

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 20

Ver. 1. *And after the uproar was ceased*, etc.] Which Demetrius, and the craftsmen, had raised at Ephesus, and which was put an end to by the speech of the town clerk, or register keeper of the theatre:

Paul called unto him the disciples; the members of the church at Ephesus, whom he convened, either at his own lodgings, or at their usual place of meeting:

and embraced them; or “saluted them”; that is, with a kiss, which was sometimes done at parting, as well as at meeting; (see ~~Acts~~ Acts 20:37) and so the Syriac version renders it, and “kissed” them, and so took his leave of them, and bid them farewell; the Alexandrian copy, and some other copies, and the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions before this clause insert, “and exhorted, or comforted” them; that is, exhorted them to continue steadfast in the faith, and hold fast the profession of it without wavering, and comforted them under all their tribulations, and in a view of what afflictions and persecutions they must expect to endure for the sake of Christ, with the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel:

and departed to go into Macedonia; to visit the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, and to establish them in the faith of the Gospel: he did not choose to leave Ephesus till the tumult was over, partly on his own account, that he might not bring upon himself an imputation of fear and cowardice; and partly on the account of the church at Ephesus, that he might not leave them in distress, and add to it; but now it was over, he judged it proper to take his leave of them, and visit other churches, the care of which equally lay upon him.

Ver. 2. *And when he had gone over those parts*, etc.] Of Macedonia, and the cities in it before mentioned;

and had given them much exhortation; to abide by the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and to walk worthy of it in their lives and conversations; and this exhortation he was frequently giving, as often as he

had opportunity, improving his time much this way, and continued long at it: and, having pursued it to a sufficient length,

he came into Greece; or Hellas; which, according to Ptolomy^{f990} and Solinus,^{f991} is properly true Greece; the former makes it to be the same with Achaia, where Corinth was; and the latter says it was in his time called Attica, where Athens was; so Pliny^{f992}, who also says, that Thessaly was so called: this Hellas included Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, Achaia, which is properly Greece, Peloponnesus, and the adjacent islands.

Ver. 3. *And there abode three months*, etc.] In Greece:

and when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria; from some part of Greece, in order to go to Jerusalem; which the Jews in the parts of Greece understanding, laid wait for him, either by sea or land, with an intention either to take the money from him, which he had collected in Macedonia, and in Greece, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, or to take away his life, or both; of which lying in wait for him, the apostle had some notice, either by divine revelation, or from somebody who was in the secret, or had got knowledge of it from such as were: upon which he

purposed to return through Macedonia; through which he came from Ephesus to Greece: this wicked design being made known to him, obliged him, in point of prudence, and both for his own safety, and the good of the churches, to alter his scheme, and steer his course another way, to the disappointment of his enemies; in which the wisdom of providence, the care of God over his ministers, and his concern for his churches manifestly appeared.

Ver. 4. *And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea*, etc.] This Sopater is thought to be the same with Sosipater in (~~612~~Romans 16:21) and in three of Beza's copies, and in as many of Stephens's, he is so called here; the Ethiopic version calls him Peter, a citizen of Berea; and the Arabic version Sopater of Aleppo. The Alexandrian copy, Beza's most ancient copy, and others, the Complutensian edition, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, Sopater of Pyrrhus, the Berean; that is, the son of Pyrrhus. He is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and is said to be bishop of Iconium; (see Gill on "~~211~~Luke 10:1"). This name was common among the Greeks; there was one of this name a native of Paphus, in the times of Alexander the great, a comical poet, and who also is sometimes called Sosipater, as this man was; there was another Sopater the sophist, who

wrote the affairs of Alexander; and there was another of this name, who, among other things, collected much concerning painters and statuaries. The name signifies “a father saved”. Pyrrhus is a Grecian name well known, being the name of a famous king of Greece who engaged in war with the Romans. This man went along with the apostle into Asia; and it seems, that of the persons here mentioned, he only accompanied him; for the verb is in the singular number, and the other six persons following did not go along with him, as Sopater did, but went before him to Troas, which was in Asia, and there waited for him; though the Syriac version reads in the plural number; but then it renders the words, “they went forth with him”, as they might do from Greece, and yet not accompany him into Asia: the phrase into Asia is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions.

And of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; the former of these is before said to be a Macedonian, (^{<4492>}Acts 19:29) and here he appears to be of Thessalonica, and his name is a Greek one; but Secundus is a Roman name, though he might be born at Thessalonica, or at least have lived there, and so be said to be of it. His name signifies “Second”; very likely was his father’s second son, and therefore so called; though the name was used among the Grecians. We read of Secundus an Athenian, the master of Herod the sophist, who flourished under the emperor Adrian, there are sentences under his name still extant; and another called Secundus the grammarian, a friend of Poleman, a philosopher at Athens, who corrected his writings; so that this man might be a Grecian, and a native of Thessalonica; mention is made of him nowhere else.

And Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; the former of these is so called to distinguish him from Gaius the Macedonian in (^{<4492>}Acts 19:29) and the latter by being joined with him should be of the same place, as he might be; (see ^{<4401>}Acts 16:1) though the Syriac version reads, “and Timotheus of Lystra”; and so does the Arabic version used by Deuteronomy Dieu; and this is mentioned with Derbe in the above cited place.

And of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus: of the former (see ^{<4061>}Ephesians 6:21, ^{<5047>}Colossians 4:7, ^{<5042>}2 Timothy 4:12) and of the latter (see ^{<5042>}2 Timothy 4:20) (^{<4212>}Acts 21:29) where he is called an Ephesian, as they both are here in Beza’s most ancient copy; Ephesus being the metropolis of Asia, strictly so called. These are both of them said to be among the seventy disciples: Trophimus, we are told, taught at Arles in France, and suffered martyrdom with the Apostle Paul; and that Tychicus was bishop of

Chalcedon in Bithynia; and that another of the same name was bishop of Colophon; (see Gill on “^{<<200>}Luke 10:1”). Trophimus signifies “nourished”, and is a name to be found in a funeral inscription of the Romans ^{f993}, though Greek, and in the fragments of the poet Menander: and Tychicus signifies “fortunate”; whether the same with Fortunatus in (^{<<667>}1 Corinthians 16:17) may be inquired.

Ver. 5. *These going before*, etc.] The apostle into Asia, all but Sopater, who accompanied him:

tarried for us at Troas; a city in Asia Minor; (see ^{<<468>}Acts 16:8) whither they went before hand a nearer way, to provide for the apostle, and where they waited for him, and for Sopater, and for Luke, the writer of this history, who appears from hence to be in company with the apostle, and for as many others as were along with him.

Ver. 6. *And we sailed away from Philippi*, etc.] Which was in Macedonia, from whence they came in a straight course by Samothracia, over the Hellespont, to Troas, where the above six persons were waiting for them: and they set sail

after the days of unleavened bread; or the passover; which is mentioned only to observe the time of year when this voyage was taken; and not to suggest to us that Paul and his company stayed at Philippi, and kept this feast there; for the passover was only kept at Jerusalem, and besides was now abolished, and not to be observed by Christians:

and came unto them to Troas in five days; not that they were five days sailing from Philippi to Troas; but either they were so long in all, from their first setting out into Asia, to their arrival at Troas; or rather, they came to Troas within five days after the above six persons had got thither; so that they waited at Troas but five days for the apostle, and those that accompanied him.

Where we abode seven days; by what follows they came into Troas on the Lord’s day evening, or early on Monday morning, and stayed there till the next Lord’s day, or first day of the week; for it follows,

Ver. 7. *And upon the first day of the week*, etc.] Or Lord’s day, (^{<<610>}Revelation 1:10) and which Justin Martyr calls Sunday; on which day, he says ^{f994}, all, both in city and country, met in one place for religious worship; and on this day, it appears from hence, and from other places, that

the apostles and primitive churches did meet together for religious exercises; (see ^{<B19>}John 20:19,26 ^{<B6E>}1 Corinthians 16:2) and so they did at Troas at this time, as follows:

when the disciples came together to break bread; not to eat a common meal, or to make a feast, or grand entertainment for the apostle and his company, before they departed; but, as the Syriac version renders it, “to break the eucharist”, by which the Lord’s supper was called in the primitive times; or as the Arabic version, “to distribute the body of Christ”, which is symbolically and emblematically held forth in the bread at the Lord’s table. Now on the first day of the week, the disciples, or the members of the church at Troas, met together on this occasion, and the apostle, and those that were with him, assembled with them for the same purpose; the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “when we were come together”; Paul and his company, together with the church at Troas; for it is plain from hence that there was a church in this place, not only by disciples being here, but by the administration of the Lord’s supper to them; and so there was in after ages. Who was the first pastor or bishop of this church, is not certain; perhaps Carpus, of whom mention is made in (^{<S013>}2 Timothy 4:13) though he is said to be bishop of other places; (see Gill on “^{<S013>}2 Timothy 4:13”). In the “second” century, in the times of Ignatius, there were brethren at Troas, from whence he wrote his epistles to the churches at Smyrna, and Philadelphia, and who are saluted in them by the brethren at Troas ^{f995}: in the third century, several martyrs suffered here, as Andreas, Paulus, Nicomachus, and Dionysia a virgin: in the “fifth” century, Pionius, bishop of Troas, was present at Constantinople at the condemnation of Eutyches, and afterwards he was in the council at Chalcedon; and even in the “eighth” century mention is made of Eustathius, bishop of Troas, in the Nicene council ^{f996}.

Paul preached unto them; to the disciples that were gathered together, either before, or after, or at the time of breaking of bread; for this ordinance was not administered without some instructions about the nature, use, and design of it.

Ready to depart on the morrow; this seems to be mentioned as a reason for what follows,

continued his speech until midnight: since he was about to take his leave of them, and not knowing when he should see them again, or whether ever any more, he delivered a long discourse to them; which not only shows that

he was full of matter, but that his affection for these saints, and his desire of doing them good, were very great, by imparting as much spiritual light and knowledge as he could unto them; and also his great zeal for the glory of God, and the interest of Christ, though he was to set forth on a journey the next morning.

Ver. 8. *And there were many lights in the upper chamber,* etc.] Which were lighted up, both for necessary uses, to see by, to read the word, and to administer the ordinance of the supper, and for the comfort and pleasure of the whole company, both preacher and hearers; as well as to remove all ground of suspicion, or occasion of reproach, as if it was a midnight society met for wicked practices: but this no ways countenances the use of lamps and wax candies in the daytime at divine worship, since this was in the night; of the upper chamber, in which it was usual to meet for religious exercises, (see ~~400~~ Mark 2:4, ~~401~~ Acts 1:13), where they were gathered together; the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, “where we were gathered together”.

Ver. 9. *And there sat in a window a certain young man,* etc.] In the upper room, where he placed himself, either for air and refreshment, the chamber being suffocating, through the number of people, and of lights; or for want of room, the place being full:

named Eutychnus; a Greek name, which signifies one of good fortune:

being fallen into a deep sleep; which may be accounted for without aggravating the case; as from his youth, he was a young man, and so more subject to sleep, and more easily overcome with it, than persons in years, by reason of the humours of the body which incline to it; and also from the length of service, and the lateness of the season of the night, all which contributed to bring on this deep sleep: it can hardly be thought that he purposely composed himself to sleep, for had he, he would never have chose so dangerous a place to sit in as a window, and that at so great an height from the ground; but this sleep seemed to come upon him at an unawares; what hand soever Satan might have in it, with a view to the young man’s hurt, both as to soul and body, and to bring reproach and scandal upon the church, and the Gospel, it seems evident that the providence of God was in it, and which overruled it for a good end, even the greater confirmation of the Gospel, and very probably for the spiritual good of the young man.

And as Paul was long preaching he sunk down with sleep; being quite overcome, and bore down with it, not able to hold up his head, he either bowed down, or leaned backwards: and fell down from the third loft: or three story high, where the upper room was. It seems that he did not fall inward, for then he would have fallen no further than the floor of the upper room, but outward, out of the window into the street or yard; and this is the more evident from Paul's going down to him, mentioned in the next verse:

and was taken up dead; not only for dead, or as one dead, but he really was dead, as it is no wonder he should.

Ver. 10. *And Paul went down*, etc.] From the upper room, where they were assembled, into the court, yard, or street, where he fell; or into the lower room of the house, where he was brought when taken up. The apostle might see him fall, or he might be told of it, or he might have an intimation of it from the Spirit of God, by whom he might be impressed to go down, in order to work a miracle, for the confirmation of the Gospel he was preaching:

and fell on him, and embracing him; praying over him, as Elijah and Elisha did, (^{<1172>}1 Kings 17:21, ^{<1184>}2 Kings 4:34) and the like effect followed:

said, trouble not yourselves; which speech perhaps was addressed to the friends and relations of the young man; or to the disciples present, who were concerned at this accident, both for the young man's sake, and lest it should be improved to the disadvantage of the Gospel by the enemies of it,

For his life, or "soul"

is in him; it being returned upon the apostle's falling on him, and praying over him; or he said this as being fully assured that it would return, in like manner as Christ said concerning Jairus's daughter, (^{<1185>}Luke 8:52,55).

Ver. 11. *When he therefore was come up again*, etc.] Into the upper room, where he was before, and where the disciples were gathered together:

and had broken bread and eaten; administered the Lord's supper, and also eat for his bodily refreshment:

and talked a long while: about the ordinance and the doctrines of the Gospel, and spiritual experience, and such like divine things:

even till break of day; not knowing when to leave off:

so he departed; without taking any rest; though before he departed, what follows was done; it was at this time he left his cloak, books, and parchments here, (^{SMH3}2 Timothy 4:13).

Ver. 12. *And they brought the young man alive*, etc.] Up into the upper room, and presented him alive to the disciples:

and were not a little comforted; that is, the disciples, at the sight of the young man, who was taken up dead, not only for his sake, but chiefly because by this miracle the Gospel, which the apostle preached, and who was about to depart from them, was greatly confirmed to them.

Ver. 13. *And we went before to ship*, etc.] That is, Luke, the writer of this history, and the rest of the apostle's company, went before him to a ship, which lay at Troas, and went aboard it:

and sailed unto Assos; a city of Aeolia, or Mysia; and is said by Pliny to be the same with Apollonia; and which he places on the sea shore, where it is evident this Assos was. His words are ^{f997},

“on the shore Antandros, formerly called Edonis, then Cimmeris and Assos, the same with Apollonia.”

And in another place ^{f998} he calls it Assos of Troas; and says of it, that about Assos of Troas a stone grows, by which all bodies are consumed, and is called “sarcophagus”, (a flesh devourer,) of which he also makes mention elsewhere ^{f999}, and observes, that in Assos of Troas the stone sarcophagus is cut in the pits, in which the bodies of the dead being put, are consumed within forty days, excepting their teeth: and with him Jerom ^{f1000} agrees, as to the name and situation of this place, who says that Assos is a maritime city of Asia, the same that is called Apollonia. It is represented by Strabo ^{f1001} as a place very much fortified by art, and very difficult of ascent on that part which lies to the sea; unless another Assos in Lycia is designed by him: if this was the situation of the Assos in the text, it seems to furnish us with a reason, from the nature of the place, why the apostle chose to go on foot thither. Pausanias ^{f1002} speaks of it as in Troas, and near Mount Ida. Sodamos of Assos in Troas, which lies near Ida, was the first of the Aeolians, who conquered in the Olympic race of the boys. In this place was born the famous philosopher Cleanthes, a disciple and successor of Zeno; hence he is called Cleanthes the Assian ^{f1003}. No

mention is made of the Gospel being preached here, or of any church until the eighth century, when John, bishop of Assos, is said to be in the Nicene council ^{f1004}. Some exemplars read Thassos, as the Syriac and Arabic versions seem to have done:

there intending to take in Paul; who stayed behind, willing to have a little more Christian conversation with the saints at Troas.

For so had he appointed; that these should go before hand to Assos, and meet him there, and take him in:

minding himself to go afoot; from Troas to Assos, which were not very far off from one another; hence Assos is, by Pliny, called Assos of Troas; and by Pausanias, Assos, which is in Troas; that is, in the country of Troas, as before observed: what was his reason for going by foot thither, is not very evident; whether that he might have the opportunity of conversing with the disciples of Troas, who might accompany him thither; or whether that he might be alone, and have leisure for private meditation, and free converse with God.

Ver. 14. *And when he met with us at Assos*, etc.] According to appointment:

we took him in; to the ship, and so sailed on:

and came to Mitylene; a city in Lesbos ^{f1005}, an island in the Aegean sea, now Metelino: sometimes the island is so called, and is about seven miles and a half from the continent: of this city Vitruvius ^{f1006} says, that it was magnificently and elegantly built, but not prudently situated; for when the south wind blew, men were sick in it, and when the northwest wind blew they had coughs, and when the north wind blew, they were restored to health. Some say it had its name from Mitylene, the daughter of Macaria or Pelops; others from Myto, the son of Neptune and Mitylene; and others from Mityle, the builder of it. ^{f1007} Hillerus inquires, whether it may not be so called from the Chaldee word, **anl j m**, “Matlana”, used in the Targum on (³⁸⁰¹³ Job 40:13) which signifies “a bar”, this city being as a bar to Lesbos, which shut it up. It was famous for being the native place of Pittacus, one of the seven wise men of Greece, a great philosopher and legislator, who, with others, conquered Melanchrus the tyrant of Lesbos, whom the inhabitants of Mitylene greatly honoured, and made him their governor; and a field, which they gave him, was called after his name

Pittacius^{f1008}: of this place was Theophanes, a famous historian, who wrote the history of Pompey the great, and was familiar with him, and honoured by him, as Cicero^{f1009} relates: other persons of note are said to be of this place, as Alcaeus a lyric poet, and Diophanes a rhetorician. It does not appear that the apostle stayed and preached the Gospel here, or that any Gospel church was here by him raised; no mention is made of it in ecclesiastical history until late: in the “second” century Heathenism prevailed in the island, the Lesbians sacrificed a man to Dionysius. In the “fifth” century we read of a bishop of this island in the Chalcedon council: in the “sixth” century there was a bishop of Mitylene, in the fifth Roman synod: in the seventh century, Gregory, bishop of Mitylene, assisted in the sixth council at Constantinople, and Theodorus of the same place: in the eighth century Damianus, bishop of the same place, was present in the Nicene council^{f1010}.

Ver. 15. *And we sailed thence*, etc.] From Mitylene:

and came the next day over against Chios; which, according to R. Benjamin Tudelensis^{f1011}, was three days’ sail from Mitylene; according to Pliny^{f1012} it was sixty five miles from it, and is an island in the Icarian or Aegean sea, and lies between Lesbos and Samos, next mentioned; and has its name from the nymph Chione, so called from the exceeding whiteness of her skin, as snow: it was famous for marble; from hence came the best mastic, and good figs, and the wine called malmsey wine^{f1013}. And of this place Jerom says^{f1014}, Chios, an island before Bithynia, whose name in the Syriac language signifies “mastic”, because that mastic grows there; some add, he called it “Chia” from Chione the nymph: the reason of its name, as Pausanias^{f1015} relates, was this; Neptune coming into a desert island, had carnal knowledge of a nymph, and in the time of her travail, a snow fell from heaven on the ground; and from this Neptune called his son Chius, from whom the island has its name. Others^{f1016} conjecture, that it was called from *aywj*, “Chivja”, which signifies a serpent; this island having been very much terrified, as Aelianus^{f1017} says, by the hisses of a serpent of a monstrous size, until it was consumed by fire. It was common to sail from Mitylene hither, and “vice versa”: so we read^{f1018} of Herod seeking Agrippa, he came to Chios, and from thence to Mitylene. We read nothing of the apostle’s stay and preaching here, nor of any Gospel church here, till ages after: in the “fourth” century, Heathenism prevailed to such a degree in it, that Dionysius Omadius was worshipped here with human sacrifice; and yet, in the fifth century, a bishop of Chios was present in the council of

Chalcedon; and in the “sixth” century another assisted in the fifth Roman synod; and in the “seventh” century there was a bishop of this place at the sixth synod at Constantinople; and in the “eighth” century, Leon, bishop of Chios, was in the Nicene ^{f1019} synod. It is now called Chio or Scio, by the Turks Saches, and is inhabited by Italian Genoese.

And the next day we arrived at Samos; another island in the Icarian sea, not a very fruitful one, unless for olives ^{f1020}; and for nothing more famous than for being the birth place of Pythagoras ^{f1021}, hence called the Samian, and of Melissus. It was ninety three miles distant from Chios ^{f1022}; and, according to R. Benjamin, two days sail from it ^{f1023}; but Paul sailed hither in a day. Of this place Jerom ^{f1024} thus writes; Samos, an island in the Aegean sea, in which, it is reported, earthen vessels were first made. Herodotus ^{f1025} speaks of three things for which it was famous, a very high mountain in it, a bulwark about the haven in the sea, and a temple the largest of all he ever saw. Some say it has its name from the height of it, Samos signifying an high place. Pausanias ^{f1026}, from Asiuss, a Samian, suggests, that it was so called from Samus, the son of Ancaeus and Samia; and observes, that the inhabitants of it affirm, that Juno was born here; and here was a famous temple, said to be dedicated to her by the Argonautes. One of the Sybils dwelt here, called from hence Samia, and Polycrates, a noted tyrant. Lycurgus, the famous lawgiver, died in this place, as did also Pherecydes, the Syrian ^{f1027}. It is now called Samo. The apostle stayed not here to preach the Gospel; nor do we read of its being preached here by any: idolatry greatly prevailed in this place in the “second” century; and so it did in the “fourth”: though in the same we also read of some Christians here that suffered persecution; and so low as the “eighth” century, Heraclius, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod ^{f1028}.

And tarried at Trogyllium; which, according to Ptolomy ^{f1029}, was a promontory in the Icarian sea: it was about forty furlongs distant from Samos, according to Strabo ^{f1030}. It was a promontory of Mycale; and Trogilius, called also Trogilia, is mentioned with Mycale and Samos by Pliny ^{f1031}, as near to Miletus. It follows here, and the next day we came to Miletus; which was once the chief city of Ionia: it was famous for being the birth place of Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, and of Timotheus the musician, and of Anaximander, and Anaximenes, and the famous Democritus, philosophers ^{f1032}, and of Cadmus, the first inventor of prose ^{f1033}. Pliny says ^{f1034}, it was formerly called Lelegeis, Pityusa, and Anaetoria; and it seems it had its name Miletus from Miletus, the son of

Apollo, who is said to build it ^{f1035}; and Apollo himself is sometimes called Apollo Milesius, and who had a famous temple in this place ^{f1036}. Though rather it was so called from **atlym** “Milata”, or “Melote”, which signifies pure, white, fine, soft wool, for which this place was famous; which was used for carpets, but chiefly for cloth, which being dyed purple, was sent into divers parts: “Melote” in Greek signifies the same; it is used in (^{<38137>}Hebrews 11:37) and translated “sheepskin”. Ptolomy ^{f1037} places this city in Caria, by the sea; and certain it is from this account, that it was a sea port: it is said to have four ports or havens, one of which would hold a fleet. Of it Jerom ^{f1038} says; Miletus, a maritime city in Asia, distant ten furlongs from the mouth of the river Maeander: by the apostle’s sending from hence to Ephesus, for the elders of the church there to meet him at this place, as is afterwards related, and taking no notice of any brethren, elders, or church here, it looks as if there were none at this time: and in the “second” century, Gentilism was embraced at Miletus; and in the “fourth” century Licinius consulted the oracle of Apollo Didymaeus in this place, concerning the event of the war against Constantine; but in the “fifth” century we read of a church here, a bishop of this place being in the Chalcedon council; in the “seventh” century a bishop of this church assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople, whose name is said to be George; and in the “eighth” century Epiphanius, bishop of Miletus, was present in the Nicene council ^{f1039}.

Ver. 16. *For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus*, etc.] That is, to sail by it, without calling at it, as he did, for it lay by the shore before he came to Miletus; but he chose not to stop there, fearing he should be detained by the brethren there:

because he would not spend the time in Asia; of which Ephesus was the metropolis:

for he hasted, if it were possible, for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost: which was near at hand; for it was but fifty days from the second day of the passover, which feast was over when he sailed from Philippi; and at Troas he stayed seven days, and he had been several days sailing already; (see ^{<4416>}Acts 20:6,13-15). And his great desire to be at the feast of Pentecost was not in order to keep that feast, according to the usage of the Jews; but that he might have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to a great number of Jews, out of all countries, whom he knew would come to that feast.

Ver. 17. *And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus*, etc.] Which is said, by some, to be about four hundred furlongs from Miletus, and, by others, ten German miles.

And called the elders of the church; that is, at Ephesus; not the ancient members of the church, but the officers of it; the pastors, bishops, and overseers, as they are called, (~~Acts~~ Acts 20:28) and are so styled from their office, and not their age. The twelve disciples the apostle found in this place, and the numerous converts made by him here, first composed this church, which doubtless was formed into Gospel order by himself; to which he afterwards wrote an epistle, when at a distance from them, called the Epistle to the Ephesians; and in the latter end of the first century, another epistle was sent from Jesus Christ himself, by the Apostle John, to this church, (~~Revelation~~ Revelation 2:1) and which had an angel, pastor, or bishop over it; but who he was, is not certain; Caius, who is reckoned among the seventy disciples, is said to be bishop of it; (see Gill on "~~Luke~~ Luke 10:1"). Some say Timothy was the first bishop of this church, and after him Onesimus; but these accounts are uncertain, and not to be depended on: but certain it is, that the Apostle John dwelt here, and in the parts adjacent, unto his death, and was a superintendent and overseer in common of this church, and others near it; concerning whom Irenaeus ^{f1040}, a very ancient writer near his time, says, the church at Ephesus was founded by Paul; but John remained with them to the times of Trajan. In the "second" century Ignatius ^{f1041} wrote an epistle to this church, in which he speaks highly of it, saying, there was no heresy in it; and makes mention of Onesimus as bishop of it: in the "third" century there was a church in this place, and a very memorable affair happened here in the times of Decius; he having obliged all to sacrifice to the idols in the temple, seven persons, by name Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Dionysius, Johannes, Serapion, and Constantine, were accused of Christianity, which they owned; but being soldiers, they had space given them to repent until the return of the emperor, who was going elsewhere: whilst he was gone they fled and hid themselves in the caves of Mount Caelius; upon the emperor's return they were inquired after, and found to be there; who, being provoked, ordered the mouth of the caverns to be shut up with stones, that they might be famished; and it is said, that what through fear and grief they fell asleep, and slept to a great age; some pretend to say to the times of Theodosius, and then awaked; and these are they that are called the seven sleepers: in the beginning of the "fourth" century there was a bishop of this church at

the council of Nice: in the “fifth” century Ephesus was famous for a general synod, convened in it against Nestorius; and in this age we read of several bishops of this place: at the time of that synod, Memnon was bishop of it, and before him Antonius and Heraclides, and after him Basil, Bassianus, Stephen, and Paul: in the “sixth” century there was a bishop of this church present at the synod of Rome and Constantinople; and in the same age Ruffinus was bishop at Ephesus, who flourished under Mauritius the emperor: in the “seventh” century a bishop of this place assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople; in this century it was a metropolitan church, and Theodorus was archbishop of it: in the “eighth” century, one Theodosius presided over the church here; to which church the emperor Constantine gave a hundred pounds of gold^{f1042}: so far down Christianity is to be traced in this place.

Ver. 18. *And when they were come to him*, etc.] That is, when the elders or pastors of the church at Ephesus were come to the apostle at Miletus:

he said unto them, ye know, from the first day I came into Asia; to Ephesus the chief city in it:

after what manner I have been with you at all seasons; what was his conduct, conversation, and constant manner of life; which the apostle takes notice of, not to commend himself, or to obtain applause of men; but either in vindication of himself, against those that were ready to charge and censure him; or to recommend the doctrine which he taught; and chiefly for the imitation of these elders, he had sent for, and convened in this place; and he appeals to themselves, as eyewitnesses of what he was going to say.

Ver. 19. *Serving the Lord with all humility of mind*, etc.] Meaning, in the ministration of the Gospel, being conscious to himself of his own weakness and insufficiency in himself for such service; no ways elated with those excellent and extraordinary gifts bestowed upon him; ascribing all his success to the power, grace, and Spirit of God; treating no man with contempt and disdain; nor lording it over God’s heritage, or claiming a dominion over the faith of men; nor seeking honour nor riches for himself, nor even what he had a just right unto, a maintenance from the people; but laboured with his own hands, and to his own and the necessities of others:

and with many tears; at the obstinacy and unbelief of some, and at the distresses and afflictions of others, both corporeal and spiritual; as well as on account of the unbecoming walk of some professors:

and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: who were hardened against his ministrations, and believed not the Gospel preached by him, but spoke evil of it, and lay in wait to take away his life; by reason of which, his afflictions, which he calls temptations, because they were trials of his faith and patience, were very great.

Ver. 20. *And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you,* etc.] The Syriac version supplies, “to your souls”; to lead them into a true knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, and to confirm them in the same, and to preserve them from errors in principle, and immoralities in practice, and to encourage the exercise of every grace, and to instruct them in every branch of duty; nothing of this kind, or which had this tendency, did the apostle dissemble, conceal, or drop, either through sloth and indolence, or through fear of men, or for the sake of reputation, wealth, and friends. The things the apostle may have chiefly in view are the truths of the Gospel, which are very profitable to the souls of men; such as relate to the knowledge of God, his being, perfections, and persons; as that there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit, which is profitable to be known, in order to understand the economy of salvation, in which each person has his distinct concern; and that both the Son and Spirit are equally God with the Father, which accounts for the virtue and efficacy of the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and how safely he may be depended upon for salvation, and how equal the Holy Spirit is to his work and office; likewise such doctrines as relate to the sin of Adam and his posterity in him, to the imputation of the guilt of that sin unto them, and the derivation of a corrupt nature from him, and which respect the impurity and impotence of human nature; all which is profitable, since it accounts for the origin of moral evil, and many of the dispensations of providence in involving those that do not know the right hand from their left in public calamities; and since it shows the necessity of regenerating grace, tends to the humiliation of men, and makes for the magnifying the riches of God’s grace: also such doctrines as express the grace of God in man’s salvation as the doctrines of God’s everlasting love, of election, redemption, justification, pardon, reconciliation, union to Christ, and final perseverance; all which are exceeding profitable, for the peace, comfort, and refreshment of the souls of God’s people. Moreover, the ordinances of the Gospel, baptism, and the Lord’s supper, which are the privileges of believers, and the means of their spiritual profit, may be included, together with all the duties of religion; which though not profitable by way of merit,

yet contribute to the peace and pleasure of the mind; and none of these things did the apostle withhold from the elders and church at Ephesus, as his epistle to that church does abundantly show, in which, doctrines, ordinances, and duties are taken notice of: now to keep back these, is either to keep them back wholly, to say nothing of any of them, but in the room of them to deliver out morality and legal righteousness; or in part, to mix the truths of the Gospel with the doctrines of men, and not give out the sincere milk of the word; or to draw and fetch back what has been delivered through the fear of men, and in order to gain reputation and applause: but so did not the apostle, nor should any minister of the Gospel; and that for the reason in the words, because they are profitable; as also because they are the counsel of God; and because it is the will of Christ that nothing should be hid, but everything should be published, which he has signified to his servants; and this is enforced by his own example, who whatever he heard of his Father, he made known to his disciples; and for the ministers of Christ to do otherwise, would argue unfaithfulness in them both to Christ and to the souls of men:

but have showed you; all the doctrines of the Gospel, and pointed to every path of duty, and declared, as he says hereafter, the whole counsel of God:

and have taught you publicly; first in the Jewish synagogue, then in the school of Tyrannus, (~~490B~~ Acts 19:8-10) and in whatsoever place the church, when formed, might meet together for public worship; there the apostle taught them the truths of the Gospel openly, and without any reserve, before all the people, as Christ ordered his apostles to do, and as he himself did, (~~1002~~ Matthew 10:27, ~~818D~~ John 18:20)

and from house to house: as he visited the saints at their own houses, to know their personal cases, and the state of their souls, he instructed them privately and personally one by one; he taught the same publicly as privately, and privately as publicly: and took every opportunity of instilling Gospel truths into them, and of enriching them with a larger knowledge of them; which shows his affection and zeal, his laboriousness, industry, and indefatigableness in the ministry.

Ver. 21. *Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks*, etc.] To the Jews first in their synagogue, and then to both Jews and Greeks, or Gentiles, in the school of Tyrannus; opening and explaining to both the nature and use, urging and insisting upon, and proving by undeniable testimonies the necessity,

of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ: the former of these is not a legal repentance, but an evangelical one; which flows from a sense of the love of God, and an application of pardoning grace and mercy, and is always attended with hope, at least of interest in it, and as here with faith in Christ Jesus: it lies in a true sight and sense of sin, as exceeding sinful, being contrary to the nature and law of God, and a deformation of the image of God in man, as well as followed with dreadful and pernicious consequences; and in a godly sorrow for it, as it is committed against a God of infinite purity and holiness, and of love, grace, and mercy; and it shows itself in shame for sin, and blushing at it, and in an ingenious confession of it, and forsaking it: and the latter of these is not an historical faith, or an assent of the mind to whatsoever is true concerning the person, office, and grace of Christ; but is a spiritual act of the soul upon him; it is a looking and going out to him, a laying hold and leaning on him, and trusting in him, for grace, righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation. Now these two were the sum of the apostle's ministry; this is a breviary or compendium of it; a form of sound words held fast and published by him: and as these two go together as doctrines in the ministry of the word, they go together as graces in the experience of the saints; where the one is, there the other is; they are wrought in the soul at one and the same time, by one and the same hand; the one is not before the other in order of time, however it may be in order of working, or as to visible observation; repentance is mentioned before faith, not that it precedes it, though it may be discerned in its outward acts before it; yet faith as to its inward exercise on Christ is full as early, if not earlier; souls first look to Christ by faith, and then they mourn in tears of evangelical repentance, (^{<3120>}Zechariah 12:10) though the order of the Gospel ministry is very fitly here expressed, which is first to lay before sinners the evil of sin, and their danger by it, in order to convince of it, and bring to repentance for it; and then to direct and encourage them to faith in Christ Jesus, as in the case of the jailer, (^{<4163>}Acts 16:29,30) and this is, generally speaking, the order and method in which the Holy Spirit proceeds; he is first a spirit of conviction and illumination, he shows to souls the exceeding sinfulness of sin, causes them to loath it and themselves for it, and humbles them under a sense of it; and then he is a spirit of faith, he reveals Christ unto them as God's way or salvation, and works faith in them to believe in him. Moreover, these two, repentance and faith, were the two parts of Christ's ministry, (^{<4115>}Mark 1:15) and are what, he would have published and insisted on, in the preaching of the word, (^{<4247>}Luke 24:47, ^{<4166>}Mark 16:16) so that the

ministry of the apostle was very conformable to the mind and will of Christ.

Ver. 22. *And now behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem,* etc.] Not in his own spirit, though the Ethiopic version reads, “in my spirit”; as if he was pressed and straitened, and troubled within himself, at what afflictions and bonds he was to endure at Jerusalem; for this is not consistent with what he says in (^{<440B>}Acts 20:24) nor is the sense, that he was bound in conscience and duty to go to Jerusalem, to carry the collections of the churches made for the poor saints there, which the Gentile churches importuned him to take upon him, and which he undertook, and promised to perform, and so was under obligation to do it; but rather that he was resolved and determined in his own mind, within himself, or he purposed in his spirit, as in (^{<4402>}Acts 19:21) to go to Jerusalem: but it is best to understand it of the Spirit of God; as that either the apostle, by the revelation of the Spirit of God, knew that when he came to Jerusalem he should be laid in bonds, and under a deep impression of that upon his mind, he went thither, as though he was bound already; or rather that he was under such a strong impulse of the Spirit of God, by which he was moved to such a vehement desire to go thither, that the bonds and afflictions he saw waited for him there, could not deter him, and all the entreaties of his friends could not dissuade him from it:

not knowing the things that shall befall me there; that is, the particular things he should suffer there, nor how they would issue with respect to life or death; and if the latter, whether he should suffer death, there or elsewhere; these things were not as yet revealed to him; he only in general knew, that bonds and afflictions would be his lot and portion, and which therefore he excepts in the next verse: after this it was revealed to him by Agabus a prophet, in the name, and under the influence of the Holy Ghost, that he should be apprehended at Jerusalem, and should be bound and delivered to the Gentiles; which was signified by the prophet’s taking his girdle and binding his hands and feet with it, but still he knew not whether he should die there or not, though he was ready for it, (^{<4421>}Acts 21:10,11,13) afterwards when he was come to Jerusalem, and had been bound, and was in prison, the Lord himself appeared to him, and told him that he must bear witness at Rome, as he had testified of him at Jerusalem, (^{<44231>}Acts 23:11) so that he was not to suffer death there, only bonds and imprisonment.

Ver. 23. *Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city,* etc.] As he passed along, where there was a church, or any number of saints: in the churches of those times there were prophets who foretold things to come, and by these the Holy Ghost testified to the apostle, as he travelled along, and called upon the churches in every city, what would befall him when he came to Jerusalem; this sense the natural order of the words requires, unless there should be a transposition of them, thus, “save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me, or wait for me in every city”; that is, this in general was only made known to him by the Spirit of God, that wherever he came, affliction and persecution would attend him, and he must expect bonds and imprisonment; these were ready for him, and he must prepare for them, as he did: and therefore, whenever they came, he was not surprised at them, they were no other than what he looked for; but the other sense seems best, for such a transposition is not very easy, and, besides, can by no means be admitted, if the sense is, as the words are read in Beza’s ancient copy, and in others, and in the Vulgate Latin version, “that bonds and afflictions abide me at Jerusalem”; however, since the Holy Ghost testified before hand of the afflictions and bonds of the apostle, whether in every city or in Jerusalem, or both; it is no inconsiderable proof of the proper deity of the Spirit of God, and is an instance of his affectionate regard to the apostle, to give him previous notice of these things.

Ver. 24. *But none of these things move me,* etc.] From the hope of the Gospel, nor from the ministry of the word, nor from his journey to Jerusalem; they did not shake his faith, nor inject fear into him, nor cause him to alter his purpose and design:

neither count I my life dear unto myself: life is a very valuable thing, no outward or temporal enjoyment can be dearer to a man than life; all that he has he will give for his life: this therefore must not be understood in an absolute sense, as if the apostle despised his life, and esteemed of it meanly, when it was the gift of God, and had been not only so eminently preserved in providence, but had been so useful in a way of grace to so many valuable purposes; but it must be taken in a comparative sense, with respect to Christ and his Gospel, and when it should be called for to be laid down for him; and that, in such circumstances, and under such considerations, he made no account of it at all, but preferred Christ and his Gospel to it: this sense appears by what follows,

so that I might finish my course with joy; the course and race of his life, ending it by suffering cheerfully and joyfully for Christ; or his Christian course and race, which began at his conversion, ending that with a joyful prospect of being with Christ in an endless eternity; or else the course of his ministry, sealing that with his blood, and rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and so he did finish his course, (~~SM~~ 2 Timothy 4:7)

and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus; which seems to be explanative of the former, or of what is meant by his course, namely his ministry, the ministry of the Gospel: Beza's ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin version read, "the ministry of the word"; this he had received from Christ, both the Gospel which he ministered, and gifts qualifying him for it, and a mission and commission to minister it; and which he was desirous of fulfilling in such a manner, as to give up his account with joy to him from whom he had received it, and to whom he was accountable; namely,

to testify the Gospel of the grace of God; to profess and preach it, to bear a constant and public testimony to it at death, as in life, and faithfully to declare it, and assert it to the last; which he calls not only the "Gospel", or good news of salvation by Christ; but the Gospel "of the grace" of God: which brings the account of the free grace, love, and mercy of God, displayed in the scheme of salvation of the grace of God the Father, in pitching his love upon any of the sons of men; not because they were better and more deserving of his favour, than others, but because of his sovereign will and pleasure, who will be gracious to whom he will be gracious; and in choosing them in Christ unto salvation, before they had done good or evil, and without any consideration or foresight of, or motive from good works hereafter done by them; in drawing the scheme and model of their salvation in Christ, appointing him to be the author of it; and in making a covenant of grace with him, stored with all the blessings and promises of grace; and in sending him, in the fulness of time, to suffer and die for them, not sparing him, but delivering him up for them all, and giving all things freely with him; and in accepting the sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness of his Son on their account, as if done by themselves. It also gives an account of the grace of Christ in undertaking the salvation of men; in assuming their nature, and becoming mean and low in it; in dying for their sins; in his intercession for them at the right hand of God; and in the care he takes of them in this world, until he has brought them safe home to himself. Likewise it gives an account of the grace of the Spirit in regeneration and

sanctification; in working faith in the hearts of men; in being a comforter to them, a witnesser of their adoption, the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them unto the day of redemption. And the Gospel may be so called, because all the doctrines of it are doctrines of grace; it asserts election to be of grace, and not of works; and ascribes the justification of a sinner to the free grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ, imputed without works and received by faith, which faith is the gift of God, and it denies it to be of the deeds of the law; it represents the pardon of sin to be according to the riches of God's grace, though it is through the blood of Christ, and not owing to humiliation, repentance, confession, and new obedience, as causes of it; it attributes regeneration and conversion to the abundant mercy, the free favour of God, and to the efficacy of his grace, and not to the will of the flesh, or the will of man; and in a word, as the great doctrine of it is salvation, whence it is called the Gospel of salvation, it declares that the whole of salvation, from first to last, is all of grace. And it may also bear this name, because it is a means of conveying grace unto, and implanting it in the hearts of men; regenerating grace comes this way; God begets men by the word of truth, they are born again of incorruptible seed by it; the Spirit of God, as a spirit of sanctification, is received through it, and faith comes by hearing it; and both that and hope, and every other grace, are quickened, encouraged, and drawn forth into exercise by it; all which is, when it is attended with the Spirit of God and power: and this being the nature and use of the Gospel, made it so precious and valuable to the apostle, and made him so intent upon testifying it, and fulfilling the ministry of it, and to prefer it to life and everything in this world; and it cannot but be highly valued and greatly desired by all those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Beza's ancient copy, and some others, read, "to testify to Jews and Greeks the Gospel of the grace of God".

Ver. 25. *And now behold*, etc.] This is not only a note of asseveration, but of attention, stirring up to observe what is here asserted:

I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more; the sense is, that none of them should ever see him again, none of the churches of Asia, or the members of them; among whom he had been some years preaching the Gospel, the things concerning the Messiah, his kingdom and glory, and the meetness of the saints for, and their right unto the heavenly inheritance, prepared by God, and given by him to all that love him: Beza's ancient copy reads, "the

kingdom of Jesus”: this the apostle knew by divine revelation, by the same spirit in which he was going bound to Jerusalem, though he knew not whether he should die there or elsewhere; however, he knew, and was persuaded, he should visit these parts no more.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore I take you to record this day*, etc.] This is a solemn appeal to the elders of the church at Ephesus, who knew his doctrine and manner of life for a considerable time among them:

that I am pure from the blood of all men: or “of you all”, as some copies, and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; which seems most natural, since they could only bear a testimony for him with respect to themselves, and the people at Ephesus, where he had so behaved both in the faithful discharge of his ministry, and in his exemplary life and conversation; as that the ruin and destruction of no one of them could be laid to his charge, or any one perish for want of knowledge, or through any negligence of his; (see ^{<4073>}Ezekiel 33:6).

Ver. 27. *For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*.] By which is meant, not the purposes and decrees of God, latent in his own breast, these the apostle could not declare; but his revealed will in the Gospel, concerning the salvation of men by Jesus Christ, even the whole of the Gospel, every truth and doctrine of it, necessary to salvation, and to the peace, joy, and comfort of the saints; together with all the ordinances of it, and everything that had any tendency to promote the glory of God, and the good of souls; (see ^{<4073>}Luke 7:30) none of these things did the apostle withhold from the knowledge of the church at Ephesus, but freely imparted and communicated them to them; (see Gill on “^{<4080>}Acts 20:20”).

Ver. 28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves*, etc.] Since the blood of men may be required of those, who are negligent or partial in their office, and shun to declare the whole counsel of God: this exhortation is given them not merely as men, to take care of their bodily health, the outward concerns of life, and provide for themselves and families; nor merely as Christians, but as ministers of the Gospel; that they would take heed to their gifts, to use and improve them, and not neglect them; to their time, that they spend it aright, and not squander it away; and to their spirit, temper, and passions, that they are not governed by them; and to their lives and conversations, that they be exemplary to those who are under their care; and to their doctrine, that it be according to the Scriptures; that it be

the doctrine of Christ, and the same with the apostles; that it be according to godliness, and that it tends to edification; that it be sound and incorrupt, pure and unmixed, and all of a piece and consistent with itself; and that they be not infected and carried away with errors and heresies:

and to all the flock; the church and all the members of it, which are compared to a flock of sheep, which are to be looked after and watched over by the ministers of the word, who are as shepherds to them, lest they should be infected, or any damage done them. The people of God are compared to sheep on many accounts; before conversion, for their going astray, when they are as lost sheep; after conversion, for their meek and inoffensive carriage and behaviour, and for their patience in bearing sufferings, to which they are exposed: and a church of Christ is compared to a flock of them, being in Gospel order, folded together and feeding in the same pasture, attending the word and ordinances, under the care of shepherds appointed by Christ the chief shepherd; whose business it is to take heed unto them, and care of them, to learn to know their state and condition, to watch over them, and to feed them with knowledge and with understanding, for which they are qualified by Christ; and they are to take heed unto everyone in the flock, the poor of the flock as well as others, the lambs as well as the sheep, and the sick and the diseased, the torn, and straying, and driven away, as well as the fat and the strong: and this flock, though a little flock, is a holy and beautiful one, a flock of men, and of the souls of men dear to God, to Christ and the blessed Spirit; and a special regard should be had unto them, and that for reasons following:

over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers; or “bishops”; this is said to the elders of the church, (~~Act~~ Acts 20:17) which shows that the office of an elder and a bishop is one and the same office; and this contains in it more than one argument why they should take heed to the flock; as because they are the overseers of it, who have the care and oversight of the flock, that is under their inspection, and is their proper province, and office; and this they were put into by the Holy Ghost, who gave them gifts to qualify them for it, and called, and inclined them to undertake it, as well as moved the people to make choice of them for this purpose; and since, therefore, this was an affair in which the Holy Ghost was so much concerned, it became them very diligently to attend it:

to feed the church of God; with knowledge and understanding; and discharge the whole office of faithful shepherds to the flock, by feeding the

flock and not themselves, strengthening the diseased, healing the sick, binding up the broken, bringing again that which was driven away, and seeking up that which was lost: and here is another argument suggested, to stir up to a diligent performance of this work; and that is, that this flock is the church of God, a set of men whom God has chosen for himself, and called by his grace out of the world, and separated for his own use and glory, and among whom he dwells; and therefore to be fed with the faithful word, with the finest of the wheat, and not with the chaff of human schemes, and with the wind of false doctrine, nor with anything that is vain, trifling, and deceitful; but with the solid doctrines of the Gospel, with the words of faith and good doctrine, with the wholesome words of Christ Jesus, which have in them milk for babes and meat for strong men, and with and by the ordinances of the Gospel, which are the green pastures they are to be guided into, and abide in; and in all they are to be directed to Christ, the sum of the word and ordinances, who is the bread of life, and food of faith; and that the church should be thus fed, is the will of Christ, who has appointed and ordered his ministers to feed his lambs and sheep, and has furnished them with what is necessary for this work; this is the design of the ministry of the Gospel, and the administration of ordinances; and the churches of Christ are placed where food may be had, where the word is faithfully preached, and the ordinances truly administered: some copies read, “the church of the Lord”; and others, and so the Complutensian edition, “the church of the Lord and God”:

which he hath purchased with his own blood; which being the blood not only of a pure and innocent man, but of one that is truly and properly God as well as man, was a sufficient ransom price to redeem the church and people of God from sin, the law, its curse and condemnation: so that this is no inconsiderable proof of the true and proper deity of Christ; and contains a fresh argument, or reason, why the flock of God and “church of Christ”, as the Syriac version reads; or “the church of the Lord and God”, as in five of Beza’s exemplars: or “of the Lord God”, as the Arabic version, should be taken heed unto and fed; because it must needs be dear to God and Christ, and precious to them, since so great a price has been paid for it. The purchaser is God, Christ who is God over all, blessed for ever, not a creature; that could never have made such a purchase, it could not have purchased a single sheep or lamb in this flock, no man can redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him, much less the whole flock; but Christ being God, was able to make such a purchase, and he has actually

made it, and given a sufficient price for it; not to Satan, with whom these sheep were a prey, and from whom they are taken in virtue of the ransom given; but to God, from whom they strayed, against whom they sinned, and whose law they broke; and this price was not silver and gold, nor men, nor people: but Christ himself, his life and blood; and which were his “own”, the human nature, the blood of which was shed, and its life given being in union with his divine person, and was in such sense his own, the property of the Son of God, as the life and blood of no mere man are theirs: and this purchase now being made in this way, and by such means, is a very proper one; it is not made without price, but with an invaluable one; and it is a legal purchase, a valuable consideration being given for it, perfectly equivalent to it; and therefore is a complete one, there is nothing wanting to make it more firm, it is a finished purchase; and it is a very peculiar one, it is a peculiar people that are purchased, called the purchased possession, (~~4014~~ Ephesians 1:14) and a peculiar price which is paid for it; there is no other of the same kind, nor any thing like it, and it is made by a peculiar person, one that is God and man in one person.

Ver. 29. *For I know this*, etc.] By divine revelation:

that after my departing; either out of this world, or after his leaving them now, and proceeding on, his journey:

shall grievous wolves enter in among you; false teachers, comparable to wolves, for their craft and cunning, and for their greedy, covetous, and voracious dispositions; and who would be very grievous, troublesome, and even intolerable to them; these, he knew, would enter privily, at an unawares, into their churches, and set up themselves for preachers, without being called or sent:

not sparing the flock; fleecing it instead of feeding it, making merchandise of it, and like the Pharisees, under religious pretences, devour widows' houses, and drain the purses of men; and having as little compassion upon their souls, poisoning them with their errors and heresies, subverting their faith, and bringing them into swift ruin and destruction, as much as would in them lie.

Ver. 30. *Also of your own selves shall men arise*, etc.] Not only false teachers from abroad should come and enter among them, but some would spring up out of their own communities, such as had been admitted

members of them, and of whom they had hoped well; such were Hymenseus, Philetus, Alexander, Hertoogenes, and Phygellus;

speaking perverse things; concerning God, and Christ, and the Gospel; distorted things, wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction, and that of others; things that are disagreeable to the word of God, and pernicious to the souls of men:

to draw away disciples after them; to rend away members from the churches, make schisms and divisions, form parties, set themselves at the head of them, and establish new sects, called after their own names; (see ~~418~~1 John 2:19, ~~418~~1 Timothy 5:19).

Ver. 31. *Therefore watch*, etc.] Meaning both over themselves, and the flock; to prevent, if possible, false teachers entering in, and to nip the buds of heresy and schism, as soon as they appear, and to preserve themselves, and the church, from being carried away with the error of the wicked.

And remember that by the space of three years; reckoning from his first coming to Ephesus, unto this time, that he now called at Miletus; (see ~~418~~Acts 18:19,20 19:8,10,22, 20:3,6,17) and

I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears; that is, he was constantly and continually cautioning them against false teachers, and their doctrines, in the most tender and affectionate manner; shedding tears at the thoughts of what mischief would be done, and how many souls would be ruined by them; which gives a lively idea of the apostle, and his ministry, of his affection, zeal, and diligence, very worthy of the imitation of all the preachers of the Gospel. Several copies, and all the Oriental versions, read, “everyone of you”.

Ver. 32. *And now brethren*, etc.] So the apostle calls the elders of the church at Ephesus; though they had not the same gifts, and were not in the same high office as he was, yet he puts himself upon a level with them, as if he and they were fellow elders, as Peter calls himself, (~~418~~1 Peter 5:1) which is an instance of the apostle’s humility and affection:

I commend you to God; to God the Father; to his grace, to supply all their need; to his wisdom, to direct them in all their affairs; and to his power, to keep them from the sins and corruptions of the times, and from the errors and heresies now broaching, or to be broached.

And to the word of his grace: either the Gospel, before called the Gospel of the grace of God, (~~Acts~~ Acts 20:24) This is sometimes called “the word”, the word of faith, of truth, of righteousness, of reconciliation and salvation; and is “his” word, the word of God, and not of man; it comes from him, is concerning him, and is succeeded by him; and it is the word of “his grace”, since it publishes his free grace and mercy in Christ Jesus, and declares salvation to, be wholly of the grace of God; to which this church is commended by the apostle as a rule of faith and practice, to attend unto, and abide by, and as a preservative from those errors and heresies which he had observed would spring up among them, and which would be for their instruction, comfort, and establishment: or else the Lord Jesus is intended, who is the eternal and essential word of God; who, as the word, inwardly conceived, is the image of the mind, equal to it, and yet distinct from it, so Christ is the image of the invisible God, equal to him, and yet a distinct person from him; and as the word expressed is the interpreter of the mind, so Christ the word, who was in the beginning with God, and lay in his bosom, has spoke all things from him, declared his mind, and explained his will: besides, he is the word who in the everlasting council and covenant spoke on the behalf of all his people, asked for every blessing for them, and engaged to be the surety of them; and is the word, who, in the beginning of time, spoke all things out of nothing; and now is the advocate, and speaks for the saints in heaven, as well as he has been the word spoken of by all the holy prophets from the beginning of the world: and he may be thought the rather to be designed, since the saints never commend themselves, or others, either in life, or in death, to any but to a divine person; nor is any but a divine person capable of taking the care and charge of the saints, and of making it good; nor will they trust any other; nor are the saints ever said to be committed or commended to the Gospel, but on the other hand, that is said to be committed to them: the written word is committed to the care and keeping of the saints, but not the saints to the care and keeping of that; nor does it appear so agreeable to put the written word upon a level with the divine Being; a commendation of the saints, equally to the written word, as to God himself, seems to be a lessening of the glory of the divine Being, and an ascribing too much to the word, but suits well with Christ the essential word: and who may be called the word of his grace, because the grace of God is greatly displayed in him; and because all fulness of grace dwells in him; and he is the author, donor, and object of all grace, and so a proper person to be commended to; and what follows is very applicable to him:

which is able to build you up: in faith and holiness, and on himself, the sure foundation; for though the Gospel is an instrument in the hands of the Spirit of God, in building up saints on their most holy faith, yet Christ is the master builder; it is he that builds the temple, the church, and every particular believer, and must bear the glory. The saints, though they are built on Christ the foundation, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, and so are safe; yet they stand in need of building up, or of edification; and a church may be said to be built up, or edified, when additions are made unto it of such as shall be saved; and particular members are built up, when additions are made to their grace, or they grow in the exercise of it; when their spiritual strength increases, when their understandings are more enlightened, their judgments better informed, and their memories filled with divine truths and Gospel doctrines; when they are more and more confirmed in the faith of Christ, both as a grace, and as a doctrine; and their wills are brought to a greater resignation to the will of God, as well as their afflictions are set upon things in heaven, and their souls are more seeking after them: and now this is what God is able to do, and does do; for except he builds, in vain do the builders build; he causes all grace to abound; and so does his word, his essential word; he is the author and finisher of faith, and gives both grace and glory, as it follows:

and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified: by the inheritance is meant the heavenly glory, which is a free grace gift and not obtained by the works of the law, or the industry of men. It is a distribution by lot, as the land of Canaan was, even by the lot of God's eternal purpose and decree: it is what belongs to children, to the children of God, and them only; and therefore bears this name, and comes unto them upon, and in consequence of the death of Christ the testator: it is his righteousness which entitles unto it; and it is the grace of God which makes meet for it; and the Spirit of God is the earnest of it: it is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens, and is an eternal one; it lies in light, and among the saints there. God is able to give it; it is a gift of his grace, of his sovereign will, which he gives to whom he pleases; it is an inheritance of his preparing and disposing, which he calls unto, makes meet for, and bestows: and Christ, the word of his grace, is able to give it; it is in his hands, not only the promise of it, but that itself; he is in possession of it, and it is in his power to give it; and he does give it to all that the Father has given him, and who are here described from their sanctification; for this is only enjoyed by such, who are set apart

by God the Father, whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and to whom he is made sanctification, and who are sanctified by the blessed Spirit. Now though the Gospel, the written word, may be as a map, which shows where this inheritance lies, and which is the way to it; yet it is Christ, the living word, who gives the right unto it, the meetness for it, the earnest of it, and will put into the possession of it.

Ver. 33. *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.*] This the apostle says, not merely in vindication of himself, and his character, from all charge or suspicion of avarice; but chiefly for the instruction of these elders, and all others of the same office, not to indulge the sin of covetousness, which is very disagreeable, and ought not to be in a minister of the word; and it may be observed, that many things which the apostle says before of himself to those elders, is said not to commend himself, nor so much in his own vindication, as for their imitation; compare with this (^{<0465>}Numbers 16:15, ^{<0423>}1 Samuel 12:3) and to point out the character of false teachers that would come in, or spring up among them, who would make merchandise of them. Beza's ancient copy, and others, read, "the silver, etc. of none of you"; and so the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 34. *Yea, you yourselves know,* etc.] So far was the apostle from desiring to have other men's money, or to wear their apparel, or to eat their bread, that he could appeal to these elders for the truth of it, they having been eyewitnesses of it:

that these hands have ministered unto my necessities; meaning, that he had wrought with his hands, which he then held up, or stretched out, at tent making, along with Aquila and Priscilla, at Ephesus, as he had done before at Corinth, (^{<4812>}Acts 18:2,3,18,19) and therewith supplied himself with necessaries for food and clothing; for though he had a power, as a minister of the Gospel, to forbear working, and to insist upon a maintenance from the churches, yet in some cases, and in some places, he chose rather to forego that, lest he should either any ways hinder the progress of the Gospel at the first preaching of it, or be burdensome to the churches, or give the false teachers any handle against him; and he not only supported himself in this way, but assisted others also:

and to them that were with me; as Luke, Timothy, and others; (see ^{<4811>}Acts 20:4).

Ver. 35. *I have showed you all things*, etc.] Both as to doctrine and practice, and had set them an example how to behave in every point, and particularly in this:

how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak; the sense of which is, that they should labour with their hands as he did, and so support the weak; either such who were weak in body, and unable to work and help themselves, and therefore should be helped, assisted, relieved, and supported by the labours of others, that were able; or the weak in faith, and take nothing of them, lest they should think the preachers of the word sought only their own worldly advantage, and so they should be stumbled and fall from the truth:

and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus; which the apostle had either collected as the sense of some passages of his, such as (^{<0163>}Luke 6:30,35,38, 14:13,14, ^{<0254>}Matthew 25:34,35), etc. or which though not recorded in any of the Gospels, the apostle might have received from one or other of the twelve disciples, as what were frequently used by Christ in the days of his flesh; and which the apostle had inculcated among the Ephesians, and now puts them in mind of them, they being worthy of remembrance: how he said,

it is more blessed to give than to receive: it is more comfortable, honourable, pleasant, and profitable: the giver is in a more comfortable situation, having an abundance, at least a sufficiency, and something to spare; whereas the receiver is often in want and distress, and so uncomfortable: it is an honour to give; an honour is reflected upon the giver, both by the receiver, and others; when to receive is an instance of meanness, and carries in it, among men, some degree of dishonour: it is a pleasure to a liberal man to distribute to the necessities of others; and it cannot be grateful to a man to be in such circumstances, as make it necessary for him to receive from others, and be dependent on them; and great are the advantages and profit which a cheerful giver reaps, both in this world, and that to come: wherefore the conclusion which the apostle would have drawn from hence is, that it is much more eligible for a man to work with his own hands, and support himself, and assist others, than to receive at the hands of others.

Ver. 36. *And when he had thus spoken*, etc.] And finished his speech to the elders: he kneeled down: upon the floor, which was a prayer gesture, used by Christ, and others; for, it seems, the disuse of kneeling in prayer,

between the passover and pentecost, which Tertullian ^{f1043}, and other writers, speak of, had not yet obtained, which was in memory of Christ's resurrection from the dead, for this was now the time: (see ~~406~~ Acts 20:6,16) and

prayed with them all: and no doubt for them all; the Syriac version renders it, "and he prayed, and all the men with him"; the apostle, and the elders, joined together in prayer.

Ver. 37. *And they all wept sore*, etc.] At the thoughts of parting with such a faithful and affectionate friend and servant of Christ; and no doubt but their affections were greatly moved by his prayers for them, as well as by his discourse to them. Christians are not Stoics, religion does not take away and destroy the natural affections, but regulates and governs them, and directs to a right use of them:

and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him; as Esau fell on Jacob's neck and kissed him, (~~0304~~ Genesis 33:4) and Joseph on his brother Benjamin's, and his father Jacob's, (~~0454~~ Genesis 45:14, 46:29). And it was usual with the eastern nations, particularly the Persians ^{f1044}, for friends and relations to kiss at parting, as well as at meeting; (see ~~0009~~ Ruth 1:9,14).

Ver. 38. *Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake*, etc.] In (~~4025~~ Acts 20:25) it filled them with sorrow to part with him; but this was increased, and made almost intolerable by what he said,

that they should see his face no more: could they have hoped to have seen him again, it would have made their parting with him more easy; but to be told they should never see him more in this world, it cut them to the heart; which shows what a share the apostle had in their hearts and affections, and not without good reason: however, that they might have a sight of him as long as they could, they went along with him to see him take shipping, and to see the last of him.

And they accompanied him unto the ship: which lay at Miletus waiting for him.