers 25:11-13 rang in his ears:

Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites; for he was as jealous as I am for my honor among them, so that in my zeal I did not put an end to them. Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him. He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites.

2Macc 6:13 counsels that “it is a mark of great kindness when the impious are not let alone for a long time, but punished at once.”

The Dead Sea Scrolls define a righteous man as one who “bears unremitting hatred toward all men of ill repute” (1QS 9.22). They speak of unswerving allegiance to God and his laws as alone providing a firm foundation for the Holy Spirit, truth, and the arrival of Israel’s hope (cf. 1QS 9.3-4, 20-21) and call for volunteers who are blameless in spirit and body to root out apostasy in the final eschatological days (cf. 1QM 7.5; 10.2-5). The Qumran psalmist, in fact, directly associates commitment to God and his laws with zeal against apostates and perverters of the law when he says:

The nearer I draw to you, the more am I filled with zeal against all that do wickedness and against all men of deceit. For they that draw near to you cannot see your commandments defiled, and they that have knowledge of you can brook no change of your words, seeing that you are the essence of right, and all your elect are the proof of your truth (1QH 14.13-15).

With such precedents and parallels, coupled with the rising tide of messianic expectation within Israel, Saul could very well have felt justified in mounting a further persecution against the Christians. Probably he felt that in light of Israel’s rising messianic hopes the nation must be united and faithful in its obedience to the law and kept from schism or going astray. In his task, he doubtless expected to receive God’s commendation.

According to 1 Maccabees, Judah, Jonathan, and Simeon (the three great Hasmonean rulers) established friendly relations with Rome (cf. 1Macc 8:17-32; 12:1-4; 14:16-24), a reciprocal extradition clause being included in Rome’s reply to Simeon (cf. 1Macc 15:15-24). And the decrees of the Roman senate that Josephus records appear to indicate that the treaties of friendship between Rome and the Jewish people were renewed in the time of John Hyrcanus (cf. Antiq. XIII, 259-66 [ix.2]; XIV, 145-48 [viii.5]). While the Sadducean high priests of Jerusalem no longer exercised the civil authority of their predecessors, they were, it seems, recognized by Rome as the titular rulers of their people in most internal matters; and evidently they retained the right of extradition in strictly religious situations. Therefore Saul, seeking the return of Jewish Christians, “went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem” (cf. 22:5; 26:12).

Damascus was a large and thriving commercial center at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon mountain range. Since 64 B.C. it had been part of the Roman province of Syria and was granted certain civic rights by Rome as one of the ten cities of eastern Syria and the Transjordan called the Decapolis (cf. Mark 5:20; 7:31). It had a large Nabatean Arab population, and possibly was ruled by the Nabatean king Aretas IV (9 B.C.-A.D. 40) at some time during this period (cf. 2Cor 11:32). It also had a large Jewish population, 10,500 of whom Josephus reports were killed by the people of Damascus at the outbreak of Jewish-Roman hostilities in A.D. 66 (cf. War II, 561 [xx.2]; though in War VII, 368 [viii.7] the figure is 18,000). It was to this city that Saul went with the authority of the Jewish Sanhedrin, seeking to return to Jerusalem those Christians who had fled the city—chiefly the Hellenistic Jewish Christians—in order to contain the spread of what he considered to be a pernicious and deadly contagion within Israel.

While we have spoken repeatedly of the early believers in Jesus as Christians, the term “Christian” (*Christianos*) was first coined at Antioch of Syria (cf. 11:26) and appears only three times in the entire NT (11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). Before being named at Syrian Antioch and during the early existence of the church, those who accepted Jesus’ messiahship and claimed him as their Lord called themselves those of “the Way” (*he hodos*, as here and at 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22; cf. also 16:17; 18:25-26), while their opponents spoke of them as members of “the sect of the Nazarenes” (*he hairesis ton Nazoraion*; cf. 24:5, 14; 28:22). The origin of the absolute use of “the Way” for Christians is uncertain, though it surely had something to do with the early believers’ consciousness of walking in the true path of God’s salvation and moving forward to accomplish his purposes. In the vignette of Acts 9:1-30, it is synonymous with such self-designations as “the disciples of the Lord” (vv.2, 10, 19), “saints” (v.13), “all who call on your [Jesus’] name” (v.14), and “brothers” (vv.17, 30).

⁸⁸ This is the end Paul’s first visit to Damascus which includes Jesus’ appearance to him on the road and his conversion.

⁸⁹ In Galatians 1:15-17 Paul indicates that after his conversion he spent three years in Arabia and then returned to Damascus. The newly discovered information that Jesus really is the Messiah must have both disturbed and excited Paul to the point that he knew he needed to restudy the Old Testament and find out where he went wrong in his understanding of it such that he had concluded that Jesus was not the Messiah. Therefore, his time in Arabia was devoted to studying the Old Testament with God’s (Jesus’) guidance and rethinking the biblical message. When he returned to Damascus he was well prepared to argue from the scriptures for Jesus’ true identity and confound the Jews who were resisting believing that this is true (v. 22).

Therefore the *εὐθέως* does not mean “immediately” but something like “soon thereafter” where “soon” allows for a three year hiatus for Paul to spend the time he needed to restudy the Old Testament in order to understand it accurately with respect to the Messiah and his suffering.

⁹⁰ It is Paul’s three years of restudying the Old Testament with God’s guidance that has equipped him to speak so eloquently about Jesus as the Messiah and refute any argument that the Jews might try to raise against him.

⁹¹ The apostles to whom Barnabas brought Paul were only Peter and James as Paul indicates in Galatians 1:18-20.

⁹² Paul describes his leaving Jerusalem in Galatians 1:21, “Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.” He stayed in this area for probably about 8 years.

⁹³ Cohort = a tenth of a legion, which was 6,000 men. Therefore, 600 men.

⁹⁴ It sounds as though Cornelius is already a genuine believer in Yahweh. But he has not yet heard the message of God’s Messiah Jesus, and this is what God is arranging for him.

⁹⁵ καὶ ἡπαρήγγειλεν ἡμῖν κηρύξαι ὅτι τῶ λαῷ καὶ διαμαρτύρασθαι ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ὀρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κριτὴς ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν – Two options for “the living and the dead” – 1) those who are still alive at Jesus’ return and those who have died before it, or 2) those who gain eternal life through Jesus’ judgment according to what he says in John 5 and those who incur God’s wrath and destruction through Jesus’ judgment at the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20. #2 is more profound and coherent with the next verse. Jesus decides who lives eternally and who dies eternally. But there is a condition for those who live, that

And in this case, κριτὴς refers to Judge and not Ruler as in Acts 17:31.

Cf. [Heb. 12:23](#) to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge [Ruler] of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect.

Cf. [2 Timothy 4:8](#) in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge [Ruler and Judge], will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Cf. [James 5:9](#) Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged [condemned]; behold, the Judge [the One who can condemn] is standing right at the door.

⁹⁶ This is probably not God’s changing Cornelius’ heart. Maybe it is in conjunction with changing the hearts of some of his family and friends. But this is the verification of Cornelius’ and the rest of the Gentiles’ becoming open and accepting Jesus as their King and Priest by their speaking in tongues as described in the next two verses and as God credentialed the Jewish apostles and disciples as the actual people of God in Acts 2 at Pentecost. Thus, God is demonstrating that the Gentiles have become just as much the people of God as the Jews have who are authentic believers in Jesus as the Messiah.

⁹⁷ God was granting the Holy Spirit to make them the people of the God as He had done with the Jews at Pentecost.

Cf. [Acts 2:33](#) “Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth (ἐξέχεεν) this which you both see and hear.

Cf. [Acts 15:7](#) After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe [8](#) “And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us [9](#) and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.

Cf. [Romans 5:5](#) and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν).

Cf. [Titus 3:5](#) He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, [6](#) whom He poured out upon us richly (οὐ ἐξέχεεν ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς πλουσίως) through Jesus Christ our Savior, [7](#) so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

⁹⁸ This is the falling of the Holy Spirit on them and the pouring out of the Spirit on them.

⁹⁹ Peter acknowledges that God has poured out His Spirit on these Gentiles with the evidence of the speaking in tongues just as He had done in Acts 2 in regard to all the apostles and disciples gathered in the room at Pentecost.

¹⁰⁰ This is to say that these Gentiles demonstrated authentic belief in Jesus as the Messiah through their speaking in tongues, just as had occurred on Pentecost in Acts 2.

¹⁰¹ However, this does not mean that the apostles and the rest of the Jewish Christians present understood that the Gentiles have no obligation to the Mosaic Covenant. This idea does not become clear until Acts 15.

¹⁰² “And the hand of Yahweh was with them” = another reference to God’s sovereign power, rule, work, and causation within the creation as in the apostles’ prayer in Acts 4.

¹⁰³ ὃς ἡ παραγενόμενος καὶ ἰδὼν τὴν χάριν ὅτι τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐχάρη καὶ παρεκάλει πάντας τῇ προθέσει τῆς καρδίας προσμένειν ὅτι κυρίῳ – A wonderful verse that sums up the task of a Christian. Once the grace of God has operated within him to change his inwardness and cause him to believe the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah, the person must make every human effort to remain a believer by resolving in his heart, mind, and inwardness that this is what he is committing himself to do in the face of all the opposition that Satan and the world throws at him.

¹⁰⁴ It is more likely that Paul is emphasizing Jesus as Israel’s champion who will restore the Kingdom of David and free them from all their enemies, i.e., the millennial kingdom of Revelation 20. Nevertheless, this message leads to understanding also that Jesus is everyone’s champion in freeing them from God’s eternal wrath and condemnation.

¹⁰⁵ First for the sake of Israel’s becoming a great nation and second for Israel’s obtaining eternal life.

¹⁰⁶ Interesting point. The Jewish leadership could read in the OT about the suffering of their Messiah for the sake of their obtaining God’s mercy. But having read such passages, they misunderstood them and fulfilled them instead by killing the Messiah.

¹⁰⁷ The Jewish leadership did their part in fulfilling the OT passages regarding the death of the Messiah.

¹⁰⁸ Then, by raising Jesus from the dead, God started to do His part in fulfilling the OT passages regarding the Messiah's providing Israel and Gentiles with God's eternal mercy and providing Israel with a leader who will destroy their enemies and restore the Kingdom of Israel.

¹⁰⁹ This is the promise to forge Israel into the greatest nation in human history.

¹¹⁰ This Psalm is about Solomon's becoming king of Israel and destroying anyone who stands opposed to him—Jew or Gentile. Thus is foreshadows Jesus' role as doing the same.

¹¹¹ This line in Isaiah 55:3 is not about the Messiah. It is about Jews who thirst for God's mercy and His fulfilling His promise to give them a permanent king who frees them from harm from their enemies.

¹¹² This line in Psalm 16:10 is about Jesus who will be raised from the dead. Cf. Peter's comments on this in Acts 2:31.

¹¹³ Ἴδετε, οἱ καταφρονηταί, καὶ θαυμάσατε, καὶ ἀφανίσθητε· ὅτι ἔργον ἐργάζομαι ἐγὼ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ὑμῶν, ἔργον ὃ οὐ μὴ πιστεύσητε, ἐάν τις ἐκδιηγῇται ὑμῖν – Here is Habakkuk 1:5, ἴδετε, οἱ καταφρονηταί, καὶ ἐπιβλέψατε καὶ θαυμάσατε θαυμάσια καὶ ἀφανίσθητε, διότι ἔργον ἐγὼ ἐργάζομαι ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ὑμῶν, ὃ οὐ μὴ πιστεύσητε ἐάν τις ἐκδιηγῇται. Paul's point is that just as the people of the southern Kingdom of Judah mocked the prophets for predicting disaster in the light of their success, prosperity, and disobedience of the MC, he would not want the Jews of Psidian Antioch to ignore his warning of God's eternal condemnation if they reject Jesus as the Messiah. The people of Judah were even by God through Habakkuk that the Babylonians were poised to descend on them and destroy the kingdom, just as Paul has warned them of God's judgment in they ignore his telling them about Jesus.

An important lesson here. Once a person hears the truth of Jesus as Messiah, king, priest, ruler, judge, and prophet, he is accountable for this information and dare not turn his back on it or incur God's eternal condemnation.

¹¹⁴ Ἀκούοντα δὲ τὰ ἔθνη ἔχαιρον καὶ ἑδόξαζον· τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου· καὶ ἐπίστευσαν ὅσοι ἦσαν τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον – here "appointed" is the verb τάσσω.

¹¹⁵ Very important data point. Some people will reject God's truth. Some people will embrace it. And it seems that the whole data of the Bible indicates that most people will reject it.

¹¹⁶ Lycaonia is the district. Lystra and Derbe are cities.

¹¹⁷ The original outside agitators. This demonstrates how fickle human beings are. One moment the Gentile crowds want to worship Paul and Barnabas. The next moment they have become convinced by the Jews that Paul and Barnabas deserve to die, probably because the Jews argued that their message (not their miracles) would destroy their religious traditions.

¹¹⁸ Paul must have been and looked a mess after being stoned to the extent that people supposed that he had stopped breathing and was dead. But he got up, went back into the city, and continued the ministry to which God had called him—until God finally had him put to death (in Rome by tradition).

¹¹⁹ They went back to the cities where they knew there were people who hated them and wanted to kill them. Such courage and boldness by means of the Spirit of God.

¹²⁰ ἐπιστηρίζοντες τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν μαθητῶν, παρακαλοῦντες ἐμμένειν τῇ πίστει καὶ ὅτι διὰ πολλῶν θλίψεων δεῖ ἡμᾶς εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ – This is a hard truth to accept, but every authentic believer must do so.

¹²¹ This prayer with fasting was a Jewish, cultural set of practices that naturally went together for people such as Paul and Barnabas. Cf. Acts 13:3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. cf. 2Cor. 8:19 and not only this, but he has also been appointed (χειροτονηθεὶς) by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness.

¹²² Both of these are Roman provinces or districts.

¹²³ And this door has remained open to this day with more Gentiles than Jews becoming believers in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus.

¹²⁴ And they are still believing this after Cornelius and his household and friends become believers and all the Gentiles in Galatia do so also.

¹²⁵ This giving of the HS just as God gave it to the apostles in His causing Cornelius and his family and friends to speak in tongues as the way to demonstrate explicitly that they are of the same people of God as the Jewish apostles.

God probably did this in every case with Paul as he proclaimed the gospel to Gentiles on his missionary journeys, even if Luke does not mention this miracle in each and every case.

Cf. Acts 19:1 It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. 2 He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."... 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying. 7 There were in all about twelve men.

¹²⁶ Peter must mean by this that never has the entire nation of Israel kept the Mosaic Covenant as God requires for them to be the "great nation" which He promised to Abraham. This will be something that only God brings about when Jesus restores the kingdom at his return. So why burden the Gentiles with something that the Jews have not been able to accomplish? And this is especially true when they consider that it is the combination of Jesus and God's grace that producing salvation, not the Mosaic Covenant.

¹²⁷ As James goes on to indicate, he interprets the restoration of the Davidic Kingdom as something that does not require the Gentiles who believe in the Davidic king, Jesus, to obey the national, Jewish covenant given by God

through Moses at Mt. Sinai. The last part of this verse is added by James to emphasize that these concepts have been revealed by the OT for a long time and should not surprise anyone who thoughtfully considers them.

¹²⁸ James is encouraging the Gentiles that they have no moral obligation to follow the Mosaic Covenant as the Jews have a national obligation to do so. But the Gentiles should be sensitive to their Jewish Christian brothers by avoiding pagan, sacrificial foods that violate the Mosaic Covenant particularly by including the blood of the animal as part of the food.

Lev. 3:17 'It is a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings: you shall not eat any fat or any blood.' Cf. Lev. 7:26. Cf. **Lev. 17:14** 'For as for the life of all flesh, its blood is identified with its life. Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, 'You are not to eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off.'"

¹²⁹ μετὰ δέ τινας ἡμέρας εἶπεν πρὸς Βαρναβᾶν Παῦλος· ἐπιστρέψαντες δὴ ἐπισκεψώμεθα τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς κατὰ πόλιν πᾶσαν ἐν αἷς κατηγγείλαμεν τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου πῶς ἔχουσιν – cf. **Gen. 43:27** Then he asked them about their welfare (מִן־שְׁלָמֶיךָ מִן־שְׁלָמֶיךָ) (ἠρώτησεν δὲ αὐτοὺς Πῶς ἔχετε), and said, "Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?"

¹³⁰ This is the first time that Luke includes himself in the story with the "we."

¹³¹ κάκειθεν εἰς Φιλίππους, ἧτις ἐστὶν 'πρώτης] μερίδος τῆς' Μακεδονίας πόλις, κολωνία. Ἐμμεν δὲ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ πόλει διατρίβοντες ἡμέρας τινάς – κολωνία = a city or town outside Italy whose inhabitants enjoyed special political privileges (BDAG).

¹³² καὶ τις γυνὴ ὀνόματι Λυδία, πορφυρόπωλις πόλεως Θυατείρων σεβομένη τὸν ἑθόν, ἤκουεν, ἧς ὁ κύριος διήνοιξεν τὴν καρδίαν προσέχειν τοῖς λαλουμένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ Παύλου – This is an instance where the new believer's speaking in tongues is not mentioned.

¹³³ It is more than likely that Lydia is a Gentile, and yet Paul and his Jewish (and Greek) companions freely choose to stay with her and her family.

¹³⁴ Διοδεύσαντες δὲ τὴν Ἀμφίπολιν καὶ τὴν Ἀπολλωνίαν ἦλθον εἰς Θεσσαλονίκην ὅπου ἦν συναγωγὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων – We know that Paul is being accompanied by at least Silas and Timothy. But there must be others with them because Paul says in **1 Thessalonians 3:1** Therefore when we could endure it no longer, we thought it best to be left at Athens alone, **2** and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith.

The "we" of **1 Thessalonians 3:1** probably includes Luke and even some other unnamed coworkers, because Acts 17:14 says that Silas and Timothy remained in Berea when Paul had to flee to Athens. And then Acts 18:5 says that "Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia" to join Paul in Corinth. To make sense of all the details, the sequence of events must have been this –

- 1) Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke, and others came to Thessalonica and then fled to Berea.
- 2) Paul, Luke, and others fled to Athens, leaving at least Silas and Timothy in Berea.
- 3) Paul from Athens sends word to Timothy to return to Thessalonica and encourage the Christians there, while Silas probably remains in Berea. This leaves Paul, Luke, and the others "alone" in Athens.
- 4) Paul, Luke, and the others leave Athens and travel to Corinth.
- 5) Timothy finishes his assignment in Thessalonica, travels to Berea where he meets up with Silas to continue his journey, and the two together rejoin Paul in Corinth.

¹³⁵ ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιήσας τὸν κόσμον καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, οὗτος οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὑπάρχων κύριος οὐκ ἐν χειροποιήτοις ναοῖς κατοικεῖ – Options for "all things in it" – 1) every rock, tree, star, galaxy, etc., i.e., all material things, 2) every material, emotional, intellectual, spiritual thing and thing of the will of every living creature, i.e., every detail of the story of the creation that God is bringing about as its author.

"Lord of heaven and earth" = ruler and master of all material things and events that involve them—the author of the story of creation

"Does not dwell...hands" – cannot be contained in or confined to any building that man has constructed.

¹³⁶ οὐδὲ ὑπὸ χειρῶν ἀνθρωπίνων θεραπεύεται προσδεόμενός 'τινος, αὐτὸς διδοὺς' πᾶσιν ζωὴν καὶ πνοὴν καὶ τὰ πάντα – God gives life = these options – 1) strictly viability (the ability of a thing to maintain itself alive) and existence (the state of living), 2) existence as determined by God so that every detail of it is caused by God.

God gives breath = these options – 1) the ability to take in air into our lungs by exercising our diaphragms, 2) the authorial causation of a "living" organism such as us human beings to perform the action of breathing as the author's way of making human beings exist in his story. Cf. **Genesis 2:7** Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (ἐνεφύσησεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοὴν ζωῆς); and man became a living being.

God gives all things = these options – 1) everything that a human being needs from outside him to exist, 2) everything that an author writes into his story to cause a living being to exist and perform all that the author intends for this particular character in his story to accomplish for his purposes.

¹³⁷ ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἑνὸς τῶν ἔθνων ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ 'παντὸς προσώπου' τῆς γῆς, ὅρισας ἑρροσταταμένους καιροὺς 'καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας' τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν – Two options – 1) God has determined the appointed times and boundaries of each nation of people, or 2) He has determined the appointed times and boundaries of each human being within all the nations.

¹³⁸ ῥητεῖν τὸν θεόν, εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν καὶ εὗροιεν, καὶ γε ἰού μακρὰν ἀπὸ ἐνὸς ἐκάστου ῥήμων ῥύπαρχοντα – Same two options as above, either “they” = nations or “they” = individual human beings. The latter seems more coherent, especially because of the last part of the verse, “even though He is not far from each one of us.” This results in #2 as the correct option for v. 26.

¹³⁹ ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν, ὥς καὶ τινες τῶν καθ’ ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν εἰρήκασιν τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν – Notice that Paul is not saying that God is everywhere, i.e., omnipresent, which is to say that God is not in everything. Instead, everything is “in God,” in His imagination and thoughts as that have brought into existence the creation.

Therefore, in God’s desires and thoughts, we live, i.e., we are viable, existence human beings, we move, i.e., we carry out our roles within the story that God is telling, and we have our being, i.e., we exist as opposed to not existing, which is to say that our ontology is one where God has made us something and not nothing.

And all this is because God has generated us as beings, which can be said by calling us His children or offspring. We are the produce to His imagination and desire to create that which is not Him. He is a necessary being, while we are contingent (completely dependent on His causing us to exist) beings.

¹⁴⁰ καθότι ἔστησεν ἡμέραν ἣν ἡ μέλλει κρίνειν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἐν ἧ ὅρισε, πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν ἀναστήσας αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν – The verb κρίνω and the noun κριτής can refer to someone who rules and not judges per se as we use this latter term. It makes more sense in this context that Paul is referring to the Jesus’ ruling the millennial kingdom of Israel and the world at his return. He is going to do this “in righteousness,” i.e., morally perfectly and completely as no other human being or government has before.

¹⁴¹ There is a possibility that σκηνοποιοὶ refers to those who helped set up stage productions in metropolitan areas, which were in abundance at this time in the Roman Empire, perhaps especially in Greece. But does this make sense in the light of Paul and Aquila as Jews?

¹⁴² In other words, had they been confirmed as those in whom God had worked through His Spirit by their speaking about God in languages that they did not personally know?

¹⁴³ These disciples had become students of John, but not yet actually of Jesus (?).

¹⁴⁴ Δυνάμεις τε οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας ὁ θεὸς ἐποίει διὰ τῶν χειρῶν Παύλου – God was causing miraculous healings to take place as Paul touched people and touched objects that were taken to sick people. This would not be any different from the way God operated through and with Jesus, who, even as the icon of God within the creation story, was human like Paul and lacked the transcendent power himself to alter the laws of physics in order to bring about healing of illnesses.

Regarding οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας where τυγχάνω = obtain, attain, there is also [Acts 28:2](#) The natives showed us extraordinary kindness (οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν φιλανθρωπίαν); for because of the rain that had set in and because of the cold, they kindled a fire and received us all. So this phrase οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας seems to mean “that which someone cannot attain on his own” and therefore requires God or another person to perform for him.

¹⁴⁵ Ὡς δὲ ἐπληρώθη ταῦτα, ἔθετο ὁ Παῦλος ἐν τῷ πνεύματι διελθὼν τὴν Μακεδονίαν καὶ Ἀχαΐαν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα εἰπὼν ὅτι μετὰ τὸ γενέσθαι με ἐκεῖ δεῖ με καὶ Ῥώμην ἰδεῖν – To “set in the spirit” is probably like our “resolved in his mind.” This is Paul is has always wanted to visit Rome and now is committed himself to doing so. It makes sense that this is not God’s Spirit who is instructing Paul to go to Rome, because this would make his claim in Acts 21:13 to be willing to die in Jerusalem a vacuous one. This is also coherent with Acts 23:11 where God speaks to Paul and promises him that he will go to Rome. It is just that it will be at least two years before he gets there, which is why God must be stating to Paul explicitly that he will eventually make it to Rome. Thus, while Paul is in prison for two years in Caesarea Maritima (Acts 24:27), he can reflect on God’s statement to him and be encouraged that his incarceration will not last forever.

¹⁴⁶ This detail of the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread not only shows that Luke as an eyewitness of these events but also allows the reader to understand the timing of the very next events in the light of Paul’s desire stated in 20:16 that he wanted to be in Jerusalem by Pentecost, 50 or so days later.

¹⁴⁷ By both the miracle and Paul’s lengthy exhortation and teaching.

¹⁴⁸ My guess is that the reason why Luke includes so many details of Paul’s journey to Jerusalem and then on to Rome through 28:14 (“and thus we came to Rome” – καὶ οὕτως εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἦλθαμεν) is because he wants to highlight the fact that God’s moving us from point A to point B in our individual journeys through life may involve many unforeseen and difficult steps, but He will faithfully carry out His plans and desires for us, even if we are not aware of point B as Paul was, unless we want to call point B eternal life and salvation.

¹⁴⁹ Paul has resolved in his own heart to go to Rome (Acts 19:21), but he does not know yet God will make sure he gets there (Acts 23:11). In his mind, there really is a possibility that he will die in Jerusalem, if God so wills.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Numbers 6:13-20 regarding the Law of the Nazirites, [Num. 6:13](#) ‘Now this is the law of the Nazirite when the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall bring the offering to the doorway of the tent of meeting. 14 ‘He shall present his offering to the LORD: one male lamb a year old without defect for a burnt offering and one ewe-lamb a year old without defect for a sin offering and one ram without defect for a peace offering, 15 and a basket of unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil and unleavened wafers spread with oil, along with their grain offering and their drink offering. 16 ‘Then the priest shall present them before the LORD and shall offer his sin offering and his burnt offering. 17 ‘He shall also offer the ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, together with the basket

of unleavened cakes; the priest shall likewise offer its grain offering and its drink offering. **18** ‘The Nazirite shall then shave his dedicated head of hair at the doorway of the tent of meeting, and take the dedicated hair of his head and put it on the fire which is under the sacrifice of peace offerings. **19** ‘The priest shall take the ram’s shoulder when it has been boiled, and one unleavened cake out of the basket and one unleavened wafer, and shall put them on the ‘hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his dedicated hair. **20** ‘Then the priest shall wave them for a wave offering before the LORD. It is holy for the priest, together with the breast offered by waving and the thigh offered by lifting up; and afterward the Nazirite may drink wine.’

¹⁵¹ These “Jews from Asia” are probably not believers but visitors from Ephesus or there about who have heard Paul teach the message of Jesus as the Messiah and its implications for the Gentiles. Therefore, their statement about Paul is a distortion of what he has actually said, especially in the light of Paul’s purifying himself and participating with the other men who are obeying the commandments concerning the Nazirite vow.

¹⁵² Cf. Acts 9:19-30.

¹⁵³ This would have been after three years in Arabia, a brief return to Damascus, and then a brief stay in Jerusalem that included meeting with Peter and James as apostles (cf. Galatians 1:15-24 along with Acts 9:19-30).

¹⁵⁴ It would have been at this point in Paul’s visit to Jerusalem as described in Galatians 1:18-21 that he would have left for Tarsus via Caesarea Maritima and would have stayed there for approximately 8 years.

¹⁵⁵ Ἦκουον δὲ αὐτοῦ ἄχρι τούτου τοῦ λόγου καὶ ἐπήραν ἑτὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν λέγοντες· αἶρε ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς τὸν τοιοῦτον, οὐ γὰρ καθῆκεν αὐτὸν ζῆν – Why would Paul’s statement have made the Jews so upset that they believed he deserved to die? Probably their religious scruples derived from the Mosaic Covenant and the OT prophets to the effect that the Jews are never commanded to go to the Gentiles, because they should always keep themselves separate from them by remaining on the land of Israel—safe and secure from all those Gentile dogs and their evil influences. Instead, it will be the Gentiles who come to them to learn of God. Therefore, for Paul to claim that the Messiah, who should uphold the Law and the Prophets more than anyone, ordered him to “break” the Mosaic Covenant and reverse the predictions of the OT prophets amounts to heresy and rebellion against God, which both means that he deserves death according to the Mosaic Covenant.

¹⁵⁶ Ἐφη τε ὁ Παῦλος· οὐκ ἦδεν, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι ἐστὶν ἀρχιερεὺς· γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι ἄρχοντα τοῦ λαοῦ σου οὐκ ἐρεῖς κακῶς – Doesn’t seem unusual that Paul had not recognized the High Priest? So maybe this was intentional as a way for Paul to make the point that the Sanhedrin were speaking evil of the ultimate ruler of the Jewish people—Jesus! And this in the light of all Paul said was that he believed that he had obeyed the Torah as it was meant to be obeyed, including embracing Jesus as the Messiah, which he was implying. And it was this last part that offended the High Priest, who believed that as the chief instructor of OT Torah to the Jewish people he was right in denying that Jesus was the Messiah.

Cf. **Exodus 22:28** “You shall not curse God, nor curse a ruler of your people (καὶ ἄρχοντας τοῦ λαοῦ σου οὐ κακῶς ἐρεῖς).

¹⁵⁷ Σαδδουκαῖοι ὁμὲν γὰρ λέγουσιν μὴ εἶναι ἀνάστασιν ἢ μήτε ἄγγελον μήτε πνεῦμα, Φαρισαῖοι δὲ ὁμολογοῦσιν τὰ ἀμφοτέρω – Sounds as though the Sadducees were mechanistic materialists, in spite of the OT’s references to the resurrection from the dead (cf. Daniel 12:2; Isaiah 26:19), the angelos of Yahweh (cf. Exodus 3

Isaiah 26:19 Your dead will live; their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, for your dew is as the dew of the dawn, and the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

Daniel 12:2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

¹⁵⁸ Τῇ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ νυκτὶ ἐπιστάς αὐτῷ ὁ κύριος εἶπεν· θάρσει ὅτι ὡς γὰρ διεμαρτύρω τὰ περὶ ἐμοῦ εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, οὕτως σε δεῖ καὶ εἰς Ῥώμην μαρτυρῆσαι – In Acts 19:21 Paul sets his heart (“spirit”) on going to Rome, something he has always wanted to do. Now, God is actually saying that he is going to accomplish this goal. It is just going to take at more than two years as the story bears out. And this is after Paul thought there it was very possible that he would die in Jerusalem (Acts 21:13).

¹⁵⁹ This is no coincidence. It is God’s sovereign control of His story at work again. Interesting way to inform anyone who reads the Bible and this document specifically that Paul had a sister and a nephew, the latter figuring prominently in the preservation of his life in the present realm. We never know whom God will use to save people’s lives and to end people’s lives (such as the Jewish and Roman leadership in the case of Jesus).

¹⁶⁰ City in Judea founded by Herod the Great and named after his father (Jos., Ant. 16, 143, Bell. 1, 417), on the road from Lydda to Caesarea.

¹⁶¹ The πραιτώριον was originally the praetor’s (one of two Roman magistrates ranking below consul) tent in the midst of the Roman camp. It eventually came to mean the governor’s official residence.

¹⁶² εὐρόντες γὰρ τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον λοιμὸν καὶ κινοῦντα ἑστάσεις ὅπασιν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην πρωτοστάτην τε τῆς τῶν Ναζωραίων αἵρέσεως – The word αἵρεσις does not necessarily have a negative connotation, at least not so negative that people are utterly rejected for their “heresy” (cf. Acts 5:17; 15:5). However, in this case, Christians are looked upon negatively as a faction of Judaism. Cf. Acts 28:22, “But we request to hear from you what you are thinking, for concerning this sect, it is known to us that it is spoken against everywhere.” “Nazarenes” is probably a reference to Jesus’ having come from Nazareth in Galilee.

¹⁶³ ἐλπίδα ἔχων εἰς τὸν θεὸν ἦν καὶ αὐτοὶ οὗτοι προσδέχονται, ἀνάστασιν μέλλειν ἔσεσθαι ⁂ δικαίων τε καὶ ἀδίκων –

¹⁶⁴ ἐν τούτῳ καὶ αὐτὸς ἀσκῶ ἀπρόσκοπον συνειδήσιν ἔχειν ἑπὶ τὸν θεὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους διὰ παντός – Here Paul connects the mind, heart, and will with the outcome of a person's life. Maintaining a good understanding of reality, of God and His plans and purposes for mankind, is vital to obtaining eternal life and mercy from God, which Paul has referred to as that which will occur at the resurrection of the justified, i.e., those who stand to receive God's forgiveness and eternal life through a proper inwardness. This is in contrast to an erroneous and bad understanding of reality of the unjustified. As long as they maintain this, they will incur God's wrath and condemnation, along with eternal destruction.

¹⁶⁵ So Paul's incarceration was not too bad. He was staying in the official residence of the governor, and he was allowed to meet with whoever wanted to visit him. And this situation probably lasted the entire two years that he was in Caesarea.

¹⁶⁶ διαλεγόμενον δὲ αὐτοῦ περὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἐγκρατείας καὶ τοῦ κρίματος τοῦ μέλλοντος, ἔμφοβος γενόμενος ὁ Φίλιππος ἀπεκρίθη τὸ νῦν ἔχον πορεύου, ἑκκαὶ δὲ μεταλαβὼν μετακαλέσομαι σε – Probably the first item of discussion was not morality, i.e., righteousness, but justification, i.e., how a sinner obtains a standing before God whereby He will grant him eternal mercy and life. The second item probably refers to morality, i.e., to how a justified sinner should live his life until he arrives in the Kingdom of God when Jesus returns. So the third item is when this arrival occurs, i.e., when Jesus arrives to establish and restore the Kingdom of Israel that will also eventually result in the judgment and condemnation of those who do not meet the condition for eternal mercy.

[Galatians 5:23](#) gentleness, self-control (ἐγκράτεια); against such things there is no law.

[2 Peters 1:6](#) and in your knowledge, self-control (τὴν ἐγκράτειαν), and in your self-control (ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐγκρατείᾳ), perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,

¹⁶⁷ Paul wants to make sure that he remains in the custody of the Romans so that the Jews have no opportunity to take control of his situation and condemn him to death. This also means that he wants to stay as far away from Jerusalem as he can, and Rome is about as far away as one can get in the Roman Empire, especially because it is a city controlled completely by the Emperor and not in any way by the Jews, as is Jerusalem.

¹⁶⁸ ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἐν Δαμασκῷ πρῶτον τε καὶ Ἱεροσολύμοις, ⁂ πᾶσάν τε τὴν χώραν τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀπὸ ἀγγέλλων μετανοεῖν καὶ ἐπιστρέφειν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ἅξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντας – Cf. [Galatians 1:15-24](#) – After Paul's conversion, he went away into Arabia for three years and briefly returned to Damascus, only to have to leave there and flee to Jerusalem. He stayed there for a short time, seeing Peter and James only as apostles, then hurriedly had to leave and was sent by his fellow Christians to Tarsus and Cilicia where he stayed for approximately eight years. Eventually, after another visit to Jerusalem in Acts 15, Paul did have the opportunity to proclaim the gospel "throughout the region of Judea, and to the Gentiles" during his three missionary journeys.

The main content of Christianity is to turn to God for eternal mercy and life and to pursue a life of actions that are commensurate with a sinner's genuinely repudiating his violations of God's moral commandments and therefore seeking to act in a manner that is in line with biblical morality.

¹⁶⁹ Here Paul categorically declares that the Old Testament speaks of all that he teaches about Jesus as the crucified Messiah and the gospel message of repentance leading to God's eternal mercy and life.

¹⁷⁰ Here the "light" is not just any true ideas that come from the Bible but the ideas specific to the crucified Messiah who becomes the source and means of God's eternal forgiveness and life through his intercession on behalf of sinners. And this light is even more the light by virtue of the events having taken place that resulted in Jesus' having qualified for all his roles as the Son of God.

¹⁷¹ οἱ τε βάρβαροι παρείχον οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν φιλανθρωπίαν ἡμῖν, ἅπαντες γὰρ πυρὸν προσελάβοντο πάντας ἡμᾶς διὰ τὸν ὑπερῶν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν καὶ διὰ τὸ ψυχὴν – The only other use of φιλανθρωπία in the NT is [Titus 3:4](#) But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind (ἡ φιλανθρωπία) appeared.