

prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. {See JAMES 5:17 & 18.} No wonder then that the Apostle Paul also wrote in this very same ROMANS epistle this statement found in ROMANS 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* It is this very same word of God that the Apostle Paul references in his fourth fact of establishing power found here in ROMANS 16:25-27.

Fact (4). The fourth fact of the power that will establish you is the scriptures of the prophets, that is the Old Testament prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God. It is not a message of law, but rather of grace. And he goes on to write that his gospel was made know to all nations for the obedience of faith. ROMANS 16:24 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. ...27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.*

The Journey from Corinth to Jerusalem

ACTS 20:3 *And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.* An expounded translation of this verse reads: "And when he had spent three months there, and when he learned that a plot was laid against him by the Jews just as he was going to sail for Syria, he changed his mind, and returned by way of Macedonia."

As we again read this verse keep in mind that somewhere between eight to eleven months have passed since Paul left Ephesus. We have discussed how he traveled from Ephesus unto Troas, and then on to revisit Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. After visiting these cities of Macedonia, and writing his second epistle unto the Corinthians, he then proceeded to Corinth, where he spent the winter, and wrote two more epistles: GALATIANS and ROMANS. Paul has now finished ROMANS, and he felt it was time to finish this third missionary journey.

By this point in Paul's life he has been a Christian around twenty years. All of the manifold tests chronicled by Paul in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23-12:4 have already happened to him. These trials have included several arrests and time spent in several prisons for preaching the gospel, five times of receiving 39 stripes by the whip administered by unbelieving Jews, manifold life threatening perils, three ship wrecks, daring escapes, and one stoning. Paul has approximately ten more years left here on earth before being killed by the Romans. During these last ten years Paul will face more prison time, another major ship wreck, more escapes from angry mobs, and an unknown number of daily trials. Yet in all of this the Apostle Paul continued strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might (EPHESIANS 6:10) as our example of what it takes to be a New Testament worthy of faith. In other words he always had an upward looking focus, expecting Jesus to deliver him out of all of his troubles, and He did! Note some scriptures that he has already written: ROMANS 7:24 *C wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* 25 *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* 2 CORINTHIANS 1:9 *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:* 10 *Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;... .* GALATIANS 1:3 *Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,* 4 *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:* 5 *To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Truly the Apostle Paul lead the life of a full overcomer, and lead by example. It is during these last ten years of Paul's trial filled life that he will pen his final eight epistles, which are so rich in meaning to the New Testament full overcomer.

Paul's immediate travel plans after leaving Corinth were revealed in ROMANS 15:25 & 26, which again reads: *But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.* 26 *For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.* These very same intentions were recorded by Luke in ACTS 19:21, which states in part: *After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem;... .* Paul has now passed through Macedonia, and Achaia, so his immediate intentions were to

go unto Jerusalem, and then on to Antioch, Syria where was located the church that sponsored all of Paul's missionary journeys. {For more on Antioch, Syria review these notes starting on page 86.} Our text of ACTS 20:3 above also indicates that the Apostle Paul intended to return to Syria, in other words Antioch, Syria after visiting Jerusalem, and taking this collection for the poor Saints to them. However Paul never again made it to Antioch, Syria at the end of this third missionary journey of his. Nor do we read of Antioch, Syria, or Syria itself ever again in scripture.

Since on this journey is the last mention of Syria in scripture, let's note some points of interest concerning Syria. Syria means "exalted." Mention the word "exalted" to a Christian, and Jesus Christ should immediately come to mind, for the following reason. PHILIPPIANS 2:9 - 11 speaks of Jesus Christ, and tells us: *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Saul of Tarsus was heading for one of the oldest cities in the world when he met the "exalted" One, Jesus Christ. That city was Damascus, Syria. ISAIAH 7:8 tells us: *For the head of Syria is Damascus,...* . Damascus means "silent is the sackcloth weaver," and is figurative of the behind the scenes fine linen weaving work of the Holy Spirit. Recall in GENESIS 24 that the eldest servant of Abraham was no doubt Eliezer of Damascus, (see GENESIS 15:2) who figures the Holy Ghost in this chapter. We noted in our study of GENESIS 24 that Rebekah had no power to get to Isaac until Abraham's servant came, and guided her unto him! In like fashion during this church age the Bride of Christ will only be able to make herself ready by following the leading and guidance of the Holy Ghost, whom she has received unto herself! Eliezer's name means "God of help," or "God is help." Isn't that why the Holy Ghost was sent, to help guide us in all things along life's pathway? Jesus said in JOHN 16:13 *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.* If we want God's best we will receive the Holy Ghost, and follow His leading, just like Rebekah followed Abraham's eldest servant (Eliezer), and in the end we too will be found in the Bride of Christ! Ironically our Apostle Paul also got filled with the Holy Ghost while in Damascus, Syria (see ACTS 9:17).

Again Saul of Tarsus got saved in Syria, on the road to Damascus, and he got filled with the Holy Ghost in Damascus, Syria, and he was called to be an Apostle in Syria, and he started all of his missionary journeys from Syria. Truly Syria speaks of "exalted" when it comes to the Apostle Paul, who himself was "exalted" from the chiefest of sinners, to the chiefest Apostle! {Study 1 TIMOTHY 1:15, and 2 CORINTHIANS 11:5 and 12:11.} Syria is found mentioned in 75 scriptures. Eight of these scriptures are in the New Testament. 75 is the product of 5 times 15; GRACE multiplied by REST. From the day Saul of Tarsus met the "exalted" Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, Syria he RESTED in His mighty GRACE from that point on in his life. Damascus is also mentioned fifteen (REST) times in the New Testament, all in association with the Apostle Paul.

Paul's ministry was further "exalted" from one of the main cities of Syria, that being Antioch, Syria. (It is to this church in Antioch, Syria that Luke addresses his gospel of LUKE, and his THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. O Theophilus was according to tradition, a prominent man in the church at Antioch.) The name Antioch is found 19 times in scripture. Nineteen is the number of FAITH. Certainly the church at Antioch, Syria was a church of FAITH, and thus it is no wonder that we read in ACTS 11:26 that *...the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.* Of the nineteen times we find "Antioch" in scripture, fifteen of these times reference the church of Antioch, Syria. Fifteen is the number of REST, and those of Antioch, Syria found REST and comfort in the gospel of Paul, and thus sponsored all of his missionary journeys. Antioch, Syria was also one of the few places the Apostle Paul found REST.

Antioch has two meanings: "driven against," and "speedy as a chariot." Putting the two meanings together you get the picture of a driven speedy chariot faster than any mode of transportation of that day. Elisha in 2 KINGS 2:11 & 12 witnessed the fastest transportation that anyone has ever witnessed: 2 KINGS 2:11 *And it came to pass, as they*

still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. Obviously this is the time when Elijah was translated. The "driven speedy chariot" then is a symbol of translation. The Apostle Paul in his gospel has taught us about another soon coming translation in 1 THESSALONIANS 4:16-18: *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.* Do you want to have God's best and be an overcomer found in the highest heavenly company called the Bride of Christ? If so then follow the Apostle Paul, and learn his gospel like those of Antioch, Syria did. Paul's gospel will take you higher and higher and draw you close to Jesus! This then is how we remember the Saints of Antioch, Syria. Thank God for their prayers for Paul, for their acceptance of his gospel, and there concern for those beyond their borders, and yes that included even you and me!

ACTS 20:3 *...And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.* Again an expounded translation of this verse reads: "And when he had spent three months there, and when he learned that a plot was laid against him by the Jews just as he was going to sail for Syria, he changed his mind, and returned by way of Macedonia." This wasn't the first time the Jews had formed a plot against the Apostle Paul, nor would it be the last. Many times in his Christian life Paul has had encounters with the Jews who had the intention of killing him. Back in ACTS 9 Paul had to escape Damascus because the Jews were intent on killing him. ACTS 9:23 *And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: 24 But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. 25 Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.* This same account Paul wrote about in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:32 and 33, which reads: *In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: 33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.* On his first missionary journey the Jews became envious of his preaching, and the multitudes that were attracted unto him, and began speaking against those things that Paul taught, (study ACTS 13:45). ACTS 13:50 records what took place next: *But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.* Paul continued preaching, and some of these very same Jews continued pursuing Paul, to the point that we read in ACTS 14:19 *And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.* On Paul's second missionary journey after he had come to Thessalonica we read in ACTS 17:5 *But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.* Their intention was to get rid of the Apostle Paul, which was some what successful at that time. Paul escaped and went to Berea. In ACTS 17:13 we read: *But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.* Paul once again escaped these pursuing Jews and went to Athens, and then on to Corinth, where once again the Jews pursued after him, but the Lord appeared unto Paul by night in a vision, and spake the following words unto him, found in ACTS 18:9 & 10: *...Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.* Paul preached at Corinth a year and a half, then we read in ACTS 18:12 & 13 -- *And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, 13 Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.* Paul then finishes his second missionary journey, and on his third missionary journey he came unto Ephesus, where he preached for nearly three years until the time

of the insurrection against him by the silversmiths, and those of like trade, which we most recently studied about in ACTS 19:23-41. So we see that there had been many plots by the Jews against the Apostle Paul ever since he first believed, and started preaching that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. This plot that is recorded here in ACTS 20:3 just adds to the long list of plots by the Jews to kill Paul, and these plots will keep piling on as time goes on.

No doubt Paul then having been made aware of this latest plot against him, changed his mind and travelled inland "through Macedonia." Paul already knew that there would be many obstacles on his race course, and had recently written the Saints of Rome to pray for his journeyings, stating in ROMANS 15:30-32 *Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; 31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; 32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.* We find here in ACTS 20:3 that the Apostle Paul also had to be delivered from them that didn't believe here at Corinth also. Paul also had written the ROMANS that he was in good hands, stating in ROMANS 8:26 *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* This plot of the Jews against Paul here at Corinth worked for his good, and Paul knew that it would. He had also recently penned the following words in his ROMANS epistle. ROMANS 8:31 *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* After writing such wonderful and powerful Holy Ghost inspired words it is no wonder that Satan seen to it that there was another plot against the Apostle Paul. One has to also wonder if this large sum of money Paul was taking with him for the poor Saints at Jerusalem added to the plot against him at this particular time in his life. Many suppose it did.

ACTS 20:3 *...And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. 4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. 5 These going before tarried for us at Troas.* We are not finished examining verse 3 yet, however it is also important to recognize the importance of what is stated in verses 4 & 5 to better appreciate what took place here in verse 3. In verse 5 we find the seven men of verse 4 sent ahead by the Apostle Paul to rendezvous with him at Troas. What this means to us back in verse 3 then is that the Apostle Paul appears to have left Corinth by himself, or maybe with no more than two of the seven men listed in verse 4. Study closely verse 4 and 5 and see that there is really no indication that any of these men traveled with Paul from Corinth through Macedonia. If Paul left with anybody traveling with him from Corinth, it seems it would have been Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, who would only accompany him unto Thessalonica, and then they would have proceed on to Troas leaving the Apostle Paul to travel by himself unto Philippi, where he is again rejoined by Luke.

Paul's travel plans changed just as he was about to leave Corinth because of this plot by the Jews to kill him. Though we are not told exactly when Paul found out about this plot, it was no doubt another of the many "midnight" experiences Paul faced so many times on his road as the Apostle unto the Gentiles. (We will read of another "midnight" experience of Paul's later in ACTS 20, {see verses 7-12}). {Also review these notes starting on page 338 for more information about the "midnight" experience.} "Midnight" can be expressed in literal terms, in figurative terms, and in spiritual terms. The full overcomer will face many "midnight's" in spiritual terms throughout his or her life time. The Apostle Paul did, as did all the Old Testament worthies of faith. When we looked at the "midnight" experience Paul faced in ACTS 16 at the Philippian jail we discovered that the word "midnight" is found fourteen times in Scripture. The number fourteen is the number that has to do with DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. Here in ACTS 20:3 we also find that the Apostle Paul was DELIVERED from this "midnight" experience also.

Note that we do not hear one word of complaining from the Apostle Paul concerning this immediate change of plans that came his way. As a full overcomer himself we know that he took every obstacle that came on his race course as something coming from the Lord. No doubt the Apostle Paul knew very well this statement found in ISAIAH 46:9 & 10 -- *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:...* . Paul rested in the fact the Lord knew "the end from the beginning" of his race course, and thus he let the Lord have his way, and change his immediate travel plans as He wished. One of the future benefits that Paul would realize from this change in itinerary was the addition of Luke as a near constant traveling companion, and help unto Paul up until the time he arrived at Rome some few years later. No doubt Luke was a great assistant to the Apostle Paul, as we will see as we progress with this study of the life of the Apostle Paul.

We have mentioned earlier in lessons past of this study that the Apostle Paul wasn't selfish in his travels, but nearly always had traveling companions, and perhaps he needed the physical help of traveling companions in order to better function in his travels, but oftentimes we do not know exactly who all of his traveling companions were. Yet we find here as he leaves Corinth, that he may have left alone, or at least finished his journey to Philippi alone. Paul's being alone when he got to Philippi may have been the inspiring thing that influenced Luke to once again take up traveling with Paul. We have already discussed his poor eyesight, and how it would have been very beneficial for the Apostle Paul to have others to help him, and be his eyes as he went down the pathway of life, yet Paul went on with the Lord, whether traveling by himself, or alone. And he did so with a thankful heart, which is the kind of heart all full overcomers must have. Let me quote some statements that are found in Brother Hill's book entitled "The Shepherd's Psalm."

"Thankfulness in itself is such a beneficial thing. It invigorates and animates us, it glorifies God, and it attracts and edifies those that are around us. ...Paul's life was another notable example of thanksgiving. Regardless of the poverty that he embraced, the illness that must have been his and the solitude that he experienced, he sat with a merry heart and wrote the joy book of the Bible, PHILIPPIANS. Unlike any other natural man Paul has benefited humanity with his testimony of God's goodness and faithfulness to his life. He said the Lord had never failed him and while everybody else was against him, the Lord stood with him."

"...What is it that can give one an unshakable and positive confidence which eases burdens so heavy that others are crushed by them? How can we understand God's leading when the path is hard and dark? It is the purpose of unfailing love to put a steady abundant life on the past, present and the future; it is knowing Him and believing His promises. To know what He has been in the past, to grasp what He is today, and to believe what He promises to be in the future, we can say with Paul, *"...He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me"* (HEBREWS 13:5,6). Paul also said, *"...For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I*

have committed unto him against the day" (2 TIMOTHY 1:12)." {End of quoting from Brother Hill's The Shepherd's Psalm pages 52 and 53}.

So we note that this change in travel plans of the Apostle Paul noted in ACTS 20:3 didn't really phase him, rather he took his leading and guiding from the Holy Ghost, and joyfully went along with the Lord's leading, knowing that *...all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose...* words the Apostle Paul himself had recently penned in ROMANS 8:28.

ACTS 20:3 *...And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.* Macedonia is always mentioned in scripture in some kind of connection with the Apostle Paul. Macedonia means "extended land," and it lies just north of Greece. Macedonia is found mentioned twenty-six times in scripture. Twenty-six is the number that has to do with GOOD NEWS, or the GOSPEL. It was the Apostle Paul who first preached the GOOD NEWS of the GOSPEL unto the Macedonians. Recall how it was that the Apostle Paul came unto Macedonia in the first place. It was because Paul saw a Macedonian in a vision in ACTS 16:9 who said: "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." And help them he did, for many were saved by the preaching of Paul. And as time went on they supported the ministry of the Apostle Paul. In 2 CORINTHIANS 11:9 Paul acknowledged the support he received from those of Macedonia stating: *And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied:...* Later in life the Apostle Paul will once again acknowledge the help and support he has received from the Macedonians. We read this acknowledgment in PHILIPPIANS 4. PHILIPPIANS 4:10 *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. 12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. 14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. 15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. 18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.*

By now we know that the Apostle Paul had many friends in Macedonia, people who appreciated his GOOD NEWS GOSPEL message concerning Jesus Christ. Thus we see that the Apostle Paul was comfortable in letting the Lord changing his travel plans, and returning by way of Macedonia as ACTS 20:3 again states: *...And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.*

ACTS 20:4 *And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.* There has to be some time lapse between verse 3 and verse 4, because, as we have just noted, Paul traveled through Macedonia after leaving Corinth, and here in verse 4 we read of him journeying into Asia. Luke gets a little ahead of himself here, and mentions seven men that accompanied Paul into Asia, but if we look close at the next couple of verse of ACTS 20 we find that these seven men went to Troas to await the arrival of the Apostle Paul. Meanwhile the Apostle Paul travels through Macedonia, and ends up back in Philippi, where Luke once again joins his company, and we will find that Luke remains with the Apostle Paul until the end of ACTS. The record Luke leaves us in ACTS will now contain more detail than the last couple of chapters have given us, because Luke himself is witnessing the events he is writing about.

ACTS 20:4 *And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. 5 These going before tarried for us at Troas. 6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.*

Let's first here discuss the seven men mentioned in ACTS 20:4, and how it was they ended up waiting for Paul at Troas. Coneybare and Howson note in their book on The Life and Epistles of St. Paul that the order in which these seven disciples are mentioned by Luke, may indicate the last minute change in plans that the Apostle Paul had to make after he found out about the plot to kill him there at Corinth. They speculate that Paul left Corinth sooner than intended, even before all the arrangements were complete for the collection for the poor Saints at Jerusalem. Thus they surmise that Sopater was sent to Berea to gather the funds from the Bereans, and Aristarchus and Secundus were sent to finish the collection from the Thessalonians. Meanwhile Paul went up to Philippi where he once again met up with Luke. As for Timothy, Gaius of Derbe, and the Ephesians Tychicus and Trophimus, it appears that they went unto Asia to finish gathering the collection from those of Asia for the poor Saints at Jerusalem. All of these seven were instructed to wait for Paul at Troas.

Brother Copley calls these men of ACTS 20:4 "the faithful seven." ACTS 20:4 *And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.* Some of these men we have already studied about before.

Sopater of Berea {see page 590 of these notes} we think is probably the same man mentioned as Sosipater in ROMANS 16:21. Of course there is no way for us to know for sure, but both men names mean the same thing: "saving father." "Saving father" indicates that testimony that the full overcomer gives of God as being that "saving father."

Aristarchus we read about in ACTS 19:29, where we noted: Aristarchus name means: "the best prince," or "best ruler," or "the chief of princes," or "the prince of chiefs." Aristarchus is mentioned as being "of the Thessalonians" here in ACTS 20:4, "a Macedonian of Thessalonica" in ACTS 27:2. Aristarchus is truly one of the faithful seven. He has been with Paul for sometime already, and will continue to be mentioned with Paul for years to come. During the uproar of ACTS 19 when the silversmiths were causing the city to riot, Aristarchus was one of two of Paul traveling companions who was held hostage by those of Ephesus. Aristarchus went to Jerusalem with Paul on the conclusion of this third missionary journey, and stayed near Paul during his imprisonment at Caesarea, for we next read of Aristarchus going on that fateful journey of Paul's to Rome some two years later, which included the shipwreck of ACTS 27. In COLOSSIANS 4:10 Paul mentions Aristarchus as a "fellowprisoner." And in PHILEMON 24 Paul names Aristarchus a "fellowlabourer." Certainly being a "fellowprisoner," and a "fellowlabourer" of Paul's are impressive credentials worthy of a New Testament full overcomer. "Fellowlabourer" comes from the same Greek word that also translates into our English as helper, fellowhelper, fellow worker, workfellow, labourer together with, and companion in labour. From such men, and women, followers of the Apostle Paul, will come those who will rule and reign with Christ, and that is of course, those who will be in the Bride of Christ. 2 TIMOTHY 2:11 *It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: 12 If we suffer, (with Him) we shall also reign with him:...* . Certainly Aristarchus met such qualifications. May we too be found of such character! Such will be the make up of those found in that small group of Saints from this church age know as the Bride of Christ. Aristarchus is found mentioned in five scriptures total, showing us that he was a true GRACE Saint! {Review page 559 of these notes.} So we see that Aristarchus was a close companion of the Apostle Paul, and an associate of Paul in the ministry, and no doubt one of the ones referenced as "...a pillar in the temple of my God..." in REVELATION 3:12! Though Aristarchus remained quietly in the background in the ministry of the Apostle Paul, according to the record we have of him, yet he leaves us this testimony, that he was ...*strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might...* (EPHESIANS 6:10). Thus he lived up to his name: "the best prince," or "best ruler," or "the chief of princes," or "the prince of chiefs." Let's look for him among that bridal company!

Secundus is one man we haven't talked about before in this study. Secundus was a Roman and means "second," possibly because he was his fathers second son. Secundus also means "fortunate" for reasons unknown. He is only found this one time in scripture. From our text we know he was one of the Thessalonians. He obviously was one of the Thessalonian Gentiles who latched onto Paul's gospel. We are not told

anymore about him in scripture. Obviously he was close to Aristarchus for he traveled with him at least as far as Troas.

Gaius of Derbe appears to be a different Gaius than mentioned in ACTS 19:29, for that Gaius was of Macedonia. Gaius of Derbe was also a different man than the Gaius from Corinth, {study ROMANS 16:23 and 1 CORINTHIANS 1:14}. Recall from ACTS 16:1 that Timothy was from Derbe, and it is possible that this Gaius of Derbe was acquainted with Paul and Timothy from the days of Paul's first missionary journey. Recall also from ACTS 14:6 & 7 how that Paul and Barnabas first came *...unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: 7 And there they preached the gospel.* Perhaps Gaius of Derbe heard Paul preach at that time. This Gaius of Derbe knew Timothy, perhaps from growing up with him at Derbe, but if not at the least they both came from Derbe.

Derbe means "tanner: tanner of skin: coverer with skin," and reminds us of the time when God first slew animals to make a covering with skins to cover sinful Adam and Eve. This is found in GENESIS 3:21, which reads: *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.* GENESIS 3:21 pointed to the time when Jesus Christ would be slain for sinful mankind the one sacrifice for sins for ever. These next two scriptures written by Paul summarize this fact. EPHESIANS 5:2 *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.* HEBREWS 10:12 *But this man, (Christ Jesus) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;...*

Gaius name means "on earth" by some dictionaries, and "lord" in others. Gaius speaks to us of the best "on earth" of royal lineage. Are you a child of the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords? If so then you are *...heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together (with Him).* {ROMANS 8:17.} Obviously from ACTS 20:4 *Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus* accompany the Apostle Paul from Troas into Asia. ACTS 20:4 *And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.*

Of the seven names mentioned in ACTS 20:4 Timotheus, or the Apostle Timothy, is the most familiar to us, and we have said much concerning him before. {Review pages 544-547, and 588-589 of these notes}. Once again Timothy's name means "honoring God." The Apostle Paul has sent Timothy many times on side trips, most recently being in ACTS 19:22 when Paul sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia. This is the last mention of Timothy in the book of ACTS. We are not told if Timothy went all the way to Jerusalem with Paul or not, but we assume that he did. We do know that Paul stayed in contact with Timothy after the time of the book of ACTS. The Apostle Paul will not write any more epistles during the remaining time frame of the book of ACTS, however when the Apostle once again writes his letters, Timothy's name will also be mentioned later by Paul in PHILIPPIANS, PHILEMON, COLOSSIANS, HEBREWS, and of course 1 & 2 TIMOTHY. The only two epistles of Paul that don't mention Timothy are EPHESIANS and TITUS. The Saints of Ephesus however did get a lot of extra Pauline teaching from the mouth of Timothy even when the Apostle Paul wasn't there. Tradition teaches that Timothy later became the bishop of Ephesus. Paul in his letter to the PHILIPPIANS expresses his thoughts concerning Timothy. PHILIPPIANS 2:19 *But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. 23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.*

Tychicus and Trophimus, like Timothy and Aristarchus, were truly faithful followers of the Apostle Paul for the rest of his life. Tychicus name means "chance," or "fortuitous." Tychicus is found in five scriptures. In EPHESIANS 6:21 & 22 Paul refers to Tychicus as *...a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord,...* and able to make known unto them *...all things. 22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.* Obviously Paul had spent much time with Tychicus in order to write such a statement about him. Again in COLOSSIANS 4:7 Paul writes this concerning Tychicus: he is *...a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord.* Additionally

TITUS 3:12, and 2 TIMOTHY 4:12 indicate that Tychicus was willing to go wherever the Apostle Paul sent him in those later years.

Trophimus is mentioned being with Paul in Jerusalem in ACTS 21:29, and is the only one of these seven mentioned by name as actually arriving in Jerusalem with Paul. We assume that all of these seven did continue on with Paul to Jerusalem on this journey, and several scriptures in ACTS 20 and 21 indicate that this group stayed together until reaching Jerusalem. Trophimus is mentioned in 2 TIMOTHY 4:20, probably Paul's last letter, where Paul notes that Trophimus has been left by Paul at Miletum very sick. Trophimus' name means "nourishment," and no doubt he, as a minister for Jesus Christ, gave out nourishment for many, including the Apostle Paul. Trophimus is only mentioned in these three scriptures: ACTS 20:4; ACTS 21:29, and 2 TIMOTHY 4:20.

Obviously these seven men were willing to be closely associated with the Apostle Paul, and willing to risk their lives for the sake of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore these "faithful seven" men were going after God's best, otherwise why follow the Apostle Paul? Recall that the number seven itself points to the thought of SPIRITUAL PERFECTION or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION, and the Holy Spirit made sure that these seven men were mentioned together in scripture for our learning, and so that we would make this connection.

How many of the seven men mentioned in ACTS 20:4 that traveled with Paul all the way to Jerusalem on this conclusion of his third missionary journey we are not told in scripture. Perhaps all of these seven men went as far as Jerusalem with the Apostle Paul. I have always been under the assumption that all of these seven men of ACTS 20:4 made it all the way to Jerusalem with the Apostle Paul. Certainly Trophimus made it all the way to Jerusalem with Paul, and stayed with him beyond this time. An eighth man joins them in verse 5.

ACTS 20:5 *These going before tarried for us at Troas.* The most important word to understand in this verse is the little word "us." It references Luke, who once again joins up with the Apostle Paul at Philippi, where we last read of his first hand account of being with the Apostle Paul in ACTS 16:10-17.

Luke wasn't part of Paul's original travel plans at the conclusion of this his third missionary, for recall in ACTS 20:3 Paul as he left Corinth intended to sail into Syria. ACTS 20:3 *And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.* Let's look at this word "purposed" here in ACTS 20:3 a little closer. The five times we find the word "purposed" in the New Testament it is in association with the Apostle Paul; either he wrote it, or it was written about him. What we are saying here is that the Apostle Paul didn't "purpose" in his own plans to go out of his way some two hundred plus miles to take Luke with him at the conclusion of this missionary journey. Paul in his own plans never intended to return again to Philippi at this time, or on this journey. However, Paul, by the leading and guiding of the Holy Ghost, "came to be of purpose" to return through Macedonia; to return again unto Philippi, because it was in the plan of God to have Luke travel with Paul from this point forward in his life. (Look up the word "purposed" in the Greek here, and you will find the meaning to be "he came to be of purpose.")

What we need to see here once again is the heart attitude of the full overcomer. And we see it illustrated to us here both in the life of Paul, and the life of Luke. Both men were willing to following the leading of the Holy Ghost, which is how we follow the leading of the Lord. To His disciples Jesus stated this fact concerning the Holy Ghost: *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.* (JOHN 16:13). (The Spirit of truth is another name for the Holy Ghost, and so is the Comforter. {Study JOHN 14:26 and 15:26.}). Note here in JOHN 16:13 the fact that the Holy Ghost is sent to be a guide unto us. If we as mortal men, mortal Christian men and women, had the ability to achieve God's best, and to be a full overcomer by our selves, then why would we need to following the leading and guiding of the Lord? But the reality is, we mere mortals have no such ability. In fact having God's best is something that is foreign to the majority of most Christians, and following the leading of the Holy Ghost is even foreign to the majority of most Holy Ghost filled Christians! Rebecca couldn't get to Isaac without the leading of Eliezer. Eliezer even

questioned Abraham long and hard about this very thing, stating unto Abraham in GENESIS 24:5 *...Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land...*. Abraham answered in GENESIS 24:8 *...if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath...*. In our own Christian lives, if we are not willing to following the leading and guidance of the Holy Ghost, our heavenly Eliezer, how then do we expect to ever win Christ, our heavenly Isaac, as our bridegroom? It simply can not be done any other way. We know that the Apostle Paul wanted God's best in his life, and I believe that Luke did too, otherwise why do what they did, and go where they went? Brother Copley states this of a full overcomer: "They are not content with simply a friendly affection for the Lord. They love him ardently, worship Him fervently, and serve Him faithfully. The Father watches over them as "the Apple of His eye." He has them in training for a throne. Their tests and trials are very strange and peculiar, often difficult to understand. They wholly follow the Lord." (End of quote from Brother Copley.)

So we have noted that the Apostle Paul followed the leading of the Holy Ghost, and changed his travel plans, and proceeded up to Philippi, where without much fan fare, Luke rejoins Paul in his travels, which is recorded for us in scripture with these words from ACTS 20:6 *And we (Paul and Luke) sailed away from Philippi...*

In discussing the "faithful seven" from ACTS 20:4 we mentioned that there were more than seven men traveling with the Apostle Paul at this time, the eighth being Luke.

So who is Luke? Luke was not one of the twelve disciples or apostles of the Lord. However Luke truly and deeply loved the Lord, and went to great lengths to see that the truth was preserved. Luke's name is contracted from Latin *Lucanus*, and he is found also in scripture mentioned as *Lucas*. Luke and *Lucas* means "light-giving". This is very appropriate, for Luke shed light on many thoughts and themes and lives that we otherwise would know nothing about. For example, we would have no information about Jesus as a twelve year old if it hadn't been for the gospel of LUKE, which was written by Luke. We wouldn't know about a guy named Theophilus had it not been for Luke. Also we wouldn't have the book of ACTS had it not been for Luke. We wouldn't know about Stephen, or Philip the evangelist had it not been for Luke. We wouldn't know a lot of things had it not been for the "light-giving" of Luke. In order to write what Luke wrote he needed to interview numerous Saints, and witness many events. Luke was with the Apostle Paul most of the time from this point forward in Paul's life. A side benefit from this association with Paul was the opportunity to interview numerous Saints, and witness many events, some of which he wrote about. In COLOSSIANS 4:14 Paul calls Luke *...Luke, the beloved physician...* indicating somewhat of the importance of Luke to the life of the Apostle Paul. Volumes have been written on this subject. By the time of ACTS 20:6 Luke is with Paul on this his final journey to Jerusalem.

Scripture reveals very little about the man Luke himself, but here are some scriptural facts. Paul wrote about Luke in three different places. In COLOSSIANS 4:14 Paul writes: *Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you*. So we see that Luke was a physician, beloved of Paul. And think of Paul at this time in his life having suffered all of the things recorded in 2 CORINTHIANS 11, plus the many other things recorded in ACTS after the time frame in which 2 CORINTHIANS 11 was written. No doubt Paul was a hurting man, and to have a beloved friend who was also a physician brought much comfort to the Apostle Paul. So Luke was with out a doubt a real blessing unto the Apostle Paul.

In PHILEMON verse 24 Paul writes of: *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers*. Marcus we learned before is another name for John Mark, the author of the gospel of MARK. Here in PHILEMON verse 24 we find Marcus in association with *Lucas* as being fellowlabourers with the Apostle Paul. *Lucas* is contracted from Latin *Lucanus*, and is another name for Luke. Again as a fellow labourer in the gospel with the Apostle Paul, what wonderful hours of fellowship they must have shared.

One other time in his final epistle Paul mentions Luke. 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry*. So Luke was with the Apostle Paul from this point on until the end of Paul's life it seems.

Luke as you can see is a precious brother, a Gentile Christian, possibly a convert of Paul. But this is just about all the background information we have on him. Let's put some missing parts together here now and see who Luke is. Luke knew the Apostle Paul when he joined up with him in ACTS 16:10, this is the assumption we have to make. But where would Luke know Paul from? The most logical and most probable answer is Antioch, Syria. Paul and Barnabas both had spent much time in Antioch, Syria. Paul was gladly received there, and was allowed to teach and preach in Antioch for three prolonged periods of time before the time frame of ACTS 16:10. Study ACTS 11:26; 12:25 & 13:1; 14:26-28; and 15:30-35. Obviously Luke wrote about this, so he must of had first hand knowledge of these facts. Of course Paul himself could have relayed this same information to Luke.

Let's note something here about the writing style of Luke. When men tell a story, a unique story of what they know, they usually use the words "I," "me," and "myself," and they use these words a lot. Study the first four verses of LUKE 1, and the first three verses of ACTS 1 where Luke is writing about himself, and his reason for writing these gospel records in the first place, and you will only find the word "I" once! And that is in ACTS 1:1. You will only find the word "me" once, and that is in LUKE 1:3. From this we note that Luke was not conceited or totally focused upon himself, but rather Luke was a humble man with a clear focus upon the important things of God. Luke does use the words "we" and "us" several times in his writings in reference in part to himself, and as he does so we see Luke as a team player, and not the center of attention. Luke never focuses the attention upon himself in his writing. Thus we know very little about him.

This brings up a related thought. In HEBREWS 11 we read of the Old Testament worthies of faith. We also read in HEBREWS 11 of the New Testament worthies of faith. The New Testament worthies of faith, the full overcomers of this church age in HEBREWS 11 are referred to as "we" and "us." "We" is found in HEBREWS 11:3, which reads: *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* "Us" is found twice in HEBREWS 11:40, which reads: *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

Luke uses the word "us" twice in his introductory statements written unto Theophilus. The word "us" is found in LUKE 1:1 and in LUKE 1:2. When Luke uses the little word "us" in his opening remarks of LUKE, he is referencing himself and Theophilus. However beyond that the Holy Ghost wants the "us" to include you and me too! For are you not a part of the group of believers from this church age who believe the ...*declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us...* ? LUKE 1:1 *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,* 2 *Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;* 3 *It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,* 4 *That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.*

So in ACTS 20 we find Paul traveling with at least eight men heading for Jerusalem, and ...*if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.* {ACTS 20:16}. These eight men were followers of the Apostle Paul, and each had an important place in Paul's ministry. The number eight seems to come to mind several times during this portion of our study. Paul is traveling with eight men. Paul has written six books so far, and will write eight more after this. Eight is a number that has to do with the Bride of Christ. The Apostle Paul was after God's best, and encouraged his followers to also go after God's best. Paul has already written in 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* These eight men were also familiar with the statement Paul already made in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:2 *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.* I would have to think that these eight men traveling with Paul were also interested in being in the Bride of Christ, otherwise why go with the Apostle Paul? Certainly these eight men had heard Paul teach what he wrote in ROMANS 12:1 & 2 -- *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies*

a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Paul himself would be tested along these lines again and again in his life, and we will continue to see in this study that Paul wanted God's perfect will in his own life. This is what must be in the heart of the full overcomer.

Were these eight men that were traveling with the Apostle Paul men of faith? This may seem like a silly question, but never the less it is a question worthy of our consideration. The Apostle Paul has at this point in our lesson recently written ROMANS, where in he penned this statement: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* (ROMANS 10:17). Obviously these eight men traveling with the Apostle Paul loved the word of God, and they loved the word of God preached by the Apostle Paul. They were willing to forsake everything that before was important to themselves, and follow Paul, as he followed Christ. Each of these men with the exception of Luke had faith to believe that the Apostle Paul would meet them in Troas, thus Luke wrote in ACTS 20:5 *These going before tarried for us at Troas.* No doubt each of these eight men had heard the Apostle Paul often quote from HABAKKUK 2:4 this statement: *...the just shall live by his faith.* Paul also had recently penned this quote in GALATIANS 3:11 and ROMANS 1:17 restating *...The just shall live by faith.* Later on in his life the Apostle Paul will once again quote HABAKKUK 2:4 when he writes in HEBREWS 10:38 *Now the just shall live by faith....* Paul will then go on to write about the Old Testament worthies of faith in HEBREWS 11, mentioning by name Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gedeon, Barak, Samson, Jephthae, David and Samuel; sixteen men and women who LOVED God, and put their faith and confidence and trust in God, knowing from the bottom of their heart that *...The just shall live by faith.* Paul then went on to mention many other Old Testament worthies of faith in HEBREWS 11:33-38 stating: *Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And then Paul caps off HEBREWS 11 by introducing the New Testament worthies of faith in his closing statement of HEBREWS 11:39 & 40, writing: *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.* The "us" of HEBREWS 11:40 also includes the "we" of HEBREWS 11:3, which reads: *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* Let's connect the dots. In ROMANS 10:17 we read: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Connect this statement with what we just read in HEBREWS 11:3 *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* It is by hearing "the word of God," and believing "the word of God" that one can be a worthy of faith. "The Word of God" is Jesus REVELATION 19:13 tells us. The very same "Word of God" who was in the beginning with God; the very same "Word of God" who "*was made flesh and dwelt among us... full of grace and truth*" as noted in JOHN 1:1-14. Were these eight men that were traveling with the Apostle Paul men of faith? Yes indeed! They were race course runners like the Apostle Paul described in HEBREWS 12:1 & 2, which reads: *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**