



## 2. LAUNCH THE SOCIETY

as in the Acts of the Apostles

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#### 4. LAUNCH THE SOCIETY as in the Acts of the Apostles

### SECTION A

#### INTRO TO IDENTITY AND THE RE-TRACING OF STEPS

Acts 1:1-6:8

Paragraph "Hooks" are places where New Converts are Located

1	1:1-14	Introduction
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"multiplied the number of disciples in Jerusalem (6:7)



<p><b>1. Introduction</b></p>	<p><b>Ch 1:1-14</b></p>
<p>1:1-14 The first account that I compiled Theophilus was about all the things that Jesus both did and taught. This was up to the day on which he gave injunctions to the apostles and when he chose to be taken up (to the heavens) through the Holy Spirit. <i>c/f Luke 24:50</i>. After he had suffered he had presented himself to the apostles as being alive over a forty day period. They saw this was the case with many infallible proofs. He also spoke to them concerning the kingdom of God. On meeting with them he told them not to leave Jerusalem <i>c/f Lk 24:47</i> but to wait for the promise of the Father. (He told them) "You have heard about this from me. John had indeed baptized with water But you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Coming together these people questioned him saying "Lord are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?" <i>c/f Lk 24:21</i> He said to them "It is not for you to know at what times or seasons the Father fixes his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. You will witness to me both in Jerusalem and in Judea</p>	<p>and Samaria and unto the ends of the earth." And saying these things he was taken up (into the heavens). A cloud received him from their sight. And, as they were looking up to heaven as he went, behold there were two men standing by them in white garments. <i>c/f Lk 24:4</i> They said to them "Galileans. Why do you stand (here) looking up to heaven? Jesus, the one who has been taken from you up to heaven will come (back) in the way you saw him going up to heaven." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount, which was called after the olive grove <i>c/f Lk 22:39</i> and which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath's journey away. And they went into the upper room, where they had been waiting. There were both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Phillip and Thomas, Bartholmew and Matthew. There were James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the brother of James. <i>c/f Lk 22:13 14</i> All of them continued with one mind in steadfast prayer. They were with the women (including) Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brothers.</p> <p><small>(Note: Text is mainly a paraphrase of the Literal translation in the RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, 1988)</small></p>
<p><b>2. Replacement of Judas</b></p>	<p><b>Ch 1:15-26</b></p>
<p>15-26 At that time Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers. Their names numbered about one hundred and twenty. "Men, brothers. It has happened that the Scriptures spoken prior to this by the Holy Spirit and through the mouth of David concerned Judas. He was the one who became guide to those who took Jesus. He had been numbered amongst us and had been allotted his share of this ministry. He bought a field with his unrighteous reward. He swelled up and burst asunder in the middle so that his bowels were poured out. This became known to all those in Jerusalem so that field came to be called in their own language Aceldamach, that is, the Field of Blood. It has been written in the roll of the Psalms. "Let his estate be deserted and let not anyone dwell in it." And (it also says) "Let</p>	<p>another take on his office." It therefore behoves us that we should consider the men who have accompanied us in all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out amongst us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us. Let one of these (people) be a witness of the resurrection with us. And so they selected two (men), Joseph who was called Barsabbas and who was surnamed Justus and Matthias. Praying (over them) they said "You Lord know the heart of all men. Show us which of these two should take the place of the ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell. Who should go into his place. " They cast lots for them and the lot fell on Matthias. So he was reckoned (equal) along with the eleven (other) apostles. <i>c/f Lk 22:3</i></p>

### 3. Holy Spirit converts crowds

Ch 2:1-47

2:1-47 The day of Pentecost (Jewish Harvest festival, 15 days after 2nd day of Passover) was completed and they were all together. Then suddenly out of heaven came a sound as though caused by a violent wind. It filled the whole house where they were sitting. There appeared to them spreading out, tongues as of fire. It sat on each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in their tongues as the Spirit prompted them to speak out. Now there were in Jerusalem at that time Jews who were devout men from every nation under heaven. When the sound came the multitude assembled. They were confounded because each of them heard someone speaking to him in his own language. They were amazed and marvelled saying, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? How is it that we each hear (them) speak in the language to which we were born - Parthians, Medes, Elamites and (the language) of those who inhabit Mesopotamia and Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, and both Phrygia and Pamphylia, (Also included are) Egypt and the regions of Libya that belong to Cyrene as also visitors from Rome, both

Jews and Jewish converts. (There are) also Cretans and Arabians. Do we not hear them speaking in our own tongues about the great deeds of God? All were amazed and were troubled. They said to each other "What does this mean?" But others were mocking (them) and said "They have been filled with sweet wine." But standing up Peter with the eleven lifted up his voice and spoke out to them. *c/f Lk 21:37* "Jewish fellows and those who live in Jerusalem. Let this be known to you and listen to what I say. For these men are not drunk as you imagine. It is (only) the third hour of the day (9a.m.) But this is what has been spoken about through the prophet Joel "It shall be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh and your sons will prophesy and your daughters and your young men will see visions. Your old men will dream dreams. Onto my male servants and female servants I will pour out my spirit in those days and they will prophesy. *c/f Lk 21:34-36* I will do wonders in heaven above and there will be signs on the earth below. (that is,) blood and fire and the vapour of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the day of the Lord comes - the great and notable day. It will be that everyone who invokes the

name of the Lord will be saved." Israelites. Hear these words. Jesus the Nazarene, a man approved by God, dwelt amongst you with powerful deeds and wonders and signs. God did all this through him (and) in your midst, as you yourselves know. This man through a fixed plan and foreknowledge of God, was given up through the hand of lawless men. (And) fastening on him you killed him. God raised (him) up thereby loosening the pangs of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

David says about him "I foresaw the Lord always before me because he is on my right hand lest I be moved. Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced. Now also my flesh will live in hope because You will not abandon my soul in Hades. Nor will You give your holy one over to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life. You will fill me with gladness in your presence."

Men - brothers, you can speak with plainness about the patriarch David - that he both died and was buried. His tomb is amongst us until this day. Yet being a prophet and knowing that God swore an oath to him about the fruit of his loins and about sitting on  
*Continued over*

***Continued 2:1-47***

his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ. Neither was he (the Christ) abandoned in Hades. Nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus was raised up by God and we are witnesses to this. He is therefore at the right hand of God. He has been exalted. He received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father and He poured this out which you both see and hear (now). For David did not ascend to the heavens. But he says "The Lord said to my Lord. Sit on my right until I make your enemies into your footstool. Assuredly therefore let all the house of Israel know that God has made this Jesus

whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. And hearing this they were stung to their hearts and said to Peter and the remaining apostles. What may we do brothers? Peter said to them. Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ with a view to the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise and to your children and to those far away - as many as our Lord and God calls to himself. And with many other words he gave solemn witness and exhorted himself. And with many other words he gave solemn witness and exhorted them saying "Let this perverse generation be saved." Those therefore who welcomed his word were baptized and there were added that day about

three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles and in the fellowship, in the breaking of the loaf and in the prayers. Everyone was fearful. and many wonders and signs happened through the apostles. All those who believed came together and owned everything in common. They sold properties and possessions and distributed (the money) to all, according to anyone's need. From day to day they continued steadfastly with one mind, in the temple and going from house to house to break bread. They shared food in gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all people. The Lord added people from day to day to the ones who were being saved.

The last question asked in Luke's gospel was about the Kingdom and when it would be coming. This was the first question to be addressed by Luke in the *Acts of the Apostles*. As Jesus had promised, the Holy Spirit came upon the assembled Apostles and soon Peter was addressing the crowds gathered in Jerusalem. There had been the idea that the Messiah or the Christ would reassert a kingdom such as that established by King David hundreds of years before. But Peter reminds the people that the Kingdom of David was actually limited as it did not extend beyond death. Who knows what awaited one in Hades? On the other hand Jesus had won forgiveness for the sins of humanity from the Father-Originator of the Universe. So a Kingdom could be established beyond death. People could be safe from the aftermath of their sins. Their own repentance and request for forgiveness would assure them of this. Peter tells the crowd that King David in fact foresaw that a greater kingdom than his own would eventually come. Peter shows that with Jesus, this Kingdom has indeed arrived. The resurrection of Jesus shows this. Ultimately, (as Mark showed) all the anxieties about establishing a viable type of society come down to the safety of the individual. The Kingdom that has been brought in by Jesus can reach throughout this world and, into the next one.

In terms of the line of logic followed by *Reality Search*, the type of society and way of life presented by Jesus re the balance of time and place, enables people to reach a deeper harmony with the overall structure of the Cosmos. In the gospel of John (to be written around the turn of the first century) people will be challenged to intimately identify with the balance that is integral to the cosmos and which is integral to the Originator of the Cosmos.

<p><b>4. Cure of lame man</b></p>	<p><b>Ch 3:1-4:4</b></p>	
<p>3:1-4:4 It happened Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer which is the ninth hour (3 p.m.). A certain man who had been lame from birth was being carried. They used to put him each day at the door of the temple which was called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who went into the temple. Seeing that Peter and John were about to go into the temple he asked them for some alms. Looking at him with John beside him, Peter said to him "Look at us." He paid attention to him expecting to receive something from them. Peter said "I do not have silver and gold. But what I have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, walk." And taking him by the right hand he raised him up. At once (the man's) feet and ankle-bones were made firm. Leaping up he stood and walked. He went into the temple with them walking and jumping and praising God. All the people (there) saw him walking and praising God. They recognised him - that this was the man who would sit asking for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple. They were filled with amazement and bewilderment at what had happened to him. As he was attached to Peter and John all the people ran together at the porch of Solomon greatly amazed. And seeing (them) Peter answered the people. "Fellow Israelites why do you</p>	<p>marvel at this man or at us. Why do you look (as if it is) by our own power or piety we have made him walk? The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus whom you delivered and denied in the presence of Pilate when he had decided to release him. You denied the holy and just one and asked that a murderer be granted to you (instead). And the Author of life, you killed. (This is he) whom God raised from the dead and which we witnessed. (It was) faith in the name of him (Jesus) that this man that you see and know has been made firm (in his feet.). It is faith in the name of (Jesus) and through him that gave (this man) firmness of foot and (this is evidence) before all of you. And now brothers. I know that it was because of ignorance that you acted (c/f denying Jesus) and it was also (because of) your rulers. But God fore announced through the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ was to suffer. And this was fulfilled in this way. Repent therefore and turn that your sins may be wiped away. This is so that refreshing times may come upon you from the presence of the Lord and that he may send the fore appointed Christ Jesus for you. It behoved heaven to receive (him) until</p>	<p>the times of restitution of all the things of which God spoke through the mouth of the holy prophets. Indeed Moses said "A prophet will be raised up for you from amongst (you) as he (raised up) myself. You shall hear him according to everything he may speak to you. Every soul who does not listen to that prophet will be cast out from the people. Also all the prophets from Samuel and those who came after him announced these days (which are now here). You are the sons of the prophets and the covenant which God made with our fathers. God said to Abraham "You will be blessed in your seed and (through your seed) all the families of the earth (will be blessed). . God on having raised up his servant sent him to you as a blessing to help each one of you to turn away from your sins."                  4:1-4 While they were still speaking to the people, the priests and the Commandant of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them. They were greatly troubled because in their teaching they (Peter and John) were announcing to the people the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. They had hands laid upon them (Peter and John) and they had them put under guard until the morrow - for it was now evening. But many of those who heard the word, believed and the number of men believing numbered five thousand.</p>

One wonders what would have happened to the Judaism of the 1st AD if in fact Jesus had not come. The clash between the rulers of Judaism and the Roman army with the siege of Jerusalem in 70AD seemed to be a fairly inevitable thing. But Jews were already scattered around the Roman Empire and continued with their identity as Jews in the local synagogue. Perhaps what happened to Jesus, helped the rank and file Jews to realise how corrupted their externalised system of law as based around the Temple had actually become. They didn't really need this system to survive. We know that Paul about whom much of *Acts* is written, was a brilliant student of the great Jewish scholar Gamaliel. Gamaliel therefore had great influence on Paul and indirectly on Christianity. But was there also influence from Paul back to Gamaliel? Gamaliel in fact is mentioned in some of the crucial decisions made about both groups, for example he suggests that the Jews hold off persecuting the emerging Christian group in case God's spirit was acting within it. To what extent did Gamaliel (and Jesus) influence the future of Judaism as well?

## 5. Peter's Address

## Ch 4:5-31

4: 5-31 On the next day the rulers and elders and scribes in Jerusalem assembled. Amongst them were Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander and as many as were high priests. Having stood them (Peter, John and the cured man) in their midst they inquired. "By what power or in whose name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit said to them: "Rulers of the people and elders. If we today are to be examined on a good deed done to an infirm man, by what power has this man been healed? Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified and whom God raised from the dead; it is in this name that this man stands before you whole. This is the stone despised by you the builders and it has become the head corner stone. . *c/f Lk 20:17* And we cannot be saved by any other name under heaven which has been given to men." And seeing the boldness of Peter and of John and perceiving that they were unlettered men and laymen, they (the assembly) marvelled. They recognised that (Peter and John) had been with Jesus. They saw the man who had been healed standing with them. They had nothing to say against them. So having ordered them to go outside the council they discussed (this) with one another saying "What can we do to these men? It is indeed a remarkable sign that has

happened through them. It is obvious to all those who live in Jerusalem. We cannot deny it. But in case it is talked about (even) more amongst the people let us threaten them not to speak about this name to any one else. And so calling them (back into the assembly) they ordered them not to speak of nor teach in the name of Jesus *c/f Lk 20:2*. But Peter and John answering said to them. "Should we listen to God or to you? You decide. We cannot fail to speak about what we saw and heard." And so they (the assembly) added more threats and released them. They could not find any way to punish them because of the people and because everyone was praising God about what had happened. The man on whom this sign of a cure had happened of cure was more than forty years old. And so on being released they (Peter and John) went back to their own people and reported what things the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And having heard this they (their own people) lifted up their voice with one mind to God. They said "Master you who have made heaven and earth and the sea and everything in it. You are our Father. Through the Holy Spirit and by the mouth of your servant David you said "Why do the nations rage and people devise vain things? The kings of the earth and its rulers assembled together against the Lord and against his Christ. For in truth in this (very) city there was an assembly

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<p><b><i>Continued</i></b>        (pitted) against your holy servant Jesus whom you anointed. Both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the nations (Gentiles) and the peoples of Israel did the things that you fore ordained to happen. And now Lord look at their threats. Give your slaves</p>	<p>boldness to speak out your word. Stretch out your hand to cure and allow signs and wonders to happen through the name of your servant Jesus." And, as they were making the request, the place in which they were assembled was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.</p>
<p><b>6. All things in common</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Ch 4:32-37</b></span></p>	
<p>4:32-37 Now the multitude of those who believed with one heart and soul did not have any possessions of his (or her) own but held all things in common. With great power they witnessed to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Great grace was upon all of them. Nor were there any needy ones amongst them. For those who owned lands or houses were selling them and bringing the</p>	<p>money of everything sold and putting it at the putting it at the feet of the apostles. So it was distributed to each according to anyone who was in need. (For example) Joseph who was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles (translated Son of Consolation) was a Levite and Cypriot by race, had a field. He sold it and brought the proceeds and placed it at the feet of the apostles.</p>
<p><b>7. Reprimands couple</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Ch 5:1-11</b></span></p>	
<p>5:1-11 There was a certain man named Ananias with a wife named Sapphira. He sold a property and he and his wife took the money from it. They brought a certain part of it and placed it at the feet of the apostles. Peter said "Ananias why has Satan filled your heart that you should (try to) deceive the Holy Spirit and appropriate (something) from the price of the land? Did it not belong to yourself and was it not sold with your own authority? Why was the (idea) of this action put into your heart? You did not lie to people but to God." And hearing these words Ananias fell down dead. Then a great fear came on all those who heard it. Rising up the young men wrapped</p>	<p>him (Ananias) up and carried him out to bury him. And about three hours later his wife, not knowing what had happened came in. Peter said to her "Tell me did you sell the land for such and such?" She said "Yes for so much." Peter said to her "Why was it agreed with you to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Look the feet of those who have just buried your husband are (now) at the door and they will carry out you (as well)." She fell at once at his feet and expired. Entering in, the young men found her dead. Carrying her out they buried her beside her husband. And so a great fear came on all the church and on those who heard about these things.</p>
<p>An interpretation of this event is that at that time the presence of the Holy Spirit was such a force that it bound the disparate group into "one mind". When a couple of people tried to undercut this "one mind" with deceit the connection they had with their own 'life force' was severed.</p>	

**8. Healed all****Ch 5:12-16**

5:12-16 Through the hands of the apostles there were many signs and wonders (worked) amongst the people. All would be gathered with one mind in the porch of Solomon. None of the rest (of the temple officials?) dared to be joined to them. But the people held them in high regard. More and more believers in the Lord were added in multitudes - both of men and of women.

People would even bring out their ailing (friends & relatives) to place on pallets and mattresses so that as Peter (came by), even his shadow might fall on some of them. The multitude also came together from the cities around Jerusalem, carrying ailing ones and those being tormented by unclean spirits. All were healed.

It could be asked why this opening Section A of *Acts* does not appear to fall into the 'analysis mode' of the bulk of the gospels and *Acts*. Rather it is presented here in a fairly unanalysed form, similar to the opening passages of Matthew and Luke's gospel. Is there a connection here? A number of times in this Section A the reader is told that the Apostles and disciples and new converts are "of one mind". Recall that the underlying line of logic of the gospels is to try to pull together two conflicting types of mindsets. The introductory Section A compares to some extent with the start of the gospels of Matthew and Luke. The introduction is about the immediate aftermath of the "birth" of the church. It appears that at first there was a 'fusion' of thinking - because of the forceful presence of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the writer presents the new community before settling down to trying to develop a line of argument as to how such a community could be launched on a permanent basis.

As the references show, the writer is working backwards into the previous gospel with his subject matter so a reader can see that the second book and its steps in logic flow out of the preceding one.

Towards the end of Section A (in the paragraph to follow) the two 'mindsets' are re-emerging after the original 'fusion'. The "Hellenists" (c/f Greek-based philosophy) are starting to loudly complain about the "Hebrews" (c/f Jewish society) because of their failure to include widows of a different background.

This initial conflict reminds one of the end of Luke's gospel when he shows a tendency towards narrowness in a law-based society (c/f Peter in the warmth of the High Priest's courtyard refusing to acknowledge Jesus). The conflict at the end of Section A started with the narrowness of one group (c/f Jewish Christians) which then resulted into the loud voice of the other (c/f Gentile Christians). Mention of this conflict also reminds one of the way Pilate, the Roman governor, (c/f an order-based society) caves in under pressure from the "loud voice" of the Jewish Council. The two factors - of narrowness and the "loud voice" - are pivotal to the structure of *Acts*. This was because the emerging church had to find a way of dealing with potential weaknesses of both groups (Jews and Gentiles) if a 'hybrid' society was to be formed.



## 9. Angel opened door

## Ch 5:17-6:7

5:17-6:7 The high priest and all those with him, the existing sect of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. They laid hands on the apostles and put them into public custody. But *an angel* of the Lord, during the night *opened the doors* of the prison and lead them out. (The angel said). "Go and stand up in the temple and tell the people everything about this (way of) life. And having heard they went at about dawn into the temple and taught. Having come (to the assembly area) the high priest and those with him called together the council and the whole senate of the sons of Israel. They sent to the jail to have them (the apostles) brought to them. But the attendants did not find them in the prison. Having returned (to the high priest etc) they reported saying "We found the jail shut and all the security there with the guards standing by the doors. But on opening it we found there was nobody inside." As they heard these words, both the commandant of the temple and the chief priests doubted (the attendants) and wondered what was to happen. Then someone came and reported to them "Look the men that you put into the prison are in the temple standing there and teaching the people." Then going (there) the commandant and his attendants brought them back, but not with force, for they feared that the people may stone them. After they were brought in the apostles stood before the council. The high priest

questioned them saying "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name (of Jesus). And look you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you intend to place the blame of the blood of this man upon us." Answering (them) Peter and the apostles said "Should we not obey God rather than men? The God of our fathers raised Jesus whom you killed, hanging him on a tree. God has exalted this man as a Ruler and a Saviour. He has put him at his right hand to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of their sins. We are witnesses of these things and of God giving the Holy Spirit to those who obey him. When they (those at the council) heard this they were enraged and intended to kill them. But standing up in the council, a Pharisee whose name was Gamaliel and who was a teacher of the law and honoured by all the people ordered that the men be put outside for a time. He then said to (the council). "Fellow Israelites. Be careful what you do to these men. Recall that before this time there was Theudas who was claiming to be somebody and to whom about four hundred men were attached. He was killed and all those who obeyed him were dispersed and came to nothing. After this there was Judas the Galilean in the days of the enrolment. He drew people away after him. But that man perished and as many as obeyed him were scattered. And now I say to you stand aside from these men and leave them alone. If this counsel or work is of men

it will be destroyed. But if it is of God you will not be able to destroy them and you will be found to be fighting against God." They did what he said. Having re-called the apostles and beating them they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus. Then they released them. (The apostles) went out from the presence of the council. They were celebrating because they were deemed worthy to be dishonoured on behalf of the name. And every day in the temple and from house to house they did not cease from teaching and preaching the Christ Jesus *c/f Lk 19:47*.

6:1-7 Now at that time as the disciples were multiplying there was a murmuring of the **Hellenists against the Hebrews** because their widows were being overlooked in the daily service. Having called them (together) the twelve (apostles) said to the multitude of disciples. "It is not acceptable that we need to leave the word of God in order to serve at tables. Therefore brethren take from yourselves seven men of good repute who are full of the Spirit and of wisdom and we will appoint them over this office. But we (ourselves) will keep to prayer and the service of the word." This word (of the apostles) pleased the multitude. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit and Philip and Prochorus and Nicanor and Timon and Parmenas and Nicolaus of Antioch (someone who had been converted to Judaism) They put these before the apostles who having prayed, placed their hands upon them. The word of God grew and the number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly. (There was also) a big crowd of priests who obeyed the faith.

"multiplied the number of disciples in Jerusalem"(6:7)

## Section B

### RECOGNISE AUTHENTICITY OF OUTSIDERS

**Acts 6:8 - 11:29**

**Paragraph "Hooks" are places where New Converts are Located**

<b>Beyond religious law system</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>disciple and 'outsider'</b>	<b>V4 Page</b>	<b>V5 Page</b>
1. . Power is in Person (not a system)	6:8-8:3	Outside Jerusalem	Stephen & Saul	196	169
2. . Separation of spiritual favour and money	8:4-25	Samaria	Philip & Samaritans	199	172
3. . Inter-racial	8:26-40	Ethiopia	Philip & Ethiopian	199	172
4. . Power outside of priests	9:1-31	Damascus	Ananias & Saul	201	174
5. . Movement promoted	9:32-34	Lyydda	Peter & Aeneas	202	175
6. . Oriented towards re-birth	9:35-43	Joppa	Peter and Dorcas	202	175
7. . Inter-cultural	10:1-48	Caesarea	Peter & Cornelius	203	176
8. . Readiness to adjust	11:1-1-18	Jerusalem	Peter & ones of circumcision	204	177
9. . Mutual financial support	11:19-29	Antioch	Barnabas, Paul & 'Christians'	205	178

**Christians at Antioch sending alms to elders in Judea . .c/f 11:25**



Beyond Religious Law System	Ref	Location	Disciple and 'outsider'
1. . Power is in the person not a system	6:8-8:3	Outside Jerusalem	Stephen & Saul

6:8-8:3 **Stephen** who was full of grace and power did great signs and wonders amongst the people. But there was a group in the synagogue who were called Freedmen. They were Cyrenians and Alexandrians and people from Cilicia and Asia. They were disputing with Stephen but were not able to withstand the wisdom and the spirit with which he spoke. Then they instigated men to say "We have heard him speaking blasphemy against Moses and God." They stirred up the people and the elders and scribes. Coming at him they seized him and led him to the council. False witnesses stood there saying "This man does not stop speaking against this holy place and the law. We have heard him saying that Jesus the Nazarene will destroy this place and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." Looking at him all those sitting in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel. 7:1 The high priest said "Have you done these things?" He

said. "Brethren and fathers listen. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham who was living in Mesopotamia before he lived in Charran. God said to him "Go out of your land and your kindred and go to the land that I show you." Then going out of the land of the Chaldaeans he lived in Charran. And after that his father died and God moved him on into this land where you now live. Yet he did not give him an inheritance in it - not a foot's space. (Rather) he promised to allow himself and his descendants to live in it, even though he had no child. God told him that his seed would live in a land (c/f Egypt) that belonged to others. These others would enslave (his descendants) and would ill-treat them for four hundred years. God said "in whichever nation they will serve I will judge it. (Then) after these things they will come forth and will worship me in this place." He (God) gave (Abraham) a covenant of circumcision. And so he fathered Isaac and circumcised

him when he was eight days old. Isaac fathered Jacob and Jacob fathered the twelve patriarchs. The patriarchs (when they were young men became jealous sold Joseph into Egypt. God was with him and rescued him from all his afflictions and gave him favour and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. The latter appointed (Joseph) governor over Egypt and all his household. But a famine came over all of Egypt and Canaan with great affliction. Our fathers had nothing to eat. But Jacob heard there was corn in Egypt. He sent our fathers first. The second time Joseph made himself known to his brothers and the race of Joseph became known to Pharaoh. Sending, Joseph called his father Jacob and all his family of seventy-five people. Jacob went down to Egypt and died there with our *Continued*

(Note: Text is mainly a paraphrase of the Literal translation in the RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, 1988)



**Continued**

fathers. He was transferred to Sychem and was put in the tomb which Abraham had bought for a price of silver from the sons of Enmor in Schem. As the time drew near for the promise which God had made to Abraham, the people multiplied in number in Egypt. (This happened) until another king rose up over Egypt who did not know Joseph. This man was dealing craftily with our race and ill-treated the fathers so as to expose their babies so that they would die. It was at that time Moses was born and he was fair in the eyes of God. He was reared for three months in his father's house. When he was exposed Pharaoh's daughter picked him up and reared him as her own son. So Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was powerful both in his words and works. But when he was forty years old the time came in his heart to visit his brothers and the sons of Israel. On seeing one of these being injured he defended him. He wrought vengeance for them and struck the Egyptian. Now he supposed that his brothers would understand that God would give them salvation through his hand. But they did not understand. On the next day he appeared they were fighting. He attempted to reconcile them into peace saying "You are brethren. Why do you injure each other?" But the one who was injuring his neighbour

pushed him away saying "Who appointed you ruler and a judge over us? Do you want to kill me in the same way as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" So Moses fled at this word and became a dweller in the land of Midian where he fathered two sons. And when forty years were fulfilled an angel appeared to him in the desert of mount Sinai in the flame of a burning thorn bush. Moses marvelled on seeing the vision. As he approached to take a better look there was a voice of the Lord. "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob". But Moses was trembling and dared not take notice. The Lord said to him "Loosen your sandal from your feet for the ground on which you are standing is holy. I have been seeing the ill-treatment of my people in Egypt and I have heard their groan. I have come down to rescue them. So come and I will send you to Egypt." (Stephen continued in his address). "It was this Moses whom (someone amongst his people) denied saying "Who appointed you a ruler and judge?" It was this man that God sent, both as a ruler and as a redeemer with the hand of the angel that had appeared to him in the bush. It was this man who led them (God's people) out and (afterwards) did signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, in the Red Sea and in the desert over forty years. It was this Moses who was saying to the sons of Israel "God will

raise up a prophet from amongst you as he has raised me." This is the one (Moses) who was raised up in the congregation in the desert. The angel spoke to (Moses) in Mount Sinai (with the giving of the commandments) and (also spoke) with our fathers. They received living oracles (commandments) to give to you. But our fathers did not wish to become obedient. They thrust (Moses) away and turned in their hearts (back) to Egypt. They said to Aaron (Moses' brother) "Make gods for us which will go before us. We do not know what has happened to this Moses who led us out of the land of Egypt." (because he was still up on Mt Sinai). And so they made the model of a calf in those days and brought up a sacrifice to this idol and worshipped what they had made. And so God turned and delivered them to worship the host of heaven (instead of himself) as it has been written in the roll of the prophets." "You did not offer victims and sacrifices to me in the forty years (you spent) in the desert O house of Israel. (Rather) did you not take up the tent of Moloch and the star of the god Rompha and the idols that you made in order to worship them?"

(After they turned back to the Lord) Our fathers had the tent of witness in the desert. Moses directed the one who made this to do so according to the model which he had seen. Having received (the

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tent) our fathers brought it (into the land) with Joshua when he took possession of the land from the nations (who had been here beforehand ). And so (the tent) was, until the days of David. David found favour before God and wanted to build a place of dwelling (rather than a tent) for the house of Jacob. It was Solomon (his son) who built a house for (God.)"

(Stephen continued) "But the Most High (God) does not dwell in places made by hand. As the prophet says "Heaven is a throne for me and the earth is a footstool for my feet". The Lord says "What house can you build for me? Or what place of rest? Did not my hand make all of these things? and uncircumcised in the heart and ears as you are you always oppose the Holy Spirit."

(Stephen then spoke directly to the council.) "Hard-necked as your fathers also. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who were announcing beforehand about the coming of the righteous one (Jesus). You became betrayers and murderers (of him). You received the law given by angels and did not keep it." On hearing these things they (members of the council) were cut to their hearts and raged at (Stephen). But being full of the Holy Spirit he gazed into the heavens. He saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. He said "Look I see the heavens opened up and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." Crying out with a great voice they closed over their ears. They rushed with one mind upon him. Casting him

outside the city they stoned him. The witnesses took off their garments and put them at the feet of a young man called **Saul**. As they stoned him Stephen called upon God saying "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Kneeling down he cried out with a great voice "Lord do not place the blame of this sin upon them." And so saying he fell asleep. Saul approved of the killing of him. 8:1-3 That day there was a great persecution started against the church in Jerusalem. (Its members) all scattered throughout the countries of Judea and Samaria except for the apostles. Devout men recovered the body of Stephen and mourned greatly for him. But Saul ravaged the church. He went (around) house by house, entering in and dragging both men and women out to be delivered to prison.



There are a number of levels being addressed in Stephen's self-defence made to the Jewish Council. Luke is giving Theophilus, his non-Jewish reader, a quick overview of Jewish salvation history. He is making the point that the law of the Jews was given

to them by God. This remains the case even if the Jews of the day were breaking it. Luke also recalls how major figures in Jewish history "moved out" Abraham began this by leaving family and country. Then Jacob went to Egypt. Later Moses moved out of Egypt and took his people out as well. Finally, after the speech, Stephen himself is 'moved out'. There is an echo here of the way Jesus was cast out of Nazareth. As Stephen is dying there is a deliberate echo of the way that Jesus died. He commends his spirit. He asks forgiveness for those who killed him. On another level again Luke starts to address ways of dealing with the tendency that a law-based society has, to be narrow and enclosed. He introduces a young firebrand named Saul (to be re-named Paul). Even as other Christians are 'moving out' of Jerusalem, the apostles will be challenged to 'move out' towards the acceptance of someone (Paul) who has persecuted them.

<p><b>2. . Separate spiritual favour and money</b></p>	<p><b>8:4-25</b></p>	<p><b>Samaria</b></p>	<p><b>Philip &amp; Samaritans</b></p>
<p>8:4-25 Those who had been scattered (out of Jerusalem) went around preaching the word. <b>Phillip</b> was gong down to the city of Samaria to proclaim the Christ to them. The crowd heeded the things being said by Philip with one mind. They also saw the signs he was working. Many of those who had unclean spirits came out crying with a loud voice. Many who were paralysed and the lame were healed. There was much joy in that city. Now there was a certain man named Simon who was previously practised magic in the city and who astonished all of <b>Samaria</b>. They thought he was someone great and all of them, from the greatest to the least heeded him. (They said) "This man is great in the power of God" They heeded him because he had astonished them with his magic for a considerable time. But when they believed Phillip who was preaching about the kingdom of God and in the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Now Simon himself also believed. And having been baptized he was attaching himself to Philip. On seeing the signs and the great and powerful deeds happening he was amazed. Meanwhile in Jerusalem the apostles heard that <b>Samaria</b> had received the word of God. They sent Peter and</p>	<p>John to them. On going down they prayed for them so they (the Samaritans) might receive the Holy Spirit. For he (the Holy Spirit) had not fallen on any of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they (Peter and John) laid hands on them (the Samaritans) and they received the Holy Spirit. On seeing (all this) Simon saw that through the laying on of the hands of the apostles the Spirit was given. He (therefore) offered them money saying "Give me this authority as well so that on whomever I lay my hands he may also received the Holy Spirit." But Peter said to him. "May your silver be to your perdition because <i>you have supposed that you could obtain the gift of God through money.</i> You have no right in this matter for your heart is not right before God. Therefore repent from this wickedness and ask the Lord if perhaps he will forgive you the thought of your heart. For I see in you a gall of bitterness and a bond of iniquity." And answering Simon said "You ask the Lord for me so that none of the things you have spoken about will come upon me." They (Peter and John) therefore gave solemn witness and on speaking the word of the Lord they returned to Jerusalem. Many of the villages of the Samaritans were evangelized.</p>		
<p><b>3. . Trust the Inter-racial</b></p>	<p><b>8:26-40</b></p>	<p><b>Ethiopia</b></p>	<p><b>Philip &amp; Ethiopian</b></p>
<p>8:26-40 But an angel of the Lord spoke to <b>Philip</b> saying. "Get up and go south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." Now this is desert. Rising up he went. And behold he came across an <b>Ethiopian</b> man who was a eunuch and a <i>courtier of Queen Candace of Ethiopia</i>. He was in charge of all her treasure and had come to Jerusalem to worship. He was returning (home) and sitting in his chariot reading the prophet</p>	<p>Isaiah. The Spirit said to Philip "Go up to him and keep company with him in his chariot." So running up Philip heard him reading Isaiah the prophet. He said "Do you know what you are reading?" He said "How indeed am I able to unless someone guides me? " And he asked Philip to get up and sit with him. Now the passage of the Scripture which he was reading was this "As a sheep to slaughter he was led. <i>Continued</i></p>		

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As a lamb before the shearer he is dumb and does not open his mouth. In the humiliation of judgment he was taken away. Who can describe his generation because it has taken away his life from the earth."

And answering the eunuch Philip said. "I ask you. Who is the prophet talking about when he said this, about himself or about someone else?"

And opening his mouth and beginning from this section of Scripture he told him about Jesus. As they were going along the way they came upon

some water. The eunuch said "Look there's some water" What's stopping me from being baptized now?" He ordered the chariot to stop and both of them went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch. And he baptized him. When they came up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord seized Philip and the Eunuch did not see him any more. He went on his way happy.

But Philip was found to be in Azotus. Passing through here he evangelized all the cities until he came to Caesarea.



4. . Recognise power outside of any central group	9:1-31	Damascus	Ananias & Saul
<p>9:1-31 (In the meantime) Saul was still threatening murder against the disciples of the Lord. He <i>approached the high priest and asked him for letters of reference</i> for the synagogue at Damascus. This was so that if he found any of those in "the way", either men or women he could take them prisoner and bring them to Jerusalem. Now as he drew near to Damascus, suddenly there shone round him a light out of heaven. On falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" He said "Who are you Lord?" He answered "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. Get up and go into the city. You will be told what to do (there)." Now the men who were journeying with him stood by speechless. They heard indeed the sound but saw nobody. Saul was lifted from the ground but he could see nothing. Leading him by the hand they brought him into Damascus. He was there three days unable to see and he neither ate nor drank.</p> <p>Now there was a certain disciple in Damascus called <b>Ananias</b>. The Lord said to him in a vision "Ananias" He answered "Here I am Lord." The Lord said to him. "Get up and go to the street called Straight. Ask in the house of Judas for Saul, a Tarsian by name. He is praying." Ananias (then) saw in a vision a man coming n and putting his hands on him (Saul) so he could see again. Ananias answered "Lord I have heard from many about this man, and how many evil things he did to your saints in Jerusalem. Here he has authority from the chief priests to arrest all those who call upon your name." But the Lord said to him. "Go because <i>this man is a vessel</i> chosen by myself to carry my name before both the kings of the nations (Gentiles) and the sons of Israel. I will show him how many things he will have to suffer for the sake of my name. Ananias went away and entered into the house. He put his hands on him (Saul) and said "Saul, brother, the Lord has sent me. This is Jesus who</p>			<p>appeared to you on the road where you were traveling. (He sent me) so that you can see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Immediately the scales fell away from (Saul's) eyes and he saw again. On getting up he was baptized and was strengthened by eating.</p> <p>Now he was with the disciples in Damascus for some days. Then immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying that this one is the Son of God. All those hearing were amazed and said "Was this not the one who destroyed those in Jerusalem who invoked this name. Now he has come here to arrest them and bring them before the chief priests? But <b>Saul</b> was filled (even) more with power and confounded the Jews who were living in Damascus, proving that it is this one (Jesus) who is the Christ. When a considerable number of days had passed the Jews consulted together and decided to kill him. But their plot was made known to Saul. They carefully watched the gates both day and night so as to destroy him. But the disciples took him by night through the wall and then lowered him down in a basket. On arriving at Jerusalem (Saul) tried to join the disciples. (But) all feared him, not believing that he was a (real) disciple. But Barnabas took hold of him and led him to the apostles. He narrated to them how he (Saul) saw the Lord and that he (the Lord) spoke to him. (Then Barnabas) said how in Damascus (Saul) spoke boldly in the name of Jesus. He was with them (Barnabas &amp; co) going in and out to Jerusalem and speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He (Saul) both addressed and was in discussion with the Hellenists who attempted to kill him. But knowing (what was happening) the brothers brought (Saul) down to Caesarea and (then) sent him on to Tarsus.</p> <p>(After this) the church throughout all of Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace. It (the church) was built up in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Membership was multiplied.</p>

In Luke's gospel he associates "the word" with nature images with potential life e.g. seed, a child asking the Father for an egg, the womb and the action of receiving and keeping the word. He also draws contrasts by using negative images of containers c/f a tomb, dirty dishes, a body described as a house with evil spirits in it etc.

In *Acts* with the coming of the Holy Spirit we find 'the word' is not only something distinct. It engenders new life into those who receive it. In a sense the 'word' with a small letter becomes the "Word" with a capital letter. In *Acts* Luke develops understanding of "the Word" as being alive. John will later on take the theology of "the Word" much further. In the previous paragraph here, the Lord Jesus describes Saul as a "chosen vessel". This fits in with both the imagery and the ideas that are being developed. Also note the phrase used before someone proclaims 'the word' i.e. "He opened his mouth"



<b>5. . Encourage movement</b>	<b>9:32-35</b>	<b>Lydda</b>	<b>Peter &amp; Aeneas</b>
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<p>9:32-34 Now it happened that <b>Peter</b> was passing through <i>here and there</i> and he came down to the saints who were living in Lydda. He found a certain man there called <b>Aeneas</b> who had been lying on a mattress for eight years</p>	<p>because he was paralysed. Peter said to him "Aeneas, Jesus Christ cures you. Get up and dress yourself. Immediately he rose up. (When) all those who lived in Lydda and Saron saw him, (all of them) turned to the Lord.</p>
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<b>6. . Be oriented towards re-birth</b>	<b>9:35-43</b>	<b>Joppa</b>	<b>Peter and Dorcas</b>
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<p>9:35-43 Now in Joppa there was a certain disciple who was called Tabitha. This is being translated here as Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and acts of charity. It happened that at time she was ill and died. Having washed her they put her in an upstairs room. Now Lydda was near to Joppa. The disciples heard that <b>Peter</b> was there and sent two men to him asking "Come to us straight away." Peter went with them. On their arrival they led him up into the upper room. All the widows stood beside him</p>	<p>weeping and showing (him) tunics and garments that <b>Dorcas</b> had made with them. Putting them all outside Peter knelt down and turning to the body he said "<i>Tabitha. Get up.</i>" She opened her eyes and seeing Peter she sat up. He gave her a hand and raised her up. (Then) calling the saints and the widows he presented her to them alive. (This) became known throughout all of Joppa. Many believed in the Lord. (Peter) remained many days in Joppa staying with a tanner called Simon.</p>
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7. . Appreciate the Inter-cultural	10:1-48	Caesarea	Peter & Cornelius
<p>10:1-48 There was a certain man in Caesarea whose name was <b>Cornelius</b>. He was a centurion of what was called an Italian cohort. He was a devout man and feared God along with all his household. He gave many donations to the people and petitioned God continually. (One day) at about the ninth hour (c/f 3 p.m.) an angel of God entered him and said to him "Cornelius." He looked at him (the angel) and becoming terrified he said "What is it Lord?" He said to him. "Your prayers and your alms have gone as a memorial before God. And now send to Joppa and ask for Simon, the one who is surnamed Peter. This man is lodged with a tanner named Simon. He has a house by the sea." As the angel who was speaking to him went away he called two of the household slaves and a devout soldier who were in attendance. He explained all this to them and sent them to Joppa. On the next day as they journeyed and drew near to the city Peter went up onto the roof to pray at about the sixth hour (midday). He became hungry and wanted to eat. While they prepared (the meal) an ecstasy came upon him. He saw heaven being opened and a certain vessel, like a great sheet held by four corners` appeared to be let down onto the earth. In it were all the quadrupeds and reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. Then there came a voice to him saying "Get up Peter. Kill and</p>	<p>eat." But <b>Peter</b> said " Not at all Lord. I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean." Again a second time a voice came to him "<i>What things God has cleansed, you cannot treat as being unclean.</i>" This happened on three occasions. (Then) immediately the vessel was taken up into heaven. Now Peter was doubting within himself what the vision that he saw actually meant. Then the men who had been sent by Cornelius (arrived) asking for the house where Simon was. (Peter was) standing at the porch. Calling out to him they asked if Simon, surnamed Peter was living here. Peter was there pondering about the vision. The spirit said "Look at the two men who are looking for you. Get up and go down with them. Doubt nothing because I have sent them." (And so) going down Peter said to the men "Look, I am the one you are looking for. Why are you here?" They said "Cornelius, a centurion who is a just man and fears God and who respected by all of the Jews, was told by a holy angel to summon you to his house so that he can hear from you." Therefore he invited the men in to stay there. The next day, getting up he went off with them. Some of the brothers from Joppa went with him. The day after that he (Peter) went into Caesaria. Cornelius was waiting for him. He had called together his relatives and close friends. Now when Peter</p>	<p>entered Cornelius came to meet him. Falling at his feet he worshipped him. But Peter raised him up saying "Stand up I am only a man." And so talking with him he came in and found that there were many people together there. He said to them "You understand that it is not lawful for a Jew to belong with or to approach an outsider. (But) God has shown me not to call anything common or unclean, including people. And so I came when asked (by you) without question. I am therefore asking why you summoned me?" Cornelius told him "Four days ago at about this time I was praying at the ninth hour and lo and behold a man stood before me in bright clothing. He said "Cornelius your prayer and your alms have been remembered before God. Therefore send to Joppa and ask for Simon who is surnamed Peter. This man is lodged in the house of Simon, a tanner and it is by the sea." Therefore at once I sent messengers to you and you have done well in arriving. Now therefore all of us are present here to hear what has been commanded to you by the Lord." And so Peter opening his mouth said "In truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of person. But in every nation there are people fearing him and doing works that are acceptable to him. The word which he sent to the sons of Israel preaching peace through Jesus Christ. It is this one which is Lord of all.</p>	

<p><i>Continued</i>                  You know what took place throughout all Judea starting from Galilee After John's proclamation of baptism. (You know) how Jesus of Nazareth was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and power and he went about doing good and curing all the people oppressed by the devil because God was with him. We are witnesses of all the things he did both in the country of the Jews and Jerusalem. (But) they killed him by hanging him on a tree. This same person was raised by God on the third day</p>	<p>afterwards and God made him visible, not to all the people, but to us, witnesses previously appointed by God. We ate and drank with him after he rose again from the dead. He commanded us to proclaim to the people and give solemn witness that this man is the one designated by God to be judge of the living and of the dead. It is to this man that all the prophets give witness so that forgiveness of sin is to be received though his name by everyone believing in him. While Peter was still speaking these words the Holy Spirit fell on those who</p>	<p>heard him. And those in favour of circumcision who accompanied Peter were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on people of 'the nations' as well. They heard them speaking in tongues and magnifying God. Then Peter answered. "Nobody can forbid the water of baptism to these people who have received the Holy Spirit in the same way as ourselves." He commanded that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then the people asked him to remain with them for some days longer.</p>	
<p><b>8. . Be ready to adjust</b></p>	<p><b>11:1-18</b></p>	<p><b>Jerusalem</b></p>	<p><b>Ones of circumcision &amp; Peter</b></p>
<p>11:1-18 Now the apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the non-Jewish people ('the nations') also received the word of God. When <b>Peter</b> went up to Jerusalem those <b>people who stressed the need for circumcision</b> disputed with him. They were saying. "You went into the houses of people who were uncircumcised and ate with them." Peter began to explain why he did this saying "I was in the city of Joppa praying. And I saw in an ecstasy a vision. It was coming down as a kind of vessel in the shape of a great sheet. The four corners were as though they were being let down out of heaven. It came up to me. Looking into it I perceived the quadrupeds of the earth and the wild beasts and the reptiles and the birds of heaven. I also heard a voice saying to me. "Get up Peter. Kill and eat." I said "Not at all Lord because a common or unclean thing has never gone into my mouth." A second time a voice out of heaven answered. "What God has cleaned, you are not to regard as common." This took place on three occasions and again all the things were</p>		<p>pulled back up to heaven. And behold at once there were three men who stood at the house in which I was staying. They had been sent down from Caesarea to me. The Spirit told me to go with them and doubt nothing. Also there were six brothers who came with me. We entered into the house of the man. He reported to us how he saw the angel in his house standing there and saying. "Send to Joppa and summon Simon who is surnamed Peter. He will speak words to you by which you and all your household may be saved." As I began to speak the Holy Spirit descended on them just as it did onto us at the beginning (of our ministry). Then I remembered the word of the Lord and how he said "John indeed baptized you with water. But you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit." If therefore God gave them a gift equal to what was given to us on believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who I was I to be able to hinder God?" <i>And so on hearing these things they (the ones supporting circumcision) kept silence.</i> They glorified God saying "Then God has also given to non-Jews his repentance into life?"</p>	

<b>9. . Encourage mutual financial support</b>	<b>11:19-29</b>	<b>Antioch</b>	<b>Barnabas, Paul &amp; 'Christians'</b>
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<p>11:19-29 The people who had been scattered (from Jerusalem) because of the persecution occurring over Stephen, passed through to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch. They did not speak 'the word' to anyone except to Jews. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene who came to Antioch. They also spoke to the Greeks, preaching the Lord Jesus to them. The hand of the Lord was with them and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord. An account of this reached the church in Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. On arriving and seeing the grace of God he rejoiced and exhorted all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart. He (Barnabas) was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and faith. A considerable crowd was added to the Lord. He</p>	<p>(then) went forth to Tarsus to seek Saul. On finding him he brought him to Antioch. It happened that for a whole year they assembled in the church to teach a large crowd. It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called <b>Christians</b>. In these days some prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them named Agabus rose up and signified through the spirit that a great famine was about to come over all the inhabited world. This happened in the time of (Emperor) Claudius. And so any of the disciples who were prosperous <i>decided that each of them would send something from their ministry</i> to the brothers dwelling in Judea. They indeed did this and sent something to the elders through the hand of <b>Barnabas and Saul</b>.</p>
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**Christians at Antioch sending alms to elders in Judea c/f 11:25**



## Section C

**COPE WITH OPPOSITION TO OUTREACH****Acts 12:1 - 15:29****Paragraph "Hooks" are places where New Converts are Located**

<b>Coping Response</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Opposer</b>	<b>Likely Motive</b>	<b>V.4 Page</b>	<b>V.5 Page</b>
1. . Power through Prayer	12:1-23	Herod	Politics	207	180
2. . Power through truth	12:24-13:12	Sorcerer	Monetary	208	181
3. . Material Independence	13:13-52	The Jews	Influence amongst wealthy	209	182
4. . Perception to escape	14:1-6	The disobeying Jews	Crowd influence	210	183
5. . Stress on humanness	14:7-18	Crowds	Adulation	211	183
6. . Brotherly Support	14:19-28	Iconium Jews	Desire for leadership	211	184
7. . Salvation through grace	15:1-29	Some of Pharisee sect	Sect control	213	184

**Apostles and elder brothers sending reduced rules throughout Antioch, Syria and Cilicia 15:29**

Coping Response	Reference	Opposer	Likely Motive
<b>1. . Power through Prayer</b>	<b>12:1-23</b>	<b>Herod</b>	<b>Politics</b>

<p>12:1-23 Now at that time <b>Herod the King</b> had hands laid on some of those from the church to ill-treat them. He killed James the brother of John with a sword. Seeing that this was pleasing to the Jews he went on to arrest Peter also. This was in the days of unleavened bread. He seized him and put him in prison delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him. He intended after the Passover to bring him up to the people. Therefore Peter was kept in the prison. <i>But prayer was earnestly being made by the church to God concerning him.</i> During the night before Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. He had been bound with two chains and guards were before the door keeping watch at the prison. And behold an angel of the Lord came upon them. A light shone in the building. (The angel), striking the side of Peter raised him up saying "Get up quickly." The chains fell off his hands. The angel said to him. "Dress yourself and put on your sandals." He did so. He told him "Wrap your mantle around you and follow me." And so going forth he (Peter) followed. He was not sure if what was happening through the angel was real. He thought he was seeing a vision. And going through the first prison and (then) the second they came to the iron gate which led to the city. This opened to them of its own accord. And going out they went forward into a street. Immediately the angel departed from him. Peter said to himself "Now I truly know that the Lord sent forth his angel and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and the expectation of the people (leaders?) of the Jews." On realizing this he came upon the house of Mary, the mother</p>	<p>of John who was surnamed Mark. There were many who had assembled there and who were praying. As he knocked on the door of the porch a maidservant approached. to listen. Her name was Rhoda. On recognizing the voice of Peter she was so happy she did not open the porch but ran to announce to those inside that Peter was standing outside the porch door. They said to her "You are raving." But she emphatically insisted it was so. They said "It is his angel" But Peter continued knocking. On opening it they saw him and were amazed. Beckoning to them with his hand to be quiet he told them how the Lord led him out of the prison and said "Tell James and the brothers about these things." And so going out he went on to someone else.</p> <p>When it was day there was not a little disturbance amongst the soldiers as to what had become of Peter. Herod searched for him and on not finding him he examined the guards and commanded that they be led away (to execution). Then he (Herod) went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.</p> <p>Now he was furious with the people of Tyre and Sidon. With one mind they came to him. They persuaded Blastus who was in charge of the King's bedchamber (to get them an audience). They asked for peace because their country relied on the king for food. On an appointed day Herod, having been arrayed with regal clothing and sitting on the tribunal made a public speech to them. The mob cried out. "He has the voice of a god and not of a man." At once an angel of the Lord smote him because he did not give glory to God. He was eaten by worms and died.</p> <p><small>(Note: Text is mainly a paraphrase of the Literal translation in the RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, 1988)</small></p>
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It seems that following the death of James, the brother of John, the 'other' apostle named James that is son of Alphaeus, was elected as second in charge.

Luke the writer, is conscious of parallels in the previous paragraph. He presents Herod the official King of the Jews as a contrast to the situation of Jesus. It appears that Herod deliberately seized Peter at the Passover time, imprisoned him and made the Jews, (it would seem the Jewish council of leaders), aware that Peter would be brought before them and condemned to death as Jesus himself had been condemned. We recall that Herod was keen to see a 'miracle' of Jesus. In this case a miracle did occur - Peter's release. But Herod was not impressed this time and he withdrew, possibly in fear. Then his anger turned on the townships of Tyre and Sidon. The cities have a connection to Herod through a household servant (an echo of Jesus' connection through a household servant). Herod appears before the people as though transfigured (another echo). They are before him with "one mind", but not with the same mind as the disciples of Jesus. They call out in the "loud

voice" that is referred to by Luke. They claim Herod speaks as though he were a god. This is another echo c/f 'the word' of God being spoken or proclaimed through the mouth of the apostles. But Herod takes any such praise to himself and his destiny is linked with that of 'worms' which recall the images used in Scripture to reflect damnation.



2. . Power through truth	12:24-13:12	sorcerer	monetary
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<p>12:24-13:12 But the word of the Lord grew and increased. Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem having completed their mission, taking with them John who was surnamed Mark. 13:1. Now in Antioch amongst existing church prophets and teachers there were both Barnabas and Simeon who was called Niger. There were Lucius the Cyrenian and Manaen who was a foster brother of Herod the tetrarch and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit spoke to them. Separate off for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. Then having fasted and having prayed and laid hands on them they (leaders of the church in Antioch) dismissed them. They (Barnabas and Saul) therefore were sent out by the Holy Spirit and went down to Seleucia and from there sailed away to Cyprus. Being in Salamis they announced the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also</p>	<p>had John (Mark) as an attendant. Passing through all the island until Paphos they found a certain man who was a <b>magician</b> and a false prophet. He was Jewish and was named Barjesus. He was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called Barnabas and Saul to him in order to hear the word of God. But Elymas (which was the translated name of the sorcerer) was opposed to them. He sought to divert the proconsul from the faith. But Saul (also called Paul) was filled with the Holy Spirit and gazed at him and said "<i>You are full of deceit and fraud</i> and a son of the devil the enemy of all righteousness. Will you not stop perverting the righteous ways of the Lord Now behold the hand of the Lord is on you. You will be blind, not seeing the sun until a certain time." And at once a mist and darkness fell on him (the sorcerer) and he sought out people to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul on seeing what had occurred believed. He was astounded at the teaching of the Lord.</p>
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3. . Material Independence	13:13-52	The Jews	Influence amongst wealthy
<p>13:13-52 Those who were with Paul set sail from Paphos and came to Perga of Pamphylia. Then John (Mark) departed from them and returned to Jerusalem. The others continued, going from Perga and arriving in Antioch of Persidia. They then went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. After the reading of the law and of the prophets the synagogue rulers said to them "Brethren. If there is any word of exhortation amongst you for the people say it." So rising up Paul motioned with his hand and said "Fellow Israelites and those who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and exalted their people during their sojourn in the land of Egypt. Then with a raised arm he led them out of it. They endured in the desert for about forty years. Then having destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan the land was given to them for about four hundred and fifty years. After this God gave (them) judges until the time of Samuel a prophet. Then they asked for a king and God gave them Saul the son of Cis of the tribe of Benjamin for forty years. Then removing him he (God) raised David up for them as a king. He also gave witness to (David) saying "I have found David the son of Jesse to be a man according to my heart who will do all that I want." According to his promise God raised from the descendants of this man a Saviour called Jesus and brought him to Israel. Before His public entrance John proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. As this (preparation) was completed John said "Who do you suppose me to be? I am not the promised one. He is coming after me and I am not worthy to loosen the sandal on his foot."</p> <p>(Paul continued) "Brethren, sons of the race of Abraham and those amongst you who fear God, the word of this salvation was sent forth to us. But those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, did not recognise him. So they fulfilled the judgement of the voices of the prophets being read through on every Sabbath. On finding no reason to condemn him to death they asked Pilate to destroy him. Then when they finished doing all the things which had been written concerning him they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him out of the dead and he appeared over many</p>	<p>days to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now witnesses about him to the people. What we preach to you, is that the promise made to the fathers has come about. God has fulfilled that promise to our children by raising up Jesus. This has been as it is written in the second psalm. "You are my son. Today I have begotten you." And (also) "He raised him up out of the dead so that he would no longer return to corruption." Thus he has said "I will give to you the holy things of David the faithful one. Wherefore also in another psalm he says "You will not give your holy one to see corruption." As far as David himself was concerned having served his own generation with the counsel of God he fell asleep and was added to his fathers and he did see corruption. But the one (Jesus) whom God raised (from the dead) did not see it." Know therefore and let it be understood brethren that it is through this man (Jesus) that forgiveness of sins is announced. (Through him) you are (saved) justified from all the things that you could not be saved from by the law of Moses. Indeed everyone is justified by believing in this man. Watch out therefore in case what has been said in the prophets (re warnings) comes upon you. i.e. "You scoffers, marvel and perish because I work something in your time, yet it is something you refuse to believe in when you are told about it." And as they (Paul and Barnabas) went out the people asked them to tell them more about this during the week. When the assembly (in the synagogue) was broken up many of the Jews and the worshipping proselytes (converts to Judaism) who were speaking to Paul and Barnabas urged them to continue. And so on the next Sabbath almost all the city was assembled to hear the word of God. But on seeing the crowds <b>the Jews were filled with jealousy</b> and contradicted the things spoken by Paul and so they blasphemed. Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said. "It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken to yourselves first of all. However since you put it away and were not worthy (of it) judge yourselves regarding eternal life. Behold we are going to turn to the Gentiles (non-Jews). For the</p> <p><b>Continued</b></p>		

**Continued**

Lord has commanded us to do this. (God said) "I have set you as a light for the nations (meaning non-Jews) to be for the salvation (of all) to the ends of the earth."

On hearing about this the non-Jews rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord. As many as were disposed towards eternal life believed. Thus the

word of the Lord was carried throughout all the country. But the Jews pressured the more influential women and chief men of the city and so brought persecution against Paul and Barnabas. Thus they expelled them from their borders. But they (Barnabas and Paul) shook off the dust from their feet (i.e. they moved on ) and came to Iconium. The disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

In the speech of the above paragraph Paul (as recounted by Luke) raises the massive question of "Justification by Faith." This has been a linch pin in the position of Protestants since they broke from the 'Roman' Church about five hundred years ago. But perhaps the position of both groups is similar and it comes down to a matter of degree as to which of two "prongs" each of them emphasise. How does this fit in with the line of logic as portrayed in *Reality Search*? As a re-cap, the two societies, one of which is based on law or time and the other which is based upon order or place are both inadequate. People in a 'law-based only' society are likely to realise this. Probably as people listened to Paul they knew that even though they kept to the law of Moses as prescribed in Jewish society they were still guilty of failing to come up to the quality of life that was intended in the Ultimate Plan of the Universe. So did the non-Jews. And so they were still as it were "off-key" to some extent. On the other hand the way of life as proclaimed in "the Word" about Jesus would help them to attain a more balanced approach. In the speech above, the best of both types of societies are presented and people are warned about the inadequacies of each of them. By keeping to the "Way" of life as exemplified by Jesus, that is by keeping faith in himself and what he stood for, people are more likely to be able to function according to the Ultimate Plan of the Universe. Thus they are less likely to be alienated from it.

In the above passage Jesus is presented as a Source of Life as well. As Paul said to the Jews, it was fitting to proclaim 'the Word' relating to Jesus to themselves first of all. This was because, like the down-beam of the cross, natural law as such forms the basis of any society, starting with the animal world. At the same time 'the Word' relating to the way of life of Jesus contains within itself sufficient wisdom about law including the moral law, for it to move out from Judaism into the wider world.

**4. . Perception to escape**

**14:1-6**

**The disobeying Jews**

**Crowd influence**

14:1-6 Now it happened that as they entered into the Jewish synagogue together to speak, a great company of both Jews and Greeks believed. But the **Jews who did not agree** excited and embittered the minds of the non-Jews against the brothers. The latter continued for a considerable time to speak boldly about the Lord. They witnessed to the life of God (grace) within the

word, working signs and wonders through their hands. But the multitude of the city was divided. Some were with the Jews but others were with the apostles. When there was a plan of both Jews and non-Jews and their rulers to rush at the (apostles) to insult and stone them *they perceived this*. They escaped to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and the neighbourhood of Derbe and evangelized there.

<p><b>5. . Stress on humanness</b></p>	<p><b>14:7-18</b></p>	<p><b>Crowds</b></p>	<p><b>Adulation</b></p>
<p>14:7-18 They were evangelizing there (Lycaonia etc) and a certain man who had no power in his feet was sitting by. He had never walked and had been lame from birth. This man listened to Paul speaking. Paul gazed at him and saw that he had the faith to be healed. He said with a loud voice "Stand up on your feet erect." (The man) leaped up and walked. The <b>crowds</b> on seeing what Paul did lifted up their voice around Lycaonia saying "These men are like gods who have come down to us." So they called Barnabas Zeus and (they called) Paul Hermes since it was he who was the leader of the discourse. The priest of Zeus brought bulls and garlands to the gates of the city and with the crowds wanted to</p>		<p>make a sacrifice. But on hearing about it Barnabas and Paul tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd crying out and saying "Men why are you doing these things? <i>We are only men like yourselves.</i> We are preaching to you about turning away from these vanities towards the Living God who made heaven and earth and the sea and everything in them. In generations past he has allowed all the nations (non-Jews) to go on in their ways. Yet even so, he has witnessed to himself in doing good from heaven like giving rain and at times the bearing of fruit. He has filled our bodies with food and our hearts with gladness." But in saying these things they scarcely stopped the crowds from sacrificing to them.</p>	
<p><b>6. . Brotherly Support</b></p>	<p><b>14:19-28</b></p>	<p><b>Iconium Jews</b></p>	<p><b>desire for leadership</b></p>
<p>14:19 -28 There were <b>Jews</b> who came from <b>Antioch and Iconium</b>. They swayed the crowds (at Lycaonia etc) and so Paul was stoned and dragged outside the city. It was supposed that he had died. But as <i>the disciples surrounded him</i> he got up and went (back) into the city. The next day he went out (from there) with Barnabas and on to Derbe. Having evangelized that city and having made many disciples they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch. They confirmed the minds of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, (and telling them) that it is through many afflictions that it behoves us to enter into the</p>		<p>kingdom of God. Then, having appointed elders for them in every church and after praying with fasting, they committed them (Paul and Barnabas) to the Lord in whom they had believed. They (then) passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. They were speaking the word in Perga and (then) they came down to Attalia and from there sailed away to Antioch. It was there they were commended to the grace (life) of God for the work which they had accomplished. So having arrived and having assembled the church they reported what things God had done with them - that he had opened a door of faith to the nations (non-Jews). They stayed quite some time with the disciples there (at Antioch).</p>	

C/f the line of logic presented in *Reality Search* why would Paul teach that it is with 'affliction' that one enters into the kingdom of heaven? If the kingdom of heaven is a type of hybrid society resting on a base of both time and place wouldn't those who gear their lives in this way be accepted by all. On the contrary, people entrenched in one or other of these societies would recognise that the people who base their lives on "the way" also have the traits of a differing type of society. For example, 'conservatives' would consider them too 'liberal'. 'Liberals' would rate them as too 'conservative' etc. So it is likely there would be hostility towards them.

In the overall structure of Luke's Sections B and C in *Acts*, the early church endeavours to overcome the narrowness of Judaism by moving out into the non-Jewish world. But by doing this they cut across a range of vested interests in the status quo. Conflict is inevitable. Section C as a whole presents a range of ways by which the early church endeavoured to deal with this 'blocking' kind of opposition.

In the final paragraph of the Section C (to follow) the Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem follow the judgment of James. This was probably son of Alphaeus and not James, brother of John as the latter James was already killed by Herod.) They 'pare' down the observance of Moses' law by Gentile Christians to its very essentials. This is discussed in Appendices of Version Two of *Reality Search*. It is pointed out here there are parallels between these 'laws' and the first three commandments as given by Moses about the worship of God. Then, in terms of the ten commandments, "blood" connects with "Thou shalt not kill" (c/f the fifth commandment) and blood sports. "Fornication" connects with "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (c/f sixth commandment). Then, "Things strangled" has Scriptural links with the unjust practices of usury which links with "Thou shalt not steal" (c/f seventh commandment or in Protestant Scriptures the eighth commandment).

It is interesting to note that in the following paragraph James appears to think that people will remain familiar with the guidance of Moses' law. This is because at that time the law was read on the Sabbath in local synagogues throughout the known world and Christians could attend there. However as it turned out, a few decades after this edict from the Apostles and elders, the Jews introduced a prayer into the synagogues which put a curse on Christians. This prayer then effectively banned Christians from the synagogues and they had to create their own house churches.



<p><b>7. . Salvation through spiritual strength</b></p>	<p><b>15:1-29</b></p>	<p><b>Some of Pharisee sect</b></p>	<p><b>Sect control</b></p>
<p>15:1-29 Some people went down (to Antioch) and taught the brothers "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses you cannot be saved." This caused considerable discord and questioning by Paul and Barnabas with them. So they agreed to go up to Jerusalem with Paul and Barnabas and some of the others amongst them in order to meet with the apostles and elders in Jerusalem and deal with this question. In the process of being sent forward by the church they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria. They related there about the conversion of the nations (non-Jews/ gentiles) and caused great joy amongst all the brothers. Then having arrived in Jerusalem they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders. They reported on what things God had done with them. <b>But some of those from the sect of the Pharisees</b> who had been converted stood up. They said "It is fitting to circumcise them and tell them to keep the law of Moses."</p> <p>The apostles and the elders assembled to see about this matter. After much questioning had taken place, Peter rose up and said to them. "Brethren, you realise that from the beginning (of our ministry) God chose that the nations would hear the word of the gospel through my mouth and believe it. <i>And God the Heart-knower accepted them and gave them the Holy Spirit to them</i> in the same way as to us. There was no distinction made between themselves and us. It was by faith that their hearts were cleansed. Now therefore why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples. (a yoke) which neither our fathers nor ourselves were able to bear. It is through the grace (life) of the Lord Jesus that we believe that we are saved just as they also believe. All the multitude were silent. They (then) heard Barnabas and Paul relating what signs and wonders God had done amongst the nations through themselves. After that they kept</p>	<p>silence. James answered them saying "Brethren hear me. Simon (Peter) told how God first visited him so that he would take his name out to the nations. This agrees with the words of the prophets for it has been written. "After these things I will return and rebuild the tent of David which has fallen. And I will rebuild everything that has been overturned. I will rear it again so that the rest of men may seek the Lord - even all the nations on whom my name has been conferred says the Lord. Doing these things has been known from the beginning."</p> <p>Because of this I (James) do not want to trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God. Rather write word to them telling them to abstain from the pollution of idols and fornication and anything strangled and also blood. For Moses from ancient generations in every city has had (all sorts of) people reading him (and his law) in the synagogues on every Sabbath.</p> <p>So it then seemed good to the apostles and to the elders and all the church to send men chosen from amongst them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. Thus Judas called Barsabbas and Silas who were leading men amongst the brothers (went with them) with the following letter. "The apostles and the elders send greeting to the gentile brothers throughout Antioch and Syria and Cilicia. We heard that some of us have troubled you with what was said and have unsettled you minds. We had not commissioned this. Therefore it has seemed good to us with one mind to send some men chosen from amongst us to yourselves with our beloved Barnabas and Paul. These men have given up their previous lives on behalf of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent Judas and Silas so that they through speech can announce the same things. It has appeared good to the Holy Spirit and to us to put no more burden on yourselves than these necessary things. Abstain from idol sacrifices and blood and strangled things and fornication. In doing this you will do well. Farewell.</p>		
<p><b>Apostles and elder brothers sending reduced rules throughout Antioch, Syria and Cilicia 15:29</b></p>			

## Section D

### HEED MULTIPLE VOICES AND THE LIVING WORD

Acts 15:30 - 20:38

Paragraph "Hooks" are references to the 'Word of God'

#### Steps towards the "Living Word"

	Section/ Verse	V4 Page	V5 Page
1. The "word" is taught and preached by many	15:30-35		
. . <i>Paul and Barnabas . . teaching and preaching . . others many the word of the Lord</i>	15:35	215	187
2. The "word" continues to live on with those who 'have' it	15:36-41		
. <i>Let us visit . . (where) . we announced the word . (and see) how they have (it)</i>	16:33	215	187
3. Speaking the "word" is permitted by the Ultimate Spirit	16:1-16:10		
. . <i>prevented by - Holy Spirit to speak - word in Asia . . not allowed them - Spirit of Jesus</i>	16:6	216	188
4. The "word" is spoken to those ready to believe	16:11-40		
. <i>Believe . . and they spoke to him the word of God with all . . in the house of him</i>	16:32	217	189
5. The "word" is received by people who include the wealthy	17:1-34		
. . <i>and these were more noble . . who received the word with all eagerness</i>	17:11	218	190
6. The "word" has opponents	17:13-34		
. . <i>announced by Paul the word of God, they (Jews) came there also . . troubling</i>	17:13	219	190
7. The "word" urges proclamation	18:1-6		
. . <i>Paul was urged by the word to solemnly witness to ... Jesus being the Christ</i>	18:5	220	191
8. Teaching the "word" is commanded by the Final "I AM"	18:7-23		
. . <i>said . Lord . speak and not keep silence . I am with thee . . teaching . . word of God</i>	18:11	220	192
9. The "word" expects attention	18:24-19:10		
. . <i>some hardened and disobeyed, (others) came to hear word</i>	19:9	221	193
10. The "word" is increased and strengthened by the "I AM"	19:11-20		
. . <i>by might of the Lord the word increased and was strong</i>	19:20	221	194
11. The "word" is linked in with "the way"	19:21-41		
. <i>no small amount of trouble concerning 'the way'</i>	19:23	222	194
12. The "word" continues the work of "I AM"	20:1-38		
. . <i>I commend you to the Lord and to the word of the grace of him being able to build</i>	20:32	223	195

*The 'flock' accompany Paul to the ship to Jerusalem . .20:28*

**Paragraph "Hooks" are references to the "Word of God"**

<b>Steps towards the "Living Word"</b>	<b>Verse</b>	<b>Section</b>
<b>1. The "word" is taught and preached by many</b>		

<i>Paul and Barnabas many others</i> <i>teaching and preaching, the word of the Lord</i>	<b>15:35</b>	<b>15:30-35</b>
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<p>15:30-35 On being dismissed (by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem) they (Paul and Barnabas etc) went down to Antioch. They assembled the multitude (of disciples) and handed them the letter (from Jerusalem). On having read it they (the multitude) rejoiced at the exhortation (i.e. telescoped laws). Judas and Silas (sent from Jerusalem) who were prophets themselves addressed the meeting</p>	<p>with much exhortation. They confirmed the brothers (in what they were doing). After having continued a time (at Antioch) these two were farewelled with peace from the brothers and sent back to those (in Jerusalem) who had sent them. But Paul and Barnabas stayed on in Antioch, <i>teaching and preaching the word of the Lord along with many others.</i> <small>(Note: Text is mainly a paraphrase of the Literal translation in the RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, 1988)</small></p>
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<b>2. The "word" continues to live on with those who 'have' it</b>
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<i>. Let us visit . .(where) . we announced the word . (and see) how they have (it)</i>	<b>16:33</b>	<b>15:36-41</b>
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<p>15:36-41 Now after some days Paul said to Barnabas "Let us return and visit the brothers throughout every city in which we announced <b>the word of the Lord</b> and see how they are." Barnabas wanted to take with them as well John who was called Mark. But Paul thought it fit not to take this person with them given his</p>	<p>withdrawal from them at Pamphylia and not continuing the work with them. There was sharp feeling, such as to separate them from each other. Barnabas took Mark to sail away to Cyprus. But Paul, having chosen Silas went out being commended to <i>the grace (or life) of the Lord</i> by the brothers. He went through Syria and Cilicia <i>confirming the churches.</i></p>
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### 3. Speaking the "word" is permitted by the Ultimate Spirit

**.. prevented by - Holy Spirit to speak -  
word in Asia . .not allowed them - Spirit of Jesus**

**16:6**

**16:1-16:10**

16:1-10 He (Paul) also came down to Derbe and to Lystra. Now there was a certain disciple there who was called Timothy. He was the son of a faithful Jewish woman. But his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to take this man with him on his travels. So, taking him apart he circumcised him because of the Jews in that area. They knew that he (Timothy) had a Greek father. As they went through the cities they urged them (the disciples) to keep to the decrees decided upon by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. The churches were therefore

strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily. As they went through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia they were prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking **the word** in Asia. On coming opposite Mysia they attempted to go into Bithynia. But the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them. So passing by Mysia they came down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision. A man from Macedonia appeared. He was begging him (Paul) and saying. Cross into Macedonia and help us. So after the vision that he saw we immediately sought to go forth to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to evangelize them.

After all they had been through Paul and Barnabas were still 'human' enough to have a major rift. By this stage there appeared to be a fluidity amongst who was with whom. In the above paragraph someone from Paul's group is directly relating what happened. Was Luke himself there? Also one wonders why the Spirit did not want the word preached to the Asians. Was it because of their lack of contact with both Jews and Greeks at that time? Paul finally did spend time there, at least in near Asia.

Another question concerns the heading of this Section which mentions "multiple voices". A look at the literal text shows the theme of people talking in every way. There are at least 32 different words to describe this (c/f the literal gospel translation in Version Five in *Reality Search*) Luke appears to be setting a framework in which 'the word' extends beyond a straight proclamation about Jesus being the Christ. Even in his gospel Luke was developing the idea of 'word' as a seed, egg etc and people being like a receptacle. This development continues. It connects in with the 'Living Word' presented further in John's gospel. In the line of logic presented by *Reality Search* this 'living word' is a counter to 'the loud voice' .



#### 4. The "word" is spoken to those ready to believe

*. Believe . . and they spoke to him the word of God with all . . in the house of him*

16:32

16:11-40

16:11-40                      Setting sail from Troas we ran a straight course to Samothracia then on the next day to Neapolis and then to Phillippi. This is the first part of Macedonia, a colony city. We were in this city staying there for some days. On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate (of the city) by a river where we supposed there was a place of prayer. Sitting there we spoke to the women who had come together. Amongst them there was a certain woman whose name was Lydia. She was a dealer in purple dyed garments of the city of Thyatira. She worshipped God and when she heard the things spoken about by Paul *the Lord opened up her heart to take heed*. When she was baptized together with her household, she asked (us) saying "If you have judged that I am faithful to the Lord come into my house and stay there." And so she urged us.

Now it happened that as we had gone up to the place of prayer there was a certain slave girl who had the spirit of a python and had come to meet us. She earned a lot of money for her masters by the practice of soothsaying. She followed after Paul and the rest of us crying out and saying "These men are slaves of the God Most High. They announce to you a way of salvation." She continued doing this over many days. Paul was becoming greatly troubled (about this) and turning to the spirit (of the python) he said "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." It did come out within the same hour. But the masters (of the slave girl), on seeing that their hope of earning money had gone, seized Paul and Silas. They dragged them to the marketplace before the rulers. Then bringing them to the magistrates they said "These men are troubling us greatly in the city. They are Jews and they announce customs which it is not lawful for us to take on because we are Romans. So the crowd rose up together against them. The magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be flogged. There were many stripes laid upon them. Then they were thrown into prison. The jailor was ordered to

keep them secure. On receiving such an order (the jailor) threw them into the inner prison and secured their feet in the stocks. Then about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing a hymn to God. The prisoners listened to them. Then suddenly there was a great earthquake so that the foundations of the jail were shaken. At once all the doors were opened and the bonds of all were loosened. The jailor woke up. Seeing that the doors of the prison had been opened he drew his sword and was about to kill himself. He supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul called out (to him) with a great voice saying "Do not do yourself harm. We are all here." So asking for lights he (the jailor) rushed in. Trembling he fell before Paul and Silas. Then he led them forward outside and said "Sirs what should I do to be saved?" They said. "*Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved together with your household.*" So they spoke **the word of God** to him as well as to those in his household. And so taking them in that hour of the night he washed where they had been whipped. (Then) he and all of his household were baptised at once. Then bringing them into the house he set a table before them. He with all his household celebrated and believed in God.

When day came the magistrates sent the police saying "Release those men." The jailor announced this to Paul. The police had been sent to release you. Go now in peace. But Paul said to them (the jailor and police) "They (the magistrates) have beaten us publicly without our being condemned. And we are Roman citizens. (Then) they threw us into prison. Now they want to expel us secretly. No indeed. Rather let them come themselves to let us out." So the police reported these words to the magistrates. Now (the magistrates) were afraid on hearing that they (Paul and Silas) were Roman citizens. Coming they pleaded with them and bringing them out (of the prison) they asked them to go away from the city. And so going out from the prison (Paul and Silas) went to the house of Lydia. Then after seeing and exhorting the brothers, they departed.

### 5. . The "word" is received by those who include the wealthy

*. . and these were more noble . . who received the word with all eagerness*

17:11

17:1-12

17:1-12 Travelling through Amphipolis and Apollonia they came to Thessalonica where there was a Jewish synagogue. According to Paul's custom he entered it and over a period of three Sabbaths he lectured to them from the Scriptures. Opening these up he set (the Scriptures) before them showing that it was fitting that Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead. (He said) "This Jesus whom I am telling you about was and is, the Christ." Some of them were persuaded and threw in their lot with Paul and Silas. This included a great number of worshipping Greeks and not a few of *the leading women*. But the Jews became jealous. Taking aside some wicked men who were lounging around in the market place and gathering up a crowd they disturbed the city. (Then) coming on to the house of Jason they sought to bring them (Paul and Silas) out to the mob. But on not

finding them they dragged out Jason and some of the brothers (and took them) to the authorities crying "These men having turned the world upside down, have now arrived here and have been received by Jason. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar. They claim someone else called Jesus is king." And so they troubled the crowd. The authorities on hearing these things and charging Jason and the rest a fine, they released them. Then during the night the brothers quickly sent out both Paul and Silas to Beroea. Then on arriving here they went to the Jewish synagogue. Here the people were more noble than those in Thessalonica. **They received the word** with all eagerness. They examined the Scriptures daily to see whether or not these things (claimed by Paul) were so. And so many of them believed. Also (believing) *were honourable Greek women* and not a few (Greek) men.



**6. . The "word" has opponents**

*. . announced by Paul the word of God, they (Jews) came there also . .troubling*

**17:13**

**17:13-34**

17:13-34 But when the Jews from Thessalonica found out that they (Paul and Silas) were also in Beroea and **the word of God was announced** by Paul, they came here also, *stirring up and troubling the crowds*. So the brothers immediately sent Paul away as far as the sea. But Silas and Timothy stayed on there. The people conducting Paul brought him as far as Athens. Then he directed them that Silas and Timothy should come as soon as possible. And so those who had brought him here departed.

In Athens, while Paul was waiting for them (Silas and Timothy) he was provoked within his spirit on seeing the city to be full of images (of gods). He therefore addressed the Jews in the synagogue and those who worshipped (c/f non-Jews outside the city) and also people in the market place who happened to be there. Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers fell into discussion with him. Some said "What does this ignorant plagiarist want to say?" Others said "He seems to be an announcer of foreign demons because he is preaching about Jesus and the resurrrection. And so taking hold of him they led him to the Areopagus saying "Can you help us to know about this new teaching you are talking about. For you are bringing startling things to our ears. We therefore want to know what these things may be." Now all Athenians and the foreigners who lived there, use their leisure to either talk about nothing that is different or they want to hear something new. So standing up in the midst of the Areopagus Paul said. "Athenian people I notice you are very religious in everything. Passing along and looking up at the objects of your

worship I found also an altar on which had been inscribed "To an unknown God." You (even) reverence what you are ignorant about. (So) I announce this to you. The God who made the world and all things in it, this one who is Lord of heaven and earth does not dwell in hand-made shrines. Nor is he served by human hands as he is not in need of anything. He gives life and breath and everything. He made every nation of people to live on the face of the earth out of one (man, Adam). He has appointed the seasons (for every nation) and the boundaries of their habitation. (He has made all people so that they) might sense God and may find him. Yet He is he is not far from every one of us. In him we live and move and have our being. Some of you who are poets have indeed said "We are his offspring." As offspring therefore of God, we should not supposed him to be made of gold or silver or stone or an engraved work of art. Nor is the divine nature like what man may consider. In times of ignorance God may have overlooked this. But God now declares to all people everywhere to repent. He set a day in which he is about the judge the inhabited earth according to righteousness. This is by a man whom he designated. He has offered a guarantee (of a just hearing) to all, by raising him out of the dead. Now on hearing about a resurrection of someone from the dead some (Greeks) scoffed. Others said "*We will hear you about this another time.*" So Paul went out from amongst them. But some people kept with him and believed. Amongst these were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman whose name was Damaria and others with them.

In terms of the line of logic that Christianity is a hybrid society based on Judaism and Greek philosophy, the impact of Paul in Athens has significance. Luke the writer shows how the Athenians are locked into discussions and they appear to lack direction. They fail to listen with their heart. These are the weaknesses of an order based society that Christianity within the gospels (c/f *Reality Search*) is trying to deal with.

## 7. . The "word" urges proclamation

. . *Paul was urged by the word to solemnly witness to.... Jesus being the Christ*

18:5 18:1-6

18:1-6 After this he (Paul) left Athens and came to Corinth. He found a certain Jew called Aquila, a native of Pontus. (Aquila) had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla because Claudius had commanded that all the Jews were to leave Rome. He (Paul) went to see them because he was of the same trade as himself that is, they were tent-makers. And so he remained with them. On every Sabbath day he lectured in

the synagogue and persuaded both Jew and Greeks (towards his position). (Then), when both Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia. Paul was **urged by the word** to *give solemn witness to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ*. But when they resisted and blasphemed he shook off his garments and said to them. "Your blood be upon your own head. I am clean of it and from now on I will go to the nations (non-Jews).

Paul was a brilliant scholar in the Scriptures and had trained 'at the feet' of Gamaliel, the greatest Scripture scholar of the day. It seems Paul could go so far in his explanation of the Scriptures. But when he proclaimed Jesus as the Christ it was too much for some of the Jews. So he would move on to another place. In this whole Section 'the word' takes on a 'life' of its own more and more. Here it appears to be reinforced enough by the arrival of Silas and Timothy to push Paul forward into a solemn proclamation about Jesus.

## 8. . Teaching the "word" is commanded by the Final "I AM"

. . *said . Lord . speak and not keep silence . . .teaching . . word of God*

18:11

18:7-23

18:7-23 And so on leaving from there (the synagogue in Corinth) he went into the house of a person named Titus Justus who worshipped God. His house was actually next door to the synagogue. Now Crispus the synagogue ruler believed in the Lord (Jesus) as well as all his household. (In fact) many of the Corinthians on hearing (Paul) believed and were baptized. (Then) one night *the Lord spoke* to Paul through a vision. "Do not be afraid but *speak out and do not keep silent*. I am with you. Nobody will set upon you to ill treat you because people in this city mean much to me. So (Paul) sat a year and six months **teaching the word of God** amongst them. When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia the Jews set upon Paul with one mind and brought him to the tribunal saying. This man urges men to worship God differently from the law. When Paul was about to open his mouth Gallio said to the Jews. "If indeed this was a crime or some villainous evil Jews (who were brought by you), I would rightly heed you. But if this is a matter

concerning a word and names and the law according to yourselves you will need to see to it yourselves. I do not intend to be a judge over it. And so he drove them away from the tribunal. But they all seized Sosthenes the synagogue ruler and they struck him in front of the tribunal. But none of this mattered to Gallio. Paul stayed on for many days but then he bade farewell to the brothers and sailed away to Syria. With him were Priscilla and Aquila. (Paul) had taken on a vow at Cenchrea and so shore his head. They came down to Ephesus. He left them (Priscilla and Aquila) there But he himself went into the synagogue and lectured to the Jews. They asked him to remain for a longer time but he did not consent to this. Rather he bade them farewell saying "God willing I will return to you." He then set sail from Ephesus and coming down to Caesarea he went and greeted the church. Then he went down to Antioch. Having spent some time there he departed in order to go through the district of Galatia and Phrygia and confirm all the disciples.

## 9 .The 'word' expects attention

*.. some hardened and disobeyed (others) came to hear word*

19:9,10

18:24-19:10

18:24 -19:41 There was a certain Jew called Apollos who was an Alexandrian by race. He was an eloquent man who was well versed in the Scriptures and who came to Ephesus. This man had been orally instructed in the way of the Lord. He was very keen and spoke and taught about Jesus in an accurate way. However he only had an understanding of the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. On hearing about him Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and explained the way of God to him more accurately. When he intended to go on through Achaia he was encouraged by the brothers who wrote to the disciples telling them to welcome him. When he arrived he greatly contributed to those who had believed (in salvation) through grace (the life of God). He argued with the Jews vehemently in public and proved, through the Scriptures, to be the Christ. 19:1 Now it happened that while Apollos was in Corinth Paul had passed through the upper parts of the country and came to Ephesus where he found some disciples. He said to them. Have

you believed in and received the Holy Spirit?" They said to him We have not even heard of the Holy Spirit." He said "To what therefore were you baptised? (c/f converted)?" They said "To the baptism of John." Paul said "John baptized a baptism of repentance to the people, telling them they should believe in the one coming after him. This one is Jesus." On hearing this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Paul laid his hands on them and the Holy Spirit came upon them. They spoke in tongues and prophesied. All told, there were about twelve men there. And then entering into the synagogue he (Paul) spoke boldly over three months lecturing and persuading people concerning the kingdom of God. But as some people were *hardened and disobeyed* (the Spirit?), speaking ill of 'the way' before the multitude, he (Paul) withdrew. He lectured the disciples separately every day in the school of Tyrannus. This went on over two years so that all who inhabited Asia **came to hear the word of the Lord**. This included both Jews and Greeks.

## 10. . The "word" is increased and strengthened by the "I AM"

*.. by might of the Lord the word increased and was strong*

19:20

19:11-20

19:11-20 And God worked powerful deeds that were not ordinary, through the hands of Paul. These works were such that even things that had touched his skin such as handkerchiefs or aprons which were put onto people, rid them of their diseases and evil spirits went out of them. But there were also some itinerate Jews who attempted exorcism. They pronounced the name of the Lord Jesus over evil spirits saying "I adjure you (to leave) by the Jesus that Paul proclaims." There was a Jewish chief priest named Sceva with seven sons who were doing this. But the evil spirit answered and said to them "Jesus indeed I know and Paul I understand. But who are you?" And the (possessed), man

leapt upon them He was strong against them and overpowered them. (But) they escaped out of that house naked and wounded. This (event) became known to all the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus. Fear fell upon all of them and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. There were many people who believed and came confessing and talking about what they had done. A considerable number of them who practised magic brought their rolls (c/f books) together and burned them before all. They reckoned the prices of these (rolls) and found them to be worth five thousand pieces of silver. Thus *by the might of the Lord the word increased and was strong*.

Luke the writer is gradually developing more ideas and understanding about 'the way' and 'the name' of Jesus and these are linked in with 'the word' . .

## 11. . The "word" is linked in with "the way"

. . *no small amount of trouble concerning 'the way'*

19:23

19:21-41

19:21-41 And when these things were completed Paul decided within his spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem. He was saying "What should I do? It behoves me to see Rome as well." And sending two of the people ministering to him, that is Timothy and Erastus, into Macedonia he stayed for a time in Asia. Now there was at about that time no small amount of trouble concerning '**the way**'. There was someone called Demetrius who was a silversmith. He made silver shrines of Artemis and provided the artisans with no small amount of trade. He assembled the workmen connected with this and said "Men you understand that this trade is our livelihood. You see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia Paul has persuaded a considerable crowd of people saying that what we make are not gods. Now this is endangers our livelihood bringing it into disrepute. Also the temple of the great goddess Artemis is reckoned as nothing and her greatness is diminished. Yet all of Asia and the inhabited earth worship her. On hearing (this) and becoming full of anger they (the workmen) cried out saying "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians." Thus the city was filled with confusion and they (the crowd) rushed with one mind into the theatre keeping a firm grip on the Macedonians, Gaius and Aristarchus; who were traveling companions of Paul. Paul intended to go into the mob but the disciples would not allow him. There were also some of the Asiarchs who were his friends who

sent messages to him and begged him not to go into the theatre himself. Others indeed cried out something different. For the assembly was in confusion and most people did not know why they had come together. Some of the crowd instructed Alexander whom the Jews put forward (to speak to the crowd). Alexander waved his hand wanting to make a defence. But knowing that he was a Jew there was the one voice from all, over a period of about two hours, crying out "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians." (Eventually) the town clerk quietened the crowd saying "Fellow Ephesians who indeed amongst men does not know that (people of) the city of the Ephesians are not the temple wardens of the great Artemis and the image that has fallen from the sky? These things are undeniable and necessary. Therefore you should be quiet and do nothing rash. You have brought these men here and they are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers against your goddess. If therefore Demetrius and those artisans with him have an account against anyone, the courts are held and proconsuls are there. Let them bring a charge against (these men). But if there is anything further that you want, it will be settled in the lawful assembly. Indeed we are in danger of being charged with insurrection to-day (by the Romans). For there is no cause of concern that we can account for to justify (all) this commotion.) And so, after saying these things he dismissed the assembly.

If "the word" is being used by the writer as a 'paragraph hook' how come mention of this is not to be found in this paragraph? Obviously the incident in itself stands on its own as a distinct paragraph within the general story. It appears that what we have here is the presentation of a babel of confusion which is associated with the worship of idols. The story presents like the antithesis of what 'the word' entails. So omission of 'the hook' may be deliberate. Rather, the idea of 'the way', which is the outcome of 'the word' is presented.

In the paragraph to follow, the last in Section D, the 'word' is presented as the grace or life of Jesus. This 'life' is able to grow and pass on the sanctification or Life of God within people. Also mentioned in this last paragraph are "the words (plural) of the Lord Jesus" and 'the word' of Paul himself. But these mentions are not used in the same sense of 'proclamation' as elsewhere in the Section. Rather, they link the destiny of Jesus with that of his disciple Paul.

## 12. . The "word" continues the work of "I AM"

. . *I commend you to the Lord and to the word of the grace of him being able to build*

20:32

20:1-38

20:1-38 After the uproar ceased Paul summoned the disciples and after exhorting them he took leave and left to go to Macedonia. Then having gone through those parts and having exhorted them with much speech he came into Greece. After spending three months there and because there was a plot against him by the Jews he was about to set sail for Syria. He had a mind to return through Macedonia. Accompanying him were Sopater (son) of Pyrrhus a Berean, and the Thessalonians Aristarchus and Secundus, and Gaius who was a Derbean and Timothy. There were the Asians Tychicus and Trophimus. These men went forward and waited for us in Troas. After the days of unleavened bread we sailed away from Philippi and in five days we came to them at Troas where we stayed seven days. On the first day of the Sabbath we were assembled to break bread. Paul lectured to them (the assembly) because he was about to leave the next day. He continued his speech until midnight. Now there were a considerable number of lamps in the upper room (where) we were assembled. There was a certain young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill. He was overcome by a deep sleep since Paul lectured for a longer time than usual. Overcome by sleep (Eutychus) fell from the third floor down onto the ground and was picked up dead. But going down Paul lay over him and embraced him closely. He said "Do not be terrified for life is in him." And going upstairs and breaking the bread and eating it he conversed for a considerable time until it was daylight. Then he departed. They brought (in) the lad who was alive and they were comforted (about this) in no small way. We got onto the ship (that was) setting sail to Assos. We then intended to pick up Paul as arranged because he was intending to go (there) on foot. Now when he met with us in Assos we brought him on board and we came to Mitylene. Sailing from there the next day we arrived off Chios and (then went on to) Samos. Next we came to Miletus. Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not spend time in Asia for he was in a hurry. (He was hoping) if possible for him to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and summoned the elders of the church. When they came to him he said to them. "You understand that from the first day I set foot in Asia how I lived the whole time. (I was) serving the Lord with all humility and with the tears and trials that were happening to me because of the plots of the Jews. I kept nothing back of

things that would be beneficial to declare and publicly teach you from house to house. (I was) solemnly witnessing both to Jews and to Greeks (the need for) repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus. And now behold I have been bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem so I can meet with what is unknown, apart from the fact that the Holy Spirit has solemnly shown me in every city, that bonds and afflictions wait for me. But I make no account of my life. What is precious to me is that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus. This is to solemnly witness to the gospel (good news) of the grace (life) of God. So now behold I know that you will not see my face again, neither will you, nor all (those) amongst whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom. So I witness to you today that I am clean of the blood of all men. I did not refrain from declaring to you all the counsel of God. Take care of yourselves and also all *the flock*. The Holy Spirit has given it to you to oversee and shepherd the church of God which he acquired through the blood of his own (son). I know that after my departure wolves will come in causing grief amongst you and who will not spare the flock. (Also) men will rise up from amongst yourselves speaking perverted things (in order) to drag the disciples away after them. Therefore keep watch. Remember that for three years, night and day I did not cease admonishing with tears each one of you And now I commend you **to the Lord and to the grace of his word**. (This will) enable you to build and to pass on the inheritance of all those who have been sanctified (with the life of grace). I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that my own hands ministered to my needs and to those (of the people) who were with me. I showed you all things so that in thus labour it was fitting to help those ailing (in faith) and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that is, when he said "It is blessed to give rather than to receive." And so having said these things and kneeling down with all of them he (Paul) prayed. There was considerable weeping amongst all. They fell onto Paul's neck and fervently kissed him. They were suffering most over the word that he had said - that they would never see his face again. And so they escorted him to the ship

**The Flock (20:28)**

<b>9. . the Governor</b>	<b>23:25-24:27</b>	<b>Felix</b>	<b>gave on-going protection</b>
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<p>23:25-24:27 He (the Tribune) (then) wrote a letter along these lines. "Claudius Lysias sends greetings to the <b>most excellent governor Felix</b>. This man (Paul) has been arrested by the Jews and was about to be killed by them when my soldiery came upon the scene and I rescued him. I have learned that he is a Roman. As I wanted to know fully as to why they were accusing him I brought him down to their council. I found that he was being accused about questions relating to their law, But there was nothing (he had done) that deserved either death or imprisonment. When it was revealed to me that there was</p>	<p>a plot against the man I have at once sent him to you. I have also ordered that his accusers state their case before yourself. And so the soldiers, according to their instructions took Paul and brought him during the night to Antipatris. The next day the horsemen departed with him while (the soldiers) went back to the fort. On entering into Caesaria and on handing over the letter to the governor Paul was also presented to him. On reading (the letter) and asking what province he was from and learning it was Cilicia he said</p>	<p>"I will hear you when your accusers also arrive. " He then commanded that he be kept in Herod's Praetorium. 24:1 And after five days the high priest Ananias came down (to the governor at Caesaria) with an orator named Tertullus. They informed the governor against Paul. When he was called (forward), Tertullus began to make accusations saying "We have obtained much peace and reform from you for this nation. You have carried this out with much forethought and we welcome it both in everything and everywhere most excellent Felix. We thank (you for it). However</p>
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Continued

though I do not want to hinder you further I implore you to hear us briefly in your forbearance. For, having found this man to be a pestilence and moving sedition amongst all the Jews throughout the world and a ringleader of the Nazarene sect, who also tried to profane the temple and whom we also arrested. You will be able to see this for yourself on having examined all these things so that you will fully know what we accuse him about." And so the Jews also joined in alleging that all these things were the case. And Paul answered when the Governor signalled him to speak. "For many years you have been a judge over this nation, and you understand it. I therefore cheerfully defend myself. As you are able to know, about twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. And they did not find me in the temple discoursing with anyone. Nor was there a crowd collecting, either there nor in the

synagogues, nor throughout the city. Nor are they able to prove to you what they accuse me of. But I confess this to you, as they say, that according to the way in which they say that I worship the ancestral God in a sect, and believing all things according to the law and all that was written in the prophets, I also have hope in God, like these people. I believe in a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust. By this I have always exercised a blameless conscience towards God and men. After years and much almsgiving to my nation I arrived with offerings. They found me on having been purified in the temple, neither with a crowd nor with an uproar. But there were some Jews from Asia who it may behove you to have brought forward and (let them) accuse me if they have anything against me. Or let them say how they found misdeeds against me while I stood before the council. Only with one voice have I cried out amongst them concerning a

resurrection of a dead person. I am being judged about this to-day before you. Then Felix postponed the session wanting to know more exactly about the things concerning 'the way' saying "When Lysias the chilarch comes down, I will determine things regarding yourself." So, commanding the centurion to keep him and to have indulgence and allow his own people to attend him, and after some days after arriving, Felix with Drusilla his wife who was a Jewess sent for Paul. He heard from him about his faith in Christ Jesus. He (Paul) told him about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment. Becoming afraid Felix answered. "Go along for the present but I will send for you later on. At the same time he was hoping that Paul would give him money. So he sent for him more frequently and conversed with him. Two years went by until Felix received a successor, that is, Porcius Festus. And, wishing to show a favour to the Jews, Felix left with Paul still in prison.

The message of Jesus was "for all nations". But the Jews here show they thought of Christians as 'the Nazarene sect' within Judaism. Jesus identified himself as "the son of man" that is, the 'son of humankind'. In justice to his message, the New Testament texts are written in terms of facing outwards and away from the identification of Jesus with a sect.

Regarding the matter here at hand. Felix has put his finger on the problem. This is not about desecrating the Temple but about 'the way'. The Jews saw this as the basis of a sect which rejected the Jewish law. Paul saw it as coming from mainstream Judaism and as its fulfilment.



<b>10. . the Successor</b>	<b>25-1-7</b>	<b>Festus</b>	<b>weighed up case</b>
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<p>25:1-12 <b>Festus</b> (The new governor) therefore came into the Province. After three days he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. The chief priests and the leaders of the Jews informed him about their accusations against Paul. They asked a favour against him (Paul) so that he (Festus) might summon him to Jerusalem. (The Jews) were making a plot to kill him on the way. (But) Festus answered that Paul was to be kept in Caesarea and he himself <i>would go and attend to</i></p>	<p><i>him</i> shortly. He said "Therefore send able men from amongst you to go down (to Caesarea) with me. If there is anything amiss in this man let them accuse him." And having stayed amongst them no more than eight or ten days he (Festus) went down to Caesarea. On the next day, when sitting on the tribunal he ordered that Paul be brought in. When he (Paul) arrived the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him and brought against him charges which they were not able to prove.</p>
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<b>11. . the Emperor</b>	<b>25:8-12</b>	<b>Caesar</b>	<b>provided base for world outreach</b>
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<p>25:8-12 Paul defended himself (saying). Neither against the law of the Jews nor against the Temple, nor against Caesar have I done any wrong."          However Festus, wanting to show the Jews a favour answered Paul "Would you like to go up to Jerusalem to be judged before me about these things there?" Paul said "I am standing before the tribunal of Caesar (here) where it is fitting</p>	<p>for me to be judged. I have not wronged the Jews as you very well know. I have not done wrong or anything deserving death I do not seek to escape death. But if there is no one (here) able to accuse (and prove anything against) me then nobody can give me up to them (the Jews in Jerusalem). I appeal (therefore) to <b>Caesar</b>." Then Festus, having talked with the council answered, "You have appealed to go before Caesar and to Caesar you will go."</p>
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12. . Monarchy	25:13-26:32	Agrippa & Bernice	gave a hearing
<p>25:13-26:32 When some days had passed <b>Agrippa the king and Bernice</b> arrived at Caesarea and greeted Festus. As more days passed they stayed (on) there. Festus set forth the matters regarding Paul to the king saying "There is a certain man who has been left by Felix as a prisoner. When I was in Jerusalem the chief priests and elders of the Jews informed me about him, asking for a sentence against him. I answered them that it is not a custom with Romans to condemn any man, before the one who is being accused meets his accusers face to face in that place, in order to provide a defence against the charge. I made no delay (in arranging for this) and they came together the next day when I was sitting on the tribunal. I ordered the man to be brought in. But the accusers standing there could not bring any charge which I thought was evil against him. They had certain questions with him in relation to their own religion about someone called Jesus. He had died and Paul claimed him to be alive. Being perplexed about these things that were being debated I asked him if he wanted to go (back) to Jerusalem and be judged there about these matters. But Paul appealed to be kept on, so that Augustus (the emperor) should make a decision, I ordered (therefore) that he be kept (at Caesarea) until I can send him up to Caesar. " Agrippa said to Festus. I was minded myself to</p>	<p>hear the man. So Festus said "Tomorrow you will hear him." On the next day therefore Agrippa and Bernice came with much display and entered into the place of audience with both the military Tribunes and chief men of the city Festus then ordered that Paul be brought in. Festus said. "King Agrippa and all those present together with us. You are looking at this man about whom the multitude of the Jews petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here (in Caesaria). They were crying out that he should not live any longer. But I have not found him to have done anything that is worthy of death. When he appealed to (Caesar) Augustus I decided to send (him there). However I am not certain what to write to the lord (Caesar) and so have brought him before you (all) and (before) you most of all King Agrippa. When there has been an examination I may have something to write. It seems unreasonable to me to be sending a prisoner on and not to have any charges against him. 26:1 Agrippa said to Paul "<i>You are allowed to speak on behalf of yourself.</i>" So Paul stretched out his hand to defend himself saying "King Agrippa I consider myself happy to be able to defend myself before you to-day regarding all the things about which I am accused. This is especially so as you are an expert in knowing all the customs and questions amongst the Jews. Therefore I beg you to patiently hear you.. From my youth both in my own nation</p>	<p>and in Jerusalem, all the Jews have known my manner of life from the beginning of it. They can if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee, the most exact sect of our religion. And now I stand here being judged in terms of my hope in the promise that God made to our fathers. It is in terms of this hope that our twelve tribes worshipped with all earnestness, waiting for (for what they hoped for) to arrive. It is concerning this hope that I am being accused by the Jews O King. Why would you consider it to be incredible that God should raise dead persons. (As for myself) I indeed intended to do many things against the name of Jesus the Nazarene and I did do these things in Jerusalem. I shut many saints up into prison after receiving authority to do so from the chief priests. When it was being decided to kill them I cast a vote. (I went) throughout all the synagogues, often punishing them and compelling them to blaspheme. I raged against them so excessively that I even went to persecute them in far away cities. (But something happened) while I was journeying to Damascus with the authority of the chief priests. As I was going along at midday I saw O King, a light with the brightness of the sun. It came from heaven and shone all around myself and those who were on the journey with me. When we had all fallen down to the earth I heard a voice saying <i>Continued</i></p>	

**Continued**

to me in the Hebrew language. "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" It is hard for you to kick against the goad. (spiked stick for driving cattle)" I said "Who are you Lord?" The Lord said "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. "But get up and stand on your feet. This is why I have appeared to you - to appoint you as a servant who will witness to what you have seen. I will appear to you and deliver you from the people and the nations to whom I send you in order to open their eyes and to turn darkness into life. Thus they will be delivered from the authority of Satan and turned towards God. This is so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and many of them may be sanctified by faith in

me." And so King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. (Rather) I first went to those in Damascus and also Jerusalem and all the country of Judea and to the nations. I announced repentance to them so that they would turn towards God and do works that are worthy of this repentance."

(Paul) defended himself by saying this with a great voice (But) Festus said "You are raving Paul. Your great learning has turned you mad." But Paul said I do not rave most excellent Festus but am talking of the truth and am speaking words of good sense. The King understands about these things. And it is to himself that I am speaking boldly. I am persuaded it is

not appropriate for these things to be hidden in a corner. Do you believe this King Agrippa? I know that you believe in the prophets." Agrippa said to Paul "Are you trying in a short time to make me into a Christian?" Paul said "I would pray to God whether in a short or a long time to not only make (yourself a Christian) but also all those who hear me today so that they may become like myself here, except for these bonds."

Both the king and governor and Bernice rose up as also the people with them. On having left they spoke to one another saying "This man is neither worthy of death nor of prison." Agrippa said to Festus. "This man could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar."

**To Rome (26:32)**



## Section F

### CHALLENGE THE POWER BASE OF THE WORLD

Acts 27:1 - 28:31

Paragraph "Hooks" are References to Centurion

Authority Figure (Centurion)	Ref	Background	V. 4 Page	V. 5 Page
1. Kingdom figure sets sail under secular law enforcer	27:1-5	"we" set sail for Italy	241	206
2. Kingdom figure offers advice	27:6-10	"now dangerous"	241	206
3. Law enforcer refuses Kingdom figure's advice	27:11-29	he took wrong advice and shipwreck looms	241	207
4. Law enforcer heeds Kingdom figure's warning	27:30-41	Centurion forbids the killing of prisoners	242	208
5. Law enforcer saves Kingdom figure	27:42-28:10	Paul's 'internalised law' accepted	242	208
6. Law enforcer accepts internalised law	28:11-31	Paul's 'internalised law' accepted	244	209

**Paul in Rome proclaiming the kingdom (to the world) 28:31**

Authority Figure (Centurion)	"Hook"	Ref	Assistance given
<b>1. Kingdom figure sets sail under secular law enforcer</b>	27:1-5		<b>"we" set sail for Italy</b>
<p>27:1-10 When it was decided that we should set sail to Italy they delivered both Paul and some other prisoners to a <b>centurion</b> whose name was Julius. He was of an Augustan cohort. We set sail embarking in a ship that belonged to Adramyttium and which was about to sail along the coast of places in Asia. With us was Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica. The next day we</p>	<p>were brought to land at Sidon. Julius treated Paul kindly and allowed him to go to his friends to be cared for. Then putting to sea we sailed close to Cyprus because of adverse winds. We sailed over the sea past Cilicia and Pamphylia and came down to Myra of Lycia.  <small>(Note: Text is mainly a paraphrase of the Literal translation in the RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, 1988)</small></p>		
<b>2. Kingdom figure offers advice</b>	27:6-10		<b>"now dangerous"</b>
<p>27:6-10 There <b>the centurion</b> found an Alexandrian ship sailing down to Italy and he put us on board. We sailed slowly over several days because the wind was not favourable. We sailed close to Crete off Salmone and with difficulty we came to a certain place called Fair Haven. Near this was a</p>	<p>city of Laesea. When we arrived a lot of time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous. The fast (tide?) had now gone by. Paul advised them saying "Men I see that it will be only with injury and loss, not only of the cargo and of the ship but also of our lives (if we continue) the voyage."</p>		
<b>3. Law enforcer refuses Kingdom figure's advice</b>	27:11-29		<b>he took wrong advice and shipwreck looms</b>
<p>27:11-29 But <b>the centurion</b> was persuaded by the steersman and the shipmaster rather than by what Paul said. The port was unsuitable for wintering (waiting out the bad weather). The majority decided to set sail from there (hoping) they might somehow arrive at Phoenix to pass the winter (there). This was a port of Crete looking toward the south-west and toward the north-west. When a south wind blew gently they thought they had obtained favourable conditions and raising the anchor they coasted by Crete close to the shore. But not long after there beat down a tempestuous wind called a 'northeaster'. The ship was grabbed (by the wind) and it was unable to struggle against it. Rather we were carried away by the wind. There was a certain islet close to the lee (shore</p>	<p>shelter from the wind) called Claudia. With great difficulty we were able to get enough control of the boat to hoist it up. They undergirded the ship fearing they might run into rocks. Then lowering the gear we went on. But as we were well in the grip of a storm. On the next day they threw the cargo overboard. On the third day they threw out the tackle of the ship. Over many days neither sun nor stars appeared and storm weather was pressing us hard. By now all hope that we might be saved had been given up. They (everyone) had been a long period without food when Paul stood up in their midst and said. "<i>You men should have done what I said</i> and not set sail from Crete and so come into this injury and loss. Now I advise you to be of good heart. <i>Continued</i></p>		

<p><i>Continued</i> There will be no loss of life but only loss of the ship. For tonight an angel of the God whom I serve stood by saying "Do not be afraid Paul, it is fitting for you to stand before Caesar. God will save all those who are sailing with you." Therefore be of good heart men. I believe things will work out in the way that God has told me. It will happen that we will run onto some island." Now when the fourteenth night arrived while we</p>	<p>were being carried about in the Adria (sea), about the middle of the night the sailors supposed some country was on the horizon. Having sounded (the depths) they found they were twenty fathoms from the bottom. (Then) having moved again they found the bottom to be fifteen fathoms down. They were afraid lest somewhere we might run into a rough patch (of rocks) so they threw four anchors out of the stern and prayed for day to come.</p>
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<p><b>4. Law enforcer heeds Kingdom figure's warning</b></p>	<p><b>27:30-:41</b></p>	<p><b>Paul warns sailors are about to desert</b></p>
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<p>28:30-41 Then the sailors sought to flee from the ship and they lowered the boat (small boat?) into the sea under the pretence of throwing the anchors out of the bow (front of) the ship. Paul said to the <b>centurion</b> and the soldiers. "<i>Unless these (sailors) remain in the ship you cannot be saved.</i>" So then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the (small) boat and let it fall off (the ship).</p> <p>As day was about to come Paul urged everyone to eat saying "You have continued until today, the fourteenth day without food. I beg you to eat for this will be the saving of you., for not a hair from your head will be damaged." And so saying these things and taking some bread he gave thanks to God before all and</p>	<p>breaking it began to eat. Everyone picked up in spirits as they also ate. Now in the ship, all of us numbered two hundred and seventy-six people. Having eaten they lightened the ship by throwing out the wheat into the sea. (Then) when day came they (saw) land which they did not recognise. But they noticed that a certain bay had a shore and they decided to try and steer the ship there. Having (already) cast off the anchors they left them in the sea. At the same time they loosened the fastenings of the rudders and raising the foresail to the breeze, they held the ship (under control) till they reached the shore. (Then) coming upon a spur between two bodies of water the vessel ran aground and couldn't move any further. Then the stern broke up with the force (of waves).</p>
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<p><b>5. Law enforcer saves Kingdom figure</b></p>	<p><b>27:42-28:10</b></p>	<p><b>Centurion forbids the killing of prisoners</b></p>
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<p>27:42-28:10 Now the soldiers had a mind to kill the prisoners in case anyone swam out and escaped. But <b>the centurion</b> wanted to save Paul and forbade them to do this. (Then) he ordered that those who could swim were to jump overboard first and get out onto the land. The rest were to follow,</p>	<p>some on planks and others floating on some of the things from the ship. And so it happened that everyone was saved and reached the land. Having been saved we then found out that the island was called Malta. The foreigners showed us extra kindness. Having lit a fire they welcomed all of us because of the rain coming on and</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued</i></p>
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because of the cold. Paul collected a quantity of sticks and put them on the fire. But a snake came out from the heat and fastened on his hand. When the foreigners saw the beast hanging from his hand they said to one another. "This man is surely a murderer. He was saved from the sea but justice does not allow him to live." He (Paul) then shook off the beast into the fire but suffered no harm. They expected him to be about to swell up or to suddenly fall down dead. They continued to expect this over a considerable time. But they saw that nothing amiss happened to him. So they changed their minds and said he must be

a god. Now in the area around, there were lands owned by the chief man of the island whose name was Publius. He welcomed us and for three days treated us with hospitality. Now it happened that the father of Publius was suffering from feverish attacks and dysentery. He was lying down and Paul went (in to him) and praying, put his hands (on him) and cured him. When this happened the rest of the other people on the island who had ailments came up (to Paul) and were healed. And so it was with many honours that we put (back) to sea and we had everything we needed.

In the wider sense what is going on here? At the end of the last Section (c/f the analysis of *Reality Search*) Paul cuts, what some may have perceived to be, an almost pathetic figure. It appears he has 'boxed' himself into a corner - too dangerous to be released as far as the Jews were concerned yet innocent as far as the representatives of the 'Gentile' world could see. As a biblical scholar and as an Apostle he is convinced that his position about the minimisation or internalisation of the law and faith in the cosmic presence and power of Jesus Christ, is the fulfilment of Judaism. Yet the Jews do not see this position as being realistic.

With a clash of both theological logic and realism going on, Luke the writer then takes the reader into a detailed description of a huge storm. Surely this is a reflection of what internal and external pressures the emerging church was going through at the time, as it tried to sort out its position.

Luke the third and last synoptic gospel writer (synoptic meaning similar) has taken a reader to the point when there is a dawning realisation that Christianity is indeed something different. But at the same time it has, what appears to be, some basic and inherent contradictions.

Consider contradictions in the light of the line of logic presented by the analysis of *Reality Search*. The contradictions include the situation that Christianity combines two different societies. One is based upon time and the other is based

upon place. They involve two different mind sets, even a contradiction in terms. Yet the one supports the existence of the other. The Christian 'type' - of the adult-child is also a contradiction in terms.

Something that makes the C21st cosmology of "The Big Bang" an interesting starting position for this line of logic and the structure of the Church itself is that both time and place started out together. At some stage they did fit as a fusion. So also were the 'Cause' of the big bang and its 'result' together, or in other language, the Creator and the created were at one. Perhaps there is some sort of 'force' within nature trying to bring about some form of 'reconciliation' between the two.

It appears there is some sort of realisation about inherent contradiction, towards the end of *The Acts of the Apostles* and this finds expression in the description of the storm. The next gospel writer, John, who wrote some decades later, appears to 'embrace' such the realisation of contradiction. Instead of reaching such an idea towards the end of his writing, he in fact starts with it - in the very first sentence. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Then he proceeds with the rest of his gospel. He redefines Christianity in terms of the fact that it is a contradiction.



**6. Law enforcer accepts internalised law**

**28:11-31**

**Paul's 'internalised law' accepted**

28:11-31 After three months, having passed the winter on the island we embarked on a ship.. This was Alexandrian with a sign of Dioscuri. Having been brought to land at Syracuse we remained there three days. From there by tacking (the boat) we arrived at Rhegium. After one day, as a south wind came on, we came on the second day to Puteoli. Having found brothers there, we were asked to remain seven days with them and so in this way we went on to Rome. There the brothers had heard the things concerning us and they came as far as Apil Forum and Three Taverns to meet with us. On seeing them Paul thanked God and he took courage. When we entered into Rome **he (the centurion)** *permitted Paul to stay on his own with a soldier guarding him.*

It happened that after three days he called together those who were Jews and when they came together he said to them "Brethren I have done nothing against the (Jewish) people or (against) ancestral customs. As a prisoner from Jerusalem I was delivered into the hands of the Romans. On having examined me they were minded to let me go as I had done nothing to deserve death. But when the Jews spoke against me I was obliged to appeal to Caesar, not that my nation had anything to accuse (me of). Because of this therefore I called you (together) to see and to speak to you. It is for the sake of the hope of Israel that I have this chain around me." They (the Roman Jews) said to him.

"We have not received letters about you from Judea. Nor have any brothers on arriving told (us about you) or spoke about you as being evil. We think it is right to hear from you and what you think about this sect (called the Nazarene sect by the Jews) which is known to us and which is spoken against everywhere." And so on arranging a day they came to his lodging again. He set forth solemnly a witness to the kingdom of God and persuaded them about Jesus both in terms of the law of Moses and the prophets. He taught from morning until evening. Some of them were persuaded by the things being said. Others disbelieved and on disagreeing with one another they departed. This was especially after one statement of Paul, that is, "The Holy spirit spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers saying "Go to this people and say: "In hearing you will hear but by no means understand. In looking you will look but by no means see. The heart of this people was thickened and they heard with heavy ears. They closed their eyes lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn (so that) I can cure them. Let it therefore be known to you that the salvation of God was sent to the nations and they will hear." (Paul) remained a whole two years in his own hired apartment and he welcomed all those who came to him. **He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without any opposition.**

