

English: Unlocked Literal Bible for Acts

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Acts

¹ The former account I wrote, Theophilus, told all that Jesus began to do and to teach,² until the day that he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.³ After his suffering, he presented himself alive to them with many convincing proofs. For forty days he appeared to them, and he spoke about the kingdom of God.

⁴ When he was meeting together with them, he commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, about which he said, "You heard from me⁵ that John indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit in a few days."

⁶ When they were assembled together they asked him, "Lord, is this the time you will restore the kingdom to Israel?"⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has determined by his own authority.

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹ When the Lord Jesus had said these things, as they were looking up, he was raised up, and a cloud hid him from their eyes.¹⁰ While they were looking intensely to heaven as he went, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing.¹¹ They said, "You men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will return in the same manner as you saw him going into heaven."

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain that is called Olives, which is near to Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.¹³ When they arrived, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were staying. They were Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.

¹⁴ They all were devoted with one purpose to prayer, together with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers, about 120 names, and said,¹⁶ "Brothers, it was necessary that the scripture should be fulfilled, that the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who guided the ones who arrested Jesus.

¹⁷ For he was one of us and received a share of this ministry."¹⁸ (Now this man bought a field with the earnings he received for his wickedness, and there he fell headfirst, and his body burst open, and all his intestines poured out.¹⁹ All those living in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language "Akeldama," that is, "Field of Blood.")

²⁰ "For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

'Let his field be made desolate,
and do not let even one person live there';
'Let someone else take his position of leadership.'

²¹ It is necessary, therefore, that one of the men who accompanied us all the time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

²² beginning from the baptism of John to the day that he was taken up from us, become a witness with us of his resurrection."²³ They put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias.

²⁴ They prayed and said, "You, Lord, know the hearts of all people, so reveal which of these two is the one whom you have chosen²⁵ to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned away to go to his own place."²⁶ They cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

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

⁵ Now there were Jews who were living in Jerusalem, godly men, from every nation under heaven.⁶ When this sound was heard, the multitude came together and was confused because everyone heard them speaking in his own language.⁷ They were amazed and marveled; they said, "Really, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

⁸ Why is it that we are hearing them, each in our own language in which we were born?⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and those who live in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia,¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya toward Cyrene, and visitors from Rome,¹¹ Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our languages about the mighty works of God."

¹² They were all amazed and perplexed; they said to one another, "What does this mean?"¹³ But others mocked and said, "They are full of new wine."

¹⁴But Peter stood with the eleven, raised his voice, and declared to them, "Men of Judea and all of you who live at Jerusalem, let this be known to you; pay attention to my words.¹⁵ For these people are not drunk as you assume, for it is only the third hour of the day.

¹⁶But this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ 'It will be in the last days,' God says,
 'I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.
Your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
 your young men will see visions,
 and your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Surely on my servants
 and my female servants in those days
I will pour out my Spirit, and they will prophesy.

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

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
 and the moon to blood
 before the great and remarkable
 day of the Lord comes.

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

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

²⁵For David says about him,
 'I saw the Lord always before my face,
 for he is beside my right hand
 so that I should not be moved.

²⁶ Therefore my heart was glad
 and my tongue rejoiced.
Also, my flesh will live in hope.

²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
neither will you allow
 your Holy One to see decay.

²⁸ You have made known to me the ways of life;
 you will make me full of gladness with your face.'

²⁹Brothers, it is proper for me to speak to you confidently about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.³⁰Therefore, he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of the fruit of his loins on his throne.³¹He saw what was to happen in the future and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see decay.

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

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

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

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

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

³⁷Now when they heard this, they were pierced in their hearts, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what must we do?"

³⁸Then Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹For the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are far off, as many people as the Lord our God will call."

⁴⁰With many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."⁴¹Then they received his word and were baptized, and there were added in that day about three thousand souls.⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.

⁴³Fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common,⁴⁵and they sold their property and possessions and distributed them to all, according to the needs anyone had.

⁴⁶So day after day they devoted themselves with one purpose in the temple. They also broke bread in homes, and they shared food together with glad and generous hearts,⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people, and every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

3 ¹Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.²Now a man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful. They would place him there every day so he could ask those who were going into the temple for alms.³When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked them for alms.

⁴Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, "Look at us."⁵The lame man looked at them, expecting to receive something from them.⁶But Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have, I will give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

⁷Taking him by the right hand, Peter raised him up, and immediately the man's feet and ankles were made strong.

⁸Leaping up, the lame man stood and began to walk; and he entered with Peter and John into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God.

⁹All the people saw him walking and praising God.¹⁰They noticed that it was the man who had been asking people for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement because of what had happened to him.

¹¹As he was holding on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly marveling.¹²When Peter saw this, he answered the people, "You Israelite men, why do you marvel? Why do you fix your eyes on us, as if we made him walk by our own power or godliness?

¹³The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. He is the one whom you handed over and rejected before the face of Pilate, when he had decided to release him.¹⁴You rejected the Holy and Righteous One, and you asked instead for a murderer to be given to you.

¹⁵You killed the Founder of life, whom God raised from the dead—and we are witnesses of this.¹⁶On the basis of faith in his name, his name made this man, whom you see and know, strong. The faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.

¹⁷Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.¹⁸But the things which God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he has now fulfilled.

¹⁹Repent, therefore, and turn, so that your sins may be blotted out,²⁰so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who has been appointed for you, Jesus.

²¹He is the One heaven must receive until the time of the restoration of all things, about which God spoke from ancient times by the mouth of his holy prophets.²²Moses indeed said, "The Lord God will raise up a prophet like me from among your brothers. You must listen to everything he tells you."²³It will happen that every person who does not listen to that prophet will be completely destroyed from among the people.'

²⁴Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those who came after him, they spoke out and announced these days.²⁵You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your ancestors, as he said to Abraham, 'In your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed.'²⁶After God raised up his servant, he sent him to you first, in order to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness."

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

⁵ It came about on the next day that their rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem.⁶ Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and all who were relatives of the high priest.⁷ When they had set Peter and John in their midst, they asked them, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "You rulers of the people, and elders,⁹ if we are on trial today concerning a good deed done to a sick man, and by what means this man was healed,¹⁰ let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that this man stands before you healthy in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead.

¹¹ Jesus Christ is the stone which you builders rejected but which has been made the cornerstone.¹² There is no salvation in any other person, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were ordinary, uneducated men, they were surprised, becoming aware that Peter and John had been with Jesus.¹⁴ Because they saw the man who was healed standing with them, they had nothing to say against this.

¹⁵ But after they had commanded the apostles to leave the council meeting, they talked among themselves.¹⁶ They said, "What should we do with these men? For a remarkable sign has been done through them, and this is evident to everyone who lives in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it."¹⁷ But in order that it spreads no further among the people, let us warn them not to speak anymore to anyone in this name."¹⁸ Then they called them in and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is proper in the sight of God to obey you rather than him, you judge."²⁰ We are not able to stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard."

²¹ After further warning Peter and John, they let them go. They were unable to find any excuse to punish them, because all of the people were glorifying God for what had been done.²² The man who had experienced this sign of healing was more than forty years old.

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

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

²⁶ You said,
'The kings of the earth set themselves together,
and the rulers gathered together
against the Lord, and against his Christ.'

²⁷ Indeed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.²⁸ They gathered together to do all that your hand and your plan had decided in advance would happen.

²⁹ Now, Lord, look upon their warnings and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness.³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and to give signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."³¹ After they had prayed, the place where they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

³² The great number of those who believed were of one heart and soul. No one said that anything he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common.³³ With great power the apostles were proclaiming their testimony about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

³⁴ There was no person among them who lacked anything, for all who owned title to lands or houses sold them and brought the money from the things that were sold³⁵ and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each one according to their need.

³⁶ Joseph, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite, a man from Cyprus,

³⁷ sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

⁵ Now a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of property,² and he kept back part of the sale money (his wife also knew it), and brought the other part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet.

³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the price of the land?"⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own, and after it was sold, was it not under your authority? Why did you put it in your heart to do this? You have not lied to men, but to God."⁵ Hearing these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last, and great fear came upon all who heard it.⁶ The young men arose and wrapped him up, and they carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After about three hours, his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.⁸ Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." She said, "Yes, for so much."

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

¹² Many signs and wonders were taking place among the people through the hands of the apostles. They were all together in Solomon's Porch.¹³ But none of the rest had the courage to join them; however, they were held in high esteem by the people.

¹⁴ Still more believers were being added to the Lord, multitudes of men and women,¹⁵ so that they even carried the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, so that as Peter came by, his shadow might fall on some of them.¹⁶ There also came together a great number of people from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

¹⁷ But the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees); and they were filled with jealousy¹⁸ and laid hands on the apostles, and held them in custody in the common prison.

¹⁹ Yet during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison and led them out, and said,²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."²¹ When they heard this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and taught. But the high priest came, and those who were with him, and called the council together, all the elders of the people of Israel, and sent to the prison to have the apostles brought.

²² But the officers that went did not find them in the prison, and they returned and reported,²³ "We found the prison securely shut and the guards standing at the door, but when we had opened it, we found no one inside."

²⁴ Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were much perplexed concerning them as to what would come of it.²⁵ Then someone came and told them, "The men whom you put in the prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people."

²⁶ So the captain went with the officers and brought them back, but without violence, for they feared the people, that they might be stoned.²⁷ When they had brought them, they set them before the council. The high priest interrogated them,²⁸ saying, "We ordered you with a command not to teach in this name, and yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and desire to bring this man's blood upon us."

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

³³ When the council members heard this, they were furious and they wanted to kill the apostles.³⁴ But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was honored by all the people, stood up in the council and gave a command to take the men outside for a little while.

³⁵ Then he said to them, "Men of Israel, pay close attention to what you propose to do with these people."³⁶ For before these days, Theudas rose up claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who had been obeying him were scattered and came to nothing.³⁷ After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census and drew away some people after him. He also perished, and all who had been obeying him were scattered.

³⁸ Now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or work is of men, it will be overthrown.

³⁹ But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; you may even find that you are fighting against God." So they were persuaded.

⁴⁰ Then they called the apostles in and beat them and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

⁴¹ They went away from before the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name.

⁴²Thereafter every day, in the temple and from house to house, they were continuously teaching and proclaiming the good news that the Christ is Jesus.

6 ¹Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, a complaint by the Grecian Jews began against the Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of help.

²The twelve called the multitude of the disciples to them and said, "It is not right for us to give up the word of God in order to serve tables.³You should therefore choose, brothers, seven men from among yourselves, men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.⁴As for us, we will always continue in prayer and in the ministry of the word."

⁵Their speech pleased the whole multitude. So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte from Antioch.⁶The believers brought these men before the apostles, who prayed and then placed their hands upon them.

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

⁸Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people.⁹But there arose some people who belonged to the synagogue called the synagogue of the Freedmen, of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia. These people were debating with Stephen.

¹⁰But they were not able to stand against the wisdom and the Spirit with which Stephen spoke.¹¹Then they bribed some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God."

¹²They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, and they approached Stephen and seized him and brought him before the council.¹³They brought false witnesses, who said, "This man does not stop speaking words against this holy place and the law.¹⁴For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us."¹⁵Everyone who sat in the council fixed their eyes on him and saw his face was like the face of an angel.

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

"Brothers and fathers, listen to me: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran;

³he said to him, 'Leave your land and your relatives, and go into the land that I will show you.'

⁴"Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran; from there, after his father died, God brought him into this land, where you live now.⁵He gave none of it as an inheritance to him, no, not even enough to set a foot on. But he promised—even though Abraham had no child yet—that he would give the land as a possession to him and to his descendants after him.

⁶God was speaking to him like this, that his descendants would live for a while in a foreign land, and that the inhabitants there would bring them into slavery and mistreat them for four hundred years.⁷But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they will come out and worship me in this place.'⁸Then God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision, so Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of the twelve patriarchs.

⁹"Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him into Egypt; but God was with him¹⁰and rescued him from all his tribulation. He gave Joseph favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him governor over Egypt and over all his household.

¹¹"Now a famine and great tribulation came over all Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers could find no food.¹²But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first trip.¹³On their second trip Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh.

¹⁴Joseph sent his brothers back to invite Jacob his father to come to Egypt, along with all his relatives, seventy-five persons in all.¹⁵So Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers.¹⁶They were carried over to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a price in silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

¹⁷"As the time of the promise approached, the promise that God had made to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,¹⁸until there arose another king over Egypt, a king who did not know about Joseph.¹⁹He deceived our people and mistreated our fathers, forcing them to expose their newborn infants so they would not be kept alive.

²⁰"At that time Moses was born; he was very beautiful before God and was nourished for three months in his father's house.²¹ When he was placed outside, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and raised him as her own son.

²²Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and works.

²³"But when he was about forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the descendants of Israel.²⁴ Seeing an Israelite being mistreated, Moses defended him and avenged him who was oppressed by striking the Egyptian:²⁵ he thought that his brothers would understand that God, by his hand, was giving them salvation, but they did not understand.

²⁶On the next day he appeared to them when they were fighting, and he tried to make peace between them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why are you wronging one another?'

²⁷"But the one who had wronged his neighbor pushed him away, and said, 'Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us?'²⁸ Would you like to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?'

²⁹Moses ran away after hearing this statement; he became a foreigner in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

³⁰"When forty years were past, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush.

³¹When Moses saw the fire, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look at it, the voice of the Lord came, saying,³² 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob.' Moses trembled and did not dare to look.

³³"The Lord said to him, 'Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.'³⁴ I have certainly seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them; now come, I will send you to Egypt.'

³⁵"This Moses whom they rejected, when they said, 'Who appointed you a ruler and a judge?'—he was the one whom God sent as both a ruler and deliverer. God sent him by the hand of the angel who appeared to Moses in the bush.³⁶ Moses led them out of Egypt, after doing miracles and signs in Egypt and at the Sea of Reeds, and in the wilderness during forty years.

³⁷"It is the same Moses who said to the people of Israel, 'God will raise up a prophet for you from among your brothers, a prophet like me.'

³⁸This is the man who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel who had spoken to him on Mount Sinai, who was with our fathers, and who received living words to give to us.

³⁹"But our fathers refused to obey him; they pushed him away from themselves, and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt.⁴⁰ At that time they said to Aaron, 'Make us gods who will lead us. As for this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.'

⁴¹So they made a calf in those days and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced because of the work of their hands.

⁴²But God turned and gave them up to worship the stars in the sky, as it is written in the book of the prophets,

'Did you bring me offerings and sacrifices
during the forty years in the wilderness, house of Israel?

⁴³ You accepted the tabernacle of Molech
and the star of the god Rephan,
and the images that you made to worship them:
and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'

⁴⁴"Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, just as God commanded when he spoke to Moses, that he should make it like the pattern that he had seen.⁴⁵ Later, our fathers, under Joshua, received the tabernacle and brought it with them when they took possession of the land. God took the land from the nations and drove them out before the face of our fathers. The tabernacle remained in the land until the time of David,⁴⁶ who found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob.

⁴⁷But it was Solomon who built the house for God.

⁴⁸"However, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands, as the prophet says,

⁴⁹ 'Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is the footstool for my feet.
What kind of house can you build for me? says the Lord,
or what is the place for my rest?

⁵⁰ Did my hand not make all these things?'

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

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

⁵⁷At this the council members covered their ears, and shouting out with a loud voice, they rushed at him with one purpose.⁵⁸ They forced him out of the city and began to stone him. The witnesses laid down their outer clothing at the feet of a young man named Saul.

⁵⁹As they were stoning Stephen, he was calling out to the Lord and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."⁶⁰ He knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

¹The phrase: the house of Jacob, is found in many ancient copies. Other ancient texts have the phrase: the God of Jacob.

8 ¹Saul was in agreement with his death.

So there began on that day a great persecution against the church that was in Jerusalem; and the believers were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

²Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him.³ But Saul tried to destroy the church. He would enter house after house, drag off both men and women, and put them in prison.

⁴Yet the believers who had been scattered went about preaching the word.⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ.

⁶Crowds of people were giving close attention to what was being said by Philip; with one mind they heard him, and they saw the signs he did.⁷ Unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying out with a loud voice, and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.⁸ So there was much joy in that city.

⁹But there was a certain man in the city named Simon, who had earlier been practicing sorcery; he used to astonish the people of Samaria while claiming that he was an important person.¹⁰ All the Samaritans, from the least to the greatest, paid attention to him; they said, "This man is that power of God which is called Great."¹¹ They listened to him because he had astonished them for a long time with his sorceries.

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

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

¹⁵When they had come down, they prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ For until that time, the Holy Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money.¹⁹ He said, "Give me this authority, too, that whoever I place my hands on might receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish along with you, because you thought to obtain the gift of God with money.

²¹You have no part or allotted portion in this matter, because your heart is not right with God.²² Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord, so that he might perhaps forgive you for the intention of your heart.²³ For I see that you are in the poison of bitterness and in the bonds of unrighteousness."

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

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

²⁶Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said, "Arise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This road is in a desert.)²⁷He arose and went. Behold, there was a man from Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship.²⁸He was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.

²⁹The Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and stay close to this chariot."

³⁰So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

³¹Then he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" He invited Philip to come up into the chariot and sit with him.

³²Now the passage of the scripture which the Ethiopian was reading was this,

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

³³ In his humiliation

justice was taken away from him.

Who can give a full account of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth."

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

³⁶As they went on the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, there is water here. What prevents me from being baptized?"³⁷³⁸So the Ethiopian commanded the chariot to stop. They went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and Philip baptized him.

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

¹The best ancient copies do not have Acts 8:37, Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may be baptized." The Ethiopian answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God".

9 ¹But Saul, still speaking threats even of murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest²and asked him for letters for the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

³As he was traveling, it happened that as he came near to Damascus, suddenly there shone all around him a light out of heaven;⁴and he fell upon the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

⁵Saul replied, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting;⁶but rise, enter into the city, and it will be told you what you must do."⁷The men who traveled with Saul stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one.

⁸Saul arose from the ground, and when he opened his eyes, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.⁹For three days he was without sight, and he neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias!" He said, "See, I am here, Lord."

¹¹The Lord said to him, "Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying.¹²He has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him, so that he might see again."

¹³But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem.¹⁴He has authority from the chief priests to put in bonds everyone here who calls upon your name."

¹⁵But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine, to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel;¹⁶for I will show him how much he must suffer for the cause of my name."

¹⁷So Ananias departed, and entered into the house. Laying his hands on him, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road when you were coming, has sent me so that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."¹⁸Immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he received his sight; he arose and was baptized,¹⁹and he ate and was strengthened.He stayed with the disciples in Damascus for several days.

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

²³After many days, the Jews planned together to kill him.²⁴But their plan became known to Saul. They watched the gates day and night in order to kill him.²⁵But his disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

²⁶When he had come to Jerusalem, Saul attempted to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.²⁷But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and he told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how at Damascus Saul had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.

²⁸He was with them, going in and out around Jerusalem. He spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus²⁹and debated with the Grecian Jews; but they kept trying to kill him.³⁰When the brothers learned of this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

³¹So then, the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the church grew in numbers.³²Now it came about that, as Peter went throughout the whole region, he came down also to God's holy people who lived in the town of Lydda.

³³There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been in his bed for eight years, for he was paralyzed.³⁴Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed," and right away he got up.³⁵So everyone who lived in Lydda and in Sharon saw the man and they turned to the Lord.

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

³⁸Since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, pleading with him, "Come to us without delay."³⁹Peter arose and went with them. When he had arrived, they brought him to the upper room, and all the widows stood by him weeping, showing him the tunics and garments that Dorcas had made while she had been with them.

⁴⁰Peter put them all out of the room, knelt down, and prayed; then, turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up.⁴¹Peter then gave her his hand and raised her up; and when he called God's holy people and the widows, he presented her alive to them.⁴²This matter became known throughout all Joppa, and many people believed on the Lord.⁴³It happened that Peter stayed for many days in Joppa with a man named Simon, a tanner.

10 ¹Now there was a certain man in the city of Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of what was called the Italian Company of Soldiers.²He was a devout man, one who feared God with all his household, gave many alms to the people, and prayed to God constantly.

³About the ninth hour of the day, he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God coming to him. The angel said to him, "Cornelius!"⁴Cornelius stared at the angel and was very afraid and said, "What is it, sir?"The angel said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have gone up as a memorial offering into God's presence.

⁵Now send men to the city of Joppa to bring a man named Simon who is called Peter.⁶He is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the seaside."

⁷When the angel who spoke to him had left, Cornelius called two of his house servants, and a devout soldier from among those who served him.⁸Cornelius told them all that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

⁹Now on the next day at about the sixth hour, as they were on their journey and were approaching the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray.¹⁰He then became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while the people were cooking some food, a trance came on him,¹¹and he saw the sky open and a certain container descending, something like a large sheet coming down to the earth, let down by its four corners.¹²In it were all kinds of four-footed animals and things that crawled on the earth, and birds of the sky.

¹³Then a voice spoke to him: "Rise, Peter, kill and eat."

¹⁴But Peter said, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that was defiled and unclean."

¹⁵But the voice came to him again a second time: "What God has made clean, you must not call defiled."¹⁶This happened three times; then the container was immediately taken back up into the sky.

¹⁷Now while Peter was very confused about what the vision that he had seen could mean, behold, the men who were sent

by Cornelius stood before the gate, after they had asked their way to the house.¹⁸ They called out and asked whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there.

¹⁹While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you.¹⁹ Arise and go down and go with them. Do not hesitate to go with them, because I have sent them."

²¹So Peter went down to the men and said, "I am he whom you are seeking. Why have you come?"

²²They said, "A centurion named Cornelius, a righteous man and one who fears God, and is well spoken of by all the nation of the Jews, was instructed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house, so he could listen to a message from you."²³ So Peter invited them to come in and stay with him. On the next morning he got up and went with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.

²⁴On the following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them; he had called together his relatives and his close friends.

²⁵It came about that when Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet to worship him.²⁶ But Peter helped him up, saying, "Stand up! I too am a man."

²⁷While Peter was talking with him, he went in and found many people gathered together.²⁸ He said to them, "You yourselves know that it is not lawful for a Jewish man to associate with or to visit a foreigner. But God has shown me that I should not call any man defiled or unclean.²⁹ That is why I came without arguing, when I was sent for. So I ask you why you sent for me."

³⁰Cornelius said, "Four days ago at this very hour, I was praying at the ninth hour in my house; and see, a man stood before me in bright clothing.³¹ He said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard by God, and your alms have reminded God about you.'³² So send someone to Joppa, and call to you a man named Simon who is called Peter. He is staying in the house of a tanner named Simon, by the seaside.'³³ So at once I sent for you. You are kind to have come. Now then, we are all here present in the sight of God to hear everything that you have been instructed by the Lord to say."³

³⁴Then Peter opened his mouth and said, "Truly I understand that God is not partial.³⁵ Instead, in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

³⁶You know the message that he sent to the people of Israel, when he announced the good news about peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all—³⁷you yourselves know the events that took place, which occurred throughout all Judea, beginning in Galilee, after the baptism that John announced;³⁸ the events concerning Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

³⁹We are witnesses of all the things Jesus did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree,⁴⁰ but God raised him up on the third day and caused him to be seen,⁴¹ not by all the people, but to the witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

⁴²He commanded us to proclaim to the people and to testify that this is the one who has been chosen by God to be the Judge of the living and the dead.⁴³ About him all the prophets testify, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

⁴⁴While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all of those who were listening to his message.⁴⁵ The people who belonged to the circumcision group of believers—all of those who came with Peter—were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out also on the Gentiles.

⁴⁶For they heard these Gentiles speaking in tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered,⁴⁷ "Can anyone keep water from these people so they should not be baptized, these people who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?"⁴⁸ Then he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay with them for several days.

¹⁹Some ancient copies have, two men are looking for you or some men are looking for you .

²³Some ancient copies add: When he comes, he will speak to you.

³Instead of instructed by the Lord to say, some ancient copies have, instructed by God to say.

11 ¹Now the apostles and the brothers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

²When Peter had come up to Jerusalem, they who belonged to the circumcision group criticized him;³ they said, "You associated with uncircumcised men and ate with them!"

⁴But Peter started to explain the matter to them in detail, saying,⁵ "I was praying in the city of Joppa, and in a trance I saw a vision of a container coming down, like a large sheet let down from heaven by its four corners. It descended to me.⁶ I gazed at it and I thought about it. I saw the four-legged animals of earth, wild beasts, things that crawled, and birds of the sky.

⁷Then I heard a voice say to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat!'

⁸I said, 'Not so, Lord; for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered into my mouth.'

⁹But the voice answered again from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call defiled.'¹⁰This happened three times, and then everything was taken back up into heaven again.

¹¹"Behold, right away there were three men standing in front of the house where we were; they had been sent from Caesarea to me.¹²The Spirit commanded me to go with them, and that I should make no distinction regarding them. These six brothers went with me, and we went into the man's house.¹³He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send men to Joppa and bring back Simon who is called Peter.'¹⁴He will speak to you a message by which you will be saved—you and all your household.'

¹⁵As I began to speak to them, the Holy Spirit came on them, just as on us in the beginning.¹⁶I remembered the words of the Lord, how he said, 'John indeed baptized with water; but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

¹⁷Then if God gave to them the same gift as he gave to us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could oppose God?"

¹⁸When they heard these things, they said nothing in response, but they glorified God and said, "Then God has given repentance for life to the Gentiles also."

¹⁹Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose over Stephen spread as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word only to Jews.²⁰But some of them, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, came to Antioch and spoke also to Greeks, proclaiming to them the gospel about the Lord Jesus.²¹The hand of the Lord was with them; a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

²²News about them came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas as far as Antioch.²³When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad and he encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart.

²⁴For he was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and many people were added to the Lord.

²⁵Barnabas then went out to Tarsus to search carefully for Saul.²⁶When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. It came about that for an entire year they gathered together with the church and taught many people. The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

²⁷Now in these days some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.²⁸One of them, Agabus by name, stood up and indicated by the Spirit that a great famine would occur over all the world. This happened in the days of Claudius.

²⁹So the disciples, as each one was able, determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brothers in Judea.³⁰They did this; they sent money to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

12 ¹Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church so that he might mistreat them.

²He killed James the brother of John with the sword.

³After he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. That was during the days of unleavened bread.

⁴After arresting him, he put him in prison, assigning him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him; he was intending to bring him to the people after the Passover.

⁵So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer was made earnestly to God for him by those in the church.⁶On the night before Herod was going to bring him out for trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison.

⁷Behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared by him, and a light shone in the prison cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him and said, "Get up quickly," and his chains fell off his hands.⁸The angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." Peter did so. The angel said to him, "Put on your outer garment and follow me."

⁹So Peter followed the angel and went out. He did not know that what was done by the angel was real. He thought he was seeing a vision.¹⁰After they had passed by the first guard and the second, they came to the iron gate that led into the city; it opened for them by itself. They went out and went down a street, and the angel left him right away.

¹¹When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I truly know that the Lord has sent his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from everything the Jewish people were expecting."¹²When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.

¹³When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer.¹⁴When she recognized Peter's voice, out of joy she failed to open the gate; instead, she came running into the room; she reported that Peter was standing at the gate.¹⁵So they said to her, "You are insane." But she insisted that it was so. They said, "It is his angel."

¹⁶But Peter continued knocking, and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed.¹⁷Peter motioned to them with his hand to be silent, and he told them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. He said, "Report these things to James and the brothers." Then he left and went to another place.

¹⁸Now when it became day, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter.¹⁹After Herod had searched for him and could not find him, he questioned the guards and ordered them to be put to death. Then Herod went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

²⁰Now Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. They went to him with one purpose, and after persuading Blastus, the king's assistant, to help them, they asked for peace because their country received its food from the king's country.²¹On a set day Herod dressed himself in royal clothing and sat on a throne; he made a speech to them.

²²The people shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man!"²³Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give God the glory; he was eaten by worms and died.

²⁴But the word of God increased and multiplied.

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

¹Some ancient copies read, they returned to Jerusalem.

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

⁴So Barnabas and Saul, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; from there they sailed away to Cyprus.⁵While they were in the city of Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John for an assistant.

⁶When they had gone through the whole island to Paphos, they found a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar-Jesus.⁷This magician associated with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul, because he sought to hear the word of God.⁸But Elymas "the magician" (that is how his name is translated) opposed them; he tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

⁹But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, stared at him intensely¹⁰ and said, "You son of the devil, you are full of all kinds of deceit and wickedness. You are an enemy of every kind of righteousness. You will never stop twisting the straight paths of the Lord, will you?"

¹¹Now look, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will become blind. You will not see the sun for a while." Immediately there fell on Elymas a mist and darkness; he started going around seeking people to lead him by the hand.

¹²After the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, because he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

¹³Now Paul and his friends set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. But John left them and returned to Jerusalem.¹⁴Paul and his friends traveled from Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia. There they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down.¹⁵After the reading of the law and the prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent them a message, saying, "Brothers, if you have any message of encouragement for the people here, say it."

¹⁶So Paul stood up and motioned with his hand; he said, "Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen.¹⁷The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people when they stayed in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm he led them out of it.¹⁸For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness.¹

¹⁹After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave our people their land for an inheritance.²⁰All these events took place over 450 years. After all these things, God gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.

²¹Then the people asked for a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin, to be king for forty years.²²After God removed him from the kingship, he raised up David to be their king. It was about David that God testified, saying, 'I have found David son of Jesse to be a man after my heart, who does all I want him to do.'

²³From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised to do.²⁴Before the arrival of Jesus, John proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.²⁵As John was finishing his work, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the one. But listen, one is coming after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.'

²⁶Brothers, children of the offspring of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, it is to us that the message about this salvation has been sent.²⁷For they who live in Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize him, and they fulfilled the voices of the prophets that are read every Sabbath by condemning him.

²⁸Even though they found no reason for the death penalty, they called on Pilate to kill him.²⁹When they had completed all the things that were written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb.

³⁰But God raised him from the dead.³¹He was seen for many days by those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. These people are now his witnesses to the people.

³²So we tell you the good news: The promise that came to our fathers³³ God has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm:

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

³⁴As to his raising him from the dead, never to return to decay, he has spoken in this way:
'I will give you the holy and sure blessings
promised to David.'

³⁵This is why he also says in another Psalm,
'You will not allow your Holy One
to see decay.'

³⁶For when David had served the purpose of God in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was laid with his fathers and his body experienced decay.³⁷ But he whom God raised up experienced no decay.

³⁸So let it be known to you, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. The law of Moses could not make you righteous.³⁹ But by this man God makes righteous everyone who believes.

⁴⁰So then be careful that the thing the prophets spoke about does not happen to you:

⁴¹ 'Look, you despisers,
and be astonished and then perish;
For I am doing a work in your days,
a work that you would never believe,
even if someone announces it to you.'"

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

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

⁴⁴On the next Sabbath, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of the Lord.⁴⁵ When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with envy and spoke against the things that were said by Paul and insulted him.

⁴⁶But Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing you push it away from yourselves and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, see, we will turn to the Gentiles.⁴⁷For so has the Lord commanded us, saying,

'I have appointed you as a light for the Gentiles,
that you should bring salvation
to the uttermost parts of the earth.'"

⁴⁸As the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. As many as were appointed to eternal life believed.⁴⁹The word of the Lord was spread out through the whole region.

⁵⁰But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and threw them out of their region.⁵¹But Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust from their feet against them. Then they went to the city of Iconium.⁵²And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

⁵³Some ancient copies read, For about forty years he cared for them in the wilderness.

14 ¹It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in such a way that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed.²But the Jews who were disobedient stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and made them bitter against the brothers.

³So they stayed there for a long time, speaking boldly with the Lord's power, while he gave evidence about the message of his grace. He did this by granting signs and wonders to be done by the hands of Paul and Barnabas.⁴But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles.

⁵Both Gentiles and Jews (together with their leaders) made an attempt to mistreat them and to stone them,⁶but as soon as they learned about this, they fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding region,⁷where they continued to proclaim the gospel.

⁸At Lystra a certain man sat, powerless in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.⁹This man

heard Paul speaking. Paul fixed his eyes on him and saw that he had faith to be made well.¹⁰ So he said to him in a loud voice, "Stand up on your feet." Then the man jumped up and walked around.

¹¹When the multitude saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the dialect of Lycaonia, "The gods have become like men and come down to us."¹² They called Barnabas "Zeus," and Paul "Hermes," because he was the main speaker.¹³ The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and wreaths to the gates; he and the multitudes wanted to offer sacrifice.

¹⁴But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their clothing and quickly went out into the crowd, crying out,¹⁵ "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are human beings, with the same nature as you. We are telling you good news that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them."¹⁶ In the past ages, he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways.

¹⁷But still, he did not leave himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you the rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."¹⁸ Even with these words, Paul and Barnabas barely kept the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

¹⁹But some Jews from Antioch and Iconium came and persuaded the crowds. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking that he was dead.²⁰ Yet as the disciples were standing around him, he got up and entered the city. The next day, he went to Derbe with Barnabas.

²¹After they had proclaimed the gospel in that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch.²² They kept strengthening the souls of the disciples and encouraging them to continue in the faith, saying, "We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations."

²³When they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they entrusted them to the Lord, in whom they had believed.²⁴ Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia.²⁵ When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.²⁶ From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had now completed.

²⁷When they arrived in Antioch and gathered the church together, they reported all the things that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles.²⁸ They stayed for a long time with the disciples.

15 ¹Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and taught the brothers, saying, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."² This brought Paul and Barnabas into a sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas, along with some others from among them, were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to meet with the apostles and elders about this question.

³They therefore, being sent by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria and announced the conversion of the Gentiles. They brought great joy to all the brothers.⁴ When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all the things that God had done with them.

⁵But certain men who believed, who belonged to the group of Pharisees, stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses."⁶ So the apostles and the elders gathered together to consider this matter.

⁷After much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that a good while ago God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.⁸ God, who knows the heart, has testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us.⁹ He made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.

¹⁰Now therefore why do you test God, that you should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"¹¹ But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they were."

¹²All the multitude kept silent while they listened to Barnabas and Paul report the signs and wonders God had worked among the Gentiles through them.

¹³After they stopped speaking, James answered, saying, "Brothers, listen to me.

¹⁴Simon has told how God first graciously helped the Gentiles in order to take from them a people for his name.

¹⁵The words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written,

¹⁶ 'After these things I will return,
and I will build again the tabernacle of David,
which has fallen down;
I will set up and restore its ruins again,

¹⁷ so that the remnant of men may seek the Lord,
including all the Gentiles called by my name.'

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

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

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

²³They wrote this with their hands,

²⁴Because we have heard that certain men have gone out from us, with no orders from us, and have disturbed you with words that upset your souls,²⁵ it seemed good to us, who have come to one mind, to choose men and to send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁷Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who will report to you the same things in their own words.²⁸For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:²⁹that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, blood, things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you avoid these things, you will do well.

³⁰So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; after they gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter.³¹When they had read it, they rejoiced because of the encouragement.³²Judas and Silas, also prophets, encouraged the brothers with many words and strengthened them.

³³After they had spent some time there, they were sent away in peace from the brothers to those who had sent them.

³⁴ ³⁵² But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching (along with many others) the word of the Lord.

³⁶After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return now and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."³⁷Barnabas wanted to also take with them John, who was called Mark.³⁸But Paul thought it was not good to take Mark, who had left them in Pamphylia and did not go further with them in the work.

³⁹Then there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.⁴⁰But Paul chose Silas and left, after he was entrusted by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.⁴¹Then he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

¹There are some copies of the ancient Greek text that have a slightly different meaning, This is what the Lord says, to whom are known all his deeds from ancient times.

²The best ancient copies do not have verse 34 (See: Acts 15:40), But it seemed good to Silas to remain there.

16 ¹Paul also came to Derbe and to Lystra, and behold, a certain disciple named Timothy was there, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek.²He was well spoken of by the brothers who were at Lystra and Iconium.³Paul wanted him to travel with him, so he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

⁴As they were going along through the cities, they were passing along the decrees to obey that were decided on by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. ⁵So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily.

⁶Paul and his companions went through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia, since they had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word in the province of Asia.⁷When they came near Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus prevented them.⁸So passing by Mysia, they came down to the city of Troas.

⁹A vision appeared to Paul in the night: A man of Macedonia was standing there, begging him and saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."¹⁰When Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

¹¹Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day we came to Neapolis.¹²From there we went to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the most important city in the district and a Roman colony, and we stayed in this city for several days.

¹³On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we thought there would be a place of prayer. We sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.

¹⁴A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God, listened to us. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵When she and her house were baptized, she pleaded with us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay in my house." And she persuaded us.

¹⁶It came about that, as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain slave girl who had a spirit of divination encountered us. She brought her masters much gain by fortunetelling. ¹⁷This woman followed after Paul and us and shouted, saying, "These men are servants of the Most High God. They proclaim to you the way of salvation." ¹⁸She did this for many days. But Paul, being greatly annoyed by her, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out at that same hour.

¹⁹When her masters saw that their hope of profit was now gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. ²⁰When they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are causing trouble in our city. They are Jews. ²¹They proclaim customs that are not lawful for Romans to accept or practice."

²²Then the crowd rose up together against Paul and Silas; the magistrates tore their garments off them and commanded them to be beaten with rods. ²³When they had laid many blows upon them, they threw them into prison and commanded the jailer to guard them securely. ²⁴After he got this command, the jailer threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

²⁶Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were unfastened.

²⁷The jailer was awakened from sleep and saw the open prison doors; he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he thought that the prisoners had escaped.

²⁸But Paul shouted with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, because we are all here."

²⁹The jailer called for lights and rushed in and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰and brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

³²They spoke the word of the Lord to him, together with everyone in his house. ³³Then the jailer took them at the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he and those in his entire house were baptized immediately. ³⁴Then as he brought Paul and Silas up into his house and he set food before them, he rejoiced greatly with those of his house, that he had believed in God.

³⁵Now when it was day, the magistrates sent word to the guards, saying, "Let those men go."

³⁶The jailer reported the words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent word to me to let you go. Now therefore come out, and go in peace."

³⁷But Paul said to them, "They have publicly beaten us without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens—and they threw us into prison. Do they now want to send us away secretly? No! Let them come themselves and lead us out."

³⁸The guards reported these words to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Romans, they were afraid. ³⁹The magistrates came and apologized to them and brought them out, asking them to go away from the city.

⁴⁰So Paul and Silas went out of the prison and came to the house of Lydia. When Paul and Silas saw the brothers, they encouraged them and then departed from the city.

17 ¹Now when they had passed through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to the city of Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ²Paul, as his custom was, went to them, and for three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures.

³He was opening the scriptures and explaining that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead. He said, "This Jesus whom I proclaim to you is the Christ." ⁴Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, including a large number of devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women.

⁵But the unbelieving Jews, being moved with jealousy, took certain wicked men from the marketplace, gathered a crowd together, and set the city in an uproar. Assaulting the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring Paul and Silas out to the people. ⁶But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and certain other brothers before the officials of the city, crying, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also. ⁷These men whom Jason has welcomed act against the decrees of Caesar; they say that there is another king—Jesus."

⁸They troubled the crowd and the officials of the city who heard these things. ⁹But after they took security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

¹⁰That night the brothers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.

¹¹Now these people were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. ¹²Therefore many of them believed, including some influential Greek women and many men.

¹³But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that Paul was also proclaiming the word of God at Berea, they went there and stirred up and troubled the crowds. ¹⁴Then immediately, the brothers sent Paul to go to the sea, but Silas and Timothy stayed there. ¹⁵Those who were leading Paul took him as far as the city of Athens. As they left Paul there, they received from him instructions for Silas and Timothy to come to him as quickly as possible.

¹⁶Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city full of idols. ¹⁷So he reasoned every day in the synagogue with the Jews and others who worshiped God, as well as in the marketplace with those who happened to be there.

¹⁸But also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. Some said, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others said, "He seems to be one who calls people to follow strange gods," because he was proclaiming the gospel about Jesus and the resurrection.

¹⁹They took Paul and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know this new teaching which you were speaking?"

²⁰For you bring some strange things to our ears. Therefore, we want to know what these things mean." ²¹(Now all the Athenians and the strangers living there spent their time in nothing but either telling or listening about something new.)

²²So Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus and said, "You men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way.

²³For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I announce to you.

²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples built with hands. ²⁵Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives people life and breath and everything else.

²⁶From one man he made every nation of people to live on the surface of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons and the boundaries of their living areas, ²⁷so that they should search for God and perhaps they may feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us.

²⁸For in him we live and move and have our being, just as one of your own poets has said: 'For we also are his offspring.'

²⁹"Therefore, since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the qualities of deity are like gold, or silver, or stone—images created by the art and imagination of man.

³⁰Therefore God overlooked the times of ignorance, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent. ³¹This is because he has set a day when he will judge the world in righteousness by the man he has appointed. God has given proof of this man to everyone by raising him from the dead."

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

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

⁴So Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks. ⁵Now when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself to the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

⁶But when the Jews opposed and insulted him, Paul shook out his garment at them and said to them, "May your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

⁷Then he left from there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a man who worshiped God. His house was next to the synagogue. ⁸Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians who heard about it believed and were baptized.

⁹The Lord said to Paul in the night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent. ¹⁰For I am with you, and no one will try to harm you, for I have many people in this city." ¹¹Paul lived there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

¹²But when Gallio became governor of Achaia, the Jews rose up with one mind against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat; ¹³they said, "This man persuades people to worship God contrary to the law."

¹⁴Yet when Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "You Jews, if indeed it were a matter of wrong or a wicked crime, it would be reasonable to put up with you.¹⁵But since these are questions about words and names and your own law, settle it yourselves. I do not wish to be a judge of these matters."

¹⁶Gallio made them leave the judgment seat.¹⁷So they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the judgment seat. But Gallio did not care what they did.

¹⁸Paul, after staying there for many more days, left the brothers and sailed for Syria with Priscilla and Aquila. Before he left the seaport, Cenchreae, he had his hair cut off because of a vow he had taken.¹⁹When they came to Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

²⁰When they asked Paul to stay a longer time, he declined.²¹But taking his leave of them, he said, "I will return again to you if it is God's will." He then set sail from Ephesus.

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

²⁴Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, came to Ephesus. He was eloquent in speech and mighty in the scriptures.²⁵Apollos had been instructed in the teachings of the Lord. Being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, but he knew only the baptism of John.²⁶Apollos began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

²⁷When he desired to pass over into Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples in Achaia to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who believed by grace.²⁸Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public debate, showing by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

19 ¹It came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to the city of Ephesus, and found certain disciples there.²Paul said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They said to him, "No, we did not even hear about the Holy Spirit."

³Paul said, "Into what then were you baptized?"They said, "Into John's baptism."

⁴So Paul replied, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance. He told the people that they should believe in the one who would come after him, that is, in Jesus."

⁵When the people heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.⁶Then when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.⁷In all they were about twelve men.

⁸Paul went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.⁹But when some Jews were hardened and disobedient, they began to speak evil of the Way before the crowd. So Paul left them and took the disciples with him, reasoning with them every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.¹⁰This continued for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

¹¹God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul,¹²so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick and their illnesses left them and the evil spirits came out of them.

¹³But there were Jewish exorcists traveling through the area. They called on the name of the Lord Jesus so they could have power over evil spirits when they said, "By the Jesus whom Paul proclaims, I command you to come out."¹⁴The Jewish high priest, whose name was Sceva, had seven sons who were doing this.

¹⁵An evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"¹⁶The evil spirit in the man leaped on the exorcists and subdued them and beat them up. Then they fled out of that house naked and wounded.¹⁷This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived at Ephesus. They became very afraid, and the name of the Lord Jesus was honored.

¹⁸Also, many of the believers came and confessed and gave a full account of the evil things they had done.¹⁹Many who practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of everyone. When they counted the value of them, it was fifty thousand pieces of silver.²⁰So the word of the Lord spread very widely in powerful ways.

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

²³At about that time there was no small disturbance in Ephesus concerning the Way.²⁴ A certain silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in much business for the craftsmen.²⁵ So he gathered together the workmen of that occupation and said, "Men, you know that in this business we make much money.

²⁶You see and hear that, not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people. He is saying that gods made by hands are not gods.²⁷ Not only is there danger that our trade will be discredited, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis might be regarded as worthless, and her greatness would be brought to nothing, she whom all Asia and the world worship."

²⁸When they heard this, they were filled with anger and cried out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians."²⁹The whole city was filled with confusion, and the people rushed with one mind into the theater. They had seized Paul's travel companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, who came from Macedonia.

³⁰Paul wanted to enter in among the crowd of people, but the disciples prevented him.³¹ Also, some of the officials of the province of Asia who were his friends sent him a message pleading with him not to enter the theater.³² Some people were shouting one thing, and some another, for the crowd was in confusion. Most of them did not even know why they had come together.

³³Some of the crowd advised Alexander, whom the Jews were pushing forward. So Alexander motioned with his hand, wanting to give a defense to the assembly.³⁴ But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all cried out for about two hours with one voice, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians."

³⁵When the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "You men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the image which fell down from heaven?"³⁶ Seeing then that these things are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash.³⁷ For you have brought these men to this court who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess.

³⁸Therefore, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have an accusation against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them accuse one another.³⁹ But if you are seeking anything more, it should be resolved in the regular assembly.⁴⁰ For we are in danger of being accused of rioting today, and there is no cause we can give to justify this uproar." When he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

¹Some Greek copies number this last sentence as verse 41.

20 ¹After the uproar was over, Paul sent for the disciples and after he encouraged them, he said farewell and left to go into Macedonia.² When he had gone through those regions and had spoken many words of encouragement to them, he came to Greece.³ After he had spent three months there, a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to sail for Syria, so he decided to return through Macedonia.

⁴Accompanying him as far as Asia were Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus, both from the Thessalonian believers; Gaius of Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia.⁵ But these men had gone before us and were waiting for us at Troas.⁶ We sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and in five days we came to them in Troas. There we stayed for seven days.

⁷On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul spoke to the believers. He was planning to leave the next day, so he prolonged his message until midnight.⁸ There were many lamps in the upper room where we had come together.

⁹In the window was sitting a young man named Eutychus, who fell into a deep sleep. As Paul spoke even longer, this young man, still sleeping, fell down from the third story and was picked up dead.¹⁰ But Paul went down, stretched himself out on him, and embraced him. Then he said, "Do not be upset any more, for he is alive."

¹¹Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking with them much longer until dawn, he left.¹² They brought back the boy alive and were greatly comforted.

¹³We ourselves went ahead of Paul by ship and sailed away to Assos, where we planned to take Paul on board. This is what he himself desired to do, because he planned to go by land.¹⁴ When he met us at Assos, we took him onto the ship and went to Mitylene.

¹⁵Then we sailed from there and arrived the next day opposite the island of Chios. The following day we touched at the island of Samos, and the day after we came to the city of Miletus.¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not spend any time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost, if it were at all possible for him to do so.

¹⁷From Miletus he sent men to Ephesus and called to himself the elders of the church.¹⁸ When they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I always spent my time with you."¹⁹ I kept

serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind and with tears, and in trials that happened to me because of the plots of the Jews.²⁰ You know how I did not keep back from declaring to you anything that was useful, and how I taught you in public and from house to house,²¹ testifying to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus.²² Now look, I am going to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there,²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that chains and afflictions await me.²⁴ But I do not consider my life valuable to myself, if only I may finish the race and complete the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

²⁵Now look, I know that you all, among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom, will see my face no more.

²⁶Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of any man.²⁷ For I did not hold back from declaring to you the whole will of God.

²⁸Therefore be careful about yourselves, and about all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers. Be careful to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.²⁹ I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.³⁰ Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth to draw away the disciples after them.

³¹So be on guard. Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each one of you night and day with tears.³² Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are being sanctified.

³³I coveted no man's silver, gold, or clothing.³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands served my own needs and the needs of those who were with me.³⁵ In all things I gave you an example of how you should help the weak by laboring, and of how you should remember the words of the Lord Jesus, words that he himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

³⁶After he had spoken in this way, he knelt down and prayed with them all.³⁷ There was a lot of crying and they embraced Paul and kissed him.³⁸ They were in anguish most of all because of what he had said, that they would never see his face again. Then they escorted him to the ship.

¹Instead of with his own blood, some ancient copies read, with the blood of his own Son.

21 ¹When we had gone away from them and set sail, we took a straight course to the city of Cos, and the next day to the city of Rhodes, and from there to the city of Patara.² When we found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail.

³After sighting Cyprus, leaving it on the left side of the boat, we sailed on to Syria and landed at Tyre, where the ship was to unload its cargo.⁴ After we found the disciples, we stayed there seven days. Through the Spirit they kept urging Paul not to go to Jerusalem.

⁵When our days there were over, we left and went on our way, and they all, with their wives and children, accompanied us out of the city. Then we knelt down on the beach, prayed,⁶ and said farewell to each other. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

⁷When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais. There we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for one day.⁸ On the next day we left and went to Caesarea. We entered the house of Philip, the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and we stayed with him.⁹ Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

¹⁰As we stayed there for some days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.¹¹ He came to us and took Paul's belt. With it he tied his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up the man who owns this belt, and they will hand him over into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

¹²When we heard these things, both we and the people who lived in that place pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem.

¹³Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready, not only to be tied up, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

¹⁴Since Paul would not be persuaded, we remained silent and then we said, "May the will of the Lord be done."

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

¹⁷When we had arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us gladly.¹⁸ The next day Paul went with us to James, and all the elders were present.¹⁹ When he had greeted them, he reported one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

²⁰When they heard it, they glorified God, and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands have believed among the Jews. They are all zealous to keep the law."²¹They have been told about you, that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to abandon Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children, and not to walk according to the traditional ways.

²²What should we do? They will certainly hear that you have come.²³So do what we say to you. We have four men who made a vow.²⁴Take these men and purify yourself with them, and pay their expenses for them, so that they may shave their heads. So everyone will know that the things they have been told about you are false. They will learn that you also live correctly, obeying the law.

²⁵But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote about our decision that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from sexual immorality."²⁶Then Paul took the men, and the next day he purified himself along with them. Then they went into the temple, giving notice when the days of purification would be fulfilled and the offering would be presented for each of them.

²⁷When the seven days were almost finished, some Jews from Asia, seeing Paul in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him.²⁸They were shouting, "Men of Israel, help us. This is the man who teaches all men everywhere things that are against the people, the law, and this place. Besides, he has also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."²⁹For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they thought that Paul had brought him into the temple.

³⁰All the city was excited, and the people ran together and laid hold of Paul. They dragged him out of the temple, and the doors were immediately shut.³¹As they were trying to kill him, news came up to the chief captain of the company of soldiers, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

³²Right away he took soldiers and centurions and ran down to the crowd. When the people saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.³³Then the chief captain approached and laid hold of Paul, and commanded him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done.

³⁴Some in the crowd were shouting one thing and others another. Since the captain could not learn the truth because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.³⁵When he came to the steps, he was carried by the soldiers because of the crowd's violence.³⁶For the crowd of people followed after and kept shouting out, "Away with him!"

³⁷As Paul was about to be brought into the fortress, he said to the chief captain, "Is it permitted for me to say something to you?"The captain said, "Do you know Greek?"

³⁸Are you not then the Egyptian who some time ago started a rebellion and led the four thousand men of the 'Assassins' out into the wilderness?"

³⁹Paul said, "I am a Jew, from the city of Tarsus in Cilicia. I am a citizen of no unimportant city. I beg you, allow me to speak to the people."

⁴⁰When the captain had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned with the hand to the people. When there was a deep silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language. He said,

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

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

³"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but educated in this city at the feet of Gamaliel. I was instructed according to the strict ways of the law of our fathers. I am zealous for God, just as all of you are today.⁴I persecuted this Way to the death, binding up and delivering to prison both men and women,⁵as the high priest and all the elders can testify. I received letters from them for the brothers in Damascus, and I went there to bring them back in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.

⁶It happened that when I was traveling and nearing Damascus, about noon suddenly a great light from heaven began to shine around me.⁷I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'

⁸I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?'He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'

⁹Those who were with me saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who spoke to me.¹⁰I said, 'What should I do, Lord?'The Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus. There you will be told everything that has been appointed for you to do.'

¹¹I could not see because of that light's brightness, and being led by the hands of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.

¹²There I met a man named Ananias, a devout man according to the law and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there.¹³He came to me, stood by me, and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' In that very hour I saw him.

¹⁴Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear the voice coming from his own mouth.' ¹⁵For you will be a witness for him to all men about what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶Now why are you waiting? Arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.'

¹⁷After I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple, a trance came on me. ¹⁸I saw him say to me, 'Hurry and leave Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.'

¹⁹I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you in every synagogue.' ²⁰When the blood of Stephen your witness was spilled, I also was standing by and agreeing, and I was guarding the cloaks of those who killed him. ²¹But he said to me, 'Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'"

²²They listened to him until that statement. Then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not right that he should live." ²³As they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and throwing dust into the air, ²⁴the chief captain commanded Paul to be brought into the fortress. He ordered that he should be questioned with scourging, so that he himself might know why they were shouting against him like that.

²⁵When they had tied him up with the thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and who has not been put on trial?"

²⁶When the centurion heard this, he went to the chief captain and told him, saying, "What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen."

²⁷The chief captain came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" Paul said, "Yes."

²⁸The chief captain answered, "It was only with a large amount of money that I acquired citizenship." But Paul said, "I was born a Roman citizen."

²⁹Then the men who were going to question him left him immediately. The chief captain also was afraid, when he learned that Paul was a Roman citizen, because he had tied him up.

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

23 ¹Paul looked directly at the council members and said, "Brothers, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day." ²The high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.

³Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall. Are you sitting to judge me by the law, yet order me to be struck, against the law?"

⁴Those who stood by said, "Is this how you insult God's high priest?"

⁵Paul said, "I did not know, brothers, that he was high priest. For it is written, 'You must not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"

⁶When Paul saw that the one part of the council were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he spoke loudly in the council: "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is because I have the hope of the resurrection of the dead that I am being judged." ⁷When he said this, an argument began between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the crowd was divided. ⁸For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, no angels, and no spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge all of them.

⁹So a large uproar occurred, and some of the scribes belonging to the Pharisees stood up and argued, saying, "We find nothing wrong with this man. What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?" ¹⁰When there arose a great argument, the chief captain feared that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, so he commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among the council members, and bring him into the fortress.

¹¹The following night the Lord stood beside him and said, "Have courage, for as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

¹²When it became day, some Jews formed a conspiracy and put themselves under an oath, saying that they would not eat or drink anything until they had killed Paul. ¹³There were more than forty men who formed this conspiracy.

¹⁴They went to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have sworn a great oath to eat nothing until we have killed Paul." ¹⁵Now, therefore, let the council formally request the chief captain to bring him down to you, as if you would decide his case more precisely. As for us, we are ready to kill him before he comes here."

¹⁶But Paul's sister's son heard that they were lying in wait, so he went and entered the fortress and told Paul.

¹⁷Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the chief captain, for he has something to report to him."

¹⁸So the centurion took the young man and brought him to the chief captain and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to him, and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you."

¹⁹The chief captain took him by the hand to a private place and asked him, "What is it that you have to report to me?"

²⁰The young man said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring down Paul tomorrow to the council, as if they were going to ask more precisely about his case. ²¹But do not be persuaded by them, because there are more than forty men who are lying in wait for him. They have put themselves under oath neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him. Even now they are ready, waiting for your approval."

²²So the chief captain let the young man go, after instructing him, "Tell no one that you have reported these things to me."

²³Then he called to him two of the centurions and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready to go as far as Caesarea, and seventy horsemen also, and two hundred spearmen. You will leave at the third hour of the night." ²⁴He also ordered them to provide animals which Paul could ride and to take him safely to Felix the governor.

²⁵Then he wrote a letter like this: ²⁶"Claudius Lysias, ²⁷This man was arrested by the Jews and was about to be killed by them when I came upon them with soldiers and rescued him, since I learned that he was a Roman citizen.

²⁸I wanted to know why they accused him, so I took him down to their council. ²⁹I learned that he was being accused about questions concerning their own law, but that there was no accusation against him that deserved death or imprisonment.

³⁰Then it was reported to me that there was a plot against the man, so I immediately sent him to you and instructed his accusers also to bring their charges against him in your presence.

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

³⁴When the governor read the letter, he asked what province Paul was from. When he learned that he was from Cilicia,

³⁵he said, "I will hear you fully when your accusers come here." Then he commanded him to be kept in Herod's government headquarters.

24 ¹After five days, Ananias the high priest, certain elders, and an orator named Tertullus went there. These men brought charges against Paul before the governor. ²When Paul stood before the governor, Tertullus began to accuse him and said to the governor, "Because of you we have great peace, and your foresight brings good reform to our nation; ³so with all thankfulness we welcome everything that you do, most excellent Felix.

⁴So that I detain you no more, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly. ⁵For we have found this man to be a pest and one who causes all the Jews throughout the world to rebel. He is a leader of the Nazarene sect. ⁶He even tried to desecrate the temple, so we arrested him. ¹

⁷ ⁸When you examine Paul about all these matters, you will be able to learn about all the things of which we are accusing him." ⁹The Jews also joined in the accusation, affirming that these charges were true.

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

¹¹You can learn for yourself that it has not been more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem. ¹²When they found me in the temple, I did not argue with anyone, and I did not stir up a crowd, either in the synagogues, or in the city. ¹³They cannot prove to you the accusations they are now making against me.

¹⁴But I confess this to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I serve the God of our fathers, believing all things that are according to the law and that has been written in the prophets. ¹⁵I have a hope in God, which these men also have, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. ¹⁶So I always strive to have a blameless conscience before God and human beings.

¹⁷Now after many years I came to give alms to my nation and present sacrifices. ¹⁸When I did this, certain Jews from Asia found me in a purification ceremony in the temple, not with a crowd or an uproar. ¹⁹These men ought to be before you now and accuse me, if they have anything.

²⁰Or else, these same men should say what wrong they found in me when I stood before the Jewish council, ²¹unless it is about this one thing that I shouted out when I stood among them, 'It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.'"

²²Then Felix, who was well informed about the Way, postponed the hearing. He said, "When Lysias the commander comes

down from Jerusalem, I will decide your case."²³ Then he commanded the centurion that Paul should be kept in custody, but to have some freedom so that none of his friends would be prevented from attending to his needs.

²⁴After some days, Felix returned with Drusilla his wife, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and he heard from him about faith in Christ Jesus.²⁵ But when Paul reasoned with him about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for now. But when I have time later on, I will send for you."

²⁶At the same time he hoped that Paul would give money to him, so he often sent for him and spoke with him.²⁷ But when two years passed, Porcius Festus became the governor after Felix, but Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he left Paul bound.

¹Some ancient copies add, We wanted to judge him according to our law.

²Some ancient copies have for verse 7 and the beginning of verse 8, 7 But Lysias, the officer, came and took him by force out of our hands, 8 commanding his accusers to come to you.

25 ¹Now, Festus entered the province, and after three days, he went from Caesarea up to Jerusalem.² The chief priests and the prominent Jews brought their charges against Paul, and they asked Festus earnestly—³asking him to do them a favor against Paul—to summon him to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way.

⁴Festus answered that Paul was being held in custody at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there soon.⁵ "Therefore, those who can," he said, "should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

⁶Festus stayed not more than eight or ten days and then he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he sat on the judgment seat and commanded Paul to be brought to him.⁷ When he arrived, the Jews from Jerusalem stood nearby, and they brought many serious charges which they could not prove.

⁸Paul defended himself and said, "I have committed no sin against the law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar."

⁹But Festus wanted to gain the favor of the Jews, and so he answered Paul and said, "Do you want to go up to Jerusalem and to be judged by me about these things there?"¹⁰ Paul said, "I stand before the judgment seat of Caesar where I must be judged. I have wronged no Jews, just as you also very well know.

¹¹Though if I have done wrong and if I have done what is worthy of death, I do not refuse to die. But if their accusations are nothing, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar."¹² After Festus talked with the council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

¹³Now after some days, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay an official visit to Festus.¹⁴ After they had been there for many days, Festus presented Paul's case to the king; he said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner.¹⁵ When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against this man to me, and they asked for a sentence of condemnation against him.¹⁶ I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had faced his accusers and received an opportunity to defend himself against the charges.

¹⁷Therefore, when they came together here, I did not wait, but the next day I sat in the judgment seat and I ordered the man to be brought in.¹⁸ When the accusers stood up, they charged him with nothing that I considered wickedness.

¹⁹Instead, they had certain disputes with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus who was dead, whom Paul claims to be alive.²⁰ I was perplexed about how to investigate this matter, and so I asked him if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem to stand trial there about these charges.

²¹But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody while awaiting the decision of the emperor, I ordered him to be held in custody until I could send him to Caesar."²² Agrippa spoke to Festus: "I would also like to listen to this man." "Tomorrow," Festus said, "you will hear him."

²³So on the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with much ceremony; they came into the hall with the military officers and with the prominent men of the city. When Festus spoke the command, Paul was brought to them.²⁴ Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you men who are here with us, you see this man; all the multitude of Jews appealed to me in Jerusalem and here also, and they shouted to me that he should no longer live.

²⁵I found he had done nothing worthy of death; but because he appealed to the emperor, I decided to send him to Rome.

²⁶But I do not have anything certain to write to my lord. For this reason, I have brought him to you, especially to you, King Agrippa, so that I might have something more to write about the case.²⁷ For it seems unreasonable for me to send a prisoner and to not also state the charges against him."

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

²"I consider myself happy, King Agrippa, to make my case before you today against all the accusations of the Jews, especially because you are an expert in all the Jewish customs and questions. So I beg you to hear me patiently.

³Truly, all the Jews know how I lived from my youth in my own nation and at Jerusalem.⁴They have known about me from the beginning, if they are willing to admit it, that I lived as a Pharisee, the strictest party of our religion.

⁵Now I stand here to be judged because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers.⁶It is this promise that our twelve tribes hope to receive as they worship God earnestly night and day, and it is for this hope, king, that the Jews are accusing me.⁷Why should any of you judge it to be incredible that God raises the dead?

⁸Now indeed, I myself thought that I should do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth.⁹I did these in Jerusalem. I locked up in prison many of God's holy people by the authority I received from the chief priests; and when they were killed, I cast my vote against them.¹⁰I punished them many times in all the synagogues, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was furiously enraged against them, and I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

¹¹While I was doing this, I went to Damascus with authority and orders from the chief priests;¹²and on the way there, in the middle of the day, king, I saw a light from heaven that was brighter than the sun, and it shone around both me and the men who were traveling with me.¹³When we all fell to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me that said in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick a goad.'

¹⁴Then I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' The Lord replied, 'I am Jesus whom you persecute.'¹⁵Now get up and stand on your feet; because for this purpose I appeared to you, to appoint you to be a servant and a witness concerning the things that you know about me now and the things that I will show to you later;¹⁶and I will rescue you from the people and from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you,¹⁷to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, so that they may receive from God the forgiveness of sins and the inheritance that I give to them who are sanctified by faith in me.'

¹⁸Therefore, King Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision;¹⁹but, to those in Damascus first, and then at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, I gave them the message that that they should repent and turn to God, doing deeds worthy of repentance.²⁰For this cause the Jews arrested me in the temple and tried to kill me.

²¹Therefore I have received the help that comes from God until this very day, and I stand and testify to both small and great about nothing more than what the prophets and Moses said would happen—²²that Christ must suffer, and by being the first to rise from the dead he would proclaim light to our own people and to the Gentiles."

²³As Paul completed his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are insane; your great learning makes you insane."²⁴But Paul said, "I am not insane, most excellent Festus, but I am declaring words of truth and sound judgment.

²⁵For the king knows about these things; and so I speak boldly to him, for I am persuaded that none of this is hidden from him; for this has not been done in a corner.

²⁶Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that you believe."²⁷Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me and make me a Christian?"

²⁸Paul said, "I pray to God, that whether in a short or long time, not you only, but also all that hear me today, would be like me, but without these prison chains."

²⁹Then the king stood up, and the governor, and Bernice also, and those who were sitting with them;³⁰when they left the hall, they talked to one another and said, "This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds."

³¹Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been freed if he had not appealed to Caesar."

27 ¹When it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they committed Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Augustan company of soldiers.²We boarded a ship from Adramyttium which was about to sail along the coast of Asia. So we went to sea. Aristarchus from Thessalonica in Macedonia went with us.

³The next day we landed at the city of Sidon, where Julius treated Paul kindly and allowed him to go to his friends to receive their care.⁴From there we went to sea and sailed under the lee of Cyprus, close to the island, because the winds were against us.⁵When we had sailed across the sea past Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra, a city of Lycia.⁶There, the centurion found a ship from Alexandria that was going to sail to Italy. He put us on it.

⁷When we had sailed slowly for many days and had finally arrived with difficulty near Cnidus and the wind no longer allowed us to go that way, we sailed along the sheltered side of Crete, opposite Salmone.⁸We sailed along the coast with difficulty, until we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, which is near the city of Lasea.

⁹We had now taken much time, the time of the Jewish fast also had passed, and it had now become dangerous to sail. So Paul warned them,¹⁰and said, "Men, I see that the voyage we are about to take will be with injury and much loss, not only

of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."¹¹ But the centurion was more persuaded by the master and by the owner of the ship than by those things that were spoken by Paul.

¹²Because the harbor was not easy to spend the winter in, most of the sailors advised to sail from there, and if by any means we could reach the city of Phoenix, to spend the winter there. Phoenix is a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.¹³ When a south wind began to blow gently, the sailors thought that they had what they needed. So they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore.

¹⁴But after a short time a wind of hurricane force, called the northeaster, began to beat down from the island.¹⁵ When the ship was caught by the storm and could no longer head into the wind, we had to give way to the storm and were driven along by the wind.¹⁶ We sailed along the lee of a small island called Cauda, and with difficulty we were able to secure the lifeboat.

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

¹⁹On the third day the sailors threw overboard the ship's equipment with their own hands.²⁰ When the sun and stars did not shine on us for many days, and the great storm still beat upon us, any more hope that we should be saved was abandoned.

²¹When they had gone long without food, then Paul stood up among the sailors and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have set sail from Crete, so as to get this injury and loss."²² Now I urge you to take courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only the loss of the ship.

²³For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong, whom also I worship—his angel stood beside me²⁴ and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar, and see, God in his kindness has given to you all those who are sailing with you.'²⁵ Therefore have courage, men! For I trust God that it will happen just as it was told to me.²⁶ But we must run aground upon some island."

²⁷When the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven this way and that in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors thought that they were approaching some land.²⁸ They took soundings and found twenty fathoms; after a little while, they took more soundings and found fifteen fathoms.²⁹ They were afraid that we might crash on the rocks, so they lowered four anchors from the stern and prayed that morning would come soon.

³⁰The sailors were looking for a way to abandon the ship and had lowered the lifeboat into the sea, and pretended that they would throw down the anchors from the bow.³¹ But Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved."³² Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat and let it drift away.

³³When daylight was coming on, Paul encouraged them all to take some food. He said, "This day is the fourteenth day that you have been on constant guard and have gone without food—you have not eaten anything."³⁴ So I urge you to share some food, for this is necessary for you to survive. For not one of you will lose a single hair from his head."³⁵ When he had said this, he took bread and he thanked God in the sight of everyone. Then he broke the bread and began to eat.

³⁶Then they were all encouraged and they also took food.³⁷ We were 276 souls on the ship.³⁸ When they had eaten enough, they made the ship lighter by throwing out the wheat into the sea.

³⁹When it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a beach, and they discussed whether they could drive the ship onto it.⁴⁰ So they cut loose the anchors and left them in the sea. At the same time they loosed the ropes of the rudders and raised the foresail to the wind; and so they headed to the beach.⁴¹ But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow was stuck there and remained unmovable, and the stern was broken up by the force of the waves.

⁴²The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners so that none of them could swim away and escape.⁴³ But the centurion wanted to save Paul, so he stopped their plan; and he ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land.

⁴⁴Then the rest of the men should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. In this way it happened that all of us were brought safely to land.

28 ¹When we were brought safely through, we learned that the island was called Malta.² The native people offered to us not just ordinary kindness, but they lit a fire and welcomed us all because of the constant rain and cold.

³But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and placed them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened onto his hand.⁴ When the native people saw the animal hanging from his hand, they said one to another, "This man certainly is a murderer who has been saved from the sea; Justice does not permit him to live."

⁵But then he shook the animal into the fire and suffered no harm.⁶ They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they watched him for a long time and saw that nothing was wrong with him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

⁷Now in a nearby place there were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, a man named Publius. He welcomed us and kindly provided for us for three days.⁸ It happened that the father of Publius was lying afflicted with a fever and dysentery. When Paul went to him, he prayed, placed his hands on him, and healed him.⁹ After this happened, the rest of

the people on the island who were sick also came and were healed.¹⁰The people also honored us with many honors. When we were preparing to sail, they gave us what we needed.

¹¹After three months we set sail in a ship that had spent the winter at the island, a ship of Alexandria, with "the twin gods" as its figurehead.¹² After we landed at the city of Syracuse, we stayed there three days.

¹³From there we sailed and arrived at the city of Rhegium. After one day a south wind sprang up, and in two days we came to the city of Puteoli.¹⁴There we found some brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. In this way we came to Rome.¹⁵From there the brothers, after they heard about us, came to meet us as far as the Market of Appius and the Three Taverns. When Paul saw the brothers, he thanked God and took courage.

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

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

¹⁹But when the Jews spoke against their desire, I was forced to appeal to Caesar, although it is not as if I were bringing any accusation against my nation.²⁰For this reason, therefore, I called upon you that I might see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am now wearing this chain."

²¹Then they said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea about you, nor did any of the brothers come and report or say anything bad about you."²²But we want to hear from you what you think about this sect, because it is known by us that it is spoken against everywhere."

²³When they had appointed a day for him, more people came to him at his dwelling place. He presented the matter to them, and testified about the kingdom of God. He tried to persuade them about Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning until evening.²⁴Some were convinced about the things which were said, while others did not believe.

²⁵When they did not agree with one another, they left after Paul had spoken this one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke well through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers.

²⁶ He said, 'Go to this people and say,
"Hearing you will hear, but you will never understand;
seeing, you will see, but you will never know.

²⁷ For the heart of this people has become dull,
and with their ears they hardly hear,
and they have shut their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their heart and turn again,
and I would heal them."

²⁸Therefore, you should know that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen."²⁹¹

³⁰Paul lived for two whole years in his own rented house, and he welcomed all who came to him.³¹He was proclaiming the kingdom of God and was teaching the things about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness without being hindered.

¹Acts 28:29—Some ancient copies have verse 29: When he had said these things, the Jews went away. They were having a great dispute among themselves.