

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 18

Ver. 1. *After these things*, etc.] The Arabic version renders it, “after these words, or discourses”; after the apostle’s disputation with the philosophers, and his sermon in the Areopagus, the effects of which are before related:

Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; the metropolis of Achaia, or Peloponnesus. The city was formerly called Ephyra, from Ephyra^{f904}, the daughter of Oceanus, and had its name of Corinth from Corinthus, the son of Maratho, who repaired it when destroyed; or, as others say, from Corinthus the son of Pelops, others of Orestes, and others of Jupiter: though more probably it was so called from the multitudes of whores in this place, as if it was *κοραι ενψα*, “corai entha, here are girls, or whores”; for in the temple of Venus there were no less than a thousand whores provided, to be prostituted to all comers thither; (see Gill on “<4722>2 Corinthians 12:21”). It was situated between two great seas, the Aegean and Ionean; hence^{f905} Horace calls it Bimaris: it had a very strong tower, built on a high mount, called Acrocorinthus, from whence these two seas might be seen, and where was the fountain Pirene, sacred to the Muses: the city was about sixty furlongs, or seven miles and a half, from the shore^{f906}: it was a city that abounded in riches and luxury. Florus^{f907} calls it the head of Achaia, and the glory of Greece; and Cicero^{f908}, the light of all Greece: it was in time so much enlarged, and became so famous, that it was little inferior to Rome itself, on which account it grew proud and haughty; and using the Roman ambassadors with some degree of insolence, who were sent into Greece, on some certain occasion, first Metellus, and then Mummius, were sent against it, which latter took it, and burnt it; and the city then abounding with images and statues of gold, silver, and brass, were melted down together in the fire, and made what was afterwards called the Corinthian brass, which became so famous, and is often spoken of in history^{f909}: but Julius Caesar, moved with the commodious situation of the place, rebuilt it^{f910}, and it became a colony of the Romans, as Pliny^{f911} and Mela^{f912} both call it: and so it was at this time when the apostle was there. After this it came into the hands of the Venetians, from whom it was taken

by Mahomet, the second son of Amurath, in the year 1458^{f913}; but is now again in the hands of the Venetians; and that and the country about it are called the Morea. And as the Gospel was to be preached to the worst of sinners, among whom God's chosen ones lay, the apostle was directed to come hither; and it appears by the sequel, that God had much people here, even more than at Athens, among the wise and learned.

Ver. 2. *And found a certain Jew named Aquila*, etc.] This seems to have been his Roman name, which he had took, or was given him, while he was at Rome; very likely his Jewish name was **דְּשֵׁן**, “Nesher”, which signifies an eagle, as “Aquila” does: unless it should rather be thought to be a Greek name; and as “Olympas” is from “Olympios”, and “Nymphas” from Nymphios”; so “Akilas”, as it in the Greek text, from Akylios”, and this from **ακυλος**, “Akylos”, which signifies an acorn. There was a Jewish proselyte of this name, who translated the Bible into Greek, who is called by the Jewish writers **שׁל יִקָּל**, “Akilas”^{f914}; and Eusebius^{f915} calls him **ακυλας ο ποντικος**, or “Akylas” or “Aquila” of Pontus, as here, but cannot be the same; for one was a Jew, the other a Gentile, then a Christian, and afterwards a Jewish proselyte, and lived after the destruction of Jerusalem many years, even in the times of Adrian: nor is it the same name with Onkelos, the famous Chaldee paraphrast, as some have thought, and much less the same person; for though their age better agrees, yet neither their name, nor their nation; for Onkelos was only a proselyte, not a Jew, as this man was; and the agreement the names of these proselytes may be thought to have with this, does but confirm it to be a Roman name; and in a decree of Claudius the Roman emperor, mention is made of Akylas, or Aquila, a Roman governor of Alexandria^{f916}: and in the reign of Caius Caligula, there was a consul of Rome whose name was M. Aquila Julianus. This is said to be afterwards bishop of Heraclea; but that is not to be depended upon:

born in Pontus; a country in Asia; (see Gill on “~~489~~ Acts 2:9”) where many Jews lived; though he was born in an Heathen country, his parents were Jews:

lately come from Italy; a famous and well known country in Europe: (see Gill on “~~313~~ Hebrews 13:24”).

with his wife Priscilla; she and her husband are both highly spoken of in (~~510B~~ Romans 16:3,4 (see Gill on “ ~~510B~~ Romans 16:3”)), (see Gill on “ ~~510A~~ Romans 16:4”):

because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome; of which edict Suetonius ^{f917} makes mention, who says, that Claudius

“expelled the Jews from Rome, who were continually making tumults, being moved thereunto by one Chrestus,”

who is generally understood to be Christ; and it is thought that the reason of this edict was, that the Jews in Rome continually opposing and disputing with the Christians, about Jesus being the Messiah, Claudius, who was of a timorous disposition, was afraid of a tumult, and that it might issue in his detriment, and therefore banished all the Jews, with whom the Christians were involved; for by the Heathens they were all called Jews, the first Christians being Jews: though others say the reason was, that the Jews had contracted an acquaintance with Agrippina, the wife of Claudius, and had drawn her into Judaism: but be it as it will, such an edict was made, on account of which Aquila and Priscilla were obliged to leave Rome, and come to Corinth. It must be something that was very provoking to him, otherwise before he had shown much favour to the Jews; for he not only granted to the Jews at Alexandria, that they should continue in the observance of their laws and customs, but permitted the same to them in all parts of the empire, by a special decree, which runs thus ^{f918};

“Tiberius Claudius Caesar, etc. decrees, seeing the Kings Agrippa and Herod, my dearest friends, have entreated me that I would suffer the Jews in every government under the Romans, to observe their laws as in Alexandria; I most willingly grant it, not only for the sake of gratifying those who ask it, but judging that those are worthy, for whom it is asked, because of their faithfulness and friendship to the Romans; especially accounting it most just that no Grecian city should be deprived of these rights, seeing they were kept for them by the divine Augustus; wherefore it is right also that the Jews throughout all our empire should observe the customs of their country without any hinderance, whom I now command that in love to us they would behave more moderately, and not despise the religion of other nations, but keep their own laws; and I will that governors of cities, and colonies, and freedoms, both in Italy and without, have this my edict transcribed, and also kings and

princes by their ambassadors, and that it be put in such a place in less than thirty days, from whence it may be plainly read.”

This Claudius was the “fifth” emperor of Rome; and this decree passed in the “ninth”, or, as others, in the “eleventh” year of his reign, and about the year of Christ 51, or, as others, 54.

And came unto them: that is, the apostle, having found out Aquila and Priscilla, he came and visited them, and took up his lodging with them.

Ver. 3. *And because he was of the same craft,* Art, occupation, or trade:

he abode with them; in the same house in which they were:

and wrought; with his own hands, to support himself, for he was a stranger in this place; and as yet here was no church to minister to him; and when there was, he would take nothing of them, that the false teachers, who rose up among them, might not make any handle of it against him, and to the prejudice of the Gospel; though otherwise he thought it his just due to receive a maintenance from the churches; and insisted upon it as an ordination of Christ. He learned a trade whilst among the Jews, with whom it was common for their greatest doctors to be brought up to some trade or another; (see Gill on “~~Mark~~ Mark 6:3”).

for by their occupation they were tent makers; either for the soldiers, and which were made of sack cloth of hair, or of leather, and of the skins of various animals^{f919}, sewed together; hence the phrase, “sub pellibus”, “under the skins”, is used for to lie in tents^{f920}: or those tents they made, were canopies made of linen, and other things, which were erected in the summer season to shade and screen from the heat of the sun; though others take them for a sort of tapestry, or hangings, which they made for theatres, palaces, and stately rooms; and according to the Syriac version, they were horses’ trappings which they made: perhaps they were of the same occupation with Menedemus the philosopher, who was σκηνορραφος, “a sewer of tents”^{f921}.

Ver. 4. *And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath,* etc.] In Corinth there was a synagogue of the Jews, in which they met together for worship on the seventh day of the week, which was their sabbath; and hither Paul went, and took the opportunity of reasoning with them out of the Scriptures, concerning Christ, his person, and offices, his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, and about redemption and salvation by

him: we may observe the diligence, industry, and indefatigableness of the apostle; on the sabbath day he went to the synagogue, and preached Christ to those who there attended; and on the weekdays he laboured with his own hands. Beza's most ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin version add here, "interposing the name of the Lord Jesus"; frequently making mention of his name, or calling upon it, and doing miracles in it.

And persuaded the Jews and the Greeks; this was the effect of his reasoning, and the success that attended it; some, both of the Jews, who were so by birth, as well as religion, and of the Greeks, or Gentiles, who were Jewish proselytes, and attended synagogue worship, were convinced by his arguments, and were induced to believe the truth of his doctrine, and to embrace it; or at least he endeavoured to persuade them that they were lost sinners, and that there was salvation for them in Christ, and in him only.

Ver. 5. *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia*, etc.] Not from Berea in Macedonia, for from hence they came to the apostle while at Athens, and from whence he sent them, at least Timothy, to Thessalonica, to know the state of the saints there, as appears from (~~1~~1 Thessalonians 3:1,2) and from hence they now came to the apostle at Corinth: when

Paul was pressed in Spirit; either by the Holy Spirit, by which he was moved and stirred up to preach the Gospel more frequently, and more powerfully; for he had not always the same measure of the Spirit, or was not always under the same influence; or else in his own spirit, and so the Arabic version renders it, "grief beset the spirit of Paul"; his soul was filled with trouble and sorrow, when he observed the nonrepentance and unbelief, the contradiction and blasphemy of the greater part of the Jews; and being filled with zeal for their welfare, he continued preaching Christ unto them. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, instead of "in spirit", read "in speech", or "in word"; and the sense is, not that he was straitened in his speech, and knew not what to say to the Jews, or had not freedom of speech with them; but he was instant in preaching to them, and preached the word more frequently and fervently, upon the coming of Silas and Timothy to his assistance:

and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ; he continued to produce more testimonies out of the writings of Moses, and the prophets, to prove

that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, or Messiah, prophesied of in those writings, and promised to the Jews, and whom they expected.

Ver. 6. *And when they opposed themselves*, etc.] To the truth, and contradicted themselves in many instances, and their own prophecies; or those books which they themselves allowed to be the oracles of God, and blasphemed both Christ, and the apostle, and the doctrine which he taught; and railed at him, and spoke evil of him, and used him in a very contumelious and reproachful manner, as they were used from contradicting to go to blaspheming; (see ^{<4135>}Acts 13:45)

he shook his raiment; his outer garment, and the dust off from it, as a testimony against them; (see ^{<4104>}Matthew 10:14, ^{<4135>}Acts 13:51)

and said unto them, your blood be upon your heads; meaning, that they were the authors of their own ruin and destruction; that they could not impute it to any other, when it came upon them; and that they were left inexcusable, and must bear their own iniquities, and the punishment of them: this clause is wanting in the Syriac version.

I am clean; meaning from their blood; (see ^{<4106>}Acts 20:26). The apostle seems to allude to (^{<2334>}Ezekiel 33:4-9) signifying, that he had discharged his duty as a preacher, and so had delivered his own soul from their blood being required at his hands; and that it rested entirely on themselves, and they were answerable for all their impenitence, unbelief, and blasphemy:

from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles; in that city, and preach the Gospel to them, and no more enter into their synagogue, as it is very likely he afterwards never did; for though Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, was afterwards converted, yet his conversion seems to have been not in the synagogue, but in the house of Justus, which was hard by it. Compare with this (^{<4136>}Acts 13:46).

Ver. 7. *And he departed thence*, etc.]. Not from Corinth, but from the synagogue:

and entered into a certain man's house named Justus; he did not return to Aquila and Priscilla, because they were Jews, lest he should be thought not to abide by his words, that he would henceforth go to the Gentiles; wherefore as he came out of the synagogue, he turned into a house adjoining to it, which belonged to one Justus: in one copy of Beza's, and in some others, and in the Vulgate Latin version, he is called "Titus Justus";

and in the Arabic version, “Titus the son of Justus”; the Syriac version only reads “Titus”: whether this is not the same Titus, who afterwards was a companion of the apostle, and to whom he wrote an epistle, may be inquired.

One that worshipped God; a Gentile, but a religious man, such an one as Cornelius: he might be a proselyte either of the gate, or of righteousness; though if he was the same with Titus, he could not be the latter, because he was not circumcised, (~~400B~~ Galatians 2:3) whose house joined hard to the synagogue; had this man been a Jew, his house might very well have been taken for the house which was *tsnkh tybl Æwms*, “near to the synagogue”, in which travellers were entertained, and ate, and drank, and lodged ^{f922}; and that he was the person appointed to take care of them, and so a very suitable house for Paul, a stranger, to take up his lodging in. The Ethiopic version adds, very wrongly, taking it from the beginning of the next verse, “because he was the ruler of the synagogue”; as if Justus was the ruler of the synagogue; and this the reason why his house was so near; whereas not he, but Crispus, was the ruler, as follows.

Ver. 8. *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue*, etc.] This was a Jewish name; frequent mention is made of R. Crispa in the Jewish writings ^{f923} this person, either through hearing Paul before he departed from the synagogue, or when in Justus’s house, which was hard by the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: he believed the doctrine the apostle preached, concerning Jesus, and that he was the Messiah; and he believed in him for life and salvation, and made a profession of his faith in him, and so did all his family, upon which he was baptized by the apostle; (see ~~401H~~ 1 Corinthians 1:14)

and many of the Corinthians hearing not “his faith”, as the Arabic version adds; as if hearing of the faith of Crispus induced them to believe also; for the ruler of the Jewish synagogue had no such influence on the Gentile Corinthians, as these were: but these hearing the Gospel preached by the apostle, very likely in the house of Justus, to which they came,

believed; faith came by hearing; they believed the Gospel, and they believed in Christ, the sum and substance of it; and not with a bare historical faith, but with a spiritual and saving one, or such as is unto salvation, with their heart, and with their mouth made confession of it:

and were baptized; not by the apostle, for he baptized at Corinth none but Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas, but by some of his companions, as Silas, or Timothy, or both: this is a plain instance of believers' baptism; first they heard the word of God; then they believed, this word coming with power to them; and upon their believing, they are baptized. These laid the foundation of a famous church in this place, which continued for many ages after; Silas, who is reckoned among the seventy disciples, is said to be the first bishop or pastor of it; (see Gill on "~~200~~Luke 10:1"); in the "second" century Primus was bishop of this church, with whom Egesippus as he went to Rome stayed some days, and was much refreshed with the orthodox faith of him, and the Corinthians; in the same century Dionysius presided over this church, who was not only very useful to the church under his care, but to many others ^{f924}; in the same age, under Severus lived Bacchylus bishop of Corinth, who wrote a book concerning Easter in the name of all the bishops in Achaia ^{f925}; in the third century Tertullian ^{f926} makes mention of a church at Corinth; in the fourth century Epictetus was bishop of the said church, and was contemporary and familiar with Athanasius, to whom a letter is extant in the works of Athanasius ^{f927}; in the "fifth" century there was a church at Corinth, and a bishop of it was in the synod at Chalcedon, and it was then a metropolitan church; in this age Peregrinus bishop of Corinth was in the first synod at Ephesus, held against Nestorius, and Erisistratus, a bishop also of the same church, was in another synod at the same place, and Peter bishop of Corinth was in the Chalcedon council; in the "sixth" century mention is made of a bishop of the Corinthians, in the fifth synod at Constantinople, and in the same century Gregory instructed John bishop of the Corinthians rightly to govern the Lord's flock, and exhorted all the Corinthian bishops to concord. In this age Adrianus also was bishop of Corinth, he flourished under Mauritius the emperor; as likewise did Anastasius archbishop of the Corinthians; and he being removed from his office, John succeeded him in it; in the "seventh" century there was a Corinthian bishop in the sixth council at Constantinople ^{f928}; thus far this ancient church is to be traced in history.

Ver. 9. *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision*, etc.] On a certain night as he was asleep, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream, and spake after this manner to him:

be not afraid; it is very likely that after the baptism of Crispus and his family, and of many of the Corinthians, that both the Jews and the Gentiles

were exasperated against the apostle; and his life might seem to be in danger, and he might be thinking of removing from hence for his preservation and safety; and might be advised to it by his friends, or at least that he should be incognito, and not be seen publicly: wherefore the Lord appears to him, and bids him not indulge any fears, or conceal himself and be silent,

but speak, and hold not thy peace; preach freely and boldly the Gospel without fear of men; the fear of men should not stop the mouths of Christ's ministers.

Ver. 10. *For I am with thee*, etc.] According to his promise, (^{483D}Matthew 28:20) not only to assist in the ministry of the word, to give light into it, and liberty to preach it, and success in it, but to keep and preserve him from being hurt by men:

and no man shall set on thee; attack thee, or lay hands on thee:

to hurt thee; to do any injury to thy person, to thy body, in any part of it: wicked men cannot strike a blow, or do the least damage to a servant of Christ without his permission; he can tie their hands, and restrain their rage.

For I have much people in this city; this wicked and luxurious city; there were many here who were yet in their sins, in a state of unregeneracy, whom God had chosen to be his people, and had taken into his covenant as such; were given to Christ as his peculiar people, and whom he had redeemed with his precious blood: they were his people both by gift and purchase, before they were called by grace; and because of this his interest in them, he will have his Gospel continued for the gathering them in to himself; for Christ will lose none of his, all shall come unto him: from all which it appears, that Christ has a people who are related to him, and he has an interest in, before they are effectually called by grace; for this refers not to the many Corinthians who had heard and believed, and were baptized, but to some that had not, and were yet to be called; not the Jews in this city, Christ's own nation, nor all the inhabitants of it who were in some sense Christ's people, being made and supported in their beings by him, are intended; but a special people among the Gentiles, the same with the other sheep Christ speaks of, (^{610E}John 10:16) not yet of his fold; a people beloved of God, chosen in Christ, given to him, and with whom a covenant was made in him, for whom Christ undertook, in whose name he

acted, and for whom he received blessings and promises, as well as took the care and charge of their persons; for the sake of these he assumed human nature, and suffered and died; towards these his heart always is; his eye is upon them, and he knows them, and where they are; and therefore he will look them up and find them out, and they shall be brought to believe in him, and shall not perish, but have everlasting life: and it may be further observed, that Christ has “many” such, though they are but comparatively few, yet in themselves they are a great number; yea, he has sometimes many of these in the worst of places, and among the vilest of men; and for the sake of these, in order to select and separate them from the rest, is the Gospel preached and continued. The ministers of it are sent here and there, where such persons are, and there they are continued till they are gathered in; yea, on this account both the Gospel and its preachers are continued in the world; and even the world itself, for the sake of these, till they are brought in, and then it will be destroyed; and it may be also remarked, that for the encouragement of Gospel ministers, Christ promises his presence and protection, and which was fulfilled in the Apostle Paul at Corinth; who though he stayed there a year and six months, none were suffered to do him any injury; and when an insurrection was made within that time, yet the apostle escaped, and quietly departed elsewhere.

Ver. 11. *And he continued there*, etc.] At Corinth, as the Syriac version, and some copies, read; he was obedient to the heavenly vision: in the Greek text it is, “he sat” there, answerable to the Hebrew word **בָּעָי**, which signifies to sit, continue and abide: he stayed there in all a year and six months; which was a long time for the apostle to stay in one place, and longer than he did anywhere, unless at Ephesus, where he continued two years, (~~490~~ Acts 19:10) for as for his stay at Rome, that was by confinement: but here were many people to be called, and much work to do, a large church to be raised, and put in order; and this required time as well as care and labour:

teaching the word of God among them; he did not sit idle here, but preached the Gospel, which is the word of God, and not man, openly and publicly, among them all; and that frequently, in season and out of season, and with great boldness and faithfulness.

Ver. 12. *And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia*, etc.] This province, which was now become a Roman one, Pliny the younger^{f929} calls true and mere Greece; it went by the name of Aegialus^{f930}, and now it is called

Livadia: it has on the north the country of Thessaly, and on the west the river Acheloo, or Aracheo, on the east the Aegean sea, and on the south Peloponnesus, or the Morea. Gallio, who was now deputy of it, was brother to L. Annaeus Seneca, the famous philosopher, who was preceptor to Nero; his name at first was M. Annaeus Novatus, but being adopted by L. Junius Gallio, he took the name of the family. According to his brother's account of him ^{f931}, he was a very modest man, of a sweet disposition, and greatly beloved; and Statius ^{f932} calls him *Dulcem Gallionem*, "the sweet Gallio", mild and gentle in his speech, as Quintilian says. Seneca ^{f933} makes mention of him as being in Achaia; and whilst he was deputy there he had a fever, when as soon as it took him he went aboard a ship, crying, that it was not the disease of the body, but of the place.

The Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul; being provoked that so many of their people, as well as of the Gentiles, were converted by him to the Christian religion, and were baptized:

and brought him to the judgment seat; of Gallio, the deputy, to be tried and judged by him.

Ver. 13. *Saying, this fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.*] Meaning either to the law of the Romans, which forbade the bringing in of any new gods, without the leave of the senate; (see Gill on "~~the~~ Acts 16:21"); or rather to the law of Moses: the Arabic version reads, "our law"; though this was false, for Moses in his law wrote of Christ, and ordered the children of Israel to hearken to him.

Ver. 14. *And when Paul was now about to open his mouth*, etc.] In his own defence, and plead his own cause, and answer to the charge exhibited against him:

Gallio said unto the Jews, if it was matter of wrong; of injury to any man's person or property, as murder, theft, etc.

or wicked lewdness; as fraud, forgery, perjury, treason, etc.

O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: his sense is, that it would be according to right reason, and agreeably to his office as a judge, to admit them and their cause, and try it, and hear them patiently, and what was to be said on both sides of the question, what the charges were, and the proof of them, and what the defendant had to say for himself. The Vulgate Latin version reads, "O men Jews"; and so Beza's ancient copy.

Ver. 15. *But if it be a question of words*, etc.] “Or of the word”, what the Jews called the word of God, which Gallio did not pretend to understand: “and names”; as the names of God, of Jesus, and of Christ, whether he is God, and the Messiah:

and of your law; concerning circumcision, whether these Christians, and the proselytes they make, are obliged unto it:

look ye to it; suggesting that this was a matter that lay before them, and they were the proper judges of, and might determine for themselves, since they had the free exercise of their religion, and a right of judging of everything that respected that within themselves, and for which they were best furnished, as having a more competent knowledge of them; as the Arabic version renders it, “and ye are more learned in these things”; and most conversant with them:

for I will be no judge of such matters; and it would be well if every civil magistrate would act the same part, and not meddle with religious affairs, any further than to preserve the public peace.

Ver. 16. *And he drave them from the judgment seat.*] He would not hear, and try the cause; but dismissed them with threatening them, if ever they brought an affair of that kind to him any more.

Ver. 17. *Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes*, etc.] These were not the Greeks or Gentiles that were devout persons, or converted to Christianity, and were on the side of Paul, and fell foul on Sosthenes, as being his chief accuser; for this is not agreeably to the spirit and character of such persons, but the profane and unconverted Greeks, who observing that Gallio sent the Jews away, with some resentment and contempt, were encouraged to fall upon the principal of them, and use him in a very ill manner; it is very likely that this person was afterwards converted, and is the same that is mentioned in (~~400~~1 Corinthians 1:1). The name is Greek, and there is one of this name mentioned among the executors of Plato’s will ^{f934}. This man was now

chief ruler of the synagogue; chosen in, very likely, upon Crispus becoming a Christian, and being baptized:

and beat him before the judgment seat; of Gallio; before he and his friends could get out of court:

and Gallio cared for none of these things; which might not be owing to any sluggishness in him, but to an ill opinion he had of the Jews, as being a turbulent and uneasy people, and therefore he connived at some of the insolencies of the people towards them; though it did not become him, as a magistrate, to act such a part, whose business it was to keep the public peace, to quell disorders, to protect men's persons, and property, and prevent abuse and mischief, and to correct and punish for it. The Arabic version renders it, "and no man made any account of Gallio"; they did not fear his resentment, he having drove the Jews from the judgment seat.

Ver. 18. *And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while*, etc.] A year and a half, as in (^{<4818>}Acts 18:11) for this insurrection might follow immediately upon the vision the apostle had; and who by that was encouraged to continue in this city, notwithstanding the treatment he met with; he not doubting of the promise of God, and of his power and faithfulness to fulfil it, though this was a trial of his faith and constancy:

and then took his leave of the brethren; whom he had been instrumental in the conversion of, and had established and confirmed in the faith; and having now done his work in this place, at least for the time present, he takes his leave of them and departs:

and sailed thence into Syria; or towards Syria, for he took Ephesus by the way, which was in Asia, and stopped there a little while:

and with him Priscilla and Aquila; whom he had met with at Corinth, and with whom he had lodged and wrought at his trade, (^{<4819>}Acts 18:2,3)

Having shorn his head in Cenchrea; which some understand not of Paul, but of Aquila, who is the last person spoken of; and the Ethiopic version reads in the plural number, referring this to both Priscilla and Aquila, "and they had shaved their heads, for they had a vow"; and so it was read in a manuscript of Baronius, and Bede observes, that it was read in like manner in some copies in his time; but the more authentic reading is in the singular number, and is more generally understood of the Apostle Paul; who being about to go into Judea, to the Jew became a Jew, that he might gain some: Cenchrea, where this was done, was a sea port belonging to the Corinthians, on the east of the Isthmus, as Lechea was on the west; according to Pliny^{f935}, there were two gulfs, or bays, to the Isthmus, the one he calls the Corinthian bay, and others the Crissean and Alcyonian bay, and Golfo de Petras; the other the Saronic bay, now called Golfo de Engia;

Lechea was in the Corinthian bay, and Cenchrea in the Saronic bay; and both belonged to Corinth, and were the bounds of the Straights; the space between them was the Isthmus, which consisted of about five miles; and so Pausanias says ^{f936}, the Isthmus of the Corinthians is washed on both sides by the sea; on one side at Cenchrea, and on the other at Lechea, and this makes the island a continent; and likewise Philo ^{f937} giving an account of a voyage of Flaccus says, that passing over the Ionian gulf, he came to the sea (or shore) of Corinth — — — - and going over the Isthmus from Lechea, to the opposite sea, he came down to Cenchrea, a seaport of the Corinthians; of which Apuleius ^{f938} gives this account:

“this town is a most noble colony of the Corinthians, it is washed by the Aegean and Saronic sea, where there is a port, a most safe receptacle for ships, and very populous.”

Hither the apostle came from Corinth to take shipping, and from hence he sailed to Syria, as before observed: it has its name either from millet, for “Cenchros” signifies “millet”; and “Cenchrias” is “bread made of millet”; or from the bird “Cenchris”, which is a kind of hawk; (see Gill on “~~5101~~Romans 16:1”).

For he had a vow; this, some think, could not be the vow of the Nazarites, for then he should have stayed till he came to Jerusalem, and have shaved his head at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and cast the hair into the fire, under the pot in which the peace offerings were boiled ^{f939}; though he that vowed in the country, was not obliged to this: others think it was such an one as the Jews in travelling used, that they would not shave till they came to such a place; and so the apostle had made a vow that he would shave at Cenchrea; and accordingly did; but this is not likely, that the apostle should make a vow upon so light an occasion: others that it refers to his going to Jerusalem, to keep the feast there, (~~44821~~Acts 18:21) and so these think the words are a reason, not of his shaving of his head, but of his sailing to Syria; the first is most probable, that it was a Nazarite’s vow; (see ~~44214~~Acts 21:24).

Ver. 19. *And he came to Ephesus*, etc.] The metropolis of Asia; according to Pliny ^{f940}, it had been called by many names; at the time of the Trojan war, Alopes, then Ortygia and Morges, also Smyrna Trachea, Samornion and Prelea, and which he calls the work of the Amazons: some say ^{f941} it was called Ephesus, because Hercules permitted the Amazons to dwell in it, Ephesus in the Greek language signifying “permission”; Pausanias ^{f942}

denies, that the famous temple in it was built by them, but by Ephesus the son of Caystrus, and says that from him the city had its name; though others say it was built by Androclus, the son of Codrus, king of Athens, in the time of David king of Israel; and that having suffered by the sea, it was rebuilt by Lysimachus king of Thrace, who called it after his wife's name Arsinoe; but he being dead, it was called by its ancient name Ephesus: it is now a poor village in the hands of the Turks, and with them goes by the name of Aiasalik; though with others it still has the name of Epheso; the Syriac version reads, "they came"; not only Paul, but Aquila and Priscilla; and certain it is that they came with him thither, since it follows,

and left them there; unless this is to be understood of Cenchrea: this clause is not here read in the Syriac version, but is placed at the end of (~~41821~~ Acts 18:21), where it reads much better; as that he should leave them at Ephesus, when he departed from thence, than when he first came thither; unless the sense is, that he left them in some part of the city, whilst he went to the Jewish synagogue; since it follows,

but he himself entered into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews; concerning Jesus being the Messiah, and the abrogation of the law; and the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, and not by the deeds of the law: which were the principal things in debate, between him and the Jews: Beza's ancient copy reads, "and the sabbath following he left them there".

Ver. 20. *When they desired him to tarry longer time with them*, etc.] Either Aquila and Priscilla, whom he left here, for here they were, as is certain from ~~41826~~ Acts 18:24,26 or rather the Jews with whom he reasoned, who might be desirous of further conference with him, upon the subject they had disputed about; either in order to gain more knowledge, or in hopes of baffling and confounding him:

he consented not; for a reason afterwards given.

Ver. 21. *But bade them farewell, saying*, etc.] As follows:

I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem; which perhaps was the passover, since that often went by the name of the feast: the why he must by all means keep it, was not because it was obligatory upon him; nor did he always observe it, as appears from his long stay at Corinth, and other places; and besides, as a Christian, he had nothing to do with it; but either because of his vow, (~~41818~~ Acts 18:18) or because he knew

he should have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to great numbers; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions omit this clause:

but I will return again unto you, if God will; he promises to return to them, but not peremptorily as knowing that he was altogether subject to the will of God, who disposes and orders all things according to his sovereign pleasure; (see ^{<3015>}James 4:15) and he sailed from Ephesus; which was near the Aegean sea: such was the situation of Ephesus, according to Apollonius ^{f943}; who says, that it stood out to the sea, which encompassed the land on which it was built; so Pausanias ^{f944} relates, that Lysimachus passing into Asia by shipping, took the kingdom of Antigonus from him, and built the city the Ephesians now inhabit near the sea; so Josephus ^{f945} reports of Herod and Agrippa, that travelling by land to Phrygia Major, they came to Ephesus, and again, **διεπλευσιν**, “they sailed from Ephesus” to Samos.

Ver. 22. *And when he had landed at Caesarea*, etc.] This was Caesarea Stratonis, formerly called Strato’s tower: it would have been nearest for the apostle to have landed at Joppa, in order to go to Jerusalem, but that haven was a dangerous one; this was the safest, and which therefore Herod had repaired at a vast expense, and in honour of Caesar had called it by this name: of the port at Caesarea, and what a convenient and commodious one, as it was made by Herod, Josephus ^{f946} gives a particular account, and who often calls this place Caesarea, **παραλιος**, “Caesarea by the sea” ^{f947}; and in other Jewish ^{f948} writings mention is made of this place as a sea port, and of **ἄρσϣϣδ amyδ ατνωϣ**, “the shore of the sea of Caesarea”:

Josephus ^{f949} sometimes calls it the port Sebastus, or Augustus, it being, as before observed, made by Herod, and so called in honour of Augustus Caesar; and in another place ^{f950}, Sebastus the port of Caesarea: according to Jerom ^{f951}, or a writer under his name, this was neither Caesarea Philippi, which indeed it could not be, that being an inland town; nor Caesarea formerly called Strato’s tower, but a third Caesarea, the metropolis of Cappadocia: in which he must be mistaken, seeing that was no sea port, and the apostle could not be said to land there; nor did it lie in the way to Jerusalem from Ephesus; but this city was in Phenice, and lay between Joppa and Dora; which cities were maritime ones, but very disagreeable havens, because of the vehement strong winds from Africa: which rolling up the sand out of the sea upon the shore, would not admit of a quiet station ^{f952}; wherefore the apostle chose to land here, and not at either of the said ports;

and gone up; not to Caesarea, but to Jerusalem, from thence, which lay higher; and going to and from these places, is signified by a going up and down, (^{<40B>}Acts 9:30, 25:1). Moreover, the apostle had told the Ephesians, that he must go and keep the feast in Jerusalem, as he undoubtedly did: and yet if this does not refer to his going up thither, it will not be easy to observe that he went thither at all before his return to Ephesus; and besides, to suppose him to go from Caesarea to Antioch, was all one as to go back to Ephesus; and so to go, as one observes, by the same place to Jerusalem, into which he promised, in his return from Jerusalem, to come again, if God would:

and saluted the church; at Jerusalem, the mother church:

he went down to Antioch; in Syria, from whence he first set out.

Ver. 23. *And after he had spent some time there*, etc.] At Antioch:

he departed; from thence:

and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples; that were in those parts, confirming them in the faith of Christ, and fortifying their minds against the temptations of Satan, and encouraging them to bear the reproaches and persecutions of men; which shows the affection, diligence, and industry of the apostle: it seems there were disciples in these countries of Galatia and Phrygia, which very likely were made by the apostle, when he passed through those places, (^{<40B>}Acts 16:6) and who were the beginning of Gospel churches in these places, which continued for ages after: certain it is, there were churches in Galatia in the apostle's time, of whom he makes mention, and to whom he wrote, (^{<40B>}1 Corinthians 16:1, ^{<40B>}Galatians 1:2). According to the apostolical constitutions, Crescens, mentioned (^{<40B>}2 Timothy 4:10) was appointed by the apostles bishop of the churches of Galatia; and particularly it is said, that he was bishop of Chalcedon in Galatia; (see Gill on "^{<40B>}Luke 10:1") and in the "second" century, there was a church at Ancyra, which was disturbed by the heresy of Montanus, and was established by Apolinarius, who makes mention of the elders of this church ¹⁹⁵³: in the "third" century there were churches in Galatia, which Stephen bishop of Rome threatened with excommunication, because they rebaptized heretics: in the beginning of the "fourth" century, there were bishops from hence, which assisted at the council of Nice, against Arius, and at the synod of Sardica, in the same century; and at the beginning of it, Clemens

bishop of Ancyra, after he had taught twenty nine years, suffered much in the persecution of Dioclesian, first at Rome, then at Nicomedia, and at last was put to death by the sword; in this age also lived Basil, bishop of Ancyra, under Constantius; he first came to the bishopric of that place under Constantine, but being deprived of it for four years, was restored by Constantius in the council of Sardica; under the former he disputed against Photinus, as Epiphanius^{f954} relates; who makes mention of Anysius his deacon, and Eutyches and Theodulus his notaries; and the same writer^{f955} takes notice of several elders and officers of the same church in that age, as Photinus, Eustathius, another Photinus, and Sigerius, elders, Hyginus deacon, Heracides subdeacon, Elpidus reader, and Cyriacus president of the church: in the “fifth” century, there were many churches in Galatia, yea, they are said to be innumerable; Leontius was bishop of Ancyra in the times of Arcadius and Honorius; and was succeeded by Theodotus, who was in the first Ephesine synod against Nestorius, as was also Eusebius bishop of the same church, at another synod in the same place; Anastasius was bishop of the said church, lived under the emperor Leo the first, and was at the synod of Constantinople; Meliphthongus, bishop of Juliopolis in the same country, assisted at several synods; Eusebius, bishop of Aspona in Galatia, was present in the first synod at Ephesus, against Nestorius; likewise Peter bishop of Gangrae, and Theoctistus bishop of Pessinus, both lived in the time of the two synods, the infamous one at Ephesus, and the other at Chalcedon: in the “sixth” century, there were bishops of Ancyra, Juliopolis, and other cities in Galatia, who were present at the Roman and Constantipolitan synod; in this age, under Anastasius the emperor, lived Dorotheus bishop of Ancyra: in the “seventh” century were present, at the sixth council at Constantinople, several bishops of the churches of Galatia; as of Sinope, Pessinus, Aspona, and others: in the “eighth” century, mention is made of Basil, bishop of the church at Ancyra, Nicodemus bishop of Didymi, Gregory bishop of Sinope: and even in the ninth century a garrison of Christians was placed in Ancyra, against the incursions of the Saracens^{f956}; so long the Christian name remained in those parts: and that there were also churches in Phrygia is as evident; Aristarchus, a companion of the apostle Paul, is said to be bishop of Apamea, which was a city in Phrygia; (see Gill on “~~200~~ Luke 10:1”) the second century, Papias, a disciple of the Apostle John, was bishop of Hierapolis in this country^{f957}; and in the same age there was a church at Philomelium in Phrygia, to which the church at Smyrna wrote a letter, still extant in Eusebius^{f958}, which gives an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp; likewise the church at Lyons, in

France, sent a letter to the churches in Asia and Phrygia, giving an account of their martyrs, which is to be seen in the same writer ^{f959}; in this century lived Apolinarius, bishop of Hierapolis, who opposed the Phrygian heresy of Montanus; and who makes mention of Zoticus, of the village of Comana, and Julianus of Apamea, both in Phrygia, as his fellow elders and bishops ^{f960}: Dionysius, of Alexandria, speaks of a church, and of the brethren at Synnada, which was in Phrygia, in a letter of his to Philemon, a presbyter at Rome ^{f961}; at Lampsacus in Phrygia, there were martyrs that suffered under Decius: in the third century, there was a church at Hierapolis, famous from the times of the apostles. Tertullian makes mention of the believers in Christ in Phrygia, in his time ^{f962}: in the beginning of the “fourth” century under Dioclesian, a whole city in Phrygia of Christians was set on fire and burnt, men, women, and children, calling upon Christ the God of all ^{f963}; and at the council of Nice, under Constantine, were present bishops of many churches in Phrygia; as Ilium, Synnada, Eucarpia, Hierapolis, and others; at Lampsacus, in this country, was held a memorable synod against Eudoxus and Acacius, the chief of the Arian faction: in the “fifth” century there were churches in Phrygia; Theodosius and Agapetus were bishops of Synnada in Phrygia Pacatiana; Marinianus, bishop of the same place, was present at the several synods in this century; Nunechius of Laodicea, Gennadius of Acmonii, Thomas and Olympius, both of Theodosiopolis, Lucianus of Ipsa, Albertus of Hierapolis, Eusebius of Doryleus, with many others, all in Phrygia, are made mention of in history: in the “sixth” century, several bishops of Phrygia, as of Philomelium, etc. were present at the synod held at Rome and Constantinople: in the “seventh” century, bishops of several churches in this country, as of Hierapolis, Synnada, etc. assisted at the sixth synod at Constantinople: in the eighth century were many churches here, whose bishops were present at the Nicene synod, as Basil, bishop of Pergamus, Nicetas of Ilium, John of Synnada, and others ^{f964}.

Ver. 24. *And a certain Jew named Apollos*, etc.] Who by some is thought to be the same with Apelles, (^{<5160}Romans 16:10), his name is Greek, though he was a Jew, not only by religion, but by birth, being of a Jewish extract:

born at Alexandria; in Egypt, which was built by Alexander the great, from whence it had its name; it was the metropolis of Egypt, and the seat of the kings of it; great numbers of Jews were in this place; here lived Philo the famous Jew:

an eloquent man; in speech, as well as learned, wise, and “prudent”, as the Ethiopic version renders it:

and mighty in the Scriptures; of the Old Testament, particularly in the prophecies of them concerning the Messiah; he had thoroughly read them, and carefully examined them, and could readily cite them; as well as had great knowledge of them, and was capable of explaining them; he was “skilful in the Scriptures”, as the Syriac version renders it; or he “knew” them, as the Ethiopic; he had large acquaintance with them, and was well versed in them: it is a Jewish way of speaking; so Ahithophel is said to be **hrwtb rwbq**, “mighty in the law”^{f965}; the same is said of the sons of Reuben^{f966}: this man

came to Ephesus; after the departure of the Apostle Paul, and while Aquila and Priscilla were there; the reason of his coming hither was to preach the word, as he did.

Ver. 25. *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord*, etc.] Which John, whose baptism he only knew, came to prepare: the word here used signifies “catechised”; and suggests, that he was trained up by his parents in this way, who might have been the disciples of John, though afterwards removed from Judea to Alexandria; and that he only had been taught the rudiments of the Christian religion, or doctrine of the Gospel; here called the way of the Lord, or which directs and leads unto him, as the only Saviour, and is the path of faith and truth; or as some copies read, “the word of the Lord”; and which accounts for what is afterwards said of him:

and being fervent in the spirit; either in or by the Spirit of God, being made so by him, who is, compared to fire, and who, in the form of cloven tongues of fire, sat upon the disciples at the day of Pentecost, and upon others; among whom this Apollos is by some thought to be, though without any reason; however, he might be inspired with zeal by the Spirit of God: or “in his own spirit”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; his soul was inflamed with zeal for the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the good of souls; his ministry was very affectionate, warm, and lively; (see ^{<6121>}Romans 12:11) He spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord; or “of Jesus”, as read the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; according to the measure of light and grace he had received, he spake out freely and fully, and taught the people with great

industry, and with all the exactness he could, the things he knew concerning the person, offices, and grace of the Lord Jesus:

knowing only the baptism of John; which must be understood, not of the ordinance of baptism singly, as administered by John, but of the whole ministry of John; as of that ordinance, so of his doctrine concerning repentance and remission of sins; and concerning Christ that was to come, and concerning his being come, and who he was, whom John pointed at, and taught the people to believe in: but perhaps he might know very little, if anything, of the miracles of Christ, or of his death and resurrection from the dead, and the benefits and effects thereof; and of the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, and the light and knowledge which were communicated thereby.

Ver. 26. *And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue*, etc.] Of the Jews at Ephesus; using great freedom of speech, and showing much intrepidity and greatness of soul, and presence of mind; not fearing the faces of men, nor the revilings and contradictions of the Jews:

whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard; they attending at the synagogue, and having observed what he delivered, that there was some deficiency in it, though they took no notice of it publicly; partly on their own account, it not being proper, especially for Priscilla, to speak in public, nor was it allowed in the Jewish synagogues for a woman to speak there; and partly on his account, that they might not put him to the blush, and discourage him; and chiefly on account of the Gospel, that they might not lay any stumblingblocks in the way of that, and of young converts, and give an occasion to the adversary to make advantages: wherefore

they took him unto them; they took him aside when he came out of the synagogue, and privately conversed with him; they had him “to their own house”; as the Syriac version renders it;

and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly; these two doubtless had received a considerable measure of evangelical light and knowledge from the Apostle Paul, during the time of their conversation with him; and as they freely received from him, they freely imparted it to Apollos, with a good design to spread the truth of the Gospel, and to promote it and the interest of Christ in the world: and as on the one hand it was a good office, and a kind part in them, to communicate knowledge to him, so it was an instance of a good spirit, and of condescension in him, to

be taught and instructed by them; especially since one of them was a woman, and both mechanics, and made but a mean figure: and from hence it may be observed, that women of grace, knowledge, and experience, though they are not allowed to teach in public, yet they may, and ought to communicate in private, what they know of divine things, for the use of others.

Ver. 27. *And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia*, etc. The chief city of which was Corinth, and whither Apollos went, as appears from (~~490~~ Acts 19:1). What disposed him to go thither, after he had received a greater degree of light and knowledge, was no doubt that he might communicate it, to the good of others, to which he was moved by the Holy Ghost, who had work for him to do there: according to Beza's most ancient copy, there were Corinthians sojourning in Ephesus, who when they had heard him (Apollos), besought him that he would go with them into their country; to which he agreeing, the Ephesians wrote to the disciples at Corinth to receive him, as follows:

the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; that is, the brethren at Ephesus, among whom Aquila was a principal one, wrote letters of recommendation to the brethren of the churches in Achaia, particularly at Corinth, not only that they would receive him into their houses, and hospitably entertain him as a Christian man, but admit him, and behave towards him as a preacher of the Gospel:

who when he was come; into Achaia, and to Corinth:

helped them much which had believed through grace; the phrase "through grace", is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, but is in all the Greek copies, and may be connected either with the word "helped"; as the Syriac version, "he helped through grace"; and then the sense is, that Apollos, through the gifts of grace bestowed on him, or by the assistance of the grace of God, or both, greatly helped and contributed much to the advantage of the believers in those parts; as to the encouragement of their faith, and the increase of the joy of it; for the quickening, and comforting, and establishing them in the truths and doctrines of the Gospel, by his affectionate, fervent, and nervous way of preaching: or it may be connected with the word "believed", as it is in the Arabic version and in ours; and the meaning is, that he greatly assisted such who were already believers; and who became so, not of themselves, but through the grace of God; for faith is not of nature, nor the produce of man's free will, but is the gift of God's

grace; it is a fruit of electing grace, an instance of distinguishing grace, it is owing to efficacious grace, and comes along with effectual calling grace, through the word preached, the means of grace; and is supported and maintained by the grace of God; the Ethiopic version renders it, “he preached much to them, who believed in the grace of God”; that is, in the Gospel, the doctrine of the grace of God, which they had received and professed; or in the love and favour of God, they were rooted and grounded in, and persuaded of.

Ver. 28. *For he mightily convinced the Jews*, etc.] His reasoning was so strong and nervous, his arguments so weighty and powerful, and the passages he produced out of the Old Testament so full and pertinent, that the Jews were not able to stand against him; they could not object to the texts of Scripture he urged, nor to the sense he gave of them, nor answer the arguments founded upon them; he was an overmatch for them; they were refuted by him over and over, and were confounded to the last degree:

and that publicly, in their synagogue, before all the people; which increased their shame and confusion; and was the means of spreading the Gospel, of bringing others to the faith of it, and of establishing them in it, who had already received it: showing by the Scriptures; of the Old Testament, which the Jews received and acknowledged as the word of God:

that Jesus was Christ; or that Christ, that Messiah, which these Scriptures spoke of, whom God had promised, and the church of God expected; and which was the main thing in controversy between the Jews and the Christians, as it still is.