

## Acts 11:19-26

May 11, 1976

Go to Acts chapter 11 please. **Acts 11:18** ended up with that great truth, “to the Gentiles also God had granted repentance unto life.”

### Acts 11:19

“now” – delete

“they which were” – they indeed therefore

“upon” – because of

“arose about” – followed after

“Stephen” – i.e. – his death

“preaching the word” - You noticed wherever they went they preached the Word. The persecution was there and yet they continued to do what? Preach the Word. Persecution killed some of them, but in the blood of the believers--seemed like every time one was killed, four rose up to believe. I believe it was in last week's issue of Newsweek, or one of those magazines, in the religious section there was an article about the persecution. I think it's either Jehovah's Witnesses or Seventh Day Adventists, in one of the black countries in Africa. It mentioned the thousands of them that had been killed, executed. Yet in spite of all that, the growth of that particular denomination is phenomenal in that country.

Here the persecution drove them out. They went to Cyprus. These islands and areas play a tremendous part in the outreach of God's Word in the first century. But they preached the Word.

“to none but unto the Jews only” - They still had a hang up. They shouldn't have had it but they did. They're just human beings; just like you and I have hang ups. It takes us sometimes a long time till the Word of God, which we know in our mind, really begins to live in our actions, in our outreach, in our real believing and moving; till we're really convinced in the innermost part of our being that, that's it. That's what occurred to them, too.

### Acts 11:21

“hand of the Lord” - figure of speech – *condescensio* - the Lord was fighting for them; the Lord was working with them and for them.

“a great number believed” - I think the words “great number” is “crowds” in the text. I forget exactly. Just a great number; just like, “crowds believed and turned unto the Lord.”

### Acts 11:22

“tidings” - I believe in the critical Greek text it's the word *logos*. Any of you have a Greek text with you? Isn't that significant? The different usages of the word *logos*; in **John 1:1**--“In the beginning was the *logos*. The *logos* was with God and the *logos*...” See, here it's the word *logos* and it's translated “tidings.”

“of” - concerning

Look at the usage of the word *logos*, which is the Holy Spirit's privilege, people. You use the word "bank." What do you mean? A money place? What about the side of a river? It's also a bank, right? How about 'banking' on this statement? These are different usages of a word that we as human beings use, right? Then by the same logic, why can't people give God that same privilege? He could have holy men of God by way of the holy spirit use the same words with different usages and different meanings. Well, He does. That is why you have to read the Word not only in the word itself but its context; how it's used. "Tidings" - I understand that. The word "tidings" sort of communicates to me as a translation of the word *logos*; "tidings," or "the word", "the news." Maybe news would fit your head well.

"came unto" - was heard by

"the ears of the church" - this means the people, the body, heard about the things that had occurred at Antioch. This must have been exciting news to them because we read that they preached the Word to none but unto the Jews only, and yet people from Cyprus and Cyrene came to Antioch. They went to Antioch first. There was a man who bore the cross named what? Simon of Cyrene. The Word from Cyrene went to Antioch. I often wonder whether Simon could have been there. They carried the Word to Antioch. (references to: **Acts 11:20**)

Now they heard this in Jerusalem, and this must have really disturbed them somewhat. Not negatively, necessarily, but just alarmed them. And so they sent forth Barnabas. Barnabas was a prophet in Jerusalem. It's neat that they sent him because Barnabas was a native of Cyprus. And Cyprians and the Cyrenians were the ones who carried the Word to Antioch. So they sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch.

"that he should go" - delete

### **Acts 11:23**

"seen the grace of God" - How's that? That the Gentiles are fellow heirs and of the same what body. They had preached to Jews only en route. But the people from Cyprus, from Cyrene, they went to Antioch. There they spoke the Word to Greeks. You and I would refer to them as Gentiles. And when Barnabas came, he saw the grace of God. How do you think Barnabas recognized that it was the grace of God? It cannot be because they'd given up hog meat. There had to be manifestations. The manifestations are the only proof in the senses world of the internal reality and presence of Christ within, operated by their free will, by the people's free will and according to the Word. That's what Barnabas saw. It doesn't say that in that verse. I know that, but you got to know the depth of the Word in order to see it. Barnabas came and saw the grace of God; that God had saved these Gentiles, these Greeks, and they were speaking in tongues. That's how he knew God had saved them. And he called it the grace of God. He came and had seen the grace of God; people getting saved.

"was glad" - He was what? Glad. Even though a lot of the people had not yet gone beyond preaching the Word to Jews only, Barnabas coming to Antioch saw that these people had the same Christ in them that they had in Jerusalem. And he saw the grace of God, and he was glad. Isn't that wonderful?

"exhorted" - was exhorting - Do you know what it means? To encourage toward a more worthy endeavor. Barnabas did this. He was a prophet of God, a man of God exhorting them all. This I understand, too. They were Gentiles in background; very little knowledge of the true God. So what was Barnabas really doing? He was exhorting them all, encouraging them toward a more worthy endeavor. He was most likely saying, "Look, fellows, clean up a little. Cut your long hair. You know and when you come to the meetings don't wear your shorts with all the holes in the back or front." I

understand this really beautifully because these were Gentiles. They had served pagan gods, idols. Therefore, he was just encouraging them to get it together a little better. We do the same thing in our ministry. You see, we don't mind people if they walk in barefooted without half their clothes on. It doesn't bother me any. But if they hang around long enough, we encourage them toward a more worthy endeavor. In other words, if that's all you own you're welcome anytime. But you see, if you've got something neat and nice, whenever you're working with men and women of God moving the Word, you ought to put on your best; simply because it makes you feel your best and you got to be the best. Anything we can do to be God's best we got to do. That's what he's talking about, not just clothing, but he most likely told him to quit drinking hard liquor all the time, too much of it. It's taking people, just like babies, and teaching them so they spiritually grow up. That's what's in that section. "And was exhorting them all"; building them up toward a more worthy endeavor. Isn't that beautiful in the Church! Gosh, I love that. Well, what do you think he was exhorting them on? That's all it can be; to get their lives in harmony; their walk in harmony with the Word; their talk in harmony with the Word; that the Word would have preeminence in their day-by-day living. I think it's real great.

"purpose" – *prothesis* - That's quite a usage of the word "purpose." *Pro* means first or before and *thesis* - you know when you get a Master's Degree you write a thesis, or a Doctor's Degree you write a dissertation. In philosophy you have a thesis, you have an antithesis, and then you have a synthesis. The thesis is that basic dynamic truth, that one and only. Now, here he said he was exhorting them all that, with "purpose" be "one and only" of heart. Be "one and only" of heart. What a tremendous usage of "purpose." You have to have a little spiritual depth of perception and understanding of word usage like *thesis*-, like the word *pro*; how it would relate and why they would use a word like this. It's singularly significant. He was exhorting them all that with that one singleness of heart and mind - that's translated that way in some other place; He uses singleness of heart and mind. That's what he's talking about; that one purpose; Christ in them, the hope of glory.

"cleave" – abide – The word "cleave" is real good.

"cleave unto the Lord." - The truth of the Word- -cleave unto it. Abide with it.

### Acts 11:24

"and full" – both full

"of faith" – in believing

He was a good man. The reason he was a good man was because he was both full of *pneuma hagion* and fantastic believing. This is the great long suit of the manifestation of believing. If you're ever going to win people to the Lord, you got to believe for them. God will show you that, sure, they're believing, but then by the manifestation of believing operating in your life, you got to stay put with them until you finally get them 'out of the woods.'

You know great deliverance to people doesn't come just from teaching the Word (the 'plain simple Word'). It comes from operating the principles of that Word, that when you're teaching it, you're believing (the manifestation of believing in operation) that your kids will get it. I do this all the time when I teach the Corps. I just believe you're going to get it. And I don't quit until I feel in my heart you got it. Now some of you get it that much and some that much, but you're getting it. That's the point. And it's that manifestation of believing that I just keep operating all the time. I am so absolutely convinced of God's Word when I begin to move in God's Word, that I just believe that anybody that's got the guts to sit there and listen me out, I can believe with all of my ability of the

manifestation, that they are going to get the blessing of that Word. So many times I just pull the stuff out of you by my manifestation of believing. You do this when you teach in your Twigs. Well, you ought to; you are the leader of that Twig. You got to believe that everybody in that Twig gets the retemory in order, gets this in order. You're responsible to God to operate those manifestations. That's what Barnabas did.

"much people" - I think the word here is "crowds." Isn't it? Any of you that have Greek texts know anything about it? - crowds were added - crowds brought to the Lord.

### **Acts 11:25**

Why do you believe Barnabas went to Tarsus? Revelation. That's right. You see, Saul (or Paul) had been in Jerusalem previously, right? Who had sort of interceded for Paul and accepted him? Barnabas. Apparently he saw John and Peter and in the process, of course, Barnabas befriended him and he learned some things about Paul's life; revelation God had given him. Now here he is. He sees the great grace. He is there and he's teaching, and one night God says to him, "This thing is just getting a little too big for you, Barney. You go over and find Saul." I teach in the Power for Abundant Living foundational class, if you get hungry enough, God will either send somebody to you or send you to somebody. Whenever the ministry rises and the believers increase, God gets the people ready. That's one reason I think you are in the Corps. You better get ready because I know you're just not in the Corps so that when you finish the Corps you can forget about the Word of God and go sit and "hatch" someplace. That's right. I believe you must be in the Corps because of God's great vision of the outreach of the Word in our day and time around the world. And He's got to have some qualified people. If you have to go into the wilderness awhile, it's ok. If you have to go back to Tarsus awhile, it's ok.

I do not know what happened in Tarsus when Paul went back there; whether some of those areas opened up under his teaching then. If they did, they were very nominal because the greater part of its opening comes after the Antioch record here in the Word. Maybe in those years, Paul didn't add great numbers to the Church, but he added a great commitment, a great knowledge of God's life to himself. Maybe he just had a little Twig out there and that's all he was doing in Tarsus because he wasn't qualified yet to handle the immensity of the greatness of the Word. God was getting him ready. That's why in the early part of Saul's ministry he did a lot of experiential teaching; I experienced it; this is what God did; let me down from a basket, and all the rest of the stuff. When he gets here in Acts and later on when you see him tie the epistles together; when that thing breaks in Acts at Antioch, from then on it's the Word, the Word, the Word and nothing but the Word. And that old boy's just right on top of it. So Barnabas goes over to Tarsus by revelation to seek Saul.

### **Acts 11:26**

"he brought him unto Antioch" - What a day that must have been. I can see those two fellows coming into Antioch and saying, "Well, here she is. We're gonna take this town, live or die. We're going to Twig it to death," or something.

"And it came to pass" - the following things are all contingent upon this phrase

For one year those two men worked with the body of believers. Imagine Paul working with them for one year, and Barnabas and other people that were there from Cyprus and Cyrene.

"taught much people" - not only preached the Word but taught them; built them up in the knowledge of the Word. He taught, taught, taught.

“the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” - this occurred at the time when Barnabas and Saul were there and that word “Christian” was given to the believers by unbelievers in a derogatory sense; as the people who were followers of Herod were called Herodians. One of the emperors later on wanted to change the word “Christian” to “Galilean.” As a matter of fact he put on a nice persecution. He said, “Don’t you call anybody a Christian. If I hear you call anybody a Christian, I’ll chop your head off. Call them Galileans.” They were called, “followers of the Nazarene”, because no good thing can come out of Nazareth. Therefore, it was a disgrace. They were called, “the sect of the Nazarene.” Sect is the word “cult.” “The cult of the Nazarene”, they were called. And here they first used that name, “Christians”, of these people. They used it, perhaps, in a derogatory sense, but it was in a greater truth than any of them realized. What they were saying, which they said was a disgrace, “They have Christ in them. Therefore they’re Christians; Christ-in. Whoever heard of a silly thing like ‘Christ-in’?” Yet, that’s exactly what they said and they walked like Christ said they ought to walk. So that which they thought was a derogatory word came to be the greatest word of all time, perhaps, until our age of the Occidental religion; so-called Christianity, where today to be a “Christian” is just a word. If you are baptized when you are born in one group, then you are a “Christian.” If you are immersed in another group, you’re a “Christian.” So today, the meaning of the word “Christian” is perhaps at the lowest ebb in all history. It would have been better to have it as it was here in **Acts 19**, done by the unbelievers, because they said, “Oh, you got Christ in you. Ah! Ah! Yeah.” That would have been real mean-ingful. Today “everybody” is “Christian.” You can get to be a “Christian” by paying. You can get to be a “Christian” by signing a certain register. You can get to be a “Christian” by baptizing, by falling on your nose, by quoting Genesis.

But here these wonderful men held forth the greatness of the Word and the disciples were called “Christians” first in Antioch of Syria.

Conybeare and Howson have a very nice piece of work on [The Life and Epistles of Paul](#). There is a record in Conybeare’s works that I want to share with you at this point regarding Antioch and the significance of its location. It was the gateway to the Near East until Constantinople became the gateway. So in the first two centuries of Christendom this was one of the great, great cities of all time. And I’ve asked Pete Coad to read that section for you tonight from Conybeare and Howson on this part of the Word of God that deals with Antioch and the city of Antioch. So Pete will you come up here and sit at this microphone and read it please?

Pete Coad -- The title of this chapter is The name Christian :

It is not likely that they received this name from the Jews. The “Children of Abraham” employed a term much more expressive of hatred and contempt. They called them “the sect of the Nazarenes.”<sup>1</sup> These disciples of Jesus traced their origin to Nazareth in Galilee: and it was a proverb that nothing good could come from Nazareth.<sup>2</sup> Besides this, there was a further reason why the Jews would not have called the disciples of Jesus by the name of “Christians.” The word “Christ” has the same meaning with “Messiah;” and the Jews, however blinded and prejudiced on this subject, would never have used so sacred a word to point an expression of mockery and derision; and they could not have used it in grave and serious earnest to designate those whom they held to be the followers of a false Messiah, a fictitious Christ. Nor is it likely that the “Christians” gave this name to themselves. In the Acts of the Apostles, and in their own letters, we find them designating themselves as “brethren,” “disciples,” “believers,” “saints.”<sup>3</sup> Only in two places<sup>4</sup> do we find the term “Christians;” and in both instances it is implied to be a term used by those who are without. There is little doubt that the name originated with the Gentiles, who began now to see that this new sect was so far distinct from the Jews, that they might naturally receive a new designation. And the form of the word implies that it came from the Romans<sup>5</sup>, and not from the Greeks. The word “Christ” was often heard in the conversation of believers, as we know it to have been constantly in their letters. “Christ” was the title of Him whom they avowed as their leader and their chief. They confessed that this Christ had been crucified; but they asserted that He was risen from the dead, and that He guided them by His invisible power.

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 24:5.

<sup>2</sup>John 1:46. See John 7:41, 52.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 15:23; 9:26; 5:14; 9:32; Colossians 1:2.

<sup>4</sup>Acts 26:28, and I Peter 4:16.

<sup>5</sup>So we read in the Civil War of “Marians” and “Pompeians” for the partisans of Marius and Pompey; and, under the Empire of “Othonians” and “Vitellians” for the partisans of Otho and Vitellius. The word “Herodians” (Matthew 22:16; Mark 3:6; 12:13) is formed exactly in the same way.

Thus “Christian” was the name which naturally found its place in the reproachful language of their enemies<sup>1</sup>. In the first instance, we have every reason to believe that it was a term of ridicule and derision.<sup>2</sup> And it is remarkable that the people of Antioch were notorious for inventing names of derision, and for turning their wit into the channels of ridicule.<sup>3</sup> In every way there is something very significant in the place where we first received the name we bear. Not in Jerusalem, the city of the Old Covenant, the city of the people who were chosen to the exclusion of all others, but in a Heathen city, the Eastern centre of Greek fashion and Roman luxury; and not till it was shown that the New Covenant was inclusive of all others; then and there we were first called Christians, and the Church received from the world its true and honorable name.

In narrating the journeys of St. Paul, it will now be our duty to speak of Antioch, not Jerusalem, as his point of departure and return. Let us look, more closely than has hitherto been necessary, at its character, its history, and its appearance. The position which it occupied near the abrupt angle formed by the coasts of Syria and Asia Minor, and in the opening where the Orontes passes between the ranges of Lebanon and Taurus, has already been noticed. And we have mentioned the numerous colony of Jews which Seleucus introduced into his capital, and raised to an equality of civil rights with the Greeks. There was everything in the situation and circumstances of this city, to make it a place of concourse for all classes and kinds of people. By its harbor of Seleucia, it was in communication with all the trade of the Mediterranean and, through the open country behind the Lebanon, it was conveniently approached by the caravans from Mesopotamia and Arabia. It united the inland advantages of Aleppo with the maritime opportunities of Smyrna. It was almost an oriental Rome, in which all the forms of the civilized life of the Empire found some representative. Through the first two centuries of the Christian era, it was what Constantinople became afterwards, “the Gate of the East.” And, indeed, the glory of the city of Ignatius was only gradually eclipsed by that of the city of Chrysostom. That great preacher and commentator himself, who knew them both by familiar residence, always speaks of Antioch with peculiar reverence<sup>4</sup> as the patriarchal city of the Christian name. There is something curiously prophetic in the stories which are told of the first founding of this city. Like Romulus on the Palatine, Seleucus is said to have watched the flight of birds from the summit of Mount Casius. An eagle took a fragment of the flesh of his sacrifice, and carried it to a point on the seashore, a little to the north of the mouth of the Orontes.

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<sup>1</sup>It is a Latin derivative from the Greek term for the Messiah of the Jews. It is connected with the office, not the name, or our Saviour, which harmonizes with the important fact that in the Epistles He is usually called not “Jesus” but “Christ.” The word “Jesuit” (which, by the way, is rather Greek than Latin) did not come into the vocabulary of the Church till after the lapse of 1,500 years. It is not a little remarkable that the word “Jesuit” is a proverbial term of reproach, even in Roman-Catholic countries; while the word “Christian” is used so proverbially for all that is good, that it has been applied to benevolent actions in which Jews have participated.

<sup>2</sup>It is needless to remark that it soon became a title of glory. Julian tried to substitute the term “Galilean” for “Christian.”

<sup>3</sup>Apollonius of Tyana was driven out of the city by their insults, and sailed away (like St. Paul) from Seleucia to Cyprus, where he visited Paphos.

<sup>4</sup>In his homilies on St. Matthew he tells the people of Antioch, that though they boasted of their city’s pre-eminence in having first enjoyed the Christian name, they were willing enough to be surpassed in Christian virtue by more homely cities.

There he founded a city, and called it Seleucia<sup>1</sup>, after his own name. This was on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April. Again, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, he sacrificed on the hill Silpius; and then repeated the ceremony and watched the auguries at the city of Antigonía, which his vanquished rival, Antigonus, had begun and left un-finished. An eagle again decided that this was not to be his own metropolis, and carried the flesh to the hill Silpius, which is on the south side of the river about the place where it turns from a northerly to a westerly direction. Five or six thousand Athenians and Macedonians were ordered to convey the stones and timber of Antigonía down the river; and Antioch was founded by Seleucus, and called after his father's name<sup>2</sup>.

This fable, invented perhaps to give a mythological sanction to what was really an act of sagacious prudence and princely ambition, is well worth remembering. Seleucus was not slow to recognize the wisdom of Antigonus in choosing a site for his capital, which should place it: in ready communication both with the shores of Greece and with his eastern territories on the Tigris and Euphrates; and he followed the example promptly, and completed his work with sumptuous magnificence. Few princes have ever lived with so great a passion for the building of cities; and this is a feature of his character which ought not to be unnoticed in this narrative. Two, at least, of his cities in Asia Minor have a close connection with the life of St. Paul. These are the Pisidian Antioch<sup>3</sup> and the Phrygian Laodicea<sup>4</sup>, one called by the name of his father, the other of his mother. He is said to have built in all nine Seleucias, sixteen Antiochs, and six Laodiceas. This love of commemorating the members of his family was conspicuous in his works by the Orontes. Besides Seleucia and Antioch, he built, in the immediate neighborhood, a Laodicea in honor of his mother, and an Apamea in honor of his wife. But by far the most famous of these four cities was the Syrian Antioch.

We must allude to its edifices and ornaments only so far as they are due to the Greek kings of Syria and the first five Caesars of Rome.<sup>5</sup> If we were to allow our description to wander to the times of Justinian or the Crusaders, though these are the times of Antioch's greatest glory, we should be trespassing on a period of history which does not belong to us. Strabo, in the time of Augustus, describes the city as a Tetrapolis, or a union of four cities. The two first were erected by Seleucus Nicator himself, in the situation already described, between Mount Silpius and the river, on that wide space of level ground where a few poor habitations still remain by the banks of the Orontes. The river has gradually changed its course and appearance, as the city has decayed. Once it flowed around an island which, like the island in the Seine<sup>6</sup>, by its thoroughfares and bridges, and its own noble buildings, became part of a magnificent whole.

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<sup>1</sup>See Acts 13:4.

<sup>2</sup>Some say that Seleucus called the city after his son.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 13:14; 14:21; II Timothy 3:11.

<sup>4</sup>Colossians 4:13, 15, 16. See Revelation 1:13; 3:14.

<sup>5</sup>In our larger editions is a plan of the ancient city, adopted (with some modifications) from the plan in the work mentioned below, n. 5. See a fuller account of Antioch in Dr. Smith's *Dictionary of Geography*.

<sup>6</sup>Julain the Apostate suggests a parallel between Paris and Antioch. See Gibbon's 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>d</sup> chapters.



But, in Paris, the Old City is on the island; in Antioch, it was the New City, built by the second Seleucus and the third Antiochus. Its chief features were a palace, and an arch like that of Napoleon. The fourth and last part of the Tetrapolis was built by Antiochus Epiphanes, where Mount Silpius rises abruptly on the south. On one of its craggy summits he placed, in the fervor of his Romanizing mania, a temple dedicated to Jupiter Capitolinus; and on another, a strong citadel, which dwindled to the Saracen Castle of the first Crusade. At the rugged bases of the mountain, the ground was leveled for a glorious street, which extended for four miles across the length of the city, and where sheltered crowds could walk through continuous colonnades from the eastern to the western suburb. The whole was surrounded by a wall, which, ascending to the heights and returning to the river, does not deviate very widely in its course from the wall of the Middle Ages, which still can be traced by the fragments of ruining towers. This wall is assigned by a Byzantine writer to Tiberius, but it seems more probable that the Emperor only repaired what Antiochus Epiphanes had built. Turning now to the period of the Empire, we find that Antioch had memorials of all the great Romans whose names have been mentioned as yet in this biography. When Pompey was defeated by Caesar, the conqueror's name was perpetuated in this Eastern city by an aqueduct and by baths, and by a basilica called Caesarium. In the reign of Augustus, Agrippa built in all cities of the Empire, and Herod of Judaea followed the example to the utmost of his power. Both found employment for their munificence at Antioch. A gay suburb rose under the patronage of the one, and the other contributed a road and a portico. The reign of Tiberius was less remarkable for great architectural works but the Syrians by the Orontes had to thank him for many improvements and restorations in their city. Even the four years of his successor left behind them the aqueduct and the baths of Caligula.

The character of the inhabitants is easily inferred from the influences which presided over the city's growth. Its successive enlargement by the Seleucids proves that their numbers rapidly increased from the first. The population swelled still further, when, instead of the metropolis of the Greek kings of Syria, it became the residence of Roman governors. The mixed multitude received new and important additions in the officials who were connected with the details of provincial administration. Luxurious Romans were attracted by its beautiful climate. New wants continually multiplied the business of its commerce. Its gardens and houses grew and extended on the north side of the river. Many are the allusions to Antioch, in the history of those times, as a place of singular pleasure and enjoyment. Here and there, an elevating thought is associated with its name. Poets have spent their young days at Antioch<sup>4</sup>, great generals have died there<sup>5</sup>, emperors have visited and admired it<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>A comparison has been instituted above between Paris and Antioch: and it is hardly possible now (1860) to revise this paragraph for the press without alluding to the Rue de Rivoli.

<sup>2</sup>See Muller, *Antiq. Antioch.* pp. 54 and 81.

<sup>3</sup>This friend of Augustus and Maecenas must be carefully distinguished from that grandson of Herod who bore the same name, and whose death is one of the subjects of this chapter. For the works of Herod the Great at Antioch, See Joseph *Ant.* 16 5,3; *War.* 1:21,11.

<sup>4</sup>See Cic. *pro Archia Poeta.*

<sup>5</sup>All readers of Tacitus will recognize the allusion. (See *Ann.* it.72.) It is not possible to write about Antioch without some allusion to Germanicus and his noble-minded wife. And yet they were the parents of Caligula.

<sup>6</sup>For all that long series of emperors whose names are connected with Antioch, see Muller.

But, for the most part, its population was a worthless rabble of Greeks and Orientals. Their frivolous amusements of the theatre were the occupation of their life. Their passion for races and the ridiculous party quarrels<sup>1</sup> connected with them were the patterns of those which afterwards became the disgrace of Byzantium. The oriental element of superstition and imposture was not less active. The Chaldaean astrologers found their most credulous disciples in Antioch<sup>2</sup>. Jewish impostors<sup>3</sup>, sufficiently common throughout the East, found their best opportunities here. It is probable that no populations have ever been more abandoned than those of oriental Greek cities under the Roman Empire, and of these cities Antioch was the greatest and the worst<sup>4</sup>. If we wish to realize the appearance and reality of the complicated Heathenism of the first Christian century, we must endeavor to imagine the scene of that suburb, the famous Daphne<sup>5</sup>, with its fountains and groves of bay-trees, its bright buildings, its crowds of licentious votaries, its statue of Apollo, where, under the climate of Syria and the wealthy patronage of Rome, all that was beautiful in nature and in art had created a sanctuary for a perpetual festival of vice.

Thus, if any city in the first century, was worthy to be called the *Heathen* Queen and Metropolis of the East, that city was Antioch. She was represented, in a famous allegorical statue, as a female figure, seated on a rock and crowned, with the river Orontes at her feet<sup>6</sup>. With this image, which art has made perpetual, we conclude our description. There is no excuse for continuing it to the age of Vespasian and Titus, when Judaea was taken, and the Western Gate, decorated with the spoils, was called the “Gate of the Cherubim”<sup>7</sup>, or to the Saracen age, when, after many years of Christian history and Christian mythology, we find the “Gate of St. Paul” placed opposite the “Gate of St. George,” and when Duke Godfrey pitched his camp between the river and the city wall. And there is reason to believe that earthquakes, the constant enemy of the people of Antioch, have so altered the very appearance of its site, that such description would be of little use. As the Vesuvius of Virgil or Pliny would hardly be recognized in the angry neighbor of modern Naples, so it is more than probable that the dislocated crags, which still rise above the Orontes, are greatly altered in form from the fort-crowned heights of Seleucus or Tiberius, Justinian or Tancred.

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<sup>1</sup>The Blue Faction and the Green Faction were notorious under the reigns of Caligula and Claudius. Both emperors patronized the letter.

<sup>2</sup>Chrysostom complains that even Christians, in his day, were led away by this passion for horoscopes. Juvenal traces the superstitions of Heathen Rom to Antioch. in “Tiberim defluxit Orontes.”

<sup>3</sup>Compare the cases of Simon Magus (Acts 8), Elymas the Sorcerer (Acts 8), and the Sons of Sceva (Acts 19). We shall have occasion to return to this subject again.

<sup>4</sup>Ausonius hesitates between Antioch and Alexandria, as to the rank they occupied in eminence and vice.

<sup>5</sup>Gibbon’s description of Daphne is well known. The sanctuary was on the high ground, four or five miles to the S. W. of Antioch. See Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible.

<sup>6</sup>For this celebrated statue of the Genius of Antioch, so constantly represented on coins, see Muller, Antig. Antioch. pp. 35-41.

<sup>7</sup>The Byzantine writer Alalas says, that Titus built a theatre at Antioch were a synagogue had been.

Earthquakes occurred in each of the reigns of Caligula and Claudius<sup>1</sup>. And it is likely that, when Saul and Barnabas were engaged in their apostolic work, parts of the city had something like that of the appearance which still makes Lisbon dreary, new and handsome buildings being raised in close proximity to the ruins left by the late calamity. It is remarkable how often great physical calamities are permitted by God to follow in close succession to each other. That age, which, as we have seen, had been visited by earthquakes, was presently visited by famine. The reign of Claudius, from bad harvests or from other causes, was a period of general distress and scarcity “over the whole world.”<sup>2</sup> In the fourth year of his reign, we are told by Josephus that the famine was so severe, that the price of food became enormous, and great numbers perished<sup>3</sup>. At this time it happened that Helena, the mother of Izates, king of Adiabene, and a recent convert to Judaism, came to worship at Jerusalem. Moved with compassion for the misery she saw around her, she sent to purchase corn from Alexandria and figs from Cyprus, for distribution among the poor. Izates himself (who had also been converted by one who bore the same name<sup>4</sup> with him who was baptized St. Paul) shared the charitable feelings of his mother, and sent large sums of money to Jerusalem.

While this relief came from Assyria, from Cyprus, and from Africa to the Jewish sufferers in Judaea, God did not suffer His own Christian people, probably the poorest and certainly the most disregarded in that country, to perish in the general distress. And their relief also came from nearly the same quarters. While Barnabas and Saul were evangelizing the Syrian capital, and gathering in the harvest, the first seeds of which had been sown by “men of Cyprus and Cyrene,” certain prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch, and one of them named Agabus announced that a time of famine was at hand<sup>5</sup>. The Gentile disciples felt that they were bound by the closest link to those Jewish brethren whom though they had never seen they loved. “For if the Gentiles had been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty was also to minister unto them in carnal things.”<sup>6</sup> No time was lost in preparing for the coming distress. All the members of the Christian community, according to their means, “determined to send relief.” Saul and Barnabas being chosen to take the contribution to the elders at Jerusalem<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>One earthquake, according to Malalas, occurred on the morning of March 23, in the year 37, and another soon afterwards,

<sup>2</sup>Besides the famine in Judaea, we read of three others in the reign of Claudius, one in Greece, mentioned by Eusebius, and two in Erme, the first mentioned by Dio Cassius, the second by Tacitus.

<sup>3</sup>Ant. iii. 15, 3, 10 2,5, and 5,2.

<sup>4</sup>This Anaias was a Jewish merchant, who made proselytes among the women about the court of Adiabene, and thus obtained influence with the king. (Joseph. Ant. 20 2, 3.)

<sup>5</sup>Acts 11:29.

<sup>6</sup>Romans 15:27.

<sup>7</sup>Acts 11:29, 30.

Dr. -- Thank you.

The road running through the city of Antioch was how long? Four miles east to west. How far is Antioch from Seleucia, the seaport? Sixteen miles. The seaport was Seleucia. Antioch was a little interior, sixteen miles in. One of the greatest libraries of all time, of course, was at Antioch. A lot of the collections of all the erotic things were there among others.

You marvel when you think of these things because the Word of God moved into those great cities with all their wickedness. They just took the Word in. And you noticed when the famine came along, in spite of the fact that the Christians were the despised group, they still had material things to give and to share. When you work it down in all of its accuracy, you're going to learn some tremendous things.

If a slavery system in the United States, communistic system, socialistic system, took over the United States you would have about half of the productivity you have now. And over a period of time you'd even lose that.

Land will only give back to people who love it and who believe in it. Nobody gets any better production out of land than a Christian believer. Have you ever heard the statement about somebody having a green thumb? Why? You see, if you really love the land, you love flowers or you love something, it gets blessed. Now it's already blessed even if it's the *phileo* type of love. But when it becomes the love of God in the renewed mind that we're thankful for all things; all we do in word and deed we do heartily as unto the Lord. So when you farm you farm heartily as unto the Lord, that ground will start giving back super abundance. Any nation that loses the true God cannot have anything but famine. Check your history. And for God's sake, let's hope somebody wakes up. It's only in the freedom and the love that's there. Now as long as the brotherly love is there, it will still produce, but even brotherly love will never equal the production that's there when it's the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation on that job; that land.

I don't know why the scientists don't start working some of these fields and really get their heads into it. An automobile will last longer for a believer than an unbeliever. Machinery operates better, microphones, everything. I think even Kleenex cleans cleaner. It's all in that Word. But, you see, we've never seen the immensity of the greatness of the love of God in Christ Jesus in a believer when it says "Christ in you." For instance, whatever you touch with Christ in you, believingly and with thanksgiving, will produce. It's got to. Whatever is cursed by that man who uses the name of God in vain, that land will always produce less. So he fortifies it for a number of years with more devilish stuff to keep the production up high. But sooner or later it's got to drop. And that's when you get famine.

Antioch had more money than Emporia had. That's for sure. There was a time when New York City had money to burn. Now it has to be financed by the Federal government. New York City financed by the Federal government! They've got a famine. It's going to get worse. And should the American taxpayer get tired of paying IRS to finance New York, we're going to have an interesting time in New York. They couldn't live for one week. That's famine. It's right at the door. And you know why? Because they're not believing God. They are not blessing God. They're not putting God first. A wicked city like Antioch and finally they disintegrate and disappear. Their service is gone.

I think it's quite a record here in Acts, and I think what Pete read to you from Conybeare and Howson is a very great record of the history and the background. He named the city of Antioch in

memory of his father whose name was Antioch. And getting the background of the city and its significance. How many Antiochs did he build? Sixteen, wasn't it? He had a real trip going. Well, this is going to have to hold you 'til I get back.