

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 16

Ver. 1. *Then came he to Derbe and Lystra*, etc.] Which were cities of Lycaonia, (⁴⁴⁰⁶Acts 14:6) after Paul had gone through Syria and Cilicia; in the last of these places, he had been stoned, and yet goes thither again; none of these things moved him from the preaching of the Gospel, and from the care of the churches, such zeal, courage, and intrepidity was he possessed of:

and behold a certain disciple was there: a converted person, a believer in Christ, one that had learned to know and deny himself, and understood the way of salvation by Christ, and was a follower of him; whether the apostle was an instrument of his conversion, when he was before in these parts, is not certain, though probable, since he often calls him his son; nor is it so evident whether he was at Derbe or at Lystra, though the latter seems most likely, since a report was given of him by the brethren there, and at Iconium, when no mention is made of Derbe, in the following verse:

named Timotheus; or Timothy, the same person to whom afterwards the apostle wrote two epistles: it is a name much used among the Greeks, and his father was a Greek; one of this name, who was an historian among the Greeks, is frequently mentioned by Laertius^{f762}; and there was another of this name, the son of Conon, an Athenian general^{f763}; and another that was a captain or general of Antiochus,

“Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain.” (1 Maccabees 5:6)

“Now Timotheus, whom the Jews had overcome before, when he had gathered a great multitude of foreign forces, and horses out of Asia not a few, came as though he would take Jewry by force of arms.” (2 Maccabees 10:24)

the name signifies one that honoured God, or was honoured by God; both were true in this disciple of Christ:

the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed; his mother was a Jewish woman, but a believer in Christ, her name was Eunice, (Acts 16:1 Timothy 1:5)

but his father was a Greek; a Gentile, an uncircumcised one, and so he seems to have remained, by his sons not being circumcised.

Ver. 2. *Which was well reported of,* etc.] Not the father of Timothy, but Timothy himself; to whose piety, virtue, and good conversation witness was borne,

by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium; the members of the churches which were in these places, and which were not far from one another; and as it is necessary that ministers of the Gospel should have a good report of them that are without, so likewise of them that are within; and the testimony of the latter is preferable to that of the former.

Ver. 3. *Him would Paul have to go forth with him,* etc.] Perceiving that he was a young man, that not only had the grace of God, but very considerable gifts, and abilities for ministerial service; and having a good testimony of his agreeable life and conversation, the apostle was very desirous he should go along with him, and be his companion in his travels, and be an assistant to him in the work of the ministry; and accordingly he was, and is often spoken of in his epistles, as his fellowlabourer, and one that served with him in the Gospel of Christ, and who was very dear unto him:

and took and circumcised him; which may seem strange, when there had been so lately a controversy in the church at Antioch about circumcision, from whence the apostle was just come; and when this matter had been debated and determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, where he was present, and he was now carrying about their decrees: but it is to be observed, that the apostle used circumcision not as a duty of the law, as what that required, and in obedience to it, which he knew was abrogated; much less as necessary to salvation, which the judaizing preachers urged; but as an indifferent thing, and in order to gain a point, and secure some valuable end, as follows

because of the Jews which were in those quarters; not the believing ones, for he brought along with him the decrees of the apostles and elders to satisfy them, that circumcision was not necessary; but the unbelieving ones, who he knew would not suffer an uncircumcised person to teach in their

synagogues, nor would they hear him out of them; wherefore having a mind to take Timothy with him to be assisting to him in the preaching of the Gospel, in point of prudence he thought it proper to circumcise him, that he might be received by them, and be the more acceptable to them; who would otherwise have taken such an offence at him, as not to have heard him: thus the apostle to the Jews became a Jew, that he might gain and save some, (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 9:20) for they knew all that his father was a Greek; and that therefore he was not circumcised; for a woman might not circumcise, because she was not a fit subject of circumcision herself^{f764}; though in case of necessity circumcision by women was allowed of^{f765}.

Ver. 4. *And as they went through the cities*, etc.] Of Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, and others in Lycaonia, and in Phrygia and Galatia; the Arabic version reads, “they both”; that is, Paul and Barnabas:

they delivered them the decrees for to keep; they gave the churches, in these cities, the sentiments, and determinations to be observed and followed by them:

that were ordained of the apostles which were at Jerusalem; concerning the abstinence of the Gentiles from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, (^{<415>}Acts 15:20,29).

Ver. 5. *And so were the churches established in the faith*, etc.] Of Christ, both in the grace and doctrine of faith; and that both by the preaching of the Gospel by the apostle and his companions, and by the decrees of the elders delivered by him:

and increased in number daily; as well as in gifts and grace.

Ver. 6. *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia*, etc.] (See Gill on ^{<410>}Acts 2:10”) To which may be added, that this country had its name either from the river Phryx, as Pliny^{f766} observes, or from the word Phrygios, which signifies “dry”; this being a very dry and sandy country: it was famous for marble stone; hence we read^{f767} of Phrygian Stone or marble, of which pillars and statues were made: according to Josephus^{f768}, the original of the Phrygians was Togarmah the son of Gomer, and grandson of Japheth, (^{<410>}Genesis 10:3), whom he calls Thygrammes, and his people from him, Thygrammeans, and who, adds he, as it seems by the Greeks, are called Phrygians. Herodotus^{f769} reports, that the Phrygians (as the Macedonians say) were called Briges or Brygians, so long as they were

Europeans, and dwelt with the Macedonians: but when they went into Asia, together with the country, they changed their names, into Phrygians: of one Philip a Phrygian, whom Antiochus left governor at Jerusalem, mention is made in:

“And he left governors to vex the nation: at Jerusalem, Philip, for his country a Phrygian, and for manners more barbarous than he that set him there;” (2 Maccabees 5:22)

here dwelt Jews, as appears from (~~41210~~ Acts 2:10) and here the apostle preached and made converts.

And the region of Galatia: in Asia Minor: it had Cappadocia on the east, Bithynia on the west, Pamphylia on the south, and the Euxine sea on the north. The inhabitants of this country were originally Gauls, who under Brennus their captain, came out of some parts of France, and invaded Italy, and came to Rome, and took it all but the capitol; from whence being sallied out upon by the Romans at an unawares, they were obliged to retire; and from thence they sailed into Greece, and went into Asia, into this part of it where they settled, which was first called after them Gallo Graecia, and in process of time Galatia; though some say the Grecians called them Galatians from Gala, which signifies “milk”, because of their milky colour: of the Galatians, mention is made in,

“And he told them of the battle that they had in Babylon with the Galatians, how they came but eight thousand in all to the business, with four thousand Macedonians, and that the Macedonians being perplexed, the eight thousand destroyed an hundred and twenty thousand because of the help that they had from heaven, and so received a great booty.” (2 Maccabees 8:20)

here the Gospel was preached, and many believed; for we afterwards read of disciples both in this country and in Phrygia, (~~41823~~ Acts 18:23) and here were churches formed, and to whom the apostles preached, and delivered the decrees of the apostles and elders.

And were forbidden of the Holy Ghost; not by an articulate voice, but by a secret and powerful impulse upon their minds;

to preach the word in Asia: that is, in that country which was properly called Asia, or pro-consular Asia, otherwise Phrygia, and Galatia, were provinces in Asia Minor. Beza’s most ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin

and Syriac versions read, “the word of God”: the reasons why it was prohibited to be preached here, at this time, cannot be said, and must be referred to the sovereign will of God; it seems, that at this instant, there were no chosen ones to be called by grace, and there was work for the apostle and his companions to do elsewhere, namely, in Macedonia.

Ver. 7. *After they were come to Mysia*, etc.] Another country in Asia Minor. It is divided by Ptolomy^{f770} into two parts; superior Mysia is bounded by Dalmatia on the west, by Macedonia on the south, by part of Thrace on the east, and by part of the river Danube on the north; inferior Mysia is bounded on the west with part of the river Ciaber and the Danube, on the south with part of Thrace, on the north with the turn of the river Tyra, and on the east with the Euxine Pontus; but this was the European Mysia: the Mysia which seems here intended, was divided into the lesser Mysia by the Hellespont, and had Troas on the south; and into the greater Mysia by Olympus, which was bounded on the west with the lesser Mysia and Troas, on the east with Bithynia, and on the south with Asia, properly so called. By Pliny^{f771} it is called Aeolis, and so Jerom says^{f772}, it was in his times; sometimes it is called Abretta and Abrettina, and of later years Thya, or Thyria: some suggest it has its name of Mysia from Mysus, the brother of Car^{f773}, the father of the Carions; but according to the Talmudists, it had its name from Meshech, the son of Japheth, (^{GEN}Genesis 10:2) for they say^{f774} Meshech, *ayswm wz*, “this is Mysia”; Pliny observes^{f775}, that there are some authors who assert that the Mysians, Brygians, and Thynnians came out of Europe, from whom they are called Mysians, Phrygians, and Bithynians, in Asia. The inhabitants of Mysia were very despicable; hence the proverb, “ultimus Mysorum”, “the last of the Mysians”,^{f776} is used for a very mean and contemptible person. The apostle was willing to preach to the wise and unwise, and disdained not to carry the Gospel to the meanest part of mankind.

They assayed to go into Bithynia; another country in Asia Minor; it makes one province with Pontus, and has the same boundaries; Pontus being at the east, and Bithynia at the west: it was bounded on the north with the Euxine sea, on the east with Galatia, on the south with Asia properly so called, and on the west with the Propontis; according to Pliny^{f777} it was called Cronia, afterwards Thessalis, then Maliande, (perhaps Mariandyne), and Strymonis; and Herodotus^{f778} reports, that the Thracians going into Asia were called Bithynians, who were first called (as they say) Strymonians, inhabiting Strymon; according to Jerom^{f779}, it was formerly

called Bebrycia, then Mygdonia, and Phrygia Major, and by the river Iera, or, as Pliny calls it, Hieras, is divided from Galatia; to which agrees Solinus^{f780} who says it was before Bebrycia, afterwards Migdonia, and now Bithynia, from Bithynus the king; the king; though others say, it was so called from Bithyne, a daughter of Jupiter;

but the Spirit suffered them not; the Alexandrian copy, and Beza's most ancient copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, "the Spirit of Jesus": so that it was not an evil spirit, or Satan, that hindered them, who sometimes did; but they were under the direction and guidance of the divine Spirit, called, in the preceding verse, the Holy Ghost; however, the Gospel was preached here afterwards, and churches formed; of which (See Gill on "~~1~~ Peter 1:1").

Ver. 8. *And they passed by Mysia*, etc.] Without stopping or staying there, though they came to it:

came down to Troas; either the country of Troas, as the Syriac version renders it; which, according to Solinus^{f781}, is bordered on the north part of Galatia, and was near to Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Mygdonia on the south, and to Lydia on the east, and to Mysia and Caria on the north: or rather the city of Troas, which Pliny says^{f782}, was formerly called Antigonion, now Alexandria, a colony of the Romans. Antigonon king of Asia called it Troas at first, because it was in the country, and near where Troy stood, but afterwards he called it, according to his own name, Antigonion; but Lysimachus king of Thrace having got this city into his hands, repaired it, and called it after the name of Alexander, Alexandria; and to distinguish it from Alexandria in Egypt, and other cities of the same name in other places, it was called Alexandria Troas.

Ver. 9. *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night*, etc.] Either in a dream, or, it may be, when he was awake:

there stood a man of Macedonia; an angel in the form of a man; the Syriac version reads, "as a man of Macedonia", and who might appear in a Macedonian habit, or speak in the Macedonian language; or the apostle might conclude him to be so, from his making mention of Macedonia, as the place where he requested him to come, and assist:

and prayed him, saying, come over into Macedonia; Macedonia was a very large country in Europe; which formerly consisted, as Pliny^{f783} says, of a hundred and fifty people, or nations, and was called Emathia; it took

its name of Macedonia from Macedo, a son of Jupiter, and of Thyd, a daughter of Deucalion: according to Ptolomy^{f784} it had on the north Dalmatia, superior Mysia and Thracia; on the west, the Ionian sea; on the south Epirus; and on the east, part of Thracia, and the gulfs of the Aegean sea. It had formerly other names besides Emathia and Macedonia, as Mygdonia and Edoma, and is now called Albania or Ronnelli. Troas, where the apostle now was, when he had this vision, was just by the Hellespont, over which he must go to Macedonia; and therefore the Macedonian prays him to “come over”, adding,

and help us; by praying and preaching, to pull down the kingdom of Satan, to destroy superstition and idolatry, to enlighten the eyes of men, and turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, and save them from utter ruin and destruction. This shows what a miserable condition this country was in; and that God had some chosen people among them to gather in, whose time was now come; and of what use and service the angels, Christ’s ministering spirits, are, who are helpful in weakening the kingdom of Satan, and advancing the interest of Christ, and in spreading his Gospel, and particularly in directing the ministers of it where to preach it; though it follows not from hence, that this angel presided over the whole country, and was their tutelar angel, as some think.

Ver. 10. *And after he had seen the vision*, etc.] And considered it, and related it to his companions: and when they had well weighed it, and the circumstances of it:

immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia; they determined upon it, and took all the proper methods, and made the necessary provisions for it. Here Luke, the writer of this history, first appears, saying, “we endeavoured”; whether he came with the apostle from Antioch, since he is commonly said to have been a physician of Antioch; or whether he met the apostle at Troas, since here is the first hint of him, is not certain:

assuredly gathering, that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them; they concluded from the vision with great certainty, that they had a manifest call from God to go into Macedonia, and preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of it, not doubting but that they should meet with success. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read “God”, instead of “Lord”.

Ver. 11. *Therefore loosing from Troas*, etc.] Or setting sail from thence, which, as before observed, was the Hellespont; which was a narrow sea that divided Asia from Europe, now called Stretto di Gallipoi, or Bracci di St. Georgio: and so Pliny ^{f785} speaking of Troas says, it lies near the Hellespont; and Jerom ^{f786} calls it a maritime city of Asia; and it further appears to be on the sea coast, by what is said in (~~4016~~ Acts 20:6), for from Philippi hither, the apostle and his company sailed in five days, and from hence they sailed to Assos, (~~4016~~ Acts 20:6,13)

we came with a straight course to Samothracia; which was an island in the Aegean sea, or Archipelago: it was formerly called Dardania ^{f787}, from Dardanus the, son of Jupiter by Electra, who fled hither from Italy, upon killing his brother Jasius; it had its name of Samothracia, from Thracia, near to which it was, and from the Samians who inhabited it; and it was called Samothracia to distinguish it from the island Samos in the Ionian sea; it is now called Samandrachi: Jerom ^{f788} calls it an island in the gulf of Pagasa; of this island of Samothracia, Pliny says ^{f789}, that it was free before Hebrus, was thirty two miles from Imbrus, twenty two and a half from Lemnus, thirty eight, from the shore of Thracia, and in circumference thirty two — and that it is fullest of good havens of any in those parts; and adds, that Callimachus calls it by its ancient name Dardania; it seems it was also called Leucosia, or Leucadia, because to spectators at a distance it looked white: according to ^{f790} Herodotus the Pelasgi first inhabited Samothracia, who with the Athenians dwelt there, and from them the Samothracians received their sacred rites and mysteries; for this island was famous for the worship of the Cabiri, or chief deities of the Gentiles, particularly Ceres, Proserpina, Pluto, Mercury, and the two brothers Castor and Pollux, Neptune, and all the sea gods; insomuch that it was called “the holy island” ^{f791}, and persons of other nations, and even of the greatest figure, were initiated into the mysteries of the Samothracians, which Pliny ^{f792} calls the most holy; for speaking of Venus, Potho, and Phaeton, adds, who are worshipped with the most holy ceremonies of Samothracia. The apostle did not stay to preach the Gospel in this place, nor do we read of its being preached here by him at any other time, or by any other, nor of any church in this place in after ages in ecclesiastical history. The apostle and his companions are said to come hither, “with a straight course”; not only because they might have a fair gale, which brought them at once hither; but because when they were over the Hellespont, this island lay directly in their way, in a straight line to Macedonia:

and the next day to Neapolis; the Alexandrian copy reads, “the new city”, as the word signifies; hence the Ethiopic version by way of interpretation renders it, “the next day we came to the new city, the name of which is Neapolis”: according to Ptolomy, it was a sea port of Edonis, a part of Macedonia, and was upon the borders of Thrace; it is now called Christopoli; and was not Neapolis in Campania, nor Sychem in Samaria, which is so called, but was at a great distance from either of these. Pliny places it in Thracia, as he also does Edonis, and even Philippi^{f793}. Jerom calls^{f794} it a city of Caria, but wrongly: and though we have no account of the apostles preaching in this place, and of making converts, neither now nor at any other time; yet it appears even in after ages that here was a church in this place: in the “sixth” century the bishop of it was sent to the fifth Roman synod; and in the “seventh” century one Andreas was bishop of this place, who was in the sixth synod at Constantinople^{f795}.

Ver. 12. *And from thence to Philippi*, etc.] This place is by Appianus called Damos, which was its original name; and by Diodorus Siculus, Crenidae^{f796}, from the fountains of water, which were many and wholesome, that were about it; and it had its name Philippi, from Philip king of Macedon, father of Alexander the great, who rebuilt it^{f797}: it is now vulgarly called Chrixopolis, that is, Chrysopolis, from the veins and mines of gold found about it; it was famous for a battle here fought between Augustus Caesar and Anthony on the one side, and Brutus and Cassius on the other, in which the latter were vanquished:

which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia; which is called Edonis, in which Ptolomy places it;

and a colony: that is, of the Romans; (see ^{<4465>}Acts 16:37,38) and which Pliny^{f798} also calls a colony:

and we were in that city abiding many days; without doing anything, having no opportunity, or door opened to them to preach the Gospel; which must be a great trial of their faith, after Paul had seen such a vision, by which they were so strongly assured it was the will of God they should come and preach the Gospel here, and after they had travelled so far by sea and land; though some observe, that the word used signifies not only to abide, but to exercise themselves, by teaching and preaching the word, which it is supposed they did with success; and that the women they after met with by the river side, were such, at least some of them, who had been converted under their ministry; but the former seems to be the truest sense.

Ver. 13. *And on the sabbath*, etc.] That is, as the Syriac version renders it, “on the sabbath day”; the Jewish sabbath, the seventh day of the week; though the words may be rendered, “on a certain day of the week” agreeably to (~~400~~ Acts 20:7) where the first of the sabbath means the first day of the week; but be this as it will, on this day,

we went out of the city by a river side; perhaps the river Strymon, which was near; the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read,

without the gate; and the Syriac version, “without the gates of the city”; all to the same sense: it looks as if there was no synagogue of the Jews in this place, or otherwise the apostle and his companions would have gone into that, according to their custom; and this the rather seems to be the case, since it is so particularly remarked, that at Thessalonica, the next place they stayed at there was one, (~~410~~ Acts 17:1) and the reason might be, because that Philippi being a Roman colony, the Jews were not suffered to have one in it; wherefore Paul and his company, whether on the Jewish sabbath, or on any other day of the week, took a walk out of the city; either for the sake of a walk, or rather to converse together, and consider what was to be done, or to look out for an opportunity to preach the Gospel; and they came to a place,

where prayer was wont to be made; or as the words may be rendered, “where was thought to be a place of prayer”; a “proseucha”, an oratory, or a place built and made use of for prayer; that is, as they walked along, they saw a place, which in their opinion looked like a religious house, or a place for prayer, and so made up to it, where they found some persons assembled together on that account: this sense is confirmed by several versions; the Vulgate Latin version reads, “where there seemed to be prayer”, and so reads Beza’s most ancient copy; and the Syriac version is very express, “for there was seen” *atwl x tyb*, “an house of prayer”; to which agrees the Arabic version, “we went out to a certain place, which was thought to be a place of prayer”; to which may be added the Ethiopic version, “and we thought there was prayer there”; and that the Jews had their oratories, or prayer houses, is certain; (See Gill on “~~412~~ Luke 6:12”) and that these were without the cities, and in the fields, appears from a passage of Epiphanius ^{f799}, who says,

“there were anciently places of prayer, both among the Jews, “without the city”, and among the Samaritans, there was a place of prayer at Sichem, which is now called Neapolis, “without the city”, in the field, about two stones distance, in form of a theatre, open to the air, and without covering, built by the Samaritans, who in all things imitated the Jews:”

and if these were commonly built by fountains and rivers, and as some think, in imitation of Isaac, who went out into the field, “to meditate”; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, “to pray”; and is also in the same place said to come, as the Jerusalem paraphrase renders it, *arabl* “to a well”, or “fountain”, (^{OLD}Genesis 24:62,63) then this clause may be rendered, “where it was usual for a prayer house to be”: and then the sense is, there being no synagogue in the city, the apostle and those with him went out of it, to the river side, to look out for a prayer house; where such places were wont to be built, and they accordingly found one:

and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither; who seem to have been Jewish women, who met here to attend public prayer, there being no religious worship of the true God in the city; and among these worshippers of God was Lydia, hereafter mentioned; and worship not being begun, the apostle and his companions sat down among them, and entered into some religious conversation with them, and took the opportunity of preaching the Gospel, which was what they wanted, and were seeking after.

Ver. 14. *And a certain woman, named Lydia*, etc.] Whether this woman was a Jewess or a Gentile, is not certain, her name will not determine; she might be called so from the country of Lydia, which was in Asia minor, and where was Thyatira, her native place; Horace makes frequent mention of one of this name ^{f800} and it might be a Jewish name; we read of R. Simeon ben Lydia ^{f801}; and as these seem to be Jewish women that met at this oratory, she might be one:

a seller of purple; either of purple silks, much wore in the eastern countries; or of the purple dye, which in,

“Then Judas returned to spoil the tents, where they got much gold, and silver, and blue silk, and purple of the sea, and great riches.” (1 Maccabees 4:23)

is called “purple of the sea”, or “sea purple”; it being the blood or juice of a turbinated shell fish, which the Jews call ^{^wzl j}, “Chalson”: this they speak of as a shellfish; hence those words ^{f802},

“go and learn of the Chalson, for all the while it grows, its shell grows with it:”

and that purple was dyed with the blood of it, appears from the following instances; “the best fruits in the land”, (^{<0481>}Genesis 43:11) are interpreted ^{f803}, the things that are the most famous in the world, as the Chalson, etc. with whose blood, as the gloss on the passage says, they dye purple: and the purple dyed with this was very valuable, and fetched a good price; the tribe of Zebulun is represented ^{f804}, as complaining to God, that he had given to their brethren fields and vineyards, to them mountains and hills, to their brethren lands, and to them seas and rivers; to which it is replied, all will stand in need of thee, because of Chalson; as it is said, (^{<f839>}Deuteronomy 33:19) “They shall suck of the abundance of the seas”; the gloss upon it, interpreting the word Chalson, is, it comes out of the sea to the mountains, and with its blood they dye purple, which is sold at a very dear price. The text in (^{<f839>}Deuteronomy 33:19) is thus paraphrased by Jonathan the Targumist;

“at the shore of the sea they dwell (i.e. they of the tribe of Zebulun), and they delight themselves with (the fish) Tuny, and take Chalson, and with its blood dye purple the threads of their garments.”

And so Maimonides says ^{f805}, that they use this in dyeing the fringes on the borders of their garments; after they have scoured the wool, and the like, that it may take the dye, he says,

“they take of the blood of Chalson, which is a fish whose colour is like the colour of purple, and its blood is black like ink, and it is found in the salt sea,”

particularly about Tyre; so the husbandmen in (^{<2526>}Jeremiah 52:16) are interpreted ^{f806}, they that catch Chalson from the ladder of Tyre to Chippah, or the shore; the gloss explains it, those that squeeze and press the Chalson, to fetch out its blood: and with all this agree the modern accounts given of purple, as follow;

“purple was much esteemed among the ancients, especially the Tyrian purple; which underwent more dyes than the rest, and which was almost peculiar to emperors and kings, yet this purple did not exceed that now in use. — The ancient purple was tinged, or given with the blood or juice of a precious turbinated testaceous sea fish, called by the Greeks **πορφυρα**, and by the Latins “purpura”. — In the seas of the Spanish West Indies, about Nicoya, is found a shell fish, which perfectly resembles the ancient “purpura”, and in all probability is the very same — these are gathered very plentifully in the spring, and by rubbing one against another, yield a kind of saliva, or thick glair, resembling soft wax; but the purple dye is in the throat of the fish, and the finest part in a little white vein — the chief riches of Nicoya consist in this fish; cloth of Segovia dyed with it, is sold for twenty crowns the ell. — In the Philosoph. Transact., we have an account of a purple fish discovered in 1686, by Mr. W. Cole, on the coasts of Somersetshire, South Wales, &c, where it is found in great abundance. — The fish is a kind of “buccinum”, a name given by the ancients to all fishes, whose shell bears any resemblance to a hunting horn; and it appears from Pliny, that part of the ancient purple was taken from this kind of shell fish. The Caribbee Islands have likewise their “purple” fish; it is called “burgan”, being of the size of the end of the finger, and resembling our periwinkles; its shell is of a brownish azure, its flesh white, its intestines of a very bright red, the colour whereof appears through the body; and it is this that dyes that froth, which it casts when taken, and which is at first of a violet hue, bordering on blue; to oblige them to yield the greater quantity of froth, they lay them on a plate, and shake and beat them against one another, upon which the plate is immediately covered with the froth, which is received on a linen cloth, and becomes “purple”, in proportion as it dries^{f807}.”

It may be further observed, that the fringes which the Jews wore upon their garments, had on them a ribband of blue or purple, (^{<0453>}Numbers 15:38), for the word there used, is by the Septuagint rendered “purple”, in (^{<0047>}Numbers 4:7) and sometimes “hyacinth”; and the whole fringe was by the Jews called **tl kt**, “purple” :hence it is said^{f808},

“does not everyone that puts on the “purple” (i.e. the fringes on his garments) in Jerusalem, make men to wonder? and a little after, the

former saints, or religious men, when they had wove in it (the garment) three parts, they put on it **tl kt**, “the purple.”

And there were persons who traded in these things, and were called **tl kt yr kwm**, “sellers of purple”^{f809}, as here; that is, for the Tzitzith, or fringes for the borders of the garments, on which the ribband of blue or purple was put, as the gloss explains it: the Jews were very curious about the colour, and the dying of it; that it should be a colour that would hold and not change; and that the ribband be dyed on purpose for that use. Maimonides gives rules for the dying of it^{f810}, and they were no less careful of whom they bought it; for they say, that “the purple” was not to be bought, but of an approved person, or one that was authorized for that purpose^{f811}; and a scruple is raised by one, whether he had done right or no, in buying it of the family of a doctor deceased^{f812}: now since Lydia might be a Jewess, or at least, as appears by what follows, was a proselytess of the Jewish religion, this might be her business to sell the purple for their fringes, and it may be the fringes themselves; and if this was her employment, she was thoroughly a religious person in their way, since we find, that **tl kt yr kwm**, “sellers of purple”, were free from reading

“hear O Israel”, etc. (~~Exod~~ Deuteronomy 6:4) and “from prayer”, and from the phylacteries, etc. for this reason, because he that is employed in the commandment (in any work for it) was free from the commandment^{f813};

and yet she attended at the place and time of prayer:

of the city of Thyatira; which was in Lydia, or as others say in Mysia, which was in Asia Minor; Pliny^{f814} seems to place it in Ionia, by the river Lycus, and says it was formerly called Pelopia and Euhippa, and it was also called Semiramis; it had its name of Thyatira from Seleucus Nicanor, who being at war with Lysimachus near this place, and hearing he had a daughter born, called it Thygateira; though others say it was so called, because that when the Mysians were about to build a city, inquiring of the gods where they should build it, were told, that they should build it where a hart was struck, and appeared running; and **δια το ψυειν**, because of the sacrificing of the hart, they called it Thyateira. The Turks now call it “Ak hissar”, the white camp. This was Lydia’s native place, from which she was now at a great distance, being either wholly removed hither, or was

here upon business; for Thyatira was in Asia, and Philippi, where she now was, was in Europe:

which worshipped God; the true God, the God of Israel, and not the gods of the Gentiles, among whom she was; which shows, that she was either a Jewish woman, who had knowledge of the one true and living God, or at least a proselytess of the Jewish religion:

heard us; not alone, but with other women; and at first only externally, and not so as to understand and receive what she heard, until the efficacious grace of God was exerted upon her, signified in the following clause:

whose heart the Lord opened; which was before shut and barred, with the bars of ignorance, hardness, and unbelief. The heart of a sinner before conversion, is like a house shut up, and wholly in darkness; whatever degree of natural or moral light is in it, there is none in spiritual things; it is empty of the grace of God, of the fear of him, and love to him; it is without proper inhabitants, without God, Christ, and the Spirit; and is the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, who delight in dark and desolate places; it is bolted and barred with unbelief, and walled up, and even petrified and hardened with sin, and is guarded and garrisoned by Satan, and its goods are kept in peace by him: and this had been the case of Lydia; but now the Lord opened her understanding, and put light into it, which was before darkness itself; as to spiritual things; by which she saw her wretched, sinful, and miserable state by nature, the insufficiency of all ways and means, and works, to justify and save her, and the necessity, suitability, and fulness of grace and salvation by Christ; which was done by the same divine power, that at first created light in darkness: moreover, the Lord wrought upon her affections, and engaged them to divine and spiritual things; creating love in her soul to Christ, to his people, truths and ordinances; which was done by his almighty hand, taking away the stony heart, and giving an heart of flesh: he also removed the bar of unbelief, entered in himself, dispossessed Satan, and worked faith in her, to look to him, lay hold on him, and receive him, as her Saviour and Redeemer; making her willing in the day of his power, to be saved by him, and to serve him: it is a petition the Jews frequently make ^{f815}, in their prayers to God, *yabl j tptd*, “that thou wouldst open my heart”, in thy law; or as sometimes, open our hearts in the doctrine of thy law: not Lydia herself, nor the Apostle Paul, but the Lord opened her heart; Jehovah the Father, who commanded light out of darkness; Jehovah the Son, who has the key

of the house of David; Jehovah the Spirit, who convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment:

that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul; concerning the person and offices of Christ, concerning his truths and ordinances, concerning free justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and everlasting salvation by him; these things she hearkened unto in another manner than she had done; before she heard, but did not attend to what she heard; but faith coming by hearing, now she hears with the hearing of faith, and understands what she hears, and cordially receives and embraces it, and put into practice what she heard, submitting to the ordinance of Christ, as follows.

Ver. 15. *And when she was baptized*, etc.] In water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the commission of Christ, by the apostle, or some one of his companions; by whom she was instructed into the nature and use of this ordinance; and very likely it was performed in that river, by the side of which the oratory stood, where they were assembled:

and her household; they were baptized also, being converted at the same time; these seem to be her menial servants, who came along with her from her native place upon business, and who attended on her; accordingly the Ethiopic version renders it, “and she was baptized with all her men”; and these were believers, and are called “the brethren”, (⁴¹⁶⁰Acts 16:40) hence this passage will by no means serve the cause of infant baptism: whether Lydia was a maid, a wife, or widow, cannot be said; it looks, however, as if she had no husband now, since she is mentioned as a trader herself; and whether she had any children or not, is not certain, nor can it be concluded from this clause, for there are many households that have no children; and if she had young children, it is not likely she should bring them with her to such a distant place, whither she was come upon trade and business: the pleaders for infant baptism must prove that she had children; that these were her household, or part of her household here spoken of; and that they were baptized; or this instance will be of no service to their cause:

she besought us, saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord; this she said, not as doubting whether they had so judged of her, but as supposing it, and taking it for granted, that they had; wherefore she reasons upon it, and argues from it; and the sense is this, that seeing the apostle and his company had judged her to be a believer in Christ, by admitting her to

the ordinance of baptism; and she had shown her faithfulness to him, by submitting to it, according to his will; therefore she earnestly entreated them to take up their residence at her house, whilst at Philippi: saying,

come into my house, and abide there; her faith soon worked by love; and by the fruits of righteousness which followed upon it, it appeared to be true and genuine: and she constrained us; Paul and Silas, and Timothy and Luke, and whoever else were in company; she not only invited them, but obliged them to go with her; she would take no denial, and by her arguments, entreaties, and importunity, as it were forced them, and prevailed upon them to go with her.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass as we went to prayer*, etc.] That is, to the house of prayer, or to the oratory, as they were in the way to it; for this is not to be understood of their just going to the act, or duty of prayer; for the damsel that now met them, is said to follow them, and to do so for many days, one after another; and it was by their going to the prayer house, that she knew what they were; and besides, the phrase of “going to prayer”, as used by us, for the act or duty of prayer, is a mere Anglicism, and unknown to the eastern writers: now this their going to the oratory, was after they had been at Lydia’s house, and had been entertained and refreshed there; whether this was on the same day that she was converted and baptized, is not certain: however, so it was, that

a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, met us; in the Greek text it is, “the spirit of Python”; the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, “the spirit Python”; the same with Apollo, who was called Pythius, as was his oracle, from the people coming to him, $\pi\upsilon\upsilon\psi\alpha\nu\epsilon\sigma\psi\alpha\iota$, to inquire of him and consult with him, about difficult matters ^{f816}; or rather from the Hebrew word $\hat{t}p$, which signifies a serpent; and so Apollo is said to have his name Pythius, from his killing the serpent Typhon, or Python ^{f817}; hence the city of Delphos, where was the oracle of Apollo, was called Pytho ^{f818}; the prophetess that sat upon the golden tripos, and delivered out the oracles, Pythia; and the feasts and plays instituted to the honour of Apollo, were called the Pythian feasts and plays, and the place of the oracle Pythium ^{f819}: and so this maid, or the spirit in her, pretended to divine and foretell things to come; and the Arabic renders it, “an unclean spirit, foretelling future things”: the Jews ^{f820} make this spirit of Python, to be the same with Ob, which we render a familiar spirit, (^{<R17>}Leviticus 20:27 ^{<S181>}Deuteronomy 18:11) and the Septuagint by

“Engastrimythos”, a ventriloquist, one that seemed to speak out of his belly, and pretended to predict future events; and most of the versions in the Polyglot Bible render it by “Python”, the word here used: so the Jews say ^{f821}, that a master of Obidiah (as the woman of Endor is called the mistress of Ob), **מִטְּיֹב הַזֶּה**, this is “Python”: and so Jarchi on (^{f821}Deuteronomy 18:11) explains the word, and adds, that it is one that speaks out of his arm holes, as those sort of people did from several parts of their bodies, and even from their secret parts: the word signifies a bottle, and they were called masters or mistresses of the bottle; either because the place on which they sat, and from whence they gave forth their oracles, was in the form of one; or they made use of a bottle in their divinations; or as Schindler ^{f822} observes, being possessed, they swelled and were inflated like bottles; and being interrogated, they gave forth answers out of their bellies, concerning things past, present, and to come: and this speaking out of their bellies might be done, without the possession of a real spirit, and much less was it from God, as Plutarch ^{f823}, an Heathen himself, observes;

“it is foolish and childish, to think that God, as the ventriloquists formerly called Eurycleans, and now Pythonists, should hide himself in the bodies of the prophets, using their mouths and voices as instruments to speak with, for this was done by turning their voices down their throats.”

The first of this sort was one Eurycles, of whom Aristophanes ^{f824} makes mention; and the Scholiast upon him says, that he was a ventriloquist, and was said by the Athenians to prophesy by a “demon” that was in him, when it was only an artificial way of speaking; Tertullian affirms he had seen such women that were ventriloquists, from whose secret parts a small voice was heard, as they sat and gave answers to things asked: Caelius Rhodiginus writes, that he often saw a woman a ventriloquist, at Rhodes, and in a city of Italy his own country; from whose secrets, he had often heard a very slender voice of an unclean spirit, but very intelligible, tell strangely of things past or present, but of things to come, for the most part uncertain, and also often vain and lying; and Wierus relates of one Peter Brabantius, who as often as he would, could speak from the lower part of his body, his mouth being open, but his lips not moved, whereby he deceived many by this cunning; and there was a man at court in King James the First’s time here in England, who could act this imposture in a very lively manner ^{f825}: but now whether the spirit that was in this maid was a cheat, an imposture of this kind, is not so easy to say; it seems by the dispossession that

follows, that it was a real spirit that possessed her; though some think it was no other than a deluding, devilish, imposture:

which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: divining or prophesying; it seems she had many masters, who had a propriety in her, and shared the gain she brought; unless by them are meant her master and mistress: vast treasures were brought to the temple at Delphos, by persons that applied to the Pythian oracle there; and great quantities were got by particular persons, who pretended to such a spirit, by which they told fortunes, and what should befall people hereafter, or where their lost or stolen goods were, and such like things; and of such sort were the magical boys and servants Pignorius ^{f826} makes mention of, out of Apuleius, Porphyry, and others, who either for gain or pleasure, performed many strange things.

Ver. 17. *The same followed Paul and us*, etc.] Silas, Luke, and Timothy; the Arabic version reads, “the same followed Paul and Silas”; as they were going to the oratory:

and cried, saying, these men are the servants of the most high God; not of Python, or Apollo, as she and her masters were; or of any of the deities of the Gentiles; nor of sin, nor of Satan, nor of men, but of the one only true and living God, one of whose titles is [^]wyl [, “Elion”, the “Most High”, (^{<0142>}Genesis 14:22 ^{<0318>}Psalm 83:18) and these men were his servants, not merely by right of creation, as all men are, or should be; nor only through the power of divine grace upon their souls, bringing them into a willing obedience to him, as all the saints are; but by office, being ministers of the word: wherefore it follows,

which show unto us the way of salvation; which is not by the works of men; for by them the justice of God cannot be satisfied, nor his law fulfilled; God has declared against this way of salvation; it would make void the death of Christ, and frustrate the design of God in it; which is to magnify his grace, and exclude boasting in man: to which may be added, that the best works of men being imperfect, and attended with much sin, would rather damn than save; wherefore it is sinful, dangerous, and vain, to attempt salvation in this way. The only way of salvation is by the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the law is fulfilled, satisfaction is made for sin, peace and pardon are procured, an everlasting righteousness is brought in, and through whom grace and glory are given: and this is a way of

salvation, agreeable to all the perfections of God; in which the vilest sinner made sensible of his sins, and of his need of this, has no reason to despair; it is exceeding suitable to his case, and is a way in which none ever perish, that are directed to it: and now this way of salvation is only shown in the Gospel, by the ministers of it; not by the light of nature, for to men who only have that, it is foolishness; nor by the law of Moses, for to such who are under that, it is a stumbling block; nor by the carnal reason of men, it is not of men, nor after men, but by divine revelation: and therefore the natural man receives it not, it is hid from such; and therefore they project various ways of salvation, which are pleasing in their own eyes, but the end of them are the ways of death; the way to life and immortality, is only brought to light in the Gospel: whether she said this of her own accord, or was obliged to it by divine impulse; and whether it was through fear of Paul, and in flattery to him, or was with a good or bad design, is not easy to determine: however, certain it is, what she said was truth; and sometimes the devil himself, the father of lies, is obliged to speak it.

Ver. 18. *And this she did many days*, etc.] As the apostle and his company passed to and from the oratory, being for that time at Lydia's house; she followed them, and repeated the above words. This she was suffered to do, time after time; not that the apostle and his friends wanted such a testimony, or that it was of any use to them; but that the expulsion of the evil spirit might be more manliest, and more taken notice of:

but Paul being grieved; at the unhappy condition the maid was in, being possessed with such a spirit: and that the people were so imposed upon and deluded by it; and that it should be thought that there was any combination and agreement between that and him:

turned; himself to her, who was behind him, she following him, as is said in the preceding verse; this is left out in the Syriac version:

and said to the spirit; or to that spirit, as the same version renders it; to the spirit of Python, or Apollo, or of divination, that was in the maid; the Ethiopic version reads, "and he said", "in", or "by the Holy Spirit"; being under a more than ordinary influence and impulse of his; but not the spirit by which he spake, but the spirit to which he spake, is here meant:

I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her, and he came out the same hour; this is an instance of that power which Christ

gave to his apostles to cast out devils in his name, (~~400~~ Matthew 10:1, ~~4167~~ Mark 16:17)

Ver. 19. *And when her masters saw*, etc.] As they might by her sedateness and composure; she not being wild and frantic, and not having such motions and agitations she had whilst under the possession of the evil spirit:

that the hope of their gains was gone; the Syriac version adds, “out of her”; namely, the evil spirit which was the ground and foundation of all their hope of gains, they expected to acquire for themselves; that being gone, they had no more work to do, nor tricks to play, nor profit to expect from the maid: wherefore

they caught Paul and Silas; they being the chief speakers, and principally concerned in the ejection of the evil spirit; they laid hold on them, took them by the collar, or held them by their clothes,

and drew them into the market place: or rather into the court of judicature, as the word also signifies; there to accuse them, and to have them tried, condemned, and punished:

unto the rulers; the judges of the court, it may be the Decuriones; for in a Roman colony as Philippi was, they chose out every tenth man, that was of capacity and ability, to make and establish a public council, and who therefore were called by this name.

Ver. 20. *And brought them to the magistrates*, etc.] The same as before; wherefore the Syriac version omits them there, and reads them both together here, calling them the magistrates and chief men of the city; though the word here used, properly signifies military captains, captains of the Roman militia: but that they were the same with the Decuriones, or ten men before mentioned, appears from what Harpocratian says ^{f827}, that every year were chosen “ten *στρατηγοι*, magistrates”, the word here used:

saying, these men being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city; they call Paul and Silas Jews, either because they knew them to be so, or because they attended at the Jewish oratory, or place of worship; and it was common with the Romans to call the Christians Jews; they were generally included in the same name; and this name of the Jews was become very odious with the Romans; a little after this, Claudius commanded them, the Jews, to depart from Rome, (~~4480~~ Acts 18:2) they were commonly looked

upon as a troublesome and seditious sort of people, and indeed this was the old charge that was fastened upon them, (^{<13045>}Ezra 4:15, ^{<13088>}Esther 3:8). So that it was enough to say that Paul and Silas were Jews, to prove them to be disturbers of the public peace: and it is to be observed, that their accusers make no mention of the dispossessing of the maid, who was their private property, and which was a private affair; but pretend a concern for the public welfare, and bring a charge of public disturbance and detriment, to which their malice and revenge prompted them, hoping in this way the better to succeed: the Arabic version reads, “these two men trouble our city, and they are both Jews”.

Ver. 21. *And teach customs*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read in the singular number, “custom or law”; referring to the doctrine of salvation by Christ, in whose name the spirit of divination was cast out of the maid, and whom they took for a new deity; and so concluded that the apostle and his company were introducing a new religious law or custom, the worship of another God:

which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans; for the city of Philippi was a Roman colony, and so the inhabitants of it called themselves Romans; or these men might be strictly such, who were transplanted hither; and with the Romans, it was not lawful to receive, observe, and worship, a new or strange deity, without the decree of the senate ^{f828}.

Ver. 22. *And the multitude rose up together against them*, etc.] The crowd of people that were gathered together in the court on this occasion; being no doubt spirited up by the proprietors of the maid, out of whom the spirit of divination was cast, and encouraged by the rulers, and being provoked at the hearing of unlawful customs being introduced among them;

and the magistrates rent off their clothes; not their own clothes, as did the high priest, (^{<4143>}Mark 14:63) but the clothes of Paul and Silas; and so reads the Arabic version, “and the rulers rent the garments of both of them”; which removes the ambiguity in the words; for at the whipping or beating of malefactors, they did not pluck off their garments, but rent and tore them off, and so whipped or beat them naked: this was the custom with the Jews ^{f829}; it is asked,

“how did they whip anyone? his hands are bound to a pillar here and there, and the minister of the synagogue (or the executioner)

takes hold of his clothes; and if they are rent, they are rent, and if they are ripped, they are ripped, (be it as it will,) until he has made his breast bare, etc.”

And in like manner the Lectors, or executioners among the Romans, used to tear the garments of malefactors, when they beat them; this the magistrates themselves did here, unless they may be said to do it, because they ordered it to be done, as follows:

and commanded to beat them; that is, with rods: this was one of the three times the apostle was beat in this manner, (^{<47125>}2 Corinthians 11:25) and of this shameful treatment at Philippi, he makes mention in (^{<5101>}1 Thessalonians 2:2).

Ver. 23. *And when they had laid many stripes upon them*, etc.] Even above measure, as in (^{<47113>}2 Corinthians 11:35).

They cast them into prison; designing doubtless to inflict some greater punishment upon them, after they had further examined into their affairs:

charging the jailer to keep them safely; suggesting, that he must be answerable for them, should they escape, either through his favour or his negligence; and they might rather give this strict charge, because they perceived that they were uncommon men, possessed of a strange power, which they had exerted in the casting out of the evil spirit, which might come to their knowledge by some means or other; they might look upon them to be a sort of magicians, and therefore were to be narrowly watched, that they did not make use of their art to deliver themselves; however, they judged it necessary to use all the precautions they could, to secure them: some have thought this jailer to be the same with Stephanas, (^{<40116>}1 Corinthians 1:16) but this is not certain, nor very probable.

Ver. 24. *Who having received such a charge*, etc.] So strict an one from the magistrates, was doubly careful and diligent:

thrust them into the inner prison: the innermost part of it, the lowest or furthest part of the prison; so that there were the more doors, bolts, and bars, to break open, and pass through, should they attempt to make their escape:

and made their feet fast in the stocks; or “wood”, a wooden machine, in which the feet of prisoners were put for security, and which we call “the

stocks”; some say it was such an one, in which the neck as well as the feet were put, and so might be the same with our “pillory”.

Ver. 25. *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed,* When others were asleep, and all things were still and quiet; (see Gill on “~~3962~~ Psalm 119:62”), and they prayed doubtless for themselves, for their deliverance in God’s time and way, and for support under their present afflictions; and for supplies of grace, to enable them to bear with patience and cheerfulness, until an issue was put to them; and for their enemies, and, particularly it may be for the jailer, who had used them so ill; and for the churches of Christ, for all the saints, and for the spread and success of the Gospel:

and sang praises unto God; or “sang an hymn to God”, very likely one of David’s psalms, or hymns: for the book of Psalms is a book, of hymns, and several of the psalms are particularly called hymns; this showed not only that they were cheerful, notwithstanding the stripes that were laid upon them, and though their feet were made fast in the stocks, and they were in the innermost prison, in a most loathsome and uncomfortable condition; and though they might be in expectation of greater punishment, and of death itself; but also that they were thankful and glorified God, who had counted them worthy to suffer for his name’s sake:

and the prisoners heard them; for it seems there were other prisoners besides them, and who were in the outer prison: and from hence it appears, that their prayer was not merely mental; nor was their singing praises only a making melody in their hearts, but were both vocal; and it might be chiefly for the sake of the prisoners, that they both prayed and praised in this manner, that they might hear and be converted; or at least be convicted of the goodness of the cause, for which the apostles suffered.

Ver. 26. *And suddenly there was a great earthquake,* etc.] An extraordinary and unusual one; which did not arise from natural causes, from wind being pent up in the earth, but from the prayers and praises of the saints, going up to heaven; when God was pleased to testify his presence and power this way; and the effects which followed upon this earthquake, show it to be a supernatural one:

so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; not the roof and walls only, as is common in earthquakes, but the very foundation also; and yet the edifice was not thrown down, as is usual when the foundation is shaken:

and immediately all the doors were opened; both of the outer and inner prisons, which is another unusual effect of earthquakes:

and everyone's bands were loosed; not only the bands of Paul and Silas, but of the rest of the prisoners; though the Arabic version reads, "all the fetters and bands of both were loosed", referring it only to Paul and Silas; this circumstance shows also, that the earthquake was miraculous, for when was it ever known that such an effect ever followed one?

Ver. 27. *And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep*, etc.] Not so much by the loud voices of Paul and Silas, as by the uncommon motion of the earth, which so shook him, as thoroughly to awake him:

and seeing the prison doors open; which was the first thing in his fright he was looking after, and careful of, and which he might perceive, though it was midnight, and though as yet he had no light:

he drew out his sword; from its scabbard, which was girt about him; for it may be he had slept with his clothes on, and his sword girt to him; or if he had put on his clothes upon awaking, he had also girt himself with his sword:

and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled; especially Paul and Silas, concerning whom he had received such a strict charge from the magistrates; and he knew that according to law, he must suffer the same punishment that was designed for them; and therefore in fear of the magistrates, and what they would inflict upon him, he was just going to destroy himself.

Ver. 28. *But Paul cried with a loud voice*, etc.] Knowing by divine revelation, what the jailer was about to do; though being in the innermost prison, in a dark dungeon, he could not see him, unless it can be thought, that the opening of the doors had let in light sufficient; and it may be also, that he knew in the same way, what designs of grace God had towards this man and his family:

saying, do thyself no harm; which is an instance of great tenderness, humanity, and love, to one that had used him and his companion with so much severity and cruelty:

for we are all here; not only Paul and Silas, but the rest of the prisoners also; who either being so intent upon hearing the prayers and praises of the

apostles, or so terrified with the earthquake, that they took no notice of their bands being loosed, and so never thought or attempted to make their escape; and as for Paul and Silas, all this happened to them, not for their deliverance in this way, as in the case of Peter, but to show the power of God, what he could do, and his presence with his servants.

Ver. 29. *Then he called for a light*, etc.] Or “lights”; he ordered his servants to bring in some candles; the Syriac version renders it, “he lighted a light for himself”; and the Ethiopic version, “he brought a light”: whilst he was under the influence of Satan, and going about a work of darkness, namely, to destroy himself, he was in no concern for a light; but when he was delivered from the temptation and snare, he calls for light:

and sprang in; leaped in at once, in all haste, into the inner prison:

and came trembling; not as before, because of the prisoners and their escape; nor merely or so much on account of the earthquake, though the terror of that might not be as yet over; but chiefly through the horror of his conscience, and the dreadful sense he had of himself as a sinner, and of his lost state and condition by nature; the law had entered into his conscience, and had worked wrath there; the Spirit of God had convinced him of his sin and misery, and there was a fearful looking for of fiery indignation in him:

and fell down before Paul and Silas; not in a way of religious adoration, for they would never have admitted that; but in token of civil respect unto them, and of his great veneration for them, as was the manner of the eastern people; the Syriac version renders it, “he fell down at their feet”, and so in Velesius’s readings; at those feet, which he had before made fast in the stocks: a strange change and sudden alteration this! what is it that almighty power and efficacious grace cannot do?

Ver. 30. *And brought them out*, etc.] Of the inner prison, to some part of the prison that was more free and open:

and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? he treats them with great reverence now, and addresses them under a title and character of honour and respect; whom but a few hours ago he despised and abhorred, and perhaps knew no name bad enough for them; he now saw himself lost and perishing, and wanted their instructions, advice, and assistance; and as most persons under first awakenings are, so he was, upon the foot of works; thinking he must do something to procure his salvation, and desires to know what it was he must do, that he might set about it directly; and it

may be he had heard what the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination had frequently said of Paul and Silas, that they were the servants of the most high God, and showed unto men the way of salvation, (~~4467~~Acts 16:17) and therefore he desires that they would acquaint him with it: his language shows, he was in earnest, and expresses great eagerness, importunity, and haste.

Ver. 31. *And they said, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*, etc.] Not with a bare historical faith, as only to believe that he was the Son of God, and the Messiah, and that he was come in the flesh, and had suffered, and died, and rose again, and was now in heaven at the right hand of God, and would come again to judge both quick and dead, for there may be such a faith and no salvation; but so as to look unto him alone for life and salvation, to rely upon him, and trust in him; to commit himself, and the care of his immortal soul unto him, and to expect peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life from him; the answer is much the same our Lord returned to the Jews, when they asked, though not with the same affection and sincerity as this man, what they must do to work the works of God, (~~4168~~John 6:28,29).

And thou shalt be saved; from sin, and all its miserable effects and consequences; from the curses of the law, from the power of Satan, from the evil of the world, from the wrath of God, hell and damnation: this is to be understood of a spiritual and eternal salvation; for it is said, after that the jailer was inquiring about it, being terrified in his conscience with a sense of sin and wrath; and between believing in Christ, and being saved with an everlasting salvation, there is a strict and inseparable connection, (~~4166~~Mark 16:16) though not faith, but Christ is the cause and author of salvation; faith spies salvation in Christ, goes to him for it, receives it from him, and believes unto it:

and thy house; or family, provided they believe in Christ also, as they did, (~~4464~~Acts 16:34) or otherwise there can be no salvation, for he that believeth not shall be damned.

Ver. 32. *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord*, etc.] That is, the Gospel; which comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, as the author of it; and is concerning him, as the subject matter of it, and is what was preached by himself when on earth; this is the word, which is called the word of salvation, the word of reconciliation and peace, the word of life, the word of righteousness, and the word of faith; because it publishes salvation by Christ, peace and reconciliation by his blood, life by his death, his

righteousness for justification, and proposes him as the object of faith, and encourages souls to believe in him; and faith comes by it, and it contains things to be believed: and this word Paul and Silas spake to the jailer, and opened and explained it to him for his comfort, and for the encouragement of his faith in Christ:

and to all that were in his house; his whole family, who were all alarmed by the earthquake, and were got together into the prison; for it seems as if, after this, the jailer had them into his dwelling house, (~~Acts~~ Acts 16:34). These appear to be adult persons, such as were capable of having the word of the Lord spoken to them, and of hearing it, so as to believe in it, and rejoice at it, for faith came to them by hearing.

Ver. 33. *And he took them the same hour of the night*, etc.] After they had done preaching to him, and to his family:

and washed their stripes; which were very many and heavy, and whereby they were covered with blood; and which by this time began to fester, and to produce corrupt matter; and all this in a pool, which Grotius supposes was within the bounds of the prison, he washed off from them: his faith worked by love, and showed itself in fruits of charity and righteousness, and in obedience to Christ, and submission to his ordinance, as follows:

and was baptized, he and all his, straightway; by immersion, that being the only way in which baptism was administered, or can be, so as to be called a baptism: and which might be administered, either in the pool, which Grotius supposes to have been in the prison; or in the river near the city, where the oratory was, (~~Acts~~ Acts 16:13) and it is no unreasonable thought to suppose, that they might go out of the prison thither, and administer the ordinance, and return to the prison again before morning unobserved by any; and after that, enter into the jailer's house and be refreshed, as in the following verse; and as this instance does not at all help the cause of sprinkling, so neither the baptism of infants; for as the jailer's family were baptized as well as he, so they had the word of the Lord spoken to them as well as he, and believed as well as he, and rejoiced as he did; all which cannot be said of infants; and besides, it must be proved that he had infants in his house, and that these were taken out of their beds in the middle of the night, and baptized by Paul, ere the instance can be thought to be of any service to infant baptism.

Ver. 34. *And when he had brought them into his house*, etc.] After he and his family had been baptized, either in the pool in the prison, or in the river near the city of Philippi:

he set meat before them; he spread a table for them, with provisions to refresh them after all their fatigue; partly by stripes and imprisonment, partly by the exercises of prayer and praise, and also by the ministration of the word, and the administration of the ordinance of baptism to the jailer and his family:

and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house; he and his rejoiced at the good news, of peace and pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, which the Gospel brought unto them; they rejoiced in Christ Jesus, in his person, offices, grace and righteousness; believing in him who is truly and properly God, they were filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; with a joy that always attends true faith, and which a stranger intermeddles not with; and they rejoiced that they were admitted to the ordinance of Christ, and were among his baptized followers; so the eunuch, after baptism, went on his way rejoicing, (~~483~~ Acts 8:39).

Ver. 35. *And when it was day*, etc.] In one copy Beza says, these words are added,

“the magistrates came together in one place in the court, and remembering the earthquake that was made, they were afraid, and sent the sergeants;”

but they seem to be no other than a gloss, which crept into the text; however, it seems reasonable to suppose, that in the morning the magistrates met together, to consider what was further to be done with Paul and Silas; when upon cooler thoughts, they judged it best to be content with what punishment they had inflicted on them, and dismiss them; and if they had felt anything of the earthquake, or had heard of it in the prison, and of the converts that had been made there, they might be the more induced to let them go:

the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, let these men go; the Arabic version reads, “these two men”; that is, Paul and Silas: who these sergeants were, is not very certain; they seem to be so called in the Greek language, from their carrying rods, or little staves in their hands, and were a sort of apparitors; by these the magistrates sent orders, either by word of mouth, or in writing, to the jailer, to let Paul and Silas out of prison, and set them

at liberty, to go where they would; the same power that shook the foundations of the prison, and loosed the bands of the prisoners, wrought upon the hearts of the magistrates, to let the apostles go free.

Ver. 36. *And the keeper of the prison told this, saying to Paul*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, “and to Silas”; this was the same person with the jailer, whom Paul had baptized; and indeed, the same word is here used, though a little differently rendered, who no doubt reported this message to Paul with great joy:

the magistrates have sent to let you go; they have sent an order to let you out of prison:

now therefore depart, and go in peace; which expresses the jailer’s pleasure of mind, and joy of heart, in executing his orders; and his sincere and hearty wishes for peace and prosperity to go along with them wherever they went, who had been instrumental of so much good to him and his family.

Ver. 37. *But Paul said unto them*, etc.] The sergeants, who were present when the jailer reported to Paul the message they came with from the magistrates; though the Syriac version reads in the singular number, “Paul said to him”, to the jailer:

they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; what the magistrates ordered to be done to them, is reckoned all one as if they had done it themselves; and which was done “openly”, before all the people, in the most public manner; to their great reproach, being put to open shame, as if they had been the most notorious malefactors living; when they were “uncondemned”, had done nothing worthy of condemnation, being innocent and without fault, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render the word; nor was their cause heard, or they suffered to make any defence for themselves; and what was an aggravation of all this, that this was done in a Roman colony, and by Roman magistrates; and to persons that were Romans, at least one of them, Paul, who was of the city of Tarsus: for, according to the Porcian and Sempronian laws, a Roman citizen might neither be bound nor beaten^{f830}; but these magistrates, not content to beat Paul and Silas, without knowing the truth of their case, had cast them into prison as malefactors, and for further punishment:

and now do they thrust us out privily? nay, verily; or so it shall not be: this shows, that the apostle was acquainted with the Roman laws, as well as with the rites and customs of the Jews; and acted the wise and prudent, as well as the honest and harmless part; and this he did, not so much for the honour of the Roman name, as for the honour of the Christian name; for he considered, that should he and his companion go out of the prison in such a private manner, it might be taken for granted, that they had been guilty of some notorious offence, and had justly suffered the punishment of the law for it, which would have been a reproach to Christianity, and a scandal to the Gospel: wherefore the apostle refuses to go out in this manner, adding,

but let them come themselves, and fetch us out; that by so doing, they might own the illegality of their proceedings, and declare the innocence of the apostles.

Ver. 38. *And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates,* etc.] They returned to them, and acquainted them with what the prisoners said:

and they feared when they heard that they were Romans; they were not concerned for the injury they had done them; nor for the injustice and cruelty they had been guilty of; nor did they fear the wrath of God, and a future judgment; but they were put into a panic, when they found the men they had so ill used were Romans; lest they should be called to an account by the Roman senate, and be found guilty, and have their places taken away from them, and their persons punished.

Ver. 39. *And they came,* etc.] To the prison in person, as Paul had insisted on they should:

and besought them; that they would put up the injury that had been done them, and quietly depart out of prison:

and brought them out; that is, out of prison; took them by the arms, and led them out, as they had put them in, which was what the apostle required:

and desired them to depart out of the city; lest there should be any further disturbance about them: in Beza's most ancient copy, and in another manuscript copy, this verse is read thus, and which more clearly explains the passage;

“and they came with many friends unto the prison, and desired them to go out, saying, we are not ignorant of your case, that you are righteous men; and bringing them out they besought them, saying, go out of this city, lest they (the people) should turn again upon you, crying against you;”

which looks as if they took along with them some persons, who were friends to the apostles as well as to them, to prevail upon them to depart quietly; and they excuse themselves by attributing what had passed to popular rage and fury, and pretend they consulted the safety of the apostles, by desiring them to go out of the city.

Ver. 40. *And they went out of the prison*, etc.] In a public manner, with great honour and reputation, at the request of the magistrates that put them there:

and entered into [the house] of Lydia; whom Paul had baptized, (~~Acts~~ Acts 16:14,15). The word “house” is rightly supplied, for the sense is not, that they went into the country of Lydia, as some have been tempted to think; but they went to the woman Lydia, whose heart the Lord had opened, and was become a disciple and follower of Christ; they went to her house it being in the city of Philippi, where she now abode,

and when they had seen the brethren: the men of Lydia’s house, her servants, who were converted, and had been baptized with her, and are therefore called brethren; and whomsoever else they might have been instrumental in the conversion of, who might meet them in Lydia’s house: in Beza’s above mentioned copy, it is here added, “they declared what the Lord had done for them”; they related the earthquake and the effects of it, and how they had been useful for the conversion of the jailer and his family, who had been baptized by them, and by what means they were released from prison; all which they ascribe to the Lord, who has all power, and the hearts of all in his hands: and thus,

they comforted them; with what God had done for them, or exhorted them: to cleave to the Lord, to continue in the faith, and abide by the truths and ordinances of the Gospel:

and departed; that is, out of the city of Philippi; this is wanting in the Syriac and Arabic versions here, but is placed in the beginning of the next chapter: and now these two families, Lydia’s and the jailer’s, laid the foundation of a Gospel church in this city of Philippi, and which continued

for ages after; Erastus, of whom mention is made in (~~<41922>~~Acts 19:22) is said to be bishop of this church, and it may be also Epaphroditus, for there were more bishops than one in this church in the apostle's time, (~~<5000>~~Philippians 1:1 2:25 4:18), in the "second" century there was a church, to which Ignatius and Polycarp are said to send epistles; and there are epistles to the Philippians which go under their names, that are still extant: in the "third" century, Tertullian^{f831}, among other churches, makes mention of the church at Philippi, as sound in the faith; and in the "fourth" and "fifth" centuries we read of a church in this place; in the "seventh" century, when it went by the name of Chrysopolis, there was a church in it, and a bishop of it, who was present at the sixth council in Constantinople; there were Christians dwelling here in the "ninth" century^{f832}.